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Sefrou Association for Multidisciplinary Arts
جمعية سفرو للفنون متعددة المناهل
SAMA

Dakira / SAMA / Project Sho'la

Quarterly Performance Report #3

April – June 2022 / Sefrou



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Executive Summary

Project Sho'la is a community arts project that explores and highlights the story of multiculturalism in Sefrou, developing the arts aspect of the program as a tool for dialogue. A series of five traditional story telling workshops were carried out as an extension to the program to further delve into Sefrou heritage. As the project comes to a point of closure, celebrations of the community participation and content creation and showcasing the project to a wider public are the main features of this third and final quarter for Project Sho'la.

By executing a community theater piece with Sefrous youth and building relations through the creation of a mural in the Jewish quarter, highlighting Morocco's diverse heritage, Project Sho'la cultivates cross cultural empathy, a sense of belonging and community cohesion.

Project elements, along with participants and guests and new acquaintances have been brought together through two interactive showcases, sharing the multicultural story of Sefrou and further building communities.



Program Progress & Main Achievements

An extension program over the month of Ramadan enabled the young theater participants to further explore and develop storylines based around Sefrous multicultural traditions. A series of 5 storytelling sessions were carried out, led by Association Masque and co-facilitated by SAMA facilitators. (see link #5 in Annex)



A community gathering was held between the youth participants, Association Masque and SAMA members where reflections and contributions were celebrated, alongside the execution of creative and playful evaluation activities. This event also gave opportunity for Sho'las youth participants to express their sense of community building and increase in awareness of the diverse cultural heritage through short filmed interviews.



Some participants in one of Project Sho'las community gatherings. Spring 2022

Parallel to the youth-groups collective exploration of their local heritage, SAMAs facilitators' built relations with the Mellah's street community. Through focus groups and evaluation

activities they subsequently engaged in dialogue with regards to the mural, titled *The Meeting Point*, the design of which encompasses figures that represent various cultures that have passed through Sefrou and left their mark; Roman, Jewish, Sub Saharan African as well as figures from the Arab and indigenous Amazigh culture.

Alongside responses to the mural from medina residents, 6 of SAMAs team members plus 3 from Association Masque received training on Community Dialogue and Outreach, carried out over 5 sessions with educator and trainer Becca Polk. (see training program appendix)

Using the Mural as a tool to entice dialogue to both the topic and draw attention to a neglected neighborhood of significant cultural heritage, there has been a definite increase in visitor numbers to the Mellah, through SAMAs activities and otherwise, highlighting the multicultural history of Sefrou and beyond.

Three months after the creation of 'The Meeting Point' a local medina association, in partnership with the Government program Awarash, are further cleaning up and flattening the ground directly beneath the mural, to transform it into a community football pitch.



Conditions of the area 1-week before the creation of Sho'las mural



Members of a local association (under the government initiative Awarash) clearing the grounds

To further showcase the notion of local cultural diversity and develop community relations, two participatory exhibits were presented in the month of June. The first exhibition was at the Dakira Conference in Marrakesh, where approximately 100 conference participants engaged with SAMAs interactive presentation on Project Shola and thus contributing to the displayed content. Engagement tools facilitated by SAMA members included blackboard contributions, mini competitions and post-card dialogue prompt cards.



Images from SAMAS contribution to the Dakira Conference



The second showcase of Project Sho'la was presented at SAMAs hub in the heart of Sefrou medina, approximately 140 visitors attended over two events, a V.I.P. for local council members and the other for the general public. A high level of interaction occurred with the exhibit and Sho'la representatives, along with the designated points of engagement around Sefrous medina (the mural and points of performance by local artists).



Images from SAMA's Open Day, June 2022

Activities Planned

The month of June and this report sees the closure of Project Sho'la. Project proposals building on this program are currently being crafted.

Documentaries, and interviews (see links in Annex) from Project Sho'la will be presented on-line to continue to disseminate the project and its undertaking in engaging audiences on multiculturalism in Morocco.

Challenges

i. Performance Location Concerns

Responding to some parents concerns about the youth participants performing in the Mellah streets, the location of the filming of the play was changed to another area in the medina.

ii. Community Outreach Activities and Dialogue

The engagement in dialogue around the topic of multiculturalism is a new experience for Sefrou's community. SAMA was able to build on their existing relationship with the Sefrouian community Through SAMA's existing relationships within Sefrous community has begun the process of building trust and confidence within the community to begin the process of building trust and confidence, creating the foundations for incremental progress.

Mitigation Plan

The necessary fundamentals to building community trust and strengthening relationships requires dedicated time and continuity. The role of facilitating potentially difficult dialogues is one that SAMA is currently approaching with a proposed training program. SAMA is continually

renewing and developing the team skills in facilitating potentially difficult dialogues and is committed to further training in the near future.

SAMA is developing both tools and a training proposal for a substantial program to empower and capacity build local youth in dialogue facilitation.

Future Potential

Contextually relevant tools for dialogue, such as short films, interactive games and workshop activities, in Moroccan dialect, on Moroccan issues and created with Moroccan communities would greatly enhance programs wanting to engage with such intercultural and local issues.

SAMA has the opportunity alongside the project to drafts Community Outreach Manuals (see draft from in appendix link) and would wish to further develop for sharing with subsequent organizations, programs and activities.

There is great potential to build on Project Sho'la through the community connections formed, using content collectively explored and crafted, and building on SAMAs portfolio for art as tool for inter-cultural and cross-cultural dialogue with Sefrou multicultural heritage as its exemplary muse.



Annex

1. SAMA Q#3Training notes attached
2. 10 x short testimonial videos from Project Sho'la Youth Participants -
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ZZCTeoBPyRFXV9pHxLr_VeMMrELIRtvE?usp=sharing
3. Short teaser video for the Socio-Doc *Sefrou through the Years*
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1kB5tCu5Gy0g0nuPL8Fxfkj1SB7IQ7b-nl?usp=sharing>
4. Short teaser video for *Project Sho'la*
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/18d9SFOvc1OI6ficu_EAiTbxpKanpdm7j?usp=sharing
5. Storytelling Medley
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1S19Aud7TO0L62QpJ7EhswXZsEVAAuXGb?usp=sharing>
6. Community Outreach manuals, (in draft form)
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/16vXb2uwlyreBgGlpjmaB-UEDXM_aa2iA?usp=sharing



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