

## INNOVATION DAYS - Experience sheet

Name and function of the person filling in the grid: *Mawuli TUKPO, Project Manager*

<b>1. Name of the innovation</b>	The District Child Consultative Councils (DCCC), Vectors of Peace
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### 2. Context and issues

*In what context was this innovation developed? What issues or needs was it trying to address?*

The issue of violence and conflict is becoming more and more acute in Togo despite the efforts made by the competent authorities and the various parties to develop peaceful and secure coexistence. This situation affects more and more young people and adolescents, many of whom spend many years looking for their first internship and/or job.

These teenagers often indulge in delinquency, alcoholism and the exacerbation of their frustrations with politicians, whom they see as the source of all their misfortunes and who expose them to the risk of being used by political parties. This state of affairs helps to crystallize antagonisms around political and constitutional issues. In addition, many of these young people do not have a solid knowledge of life skills, particularly issues of citizenship, respect for differences, and peace-building, which makes them less tolerant of those who do not have the same political opinions as them or who are different from them.

In August 2017, Togo experienced a resurgence of socio-political tensions marked by political rallies and marches often resulting in violent clashes between security forces and demonstrators in several cities in the country (Anié, Sokodé, Mango, Bafilo and Kara). These demonstrations have often resulted in the death of some demonstrators, including children.

In view of these different elements, the project was initiated to build the capacity of adolescents in life skills, including peacebuilding, and to promote their involvement in decision-making at the local level, so that the decisions that are made and the policies that are developed can address their priority problems.

### 3. Type of innovation (check the appropriate box)

<b>Technological or practical innovation</b> (tool, practice, technique, etc.)	
<b>Institutional, organisational or methodological innovation</b> (processes, organisational models, partnerships between actors, project management etc.)	X
<b>Policy innovations</b> (new policy or regulatory measures, etc.)	X

### 4. Description of the innovation

*What did the innovation consist of? How does it work? What is the method?*

The aim was to set up children's consultative councils (DCCC) in 40 districts in Togo to promote increased and effective participation of young people and adolescents in the peacebuilding process in their families, schools and communities.

What is the method?

- Participatory definition of the criteria for the selection of DCCC members (age, level (students and apprentices, etc.), membership of a particular social group (adolescents and young people, excluded, minorities, nomads, etc.)). The criteria are jointly defined by: State Services (Social action, Education), AEA, and CSO partner CACIT (Collective of Togolese associations against impunity)
- Establishment of the DCCC (diagnosis of initial situation in each district, identification/selection of members, election of the board, official installation, etc.). This process is jointly animated by AEA's animators and by Social Action services.
- Monitoring of the functioning of the DCCC (training of members, support of the DCCC in the development and implementation of its action plan, monitoring of its implementation, etc.)

How does it work?

DCCCs, accompanied by supervisors (often teachers from their schools or social workers):

- Elaborate their action plans, which include socio-educational activities (talk-debates, sketches and role plays, etc.); civic and citizenship activities (cleaning up public places and public services, etc.) ; mass-sensitization (towards peers, parents, local authorities) ; cleaning of school courtyard ; participation to talks with police authorities, etc.
- Lead the implementation of action plans
- Report on their actions to the local authorities (heads of neighborhoods, villages and districts)
- Ensure annual membership renewal
- Regularly update their action plans.

*How is it innovative? In order to identify the innovative character of the experiment, we can refer to the criteria grid in the appendix below.*

The action is innovative because of the choice of target group, since for the first time, thematic groups of adolescents are taking charge of the problem of conflict prevention and management; the notion of peace and the subjects of citizenship at the grassroots level (schools, secondary schools, informal education centers).

## 5. Results/changes achieved

*What were the effects of this innovation? What changes did it produce in the actors?*

- Acquisition of skills by the members of the DCCC on the notions of peace and peaceful conflict management, citizenship and living together, leadership, and improvement of written and oral expression;
- The enthusiasm, dynamism and willingness of DCCC members to work for the cause of peace in their respective families, schools, workshops and communities;
- Acquisition of know-how in the transmission of knowledge through awareness-raising activities;
- Testimonies of behavioral change by some members of the DCCC and some community members who feel they no longer engage in acts of violence;
- The development of a spirit of initiative among young people and adolescents (e.g. theater used as channel to spread the message of peace in some districts);
- The dynamism and willingness of DCCC members to continue the work ;
- Conflict resolution between adolescents (child to child) in classrooms and schools;
- Agreement and willingness of community stakeholders to support the DCCC in its mission.

## 6. Elements to be capitalized

*What are the strengths and weaknesses of this innovation? What are the lessons to be learned from this experience? This section can be filled in/completed after the presentation to include feedback from participants.*

**Highlights:**

- Intervention focused on adolescents (adults of tomorrow), taking into account the concepts of gender and equity;
- Creation and synergy of several actors at the same time (State services including Education, Social Action, Human Rights, Law and Order and Security forces; Unicef, Aide et Action but also CSO partner CACIT);
- Anchoring of the DCCCs with the endogenous animation and the accompaniment of the services of the State in the implementation;
- Development of cantonal plans for the sustainability of the project's achievements (through support to DCCCs provided by decentralized State services (Social Action, Education, district offices), and through provision of tools to facilitate sensitization sessions (megaphones)).

**Weaknesses:**

- The accompaniment of the actors was too short for the implementation, the progress and an effective closing of the project (the technical support team was temporary), whose consequences :
  - o *Insufficient post-training follow-up due to the end of the project on 30 November 2020*
  - o *The number of training days was too short for young people and adolescents, given the density of the training modules (young people and adolescents do not learn at the same pace as adults)*
  - o *The installation of the DCCC did not cover all the districts of the beneficiary prefectures;*
- Dispersal of the project intervention area (one district per administrative region, choice of partner on which Aide et Action could not act)
- Aide et Action does not have a mechanism to monitor changes and impacts after the project; (i) the project team involved in the project is temporary; (ii) the individual workload of the staff involved in other projects does not allow them to take responsibility for post-project monitoring (at least in the areas of presence of AEA where DCCC were established).

## 7. Who to contact for more information

*Mawuli TUKPO, Project Manager: [mawuli.tukpo@aide-et-action.org](mailto:mawuli.tukpo@aide-et-action.org); (00228) 70054560*

**Appendix: Criteria grid for qualifying an innovation :**

Criteria: an innovation must be :		Yes/ No	Observations, gap analysis	Elements to be capitalized
<b>News in the context in which it takes place</b>	The experience is new (the "newness" may refer to the geographical context, the scale, the field of intervention, the type of practice, etc.).	Yes		
<b>Useful for the purpose or to solve a specific problem</b>	The actors of the territory are involved in the identification of the need or the problem, in the construction of the innovative response (which follows the principles of human-centred design), and in its implementation	Yes	However, the expected results of the project were predefined by the financial partner on the basis of its collaboration programme with Togo	
	Experience brings new answers and added value to a need or a problem	Yes		
	The experience has a positive impact, direct or indirect, on the development of the territory	Yes	Yes, but more broadly in Togo since the project only intervened in Togo	
	The experience offers prospects for empowerment and social change for the actors in the territory	Yes	However, the conditions for its establishment, implementation and closure are not sufficient to truly empower communities for sustainable social change.	
<b>Sustainable</b>	The experience provides a sustainable solution to the problem, and improves the resilience of communities	Yes		
	The experience has a moderate cost	Yes		
	The experience can easily change scale and/or inspire new projects in other territories	Yes		