

## Cultivating Peace through Teaching History in Rwandan Secondary Schools: Opportunities and Challenges (Abbreviated Version)

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## Introduction

In the wake of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi, education has become a central tenant to peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts in Rwanda. Through a case study of two institutions and analysis of the 2015 national competence-based curriculum (CBC), this study identifies challenges and opportunities for cultivating a Culture of Peace through history classes at certain secondary schools in Rwanda.

Education has the ability to cultivate a Culture of Peace or Violence in its recipients. In Rwanda, pre-1994 formal education became a tool for inciting violence by presenting a discriminatory and identity-based view of history, systemically excluding Tutsi students, and promoting obedient population masses.<sup>1</sup> Prior to the genocide, “school classrooms were one of a number of public spaces in which the Hutu regime’s historical narrative about previous ethnic conflict, Tutsi dominance and malignancy was reinforced and propagated.”<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, “the teacher-centred pedagogy reinforced a top-down system of governance...[which] rapidly mobilise[d] a significant number of civilians to participate in the genocide.”<sup>3</sup>

In the last 23 years, the Rwandan government has propagated formal education that promotes national unity and decreases division amongst students.<sup>4</sup> This is especially true in the 2015 CBC, which incorporates the holistic idea of Education for a Culture of Peace (ECOP).<sup>5</sup> With the curriculum completed for two years now, it is essential to assess the extent to which it is achieving its goal of educating for a culture of peace so as to inform future programs.

History is a subject that sets the national narrative of memory. It determines what is considered “truth” and what actions – violent or peaceful – are justified. History may be taught in a way that cultivates a Culture of Peace in students. This is important, as educating youth to embody peaceful values is essential for dismantling violent tendencies – both historical and cultural – within a society. In Rwanda specifically, incorporating peace education into history classes can establish an understanding of the past that dismantles the Culture of Violence that arose in 1994 (but which had roots from before 1959). It can also help youth find ways to manage unpeaceful thoughts or experiences down the road.

A core objective of Rwanda’s CBC is to cultivate a Culture of Peace in students. Peace education is meant to be a holistic form of learning, which is factored in to all parts of the curriculum. Now, two years into implementation, this study reflects on this program to see if the content and pedagogy of history classes within the new curriculum are successfully cultivating peace. It identifies challenges that exist in the process of teaching history and the existing opportunities that can be capitalized upon to allow further improvements

This research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What historical narrative is portrayed in the Rwandan secondary-level national curriculum and how is it taught?
2. What are the existing opportunities and challenges for cultivating a Culture of Peace through history classes at certain secondary schools in Rwanda?

It does so through pursuing the following objectives:

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<sup>1</sup> Hilker, *The Role of Education in Driving Conflict and Building Peace: The Case of Rwanda*, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Hilker, *The Role of Education in Driving Conflict and Building Peace: The Case of Rwanda*, 8.

<sup>3</sup> Hilker, *The Role of Education in Driving Conflict and Building Peace: The Case of Rwanda*, 8.

<sup>4</sup> Aegis, “Peacebuilding Education.”

<sup>5</sup> Republic of Rwanda Ministry of Education and Rwanda Education Board, *Summary of Curriculum Framework Pre-Primary to Upper Secondary 2015*, 4-5.

1. To see if the content of Rwandan secondary school history curricula cultivates a Culture of Peace in its students.
2. To see if the pedagogy for Rwandan secondary school history teachers appropriately prepares them to deliver ECOP programming.
3. To identify pending challenges and possible opportunities in the process of cultivating a Culture of Peace through history classes in certain Rwandan secondary schools.

## **Methodology**

This study looks at the content and pedagogy for history classes in the Rwandan 2015 national CBC. Criterion for ECOP were developed based on existing literature so as to analyze the curricula and its deliverance. Interviews were conducted with governmental and non-governmental organization (NGO) stakeholders in the curriculum's development to clarify the background and creation process of the CBC.

Furthermore, the study looks specifically at the cases of two secondary schools: College Ami des Enfants and Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya. Both institutions are located in Kinyinya (within Kigali), and have the CBC integrated into their educational programs. These schools were selected based on their physical proximity – a control for geographic bias – and due to the fact that the former is a private institution and the latter a public one. Within these schools, the sample population encompassed students taking history classes, history teachers, and administrators involved in curricular and pedagogical affairs.

Data collection occurred in two steps. First, a unique framework of ECOP was created based off existing literature. This included clear indicators of what lessons must be taught (content) and how (pedagogy) to cultivate a Culture of Peace to its full capacity. Using this, the CBC was analyzed to assess the extent to which its content and pedagogy follow the guidelines of the ECOP framework. The information gathered from this stage was then transferred into graphs and other forms of data presentation. This made clear the extent to which ECOP themes are incorporated in the CBC and helped identify existing trends or lack thereof.

The second stage was based on interviews, focus groups, and observation with CBC development stakeholders and individuals from two secondary schools in Kigali. Interviews were conducted with creators of the secondary-level CBC history curriculum from the National Commission for the Fight Against Genocide (CNLG), Rwanda Education Board (REB), National Itorero Commission, Institute of Research and Dialogue for Peace (IRDP), the University of Rwanda, and Collège St André.

For the case studies, interviews were conducted with the Director of Studies at both College Ami des Enfants and Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya. Focus groups and interviews were carried out with the history teachers of both College Ami des Enfants and Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya in addition to focus groups with nine S4 history students at Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya and 22 history students at College Ami des Enfants. One class was observed at College Ami des Enfants: a lesson from S1 History and Citizenship. Ultimately, the opportunities and challenges for ECOP through history classes at these schools were determined by information gathered through the ECOP framework, interviews, focus groups, and observation. This was translated into recommendations for future implementation.

Study limitations include: 1. Students under age 18 were not included as they are unable to provide legal consent without guardian approval; 2. Participation of interviewees was purely on a voluntary basis; 3. Observational opportunities at the two case study schools were constrained due to the commencement of exams, and; 4. Due to time and geographical restrictions, both schools in the study are located in Kigali.

Furthermore, it is important to recognize this study is not large or comprehensive enough to extrapolate its findings to the whole of the Rwandan peace education or history programs.

However, recommendations are provided for these two schools so that they and other domestic academic institutions may benefit from this study.

## Framework and Findings

### ECOP Framework: Content and Pedagogy

The framework used for this study to assess the extent to which curricular content educates for a Culture of Peace is broken into the following themes: 1. The Causes, Prevention, and Non-Violent Resolution of Conflict; 2. Cultural Respect and Solidarity, 3. Human Rights and Equality, 4. Environmental Protectionism, 5. Responsible Citizenship, 6. Justice, 7. The International System, and 8. Inner Peace. These topical areas were devised through thorough analysis of existing frameworks for ECOP. Those include the work of Toh Swee-Hin, the UN 1999 *Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace*, the *Learning to Abolish War* framework, Ian Harris' "Peace Education Theory," and Kevin Kester's Masters thesis.<sup>6</sup>

The eight indicators were selected by comparing the guidelines put forward by each of the aforementioned authors to find similarities in ECOP requirements. All included topics related to environmental peace, international studies, and human rights. Many also discussed the importance of inner peace. Some, such as the UN 1999 *Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace* were too State-centric in their structure to appropriately assess curricula. Others, such as Swee-Hin's model or the *Learning to Abolish War* framework, had very broad guidelines that would not provide the intimate look at ECOP topics desired in this study. Therefore, while the eight thematic areas are grounded in these existing theories, they are broken into unique guidelines.

1. The Causes, Prevention, and Non-Violent Resolution of Conflict includes both micro and macro instances of violence. For example, it covers topics of the lead-up to and history of wars, revolutions, colonialism, slave trade, genocide, conflict resolution practices, and prevention of rights violations.
2. Cultural Respect and Solidarity incorporates messages of respect for local and foreign customs and culture. It focuses on developing an understanding of the nuances of different cultural values and traditions.
3. Human Rights and Equality pertains to violations and affirmations of human rights – as outlined in the UN's *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* – both domestically and abroad.
4. Environmental Protectionism revolves around sustainability. It places emphasis on examples of both positive and negative environmental stewardship and encompasses the causes and impacts of natural disasters.
5. Responsible Citizenship discusses topics of civic participation and the duties, responsibilities, and obligations of citizens. It intends to expose students to instances of both meaningful and historically harmful participation in the State.
6. Justice covers local and international justice systems. It discusses actions taken by historical actors in pursuit of what was seen as "just" or "right" – for instance, the rational behind and objective of slave rebellions.

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<sup>6</sup> Swee-Hin, "Education for Sustainable Development & the Weaving of a Culture of Peace"; UN General Assembly, *Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace*; Betty Reardon and Alicia Cabezudo, *Learning to Abolish War: Teaching Toward a Culture of Peace: Sample Learning Units Book 1*; Betty Reardon and Alicia Cabezudo, *Learning to Abolish War: Teaching Toward a Culture of Peace: Sample Learning Units Book 2*; Harris, "Peace Education Theory"; Robin Burns and Robert Aspeslagh, "Approaching Peace through Education: Background, Concepts and Theoretical Issues"; Kester, "Assessing the Impact of Peace Education Training Programs: A Case Study of UNESCO-APCEIU"; Navarro-Castro, *Peace Education: A Pathway to a Culture of Peace*.

7. The International System centers on non-domestic content. This may range from all systems to regional unions, even to diplomatic affairs and the global economy.
8. Inner Peace consists of content that can be applied to the learner's life in terms of peaceful living habits. This takes into consideration spiritual practices, conflict mitigation skills, societal responsibilities, and family and personal values.

Educational programming should include all eight of these themes in order to holistically and effectively conduct ECOP.

Just as this study's framework has eight indicators for content, it has five for pedagogy: 1. A focus on developing values, 2. A focus on developing skills and capacities, 3. A focus on developing knowledge, 4. Are learner-centered and participatory, and 5. Depend on the behavior, knowledge, and understanding of teachers. These five characteristics were devised similarly to those for content, by analyzing and comparing existing ECOP pedagogies – namely those of Swee-Hin and Kester.<sup>7</sup> The descriptions of these five characteristics are as follows:

1. Values that may be formed through education are tolerance, respect, equality, empathy, and compassion.<sup>8</sup> Teaching to develop these attributes also promotes emotional solidarity among students.
2. Pedagogically informed skills and capacities include nonviolent communication, active listening, gender-inclusive language, cultural proficiency, and sensitivity.<sup>9</sup> These cultivate in learners a greater sense of self-awareness and understanding of reality, and provide tools to navigate interpersonal relations.
3. "Knowledge" in ECOP programming means comprehension of peace and violence throughout the past. This encompasses wars, genocides, revolutions, peace movements, justice systems, and conflict resolution. It provides students with an in-depth grasp of historical trends towards conflict perpetuation and mitigation so as to raise awareness of methods of peace cultivation.
4. Learner-centered and participatory pedagogy is manifested through methods of teaching that prompt learner involvement and welcome inquiry. Classroom teaching is not based on lecture or memorization, but should maximize analytical growth by using a diverse set of instructional techniques. Information taught is based on the prior knowledge and experiences of students, and learners have the ability to question and engage in the class agenda. Furthermore, participation is spread evenly and not dominated by a few students.
5. The teacher's behavior and relation the subject matter can greatly impact students. Educators are exemplary figures for their learners; therefore, their deliverance of lessons and treatment of others should embody the characteristics of peace they are trying to instill in their students.

Together, these five characteristics of ECOP pedagogy build a learning environment conducive for absorption of peace education content and development of nonviolent life traits.

### **Analysis of CBC: Content and Pedagogy**

Analysis of CBC content and pedagogy within the scope of the ECOP framework was conducted by first doing a deep read of the both the Ordinary Level History and Citizenship and Advanced Level History curriculums. From there, each year's units were classified based on the

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<sup>7</sup> Swee-Hin, "Education for Sustainable Development & the Weaving of a Culture of Peace"; Kester, "Assessing the Impact of Peace Education Training Programs: A Case Study of UNECO-APCEIU."

<sup>8</sup> Kester, "Assessing the Impact of Peace Education Training Programs: A Case Study of UNECO-APCEIU," 58.

<sup>9</sup> Kester, "Assessing the Impact of Peace Education Training Programs: A Case Study of UNECO-APCEIU," 58.

ECOP framework indicators that were incorporated into lessons. This was accomplished by using the pre-determined description and scope of each indicator to identify direct inclusion of the theme in the CBC unit.

S3 Unit 10, “National and international human rights instruments and the protection of human rights,” serves as an example. This unit was classified under the indicators The Causes, Prevention, and Non-Violent Resolution of Conflict, Human Rights and Equality, Responsible Citizenship, Justice, and Inner Peace. The following bullets justify why the unit could be listed under those five indicators:

- It fit under The Causes, Prevention, and Non-Violent Resolution of Conflict due to the learning objective of “analy[zing] how human rights are protected in the democratic system.”<sup>10</sup>
- Human Rights and Equality was addressed through content on “effectiveness of national and international human rights instruments.”<sup>11</sup>
- Responsible Citizenship was cultivated through the learning objective of “understand[ing] ways of protecting human rights in the context of democracy.”<sup>12</sup>
- Justice was included through the learning activity of “Read relevant materials to get information about national and international human rights instruments and summarise your findings.”<sup>13</sup>
- Inner Peace was incorporated into the learning objective of “Acquire [the] spirit of justice and protection of human rights.”<sup>14</sup>

### **Interpretation of CBC Data: Content**

Interpretation of the content-related data was facilitated by the quantification of the information in the charts. This occurred with two variations of the independent variable: one with the indicator as the independent variable, and one with the year.

First, one graph was made per standard with the indicator as the independent variable. While there was little consistency in the prevalence of each of indicator between S1 and S3, there was surprising uniformity from S4 to S6. The implication of this pattern is that emphasis is consistently placed on certain indicators as compared to others. While The Causes, Prevention, and Non-Violent Resolution of Conflict and The International System are most represented across all three years, Environmental Protectionism and Justice are least.

To further explore these trends, a graph was created with the average appearance of each indicator across the six standards. This was executed by taking the average of each indicator’s prevalence from S1 to S6. These values were plotted across the y-axis of a horizontal bar graph, as shown in Figure 1.

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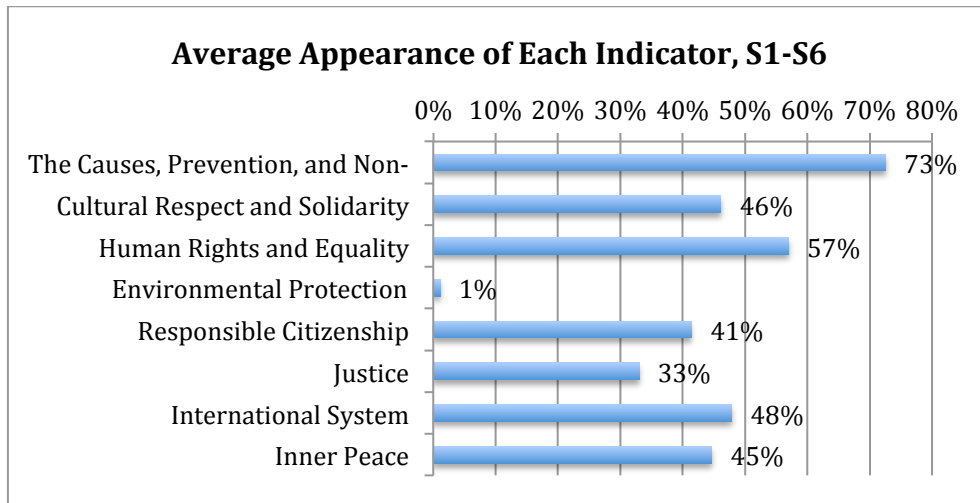
<sup>10</sup> Republic of Rwanda Ministry of Education and Rwanda Education Board, *History Syllabus for Ordinary Level S1-S3*, 62.

<sup>11</sup> Republic of Rwanda Ministry of Education and Rwanda Education Board, *History Syllabus for Ordinary Level S1-S3*, 62.

<sup>12</sup> Republic of Rwanda Ministry of Education and Rwanda Education Board, *History Syllabus for Ordinary Level S1-S3*, 62.

<sup>13</sup> Republic of Rwanda Ministry of Education and Rwanda Education Board, *History Syllabus for Ordinary Level S1-S3*, 62.

<sup>14</sup> Republic of Rwanda Ministry of Education and Rwanda Education Board, *History Syllabus for Ordinary Level S1-S3*, 62.



**Figure 1**

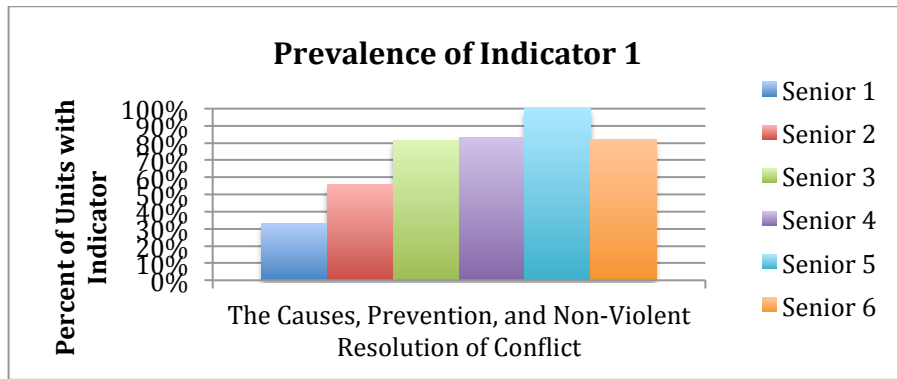
From here, it became clear that all of the indicators are well represented (present in at least 30% of the units), with one exception: Environmental Protectionism. In fact, content directly pertaining to environmental affairs was nearly nonexistent between the six standards. One rationale for this could be that Rwanda has yet to experience many consequences from natural conditions. Although the country is facing pressure from land degradation, soil erosion, and deforestation, these are not new challenges.<sup>15</sup> In fact, the Rwandan government has implemented policies to promote sustainable development and environmental protection, which have proven relatively successful thus far.<sup>16</sup> Subsequently, environmental issues come second to other national focuses, for instance development, unity and reconciliation. This is reflected in the CBC as areas such as The Causes, Prevention, and Non-Violent Resolution of Conflict – which directly relate to pressing social issues like post-genocide reconstruction – receive much greater attention. A leader in the National Itorero Commission spoke to this when she said new content in the CBC primarily concerns historical conflicts and is related to unity, conflict transformation, dignity, and self-reliance.<sup>17</sup> While this is currently the case, there may be future environment-related events that cause the country to place greater educational emphasis on the topic. For now, a Culture of Peace can be cultivated through CBC content, but with the limitation of minimal environmental education.

Second, one graph was made per indicator with the year as the independent variable. This was accomplished by calculating the proportion of units listed under the indicator per year. From the graphs, a trend immediately became clear: there is a steady increase in the prevalence of The Causes, Prevention and Non-Violent Resolution of Conflict and The International System from S1 to S6. This is shown through Figures 2 and 3.

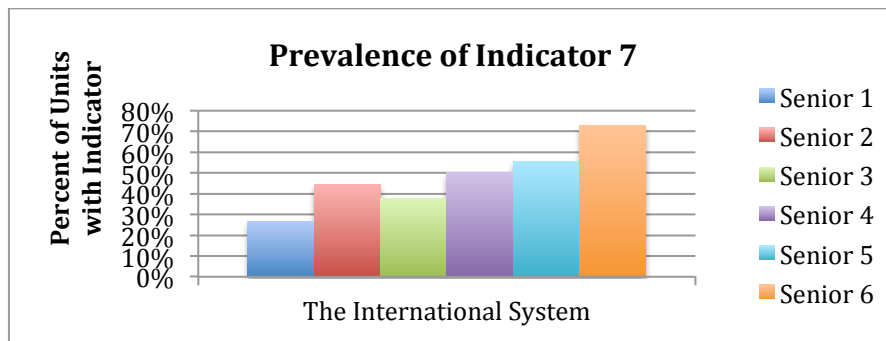
<sup>15</sup> *Environment* | ONE UN Rwanda, United Nations.

<sup>16</sup> *Environment* | ONE UN Rwanda, United Nations.

<sup>17</sup> National Itorero Commission Participant, Personal interview, 4 November 2017.



**Figure 2**



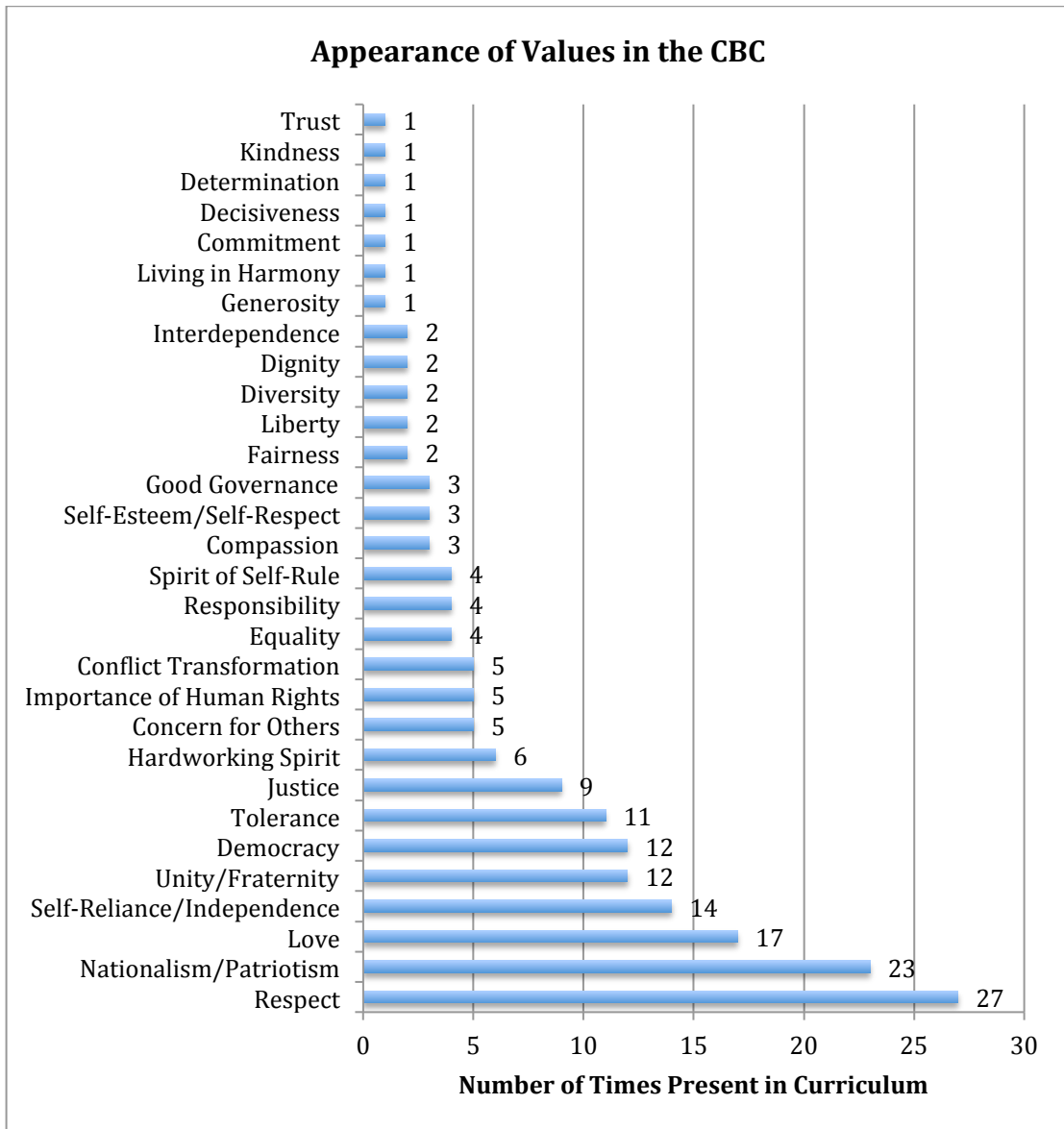
**Figure 3**

The association between these two variables is likely attestable to most internationally focused units directly relating to conflict or conflict resolution. For instance, in S3 the international units are: “Colonial administrative systems and colonial powers,” “Colonial reforms and their consequences on African societies,” “Causes of decolonization in Africa: Case Study, Ghana and Kenya,” “Analyse the 1789 French Revoltion,” “Causes and effects of the first world war,” “Between two wars,” “African response to colonial conquest,” “National and international human rights instruments and the protection of human rights,” and “Identify Rwandans in reference to regional groupings.” Many of these deal with conflict in terms of the causes and consequences of colonization, international wars, or conflict resolution through rights protections. Hence, it would make sense for a positive correlation to exist between these two indicators.

### **Interpretation of CBC Data: Pedagogy**

From the extensive amount of data pertaining to value formation, it was clear that this characteristic is present in the CBC. Quantification of this characteristic came from identifying values directly discussed in the CBC, and then counting the number of times they appeared in the curriculum. This information was transferred into a horizontal bar graph, shown in Figure 4.





**Figure 4**

The values of Love, Nationalism/Patriotism, and Respect each appeared over 15 times in the CBC. Others frequently mentioned were Self-Reliance/Independence, Unity/Fraternity, Democracy, Tolerance, and Justice. This information primarily shows two things. First, value formation definitely is incorporated into and an intention of the CBC. Second, the values prioritized by curriculum developers have to do with national cohesion and fraternity among citizens. A REB History Specialist supported this when she said: "...if our learners have habits in a Culture of Peace, they will be good citizens. Because they'll be tolerant students, [there will be] no conflicts, no bad manners, no genocide ideology."<sup>18</sup> This closely relates to the curriculum's focus on post-conflict reconstruction and unity.

In order to reflect on the presence and intention of skill and capacity development in the curriculum, the data previously collected was re-classified into general themes. Those overarching skills and capacities (listed in order of appearance from most to least often) were:

<sup>18</sup> Rwanda Education Board Participant, Personal interview, 2 November 2017.

1. Conflict management and transformation, 2. Assessment of measures adopted by the State, 3. Fostering of national pride, 4. Promotion of social cohesion, 5. Awareness of personal values, identity, and responsibilities, 6. Cultural proficiency, 7. Social, cultural, political, and economic analysis, 8. Prevention of human rights violations, 9. Analysis of factors and consequences of oppression, 10. Advocacy for homegrown solutions, 11. Inclusiveness of disability, 12. Advocacy for equality, 13. Prevention of gender based violence and domestic abuse, 14. Advocacy for democracy, and 15. Demonstrations of solidarity.

Again, the large presence of skill and capacity formation shows this pedagogical characteristic is present within the curriculum. In terms of the focus of these skills and capacities, the four most common themes were: Conflict management and transformation, Assessment of measures adopted by the State, Fostering of national pride, and Promotion of social cohesion. These remain consistent with previous findings, as they are closely related to the most emphasized values as well as focal points of curricular content. They also closely align with the traits needed to cultivate a Culture of Peace as identified by a leader at the National Itorero Commission: critical thinking, action, social cohesion, respect for diversity, individual responsibility, resistance to violence and manipulation, and inclusiveness.<sup>19</sup>

Learner-centered and participatory teaching is a multi-faceted aspect of pedagogy. Two ways it can be addressed in curricula are: 1) the extent to which learning builds on the prior knowledge of students, and 2) recommended educational activities for teachers. Interviews with curricular developers highlighted the fact that a priority of the CBC was for learning to build year upon year. The History Specialist from REB explained this concept and provided an example:

...the big change we have now is to put those themes and topics and sub-topics and the units progressively, horizontally and vertically. We can see, for example, genocide. In the old curriculum, we learn[ed] genocide studies in S3 and S6, but now, we learn genocide studies from S1 till S6. Because for example, S1 is definitions and different types of genocides, in S2 it's genocide in different countries, S3 is genocide against the Tutsis and the cause of genocide and how we stop genocide. [S4 is the comparison of genocides.] S5 we learn genocide denial, and in S6 we learn how to prevent genocide. You see, progressive genocide studies.<sup>20</sup>

A Director from CNLG commended this progression of learning in the CBC by saying: “you [now] have in one document all the information you need from beginning to end.”<sup>21</sup>

Statistics derived from the collected data confirm that the CBC builds on the prior knowledge of students. In S2, 13/18 (or 72.22%) of units are connected to prior curricular lessons. For S3 to S6, these figures were 13/16 (81.25%), 8/12 (66.66%), 6/9 (66.66%) and 9/11 (81.81%) respectively.

The spread of recommended learning activities was identified by recording all recommended activities and their frequency of appearance in the curriculum. A graph of the data showed there is a clear inclination towards a few learning activities in the CBC. Those are: group work and presentation, individual research and presentation, individual research and essay writing, and group work and summary. These four activities are quite similar in that they revolve around individual or group topic investigation and application. While more diverse teaching methods – such as video watching, poem writing, role-play, and debate – are included, they are recommended with much lower frequency.

A curriculum developer and teacher from Collège St André voiced concerns over the lack of diversity in teaching methods under the curriculum. He said: “Teachers think the CBC is

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<sup>19</sup> National Itorero Commission Participant, Personal interview, 4 November 2017.

<sup>20</sup> Rwanda Education Board Participant, Personal interview, 2 November 2017.

<sup>21</sup> National Commission for the Fight Against Genocide Participant, Personal interview, 1 November 2017.

only to organize group work... This is very difficult to implement [effectively] in the big classes... Teachers first think about how to complete the content and not the competencies.”<sup>22</sup> He elaborated on this by describing first-hand experience with effective role-play and debate in S1 history classes.<sup>23</sup>

Curriculum developers from CNLG, REB, the National Itorerero Commission, and Collège St André all agreed that additional teacher training is essential to ensuring this pedagogical characteristic is fulfilled.<sup>24</sup>

## Case Studies

### Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya

Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya (GSK) is a school of 3,182 students located in the Kinyinya Sector of Kigali.<sup>25</sup> 706 of those students attend secondary school.<sup>26</sup> GSK is a public institution, meaning its funding is provided by the government. Since the government’s implementation of Nine Year Basic Education (2007) and 12 Year Basic Education (2010) – which provide free education through secondary school – the demand for public schooling has increased nationwide.<sup>27</sup> While this has placed new pressure on public institutions, it has also caused some private schools to close altogether.<sup>28</sup> According to the Ministry of Education, in 2016 there were 1,322 public or government-aided and 253 private schools in Rwanda.<sup>29</sup> 474,663 students attended the former, while only 79,076 were enrolled in the latter.<sup>30</sup>

The CBC was introduced to GSK for the 2016-2017 school year.<sup>31</sup> Prior to its implementation, Wellspring Academy (a private school in Kigali) and REB provided training for teachers.<sup>32</sup> Wellspring Academy conducted the majority of this training due to the fact that GSK and Wellspring had an established relationship.<sup>33</sup> Training came in the form of workshops and a teaching material expo, at which materials were displayed from various schools.<sup>34</sup> According to the school’s Director of Studies, there are currently five teachers at GSK who were trained by Wellspring.<sup>35</sup> All three educators who undertook REB training left the school, but they have acquired one teacher who received this training prior to joining GSK.<sup>36</sup> There is a system in place – as recommended by Wellspring – in which subject teachers meet on a weekly basis to provide each other advice and feedback.<sup>37</sup>

The school’s three secondary history educators and Director of Studies all agreed that the CBC technically makes the role of the teacher easier, as they are now facilitators instead of

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<sup>22</sup> Collège St André Teacher, Personal interview, 20 November 2017.

<sup>23</sup> Collège St André Teacher, Personal interview, 20 November 2017.

<sup>24</sup> National Commission for the Fight Against Genocide Participant, Personal interview, 1 November 2017; Rwanda Education Board Participant, Personal interview, 2 November 2017; National Itorerero Commission Participant, Personal interview, 4 November 2017; Collège St André Teacher, Personal interview, 20 November 2017.

<sup>25</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Administrator, Personal interview, 27 October 2017.

<sup>26</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Administrator, Personal interview, 27 October 2017.

<sup>27</sup> Benson, *Reversing Privatization of Education: Case Study of Rwanda*.

<sup>28</sup> Benson, *Reversing Privatization of Education: Case Study of Rwanda*.

<sup>29</sup> Republic of Rwanda Ministry of Education, *2016 Educational Statistical Yearbook*, 34.

<sup>30</sup> Republic of Rwanda Ministry of Education, *2016 Educational Statistical Yearbook*, 34.

<sup>31</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Administrator, Personal interview, 27 October 2017.

<sup>32</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Teachers, Focus group, 26 October 2017.

<sup>33</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Teachers, Focus group, 26 October 2017.

<sup>34</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Teachers, Focus group, 26 October 2017.

<sup>35</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Administrator, Personal interview, 27 October 2017.

<sup>36</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Administrator, Personal interview, 27 October 2017.

<sup>37</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Administrator, Personal interview, 27 October 2017.

the sole possessors of knowledge.<sup>38, 39</sup> However, all were adamant that the amount of training was insufficient.<sup>40, 41</sup> According to one educator, the curriculum is “too large to comprehend,” as every lesson has a different style of teaching.<sup>42</sup> While the formal and informal training has provided a good general overview, the teachers need continued support in carrying out the new program.<sup>43</sup> The Director of Studies agreed with this when she said educators need a lot more training, especially pertaining to the specific lessons and branches.<sup>44</sup> To her, training must be continuous, and it’s “more important to get training on the pedagogy because teachers have foundations in the content. It’s not a problem in training content but in methodology.”<sup>45</sup> The director also commented on the fact that GSK educators were fortunate to receive additional training due to the school’s relationship with Wellspring; many other institutions were not provided the same opportunity.<sup>46</sup>

The three teachers identified two more factors hindering implementation of the CBC in GSK: a lack of resources and the language barrier. One said: “Materials were planned, like projectors, computers, maps... but [are] not available. [We] only have written materials. [We] don’t have the visuals to make a student-centered approach, so our teaching is no different than before.”<sup>47</sup> Students pointed out that class remains focused around lecture but there is now increased question-and-answer and group work.<sup>48</sup> Another educator described textbook scarcity, as there are only 10 books for 60 students; these copies arrived late during the school year, and the teachers do not have the funding to make photocopies of lessons for students.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, no money has been provided for field study, a highly recommended aspect of the CBC.<sup>50</sup> A S4 student commented on this by saying: “We just have class, we don’t get to go out and practice.”<sup>51</sup>

Although all formal education is conducted in English, students and educators usually use the local language, Kinyarwanda, at home.<sup>52</sup> Therefore it’s more difficult for teachers to deliver the material and for students to comprehend or respond to it. While the school provides feedback to the District and Sector levels on challenges it faces, change is slow.<sup>53</sup> Since the CBC is only one and a half years into implementation, the coming time will be pivotal in conducting monitoring and evaluation and creating changes.

The three teachers and Director of Studies were extremely positive about the content of the CBC. The director commented: “The old [curriculum] was just to give knowledge to learners. But the new one, it is really good. It trains learners to have comprehension, to become able to solve the problems of real life.”<sup>54</sup> The educators highlighted new topics included in the curriculum, such as the Gacaca courts and crosscutting issues of peace education and gender.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Teachers, Focus group, 26 October 2017.

<sup>39</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Administrator, Personal interview, 27 October 2017.

<sup>40</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Teachers, Focus group, 26 October 2017.

<sup>41</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Administrator, Personal interview, 27 October 2017.

<sup>42</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Teachers, Focus group, 26 October 2017.

<sup>43</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Teachers, Focus group, 26 October 2017.

<sup>44</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Administrator, Personal interview, 27 October 2017.

<sup>45</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Administrator, Personal interview, 27 October 2017.

<sup>46</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Administrator, Personal interview, 27 October 2017.

<sup>47</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Teachers, Focus group, 26 October 2017.

<sup>48</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Student Group 1, Focus group, 27 October 2017.

<sup>49</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Teachers, Focus group, 26 October 2017.

<sup>50</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Teachers, Focus group, 26 October 2017.

<sup>51</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Student Group 3, Focus group, 27 October 2017.

<sup>52</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Teachers, Focus group, 26 October 2017.

<sup>53</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Administrator, Personal interview, 27 October 2017.

<sup>54</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Administrator, Personal interview, 27 October 2017.

<sup>55</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Teachers, Focus group, 26 October 2017.

One provided an anecdote about integrating peace education into the classroom during a lesson on national security. He said: “I try to ask learners how they can defend security using peaceful methods. For example, Rwanda had [the] problem of the genocide against the Tutsi – I teach how to prevent the ideology of genocide, which is related to the peace of Rwandans.”<sup>56</sup> Another discussed teaching peace through lessons on the First and Second Republics: “The Republics taught people how they are different [through] the three classes. I show them how it was discrimination and try to help them find the ways to avoid that discrimination in home, at school, in the whole society.”<sup>57</sup>

The educators summarily commented on how the new curricular content and pedagogy are helping to cultivate a Culture of Peace in their students. They noted that the curriculum now focuses deeply on peace, unlike the previous one, and all agreed that they are seeing positive change.<sup>58</sup> One mentioned that they are seeing good value development in and less fighting between students, as learners are expected to uphold methods of conflict resolution among themselves.<sup>59</sup> Accordingly, student grades have improved, as learners “now participate – their ideas are being taken into consideration. Now they think the teaching is improving them.”<sup>60</sup>

Learners themselves said their history education is helping them understand the past so that they can refrain from repeating its violence and create peace.<sup>61</sup> To the students, education is essential for learning traits of unity and reconciliation and to create a peaceful Rwanda.<sup>62</sup> Despite the many pending challenges, there is still a shared belief that the CBC is moving Rwandan education in the right direction.

### **College Ami des Enfants**

College Ami des Enfants (CADE) is a private secondary school of approximately 500 students, around 400 of whom board on the campus.<sup>63</sup> It is also located in the Kinyinya Sector of Kigali. The CBC was introduced to CADE classrooms starting in 2016, but preparation for it began in 2015.<sup>64</sup> Thus far, there has been a training that all the teachers attended, as well as individual subject sessions that the school sent two teachers to at a time – both were provided by the government.<sup>65</sup> Those that attended the smaller trainings were expected to share their learning with the other teachers through school-organized workshops.<sup>66</sup>

When asked about the impact of the trainings, the Director of Studies said: “it’s not yet effective... Why? Because I still see teachers handling their students the way they did under the old curriculum. There is what they learn and what they do. Those are two different things.”<sup>67</sup> Students remarked that class materials are nearly all written on the board and explained.<sup>68</sup> This is followed by time to ask questions, and group work is added from time to time.<sup>69</sup> One of the two history teachers at the school commented that training “did not help much” because “the people who taught us were half-baked also.”<sup>70</sup> The second teacher supported this:

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<sup>56</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Teachers, Focus group, 26 October 2017.

<sup>57</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Teachers, Focus group, 26 October 2017.

<sup>58</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Teachers, Focus group, 26 October 2017.

<sup>59</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Teachers, Focus group, 26 October 2017.

<sup>60</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Teachers, Focus group, 26 October 2017.

<sup>61</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Student Group 2, Focus group, 27 October 2017.

<sup>62</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Teachers, Focus group, 26 October 2017.

<sup>63</sup> College Ami des Enfants Administrator, Personal interview, 2 November 2017.

<sup>64</sup> College Ami des Enfants Administrator, Personal interview, 2 November 2017.

<sup>65</sup> College Ami des Enfants Administrator, Personal interview, 2 November 2017.

<sup>66</sup> College Ami des Enfants Administrator, Personal interview, 2 November 2017.

<sup>67</sup> College Ami des Enfants Administrator, Personal interview, 2 November 2017.

<sup>68</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Student Group 1, Focus group, 27 October 2017.

<sup>69</sup> Groupe Scolaire Kinyinya Student Group 1, Focus group, 27 October 2017.

<sup>70</sup> College Ami des Enfants Teacher 1, Personal interview, 31 October 2017.

...three teachers were sent to go and represent us. Then... they go and train us. But even those people who trained them, they don't have enough information about the new curriculum. So they came back and told us they didn't know or understand anything about the new curriculum. So we learned nothing.<sup>71</sup>

Acknowledging these training gaps, the school administration has taken it upon itself to organize additional sessions for next year.<sup>72</sup> Noting the CBC's similarity to the international Cambridge curriculum, the Director of Studies believes it's important to have CADE teachers work closely with international educators to improve delivery.<sup>73</sup>

Similar to GSK, the greatest challenges for implementing the CBC were identified as a lack of resources and difficulties with English. A history teacher discussed the unavailability of books: there is only a single copy of the textbook for S1 and three copies for S2; S4 and S5 do not have any.<sup>74</sup> This is complicated by the fact that, as a private institution, CADE is responsible for purchasing its own textbooks.<sup>75</sup> One history teacher suggested parents should purchase them, instead.<sup>76</sup>

Materials from the old curriculum can be used for teaching subjects that have remained the same, but new lessons have no teaching aids.<sup>77</sup> Therefore, all teachers can do is prompt students with questions and ask them to do research.<sup>78</sup> The other educator described this by saying "Teachers rely on their own information. They give us the curriculum...but we don't have backup."<sup>79</sup> While the CBC expects use of the Internet, videos, CDs, textbooks, a projector, and fieldwork, only a projector is available.<sup>80</sup> One teacher noted, "...the curriculum is very hard to put into practice because some of the teachers don't know English very well. They usually use the local language. We need more training in English."<sup>81</sup>

A former teacher herself, the Director of Studies stressed that educators need to persist until more resources are available. She asserted the curriculum is meant to serve as a flexible guide embellished by each teacher.<sup>82</sup> Accordingly, educators should "think about [themselves] in terms of the individual teacher and about how [they're] teaching... [They] shouldn't let the institution be an obstacle."<sup>83</sup> Her rationale was: "However difficult it is, we have to accept it's the best curriculum. So we have to find a way to implement each and every part of it. We need to persevere so the curriculum can pick up properly."<sup>84</sup> This speaks to the generally positive attitude of the Director of Studies, teachers, and history students towards the CBC.

Few changes from the old curriculum were identified in terms of content, but the Director of Studies acknowledged that learning materials now build across the years.<sup>85</sup> One teacher said the CBC requires more practical than theoretical knowledge, which means students have to participate more than the teacher in the teaching-learning process.<sup>86</sup> He then described his method of teaching under the curriculum by saying: "I first introduce the topic, then, through guided discovery ask the students to think of the causes of conflicts then their solutions. Then

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<sup>71</sup> College Ami des Enfants Teacher 2, Personal interview, 31 October 2017.

<sup>72</sup> College Ami des Enfants Teacher 2, Personal interview, 31 October 2017.

<sup>73</sup> College Ami des Enfants Administrator, Personal interview, 2 November 2017.

<sup>74</sup> College Ami des Enfants Teacher 1, Personal interview, 31 October 2017.

<sup>75</sup> College Ami des Enfants Teacher 2, Personal interview, 31 October 2017.

<sup>76</sup> College Ami des Enfants Teacher 2, Personal interview, 31 October 2017.

<sup>77</sup> College Ami des Enfants Teacher 1, Personal interview, 31 October 2017.

<sup>78</sup> College Ami des Enfants Teacher 1, Personal interview, 31 October 2017.

<sup>79</sup> College Ami des Enfants Teacher 2, Personal interview, 31 October 2017.

<sup>80</sup> College Ami des Enfants Teacher 1, Personal interview, 31 October 2017.

<sup>81</sup> College Ami des Enfants Teacher 2, Personal interview, 31 October 2017.

<sup>82</sup> College Ami des Enfants Administrator, Personal interview, 2 November 2017.

<sup>83</sup> College Ami des Enfants Administrator, Personal interview, 2 November 2017.

<sup>84</sup> College Ami des Enfants Administrator, Personal interview, 2 November 2017.

<sup>85</sup> College Ami des Enfants Administrator, Personal interview, 2 November 2017.

<sup>86</sup> College Ami des Enfants Teacher 2, Personal interview, 31 October 2017.

after, as a teacher, I also supplement.”<sup>87</sup> The educator affirmed this has led to positive changes in his students by promoting knowledge and skills necessary outside the classroom.<sup>88</sup>

Observation of the other history teacher’s S1 classroom showed positive pedagogical practices. The theme of the lesson was “Forms and Principles of Democracy.” Class was structured into three parts: group work and presentation, question-style lecture, and an individual graded exercise.<sup>89</sup> The educator first divided students into groups of five or six.<sup>90</sup> Learners were given 40 minutes to produce notes on their topic.<sup>91</sup> The teacher periodically checked on groups and asked prompting questions; she pushed for participation from all students.<sup>92</sup> A leader was nominated from each group to present findings to the class.<sup>93</sup> The teacher recommended learners use the blackboard to provide visual aids while presenting, and had the class clap to say “good job” after each presentation.<sup>94</sup> Next, the educator asked students follow-up questions.<sup>95</sup> She provided an overarching summary of the lesson and added information not covered in presentations.<sup>96</sup> Through this, she ensured learners understood the concepts correctly and could apply them.<sup>97</sup> Finally, the students completed an independent exercise for a grade.<sup>98</sup> This was a four-question assignment based on the content covered in class.<sup>99</sup> These practices uphold the pedagogical characteristics in the ECOP framework.

In terms of learner results, one teacher believes his students’ grades are being negatively impacted by the abstract nature of learning under the CBC.<sup>100</sup> The other educator has noticed no changes in her students’ scores.<sup>101</sup> By contrast, the Director of Studies remarked that grades are improving due to more diverse methods of assessment.<sup>102</sup> Now, marks are not only based on cumulative exam results, but also incorporate other assignments and group work.<sup>103</sup> However, the director is concerned about next year’s exams, as it is unknown whether they will be based on fact memorization like before, or on the demonstration of competencies.<sup>104</sup>

The educator who did not recognize grade changes said there are definite behavioral improvements from the expanded peace education in the CBC. She said: “when you are teaching them, you try to show them how they should live,” and apply this learning to individual cases.<sup>105</sup> Accordingly, there will be a powerful impact in the long run both in and outside the school from the CBC.<sup>106</sup> However, she believes the curriculum alone will not be enough, so specialists in peace education should be brought in for additional learning opportunities.<sup>107</sup> The other teacher similarly believes student behavior is gradually changing for the positive, as teachers are giving vivid examples on the importance of maintaining peace and security in the country.<sup>108</sup> To him, in the future, this change will be big.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> College Ami des Enfants Teacher 2, Personal interview, 31 October 2017.

<sup>88</sup> College Ami des Enfants Teacher 2, Personal interview, 31 October 2017.

<sup>89</sup> College Ami des Enfants History Class, Personal Observation, 26 October 2017.

<sup>90</sup> College Ami des Enfants History Class, Personal Observation, 26 October 2017.

<sup>91</sup> College Ami des Enfants History Class, Personal Observation, 26 October 2017.

<sup>92</sup> College Ami des Enfants History Class, Personal Observation, 26 October 2017.

<sup>93</sup> College Ami des Enfants History Class, Personal Observation, 26 October 2017.

<sup>94</sup> College Ami des Enfants History Class, Personal Observation, 26 October 2017.

<sup>95</sup> College Ami des Enfants History Class, Personal Observation, 26 October 2017.

<sup>96</sup> College Ami des Enfants History Class, Personal Observation, 26 October 2017.

<sup>97</sup> College Ami des Enfants History Class, Personal Observation, 26 October 2017.

<sup>98</sup> College Ami des Enfants History Class, Personal Observation, 26 October 2017.

<sup>99</sup> College Ami des Enfants History Class, Personal Observation, 26 October 2017.

<sup>100</sup> College Ami des Enfants Teacher 2, Personal interview, 31 October 2017.

<sup>101</sup> College Ami des Enfants Teacher 1, Personal interview, 31 October 2017.

<sup>102</sup> College Ami des Enfants Administrator, Personal interview, 2 November 2017.

<sup>103</sup> College Ami des Enfants Administrator, Personal interview, 2 November 2017.

<sup>104</sup> College Ami des Enfants Administrator, Personal interview, 2 November 2017.

<sup>105</sup> College Ami des Enfants Teacher 1, Personal interview, 31 October 2017.

<sup>106</sup> College Ami des Enfants Teacher 1, Personal interview, 31 October 2017.

<sup>107</sup> College Ami des Enfants Teacher 1, Personal interview, 31 October 2017.

<sup>108</sup> College Ami des Enfants Teacher 2, Personal interview, 31 October 2017.

Learners themselves acknowledged messages of peace they have been exposed to in history class and implemented in their lives. Students identified lessons through which they learned to live peacefully with their classmates, family, or community. For instance, in African History they studied the partition and learned about vision and resistance; this taught the importance of fraternity within their community.<sup>110</sup> One student said: “The good thing history teaches us is unity. We study unity and how to live with other people.”<sup>111</sup> Every CADE student agreed that it is essential to learn about peace in the classroom.<sup>112, 113, 114, 115, 116</sup> The most common justification for this was lessons learned at school are applied in the greater community outside the classroom.

## Recommendations

Recommendations based on the prior data collection, analysis, and interpretation, are as follows. The intention of these suggestions is to build off existing opportunities and challenges within the CBC, GSK, and CADE to improve future programming.

For Both the Government and GSK and CADE School Administrators:

- Provide additional pedagogical training for secondary educators on CBC implementation. This should include simulations of specific units and practice of various teaching methods. Training should occur regularly throughout the year so as to consistently improve curriculum delivery.
- Provide supplementary English training for secondary educators. This should be ongoing so new language proficiency may be obtained.

For the Government:

- Make available classroom resources and teaching aids so that educators may more effectively implement all lessons of the CBC.
- Provide schools with a greater number of textbook copies so students can have direct access to those fundamental learning materials.
- In the next round of curricular revision, consider incorporating a stand-alone peace education class that is offered through all levels of secondary school. This will provide more direct ECOP learning for students.
- Conduct more formal monitoring and evaluation to collect feedback on opportunities and challenges for CBC implementation. Through this, meet with a variety of individual educators to obtain personal perspectives in addition to institutional ones.

For GSK and CADE School Administrators:

- Continue facilitating training and feedback programs among teachers so as to mutually develop their capacity in implementing the CBC.
- Hold town halls with teachers to gather feedback on CBC content and its implementation thus far.

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<sup>109</sup> College Ami des Enfants Teacher 2, Personal interview, 31 October 2017.

<sup>110</sup> College Ami des Enfants Student Group 3, Focus group, 1 November 2017.

<sup>111</sup> College Ami des Enfants Student Group 3, Focus group, 1 November 2017.

<sup>112</sup> College Ami des Enfants Student Group 1, Focus group, 1 November 2017.

<sup>113</sup> College Ami des Enfants Student Group 2, Focus group, 1 November 2017.

<sup>114</sup> College Ami des Enfants Student Group 3, Focus group, 1 November 2017.

<sup>115</sup> College Ami des Enfants Student Group 4, Focus group, 1 November 2017.

<sup>116</sup> College Ami des Enfants Student Group 5, Focus group, 1 November 2017.



- Invest in teaching aids and fieldwork opportunities to the greatest extent feasible within budget constraints. If possible, apply for additional or external funding to help these learning experiences materialize.
- Provide continuing feedback to the government on CBC content and implementation.
- For GSK specifically, incorporate textbook costs into annual school fees.

For GSK and CADE Educators:

- Focus on using diverse teaching methods, beyond just group work or independent research and presentation.
- Continue integrating peace education programming into classes as often as possible.
- Consciously add content pertaining to environmental protection where appropriate.
- Continue to integrate the ECOP pedagogical characteristics into classroom teaching.