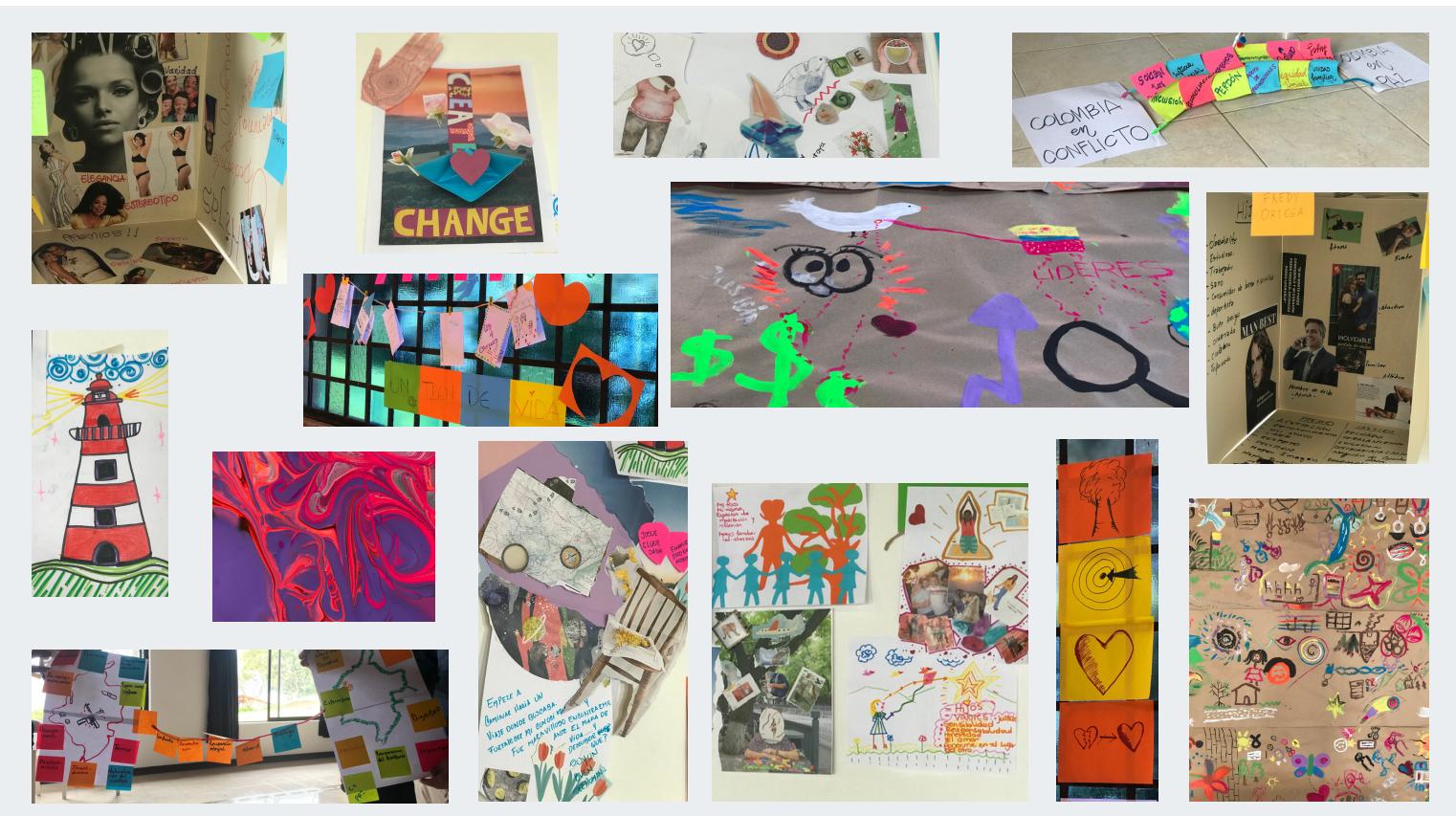


YOUTH-LED PEACE AND RECONCILIATION IN COLOMBIA: a transformational approach

Monthly newsletter about the progress of the project



WELCOME!

We are pleased to share with you the first edition of this monthly newsletter. With it, we intend to keep all the different stakeholders, that are fundamental to this project, informed. To date, and with your help, we have been monitoring the progress of the project we built together -through surveys, interviews and other tools that are part of the process of *Monitoring and Evaluation* and here are the results.

We plan to use this newsletter to share the impact of the project in different communities of our country, as well as, the work of professionals, educators and youth leaders who are making this all possible with their unrelenting efforts.

WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS EDITION?

- **Main goal of the project**
- **Components of the project**
- **Master Trainings Jul – Sep:**
Progress, impact, evaluations, summary and moments.

What are the Master Trainings?

They are workshops held to **provide professionals with tools needed to train new trainers** that will take this knowledge to **communities**.



MAIN GOAL



This project seeks to contribute to the ongoing **peace and reconciliation** process in Colombia through the **strengthening of resilience and conflict prevention capabilities** in youth and families living in vulnerable and conflict affected communities. The program is split into **three components**; all of which complement each other and the main goal.

MASTER TRAININGS July to September 2019

5 Master trainings.

Progress



Held in Medellín
(at Balcones de CDB)

To **72** Master trainers.

Coming from
21 departments of Colombia.

Belonging to
32 participating institutions.

Held during:

- Component III Focused on Families (for professionals): **July 8 to 12**.
- Component III Focused on Historical Memory (for youth): **July 8 to 12**.
- Component III Focused on Families and Historical Memory (for school professionals): **July 15 to 19**.
- Component II: **July 15 to 24**.
- Component I: **September 2 to 6**.



COMPONENTS

Between 2014 and 2018, **UNITAR**, together with **Ciudad Don Bosco (CBD)** and with the generous help of the German **Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (Ifa)**, developed a set of tools (through **three components**) designed to support youth coming from marginalized communities in Colombia to overcome past experiences lived during the conflict (2014-2016). During 2017, the goal was to help youth recognize their potential as agents of positive and peaceful change in their immediate surroundings, and, then in 2018, to contribute to reconciliation efforts.

A key aspect of the work of **UNITAR** and **CBD** in supporting the peace process has been the **empowerment approach addressed from a holistic perspective**. Interventions have been designed to offer young people, their families and communities, in addition to those who support their process (educators, teachers, social workers, psychologists), a broad variety of instruments and tools.

In order to **increase the impact** of these tools, the project seeks to **expand its territorial scope**, aiming to cover a greater number of communities who were affected by the conflict and marginalized from society.



Component I: Painting the Future

Preventing the (re-)recruitment of at-risk youth to illegal armed groups and supporting the **reintegration** of former child soldiers through the use of visual storytelling tools, participatory and experiential methodologies.



Component II: Journey of Heroes

Strengthening the capacity of young people in marginalized communities to act as **agents of positive change** in their direct environments.



Component III: Peace Perspectives

Supporting the reconciliation process in the Colombian society through storytelling and historical memory building.



Impact

For the **Monitoring and Evaluation** of the project during the **Master Training** stage, different evaluation tools were used - including interviews, conversations with participants and facilitators, participative observations during the development of the sessions, and participation in some activities. This allowed us to obtain valuable information about the **impact of the project** on those involved during this first phase, in both a personal and professional sense. Here are **some of the insights collected**:

“ What I will remember the most of this journey is that I found myself and I found those powers (I didn't know they were powers). Also, I discovered that we all have the ability to transform our environment through them.

- **Marcela Alzate Quiceno** -
Journey of Heroes
Turbo, Antioquia
Comunidad Salesiana de Currulao

“ The moment of the training when your fears are addressed, not to hurt you, but, for you to let them go and release the **hero inside you**; that is an exercise that every person on this planet needs and it will have a great impact wherever in the world it is performed.

- **Claudia Martínez Villacob** -
Journey of Heroes
San Juan del Cesar, Guajira
Asociación Scouts de Colombia

“ During this process I felt curiosity, empathy, kindness and love. I summarize the experience with the words: **listen with your heart**.

- **Alejandra Quintero Pinto** -
Peace Perspectives
Focused on Historical Memory
Medellín, Antioquia
PJS Provincia Mazzarello

“ I feel very grateful because these are wonderful and enriching encounters. I'm leaving full of renewed energy, hope and the best attitude to multiply everything that we learned.

- **Darly Andrea Acevedo** -
Painting the Future
Cúcuta, Norte de Santander
Colegio Salesiano SJB

“ From this process, I will treasure the knowledge, joy, and sharing moments with people who came from other places. Like that, the experience was enriched with a bit of everyone. On the other hand, the facilitators are very professional and most importantly, warm and kind, which allowed us to connect with one goal: the good humanity.

- **Claudia María Adarme** -
Peace Perspectives Focused on Families
and Historical Memory
Guadalupe, Santander
FMA Normal María Auxiliadora

“ The topic that caused the biggest impact in me was **forgiveness**. That is the key of everything for the communities, the families and the individuals, and we need to work around it.

- **Carmen Helena Betancur** -
Peace Perspectives Focused on Families
Pereira, Risaralda
Colegio Salesiano SJB

“ I think that **this training is very relevant at this moment in the country**, because we have been accumulating fear, not understanding other people's realities, not being empathetic and not being able to understand that there are no good or bad people here, but situations, people and pain, and that is something that hurts me.

- **Paula Forero** -
Painting the Future
Bogotá, Cundinamarca
Fundación Escuelas de Paz

“ I consider that the methodology used is very **dynamic and participative**. It incorporates ludic elements to the learning process, facilitating it for children. When the content and tools touch inner fibres and your soul, growth starts in human beings. Today, for example, I feel it is the day of my life, because of everything that has been moved in me.

- **Hernán Belalcázar** -
Peace Perspectives Focused on Families
Pasto, Nariño
Secretaría de Bienestar Social de Pasto

“ The impact that this project has on the communities starts with the recognition of their own self and the potential that they have to transforming their realities as leaders and multipliers of what they have observed in their environments.

- **José Vicente Castillo** -
Journey of Heroes
Bogotá, Cundinamarca
Corporación Juntos Construyendo Futuro

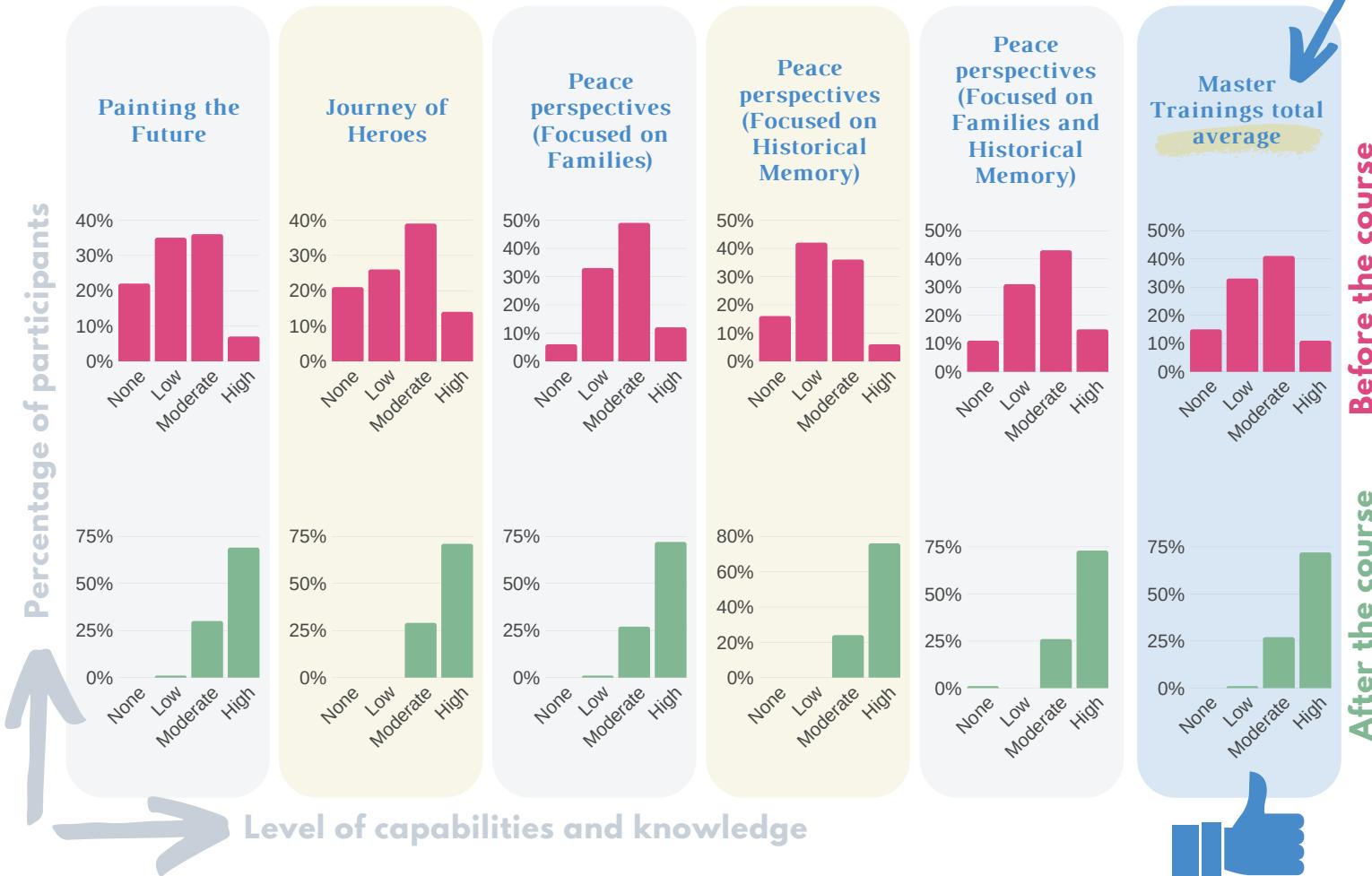


Evaluations

Quantitative analysis

At the end of the workshops, the participants answered a questionnaire designed to assess their **perception** of the acquired knowledge and their experience. The general results are as follows:

Average level of skills and knowledge of the participants in the different topics developed per component:



In relation to the satisfaction of the participants, their perception of the relevance of the course, as well as, their willingness and confidence to use what they learned, the results are:

94%

Of master trainers **strongly agree** with being satisfied with the course and the remaining 6% **agree**.

85%

Of master trainers **strongly agree** that the content of the course is very relevant for their work, the remaining 14% **agree**. 1% does not respond.

86%

Of master trainers **strongly agree** with being willing to use what they learned at work, the remaining 12% **agree**. 2% does not respond.

73%

Of master trainers **strongly agree** with feeling confident to apply the acquired knowledge in their work, the remaining 27% **agree**.



Evaluations

Qualitative analysis

About the facilitators:



The diversity of opinions expressed by the participants about the facilitators of the workshops represent the **highly positive impact** generated by them in the different training spaces. **This was possible through assisting the learning process, group cohesion, the dynamism of the conference, the understanding of the topics and compliance with the project goal.** The characteristics that stood out most about the facilitators in the evaluations are:



Summary

The topics and methodologies which were used during the **Master trainings** were very well received by the participants, who engaged with the material in depth while also doing practical activities and having fun.

The engaging and interactive nature of the tools and trainings make them great when working with diverse target audiences. This versatility means that the tools can be used effectively across the Colombia territory.

Comments and suggestions to improve the course:

Many of the participants indicated that they had no suggestions about the courses, since **they consider that the topics, methodologies, planning and logistics fulfilled their expectations.**

Another group suggested **some measures to improve the course** and mentioned the possibility of starting to incorporate those measures in their own multiplications. Here are **some of them:**

- Give greater clarity about the scope of the project and the expectations in the execution of the participants from the beginning **to make the multiplication planning more effective.**
- Involve the managers of the institutions (with their signature or something similar) **to generate greater commitment throughout the process.**
- Have more time **to enjoy** the exercises and breaks.
- Reduce the use of plastic in the coffee station and if possible, reduce paper in some exercises, **to take care of the environment.**
- Consider that the tool can be applied to other types of populations **such as people with disabilities.**

In general, comments of **appreciation and congratulations** on the workshops are registered and their relevance is constantly highlighted.

The participants expressed the value of **having personally experienced the methodologies and reflections proposed** during the training before going to work with the communities. Accordingly, they were able to manifest all kinds of **emotions and feelings** that open the path to learning and creation of **new possibilities as individuals and as a society.** At the current moment in Colombia's history, when **more leaders are needed to bring messages of peace and reconciliation to their communities**, the training and skills provided through this project **are crucial.**



Moments

