

# Davis 100 Projects for Peace Final Report - Summer 2007

**Title:** Peace Building Workshops

**School:** Macalester College

**Student(s) Information:** Fiorella Ormeno Incio

Peru

Red Cross Nordic United World College 02-04

1. **Project Summary:** Describe location, timeframe, participants, other funding involved, scope of work, and goals intended.

My project proposed to organize a series of **Peace Building Workshops** in public and private schools throughout Peru. The project's aim was to reduce conflicts and violence in schools and communities through a series of conflict resolution workshops focused on racial and gender discrimination related issues for high school students and their teachers. These workshops trained and strengthened the conflict resolution abilities of these students. The workshops promoted a culture of peaceful relationships in participant schools by establishing Peace Clubs that will now expand their roles in their communities.

2. **Project Results:** Self-evaluate the project; your assessment should enumerate what goals were and were not accomplished.

This project was designed together with a team of three people from the Peruvian Association of the United World Colleges and a number of recognized specialists in the subject of discrimination. The main objectives of the project were as follows:

**Recruit a teacher from each one of the participant high schools to lead the workshop.**

We organized three workshops for the teachers. The first one aimed to help the teachers identify discrimination within themselves; specially in situations they were agents and in which others they were targets. In the second and third workshops, they identified discrimination in their classrooms and discussed personal experiences and techniques to fight against it. All the teacher participants are highly committed individuals; each with a high profile of community development and leadership that made them perfect for the sustainability of the project. Originally 25 teachers were to be recruited from 25 different schools. Because of a teacher's strike and a recommendation from the consultant, we decided to reduce the number of schools but increase the number of teachers per school. For the second session each one of the teachers brought a colleague or two, making the group larger and richer in experiences. In a context where it was very hard to get teachers involved outside of school projects this was certainly a sign of success.

**We aimed to get teachers and students to identify themselves as agents and targets of discrimination.**

One of the main objectives of these workshops was to get teachers and students alike to identify the problems that discrimination brings both to classrooms, and to the communities. The workshops provided the space for teachers and students to not only evaluate their surroundings but also to evaluate and identify themselves as agents of discrimination.

The value for them came in the exchange of experiences and projects. During the evaluation process teachers and students recognized the importance of identifying themselves not only as victims of discrimination but also as agents.

They are currently working together to compile a book that would serve other teachers to gain from their experience in the Peace Building Workshops and repeat it in their classrooms.

**We aimed to create a sustainable framework for the continuity of the project over time**

In order to achieve this goal a highly recognized expert who has edited a number of books and currently works for the Peruvian Ministry of Education advised us to work with a network of teachers who were already involved in anti-discrimination initiatives. We contacted the editor of the magazine, "Schooling" and Director of the Program Permanent Pedagogical Workshops that focuses on teacher training in rural areas and she provided us with a list of teachers who ultimately brought the Peace Building Workshops to life. As mentioned above, the enthusiasm and willingness to dedicate time to this project was admirable. Something that exemplifies the quality of this group is their ability to work as a team efficiently is the fact that they are committing extra time to the compilation of the strategy book.

### **3. Implications: What are the project's implications for peace? What are the future prospects for the project? What have you learned?**

Peace education aims not to reproduce but to transform. It consists of people "consciously striving to educate their successors not for the existing state of affairs but so as to make possible a future better humanity." (John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*) The Peace Building Workshops are a clear example of how education can make a difference. Our facilitators motivated teachers who were then able to motivate students to the point where they took action. These workshops changed these individuals' lives and now they want to share their experiences.

The book they are working on will help them expand the initiative to other schools and share it with other teachers. They have taken this project as theirs and will use their networks and new ones to make this opportunity available to others.

The teacher's motivation was certainly contagious and it led me to schedule and hold meetings with CEO's of potential sources for future funding. Currently PanAmerican Silver Mining Consortium has expressed interest in providing further funding for the project to be implemented in the communities in which they operate.

This project has reaffirmed my belief in the power of education and my commitment to becoming a teacher in the future. I will continue pursuing my Educational Studies degree at Macalester to continue making a difference and becoming a global citizen. I had the chance to meet and closely work with people whose work I have admired for a long time. I feel really privileged in that respect. I had to improve my skill of working under pressure and dealing with unexpected situations like the sudden resignation of a consultant, a teacher's strike or an earthquake.

Coordinating such a huge project has taught me a lot about what I am capable of doing and my potential to make a difference; however it has most importantly taught me about the importance of networking and working as a team. I had to learn to be flexible and to accept the ideas of others, taking into account their experience and background. Since the beginning of the summer, I have learned many things about myself and my country. This has allowed me to reconnect with my own upbringing. After having spent six years abroad I was thrilled to be able to make a contribution in my own country. This has been a truly enriching experience that I'll always be grateful of.

