

Evaluation of the exhibition project “war is not a child’s play” (2001-2003)

To open the programme of activities with the exhibition in each town was a very successful method as the local media reported extensively about the opening. In nearly all participating cities there have been a large number of press releases and articles in the daily newspapers who predominantly contained images of drawings from the exhibition. In most cases the media reported in detail about the activities of the accompanying programme. The broad press coverage has reached the desired objective which was to put the subject 'children and war' on the media agenda and to promote the programme.

The activities and events of the accompanying programme served to deepen raised questions and impressions gained by the exhibition, to give background information to specific subjects and to propose a plan for action. An innovative approach lay definitely in the many-sided cultural offers.

The proposals made by the leading team concerning readings, film sessions, youth theatre productions and workshops were picked up by nearly all cooperating NGOs and were completed with a lot of creative ideas and other artistic contributions. Those events mainly dedicated to children and youths, but who were also presented to adults, have been most valuable as proven by the high amount of visitors and the reaction of the participants. Other activities like the more conventional information events, e.g. lectures or podium discussions, were met with less interest. Despite the rather low amount of visitors at the lectures also these events were regarded as interesting and stimulating as they provided room for extensive exchange.

Through the close cooperation with schools and other extracurricular institutions as youth libraries it was possible to integrate a large number of young people into the project who were an important target group. Especially in those cases where the exhibition was shown directly in schools and where school teachers integrated the issue into the curriculum many children were reached.

The necessary well elaborated didactic material put together in a media kit designed by the CulturCooperation were presented in several introductory workshops to teachers and multipliers. Those materials were assigned as helpful and were intensively used by most of the schools in the participating towns. The loaning of the media kits was free of charge and even after the end of the project they remained in the schools or youth libraries which was very much appreciated by all participants. The extensive and complex didactic material will continue to be used and form a fund for piece educational activities not only for schools but also for other institutions of education. This is also true for the revised and updated exhibition documentation containing background information on the subject 'children and war', well received by all cities.

From our point of view the children and youth programme was extremely successful as it gave young people a variety of possibilities to deal with 'war and violence'. Apart from the worldwide war scenario children get confronted with nearly every day by the media and whose reactions to it vary from diffuse fear to a fascination for military action, a number of workshops took place in which children and youths could discuss their impressions and reflect their own experiences of violence as well as their own conflict behaviour.

Our central concern of the project was to open up a forum for activities of piece education and conflict resolution on a local level and to do networking among different organisations in order to make it a central future issue. In close cooperation with NGOs, associations and

multipliers in the children and youth work, with civil actors as well as schools and institutions of extracurricular education and culture this objective was successfully realised.

Statistical evaluation

Year	2001	2002	2003	2001-2003
Federal states	Lower Saxony	North-Rhine-Westfalia	Berlin-Brandenburg	
Number Cities/ Places	12	10	11	33
Number participating institutions	62	76	41	179
Number of visitors	14.957	15.900	18.310	49.167
Youth programme	5.551	3.100	2.700	11.351
Programme of activities	2.037	3.400	1.500	6.937
Further exhibiting places	Netherlands (Groningen)	South Africa (Johannesburg)	Austrich (Wien) Netherlands Germany (Hamburg (Final conference)	
Number of visitors	858	1.200	14.480	16.538
Accompanying programme	56		720	776
Total number of participants	23.459	23.600	37.710	84.769