



PEACE LEADERS FORTALEZA

EVALUATION REPORT

Peace Leaders Course in Fortaleza, Brazil
23rd-27th of August 2018

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The Author's Thanks

My special thanks go to all the young Peace Leaders and the Trainers in the Leadership Course, who have given me of their time and trusted me with their thoughts, reflections, and stories. I am very grateful for your collaboration and have tried my best to include all of your inputs.

Particular thanks go to Thomas Kimath Nyagah, Evaluation Consultant, who has supported me with his advices, experience, and expertise throughout the whole process, prior the data collection to the finalization of the report. Your support has been valuable and I appreciate your time and efforts.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Peace Leaders is a leadership programme that aims at targeting young people between 18-29 years who are motivated to make a change in their communities, promoting peace and security. The targeted youths come from diverse backgrounds, working with different issues related to peace and security in their local contexts. They participate in an intensive five days' leadership course provided by the youth centre Fryshuset. This year, the training will be conducted in Latin America, the MENA-region, and Africa as a pilot project outside Sweden. Each of the three leadership trainings educate 20 youths making a total of 60 youths peace leaders to be trained during the fall of 2018.

The objectives of the leadership programme are: to empower the young Peace Leaders; to encourage them to be positive role models in their societies by promoting a "culture of peace"; to provide useful skills to the youth by spreading Fryshuset's methods for conflict prevention and peacebuilding; and to make it possible for young people to be active agents for implementing the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security.

The first Peace Leaders training took place in Fortaleza, Brazil, on the 23rd to 27th of August 2018. This report contains key findings from the Peace Leaders course and the two Training of Trainers sessions prior the course.

1.2. Methodology

A mixed method approach was adopted, making use of qualitative and quantitative data collection. The two main target groups were: a) the participants of the course, in order to examine their potential empowerment and understand the short-term impact of the training on the youths, and b) the trainers, to investigate if the Training of Trainers sessions prior to the leadership course provided the right tools for the trainers to successfully implement the Peace Leaders course as well as tracking their potential empowerment and development as trainers. The methods used were: a) two surveys for the course participants in form of a pre-assessment and post-assessment tool that they filled in prior to the course and on the completion of the course; b) daily focus group discussions with the trainers to better understand their progress, perspectives, and the on-going changes made in the course content and activities as well as one focus group discussion before and one after the course; c) unstructured interviews with the participants and one of the trainers; and d) observations throughout the whole course, inside the classroom and outside of the course, including participant observations; e) follow-up talks with some of the participants and trainers after the course.

The limitation of this report is that it can only track down the short term effects at this point, nonetheless, it provides useful indications on how the leadership course and the Training of Trainers sessions were received by the participants and the trainers, and briefly mentions some examples of projects that the participants have implemented in their local communities.

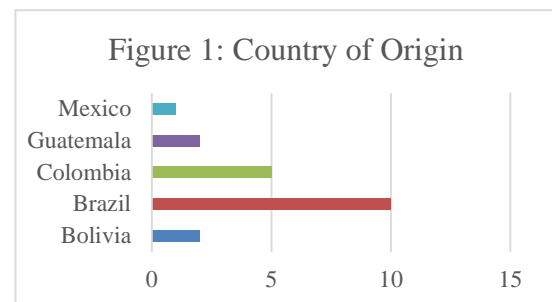
Furthermore, the participants had the opportunity to explain any needs they might have in the pre-assessment survey, but no one had anything to bring up.

2. Main Findings and Outcomes of the Trainings

In this section the main findings from the first Peace Leaders Course and the two Training of Trainers sessions will be outlined as well as giving a brief discussion of the short-term impacts of the course.

2.1. The Participants of the Course

The group of participants consisted of 12 males and 8 females coming from Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, and Mexico (See Figure 1). The age of the participants ranged from 19-26 years, with an average age of 22 years.



2.2. Expectations from the Participants

On the evening prior to the course, the participants described their expectations in the pre-assessment survey that was handed out after their first dinner together as a group. Most of the participants expressed that they wanted to learn new skills and methods for leadership and conflict management, interact and exchange ideas with youth from different countries and cultures, strengthen their networks, and improve themselves as human beings.

One female participant stated that: *“I hope that we will strengthen the bound with other countries, learn how to manage groups, help to create activities together, and [that I will be able to] bring much knowledge back to my country... not just bringing proposals”*.

Another female participant explained that *“my focus is to enrich myself as a young girl, to learn [together] with other people, to become a better version of myself, to help my community and to be a role model for good things [that] can come out from places which some people have no hope for”*.

One male participant expected that the course would *“[s]trengthen and enrich our knowledge as youths. To unite with different cultures that share similar histories, [meet] people from different cultures, [with] different languages, faiths and religions. This meeting could make us all bond in a similar sense with shared goals and dreams”*.

Another male participant made connections to his own situation in Fortaleza and stated that he wanted *“[t]o find solutions to the problems of my city, and to exchange experiences and knowledge with the youth of other countries”*.

One female participant brought up the notion of respecting each other, hoping that the course should provide tools on how *“[t]o respect each person more and accept who they are”* and also emphasized participation and leadership, wishing to *“develop new methods for leadership... [that] youth could have more opportunities to participate”*.

Finally, one male participant advised the trainers to bear in mind the importance of the cultural contexts in order for the course to be successful.

2.3. The Five days' Leadership Course

The five days' Leadership course included theoretical and practical teachings in methods such as SWOT, FIRO, Feedback, Jaharis Window, Water Lily, Norms, Black and White thinking, Active Listening, Walk and Talk, Story-telling, and SMART goals. This was combined with an extensive work on the group process, and much emphasis was put on making all the 20 participants work together as a team, practising and applying the theoretical methods and tools learned. Different games, energizers and exercises had the aim to make the participants work and collaborate together. In the end of the exercises they had to reflect upon the outcomes of what they had done, how their thinking processes and their behaviour had been and relate back to the methods and tools learned. Moreover, every day started early in the morning and ended late at night. Each participant got a reflection diary to use for the homework given at the end of each day. Furthermore, all participants had to come up with a project proposal for a small-scale project that they could implement in their local communities after the course.

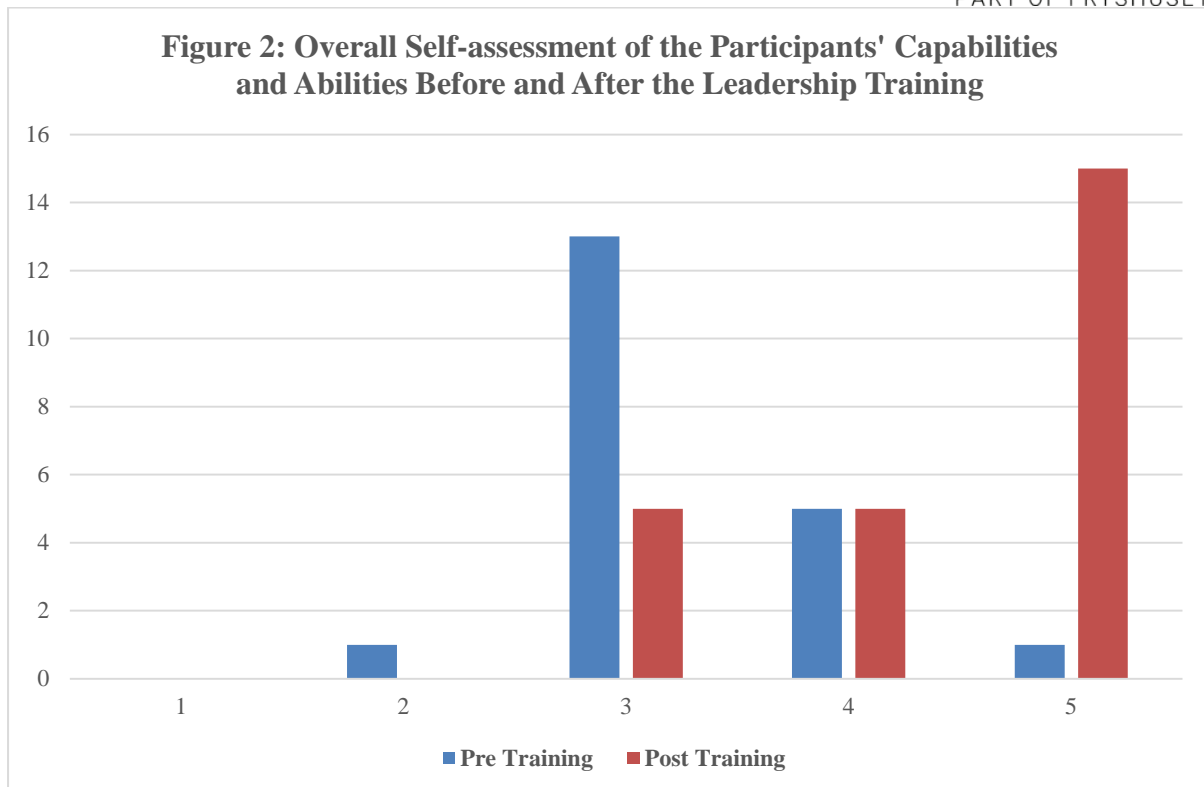
2.3.1. The Relevance of the Peace Leaders Course

"This course was beyond my expectations, a very enriching moment of learning, awakening of my own qualities and strengthening of my own potential, and all [of the] participants, on personal and social levels" (Female participant).

"I learned a lot with everyone. I will take this on for the rest of my life!" (Male participant).

One of the main objectives of the Peace Leaders course was to test Fryshuset's methods in different regions, to examine if the methods were applicable in an international context. This was one of the first times Fryshuset's methods were tried outside of Scandinavia, and the findings in this study shows positive results. As the above three quotes indicate and as one male participant stated: *"This course was one of the best experiences I have had in my life, with a lot of new learnings and thoughts for peace"*. When talking to the participants, the majority expressed both happiness and gratitude to be part of the course and stated that it had been a useful experience with much new learning.

Moreover, the self-assessment tool demonstrates that all the 20 participants were rating their own capabilities and abilities higher after the Leadership course. Before the training the participants rated their capabilities and abilities to an average of 3.58 out of 5 and after the training this number had increased to 4.51 out of 5, indicating an increase of 18.6 % during the five days training (See Figure 2).



Furthermore, the above graph indicates that the general assessment of the participants was that the training increased their capabilities. Two key areas for understanding the relevance of the course are to examine how the used methods were received by the participants and to further examine the participants' potential empowerment.

2.3.2. The Methods and Tools

"All [tools] are very feasible and highly useful. All [of them] are helping me with the performance of my role and to help others" (Female participant).

"The greatest expectation is to be able to use the course tools to change my reality. The reality of where I live!" (Male participant).

The above quotes from two participants were among many others with a similar message: that the participants believed that these methods had been useful and would change their own realities. From observations, surveys, and interviews with the participants, they all brought up the relevance of these methods both for their personal and professional lives. Many participants made connections to the different methods and how they planned to use different methods and tools when they returned to their communities. One male participant stated that after the training he had the capacity to mediate conflicts in his work team as well as helping with the communication process amongst his colleagues. Moreover, several participants

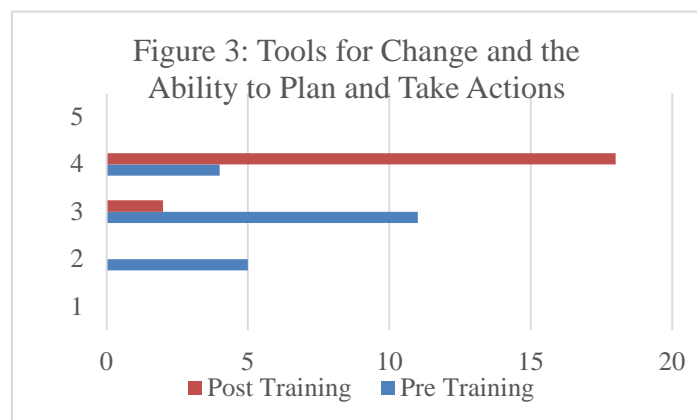
brought up the importance of the methods for doing local projects, as one female participant stated: *“I can improve my projects with the help of the given methodologies”*.

In addition, some of the participants pointed to *the way* that the trainers taught the methods, *how* they communicated, *how* they used the tools and games, and *how* they acted as leaders. Two male participants explained:

“Peace Leaders has clearly fulfilled the expectations with the methods used, how to do games, how to communicate amongst one another. They used very good methods to communicate the course”.

“The understanding of a leader as a mentor, someone who inspire to continue [the work] and facilitate the process”.

In Figure 3, we can see how the participants rated their knowledge of methods and tools for change and their abilities to therefore plan and take actions in their communities. Their rating before the course gave an average of 3.55 out of 5 and after the course 4.50, showing that their felt an increase of 19 % when it came to having tools for change.



2.3.3. Empowerment and Capabilities

“The project has made a huge change in my life and I am sure it will change the lives of many people” (Male participant).

Although this course proceeded over the limited period of five days, many statements from the participants witnessed about the empowerment they felt in the end of the training and how the course had made a change in their lives. One male participant reflected on his expectations of the course and the outcome:

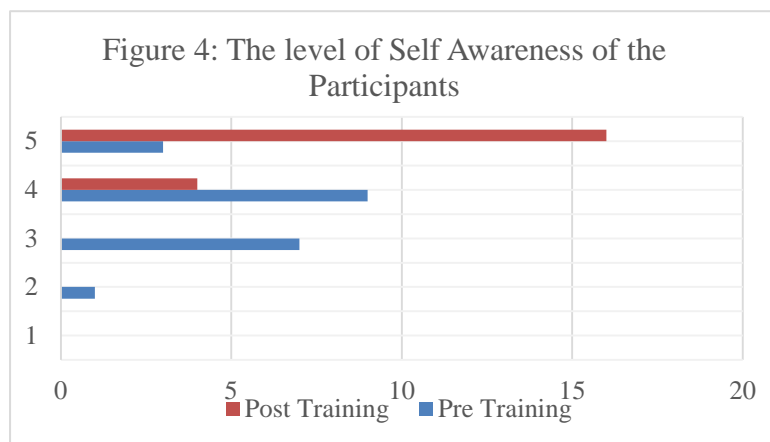
“When I arrived to Fortaleza my main expectation was to become a leader. I become both a leader and a winner: an overcomer of the obstacles that could come in my way. I also learned methods to bring back to my country and to contribute to change. .. I become a better human and I can bring good ideas to my country, the different methods.”

Another male participant pointed to his internal development during the course: *“This process filled me with hope that we can be the ones we want to be and that we can change the world if we think it is possible.”*

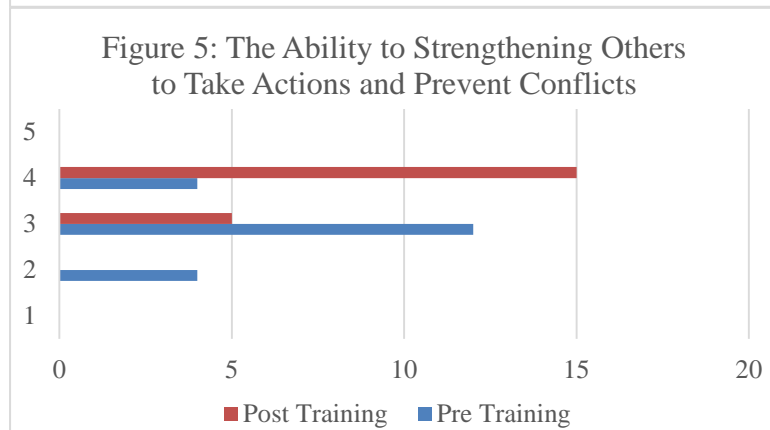
One female participant drew connections to an increased self-confidence and acknowledged the importance of the creation of a safe space, in which she felt secure to speak her mind, explaining that: *“I have learned a lot, mainly in speaking my emotions and opening up to the group”*.

Another female participant stated that although she had been a bit sceptical in the beginning, she was feeling that the course had helped her to getting to know herself and had provided her with tools to strive for her dreams: *“Thank you for giving me the opportunity to get to know myself and to facilitate the development of our dreams”*.

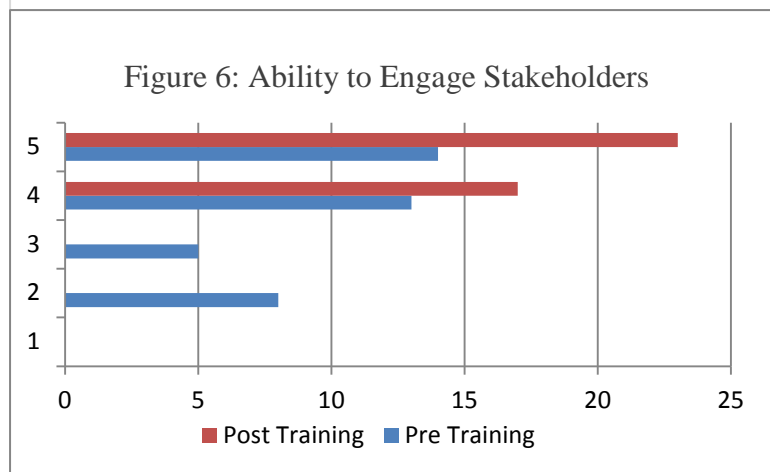
In addition, the self-assessment tool illustrates that the level of self-awareness of the participants, their perception of their own ability to encourage others to take actions and engage relevant stakeholders increased during the course, as shown below in Figures 4-6, indicating an increased level of their capabilities, and hence, an increased empowerment.



The level of Self-Awareness of the Participants, namely the way that they were thinking that they could make change in their own communities and deal with conflicts, increased with 25.2 % during the course, from an average of 3.30 out of 5 prior the training to 4.56 out of 5 after the training.



Moreover, the participants perceived that their own abilities to strengthen others to take actions, direct others and prevent conflicts between people rose from an average of 3.65 out of 5 to 4.50 out of 5 during the training. Thus, an increase by 17 %.



Finally, the abilities to know who to contact in different situations and ask supports from different stakeholders augmented by 13 %, from an average of 3.83 out of 5 to 4.48 out of 5 when rating themselves before and after the training.

2.3.4. Team building, Network and Inclusion

“I have a new family, the Peace Leaders family!” (Male participant).

The process of team-building and inclusion was something that could be noticed already in the beginning of the course, and one could see the tight bonds that the participants started to create with each other. Throughout the course they cared for each other, gave each other gifts, and respected the differences between them. After three days they started to call themselves a “Family”. One male participant explained: *“We are like brothers and sisters”*. Another female participant shared that she normally was critical to other people around her and to trainings but that she felt very happy about the group process and the course, saying that *“[t]his is the first time I feel like a subject and not an object in a group”*.

Additionally, a majority of the participants expressed that an element of the close ties between each other was the opportunity to meet other youths from across the continent with the same goal as themselves: to make a positive contribution in their communities. One male participant reflected that *“[the process was] incredible, honestly I have loved the course more than I thought, so amazing to share with other youths. It was very special”*. Another male participant said that *“[I] made many friends by heart. I got to know the history of [other] countries through the mouth of their next generation. I am immensely happy”*.

Moreover, a WhatsApp group for the participants was created in order to be able to stay in touch with each other. Since the course, they have been sharing pictures and videos and have discussions on a regular basis several times a week.

2.4. The Trainers of the Peace Leaders Course

The trainers were between 25-28 years old. Two of them were from Sweden, Fryshuset, two were from Brazil, and one from Germany. It was the first time for three of the trainers to facilitate and lead a course like this, and two of them were completely new to the task of training youths. One of the Brazilian trainers had experience from similar activities, working at a youth centre in Fortaleza, and the trainers from Fryshuset had worked with youths and group processes for many years.

2.4.1. The Process of Becoming a Trainer

Prior to the Peace Leaders course, the five trainers underwent a similar training as the participants during 2.5 intense days in May 2018 at Fryshuset in Sweden. The training was led by a former employee at Fryshuset who has worked with youths, different methods and group processes for more than a decade. The trainers learned the tools and methods and had to apply it individually as well as on their own group process. Apart from this training, the trainers had a two days’ follow-up training in Brazil in August 2018 before the Peace Leaders course, in which they went through all the methods, re-caped what they had learned and prepared the course sessions together. During this second training in Brazil, the trainers from Fryshuset took the roles of being Trainer of Trainers, helping the three new trainers to

prepare for the course. They also provided a Manual with teaching guidelines for each of the methods. In addition, from May to August 2018, the trainers had regular contact with each other and Skype meetings to prepare for the course in Fortaleza. Furthermore, throughout the five days' course in Fortaleza, the trainers met in the mornings and evenings and during the breaks to discuss the schedule and change the contents depending on the participants' and the group's progress.

2.4.2. The Trainers' Reflections on their Trainings, the Course and their Empowerment

The overall assessment of the first Training of the trainers in May was that they had learned a lot of new methods and all the trainers gave some examples on how they had used the methods, foremost on a personal level but also on a professional level since the training. One trainer stated that she had been able to solve a conflict in her apartment using the tools, another trainer had applied them at his work, which had provided more structure to their work and given useful lenses *"to be able to see the things with more clarity"*. One trainer described the training as tough since much emphasis was on self-discovery and self-growth, but also that it was *"a training that prepares you to be able to pass the knowledge on."*

Although the trainers felt that the training had provided a good basis, they meant that 2.5 days was a bit too short, and the new trainers from Brazil and Germany indicated that it did not leave enough room for their own self-reflections and to truly deepen their knowledge about the methods. Nevertheless, all of them were very excited about the second training in Brazil prior to the course, and the new trainers said that this had increased their understanding of the methods, advanced their own group process and created stronger ties amongst each other as well as building trust. They all felt prepared for the course. They explained that they would be able to back up each other, and especially the new trainers from Brazil and Germany were saying that they felt good that the two trainers from Fryshuset would be there to support them if they needed and that they would have sessions together. The main concern the trainers had prior the course was the language. This was because it would be taught in both Spanish and Portuguese. Since one of the trainers did not know much Spanish she would do it in English and it was new for two of the other trainers to teach in Spanish. Moreover, the two trainers from Brazil would translate everything as they knew both Spanish and Portuguese.

In addition, during the second training, the trainers agreed upon five goals to strive for during the course: for the participants to understand the methods; for them to develop themselves and feel empowered; for the group to be like one entity without any sub-groups; and for the participants to feel that they were part of something bigger.

In the FDG discussion after the completion of the Peace Leaders course, the trainers were very positive to the outcomes of the course, and reflected upon the five goals they had set beforehand. One trainer meant that *"the sessions were very useful and easy to understand for the participants. The participants could see how they could use the methods in their work places and in their personal lives."* Another trainer noticed that *"we created an atmosphere in which they could share their stories already after three days of the course – a safe space"* and that *"we broke the limits of language and culture. Because when we are having a common goal, there are no limits."* For one of the trainers it had been *"a massive success!"*

On an individual level the participants grew and were empowered and on a group level they were [acting] like one entity without any sub-groups". Another trainer pointed out that she felt that some of the participants had gotten very empowered by the storytelling session, since they had started to share their stories with each other and begun to realized that "I have a value, someone wants to listen to me."

Moreover, one of the new trainers reflected upon her teaching part, saying that *"we had all the instructions for the sessions in the schedule. It was just to read and practice. But the difficult part was to manage the group process and [stay attentive to] the participants".* She also brought up that *"when we have taught [the tools and methods], we have learned more ourselves"* and that this whole experience for her had been a *"fundamental personal development"*, giving her new knowledge and confidence, being *"absolutely empowering... it was a big change for me... it will make a difference in my own future"*.

Moreover, all of the trainers said that they had learned new things since all of them had tried roles that they never had had before. They emphasized their own team-building process and how strong their team spirit had been. They also expressed how important each other's support had been and how much they had trusted and relied upon each other throughout the training process. As one trainer claimed *"issues came up during the way, but we trusted each other, and could solve them"*.

Finally, one trainer reflected upon the course and said that it had been:

"Motivating and inspiring to see the network of youth happening and their change. These are tools to produce real change in social environments. Peace Leaders makes a difference." She also meant that *"in violent conflict, the tools could make people understand the perspectives of the others: comprehension and communication. Without this reflection we cannot stop the violence"*.

2.5. Peace Leaders Facilitation

"I thank you for believing in the youth, in change, in transformation" (Male participant).

The facilitation of the Training was foremost a participatory approach. The Trainers teaching methods were teaching the methods being participatory, using different exercises and a lot of reflections, all the time connecting back to the methods, and that the focus is on the group process and internal development. The trainers go through the same process as the participants prior to the course, having to adopt and implement the methods themselves in their personal and professional lives and work together as a team with their own group process. This make them not only teachers of the course content, but examples of how to apply the methods, believing in the process. Therefore they were able to adopt the course material depending on the group and its knowledge levels, and also communicate the tools in a convincing way, being sensitive and attentive to the processes of each individual as well as the whole group. This way of teaching in combination with the given tools and methods was creating a safe space and a high sense of inclusion for the participants. It also indicated a strong sense of empowerment for the participants. As noticed earlier, all the participants felt strengthened by this course in regard to their self-awareness, the knowledge of tools for

change, their abilities and capabilities to engage stakeholders and ask for help, etc. The strategy of both the Trainers and the participants going through the same process leads to a sense of empowerment of both groups and decreased the hierarchies of a teacher-student structure, with the trainers frequently stating that they were learning from the participants. Something that was striking with this course (and the Training of Trainers sessions before the course) was the empowerment and team-building that was seen not only amongst the participants, but also amongst the trainers. The trainers delivered the tools and methods in a clear way and they were working hard. They challenged themselves to try different roles and supported each other. Furthermore, the diversity of the group, the exchange of personal stories, and the language exchange between Spanish and Portuguese, all contributed to the positive outcomes of the course.

Another notion was that the course was taught in two languages, Portuguese and Spanish, which one of the trainers commented was a “weakness in the beginning and a strength in the end”, and the participants claimed that they thanks to this had learned more Spanish and Portuguese, although it had made them more tired since they had to concentrate much in the sessions.

2.6. Short-term Impact: What Have Happened after the Peace Leaders Training?

At this stage it is early to examine what long-term impact this course had on the participants and if they truly were strengthened and empowered upon return to their local communities. Nevertheless there are already some of the participants who have implemented their own projects, making use of the tools and methods provided in the training. One male participant have carried out two workshops, in Mondubim and Jangurussu, Brazil, focusing on Black and White thinking and how to decrease prejudices against one another in combination with giving lessons about make-up. Two female participants have started to do workshops in collaboration with the universities in Estrella, Brazil, talking about the rights of women. One male participant got hired at the youth centre Cuca and worked with communication projects.

In addition, one of the male participants together with one of the female trainers made a short documentary shedding light on the violent situation in Fortaleza and about the existence of the most vulnerable, following a hip-hop artist. The documentary was published on the page *De Correspondent* ([link here](#)). Several of the other participants have also started to take steps to implement their own projects, such as meeting with key persons and deciding on dates when to implement their activities.

Furthermore, one of the Brazilian trainers had a full-day workshop after the course, teaching three of the methods to more than 50 staff members and volunteers at the youth centre Cuca in Fortaleza. He spent two hours for each method and used a combination of theoretical knowledge and practical exercises. After the course he received positive feedback from some of the participants, who were finding it interesting and useful. One participant said that *“this session opened my eyes a lot in regard to our work in Cuca”* and another participant stated that she had already started to think about her Jaharis window and wanted to make use of the method.

Finally, an official Peace Leaders Facebook page ([link here](#)) was created prior to the leadership course and several posts have been made from the training. Moreover, one of the female trainers interviewed some of the participants during the course and has been making short videos and documentaries about the young participants to shed light on their stories, both giving a sense of empowerment and as a way to inspire others. Thus far, one video from the leadership course has been created ([link here](#)) that shows what the participants learned the first days of the course, as well as two short videos with one female participant from Bolivia ([link here](#)) and one male participant from Brazil ([link here](#)), giving insights in their engagement for peace and security. Besides, the training was recorded by Brazilian television, which made a short reportage from the last day of the training ([link here](#)).

3. Areas of Improvements

This was the first Leadership Course for the Peace Leaders pilot project, and therefore several areas of improvements were addressed both by the participants and the Trainers to further advance the course and its content. These areas are stated below.

Suggestions for next-coming courses:

- To continue to develop the leadership and adjust the Leadership courses based on the context and learnings from the previous trainings.
- To have context specific exercises and adopt the exercises according to cultural and religious differences. For instance, in Jordan and Kenya the exercises including physical contacts between men and women might not be comfortable for all the participants.
- Moreover, it is important to consider the timing of the training and having into consideration cultural and religious practices, such as Jumma prayer on Fridays for Muslims, and Christian Church services on Saturdays and Sundays, in order to make sure that all participants are comfortable.
- To give the participants more time to share experiences, in order for them to learn from each other, share best practices, and understand different national and local contexts as well as for the participants to have time to do their homework.
- To have highly participatory sessions, and not theoretical ones, from 6 pm to avoid that the participants are too exhausted to learn new things, but at the same time provide useful activities for the course objectives. For instance focusing on games, role plays, and short documentaries about relevant topics that could contribute to youth empowerment and inspiration. This could include reflection questions and sharing of their own experiences.
- To make a needs assessment prior the course in order to inform the Trainers on which level they should teach the sessions, as some participants thought that it had been interesting with deeper theoretical knowledge about each methods and others thought it was important to make sure that all participant understood everything clearly before moving on.

- To print out the course material for the participants or sending them the power-point presentations to use upon return to their communities.
- For the Trainers to schedule more time to interact with the participants, for instance eating lunch or dinner together in order to identify and address individual concerns, areas of clarifications and other questions.
- To have the course in maximum two languages at the same time, as the sessions with three languages were long for both the participants and the trainers.

In regard to the trainers' workload:

- The role of the trainers could be revised and specialized. All of them had multitasking roles, for instance being a trainer and a trainer of trainers at the same time.
- It would be advisable to contracting the trainers, since local trainers were doing both their normal jobs and the training as well as having the task to receive people. Therefore, it would be useful to sign a contract with the trainers' offices so they get time off during the course and do not need to work double.
- To get a local person who would help with practical and logistical matters for the trainers to be able to focus more on the course itself.

Evaluation related recommendations:

- To send out the pre-training assessment tool to participants before the training, to allow the finding to inform the content of the training preparation.
- To make a need assessment tool to examine the participants' knowledge levels prior the training.
- To remove the section in the course application form about disabilities, special needs and dietary concerns to the needs assessment tool.
- To use a pre- and post-assessment tool for the trainers to track their empowerment.

Annex 1: Some Picture from the Training and the Field-trip to Cuca.



PEACE LEADERS

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