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# 12. SERVAS PEACE SCHOOL SUMMER PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT



The aim of this report is to evaluate the SERVAS Peace School program 2020. The program normally takes place in Ekinci village in Antakya, in southern Turkey. Because of the on-going pandemic, it was decided that it would be held online for all participants in 2020.

The main purpose of this summer program was to learn about each other and exchange cultural values. The program lasted more than two weeks, from July 2- 20, 2020.

This report is based on the information provided by the coordinators, translators, participants and facilitators who were involved in the program.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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We also gratefully acknowledge the support and hospitality provided by the local community in order to make the program possible. Their support included organising parents and children to attend online workshops. Besides, we acknowledge the financial support of Servas International Development committee. The fund they provided allowed us to sponsor the Internet use of an international volunteer and some local children and also to buy painting materials for painting the Wall of Servas Peace School in a street of the village. This report is not influenced by any donation.

If you have any questions or suggestions related to the SERVAS Peace School program, please feel free to reach out to the program coordinator Mehmet Ates (mehsevi@hotmail.com) for the further details.

Cover photo credit: Seher Nuraydin Koçak



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## Background

The SERVAS Peace School was launched in 2009. Since then it has been held every summer with more volunteers and more sophisticated content. The program aims to provide children with universal values to prepare them for the century in which they live as global citizens. Children interact with people from various countries who are part of the SERVAS network. Attendance is free of charge and anyone who is willing to be a part of this program is welcome either as a participant or volunteer. Every person has something to learn from others. The aim of the program is to promote multicultural collaboration. All workshops are based on the volunteers' interests and backgrounds. The schedule is flexible and the program is managed by volunteer coordinators.

## Workshops

The SERVAS Peace School Program has been held in Ekinci, a village of Antakya in Turkey face to face until this year. Because of the on-going pandemic all around the world, it was decided that The Peace School should be implemented online for all participants in 2020.

There were 45 local, national and international volunteer facilitators from 13 countries around the world including Czech Republic, Georgia, India, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, Morocco, Poland, Russia, Turkey, Uganda and the USA this year. There were also 64 participating children in total including 50 local, 10 international and 4 refugees. The age of participant children ranged from 5 to 14. Volunteer facilitators held 46 workshops during the programme. All participants (children and parents) attended the sessions online via Zoom. The language of the sessions varied depending on the facilitators. In order to make sure the participants could follow the instructions and actively participate in the sessions, there were additional interpreters depending on the need. The link was shared with all the participants and they connected via zoom.

Many SERVAS volunteers offered workshops covering various topics. All volunteer facilitators were requested to send in advance details of the sessions offered. The content of the programs not only targets young children but also people who have an interest among other things in covering a wide range of topics, including culture, history, art, cuisine, ecology, music, language, dance and drama. You can find the details of the program in Appendix A.



## Evaluation

There were three strands to the evaluation of the SERVAS Peace School Program. First, analysis of the workshop sessions was undertaken. Secondly, in the middle of the summer school program, participants were interviewed to discuss the ongoing sessions and possible improvement for further sessions. Then finally surveys were shared with both participants and facilitators to receive their feedback and experience from workshops. Qualitative data analysis was applied in this report.

### Analysis of the Workshop Sessions: Objectives of the Peace School Program

All facilitators were invited to share the details of the workshops that they were planning to implement. The analysis noted the intended objectives and target participants for the sessions. You can find the details of the questions in Appendix B.

The volunteer facilitators listed the intended learning outcomes and objectives of the workshops that they were planning. Then all these intended learning outcomes were mapped with the skills that the participants would improve. One of the 21st Century skills is Global Citizenship, meaning an awareness of the interconnectedness of people and environments around the globe and their contribution to a global society. To become a global citizen, individuals need to be creative, flexible, dedicated and proactive. Global citizens take an active part in the emerging international community and are committed to helping build this community's values and practices. This means developing skills such as problem-solving, decision-making, critical thinking, communication and collaboration. These five skills are becoming increasingly essential to success in personal and professional life. Here are the list of objectives of the workshops by the facilitators:

#### To raise cultural awareness:

- To learn about the Mayan culture through its music
- To learn about Mexican cultures through indigenous languages
- To learn 24 interesting facts about Canada (each fact based on one letter of the alphabet)
- To gain an understanding of Uganda's culture for peace
- To learn about Italian Culture (landscapes, body language, traditional food - preparing a traditional dessert)
- To learn a little about Arabic language, and about the culture and diversity of Morocco
- To learn about and make meals of Antakya and the Middle East
- To learn about the natural and cultural beauty of Iran through dance, music, food, handcrafts and sport
- To learn about Russia and Russian traditions through making craft together

#### Activity oriented:

- To learn symmetrical and composition enhancing creativity and explore new information
- To be able to create their own story with a character from their own folklore
- To learn how to make knots with recycled materials
- To learn about traditional, recyclable local toys and musical instruments and make them online.
- To learn some basics of chess
- To learn about and appreciate the various animal species in Africa
- To learn how to reuse different materials for ecology

#### To increase factual knowledge:

- To become curious about the Night sky and gravity, the most important force of the universe

- To learn about the solar system and discuss a few interesting scientific facts
- To learn about the 4 seasons, day and night, and time zones
- To learn about the Moon and Mars and some interesting facts
- To develop a greater awareness of simple rules of being healthy
- To learn about storks (the birds)
- To become more aware of ecology
- To learn about the nature and plantations of Antakya

## Mid-term and Final Evaluation Challenges

Participants completed two evaluations. The first evaluation took place via Zoom in a group meeting at the end of the first week of the programme, when participants were asked about the difficulties that they experienced with the sessions. All volunteer facilitators were invited to attend this evaluation both to address the challenges that they faced and to enable them to provide better experiences in subsequent sessions by considering current challenges. Most of the facilitators attended this feedback session to share their insights and experiences. It was helpful in terms of improving the content of the workshops and developing methods and techniques in online teaching for the upcoming sessions.

The final evaluation was implemented with a structured questionnaire at the end of the program. The completed questionnaires were shared with all facilitators who contributed to the workshops. Most of the facilitators shared their feedback forms. They were asked questions about their experiences to see whether their activity achieved the purpose they defined at the beginning, and to note challenges they experienced and thoughts on further workshops. Because of COVID-19, there were many things to be readjusted with this new way of online workshops, teaching and learning. This was the first time the summer Peace School was implemented online, and the major part of our challenges came from this. Here is the list of challenges compiled from both evaluations:

- **Online teaching is the biggest challenge.** Internet connection is one of the biggest barriers. Because of the COVID, this is the first time Peace School has been implemented online. Since all the sessions are conducted via Zoom, the internet connection is a prerequisite for participation. It is not only a challenge for participants but also for the facilitators, therefore there is a need for more capacity for online teaching.
- **Familiarity with technology challenged both participants and facilitators.** Not all participants were familiar with online platforms so it took some time to get used to it. In order to deal with this challenge, local Servas Peace school facilitators offered Zoom training to parents in their homes. It was a challenge for some activities because of the fact that the phone screen is not wide which brings limitations in terms of engaging in activities. In other words, some activities require participants to draw, take notes, and typing so participants who connected via their phone were not able to enjoy much because of those limitations. Also, some of the children who participated in the sessions did not have a personal computer so they connected via mobile phones.
- **Language is an important limitation of communication.** Some participants understood the instructions better than others because of the language, though there were interpreters in most sessions. There was only one session where no one was available to interpret and therefore some children could not enjoy the workshop as much as others. As a solution to this challenge, workshops were re-tailored after the first week feedback to incorporate more concrete materials

and practice. In the end, the language diversity in the program was a great opportunity for all participants and helped them to become familiar with various languages.

- **Time zone was taken into account.** There were 13 countries involved in the program. There was good cooperation between volunteers but the time difference was a challenge. Since the summer school was online, participants and facilitators did not share the same physical space so the sessions were scheduled according to the availability of facilitators. It was a challenge for some participants to attend the sessions either early in the morning or late at night which affected the participation rate.
- **Duration of workshops adjusted.** The sessions were designed for varied age groups, but in general all workshops targeted young children so it was important to consider the attention span. In the mid-term evaluation session, facilitators discussed how to keep children engaged during the workshop. One of the suggestions was to shorten the duration of the session to around 45 minutes.
- **Content design is crucial to engagement.** In general, participants were happy with the content. There were several topics covered through the workshop sessions. Facilitators pointed out the importance of engagement over content itself because if children lose their attention, they cannot follow even if the content is very interesting for them. The reason for that online way of teaching and learning is new both for facilitators and children.

## Intended Learning Objectives

All facilitators were asked for their thoughts on whether their workshop session achieved the intended learning outcomes as defined in the evaluation questionnaire when the half of the workshops were implemented. They responded to this question based on their observations through the workshop. All facilitators talked about their experiences positively. Here are the thoughts from facilitators regarding learning experience of the participants:

**Content is relevant.** The things shown are really important for everyday life. Children bring their perspectives to the topics. The participation rate varied across workshops and in general most of the participant children were aged from 10- 16. Workshops for younger children aged between 5-7 were held separately.

**Participants are curious.** Children were interested in the content and asked additional questions about the topic at the end of the sessions. Some facilitators mentioned that they asked open-ended questions to trigger the participants' curiosity and they all had interactive conversation during the sessions. Also, one of the facilitators mentioned that the children were able to ask questions about Uganda's currency, traditional houses and music. They also participated in the local children's game called 'mweso'.

## Unintended learning outcomes

**The sessions welcomed all participants.** The program workshops were mainly designed for young children. To help children use Zoom, parents sat with them and interpreters attended to help all children to understand the workshops. Since the curriculum was all about global citizenship, translators and parents enjoyed it while they were supporting the process. So, parents were involved and benefited from the workshops more than in the traditional face to face Servas Peace School Summer Program that has been happening outdoors since 2009. In the end, the online program was more inclusive for other family





and public members than ever before despite the challenges since the links for the sessions were open to access to anyone who wished to attend.

## Improvements

This section includes some ideas from the facilitators to consider for future programs to provide a better experience for the participants. Based on their feedback, key issues to consider are discussed in this section. Here are some suggestions for future programs:

**Online group work is possible.** This year all workshops were online via Zoom and it was a new experience. Zoom has an option to make group work possible in breakout rooms, in that way participants have a chance to have discussions in small groups. Also, since children in the village spend time closely together on the streets even during COVID-19 times it was okay for them to sit in front of the computers in small groups, which allowed them to interact, socialize, do group work and learn together.

**Interactive content is always interesting and fun.** Most of the participants are children so they have a limited attention span. Considering the situation with technology and online programs, they would be more engaged if active participation was required. If they are asked just to listen all the time, they can lose their interest even if the content is great, so keeping them busy with questions and activities would be more fun. Having a few icebreaker activities might be helpful to get everyone relaxed and comfortable.

**An alternative plan is always necessary.** Participants and facilitators are not sharing the same physical space, so when there is an issue with internet connection or other external factors, it may affect the group dynamics. In that way being prepared for alternatives is a great advantage so as a facilitator you can manage problems more quickly and more efficiently if you already have an alternative at hand.

## Feedback from Participants

At the end of each workshop, participants were invited to share their feedback on the session. Around 20 feedback forms were received from the participant children whose ages ranged from 8-14. These were the participants who attended most of the workshops, on average around 25 sessions. The findings below were based on the responses on the evaluation form in Appendix D.

The favorite workshops were astronomy, bingo games, dances from different cultures, origami, culture sessions (Canadian, Iran, Uganda, Mayan), ecology related activities and language classes. Also, they liked the stories about animals about to go extinct and where the name of hamburger comes from. Furthermore, they enjoyed the workshops that offer experiences rather than pure knowledge. For example, they mentioned the workshop activity where they created a memory bottle and toy or tried some traditional recipes from Mexico.

In general, they liked the content and enjoyed the sessions. Some challenges from the participants' perspectives were language barriers, internet connection, duration of sessions and different facilitation styles (the speed of facilitator, lack of illustrations and instructions).

All participants agreed the Servas Peace School would be more enjoyable if they could attend in person at the place that they used to have. When they share the same physical space, they feel more comfortable to ask questions. If they attend in person, they have more chances to communicate outside





of the sessions and to socialize with the facilitator and other participants. They also shared their feelings that having the workshops outside in their streets is more fun than attending zoom meetings.

## Conclusion

All in all, although most of the facilitators stated their preference for in person and face to face teaching rather than online, the SERVAS Peace School program 2021 was a great opportunity not only for participants but also for facilitators to practice 21st century skills. Students also developed a good sense of global citizenship that respects the key universal values such as peace, sustainability and increasing awareness.

## Ways Forward

Global citizenship is becoming a widespread topic because it is relevant to global interdependence, diversity of identities and cultures, sustainable development, peace and conflict resolution, and inequities related to power, resources, and respect. One of the main aims of global citizenship education is to create a transformative movement by building the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that learners need to be able to contribute to a more inclusive, just and peaceful world.

An international network platform like SERVAS that has volunteers from all around the world will have more impact not only on children, volunteers, parents and local people but also on education systems of different countries and their culture policies. The overarching aim of this program is to bring the cultural diversity and vast background of the world into the village, situated in the south of Turkey. Although the programs came to an end, the volunteers keep in touch throughout the year and there will be other workshops that will keep running. In that way, this ongoing active communication among volunteers will foster the connection and reinforce ongoing learning in the group.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A

#### 12th Servas Peace School Online-Workshop Program

	11:00-12:15 am (All ages)	14:00-15.15 (08-11 ages)	17:00-18.15 (12-14 ages)	17:00-18:15 (05-07 ages)	
<b>02 July, Thu.</b>	What is Servas? What is the Peace School? Mehmet Ates, Turkey	Arabic is artistic Nadia Salmi Ates Morocco/Turkey	Photo Story Nino Khundadze Georgia	English and handcraft, Pınar Durmaz, Turkey	
<b>03 July Fri.</b>	Dance & Learn Esra Alev, TR	Chess time 1 Francesco Stoduto Italy	Discovering plants Mevsim Doksöz, Turkey	Flying with Peace Seher Koçak, TR	
<b>04 July Sat.</b>	Languages and Games Mehmet Ates, TR	The Rythm of Nature and Me Seyhan Ateş, TR	Chemical Events Burçin Doksöz, TR	Russia with a Fairy tale Kate Tyrina, Russia	
<b>05 July Sun.</b>	Dance & Learn Vol.2 Esra Alev, TR	Chess time 2 Francesco Stoduto Italy	Language of the world, Mehmet Ates, TR	Hello Hat :) Languages Seher Koçak, TR	
<b>06 July Mon.</b>	Sky travellers-1 Marietta Milewska, Poland	Creative Writing, Nino Khundadze Georgia	Philosophy with Pictures, Mehmet Ateş, TR	Fun Experiments İlgın Dogruer, Gökçen Baykuş, Turkey	
<b>07 July Tue.</b>	Creative Writing, Nino Khundadze Georgia	Let's look at Iran Simin Bakhtiar, Iran	Pavel Sroubek Fun facts of the Czech Republic	Sadako (Origami) Lilly Kerekes, Mexico	
<b>08 July, Wed.</b>	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	
<b>09 July Thu.</b>	Sky travellers-2  Marietta Milewska,	Compulsory Travellers (Refugees) /Zorunlu	Cooking Guacamole Lilly Kerekes, Mexico	Recycling for Flowers Alev Ateş Dönmez, TR	

	Poland	Seyahatler (Mülteciler) Mehmet Ates, TR	:)		
<b>10 July Fri.</b>	Eye Contact Nino Khundadze Georgia	Derya Atakan, Making a toy,TR	Peace in Body (Sports) İsa Ateş, TR	Geometric Shapes and Art Aysel Erkovan, TR	
<b>11 July Sat.</b>	Astronomy: Discovering the Space Simin Bakhtiar, Iran	Uganda Kültürünü Anlamak/ Understanding Culture of Uganda, Prossy Nambijja	Dream a Story Pat Farrel, Ireland	What are the Germs? Ekaterina Tyrina Russia	
<b>12 July Sun.</b>	Chess Time-3 Francesco Stoduto, Italy	Creating an Artwork, (Valerio) Marco di Mauro, Italy	My Toys My Childhood Mehmet Ates, TR	Creating an Artwork, (Gaia) Valerio Marco di Mauro, Italy	
<b>13 July Mon.</b>	Peace Songs in Different Languages Uygar Ateş, TR	World Quiz Erdi Cengiz, TR	Mandala Wilma Langeweld, The USA	Hadi spor yapalım (Vücut&Beyin) Let's do exercises (Body&Brain) İsa Ateş&Hasan Ateş	
<b>14 July, Tue.</b>	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	
<b>15 July Wed.</b>	History of Egypt Revan Doğru, TR	Recycle, geridönüşüm Angiola Brumana/Lucia Cane	Recycle for Art Popovich Svetlana, Russia	Making a basket Wilma Langeweld, The USA	
<b>16 July Thu.</b>	Ecology-Doğayı Keşfedelim	Bir Dil Bir Dünya insan/One	BEAT Global  Beat boxingle music yapmak		

	Nino Piroshmanashvili, Georgia	Language One World Hasan Ateş, Turkey	Chesney Snow, Hannah Kim The USA		
<b>17 July Fri.</b>	ABC of Canada Anna Wiczorek, Poland	Peace Culture of Uganda Prossy Nampijja, Uganda	Nail Drawing Rekha Phadke India	Nahuat Words Lilly Kerekes, Mexico	
<b>18 July Sat.</b>	Let's make Tiramisu and Pizza, R. Rota, A. Boninelli, F. Ghilardi, G.N. Gibertoni, Italy :)	PE via Mime&Drama Nurçin Karabiyik&Tuna Tanrıverdi, TR	Let's make the Meze of the Mediterranean. Hummus Esmer Alev, Turkey :)		
<b>19 July Sun.</b>	Let's do sports like animals, Russian animals. Anna Grishina Russia	Astronomy 2 Simin Bakhtiar, Iran	Singing a Mayan Song Miriam Kerekes, Mexico	Bingo Boy from Poland, Anna Wiczorek Poland	
<b>20 July Mon.</b>	Wall decoration for servas peace school	Wall decoration for servas peace school	Wall decoration for servas peace school	Wall decoration for servas peace school	Servas Peace School Party Everyone here! :) :) :)



## Appendix B

### Workshop Content Details Form

<b>Facilitator Name:</b>	
<b>Country:</b>	
<b>Workshop name:</b>	
<b>Aim of the workshop:</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	
<b>Age group for participants:</b>	
<b>The number of participants:</b>	
<b>Date/time of the workshop:</b>	
<b>Duration of the workshop:</b>	
<b>Materials that participants may need:</b>	
<b>Additional comments:</b>	

## Appendix C

### Facilitator Evaluation Form

<b>Workshop Name of the person presenting the Workshop:</b>	
<b>Name of the workshop work:</b>	
<b>The target of the workshop work:</b>	
<b>Workshop language:</b>	
<b>Participants age group:</b>	
<b>1. How many people attended the event?</b>	
<b>2. How long was the event completed?</b>	
<b>3. Do you think the event has achieved its purpose? Can you explain with a few examples for your positive and negative answers?</b>	
<b>4. What difficulties did you face during the event?</b>	
<b>5. If you were going to do this workshop again, what would you like to do differently?</b>	



## Appendix D

### 12. SERVAS Peace School Participant Evaluation Form

<b>City/COUNTRY that you are participating from:</b>	
<b>Age:</b>	
<b>Number of workshops that you have attended</b>	
<b>What did you learn from the workshops?</b>	
<b>What was your favorite workshop?</b>	
<b>Why did you like this workshop so much?</b>	
<b>What was the least interesting workshop?</b>	
<b>Why didn't you find this workshop interesting?</b>	