Rang-e-Amn: Inspiring Harmony Through Creativity

Social Action Project (SAP)



Organized By: Mansoor & Maham Faisal (Social Action Project Grantees)
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1-INTRODUCTION:

The Centre for Youth Development & Engagement (CYDE) is a youth-led organization committed to strengthening social cohesion, youth capacity and inclusive community development through targeted interventions. In the current social context, young individuals are increasingly exposed to diversity, differing ideologies and social divisions without adequate preparation to engage with these realities constructively. This gap often results in misunderstanding, intolerance and weak interpersonal relationships.

Recognizing this challenge, CYDE initiated Rang-e-Amn as a preventive peacebuilding intervention aimed at equipping youth with the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors necessary to foster peaceful coexistence. The project specifically targeted students transitioning from school to university life, a critical phase where identities are shaped and social interactions expand significantly. The initiative sought to transform peace from a passive concept into an active, lived practice rooted in empathy, respect, and responsible behaviour.

2-*Summary of Rang E Amn*:

Rang-e-Amn was implemented as an interactive workshop designed to address gaps in participants' understanding and practice of peace. At the beginning of the session, most participants perceived peace narrowly as the absence of conflict, reflecting a limited and reactive mindset shaped by their environment. The activity addressed this issue by creating a safe and inclusive space where participants could reflect on their beliefs, engage in open dialogue, and experience peacebuilding through practical activities. Through a structured process combining discussion, creative expression, and collaborative engagement, participants were guided to rethink their perceptions and understand peace as an active and continuous process. As the session progressed, participants began to recognize that peace is not external but is shaped by everyday behaviours, communication patterns, and attitudes toward others. This shift was reinforced through activities that required participants to listen, collaborate, and respect differing viewpoints, allowing them to internalize peace not only as an idea but as a practice.

2.1- Facilitators' Profile:

The session was facilitated by a multidisciplinary team whose combined expertise ensured a holistic and impactful learning experience.

Alishba Tahir led the session as the primary facilitator. With her background as a podcast host, trainer, and peace and gender activist, she brought strong expertise in youth engagement and dialogue facilitation. Her approach focused on participatory learning, critical reflection, and inclusive discussion, enabling participants to explore complex concepts in a relatable and meaningful way. Through storytelling and interactive engagement, she successfully guided participants from passive understanding toward active ownership of peacebuilding values.

Zoha Abid facilitated the creative component of the workshop, using art as a medium for emotional expression and reflection. Her role allowed participants to translate abstract ideas of peace into visual forms, deepening their connection with the concept and making learning more personal and impactful.

Mansoor Ahmed, as a Project Grantee and Youth Rights Activist, contributed by connecting the initiative to broader youth empowerment and rights-based perspectives. His involvement strengthened the contextual relevance of the session while supporting coordination and participant engagement throughout the activity.

2.2- Participants' Profile:

Sr#	Female	Male	Transgender	Others	Total
1	22	32	-	-	54

The activity engaged 54 participants, including 22 males and 32 females, all of whom were at a transitional stage between school and higher education. The age range of participants spanned from 16 to 28 years, with the majority falling within the 17 to 22 age bracket, reflecting a youth group at a formative stage of personal and social development. Participants represented diverse geographic backgrounds, primarily from Sukkur, with additional representation from Ghotki, Shikarpur, Jacobabad, Khairpur, and Thar. This diversity created an environment where participants could engage with individuals from different social contexts, allowing for meaningful exchange of perspectives.

In terms of religious composition, the group was predominantly Muslim, with representation from the Hindu community. This inclusion of minority participants added depth to the learning experience, particularly in discussions related to coexistence, inclusion, and mutual respect. At the beginning of the session, participants showed hesitation in expressing their views, especially within a mixed and diverse group. However, as the session progressed, there was a clear transformation in their engagement. Participants became more confident, actively contributed to discussions, and demonstrated increased openness toward different perspectives.

3-SESSION WISE PROCEEDINGS:

Session-01:

The proceedings of the opening session commenced with a formal registration, followed by a recitation of the Holy Quran and the National Anthem, which immediately established an inclusive atmosphere for all the participants.

Once the stage was set, initial discussions were held to establish a baseline. These early exchanges revealed that most participants viewed peace primarily as the absence of conflict.

Following this, concept of peace was expanded into an active process one fueled by empathy, tolerance and non-violent communication. Through a facilitated discussion participants were introduced to a broader understanding of peace as an active process involving empathy, tolerance and non-violent communication. Real-life examples enabled participants to connect these ideas to their own experiences, gradually shifting their perspectives.

Subsequently, a brainstorming activity provided participants with an opportunity to express their views and engage with diverse opinions. Although initial participation was limited, the supportive environment encouraged gradual openness and increased engagement. The creative expression activity marked a significant turning point in the session. Participants were invited to represent their understanding of peace through painting and visual design. This process allowed them to internalize the concept on a deeper emotional level and appreciate different interpretations of peace. Interactive games and group activities were then introduced to translate learning into action. These exercises required participants to collaborate, communicate effectively, and build trust, addressing existing gaps in interpersonal skills. Through these activities, participants experienced the practical application of peacebuilding principles in real-time. The Peace Hand Mosaic activity symbolize peace by using hand gestures (V-sign), handprints, or mosaic techniques with paper participants promoted themes of unity, peace, and mindfulness through this hands-on art. This activity served as a tool to exhibit peace and solidarity among them.

By contributing individually to a shared artwork, participants recognized how their actions contribute to a larger sense of unity and harmony. The session concluded with reflection and feedback, during which participants articulated a shift in their understanding and expressed a commitment to practicing peace in their daily lives.





4-PARTICIPANTS QUOTES:

"When participants expressed peace through art, their emotions became visible in a way words could not capture. It showed how creativity can unlock understanding that dialogue alone sometimes cannot reach." ***(Zoha Abid - Art Facilitator, Sukkur)***

"We have never experienced such sessions before. Usually we just listen in class, but here we were involved in expressing our thoughts. It made learning feel alive instead of passive." ***(Faraz Ahmed – Participant, Jacobabad)***

"We usually don't get chances to speak openly in such environments. Here, I felt heard without judgment. It gave me confidence that my voice matters even in mixed discussions. Also at the start, participants were hesitant and unsure, but gradually they started owning the space. The shift from silence to engagement showed that learning happens when young people feel safe and included." ***(Alishba Tahir – Facilitator/Podcast Host, Shikarpur)***

*As a girl, I often hesitate to speak in group settings, but this space felt safe. It encouraged me to share my thoughts freely without fear of being ignored or judged."****(Sanam - Participant, Shikarpur)***

"I come from a community where we are not often included in such mixed learning spaces. Today I felt respected and part of the group. It showed me that peace also means inclusion and equal opportunity to participate. ***(Hishmat - Participant, Thar)***

5-Challenges:

A significant operational challenge occurred due to an unexpected venue disturbance linked to an Easter-related scheduling clash, which disrupted initial arrangements and created logistical uncertainty. This affected setup, timing, and early coordination. Despite this disruption, the team adapted quickly, reorganized activities, and ensured the session proceeded successfully without compromising learning outcomes. This demonstrated strong resilience, coordination, and problem-solving capacity. Another challenge was participants' initial hesitation in open dialogue, particularly in mixed groups. This was addressed through trust-building activities and gradual engagement techniques. Additionally, the abstract nature of peace made initial comprehension difficult, which was effectively resolved through experiential and creative learning methods.

6-Lesson Learnt:

The session demonstrated that peacebuilding is most effective when it is experiential rather than theoretical. Structured interaction, creative expression, and safe spaces significantly improve engagement and retention. It also highlighted disparities in exposure to participatory learning, particularly among participants from Shikarpur and Ghotki, who emphasized that such sessions are rare in their educational contexts. Female participation reinforced the importance of inclusive environments where young women can express themselves freely without hesitation. Most importantly, the intervention showed that early exposure to life skills during school-to-university transition can create long-term behavioural and emotional resilience.

7-Conclusions & Recommendations:

Rang-e-Amn successfully transformed participants' understanding of peace from a passive idea into an active behavioural practice rooted in empathy, communication, and responsibility. Participants demonstrated improved confidence, openness to diversity, and stronger interpersonal awareness. The intervention also strengthened their readiness for future academic environments.

A key takeaway from participants was the relevance of these skills for university life. Many expressed that such learning would help them remain emotionally stable, socially adaptable, and confident in unfamiliar environments. To sustain and scale this impact, similar interventions should be integrated into colleges and universities. Continuous exposure to experiential peace education can significantly contribute to long-term social cohesion and youth resilience.