*Building Relations and Intercultural Dialogue for Global Education.*

******BRIDGE-Centre**

**11, TOKYO AV. INSTANBUL Q. DRC/ GOMA**

**E-MAIL:** [**bakundukizenku@gmail.com**](mailto:bakunduki#zenku@gmail.com)

**Tel: +243 999229068**

***TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE BRIDGE-CENTRE***.

1. Context and justification:

While there are millions of tribes worldwide and each tribe has got its own culture, there is a need to unite/connect the world in order to make unity in diversity. In a multicultural society, inevitably, there is coexistence of people who come from different corners of the world and have different mentalities, conventions and habits which could be considerably, if nothing preventive is done, a source of conflicts. The multicultural reality, which is not yet accepted by all nor valued, needs to find those paths that can foster the development of an open-minded mentality that embraces who is different from us and evolves in a real intercultural dimension. If it is true that every man has those peculiar characteristics that associates all the human species, from which his fundamental rights rise, it is also true that every man is different from his counterparts due to his congenital physical and, above all, to the original personality that comes from his original culture, that fundamentally contributed to build his personality. In interpersonal relations, one is always up against others that are different, individuals with similarities and differences. These differences, especially in the cultural field, are more identifiable in individuals belonging to different ethnic groups. Therefore, in order to elicit and foster the transition from multicultural to intercultural, the educative action commitment has to be undertaken. We know that there is not an age when education ends, precisely because what distinguishes a person is his constant dynamism. However, it is acknowledged that educative action is of fundamental importance especially in the developmental age; that is during the years defined by physical and mental development of each individual, in which everyone’s own personality is moulded. On this side, we can assert that the educative action in relation to the interaction with those that are different, on one hand it supports each individual in developing his full and balanced personality, on the other hand it leads the individual to the formation of the common sense of belonging which definitively underpins the prospect of social coexistence (Dalla Torre, 1992, p. 54). This is an important element of nowadays society in which there are often acts of intolerance against immigrants, displaced people because of natural catastrophes, including children. In the wide field of education, mainly the BRIDGE-Centre, we now want to focus on the useful elements in order to raise and live with diversity. This means we need to foster in individuals the knowledge of the multiplicity of the social, historical and cultural values in the world, not to come to the elimination of diversity, but to achieve a balance in these values through a process of acknowledgement, dialogue and respect. The belief that education is an act of love toward those that are different must be the fundamentals of education and of those who strive to carry out it. Therefore, not only an individual is recognized for who he is, but it is helped to become more deeply himself and a free and conscientious person. And since every person has his personal history, culture and friendships as well as family, ethnic and religious relationships, to educate a person means to help him to rise into his historical and cultural identity. What the present society shows us is a multiplicity of worlds which need interaction for mutual survival.

In order to foster interaction with those that are different, educative action in different domains, particularly humanities, has to be the cornerstone of the BRIDGE-Centre not only to foreigners but also to locals, for this is the only way to make possible unity in diversity, coexistence and integration without cancelling one’s identifying characteristics for world citizenship. (Dalla Torre, 1992, p. 54). This path has to be followed since every age, more specifically childhood, is tender to acquire and grow up with dispositions and skills that represent the prerequisite to make a culturally- balanced- world. Towards those who are in a foreign land, particularly because of war, genocide, clandestine immigration, etc… we should bear in mind that an immigrant may even reject the country from which he fled but he will never lose a love-hate relationship with his native land (Demetrio & Favaro, 1992, p. XVIII). The link with one’s cultural roots is more strongly felt by adults who left their homeland but it is also noticed on their children. Just think at the use of their mother tongue, at the different food and religious habits found in the families that are, in consequence, handed down from parents to children (Let-s consider the year 1094 in the eastern Congo with the Rwandese who fled from their countries when the Genocide outbroke. In the light of all these, BRIDGE-Centre engages to undertake educative projects through interethnic, intercultural dialogue to counter a society that is split apart because of cultural differences. In so doing, projects with purposes, smart objectives and verifiable paths in which everyone could feel loved for who he is, accepted and welcomed without discrimination, esteemed and valued with his cultural baggage could be realized. It is essential that an empathic relationship, characterized by respect, loyalty, harmony and mutual confidence (Angori, 1995, p. 30) would rise and grow. These are fundamental elements to help each individual to develop and mature his own personality in the most full and balanced way. A last element that we should highlight is that education to otherness should not be seen only as depending on interculturalism, even if this purpose is an urgency imposed by society: an aim of this education is also to help the person to become increasingly aware of his own identity. In this regard, we try to understand the connection existing between the development of the personal and the sociocultural identity. Here we do not want to discuss the different theories about identity development in everyone’s developmental process; it is of importance to highlight the key role undertaken by the relation with the other; that is meeting with people that are different, building up one’s personality. Personal identity is the result of interaction between genetic factors and elements from the outer environment which the individual comes in contact with, between what according to us belongs to the innate category and all relations and acquisitions generated by the surrounding environment. With cultural identity we mean what is given to a person from the outside reality and becomes part of his personal baggage. Identity is the expression of a continuous constructive process, based on a continuous flow of interactions between the individual and the environment, in which a special resource of the individual that gives direction, legitimacy and originality to development is revealed and manifested (Papparella, 1994, p. 167). This is a dynamic interaction that is continuously evolving, even if we have to find its principal features, its specific characteristics in the early years of our life, especially in relations established in those days. Identity is a dynamic reality that evolves over something that is already entrenched and it adds new characteristics without erasing what already exists. It embodies two fundamental dimensions: the relationship with ourselves and the relationship with others. In the relationship with himself, an individual has to mature a balanced self-perception, a balanced perception of his positive features and limits, confidence in his potentialities that allows him to look at the world as an individual bearer of originality, with features similar and at the same time different from those of the other people. To achieve this, it is necessary to have a relationship with others, in which recognition gains in importance, that is the value others confer us: the opinion others have towards us has a crucial value, whether this opinion is adopted as negative or positive. In the first instance, it will be difficult that self-confidence, crucial to express oneself as a balanced personality, would increase and develop; on the contrary, in the second there will be more possibilities that the individual would achieve a balanced development of his personality, though suffering the unavoidable frustrations encountered during development. Furthermore, in the relationship with others everyone has the possibility to show his originality and at the same time the need of similarity that expresses the wish of acknowledging and of feeling acknowledged as belonging to a group, to a community that shares certain values (Cesari, 1992, p. 102). Hence there is a continuous interaction between subjects and objects, recognizable not only in the environment but in everything that is outside ourselves: due to this complementarity of internal and external factors we build our identity. Bearing in mind that reality outside us is a multicultural reality, it is clear that everyone has to get into a relationship with others that is richer and more complex than the recent past. It is like a third element has come into play: what is inside the individual; what is given by the culture in which the individual is included; what is offered to the individual by “other” cultures that entered our country. This involves firstly the awareness of the situation in which we live. It involves also the assumption from who has the task as an educator, of methods that, though offering everyone the possibility of grasping the cultural baggage that built his personality until then, accept what other cultures offer, with the awareness that it could contribute in developing his identity.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of the centre** | BUILDIND RELATIONS AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE FOR GLOBAL EDUCATION, BRIDGE-C | |
| **City and website address**: | ~~Service de la cohésion multiculturelle (COSM), Av. Léopold-Robert 90, 2300 La~~  ~~Chaux-de-Fonds, SWITZERLAND~~  [~~www.ne.ch/cosm~~](http://www.ne.ch/cosm)  ~~Contact: Ingela Geith-Chauvière~~ [~~Ingela.Geith-Chauviere@ne.ch~~](mailto:Ingela.Geith-Chauviere@ne.ch) | |
| **When it was**  **established:** | ~~Created in 1990 (first under the name of "Office of the Delegate for Foreigners - Bureau du délégué aux étrangers", the Service of multicultural cohesion (COSM) is a service of the cantonal administration attached to the Department of economy~~. | |
|  | | |
| **Description of main activities:** | * **CONSULTING CENTRE AND SOCIAL INFORMATION**   Consulting, information and orientation. Open to all with total confidentiality.   * **ADVICE AND SUPPORT TO GENDER INTERGRATION AND INCLUSIVE PROJECTS**   Expertise available to any association or person wishing to undertake a gender integration and inclusive project.  Debates, presentation meetings on gender equity/ equality.   * **INTERPRETATION AND TRANSLATION SERVICES.**   Quality written and oral translations/ interpretation in three languages (English, French and Kiswahili), and advice and | |
| information on linguistic matters.   * INTERCULTURAL CONNECTIONS.   The Intercultural Centre implements many projects in the field of cultural diversity promotion, citizenship with intercultural association and second-generation youngsters, of media and diversity, of education against racism and discrimination in the schools, of intercultural communication and relation with workers and companies. It is a place where people of different cultural backgrounds gather together for appreciation of cultural diversity by fostering intercultural dialogue and cross-cultural understanding. It offers training in cross-cultural competences in many fields and language courses focusing also on the cultural needs of people. If confronted by/ to a problem of racism, the Centre will: listen to complaints and testimonies, Help and support victims, provide information and advice and offer mediation. Besides these projects, it conducts research on work and cultural diversity, intercultural education, and intercultural journalism. |
| **Other activities** | * Workshops, presentations, conferences, debates on sustainable development Goals. * Help students achieve their academic success through our services, resources, and support, * Library, * Lecture hall for students and other professional scholars, * Café, promoting cultural diversity as a tool for social inclusion of migrant communities and on intercultural dialogue and citizenship both at national and international levels. * Thematic Evenings - open debates + music and poetry moments + traditional   Food, dedicated to different countries of origin of guest speakers and hosts, |
|  |  |
|  | |
| Our Mission. | Countering cultural differences conflicts between people by promoting intercultural dialogue for global education. |
| Vision | Unity in diversity/ A united world. |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| Goals to achieve. | ***Main Goal***: Building bridges between people through dialogue, intercultural understanding and interpersonal interactions for a globalized world  ***Specific goals***:   * Provide a place where people of different nationalities and cultural backgrounds can meet and interact, * Promote intercultural competencies and learning, * Promote and embrace cultural diversity, * Promote gender equity, * Empower young people through teaching and learnin * Provide solutions to cultural / Ethnic- based- conflicts, * Etc… |
| What kinds of people use the space? | Students, Secondary school pupils, Professional scholars, foreign associations and communities; other NGOs from DRC. |
| Legal status: | A private foundation. |
|  |  |
| Location within the city: | ~~COSM has two seats in the centres of the two main cities of the canton of Neuchâtel. The headquarters are in La Chaux-de-Fonds, the other in the city of Neuchâtel~~. |
| Working languages. | BRIDGE-Centre uses three languages: English (70%), French( 25%) and Kishwahili (5%). |
| Scope of coverage: | Local, Nation-wide, and international. |
| Number of staff: | ~~The COSM employs the following professional collaborators:~~   * ~~Multicultural and multidisciplinary team : 13~~ * ~~Collaborators on special projects: 7-10~~ * ~~Interpreters / mediators : 70~~ |
| Size of the space: | ~~The size of the centre in La Chaux-de-Fonds is 270 m2; the one in Neuchâtel is 200 m2.~~ |
| Main sources of funding: | ~~The COSM has a annual budget of 2'154'100 CHF (1'713'000 euros). About the half (1'104'100 CHF; 878'000 euros) is supported by the canton of Neuchâtel; the rest (1'050'000 CHF; 835'000 euros) is funded by the Swiss Confederation.~~ |