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EIU Best Practices 2022

Art for Peace and Environment

A Case from **Benin**



APCEIU

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Cultural Organization
국제연합
교육과학문화기구

Asia-Pacific Centre of
Education for International Understanding
under the auspices of UNESCO
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APCEIU is a UNESCO Category 2 Centre established in 2000 by the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Korea and UNESCO in order to promote and develop Education for International Understanding (EIU) and Global Citizenship Education (GCED) with UNESCO Member States.

APCEIU plays a pivotal role in promoting GCED reflected in both the UNESCO Education 2030 and UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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Foreword

The Education for International Understanding (EIU)/Global Citizenship Education (GCED) Best Practices programme is one of APCEIU's efforts to share diverse experiences, practices, and approaches to bolster EIU and GCED which can inform and inspire education professionals who wish to design and implement policies, activities, and educational programmes on EIU and GCED. A total of 59 EIU Best Practices has been published and disseminated around the Asia-Pacific region and beyond since 2006. This year, Mr. Constant Odounfa's case has been included in series number 60, focusing on increasing people's awareness regarding the importance of open-mindedness, empathy as well as the effects of their bad behaviour on the environment and their own lives, calling for the necessity of change.

In the past few years, APCEIU has encouraged the participants of its capacity building programmes to share their experiences and stories of promoting EIU and GCED through these series. At the end of each training workshop organized by APCEIU, participants present their own action plans to implement EIU and GCED after returning home. This publication shows the continued commitment and endeavours of APCEIU's training alumni to carry out EIU and GCED after the completion of the workshops. In fact, Mr. Constant Odounfa's case is the outcome of the action plans established from his learning in The 3rd Youth Leadership Workshop on Global Citizenship Education.

The EIU/GCED Best Practices Series is unique in that it provides insights into how EIU/GCED is interpreted and put into practice in different contexts by those who are at the forefront of education. Although each case is set in different

locations and institutional backgrounds, others can draw practical ideas and observations and learn from the case contributors' experiences, challenges they faced, strategies used, and lessons learned while striving to overcome those challenges. Due to COVID-19 pandemic since 2020, the programme was discontinued but later resumed online and published the series in 2021 caused by the eagerness of the Centre's alumni. I hope that the EIU/GCED Best Practices will continue to serve as a useful reference for educators, policymakers and practitioners, who share a strong commitment for EIU and GCED.

Lastly, I would like to convey my deepest appreciation and congratulations to Mr. Constant Odounfa for his continuing efforts to promote EIU and GCED, and creating a synergy effect among themselves by encouraging each other and sharing ideas, which I believe contributed to the successful publication of the EIU/GCED Best Practices 2022.

October 2022



LIM Hyun Mook
Director

EIU Best Practices is...

APCEIU has been committed to the promotion of Education for International Understanding (EIU) since its inception, in line with one of the pillars of education “Learning to Live Together.” EIU is a UNESCO initiative to promote a Culture of Peace through education, which is central to UNESCO’s mission. EIU aims to foster global citizens with values, attitudes, knowledge and skill sets necessary for learning to live together and overcoming racial, cultural, and religious conflicts. In recent years, this mission has been reaffirmed by the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Education 2030. The SDG-4 and the accompanying Target 4.7^① highlights the importance of promoting Global Citizenship Education (GCED).

APCEIU launched EIU Best Practices in 2006 to encourage and support educators, scholars and activists who wish to promote EIU and GCED by collecting and sharing success stories and lessons learned in promoting EIU/GCED in different social and cultural contexts. The EIU Best Practices aim to provide practical ideas and insights on how to design and implement EIU and GCED by sharing specific examples and practices carried out by practitioners on the ground.

The programme is conducted through the following steps: 1) Call for applications: APCEIU sends announcement letters along with application forms and guidelines to the alumni of the EIU/GCED capacity-building training programmes organized by APCEIU; 2) Screening and selection: Submitted applications are reviewed by the Screening Committee, who select the three best practices; 3) Online Monitoring: The selected applicant is required to make his or her programme/project available for online monitoring. The selected applicant

EIU Best Practices is obligated to cooperate in terms of making arrangements for APCEIU's online monitoring on his/her respective country. 4) Case presentation and award ceremony: Selected applicants present their cases and receive the Global Citizenship Education Award; 5) Submission of the final reports: Selected applicants submit the final reports to APCEIU based on the guidelines; and 6) Publication and dissemination: Final reports are published and disseminated on and offline.

APCEIU encourages educators, scholars, and activists to apply and share their diverse experiences and perspectives. It is hoped that the EIU Best Practices will continue to inspire and inform practitioners, generate meaningful dialogue, and serve as useful materials for those who are committed to promote EIU and GCED and contribute to building a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world.

① Target 4.7: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

Contributor



Mr. Constant Odounfa

Youth Volunteer

Monitoring & Evaluation Expert

Benin

Mr. Constant Odounfa is a youth activist from the Republic of Benin in West Africa, and is passionate about environmental protection, peace and education. He holds a Master in Mathematics, Economics and Statistics and a Bachelor in Development Planning and Applied Economics. He is currently a Monitoring and Evaluation Expert for the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Benin, focusing on climate change, youth and women empowerment.

He is a trainer and volunteer for the One African Child Foundation for Creative Learning (OAC) where he has been actively serving for about 8 years, since 2014. As a trainer, he has the opportunity to facilitate trainings for children from different backgrounds, including children from disadvantaged communities. He also facilitated ToT (training of trainers) on subjects like self-awareness, leadership, peacebuilding, mutual understanding and environmental protection. He is a past attendee of APCEIU's 3rd Youth Leadership Workshop on GCED and has been a member of its global alumni network since 2017.

Being a grant awardee of Peace First in 2018, he implemented activities and programmes to promote and raise awareness regarding global citizenship, ESD and EIU, at country level and in the whole West Africa region, including Nigeria and Senegal. Travel, reading and cinema are his favorite distractions.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

EIU	:	Education for International Understanding
ESD	:	Education for Sustainable Development
GCED	:	Global Citizenship Education
IICBA	:	International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa
OAC	:	One African Child Foundation for Creative Learning

Acknowledgement

This achievement would not have been possible without the generous support and kind assistance of the following:

Victoria Ibiwoye, the Founder of the One African Child Foundation for Creative Learning (OAC), my home organization, for initially accepting me into this big and awesome family. Her strong commitment for the betterment of children and their access to education has been my continuous source of motivation.

The organization Peace First for its financial support without which this project could not have been implemented. In particular, Amani Al-Nsairat, Program Manager, International Partnerships at Peace First, for her invaluable advice and technical support during the design and implementation of this Art for Peace and Environment project. Her orientations have made it possible to develop a quality project to bring about change in our communities in favor of the preservation of peace, the environment and the promotion of Global Citizenship Education (GCED), Education for International Understanding (EIU) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).

Mame Omar Diop, from UNESCO's International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA), who also supported this project and gave it an echo on his organization's platforms, allowing the project to have a greater audience and reach more people.

APCEIU, for giving me the opportunity to participate in the 3rd Youth Leadership Workshop on GCED which helped me to understand the important

concepts of GCED,/EIU and ESD, and the ways to incorporate these concepts in my teaching methods.

To the partner orphanages of this project, in particular SOS Village d'Enfants, whose leaders have invested their time and availability in the project and facilitated its implementation, contributing decisively to its success.

To the team who accompanied me in the implementation of this great experience, in particular Hugues Djima, Husni Kodjo and Spero Amoussouhon. Your commitment, availability and dedication have made it possible to complete the project. I also thank the Dounia Magazine team, especially the late Moutal Abdoul, responsible for Dounia Magazine. And to everyone who has supported this work in one way or another, your efforts and support have not been wasted. I will always remain grateful.

Summary

Benin, as well as the whole West African region and many other parts of the world, face violent extremism and conflicts arising from lack of mutual understanding. These conflicts are a global problem as it constitutes a serious threat to security and put a lot of people, if not the whole world in danger.

Another big challenge affecting our world, and merely the human existence is environmental degradation, because it affects directly the earth which is our common habitat. Faced with this urgent crisis, most people paradoxically wait for the State to take actions, but do not see their own behavior as a problem, that can become part of the solution. In my community, because of some people's bad behavior, throwing solid waste into gutters for example, the whole community gets regularly flooded during rainy seasons. From this situation, the poor suffer the most, because they live in precarious habitations and are exposed to diseases resulting from dirty runoff waters.

The current project addressed these two big challenges through education and sensitization, because it all starts with people. It aimed at increasing people's awareness regarding the importance of open mindedness, empathy as well as the effects of their bad behavior on environment and their own lives, calling for the necessity of change. This has been achieved using art made by children who were trained to GCED and ESD, and on how to use art to advocate for peace and environment.

The activities planned regarding this project were implemented in a period of 3 months. The project directly reach 200 people. This number includes 80 children that participated in schools during trainings. The participants understood the

importance of being involved for their planet, as this is the only place, we all have to live in, and the actions we take today will have an impact on the children's lives tomorrow. They also understood the need to advocate for peace, as nothing can flourish in a situation of war and unrest. They see themselves as global citizens, concerned by what happens anywhere in the world because the world is home to all humanity.

Following the training and art contest, the project team went in the community to talk with the inhabitants. Then, they were able to reach 120 people, including elders, religious leaders and farmers. Each of these 120 people are expected to reach at least 4 people.

Social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter were utilized to spread awareness and disseminate valuable information. With around 2,000 followers on OAC social media pages, it reached over 1,000 people on both networks. Though this project, training and art were used as tools to raise awareness regarding environmental protection, peace, ESD and GCED. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds were trained, and they served as agents of change in their communities.

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Art for Peace and Environment

1. Introduction and Background

West Africa has been facing serious security and peace issues for many years now. Boko Haram in Nigeria, Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State branches in Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and even coastal countries such as Togo and Cote d'Ivoire, as well as the repeated political coups happening in many of these countries, are examples of the deteriorating security situation in the region. Benin is also affected by the degradation of security due to violent extremism and misunderstanding, as terrorist attacks which were feared in the Northern part of the country when we were implementing this project in 2018 have since concretized with more than 5 attacks recorded since the beginning of the year 2022. And the situation is not better in other parts of the world.

For example, the endless war between Israel and Palestine is a sad illustration of what lack of understanding and absence of dialogue can cause. This is one of the world's most enduring conflicts, beginning in the mid-20th century. In 1947, the United Nations adopted Resolution 181, known as the Partition Plan, which sought to divide the British Mandate of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states. On May 14, 1948, the State of Israel was created, sparking the first Arab-Israeli War. The war ended in 1949 with Israel's victory, but 750,000 Palestinians were displaced and the territory was divided into 3 parts: the State of Israel, the West Bank (of the Jordan River), and the Gaza Strip (Center for Preventive Action, 2022).

Over the following years, tensions rose in the region and have not stopped since, with the implication of other Arab States such as Egypt, Syria and Jordan. Most peace efforts have focused on a two-state solution, which involves the creation of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel. However, public support for a two-state solution, which used to be supported by both Israeli Jews and

Palestinians, has waned in recent years. (Cubbison, 2018; BBC, 2022)

Other examples come from the past genocide in Rwanda (based on ethnic discrimination encouraged by years of Belgium colonization which applied the dogma ‘divide and reign’) as well as the repeated terrorist attacks in the Middle East and Western States. All these conflicts are a global problem as they constitute serious threats to security and put a lot of people, if not the whole world, in danger.

Another big challenge affecting our world, and merely the human existence is environmental degradation, because it affects directly the earth which is our common habitat. According to the US National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration (NOAA), the global surface temperature for June 2022 was the sixth-highest in a 143-year record at 0.87°C (1.57°F) above the 20th century average. The ten warmest months in record have all occurred since 2010. Many cities and countries in the West are currently experiencing heat waves and many countries in Africa have been experiencing floods this year.

Faced with these crises, people wait for the States to take actions, but they need to know that their own actions and behaviours go a long way in changing the narrative. For instance, improper waste disposal remains the main reason why the community of mine is vulnerable to flooding. And poor people are usually the hardest hit by the said predicament.

Considering the afore-explained, the current program addressed these two big challenges through education and sensitization, because at OAC we believe that it all starts with people. The Art for Peace and Environment project aimed at increasing people’s awareness regarding the necessity of open mindedness, empathy as well as the effects of their bad behavior on environment and their own lives, calling for the necessity of change. This has been achieved using art made by children who were trained to GCED and ESD, and on how to use art to advocate for peace and environment.

The programme was initiated by OAC which is an NGO working to promote education for all, especially children from disadvantaged communities. OAC has a 10-year experience in the field of empowering communities on subjects such as Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), Global Citizenship Education (GCED), Education for International Understanding (EIU), community engagement, and youth leadership. The main targets are youth and children as well as community teachers. The Art for Peace and Environment project was

implemented by OAC's branch in Benin.

As the Resident Representative of OAC in Benin, I was the one who designed the programme and coordinated its implementation. I organized a meeting with partner organizations to get their support and planned the whole set of activities. It was certainly a fulfilling experience for me with many take-aways and lessons learned.

This programme benefited from the technical and financial support of Peace First, an international organization which builds on courage, compassion and collaboration to support young people in making change in the world. The project was selected as one of the best project ideas in 2018. Peace First helped the implementation and evaluation phases of the project.

To implement the project, I negotiated and established partnerships with different organizations on the field, especially orphanages, such as 'SOS Village d'Enfants', which is a center that shelters and gives education to children from diverse backgrounds including disadvantaged children.

2. Description of the Programme

2.1. Goals and Objectives

The main goal of the Art for Peace and Environment project is to contribute to peacebuilding and environmental protection using art to raise awareness. Art is a universal language, one that can be understood by anybody regardless of their origin, race or tribe. It then becomes a powerful tool to spread mutual understanding, love and open-mindedness all over the world.

The project focuses on children, recognizing their role as future leaders. We need to build their behavior regarding these global issues to make them understand that their attitude matters and it's through purposeful engagement that they will ensure a better future for themselves and the future generations.

It specifically aimed to:

- Train children on the necessity of dialogue and open-mindedness to solve conflicts;
- Raise people's awareness about the consequences of our actions; and

- Make children become agents of peace and environmental protection in their communities.

The main target groups are children aged from 6 to 18 years, especially those coming from disadvantaged communities. The project is in collaboration with orphanages since the children do not have any support from their family or parents. This is their chance to learn something new and realize themselves. They were capacitated to become the ones who raise awareness about peace and environment in their communities.

The second target group is the whole community in order to raise awareness on the subjects that are vital for their survival and for them to realize that it is not only the responsibility of the State to take actions. As one said, “If you want to see a change in the world, start by changing your own mind.” Hopefully, the people will take action for the environment and mutual understanding.

2.2. Project Activities in Detail

The project key steps are as follows:

- Get in contact with orphanages and other centers sheltering disadvantaged children.
- Organize children and give them training about GCED, ESD, Peace and Art including drawing, painting and poem writing.
- Setting up an art contest on the theme, ‘Raising awareness for peace and environmental protection’.
- Launch the contest, get children’s production and select and award the best artworks.
- Communicate broadly about those artworks, partnering with Volunteers for Environment and media.
- Evaluate the action, after implementation.

These activities were implemented following a well-defined programme, as shown below in the Project Action Plan.

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Table: The Project Action Plan

Activities	PERIOD												
	08/10 - 15/10	16/10 - 23/10	24/10 - 31/10	01/11 - 08/11	09/11 - 16/11	23/11 - 30/11	01/12 - 07/12	08/12 - 15/12	16/12 - 23/12	24/12 - 31/12			
Contact orphanages and other centers sheltering disadvantaged children													
Organize children and give them basic training about Global Citizenship Education (GCED) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)													
Train children about Art including drawing, painting and poem writing													
Launch the contest and get children's production													
Select and award the best artworks													
Communicate about the artworks using social media													

The following provides details about each activity.

A list of orphanages officially registered and working in the cities of Abomey-Calavi and Cotonou was created. Afterwards, a meeting and presentation of the project to each of the identified orphanages were conducted. Two orphanages were selected to work and implement the project with them.

Organizing children and giving them training on GCED, ESD, Peace and Art including drawing, painting and poem writing

The trainings were organized in the SOS Village d'Enfants orphanage wherein the children participated in the project. It was designed to be interactive, with a lot of art production. All children were trained on the subjects of GCED, ESD, Peace and Art, showing them how powerful art is to vehiculate mind-blowing messages and the different forms of art they could use to express themselves.

Below is a summary of the elements I developed to conduct discussions during the sessions, with a special focus on peace and art. They are added here to give a sense of how the sessions were facilitated and show the type of materials developed for each training. Each of the following points was explained and the children showed their interest by asking questions regarding each aspect. Some of them also shared their experiences of artworks that marked their memories and raised their awareness about a specific subject, producing a change on their behavior or on how they see the world now.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPED TO FACILITATE A SESSION ON HOW TO USE ART TO PROMOTE PEACE

I. OBJECTIVES OF THE SESSION

At the end of the session, participants should be able to:

- understand the meaning of peace, art and peacebuilding;
- determine the attitudes of a peacebuilder;
- understand how art can contribute to peacebuilding;
- know how to use art to promote peace; and
- make artworks that advocate for peace in their communities.

Facilitator must first understand what art is and what peacebuilding means. What does it mean to be at peace with others and oneself? How can this be achieved? What does it mean to be a peacebuilder? What should be the behavior, attitude and skills of a peacebuilder? Also, what do we mean by art or creativity?

Then, they must be able to link art (creative activities) to peace and peacebuilding. Explain how art can help pass the message of peace and build peace in and out.



▲ Graffiti, which consists of many characters ©Dmitriip/Shutterstock.com

Definitions

Definitions of Peace, Conflict and Peacebuilding are provided to children to let them have a sense of what these concepts mean regarding the topic of the session.

- Peace:

According to the International Alert organization, Peace is when people are able to resolve their conflicts without violence and can work together to improve the quality of their lives. Therefore, peace is more than just the absence of war and violence. It is a commitment to understanding, celebrating and learning from difference; a commitment not to harm, but also to nurture all individuals.

Peace is not the absence of conflict – but the ability to manage conflict constructively, as an important opportunity for change and increased

understanding. So, what is conflict?

- Conflict:

Conflict is an actual or a perceived incompatibility of behavior and goal in a relationship between two or more parties (individuals or groups). It is a dynamic process in which context, attitudes, behavior and structure are constantly changing and influencing one another (Galtung, 1969 cited by UNESCO-IICBA, 2017).

From this definition, we understand that conflict happens when there is opposition in the attitudes of two or more parties, and it can be seen as an opportunity to foster peace, dialogue and mutual understanding.

- Peacebuilding:

Peacebuilding is defined as the practice and process of building or rebuilding new relationships or transforming existing ones. The building or rebuilding process addresses justice and human rights issues, among others (UNESCO-IICBA, 2017).

We build peace through our attitude, words and behaviors toward others, and also toward ourselves.

- **Activity:** *Facilitator starts with a photo depicting a situation of war. Then ask participants:*
 - *What are the causes and consequences of such situation?*
 - *Is it happening in my community?*
 - *Is there anything I can do to change the situation?*
 - These questions will easily lead participants to explain what they understand by peace and peacebuilding.

Other situational activities that can be used to approach the subject are: picture sharing, movie time or case studies.

- **Activity:** *Picture sharing*

Objective: To motivate participants to learn more about the reality of the world by asking them to describe it.

Outcomes: Participants have reflected on their understanding of the world and

what happens when people fail to understand each other.

Materials: Several old newspapers and magazines, scissors and glue, about two meters or more of paper or cloth (the reverse of a roll of wallpaper or a couple of large sheets joined together), colored pens or markers, non-toxic colored sprays.

II. WHAT ARE THE ACTUAL CHARACTERISTICS OF A PEACEBUILDER?

Here, the aim is to draw children's attention on why it is important to take action for peace and help in solving conflicts in a peaceful way. Violent conflicts are a global issue, and children should feel concerned about what is happening everywhere in the world, as they are trained to adopt an attitude of global citizens. Moreover, conflicts happen around them and in their everyday lives, in different ways, and the session seeks to make them become agents of peace (peacebuilders) and raise awareness in their communities on the necessity to apply dialogue and mutual understanding in solving conflicts.

Facilitator may start by an experience sharing activity. Ask some volunteers to describe a situation of conflict which they experienced, and say what they did in such a situation. Some lessons can be learned and shared by all participants.

Moving forward, facilitator should ask the participants to state certain words associated with peace. Facilitator should also ask for words associated with Peacebuilding. What in your attitude can create and sustain peace with your friends, family and others?

- **Activity:** Facilitators may ask participants to write the word "Peace" in the center of a blank piece of paper and draw a circle around it. Quickly jot down all the words and phrases you associate with this word around the circle. Review your words and try some quick categorization. Which are the words that can be seen as "personal virtues" that can be adopted by someone (the peacebuilder) or as consequences of peace.

Objective: To get a clear understanding of what it takes to be a peacebuilder.

Materials: Plain paper, colored felt pens and adhesive to stick the papers on a wall or board.

The “virtues” identified from this activity are the actual attitude and characteristics that a peacebuilder should have.

UNESCO identifies five attitudes of a peacebuilder:

- Self-respect and respect for others
- Trust
- Social Responsibility
- Open-mindedness
- Tolerance.

So, your attitude is the first way to convey the message of peace and promote peace in your family and networks.

• *Activity: Painting T-shirts*

Objective: To engage the participants in an activity that will help them reflect on their identity.

Outcomes: Participants have thought about their identity and how they want to project themselves to the world. They can also create something attractive and of value that they can keep and wear.

Materials: Participants are either provided with or bring their own white T-shirts. Painting materials for painting on cloth, appropriate paint, brushes of different sizes, possibly stencils, etc. Plain paper and colored pens for drafting their design. Through this activity, participants reflect on what change they want to bring to the world and what characteristics in their attitude can help them be real agents of peace.

Adding to the attitude, there are tools available to give strength to your message and reach more people in your communities and beyond. Among these tools, art is taking an increasingly important place. How can art and creativity contribute to peacebuilding? How can participants use art to build peace and raise awareness regarding conflict solving in a peaceful way?

But first, what is art?

III. ART AND PEACEBUILDING: HOW ART CAN CONTRIBUTE TO PEACE

What is Art:

The Oxford Dictionary defines art as the expression or application of human creative skill and imagination, typically in a visual form such as painting or sculpture, producing works to be appreciated primarily for their beauty or emotional power.

An artwork can be an animation, architecture, assemblage, calligraphy, ceramics, computer, Christian or religious, conceptual, artistic design, drawing, folk, graffiti, graphic, illuminated manuscript, illustration, mosaic, painting, performance, photography, sculpture, stained glass, tapestry, video, and the list is not exhaustive.

There are many ways to express art, and someone does not necessarily have to be a good painter, singer or photographer to be an artist; each of us has a pre-ability to perform well in a certain kind of art. We just have to find out and let it blossom.

How Art can build peace

“Creating art is a way to reimagine the future, to build bridges and foster understanding, to develop empathy, to make friends, to express feelings, to build self-confidence, to learn how to be flexible and open-minded, to be exposed to different ideas and learn to listen to the views of others, to work collaboratively. These are all attributes that can help to promote peace.” Lisa Marder (2019).

Coming back to the attitudes of a peacebuilder, the facilitator should ask whether art can promote each of the values the participants identified. If they reply yes, the next question will be how art can do that.

Next, think about the advantages of art as a powerful tool to promote peace across borders, beyond the limits of language and culture.

Note: The discussions and interactions should always be fun and creative enough to engage participants. The use of games, storytelling or other means is encouraged.

Activity: The picture below can be used as an introductory material for this section. It will asked participants whether they also think that “Art knows no borders” and why they think so.

Activity: Exquisite Corpse

This is basically about creating an artwork between different people, where each of them, draws a part of the body (or it could be any other figure).

Objective: To show participants how they can build up on their differences.

Outcomes: Participants have collaborated, from different perspectives, to the same artwork and got a unique final result. They have understood that this is how the world has to be built and can benefit from the differences between the people in it.

Materials: Plain paper and felt pens, painting materials eventually. As the artwork is created, it is also like peace. It is composed of different visions and each part makes the whole. It shows that the role of each individual is key for the accomplishment of that larger and shared vision. As well, it shows that we might have different interpretations and ideas to do what we did (as a combatant might have, for example, committed acts of terror and murder, but his motivation is not always clear until we talk), yet by hearing each other version it might enrich its interpretation. It is similar to peace; peace is richer as more people participate to create it and build it.

How can participants use art to promote peace?

To answer this question, the last session gives practical ways and examples that can inspire children to take action. The objective is to make them use their talents to advocate for peace and mutual understanding.

IV. PRACTICE

Show examples of artworks promoting peace to participants.



▲ Prague, Czech Republic - The Lennon Wall since the 1980 filled with graffiti
©emka74/Shutterstock.com



▲ Tula, Tula region, Russia - Inscription "Peace to the world". An old installation on the theme of peace and war ©Vladlena M/Shutterstock.com

Activity: Ask participants

1. What they understand looking at each artwork?
2. Are there any limits of these artworks taking into account art advantages and potential?
3. What are those limits? (Critical thinking)

Thinking about the limits gives them information about what they should avoid or do better when producing their own artworks, in order to improve.

Facilitator will now organize the class to bring out an artwork. This should be something they do collaboratively.

Activity: Participants work together to produce an artwork

Organize participants in two or more groups (depending on the number) and ask them to work on a theatre sketch (for example) that promotes dialogue and mutual understanding in their communities. You may announce rewards for the best artwork, in order to increase their commitment.

Photos of the training sessions

Below are some photos taken during the training sessions as part of this project.



▲ A girl participant during the training on How to use art for environment and peace
© Dounia magazine



▲ The Project Team © Odounfa



▲ Teaching on the skills of drawing ©Dounia Magazine



▲ Some pictures during the trainings ©Dounia Magazine



▲ Some pictures during the trainings ©Dounia Magazine



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Setting up an art contest on the theme: ‘Raising awareness for peace and environmental protection’

All children who participated in the training sessions were allowed to take part in the contest. They produced amazing artworks from which the best artworks were selected. Pictures of some of these artworks are attached in the appendix of this document.

The idea of the contest is to stimulate the creating process of children making them feel they are doing something fun and at the same time something good for their community. They saw how important their capacity to bring positive change in their community when they are empowered with the right tools. Understanding through the artworks, they were doing something good for their community and the whole world was something rewarding for them.

Communicating about those artworks

With the selected artworks as tools, communication and sensitization campaign was twofold: direct discussions with people in the field and communication through media (traditional and online).

In the field, authorities gave their support to the campaign which eased the

way to discuss with their constituents. They also made the pledge to sensitize their people about the need to adopt a change in behavior for environmental protection and peacebuilding.

Partnering with traditional media who covered the training sessions helped raising awareness about the children's artworks. The use of OAC's social media platform such as Facebook and Twitter allowed the project to reach a potential of more than 1,000 people. The project got positive feedback about the whole campaign.

Evaluate the action, after implementation

The project was implemented in a period of 3 months.

It directly reached 200 people and this includes 80 children who participated in schools during trainings. With the help of local NGOs, the project has reached 120 people in the community, including elders, religious leaders and farmers. These 120 people are expected to reach at least 4 people each.

The use of social media platforms helped intensify the awareness raising campaign. Having around 2,000 followers on OAC social media pages, the project reached over 1,000 people.

An evaluation was conducted with Peace First who supported the implementation of the project. The successes and lessons learned were identified from the initiative to improve the next interventions on future projects.

3. Relevance to EIU/GCED

The project involves training the children on GCED/EIU and ESD.

According to UNESCO, GCED/EIU aims to empower learners to assume active roles to face and resolve global challenges and to become proactive contributors to a more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive and secure world. Education for global citizenship helps young people develop the core competencies which allow them to actively engage with the world, and help to make it a more just and sustainable place. It is a form of civic learning that involves students' active participation in projects that address global issues of a social, political, economic, or environmental nature (UNESCO, n.d.). One of the main goals of GCED is nurturing respect for all, building a sense of belonging to a common humanity and helping learners become responsible and active global citizens (UN, n.d.).

Like GCED, ESD as defined by UNESCO, gives learners of all ages the

knowledge, skills, values and agency to address interconnected global challenges including climate change, loss of biodiversity, unsustainable use of resources, and inequality. It empowers learners of all ages to make informed decisions and take individual and collective action to change society and care for the planet. ESD is a lifelong learning process and an integral part of quality education. It enhances the cognitive, socio-emotional and behavioral dimensions of learning and encompasses learning content and outcomes, pedagogy and the learning environment itself (UNESCO, n.d.).

The project involves a participatory approach which discussed the principles of GCED/EIU and ESD. The 80 children trained were really receptive. They understood the importance of being involved for their planet, since this is the only place we all have to live, and the actions we take today will have an impact for the future generations.

They also acknowledged the need to advocate for peace, as nothing can flourish in a situation of war and unrest. They see themselves as global citizens, concerned by what happens anywhere in the world because the world is home to all humanity.

They were trained on how to use art through poetry, drawing and painting to express themselves and raise awareness about peacebuilding and environmental protection.

The contest allowed to get their art productions. All the 80 children who participated in the contest were rewarded.

The artworks were used to organize a sensitization campaign, communicating with the population through direct meetings, social media and conventional media. The project was able to reach about 1,920 people and were able to make the people understand the importance of adopting the right behavior regarding conflict resolution and environmental protection. This was a way to communicate more broadly about GCED/EIU and instill engagement in people regarding these crucial subjects. The children also talked to their parents and friends. The campaign was a success.

4. Conclusion

4.1. Strengths and impact of the programme

- *The campaign trained children on global issues such as environment and peace, making them become agents of change in their communities.*

The children who were trained understood their essential role in building their own future and the future of the planet. There is a real change in their behavior regarding the two aspects of littering (environment) and their relationships with their friends and family (understanding).

Their teachers and educators gave very good feedback. For instance, when someone throws garbage on the ground, they usually reminded them to be mindful of how to discard a trash.

Fighting during class breaks were lessened because they understood that open-mindedness and mutual understanding were more effective in resolving problems.

Also, in their communities, seeing these children becoming examples of good behavior regarding environment and peace was something very amazing for their relatives. Their children were always ready to remind them that littering is not a good thing and that fighting was even worse.

Some parents were delighted that they have “peace and environment police children” that were always ready to bring their attention on things they did and its consequences for the planet. They asked to reproduce these trainings in other communities.

- *The artworks made by children were effective and helped the awareness campaign reach more people.*

The artworks were the main tool used during the campaign. The artworks were showed to the people to let them see how their own children understood the importance of the issues the project wanted to address. It is easy for them to understand the message and convince most of them to take the pledge that they will stop littering and always try to see things from others points of view, and try to resolve problems in a peaceful way.

- *Our Partnerships with orphanages, NGOs and media, as well as the use of social media, helped increase the impact.*

Apart from direct actions on the field, the project made full use of available media, especially social media. This helped increase the audience of the project reaching more than 1,900 people. Social media also allowed the project team to have a direct conversation with all the people who wanted to interact and understand more. Some of them become agents for the campaign, as they shared the posts and also contributed to raise the awareness in their own communities.

4.2. Limitations

- *Less involvement of local and religious authorities*

In the communities, local authorities are seen as moral references. They have the ability to convince their people regarding the good or the bad of an action. An example is during vaccination campaigns, where some communities refused to be vaccinated because a religious leader or an elder advised them not to. Therefore, they are major actors in the communities and when an intervention wants to instill a change of behavior in people, it is better to have local authorities understand the interest of that change for their community and support the message, instead of not having their approval. That is why efforts were exerted to meet as much local and religious leaders as possible.

During the whole campaign, three local authorities and elders were receptive and who really understood the message. They even showed pride to see that their children are taking action regarding the important issues. They supported the project team in many ways, easing the work in their communities and making people pay attention to what the project team had to say.

That is why project team thinks that if they were able to meet more of them they could have reached even more people and would have had a bigger impact on the community.

- *Funds were not sufficient to go on the biggest media coverage.*

A partnership with media was made who covered the trainings and awareness-raising activities. The project team wanted to go on mainstream media such as the National Channel (Office de Radiodiffusion du Bénin – ORTB). However, the amount was as big as the budget for the whole project. So, they could not work with that. This reduced the reach on traditional media.

But this was compensated the use of social media where they even had direct feedback from the audiences with people expressing their understanding and satisfaction about the campaign and asking questions to which the project team

responded in a friendly atmosphere

4.3 Suggestions

To anyone who would want to perform this programme, we would suggest to:

- Adopt a fun approach of teaching during the trainings: this is through the materials used and the attitude adopted toward children;
- Build on strong partnerships with all the stakeholders, especially children's schools (or orphanages), NGOs intervening in the community, and the media; and
- Get to meet as much local and religious leaders as possible to make sure they understand the message and help in disseminating that message between the target population. This is a real boost during the campaign on the field.

Overall, through this programme, we were able to show the power of art in raising awareness and changing the perceptions of people on subjects important for humanity, such as environment, ESD, peace and GCED. The children we trained also showed that when we draw their attention on matters that seem too global or too big for them, they are ready to take action if they understand the importance of these subjects for their future and well-being. And they are one of the most important group of persons that we need to get informed to ensure a bigger impact on our societies for a more sustainable world.

If we want to change the world, we need to change our own behavior, and the programme increased that conviction.

Appendix

Photos of the artworks



▲ Artworks made by participants in the contest © Odounfa



▲ Artworks made by participants in the contest © Odounfa



►▲ Artworks made by participants in the contest
© Odounfa







◀▲ Artworks made by participants in the contest © Odounfa



◀▶▶ Artworks made by participants in the contest © Odounfa

