



Mabesikan Project

Promoting Art for Social Change
in Bali, Indonesia



Search for Common Ground, along with ten local civil society organizations (CSOs) and 14 local artists, implemented a series of initiatives to promote societal transformation on issues of land and resource conflict, gender-based violence and identity conflict in Bali. Search aimed to build a thriving relationship between the artists and CSOs that will increase the capacity of the artists to promote conflict prevention and allow CSOs to build awareness.

85%

68%

75%



of surveyed Mabesikan Festival attendants said that the event raised their awareness of land and resource conflict, GBV, and identity conflicts, respectively.

Although Bali has a history of identity conflict, because the current conflict is not always apparent, there is not a steady infrastructure to help moderate conflicts. Additionally, Bali's greatest economy, tourism, has added to conflicts over the declining land resources.

Why Art?

Art is central to Balinese culture. Artists are held in high esteem, and other Balinese take the messages they share seriously, making it imperative to catalyze artists' ability to share messages of conflict prevention and reconciliation. Additionally, artists have shown an interest in participating in social campaigns.

Key Activities

- Workshop for artists and CSOs on conflict management and art for social change.
- Small initiatives with artists and CSOs that aim to transform conflicts positively.
- Ten small initiatives in various locations in Bali addressing land and resource conflict, gender-based violence, and identity conflicts.
- Mabesikan Forum where stakeholders gather to discuss the current dynamics of conflict issues in Bali, and how art can contribute to promoting conflict prevention and reconciliation.
- Mabesikan festival, a public festival that showcased the ten initiatives and several artists to raise awareness of the conflict in Bali.

The Five Initiatives

- 1 'The Schizo Friend Art Movement'** reduced the stigma surrounding people with Schizophrenia and other mental illness and promoted their inclusion in society. A local artist and doctor established a rehabilitation center to provide treatment, skills-training, and income generating opportunities for those with Schizophrenia. Relatives of patients were educated on caring for those with Schizophrenia. The evaluation has beautifully captured a story of the transformation occurring in the life of a person with Schizophrenia.
- 2 'Save Garam Amed (Save Amed Salt)'** facilitated dialogue between local businesses and salt farmers over the encroachment of the traditional Balinese salt-making land in Amed village in Bali. The local CSO and artists proposed allowing salt farmers easy access to necessary resources. Artists painted murals and took photographs to bring attention to the salt farmers. Together, salt farmers and tourism entrepreneurs were able to establish Garam Amed as a unique product to represent the traditional identity of Bali and Amed Village.
- 3 'Paddy Field is our Future'** utilized painting, sculpting, installation, and theatrical shadow puppets to raise awareness of the side effects of shrinking land areas for rice paddies, a result of a growing tourism industry. The goal was to establish a forum for dialogue among different stakeholders so they can find a solution to this problem. The initiative generated societal awareness on the problem faced by local farmers and traditional rice terraces.
- 4 'Water Life Project'** brought attention to the water crisis in Bali. Local artists created a documentary film and cartoons to provide information on resource scarcity and on how to transform the conflict to achieve sustainable development. The campaign began a wider conversation on the water crisis in Bali as a result of growing commercialization of Water resources and its excessive exploitation by the rapidly growing tourism industry.
- 5 'Bhatari Art Project for Women's Empowerment'** tackled the issue of gender-based violence in Bali's Batur region. Local CSOs and artists held a painting workshop for women to encourage rehabilitation. The women were able to build skills that could help them become economically independent. The project built awareness about domestic violence, helped women create strong social networks, and increased confidence among women.

Overall, the Mabasikan Project has started a momentum of social change around the local issues of GBV, land and resource conflict, and identity conflict.

60% reported an increase in knowledge and awareness of the issues



25% had an increase in knowledge of GBV, land and resource conflict, and identity conflicts



64% were more interested in dialogue with other stakeholders



75% have developed skill in maintaining partnership, and partnered with CSOs to develop Joint Social Ventures

75% report an increase in partnership skills with artists

83% had an increased understanding of non-violent approaches to conflict resolution