

COLOMBIA

Conflict Resolution Strategies to Reduce Conflict Inside and Outside the Classroom

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1. Introduction

The Colombian team, batch 17 worked with preschool and elementary school teachers of two schools in Bogotá, Colombia; namely José Asunción Silva and Aquileo Parra schools. Teachers' multiple tasks in Colombia involve not only dealing with teaching and learning- related issues but also coping with socio-cultural aspects that affect our children. In particular, conflict inside and outside the classroom is one issue that demands special attention from teachers. Therefore, our team decided to train teachers in conflict resolution strategies inside and outside the classroom; accordingly, teachers would become skilled at dealing with conflict with their pupils. In turn, pupils themselves would benefit by learning how to deal with conflictive situations by themselves in a peaceful way.

The idea of dealing with conflict resolution strategies started when we met for the first time to talk about our schools' contexts and issues in August, 2012. In this meeting, Carlos Galán, principal of Aquileo Parra School, told us about his experience in promoting citizenship competencies in both the teachers and the pupils of his former school, and his beginning steps at Aquileo Parra School. Yanneth Consuelo Sánchez also manifested that at her school, José Asunción Silva, there had

been efforts to support secondary school teachers with the issue of bullying. We found that both schools' interests and contexts shared similarities and thought of a way of integrating them into one project, and that our primary concern should be the younger children of both schools. The idea then materialized in Sweden during the second phase of the course, more precisely after the activity of profiling a typical child of our country. With the aid of our mentor the idea centered its attention on training preschool and elementary school teachers with conflict resolution strategies with the aim of reducing conflict inside and outside the classroom.

Bearing in mind the concerns stated above, the main purpose is to train teachers in the proper use of some conflict resolution strategies that will help teachers and students focus their attention on the learning processes rather than on the problems that students face every single day. We also want to stimulate the learning and application of social values in order to contribute in the development of citizenship which has been undervalued in the last years due, possibly, to the internal war Colombian people have been suffering. We consider that all these efforts will reduce the problems teachers and students face inside and outside the classrooms.

This final report contains a frame of reference that explains the concept of conflict and illustrates some conflict resolution strategies we planned to work on. It also describes the country and regional strategies related to our project from the Ministry of Education as well as the relation with the Child Rights Convention (CRC) network present in Colombia. Next, we discuss the project's purpose, aim, and methodology. We also present the results of the work we developed, some reflections and discussions we did as a team, what we plan to do further, and finally the list of references that support our project.

2. Frame of Reference

We begin this frame of reference by defining conflict and conflict resolution strategies. Next, we relate our project for change with the Child Rights Convention (CRC henceforth). After that, we mention the country and regional strategies by the Ministry of Education; namely the strategy towards citizenship competence (2003/2004), and the Children Law (2006). Finally, we review some Colombia CRC network projects for change that tackle the issue of conflict and teacher development.

Conflict

Conflict may involve fighting, war and post-war situations. It may also include a difference in opinion, perspective or personality. Likewise, individuals may feel they are in a conflict situation, when others feel that they are just discussing opposing views. Conflict at schools can be perceived by children when they feel that something is unfair, something that they value has been taken or broken, someone is being mean, or they are not receiving a fair share. Other forms of conflict at school comprise discrimination and understated power relations existing among girls and boys of various ages, capabilities and race, class, caste, religion or income (Akerlund, 2005, Feinstein, Giertsen & O’Kane, 2010). Such forms of conflict can be identified in our context as bullying, disrespect, discrimination, swearing, and even physical abuse.

Conflict Resolution Strategies

Scholars and researches advise that conflict needs to be resolved; otherwise, unresolved conflict can lead to anger and additional unresolved conflicts. There are long-term strategies that teachers can use inside and outside the classroom to help pupils resolve a conflict. Besides, there are other strategies that teachers can apply to avoid these difficult situations. In our project we started working with The Clouds through the Theory of Constraints (TOC) in education (Goldratt, 1999) that includes the use of a symbol which helps to ameliorate the damage, the Godmothers and Godfathers Plan, the Forum Theater (Falmer, 2013), the Active Listening (Rogers & Farson, 1987), and the Dilemmas (Kohlberg, 1984). All these strategies will be explained forward.

The Project for Change and CRC

The present project for change deals with Protection and Participation. Protection, on the one hand, involves the CRC articles 2, 3 and 28. Article 2 addresses non-discrimination of any kind (race, color, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status). Article 3 states that the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration and that the institutions, services and facilities responsible for the care or protection of children shall conform with the standards established by competent authorities, particularly in the areas of safety, health, in the number and suitability of their staff, as well as competent supervision. Article 28 establishes the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of

equal opportunity. On the other hand, participation encompasses Article 12, which assures that children are capable of forming their own views, so they have the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting them, and that such views should be given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity.

We also support our project on UNICEF'S Child Friendly Schools, which calls for schools as protective environments. This means that everybody involved in the school has to make sure children learn in safe and protective environments. Our project will directly address the aspect of responsiveness to the emotional, psychological and even physical well-being of children. Attig & Hopkins (2006) assert that we need to protect children "from verbal and emotional abuse and the trauma of sexual harassment, racial discrimination, ethnic prejudice or intrusiveness by teachers and peers" (as cited in Child Friendly School Manual, UNICEF, p. 131). The manual also claims that "Schools that are child-friendly must protect students from the psychological harm that can result from various kinds of punishment perpetrated by peers or by teachers, including verbal abuse, name-calling and other forms of humiliation. School authorities must also appreciate that children can be affected by prejudice and biases that result in isolation and exclusion by their peers" (p. 131). Also, some forms of violence include student-on-student violence, gang fights, bullying, sexual attacks, and violence based on genders, which are considered as forms of conflict in the present project for change.

Finally, our project is grounded on the United Nation's Goals for the Millennium; namely goal 2, which aims at ensuring that by 2015 children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling. Of course there are many aspects to tackle in order to ensure such goal; most of them are far beyond the reach of our project for change. However, we intend to work hand in hand with teachers to make sure that a violent, non-protective environment in the school does not deter children from completing their full schooling.

Colombia CRC network: Projects for change that tackle the issue of conflict and teachers' development.

In Colombia the CRC network has been working in this programme since 2006 and, along with the government, they have done big efforts in favor of children and adolescents in different areas. In our country, there are some organizations and legislations, which lead programs in order to protect the child rights and avoid violence against them. We have the Colombian National Constitution (1991), the Chamber of Commerce, the National Ministry of Education (henceforth MEN), the Secretary of Education (henceforth SED), the Code of Childhood and Adolescence, and the Colombian Institute of Family Wellness (henceforth ICBF).

Regarding conflicts and teachers development we found some interesting projects for change. The Batch 8 composed by Valenzuela, Reyes, and Londoño (2009) expresses the importance of establishing effective mechanisms to block physical and psychological aggression, and diminishing behaviors, hate or humiliation among children. Batch 10 developed a project named “School Violence and its Influence in the Child’s Free Personality Development (Sánchez, Prieto, and Sánchez, 2010). They reflected about those behaviors that produce violence and other problems at school as well as promoted times and spots to discuss, analyze, and reflect about “impulsive actions and violent behaviors to create an accurate cohabitation school system which lets the child and teenager’s growth and promote their free personality development as person of right and responsibility” (p. 5). Likewise, Falla, Torres, and Nanwani (2011) ran a project whose target audience was Primary and Secondary school teachers, teacher trainers, headmasters, supervisors, and level coordinators, among other organizations. On the other hand, Núñez, Guerrero and Reyes, batch 13, developed a project to change the students’ participation in the school decisions related to the defense and fulfillment of Child Rights.

National and Regional Strategies

The Colombian Ministry of Education (MEN) in has a national strategy that looks for the development of citizenship competences in schools (MEN, 2011). Likewise, the children Law (2006) has become an important effort to guarantee the rights of the children in our country. Both strategies are closely related to our project for change because they deal with participation and protection of the children and with the issue of education for peace.

Context and Participants

José Asunción Silva is one of the schools where we are developing our project for change. It is located in the northwest of Bogotá, Colombia. Nowadays, the school has about 1,800 students from early childhood to eleventh grade and their age range is between 3 and 20 years. They attend school in two different shifts: morning and afternoon. The school has two campuses, one for pre-school and primary school and the other one for secondary school. Students belong to the social strata one, two, and three, which means that they come from low-income families; the lower the strata, the lower the income. Consequently, most of them come from a deprived socio-cultural environment with harsh financial and family conditions, nutritional problems, illnesses, and violent surroundings, low motivation related to their academic performance or future expectations and low self-confidence. Additionally, some of them are compelled to work and bring money home to aid their families.

One reason is that some of them come from households that have been displaced from their lands in rural areas due to the Colombian civil war. Nevertheless, some other students have a better family, financial, and cultural condition; thus their view point of life and academic behavior tend to be different because they have a house, clothing, food, and enough resources to study efficiently.

These social differences make our teaching practices and relations with students even more complex to carry out. Concerning conflict among students, it is present every single day and it takes different forms; name-calling, bullying, and fighting, to mention some. Since the school's Educative Project emphasizes the importance of values and the effective communication among all the members of the community, it is imperative to develop reflective processes about strategies to solve situations and conflicts in the best and peaceful way.

Aquileo Parra School is the second school where we are developing our project. It has 3,200 students, divided into three shifts (morning, afternoon and evening). The total number of children in these two shifts is 1,350. It is located in Verbenal neighborhood, in the northeast of Bogota. Verbenal, originally settled by people in displacement from different rural areas, is a very depressed and poor sector that contrasts to nearby areas of opulence and wealth; this has led to permanent frustration and sense of inequality for the inhabitants of the area. The population also suffers from emotional deprivation, lack of care and protection of children, and financial difficulties. This promotes high rates of robbery, theft, violence, creation of youth gangs, drug addiction, alcoholism, unemployment, lack of communication within the family, unwanted pregnancy, and poor husbandry practices by parents.

Every day conflicts arise inside and outside the classroom, evidencing the violation of human dignity, self-esteem, and respect among children. Some of the most common sources of conflict in this school include discrimination, non-acceptance of difference, teasing, name-calling, lying, stealing, and various acts against the freedom of each child.

In the year 2012, there were four cases of violence and threats reported to the school principal's office. There were twenty-two cases of student-on student aggression and violence, ten in the morning shift and twelve in the afternoon shift, reported to the school's coordination office. In sum, the principal dealt with forty-eight violence-related cases of students in all three shifts. Furthermore, there were two cases of cyber-bullying and two critical cases of aggression that involved the parents and children of different families and members of two gangs. Finally, there were 19 cases of pregnancy, eleven in the morning shift and 8 in the afternoon shift.

3. Purpose

Some of the aforementioned forms of conflict are present in the schools in Colombia; particularly, at Aquileo Parra and José Asunción Silva, participants in our project for change. These school communities might not be able to tackle a situation of conflict satisfactorily or peacefully, more often than not children resort to hitting, swearing, or involving others to take part in the conflict. Therefore, team Colombia, batch 17 has planned a project for change titled “Conflict Resolution Strategies to Reduce Conflict Inside and Outside the Classroom.” We deem necessary to train teachers in conflict resolution strategies and involve children’s in “raising awareness of peace, promoting the social values needed for peace, strengthening (and in some cases rebuilding) social relationships... demonstrating peaceful ways of resolving conflicts” (Feinstein et al, 2010, p. 56), as Feinstein et al. reported in their study on “Children’s Participation in Armed Conflict and Post-Conflict Peace Building.”

Aim

To reduce conflict inside and outside the classroom by use of conflict resolution strategies

4. Methodology / Activities

The project had as participants the teachers of pre-school and elementary school in the morning and afternoon shifts. To train teachers at both schools, we organized a series of meetings and activities to take place between August 2012 and December 2013 (see Appendix A – Chronogram of Activities). The strategies that we propose are explained below:

Clouds

The Theory of Constraints (TOC) in education (Goldratt, 1999) sustains that children can make responsible and effective decisions and to have a clear communication of their ideas and opinions. Following a series of steps in the form of clouds painted on the floor, teachers and students can have the chance to get an understanding of their personal position about the conflict, develop an empathy with the other part, observe emotions to suppress the ones that affect the situation, build a bridge that contributes to the dialogue, learn to apologize, forgive, and reconcile, as well as to find the way to get the solutions.

Symbol

Besides oral communication, it is important to use other types of languages that are closer to children's age and intellectual development like a symbolic element that represents the ending of the resolution process. Students will design and present a symbol such as a flower, a white pigeon, or a heart that is going to be given to each part involved in the problem as soon as they feel that it is solved.

The Godmothers and Godfathers Plan

This particular Godmothers and Godfathers Plan is the name of a scheme at José Asunción Silva and Aquileo Parra schools, which intends to facilitate the integration of older children (fifth and fourth graders) with younger ones (pre-schoolers, first, second and third graders). They do this with the aim of getting to know each other and protect each other.

Forum Theater

Another strategy we want to involve in our project is the technique pioneered by Brazilian Augusto Boal. According to Farmer (2010-2013), "A play or scene, usually indicating some kind of oppression, is shown twice. During the replay, any member of the audience ('spect-actor') is allowed to shout 'Stop!' step forward and take the place of one of the oppressed characters, showing how they could change the situation to enable a different outcome.

Active Listening

Another strategy that may help resolve conflicts is to teach children to listen actively (Rogers & Farson, 1987). Active means that individuals who listen to others have the responsibility to avoid getting words passively; instead, they should actively understand facts and feelings contained in the things that they listen to. Moreover, they should show an intent attitude, and help the person who is talking to resolve problems.

Dilemmas

Another technique to resolve conflicts is the one proposed by Kohlberg (1984). This strategy develops in phases that involve the teaching of moral dilemmas. Participants find and give their opinion according to the dilemmas raised; then they discuss or debate towards valid arguments, listen to the different viewpoints, and may weigh their options to change their original opinion. Finally they evaluate the whole process.

Development of the Activities

The chronogram we initially proposed suffered a number of changes and modifications. Following, there is a description of when the activities actually took place. Additionally, you can see Appendix B – Photographs of some events that contain a sort of evidence of some meetings and workshops we have developed so far with teachers, administrators, school principals, university students, and our mentor.

- In August and November we met with the teachers at both schools to ask for their participation in our project. In December, the team met and planned the activities for the project. (See Appendix A -Table of the Activities).
- On January 16th, 2013 we started with the first activity at both schools: Sensitizing teachers using videos about conflict. We had the participation of Professor Lyda Molina from Universidad Pedagógica de Colombia, who guided the activity. At Carlos' school, they had already painted the clouds in a special place and the teachers had started to announce and promote the contest of the symbol via the school radio station.
- In April, we participated as presenters in the Annual Seminar Workshop organized by Astrid Núñez Pardo, at Menhorá School; thus, contributing to the Colombian CRC network on teacher development. In this presentation, teachers and students from Aquileo Parra School were invited to share their experience with the project.
- In May and June, we had the workshop on Active Listening.
- We received our mentor's visit in August. Then, we had the workshop on Forum Theater with the participation of Lyda Molina who conducted the activities. Furthermore, we shared our project with the Department of Humanities at Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, had meetings with the Ministry of Education and the Secretary of Education, and participated in the First Encounter of The Research Circle of Public School Principals at Universidad CAFAM. All these meetings had both the purpose of spreading and sharing the CRC programme and our project for change.
- In September, a group of fifth graders from Aquileo Parra School presented a progress report on our project in the Local Forum of the Secretary of Education about Citizenship Participation and Education for Peace at Escuela Colombiana de Rehabilitación University.
- In November we participated as presenters in the International Symposium on Literacies and Discourse Studies at Distrital Francisco José de Caldas University.
- We collected some feedback from the teachers at both schools about the use of these strategies by the end of 2013 and the beginning of 2014.
- In January 2014, we had the workshop on Dilemmas and started the Godfather and Godmother plan at both schools.

5. Results

To monitor and evaluate the progress of the project, we collected some feedback from the teachers at both schools every time we had a workshop. In addition, we collected teachers' voices through a survey about their perceptions on conflict (14 teachers at JAS and 6 teachers at AP) and conducted a group interview (3 teachers at AP and 5 teachers at JAS). We read and reviewed these data and summarized it into two main categories and some sub-categories; namely, Results of the Teacher Training (Understanding that conflict needs attention, Involving the strategies in their classes, and Feeling satisfied with the application of conflict resolution strategies) and Results in the Children (Using the strategies outside the class in the school, Evolving students' relationship, and Nurturing students' leadership). Below, we explain each of the categories and sub-categories.

Results of the Teacher Training

Understanding that conflict needs attention:

The teacher training in conflict resolution strategies has become an opportunity for teachers to reflect upon what conflict is and how to deal with it using pedagogical actions in class that foster student skills to handle and solve it.

The teachers report that conflict in the schools has various meanings; for example:

"It is a misunderstanding that might lead to a verbal or physical aggression."

(Survey on Teachers' perceptions about conflict, December, 2013, JAS)

"It is a problematic situation that alters coexistence."

"It is a confrontation due to difference of opinions."

"It is an everyday situation that occurs when there is lack of effective communication; however, it can become an opportunity for learning."

(Survey on Teachers' perceptions about conflict, January, 2014, AP)

Moreover, teachers state that conflict implies pedagogical actions in class using specific strategies like the ones they received during the training sessions. However, these pedagogical actions need to be continuous. It should be an everyday work involving the strategies in our classes, according to the age of the students. In

addition, dealing with conflict resolution requires certain skills such as listening to others, dialoguing, proposing ways to solve conflict, and fostering children's self-confidence to solve the conflicts by themselves. Teachers assert:

"The teacher mediates when the children can't find a solution."

"One should help children calm down and dialogue with them to help them identify the causes of the conflict so that they reach agreements by themselves. Conflict should be faced immediately, at the moment it happens, even if this implies stopping the class."

(Group interview, January, 2014, AP)

"The most important aspect is to listen to both sides of the conflict. We have taken advantage of the mediators for this purpose."

(Group interview, January, 2014, JAS)

All in all, the teacher training has fostered teachers' reflection about conflict and their role in conflict resolution within the school.

Involving the strategies in their classes:

The teacher training programme we planned introduced teachers to a series of strategies that have pedagogical use; specifically, The Clouds, Active Listening, Forum Theater, and Moral Dilemmas. This means, teachers need to plan class activities to deal with each one of the strategies and develop the skills that conflict resolution requires; in sum, to make the strategies part of the curriculum. Teachers stress:

"One should plan carefully because to use The Clouds, for example, children should control their emotions; therefore, they should have a workshop or a talk to learn how to listen to others – with active listening."

(Group interview, January, 2014, AP)

"We [teachers] added faces to the clouds according to the steps and colored them in different tones starting with dark red and finishing with white. Those changes allowed the little ones to understand better the process."

"We [teachers] created a brochure with these clouds steps in order to involve children's parents in this process of conflict resolution."

(Group interview, January, 2014, JAS)

Teachers say that they involved different strategies in their classes; however, they should be according to the children's' age. For instance, with preschoolers, first and second graders, The Clouds was the most used strategy. With older children, fourth and fifth graders, teachers involved moral dilemmas based on actual everyday situations and elected group leaders to mediate conflicts. Teachers declare:

"The Clouds was the most appropriate and mastered strategy by the children. They understood it step by step. At the end of the year, the children used it and mastered it."

"The youngest children have relatively simple conflicts. The Clouds motivated them a lot, specially the colors. One could observe them around The Clouds during the break, solving conflicts."

(Group interview, January, 2014, AP)

"I used the active listening strategy with fourth graders and that helped them to recognize their own faults before the others' fault."

(Group interview, January, 2014, JAS)

Additionally, a group of preschool teachers decided to modify the clouds including faces that represent a feeling in each cloud and designed a brochure to inform children and parents. Also, they have designed a book named "Chiquilladas del Hada Azul" (The Blue Fairy Adventures) where they write some difficult situations children faced and the resolutions that they proposed. They report:

"Preschool teachers and students created a special book to write our conflicts and agreements. The children listen what is written and sign with their own codes. This has helped children to think better before acting wrongly again."

(Group interview, January, 2014, JAS)

Feeling satisfied with the application of conflict resolution strategies:

Teachers report feeling satisfied and content with the application of the strategies. They also assert having fulfilled positive aspects in the school. However, this requires a continuous process. In respect to this, a teacher says:

“It is a constant work of the teacher using and applying the strategies that are more appropriate for the children’s age.”

(Group interview, January, 2014, AP)

Since they have observed that children can solve conflicts by themselves, they have felt how their multiple roles as teachers are reduced. For instance:

“The teacher is released from the role of being the mediator in a conflict because the children solve the conflicts by themselves.”

(Group interview, January, 2014, AP)

“We (teachers) have reflected about our role model and it would be interesting to go to the clouds and solve our differences as children do.”

(Field notes, August, 2013, JAS)

On the other hand, the teachers assert that despite the positive results, there are several challenges still ahead. One of them is that as teachers they need to handle the class and sometimes a conflict that arises.

“One has to take the involved students out of the classroom and mediate between them while the rest of the class carries on with the class activities.”

(Survey on Teachers’ perceptions about conflict, January, 2014, AP)

“Some students do not take these strategies as seriously as they are and change their behavior just for a while. It is difficult to make them understand how important is to acquire the skills to solve conflicts in a peaceful way.”

(Field notes, May, 2013, JAS)

Another one is to achieve that children use the strategies outside the school. They come from a very particular context (see Context and Participants section) where other forms of dealing with conflict are the rule; for instance, fighting, hitting, and screaming. Therefore, the biggest satisfaction for teachers would be that children replicate these conflict resolution strategies in their context; that is, the neighborhood and their homes.

“It is common that students bring to school violent patterns that they have learned at home. We need to work with parents too even though it is more difficult.”

(Group interview, January, 2014, JAS)

Results in the children

Using the strategies outside the class in the school:

The children manifested having positive behavioral changes. They did this in the evaluation of the project that teachers conducted in December 2013, at the end of the school year.

“The children expressed that they learnt to handle conflict by themselves without complaining to their teachers, that they have more self-control, and that they dialogue to find solutions.”

(Group interview, January, 2014, AP)

“The little ones took as basic strategy the dialogue expressing their feelings about the conflict and proposing not only a solution, but also something to ameliorate the situation as giving a hug, a chocolate, a card, etc.”

(Group interview, January, 2014, JAS)

Likewise, some children voluntarily mediate conflict during the breaks and then inform their teachers that they had mediated in a conflict and how they did it.

“There are very expressive children who contribute giving solutions and tell you that they solved a conflict.”

(Group interview, January, 2014, AP)

“There was a girl that was rejected by the class and she was always apart from the group, but with the time and the work she became the “lawyer” or mediator of the classroom. She was very good at helping others.”

(Group interview, January, 2014, JAS)

Evolving students' relationships:

The application of the strategies has allowed primary school children to lower the level of aggression and discipline problems and to improve coexistence among them; one manifestation of this is that older children treat younger children with more care. Teachers call this the “Culture of good manners.”

“In primary school, the level of aggressiveness has diminished. There is a culture of good manners: they greet, they walk instead of running, and help their classmates.”

(Group interview, January, 2014)

Fostering student leadership:

One key aspect that teachers report concerns with older students' leadership. On the one hand, older students volunteered by offering teachers their help to take younger children to The Clouds and showing them how to use them. On the other hand, the children who became leaders of this Project; that is those who became mediators and participated in different events that promoted our Project, feel that they have had positive outcomes. For instance, their families have noticed such leadership and their parents have also been committed with the project by giving them permission to attend the events, learning about what their children were doing in the school with the conflict resolution strategies and when their children remind them about using dialogue to solve any conflict. In sum, student leadership has somehow transcended the school into their families.

6. Discussion and Reflection

After a year of implementing our projects, we have had very positive outcomes and achieved what we had planned. Most teachers have been responsive and interested in applying the strategies in class. Also, we had the participation of an important stakeholder: Lyda Molina, a professor from Universidad Pedagógica de Colombia, who has contributed to our project with her expertise in the area of education and peace. She conducted various activities with teachers in both schools.

Despite the positive outcomes, it is sometimes difficult to meet the goals of the project due to the dynamics of the schools. The activities proposed have been implemented at Aquileo Parra; this has been possible due to the leadership of the

principal, Carlos Eduardo Galán and the commitment of strategic teachers. Conversely, the project has developed slowly at José Asuncion Silva, where we have faced more challenges concerning the school's organization. First, there are two branches and primary teachers are in both branches, which makes meetings with teachers more difficult. Second, we count on very few strategic teachers; particularly, preschool teachers. Most of them are willing to help and participate but time for meetings is a big issue to manage. We have been patient and tolerant with the obstacles that we have found along the process and we have struggled organizing teachers and sometimes administrators for the workshops applied so far. However, we can say that we have given and gained a lot there despite the difficulties.

Team work has been enriching and rewarding. We have been able to develop a sense of ownership of the project; this is evident in our commitment in planning and implementing the proposed methodology and activities. Everybody is involved and actively participating. Even though meeting is sometimes hard due to our multiple responsibilities we have always taken advantage of the internet and technology facilities. We are still learning how to work as a team, and we do not forget that our primary goal is to work for our children and to contribute to the defense of the Child Rights in Colombia.

7. Way Forward

As team teachers we consider our project for change a big and important issue to continue developing and nurturing from other colleagues' views, knowledge, and experiences. That is why we plan to keep training teachers at both schools in the development and application of the strategies that are left providing them with workshops and activities they can replicate in the classrooms and with the help of different stakeholders.

Taking as basis the teachers' feedback and background along with the results of our project we challenge ourselves with the design of a Conflict Resolution Strategies Manual to be applied from now on. The objective of this Manual is first to understand the particular needs every school has regarding conflict resolution and second to make this practice more inclusive bearing in mind teachers and students' suggestions for the strategies.

Likewise, we want to spread our project in order to give our learning and experience to as many colleagues as possible and to gain more change agents that are engage in the defense of the Rights of the Child. For this purpose we plan to extend our

participation in seminars and workshops around schools as well as universities in and out of our city.

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Appendix A - Table of Activities

Strategy	Activities	Date
The clouds The symbol The Godmother and Godfather Plan	Painting the clouds in the school yard Creating the symbol contest Applying to The Godmother and Godfather Plan Group feedback	February to March
Active Listening Non-violent communication	Story-Reading Listening to each other activity Group feedback	April to June
Anti-Bullying strategy Body care ethics Forum theater	Workshops Games A play for the school community Group feedback	July to September
Dilemma strategy	Workshops Group feedback	October to December
	Creating a CRSs manual for the school (teachers and change agents)	2014

Appendix B – Photographs of some events



First meetings with teachers (November 2012)



Sensitizing teachers using videos (January 2013)



Active Listening Workshop (May-June, 2013)



Mentor's Visit (August, 2013)



Meeting with Public School principals (August, 2013)



Teachers' Feedback (December, 2013 - January, 2014)



Dilemmas Workshop (January, 2014)