



**Project Proposal:**

**“Ambiente de Teatro”**

**Environmental Training and Awareness through Performing Arts**

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## 1. Background

The project “Ambiente de Teatro” comes from the first special Youth Encounter on Sustainability (YES) Alumni course in Egypt in November 2008, which had the focus of “Water and Sustainability”. Approximately 20 international young professionals from countries such as Egypt, Colombia, Germany, Sudan, Uzbekistan and Canada, met in the Sinai Desert to discuss and to develop proposals for action to address the challenges that the water crisis brings for sustainable development. This proposal outlines one of the concrete projects developed during the course that came about from a two-way awareness process carried out between the local Bedouin community and course participants. The two groups came together to discuss topics related to the current and future state of water use and water resources in the Sinai Desert region. As a result of this work a group of approximately 40 children between the ages of 7 and 14 years, in addition to 7 young professionals between 21 and 33 years, created and directed a play about water in their region. Efforts were based on and derived from the tradition of the Bedouin community.

During this short and intensive process, members of the local community had the opportunity to articulate their concerns regarding water and sustainability through a role play exercise. Through this, a group of young children were engaged in a democratic, participatory, and creative decision-making process. In addition to this we were able to create a space for individuals of different backgrounds to share their insights, ideas and concepts on water management. The activities allowed participation of all the local children and youth of the community, as well as of the international facilitators in the construction of creative knowledge about the local reality of water scarcity, water management and Bedouin communities in the Sinai Desert in Egypt.

As a result of the successful implementation of the interactive theatrical production in Sinai, Egypt, the group decided that the methodology could be replicated. In this manner the approach could be used as a tool for education and awareness raising in communities in the other countries where the YES Alumni course participants came from. It is in this context, that the “Ambiente de Teatro ” project arises as a local methodology proposal for different countries and learning environments. With the aim of creating spaces for dialogue, for the construction of local knowledge and to develop proposals for action leading to the sustainability, water, our natural environment and global society. This project has been developed by YES alumni in collaboration with other local organizations that will work on the different topics that are proposed here.

A pilot project will be completed in Cartagena, Colombia in 2009. Upon successful completion there, similar pilot projects will be completed in water compromised communities in Sudan, Canada, Germany, and Egypt.

## 2. Goal

The “Ambiente de Teatro” project aims to contribute to the local youth empowerment for action on water crisis and its impacts on vulnerable communities using their own methodologies and proposals in order to develop local activities to raise awareness on both the causes and impacts of local manifestations water quality and quantity issues.

## 3. Objectives

To achieve this, the project seeks to fulfill the following objectives:

1. To develop a training process of young students and teachers on water issues in order to facilitate the dialogue between science and arts as a strategy for raising awareness.
2. To develop methodological tools that allow a more friendly approach to water issues through the arts that are the result of a creative process based on scientific knowledge of the local perspectives of the environmental crisis.
3. To create an artistic piece that will be used as a communication and awareness tool with local communities on environmental issues.
4. To promote organizational processes around the performing arts and the environment in regions that are the most vulnerable to the water crisis.
5. To contribute to community awareness on local water issues using methodologies such as Forum Theater and the results of the process of artistic creation.

## 4. Expected Benefits

- **Creation of local knowledge:** From the work developed in the “Ambiente de Teatro” we will develop interpretive processes of the available information on global and local water crises using new languages, such as theater and other arts techniques, resulting in new knowledge about environmental issues at the local level easier to be used by youth.
- **More tools to develop environmental awareness processes:** By offering a new field of action for the arts and especially the performing arts they become additional tools to develop innovative experiential processes in specific communities to build knowledge from the interpretation of information.

- **New applications of performing arts:** Art is applied to develop creativity and communicating potential in order to raise awareness and empower communities for action.
- **Strengthening the sense of social responsibility of the arts and artists regarding environmental issues:** By finding new fields for art techniques, the beneficiaries of the project identify new social roles, new responsibilities and challenges when executing for the artists and the arts.
- **Youth groups committed to sustainable development and culture:** As a result of the self-organizing processes that may arise from the project, new groups of young people will be created therefore expanding the multiplier potential effect of the initiative.
- **Local community awareness:** Thanks to the work of young students and teachers that were part of the training process, the public will be informed on topics that are familiar to them but not previously known in sufficient depth. This will be achieved by using the tools developed during the creative process, which will facilitate processes for local action.

## 5. Project Management

At the local level, the project implementation will be undertaken by a joint venture between the YES Alumni local team and a local organization with experience on arts and development projects. This arrangement will have the management support of ACTIS. Each organization shall appoint a person to serve as Project Coordinator. The Coordinator for the local organization will be in charge of the methodology of the project and the YES Alumni Coordinator will be responsible for the technical and scientific portions.

In each country, the project will be implemented jointly with local public or private schools, each of which shall in turn assign a liaison person to work with the coordinators. This person will be in charge of developing the methodology for their particular school, in collaboration with the Team Coordinators.

In Colombia, where the first pilot project will be developed, the project will be implemented in institutions of higher education in arts programs for performing arts groups with students and teachers interested in environmental and social issues, with emphasis on developing programs for the community through their professional practice. We have chosen Cartagena de Indias as our geographical focus in Colombia given the local environmental and poverty situation.

The team members from Sudan, Germany, Uzbekistan, Germany and Canada will either implement the project at the elementary, secondary, or post-secondary level, depending on the availability of time and resources of the YES Alumni Coordinator.

## **6. Project Methodology**

The methodology of the “Ambiente de Teatro” project is based on specific context, convenience and creativity. The most important component of the methodology of the project is working with the target group, young students of theater, and understanding their cultural and environmental context.

This methodology is based on the development of a creative process for the translation of knowledge about environmental conditions with respect to water issues, sustainable development and theory of change globally and locally. This knowledge will be presented to the target group who can translate it into their particular language.

The result of this creative process will be a theatrical production and it will be presented to their peers and their community as an awareness-raising tool. This process is carried out using the Forum Theater methodology.

The group participating in the creative process can replicate the experience in other communities and with other groups of students from performing arts to promote the formation of local environmental drama groups that use the tools in processes with their community.

These local groups will be chosen through the exchange of experiences once the intervention is done. This exchange will be completed through presentations of the final product of the first stage of the process, both to communities and arts groups in neighboring cities.

The project will be implemented in four phases: I) Concept Mapping, II) Understanding the target community, III) Working with the target group, and IV) Implementing the art. The phases are described in the following section. Project milestones and associated costs are outlined in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Project general implementation phases, milestones and associated costs.

Activity	Responsible group	Duration	Associated costs
<b>Phase I: Concept Mapping</b>			
Assessing work team expertise	Work Team (WT)	2 weeks	Team Meetings
Identifying water issue to work on depending on local situation	WT		
Evaluating methodologies available	WT		Material required
Work plan and proposal to target community	WT		
<b>Phase II: Understanding the target community</b>			
Field research (environmental and social issues)	WT + Community	1 week	Travel expenses
Interviewing community leaders	WT + Community		Recording material
Action plan for the local intervention	WT + Community		Paper
<b>Phase III: Working with target group</b>			
Reviewing action plan with TG	WT + Target Group (TG)	3 days	Posters
Define activity and assign tasks	WT	2 days	Materials for actions
Prepare material with TG	WT + TG	1 week	Work place and travel expenses
Training and creation workshops	WT + TG + Community	2 weeks	Work place and travel expenses
<b>Phase IV: Implementing the art!</b>			
Present results	WT + TG	2 weeks	Stage
Evaluation	WT + TG	1 day	Work space
Replication planning	WT + TG	2 days	Work space
<b>Total duration</b>		<b>9 weeks</b>	

### **Phase I: Concept Mapping**

In this phase we will consolidate the work team and the conceptual and methodological framework for the project. We will also define the evaluating criteria and indicators for the process in accordance with the goals of it.

### **Phase II: Understanding the target community**

In this phase the working team will approach the selected community by interacting with community leaders in order to identify the state of selected environmental issues, and to device the action plan.

### **Phase III: Working with the target group**

This is the implementation of the action plan developed with community leaders. It will be adjusted with inputs from the target group. Tasks will be divided and assigned, we will prepare material together and the creation process will be carried out.

### **Phase IV: Implementing the art!**

Once the target group has come up with a the product of the creation process, the results will be presented to the community for two weeks in order to reach as many individuals as possible and the evaluating process will be carried out. In accordance with the results and evaluation, a replicating process will be developed in this phase. These results will be filmed in order to share them with the other local projects in Canada, Germany, Sudan and Uzbekistan.

## **7. Continuation of the process**

The process can be replicated in different cities of the pilot country (Colombia) leading to the creation of an environmental theater network. This network would then work on raising awareness in Colombia through a process that was developed by young people in the local communities with the support of the YES Alumni Network in Colombia.

This project will be also implemented in the countries of the YES Alumni that were involved in the definition of the idea: Canada, Sudan, Germany and Egypt.

The methodology will have to be adjusted to the local characteristics but will seek the same results.

## 8. Budget

A budget is presented in Table 2 for the pilot project in the locality of Cartagena in the northern part of Colombia as described in Sections 5 and 6. The projected timeline for the pilot project is just over 2 months (9 weeks). Colombian coordinators will be paid honoraria of 25% of a full time job to cover personal expenses associated with the project. Travel expenses include two round trip flight tickets from Bogotá to Cartagena for the two coordinators in order to complete the activities of the project and lodging and meals during their stay in Cartagena. Other expenses include working place with the students, renting a space to show the results of the project to communities for at least two weeks and communications material.

**Table 2.** Itemized budget for the pilot project in Cartagena, Colombia.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Total EUR</b>
Coordinator YES Alumni	600
Coordinator Local Organization	600
Travel Expenses	600
Lodging and meals	560
Materials	300
Workplace	250
Stage	1000
Materials	200
<b>Total</b>	<b>4'100</b>