

## Week 7 Report

### What Other Groups Did & Group Dynamics

Facilitators continued to report great dynamics in most groups last week, with many adding that their students are demonstrating the skills they've acquired over the semester. They reported that students are being honest, are willing to raise controversial issues and are challenging each other in respectful, constructive ways. Facilitators also noted that students are learning to work through the tensions without prompting from their facilitators and have begun using a forward-thinking approach, as they approach the end of the semester.

Most groups began by doing the Change activity, in which students explore the concept of change and their relationship with this concept. Students looked into how they view change, the underlying social/cultural norms, assumptions and values, and how they interact with change. Most groups showed some really developed cross-cultural communication skills, and students showed an awareness of other perspectives and voiced perspectives that were not their own. They've therefore formed a solid relationship of respect and understanding of each other's differences and appreciation of each other's honest perspectives. Discussions also branched out in many directions, based on each group's interests, and groups had free-flowing conversations on a broad range of topics, including immigrants and minorities, individual roles in affecting change, youth empowerment and influences that shaped their understanding of other cultures. Many groups also moved to more personal discussions around topics such as students' religious beliefs, their experiences with gender roles in their society, and how dating and relationships are perceived and approached in different cultures.

### Attendance & Technology Update

We're happy to report that the technology in groups continues to be steady, with very few unresolved technical issues disrupting the sessions. We have also seen continued improvement in attendance levels, too, with 10% less students absent compared to the previous week. Thank you for your efforts in ensuring your students attend their sessions! **Since this week (week 8) is the final session and in many ways the most important and memorable one, we would be greatly appreciative of you could encourage your students to attend the full, 2-hour session.**

### This Week

Students will be using the final week of sessions to discuss any topics they have not had a chance to raise over these past seven weeks. Facilitators have asked students to reflect independently on the pressing issues and questions they would like to explore with their groupmates before the program ends, and we expect that this will bring a colorful and varied range of discussions in the group meetings.

In addition to that, facilitators are working to pull together what the students have learned through their online dialogue process. Most groups will be engaging in two different activities:

1. **Youth Empowerment activities:** Students will be discussing what they can be done to address the global and social challenges they have explored over the semester at both the local, community level and the global scale, and then grappling with the question, "what can we – as young people – do to promote this change."
2. **Reflections & Recognitions:** Each group will take some time to reflect on the discussions and what they have learned throughout the past seven weeks. The Recognitions activity will allow students to recognize fellow group members for a variety of things- from who made them laugh the most, to whose input they most appreciated. This activity has been very successful in the past, in rounding out the students' experience and providing them with a measure of closure to the semester.