



Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Building for Young Leaders in Central America

El Salvador (1st August 2014) – Panama (8th August 2014)

Organizers: Peace Boat & UNISDR Americas

Background

Founded in 1983, Peace Boat is an international non-governmental and non-profit organization in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) since 2002. Peace Boat works to promote peace, human rights, equal and sustainable



development and respect for the environment through educational programs, cooperative projects and advocacy activities. Peace Boat's main activities are carried out through a chartered passenger ship that travels the world on educational peace voyages. The ship creates a neutral, mobile space and enables people to engage across borders in and mutual cooperation at sea, and in over 60 ports that are visited each year.

As part of our wider peace-building activities, Peace Boat has carried out emergency relief operations for the past 18 years, delivering emergency assistance and raising funds, as well as coordinating the dispatch of experienced logisticians, interpreters

and volunteer teams to affected areas all over the world. Following the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami in 2011, Peace Boat established the Peace Boat Disaster Relief Volunteer Center (PBV) to carry out:

- Disaster Risk Reduction (i.e. prevention, mitigation, disaster preparedness, response and recovery), such as the training, dispatch and coordination of volunteers
- The on-going relief and recovery of communities affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami
- Domestic and international disaster relief
- Advocacy on Disaster Risk Reduction-related issues and their cross-cutting relations to sustainability, human security, poverty and climate change through active participation in networks and forums and is an Organising Partner of the NGO Major Group for the 2015 3rd UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR).

In May 2014, Peace Boat became an official campaign partner of UNISDR Resilient Cities Campaign, to advocate for disaster prevention and resilience building in cities around the world. As an official partner, Peace Boat hopes to bring its Japanese experience on disaster mitigation, training volunteer leaders, and coordinating disaster relief and prevention efforts, to the communities we visit in our global voyages.



Programme Theme:

"Creating regional cooperation with a community perspective"



Programme Overview

Because building resilience and disaster prevention requires the participation of both political and civil society members across the region, Peace Boat proposed working together with Central American governments and civil society organizations to create a weeklong program that would bring together young people from Central America for this purpose.

The proposed onboard programme took place onboard Peace Boat's chartered ship, during the Latin American segment of Peace Boat's 84th Voyage. 8 leaders from different Latin American countries participated in internal sessions and a training programme conducted by an experienced PBV trainer. During this program, young leaders could share with one another groundbreaking developments and experiences in their own countries and within the region, obstacles that remain, possible solutions, and mechanisms to secure the resilience of the region.

This program served as the launching program for Peace Boat's partnership with the UNISDR Building Resilient Cities Campaign. A representative of UNISDR joined the programme and served as a guest educator.

"The International Youth program is important because it's a great opportunity to learn from other cultures, different ways of thinking, and team work no matter who, it's about sharing knowledge"

Margarita Villalobos, UNISDR



Schedule & Agenda

Date	Place	Activity
1 AUG	San Salvador, El Salvador	Participants arrive in El Salvador. First session onboard
2 AUG	Acajutla, El Salvador	Visit SICA/Civil Defense, round table with government officials and civil society representatives.
3 AUG	Corinto, Nicaragua	On board conference with civil society members, government officials and UNISDR Resilient City Promoters. Hold press conference.
4 AUG	Sailing onboard Peace Boat's vessel, the Ocean Dream	Internal sessions: +What is the Resilience Cities Campaign +Presentations on their own countries risks and risk reduction programs +Japan's experience: Great East Japan Earthquake & Tsunami +Cross cutting themes: community involvement, Gender, Disabilities, children/youth, poverty, climate change +Cross border risks and chance for collaboration +Action plans formation
5 AUG	Sailing onboard Peace Boat's vessel, the Ocean Dream	
6 AUG	Sailing onboard Peace Boat's vessel, the Ocean Dream, and pass through the Panama Canal	
7 AUG	Cristobal, Panama	Visit to UNISDR offices in Panama. Discussion with government officials, intergovernmental agencies and civil society organizations in the City of Knowledge. Hold final meeting.
8 AUG	Panama City, Panama	Return to home countries

Program Objectives

This program served as the launching program for Peace Boat's partnership with the UNISDR Building Resilient Cities Campaign.

- Provide opportunities to Central-American youth to gain international experience; to learn from one another and from speakers onboard Peace Boat; to develop and gain knowledge they can use to work toward resiliency in their communities, civil society organization, local authorities and national governments; to generate links and connections with people from other countries and cultures.
- Participants evaluated both the existing challenges to strengthening resilience and potential solutions, and will have the opportunity to propose mechanisms for resilience building in the region.
- Discuss lessons learned from the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan with survivors and volunteers from the affected areas. After March 2011, there's a lot that can be shared with PBV experience in Japan and other countries.
- Building resilience and disaster prevention across the region (Central America) a very vulnerable area in natural disasters.



Photo: Conference with the Mayor of Santa Tecla City, El Salvador, which is a Role Model City

- Give Peace Boat participants the opportunity to directly interact with youth from El Salvador, Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Panama and learn about their countries' situations and the youth work in natural disaster prevention.
- Promote how young people can share with one another groundbreaking developments and experiences in their own countries and within the region, obstacles that remain, possible solutions, and mechanisms to secure the resilience of the region.

Participants

The selection of participants and contact with local governments were made thanks to the support and contact with embassies in Japan.

Name	Country / Organization	Position
José Gerardo Chávez Coronado	El Salvador / Municipality of Santa Tecla	Strategic Risk Management Expert
Patricia Carolina Cortez García	El Salvador / Municipality of Apastepeque, San Vicente	Civil Defense delegate
Luis Villamonte	Panamá / Department for Prevention and Mitigation of Disasters at SINAPROC	Geographer SINAPROC
Jim Alexander Diaz	Panama / SINAPROC	Rescuer / Volunteer
Julisa Ulate Arias	Costa Rica / National Commission for Risk Prevention and Emergency Reaction (CNE)	Legal Advisor to the Presidency
Bernardo Merayo Miller	Costa Rica / National Commission for Risk Prevention and Emergency Reaction (CNE)	Communication officer / Communications division,
Walkiri Jadima Lovo	Nicaragua / Guardabarrancos - Environmental Youth Movement	Leading Member
Idalina del Carmen Rodríguez Lanzas	Nicaragua / Guardabarrancos - Environmental Youth Movement	Rivas Department Coordinator
Margarita Villalobos	Costa Rica – Panama UNISDR representative	Special Guest

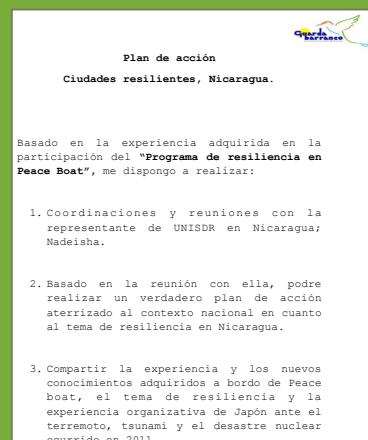
Outcomes

- The group mixed really (2 from each country) and there was a good gender balance (4 Male 4 Female. It would be ideal to have one male and one female from each country but participants were chosen by the embassies in Japan and their Foreign offices.
- For most of the members, joining a Peace Boat voyage gave them the opportunity to give talks to an international audience, and it's a good experience for them.

- We had great exchange programs in ports with local governments and organisations, understanding different realities and approaches.
- Having a UNISDR member involved was crucial for the program. Due to Margaritas experience and her knowledge in the region, this will help a lot to create a regional integration and a better follow-up.
- During the exchange program in Nicaragua (onboard sessions) we invited members and leaders of the UNIDR campaign, and their testimonies and experiences were a great encourage for the participants and other members attending.
- We had a great session with PBV volunteers onboard who took the leadership program.
- each participant made a plan-of-action on what and how they would implement their leaning and exchanges once they returned to their home countries
- A survey was conducted on the final day to evaluate how the programme performed and met the expectations of the participants

Plan-of-Action

Most importantly, each participant made a plan-of-action on what and how they would implement their leaning and exchanges once they returned to their home countries



Cultural exchange



Open spaces were used for a Japanese Cultural exchange, where four booths were set up: traditional clothing (both Japanese and Central American), traditional games, Japanese calligraphy and origami. Even though the event was only held for a couple of hours, it was very much appreciated by all the participants and it was a great opportunity for all to interact directly and take pictures together.

On a different day we wore traditional Japanese costumes and participated in a tea ceremony.

Media

Peace Boat with its high media profile and global reach drew media attention to the “Resilient Cities Campaign”.

<http://www.unisdr.org/archive/37634>

<http://www.panamaamerica.com.pa/nacion/barco-de-la-paz-de-japon-visita-la-sede-de-la-onu-en-panama>

<http://www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/news/v.php?id=38819>

<http://novecientos11.com/2014/08/20/simposio-sobre-juventud-y-resiliencia-a-bordo-de-peace-boat-barco-de-la-paz-en-su-escala-en-nicaragua/>



Photo: Media coverage while in port, Nicaragua

Participants Final Evaluation Survey

A survey was conducted on the final day to evaluate how the programme performed and met the expectations of the participants. *(below: An image of the table results)*

Participants Final Evaluation Survey for the 84th Global Voyage			Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Building for Young Leaders in Central America			Segment: El Salvador (August 1st, 2014) – Panama (August 8th, 2014)		
Number	Question	Patricia Carolina Cortez	Katrina del Carmen Rodríguez	Luis Villamonte	Julissa Ulate Arias	Walkiri Jadhira Lovo	José Gerardo Chávez Coronado	Bernardo Merayo Miller
1	Were you prepared for the programme?	Yes	Yes	More or less. I didn't have specific info about the program until I was contacted by coordinators via email.	Yes. The information provided was very realistic in order to be prepared for the training.	I didn't know very well what I was going to do, and I didn't know there were "resilient cities" in Nicaragua, but I knew I had to do my best onboard to represent my country. Although we were sent links with information about the topic, it might be good to have been introduced to a person in our country that knew about the topic in order to have a better objective/journal established before going.	It was very helpful. There is always small details but Maria and Carlos were very clear in their responses.	Sincerely, I was not prepared. Everything was new for me. It was better than we were informed of and the information sent.
2	Were you satisfied with quality of life onboard? (Shared cabin, food, etc.)	Very good. Food was healthy but it would be convenient to have latin food in one of the restaurants	Sharing room with a new person was great. I learned a lot from her, and we became like sisters. Food was not apt for our culture.	I really liked life onboard, and it was a new and incredible experience. Food I had to get used to.	Yes, the Japanese culture is very respectful and spiritual. Food is very healthy and I didn't have any problems with it.	Yes, I think it was good to share room with someone I didn't know and not from my country. That allowed me to know more about her, her culture, her country and her work. It was a very positive experience. In regards to food, it was also a nice experience, allowing us to expand our cultural and culinary vision of another country.	It was a very nice environment, good food, a great experience, specially with the volunteers.	I am satisfied with the life onboard. I believe sharing cabin with someone is an opportunity to expand knowledge and exchange cultures. With the food you should inform about the menu and not just ask if vegetarian or not.
3	Did you felt welcome and included on the onboard Peace Boat community?	Program coordinators made us feel like at home. All the activities were very interesting.	Yes. It was a brilliant experience since I was able to share part of my culture with Japanese and them with me.	Yes. They made us feel as if we had been with them since Japan, as if we were a family no matter the nationality. I enjoyed life onboard.	Yes. The fact you were greeted by everyone you met in the hallways regardless of the language made you feel special.	Even when most passengers were Japanese and didn't speak Spanish, I was able to connect with them because they looked for ways to make themselves understood. It was nice to share with them through parties activities and exchanges. I felt like one more passenger and it was nice to really connect with all others onboard.	I felt very good. I want to be part of the volunteer team onboard. I think for future programmes it might be good to keep a more serious atmosphere and emphasize on keeping romantic relationships aside.	Definitely. They made as felt as if we had been there for a long time. The crew was like a family even when we had different languages we could understand each other greatly.
4.a.	Rate from 1-5 your opinion about the following aspects of the program. a. Thematic Sessions	5	5. All presentations were very interesting and my biggest expectations was to know more about them deeply since I only had general background knowledge about them.	4. Very well prepared and with good contents	4. I would have liked to hear more people with this kind of experience.	4. It was enriching, although more time for each session might have been good, since I didn't know about the topics. I learned a lot since I didn't know much about them.	4. I think you should give more time so that each participant can explain more deeply when he speaks if he wants to.	5. It allowed us to know deeply about resiliency, and how to develop our action plan to carry it out in our community.
4.b.	b. Exchanges/Activities in Port	5. Each port of call was an interesting adventure allowing us to meet new people and organizations.	4. It was interesting to know how each country does resilience from different sectors through simple examples.	5. Excellent to share with different persons and learn from their life experiences.	5. In all countries we were treated very well.	5. Each exchange gave me new lessons, teachings, reflections, strength.	5. The sessions were relaxed and informal providing a less pressuring learning environment which helps to retain information.	5. We were able to learn about different disasters and how they were able to recover from them.
4.c.	c. Exchanges onboard (with PBV volunteers)	5. Excellent. It was a mind-opening experience, sharing knowledge and experiences from different countries.	3. It was very interesting interact with young volunteers and know their expectations from the human and social value of helping.	5. Very good experience.	4. The experience of the youth was very interesting. More pictures could have been better.	5. It was interesting to share with them. I was a motivation to keep working as a volunteer, and seeing the preparation and commitment they had was very enriching.	4. I consider the exchanges in each port were adequate and educational, although unfortunately with limited time to know more deeply.	5. Excellent. They shared their experiences and gave me many reasons and motivation to develop my action plan as a volunteer.
4.d.	d. Open presentation	5. I got the chance to meet more participants and make new friends.	4. It was a very good experience but there was a lack of audience, and it was as the topic was not that important for them.	4. Although it was done with short time, we made it!	5. It was very interesting and it was a great experience to have so many translators for the different languages.	5. Yes, I was afraid I would make a mistake, but in the end it was great to see their interest in what we presented.	4. It was good, and we were able to interact with participants thanks to interpreters.	5. The participants made us feel like a member of the Peace Boat family, even when the culture was so different.
4.e.	e. Will you be more involved in resiliency issues?	5. I like the topic as it is very connected to humanitarian development.	2. I think I will continue involved in this topic and I would like to promote the campaign in all my fields of activities.	4. Yes, I like this project as it is in my field of work.	5. Yes sure. The development and progress of each country will depend on the resilience capacity it has.	Certainly. I think I can give a lot to my country and the mental cities, and others who need to join.	Yes, I am already involved in it, and will do it even more.	4. Yes I believe I am more involved already. It was a totally interesting and enriching topic that needs to be developed further.
5.a.	About the campaign. a. Did you get to know more about the Campaign and its contents?	5. Through the campaign I got to expand my knowledge about resiliency in different areas of society. Ej. Gender, economic factors, etc.	4. I realized how the term resiliency is broad, where all must take part to achieve a change and risk reduction.	4. Yes, I learned since I didn't know about the specific topic before the workshops.	5. Yes sure. Margarita's explanation using the spiderweb was very clear. Apart from the experiences shared about Japan by Simon, and the other cities we visited.	5. Yes, since I know almost nothing about the topic and the level of organization in each country.	5. Yes, I knew it and I'm more interested in it now.	5. Yes, I learned better about the terms and objectives of the campaign, and it helped me understand a lot better the difficulties at time of disasters.
5.b.	b. Will you promote the campaign?	From my work I will promote it coordinating with experts for them to teach and support the building of resiliency.	5. I feel this experience has make me feel highly committed to promote resiliency from my family, my community, my department, etc.	Yes. I will share the campaign with my institution.	5. Yes, definitely. It is very important to promote it and follow up on it.	5. I think yes, because it was a commitment I assumed when participating, and because I like the topic and want to learn more.	5. Yes, because I will talk with ownership of the topic based on my experience, my time onboard and the experiences of my Central American friends.	5. I believe I will be a promoter for the campaign, since the topic is interesting and important for each city.
6	Did the program met your original expectations?	Yes. It is my starting point to promote this campaign in the communities I work.	Yes, because I feel consolidated with new knowledge and experiences. My mind is more open now and with higher compromises.	All the expectations were met and I learned how to better approach communities.	No, it was much better than I expected.	Yes, I learned more about resiliency, and the campaign, about PB, and other participants and about the importance of continuing communications in order to construct joint actions.	Yes, I went over them, but I don't see much interest and commitment from the participants in strengthening the team and doing something big and innovating.	I think this program went over my expectations, made me more conscious and increase my desire to cooperate.
7	Which has been the most significant educational experience for you?	Knowing about resiliency through various crosscutting themes including gender, natural resources, climate change and the economy. It is important to work together since disasters do not know limits or frontiers. Knowing about the possibility of involving the private companies not only financially but also through volunteer work from the employees.	I feel a resilient person. I never thought with the health difficulties I faced I would be able to attend all sessions, but I was able to confront that weakness of my body thanks to my interest and passion for knowledge.	The experience of the Telica municipality, how 9 municipalities joint to work on prevention. I would like to see how we can achieve more communities working together.	The places we visited in each port are admirable because of how they overcame the disasters/circumstances faced, but the most significant was the one of Granada in Panama.	Knowing more about resiliency in Latin America and in my country. I want to look further into the topic and the current situation of my country, to evaluate how I can help.	The experience of the volunteers after the Tsunami. The testimonies by Simon, Maria and Carlos about their experiences.	What I most learned from this campaign/program, was to be resilient, not just against disasters but in each area of my life.
8	Did you get enough support from the coordinators of the program and PB staff?	Yes, I'm very thankful with the facilitators for their trust and hospitality. They are excellent persons and are in my mind and heart.	Sure, they are very special persons and I feel they transferred to us all they energy, humbleness and desire for change.	Yes, very good hospitality and support for the topics covered, and were always there onboard or in land.	Yes, they shared all they could about the topics covered, and were always there onboard or in land.	I think all did a good job. I had a good connection with them since they picked me up in the airport, and there was great coordination between them to support us.	Yes, they were a moral, emotional and professional support. They are excellent guides and leaders.	The support was like being surrounded by a family.
9	Do you think the program is important, why? How did you contribute to life onboard?	Yes. Cultural exchange is important since it gives space to the exchange of knowledge.	My experience in the region I work with helped to give complimentary ideas from the grassroots rather than from the high-level, since I always emphasized on the participation of communities in decision making.	Yes. Since it gives a new experience to students on a specific topic, and we promote interest in other persons about issues of resiliency.	Yes sure, having a thematic program with experiential examples make it very attractive and entertaining.	Yes, because it supports academic and cultural development, and raises awareness over specific topics. My contribution to it was giving information about my country to other participants and passengers.	International students are important because they bring life to the onboard community and share their experiences. They saw as an example and were motivated to work hard, as many of us have work as volunteers.	I believe a program with students expands knowledge, culture and organizational skills in each country, helping to raise awareness about the issues faced by each. I hope everything I shared was helpful for my mates.
10	What were the best aspects of the program/ trip?	Presentations by facilitators, cultural exchange, departure ceremonies, open presentation.	The knowledge I gained, the cultural exchange, the respect towards our culture, and the mutual interest to communicate beyond language or other differences.	The treatment as if we were a family. The different study sessions offered. The exchange with other cultures.	That apart from it being a good training, we had time to share and learn about other cultures enriching ourselves.	The training and its theme. The exchange with participants onboard and in ports. The cultural exchange.	The exchange of experiences, the commitment made, the friendships, the future vision and the life project it is.	Each experience lived.
11	What would you improve?	Food, seasickness preparedness and not knowing how to speak English or Japanese.	I think food was my biggest frustration, because my body was not able to adapt to the food.	For me, it would be food, since our bodies are not used to it. And language, but not very relevant, since we managed to communicate when necessary through signs.	Getting used to the movement of the ship was a bit frustrating, but apart from that everything was good.	I think only the time given to each session. Otherwise I liked everything.	An English/Spanish newspaper. Sometimes the environment was very informal with too many jokes.	No. I have nothing specific to improve. But the importance of continuing to develop this program.
12	Would you like to remain in touch with PB?	Yes. It is a floating university where you can learn interesting things to grow as a person and in your job. I will like to keep in touch through gmail with the coordinators. I would like to be a volunteer to promote peace.	Yes. I want to create a social project in my community to provide education for children in poor areas, and I think Peace Boat can provide me with better ideas.	Sure. I would love to, Peace Boat's objective is excellent with its different teaching methods. Perhaps as a volunteer, sharing my experience with others.	Yes sure, would like to learn more about the programs held onboard to learn from them what we can use in my country.	Yes, I would like to be a volunteer but I do not speak English or Japanese. But I would like to learn to be able to apply as a volunteer. I like to share and learn new cultures.	Yes. Because I want to be a volunteer. I am very interested in learning about the ship and its projects, because I identify with its objectives and causes, because Carlos, Maria and Simon are great leaders.	The ship was my home for a week, and I am very interested in learning about the rest of the voyage across oceans.
13	Any other comment?	Coordinators are excellent, they know a lot and what's best they share their knowledge with humbleness and love. Thank you!	I need to know more about this NGO and its interesting activities around the world.	No	I loved the experience!	Thank you for the opportunity, and count on me for anything I can support you with.	I'm very afraid to please take me into account for anything in which I can support your cause.	No, that's all.

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