

SYSTEMATIZING THE DATA FROM THE ARCA QUESTIONNAIRE

Adult Training and Education for International and Intra- national Interventions for Peace Building, Conflict Transformation, Mediation and Crisis Management

Country Report for France
August 2006

What is this country report?

This is a document containing information on the current situation, existing resources and assessment of needs in the field of Adult Training and Education for International and Intra-national Interventions for Peace Building, Conflict Transformation, Mediation and Crisis Management in France.

What purpose does the country report serve?

The country report, with its diagnosis of the national situation in the field, can serve as a basis for further development and pioneering of peace education of adults as envisioned by the ARCA project, in the European countries participating to the ARCA project.

The country reports data will be gathered in a general report as a base for the rest of the ARCA project products.

General profile of a country report

The country report of France is a document synthesizing the answers given by the French respondents, interpreting them in relation to the national basis and context. The report will be disseminated and presented to non-governmental and governmental institutions, educational and training centers, Ministries of Education and Foreign Affairs in the partner country, respondents and other actors interested in receiving it.

The French ARCA team acknowledges that this document may present an incomplete picture of the situation approached. It is based on feedback offered solely by the respondents who took the time to answer the questionnaire.

Systematizing the information from the Questionnaire

1. Organizational profile

65.8 % of the pool of French respondents fitting the profile have submitted information on their activity in the format of the questionnaire.

23 out of 25 respondents identified themselves as **non-profit organizations** (mainly non-governmental organizations – 17 – or national associations), **working both at a national or international level**. 1 respondent is a Museum about the 2nd World War and Peace, another one in an academic institute.

The profile of the respondents can be explained by the fact that the field of training and education of adults to work in situations of conflict and management of crisis situations in France is mainly composed by national associations and non-governmental organizations. The academic sector is not really active in this area.

96% of respondents identified **education as their primary focus, complemented by action** (13 out of 25). Some of them also notified research (8 out of 25) and lobby (6 out of 25).

About the financial profile of the organizations, **the majority have a limited budget**: 66% indicate their budget as from less 25.000 to 100.000 euros annually. The others indicate their budget as between 100.000 to 1.000.000. Only one organization has an annual budget exceeding this amount.

These results are consistent with the profile of the associative sector in France, which is made of many small and medium organizations, especially in the area of Peace Building and Conflict Management. The few big French NGOs are more specialized in humanitarian and development issues.

As for the ways respondents fund their activity, they identified **many sources of finances**. 21% of the finances come from public grants (national or international), 41% from private grants (donations, foundations) and 38% from own resources (membership fees, services, revenues). The following fact is to be observed: the only organizations that receive international funding are those who develop international field projects. It is consistent with the fact that France is a donor country and not a recipient one.

2. Profile of the training programmes

All French respondents have reported being both providers and receivers of training (in general the respondents are more providers than receivers).

Objectives/aim of the training programmes

About their objectives, the training programmes **focus both in international and national work**. The organizations train and/or receive training mainly for *humanitarian and development projects in conflict areas abroad* (10 out of 25) and for *peace building at local-national level* (9 out of 25). Apart of these two main focuses, the rest of the results are heterogeneous (training of own staff: 4; deployment for peace building interventions abroad: 5; focus on multipliers: 6; focus on decision makers: 6; other: 6).

The heterogeneity of these results can be explained by the diversity of the respondents' profile and by the French civil society's profile in general.

Content of training programmes:

- **Conflict analysis, Crisis prevention and management, Mediation, Team cooperation, and Training for trainers** are present in the training programmes of the majority of the respondents (both providers and receivers; each topic was selected by more than 10 organisations).
- **Nonviolent actions, Intercultural communication, Human rights, Community development, Personal growth, Stress management, and Project management** are also fields covered by providing organizations.
- Few attention is given to topics of safety and security, interreligious dialogue, regional conflict, political participation, gender, public information (addressed by 1 to 4 organizations of the 25).

Training methodology

About the training methodology used by the respondents, the answers provided indicate **a large variety of methods employed. Role play and team work come in first** (23 and 22 out of 25 respectively). Case studies, lectures presentation and participatory models as well as exercise based methods come in second (between 15 and 20 out of 25). Learning from best practices is not as used as the other methods (9 out of 25). We can notice that none of the respondents use e-learning.

These results denotes **the orientation towards participatory and experimentation methods** and the difficulty or reserve to use some modern tools such as e-learning.

Training structure

Answers provided denote the **orientation towards both training national (11 of 25) and international participants (15 of 25).**

The off-site trainings are the most common situation (18 of 25). 12 out of 25 respondents organize on-site training programmes. **The tendency is to house participants together (14 of 25),** only 5 of 25 housing participants separately.

Duration of training programmes

The general tendency is short training programmes. According to the respondents, the training programmes provided or received showed preference for the 3-5 days duration (34%), next being for the 1-2 days (26%). The lengthy training sessions occur much less often (1-2 weeks: 8, 2-4 weeks: 5, 1-3 months: 1).

Networking between former participants and now trained staff

40% of the respondents have a network of alumni who attended their training but only 16% acknowledged membership to such a network.

This fact may signalize the **difficulty of creating and maintaining such networking systems**, mainly because of the few available resources (human and financial) compared to the constant need of up-keeping and coordination it requires.

However, some initiatives have been realized. Two platforms/coordinations of NGOs have been created in France:

- Coordination Sud, a platform of Development NGOs (but it doesn't include all the organizations working on peace building and conflict management)
- the French Coordination for the Decadeⁱ which gathers the majority of peace and non-violent organizations.

Nevertheless, a certain division between nonviolent organizations, peace organizations and human rights organizations still exists in France. These organizations have regular contacts and are used to work together, but usually on specific topics and short term actions. Their different approaches and perspectives prevent them of creating an efficient and global network in this sector.

3. Trainers and Staff (for training institutions only)

The majority of the respondent organizations have trainers on staff (82%). 41 % of them have more than 3 trainers in their staff.

These results show that the training organizations in France are technically well prepared, having a pool of expert people to provide trainings.

At a coordination and administrative point of view, **the large majority of the respondents work with small teams of permanent staff** (56% have between 1 and 3 and 32% don't have any assistance). There is an exception in the following training areas: development projects, local peace building and decision makers, in which some respondents have a higher number of permanent staff assisting with administrative activities. A possible explanation is that there are bigger NGOs in these sectors.

This opposition between availability of specialized staff (trainers) and reduced coordination teams may be a problem to develop training activities.

4. Materials used in training

ⁱ It was created to implement in France the Decade for the promotion of a culture of Non-Violence and Peace for the children of the world.

The answers provided prove the **flexible and diverse nature of the materials** used in the field by training organizations in France.

They generally develop **both formal** (lectures) **and practical methodologies** (experimentation, role play, cooperative games...) and use **both classic** (books, pedagogical manuals ...) **and modern materials** (DVDs, power point presentation, films ...).

The respondents have **both adapted international and national existing materials, and developed original curricula and methods** based on existing materials and own experience to serve the specific topics of the training programs and profile of the target groups.

5. Value of the Training Practice

This section's purpose was to obtain the evaluation of respondents on the quality of the current training in the field – for both skills needed for people who are deployed as well as how trainings respond to current needs - based on their knowledge of them and their experience as training providers and recipients.

The first question aimed particularly at organizations which had deployed personnel in crisis situations. **18 out of 25 respondents answered to this question.** It may signify that **a large part of the organizations which provide or receive training in France also deploy people in the field.**

They rated the **personal soft skills and behavioral competencies as being most necessary in the field**, whereas professional skills came secondary.

Generally, the respondents are satisfied with the quality of current training in the field, with relation to their capacity to equip people with the necessary skills for interventions in peace building and conflict transformation. 53% considered it as *good* and 41% as *satisfactory*; only 6% consider it as *excellent*. A fact is to be observed that receiving organizations are less satisfied than providing ones, which may mean that current training programmes do not completely respond to their field team needs.

About the balance between theory-oriented and practice-oriented contents of current trainings, **55% of the respondents considered that more emphasis should be given to practice, whereas 40% considered the balance as being appropriate.**

We noted some suggestions given by respondents under 5.4 "Further suggestions for improving training": *Encourage contacts between trainees and deployed staff; create long term programmes with mix/alternation of training sessions and experimentation*".

6. Cooperation with Other Organizations

Concerning communication and cooperation, **the answers provided indicated that respondents do not regularly cooperate with other similar organisations** in the field of training for Peace Building Conflict Transformation, Mediation and Crisis Management.

Only 3 organizations rated their cooperation with others bodies as frequent. However, half of the respondents indicated having collaboration with 3 to 5 partners. They generally considered this **cooperation as effective (68%) and even very effective (32%)**. According to the respondents who are active members of national/international networks with the same profile, they generally considered that there was a **good communication within these networks** (46% rated communication as *good* and 36% as *satisfactory*).

The last question of the segment asked respondents to provide suggestions for improvement of communication between organisations within networks; the reactions show a need for:

- *Increasing the financial and human resources (in order to have more time to cooperate and network)*
- *Direct communication and personal relationships*
- *Organizing staff exchange, mainly for trainers*
- *A newsletter*

7. Impact Assessment

This section focused on training organizations, asking them to provide information on the methods they use in the process of evaluation of their activity, as well as to mention the measurement criteria used in this respect.

The overwhelming majority of the respondents evaluate the performance of their training activities. The most usual methods of evaluation are questionnaires (20 out of 25) and interviews with participants. Some organizations developed other criteria for measurement such as *assessment made by the team of trainers* and *later evaluation (made with the trainees six months after the training session)*.