

ICDP training of teachers in Kenya, 2018-2019

Report by Panagiota Afaloniati

I am participating in an EU Aid Volunteer project called "Education and Awareness raising". The organization that is sending me from Europe is MONDO in Estonia and my hosting organization in Kenya is WEFOCO.

WEFOCO cooperates with various primary and secondary schools. One of my tasks is to implement ICDP sessions with primary school teachers. Until now I have completed the training in 4 schools where I have been conducting the ICDP sessions until April 2019.

I live in Shianda, East Mumias which is located in the west part of Kenya in Kakamega country. The schools are situated in the surrounding rural areas in a range of maximum 8 km.



The trained teachers come from: Rise and Shine Special School, Eshimuli, Mun'gan'ga and Eubere Primary Schools. So far 45 teachers received training.

I am planning to continue with Khaimba, Khabakaya and Mukambi Primary Schools.

The impact seems to be really positive as it is seen through the anonymous feedback they filled during our last session. Some of their statements are the following:

"My attitude towards caregiving has totally changed, I feel more free and closer to children"

"I can now appreciate the importance of being empathetic and human"

"I can value the needs and emotions of the child"

"I've been converted from a violent and non-sensitive person to a loving and understanding one"

"I changed my way of interacting with children from authoritarian to authoritative"

"I've become a better teacher and a better person; my interactions both in school and in society have improved"

"I am able to set limits on a positive way without the need of corporal punishment".

Corporal punishment is widely accepted in schools even though it was made unlawful in 2010 and 2017. What I tried hard during the ICDP sessions was to reactivate the caregivers' caring skills and boost their confidence about the existing positive features (resource-based approach). This was something very new for them and it turned out to be quite challenging, especially in a context where previous volunteers have been pointing out mistakes for

correction so the environment at schools at the beginning vibrated fear and insecurity. I am very happy that I managed to gradually create a trusting relationship with the teachers so that we could exchange information by actively listening to each other's points of view. There was a lot of meaningful reflection during the sessions.

In the last session, apart from the distribution of certificates, I also gave each of the participants a handout as a "present/reminder" with all the ICDP guidelines and some other important aspects of the programme, to remind them of our sessions and to keep the positive spirit up. Some of these handouts will be put in the teachers' offices in their respective schools. Teachers were encouraged to spread the message of good caring and most of them took the handouts to their homes to show their neighbours!

I have created a WhatsApp group with most of the trained teachers to encourage them to continue to share their insights, experiences and questions. Teachers understood the great need for ICDP sessions to be conducted with parents, babysitters and others who care for children.

Many teachers said they would like to be trained as facilitators of the ICDP programme to caregivers.