

Women, Peace and Security

Welcome

To **'ARTE y PAZ'** – a project promoting peaceful cultural values

What is the Project about?

Background

The project arose as a need to work on a culture of peace, in a very conflictual and violent socio-political context. The first phase (2020 -2022) focused on a capacity building process in culture of peace through the development of artistic workshops (on topics such as culture of peace, effective communication, communication for social change, mural workshops and psychosocial workshops). The second phase that started in 2023 was oriented to the formation and the consolidation of capacities of a group of adolescents and young people who act as promoters of the culture of peace through art in all its expressions, replicating the experience in a peer-to-peer approach. Art provokes emotions, creativity, the expression of critical thoughts and attitudes in favor of a culture of and for peace.

Context

The SDC has been active in Nicaragua since 1979. The project's context is deeply marked by a machismo culture which is a most significant barrier for gender equality. The general assertion of superiority of men over women often leads to violence against women. Women are taught to see machismo as a normal part of tradition and culture, accepting the male superiority in their lives and even passing on such beliefs and norms to the future generation. In this context, and in the framework of its commitment to SDG 5, SDC where feasible, supports activities of a transformative nature to promote the rights of women and their participation in social, economic, political and cultural life as well as to involve men to ensure egalitarian gender relations. Addressing gender-based violence, family violence, and school bullying was deemed relevant to promote safe environments within family, educational, and community settings, utilizing a peace culture and gender equality approach.



Nicaragua

Summary

Theory of change

By addressing prevalent issues such as school bullying, gender-based and family violence, polarization, and facilitating artistic outlets for adolescents and youth, through activities like cultural agenda development, and mural art training, dialogue, reflection, and peace culture promotion, this, coupled with the support of key stakeholders and community leaders, is expected to lead to increased social cohesion in Estelí, Jinotega, and La Trinidad.

Overall goal

Building capacities related to the Culture of Peace and scaling up its promotion, to increase peaceful coexistence among peers, at the individual, family and community levels.

Specific objective(s)

- Culture of Peace agendas promote actions in favor of citizenship building in Estelí, Jinotega and La Trinidad.
- Culture of Peace methodology is institutionalized in schools in Estelí, Jinotega and La Trinidad.
- FUNARTE's institutional and financial sustainability strategy is strengthened.

Expected results

- Authorities and stakeholders coordinate and collaborate.
- Culture of peace promoters are trained and apply their learning.
- Youth peace proposals are supported and successfully implemented.
- Conflict sensitivity, art, and a cross-cutting gender perspective promote equality among adolescents and youth.
- Three municipalities develop and implement Peace Culture agendas and activities.

Stakeholders

Project partners

The project was implemented by Fundación de Apoyo al Arte Creador Infantil FUNARTE [FUNARTE NICARAGUA](#) | [Estelí](#) | [Facebook](#)

Project primary stakeholders

- Adolescents and youth, in particular those committed to the promotion of peace culture.
- Adolescents in public schools of three municipalities Estelí, la Trinidad and Jinotega.

Project secondary and boundary stakeholders

Communities in Estelí, La Trinidad and Jinotega.
Key authorities with relevant mandates



Some Key Reflections:

- Community involvement is essential.
- Multi-stakeholder collaboration enhances effectiveness.
- Long-term commitment is crucial.
- Education and awareness play a significant role.
- Measurable outcomes and evaluation are important.
- Develop a sustainability plan.
- Include conflict resolution training.
- Plan for engaging the community in project implementation.
- Network and share knowledge with other initiatives.

What did the project do and learn?

Design and Implementation

Key design and implementation features, included:

- The design process included consultation with children, adolescents and youth, families and community leaders. The design process was supported by SDC.
- In the current phase, the knowledge, skills and abilities of adolescents, young people and local leaders and role models were strengthened.
- The promotion of the culture of peace through art continued through peer-to-peer replication processes.
- For the replication process, the adolescents and young people used the Methodological Guide for the promotion of the culture of peace through art.
- The project integrated a growing number of female participants in each of the artistic disciplines, which has allowed them to recognize their artistic talents and enhance them.
- The project's approach of "Peace Culture" focused on gender issues from the beginning, as it emphasized the principles of equality, recognition and respect for each person as well as the right to and benefits of peaceful coexistence for all.

Challenges in implementing a culture of peace and arts project in Nicaragua include socio-political instability and economic constraints. Additionally, security concerns, cultural sensitivity, gender inequality, resource disparities, environmental factors, and the need for long-term sustainability.

Key Achievements and Good Practices

- Participating youth feel more self-confident in the various fora that they are taking part.
- They increasingly feel able to express their point of view on issues such as family, school or community.
- Through their involvement in the Culture of Peace, young women and men engaged in relationships that were based on equality and rights, mutual respect and the recognition of individual potentials and talents.
- The activities helped prevent violence and strengthened the leadership of young people, particularly of young women.
- The project's peer approach facilitated adolescents capacity to run workshops and help them support their colleagues in a variety of tasks.
- The public presentations of the artwork created a growing interest and motivated more people to participate in the project and in the reflection spaces that were created by the project.



For more on the project, and SDC Gender in LAC experiences

- <https://www.shareweb.ch/site/PGE/Gender/Pages/Toolbox/Knowledge%20sharing/Gender-experiences-from-Latin-America.aspx>



Key Lessons Learnt and Recommendations

- The use of art as a means of expression made it easier for adolescents and young people to become interested in workshops on challenging topics such as the culture of peace, gender equality, violence prevention, self-esteem and psychosocial issues.
- Linking the culture of peace approach with a systemic gender perspective created spaces for individual and collective reflection among the participants, which led to personal changes, and improvements, including in the case of adolescent girls.
- Integrating family members in the processes allowed adolescents and young people to feel accompanied and supported.
- In addition, mothers and fathers learned about their children's artistic abilities and started to promote them.
- The project's peer approach involved adolescents in leadership activities and coaching colleagues in a variety of tasks, with a view to ensure sustainability.
- Prioritizing creating safe, welcoming spaces that consider the emotions of the target group and emphasizes child and youth participation, leadership, and empowerment.
- The public presentations of the artwork motivated more people to participate in the project's experience and in the reflection spaces that were created by the project.
- For sustainable results and systemic changes, the project needs to work with rights-holders – women and men - as well as duty bearers (such as family, community leaders) and with those actors.