we the diaspora

ILLUSTRAFRICANDO

PREFACE

Promoting visibility, political participation, and empowerment of youth groups and youth organisations from the African Diaspora is an important priority for the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe within the Euro-African Co-operation.

The involvement of the Diaspora youth groups has therefore been essential in the Africa Europe Youth Summit, in 2007, and its prior consultations and a central priority in the Africa Europe Youth Programme that the Centre has been implementing as a follow-up to that Summit.

These groups are important actors of global development, key bridges for co-operation and understanding; they represent for the host societies an immense wealth in terms of human resources, intercultural opportunities and possibilities for relationships with the societies of origin. They are also an engine and a constant source of inspiration for the continuous building of an inclusive European Citizenship.

On the occasion of the Training Course for Youth leaders of the African Diaspora Living in Europe, held in Almada, in December 2009, a group of committed participants assisted by two talented illustrators decided to convene their collective experiences, reflections, commitments, and messages in a variety of ways. In this book, you will find two of them, the storytelling shown through drawings and illustrations and a declaration from the participants.

This book is also a good example of how powerful the act of empowering individuals and groups can be, and of the lasting impact of the stimulus of non-formal education.

I would like to thank the authors of IllustrAfricando, as well as, the partners and participants of this project. I hope this book can be a useful living resource for your work and action.

Denis Huber
Executive Director of the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe

HELLO!

We are two illustrators, Elisa and Miguel.
We are the creators of the project IllustrAfricando, a strange Italian word that translated into English would mean "Illustrating Africa".

During one week we participated with a group of youths of African origin in the Training Course for Youth Leaders of the African Diaspora Living in Europe, organised by the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe in the framework of the Partnership between the European Union and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth.
Our objective was to represent, through illustrations, the Identity of the African Diaspora. We soon realised that it was an impossible mission, given the large amount of people, experiences, life stories, reasons...

Some of them were already born in Europe, others had left the African Continent when they where children and had only a few memories, others had been obliged to leave their country because of war and others had come to Europe to study.

How could we represent so much diversity in so few images?

One thing was clear: what these youths had in common was the unforgettable experience of one week spent together. One week where they created strong and lasting bonds and friendships.

These youths created a declaration where they defined what they have in common, their objectives and their hopes.

What we want to illustrate through this book, in a very simple and poetic way, is the travel of these youths. Their journey to Europe, their journey through the discovery of their origins, their journey through the week spent together, the journey through their feelings and emotions.

We want to illustrate the bond that they created between each other, so thin and yet so strong, like a thread.

We hope that these bonds will give good results and we feel very lucky that we were able to participate in this experience and proud to have done our part.
Have a nice journey through the Diaspora Land and through the world of colours and imagination!

TRAINING COURSE FOR YOUTH LEADERS OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA LIVING IN EUROPE

The project IllustrAfricando was developed in the framework of the Training Course for Youth Leaders of the African Diaspora Living in Europe, held in Almada, Portugal, from 6 - 12 December 2009. The course was organised by the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe under the Partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Commission in the field of Youth.

A training course such as this one, directed at youth leaders of the African Diaspora, is a key element to the follow-up of the Africa Europe Youth Summit, held in 2007. Youth organisations and youth groups from the African Diaspora living in Europe are fundamental actors for the Euro-African Youth Co-operation and at the political level the Diaspora is considered by the African Union as the 6th region of Africa and the 6th building block of the organisation. These groups are also important bridges for youth co-operation and represent for the host societies an immense wealth in terms of human resources, intercultural opportunities and possibilities for relationships with the societies of origin.

The course took place in Almada, Lisbon's neighbouring city, a city enriched by a large community of African descendants, with a very young population from the African Diaspora engaged in various groups and involved as important actors of the Portuguese Civil Society.
The course was developed as a residential programme of five working days, bringing together 25 youth leaders from the African Diaspora active in youth organisations in the host societies or leading African Diaspora youth groups/movements. The group was led by a pedagogical team composed of experienced trainers in Euro African co-operation also coming from the African Diaspora living in Europe.
The course was designed using a process of mutual learning, active participation, in-depth reflection and non-formal education, combining work with practical study cases, visits to the local organisations (ACIDI- High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue, Associations Khapaz and Jure).

During the training course participants had the opportunity to exchange experiences and strategies, to empower the youth community of Africans living in Europe, to acquire knowledge and skills to develop their capacity (both individual and of their respective organisations) as society actors in the process of Euro African Co-operation, to develop a common understanding of the situations and challenges faced by young people from the African Diaspora, and to find partners for strategic networking.

Participants shared their stories, their origins, their feelings, and their different point of view about the Diaspora. At the end of the course they built a collective awareness of their origins, discovering them through each other. The illustrators, through the project IllustrAfricando, wanted to translate this entire process into symbolic images.

The Participants of the Course elaborated a declaration as a sign of their commitment to continue networking and working together:

DECLARATION OF THE AFRICAN YOUTH DIASPORA LIVING IN EUROPE

We, the Leaders of African Youth Diaspora living in Europe had the chance and the opportunity to be selected to attend the school of equality and development from December 6th to December 13th 2009 in Almada.

During this week, the participants learned about the existence of different youth organizations involving African Diaspora in their strategies in different countries.

While we shared our different experiences, we came to realize that we have similar issues and challenges such as integration, identity conflict, cultural clash, stereotypes, discrimination, equality of opportunities, employment, lack of youth policies and non-involvement in the decision-making process, and the importance of education.

According to our analysis, we realized that there is a lack of information of different programs available for immigrants at national and international levels.

We want to take this on our responsibilities to use this network to disseminate information to different African communities in Europe.

We decided to connect ourselves in our different youth projects to benefit from each other.

We agreed to present this network to a more committed official platform (African Diaspora Youth Network in Europe: A.D.Y.N.E.)

We recommend arranging a General Assembly to invite African Youth Diaspora in 2010 to come up with an official structure that is going to represent us at different levels (from local to global).

We suggest that the next step of this General Assembly is to implement the ideas and projects that shall be presented by the participants.

We therefore address this message to the main actors engaged in activities geared to empower youth.

TEAR
MARGINALIZATION
FEAR

UNKNOWN
CURIOSITY

ALTERNATIVE

HOPE

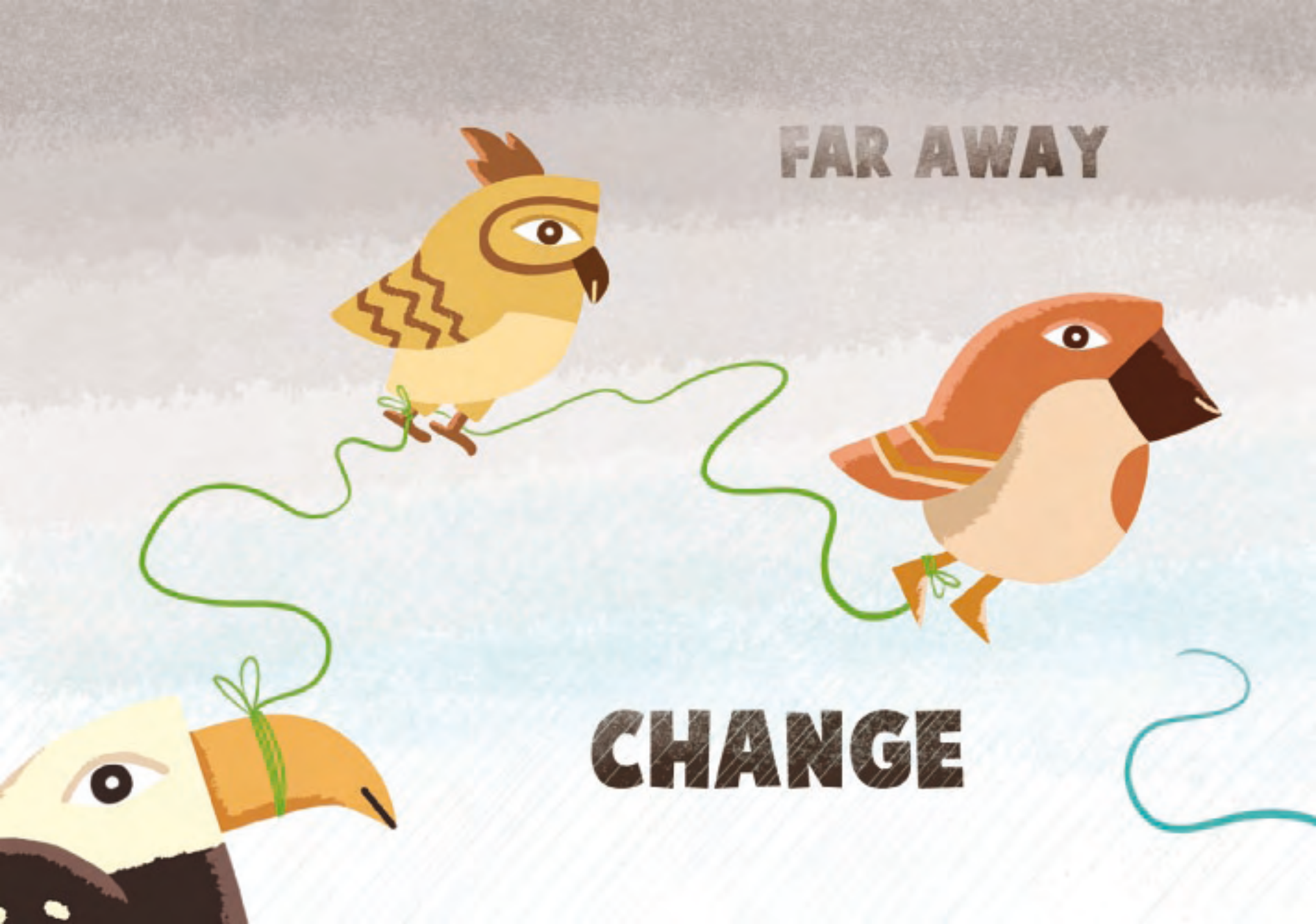
HOMESICKNESS
HELP

SOLIDARITY
LOVE

TOGETHERNESS
PARTICIPATION

EFFORT

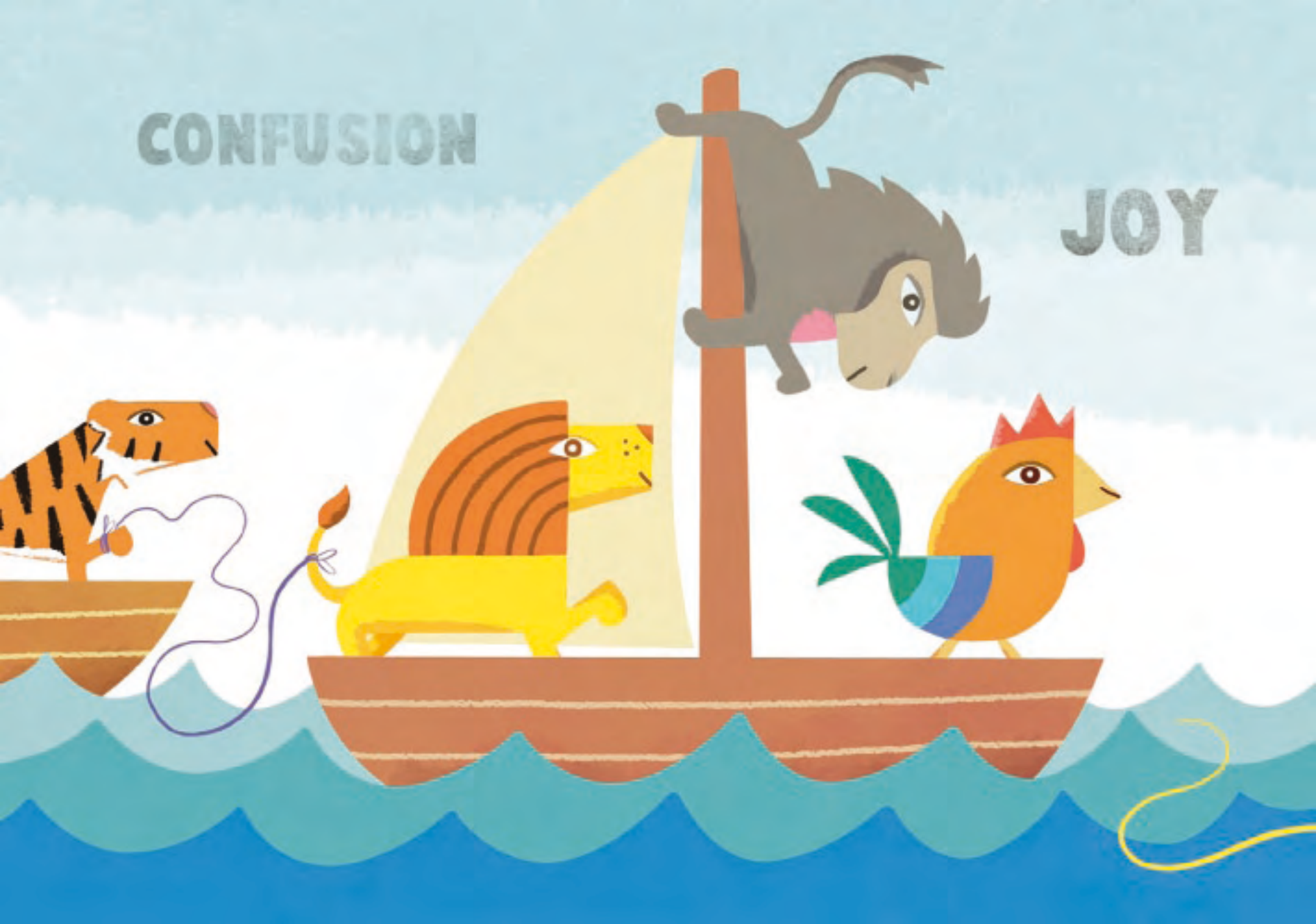
FREEDOM
PRIDE


FAR AWAY
CHANGE

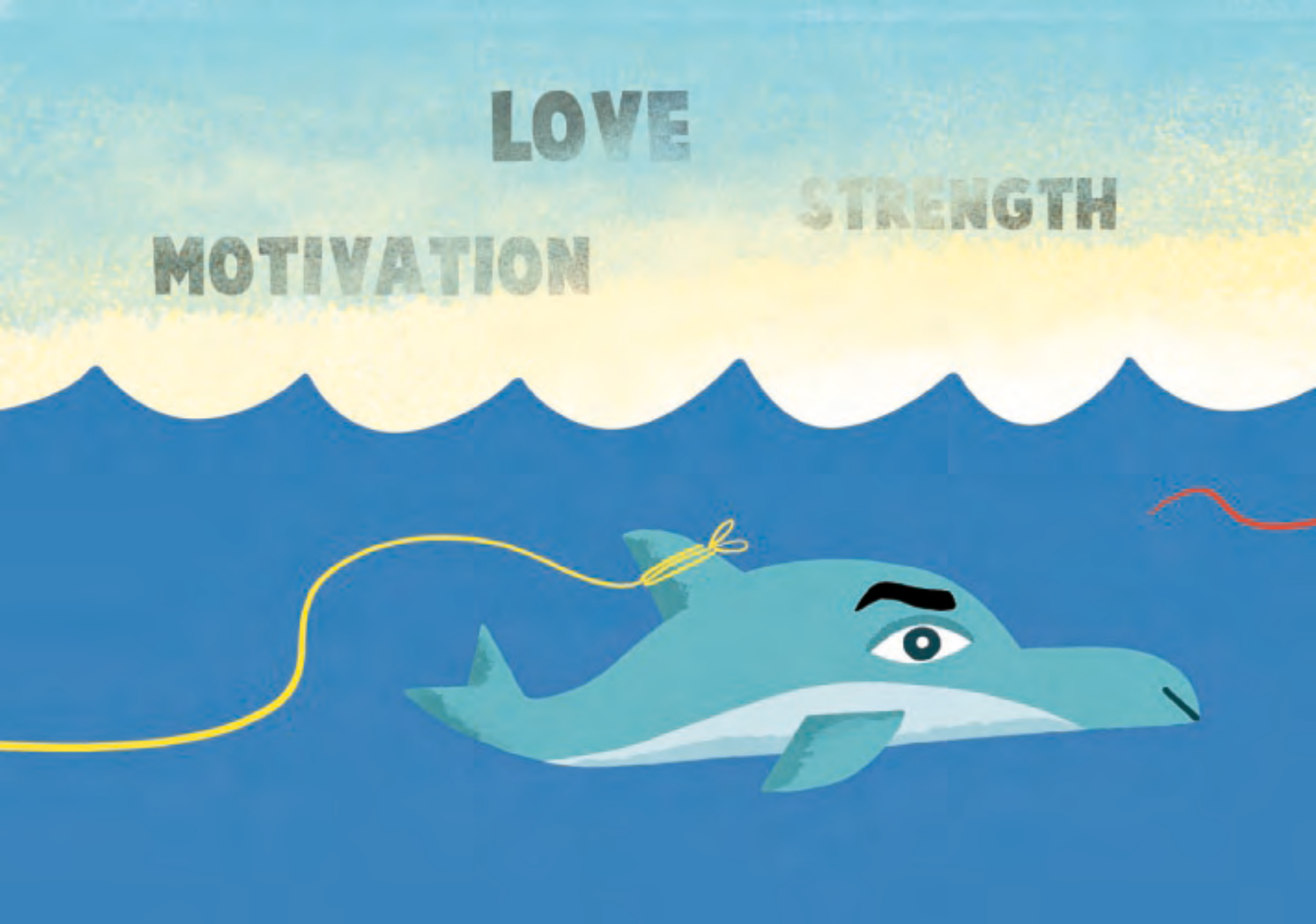
ADVENTURE

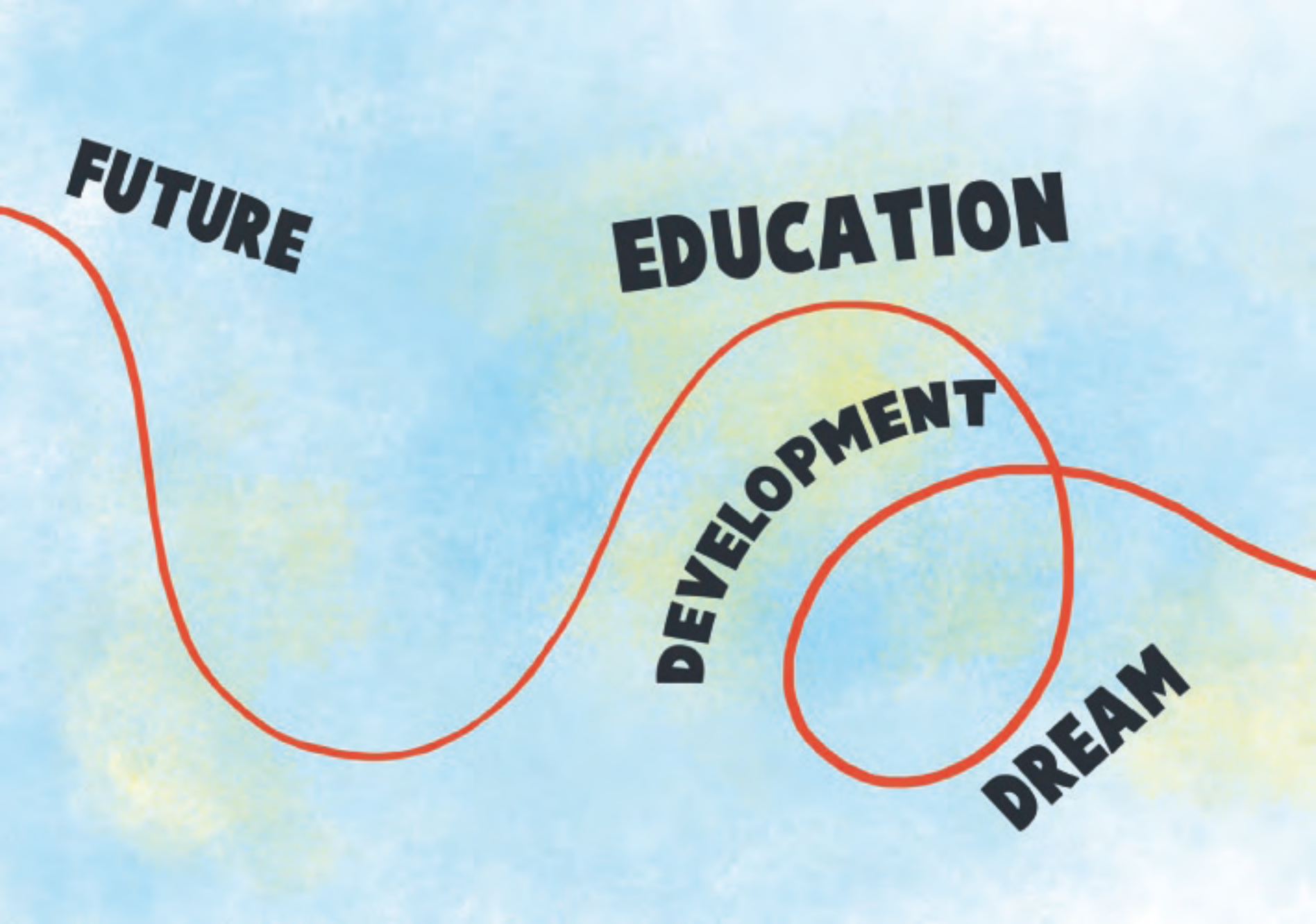
FAITH
SACRIFICE
EXCITEMENT

HAPPINESS


CONFUSION
JOY

CARRYING-ON RESPONSABILITY LIFE JOURNEY


LOVE
STRENGTH
MOTIVATION


FUTURE
EDUCATION
DEVELOPMENT
DREAM

REALITY

Elisa Carlotta QUADRI

Born in Italy in 1981, she graduated in 2004 from the European Institute of Design, specializing in illustration for children. Since 2005, she has been living in Portugal where she arrived thanks to the European Voluntary Service.

She combines the youth work with the world of illustration, books, and colours. She ran, co-ordinated, and directed several projects in the youth sector granted by the Youth in Action Programme of the European Union.

Trainee at the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe from February-September 2009, she was involved in Youth Co-operation and Euro-African Dialogue. She is the creator, co-ordinator, and supervisor of the project IllustrAfricando.

She has already collaborated several times with Miguel and this is her fourth published book.

Contact: elisa.quadri@yahoo.it

Miguel PRIETO FERNANDEZ

Born in Spain in 1981, he graduated in 2004 from the European Institute of Design, specializing in illustration for children.

He has a strong interest for the field of youth projects and European dimension and as an illustrator he has already collaborated with Elisa in the Future Capital project "As cores da Fantasia" and in the youth exchange "Enchanted with theatre: Discrimination, Fairy Tales, and Reality" (he published an illustrated book about the exchange).

Miguel is the illustrator and graphic designer of the project IllustrAfricando.

Currently, he works as a freelance illustrator in Spain where he tries to live a slow way of life, just like snails do.

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THE MAKING OF

THE ARRIVAL

Training Course for Youth Leaders of the African Diaspora
Lisbon 6/13 December 2009

What a coincidence! An exhibition in Lisbon about African art, maybe we can get inspired!

Yes this African bird is definitely cool, let's use it!

Hallo Miguel

Hallo Elisa

THE IDENTITY

It is something that changes...

and that transforms itself...

Look! We have the bird! And like a bird, it is free to migrate...

and bring with the migration the luggage of life experiences and memories.

In the Diaspora people have a double identity, we can represent it like this

Ok! Let's go see what the participants are doing...

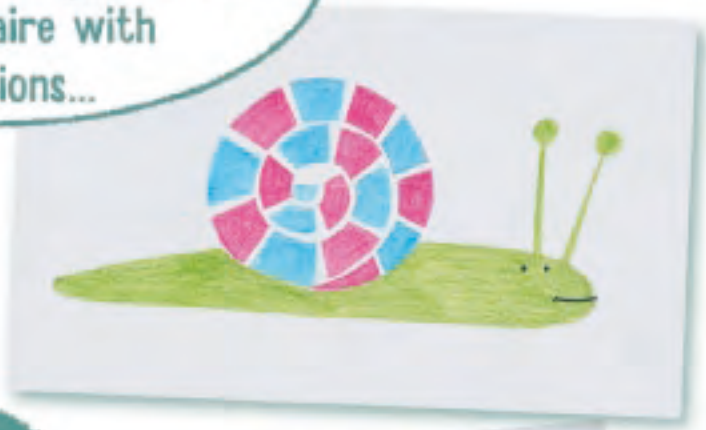
They drew a map representing their travels from Africa to Europe

The coloured paths are beautiful! We can use these elements!

And these are boxes that participants decorated representing their own identities

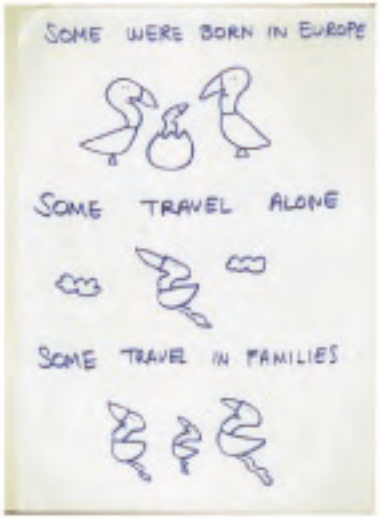
THE QUESTIONNAIRE

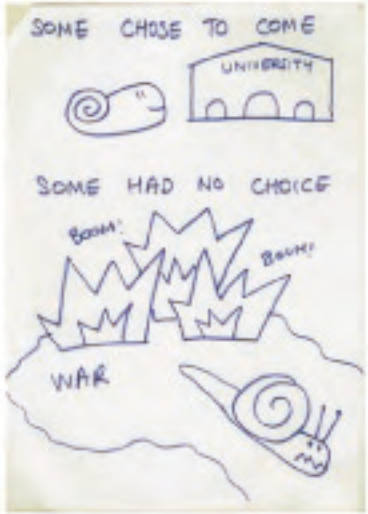
We need more information about African Diaspora, let's give them this questionnaire with some questions...



...and with images to test. Do you think they will feel represented?

THE FIRST STORYBOARD





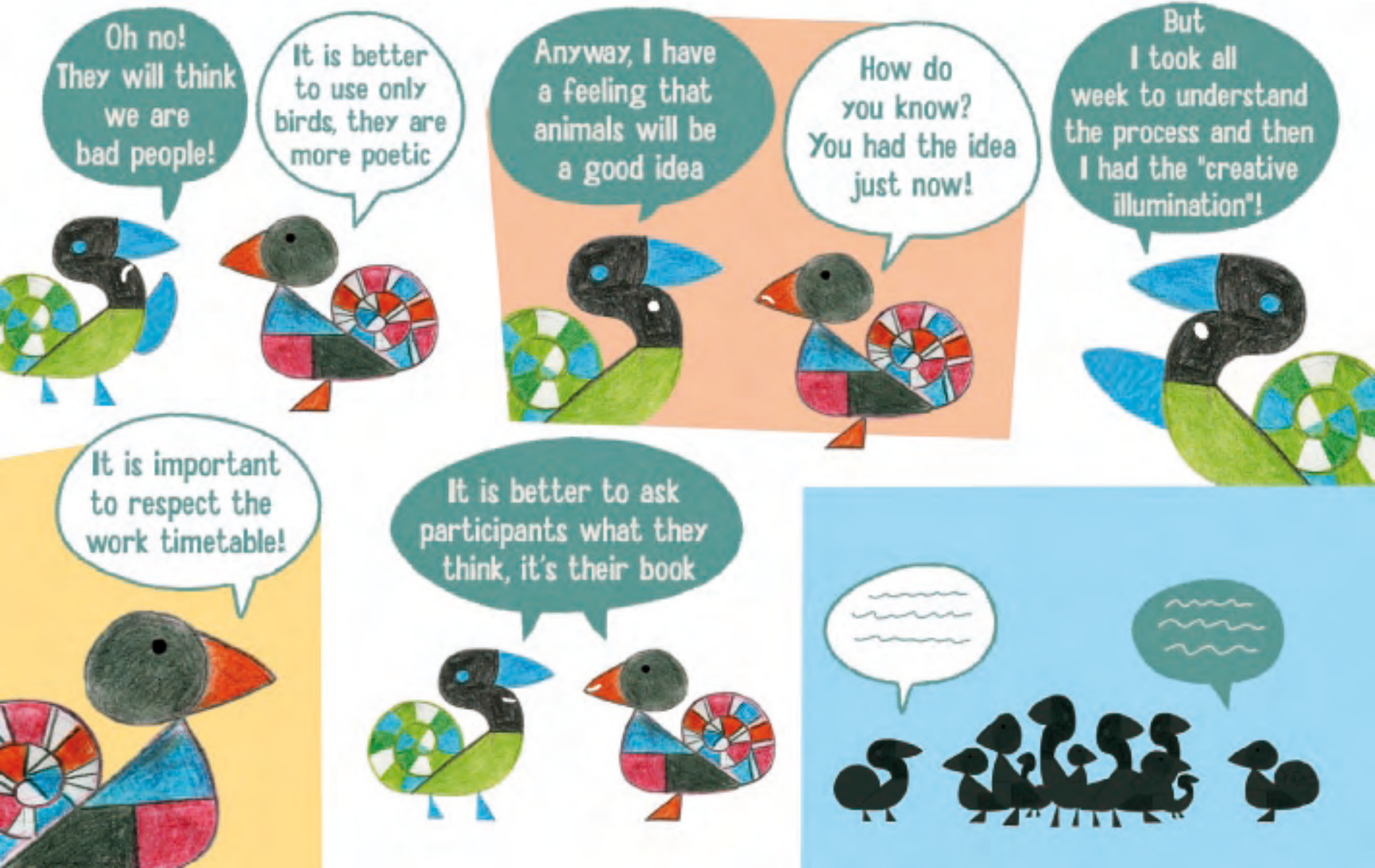
ANIMALS?

And what about representing each participant with an animal?

Maybe two babies could play with them on a map

Animals? Toys? Don't you think they will feel offended?

SCRUPLES AND DOUBTS



Finally, they liked pieces of each idea!

Perfect! Let's put them together

Look, these are the drawings of the first animals

Nice! And we can use the words they wrote on the questionnaire about Diaspora

HOPE SACRIFICE DIVISION

And join all the animals with a thread!

Wow! We have the definitive story!

Yes! And it is full of symbols

THE SYMBOLISM

ANIMALS

TRAVEL

STORM

WORDS

THREAD

The different ways they arrived in Europe and the emotional journey

The feelings of migrants as told by participants in the questionnaire

The participants of the Training Course and the diversity of the Diaspora

The difficulties they face that disappear as long as they are together

The union, the emotional links, the common objectives and networking

THE DIFFICULTIES

AFRICAN DIASPORA

The subject was enormous and impossible to represent in its totality

And we are not experts, we are beginning our career

EXPECTATIONS

We wanted to make a poetic and symbolic book but also a useful tool

What about the responsability towards the participants?

And the moral conflicts of representing them

It was hard to find our role.

Were we participants? Trainers? Observers?

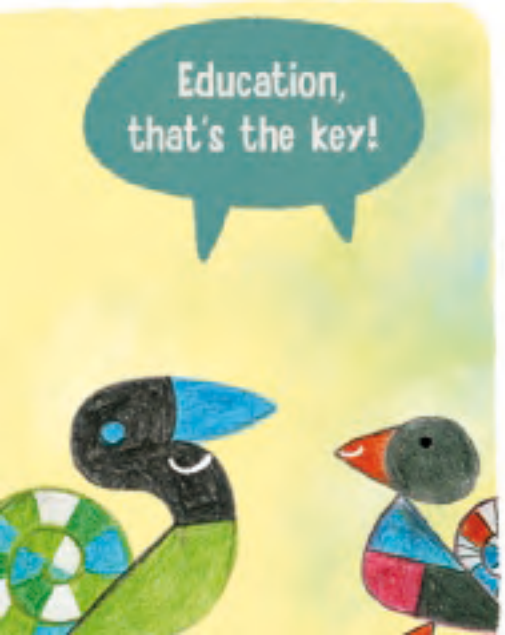
What was the right distance to keep?

And who did we have to satisfy first? Participants? Institutions? Ourselves?

Personally, I was the creator of the project, so I felt the responsability of having to be the leader and the pressure of coordinating participants, institutions and the illustrations.

For my part... I thought many times that this project was too big for me, I was afraid and not self-assured, so I really needed a lot of help and support to keep going.

THE LEARNING PROCESS



GOODBYE!

Well...I think this is the end
Yes, but it was an unforgettable experience

Maybe we can keep working together
Yes! I would like that!

But we need some holidays before
I completely agree

Then, see you soon my IllustrAfricando colleague
Bye bye and have a nice trip!

Ciao!
¡Hasta luego!

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...for having taught me to fight for what I believe in, to defend my ideals, and for always being in my heart

ILLUSTRAFRICANDO we the diaspora

A book resulting from the Training Course for Youth leaders of the African Diaspora organised by the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe in the framework of the Partnership between the European Union and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth.

Years 20 Ans

ONE WORLD OUR WORLD
UN MONDE NOTRE MONDE

NORTH-SOUTH CENTRE
CENTRE NORD-SUD

COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Council of Europe
Conseil de l'Europe

European Union
Union Européenne

Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth