

A Proposal for "100 Projects for Peace"



About us

IFIL.ch stands for „Initiative for Intercultural Learning“ and is a non-profit association founded by five Swiss students from the University of Geneva and the University of St.Gallen. Our objective is to inspire young people to take an interest in intercultural learning, to build bridges and promote a better understanding between different cultures. Amongst other events we are for the second year in a row organizing an intercultural trip for 20 young people to Venezuela (1.-14. September 2007), where we will have the opportunity to meet with decision makers from Venezuelan culture, business and politics and young local people¹. "100 Projects for Peace" therefore offers us a great opportunity to combine our stay in Venezuela with a peace-project, which will bear the following name:

"Various perspectives, two countries, one picture!"

What: Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's words to promote peace through dialog, our project aims at bringing people with different social and cultural backgrounds together to jointly plan the future.

Who: We plan on having 100 young Venezuelans between the ages 18-25 and 20 Swiss actively participating in the peace-project. The selection criteria will be set to have equal numbers of female/male participants, and a balanced spread of participants of different political orientation and social background. Physically and mentally challenged youth will also be participating.

How: Each participant will receive two single-use cameras with the assignment to document their every day life. The participants will not have any guidelines to follow regarding motifs. They will merely be requested to illustrate their way of life (family, friends, school, work, free time, meals etc.). The idea is that the participants will photograph the world the way that they perceive it. As a result their different *perspectives on life* will become visible. Together with the participants, IFIL.ch will develop the photos and arrange an exhibition, which will be open to the general public. The opening of the exhibition will also be attended by the Swiss students, who will be presenting their own photos. The "*dialog of peace*" will thus take place on two different levels: first an intersocial exchange between the different groups in Venezuela and secondly an intercultural exchange between the Venezuelans and the Swiss. Using the photos as a starting point, there will be discussions in mixed groups and comments will be made. A common meal

¹ For further information, please visit our website www.ifil.ch

and a workshop about intercultural differences aim to strengthen the exchange of experiences and to jointly look into the future. As a closing activity the participants will in cooperation create a "wall of peace" on which the young people can express their hopes, fears and chances of a peaceful future by painting a wall together. In order to have a second element commemorating the project, a report will be written by the participants, which later on will be published. Furthermore the participants will be encouraged to take responsibility and to start similar projects to pass on the intersocial and intercultural experience. The photo exhibition will later be shown in Switzerland as well.

Where: The Project will take place in Barquisimeto, which is the capital of the State Lara. Barquisimeto has about 740'000 inhabitants of which the majority is at the age under 25 years

When: In August 2007 a member of IFIL.ch will travel to Venezuela to instruct the Venezuelan participants on the event and to make arrangements for the exhibition. At the same time a second IFIL.ch member will introduce the project (which will be taking place during the two-week intercultural trip) to the Swiss participants. During the weekend of Sept. 8th and 9th, the Venezuelans and Swiss will be coming together to inaugurate the exhibition and to commence the events.

Contacts: Due to the first intercultural trip in October 2006, IFIL.ch possesses the necessary contacts in Venezuela in order to realize the project. Local Venezuelan students of the Universidad de Fermín Toro and the Swiss Embassy in Caracas will support our undertaking.

We are confident that the project will be successful and would be grateful for your trust. Your contact within IFIL.ch for „*Various perspectives, two countries, one picture!*“ is Martin Keller.

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