

# Consolidation, Learning and Evaluation in Kenya and Rwanda. A critical review of Changing the Story Projects in Eastern Africa

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Arts and  
Humanities  
Research Council



CHANGING  
THE STORY



# Introduction

This report shares on how formal and informal citizenship and peace education for teaching and learning with young people in the Changing the Story (CTS) East African region has been transformed by the infusion of Arts Based Methodologies.

This comes from analysis and evaluation of the findings from four CTS research projects:

1. Phase 1 Project – Mobile Arts for Peace Project (MAP) (Rwanda)
2. Phase 2 Early Career Researcher Project – Young peoples' interpretations of civic national values (CNM) (Kenya)
3. Phase 2 Early Career Researcher Project – Connective Memories (CM) (Rwanda)
4. Phase 2 Large Grant Project – Reanimating Contested Spaces (RCS) (Rwanda)

The fusing of project findings serves to advance knowledge and understanding on common themes of learning for peace education through arts-based methodologies, and what may be the future possibilities for the scalability, and sustainability of these projects across Eastern Africa.

# Overview of the four connected projects

## MAP Mobile Arts for Peace (Rwanda)

*This is a Phase 1 project for Changing the Story.*

The aim of MAP is to work with young people, educators, cultural artists and civil society organisations to inform the National Curriculum Framework in Music, Dance and Drama in Rwanda. In 2018, MAP was launched in the Eastern Province of Rwanda. Initial activities included a curriculum workshop with cultural artists to inform the methodology, a training of trainers with educators to adapt the methodology to local and regional contexts, and a youth camp to train young people as facilitators working alongside the adult educators to develop drama clubs and to integrate the methodology into schools.



## Examining Interpretations of Civil National Values made by Young People in Post-Conflict Settings (Kenya)

*This is Phase 2 ECR project for Changing the Story.*

This project aims to empower children in post-conflict settings to articulate their interpretations and shared communications of civic national values through their creation of a performance arts-based 'scheme of work' as a process of transformative learning for supporting local and global Civil Service Organisations (CSOs) in reducing poverty and advancing education for all, as part of the peace-building process.



# Overview of the four connected projects

## Connective Memories (Isangizanyankuru): Intergenerational Expressions in Contemporary (Rwanda).

*This is a Phase 2 EOR project for Changing the Story.*

Drawing on arts-based methodologies, the Connective Memories (CM) explores the ways that memories are made, mediated and negotiated by Rwandan young people to create new social imaginaries, in contexts where narratives of trauma and violence dominate. While there has been increasing attention to intergenerational transmission of trauma, this is largely framed by theory and practice from the Global North and there has been far less consideration about how children themselves approach the concept and practice of memory and how this may act as a resource to create cultures of their own making.



## Reanimating Contested Spaces (ReSpace) (Rwanda)

*This is a Phase 2 Large Grant project for Changing the Story.*

ReSpace investigates how concepts of space, through arts-based participatory methods, can engage the 'post-memory' generation in Rwanda to reimagine specific sites of memory. The project intends to impact upon educational content and methods in these countries by introducing creative methods to explore concrete spaces in young people's social surroundings. These spaces bear witness to often-silenced, everyday histories of, for example, civic resistance and societal cohesion, before or after war and violence. The project combines innovative technologies with causal, factual (evidential, not selective) and affective approaches to history in contrast to essentializing stories of war horrors and victimisation. The methods, focus and spaces explored thereby serve as interactive and exploratory civic educational means for youth to identify:

- 1.The contextual reasons for societal disintegration and violence.
- 2.The civic potentials of counteracting these processes.



# Overarching CTS Consolidation of Learning Questions

In speaking to OECD Sustainable development goals

- a) What do young people, CSOs, and research partners learn about post-conflict issues through CTS activities, and how does this learning take place?
- b) How do arts-based and participatory research approaches facilitate this learning?
- c) What are the implications of these understandings of learning for epistemic justice and decolonisation of knowledge?
- d) What are the implications for change and development at individual, community and policy levels?

## **SDG4: Providing quality education**

Education – both formal and informal – is a central element of many of our projects, and methodologies and approaches used by our Proof of Concept projects in Rwanda and Kosovo, for example, have been extended to new commissioned projects both in these countries but also in Kenya and Nepal. In relation to this, reflecting on the nature of 'Youth Leadership' is also becoming increasingly central to the overall project.

## **SDG10: Reducing inequality within and among countries**

Many of the young people we work with have developed new skills in participatory research, and arts based methods, which has for some led to further educational opportunities and income generating opportunities, for example in South Africa, Bosnia and India. The idea of providing a platform for marginalised youth to discuss exclusion/social powerlessness is prominent across our projects, particularly by ECRs, such as in Zimbabwe, where the project provides a platform for Tonga youth, a historically marginalised community, to voice challenges and biases they have experienced. In Malaysia the ECR project focuses on youth-led social enterprises and addresses the issue of youth economic empowerment.

## **SDG16: Promoting just, peaceful and inclusive societies**

Using Arts and Humanities methodologies to show the importance of cultural awareness, historical understanding, and critical discussion of concepts such as peace, justice and strong institutions (in part challenging the SDGs themselves, and the role of CSOs in delivering them in specific countries and contexts) is essential for enabling culturally sensitive, context-specific and sustainable responses to development challenges.

## **SDG17: Partnerships for the Goals**

Our commitment to 'partnership for the goals' is evidenced through CTS developing and spreading best practice through an international network of academics, civil society organisations and young people.

# Review of Literature

Our consolidation of learning from the projects began with the Principal Investigator and Project Partners conducting a critical review of project reports and findings generated by MAP, CNV, CM and RCS. This collation of data enabled a clearer interpretation of the common themes of learning across the projects, and what could be the future possibilities for the collective advancement of our projects.

Therefore, the purpose of the critical review was to generate key objectives, key aims and questions of inquiry for shaping our consolidation of learning meetings with stakeholders across all four projects.

Our consolidation of learning applies comparative cross-cultural perspectives for providing valuable opportunities to blend findings of the research questions from the four CTS East African projects so as to create new objectives and aims in disseminating and sustaining our work.

# Consolidation of learning research objectives

Two key objectives have emerged from our critical review of four projects and their findings:

1. To sustain the growth of a dynamic community of practice between Rwanda and Kenyan stakeholders where peace education is at the heart of learning?
2. To develop an open access community space of participation where youth-led approaches for peace education is at the heart of learning and development.

# Consolidation of learning research aims

Three key research aims have emerged our critical review of four projects and their findings:

1. **To create the space for cross-cultural collaborations.** Hbw... Collation, analysis and sharing examples of best practice with CSOs across the projects for evidencing impact and advancements with peace education teaching and learning in the Eastern African Region.
2. **To provide continued opportunity for the voicing of diverse narratives.** Hbw...Drawing upon diverse experiences and narratives in approaches to Arts Based Methodologies allowing for comparative evaluation and for seeing its current impact on CSO work and future possibilities with policymaking, decolonising curriculum knowledge, scalability and sustainability.
3. **The commitment with narrowing the knowledge gap.** Hbw...Empowering the voices of project participants providing them with autonomy and the ability to record their work in progress with young people.



# Consolidation of learning questions

Two key consolidation of learning questions have emerged from our critical review of four projects and their findings:

1. What does best practice look like from CTS East Africa projects in advancing and sustaining peace education through community values?
2. How can a community of practice for peace education be formed and maintained through a shared learning space? What should this look like? Who are the stakeholders in leading, maintaining and sustaining this?

# Online Focus Group meetings

In generating the consolidation of learning aims, objectives, aims and questions, face-to-face seminars were to be held at the University of Rwanda in Autumn of 2020. However, the worldwide COVID19 pandemic prevented these meetings causing the reframing of our approach.

A series of Zoom online focus group meetings have been held between Winter 2020/21 and Spring/Summer 2021, facilitated by the Principal Investigator with Project Partners, Directors of Art for each project. These meetings have included younger adults who have engaged with each of the projects over the last two years.

The purpose of the online Focus Group meetings being to create space and opportunity for cross-cultural collaborations including the collation, analysis and sharing examples of best practice with CSOs across the projects for evidencing impact and advancements with peace education teaching and learning in the Eastern African Region.

CTA CTS Consolidation of Learning Grp Meeting 1 - S... Download (3 files)

- b) How do arts-based and participatory research approaches facilitate this learning?
- c) What are the implications of these understandings of learning for epistemic justice and decolonisation of knowledge?
- d) What are the implications for change and development at individual, community, and policy levels?

**CTS East Africa region consolidation of learning research objectives**

- To sustain the growth of a dynamic community of practice between Rwanda and Kenyan stakeholders where peace education is at the heart of learning?
- To develop an open access community space of participation where youth-led approaches for peace education is at the heart of learning and development.

**CTS East Africa region consolidation of learning research aims:**

- Create the space for cross-cultural collaborations  
Collation, analysis and sharing examples of best practice with CSOs across the projects for evidencing impact and advancements with peace education teaching and learning in the Eastern African Region.
- Provide a continued opportunity for the voicing of diverse narratives  
Drawing upon diverse experiences and narratives in approaches to Arts Based Methodologies (ABM) allowing for comparative evaluation and for seeing its current impact on CSO work and future possibilities with policymaking, decolonising curriculum knowledge, scalability, and sustainability
- Commitment to narrowing the knowledge gap  
Empowering the voices of project participants providing them with autonomy and the ability to record their work in progress with young people.

**CTS East Africa region consolidation of learning research questions:**

- What does best practice from CTS East Africa projects in advancing and sustaining peace education through community values look like?
- How can a community of practice for peace education be formed and maintained through a shared learning space? What should this look like? Who are the stakeholders in leading, maintaining and sustaining this?

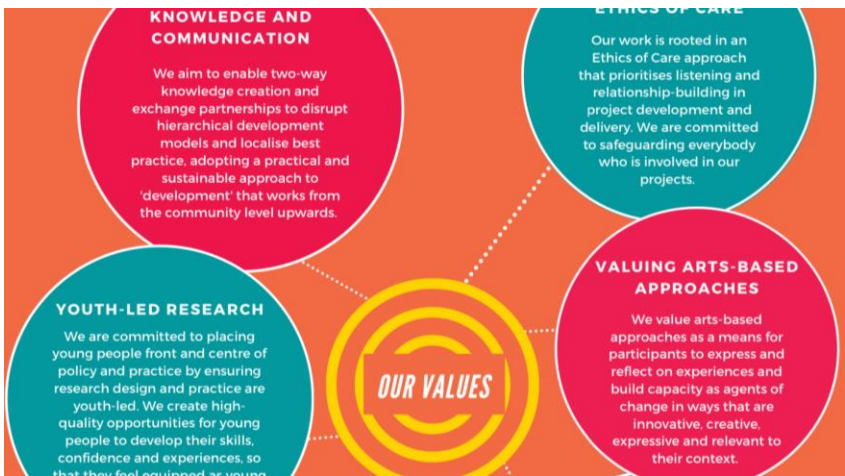
**Chat Messages**

- Alex Ndibwami 42:32  
I lost sound.
- Alex Ndibwami 42:39  
is it just me?
- DR. SYLVESTRE NZAHABWAN... 43:07  
We can follow Alex. Check your mike.
- Esther IMO 43:34  
Sorry Alex. My sound is good. If it persists you can join n the meeting afresh
- Alex Ndibwami 44:58  
ok. I'll just rejoin shortly after settling. on the road currently.

zoom CTS Consolidation of Learning Grp Meeting 2 - S... Download (3 files)

**Chat Messages**

- scott mcpherson 41:40  
https://sidequestvr.com/
- scott mcpherson 57:24  
https://hubs.mozilla.com/posVNGJ/changing-the-story
- Dr Marlon Moncrieff 01:07:10  
To move around use Q W E S D



# Emerging themes from Focus Groups

Discussion between project stakeholders in relation to the consolidation of learning objectives, aims and questions agreed on three themes as pathways to development

- 1. Community Values**
- 2. Establishing safe spaces for dialogue**
- 3. Voices of young people at the centre of curriculum dialogue**

# Community Values

MAP, CNV, CM and RCS have identified teaching and learning 'community values' through reflections on past experiences, and future perspectives through the voices of young people as being extremely valuable to their empowerment and activism, and as a core aspect of young people's formal and informal citizenship education. The research project framed by this report applies comparative research lenses for presenting an understanding on the congruent features of MAP, CNV, CM and RCS and particularly the voices of marginalised and hard-to-reach young people and CSOs. New knowledge from learning can be understood from young people's engagement across the research projects as stakeholders; as researchers; as activists and as curriculum designers. Furthermore, how young people speak to decolonising and transforming epistemological functions of existing national curricula. This is learning which enables possibility for rebuilding current CSO practice and approaches to peace education through formal and informal approaches to education in the East African region, by providing a clear understanding on how CSOs are attempting to deal with the legacy of past violence on the key issues facing young people in East Africa today. This consolidation of learning research project brings to the fore how local agency in diverse contexts is understood, what power relations exist, how might it be strengthened with comparative insights from other contexts and projects across the region.

# Establishing safe spaces for dialogue

The analysis of MAP, CNV, CM and RCS findings speak to the benefits of establishing safe space for dialogue in teaching and learning through peace education. For example CM findings discussed the project's success in creating safe spaces for intergenerational dialogue, to reflect on memory and legacies of violence and the use of arts-based methods to enable alternative forms of expression through the Isangizanyankuru. There is a cross over in relates to the goals of RCS in its notions of creating space for young people's participation in via VR/Oculus and the sharing of diverse narratives. This can also be synthesised with findings generated by MAP where the context of this work in community, schools in new spaces of participation was in effect providing apprenticeship opportunities for young people to show their capabilities of expression in civic engagement for possible future political engagement. A future link with CNV is where young people are empowered to lead the teaching and learning in the school community space, decolonising curriculum knowledge for peace education driven by a scheme of work (Appendix 1) which allows for their reimagined visions of ideal futures.

# Voices of young people at the centre of curriculum dialogue

MAP, CNV, CM and RCS have collectively identified how new knowledge for peace education must be generated by voices of young people at the centre of dialogue.

For example, CNV implemented praxis for peace education through child-led participatory arts-based methodologies. CNV was successfully applied in school settings of contrast: rural/urban and state/independent. This provided young people with lead voice in learning and the empowerment in being able to creatively use and apply their lived experiences and voices as part of a collaborative learning process. MAP functioned similarly by empowering young people the ability to take the lead in communicating the issues that they face to policymakers through performance, visual arts and film

The CTS Phase 1 and CTS CNV (Kenya), MAP and CM (Rwanda) are framed by the national curriculum aims and contents. Young people's pedagogical reinterpretations of these documents were in effect a critical decolonising of dominant curriculum (aims and contents) knowledge through the implementation of arts-based methodologies, allowing a clearer path for two-way communication between young people and policymakers in approaches to peace education. This empowered young people to forge a route to influencing future policies for education and teaching and learning through the national curriculum

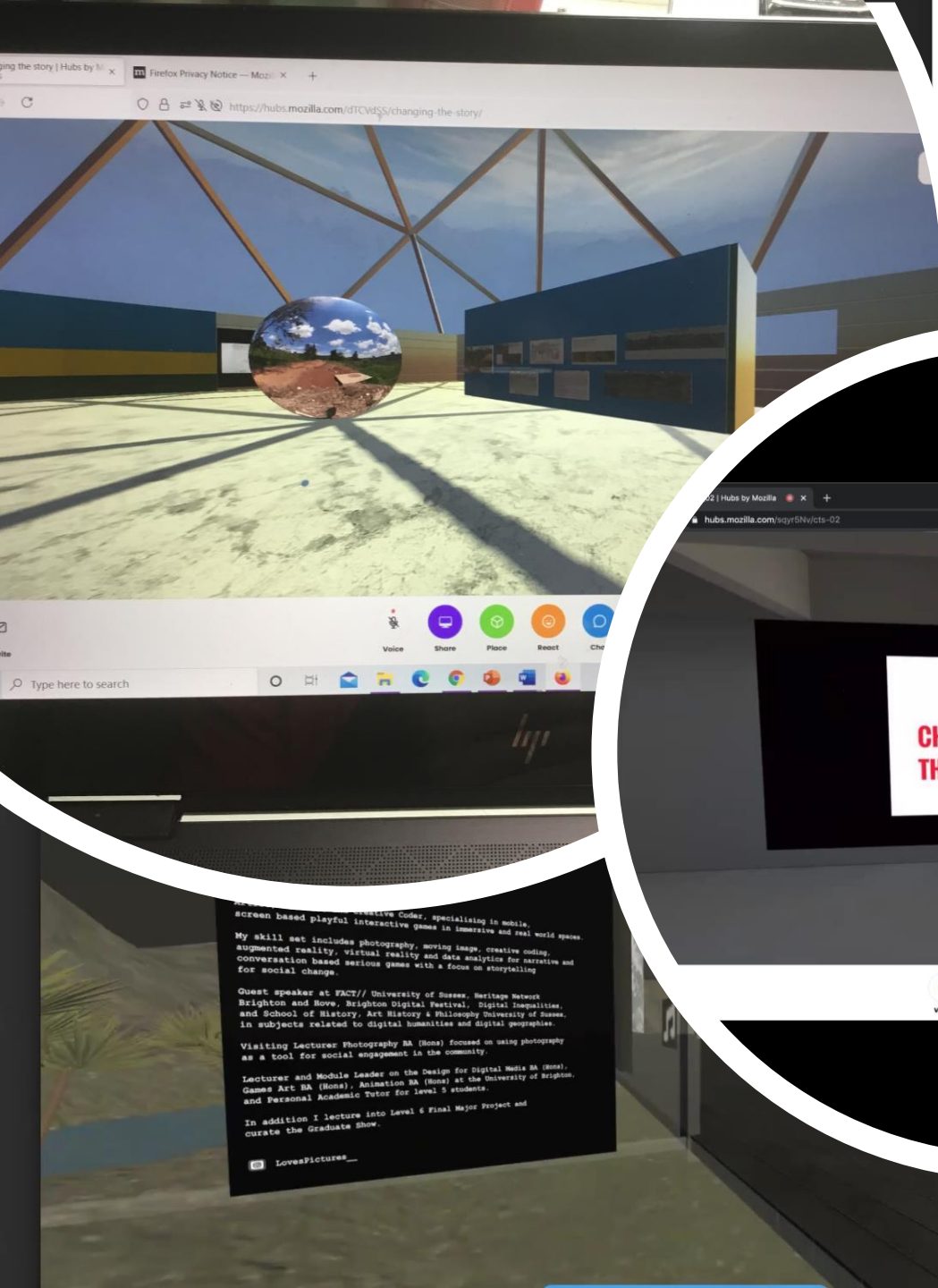
CNV via its 'scheme of work'; MAP via its manual and CM via its PAR toolkit (incorporated as part of the MAP manual) each offer practical frameworks for arts-based approaches to teaching and learning on peacebuilding. Each approach provides a blend of theory and practice for the reinterpretation of macro policy (national curriculum) by the findings of practice and impact at micro level led by the interventions of young people.

# Development of focus group themes in relation to consolidation of learning questions

1. What does best practice look like from CTS East Africa projects in **advancing and sustaining** peace education through community values?
2. How can a **community of practice** for peace education be formed and maintained through a **shared learning space**? What should this look like? Who are the stakeholders in leading, maintaining and sustaining this?

Innovation in our consolidation of learning advanced to the possibility of **advancing and sustaining a community of practice through a shared learning space** via online Virtual Reality – an arts based approach to education and development where all four projects could be brought together as one.



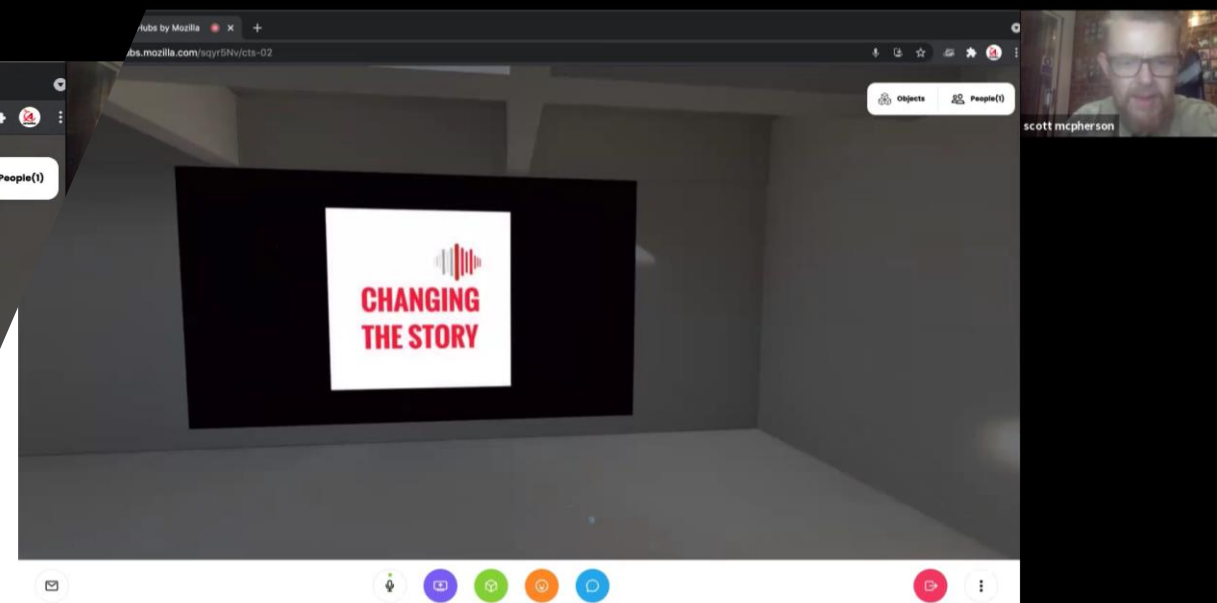
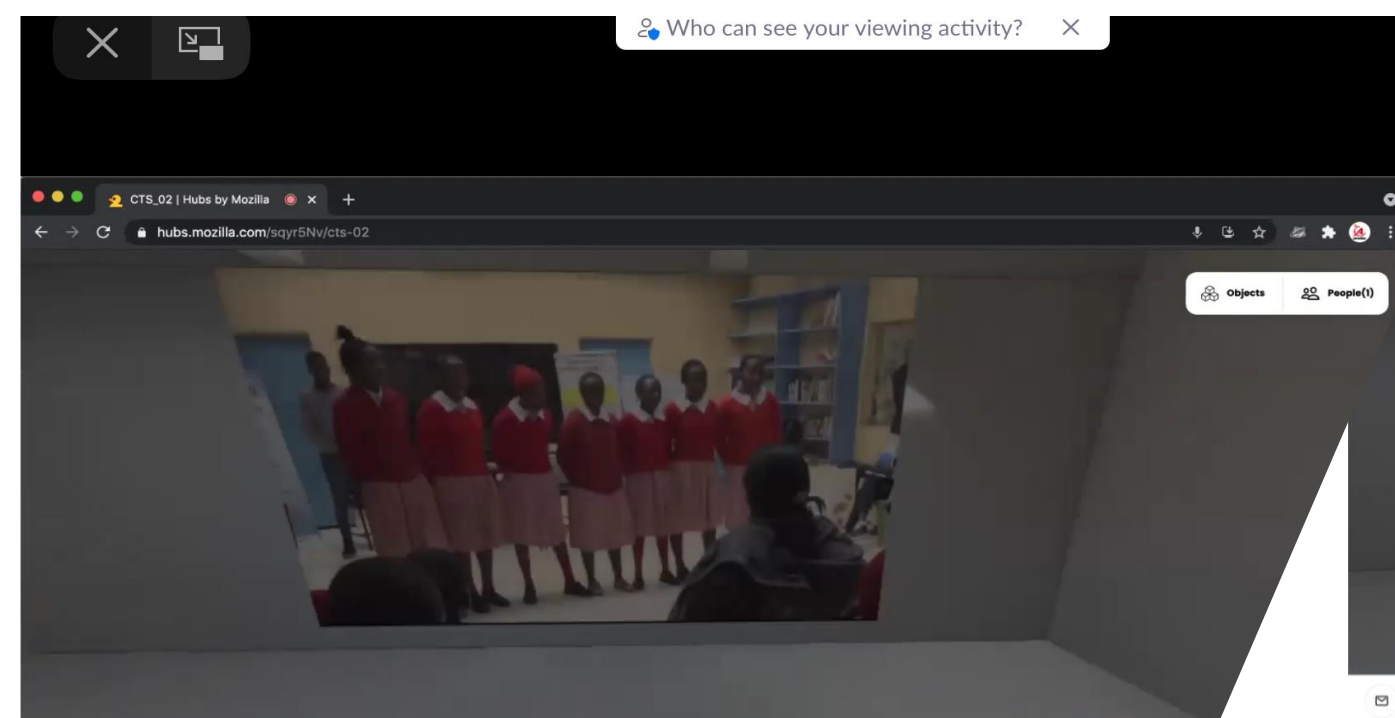


- Absence of negative feelings
- Tolerance



## Childhood memories





# Stakeholder Strategy

## In speaking to OECD Sustainable development goals

For engaging further with policymakers this project will seek AFRIC FoF for sustainability and scalability in the continued development of this cross-cultural project particularly for advancing:

- Continued collaboration and dissemination of best practices understood from CTS findings in advancing Peace Education with teaching and learning across the Eastern African Region with CSOs and via arts based methodologies. This in advancing the consolidation of learning aim- **Provide a continued opportunity for the voicing of diverse narratives, Create the space for cross-cultural collaborations.**
- To develop the digital literacy skills for young people, CSO leaders, teachers in East Africa in the use and application of Virtual Reality arts-based methodology and pedagogy. This in advancing the consolidation of learning aim- **Commitment to narrowing the knowledge gap.**

### SDG4: Providing quality education

Education – both formal and informal – is a central element of many of our projects, and methodologies and approaches used by our Proof of Concept projects in Rwanda and Kosovo, for example, have been extended to new commissioned projects both in these countries but also in Kenya and Nepal. In relation to this, reflecting on the nature of ‘Youth Leadership’ is also becoming increasingly central to the overall project.

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