



CHRISTIAN SATELLITE TV
BY & FOR THE PEOPLE
OF THE MIDDLE EAST
& NORTH AFRICA

Uplink

News from SAT-7
SEPTEMBER 2015



TURNING THE WORLD
DOWN-SIDE UP

Viewers share their stories
Pages 6-11



We strive to give attention to the audience

In the early days of His earthly ministry, Jesus invited two followers of John the Baptist to “come and see” (John 1:39). The two disciples had asked, “Teacher, where are you staying?” Jesus’ response was an invitation to observe His life and lifestyle. To come and watch. Isn’t this what we at SAT-7 are called to enable others to do? Hasn’t it been our deepest desire for twenty years to *make God’s love visible*?

There are millions of people in the MENA region who want to know about the life and teachings of Jesus. Satellite technology has given us an amazing tool to say to them, “You don’t have to come. Stay where you are, and we will help you to hear Jesus’ words, to see His face, hands and feet.”

For many people in the Middle East, it is impossible to walk into a church building or ask for a Bible. It is with humility and joy that SAT-7 makes the Gospel visible and audible.

Our ministry is of God and for His glory. It is not meant to be for us. Every day we strive to deliver programs that point to Jesus. Because we know how important our message is and how precious our viewers are. Because they are created in God’s own image.

Showing Jesus’ face is the goal, but more importantly is to know that Jesus made this invitation only once throughout his ministry. Do you know why? Because he was listening to his audience. He paid them great attention and responded accordingly, and we at SAT-7 strive to follow this model in our own Audience Relations. We must keep both of our ears sharp and sensitive, using one to listen carefully to people’s questions and the other to hear the Holy Spirit’s answers.

For me, serving at SAT-7 is like sitting down to a seven-course meal! My favourite dish in this banquet is Audience Relations, in which we “rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn” (Romans 12:15). This is all done in the comfort of our viewers’ homes. Every day we deliver pastoral care to millions of people, simply because we believe in the ministry of presence.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mansour Khajepour".

Rev. Mansour Khajepour
Executive Director, SAT-7 PARS

A TALENTED BUNCH KEEP IT IN THE FAMILY

When asked who is the best actor, herself or her Dad, 11-year-old Aya Mardass immediately replies, “Me!” The room quickly fills with laughter, with Aya’s amongst the loudest.

Aya and her producer, director and actor father Hamid are the talents behind the new program *Me and My Daughter*, which will be aired on both SAT-7 KIDS and SAT-7 ARABIC. The program uses a range of segments to examine the relationship between a father and daughter, which includes some inevitable conflicts.

Two dialects

During the show, Hamid and Aya speak in two different Arabic dialects: a North African version spoken in Morocco and a Lebanese dialect. This is because Aya’s parents speak the different dialects.

“This is so it will be easy for viewers from across North Africa and the Middle East to understand us,” Hamid says. “It’s a big challenge. The first segment in each program is a comedic drama, and my daughter and I are fighting. She’s talking in the Lebanese dialect, I’m talking in the Moroccan and this sets the theme of the episode. “We even fight about the title of the program,” he continues. “I’m always saying ‘*Me and My Daughter*,’ and she’s saying, ‘*No, Me and My Dad*’.”

“What we are trying to do is present a positive model for families in the Arab world.”

“We even fight about the title of the program. I’m always saying ‘Me and My Daughter,’ and she’s saying, ‘No, Me and My Dad’.”

A colourful program

“Following the comedic drama, we have other segments including a quote of the day, which is presented in French, Arabic and English. There is a different song in each program, for which we are joined by a parrot puppet. There is also the ‘challenge of the day’.”

These different elements are a lot to pack into each episode, and the result is a colourful and entertaining program. The show’s success is mainly thanks to the talents of Hamid, who apart from starring in it, wrote, directed and filmed it in their Cyprus home using a range of cameras.

The program will be aired on each of SAT-7 ARABIC, SAT-7 PLUS and SAT-7 KIDS later this year.

A positive role model

“What we are trying to do is present

a positive model for families in the Arab world,” says Hamid. “Often there is not a good connection between a father and his children, and we are trying to present an alternative in a humorous way.”

The show emphasises how a father and daughter can be friends and have fun together, challenging a more traditional dynamic in which a child blindly obeys their parents or even fears them.

Covering different topics

The program covers a wide range of topics, from the importance of telling the truth and the need to be physically active, to what happens when we die. One episode focuses on helping children find their individual talents. There’s no doubting one of Aya’s talents – she is a natural entertainer.



WITH JESUS REACHES FINAL EPISODE

After two years and 85 episodes, SAT-7 KIDS' live prayer and worship program *With Jesus* has come to an end. Performing for the last time on 25th July, the team encouraged the show's avid followers – who they refer to as their family – to be active in their Christian faith. The presenters urged their young friends to keep praising and worshipping God and to stay close to Him through prayer.

The team said the children should try to “plant the seeds of the Kingdom of God” wherever they are, whether at school or with friends.

“Many people were upset that the program has ended because of its popularity among children, but the team feel they have nothing new to give,” says producer Mounir Zakari.

The worship leaders have travelled to perform live from many

churches across Egypt. The final episode included a field report about a trip to South Sudan, as well as a live video in which a Syrian viewer named Emmy sang along and danced in front of the television set.

The show's Facebook page received many comments from viewers, who were keen to reach

the team in other ways and asked when they would be back on screen. At the time of writing, plans for the presenters to work together on another project were under discussion.

From the last episode of With Jesus in July.



A VOICE FOR NORTH AFRICAN WOMEN

SAT-7 ARABIC is launching a new program, one of the first of its kind, for women throughout North Africa.

This summer, presenter and producer Samia Jallali Kessai and the crew recorded 26 episodes of a new women's program called *You're Precious*. The team worked relentlessly for four days, from 6am to midnight, shooting the episodes in a house in a

mountainous area of Cyprus.

The program is in Arabic with Kabyle subtitles, making it accessible to different communities spread throughout Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania and Libya.

“We want to remind these women that they are very precious in God's eyes. We want to encourage them to believe in themselves and find peace and comfort in the Lord,” says Samia.

Targeting troubles

The 15-minute program segments confront controversial issues in which North African women often remain voiceless. For example, many young women are rushed into marriages they have not chosen and are often later discarded by their husbands, who seek new brides.

Forced marriage and abandonment

Samia says some women are forced to escape their troubled home lives:

“In the city where I live, there are many prostitutes. You'll find that most of them are runaways. Some fled as young girls before their parents forced them to marry someone they did not love. Some ran from their unhappy and unhealthy marriages. Many were driven by fear that they would be kicked out of their homes because their husbands would want new women. These runaways are afraid they will be divorced, and they and their children left destitute and disgraced. They are victims. But they are precious.”

Exploring unspoken topics

Divorce is just one of many subjects tackled by the new program. The show also raises the issues of fear, domestic conflict, choosing a spouse and finding value in one's identity as a woman.



Program presenter and producer Samia Jallali Kessai

NO CALL MISSED BY SAT-7 PARS

A new phone system is bringing unexpected benefits for SAT-7's Farsi-language channel, including a big increase in the number of Bibles being sent to viewers.

The PARS team had previously relied on a conventional phone system, which depended on a staff member actually picking up the phone and answering every call. Unfortunately, during busy periods, it just was not possible to answer every call, and many were lost.

Hundreds of calls were missed

Parsa, the channel's Audience and Public Relations Manager, says hundreds of calls were sometimes missed.

"Previously, during our live shows, especially those for children on Thursday and Friday, we might miss about 300-400 calls. That was the reason we introduced the new system – to avoid missing all these opportunities," he said.

"We designed it so that any time we have a live show during the week, the system automatically switches to a menu that tells the caller that they can join the program if they want to. Otherwise, they can choose to go through to

record a request for prayer or for a Bible, or just to leave a message."

More people ask for Bibles

Parsa says the number of Bible requests being recorded by the new VOIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol) system has been one of the surprises since its introduction.

"One of our voicemail messages is specifically for anyone who just needs a Bible, so they don't have to wait to speak with someone. From the moment this was introduced, the number of messages we received began increasing greatly. Now we have a long list of requests for Bibles and prayer," Parsa says.

"We were surprised at the number of viewers asking for Bibles because although we knew we missed lots of calls before the VOIP system was introduced, we didn't know exactly what these callers wanted. Now we don't lose any chances to hear from our audience, and we can serve our viewers much more quickly."



"From that moment the number of messages we received started increasing greatly. Now we have a long list of requests for Bibles and prayer," says Parsa, who is the Audience and Public Relations Manager for SAT-7 PARS.

Much more flexible

Another benefit of the VOIP system is that staff in one country can answer the calls from viewers of a show in a different country. This has made it easier for SAT-7 staff in different studios to assist one another during busy times. The VOIP system is also cheaper than the conventional phone system for SAT-7 to run and for viewers to call, as some can reach the studios using an 0-800 number.

The figures are clear

Sometimes it can be difficult to quantify the benefits of an innovation, but in this case, Parsa says, the figures are clear. "Our numbers right now show that our follow-up list of people who have called us has dramatically increased. It's now about five times longer," he says.



MARIAM'S JOURNEY WITH GOD AND SAT-7

Mariam, a Christian mother, experienced many difficulties at the beginning of her spiritual journey – but SAT-7 has always been there to support her.

SAT-7 is my secure refuge. I feel uncomfortable when there is a technical problem with the satellite or with the television set that prevents me from watching the channels," Mariam who is an Egyptian, says.

Before she discovered SAT-7 ARABIC, Mariam was satisfied with regularly attending church. But she did not feel truly fulfilled until she began to go deeper in her faith. After watching a Christian program on another television channel, Mariam felt her life begin to change.

"I began to have an open mind about things that I previously didn't understand," Mariam says. Her new understanding taught her to live without fear and to be assertive. Although this new way of thinking had a positive impact on her life, because of her family's particular religious background the ideas were foreign to them.

A tough journey

"They weren't very encouraging. They treated me like I was refuting my religion," Mariam says. Her father supported her in her new approach towards prayer and worship, but Mariam's mother and siblings were discouraging.

The beginning of her spiritual journey was tough, not only in her family life but also at work. But Mariam persevered because of the change she had noticed in her attitude and in her life. She was sure that God had put her on the right path and would direct her with His word.

Trouble at work

Mariam felt God was saying that, although she would face tribulations in her path, she must continue ahead because it was His plan for her life. In times of trouble, Mariam runs to Him in prayer, and she feels that He has answered her

many times through the programs she watches on SAT-7.

For example, Mariam had been facing trouble at the school where she worked, and the head teacher moved her to another branch where she faced even greater difficulties.

"I thought it would be better for me there, but I faced many tribulations in my relationships with my colleagues. I developed high blood pressure because of the stress at work, to the extent that I suffered from nose bleeds," she remembers.

Left by the roadside

A breaking point came when Mariam's colleagues refused to allow her to take the school bus home and left her by the roadside with her three-year-old child. Back at home, Mariam broke down in tears and prayed for God's direction. When she later turned on SAT-7, God comforted her through a sermon aired on the show *Answers*

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 "From this (SAT-7 program) I know that when I seek God and want to speak with Him, He will be there."

"It is God's plan to have this channel on air," says Mariam, who has been encouraged in difficult times by watching SAT-7 ARABIC and SAT-7 KIDS.





with Bayless Conley.

Mariam says she felt God promised her that He would move her from this school to a better workplace, where many blessings would be waiting for her. In a dream, God told her that she would leave the school within a month.

Finding a new job

Mariam asked for a holiday from the school, and before long she found a new job. Even though it was outside her usual field, she agreed to work as a teaching assistant. But when the head teacher realised her expertise in finance, Mariam was made head of the school's accounting department.

"When I took this position, I found there were many problems with the government, because there wasn't an accounting department before I came," Mariam remembers. "But with God's help everything seemed easy, and where there was red tape, God would send the right people to help me."

With the blessings of the new job came trouble with colleagues who wanted to put a rift between her and the head teacher. Mariam faithfully says, "I am aware of what they are trying to do and I keep praying. I know that this job is God's promise to me."

Mariam's favourite programs

In the *Perfect Stranger* series broadcast on SAT-7 ARABIC, a woman meets with Jesus over dinner, where He assures her of His love for her and that He is there whenever she needs Him. The



Some of Mariam's favourite programs are Signs and Wonders (above left), With Jesus (above) and Bible Heroes (above right).

Mariam with her daughter Joyce at the Cairo book fair, where popular SAT-7 KIDS presenter Uncle Mounir drew Joyce's caricature.



series is one of Mariam's favourites, because it reminds her of her father-daughter relationship with God.

"From this, I know that when I seek God and want to speak with Him, He will be there," she says.

Another of Mariam's favourite SAT-7 shows is women's program *Needle and Thread*.

"The program gives me guidance as a wife and mother. I am moved when I watch people sharing their personal experiences on the program. Once, the program broadcast a phone call from a woman who was healed from cancer. This woman's testimony of faith gave me hope," Mariam says.

Mariam also likes to join in prayer with the viewers who call Dr Elie Karam on the live show *Signs and Wonders* and ask him to pray for them.

Following the children's programs

Mariam says she also follows all the children's programs on SAT-7 KIDS with her daughter Joyce, including *Bible Heroes*, *Colours*, *Bedtime Stories*, *A Book in the Playroom*, *With Jesus* and the cartoon series *Friends and Heroes*.

"I learn a lot from children's programs, because the way they present the information is simple and it touches the heart," Mariam says.

"When my daughter Joyce misses one of the programs, she knows how to watch it later on SAT-7 KIDS' YouTube channel."

"I feel that the success of SAT-7's channels is the fruit of the prayers of the people who work for them, and that is how viewers are blessed," she continues. "It is God's plan to have this channel on air."

CHILDREN CELEBRATE ANSWERED PRAYERS

Several children and their families celebrated testimonies of divine healing with the program *Why Is That?*

Veronia had facial nerve paralysis that responded only slowly to electric stimulation sessions. Her mother had contacted SAT-7 KIDS requesting prayer, and later followed with an update, saying, “Veronia wants to thank you ... and thank God for healing her after your prayers on the program. Thanks be to God.”



Scenes from SAT-7 KIDS' program Why Is That?

Kyrillos Michael from the southern Egyptian town of Luxor was fighting a severe infection. He wrote, “I asked you to pray for me so I could receive healing, because I was taking a lot of antibiotics. Thank God I am feeling much better now, and I don’t take antibiotics anymore, only painkillers. Please continue your prayers for me so I can receive complete healing.”

Karam, who is 12 years old, suffered from a tumor in his back.

Untreated, it was expected to spread and become fatal. Doctors were afraid to operate because of the high risk of paralysis. Karam’s mother reached out to SAT-7 KIDS, asking for prayer. Thankfully, one doctor agreed to perform the operation. Karam’s mother says, “After your prayers, the operation was carried out successfully. The tumor was removed, and now he can walk normally. This is a witness to Jesus’ name. God answered our prayers.”

TURNING THEIR WORLD ‘DOWNSIDE-UP’

SAT-7’s Audience Relations Departments are where viewers reach past the TV screen and speak one-on-one with Christian counsellors. The team members pray with the viewers, answer their questions and help them grow in their individual relationships with Christ.

At SAT-7 KIDS, the Audience Relations Team has a heart of service. Their statement of commitment focuses on the viewers, saying:

“We are committed to turning their world downside-up (and not upside-down), helping them to grow and feel safe – not only through our programs but through all means, including social media, spoken words and actions.

Where they see violence, we want to show them peace.

Where filthiness is growing around them, we want to show purity.

Where immorality intrudes their world, we will conquer this with righteousness.

Where they are in danger, we want to make them feel safe.

Where they are being used, we want to tell them their rights.

Where terror is surrounding them, we want to bring them security.

Where there is ignorance, we want to give them the knowledge of God’s Word and love.

We are committed to making them feel important, listening to them carefully, taking their needs seriously, keeping our promises and working hard to earn their trust and confidence.”

Pray that God will speak through members of the SAT-7 KIDS Audience Relations team to share His grace, mercy and truth with each person.

From left to right, SAT-7 KIDS Audience Relation team are: Arsho Tenbelian, Enaam Haddad and Jessica Mrad.



A GROWING, ENTHUSIASTIC AUDIENCE

Since SAT-7 TÜRK began broadcasting on the Türksat satellite early this year, it has been exciting to see audience responses increasing and public awareness of the channel building.

SAT-7 TÜRK achieved extensive coverage in the Turkish broadcast and print media after its launch on Türksat, especially after an interview with Melih Ekener, the channel's Executive Director, and Gökhan Talas, its Broadcast Manager. That interview was followed up by Turkey's biggest TV channel and three national newspapers, who all wanted interviews. The fact that a Christian channel was now broadcasting on the same satellite platform as these well-established Turkish stations spiked great public interest.

SAT-7 recently spoke with Zakai Tanyar, a Turkish pastor with over 30 years experience and is former

chair of the Turkish Evangelical Alliance. He emphasised the potential long-term impact of SAT-7 TÜRK's satellite broadcasts and how the channel could help change negative perceptions about Christianity in his country: "It's a major step. It's going to help to chip away at the prejudice, although things won't change overnight. We're talking about centuries of prejudices and fears, but every time people see and hear and think, 'Oh, I didn't know that', or 'I didn't see Christians like that', it will help. I'm sure that for some people it will go further and the biblical truth they hear will lead them to seek the Lord. SAT-7 not only presents the New Testament but also teaches on it. So in the coming years when we can look back, we will probably see a major step up in responses to the Gospel. Also we are sure there are lots of secret believers out there, and it will help to strengthen them."

Alongside the media attention there has been a very encouraging steady increase in personal responses from the audience, especially from those who never knew or imagined that a Turkish Christian TV channel existed.

Call from Kırklareli

"I began to watch your channel last week. If I am honest, at first it seemed a bit pointless – why have a Christian channel? However, after watching I loved your broadcasts.



Please broadcast more religious films in Turkish. We are watching as a family, and we love it. I wish you success."

Call from Ardahan

"Yesterday evening I came across your channel while channel-surfing. I watched a couple of very nice programs. I especially liked the movie explaining the Prophet Abraham's life. I had previously read the Bible, but I did not really understand it; are you able to help me? I am a student."

Call from Izmir

"I came across Levent Kinran's program on your channel. For years, there have been some issues that really bothered me, and he gave great answers to them. Is there a book that I can read? I love the Christian faith very much, but there is a lot of pressure from my family. My Dad especially doesn't like having the Bible in the house. I watch using your Android App, and sometimes when my Dad isn't home I watch on TV. It's really great to have such a channel. Thank you."



Zakai Tanyar, a Turkish pastor, with over 30 years experience, believe that SAT-7 TÜRK will see a major step up in responses from the viewers in the future.

BEYOND THE SET, LIVES ARE TOUCHED



HELPING A LOST FATHER

A father of two young boys left his family for another woman, but his life still felt empty. After struggling through depression, he was reconciled with his family and with God.

“Erfan” and his new partner decided to leave Iran for Iraq. He later found Jesus and began watching SAT-7 PARS. He was thankful to learn about Christianity through the many programs shown on the channel.

But Erfan then discovered that his new partner had been unfaithful to him. He became distraught and suicidal. Erfan began calling the AR team to ask for prayer for encouragement and answers.

After some time, Erfan felt that he had to return to Iran. He had

nothing: no money, no passport and no belongings. Getting back into Iran seemed impossible. Erfan and the PARS team prayed about the situation, as the journey was extremely dangerous and he risked death if he was caught. Miraculously, Erfan was allowed back into Iran, and he gave thanks to God for this.

Although God had provided him with a way to return home, Erfan had nowhere to go once he was inside the country. He became convicted that he should return to his first wife and beg for forgiveness. She graciously accepted him back into their home, and Erfan has now been living with his family for over a year. He has continued to call SAT-7 PARS with prayer requests and is thankful to God for preserving his life and restoring his family.

He was thankful to learn about Christianity through the many programs shown on the channel.

THE PERFECT STRANGER

“Ashkan” had recently moved to Tehran. Although the relocation was important for his education and career path, he found it difficult to manage the higher living costs of the city and could not find a place to live.

“I’ve loved Jesus since I was a child,” said Ashkan. “I found myself crying in front of His picture, asking Him to help me find a home.”

Feeling hopeless, Ashkan walked the streets, searching the city for somewhere to live. Seeing that he was distressed, a passer-by came up to him and asked what the problem was. Ashkan told the man his troubles. Instead of walking away, the stranger stayed with him all day. Together they found Ashkan an apartment.

“I never saw him again,” said Ashkan. “I know that this was Jesus helping me through the stranger. He is like a candle in the darkness. He gave me a miracle.”

The live show *Together With You* is a lifeline for isolated Farsi-speaking believers. The program is broadcast four times a week on SAT-7 PARS. During the show two presenters, one a social media correspondent and the other an expert, discuss the topic of that day's episode. The subjects covered include family, social, cultural and theological issues.

For the first 20 minutes, viewers have the chance to hear the expert's opinion on the day's topic as it is discussed by the presenters. For the following 30 minutes, the phone lines are opened and callers can contribute questions and prayer requests. The presenters end the show with prayer for the viewers.

Together With You is one of the most interactive live shows on SAT-7 PARS, and the team tries hard to make the content as accessible and relevant to viewers as possible. The

show addresses a wide variety of subjects, and callers can steer the conversation towards areas they particularly wish to discuss. Social Media Developer Hovan Hovsepian is passionate about this flexibility, as it ensures viewers get the most that they can out of the program. "When it comes to the kingdom of God it is unity that matters," he says.

Behind the scenes is a dedicated team that ensures the viewers' voices are heard. Office and Audience Relations (AR) Manager Anita Hovsepian stresses the importance of being in constant contact with isolated believers: "Many people are waiting for answers. Working in AR, you can really see the results of the team's hard work," she says.

During many episodes, viewers have called in to share their testimonies with SAT-7 PARS.

Together With You, which is broadcast four times a week, is one of the most interactive live shows on SAT-7 PARS.

Letters from viewers

Fatemeh: "I would like to thank you for your nice programs, which show us the right way. My husband stopped using drugs a few days ago. I am very thankful for your prayers."

Afarin: "Hello to my dear brothers and sisters in SAT-7. I was born into a religious family. A few months ago, I was watching one of your programs about Christianity. I realised I cannot save myself through the things I do. Jesus has paid the price for us on the cross with His blood. Now I have new life in Him. We are following your programs, especially *Together With You*. Please share this letter with other viewers. God bless you all."

Nima: "I've been watching your programs for over two years and still watch all of them. When I first started watching, I told myself that you people are crazy. But slowly your programs began making sense to me, and I realised that I was the one who had been wrong all these years. I had never seen the truth. I've now given my heart to Jesus. Please introduce me to other Iranian Christians."





SAT-7 Day of Prayer

On Sunday 1st November, SAT-7 staff, audience members and supporters around the world will pray for refugees and internally displaced people in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), as well as their host countries, as part of SAT-7's Day of Prayer in 2015. Please join us on this day and pray for the continual transformation of the MENA through hope in Christ.

Read more at www.sat7.org/day-of-prayer, where you can also download our Day of Prayer poster, prayer guide, video clips and Power point for use in meetings. Please help us raise awareness about the day.



Job openings

We have 10 exciting jobs available at SAT-7. There are opportunities to join our team in either Cyprus or Turkey. Please visit www.sat7.org/get_involved/positions for more information. You can also download and distribute a poster and postcard to help us fill these vacancies. And if you are on LinkedIn, please do connect to our SAT-7 profile to help us promote our recruitment campaign.

Please pray that individuals who have a heart for the MENA region and a calling to our ministry will respond.



We interview some of the key people behind the scenes who help bring SAT-7's programs to the viewers.

STAFF PROFILE GÖKHAN TALAS

What does your role within SAT-7 involve?

I am the Broadcast Manager for the SAT-7 TÜRK channel. I control the weekly schedule and decide which programs will be aired and when.

What did you do before joining SAT-7?

I worked for a few national companies in Turkey as Advertisement Director and as a Graphic Designer before coming to SAT-7 TÜRK.

What do you like about working with SAT-7?

I want to see people saved in Turkey and a spiritual awakening in the country. SAT-7 provides a huge opportunity for millions of my people to hear the Gospel.

Tell us a little about your spiritual journey so far.

I was an atheist until I found Christ 13 years ago, while reading the Bible during my military service. After leaving the army, I joined

a church in Ankara. I got married in 2004, and my wife and I began attending the Filipus Training School (an unofficial Bible college) before moving to the east of Turkey to serve as evangelists. While we were working in the city of Malatya, five extremists attacked our church office and killed three of our brothers in Christ. After the murders, my wife and I moved back to Ankara, where I studied graphic design and classical art. In 2012 we moved to Istanbul to serve with SAT-7 TÜRK.

If you could sit down with Jesus today, what would you like to ask Him?

How can you forgive all of our sins without any judgment? Is this really possible?

What is your passion outside SAT-7?

Since 2012 I've been publishing the first and only Turkish Evangelical magazine, and we'd like to continue improving this magazine.



REACHING OUT TO REFUGEES

The suffering of Sudanese families who have fled to Egypt but who do not feel welcome in their country of refuge was recently highlighted in a popular SAT-7 ARABIC women's program. *Thread and Needle's* presenters interviewed female Sudanese refugees about their experiences of discrimination and racism, which ranged from verbal abuse to physical assault.

Producer Maggie Morgan says the episode has helped uncover underlying, little-discussed issues in Egyptian society, and she regards this as a step towards healing and improved relationships between communities.

Not all of the experiences described by the interviewees were negative. For example, Natalie from South Sudan pointed out that for every Egyptian who has abused her, there is another who has defended and helped her when she was in need.

The episode also allowed Egyptians to express their feelings about the issue. One viewer, a man named Michael, called the live episode to apologise on behalf of all Egyptians for the offences that Sudanese refugees have endured.



Natalie from South Sudan was one of a number of refugees who shared their experiences with *Needle and Thread*



Middle Easterners from across the region share their thoughts in the talk show segment of *Cry Freedom*

YOUNGSTERS LEARN CHRISTIAN VALUES BY EXAMPLE

A group of young performers learn valuable biblical truths from the lives of well-known historical figures in new SAT-7 ARABIC show *Cry Freedom*.

Cry Freedom is a youth program that presents values including freedom, personal responsibility and the sanctity of life in light of biblical teaching. Each episode in the ten-part series is divided into three segments. The first segment is a drama in which a fictional theatre group researches a historical character and develops a play based on his/her life. During rehearsals, the "cast" discuss how the subject's life exemplifies a certain value. For example, in one episode the performers learn about forgiveness while re-enacting the life of Corrie Ten Boom, a Dutch Christian whose family helped many Jews escape the Holocaust.

Asking the public their thoughts

As the drama progresses, members of the public are asked for their thoughts on the theme. This is followed by a talk show segment in which four young guests debate the topic. Each episode includes participants from countries across North Africa, each speaking in a

different Arabic dialect, which helps to emphasise the universal nature of the truths being presented.

The discussions about Christian values that are opened up by *Cry Freedom* are particularly important in light of recent sociopolitical events in the Middle East and North Africa. Dramatic social change since 2011 has led people in countries such as Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Iraq and Syria to question the values they hold; *Cry Freedom* tackles these principles from a biblical perspective.

Recording in France

The discussion segments were recorded in France in June and July, while the drama and field reports will be produced in Egypt.

"We found the recording of the talk show segment on the beaches of France a bit difficult, as the weather was hot, but we really enjoyed having the young guests with us," says Farid Samir, Producer and Executive Director of SAT-7 Egypt.

The show is being produced in co-operation with Arab Focus Media and is set to be broadcast in 2016.



FORMER CHILD STAR DIRECTS BRAVE NEW FARSI-LANGUAGE PRODUCTION



The writer, producer and director of the SAT-7 PARS production *Swamp*, Omid Ahangar says: "I'm 36 years old, and I've been in the industry for 32 years."

In a bold move, SAT-7 PARS has begun making one of its most ambitious drama productions yet – and the man behind the series is an icon of Iranian film and television.

Former child star Omid Ahangar is the writer, producer and director of *Swamp*, a 13-episode social drama that considers the cost of addiction.

"It's about addiction to drugs and features two parallel stories," Omid says. "One of them focuses on a male model who battles addiction, and the other is about a female journalist. As the plot progresses, their separate lives converge."

Biggest commitment yet

With 20 major characters and more than a dozen recording locations in Cyprus, *Swamp* is one of SAT-7 PARS' biggest commitments yet.

But Omid says that his decades of experience in the industry have prepared him for the pressures of the shoot, which have even included a last-minute location change when an agreement to use a building fell through.

"I'm 36 years old, and I've been in the industry for 32 years," he says. "I was the first child actor after the revolution in Iran."

"It's normal [having to move location]. Even bigger productions have their problems. I'm very excited and happy to be working with SAT-7, and we're hoping for a really good outcome."





A child of cinema

Omid, who has lectured on drama and the arts in Iran, has an impressive one hundred awards to his name for his work in theatre and cinema.

In recent years he has worked more often as a producer than as an actor.

"I'm a child of cinema, and I don't mind which role I have in a production. I love it all," Omid says. "I've been an actor for many years now, and I feel that this experience is helpful in the field of production, but sometimes I will act as well."

A worldwide addiction story

Omid says that people all over the world are living their own stories of addiction, including in his home country of Iran, and that the message of *Swamp* is one that anybody, anywhere can relate to.

"Without being heavy-handed we will show in the story how [addiction to drugs and alcohol] can be harmful and have a negative impact on your life," he says.

"In Iran I saw how big of a problem this is, and while living in the Netherlands I also saw friends and others struggle with addiction to drugs and alcohol."

"*Swamp* is not set anywhere in particular though; it is an international story that could take place anywhere."

A mirror to the world

Often, the topic of addiction and how it can drag people down is not one that is spoken about openly. But Omid says he considers it his duty to bring the issue to light:

"As a scriptwriter I'm like a mirror to the world, so I have to reflect the problems that exist there. This could be anything from drugs and addiction to the unequal role of women in society."



It is one of the largest productions SAT-7 PARS have had both when it comes to budget but also the number of actress and people in production. The team counted 40 people.



"It is always good news and does not feel it needs to be constructed, destroyed or discredited in order to affirm itself as good news"

- Dr. Martin Accad

YOUR INVITATION TO CELEBRATE 20 YEARS OF SAT-7!

SAT-7 would like to invite you to celebrate with us as we mark 20 years of broadcasting God's love to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). You are very welcome to join us for our annual Network conference, which in 2016 will be held in Nicosia, Cyprus, from 6-8th April.

The conference's special program will look back on and celebrate how God has used SAT-7 to bring hope and the love of God into the homes of millions across the MENA over the past 20 years. We will begin this exciting event with an inside look at SAT-7's new International Office and a visit to our Limassol studios. We will share our vision for the future and how we are planning and preparing for growth and increasing impact.

Many special guests will join us to share how they have witnessed SAT-7 become a vital means of transmitting God's love. We will hear from International Council members from across the region,

former and current staff members, SAT-7 Partners and numerous friends of the ministry. SAT-7's Channel Directors will show dynamic videos and multimedia presentations about their channels' work and how SAT-7 is making a difference in their viewers' lives.

Afterwards, guests will have the option to join one of three different Vision Trips that will begin on 9th April. We have planned:

- A trip to visit the many Biblical and historical sites across Cyprus.
- Experience the wonders of ancient Cairo and our SAT-7 Studios in Egypt.
- Tour ancient sites around Lebanon and visit the new SAT-7 Studios in Beirut.



For further information, please email network@sat7.org.

To register for Network 2016, please visit www.sat7.org/network/registration2016

International Office

SAT-7, P.O. Box 26760, CY-1647 Nicosia, Cyprus
Phone: (357) 22 76 10 50
E-mail: Mail@sat7.org

European Office

P.O. Box 117, DK-6070 Christiansfeld, Denmark
Phone: (45) 40 33 66 59
E-mail: Europe@sat7.org

Other Offices

USA

usa@sat7.org

Canada

canada@sat7.org

UK

uk@sat7.org

Lebanon

lebanon@sat7.org

Egypt

egypt@sat7.org

Turkey

turkey@sat7.org

South Africa

southafrica@sat7.org

Channel Websites:

ARABIC www.sat7.com
KIDS www.sat7kids.com
TÜRK www.sat7turk.com
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SAT-7 PARS

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SAT-7 TÜRK

Turksat 4A at 42° East, 11.824 GHz Vertical; Turkey, Europe & Central Asia

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