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CLUB DE MADRID

The Shared Societies Project:
Leadership for Dialogue, Diversity and Social Cohesion

Building a world safe for difference

Replicable example of practice

Commitment VIII

Initiate a process to encourage the creation of a shared vision of society at local and national level

Suggested Approaches:

- Introduce citizens to materials that encourage them to think about their society and their place in it and the place of other identity groups. Also invite them to consider how they would want to see society in the future and the place it offers for different identity groups.
- Instigate a project in schools and other institutions for young people to think about their society and their place in it and the place of other identity groups and also invite them to reflect on a question such as "What my country means to me". This could use mediums such as art, drama, music, poetry, film, photography and story-telling.

Commitment IX

Promote respect, understanding and appreciation of cultural, religious and ethnic diversity and support local communities in exploring their identity, sharing their experiences with other identity groups and working together with those groups on common concerns.

Suggested Approaches:

- Encourage cultural activities that explore issues of concern about relationships between different identity groups.
- Initiate awareness programmes to encourage respect for difference. It should highlight the positive features of pluralism and diversity and the obligations of living in a shared society and building a shared future.
- Develop and promote the implementation of awareness programmes on the nature of racism and sectarianism and how they can be combated at an individual and group level throughout all levels of society

Fundación Arte Viva-Integrarte

Country: Spain

Background

- Since 2006 Foundation Arte Viva, a private foundation has been developing innovative projects that combine social inclusion initiatives and dynamic

learning methodologies related to art. It was originally designed for public schools to break down the walls that surround art. Then the foundation realised it could also be used to break down the walls between cultural groups.

- This is an innovative intervention model that uses education and developing art awareness as a key method for promoting knowledge, respect and integration between people from very different cultural areas.
- This program has developed two educational projects:
    - *IntegrARTE: Identities in Motion:* focused on art, photography, new technologies and the Internet as integration tools that create spaces for expression, dialogue and creativity.
    - *IntegrARTE: Our Rhythms:* based on music as the intangible heritage in all cultures, coupled with the observation, reflection and dialogue of visual art, that contributes to increased capacity for creative expression of the participants and strengthens civic values.
- These methods are used to develop the debate on cultural elements, the critical and analytical skills of participants and strengthen their civic values through dialogue, exchange of views and respect for others' opinions.
- The project saw the potential of using its methodology art and cultural heritage to enhance the integration of immigrants in the community of Madrid.

Goals

- Encourage visual awareness and confidence in expressing opinions and responses to images and sounds
- Make art and looking at art more normal and not something for other people.
- Promote integration among immigrant communities and the Spanish community.
- Educate young people for a peaceful and integrated society.
- Develop creativity through workshops that are part of "integrARTE" by encouraging more creative qualities of young people, through interaction with already established artists and creating artistic expressions that will be presented at the end of each program.
- Develop a sense of belonging of immigrants integrating into the host society, enhance the concept that others have of their country of origin and reinforce their feelings of national identity and belonging.
- Enable young participations to discover art as a tool of transmission and acquisition of knowledge, strengthening their ability to interact and exchange.

Method

- The program happens in four CEPI's (*Centros de Participación e Integración de Inmigrantes*) of the Community of Madrid, who does most of the recruitment. There was media coverage to help with recruitment.
- Two groups used photography and two used drumming. The following description is mainly related to the photography projects.
- There were about 20 young people in each group, aged from 13 to 18 years old. IntegrARTE is aimed at young teenagers approaching a period of crisis and search for identity, coupled with the uncertainties of social integration.
- It was assumed that the participants do not know anything about art.
- Sessions were 2-3 hours long. The first part of the session (1 hour) was looking at and experiencing images, then there was a short break and the second part (1 hour 45 minutes) was practical work, exploring collectively ideas on the theme of each session using digital photography and music.
- There were two facilitators for each group, one leading the first session and the other leading the second
- In the first part of the session, a photographic image was projected and the participants were invited to enjoy the image for one to two minutes.
- Then they were encouraged to talk about it. They were not expected to reach any conclusions but just to feel free to express their views about the image.
- The facilitator raised questions to encourage participation. "What do you see?" "Do others see it the same way?" "What does the title of the session mean to you?"
- The facilitator repeats what is said and reaffirms the comments. They focus first on the descriptions given and keep discussions of the feelings and responses to the image until later.
- Then the process is repeated with other images. The programme is divided into four themes, identity, diversity, common language and shared heritage which relate to the topic of integration and the images are chosen accordingly. Each theme is explored over a period of about one month
- Towards the end of the programme the participants visit an exhibition to help them think about an exhibition of their own work.
- The conclusion of the programme was celebrated with a photo exhibition and a festival, organised by the two groups themselves, which collected some of the work done by participants in the programme. The drumming groups also took part. The exhibition moved between the CEPI's.

Impact

- The program has been evaluated by the University of Alcalá de Henares using the following methods:
    - Continuous assessment of the program

- Data collection of the program through questionnaires
- of the sessions for later study
- Assessment report of the collected material

Enabling conditions

- The program has been included within the framework of inclusive interventions in intercultural contexts of the Community of Madrid. Within the range of possibilities offered from the third sector and administration, often there are not many visual or recreational activities and so this project was interesting and innovative.
- Arteviva has been developing its methodology in different settings for a few years before applying it to integration
- Exploring new and innovative methodologies not only brings freshness and novelty, but also opened the doors to different funders, public and private, which means that projects are more sustainable.
- The close relationship with schools and institutions of participants (CEPI) has been a determining factor in staying close to immigrant communities and their real needs.

Comments

- The Foundation is constantly reviewing and revising the programme. After the last year they found that the drumming did not work so well so they are concentrating on the visual work. Last year the young people were only able to use the cameras during sessions but next year they plan to give the young people cameras to use between sessions.
- The use of art as a vehicle for addressing the issue of immigration allows the development of the artistic sensibility of the participants, which acts as a distributor of information gained from their inner circle and family.

Contact / References

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http://www.arteviva.org/madrid/ing/ProyectosE.asp