



Peace Education Case Studies

Armenia's Peace & Conflict Resolution Education in Schools Program

July 2019



A Network of People
Building Peace



Colophon

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Building Peace

*The **Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC)** is a member-led network of civil society organisations (CSOs) active in the field of conflict prevention and peacebuilding across the world.*

*“**Women for Development**” NGO (WFD NGO) is a women-led, grass root organization based in Gyumri, Armenia. It was founded in 1997 on the initiative of several young women full of energy and desire to improve not only their own future but also to bring positive changes into the society. Throughout the 20 years of operation, WFD has addressed issues in the field of Peace and Conflict Resolution Education, Community Development and Women’s Rights in Armenia.*



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Context

The Women for Development, NGO began their work in peace education in 2002 in response to the high rates of poverty, unemployment, socio-economic challenges, high rates of migration and the on-going [Nagorno-Karabagh conflict](#).¹ These issues were having a direct impact on the entire Armenian population, including schools. In 2019, there are still many issues facing Armenia. The school mirrors the society. The issues and conflicts existing within the society have a direct impact on the school environment. This, at times, can provoke conflicts in student-student, student-teacher and teacher-parent relations. This is why Women for Development, NGO decided to focus on educating and transferring relevant skills and knowledge to schoolchildren through peace education – skills, which they could apply in managing their daily conflicts and addressing challenges in their communities.

About

Women for Development (WFD), NGO, established in 1997 in Gyumri, Armenia, started the program, “Peace and Conflict Resolution Education in Schools” in 2002 to spread a culture of peace to children and educators in schools, colleges and universities throughout the country. As noted in their 2010 report, *Impact of Peace and Conflict Resolution Education on Students in Several Years After the Study*, the goal of teaching these concepts is to improve the quality of educational services being provided in schools, to contribute to peaceful resolution of school and community conflicts, as well as to assist in the creation of a culture of tolerance and peace among schoolchildren (Markosyan, 2010, p. 34). This program evolved in response to the United Nations Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for Children of the World (2001 – 2010) and the UN Decade for Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014). Funding was provided by the German agency Evangelischen Entwicklungsdienst (EED), an organization of German Protestant Churches, and the Dutch organization, Inter-Church Organisation for Development Cooperation (ICCO). Additional funding was provided by Bread for the World.²

Achievement Highlights (2002 – 2018)

Since 2002 WFD, working mainly with secondary schools, were able to offer the Peace and Conflict Resolution Education Program in 850 schools, train 6000 teachers in the program, and provide over 70,000 students with lessons and training.

In 2005, a Memorandum of Understanding supporting the implementation of “Peace and Conflict Resolution Education in Schools of Gyumri” was signed between WFD and the National Institute of Education (NIE) of the Republic of Armenia (RA), an organization under the Ministry

¹ Nagorno Karabakh territory currently is controlled by the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh not by Azerbaijan. The majority ethnic Armenian people want the land to belong to Armenia v. the Azeri’s. This conflict ranged from 1988 to 1994, with a further four-day armed conflict occurring in April 2016, during which, according to the U.S. Department of State, 350 people died. Numbers regarding outcomes are disputed on both sides.

² Bread for the World is a non-profit Christian organization based in the United States which urges decision makers to end hunger at home and abroad.

of Education and Science. This resulted in the integration of peace and conflict resolution education concepts and skills into State standards in secondary education in social science subjects in Armenia, as noted in the State Educational Policy of the Republic of Armenia, 2004, adopted by the government on 24 May 2004. An excerpt of the State standards, as noted in the 2007 *Peace and Conflict Resolution Education, Post-Conference Reader* (Markosyan, 2010, p. 30), states

*The goal of **cooperation abilities and skills** sub-component is that as the result of educational process each learner is able to:*

- Work in a group, make joint decisions and carry responsibility for those,*
- To learn and to teach,*
- To establish positive relations and engage in healthy competition,*
- To understand and accept both your and others' benefits,*
- To express tolerant behavior in the event of conflict situations,*
- To follow norms of ethics in the course of educational process and working relations; to respect colleagues' rights,*
- To avoid stereotypes, which contradict principles of ethics as well as such approaches,*
- To observe and comment [on] situations from others' perspectives.*

From 2005 – 2010, WFD worked with the Gyumri State Pedagogical Institute, training 50 future teachers. In addition, 100 teachers were trained through peer to peer education in peace and conflict resolution education in schools.

In 2008, the NIE of RA, under the Ministry of Education and Science, partnered with WFD to produce a methodological handbook for teachers. An updated version was produced in 2012, *Conflict Peaceful Resolution Education in Schools, Practical guide for class leading teachers' hours*.

In 2008–2009 more than 2,500 schoolchildren from 17 schools in 3 provinces participated in peace lessons once a week, taught by their classroom teachers, and organized during their regularly scheduled class time.

As one of WFD's core frameworks for providing a whole school approach includes ensuring teachers, students, parents and administrators should all have similar content knowledge and skills in peace and conflict resolution, from 2011 – 2012, 1400 teachers, 230 vice principals, 32,000 students, from 230 schools in 11 regions participated in the main course of conflict resolution education (Markosyan & Gharzaryen, 2012, p. 1, 3). As a result of these programs, physical violence was reduced by 72% and verbal conflict by 67% (p. 3).

In 2013, in a project midterm report covering the period 2011 – 2013³, which included surveys of 2,670 pupils from 32 schools and their teachers, showed that:

³ Markosyan, Gohar. (2013). *Peace Education in Schools of Armenia (2011 – 2013) Project Midterm Report, Anex, The results of the survey among 2670 pupils from 32 schools of 5 regions of Armenia*. Women for Development Non-governmental Organization, Gyumri, Armenia.

- 1) During conflicts (verbal or physical), in 70-90% of the cases, the head teacher is the one that intervenes.
- 2) Students are more likely to report their fellow students' negative behavior v. their own.
- 3) Young people were more likely to notice higher level of conflicts, both physical and verbal, than their teachers. Part of this is due to the potential perceived stigma attached to teachers who report having greater levels of conflict in their classroom and part of it is due to, just as with bullying prevention data, teachers more frequently do not see the behavior (Markosyan, 2013; Lodge, 2014).
- 4) The number of conflicts with verbal or physical negative outcomes were reduced by 62% as a result of the peace and conflict resolution training and curriculum use in the classroom (Markosyan, 2013).

In the 2015 report, *Summary of the activities carried out in schools of Armenia in frames of Peace Education project* (Markosyan) which reviewed student and teacher questionnaires as well as reports from the National Institute of Education (NIE), showed students were able to analyze their personal conflicts, applying the strategies, vocabulary, and knowledge of conflict to determine what would have been more helpful to prevent or intervene in conflict situations both in the school and in the community.

Model – Whole of School Approach

In order to create a culture of peace in schools, WFD applied a comprehensive, multi-tiered approach, integrating the concepts of peace education (see Learning Outcomes listed below) into the school culture, the pedagogy, the curriculum, and into student programming.

School Culture

The school culture level includes mission statements, policies, parent engagement, school staff professional development and training, and community engagement. Parents were involved in the learning process, invited to events, sent information about the program and courses, and invited to participate. WFD organized community events such as Peace Months during which trainings, presentations, and other community events were held over the course of the month with the theme of peace. They included administrators and other staff in the design and implementation of the program in the schools and larger community through advisories and direct consultation.

One of the challenges many programs have is dedicating time and resources to communicating or sharing what they are doing in the schools with all the key stakeholders on an on-going basis, such as with staff, parents and community members. To share the work of the Peace Centers ⁴ and other activities, WFD in partnership with the schools, hosted Peace

⁴ WFD developed Peace Centers in each of the schools they worked in, for groups of 20-25 students, ages 13-15. The students in the Peace Centers participated in trainings, round table discussions, staged conflict scenes,

Months. During Peace Months, posters were hung in the school halls highlighting the daily activities of the school Peace Center and performances and role-plays on conflict resolution were presented. Students participated in peace events both in Armenia and abroad which included essay and drawing contests organized by WFD and different international organizations (The Radiance Technique International Association, The World Peace Prayer Society, The Goi Peace Foundation, etc.). The newsletter, "Peace Bridges", was also published, raising awareness of the public in general and education professionals in particular on peace education processes (2010, p.29).

Stakeholder Engagement

Ensuring that all those who will be impacted by the program are included early is one of the keys to success for large scale institutionalization of an initiative to take place. From the country-wide level with ministries of education, to the individual school level, WFD ensures regular communication, not only with the Ministry of Education and Science staff, but also with the respective officers of the NIE.⁵ WFD also communicates regularly with school principals, vice-principals, teachers, and includes opportunities for parents to participate in events, as well as providing opportunities for parents to learn more about what their children are being taught.

Ministry of Education and Science

Before beginning the initiative, WFD met with all of the relevant departments at the Ministry of Education and Science to share how teaching the skills of conflict resolution education and peace was important for students and teachers, to share the good practices based on the research, and the resulting impact. In addition, they asked for the Ministry's input on where they saw the initiative fitting best and invited them to collaborate by sharing their expertise to ensure successful implementation. This helped address some of the concerns of the government representatives which included:

- 1) **Time:** There was a concern with how this content would be integrated into the already tight schedule for students and teachers, overloaded educational system. The proposal was made to include peace education in the list of topics taught during the class leading meetings which occur each day.
- 2) **History of Conflict:** Peace education, particularly in countries for which a recent conflict or war lingers in the memory of the living generations, can be contentious when taught. Armenia is a country surrounded by border disputes and conflict. To avoid such a context for the content, the focus was on conflict management education, which focuses less on the historical context and more on interpersonal relationships and life

and performed different role plays to learn skills. In the pilot schools the students received 41 hours of training in theory and 23 hour of practical skill building activities. They are described more in depth later in the document.

⁵ The NIE's main goal is the training and requalification of the in-service teachers.

skills for working through daily conflicts that arise and problem solving with fellow students, family members, and in the school or local community.

WFD worked to gain trust at the local level, with the local educational department and then took steps to present the project to the NIE and the Ministry of Education and Science. After the completion of the project's first phase, a report on the outcomes of the project implemented in the pilot schools, a copy of the draft educational materials, as well as a film were submitted to the local educational department for feedback and review and then, later to the NIE and the Ministry of Education and Science of Armenia. The report covered feedback from school principals, teachers, parents and school children, stories, survey results about the project efficacy, its relevance to schools and its impact. [The film](#) presented the project implementation process in the schools in detail, *"Peace and Conflict Resolution Education in Schools of Armenia" film, Part 1, 2008* and part 2.

Discussions of the possibility of integrating peace education first in the schools of one province, and then later into the schools of all the provinces in Armenia were held. Eventually, WFD managed to obtain permission from the Ministry of Education and Science and the NIE to begin the process. The first Memorandum of Understanding was signed between WFD and the NIE, within which, the NIE took the responsibility to support WFD in training teachers and reviewing educational materials. These good relations and trust resulted in Peace Education becoming a requirement in Armenia in 2015 as part of the range of topics taught during class teachers' hours in grades 5–9. As the curriculum needs to be tailored to the country's culture, requesting that the Ministry of Education and Science help review the curriculum developed and consider where it might be integrated into the current curriculum standards enhanced buy-in and ownership of the work. A sample of the curriculum handbook integrated into weekly social studies lessons and in teacher preparation, *"Conflict peaceful resolution education in schools, Practical guide for class leading teachers' hours published in 2012"* was translated into English. The handbook consists of 2 parts, 1) five main topics on conflict resolution education and peer to peer methodology, and 2) examples of class heads' hours.

Ensuring regular communication with the Ministry of Education and Science is important, periodically sending them reports about what was accomplished and the results achieved. WFD informs the Ministry about its work on Peace Education every three years through reports and individual meetings throughout the year. While ministries of education are often very busy and unable to reply, it is still important to continue to update them. It is also important to invite them to events, even if they are not always able to attend. Invite them to send a representative of the Ministry to provide a welcome at conferences, programs, or award events. WFD invited the Ministry to conferences where they presented the collaboration between the NGO and the NIE, and Ministry specialists participated in working group meetings and shared possible approaches for integrating peace education into the school system.

School Administration and Teachers

WFD started the implementation of the Peace Education project by working with the whole school administration, such as the Directors and teachers (see the sample two-day training agenda in the appendix). Every teacher should be informed about the Program and its goals. During each semester, WFD organized several meetings with school principals to discuss Peace Education Center plans, school events, and to get feedback on what was working and what needed improvement (2010, p.10). In addition, program specialists and teachers responsible for each school's PEC activities periodically checked in with school principals regarding the lessons taught, what was working well and what needed to be improved. Principals' support is critical in order to be able to allocate the time needed for teacher professional development trainings and time within the class schedule to conduct peace lessons (2010, p. 10; Markosyan 2015, p. 2). WFD's hard work with communication to key stakeholders across the country at all levels led to large scale support of the integration of these concepts.

With the goal of lobbying the importance of peace education and spreading its main ideas as well as disseminating the handbook for teachers, seminars, discussions and presentations of the handbook were organized in schools of various provinces throughout Armenia and [throughout] branches of the National Institute of Education. [Lobbying was done in both the schools and within the NIE]. In June–December 2008 presentations were organized for more than 230 teachers working in 10 project target schools as well as more than 100 teachers from 32 schools located in the capitals of Shirak, Lori and Aragatsotn provinces – Gyumri, Vanadzor and Ashtarak. All school principals received the ... “Peace Education Center Models”¹, containing useful instructions on how to establish Peace Education Centers in schools. An agreement was reached with the principals to teach the topics included in the methodological handbook during the class leading teachers' hours¹. (Markosyan, 2010, p. 34)

Parents and Caregivers

Parents are also engaged in the peace education program. Students' homework includes involving parents or caregivers in the assigned tasks. Informational handouts on the skills of conflict resolution are sent home, and parents are invited to participate in related school events (Markosyan, 2010, p. 31). These events include peace months, annual parent meetings, school performances, and peace classes held by students specifically for groups of parents. All parents at the school are informed about the curriculum and skills being taught to the children. Linkages are made for the parents between the curriculum and how the knowledge and skills can help when students become adults, as well as how they can help enhance the students' interpersonal relationships and skills needed in the workplace (Markosyan, 2010, p. 12). In addition, WFD organizes seminars on "Peaceful Parents, Peaceful Kids" for parents (Markosyan, 2010, p.16) and some of the participating schools include the parents in the evaluations to determine whether behavior is impacted at home (Markosyan 2015, p. 3).

Pedagogy

WFD integrated the concepts of peace education into teacher preparation at the university level (for pre-service teachers in psychology and pre-school teacher training, two groups at the pedagogical university) and provided professional development training for current teachers (in-service) at the schools both in the core content and in optimal methodology for modeling and delivering the lessons. The pre-service teachers in psychology and pre-school education then trained other fellow university students through peer education, using a cascade approach. While this is a start, based on the best practices in training delivery for capacity building of educators in the classroom, it is optimal to develop master trainers who can then provide on-going support over a period of time to new trainees (UNESCO, 2014). Additional information on this good practice methodology can be located in the 2014 UNESCO Manual, *Education for Safety, Resilience and Social Cohesion, Teacher Development, How Will We Support and Train Teachers*.

Adequate staff development is critical to achieving the type of behavioral changes desired, regardless of the curriculum. Educators must not only know the theory and content, but also be able to model the skills in the classroom. When the teachers are able to model the skills, the students are better able to learn and model the skills taught in the classroom as noted by WFD.

Principals noticed positive changes in teacher-pupil relations during the implementation of the project. They [the students] became more tolerant and while resolving everyday conflicts they try to apply certain skills (Markosyan, 2010, p. 11). Teachers also notice changes in their own behaviour by mentioning that they became more patient, tolerant, calm and that it is easier for them to understand how to act in conflict situations. (Markosyan, 2010, p. 12)

WFD included in their teacher training, not only core skills of conflict management and peacebuilding, but also the methodology associated with teaching peace and conflict resolution. They offered a training for all teachers who would be teaching the peace and conflict resolution lessons, in the “Application of Collaborative Teaching Methodology in the Process of Peace and Conflict Resolution Education” (Markosyan, 2010, p. 31). This training-seminar, offered in collaboration with specialists from the NIE of RA Ministry of Education and Science, included emphasizing that teachers take into consideration students’ suggestions (Markosyan, 2010). Other concepts included in the training were how to work with parents to increase their knowledge and skills in conflict resolution. The effectiveness of the delivery of the lessons depends on the teacher’s willingness to learn and apply the core conflict resolution skills and on the school administration’s willingness to advocate for this methodology to be used and to monitor its application (Markosyan, 2010, p. 13).

Curriculum

Textbooks were created to be used to teach the core concepts and the core concepts were also integrated nationally into social studies standards.

Conflict Concepts

WFD worked simultaneously at the country-wide level as well as at the individual school level in order to integrate the core theory, skills, and abilities into the learning for not only the students, but also the educators. The skills and concepts taught included:

Conflict Management
Definition of Conflicts and their Causes Conflict Escalation Conflict Management Possible Outcomes of Conflict Conflict Analysis and Mapping Skills for Peaceful Conflict Resolution Ways of Peaceful Conflict Resolution Negotiation Mediation (Markosyan, 2010, p. 25)
Peace Lessons
Culture of Peace Health, Personal Hygiene and Conflict Unemployment, Social Problems and Conflicts Peace and Human Rights Gender and Conflict The Role of Church in Peacebuilding Leadership Mass Media and Conflicts United Nations European Union and Council of Europe Red Cross (Markosyan, 2010, p. 26)

Each class that WFD works with has a teacher who is responsible for student conduct and learning progress. This teacher has one class period per week called "a class leading teaching hour". Peace Education is a required component of those weekly lessons (2010, p. 11). There are five obligatory lessons, 1) What is conflict and conflict escalation, 2) Behavior styles in conflict situations, 3) Conflict resolution skills, 4) Conflict resolution principles; and 5) Conflict resolution methods. Since 2014, the teacher handbook includes 14 lessons. In previous years 41 lessons were offered in 2008 and the number of lessons was reduced to 34 in 2012. The number of lessons were reduced to 14, as that was the number determined effective in

ensuring school children mastered the basic skills of conflict management. WFD also found that it is much more likely that teachers will complete all of them, when the number of lessons is more manageable. Class leading teachers are also able to select several topics on peace and conflict studies from the handbook of lessons created by WFD, and to teach those in their corresponding classes (Markosyan, 2010, p. 34). In addition to the class leading teaching hour, additional lessons are taught in classes through round table discussions with special guests such as lawyers, doctors, economists and journalists and talks during which the discussion was based on children's interests (Markosyan, 2010, p. 26).

The handbook, full of age appropriate lessons, has received positive responses from teachers and students alike as noted in the evaluations (Markosyan, 2010, p. 13). In order to address the difficulty of maintaining a child's connection with school and to increase interest in the subject being taught, WFD has followed good practices on curriculum design in education, linking the lessons to real life scenarios the students' may face (Markosyan, 2010, p. 19). The handbook is written in easily accessible language, and the topics and questions are relevant to the students' day to day lives. Children demonstrated great interest in the lessons that were provided.

At the country-wide level, the most important result impacting curriculum arose through cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science, leading to the integration of the main ideas of peace and conflict resolution education into the educational block of social science subjects. This requirement means that high school and middle school pupils of secondary schools will acquire knowledge on the causes of conflicts, will learn the skills of how to avoid, manage or resolve conflicts, and will be able to understand and respect others values (Markosyan, 2010, p. 32).

Student Programming

Schools instituted peace centers, held peace contests and some schools encouraged children to correspond with foreign pen-pals. WFD developed Peace Centers in each of the schools they worked in, for groups of 20-25 students, ages 13-15 (Markosyan, 2010, p. 27). The students in the Peace Centers participated in training sessions, round table discussions, staged conflict scenes, and performed different role plays to develop skills. In the pilot schools the students received 41 hours of training in theory and 23 hours of practical skill building activities. A select group of four to five students per school served as trainers, peer educators. The peer educators made it possible for trained pupils to transfer their knowledge and skills for the peaceful resolution of conflicts, enhancing their own understanding of the material and skills. The peer to peer educators trained students not only in their own schools, but also in neighboring schools using a manual developed by WFD (Markosyan, 2010, p. 28).

Challenges

While WFD have successfully expanded the use and integration of peace education and conflict resolution concepts in the schools, challenges exist.

The primary challenges encountered in implementing the Peace Education project from 2002 – 2018 include:

1. Adapting Peace Education to the Cultural Context

Peace education was a completely new area for Armenia and it was necessary to start the process by training specialists, studying how other countries were able to build the capacity in peace education, and culturally and linguistically tailoring the resources and training for schools in Armenia.

WFD began by researching:

- What type of similar projects existed in various countries?
- What results and achievements were already registered by organizations working in peace education?
- What were the reactions of the state institutions and peace education specialists?
- What kind of challenges and difficulties might be encountered in the process of including peace education in the school curriculum?

To address this challenge, the WFD peace education team attended trainings including: a) CONTACT Peace Building and Conflict Transformation International School in the USA, which still supports the training of their young staff members, and b) “Human Rights and Peace Education in Europe” teacher training course which had a major impact on the core team’s knowledge and understanding of capacity building. Later, based on the international experience and gained skills, WFD created the first training course entitled “Peace and Conflict Resolution Education in School”, designed and piloted in several schools of Gyumri, Armenia.

2. Securing Support from Local and National Education Organizations

The second main challenge was obtaining permission from the Ministry of Education and Science to implement peace education in schools. In Armenia, in order to make any changes in the schools’ educational system, to organize teacher trainings, as well as to undertake any type of activity in schools, it is necessary to get special permission from the Ministry of Education and Science. Any changes related to the school programs cannot be implemented without permission from the NIE. Gaining this permission was critical for a local non-governmental organization to be able to implement and embed this work. Continuing relationships with key personnel in the national education agencies is a priority. This is achieved through on-going communication, requests for collaboration on related projects, by sharing the results of regular evaluations, and through requests for feedback and advice.

3. Parent/Community Perceptions of Peace Education

While the vast majority of parents see the benefits of their children using these skills, there is still a misunderstanding by some parents in the country, of the concepts of conflict resolution and peacebuilding. For example, one father expressed his concern that “ a child should learn to be aggressive since early age so that ‘he is not a loser in [his] adult life’ “ (Markosyan, 2010, p. 17).

The father's perception was that teaching these skills would make his son weaker. This example helps support the need for the teaching to occur not only in the classroom, but also in the community. In response to similar parents' concerns, WFD explains that peaceful resolution of the conflict does not imply retreat or defeat and WFD offers opportunities for students to participate in similar workshops and trainings that the students participate in to learn the background of what and why students are being taught certain behavioral responses. Peaceful resolution means finding an acceptable solution for both parties. They help parents understand that aggression will further lead to new conflicts or escalate the present one and that aggressive responses by young children can lead to behavioral problems in the future.

4. Applying Critical Thinking, Negotiation Skills, and Human Rights in the Classroom

Successful teaching of peace education lessons depends on the personal understanding and buy-in from teachers of the core concepts, particularly a clear understanding of power dynamics, power "with" students instead of "over" them. The pedagogy of conflict management as a classroom management tool includes the use of collaborative teaching approaches, such as empowering students with critical thinking skills, including asking open-ended questions (not giving them a final answer at the end), and helping students to better know and understand their own rights. Sometimes when students attempt to protect their own rights, conflicts with adults occur. For example, pupils use their skills to "oppose" requests of teachers or parents, for example to abide by the classroom or school rules. As a result, WFD pay special attention in the training of teachers to help explain this concept and the parameters for students. During the teacher training, they highlight the importance of not only teaching pupils how to protect their own rights, but also to pay attention to fulfilling their own responsibilities. This helps to peacefully manage the conflicts that occur as a result of addressing the protection of human rights.

Assessment and Monitoring

A visible monitoring and evaluation strategy is important. WFD has different monitoring tools for students, teachers, and the school administration. The NIE and WFD collect the data twice a year and then analyze the information gathered. The target group, principals and class lead teachers, are familiar with these tools and submit regular reports as to the effectiveness of the implementation of the lessons and training. WFD also stays in close communication with the NIE, updating the schools' progress several times per year. WFD includes, as part of their large-scale approach, on-going and continuous feedback to monitor and improve the work they are doing. Some of the outcomes are listed below. For additional details, please download their evaluations, available in English and Armenian in the appendix.

Educators in the School's report:

- Positive changes in pupils' behaviour as a result of the lessons, especially in interpersonal relations (Markosyan, 2010, p. 13; Markosyan & Ghazaryan, 2012, p. 3-4).

- Students who were less motivated to be in school, started to participate in class discussions, school life in general, and their grades improved (Markosyan, 2010, p. 17; Markosyan & Ghazaryan, 2012, p. 3-4).

With the goal of lobbying for the importance of peace education and spreading its main ideas as well as disseminating the handbook for teachers, seminars, discussions and presentations of the handbook were organized in schools of various provinces throughout Armenia and [throughout] branches of the National Institute of Education. In June–December 2008 presentations were organized for more than 230 teachers working in 10 project target schools as well as more than 100 teachers from 32 schools located in the capitals of Shirak, Lori and Aragatsotn provinces – Gyumri, Vanadzor and Ashtarak. All school principals received the ... “Peace Education Center Models”, containing useful instructions on how to establish Peace Education Centers in schools. An agreement was reached with the principals to teach the topics included in the methodological handbook during the class leading teachers' hours. (Markosyan, 2010, p. 34)

Parents’/Caregivers’ report:

- Positive changes in the behaviour of their children (Markosyan, 2010, p. 17; Markosyan & Ghazaryan 2012, p. 3; Markosyan, 2015, p. 3).

Many parents mention that, unlike other classes, peace lessons are always impatiently awaited by their children ... because they [the students] have the opportunity to actively participate and express their opinions on various interesting topics. As ...[a] result, children are trying to act as mediators in... situations when family conflicts occur; they share their knowledge on conflict resolution with their brothers and sisters; they became more tolerant, patient, self-confident and independent. It is a great pleasure to observe how a child who used to have issues in terms of interacting with his/her peers is becoming more organized [their social skills and behavior improves, their grades improve] and how his/her parents notice the child's better grades as well as the[ir] general positive change towards the[ir] environment. (Markosyan, 2010, p. 17)

The Future

In 2017, WFD created the Peacebuilders' Regional Platform (PRP) which includes five organizations from Georgia, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan that are active in the field of peacebuilding. The goal of the PRP is to support the process of ethnic, community and inter – state conflict management through capacity building and the exchange of experience of non-governmental organizations in South Caucasus and Central Asia. The second meeting of the

PRP took place in Armenia in April of 2018. During this meeting, the members of the Platform shared their experiences and approaches to peacebuilding. WFD shared its experience in Peace Education. By the end of 2019 PRP member countries from Georgia or Kyrgyzstan will implement a pilot project by conducting trainings in one or several schools using the handbook and approaches designed and applied by WFD. The results will later be presented to the Ministry of Education and Science or to the Department of Education to help advocate for the integration of Peace and Conflict Resolution education into the school curriculum. WFD received a project proposal as of July 2018 from a Georgian organization which will include training 5 teachers in a school in Kutaisi, Georgia. The teachers will be trained with the methodology developed by the Armenian non-governmental organization “Women for Development”, with the goal of expanding the peace education school-wide at a later date. WFD NGO’s Peace Education experience will be localized by the partners in several Georgian and Kyrgyz schools.

Appendix

Citations

Batton, J., Alama A., Sinclair, M. (2014). *Education for Safety, Resilience and Social Cohesion, Teacher Development, How Will We Support and Train Teachers?* Bethke, L. & Bernard, J.(Ed.s). Paris: UNESCO, International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP)

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Sample Documents

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- Markosyan, Gohar. (2013). [Peace Education in Schools of Armenia \(2011 – 2013\) Project Midterm Report](#). Women for Development Non-governmental Organization, Gyumri, Armenia.
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Two-Day Training Agenda for Teachers

- [Peace and Conflict Management in Schools of Armenia Project, 2001-2013, Schedule of the trainings for the vice-principles and class leading teachers in secondary schools of Armenia](#) (pdf)

Letters from WFD, NGO to Ministry of Education and Science

- Markosyan, Gohar. [“Request for support to include conflict resolution education in all schools in Armenia.”](#) Received by Mr. Armen Ashotyan, Republic of Armenia, Minister of Education and Science, 19 December 2012.
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