

Bonn LTTA October 07–09, 2024

Training Report

The training event was held at the youth hostel (Jugendherberge) located in Bonn in a conference room rented for the occasion.

Participants

There were seventeen participants (17) attending the event. Each partner was represented by three participants except the Italian school Fortunato (who had two participants only).

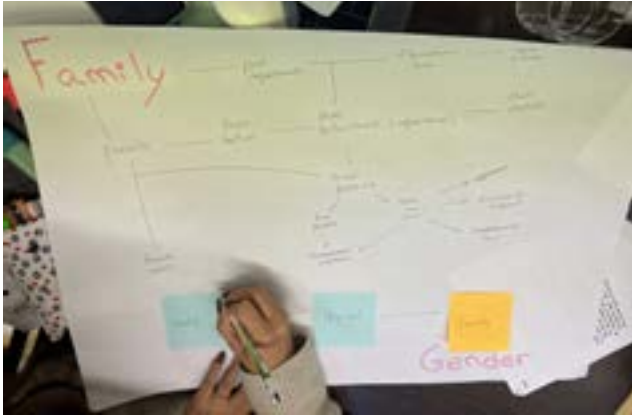


Training Methodology

In order to adhere as much as possible to the content proposed in the project application, a pre-training meeting was held on the Friday prior to the commencement of the training between all the partners. It was decided thereupon to ensure the trainer would be from Erasmus ME Academy's side and the participants would be trained on potential steps they could use further. There would be sessions on co-creation and creative thinking besides brainstorming and group work peppered throughout the three days of the training event.

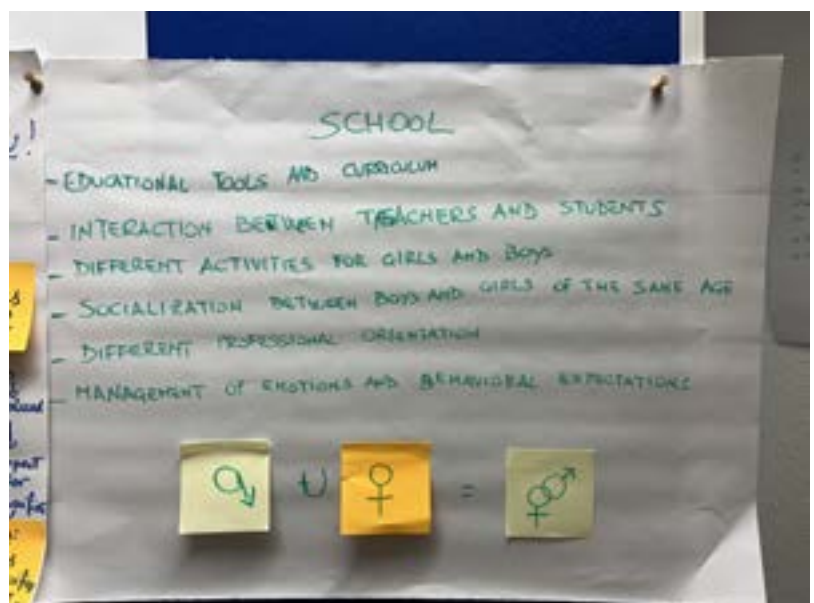
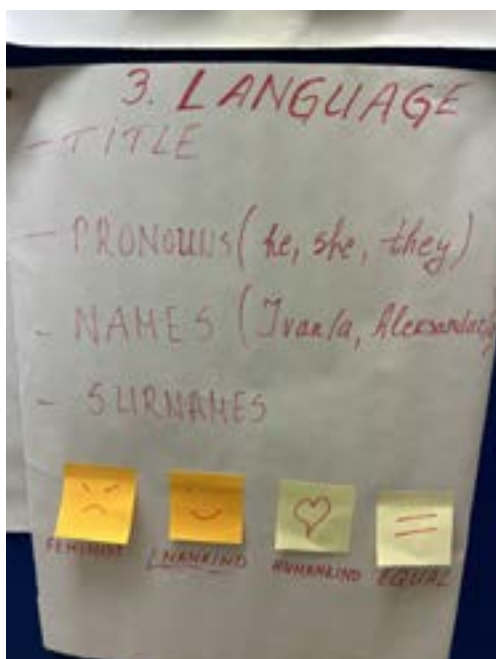
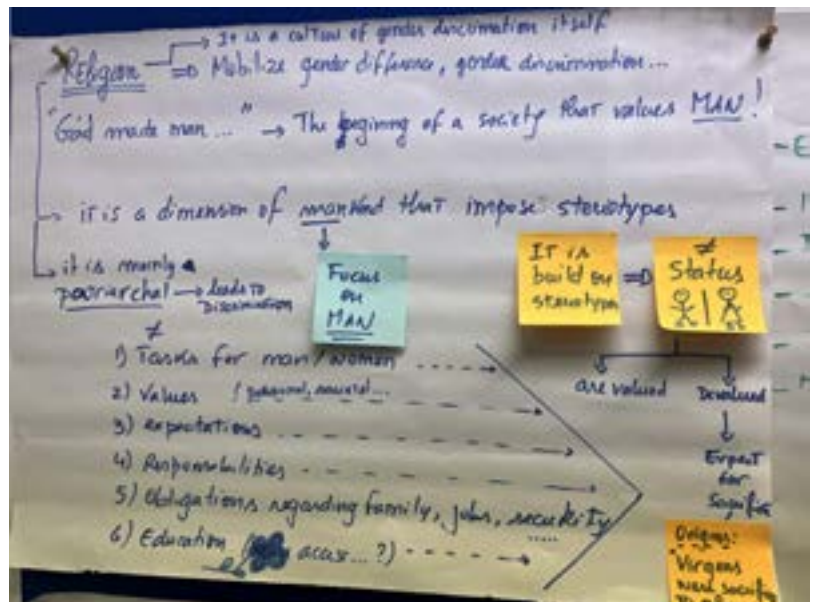
Training Content Review

Due to the general misconception proposed by the idea of sex and gender, the first few sessions were dedicated to exploring this topic. Participants took active part in the session through trying to understand the concept not only in English but also in their respective languages, for that would be the language they use in their natural work environment.



To discuss the various issues that girls face, especially concerning the gender question, the participants worked in five different groups on (i) family, (ii) school, (iii) language, (iv) religion, (v) mass media. We realised that these topics are intertwined and often they play across each other.

With a handout that was provided, we played a gender game to reflect on how complex the ideas are, that often they are mistaken. During the game, while most participants were of a common opinion on most items, we did have heated discussions on certain points. Some of the work done by the participants during this interactive session is shown here.



This handout is presented on the right side. Participants were distributed this sheet to adapt and use in their daily settings. This was very much appreciated.

To ensure the progression of understanding, the trainer introduced the idea of gender scales. This was intended to be a reflective approach to ascertain how we speak and how we could adapt our speech, given the intricacies of each language to address young girls who are often discouraged by the normal speech.

1. Most building-site workers in Germany are men. (G)
2. Women give birth to babies, men don't. (S)
3. Little girls are gentle, boys are tough. (G)
4. In one case, when a child brought up as a girl learned that he was actually a boy, his school marks improved dramatically. (G)
5. Amongst Vietnamese agricultural workers, women are paid 40-60 per cent of the male wage. (G)
6. Women can breastfeed babies, men can bottlefeed babies. (S)
7. In Ancient Egypt men stayed at home and did weaving. Women handled family business. Women inherited property and men did not. (G)
8. Men's voices break at puberty, women's do not. (S)
9. In one study of 224 cultures, there were 5 in which men did all the cooking, and 36 in which women did all the housebuilding. (G)
10. According to UN statistics, women do 67 per cent of the world's work, yet their earnings for it amount to only 10 per cent of the world's income (G)

SESSION 1

TRAINING NEEDS



Gender Scale Definition:

- Discriminatory (-3)
- Stereotype (-2)
- Blind (-1)
- Sensitive (+1)
- Responsive (+2)
- Transformative (+3)



Practical exercises were done with the gender scale and the participants were invited to reflect on the issue. Participants were very active to contribute, participate and learn.

The issue of equity vs. equality was the next issue for the participants, to help them understand that the girl student often needs much more support due to previous misgivings. Hence, providing equal opportunity alone would not suffice the cause.

The sessions thus far helped us realise that the issue of gender mainstreaming, i.e., creating acceptance among the general public was the elephant in the room.

SESSION 3

MAINSTREAMING

Gender Mainstreaming is a globally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality. Mainstreaming is not an end in itself but a strategy, an approach, a means to achieve the goal of gender equality.

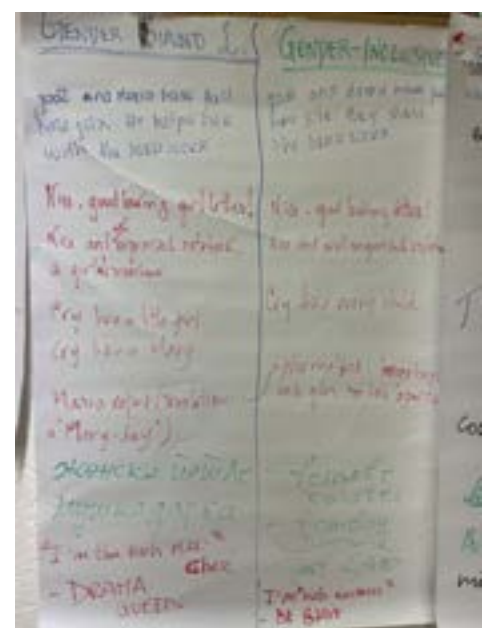
Gender mainstreaming implies that gender is not a separate set of issues; it is an element of all issues at all levels.



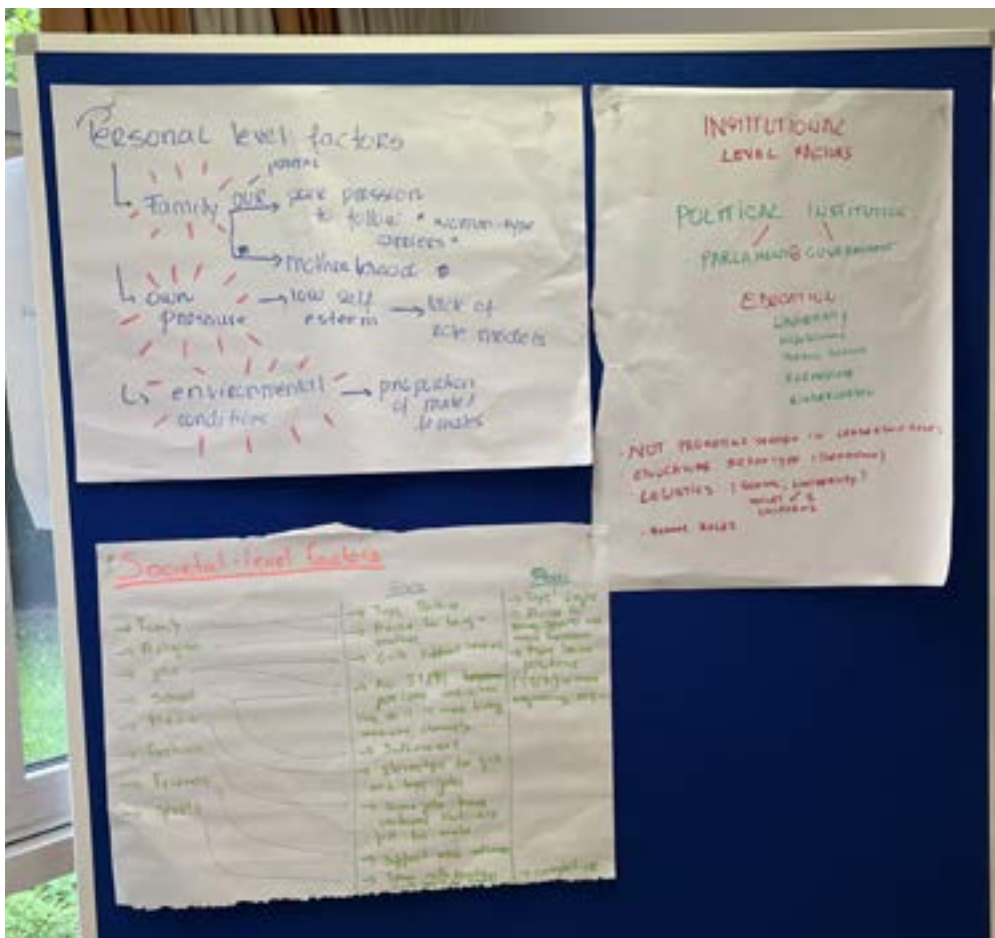
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The participants were invited to actively discuss the issue of gender-biased language and trying to adapt it to a gender-inclusive language. This, as the participants noticed was easier said than done as this concept would perhaps work in English but would be hard to replicate in other languages.

The participants, did nevertheless try the exercise not only in English but also in Italian, Portuguese and Macedonian. This was important to realise that often trainings may be done in English but the practicality of the usage remains a mystery, especially in non-English settings.



A group activity then ensued on the topic of barriers to participation of girls in STEM-related disciplines. The participants were asked to split into three groups, one each for personal, institutional and societal-level factors.



The aim of the activity was to ask the participants to mingle and come up with issues after brainstorming which they saw as being trans-boundary in nature. This was necessary to address the issue at the European level. The project has about four partner countries, both European and non-European. The activity was tasked to make participants think at the policy

level, outside their respective countries, to interact with other nationalities and come to a joint opinion.

Having the group activities at hand and noting the joint lessons learnt, the participants were then guided into the teaching and learning environment with resources they could adapt and use in their respective environments (in this case, schools and similar educational institutions).

From the needs analysis, i.e., expectations of the participants at the beginning of the training, we were able to understand that the participants were eagerly expecting such tools that they could use to improve the lives of their girl students. Hence, a list of tips were prepared, presented and discussed with the participants.

Such an effort often involves the individual to reflect on existing teaching methods and particular adaptation mechanisms to ensure the best is garnered.

By using practical examples, the participants were able to reflect and think about how to use the communicative aspect and strategies in their respective environments.

SESSION 4

T & L ENVIRONMENT

L

A_h**Communication**

- gender-inclusive

Strategies

- avoid singular pronouns
- alternate male and female examples
- visual representation
- oral communication
- addressing problems



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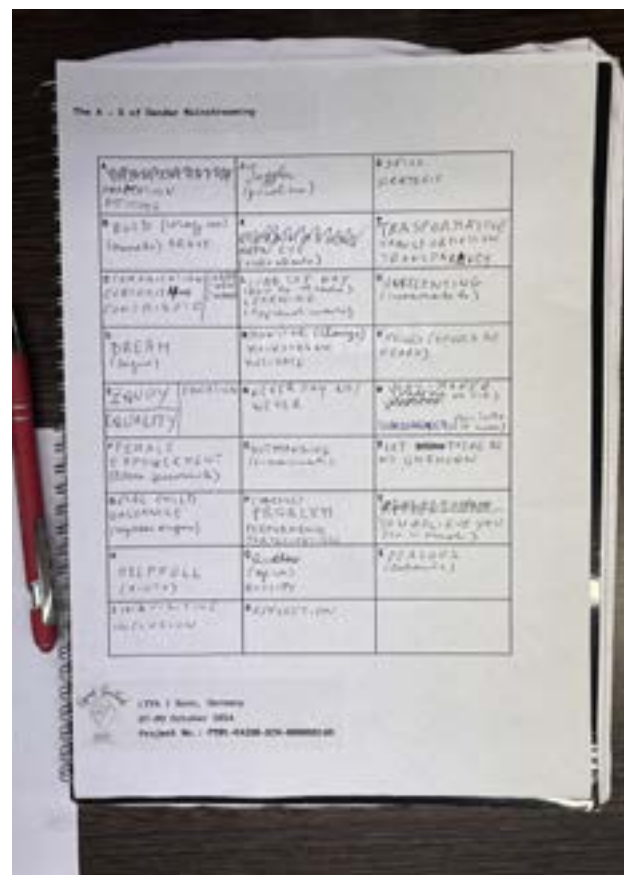
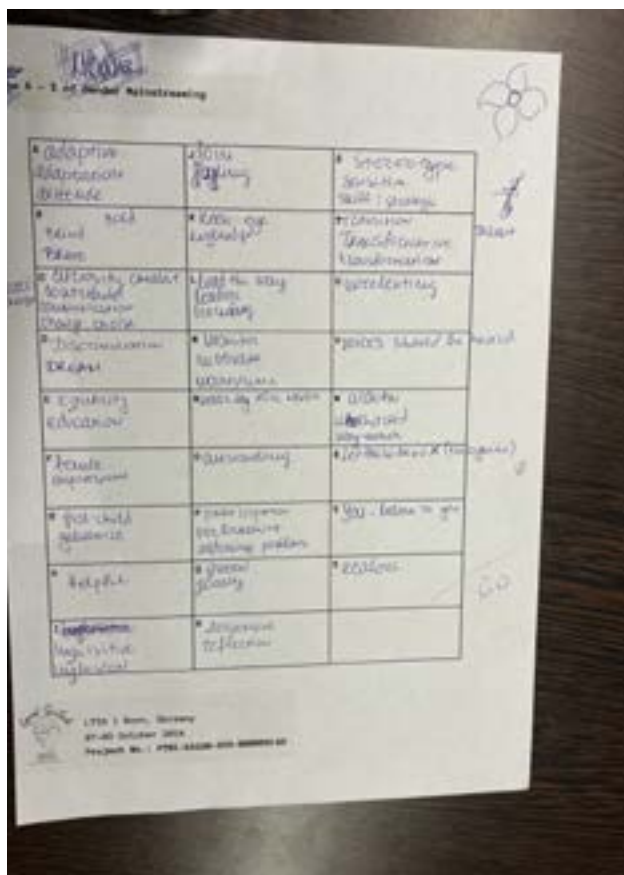
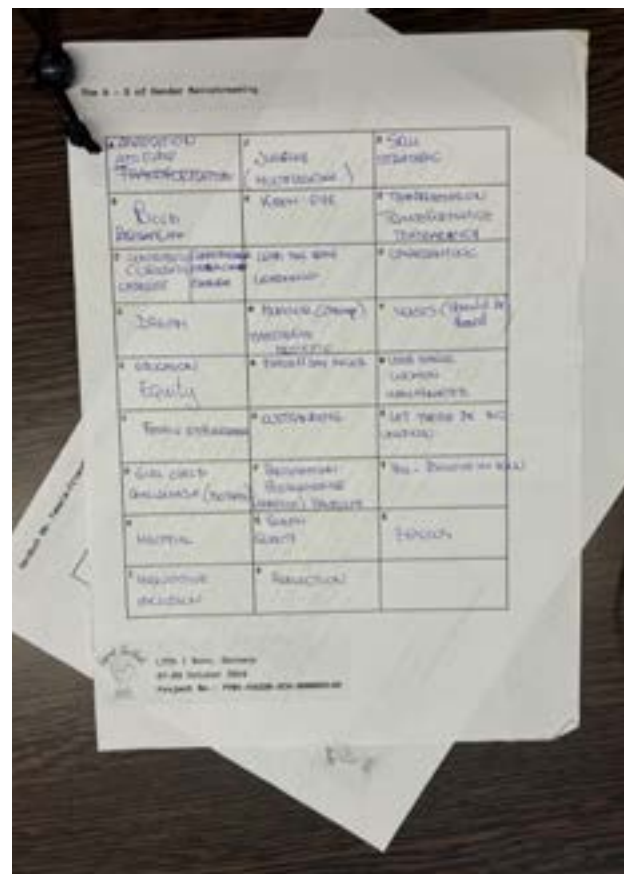
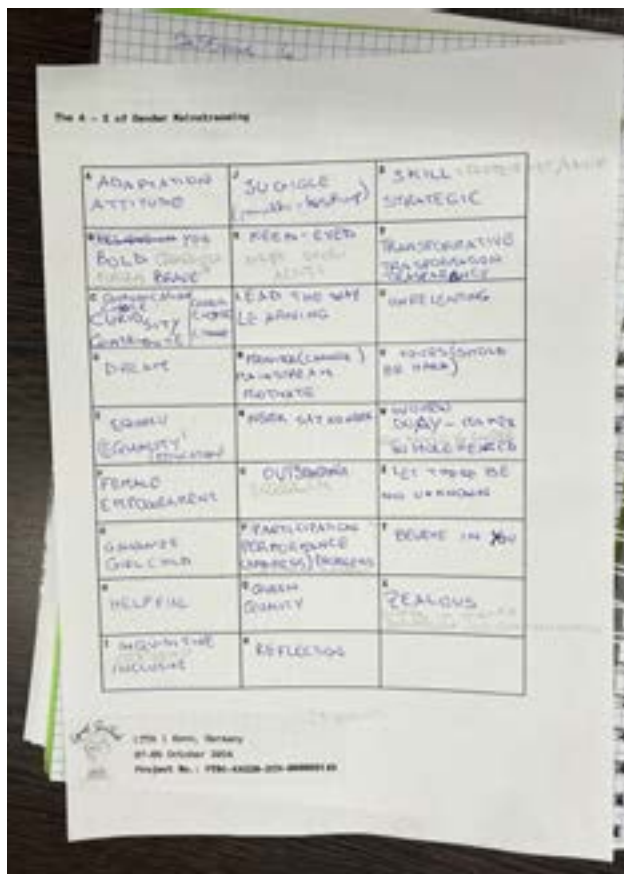
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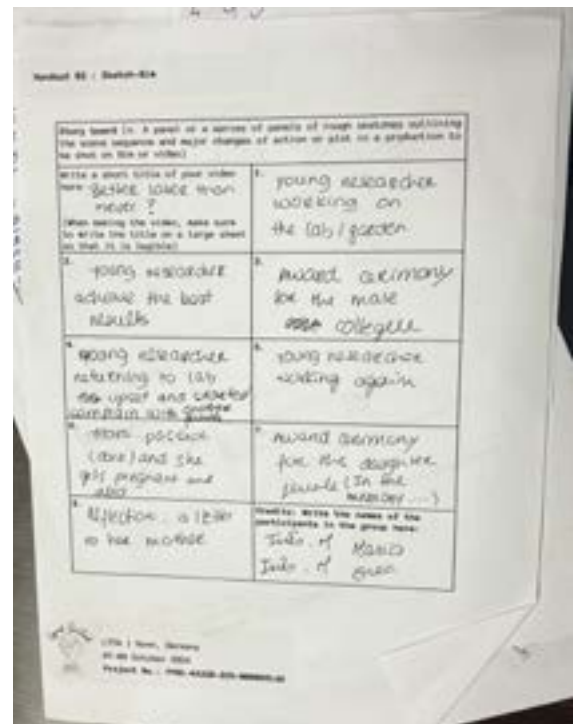
Following this, visual presentation tips were also given to the participants. To further the idea, the trainer then introduced the idea of Gender Equality Markerts, in relation to the previously discussed topic of gender scales. The relation between the two helped the participants understand how the entire idea fits into place.

On lesson planning and delivery, the participants were imparted ideas on pedagogy with specific attention being urged on the issue of increasing participation. This could be through group work, group discussions, role play, debates, case studies, etc.

Engagement is key to any goal. When training participants are engaged, they feel included and such inclusive environments promote the common learning goal. Hence, group activities through co-creation was an important aspect of the entire three-day activity. Participants were often asked to find hidden clues in the presentation to come up with an A-Z of gender mainstreaming. The goal was to entice the participants to stay attentive and learn, while simultaneously promoting the learning ambient. The following section shows some of the participant notes where were made during the activity.

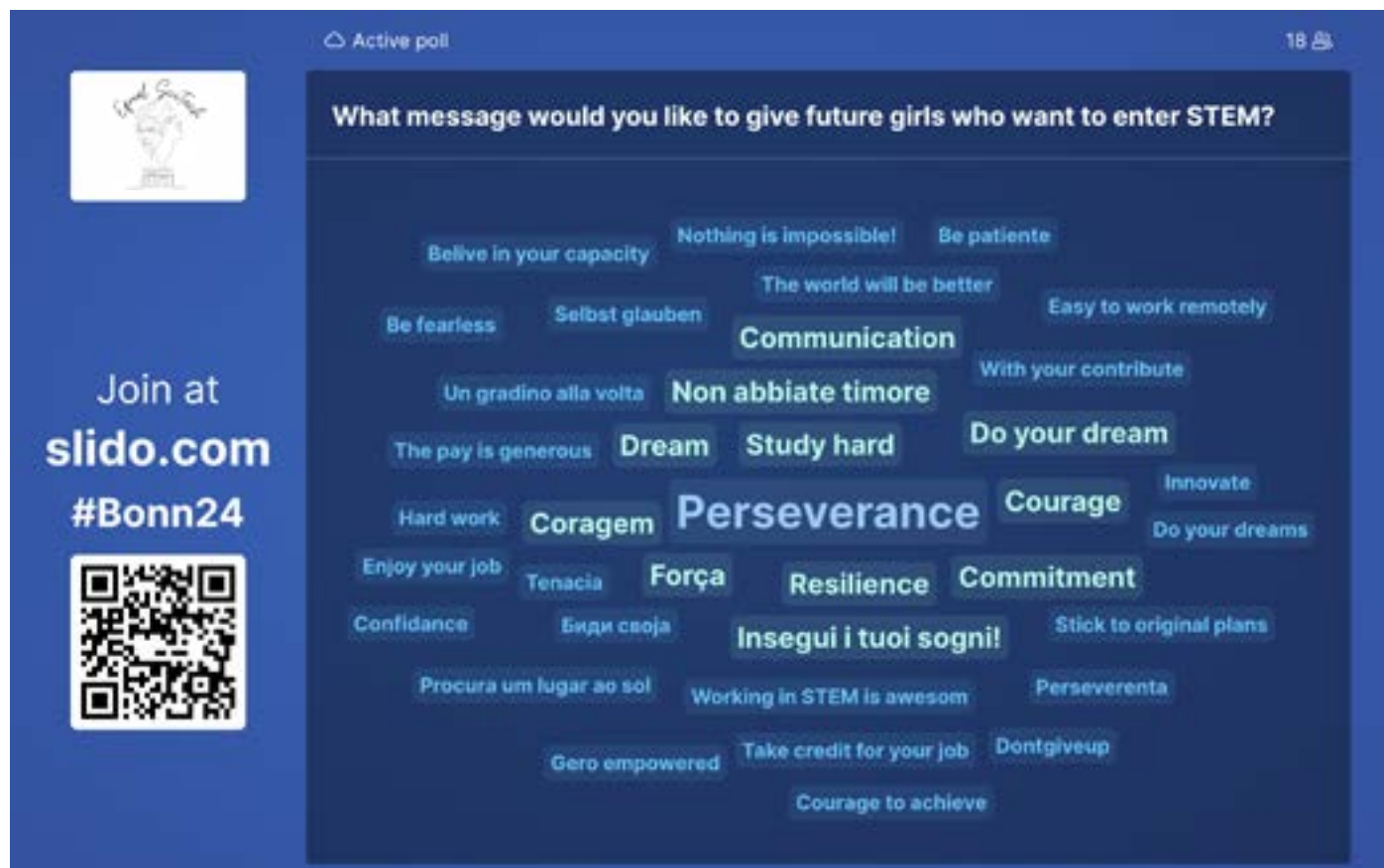


The participants were also asked to create videos on the training thematic, through an aid (see image on the right), which helped them to formulate their ideas. Though participants were asked to depict scenes and draw sketches, except one group who drew sketches and a separate group that filmed, participants preferred to animate or depict the inanimate world in their videos. The videos had a storyline, at times fictional, at times bordering on reality, but were made to the point. Participants critically thought and worked together to produce their respective videos, at times in two languages.



The fact that each group thought of a different way to speak on the general thematic highlights that the issues are varied and multiple responses need to be formulated and addressed to the target group.

In the penultimate session, the game cards from the project were presented by the project's coordinator. The participants were also asked to give advice to future girls who wished to enter STEM. The following in their interactive response.

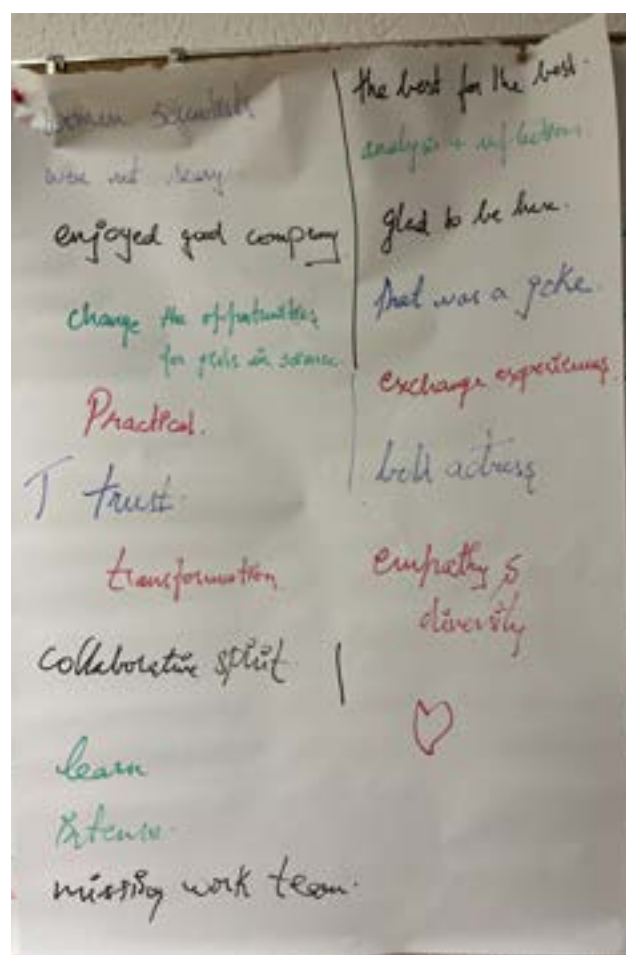


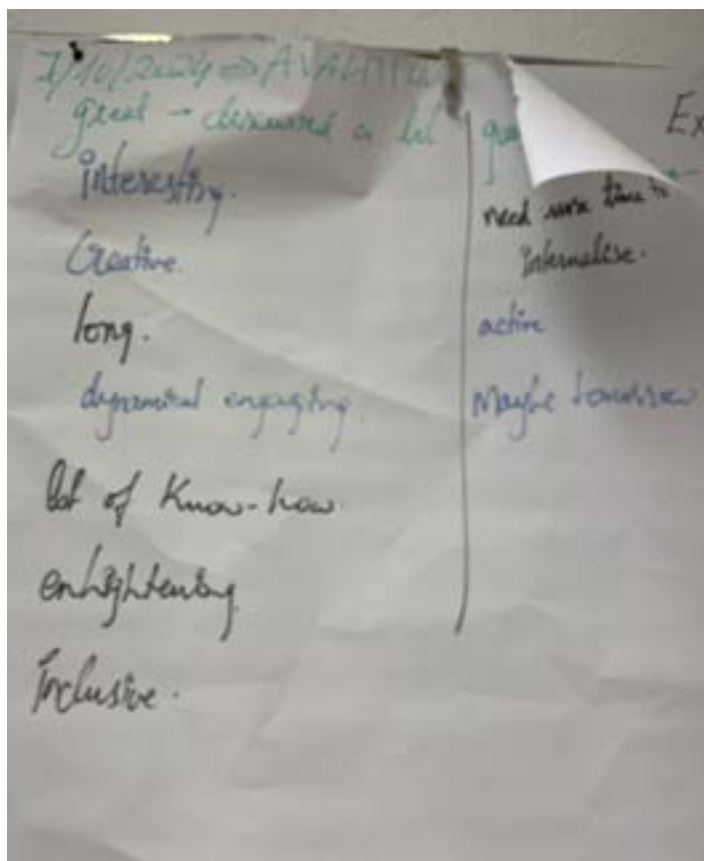
Conclusion

With feedback being collected at the end of every day from the participants, the mood was gauged to be positive though the training content was intense.

The participants felt at ease to express their opinion without facing any discrimination. They were able to share their experiences and felt heard.

As to the participants, unfortunately the participants were not able to respect the gender ratio as most partners were unable to send male participants to attend. This could be a negative factor as the ones to hear and act were missing. The female participants who attended were excellent in expressing their needs and opinions.





Monitoring, evaluation and learning processes are important in any activity. Hence, the feedback session was tailored not only to the trainer, but also to the project partners.

The activity of reflection (as expressed in the training needs) was aptly used through the applied methodologies over the three days, ensuring practical use of the said theories.

Real-world use should happen if the participants feel the need to use it, adapting the ideas to their local language. As the adage goes, you can only take the horse to watering hole, but not make it drink.

Certificates were presented to all the participants at the end of the training activity. The following is a picture of the entire group in the training room setting at Jugendherberge in Bonn. The training activity completes an important milestone in WP5 in the project. The project's completion date is scheduled for the end of March and the partners are working diligently to complete pending items.



Bavesh MOORTHY

Bonn, 10 October 2024