

German-Rwandan Student Workshop on Occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the Genocide in Rwanda in 1994 and the 70th Anniversary of the End of the Holocaust in 1945

“Dealing with traumatic pasts – the only way to avoid repetition”



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in Germany



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1. Introduction

The student workshop "German-Rwandan Student Workshop on Occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the Genocide in Rwanda in 1994 and the 70th Anniversary of the End of the Holocaust in 1945: Dealing with traumatic past – the only way to avoid repetition" was a cooperation of the Jumelage, the Ministry of the Interior, Sports, and Infrastructure of Rhineland-Palatinate, the Federal Coordination Bureau of the UNESCO Associated Schools (UPS) and the World University Service (WUS). In February 2014, the first part of the workshop took place in Rwanda. Then, a group of twelve students from Rhineland-Palatinate and Berlin travelled to Rwanda for ten days in order to work together with a group of Rwandan students on the topic of dealing with past genocides. As a subsequent workshop, the German-Rwandan Student Exchange Workshop took place in and across Germany in April 2015. It started out in Mainz and moved from there via Buchenwald (near the town of Weimar) to Berlin. From 2 April until 12 April, ten students from partner schools in Rwanda (Collège Christ Roi, APACE Kabusunzu, Lycée Notre Dame de Citeaux, E.S. Rusumo, TCC Mururu), six students from partner schools in Rhineland-Palatinate (Gymnasium Betzdorf, IGS Ingelheim, Realschule Plus Salmtal), and six students from the Nelson Mandela School in Berlin met for the first time trying to figure out ways to help prevent the repetition of such humanitarian catastrophes: What happened? How could that happen? How should we to deal with such a traumatic past? What can we learn from each other's experience in that context? All of the participants forewent their Easter holidays to deal with the Holocaust and the Rwandan Genocide together.

2. Report

2.1. The first stage: Arrival in Mainz, getting to know each other

The workshop programme started on Holy Thursday in the Ministry of the Interior, Sports, and Infrastructure of Rhineland-Palatinate, where the Rwandan and German participants met up and were then greeted by the Secretary of State, Mr Kern, and the President of the Partnership Association (also known as the *Jumelage*), Dr. Auernheimer. After having got to know each other via small (and in some cases quite entertaining) interviews and introductory games at the cozy hostel in Mainz, the Rwandan participants surprised everyone with small gifts (wooden keyrings), which they had brought from Rwanda.

2.2. Visiting the Mainz Synagogue and seminars at the hostel

For the next day, the programme foresaw a visit to the Mainz Synagogue. Here, Mrs. Schindler-Siegreich, the chairwoman of the Jewish Community in Mainz, was so generous as to accommodate the entire group despite it being the Pesach holiday and handed out matzo on top of interesting insights into the Jewish religion and community. She explained the architecture of the synagogue and its meaning, and was happy to answer all the participants' questions about the Jewish community's Torah Rolls, their price and place of origin.

Back at the hostel, Mrs. Harbich gave a presentation on the partnership between Rhineland-Palatinate and Rwanda, its origins, history of development and current state of affairs. The direct contact between the partner schools makes the partnership unique, she explained, and on both sides the cooperation is perceived as a long-lasting friendship rather than 'just' a cooperation. The programme continued with a workshop on German history especially aimed at familiarizing the Rwandan participants with Germany's history before and during World War II.



2.3. Workshop on Trauma Sensitivity

An instructional workshop on dealing with traumatising, more than well led by Lucia Fetzer, followed. During this workshop, the students had the chance to familiarize themselves with the definition and causes of trauma as well as with methods to recover from traumatic events. Some students shared their personal stories about traumatic events and their ways of dealing with them, which gave the workshop a very intimate, personal feeling. This workshop was a true success and everyone agreed that it was not only very informative and useful but also highlighted that trauma was a universal thing, which could occur to anyone irrespective of nationality or age. As it was still early into the beginning of the workshop and many students were still a little shy, this workshop also was another 'ice breaker' that drew the group closer together.

2.4. City-tour "The History of the Jewish Mainz" and dinner with people from the partnership

During a guided city-tour the group learnt about "the history of the Jewish Mainz", but also something else was soon discovered: the coldness of the German weather! As Mrs. Marie-Chantal Mukarutabana, one of the Rwandan teachers, mentioned in her feedback: "Though we were pleased by most of the things, we were challenged by the cold weather compared to our weather." But a hearty dinner in the evening at the "Schwayer" restaurant warmed up everyone and led to a very relaxed atmosphere within the group, which was also joined by people who were interested, or in some way related, to the German-Rwandan partnership. The highlight of the evening was the handover of a present from one of the Rwandan teachers, Mr. Ananie Gatalira, to the representatives of his partner school in Rhineland-Palatinate: a beautiful traditional painting that impressed all the guests.



2.5. Easter Mass at Mainz Cathedral and visit to the Concentration Camp Memorial in Osthofen

The next day was Easter Sunday, and in the morning the participants were surprised by small chocolate gifts, which the supervisors had prepared for them and placed on the breakfast tables. That certainly was a great way to start the day and was followed by another surprise: the organisers had also hidden a large number of Easter eggs in the “Volkspark”, next to the youth hostel. This tradition was something unknown and slightly curious to the Rwandans, but they soon caught on to it and on the way to Mainz Cathedral everyone joined happily together in the search. At the Cathedral the participants got to attend the Easter Mass before they went to visit the Concentration Camp Memorial in Osthofen. Here, they were guided through the camp grounds and got to look at the exhibition. Afterwards, some students acknowledged that they had never heard about such early concentration camps before and some Rwandan students drew comparisons with memorial sites in Kigali, dedicated to the Genocide in 1994.

2.6. Second stage: The concentration camp Buchenwald and excursion to Weimar

Though a lot had already been learnt, done, and seen, this was only the first third of the program! On Easter Monday the whole group (which, including teachers and organisational support staff, consisted of more than thirty people) departed to Buchenwald for a two-day stay. On the first day, after having settled in at the new hostel, located in the middle of the Ettersberg woods, the group learnt about the mass-killing system of the National Socialists. This confrontation with the brutal facts was intended to prepare the students for what they would hear and see the next day at the Buchenwald Concentration Camp Memorial. In order to get to Buchenwald, the group decided to walk there, following one of the – at times rather adventurous – hiking routes through the woods.



At the memorial site, the students got to visit the territory, guided by Mrs. Pudszuhn. Walking within the confines of the former concentration camp was a very disturbing experience for everyone. The gruesome history became palpable also through the telling by Mrs. Pudszuhn, who shared her father's personal experiences with the whole group: he had been one of the survivors of the camp. In order to prevent repetition, she argued, it is necessary to keep the memory of the victims alive, to instil empathy and to raise awareness – this was exactly in line with the credo of the workshop. After lunch, at the memorial's café, the students were happy to ask questions and learn more from her before they went on to the nearby town of Weimar. Leaving the former concentration camp behind to encounter one of Germany's most beautiful towns was a welcome change of scene and reassured the students that there also have been positive times in German history. It also eased them back into present-day Germany. As many Rwandans were very eager to explore the country and some noted they would have liked to learn more about it than just the gruesome part of its history, this was a very welcome opportunity. The students now had free time to walk around, to go have a look at places of interest and to socialize. Later in the evening the students joined together to play parlour games, particularly a card game called "Werewolf", which would become something of an evening ritual throughout the remaining time spent together. The next day, the group had to once again pack up everything and to venture out to the next and final destination: Berlin.

2.7. Third stage: Berlin

Discovering Berlin and the Jewish Museum:

The group went on a tour through the city, during which they got to know its historical sites. Points of discovery were the "Reichstag", the Brandenburg Gate, the Holocaust Memorial and the remains of the Berlin Wall.



At the Jewish Museum, which was explored the next day, the students learn a lot about the unique architecture of the museum, but also about life stories and experiences of Jewish victims of the Holocaust. After lunch, most of the students spent some free time in the museum's garden, catching some fresh air, chatting and trying to learn the basics of the traditional Rwandan cow dance. Both, the ones dancing and the ones watching, had a lot of fun!

Meeting the Rwandan ambassador and joining the Mass of Remembrance:

Then followed the next stop that many, especially the Rwandan students, had been looking forward to. The Rwandan ambassador, Mrs. Christine Nkulikiyinka received the entire group at the Rwandan embassy. She was very eager to learn from the students about the on-going workshop and their conclusions and encouraged them to stand up to discrimination on a daily basis. She had also invited everyone to join the Mass of Remembrance on occasion of the 21st commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda in the Academic Church of St. Thomas Aquinas, which took place later that day. Many students – both German and Rwandan – actively took part in the mass, performing the Kinyarwanda song “The Lord is with you”, which the Rwandan students had previously taught the Germans at the embassy. Some also recited self-written intercessions.

German Resistance Memorial Centre:

The Berlin programme also included a visit to the German Resistance Memorial Centre, where the students were brought into contact with the lives, and often deaths, of German Resistance fighters, including the “White Rose” movement and the cases of Georg Elser and Claus Stauffenberg. The aim was to give the students the chance to relate to positive role-models, and to endow them with the hope that if they ever had to face such a catastrophe, they would also have the courage to stand up and fight violence, discrimination and injustice in that way.



Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation:

At the Konrad Adenauer Foundation they learnt all about the work and the opportunities the foundation has to offer young students. At the end of the meeting, the representatives of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation discussed the image of Germany in Rwanda. Some Rwandan students mentioned that in Rwanda stereotypical thinking existed, according to which Germans were seen as racists, but most argued that the image was altogether positive. Especially after this workshop, they acknowledged, this stereotype was proven wrong.

Guest-speakers & concluding group work at the Nelson Mandela UNESCO Associated School:

On their last day, the group came together at the Nelson Mandela School in Berlin. In the morning they had the honour and pleasure to listen and talk to the three guest-speakers: Mr. Karl Flittner, a former German Diplomat of the Federal Foreign Office, who also used to work as the German ambassador to Burundi and Mali; Mr. Christian Wilmsen, former employee of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development; and Mrs. Hannah Birkenkötter, member of the United Nations Association of Germany. The three guest-speakers debated with the students on issues such as where the limitation to the sovereignty of states should lie, and when it should be valid for other states to intervene, for example in cases where fundamental human rights are endangered. They also discussed the importance of historical knowledge, a free press, and a strong civil society for a functioning democracy and reflected on the current state of affairs in Germany. Lastly, they critically reflected the role of the United Nations. During the rest of the day the students reprocessed all their findings of the ten-day workshop, trying to draw explanatory conclusions on how these two genocides could happen at all, what effects they have on (present-day) German and Rwandan society and how both



countries, Germany and Rwanda, are dealing with their traumatic pasts. The students were also asked to give their opinion on what should be done, in order to prevent the repetition of genocides. The students distinguished racism, intolerance, as well as passivity and fear as the main reasons for the two humanitarian catastrophes. They learnt from each other how different the approaches are on dealing with the past. In Rwanda, for example, there are many clubs and other organisations that support the victims of the genocide. The week of April 7th until April 14th is an officially recognized commemoration week. The strategies are more active there (e.g. founding or joining clubs that reflect on the genocide, doing social work etc.), since the Rwandan society, and even some of the participating students, are still directly affected by the aftermaths of the genocide. This was one of the crucial differences between the German and the Rwandan students, and perhaps due to the greater distance in time there seem to prevail more indirect strategies of dealing with the past (e.g. museums, field trips to memorial sites etc.) in Germany. However, the students concluded, that both countries saw strategies of remembrance and education as the main tools to prevent repetition and they agreed that it was very important to think independently in every situation and to never follow a crowd blindly. Through the example of the German resistance movements, the students saw that people had always had a choice to either resist genocide or to keep silent and thereby contribute to it. All students pointed out that it was crucial for the youth of today to be active in preserving democratic values and spreading the memories about genocides to future generations, in order to avoid repetition. Lastly, the certificates of participation were handed out to everyone and were accompanied by heart-warming hugs and good wishes. Also, some students stood up to share some words of gratitude to the organizers.



This student exchange not only helped to keep the memory of the past alive, but it also fostered friendship, understanding, and intercultural learning. Since both countries share a similar traumatic past, a sense of community and equality was enabled. But going beyond the topic of the workshop, the students also learnt about customs and habits that prevail in both countries and got to know each other on a personal level, which made the workshop even more enriching for each and every one. As one Rwandan student summed up: “I liked the way you welcomed us, I didn't expect that. You treated us as if we were friends and that touched me a lot. I've been also impressed by the way we're all together and not Rwandans apart or Germans apart and that was cool and it made me feel like we're one or a 'family'.” The German students also agreed that they were very grateful to have been given the opportunity to speak with people their age from Rwanda. They were impressed to find that despite living thousands of miles apart they still had so much in common.

3. The Students' Group Work Conclusions, Part 1

Holocaust Basics

Summary: - Minorities (Jews, Handicapped people, etc.) & political enemies were arrested, deported & killed

Details:

- NSDAP wants to “clean” Germany of “lower races” (minorities) to gain an “Aryan race” and strength
- invent & establish concentration & extermination camps -> losing of identity, dignity, human rights, mass-killing, refugees
- most people looked away / didn't help



Genocide

<u>Hutu</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>Tutsi</u>
<u>84%</u>		<u>15%</u>

1918	1959	1989	Feb' 1990
Belgian colonization	Hutu came to power	RPF founded	RPF entered Rwanda

What was done for the survivors after the Holocaust?

- Immediate medical treatment after liberation
- In the 20 years after: barely anything happened -> the 2nd guilt
- In the 60s: Auschwitz trials, compensations started being paid
- Nowadays: survivors are honoured
- Jewish Religion especially protected -> policemen in front of synagogues & Jewish centres

What was done for the survivors after the Genocide of 1994?

- Medical care
- Education
- Building houses
- Giving them basic needs
- Counselling
- The survivors were asked for forgiveness & perpetrators through Gacaca court
- The survivors were given back their properties which were destroyed in the genocide



The perpetrators after the Holocaust

- High leaders' suicide
- Nuremberg Trials
- Hierarchy
- Denazification
- Reform in every part of society

The perpetrators after the Genocide of 1994

- Some fled
- Gacaca courts
- ICC Arusha (TPIR) -> 400 cases (75 solved)
- Some are jailed

WHY: to avoid the revenge by the survivors & to make justice - Dealing with the past...

in Germany:

- Memorials
- KZs 4 visit
- Documentaries
- Museums
- Education
- Prevention work
- Workshops

in Rwanda:

- Memorial sites
- Education
- Clubs for Genocide
- Unity & Reconciliation
- Charity Work
- Insurance 4 victims
- noli umu nyarwanda



The Students' Group Work Conclusions, Part 2

How do German schools deal with the Holocaust and other genocides?

- In 10th grade only, unfortunately e.g. genocide of the Hereros is not a focus
- Through reading the books; sharing some information about the genocide; education; partnership between schools from Rwanda and from Germany
- German schools basically only deal with the German Holocaust. We learn nothing about genocides.
- Other genocides are only mentioned
- Education in class (only Holocaust)
- Visiting memorials and museums
- Since the earliest years at the school they teach the Holocaust
- Guilt

How do Rwandan schools deal with the Genocide of 1994 and other genocides?

- The students discuss about the Genocide in the clubs (anti Genocide Clubs)
- Clubs (Discussion)
- They visit memorial sites; help survivors; have a lesson called general paper
- Differentiation between the civil war and the genocide; from 7th to 12th grade you deal with it even if you don't pick history as a focus; avoid discrimination in one way or another
- Guest-speakers; experiences
- Frequency (1x week Discussion)
- Debating; Anti-Genocide clubs; Discuss, compare experiences
- Social work with widows and orphans



What do German schools do to prevent future genocides?

- Prevent Discrimination on many levels; visiting sites such as concentration camps
- Remembrance and awareness
- Democratic values
- Emphasis of Democratic and other values (Human Rights) 1949
- “School without Racism, School with Courage“
- Teaching of historical facts
- They prevent by educating; visit memorials/museums

What do Rwandan schools do to prevent future genocides?

- Anti Genocide Club
- Prevent by educating; visiting memorials
- AERG association of students who lost their parents in the genocide to prevent future conflicts + feelings of revenge; they are given housing, schooling + partnerships with ‚mothers‘ + ‚fathers‘; „we are all Rwandan“ -> a mindset that prevents repetition; „we are all Rwandan“ -> from governments but also encouraged in schools
- AERG Association des Élèves Rescapés du Génocide
- URUGERERO: 2-week-program after secondary school, seminars + social work
- Political Science Course
- Visit memorial sites
- Commemoration week: schools participate and even the younger generations are involved by talking with teachers about why their country is mourning; debates; public schools are more active [than] the private schools; walk to remember
- Learn from the past in each class to prepare the bright future
- The best possible genocide education programme:
- In school curriculum: also learning about genocides in other countries



- Meet people from other cultures and countries to be more open-minded
- Talk to witnesses (if possible)
- Visit memorial sites
- TOLERANCE through INTERACTION
- The program should contain: the genocide history -> before genocide, during the genocide, after the genocide; the effect of genocide; the possible ways to fight genocide
- Evaluation of different sources
- Teach about other Genocides as well. Examples of different forms.
- Intercultural EXCHANGE
- Globalization
- Interaction
- Active workshops + role plays to empathise with victims
- Contribution & Awareness (Political / Historical)
- Emphasis on education -> other countries should also be aware of the severe effects of genocide
- On civic education, history of the country
- Open discussions between students and teachers either in classes or elsewhere about the holocaust

4. Feedback from the participants

Siegfried: Der UNESCO Workshop war für mich eine große Bereicherung. Nicht nur, dass ich zum ersten Mal in meinem Leben die Chance hatte mit Schülern aus Ruanda zu sprechen, zu arbeiten und zu leben, aber auch, dass ich mehr über die zwei Genozide in Deutschland und in Ruanda lernen konnte und auch zu realisieren, wie ähnlich sie sich sind. Ich bin mir sicher, dass wir nur gemeinsam eine solch unvorstellbare Katastrophe verhindern können. Es ist nämlich die Aufgabe unserer Generation, auch in Zukunft die Erinnerungen des Holocausts und des Genozids in Ruanda aufrechtzuerhalten, um ein ähnliches Verbrechen gegen die Menschen nicht wieder vorkommen zu lassen. Der Workshop ist dabei der richtige Schritt: Er klärt auf, lässt uns gedenken und verbindet Menschen unterschiedlicher Kulturen und bringt somit interkulturelles Verständnis. Danke.

Melissa: I liked the way you welcomed us, I didn't expect that. You treated us as if we were friends and that touched me a lot. I've been also impressed by the way we're all together and not Rwandans apart or Germans apart and that was cool and it made me feel like we're one or a "family"; we enjoyed every single moment together, we shared everything together and we laughed together. I've also been impressed by the way in Germany everything is punctual while in Rwanda it's the opposite. On the negative side; I've been ashamed by what we learnt about our pasts and the only thing that made me feel bad is that we had to separate.

Josia: Alles in allem kann ich sagen, dass der Workshop eine echte Bereicherung für mich war. Das Programm war gut gefüllt und wir haben die Zeit, die wir zusammen hatten, voll ausgenutzt. Mit der Organisation war ich sehr zufrieden, auch wenn wir alle immer ein bisschen unpünktlich waren und Frau Harbich manchmal etwas genervt wirkte. Sie hatte aber immer alles im Griff. Ich muss zugeben, dass die 10 Tage nur aus Highlights bestanden. Besonders gefallen hat mir an erster Stelle der Besuch im



Jüdischen Museum und auch das KZ Buchenwald hat mich sehr beeindruckt. Langweilig war für mich nur der Besuch in Osthofen, was aber daran lag, dass ich dort schon letztes Jahr war. Sonst hat mir das komplette Programm sehr gut gefallen. Am beeindruckendsten für mich waren die Begegnungen und Gespräche mit den Ruandern. Es war verrückt zu sehen, wieviel wir alle gemeinsam hatten, obwohl wir aus so verschiedenen Teilen der Erde kamen. Außerdem fand ich es klasse, wie schnell sich die Ruander an Deutschland angepasst haben. Nach ein paar Tagen haben sie genauso gegessen wie wir, nur an die deutsche Pünktlichkeit haben sie sich bis zum Schluss nicht gewöhnt.

Hannah: Der Workshop hat sein Ziel, einen Austausch zwischen Schülern völlig verschiedener Hintergründe über das Thema Trauma, Genozid und seine Verhinderung auf jeden Fall erreicht. Das Programm war abwechslungsreich und hat auch mir, obwohl ich mit dem Holocaust schon bekannt war, viel Neues gebracht. Inhaltlich war das Programm also echt gut inszeniert. Allerdings fand ich, dass es zu voll mit Seminaren und Terminen war. Dies hat das Zusammenkommen der Gruppe auch etwas erschwert. Die "Quality time", wie man es im Englischen so schön sagt, passierte eigentlich vor allem durch Eigeninitiative abends, als wir mit den Ruandern in Mainz auf den Spielplatz gegangen sind, und während unserer Werwolf-Partien. Natürlich ist es sowieso immer am besten, wenn solche Gruppenaktivitäten aus der Gruppe selbst raus kommen, aber ein bisschen mehr Zeit für so etwas und ein paar Anstöße dafür, wären auch gut gewesen. Zumal ich auch von den Ruandern gehört habe, dass sie noch ein bisschen mehr von Deutschland, als nur den Holocaust, hätten mitkriegen wollen. Nichts desto trotz, waren es echt tolle 10 Tage. Ich glaube wir haben alle viel voneinander lernen können und sind mit einem neuen Blick über die Kultur und das Leben des Anderen aus dem Workshop gegangen. Man hat außerdem gemerkt, wie sehr die Ruander die 10 Tage genossen haben und wieviel Spaß sie hatten.



Sarah: Da mir der Workshop gut gefallen hat, möchte ich mich bei Ihnen und dem ganzen Team für die schöne Zeit bedanken. Es waren 10 Tage, in denen ich viele Freundschaften geschlossen habe, tolle Erfahrungen sammeln durfte und meine Englisch-Kenntnisse vorteilhaft erweitern konnte. Da Sie in Ihrer E-Mail um ein Feedback gebeten haben, möchte ich Ihnen hiermit die dort gestellten Fragen beantworten. Zuallererst ist es mir ein Anliegen, Ihnen mitzuteilen, dass mir der Workshop wie bereits erwähnt sehr gut gefallen hat, die Organisation gestimmt hat und das Programm viel zu bieten hatte. Was mir am Besten gefallen hat, war das "Tutorial on dealing with traumatic events" am 4. April in Mainz. Ich fand, dass es sehr gut gemacht war und mir hat die Gruppenarbeit sehr viel Spaß gemacht. Beeindruckt hat mich, wie unsere ruandischen Teilnehmer mit dem Thema Holocaust umgegangen sind. Dies fand ich besonders interessant, als wir die Einführung in die deutsche Geschichte und den Holocaust am zweiten Tag in Mainz hatten. Die Fragen und die Meinungen, die sie zur Geschichte unseres Landes zum Ausdruck gebracht haben, fand ich wirklich gut und ansprechend. Etwas Negatives kann ich über den vergangenen Workshop nicht sagen, da ich von dieser Zeit sehr begeistert war.

Ananie: Pertaining to the feedback to the workshop, I truly tell you that it was exciting, full of consistent and constructive thoughts and ideas. We wish it does not stop there, but be an annual tradition between German and Rwandan students. The program was well built so as to be linked with the headline. Regarding my most impressions, I remember the warm welcome given to Rwandan participants at Frankfurt Airport first and along with the workshop then. Also, I appreciated the mutual cooperation manifested by both sides (German and Rwandan students) in sharing experiences lived by both countries because of Jewish Genocide in Germany and Tutsi Genocide in Rwanda. This workshop was for students, accompanying people and teachers an opportunity to rethink on past traumatic events and how to deal with them. The workshop was also an opportunity to think on a better future by eradicating racism,



ethnicism, xenophobia and any other form of discrimination particularly in Germany and Rwanda and all over the world in general. I would like to wish such workshops not only on past traumatic events, but also in other different fields, for example education.

Marie--Chantal: We really enjoyed the workshop. The workshop was well organized that we learnt from every session we had and all the places we visited. We were also pleased by the fact students were treated the same. For example, mixing students from both countries in rooms helped the students build friendship and made our students feel welcomed. Above all, we liked that there was a respect of time in everything we did. Though we were pleased by most of the things, we were challenged by the cold weather compared to our weather. We were also challenged by the language; most of the billboards and posters are written in German language. In general, the workshop was amazing and we are glad that students from both countries were able to learn from each other.

Esther: For sure I enjoyed the trip especially visiting some historical places like the Berlin Wall, concentration camps and so on. About what impressed me most is how we were warmly welcomed in the way we didn't expect. As I said we were shocked by the weather condition which was cold even if we were informed.

Vivian: Den Workshop fand ich klasse. Mir haben nicht nur die Aktivitäten, sondern auch die Menschen gefallen. Dazu muss ich meinen Hut im Nachhinein vor den unglaublichen Zeitplänen ziehen, dass wir alles, was wir gemacht haben, nur in ca. 10 Tagen geschafft haben und uns kein einziges Mal verlaufen oder verirrt haben.

Am besten gefielen mir die Seminare die wir am Anfang in Mainz gemacht haben sowie der Besuch der Synagoge und das Jüdische Museum. Das Jüdische Museum und das KZ Buchenwald haben mich auch am meisten beeindruckt wenn auch nicht positiv. Und im Nachhinein möchte ich nur noch mal für diese unglaubliche Erfahrung danken.



Grace: The workshop was very interesting in all corners it was well organized and you took care of us. Something I liked most is the trip travelling and no thing annoying I have seen you performed miracle we couldn't believe all we have seen at that extent so thank you very much for how much you helped us to learn really you are good people. I wish to back if God wants it will be realized.

Hassan: As we were asked to give the feedback about the workshop, I'd like to give out mine, but before starting, I'd like to apologize for being late a bit due to having no access to my email account for a bit along time. Anyway, the workshop was good that I loved its organization and the way we were treated during it. The crucial thing that I liked was that we had some extra time to walk around watching some extra areas. Another thing I really liked was that everything was done on its appropriate time. I also enjoyed the dishes we had. Among the challenges I faced, there is the weather conditions that seemed to be unfavorable time, and according to my Religious believes, it became a great challenge where I hardly found where I could pray to complete my five prayers a day. Conclusively therefore the workshop was good in general and I real thank for the way you tried your best to make us feel welcomed. As an opinion I'd like you to try and find a place for Muslim participants to pray during the next workshop if possible.

5. Concluding remarks

“Dealing with Traumatic Pasts – the only way to avoid repetition”: For the second time, that has been the topic of a German-Rwandan student workshop. In 2014, 12 German students from Rhineland-Palatinate and Berlin had the unique chance to travel to Rwanda and meet students their age to learn about what happened in Rwanda in 1994 and how the country has since been dealing with the Genocide and its consequences. More than anything it struck the German students how much more intense the post-Genocide situation in Rwanda is compared to that in Germany. Unlike in Germany, Rwandan surviving victims, perpetrators and their families live wall to wall with all their shocking memories of the events 20 years ago. Yet they manage to get along these days as Rwandans. The students also were most impressed by the manifold efforts of the Rwandan government, Rwandan civil society and the international community to prevent any relapse into the state of affairs of 1994 by bringing an incredibly large number of perpetrators to justice (particularly through the use of the Gacaca courts), developing and actively promoting a new vision of Rwandan togetherness and by accomplishing a vast number of improvements to the general well-being of all Rwandans that stand out as a shining example of fast but sustainable development (most striking for many members of the German contingent: the establishment of a comprehensive welfare system basically modelled on the German example).

This year, it was the Rwandans' turn to travel, learn about the Nazis and the Holocaust and see first-hand how Germany has dealt with its traumatic past. They noticed immediately how similar the pre-histories of both genocides are in the way that previous discrimination, exclusion and dehumanisation of a minority paved the way to mass slaughter. They were seriously impressed by the importance the “New Germany” attaches to basic human rights and the rule of law in order to prevent repetition. On the other hand, they were visibly shocked to learn about “the second guilt” and how long it had taken German society to acknowledge guilt and accept responsibility even within a constitutionally secure democratic political framework. Gacaca courts would not have

been possible in Germany 20 years after the Holocaust. Resistance fighters like Georg Elser were still very often regarded as traitors by many Germans even in the 1980s. However, the students also learned that these days people like him are indeed almost universally seen as heroes and positive role models rather than that, making it much easier for young Germans to identify with them rather than the other side.

Both sides also compared their respective country's efforts to avoid repetition and worked out a remarkable list of recommendations for the best possible Genocide Prevention Education Programme that would work in both countries and beyond (see above). In doing so, they produced the workshop's most important result, which they have taken back to their respective communities to spread it there.

It has been a truly wonderful experience and a great honour to work with such a group of thoughtful and responsible young people – and it is to be hoped that more students on both sides will get an opportunity to do a workshop like this. With a little help from the excellent working relationship between the “Ruanda-Referat”, the Jumelage, the German and Rwandan chapters of UNESCO's Associated Schools Project and the World University Service that has developed within the course of this workshop, that should definitely be possible.

Annex I: Programme of the Workshop

Day	Programme	Location
Day 1 (Thursday) 2. April 2015	<i>Afternoon:</i> Arrival of all participants in Mainz - Check in at the hostel and get to know each other	Mainz
Day 2 (Friday) 3. April 2015	- Visit to the synagogue and meeting members of the Jewish community - Joint familiarization with the programme of the workshop and German history	Mainz
Day 3 (Saturday) 4. April 2015	- Tutorial on dealing with traumatic events - City-Tour "The history of the Jewish Mainz"	Mainz
Day 4 (Sunday) 5. April 2015	- Attendance of the Easter Mass at Mainz cathedral - Visit to the holocaust memorial in Osthofen	Mainz Osthofen
Day 5 (Monday) 6. April 2015	- Train ride to Buchenwald - Joint familiarization with the topic of the concentration camp	Buchenwald
Day 6 (Tuesday) 7. April 2015	<u>How should we deal with such a traumatic past?</u> - Visitation of the concentration camp - Joint debriefing regarding the new findings and experiences made and documentation of the same in small teams	Buchenwald
Day 7 (Wednesday) 8. April 2015	<u>How should we deal with such a traumatic past?</u> - Train ride to Berlin - Thematic walk through the old center of Berlin	Buchenwald - Berlin
Day 8 (Thursday) 9. April 2015	<u>How should we deal with such a traumatic past?</u> - German-Jewish work of reconciliation: eyewitness discussion and archive studies at the Jewish Museum Berlin - Visit to the Rwandan embassy	Berlin
Day 9 (Friday) 10. April 2015	- Visit to the German Resistance Memorial Centre - Talk with students, parents and teachers of the Nelson Mandela-School on how to deal with the Holocaust in German schools	Berlin
Day 10 (Saturday) 11. April 2015	<u>What can we learn from each other's experience in that context?</u> - Meeting with UN-Youth delegates and the German Society for the United Nations (DGVN): Presentation of the findings and discussion - solemn end of the seminar and social evening	Berlin
Day 11 (Sunday) 12. April 2015	Departure of the Rwandan participants from Berlin to Kigali	Berlin - Kigali



Annex II: List of Participants

	Vorname	Nachname	Schule / Institution
1	Siegfried	Adelhoefer	Nelson Mandela Schule
2	Geneviève	Akhionbare	Nelson Mandela Schule
3	Ruth	Asifiwe	E.S. Rusumo
4	Ananie	Gatalira	E.S. Rusumo
5	Jasmin	Grakoui (02.-05.04 u. 08.-12.04.)	Bundeskoordination UPS
6	Hannah	Graute	Nelson Mandela Schule
7	Mona	Harbich	Innenministerium RLP
8	Aline	Hessedenz	IGS Ingelheim
9	Sarah	Hübenthal	Realschule Plus Salmtal
10	Jana	Hüttmann (04.04.)	Partnerschaftsverein
11	Hassan	Idd	E.S. Rusumo
12	Vivien	Immik	Realschule Plus Salmtal
13	Tom	Klein	Gymnasium Betzdorf
14	Cindy	Kracht (08.-12.4.)	Nelson Mandela Schule
15	Leo	Lee	Nelson Mandela Schule
16	Lutz	Mannes	Nelson Mandela Schule
17	Jennifer	Groh	IGS Ingelheim
18	Angela	Miley (02.04-11.04)	Bundeskoordination UPS
19	Esther	Mugisha	Collège Christ Roi
20	Marie Chantal	Mukarutabana	Lycée Notre Dame de Cîteaux
21	Melina	Nelte (ab 03.04.)	Nelson-Mandela-Schule Berlin
22	Stécy Joyeuse	Nyinawumuntu Rwamukwya	Lycée Notre Dame de Cîteaux
23	Uwase Mélissa	Rangira Uwase	Lycée Notre Dame de Cîteaux Kigali
24	Daria	Rutaremara Isimbi	Lycée Notre Dame de Cîteaux Kigali
25	Alexandra	Samokhvalova	World University Service Wiesbaden
26	Bruce	Shema	Collège Christ Roi
27	Bertrand	Sibomana	APACE Kabusunzu
29	Grace	Ukwigize	TTC Mururu
30	Nicole	Uwase	Collège de Gisenyi
31	Thomas	Wasner	Gymnasium Betzdorf
32	Claudia	Wilhelm (08.-12.04.)	Bundeskoordination UPS
33	Josia	Wirth	Gymnasium Betzdorf

Workshop on Trauma Sensitivity

4th April 2015

Participants: 10 students from partner schools in Rwanda (College Christ Roi, APACE Kabusunzu, Lycee Notre Dame de Citeaux, E.S. Rusumo, TCC Mururu), 6 students from partner schools in Rhineland-Palatinate (Gymnasium Betzdorf, IGS Ingelheim, Realschule Plus Salmtal), 6 Students from Nelson Mandela Secondary School Berlin.

Supervisors: Mona Harbich (Innenministerium RLP), Thomas Wasner (Gymnasium Betzdorf), Alexandra Samokhvalova (WUS Germany), Jasmin Grakoui (Bundeskoordination der UPS), Angela Miley (Bundeskoordination der UPS), Brigitte Claudia Wilhelm (Bundeskoordination der UPS), Lutz Mannes (Nelson Mandela Secondary School), 2 Rwandan teachers

Facilitators:

Lucia Fetzer

fetzer.lucia@gmail.com

Location: Youth Hostel, Mainz

Training Schedule:

Saturday, 4th April 2015 - 09.00 – 13.00

Getting to know each other:

Participants sort themselves in the room according to different criteria:

Alphabetical order according to first letter of your name,

How many brothers and sisters do you have?

What do you like doing in your free time?

Why am I interested in the topic of trauma?

Observations:

3 main points of interest in the topic:

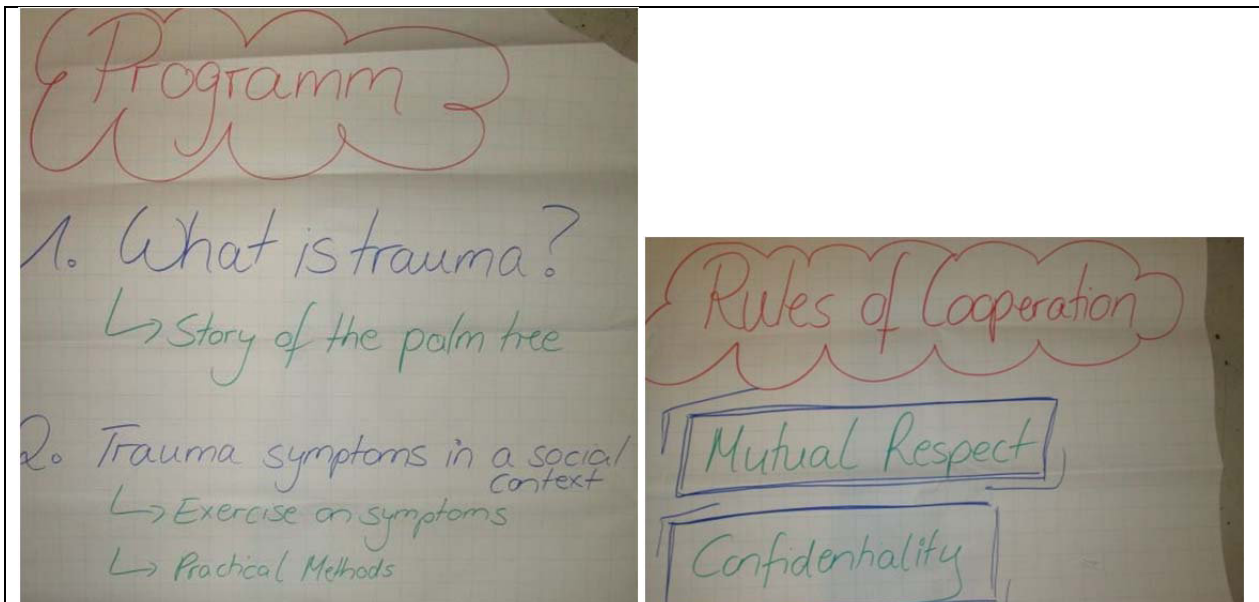
- Increase in knowledge (what are the causes of trauma)
- Know how to help others
- Know how to help myself

For more information about facilitators previous experiences in Rwanda, please see

<http://www.ziviler-friedensdienst.org/de/publikation/management-community-conflict-southern-province-rwanda>

<http://www.ziviler-friedensdienst.org/de/publikation/survivors-actors-change-peace-and-reconciliation>

Presentation of the Program and Rules of Cooperation



Observations:

It was easy for the students to define rules of mutual respect and confidentiality
 The point of not laughing about other opinions was emphasized
 The topic of confidentiality was brought up later again when discussing the groundrules on how to deal with traumatized people

Understanding trauma: Story of the palm tree

Reading together with the participants
Collecting impressions about the story
Collecting on what we learned about trauma from the story
Collection of stones and water

Observations:

Feelings and impressions evoked by the story:

- Negative feelings mentioned in the group: anger, sadness, hopelessness, pain, suffering, unfairness
- Positive feelings mentioned in the group: Story is inspiring, since it had a happy ending; it left them feeling positive, with a “hopeful feeling” and a sense that one should never give up
- Discussion about the trauma of the man who throws the stone (the one who suffers, makes others suffer, feeling of sadness for him, because his problem was not solved)
- Stone will not disappear, we have to accept the pain, because we can’t change the past,
- It is very complicated and difficult to find the stream of water, It is important to never give up, there is always hope

The group tried to define “trauma”:

- Result of a bad and violent experience; like a “scar on a person’s character”, the effect of a past experience that is continuously remembered.
- Despite trauma can also be due to the effects of natural disasters, it was agreed upon, that it is almost always connected to a social aspect or carries a social dimension.
- Trauma was also seen as the separation from a former way of life.

Brainstorming on Water and Stones:

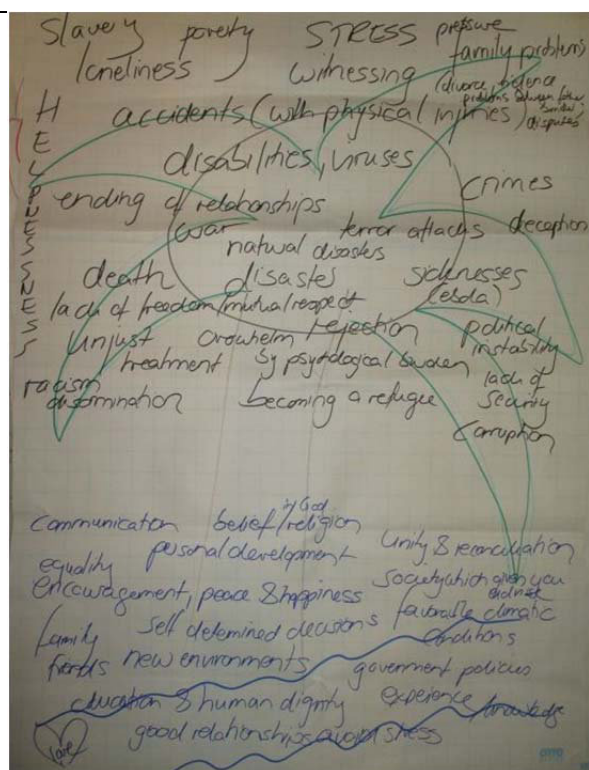
- Examples for Water: Communication, unity in or of society, good government, faith, human dignity, encouragement, peace, happiness, reconciliation
- Examples for Stones: were: deception, stress, slavery, war, Ebola, rejection, disability, viruses, and accidents (Rwandan students) Death, the ending of relationships, terror attacks, natural disasters, or the witnessing of others being injured and the ensuing sense of helplessness (German students)

General observations:

- Eager participation of Rwandan and German students alike, no remarkable differences

in ideas (e.g. genocide is not mentioned as stone),

- Students use the story and the palm tree as a “projection screen” which might make it easier to share and refer to the topic
- Several students were brave enough to share their personal stories about contacts with traumatized people (family members, friends); they refer to concrete examples of their personal experiences



What is trauma?

- bad experiences can cause trauma & violence
- trauma is like a scar on a persons character
- we cannot resurrect our pasts but we have to accept the changing conditions, restore old ones / find new connections
- trauma can be the effect of our past experiences which we continue remembering
- trauma & suffering can be brought by others

trauma is losing connection to sth in a very hurtful way

- trauma causes a separation to your former life

Understanding trauma: Input

What is trauma,

PTSD,

Traumatic Event,

Post Traumatic Growth

Collection on Personal Stories about Post Traumatic Growth

➔ The Powerpoint Presentation is added to this report in an additional document

Observations:

- The statistical numbers are very effective to raise a discussion,
- General criticism by German students on how the numbers were raised and if they could be trusted,
- Question about lack of discovery of traumatized men, they might be more likely to hide there symptoms, not ready to search for help
- Personal stories about post traumatic growth (own life, lives of family members and friends), people can identify with what it means,
- Also negative stories about people where growth didn't happen

BREAK

Trauma Symptoms

Read through the working sheet

Discuss personal experiences of the symptoms (self/others)

Exercise on trauma symptoms in a social context

3 Groups according to 3 scenarios:

Difficulties to manage tension and frustration (family context, mother traumatized, children bystanders)

Flashback (Neighbourhood, male neighbour has flashback, other neighbour observes it)

Little interest and participation in activities which once brought joy (school context, male student is traumatized, friends are bystanders)

Group splits up in two – one part put themselves in shoes of the traumatized (mother,

neighbour, school boy) – other part put themselves in shoes of bystander (children, neighbour, school friends)

Answer questions (30 Minutes)

Traumatized: What do I feel?, What do I think?, What do I need?

Bystander: What do I feel?, What do I think?, How do I react?

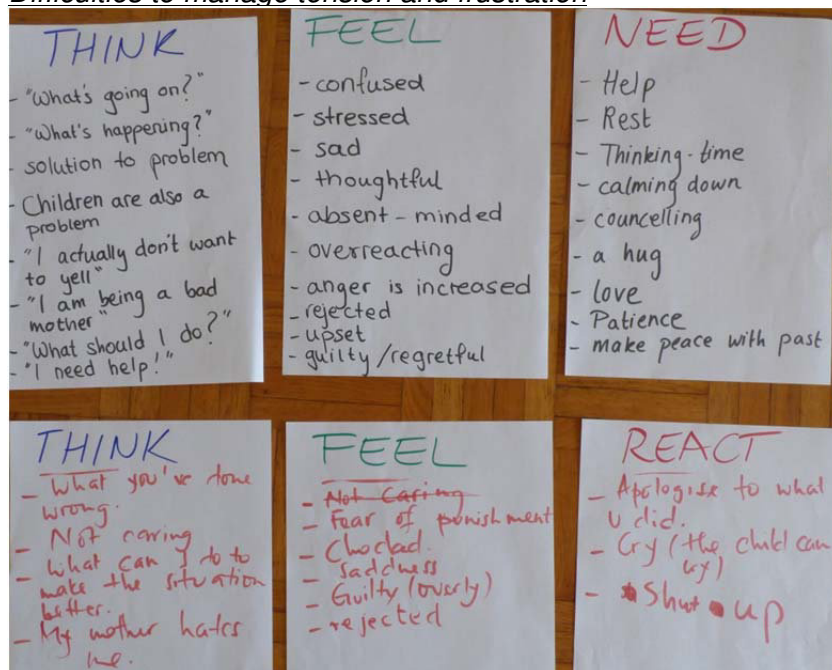
10 Minutes Exchange between traumatized and bystander group

Discussion in plenary

Observations:

- Difficult to differentiate level of feelings and thoughts
- Similar feelings of traumatized and bystanders: Both were insecure and helpless in a way.
- Traumatized person can get trapped in a vicious circle: e.g. although he or she may need to speak to someone, he or she will feel alienated and not want to talk to anyone else. This seemingly rejection from outside helps to keep the traumatized person locked up in his or her misery, as it signals to the outside person that he or she should stay away, and leave the traumatized person alone, when all the traumatized person really needs is understanding, affection, and empathy from “outside”. But this rejection will most likely have a negative effect on the bystander. It is very probably that the outside person will reflect this rejection and think it the best to simply leave the traumatized person alone.
- Topic of secondary trauma was brought up.
- Needs of the traumatised person: Give space and time, “understanding”. offer help from different angles, traumatized person might not be ready to approach you; getting back control over one’s body and mind to fight the trauma,
- Discussion about the use of sleeping pills (especially between Rwandan (PRO) and German students (AGAINST)) → it can be very helpful for the traumatized person to get some rest and for the brain to relax and break free from the vicious circle of thoughts, but in general sleeping pills should not be seen as the right way to treat trauma.

Difficulties to manage tension and frustration



Little interest and participation in activities which once brought joy

FEEL

- * Lonely
- * Sad or feeling dead ~~and~~ inside.
- * hopeless
- * Afraid
"They don't trust in any people"

THINK

- * Nobody can help me / understand me / solve my problems
- * the others have other interests than me
- * God has forgotten me
- * life is meaningless
- * I am different

NEED

- * They need to be looked after.
- * They need some one to talk to. (for some)
- * The encouragement.
- * The attention of others.
- * The advice.
- * help from others.
- * hope
- * kindness.

FEEL

- * Confusion
- * annoyed
- * sad
- * disappointed
- * helpless
- * rejected

THINK

- * "What did I do wrong?"
- * "What's up with him / what happened?" → "Should I help him?"
- * "What should I do?"
- * "Can I help him?"
- * "It doesn't like me anymore"
- * "Doesn't he trust me?"
- * "Will I lose my friend if he ever going to be the same again?"
- * "He is making such a big deal out of this!"

REACT

- (Try to)
- Help him
 - cheer him up
 - send letter → indirect contact
 - keep him company Leave him alone
- Confront him
- tell him your mind
- Ask others for help
- teachers, friends, parents
 - professional help (counselor, psychiatrist...)

Flashbacks

FEEL

- fear
- past is repeating
- ~~loneliness~~ loneliness
- shock
- terrified
- sadness
- desperate
- shamed

THINK

- fear of being killed
- facing a danger
- repetition - flashback
- horror
- thinking about the past and the murder scene.

NEED

- escape
- help
- hug and someone who cares about you
- sleeping pills
- therapist
- security and protection (family, police, secure place) friends

FEEL

- * shocked
 - * in total
 - * afraid
 - * something
- story that ~~the~~ makes
- * remind you of something you did not know
 - flashback
 - * angry (if you know him)

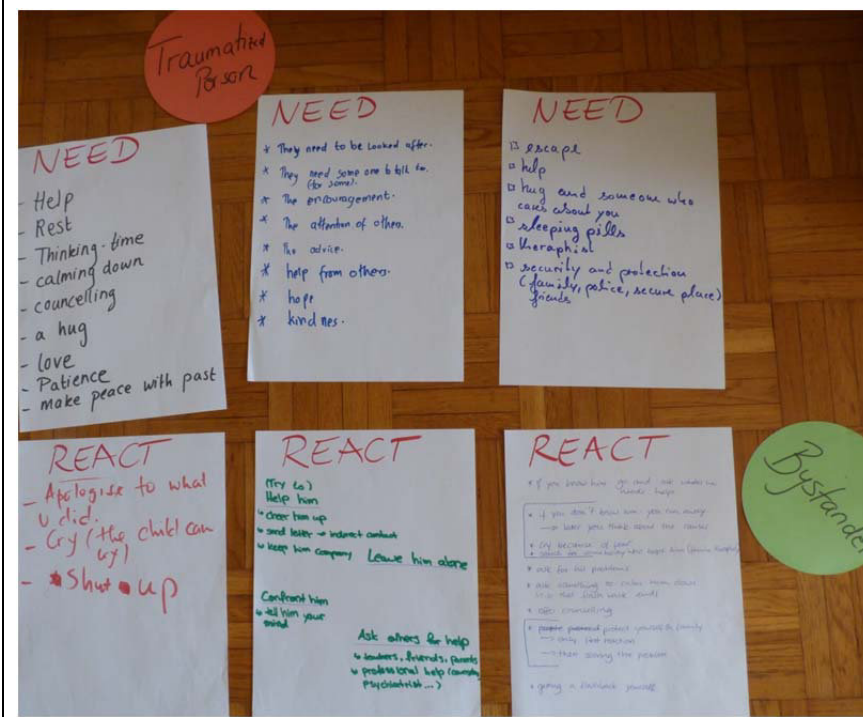
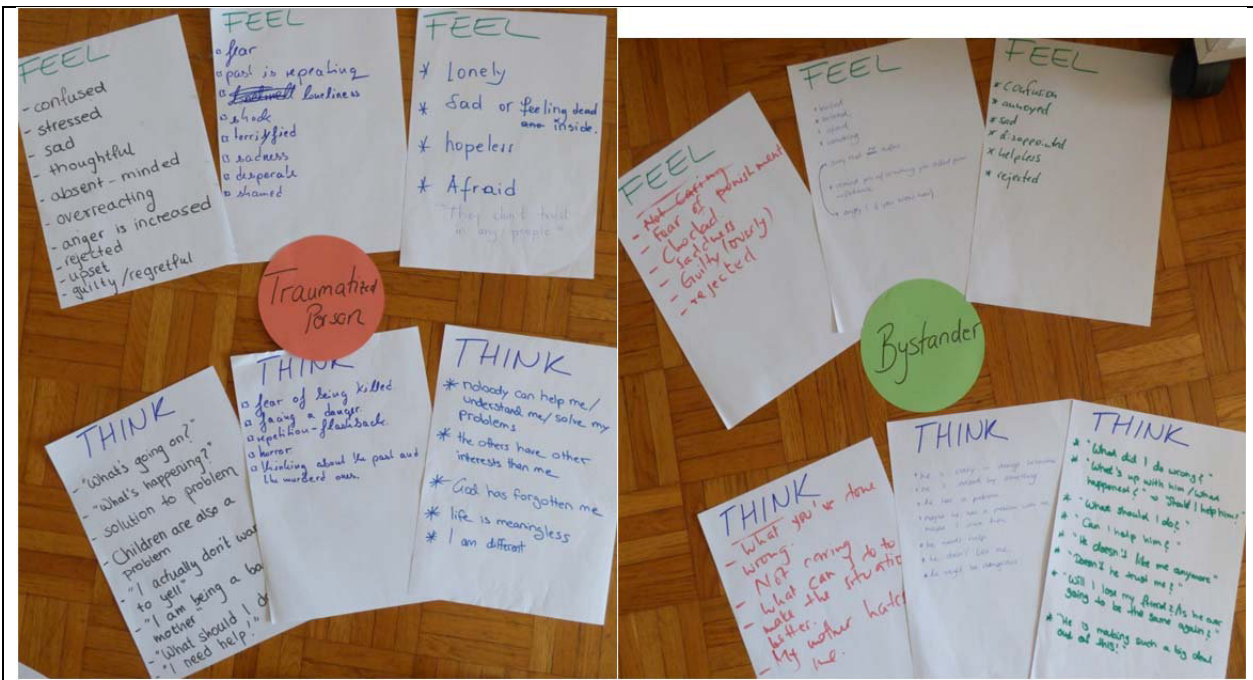
THINK

- * he is crazy → strange behavior
- * he is shocked by something
- * he has a problem
- * maybe he has a problem with me
- maybe I scare them
- * he needs help
- * he doesn't like me
- * he might be dangerous

REACT

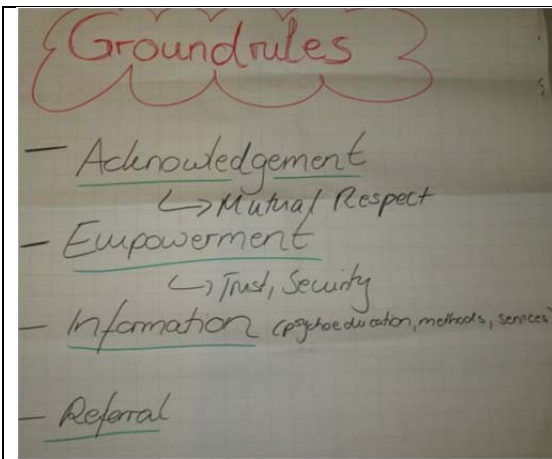
- * if you know him get close and understand his needs help
- if you don't know him you can help
- take your time about the reaction
- * cry because of fear
 - * react to what you see and hear him (panic attack)
- * ask for his problems
 - * ask something to calm him down
 - that does not work
 - * call counselling
- please protect protect yourself & family
- only fast reaction
 - then solving the problem
- * giving a flashback yourself

Comparison:



Imagination Exercise – Happy Moments

- For some students it was difficult to find a moment (or to decide for a moment)
- It was considered as important to find an explicit moment in order to remember it in all details
- My impression was that it was more difficult for some Rwandan students
- The exercise was considered as very helpful to relax and feel relieved from stress.
- Some could even match a colour to their memory (around 1/3)
- Everybody took it seriously
- Maybe the instructions were read out too quick not considering language issues
- Through learning to actively recall positive feelings (evoked by e.g. positive memories), one will find it easier to come back to these positive thoughts, also in or after difficult situations; this may help to overcome negative sentiments and gain back control over intrusive thoughts (as symptoms of trauma)



Feedback round:

- General appreciation of the workshop
- Students felt to have a better idea what to do now when encountering trauma
- They liked the exchange and sharing of ideas
- Some liked the participatory approach (group was very active), others thought that there was too much exchange in plenary (group too big)
- The workshop increased the feeling of belonging to the group (everybody can contribute, very individually relevant topic)
- Good mix of methods, diversification
- Many stressed the unusual approach to group work (point of view of an insider and a bystander) and good practical exercises
- Somebody emphasized the positive approach to a difficult topic
- One of the students from Rwanda claimed that the workshop was of a great help to her, because after learning more she felt ready to deal with and try to help traumatized people she would meet in her country.

Feedback of one of the supervisors:

"All in all, for me the workshop was very interesting. I especially liked how well structured the workshop was, starting out with a frame (introductory games, getting to know each other, setting up rules) and then using a story as a projection screen. Just like in the story, we, too, always started out with reflecting on the negative aspects to then come up with positive results or ways to deal with the negative symptoms. To me, the presentation on the statistics felt a bit like a break, since up until then it had only been about personal interpretations and opinions. Nonetheless, I thought it interesting to see how trauma was officially defined, even if I am skeptical towards supposedly 'objective' definitions of everything that has to do with the human psychology. To me, it seems, this is such a subjective and individual 'field', that one should be very careful in trying to establish general definitions and cures. Still, I think it is reasonable to try and find some definitions and try to establish a kind of 'working ground' and it was good to compare our findings to the official ones. In retrospect I think I can say that this workshop was the one the most liked by the whole group and that this was the workshop where both the Germans and the Rwandans were the most active and felt the most comfortable in."

Reflections of the facilitator:

- Language is a hindering factor to participation (some students shared after the workshop that they were really interested, but they didn't feel capable to express themselves)
- Topic touches everybody on an individual level, easy to make people participate because everybody has experiences to share (same as with conflicts!?)
- Topic has potential to create cross border similarities, e.g. family problems, problems in school
- Despite we didn't discuss in detail, if both Rwandans and German can identify with the same stones, it seemed to me as they raised similar ideas
- The topic has the potential to spread out to different life experiences of the people
- Through the discussion, empathy can be increased, also through putting yourself in the shoes of somebody

Foto 1: The group at the Synagogue in Mainz



Foto 2: The group at a memorial site in Osthofen



Foto 3: Hiking through the woods to get to the Buchenwald Concentration Camp



Foto 4: On the camp grounds



Foto 5: The group at the Rwandan embassy with the ambassador Mrs. Nkulikiyinka



Foto 6: The group performing a Christian song in Kinyarwanda at the Commemoration Mass



Foto 7: Exploring Berlin



Foto 8: The three guest-speakers: Mrs. Birkenkötter, Mr. Flittner, and Mr. Wilmsen



Foto 9: Group work at the Nelson Mandela School



Foto 10: The students come up with their final conclusions

