

# Community Engagement in the State Courts Initiative:

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Puerto Rico  
Public Engagement Pilot Project

May 2021



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Funding for this project provided by the State Justice Institute,  
contract award no. SJI-15-P-116.



**Note:**

Portions of the information in this report are available online as part of the NCSC's Community Engagement Toolkit.

See <https://www.ncsc.org/engage>

## Acknowledgments

This report is one of a series of reports produced to provide a record of the activities, materials, and results achieved by the Public Engagement Pilot Project (PEPP) sites involved in the pilot phase of the Community Engagement in the State Courts Initiative (Initiative). This phase and the entire project would not have been possible without the generous support of the State Justice Institute (SJI).

The Public Engagement Pilot Initiative is a collaboration between the [National Center for State Courts](#) (NCSC) and the [University of Nebraska Public Policy Center](#) (NUPPC), with assistance from [Michigan State University](#) researchers [Joseph A. Hamm](#) and [John Ropp](#). The pilot phase was overseen by a Steering Committee drawn from members of the Advisory Board on Community Engagement in the State Courts. These members are listed on the following page. The Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ) convened the Initiative in partnership with the National Consortium on Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts (Consortium) with support from the National Center for State Courts (NCSC). We extend our deep appreciation to CCJ, the Consortium, and NCSC for their vision and dedication to this vital effort.

After a nationwide call for proposals, six public engagement pilot projects were selected out of a significant number of proposals. Following the kickoff convened at the National Science Foundation in Washington, D.C. on February 25, 2019, the PEPP teams received resources and support from the NCSC/NUPPC implementation team. The PEPP sites worked both individually and collaboratively with the other sites and NCSC/NUPPC to engage their communities, while also advancing understanding of how courts can best engage the public to overcome social inequities and bias and build trust. We hope the efforts of these individual PEPP sites serve as blueprints for courts across the nation.

The six pilot sites are (in alphabetical order):

- Franklin County, Ohio Municipal Court
- Kansas City, Missouri Municipal Court
- Administrative Office of the Massachusetts Trial Court
- Nebraska Supreme Court Office of the State Court Administrator
- Puerto Rico Judicial Branch
- Texas Office of Court Administration

## Future Work

We are committed to assisting court leaders in their community engagement and public trust efforts. To discuss future work and for more information about the Community Engagement in the State Courts Initiative, please contact Jesse Rutledge at [jrutledge@ncsc.org](mailto:jrutledge@ncsc.org).

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## Table of Contents

<b>Acknowledgments</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Background</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Overview of Findings</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Methods</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Project Focus</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Engagement Sessions</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Survey and Evaluation</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Survey Data Analysis</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Results</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Youth: “Crearte” group engagement (May &amp; October 2019)</b> .....	<b>15</b>
Pre-Survey: Demographics.....	19
Pre-Survey: Previous experience with courts .....	19
Pre-Post Survey: Attitudes towards the courts.....	21
Pre-Post Survey: Knowledge of the courts .....	23
Pre-Post Survey: Perceptions of the courts and community engagement.....	24
Post-Survey: Evaluation .....	25
<b>Youth: “Boys and Girls Club” group engagements (May &amp; August 2019)</b> .....	<b>30</b>
Pre-Survey: Demographics.....	35
Pre-Post Survey: Attitudes towards the courts.....	35
Pre-Post Survey: Knowledge of the courts .....	37
Pre-Post Survey: Perceptions of the courts and community engagement.....	38
Post-Survey: Evaluation .....	39
Pre-Survey: Previous experience with courts .....	44
<b>Adult: ‘San Lorenzo’ group engagements (May &amp; June 2019)</b> .....	<b>46</b>
Pre-Survey: Demographics.....	52
Pre-Survey: Previous experience with courts .....	52
Pre-Survey: Perceptions of confidence and accessibility to the courts.....	54
Pre-Post Survey: Attitudes towards the courts.....	55

Pre-Post Survey: Knowledge of the courts .....	56
Post-Survey: Progress on community conflict issues.....	59
Post-Survey: Evaluation .....	60
<b>Adult: ‘Alianza’ group engagements (September 2019).....</b>	<b>65</b>
Pre-Survey: Demographics.....	69
Pre-Survey: Previous experience with courts .....	70
Pre-Survey: Perceptions of confidence and accessibility to the courts.....	72
Pre-Post Survey: Attitudes towards the courts.....	73
Pre-Post Survey: Knowledge of the courts .....	74
Pre-Post Survey: Perceptions of the courts and community engagement.....	75
Post-Survey: Evaluation .....	76
<b>Court actors and facilitators (from the Youth and Adult engagements combined) .....</b>	<b>81</b>
Pre-Survey: Previous experience with courts .....	81
Pre-Survey: Perceptions of confidence and accessibility to the courts.....	83
Pre-Survey: Knowledge of the courts .....	84
Pre-Post Survey: Perceptions of the courts and community engagement.....	85
Post-Survey: Progress on community conflict issues (Youth engagements only) .....	86
Post-Survey: Evaluation .....	86
<b>Discussion and Reflections.....</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>General/Overarching Reflections .....</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>Recruitment.....</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>The Engagement Process.....</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Outcomes .....</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>Conclusion and Next Steps.....</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>References.....</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>Appendices .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Appendix 1: Youth Survey Response Data Summary – Create .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Appendix 2: Youth Survey Response Data Summary – Boys &amp; Girls Club .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Appendix 3: Adult Survey Response Data Summary – San Lorenzo.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Appendix 4: Adult Survey Response Data Summary – Alianza .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Appendix 5: Court Actor Survey Response Data Summary – All youth and adult     engagements .....</b>	<b>26</b>

**Appendix 6: Measures and supplemental materials..... 32**

- Engagement Form..... 32
- Pre and Post Surveys..... 32
- Teamwork and communication exercise instructions..... 32
- News exercise summary ..... 32

## Introduction

In 2018, the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) issued a nationwide call for proposals from courts to implement public engagement pilot projects (PEPP) designed to engage people, especially minorities and low-income communities, to improve problems facing courts and disparities in trust in the courts. The PEPP initiative built off a national listening tour called “Courting Justice” in which judicial actors heard perspectives from the public about judicial decision-making, bias and unfairness, lack of diversity in juries and on the bench, and other issues that impaired trust and understanding of court systems, especially among marginalized populations.

From a significant number of high-quality applications nationwide, six grantees were selected to design and implement pilot engagement projects. Selections were made based on consideration of a number of factors, including the problem(s) the court actors were attempting to address, extent of community involvement in the solutions, likelihood of the projects to promote trust in the community, probability of sustainability after cessation of funding, and complementarities among projects. As a requirement of grant receipt, all grantees worked with the NCSC and the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center (NUPPC) to develop their programs to include high levels of community involvement and bi-directional court-community dialogue and to integrate an evaluation component into their projects. The purpose of the evaluation was to document participation in the pilot projects and efficacy of project activities, examine issues of engagement and trust between communities and courts, and evaluate the overall pilot project experience as well as other issues of interest to the grantees. Each pilot also was asked to agree to their materials and work products being incorporated into an overall toolkit for use by the nation’s courts.

This report summarizes project results from the Judiciary of Puerto Rico’s Public Engagement Pilot Project. The primary sponsor of the Judiciary of Puerto Rico pilot project was the Office of Education and Community Relations (EDUCO) of the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico’s Office of Courts Administration. The Chief Justice of Puerto Rico created EDUCO in 2015 to educate the public about the roles and functions of the judicial branch, rights and responsibilities of the public and court users, and strengthen communication and access between the court system and public generally. Since its inception, EDUCO has addressed these issues with a number of activities including outreach to youth in schools, educational projects with teachers and community leaders, guided tours of the courts, and other educational activities for the public. The EDUCO PEPP team has reviewed this report before publication and contributed to the substance thereof.



## Background

Puerto Rico is challenged by widespread poverty. The U.S. Census Bureau's 5-year estimate (2013-2017) of individuals below the poverty line in Puerto Rico was 44.9%, more than double that of the highest poverty rated state in the continental United States. A category 5 hurricane (Hurricane Maria) in 2017 greatly affected housing, infrastructure, communications, utilities, and the general economy throughout Puerto Rico. It is estimated by the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that Hurricane Maria was the third costliest weather disaster in the history of the United States and its territories, with costs of at least \$90 billion dollars. The hurricane affected many courthouses and presented challenges, but the judicial system used alternatives to ensure access to court functions in its 13 judicial regions.

The Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico's Office of Courts Administration convened community-court engagement sessions with four different community and stakeholder groups: 1) Youth from Create - a school focusing on social-emotional development and the arts; 2) Youth from the Boys and Girls Club of Carolina; 3) Adult community leader-stakeholders from the municipality of San Lorenzo; and 4) Adult community leader-stakeholders from Alianza - a community group that includes leaders from across the island.

The community-court sessions were organized and convened by the Office of Education and Community Relations (EDUCO) of the Office of Courts Administration through the summer and fall of 2019. A total of 80 youth and adults participated in these engagement sessions. Pre and post surveys were administered at the engagement sessions to measure general attitudes, perceptions, and knowledge of the court system. Post surveys also measured participants' satisfaction and perceptions of the engagement sessions.

## Overview of Findings

Among the four court-community engagement processes conducted by the Judiciary of Puerto Rico (Create, Boys and Girls Club, San Lorenzo, and Alianza groups), the majority of pre to post engagement changes in general attitudes towards the courts, changes in knowledge, and perceptions of courts were positive.<sup>1</sup> There were also high levels of participant satisfaction with the engagement sessions.

### *Pre to post engagement general attitudes towards the courts*

The pre to post survey asked participants to rate their general attitudes towards the courts, familiarity with the courts, and general confidence in the judicial system.

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this report we describe positive and negative numeric changes without implying that the changes were statistically significant. Because of the small number of participants involved in the engagements we did not conduct tests of statistical significance.

- General attitudes towards the Judiciary improved across all four groups except for one (Boys and Girls Club).
- Self-reported familiarity with the judicial system improved across all four groups.
- Confidence in the judicial system improved across all four groups.

#### *Pre to post engagement knowledge of the court system*

The pre to post survey asked participants to correctly identify the roles of two categories of court personnel, and the two primary functions of the court.

- Knowledge of the roles of court personnel was more mixed from pre to post engagements across all four groups. Within the Create group, participants' knowledge of court personnel roles improved for both relevant items. Among the Boys and Girls Club, one knowledge item decreased, and one remained the same from pre to post. For the San Lorenzo group, both knowledge of court personnel items appeared to decrease from pre to post. For the Alianza group, one knowledge item decreased, and one remained the same from pre to post.
- Knowledge of the court's functions were also mixed among the four groups. Within the Create group, participants' knowledge of court functions improved for one item and decreased for the second one. Among the Boys and Girls Club participants, knowledge for both court function items increased. For the San Lorenzo group, one knowledge item remained the same from pre to post, and one item decreased. For the Alianza group, one knowledge item increased, and one item decreased.

#### *Pre to post perceptions of court characteristics*

The pre and post surveys asked participants to rate perceptions of court characteristics such as comfort with participating in court activities and the extent to which court personnel treat members of the public with courtesy and respect, fairness.

- Perceptions of the court were generally very positive from pre to post. Within the Create group, perceptions improved among four relevant items and decreased among two items. Among both the Boys and Girls Club and San Lorenzo group participants, perceptions improved across five of the six relevant items. For the Alianza group, perceptions of the court improved across all relevant six items.

#### *Satisfaction with engagement sessions*

The post survey asked participants to evaluate their respective engagement experiences by rating their overall satisfaction levels, perceptions of engagement among other participants, and how informative the sessions were, among other items.

- Satisfaction with the engagement sessions ranged from moderate to very high across all groups. On a scale of 1-5, the average level of satisfaction with the sessions ranged from 3.3 (Boys and Girls Club) to 4.9 (Alianza).

- All four groups believed other participants and court actor/facilitators listened and understood viewpoints aired at the engagement sessions. On a scale of 1-5, participants believed others listened and understood views expressed at an average level ranging from 3.9 (Boys and Girls Club) to 4.6 (Alianza).
- All four groups found the engagement sessions very informative. Among three groups, 100% of participants found the engagement sessions to be informative. In the remaining group (Crearte), 90% of participants found their engagement session to be informative.

In the following sections we provide more detailed methods and results.

## **Methods**

### **Project Focus**

The focus of the public engagement project in Puerto Rico was to explore ways that EDUCO might help communities address community conflict. Conflict was explored from the perspective of youth (middle and high school students) and adults (community leaders). This broad focus was selected because it would apply to both youth students and adults and be a general enough topic that it would help facilitate the development of continuing relationships with youth and adult community leaders. Additionally, community members had already indicated to EDUCO that they were interested in addressing general conflict in their communities.

The scope of engagement activities included conducting engagement events with four separate groups throughout the course of the Summer and Fall of 2019: two youth groups and two adult groups. Three of the four groups met for two engagement sessions, with some individuals participating in both sessions, and other individuals only participating in one session. The fourth group met with the court facilitators for only one longer session. The unique number of individuals who participated in at least one engagement session is reported below for the four different groups that were engaged in the sessions. It should be noted that not all participants completed every pre and post survey. Thus, the number of participants who attended the engagement sessions is not to be equal to the number of survey respondents.

<i>Date(s)</i>	<i>Engagement/Group</i>	<i>Meetings</i>	<i>Court actors / Facilitators</i>	<i>Stake-holders</i>	<i>General public</i>	<i>Total persons</i>
May, Oct, 2019	Crearte (youth)	2	6		15	21
May, Aug, 2019	Boys and Girls Club (youth)	2	7		23	30
May, June, 2019	San Lorenzo (adults)	2	7	27		34
Sept, 2019	Alianza (adults)	1	6	15		21

*Notes.* Meetings refer to the number of meetings held by each group as part of the engagement efforts.

## Engagement Sessions

Participants included members of the targeted youth and adult community groups. Additionally, court actors served to facilitate discussion sessions. Facilitators included judges and court personnel from the courts closest to the community group meetings and EDUCO staff members. Each engagement session lasted between 2-3 hours. Engagement sessions consisted of three activities. First, each session was structured like a World café<sup>2</sup> where participants discussed different issues related to the theme of youth and community conflict: particularly how they defined and resolved conflict within their communities. Participants were divided into small groups for these discussions. The second activity was a plenary session in which court members presented information to participants about the judicial system in Puerto Rico by means of an interactive Myths and Realities exercise, covering basic information about the courts, its main roles and functions, and basic judicial procedures that could address youth and community conflict. Finally, all participants and court actors engaged in an open discussion about needs for further community education and ideas for how to keep the public and specific community groups engaged with the courts about youth and community conflict.

## Survey and Evaluation

EDUCO worked with the PEPP (Public Engagement Pilot Projects) evaluation research team to develop pre and post surveys covering areas of interest relevant to EDUCO and

<sup>2</sup> To learn more about this method, see: WORLD CAFÉ COMMUNITY FOUNDATION. A QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE FOR HOSTING WORLD CAFÉ (2015). Available at <http://www.theworldcafe.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Cafe-To-Go-Revised.pdf>

stakeholders within Puerto Rico's judicial system. Additionally, survey items measured participants' perceptions of the engagement experience, confidence and trust in the court system, and the participants' overall evaluation of the engagement sessions. All surveys were in the Spanish language.

Because it is reasonable to assume that the success of the engagements may depend both on the public and the conveners, surveys were developed to understand the perspectives of the publics engaged by the courts (youth and adults), as well as the perspectives of the court actors and facilitators who were engaging the public. Separate surveys were developed for the youth and adult groups, as well as for the court actor facilitators. Some of the survey items were similar in all surveys but others were adapted to the target population that would complete it. Both the pre and post surveys contained unique items, as well as matching items designed to measure changes before and after the engagement sessions.

In addition, the adult and court actor surveys were considerably longer than the youth surveys, and survey administration was modified for different engagement sessions, according to the time it took each group to complete the surveys and the number of sessions held with each group. For example, community leaders only filled out one post survey while youth filled out two post surveys. Types of survey items included:

#### Demographics (Pre-survey)

Basic demographic items were included for age, gender, and education.

#### Prior experiences with the court system (Pre-survey)

Participants were asked to indicate what previous types of experiences either they themselves, or family/friends/acquaintances had had with the court system.

#### General perceptions of the court system (Pre and post surveys)

Several items were asked about overall perceptions of Puerto Rico's court system, familiarity and community engagement with the court system, perceptions of confidence in the courts, and issues related to accessibility of the courts.

#### Knowledge of the court system (Pre and post surveys)

Several items were included asking participants to identify the roles and functions of the court system generally, and the types of judicial system actors employed by the court system.

### Community conflict (Post-survey)

As the content focus of the engagement sessions was on community conflict, several items were included asking respondents to indicate whether and how the engagements equipped participants with information about addressing community conflict issues.

### Evaluation (Post-survey)

Several items were asked on the post-survey measuring overall satisfaction with the engagement, participant experiences with the engagement sessions, and perceptions of the usefulness of information presented.

Basic descriptive results from the surveys are provided for all four community-court engagement sessions, as well as for court actors and staff who participated as facilitators.

## **Survey Data Analysis**

Across all four community-court engagement sessions, a total of 80 unique individuals participated. However, there were typically only 10 to 20 individual responses for each engagement sessions' corresponding set of surveys. For those survey items administered to assess change, results are only provided for matching pre and post responses. Not all respondents completed both pre and post surveys or completed all items. When a respondent did not complete both the pre-survey and post-survey item (for those items administered to assess pre to post change) their data were dropped. Thus, individual survey items may not all have the same number of respondents. Because of the low number of responses, only a basic analysis of results was conducted, and results should not be considered representative of a larger population in Puerto Rico or statistically significant. Categorical breakdown of responses by percentage, counts, and mean scores for pre to post and post surveys are presented in the body of this report. The appendices provide more detailed information for survey responses, including median score, range, standard deviation, and 50% interquartile range.

## Results

### Youth: “Create” group engagement (May & October 2019)

#### FIRST ENGAGEMENT (May 2)

##### Purpose and issues of discussion

The purpose of the first engagement was to create familiarity between the students and court personnel. Also, for court personnel to understand how Create students experienced and resolved peer conflict.

##### Facilitators and audience

There were four court facilitators. Two were from the Office of Education and Community Relations and the other two -a judge and a law clerk- were from the San Juan Judicial Center<sup>3</sup>. Create is an alternative school that aims to help students between the ages of 6 and 21 from high-risk communities to achieve their individual fulfillment. Their structured programs are designed to build and strengthen their students’ character and value system by means of artistic, recreational and educational activities. Participants were from different programs of the organization although most were from the Alternative School Program that helps students graduate from high school after dropping out of regular school programs.

##### Description of session and activities conducted

The engagement was conducted in a two-hour period with the following activities:

##### I. Icebreaker

An icebreaker was conducted so participants could get to know each other. The participants and court facilitators were asked to board a cruise ship through the Caribbean. During the trip they encountered a storm and were asked to board several lifeboats that had to have the following characteristics: 1. boats of 4-5 people, 2. have gender diversity, and 3. include participants with different birthday months. Once they got on the boat, they were asked to talk amongst themselves about the following issues: 1. each member’s name, 2. the activity each person did most during the day, 3. each member’s hobby, and 4. decide on a name for the boat.

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<sup>3</sup> Puerto Rico has 13 judicial regions. Each judicial region has a judicial center.

Through a plenary discussion each group was asked to share what each boat had discussed. If they were able to follow the instructions the members of the boat were saved and rescued. All boat members were saved and completed the icebreaker successfully.

## II. World Café discussion

The main topic was discussed by means of a World Café methodology. Three tables were set up. Each table was covered with a large piece of brown paper for drawing (butcher paper). There were markers, pens and a decorative plant at each table. Music played in the background between each round of the World Café. Snacks were provided to participants during the activity.

There was a court facilitator at each table: one EDUCO member, one judge and one law clerk. The participants were asked to divide themselves into three groups. Each group was asked to go to one table. All groups discussed the same question in each round. Before moving to the next round the facilitator asked them to draw or write a summary of their discussion on the butcher paper. When the facilitator started the next round, they were asked to summarize what each group had discussed in the prior rounds and show them the drawings. The questions asked were the following:

- **First round:** What does the word conflict mean to you? When you hear the word conflict what do you think of? What types of conflict have you seen among your peers at school?
- **Second round:** How do you think that your friends and peers can resolve conflict positively at school?
- **Third round:** What type of things can help you resolve peer conflict? Would these things include education on a topic or mediation?

## III. Plenary discussion

A plenary session was conducted to discuss what they thought of the experience and what they had learned. They were also asked if they were willing to meet again with the Judicial Branch to learn about the services the Puerto Rico Judicial Branch has to deal with peer conflict.

### **Findings and adjustments in the group**

The participants in this group were regular students in the school and not youth leaders. Some of the students were seventh graders and others were from grades 11 and 12. The group did generate answers to the questions but did not need the 15 minutes allotted to each round in the World Café. The court actors were engaged and listened to the groups. The group mentioned they did not have mayor conflicts in their alternative school but did see conflict in their greater community.



## **SECOND ENGAGEMENT (October 22)**

### **Purpose and issues of discussion**

The purpose of the second engagement was to share with the students what the Judicial Branch is and the services it provides to handle peer conflict. Also establish a basis for a follow up project where they could create banners that reflect conflicts in their community and how the Judicial Branch could help them tackle these conflicts.

### **Facilitators and audience**

The group of students that participated in the second engagement was not exactly the same one to the one that participated in the first engagement. Of the 12 students in the second engagement, only 5 participated in the first engagement. However, a recap of the first engagement was made by means of a fictional "radio news" clip.

In this session three EDUCO members participated as well as the judge and law clerk from the San Juan Judicial Center that had participated in the first engagement. Two Create School teachers also participated. The idea was for these teachers to help with the follow up project.

### **Description of session and activities conducted**

#### **I. Teamwork and communication icebreaker**

The engagement started with a group dynamic that the students seemed to enjoy. Four large squares were marked on the floor with masking tape. While music was playing, they were asked to walk around the squares. When the music stopped, they had to stand within the tape squares. In each of the three rounds one square was removed from the floor. The exercise was used to mimic the idea of a conflict and having to speak to each other to solve it. In this case they needed to all fit into the squares without stepping over the lines.

#### **II. News clip to summarize prior engagement**

To summarize the prior engagement, a fictional news clip was recorded and played. The audio was paused on two different occasions to have the students answer several questions. This was done to confirm their comprehension of the information and keep the exercise interactive. The group was asked if they thought the audio summarized what happened during the first engagement. They agreed that it did.

#### **III. Myths and realities exercise (the judge and law clerk facilitated this exercise)**

A myths and realities exercise was used to talk to the students about the Judicial Branch and the services it offers to address peer conflict. Overall, they seemed engaged during the activity and asked many questions. Each student had a card that said myth on one side and reality on the other. They had to choose the side of the card that applied to six different

statements. The court facilitators then explained if each statement was a myth or reality and why.

*Statement 1 (myth)*

The Judicial Branch is the one in charge of starting a criminal case against a person who is suspected of committing a crime. [2 said myth, 9 said reality, 2 did not respond]

*Statement 2 (reality)*

A judge and a court bailiff are Judicial Branch employees while the police and district attorney are employees of the Executive Branch. [10 said myth and 3 said reality]

*Statement 3 (myth)*

The Judicial Branch includes the Department of Justice, the Supreme Court and the Court Administrative Office. [8 said myth and 5 said reality]

*Statement 4 (reality)*

The First Instance Court has superior and municipal judges. (13 said that it was a reality)

*Statement 5 (reality)*

The Judicial Branch offers free mediation services at its 13 judicial regions. [2 said myth and 11 said reality]

*Statement 6 (reality)*

Juvenile court cases are confidential and follow a special process that is not considered criminal. [7 said myth and 6 said reality]

During the activity one or two of the students seemed tired and a bit distracted but participated when asked. The participants that had been in the first engagement seemed more attentive and were more willing to ask questions. They each were given a brochure about the Government and Court System and a handout that included a table describing three court services that deal with peer conflict. These are the Office of Education and Community Relations, Court Mediation Centers and the Juvenile System Court Procedure.

#### IV. Snacks and brainstorming for their drawing

Snacks were shared and the students seemed to enjoy them very much. The engagement ended with some free time to start jotting down ideas about the banner they were going to draw as their follow up project. The idea was for them to individually or in pairs to draw a banner where they could express what conflicts they observe in their communities and

how the Judicial Branch can help them to deal with these conflicts. This part was led by one of the art teachers from the school.

**Findings and adjustments in group**

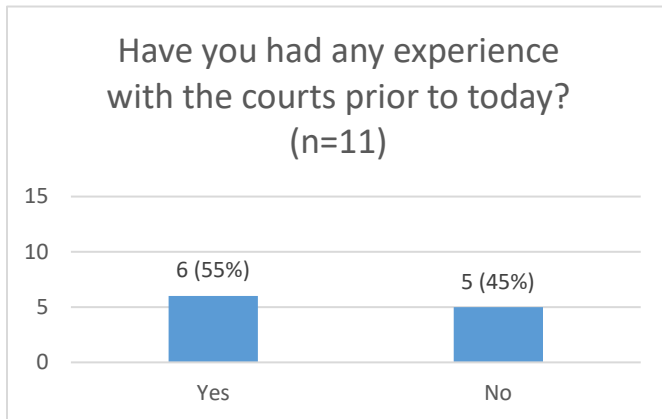
During the project the School had an unexpected administrative break and some of their teachers changed. This led to several months elapsing between each engagement and for there to be some turnover in the students participating in the project.

During the activity at least three of the students mentioned they felt uncomfortable during the engagement. Two mentioned this before the icebreaker and one right after the myths and realities activity. These three participants were not present in the first engagement. They were told they only needed to participate in what they felt comfortable with. The exact reason for their discomfort was not confirmed, but it seemed they had had some negative experience with the Judicial System in the past.

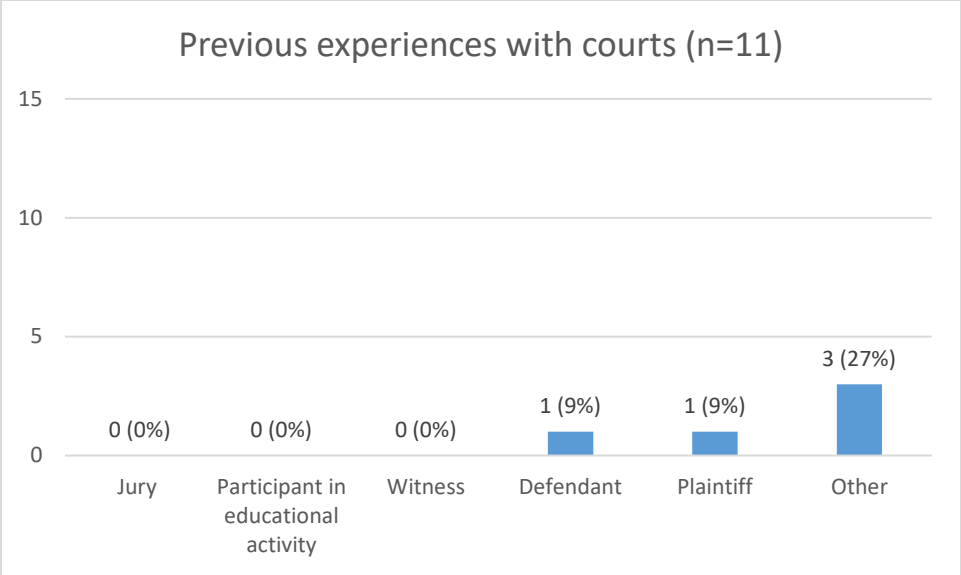
**Pre-Survey: Demographics**

Average age (n=12)	Gender (n=11)		Municipality (n=6)		Education (n=9)	
15.75 years	Male 82%	Female 18%	San Juan	100%	Some high school 100%	
					High school/GED	0%
					Some post high school	0%
					Associate/Technical degree	0%
					Bachelor’s degree	0%
					Some graduate school	0%
					Graduate degree	0%

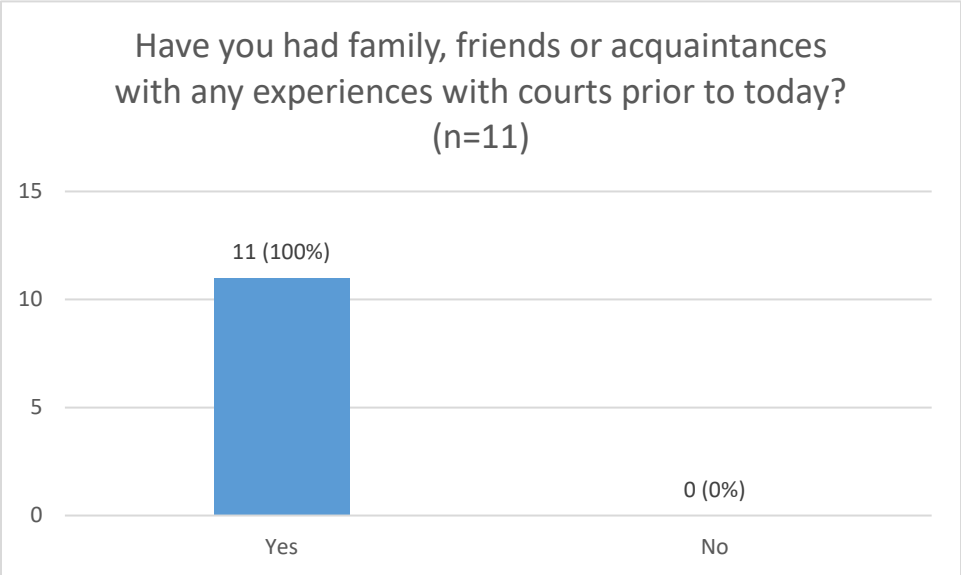
**Pre-Survey: Previous experience with courts**



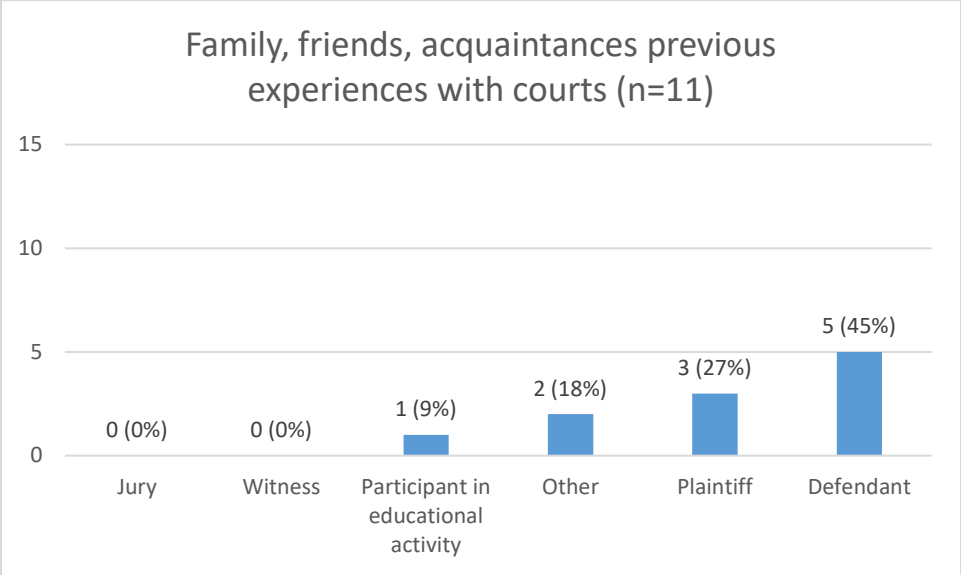
Six respondents had previous experiences with courts.



Of the six individuals out of 11 reporting having had previous experiences with courts, one was a plaintiff, one was a defendant, and three indicated “other” experiences (visitors to the court). One individual did not indicate what their previous experience was. (Note: For this item, respondents could choose multiple answers.)

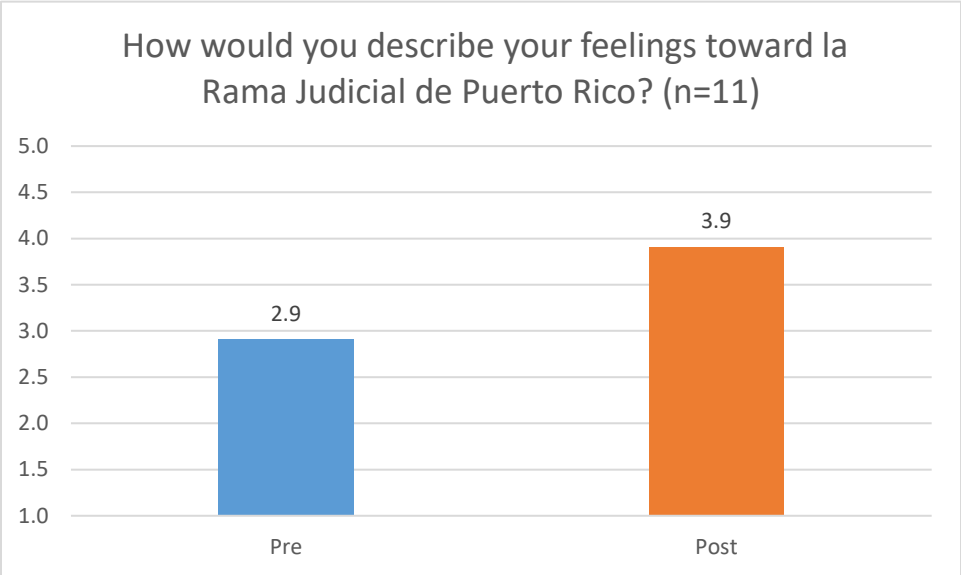


All eleven respondents indicated that they had family, friends or acquaintances with previous experiences with courts.

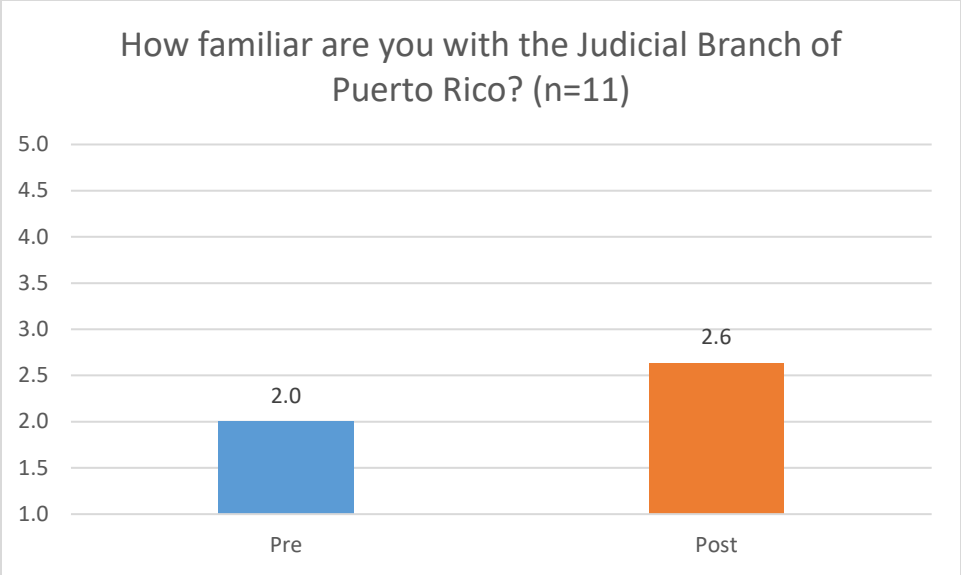


Of the eleven individuals reporting that family, friends or acquaintances had previous experiences with courts, five indicated their family/friends/acquaintances had served as defendants, three were plaintiffs, two indicated “other” experiences, and one indicated participation in an educational activity. (Note: For this item, respondents could choose multiple answers.)

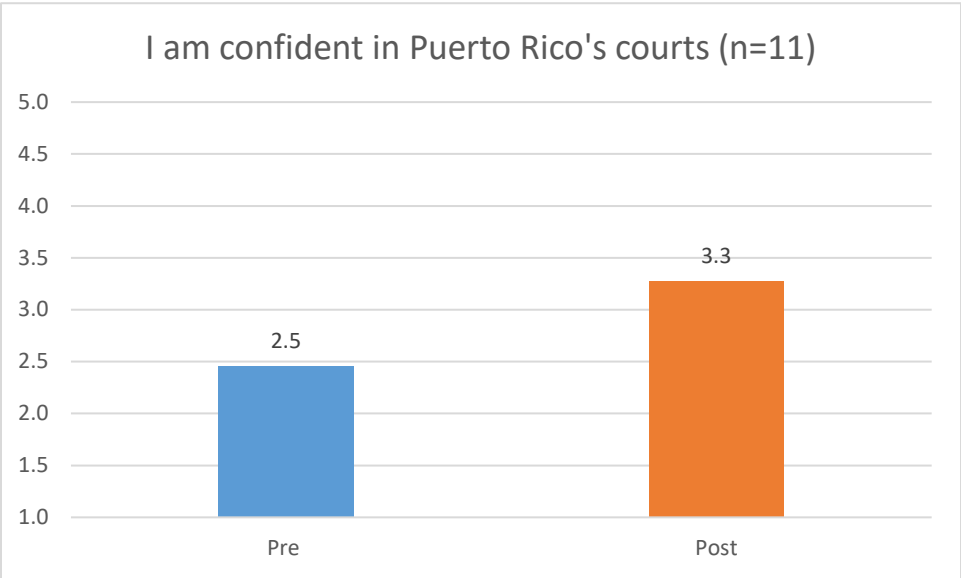
**Pre-Post Survey: Attitudes towards the courts**



On a scale of 1-5 (1=Completely negative, 5=Completely positive), respondents’ average score for feelings towards the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico increased from 2.9 to 3.9 between the time that the participants completed the pre and post surveys.

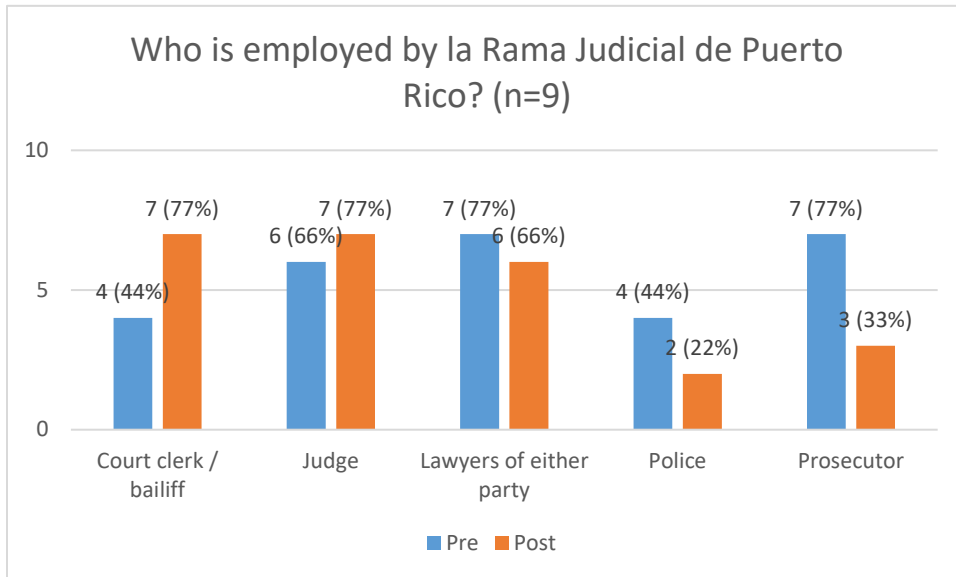


On a scale of 1-5 (1=Not familiar at all, 5=Extremely familiar), the average score for familiarity with the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico increased from 2.0 to 2.6 between the time that the participants completed the pre and post surveys.

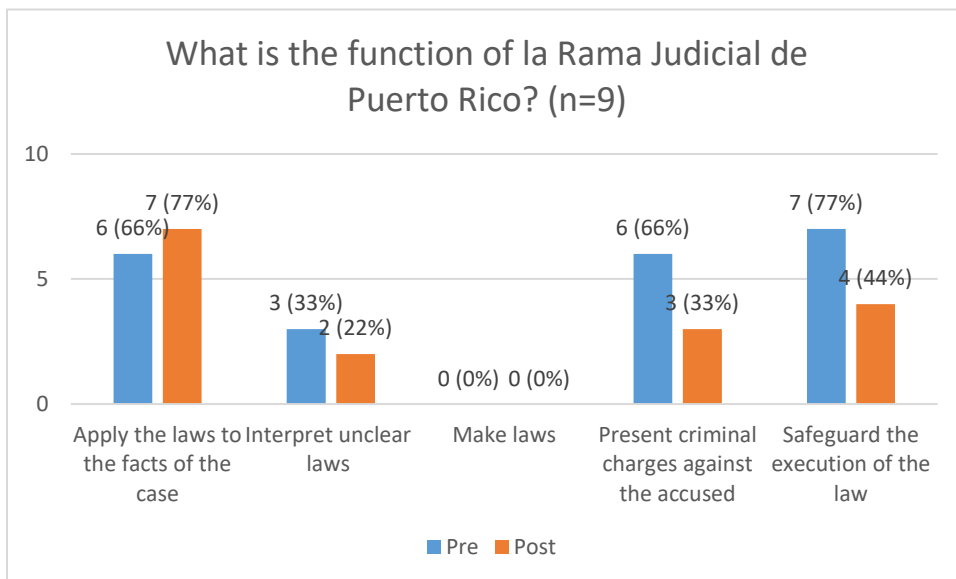


On a scale of 1-5 (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree), the average score for confidence in Puerto Rico's courts among respondents increased from 2.5 to 3.3.

### Pre-Post Survey: Knowledge of the courts

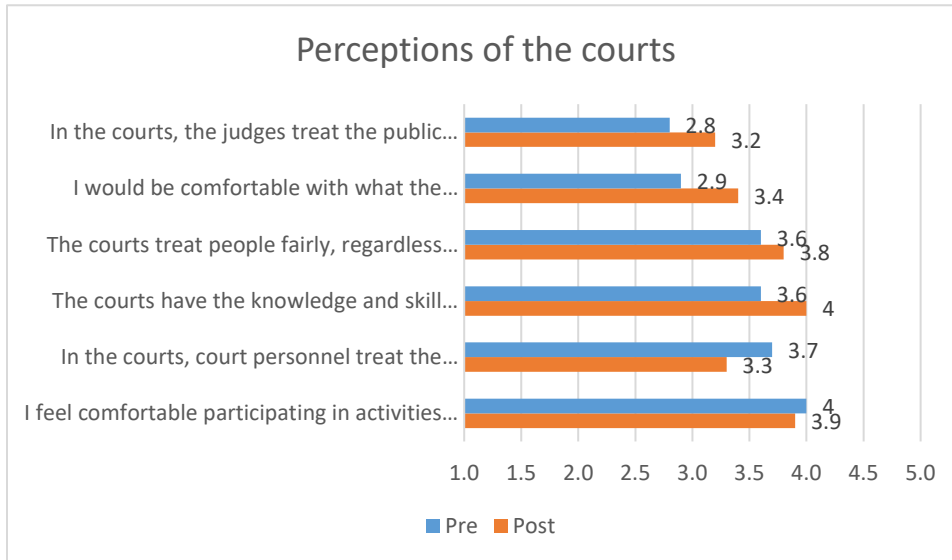


Survey respondents were asked to identify whether several positions were employees of the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico. The correct answers are “court clerk / bailiff”, and “judge.” Between the time that the participants completed the pre and post surveys, there was an increase in correct responses for both these items, and a decrease in incorrect responses for the remaining items.

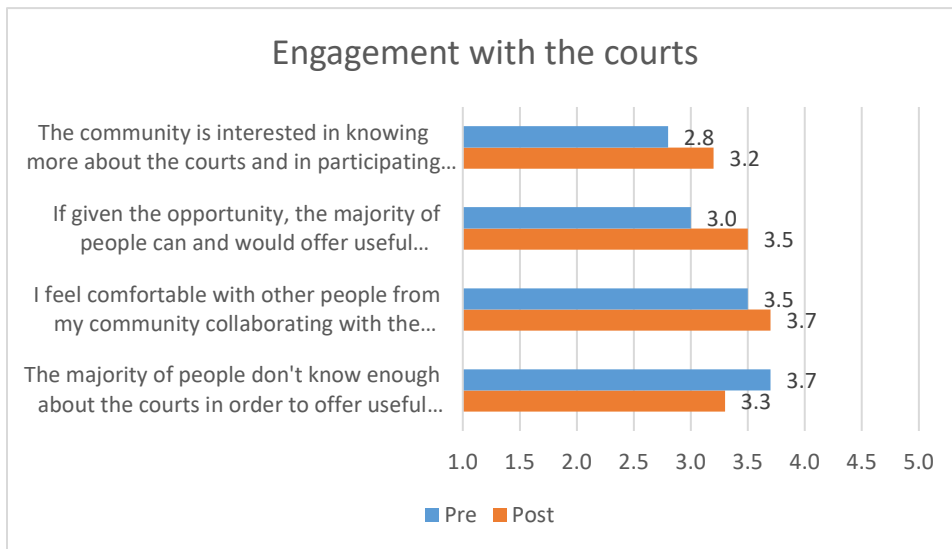


Survey respondents were asked to identify the functions of the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico. The correct answers are “apply the law to the facts of the case” and “interpret unclear laws.” Between the time that the participants completed the pre and post surveys, there was an increase in correct responses for “apply the law to the facts of the case”, but a decrease for all others, including a decrease in correct responses for “interpret unclear laws.”

## Pre-Post Survey: Perceptions of the courts and community engagement



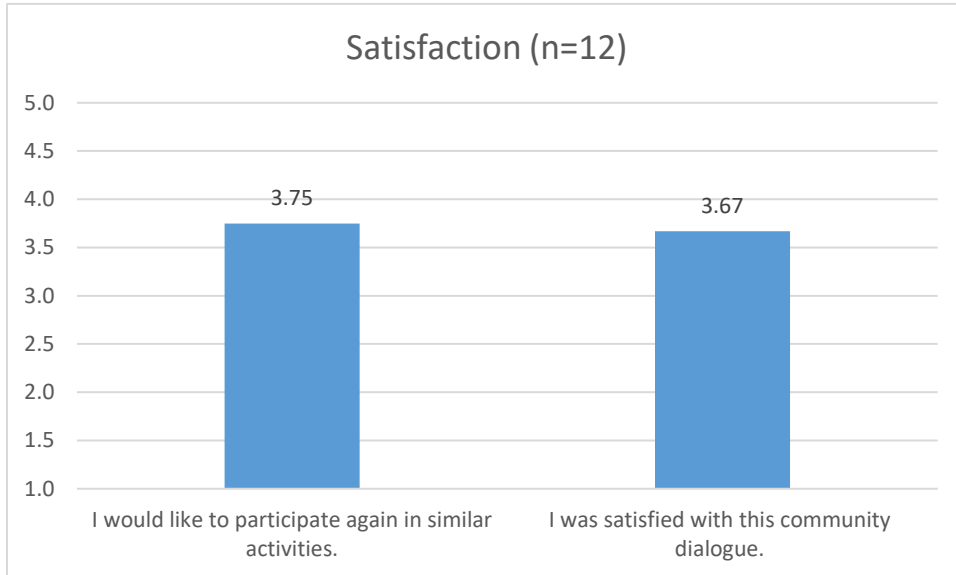
On a scale of 1-5 (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree), average ratings for perceptions of the court improved across all items with the exception of two (“In the courts, court personnel treat the public with respect and courtesy” and “I feel comfortable participating in activities like that of today and contributing ideas to the courts”).



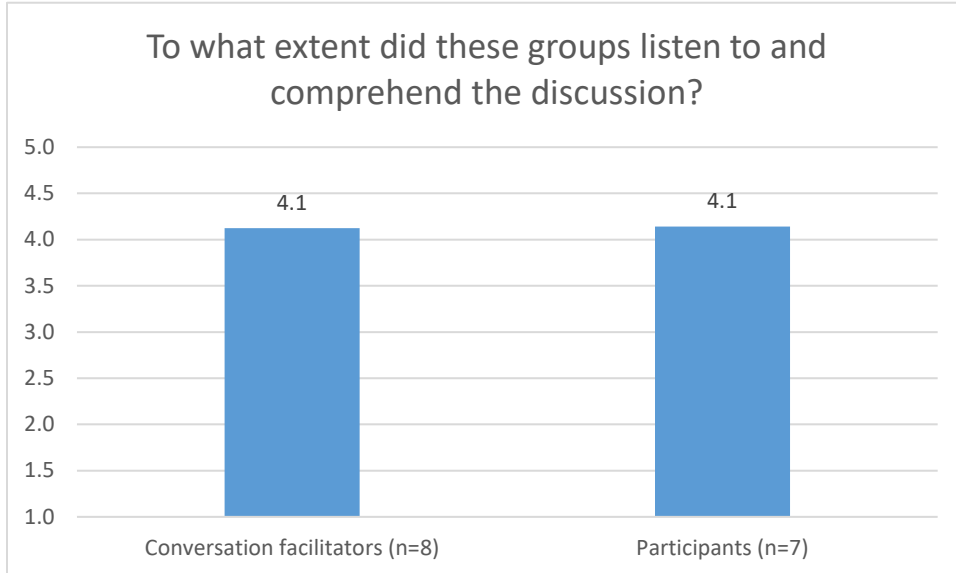
On a Scale of 1-5 (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree), average ratings of perceptions of community members who engage with the court increased across all items, with the exception of one (“The majority of people don't know enough about the courts in order to offer useful suggestions to improve its services.”). The average rating of this item decreased, representing an improvement in attitudes toward other people who might make suggestions about improving the courts.



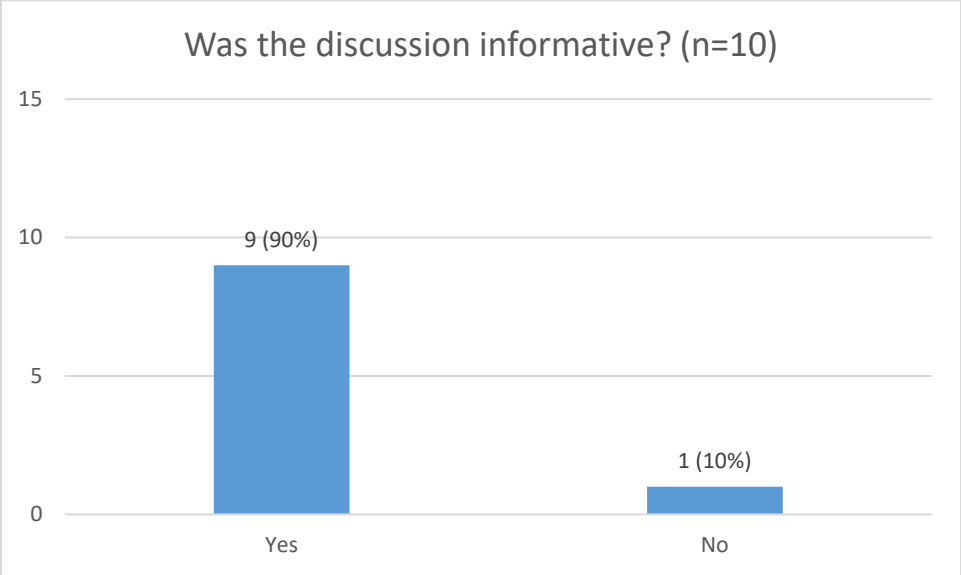
## Post-Survey: Evaluation



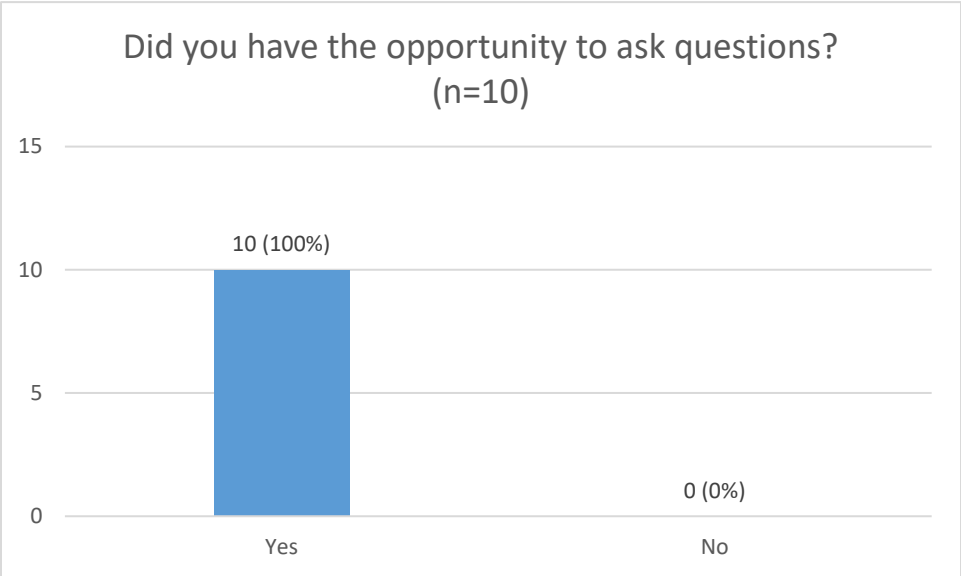
On a scale of 1-5 (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree), participants reported, on average, agreeing they were satisfied with the engagement (mean = 3.67) and that they would like to participate in similar activities again in the future (mean = 3.75).



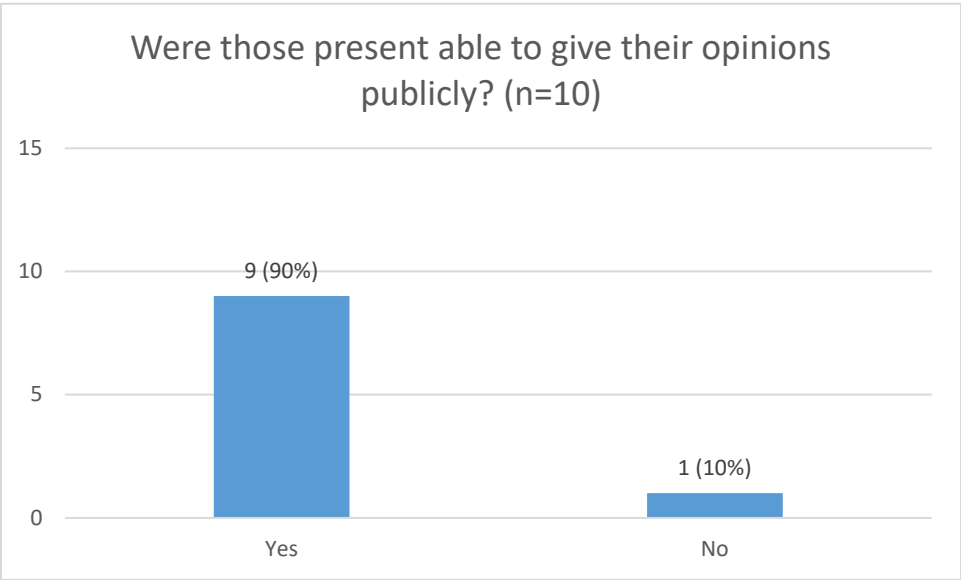
On a scale of 1-5 (1=Not good at all, 5=Extremely good), the participants rated the conversation facilitators and other participants an average of 4.5 and 4.1, respectively, in their ratings of how well they listened to and comprehended the discussions.



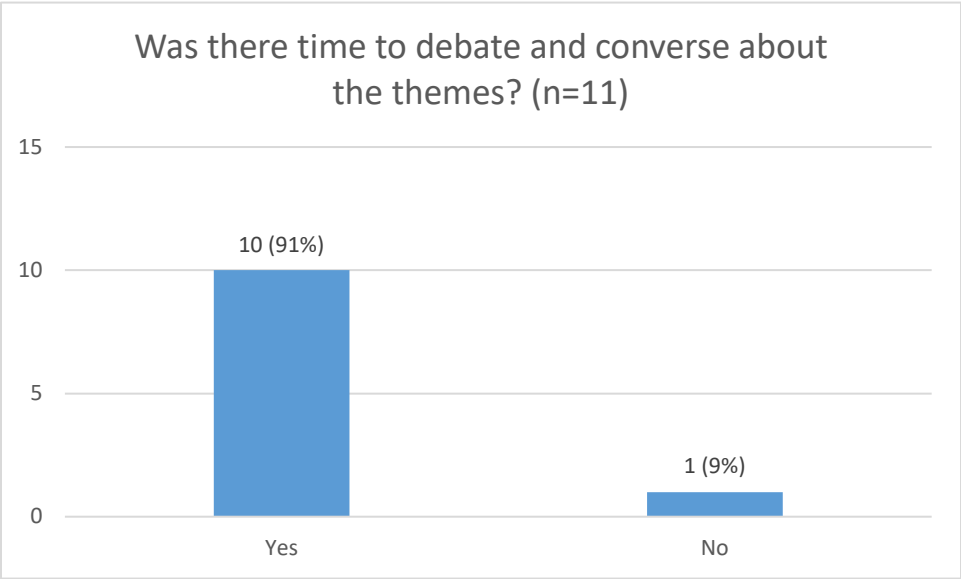
Ninety percent of the participants found the discussion informative.



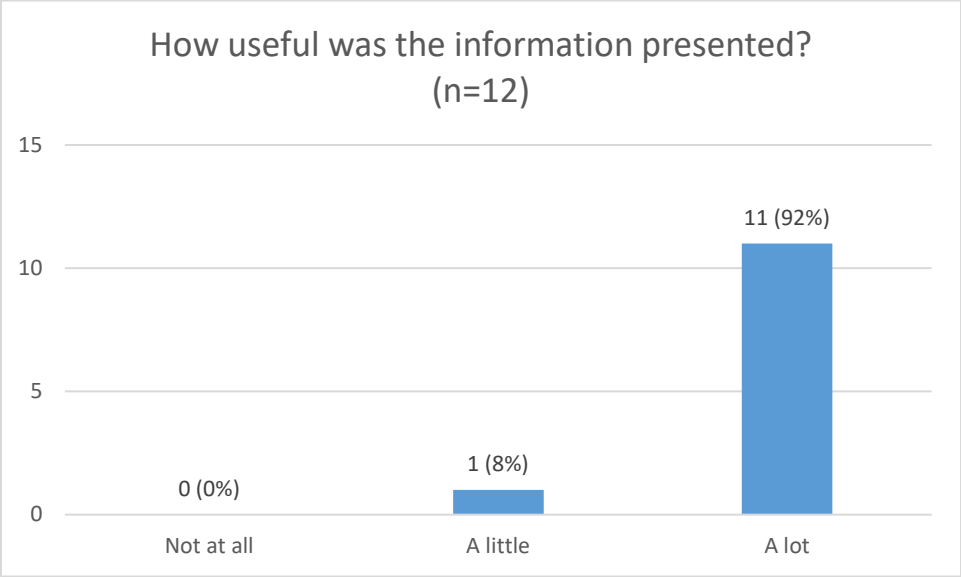
All respondents indicated that they had an opportunity to ask questions.



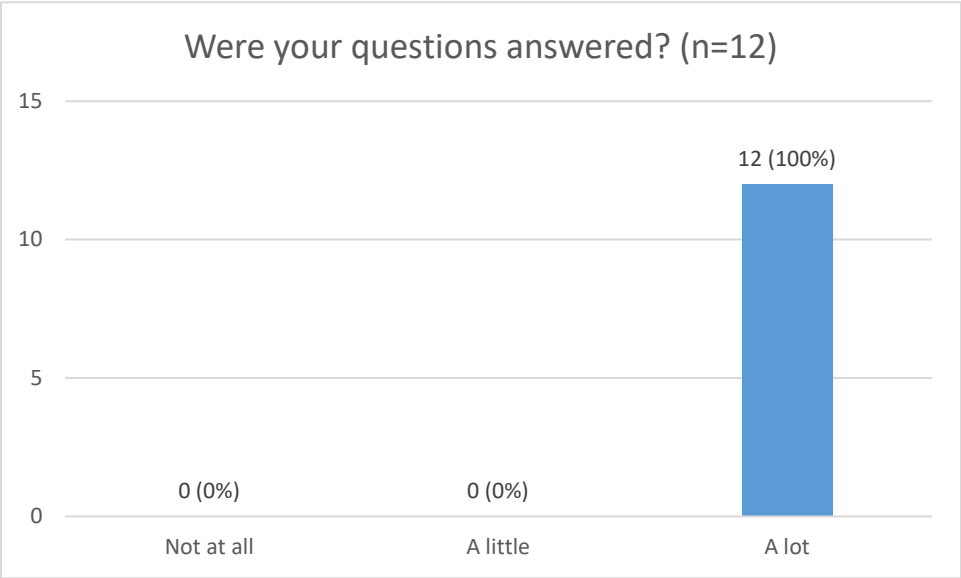
Ninety percent of respondents believed that they were able to give their opinions publicly during the discussions.



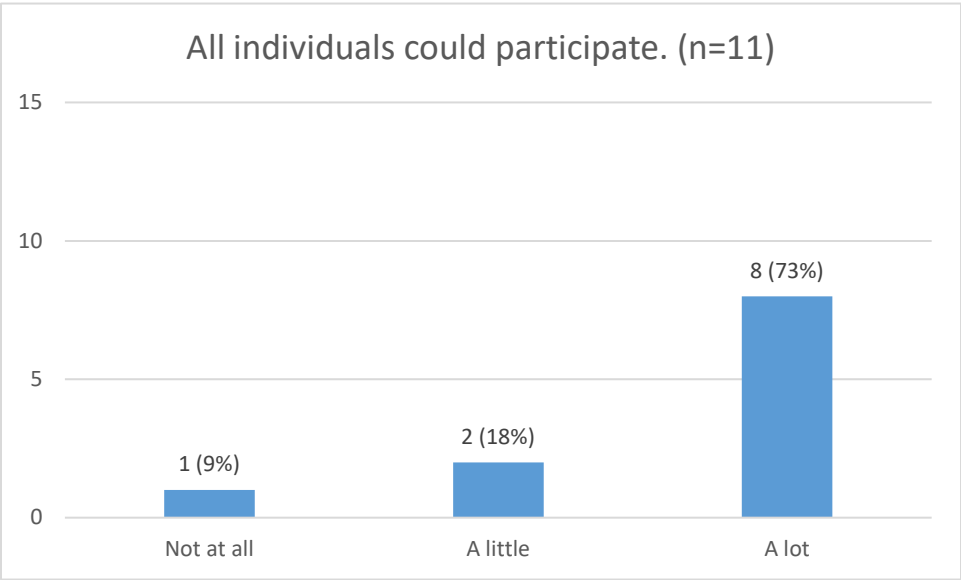
Ninety-one percent of respondents believed there was enough time to discuss and debate relevant themes.



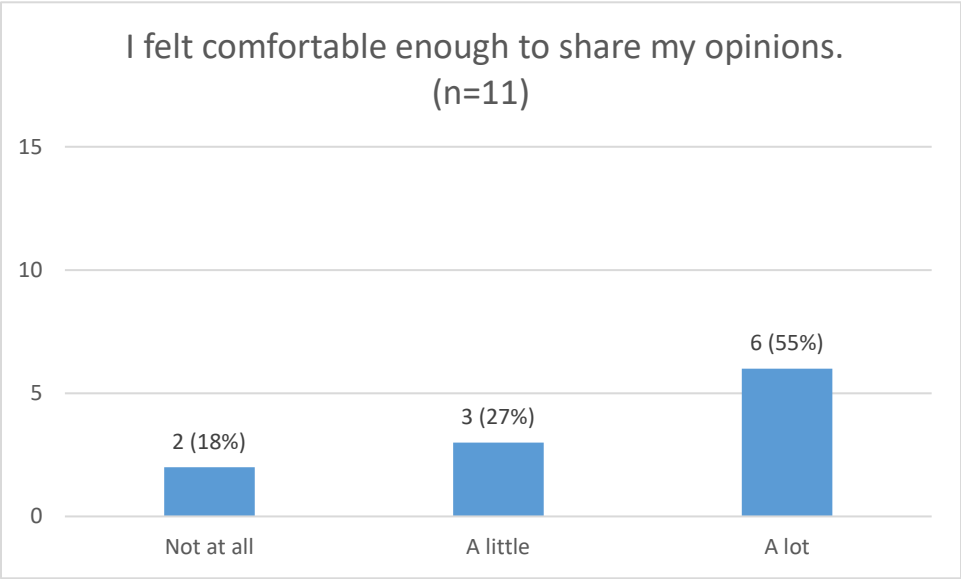
Ninety-two percent of respondents believed the information presented during the engagement activities was very useful.



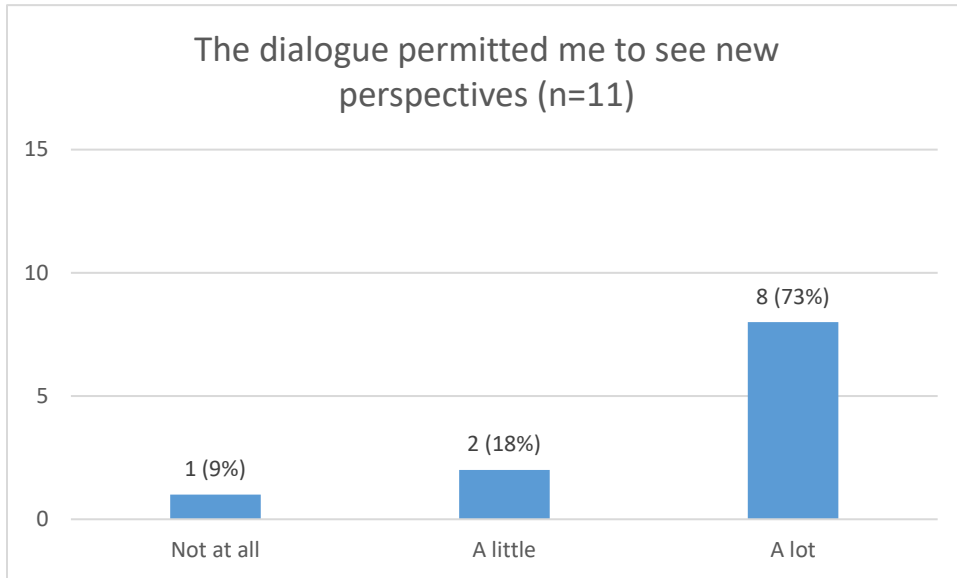
All respondents believed their questions were answered to a large extent.



Seventy-three percent of respondents believed that all participants could participate in the discussion to a large extent, and 18% felt all participants could participate to a small extent.



Fifty-five percent of respondents indicated they felt very comfortable sharing their opinions, 27% felt a little comfortable, and 18% did not feel comfortable at all.



Seventy-three percent of respondents believed that the discussion allowed them to see new perspectives to a great extent, and 18% saw new perspectives to a small extent.

## Youth: “Boys and Girls Club” group engagements (May & August 2019)

### FIRST ENGAGEMENT (May 1)

#### Purpose and issues of discussion

The purpose of the first engagement was to create familiarity between the students and court personnel. This engagement was also done so the court personnel could better understand how the Boys and Girls youth group experience and resolve peer conflict.

#### Facilitators and audience

There were five court facilitators. Two were from the Office of Education and Community Relations and the other three were from the Carolina Judicial Center. The latter were two judges and one drug court coordinator. The youth were members of the keystone group at the Boys and Girls Club in Carolina. Keystone is a service learning and leadership development program for teens ages 14 to 18. Youth participate, both in and out of the Club, in activities in three focus areas: Academic Success, Career Preparation, and Community Service.

#### Description of session and activities conducted

The engagement was conducted in a two-hour period and included the following activities:

##### I. Presentation

An icebreaker was done so participants could get to know each other. The participants and court facilitators were asked to embark on a cruise ship vacation through the Caribbean.

During the trip they encountered a storm and were asked to board several lifeboats that should have the following characteristics: 1. boats of 4-5 people, 2. have gender diversity, and 3. include participants with different birthday months. Once they got on the boat, they were asked to talk amongst themselves about the following issues: 1. each member's name, 2. the activity each person did most during the day, 3. each member's hobby, and 4. decide on a name for the boat. They then discussed in a plenary session what was their experience on each boat. If they were able to follow the instructions all the members of the boat were saved and rescued. All boat members completed the icebreaker successfully and were saved.

## II. World Café discussion

The main topic was discussed by means of the World Café methodology. Three tables were set up. Each table was covered with a large piece of brown drawing paper (butcher paper). There were markers, pens and a decorative plant at each table. Music played in the background between each World Café round. Snacks were provided to participants during the activity.

There was a court facilitator at each table: two judges and one drug court coordinator. The participants were asked to divide themselves into three groups. Each group was asked to visit a table where a court facilitator asked the group a question. All groups discussed the same question in each round. Before moving to the next round the facilitator asked them to draw or write a summary of their discussion on the piece of butcher paper. When the facilitator started the next round, they were asked to summarize what each group discussed in the prior rounds and show them the drawings. The questions asked were the following:

- **First round:** What does the word conflict mean to you? When you hear the word conflict what do you think of? What types of conflict have you seen amongst your peers at school?
- **Second round:** How do you think that your friends and peers can resolve conflict positively at school?
- **Third round:** What type of things can help you resolve peer conflict? Would these things include education on a topic or mediation?

## III. Plenary discussion

The groups gathered in a plenary session to discuss what they thought of the experience and what they had learned. They were then asked if they were willing to meet a second time to learn about the services the Judicial Branch has to deal with peer conflict. The youth group agreed to the second meeting.

### **Findings and adjustments in group**

One group did not understand the difference between question two and three as they felt they did not need education to solve conflicts. Question number 2 was intended to be about internal qualities and resources the youth had to resolve peer conflict. And question number 3 was more about the external resources they would need to resolve conflict such as education on a topic or skill. However, this same group admitted that solving conflicts required honesty and maturity that had to be taught at home.

Overall, the engagement between the court actors and youth seemed very good. It seems this group could serve as mentors and facilitators for other youth. The court actors were very interested in continuing the project. A second meeting was arranged for the month of August, as some of the students would not be available during the Summer.

### **SECOND ENGAGEMENT (August 20)**

#### **Purpose and issues of discussion**

The purpose of this second engagement was to share with the youth group what the judicial branch is and the services it provides to handle peer conflict. Also, to establish the grounds for a follow up creative project where they could illustrate peer conflict and how the judicial branch could help them tackle these conflicts.

#### **Facilitators and audience**

The group of students that participated in the second engagement were not the same that participated in the first one. Of the 16 students in the second engagement, only 6 participated in the first engagement. However, a recap of the first engagement was presented by means of playing a fictitious "radio news" clip that was created by EDUCO personnel.

In this session three EDUCO members participated as well as the three employees from the Carolina Judicial Center. A social worker from the Boys and Girls Club, one person from the National Center for State Courts and two people from the University of Nebraska were also present.

#### **Description of session and activities conducted**

##### **I. Teamwork and communication icebreaker**

The dialogue started with a group dynamic which the youth seemed to enjoy. Four large tape squares were marked out on the floor. While music was playing, they were asked to walk around the squares. When the music stopped, they had to stand within the tape squares. In each of the three rounds one square was eliminated. The idea was to mimic being in a conflict and having to speak to each other to solve it. In this situation they needed to fit into the squares without stepping over the lines.



## II. News audio to summarize prior engagement

A fictitious news clip was played for them with two pauses in order to ask them questions to confirm their comprehension of the information. They were also asked if the audio summarized what had been discussed in the prior engagement. They agreed that it did.

## III. Myths and realities exercise (the judges and drug court facilitator led this exercise)

A myths and realities exercise followed. It was used to talk to them about the judicial branch and the services that help address peer conflict. Overall, they seemed engaged during the activity and asked many questions. With this group the drug coordinator had suggested asking them to stand on one side of an imaginary line if they thought the statement was a myth and on the other side if they thought it was a reality in order to make this activity more interactive. Only five statements were discussed with this group as the discussion took a bit longer.

### Statement 1 (myth)

The Judicial Branch is the one in charge of starting a criminal case against a person who is suspected of committing a crime. [10 said myth]

### Statement 2 (reality)

A judge and a court bailiff are Judicial Branch employees while the police and district attorney are employees of the Executive Branch. [6 said myth and 4 said reality]

### Statement 3 (myth)

The Judicial Branch includes the Department of Justice, the Supreme Court and the Court Administrative Office. [6 said myth, 2 said reality and 2 were undecided]

### Statement 4 (reality)

The Judicial Branch has an office in charge of developing educational materials and activities for the community. [11 said reality]

### Statement 5 (reality)

Juvenile court cases are confidential and follow a special process that is not considered criminal. [Their answer to this statement was not recorded.]

## IV. Snacks and brainstorming for their drawing

They then shared some snacks which they enjoyed very much. The youth were then asked to divide into three groups and choose some alternatives for their follow up project.

Several phrases were written on pieces of paper and were placed on the floor. The idea was for them to mix and match the phrases to create the plot for their projects. For example, they had to choose if they wanted to work with peer conflict or family conflict, and if they wanted to do a comic strip or a short movie. They divided themselves into three groups. Two decided to work with peer conflict and comic strips, and one group chose to work with family conflict and a short movie.

### **Findings and adjustments in group**

Some of the youth that participated in the first group did not attend this second engagement. There were also new youth in this second engagement. Their leader was new as well and she was not as integrated to the group dynamic as the youth leaders that participated in the first engagement. This may have been part of the reason why some of the students came in and out of the engagement while we were conducting the activities. The court actors were very engaged with the students. Some of the students seemed to be a little disconnected during some of the activities. During the myth and reality exercise some youth did not want to stand on one side or the other of the line. It might have been better to use the myth and reality cards that were used with the other groups. For the future both ideas could be proposed to the youth and take some of the myth and reality cards as a backup plan for any youth that do not want to stand up.

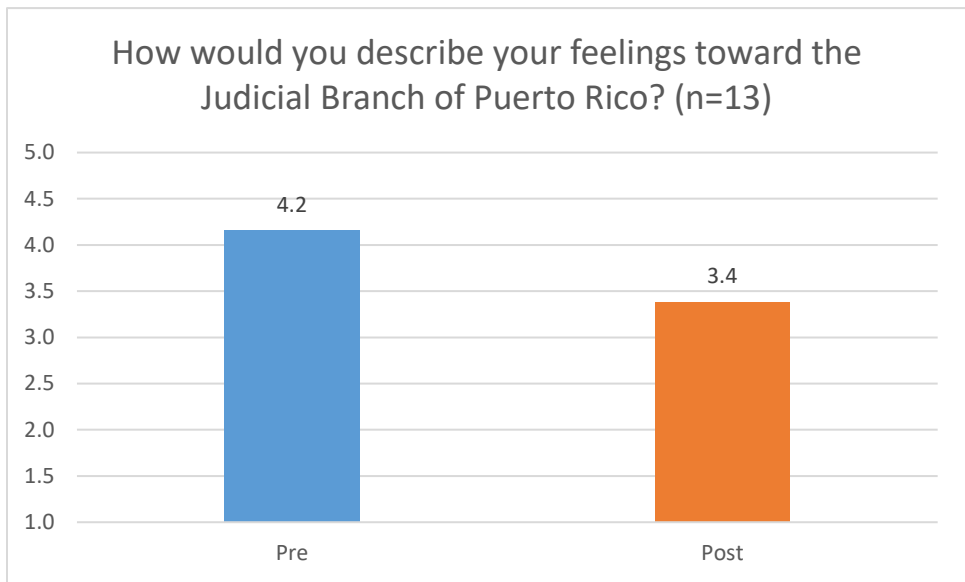
Overall, they seemed to understand what was happening and they asked the court actors some questions. The youth seemed interested in participating in the follow up project where they would develop a comic strip or short film. The Boys and Girls Club social worker mentioned some interest in the use of graphic novels as a resource.

As a follow up comment, several weeks after the second engagement, the social worker and leader of the group decided to only do one follow up project. She mentioned that it was hard for her to follow up with three different projects. One group would do a short film regarding peer conflict and bullying.

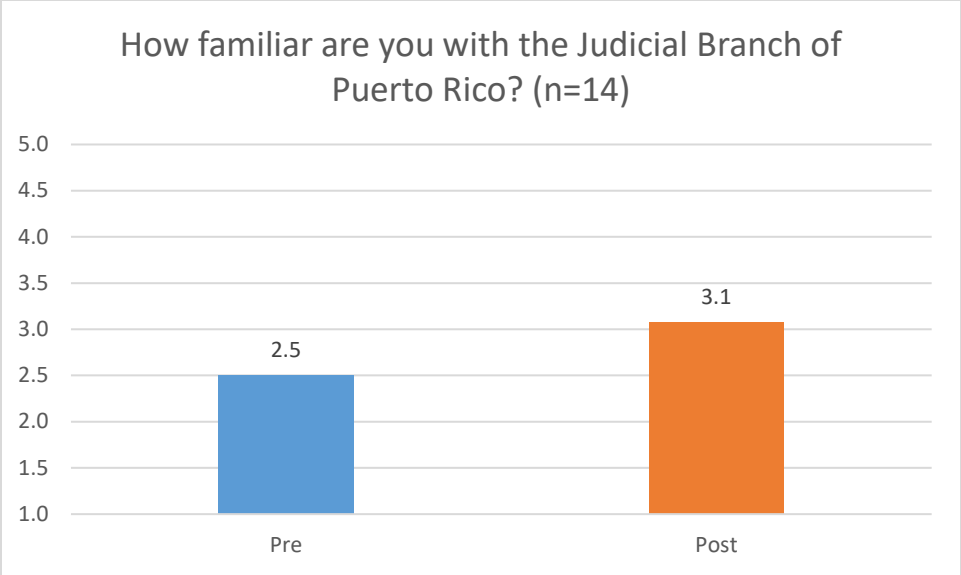
**Pre-Survey: Demographics**

Average age (n=15)	Gender (n=15)		Municipality (n=11)		Education (n=13)	
16.4 years	Male 47%	Female 53%	Carolina	77%	Some high school	85%
			Canóvanas	9%	High school/GED	8%
			Rio Grande	9%	Some post high school	0%
					Associate/Technical degree	0%
					Bachelor's degree	8%
					Some graduate school	0%
					Graduate degree	0%

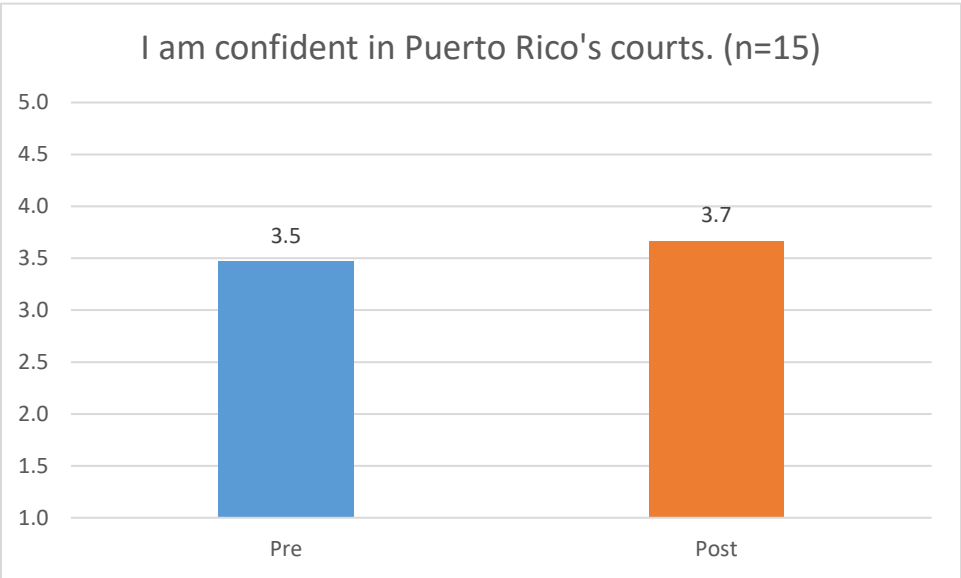
**Pre-Post Survey: Attitudes towards the courts**



On a scale of 1-5 (1=Completely negative, 5=Completely positive), respondents' average score for feelings towards the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico decreased from 4.2 to 3.4, between the time that the participants completed the pre and post surveys.

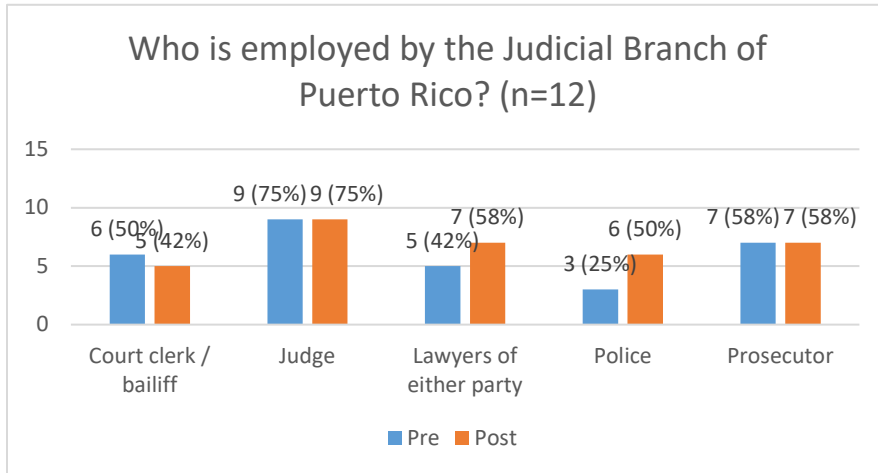


On a scale of 1-5 (1=Not familiar at all, 5=Extremely familiar), the average score for familiarity with the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico increased from 2.5 to 3.1, between the time that the participants completed the pre and post surveys.

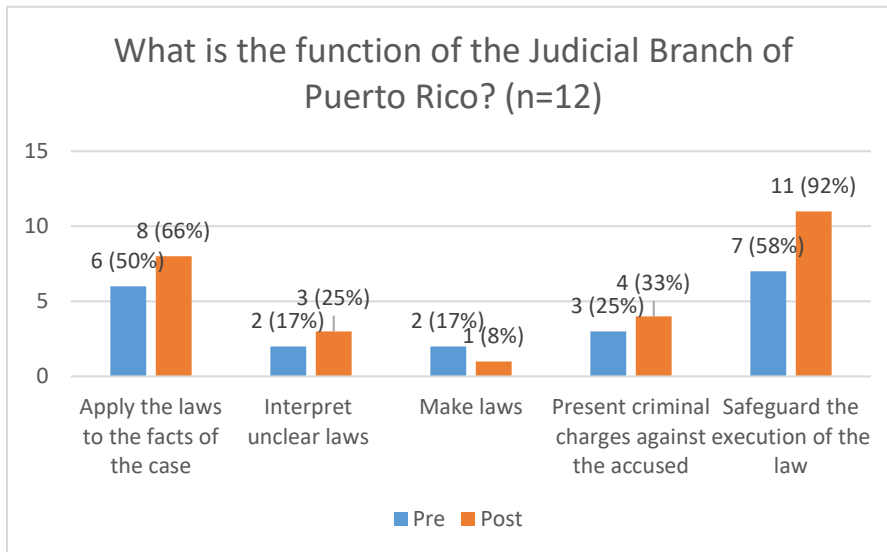


On a scale of 1-5 (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree), the average score for confidence in Puerto Rico's courts among respondents increased from 3.5 to 3.7.

## Pre-Post Survey: Knowledge of the courts

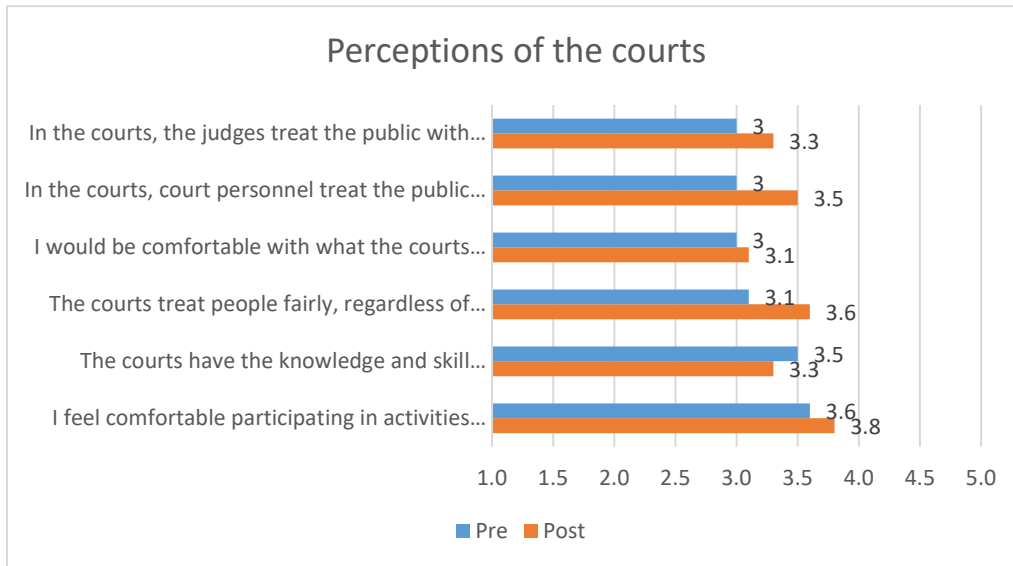


Survey respondents were asked before and after the engagements to identify whether several positions are employees of the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico. The correct answers for occupations employed by the judicial branch are the “court clerk / bailiff” and “judge.” Thus, the percentage of individuals reporting the correct answers decreased for the “court clerk / bailiff” item and remained the same for the “judge” item. Other items showed an increase in incorrect answers.

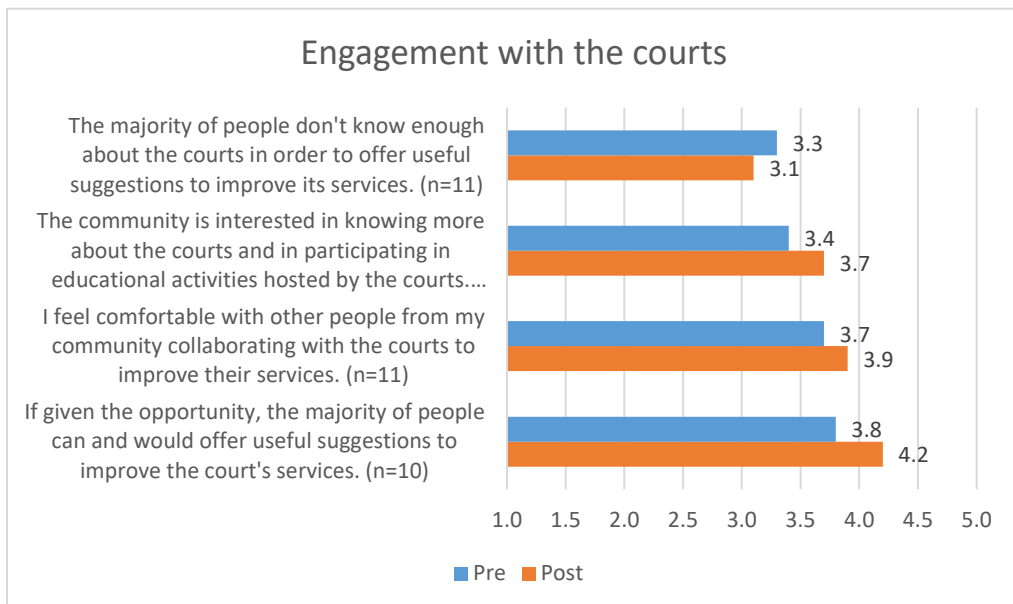


Survey respondents were asked to identify the functions of the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico before and after the engagements. The correct answers for the functions of the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico are “apply the laws to the facts of the case” and “interpret unclear laws.” Thus, the percentage of individuals reporting the correct answers increased for both items. However, other items also showed an increase in incorrect answers. Only “make laws” showed a decrease in incorrect answers.

## Pre-Post Survey: Perceptions of the courts and community engagement

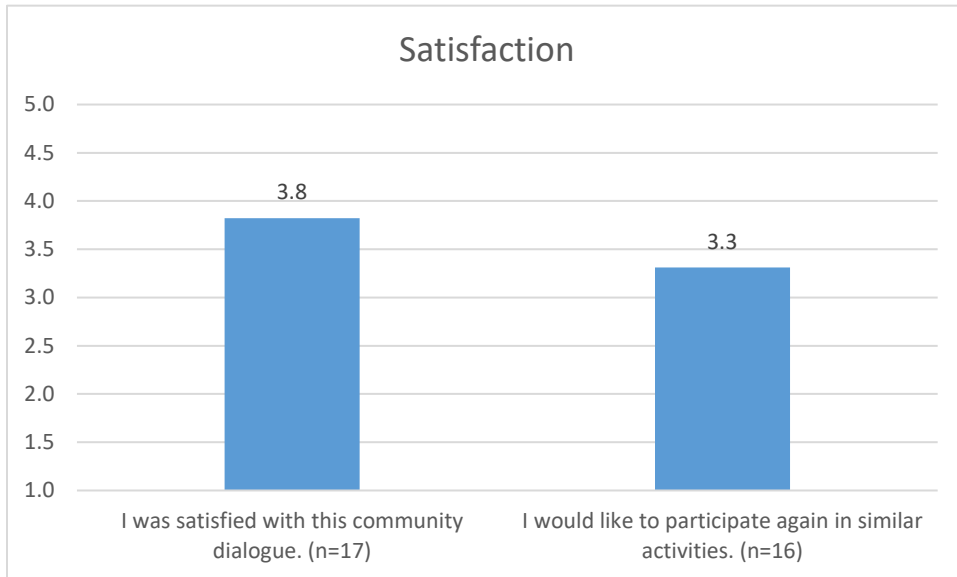


On a scale of 1-5 (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree), average ratings for perceptions of the court improved across all items except for one (“The courts have the knowledge and skill necessary in order to adequately do their job”).

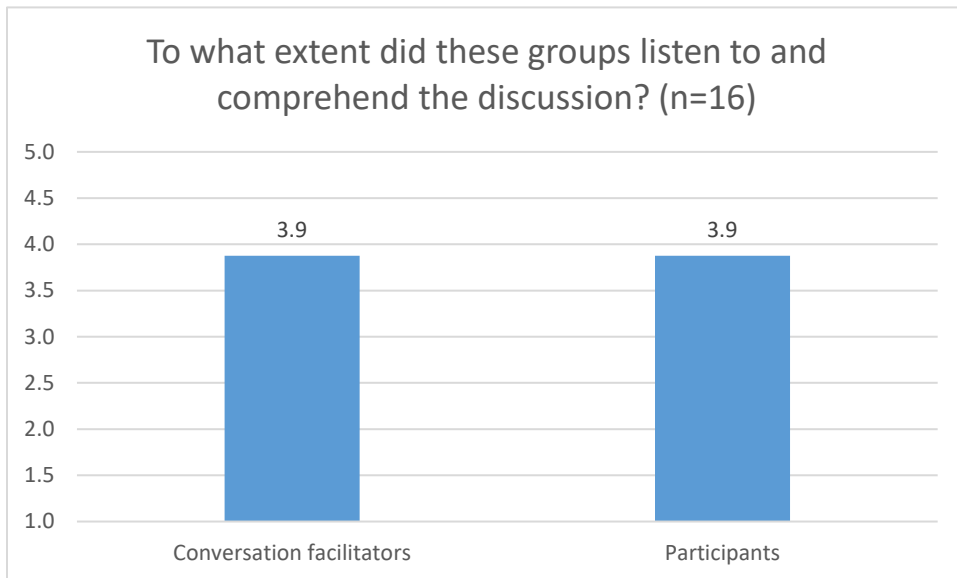


On a scale of 1-5 (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree), ratings of perceptions of community members who engage with the court improved from pre to post. That is, average agreement with the negative item “people don’t know enough” decreased, while average answers to the positive items increased.

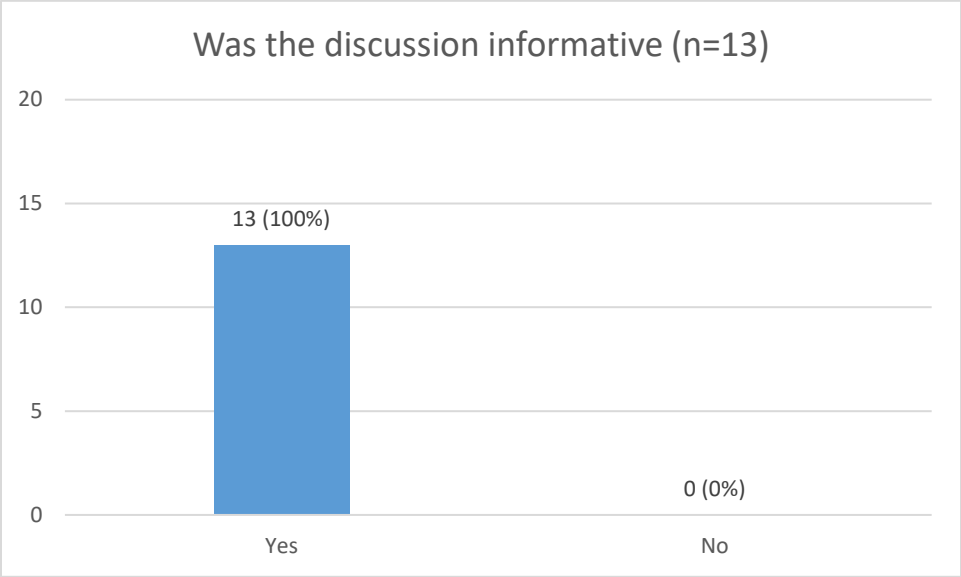
## Post-Survey: Evaluation



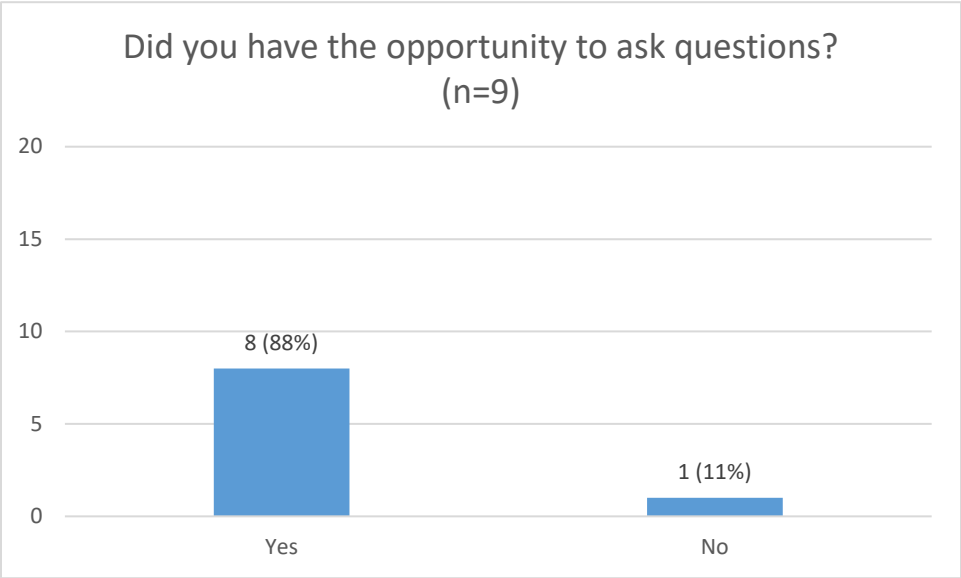
On a scale of 1-5 (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree), participants reported average levels of satisfaction ranging from 3.3 to 3.8 per item.



On a scale of 1-5 (1=Not good at all, 5=Extremely good), the participants rated the conversation facilitators and other participants an average of 3.9 in their ratings of how well they listened to and comprehended the discussions.

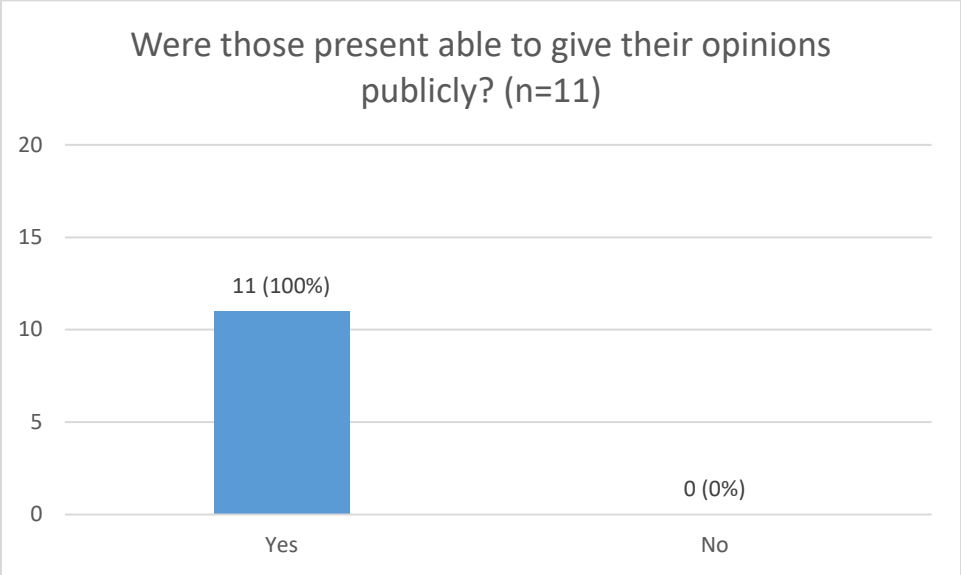


All participants found the discussion informative.

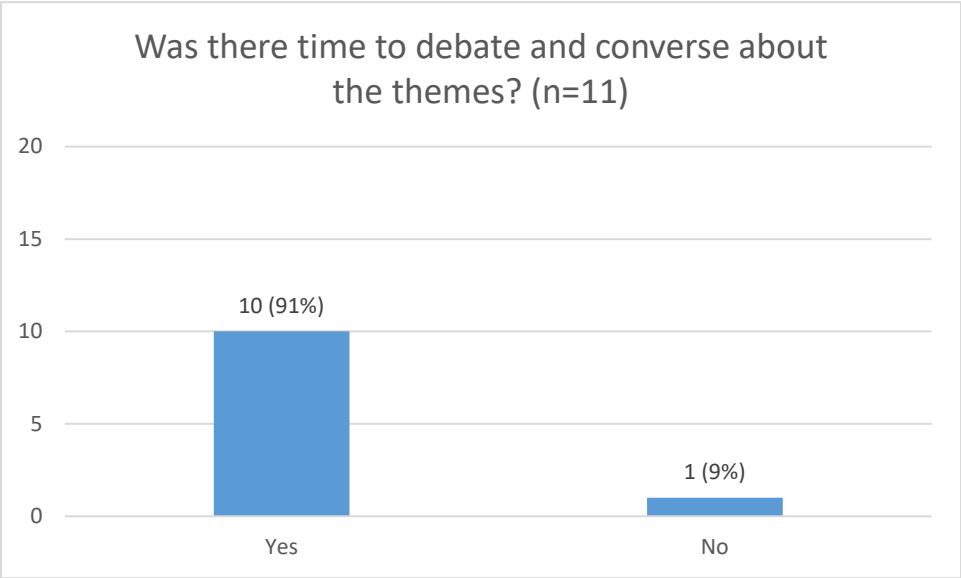


Almost all the respondents indicated that they had an opportunity to ask questions.

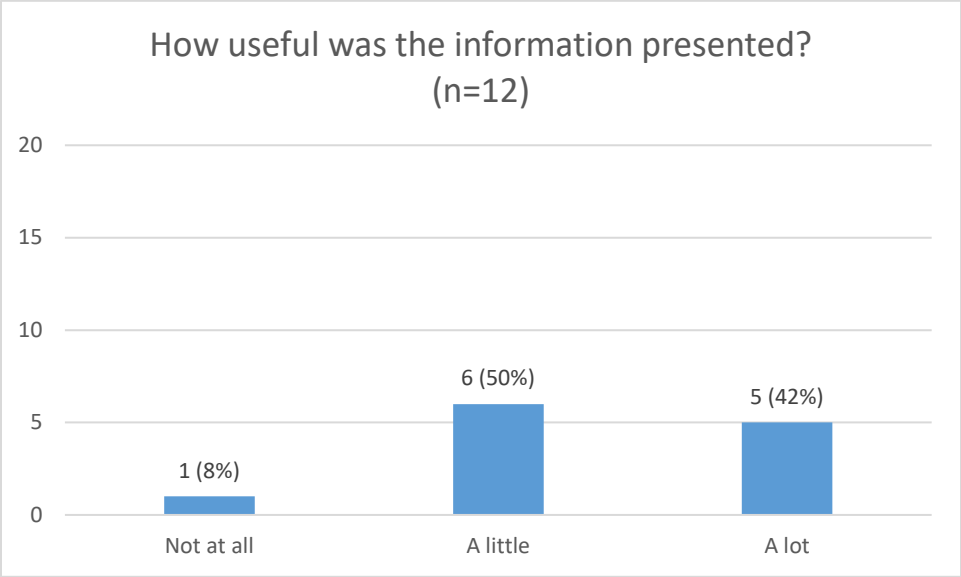




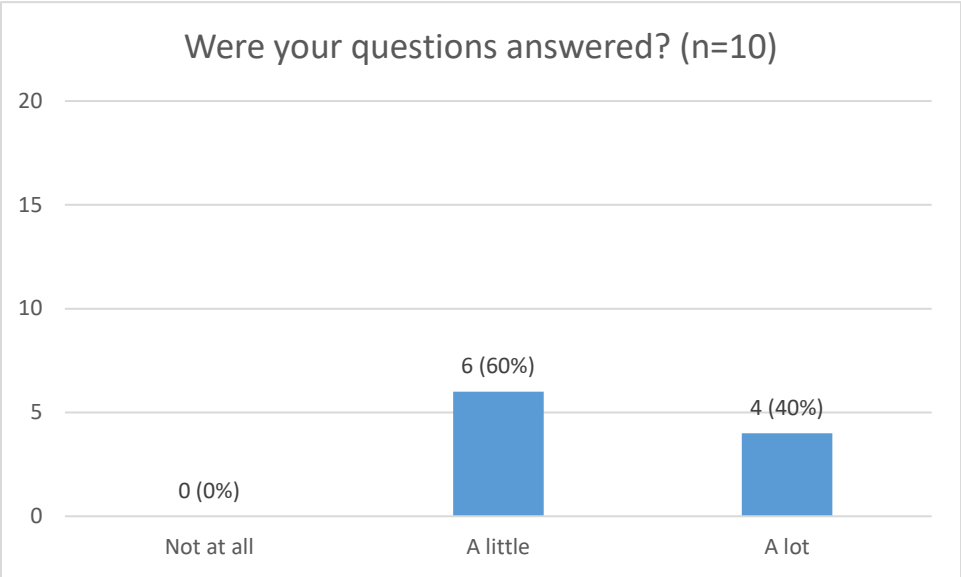
All respondents believed that they were able to give their opinions publicly during the discussions.



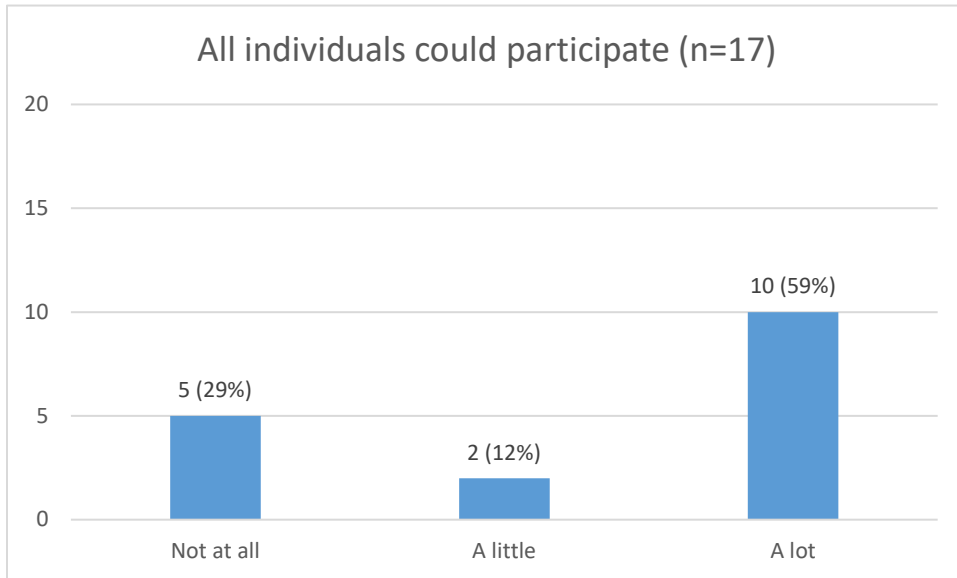
Ninety-one percent of respondents believed there was enough time to debate and converse about the themes of discussion.



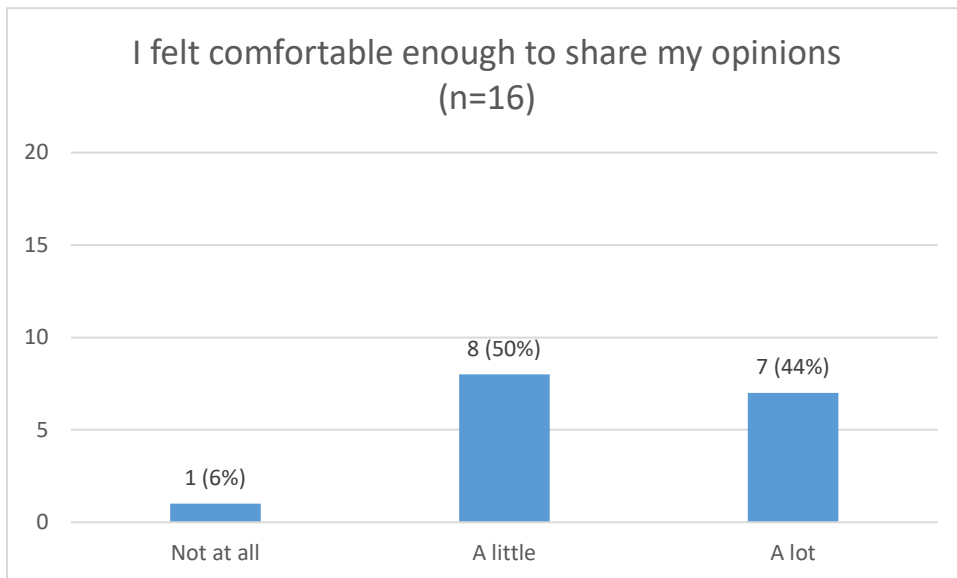
Ninety-two percent of participants thought the information presented was either a little or very useful.



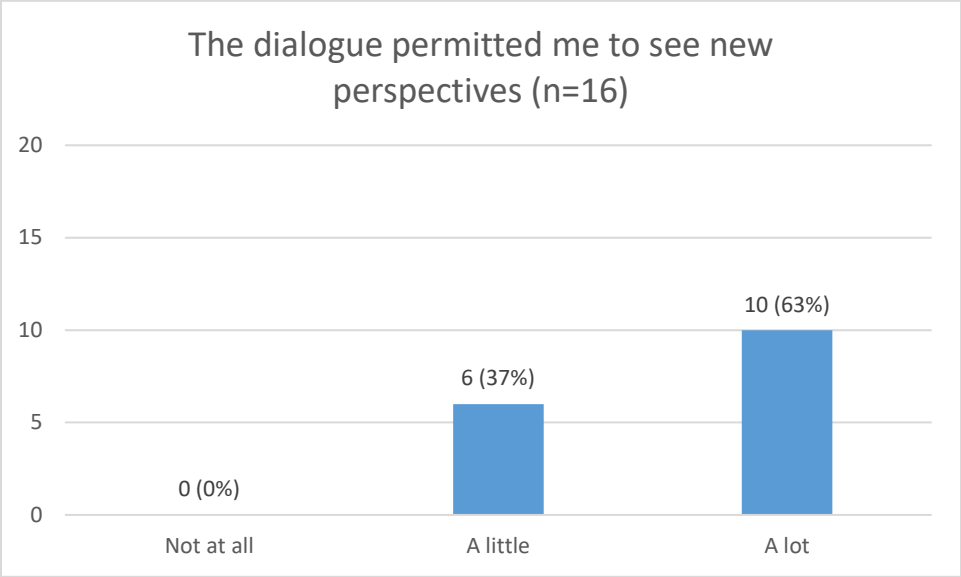
All respondents believed their questions were answered, either to a small or large extent.



Fifty-nine percent of respondents believed all individuals could participate in the discussion. However, five people (29%) did not and two people (12%) only felt there was a little participation by all participants.

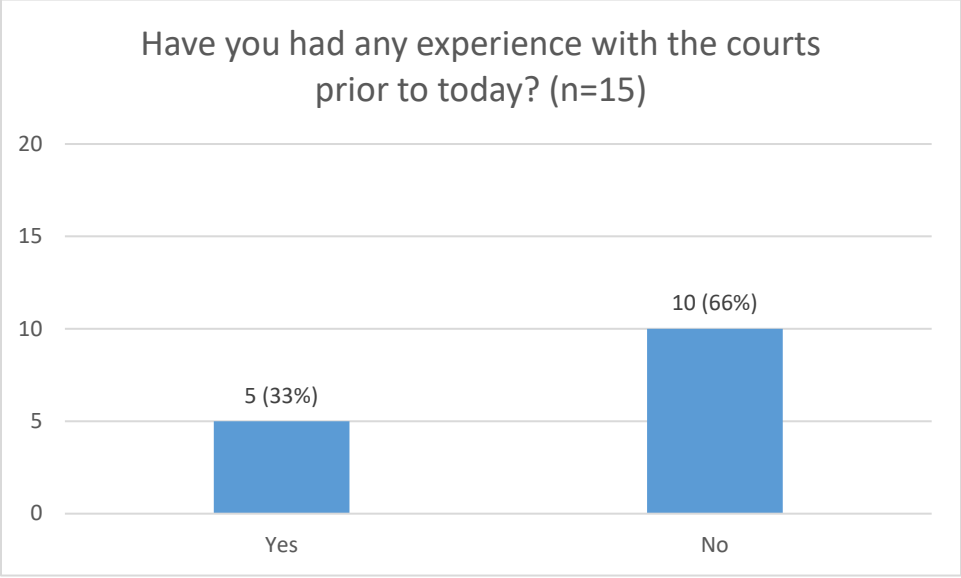


Ninety-four percent of respondents indicated they felt a little or very comfortable sharing their opinions, though one did not feel comfortable at all.

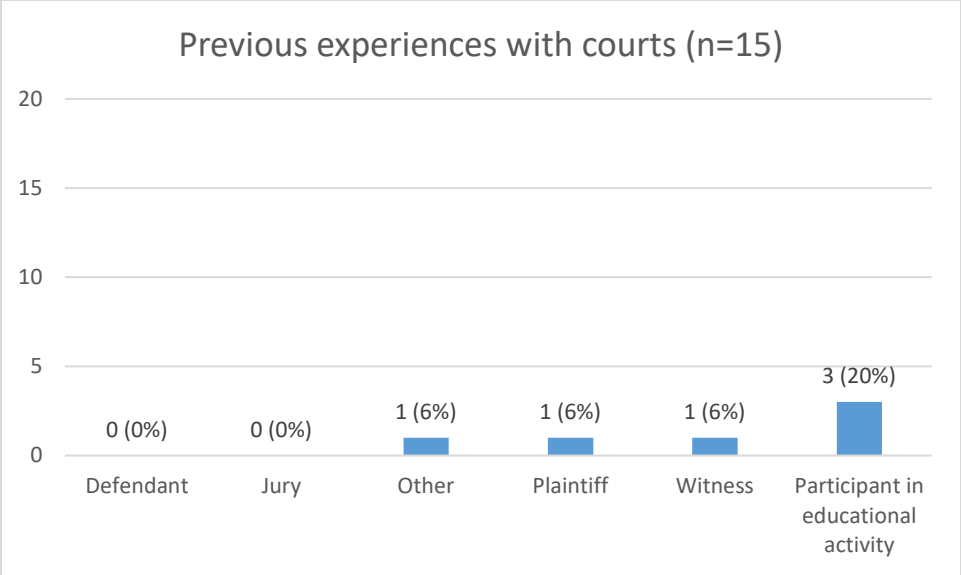


All respondents believed that the discussion allowed them to see new perspectives, ranging from a little to a lot.

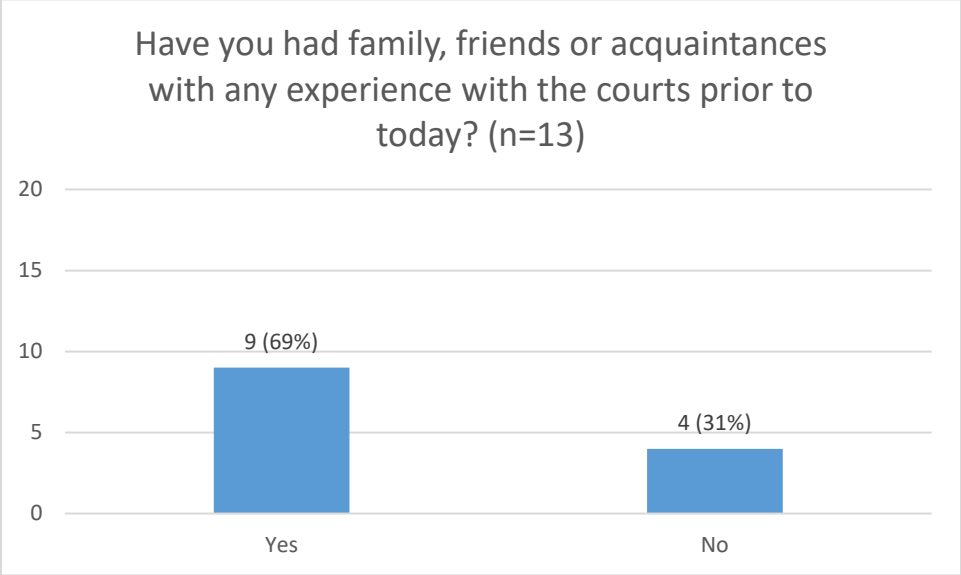
**Pre-Survey: Previous experience with courts**



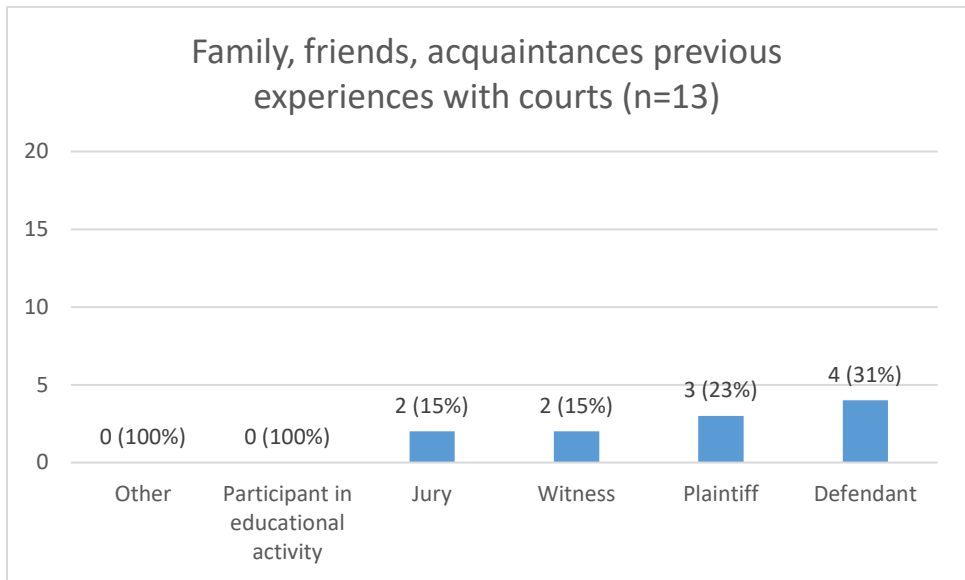
Thirty-three percent of respondents had previous experiences with courts.



Of the five individuals out of 15 reporting having had previous experiences with courts, three indicated they had been educational activity participants, one was a plaintiff, one was a witness, and one indicated an “other” experience. (Note: For this item, respondents could choose multiple answers.)



Sixty-nine percent of respondents indicated that they had family, friends or acquaintances with previous experiences with courts.



Of the nine individuals out of 13 reporting that family, friends or acquaintances had previous experiences with courts, five were defendants, three were plaintiffs, two indicated “other” experiences, and one was an educational activity participant. (Note: For this item, respondents could choose multiple answers.)

**Adult: ‘San Lorenzo’ group engagements (May & June 2019)**

**FIRST ENGAGEMENT (May 2)**

**Purpose and issues of discussion**

The purpose of the first engagement was to create familiarity between the community leaders and court personnel. Also, for court personnel to understand how the community leaders of San Lorenzo experience conflict amongst neighbors.

**Facilitators and audience**

There were five court facilitators. Two were from the Office of Education and Community Relations and the other three were judges from the Caguas Judicial Center. There were seventeen leaders from the Municipality of San Lorenzo. Most of them were from Barrio Hato, two were from Barrio Florida and one from Barrio Jagual. There were different levels of formal education amongst the community leaders; some community leaders and PEPP members had to help other leaders with the completion of the surveys.

**Description of session and activities conducted**

The engagement was conducted in a two-hour period with the following activities:

- I. Presentation

An icebreaker was done at the beginning so participants could get to know each other. The participants and court facilitators were asked to join a cruise ship vacation through the Caribbean. During their trip they encountered a storm and were asked to board several lifeboats that had the following characteristics: 1. boats of 4-5 people, 2. have gender diversity, and 3. include participants with different birthday months. Once they got on the boat, they were asked to talk amongst themselves about the following issues: 1. each member's name, 2. the activity each person did most during the day, 3. each member's hobby, and 4. decide on a name for the boat. They were then asked to share as a plenary group what each boat had discussed. If they were able to follow the instructions the members of the boat were saved and rescued. All boat members completed the icebreaker successfully and were saved.

## II. World Café Methodology

The main topic was discussed by means of the World Café methodology. Three tables were set up. Each one was covered with a large piece of brown drawing paper (butcher paper). There were markers, pens and a decorative plan at each table. Music played in the background between each World Café round. Snacks were provided to participants during the activity.

There was a judge court facilitator at each table. The participants were asked to divide themselves into three groups and for each group to sit at a different table. At each table, a court facilitator asked the group a question. All groups discussed the same question in each round. Before moving to the next round the facilitator asked them to draw or write a summary of their discussion on the butcher paper. When the facilitator started the next round, they were asked to summarize what each group discussed in the prior rounds and show them the drawings. The questions asked were the following:

- **First round:** What does the word conflict mean to you? When you hear the word conflict what do you think of? What types of conflict have you seen amongst your neighbors and community?
- **Second round:** How do you think your neighbors and your community might positively resolve their conflicts, from within the same community?
- **Third round:** What types of things can help to resolve these conflicts as a community? Would education about any subject be included among these things? And mediation?

## III. Plenary session

The group gathered in a plenary session to discuss what they thought of the experience and what they learned. They were also asked if they were willing to meet a second time to learn about the services the Judicial Branch has to deal with neighbor and community conflict

and think about a follow up project they could do with the Judicial Branch. The group agreed to a second engagement.

### **Findings and adjustments in group**

It took the community leaders about 30 minutes to fill out the initial questionnaire, and even then, some leaders were not able to finish completing it. For this reason, the PEPP team decided not to ask them to fill out a post questionnaire in the first engagement. The community leader survey was longer. It had two more questions compared to the youth survey. In both surveys each question had multiple components and sub questions. Instead, they were asked to fill out a post questionnaire at the end of the second engagement. Some leaders did not put their emails or phone numbers in the survey id section. For said reason age and education demographics were used as id numbers to match their pre and post survey answers.

Court actors seemed very engaged and expressed enjoying the experience and listening to the leaders. The community leaders expressed immediate interest in continuing the project. They spoke about different examples of conflicts they observed in their communities such as noise, waste disposal, family conflict and property demarcation between neighboring lands. Property rights seem to be intertwined with neighborhood conflicts. They also mentioned the different techniques they use as leaders to help their neighbors resolve conflict but also mentioned that in some cases the issue had be taken to the court.

Community leaders were open to participating in orientation and education activities and becoming community mediators in some instances. They also mentioned that to get the public to attend community activities it was important to give them incentives to attain more participation. They suggested raffles, food, and monetary payment. This may be an issue for the judicial branch as it cannot offer said incentives at this moment. Nevertheless, community leader participation in San Lorenzo is always high. This is evidenced by the fact that we received 19 leaders when our initial goal was 12.

## **SECOND ENGAGEMENT (June 13)**

### **Purpose and issues of discussion**

The purpose of the second engagement was to share with the community leaders what the judicial branch is and the services it provides to address conflict between neighbors. Also, the leaders were to decide what follow up project they wanted to collaboratively conduct with the Judicial Branch.

### **Facilitators and audience**

In this session two EDUCO members and two judges from the Caguas Judicial Center participated. One of the judges was not able to participate as she was assigned to another official engagement that same day. Twelve leaders came to both the first and second



engagement. There were about five leaders from the first engagement that did not come to the second engagement. There also were also ten new leaders at the second engagement.

### **Description of session and activities conducted**

#### I. Teamwork and communication icebreaker

The dialogue started with a group dynamic which the leaders seemed to enjoy. A long rectangle was marked out on the floor with the use of masking tape. The participants were then asked to form a line by standing freely within the taped rectangle. Both leaders and court actors participated in this exercise. They were then asked to talk to each other to place themselves in order of height without stepping outside of the lines. The idea was to mimic being in a conflict and having to speak to each other in order to solve the problem.

#### II. News audio to summarize prior engagement

The Judicial Branch created a fictitious “news audio clip” by reviewing the first engagement’s recordings and notes. The audio was four minutes long. The audience laughed and seemed to like it. The audio clip was played for the group and paused on two occasions so they could answer questions of what the audio said to confirm their comprehension. They were asked if the audio reflected what had been discussed in the prior engagement. Most of the group agreed that it clearly reflected what had been discussed in our first engagement. Only one person did not seem to understand, but she had not attended the first engagement.

#### III. Myths and reality exercise (one of the EDUCO lawyers did this exercise)

A myths and reality exercise was used to talk to the leaders about the judicial branch and the services it has to address community conflict. Each leader was given a card; on one side it read myth and on the other side it said reality. For each of the seven statements they were asked to choose with their cards if they thought the statement was a myth or a reality. One of the EDUCO members facilitated this exercise and one of the judges also added some comments.

##### *Statement 1 (myth)*

The Judicial Branch is the one in charge of starting a criminal case against a person who is suspected of committing a crime. [22 said reality]

##### *Statement 2 (reality)*

A judge and a court bailiff are Judicial Branch employees while the police and district attorney are employees of the Executive Branch. [13 said reality, 5 said myths and 3 were undecided]

##### *Statement 3 (myth)*

The Judicial Branch includes the Department of Justice, the Supreme Court and the Court Administrative Office. [10 said reality, 5 said myth, and 7 were undecided]

*Statement 4 (reality)*

The First Instance Court has superior and municipal judges. [22 said reality]

*Statement 5 (myth)*

The Judicial Branch offers free mediation services at its 13 judicial regions. However, a person must comply with certain income requirements to be eligible for the services. [15 said reality, 5 said myths and 2 were undecided]

*Statement 6 (reality)*

The Judicial Branch has an office in charge of developing educational materials and activities for the community. [15 said reality, 1 said myth and 6 were undecided]

*Statement 7 (myth)*

A person that goes to the court in search of assistance to address neighbor conflicts must be accompanied by legal representation and pay court fees. [20 said reality and 2 were undecided]

They were also each given a brochure about the Government and Court System and a handout that included a table that describes the three services that deal with community conflict. These included the Office of Education and Community Relations, Court Mediation Centers and a Special law procedure (Law 140) that enables municipal court judges to give fast temporary remedies in different situations such as those that affect the health and wellbeing of neighbors and the enjoyment of their property.

#### IV. Snacks and brainstorming for their follow up project

They were then given snacks which they enjoyed very much. Then a plenary discussion was held to build the work plan for the follow up project. The first question for the brainstorming session was: What would the group like to do in the collaborative project with the Judicial Branch in order to better address community conflict? The open responses were provided by participants on written sticky notes (this allowed them to participate more freely). Nevertheless, their ideas did not feed from or build upon the issues they presented in their first engagement.

The discussion then followed up with oral questions on how, when, and for whom they would do these ideas? In this oral discussion without sticky notes less leaders spoke up. As a solution to build a more complete and accurate work plan, PEPP team members told the

leaders they would try to summarize what had been discussed and send it to them by email. They would be asked to share their written comments prior to follow up project meeting.

#### V. Complete the post survey

Once the engagement ended, they were asked to complete the post survey. Several days after the engagement the leaders were sent a follow up survey to better define the priorities for the follow up project. Some leaders did not have email. However, one of the leaders printed out the survey and had the leaders fill them out manually. She then took all the completed surveys to the Caguas Judicial Center who then sent them to the EDUCO Office by a court messenger. We coordinated this with the administrative judge of the Caguas Judicial Center; he is also one of the judge court facilitators. This turned out to be very effective.

#### **Findings and adjustments in group**

A different icebreaker was done with community leaders as the Judicial Branch was under the impression, they would have less mobility than the youth.

The myth and reality activity seemed effective and engaging to the participants while it was being conducted. However, the post-survey results to the judicial branch knowledge questions (questions 4 a and b) still show some confusion regarding the employees and functions of the judicial branch. Adding some videos or role playing to this activity could clarify these issues even further.

The plenary discussion about the work plan for the follow up project did not prove to be as effective as initially planned. It was conducted as a plenary. This may have been more effective if conducted in subgroups. Later a more convenient way of doing this was discovered during the community engagement with the Alianza group.

For future activities it could be best to start the brainstorming session by writing out the ideas the leaders suggested in the first engagement and then ask them to decide in small groups how, when and with whom they would do those ideas. It seemed the leaders initially thought their role was to learn and be trained by the Judicial Branch and not to offer resources and suggestions to the court. During the engagement other alternatives were discussed such as creating educational materials with them so they could serve as facilitators for other community members on the selected topics.

The time spent answering the post survey in the second engagement took away time from the plenary discussion time. The post survey was discussed with the group orally question by question to make it easier for them to answer. This seemed to be effective as they were able to answer it in 20 minutes. By means of a follow up email survey, three topics were established as priorities. Three working groups were formed which include one judge, one lawyer and three community leaders. The leaders chosen were those that seemed more comfortable giving

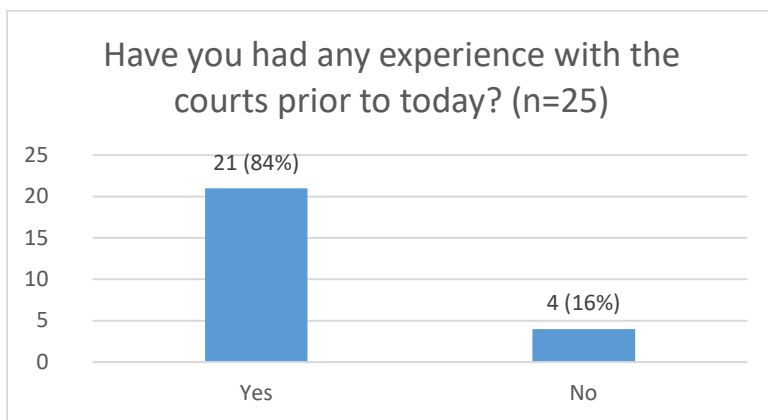
ideas. These smaller group of leaders agreed that the educational material developed by the three working groups would then be validated with the rest of the leaders of the first engagement. This group has already met twice to date.

**Pre-Survey: Demographics**

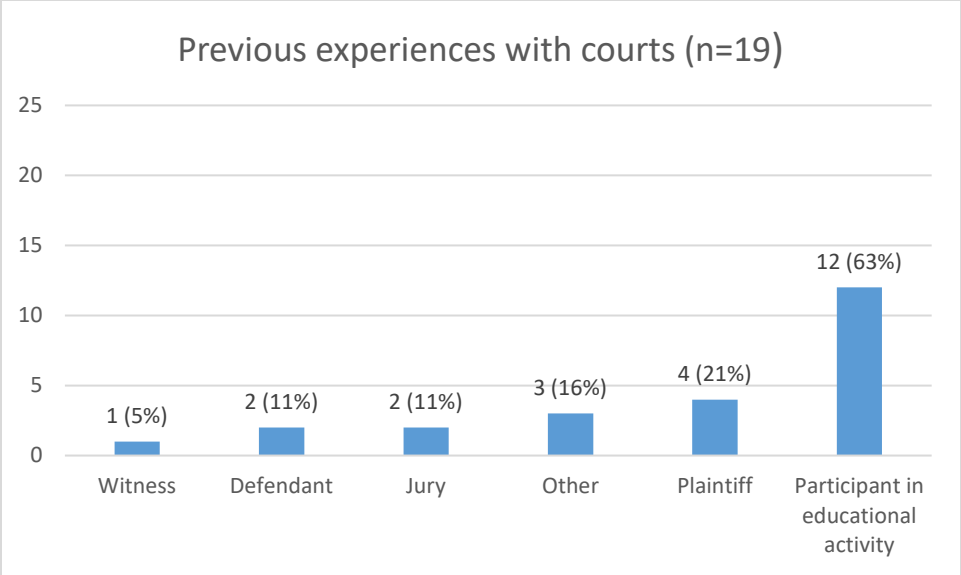
Average age (n=22)	Gender (n=21)		Municipality (n=13)		Education (n=20)
58.6 years	Male 19%	Female 81%	San Lorenzo	100%	Some high school 20% High school/GED 20% Some post high school 0% Associate/Technical degree 25% Bachelor's degree 20% Some graduate school 0% Graduate degree 15%

They were all from San Lorenzo although some of them did not write down their Municipality on their survey. Some of them wrote down their Barrio or community sector instead.

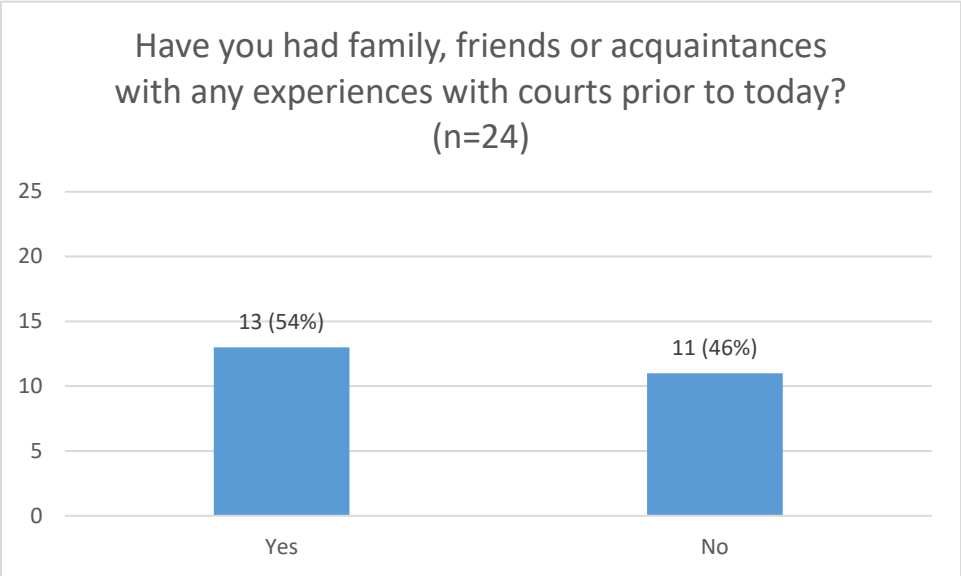
**Pre-Survey: Previous experience with courts**



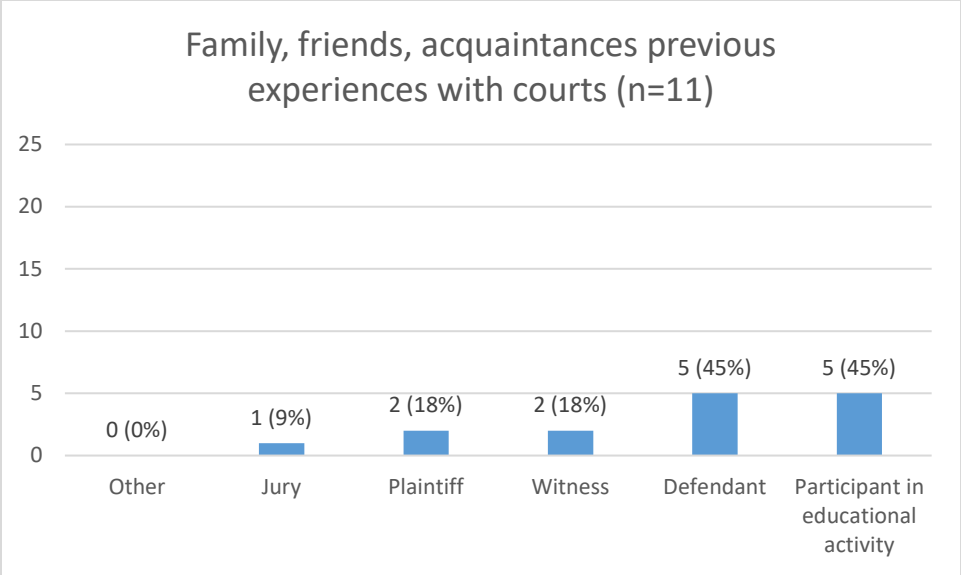
Eighty-four percent of respondents had previous experiences with the courts.



Of the 19 individuals reporting having had previous experiences with courts, all of them had one or multiple experiences in different capacities. Twelve individuals were educational activity participants, four were plaintiffs, three had “other” experiences, two served as jury members, two were defendants, and one was a witness. (Note: For this item, respondents could choose multiple answers.)

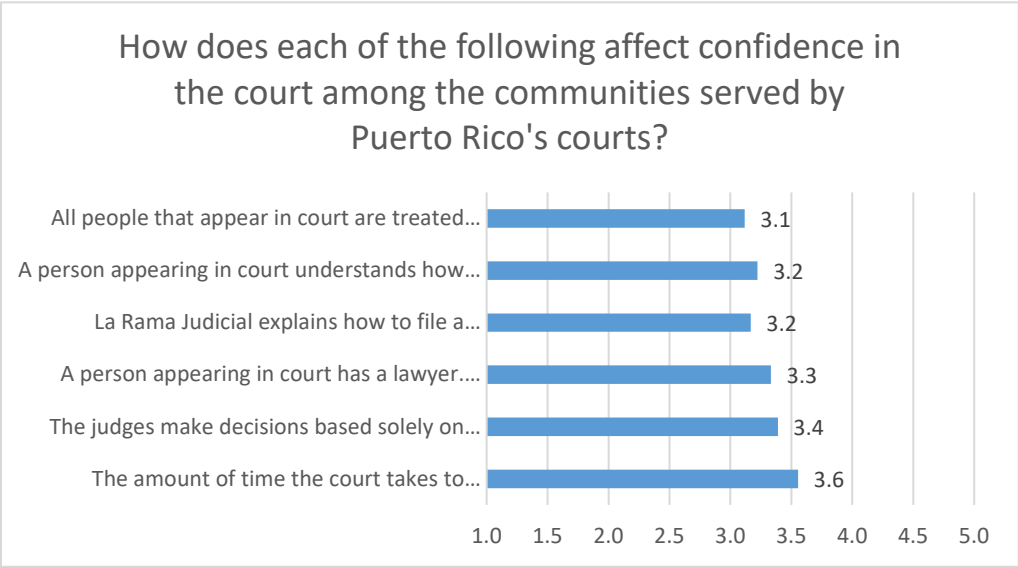


Fifty-four percent of respondents indicated that they had family, friends or acquaintances with previous experiences with the courts.

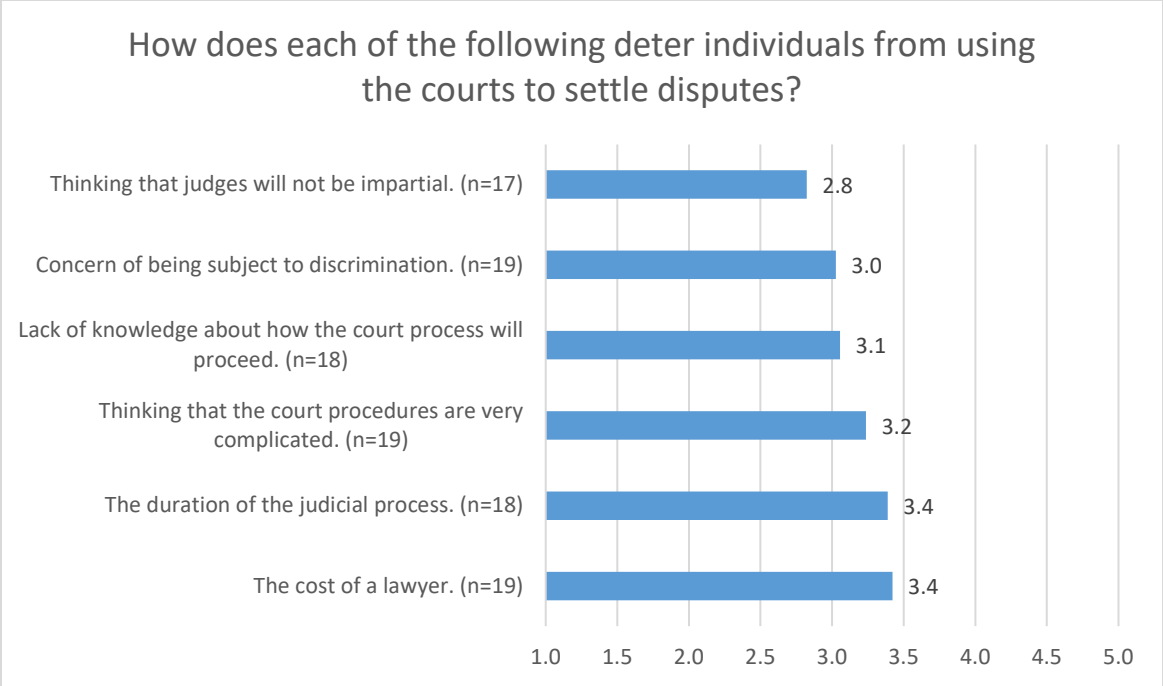


Of the 11 individuals reporting that family, friends or acquaintances had previous experiences with courts, five were educational activity participants, five were defendants, two were plaintiffs, two were witnesses, and one had served on a jury. (Note: For this item, respondents could choose multiple answers.)

**Pre-Survey: Perceptions of confidence and accessibility to the courts**

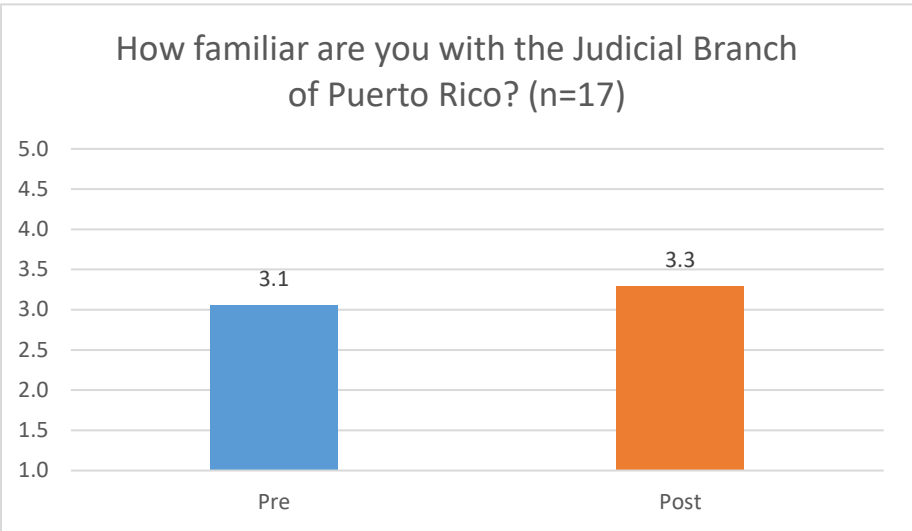


On a scale of 1-4 (1=Not at all, 4=A lot), respondents indicated the extent to which they believed the various factors affected confidence in Puerto Rico’s courts. Although all factors received average ratings above 3, the least influential factor was equal treatment of people appearing in court. The factor rated as most influential was the amount of time the court takes to resolve cases.

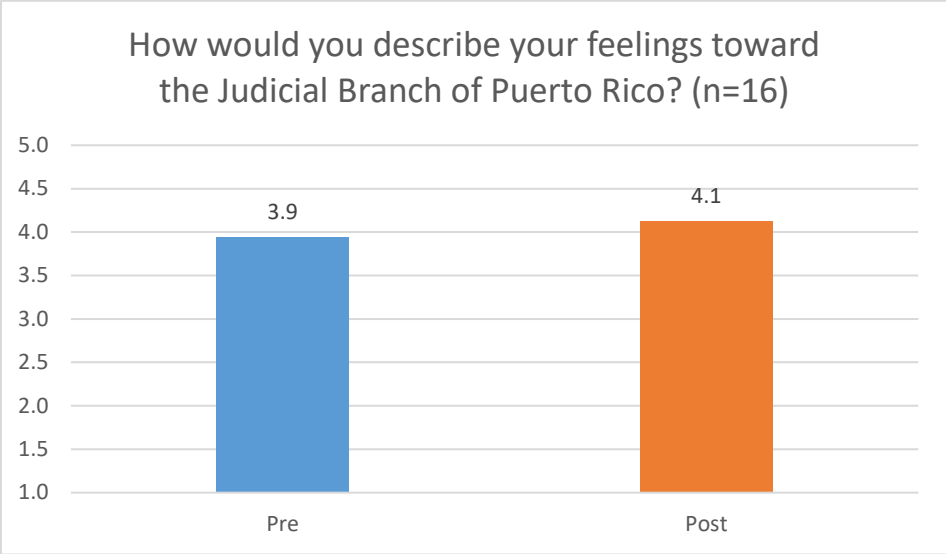


On a scale from 1 to 4 (1=Deters no one/Not a concern, 4=Deters many people/Large concern), respondents indicated the extent to which they believed the various factors deterred people from utilizing the courts to resolve disputes. The cost of a lawyer was rated as the largest concern and judge neutrality was rated as the lowest concern.

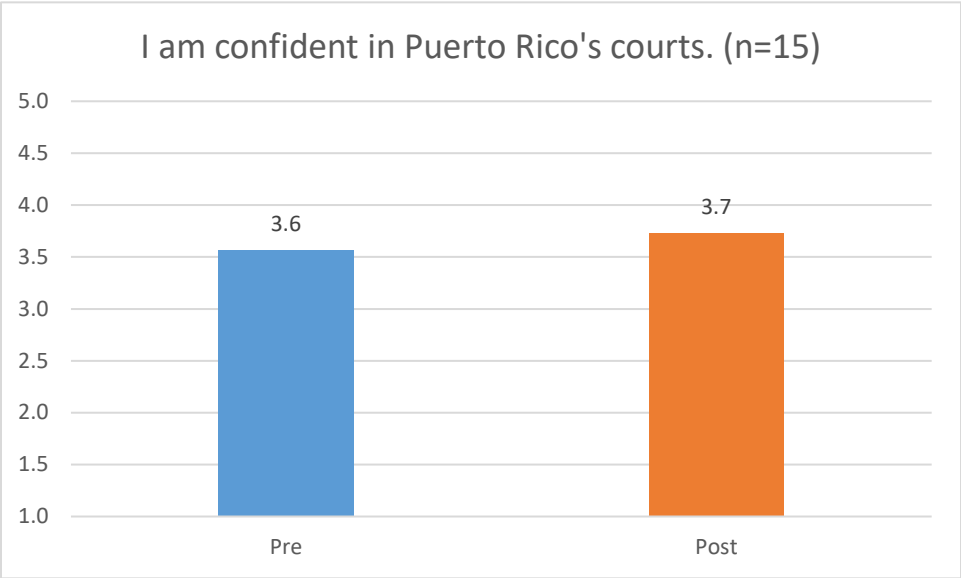
**Pre-Post Survey: Attitudes towards the courts**



On a scale of 1-5 (1=Completely negative, 5=Completely positive), the average score for feelings towards the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico among respondents increased from 3.9 to 4.1 between the time that the participants completed the pre and the post surveys.



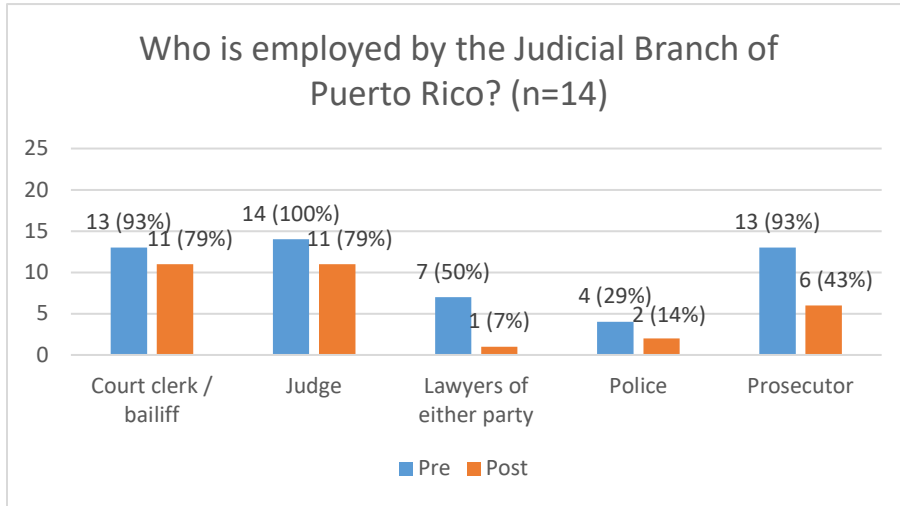
On a scale of 1-5 (1=Not familiar at all, 5=Extremely familiar), the average score for familiarity with the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico among respondents increased from 3.1 to 3.3.



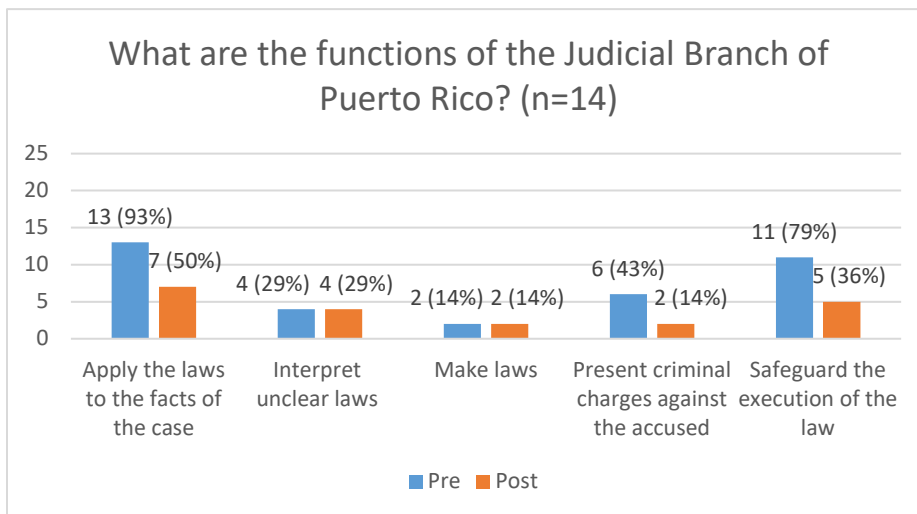
On a scale of 1-5 (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree), the average score for confidence in Puerto Rico's courts among respondents increased from 3.6 to 3.7.



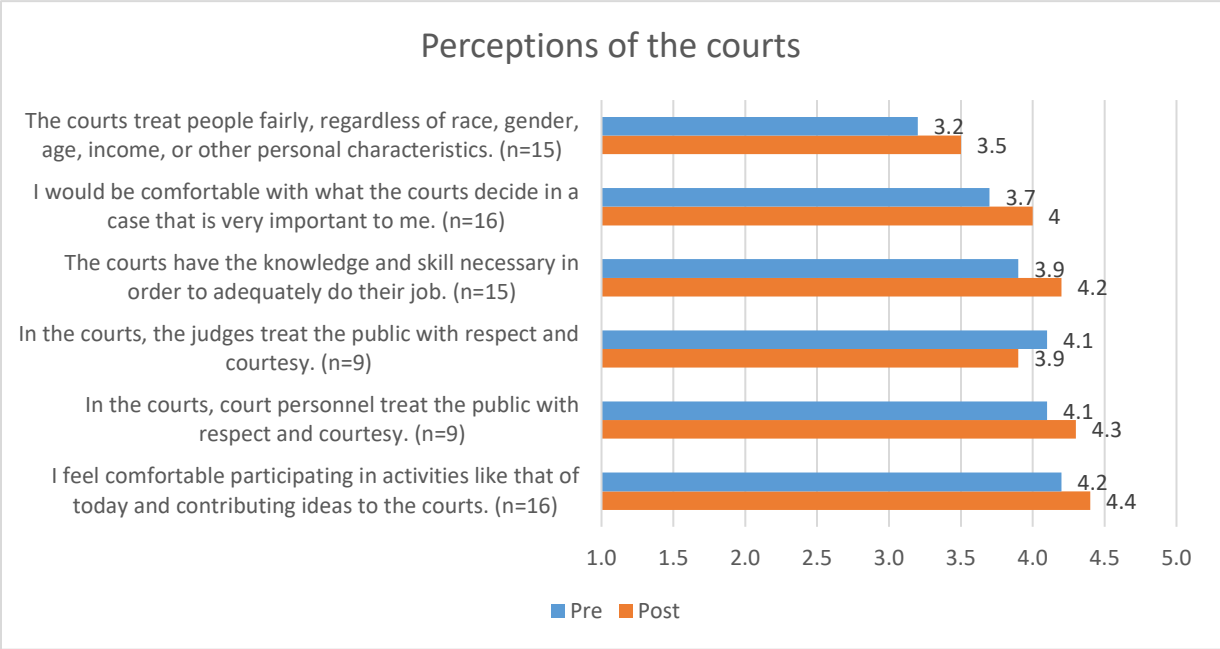
**Pre-Post Survey: Knowledge of the courts**



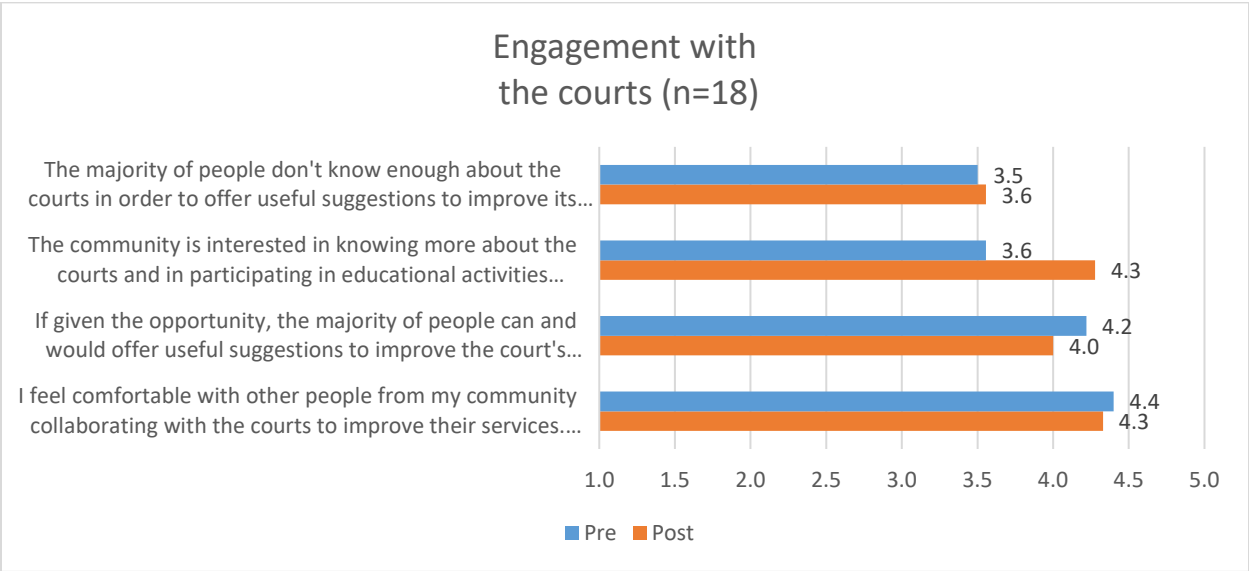
Survey respondents were asked before and after the engagements to identify whether several positions were employees of the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico. The correct answers for occupations employed by the judicial branch are the “court clerk / bailiff” and “judge.” Thus, the percentage of individuals reporting the correct answers decreased for both items. However, the percentage of persons reporting each of the three incorrect answers also decreased.



Survey respondents were asked to identify the functions of the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico before and after the engagements. The correct answers for the functions of the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico are “apply the laws to the facts of the case” and “interpret unclear laws.” Thus, the percentage of individuals reporting the correct answer decreased for the “apply the law to the facts of the case” item.

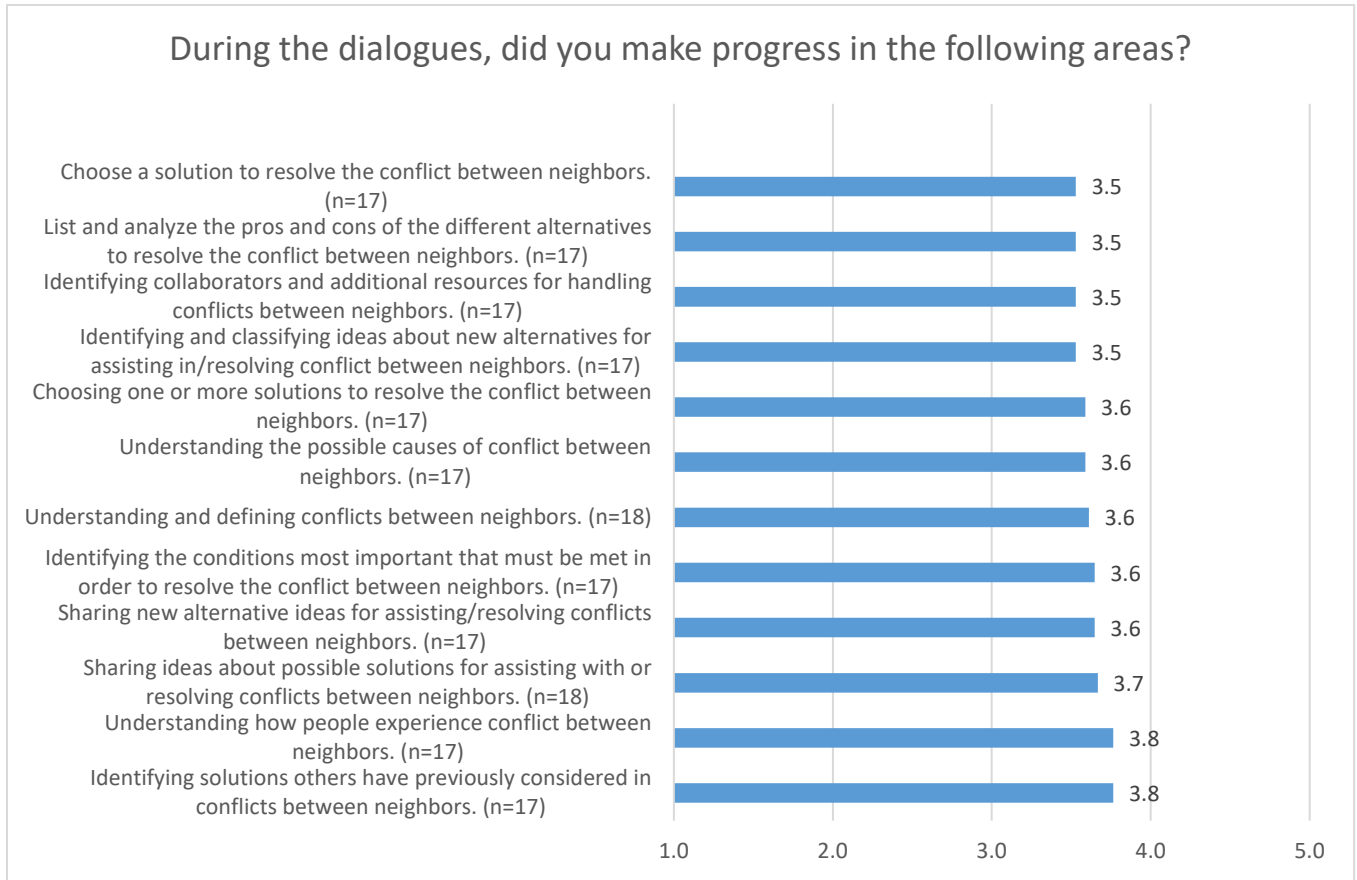


On a scale of 1-5 (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree), average ratings for perceptions of the court improved across all items except for one (“In the courts, the judges treat the public with respect and courtesy”).



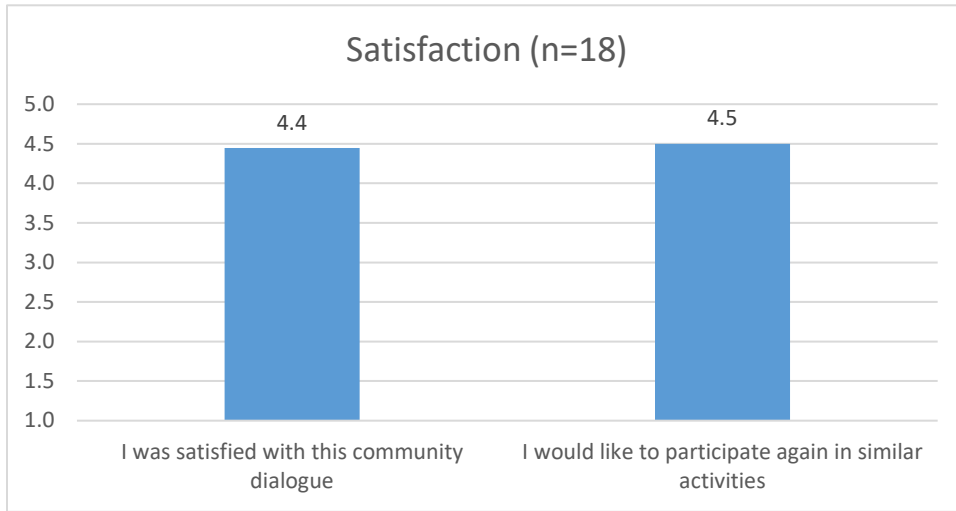
On a scale of 1-5 (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree), changes in ratings of perceptions of community members who engage with the court varied from pre to post, depending on the specific item asked.

**Post-Survey: Progress on community conflict issues**

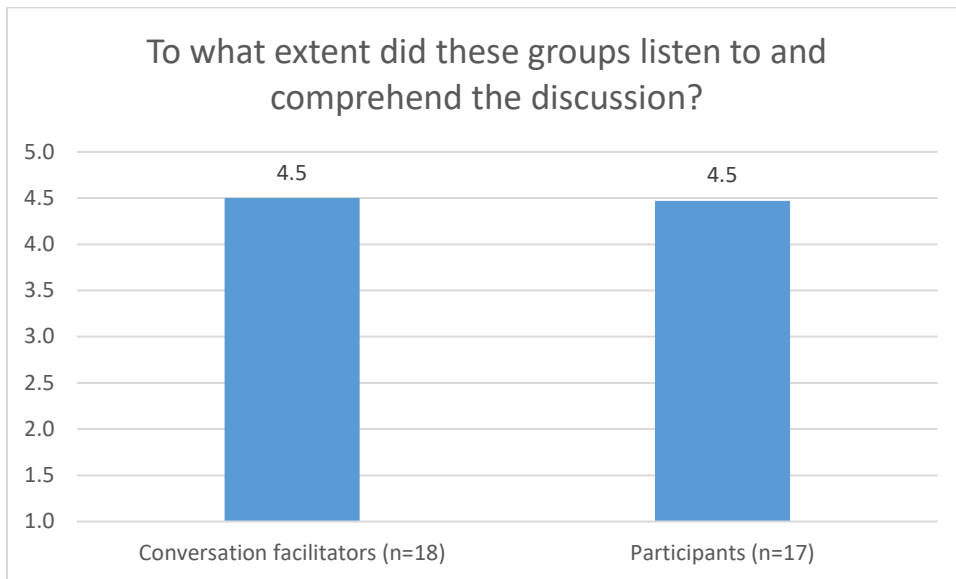


On a scale of 1-5 (1=No progress, 5=A lot of progress), average ratings among respondents indicated that they felt some progress was made during the dialogues on community conflict issues.

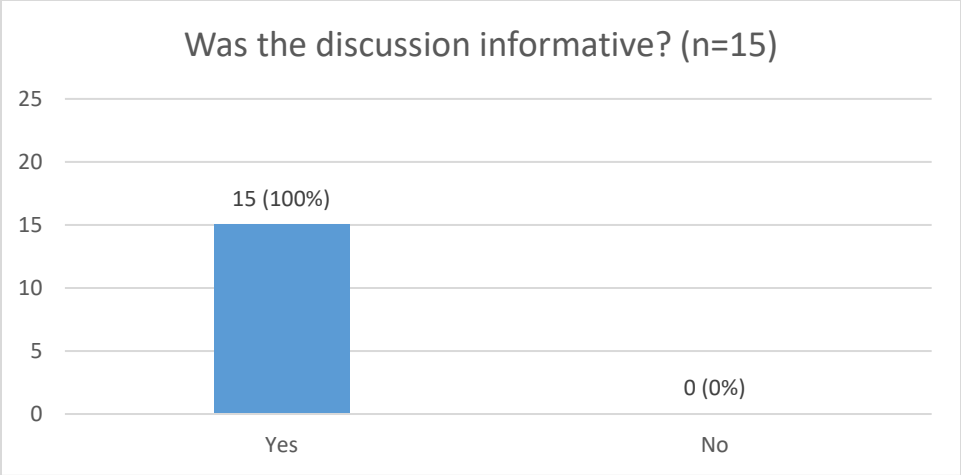
## Post-Survey: Evaluation



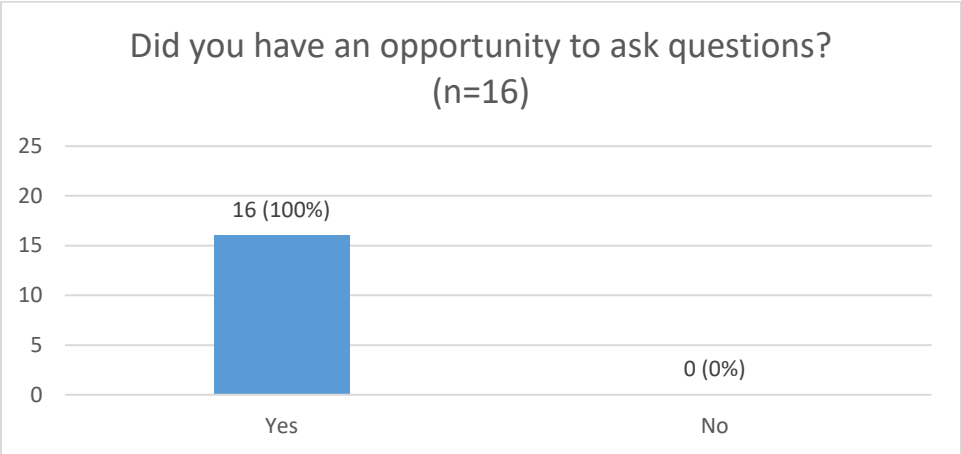
On a scale of 1-5 (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree), average ratings for satisfaction with the dialogues were very high.



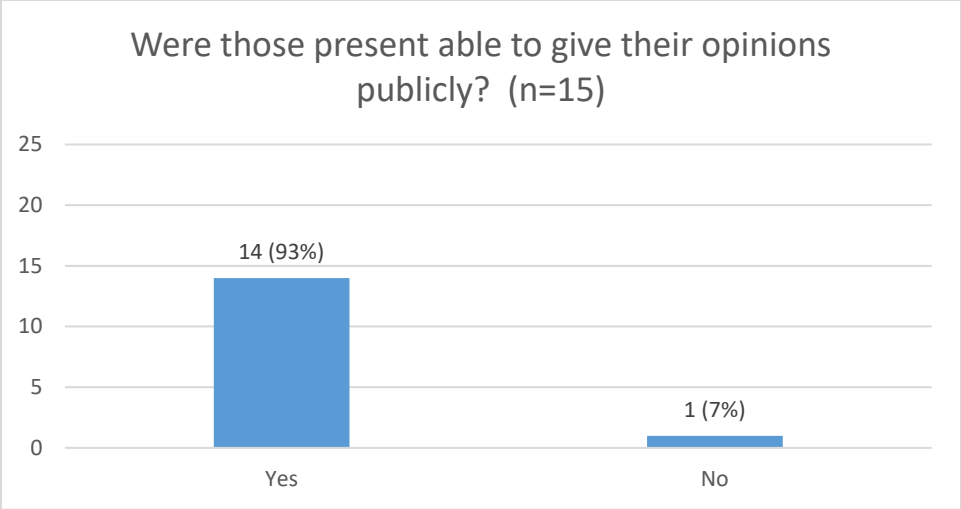
On a scale of 1-5 (1=Not good at all, 5=Extremely good), the participants rated the conversation facilitators and other participants an average of 4.5 in their ratings of how well they listened to and comprehended the discussions.



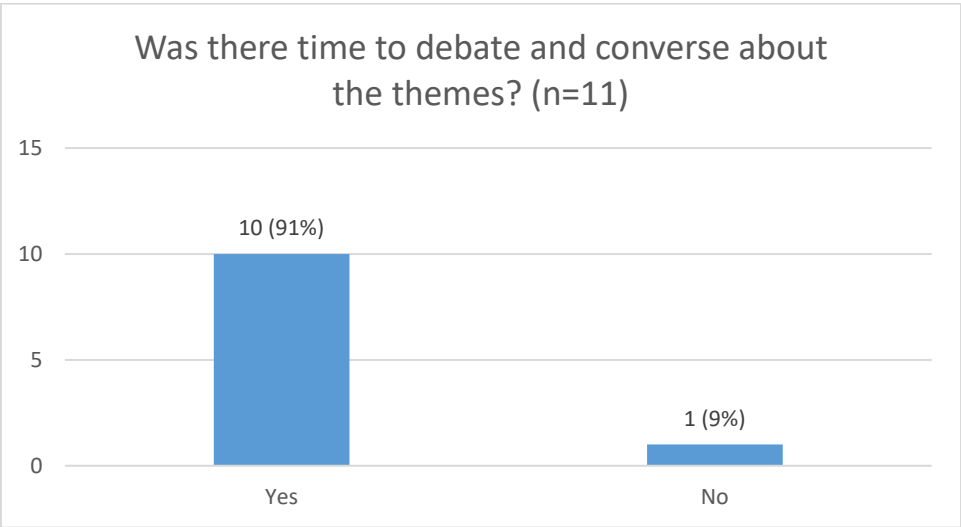
All respondents believed the discussions were informative.



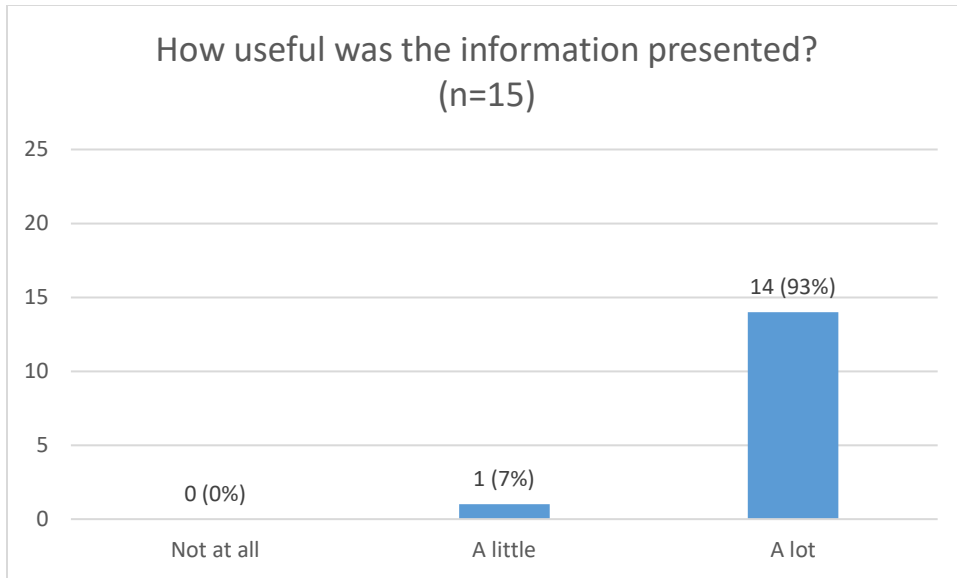
All respondents indicated that they had the opportunity to ask questions.



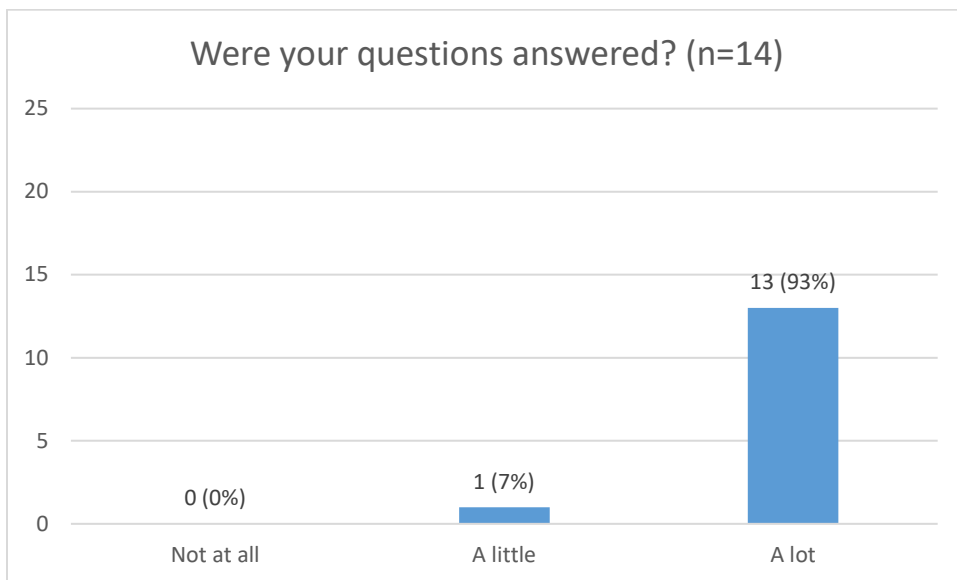
Ninety-three percent of respondents indicated that those present were able to provide their opinions publicly during the discussions.



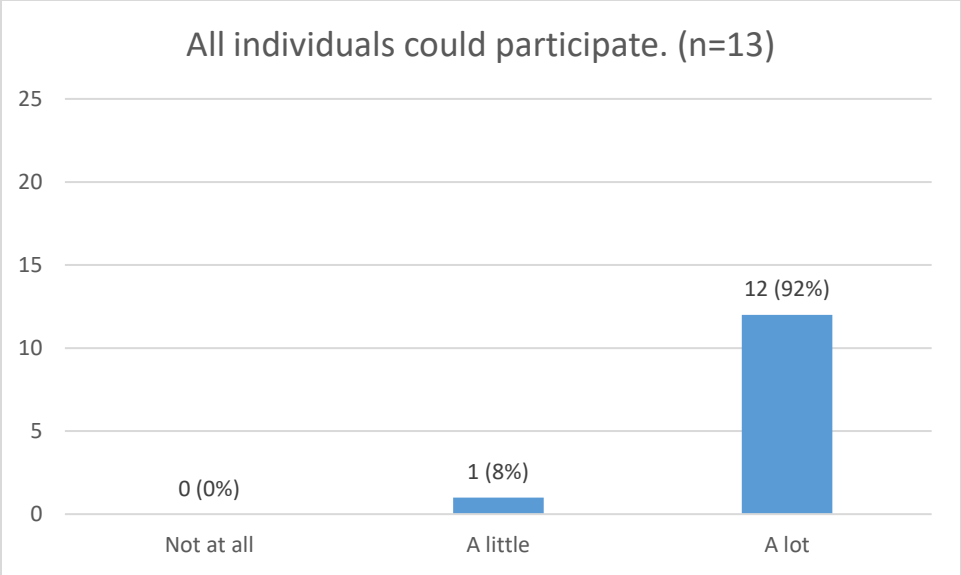
All respondents indicated that they had the opportunity to discuss and debate relevant themes.



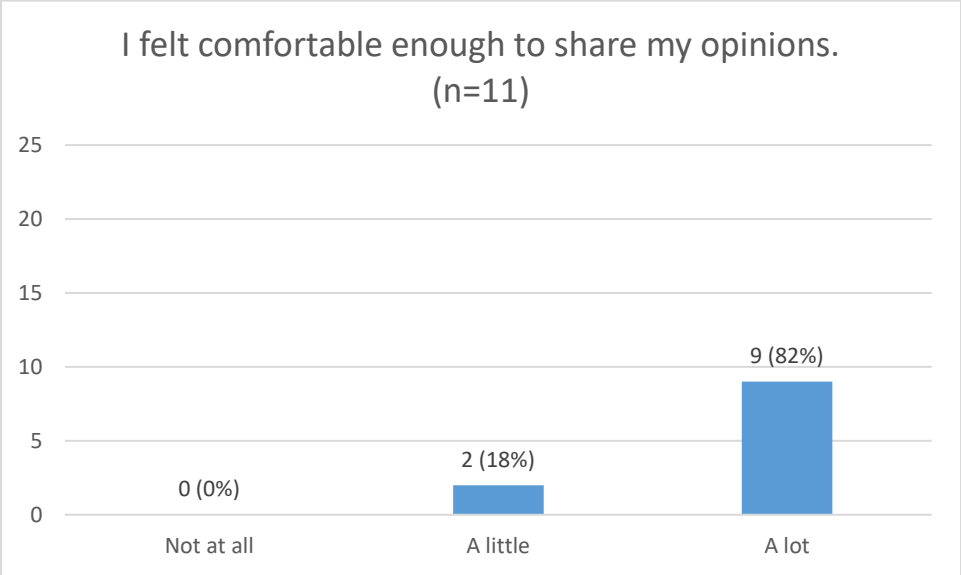
Ninety-three percent of respondents believed the information presented was very useful.



Ninety-three percent of respondents indicated that their questions were answered to a large extent.

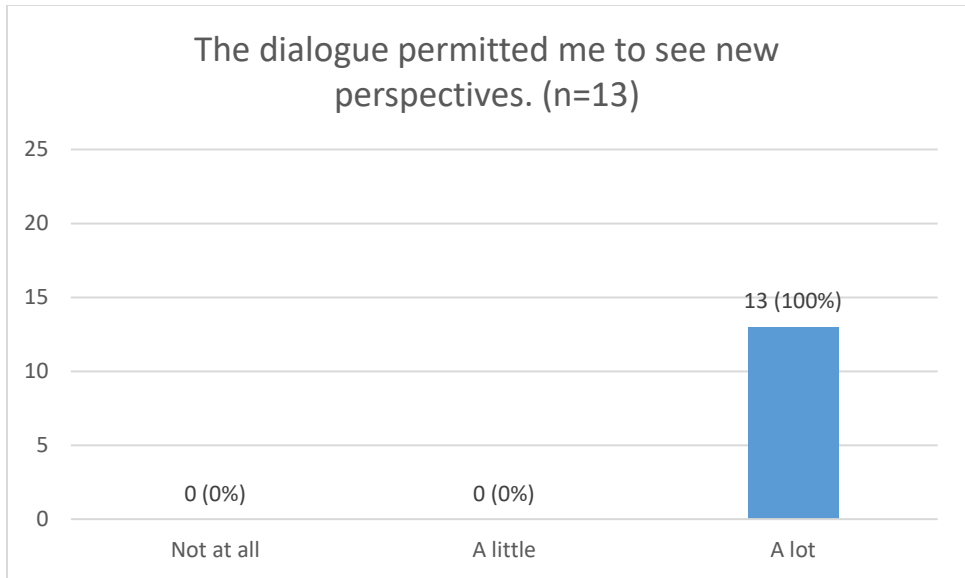


Ninety-two percent of respondents believed that participants were able to participate in the dialogues to a large extent.



Eighty-two percent of respondents indicated that they felt comfortable sharing their opinions to a large extent.





All respondents believed that the discussion allowed them to see new perspectives to a large extent.

**Adult: ‘Alianza’ group engagements (September 2019)**

**ENGAGEMENT (September 14)**

**Only one four-hour engagement was conducted with this group.**

**Purpose and issues of discussion**

The purpose of this engagement was to create familiarity between participants, for the court personnel to understand how the community leaders experience conflict between neighbors, and for the community to learn about the judicial branch and the services it provides the community to better address conflict amongst neighbors.

**Facilitators and audience**

There were five court facilitators. Two were from the Office of Education and Community Relations and the other three from the Ponce Judicial Center. The latter were two judges and one was a self-represented litigant court counselor. The leaders were all members of the Alianza group. This is an organization that has leaders from different municipalities across the island. Four of the leaders were from the Municipality of Ponce while others were from Guaynabo and several municipalities of the south western region of the island. This group of leaders are very experienced and have participated in many leadership and empowerment trainings. The engagement was held in Ponce since it is a municipality that is central to all the

leaders. Only one four-hour meeting was conducted on a Saturday, as they usually meet on weekends.

### **Description of the session and activities conducted**

The engagement included the following activities:

#### I. Presentation and icebreaker

An icebreaker was done at the beginning for participants to get to know each other. The participants and court facilitators were asked to join a cruise ship vacation through the Caribbean. During the trip they encountered a storm and were asked to board several lifeboats that had the following characteristics: 1. boats of 4-5 people, 2. gender diversity, and 3. participants with different birthday months. Once they got on the boat, they were asked to talk amongst themselves about the following issues: 1. each member's name, 2. the activity each person did most during the day, 3. each member's hobby, and 4. decide on a name for the boat. They then discussed in a plenary session what members of each boat conversed. If they were able to follow the instructions the members of the boat were saved and rescued. All boat members completed the icebreaker successfully and were saved.

#### II. World Café Discussion

The main topic was discussed by means of the World Café methodology. Three tables were set up. Each table was covered with a large piece of brown drawing paper (butcher paper). There were markers, pens and a decorative plant at each table. Music played in the background between each round of the World Café. Snacks were provided to participants during the activity.

There was a judge or Ponce court facilitator at each table. The participants were asked to divide themselves into three groups. Each group was asked to visit a different table where a court facilitator asked them a question. All groups discussed the same question in each round. Before moving to the next round the facilitator asked them to draw or write a summary of their discussion. When the facilitator started the next round, they were asked to summarize what each group discussed in the prior rounds and show them the drawings. The questions asked were the following:

- **First round:** What does the word conflict mean to you? When you hear the word conflict what do you think of? What types of conflict have you seen amongst your neighbors and community?
- **Second round:** How do you think your neighbors and your community might positively resolve their conflicts, from within the community?

- **Third round:** What types of things can help to resolve these conflicts as a community? Would education about any subject be included among these things? And mediation?

III. Myth and reality exercise (the judges and Ponce court facilitator conducted this exercise)

A myths and reality exercise was used in order to talk to the community leaders about the judicial branch and the services it has to handle conflict between neighbors. Each leader was given a card that said myth on one side and reality on the other. For each of the seven statements they were asked to choose if they thought it was a myth or a reality. They were also given a brochure about the Government and Court System and a handout that included a table with three court services that deal with community conflict. These are Office of Education and Community Relations, Court Mediation Centers and a special municipal court procedure (Under Law 140) that enables fast temporary court remedies for different situations such as those that might affect the health and wellbeing of neighbors and the enjoyment of their property.

*Statement 1 (myth)*

The Judicial Branch is the one in charge of starting a criminal case against a person who is suspected of committing a crime [10 said reality and 1 said myth].

*Statement 2 (reality)*

A judge and a court bailiff are Judicial Branch employees while the police and district attorney are employees of the Executive Branch [11 said reality].

*Statement 3 (myth)*

The Judicial Branch includes the Department of Justice, the Supreme Court and the Court Administrative Office [6 said reality and 5 said myth].

*Statement 4 (reality)*

The First Instance Court has superior and municipal judges [4 said reality and 7 said myth].

*Statement 5 (reality)*

The Judicial Branch offers free mediation services at its 13 judicial regions [6 said reality and 5 said myth].

*Statement 6 (reality)*

The Judicial Branch has an office in charge of developing educational materials and activities for the community [11 said reality].

*Statement 7 (myth)*

A person that goes to the court in search of assistance to address neighbor conflicts must be accompanied by legal representation and pay court fees [11 said myth].

#### IV. Snacks and brainstorming for their follow up project

As the Ponce Court facilitators were conducting the myths and reality exercise, the two PEPP members used two posters to write down 15 different topics related to community conflict, and 5 strategies to learn about these topics. Each leader was then given 6 dot stickers:

- Two green ones with the number 1 on it
- Two orange ones with the number 2 on it
- Two yellow ones with the number 3 on it

Each leader was asked to visit each of the two posters: one had education topics they had mentioned during their table discussions and the other one had strategies they had suggested. They were asked to place their dots on each poster in order to choose the three items they preferred learning and doing most on each poster.

Results were tallied and shared with the group.

As strategies they chose:

- Learning how to access conflict mediation services
- Learning mediation skills
- Receiving legal education on legal topics

The selected education topics were:

- People's property rights
- Law 140 judicial procedure (fast and temporary remedies in a municipal court)
- Judicial process to establish land demarcation between neighbors

#### V. Complete the post survey

They were then asked to complete the post survey. This group completed the survey with few problems.

#### **Findings and adjustments in group**

This engagement was the only one that was able to be conducted in one day. Prior to conducting it, a meeting was held with the leaders in order to present them the proposal of the engagement. This was requested by the president of the organization in order to make sure the rest of the leaders were interested in participating in the pilot project. During that initial meeting in June, PEPP members answered questions from the leaders and received their feedback about the proposal. The leaders requested some time to consider the proposal. Two

weeks later they informed they were willing to participate. This is important to EDUCO as a means to establish trust with leaders and developing projects that are relevant to the community.

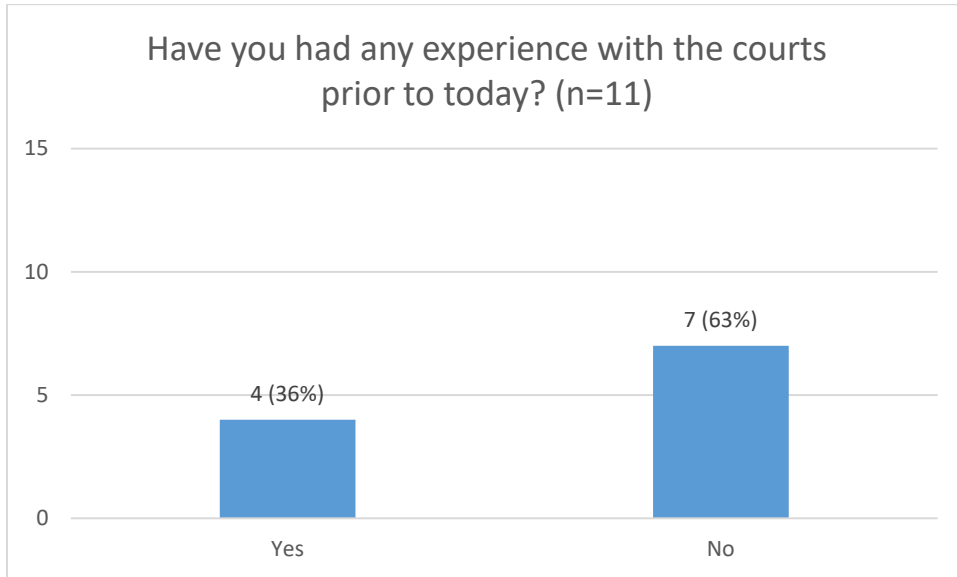
The engagement seemed to flow much better and the activities were better received as they were all done in one day. It was easier to see the flow between each part of the engagement. This was the only group that was willing to meet on a weekend and for a longer period of time. Court actors were very interested in what the community leaders expressed. This was both perceived by observation and by asking them explicitly about their impressions.

It is important for the Judicial Branch to keep in contact with these leaders and keep engaging with them so they can better understand the Judicial Branch. Even though they seemed to understand the role and composition of the Judicial Branch during the Myth and Realities activity, the post surveys said otherwise. It is important for the Judicial Branch to know that education is a long-term process especially when trying to explain terms that have been confusing to the community for a long time. It takes time to reframe this knowledge through practical and long-term strategies.

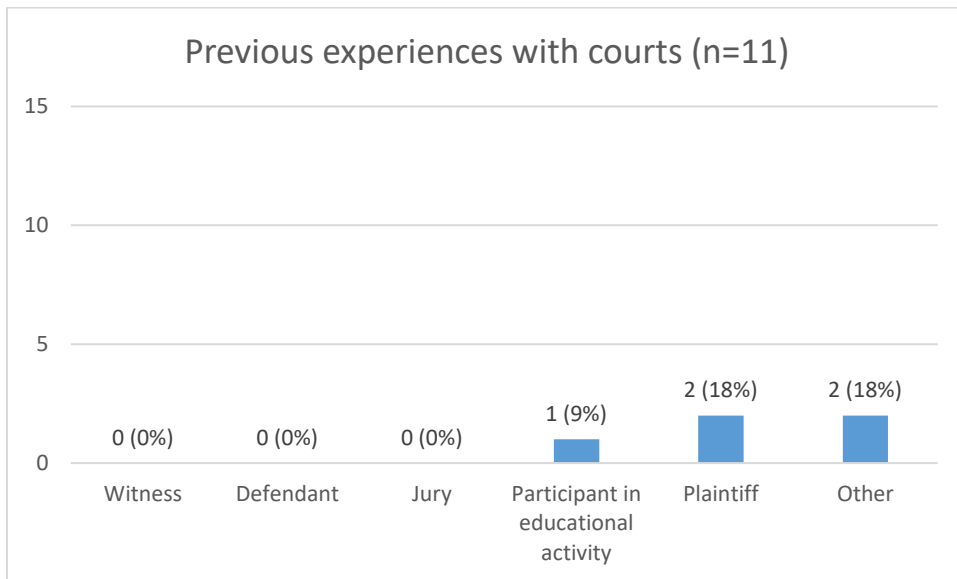
**Pre-Survey: Demographics**

Average age (n=11)	Gender (n=11)		Municipality (n=11)		Education (n=10)	
62 years	Male 73%	Female 27%	Ponce	45.5%	Some high school	0%
			Guaynabo	27.2%	High school/GED	40%
			San Germán	18%	Some post high school	10%
			Yauco	9%	Associate/Technical degree	20%
					Bachelor's degree	30%
					Some graduate school	0%
					Graduate degree	0%

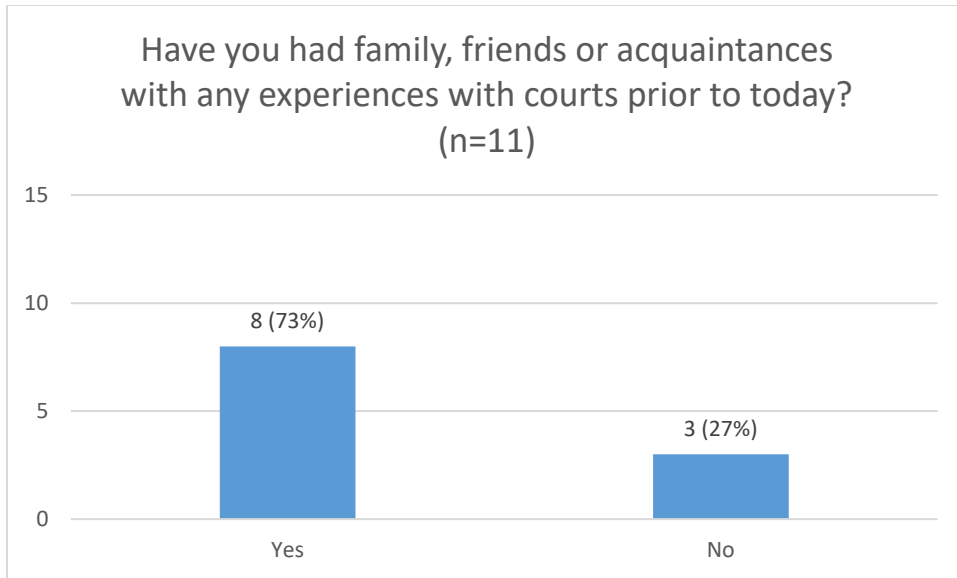
### Pre-Survey: Previous experience with courts



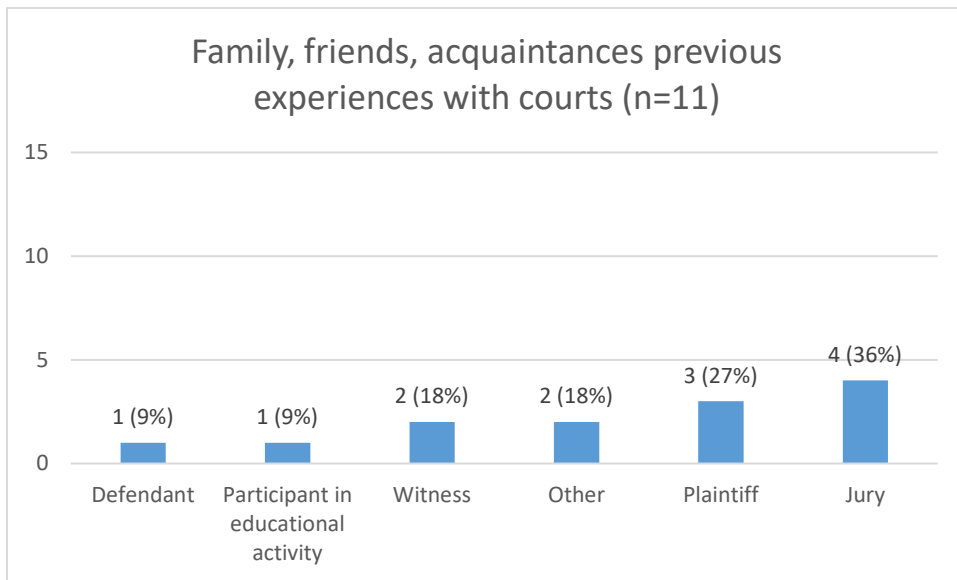
Thirty-six percent of respondents had previous experiences with courts.



Of the four individuals out of 11 reporting having had previous experiences with courts, two indicated they had been plaintiffs, two had “other” experiences, and one was an educational activity participant. (Note: For this item, respondents could choose multiple answers.)

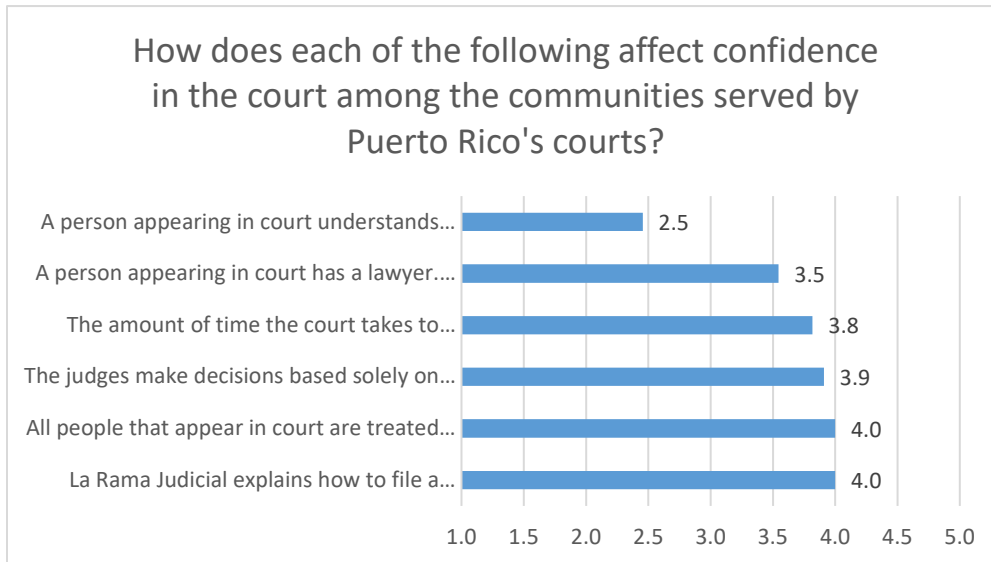


Seventy-three percent of respondents indicated that they had family, friends or acquaintances who had previous experiences with the courts.

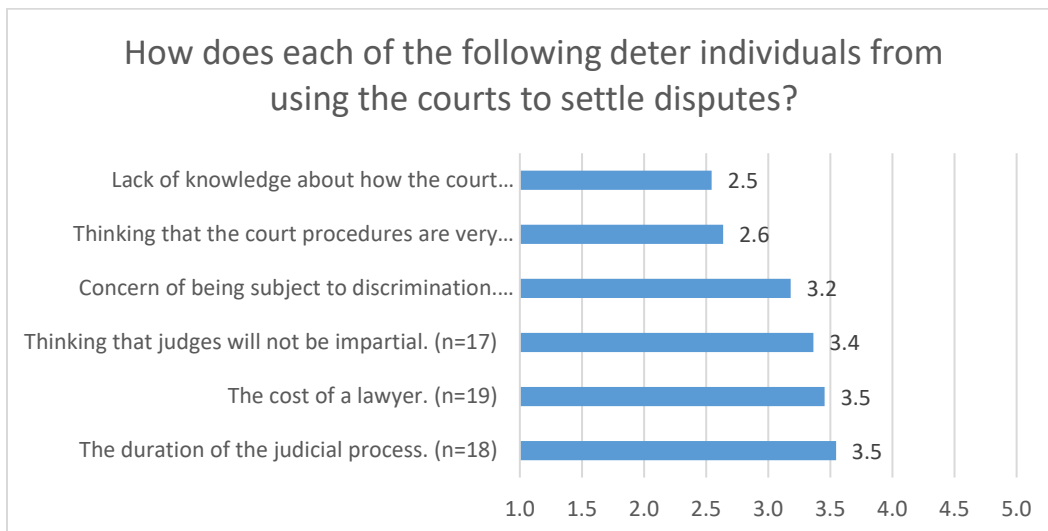


Of the eight individuals out of 11 reporting that family, friends or acquaintances had previous experiences with courts, four were jury members, three were plaintiffs, two indicated “other” experiences, two were witnesses, one was an educational activity participant, and one was a defendant. (Note: For this item, respondents could choose multiple answers.)

## Pre-Survey: Perceptions of confidence and accessibility to the courts



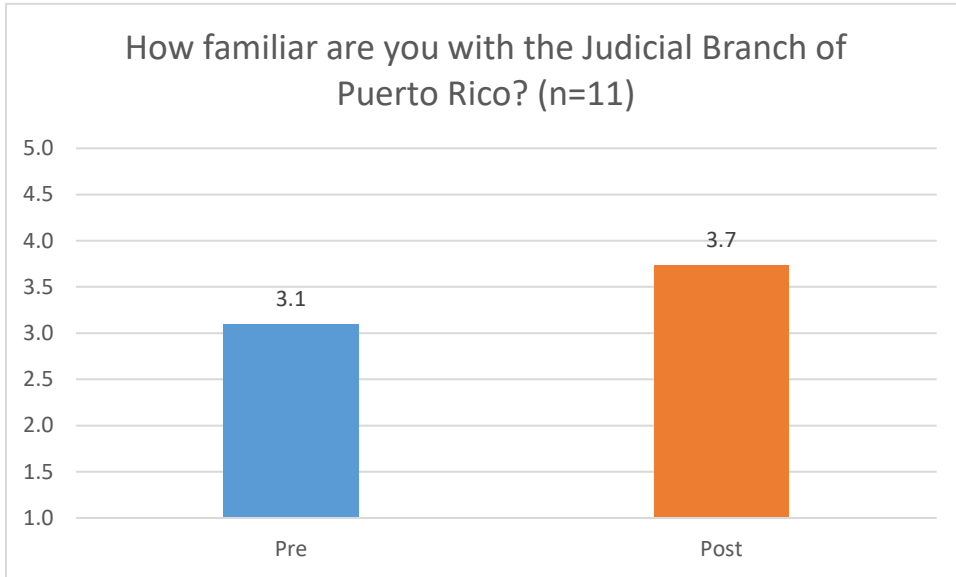
On a scale of 1 to 4 (1=Not at all, 4=A lot), respondents indicated the extent to which they believed certain factors affected confidence in Puerto Rico's courts. By far, understanding of the courts was rated as having the least influence on confidence in the courts.



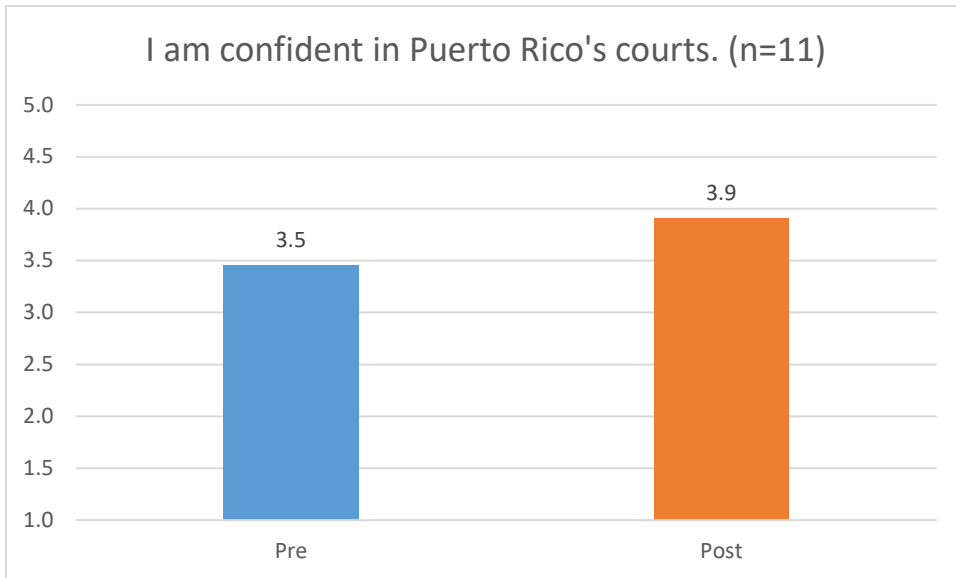
On a scale of 1-4 (1=Deters no one/Not a concern, 4=Deters many people/Large concern), respondents indicated the extent to which they believed various factors deterred people from utilizing the courts to resolve disputes. Lack of knowledge was rated lowest on average, and the duration of the process was rated highest.



**Pre-Post Survey: Attitudes towards the courts**

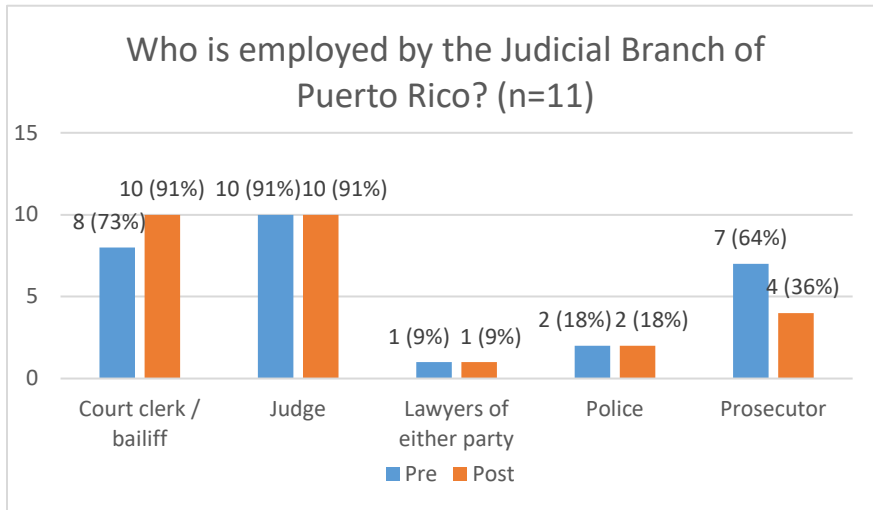


On a scale of 1-5 (1=Not familiar at all, 5=Extremely familiar), the average score for familiarity with the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico among respondents increased from 3.1 to 3.7.

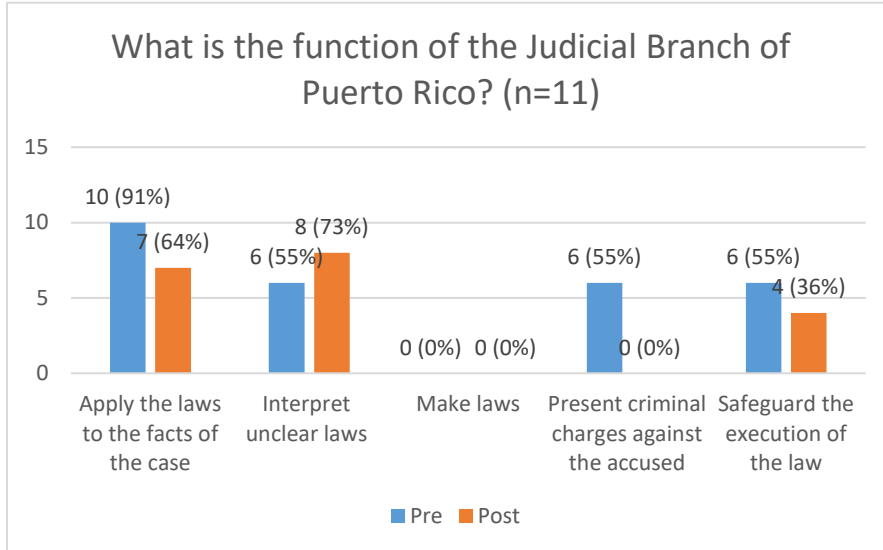


On a scale of 1-5 (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree), the average score for confidence in Puerto Rico's courts among respondents increased from 3.5 to 3.9.

## Pre-Post Survey: Knowledge of the courts

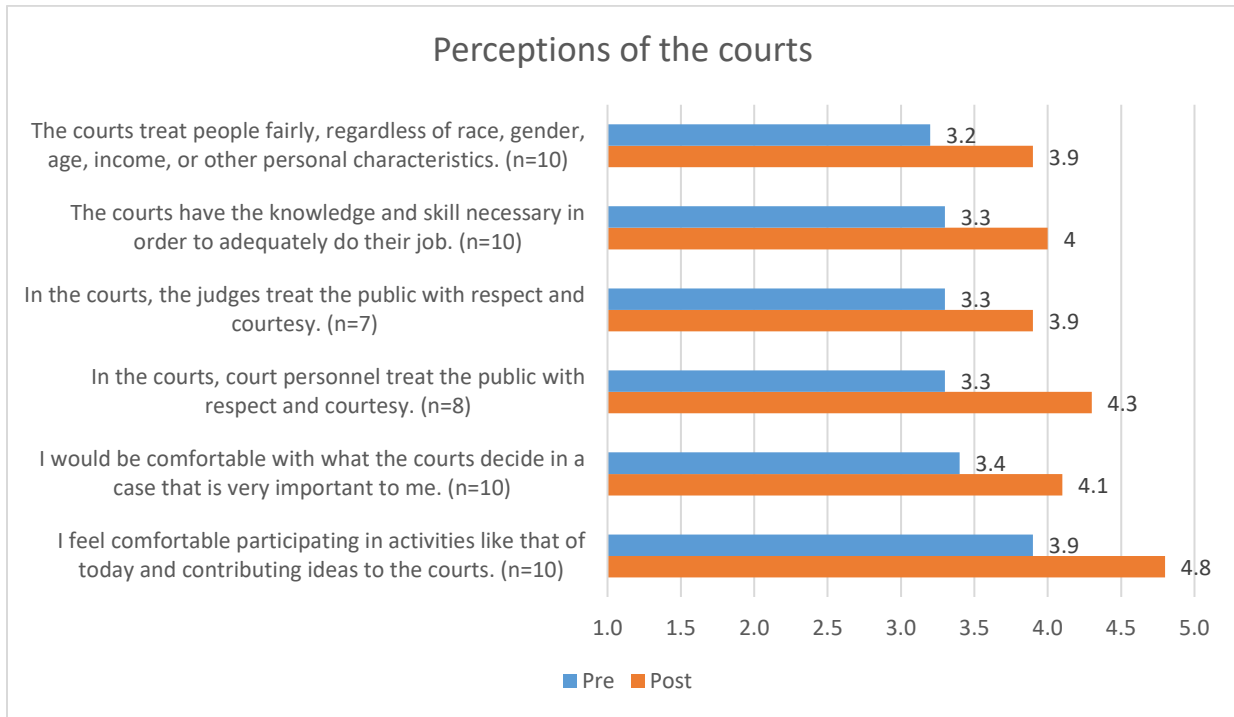


Survey respondents were asked before and after the engagements to identify whether several positions were employees of the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico. The correct answers for occupations employed by the judicial branch are the “court clerk / bailiff” and “judge.” Thus, the percentage of individuals reporting the correct answers increased for “court clerk / bailiff” and remained the same for “judge.”

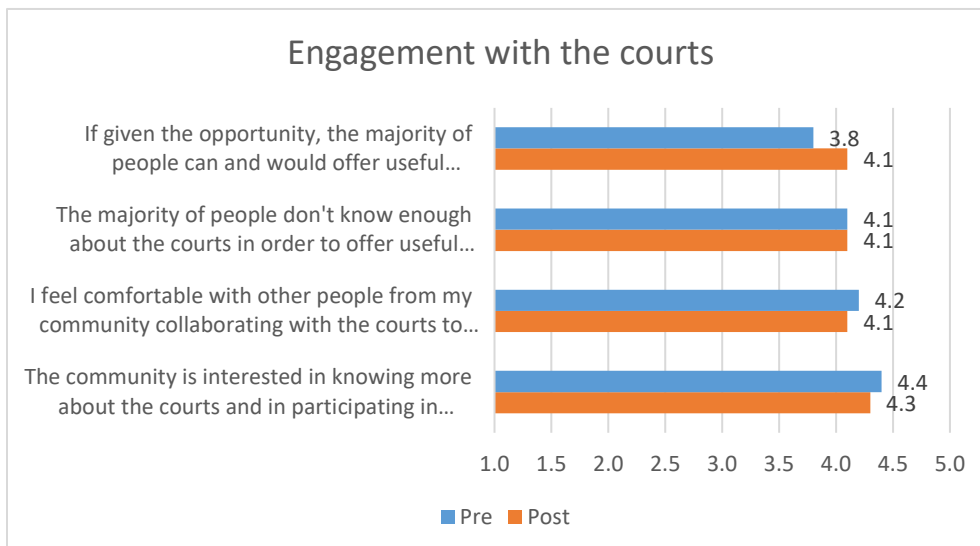


Survey respondents were asked to identify the functions of the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico before and after the engagements. The correct answers for the functions of the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico are “apply the laws to the facts of the case” and “interpret unclear laws.” Thus, the percentage of individuals reporting the correct answer decreased for “apply the law to the facts of the case” but increased for “interpret unclear laws.”

## Pre-Post Survey: Perceptions of the courts and community engagement

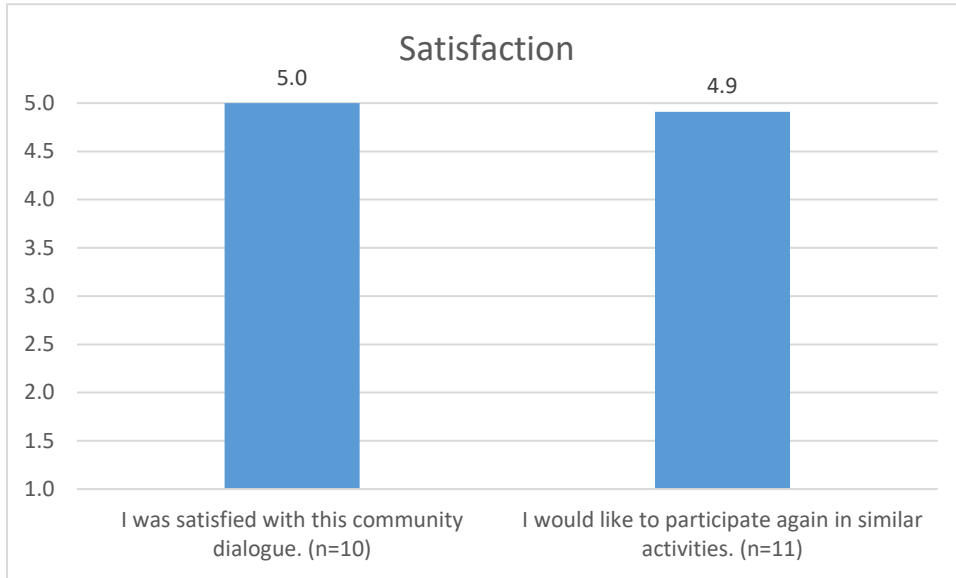


On a scale of 1-5 (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree), average ratings for perceptions of the court improved across all items.



On a scale of 1-5 (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree), ratings of perceptions of community members who engage with the court varied from pre to post, depending on the specific item asked.

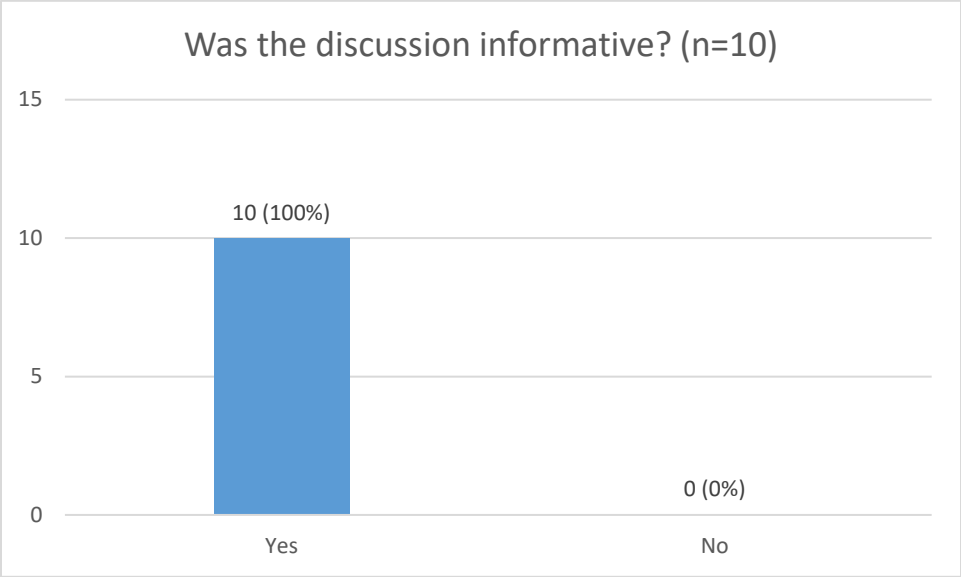
## Post-Survey: Evaluation



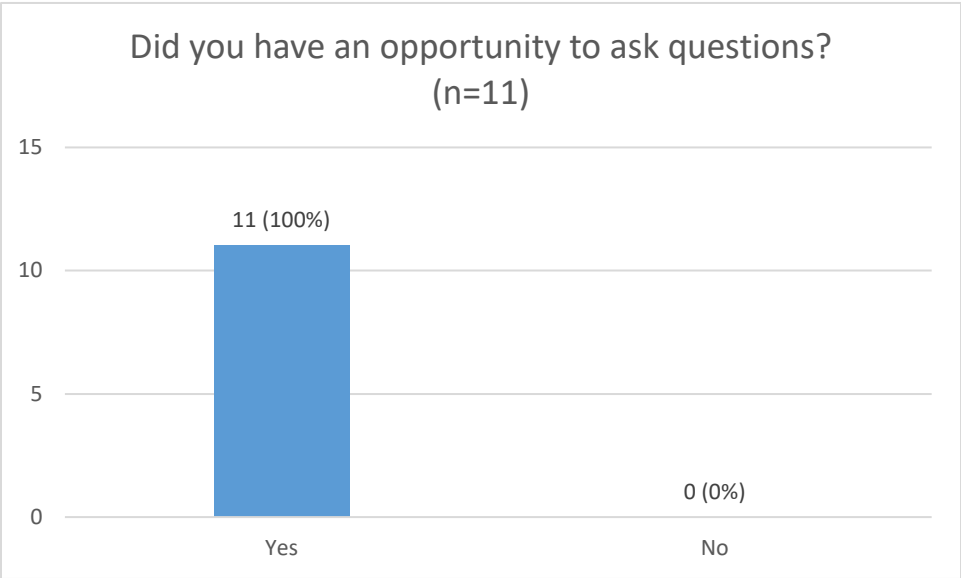
On a scale of 1-5 (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree), average ratings for satisfaction with the dialogues were very high.



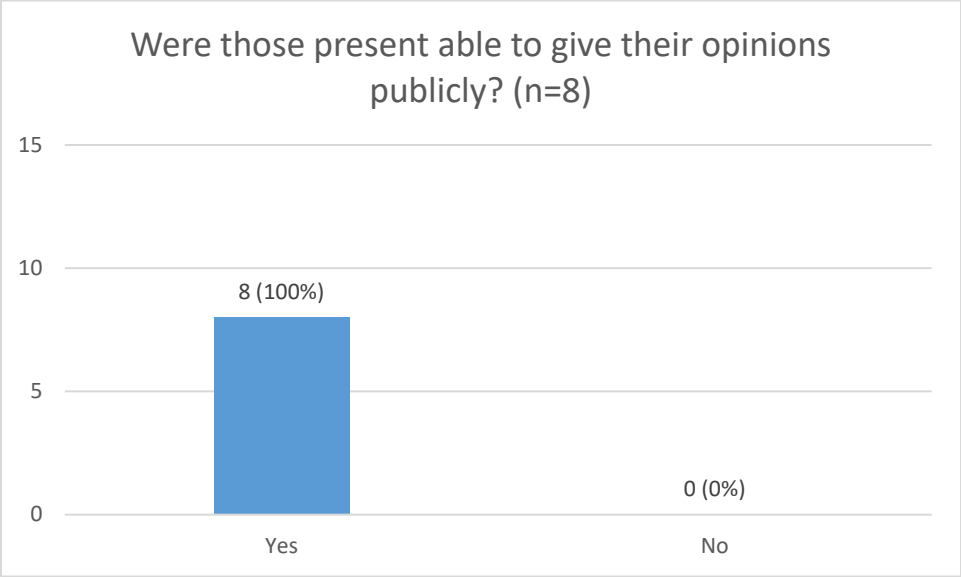
On a scale of 1-5 (1=Not good at all, 5=Extremely good), the participants rated the conversation facilitators and other participants an average of 4.7 and 4.6, respectively, in their ratings of how well they listened to and comprehended the discussions.



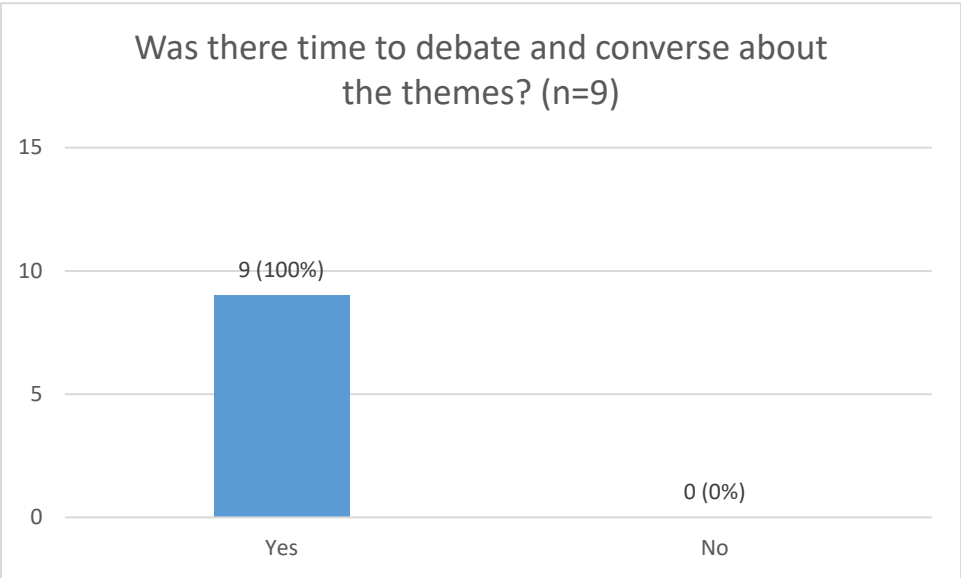
All respondents believed the discussions were informative.



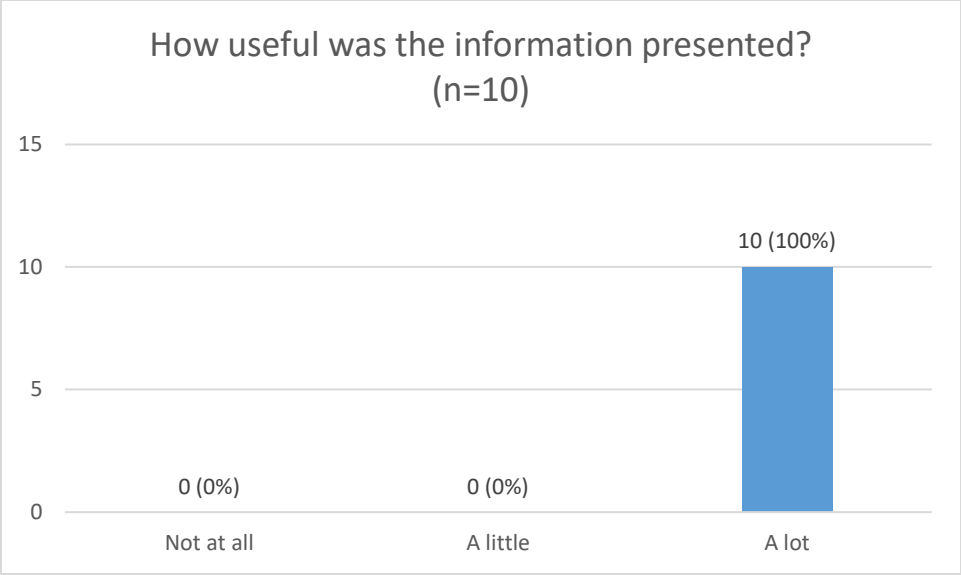
All respondents indicated that they had the opportunity to ask questions.



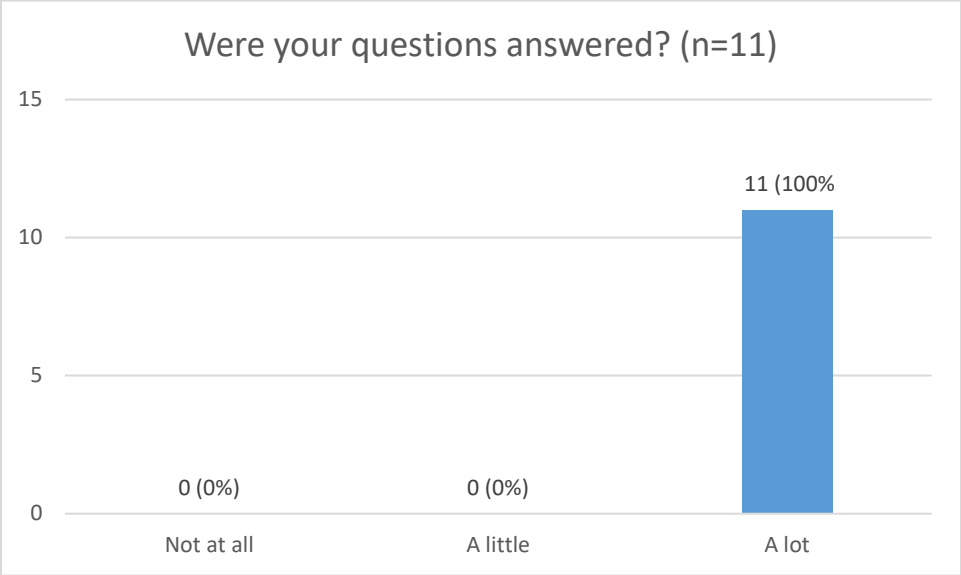
All respondents indicated that they were able to provide their opinions publicly during the discussions.



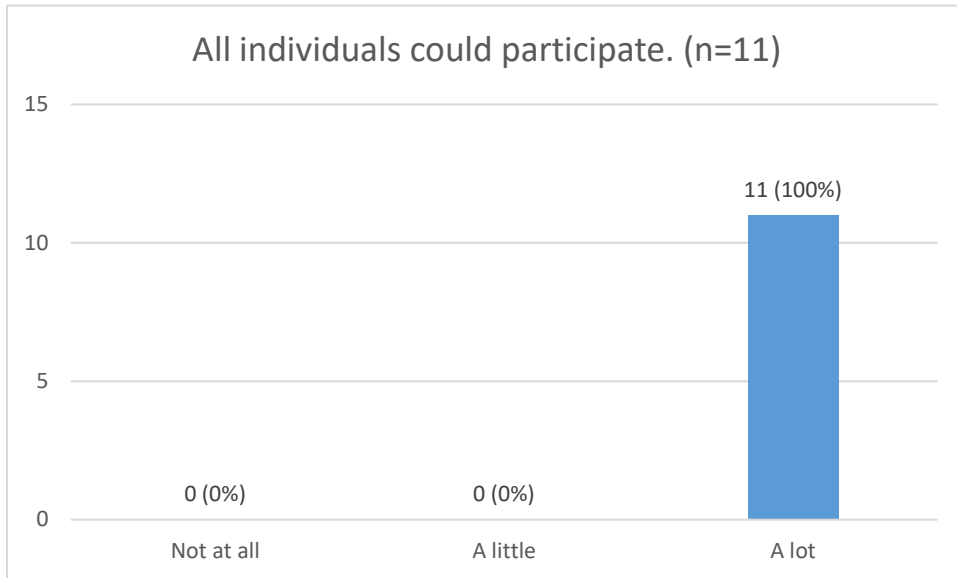
All respondents indicated that they had the opportunity to discuss and debate relevant themes.



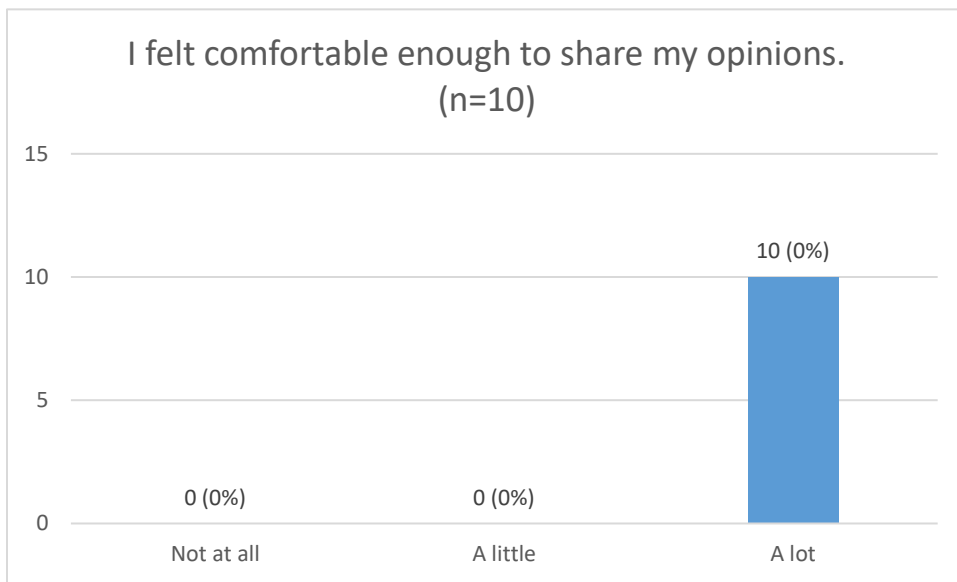
All respondents believed the information presented was very useful.



All respondents indicated that their questions were answered to a large extent.



All respondents believed that participants were able to participate in the dialogues to a large extent.



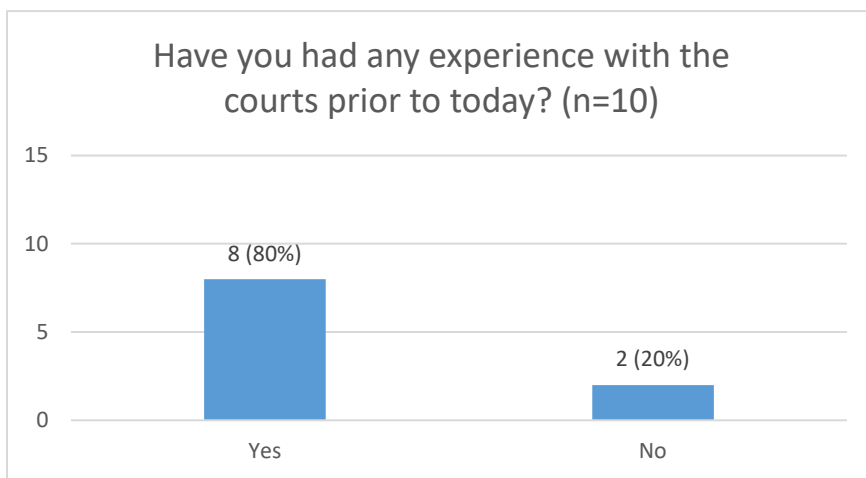
All respondents indicated that they felt comfortable sharing their opinions to a large extent.



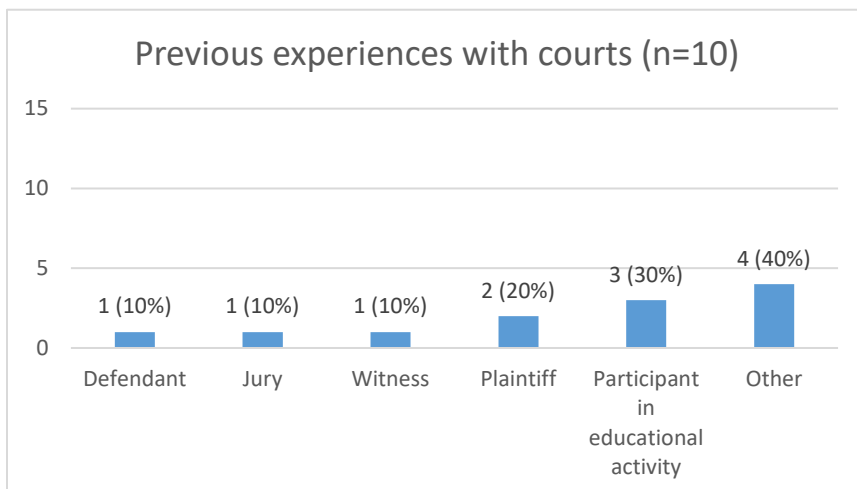
## Court actors and facilitators (from the Youth and Adult engagements combined)

In this final section of the report, the results of the surveys of the court actors and facilitators are presented. Because there were so few court actors and facilitators (relative to the number of members of the youth and adults from the general public), and because some of the court actors and facilitators attended more than one engagement, this part of the report groups all court actors and facilitators together.

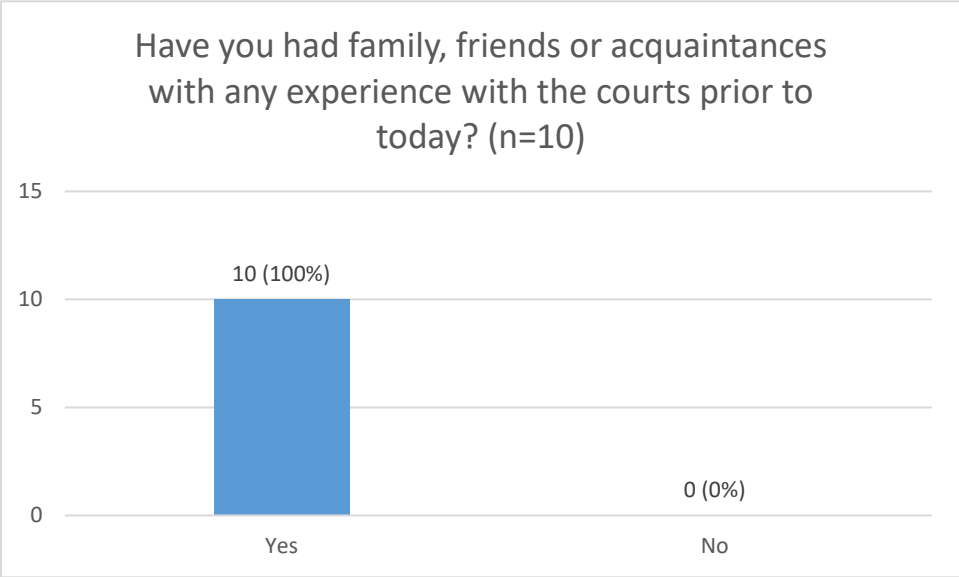
### Pre-Survey: Previous experience with courts



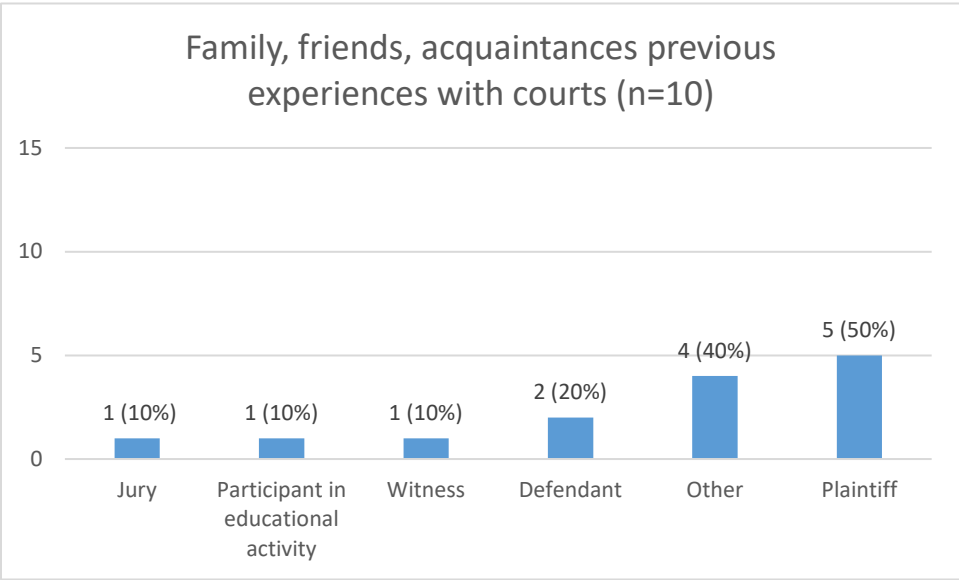
Eighty percent of respondents had previous experiences with courts.



Of the eight individuals out of 10 reporting having had previous experiences with courts, three indicated they had been educational activity participants, one was a defendant, one was a juror, one was a witness, one was a plaintiff and four indicated an “other” experience. (Note: For this item, respondents could choose multiple answers.)

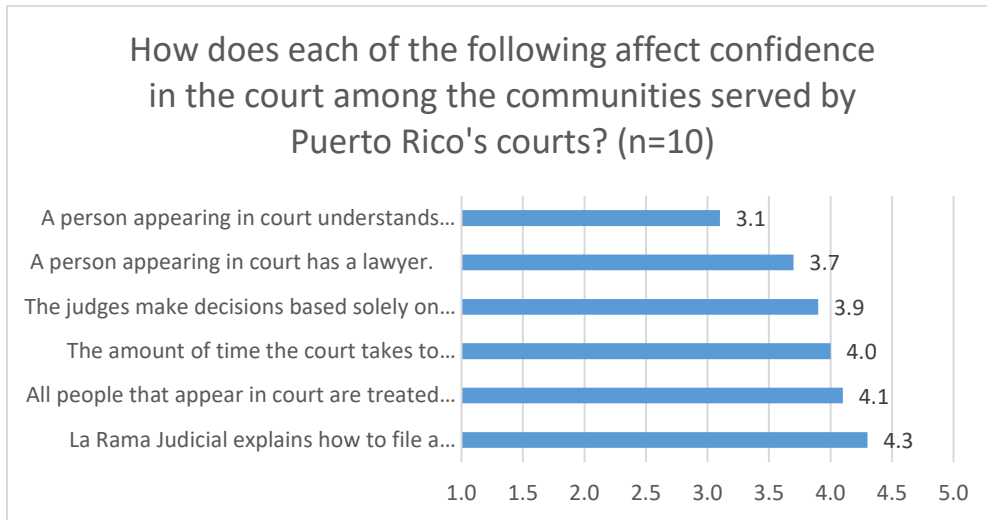


All 10 respondents indicated that they had family, friends or acquaintances who had previous experiences with the courts.

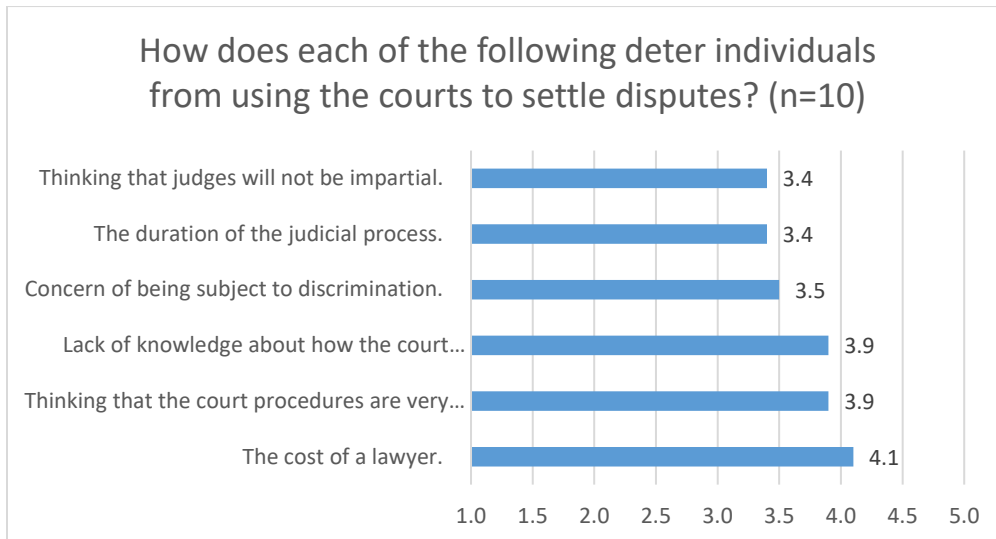


Of the ten individuals reporting that family, friends or acquaintances had previous experiences with courts, five were plaintiffs, four indicated “other” experiences, two were defendants, one was a witness, one was an educational activity participant, and one was a jury member. (Note: For this item, respondents could choose multiple answers.)

**Pre-Survey: Perceptions of confidence and accessibility to the courts**

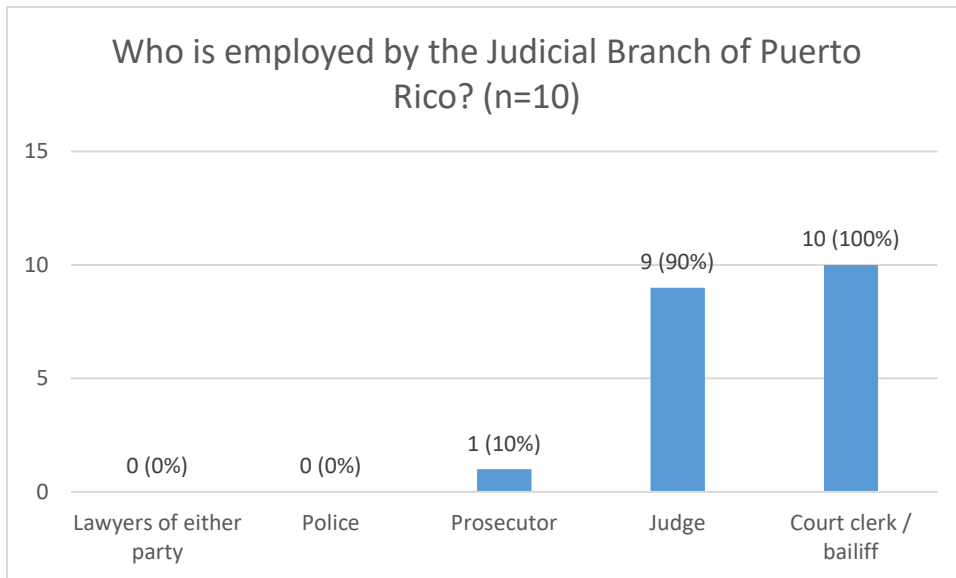


On a scale of 1-4 (1=Not at all, 4=A lot), respondents indicated the extent to which they believed various factors affected confidence in Puerto Rico’s courts. This item was both asked to court facilitators and community leaders, not to youth. The ratings given by the court actors and facilitators were very similar to the ratings given by the Alianza group but differed somewhat from the ratings given by the San Lorenzo group. For example, the San Lorenzo group had rated equal treatment of people appearing in court as the least influential factor affecting confidence in the courts.

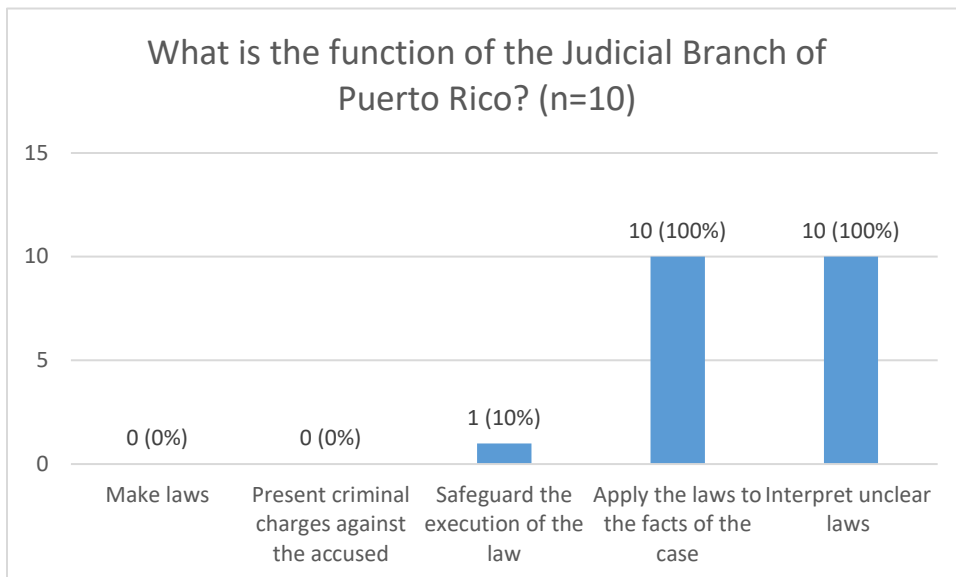


On a scale of 1-4 (1=Deters no one/Not a concern, 4=Deters many people/Large concern), respondents indicated the extent to which they believed various factors deterred people from utilizing the courts to resolve disputes. Like other groups, the facilitators rated the cost of the lawyer the highest.

### Pre-Survey: Knowledge of the courts

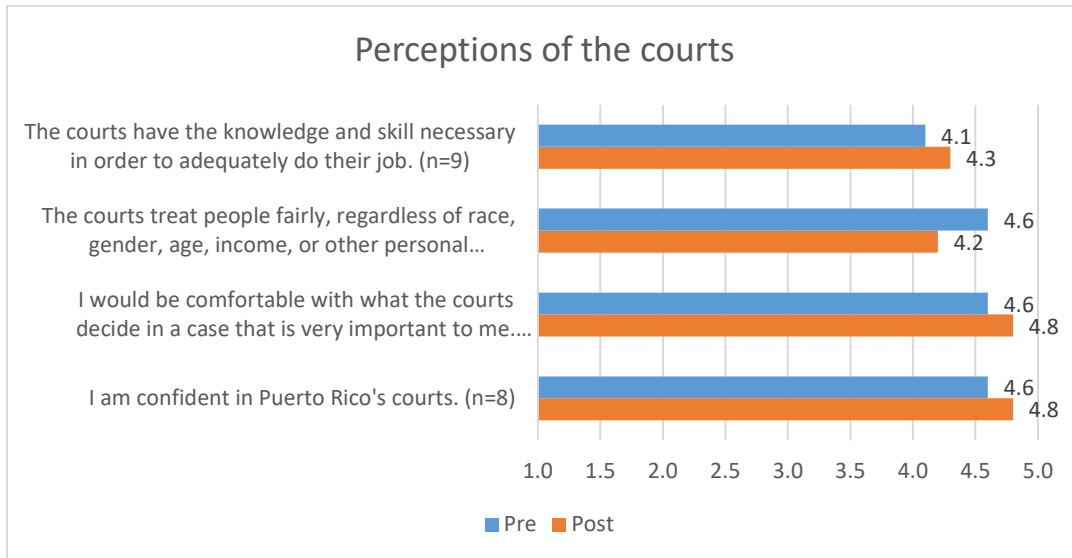


Survey respondents were asked to identify whether several positions were employees of the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico. The correct answers for occupations employed by the judicial branch are the “court clerk / bailiff” and “judge.” Most all respondents answered correctly.

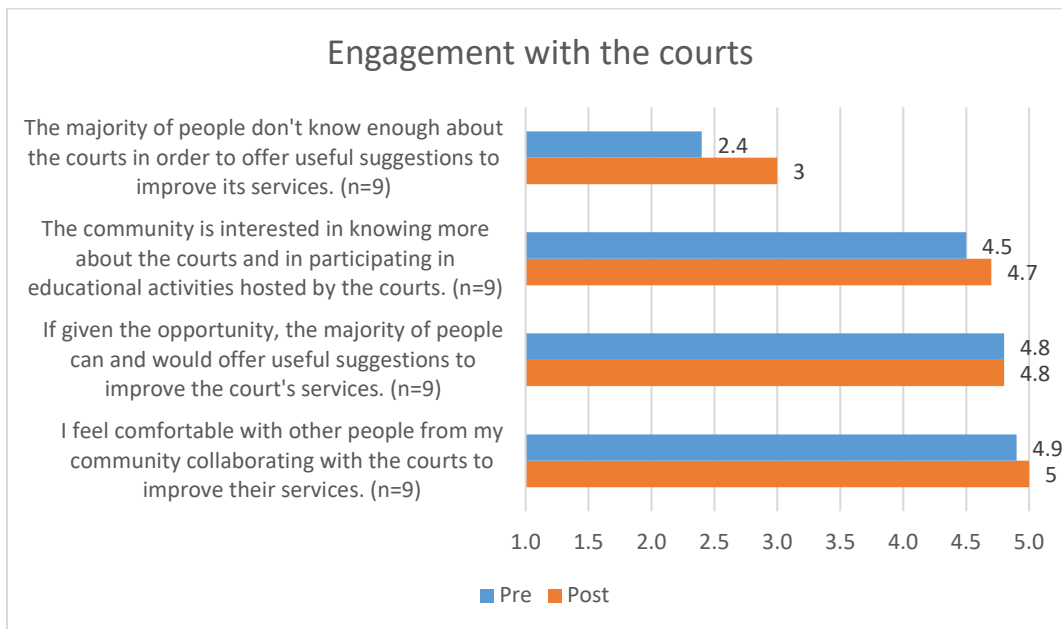


Survey respondents were asked to identify the functions of the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico. The correct answers for the functions of the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico are “apply the laws to the facts of the case” and “interpret unclear laws.” Once again, most all respondents answered correctly.

## Pre-Post Survey: Perceptions of the courts and community engagement



On a scale of 1-5 (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree), average ratings for perceptions of the court improved across all items with the exception of one item (“The courts treat people fairly, regardless of race, gender, age, income, or other personal characteristics”).



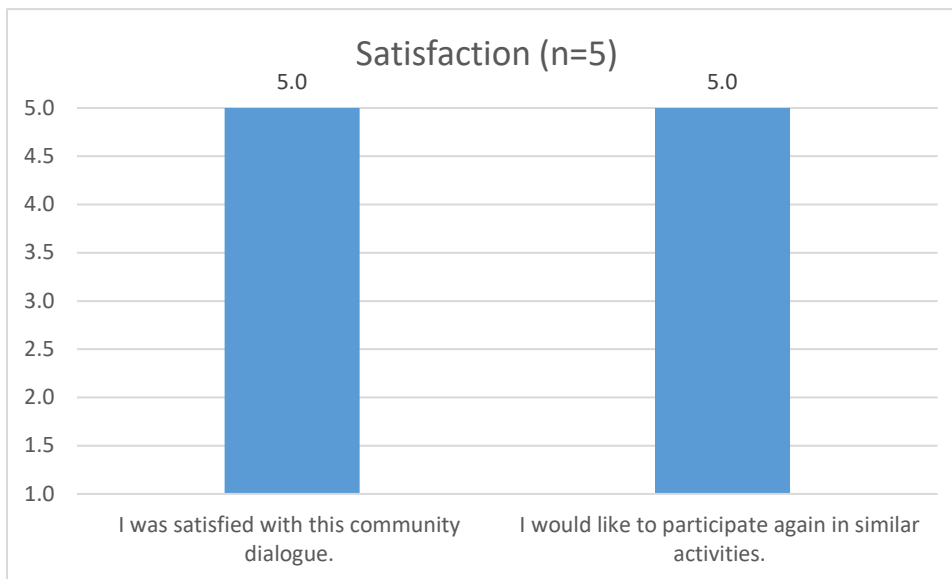
On a scale of 1-5 (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree), changes in ratings of perceptions of community members who engage with the court varied from pre to post, depending on the specific item asked. The largest change was observed for ratings of community members’ knowledge. On average, respondents were more likely to agree that people did not have enough knowledge about the courts on the post-survey.

### Post-Survey: Progress on community conflict issues (Youth engagements only)

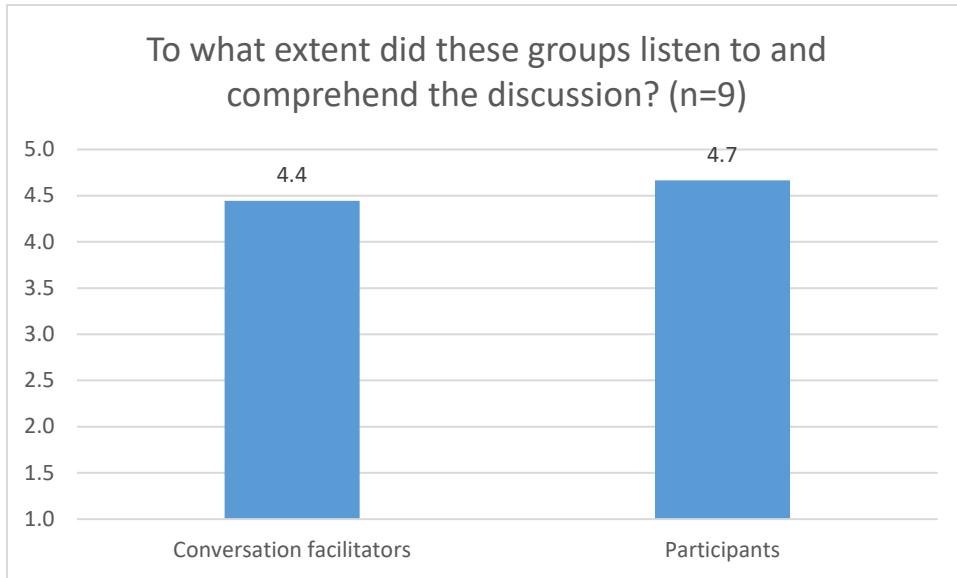


On a scale of 1-5 (1=No progress, 5=A lot of progress), average ratings among respondents indicated that they felt some progress was made during the dialogues on community conflict issues.

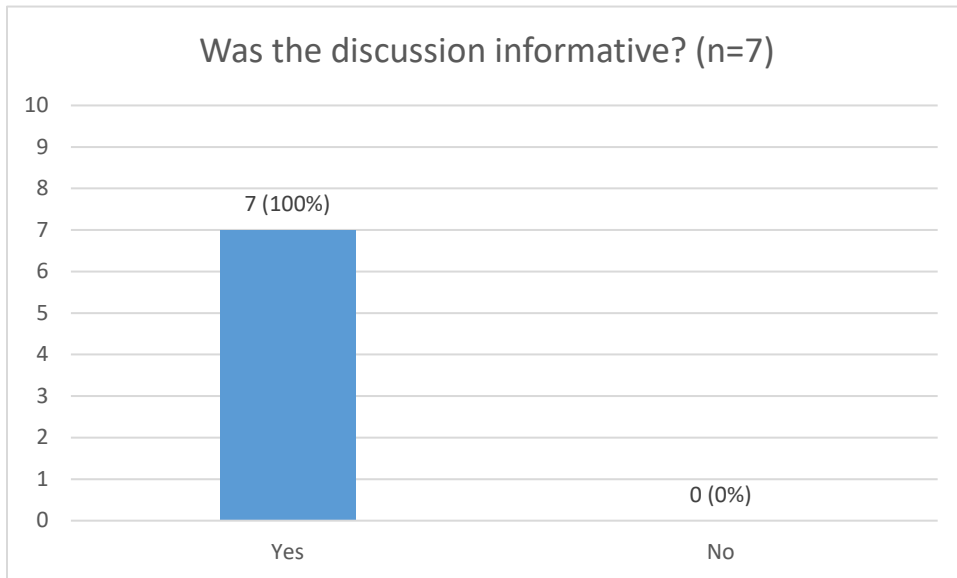
### Post-Survey: Evaluation



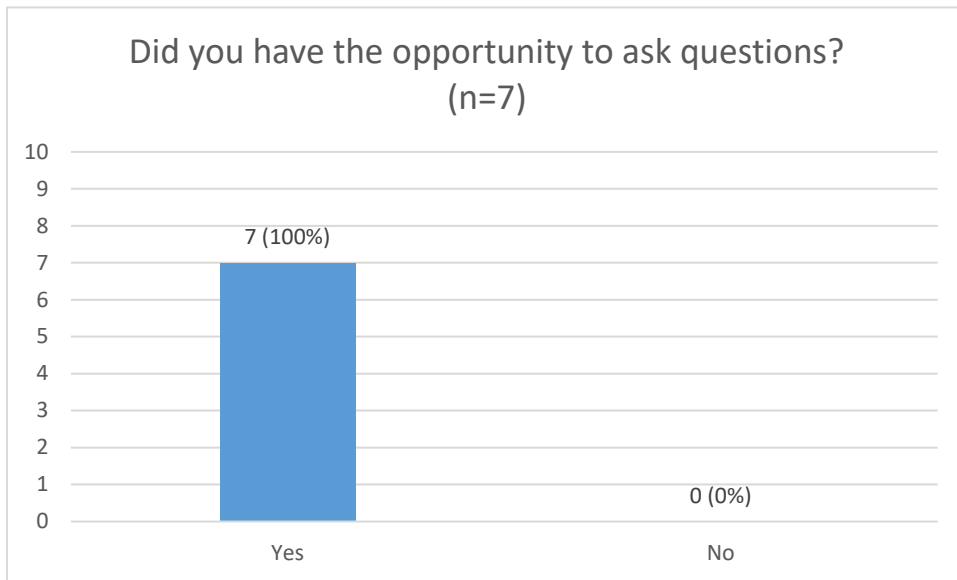
On a scale of 1-5 (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree), average ratings for satisfaction with the dialogues were very high.



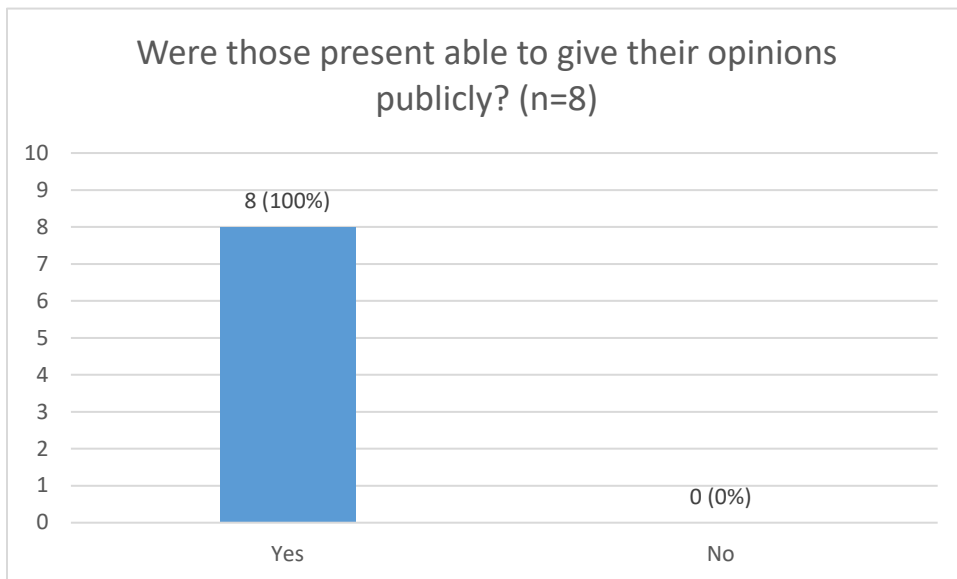
On a scale of 1-5 (1=Not good at all, 5=Extremely good), the participants rated the conversation facilitators and other participants an average of 4.4 and 4.7, respectively, for how well they listened to and comprehended the discussions.



All respondents believed the discussions were informative.

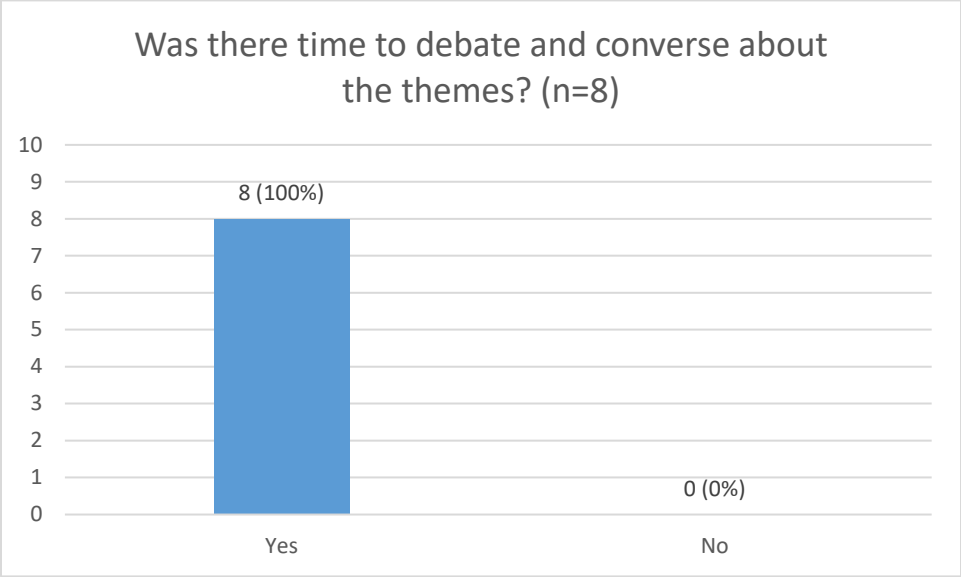


All respondents indicated that they had the opportunity to ask questions.

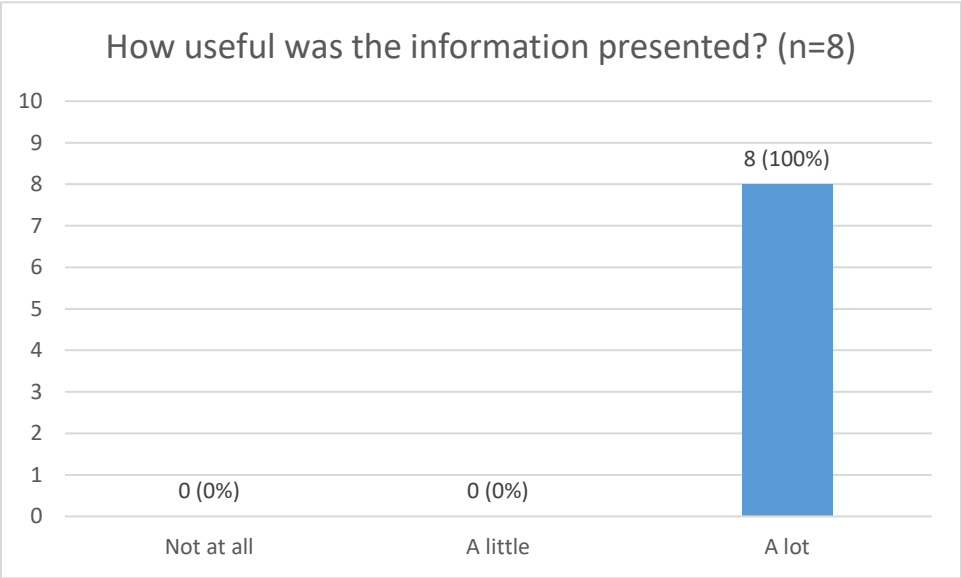


All respondents indicated that they were able to provide their opinions publicly during the discussions.

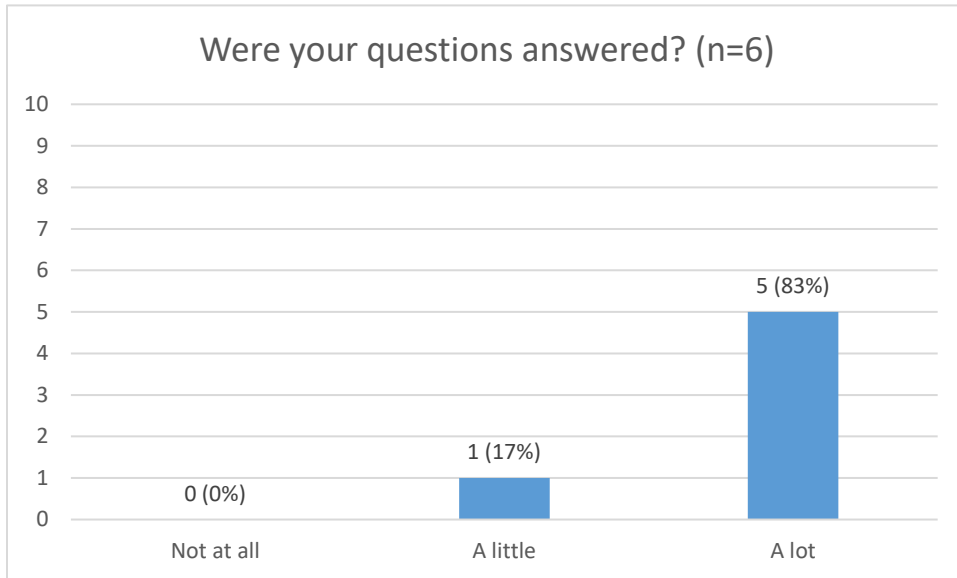




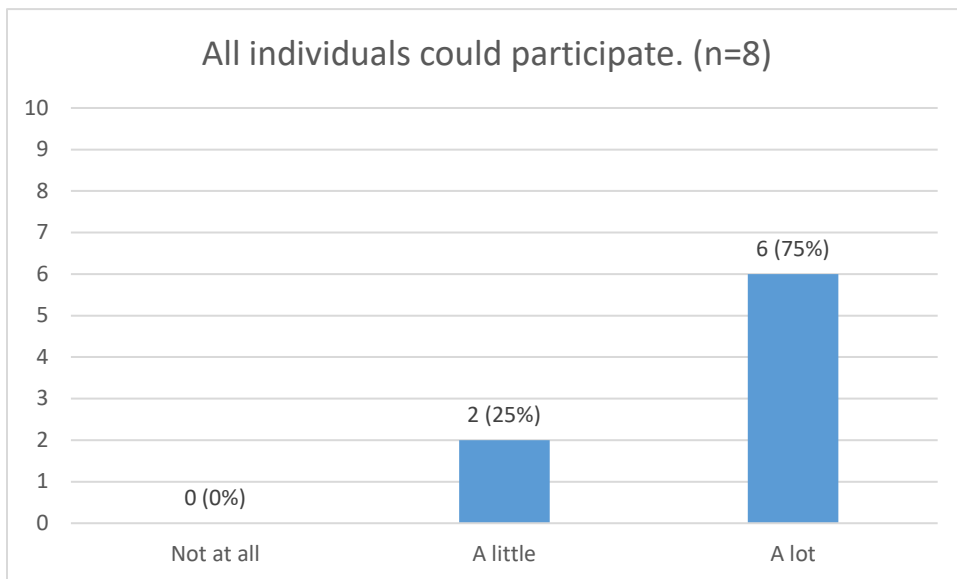
All respondents indicated that they had the opportunity to discuss and debate relevant themes.



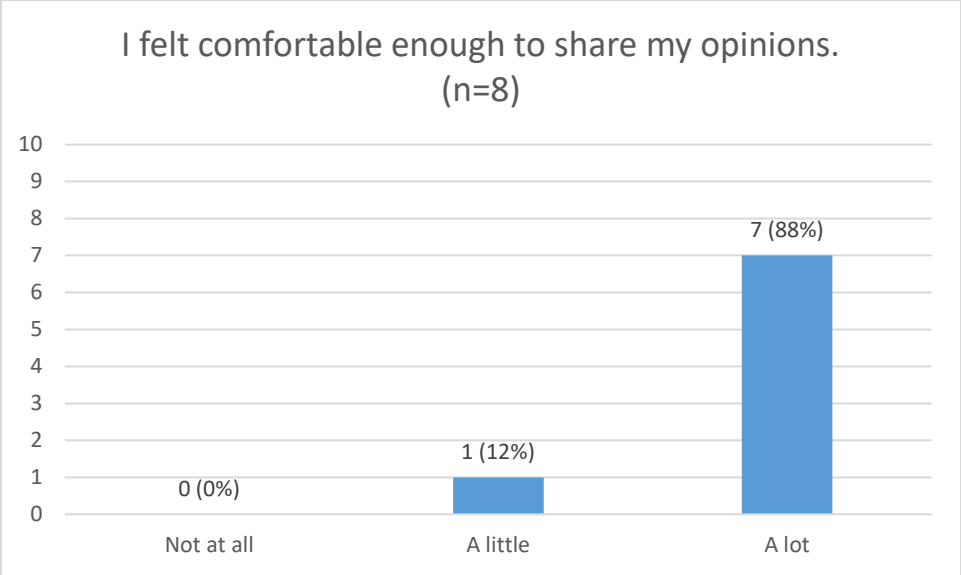
All respondents believed the information presented was very useful.



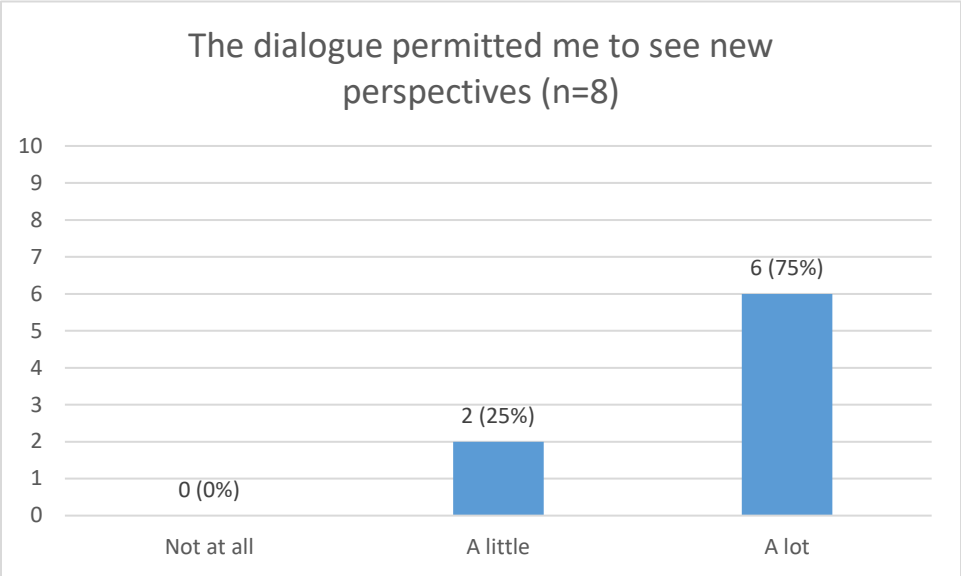
Eighty-three percent of respondents indicated that their questions were answered to a large extent.



Seventy-five percent of respondents believed that participants were able to participate in the dialogues to a large extent. Two more indicated that all participants could participate to a smaller extent.



Eighty-eight percent of respondents indicated that they felt comfortable sharing their opinions to a large extent. One individual felt they could to a smaller extent.



Eight respondents believed that the discussion allowed them to see new perspectives.

## Discussion and Reflections

The following are the Puerto Rico PEPP team's unedited reflections on the results from the pre-post surveys.

### General/Overarching Reflections

- *What stands out to you the most about the survey results for your engagements? What are the most positive results? What results may indicate areas for improvement?*

What stands out the most about the survey results of the engagements is that, in general, the participants' feelings about the courts were always positive, participants seemed to enjoy being part of this initiative and their participation enhanced their trust and perception of the courts. This was particularly observed with the community leaders.

Regarding the areas where improvement was not observed, the answers to the knowledge questions included in the pre and post survey did not improve significantly for any of the groups. This seems to reflect that the community has deep seeded perceptions and lack of knowledge that can only be modified by means of long-term educational efforts. Some of these additional efforts could include practical exercises where they can analyze real life settings and how the Judicial Branch and other sectors intervene. Hopefully, this can allow for greater transfer of knowledge after the engagements are completed.

Beyond the data of the surveys and as expressed by the court facilitators themselves, the most positive result of these engagements was the opportunity it provided court personnel to interact with community members in a different setting outside of the courts where they were able to learn from each other. The court personnel was able to better understand the communities' realities and the value of conducting community engagements. They also appreciated that the community was able to ask them questions and perceive the courts' interest in explaining its judicial processes in simple language.

When the court facilitators were asked what they would improve they mentioned the need to continue engaging with these community groups in the future. They stressed the importance of doing engagements more frequently and to include more topics of discussion. This is important because it shows that the experience had positive results in a bidirectional way. Furthermore, it demonstrates that it is important for the courts to go beyond their primary role of resolving cases and disputes and to continue to include direct community work in other ongoing court initiatives.

## Recruitment

- *How well did you manage to involve your target populations? Looking at the proportions of persons who attended, do you feel like you had the right amount of court actors, leaders, general public; the right mix of demographics (race/ethnicity, age, education, gender); and of viewpoints (e.g., ideology, persons who both are positive/negative about the courts at the time of the pre-survey)?*

The Puerto Rico project aimed to have small group engagements as a means to establish a closer relationship with each group and to design a follow up project that responded to each group's particular needs. The four groups engaged were members or leaders of marginalized communities. Within these groups no particular demographic mix or viewpoint diversity was intended. There was an interest in using the demographics that were inherently present in these groups without any intentional design.

An adequate number of participants was recruited for each engagement due to the recruitment strategies used. Leaders that had worked before with the Judicial Branch were selected. The recruitment strategy also built upon contacts the court had with organizations that were effective with youth.

It was useful to include four groups of court facilitators (one per community group) as a means to allow for more of them to participate in the experience and affect as little as possible each facilitator's court responsibilities. Having a clear activity design and script enabled the PEPP team to replicate the engagement with different court actors without adversely affecting the engagement results and dynamics.

- *Relating to recruitment, what would you be sure to do again in future engagements, and what would you like to try to do differently?*

As observed in the pilot project, using both telephone and email communications for recruitment strategies proved to be useful and complementary to each other, as well as using community leaders to plan community activities, as they are key stakeholders to identify other leaders and encourage them to attend the engagements. It was also helpful to ensure greater participants' attendance by conducting the engagements in their own community settings. These strategies will continue to be used in future engagements.

Something that will be taken into consideration for future engagements with youth is their school calendar. It is also best to identify engagement dates that are closer in time. It is preferable to start the engagements at the beginning of the school semester. It is not

convenient to start a project at the end of the semester because it can cause a change in the group composition and put project completion at higher risk.

## The Engagement Process

- *What processes seemed to go well or need improvement based on the pre/post survey data and post-survey engagement evaluation?*

Through the questionnaire results, it was observed that the engagements helped improve the community's perceptions and trust in the Judicial Branch. Overall, the satisfaction of the groups with the engagements was high. The pilot project has helped to validate EDUCO's efforts and reflect on what future steps should look like, such as conducting similar engagements with other community groups. Regarding the processes used, the World Café methodology seemed to be effective for creating a safe space for the community members to express their ideas. The exercise conducted with the Alianza group to choose their follow up project was also very effective because everybody (including people who did not want to talk) could express their opinion in an easy and organized way. Also, it was easy and quick to present the results.

- *What processes seemed to go well or need improvement based on your observations of the events? Relating to the engagement process, what would you be sure to do again in future engagements, and what would you like to try to do differently?*

Relating to the engagement process, conducting the engagement in one longer session was much more effective as the ideas connected much better. This is how the activity was initially designed. However, they were segmented into two engagements with three of the four groups because of their time availability.

When repeating this engagement content and format with other groups, it is convenient to stress the benefits of using one session. If it is possible to combine the two initial engagements into one longer one as done with the Alianza group, a second engagement could be done to enhance the community's knowledge of the courts' services by means of real-life setting exercises prior to brainstorming about the collaborative follow up project. In order to improve the community's knowledge in future engagements, it is important to include creative activities that are more interactive such as role playing and embed these knowledge concepts into a follow up project. For example, concrete conflict scenarios could be created and different community members assigned the roles that the executive, legislative or judicial branch could carry out in each situation. A different color prop could be assigned according to the branch they represent as a means for them to clearly identify the differences between the three branches of government.

The data collected showed that enhancing these learning opportunities is important because it is hard for the community to understand that the Judicial Branch is a separate government branch. The roles and differences between the three government branches is not taught in depth to citizens in k-12 settings or higher education in Puerto Rico. This adversely impacts the knowledge the community has of the Judicial Branch and its processes. Compared to the other two branches, the Judicial Branch does not usually publicize its role as much. Nevertheless, this has somewhat changed since the creation of the EDUCO office in the Puerto Rico Judicial Branch. Projects as this pilot project have allowed the Judicial Branch to better see the importance and impact of informing the community about what it does and how the community can access its services.

## Outcomes

- *How well did you manage to achieve what you hoped to achieve during the engagements (individually and across the engagements)?*

This project allowed EDUCO to validate new ways of engaging with the community in smaller groups. This process enabled us to build and strengthen relationships between court personnel and communities or youth leaders and to create activities and materials that can be used in future engagements. The experience gained and data collected through the pilot project illustrate how the courts can relate with people in a different way -beyond judges and parties of a case- and that this interaction is beneficial both for the community and the courts. It helps people better understand court processes and gain greater trust in the judicial institution. It also allows the courts to better understand the community it serves and shape the services it offers according to the community's needs.

In terms of the groups, the data shows there was improvement in their perceptions of the courts and their satisfaction by participating in the engagements. Also, after finishing the engagements, they were willing and excited to start follow up projects. We conducted a follow up survey with our court facilitators and 11 out of 12 completed it. And 100% of those that answered the survey agreed that conducting community engagements is very important for the Judicial Branch in order to better understand the community and vice versa.

Taking the above into consideration, we think that the project had positive outcomes and that we achieved our goal. It was an opportunity to gain other important lessons. For example, we noticed that the engagement and follow up project coordination seemed to be much more effective with community leaders. We had some setbacks to achieving the same success with the youth engagements. In order to improve youth group engagements, it is important to start the engagement project at the beginning of the school semester. Because of the pilot project's timeline, the engagements were started at the end of the second academic semester. The second engagement with both groups was conducted during the first semester of the next

academic year, which resulted in having participant turnover. Establishing a clear work plan with the youth group leaders or teachers is important as well. We were able to establish a clear work plan for our follow up project with the Create School but have been unable to execute it because of the COVID-19 emergency.

EDUCO is a unit within the Judicial Branch that works directly with the community. Doing community engagements is one of our main missions. Therefore, the pilot project allowed us to validate our work, enabling us to confirm the importance for the Judicial Branch to keep ongoing connections with community groups. We think that by being an office completely dedicated to education and community relations this better enabled us to complete our pilot project successfully. For that reason, we encourage other jurisdictions to create specific offices dedicated exclusively to education and community relations. And to assign them a recurrent yearly budget that includes the necessary equipment, materials and personnel that have the necessary academic backgrounds and skills in order to do this work, such as educators, social workers and journalists.

## Conclusion and Next Steps

- *What do you feel were the most important things learned from the engagements?*

Being part of the PEPP projects helped us validate the use of small community engagements to further our community educational goals. Compared to other activities that we had done in the past with larger groups of the general public, we feel that these smaller engagements with key stakeholders were more effective (goal attainment) and efficient as we needed to invest less resources for recruitment and activity logistics. Also, the experience has enabled us to finetune other community projects we are currently developing. We have validated community engagement designs and developed new community educational tools that we can use with other groups and topics.

- *Did your involvement in the PEPP projects impact your use of engagement in any way, and/or impact your institution and its attitudes toward public engagement? If so, how?*

Another benefit from the engagements is that we learned that improving the community's knowledge of the court takes time. Through the project we have realized that having community presence is important as it helps the community better understand the information and knowledge we share with them, as well as the information they hear from the media regarding the judicial processes. It has also made us more mindful of ensuring that all community focused material is written in simple language, and to include as many court actors as possible when developing these educational materials.



In addition to the simplicity of the educational materials, we learned that the courts need to use plain language always, including during the adjudicative process. Some of the judges mentioned they are now more conscious about speaking clearly in their courtrooms. That means they were able to transfer what they experienced in the engagements back into their courtrooms. This experience has helped us confirm that doing community engagement is worthwhile and important both for the community and the courts. It has been an opportunity for our court facilitators to learn more about community engagement methodologies and the communities they serve. All our court facilitators have expressed their interest to continue their involvement in similar projects.

- *What will your teams' next steps be? Will you continue or sustain your engagement efforts beyond the end of your involvement in PEPP?*

Regarding next steps, Puerto Rico has faced natural disasters during the last three years, including Hurricane María, earthquakes at the beginning of 2020, and now COVID-19. This has forced EDUCO to constantly revise its plans and ways of working with the community, including future engagements with our four pilot project groups. Nevertheless, the new COVID-19 reality will have to be carefully considered, as it hinders our ability to do face to face educational activities in the next year or so. We believe it is difficult to establish community trust with groups we have never worked with before by initiating engagements through technology and virtual activities.

Prior to COVID-19 we were expecting to continue engaging with our four community groups as well as other community sectors in Puerto Rico. Nonetheless the social distancing norms are forcing us to reevaluate how these contacts can continue. Now we feel we may be able to continue some engagement projects with teachers and school settings by means of technology and virtual engagements. We have noticed that community leaders do not have as much access to technology, as they are usually from older generations. However, we are hoping to continue developing some educational materials with the two community groups that participated in the project.

As for what we had been able to do prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, here are some comments:

#### *San Lorenzo community leaders*

We were able to start our follow up project with the San Lorenzo community leaders. We created three working groups and conducted two meetings with them. Each group has one judge, one lawyer and three community leaders. The idea is to collaboratively create educational materials on the three topics they selected. An outline for each topic was collaboratively developed. Our next steps are filling out the outlines with information and

validating the content with the leaders. Leaders were also asked to identify specific settings and conflicts to be used as examples for the educational materials on each topic.

### *Boys and Girls Club*

The follow up project with the Boys and Girls group was also started. They are creating a video about bullying. We were able to meet with the students and discuss their filmscript and give them recommendations. Because of the earthquakes in Puerto Rico during the months of January and February, schools have been closed and the Boys and Girls Club have had less participants. This project seems to be on hold for the moment. We hope to contact the Boys and Girls Club to see how they will continue to provide their services and if we can continue this project through the pandemic crisis. They were hoping to finalize the filming of the video and use it to engage other youth groups about the topic. We are still deciding on how the Judicial Branch could collaborate with the launching of the video and identifying other groups they could impact as mentors or peer leaders.

### *Crearte School*

We developed a plan to work with a new group of students as many of the initial students who graduated or moved from Puerto Rico. We were going to start the project mid-March, but it was put on hold because of COVID-19. We are hoping to contact the school to see if they are expecting to conduct any virtual experiences that could be used for the follow up project.

### *Alianza*

We have yet to initiate this project. However, we are hoping to contact the leaders and court facilitators to discuss with them the possibility of continuing this project remotely.

### *General*

EDUCO is currently planning to convene four remote engagement sessions about court services for the community in 2021. These include educational sessions on the following four topics: Juvenile conflict and delinquency, court services addressing domestic violence, court services to enforce responsibilities towards care of the elderly, and court services addressing substance and alcohol abuse.

## References

U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder. (nd). Puerto Rico: Individuals below poverty level (2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates). Available at <https://factfinder.census.gov>

U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Office of Coastal Management. (nd). Hurricane Costs. Available at <https://coast.noaa.gov/states/fast-facts/hurricane-costs.html>

C. Aponte Rivera, EDUCO, Puerto Rico Office of Courts Administration (Letter of interest, August 31, 2018).

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Youth Survey Response Data Summary – Create

<b>Pre-Survey: Previous experience with courts</b>		
Item and total respondent n	Yes	No
Have you had any experience with the courts prior to today? (n=11)	6 (55%)	5 (45%)
Previous experiences with courts. (n=11)  Note: For this item, respondents could choose multiple answers. Total percentage may either fall below or exceed 100%.	Jury	0 (0%)
	Witness	0 (0%)
	Educational Participant	0 (0%)
	Defendant	1 (9%)
	Plaintiff	1 (9%)
	Other	3 (27%)
Item and total respondent n	Yes	No
Have you had family, friends or acquaintances with any experiences with courts prior to today? (n=11)	11 (100%)	0 (0%)
Friends, family, acquaintances' previous experiences with courts. (n=11)  Note: For this item, respondents could choose multiple answers. Total percentage may either fall below or exceed 100%.	Jury	0 (0%)
	Witness	0 (0%)
	Educational Participant	1 (9%)
	Defendant	5 (45%)
	Plaintiff	2 (27%)
	Other	2 (18%)

<b>Pre to Post: Attitudes toward the courts</b>						
Item and total respondent n	Survey	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
How would you describe your feelings toward the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico? (n=11)	Pre	2.9	3.0	1-4	1.04	0.5
	Post	3.9	5.0	1-5	1.45	2.0
How familiar are you with the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico? (n=11)	Pre	2.0	2.0	1-3	.63	0
	Post	2.6	3.0	1-4	1.12	1.5
I am confident in Puerto Rico's courts. (n=11)	Pre	2.5	3.0	1-3	.82	1.0
	Post	3.3	3.0	3-4	.47	0.5

<b>Pre to Post: Knowledge of the courts</b>			
Item and total respondent n	Occupation	Pre	Post
Who is employed by the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico? (n=9)	Court clerk / bailiff	4 (44%)	7 (77%)
	Judge	6 (66%)	7 (77%)
	Lawyers of either party	7 (77%)	6 (66%)
	Police	4 (44%)	2 (22%)
	Prosecutor	7 (77%)	3 (33%)
Item and total respondent n	Functions	Pre	Post
What are the functions of the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico? (n=9)	Apply the law to the facts of the case.	6 (66%)	7 (77%)
	Interpret unclear laws.	3 (33%)	2 (22%)
	Make laws.	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	Present criminal charges against the accused.	6 (66%)	3 (33%)
	Safeguard the execution of the law.	7 (77%)	4 (44%)

<b>Pre to Post: Perceptions of the courts</b>						
Item and total respondent n	Survey	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
The courts treat people fairly, regardless of race, gender, age, income, or other personal characteristics. (n=8)	Pre	3.6	4.0	3-4	.52	1.0
	Post	3.8	4.0	3-5	.71	1.0
I would be comfortable with what the courts decide in a case that is very important to me. (n=8)	Pre	2.9	3.0	1-5	1.25	1.25
	Post	3.4	3.0	3-4	.52	1.0
The courts have the knowledge and skill necessary in order to adequately do their job. (n=8)	Pre	3.6	4.0	1-5	1.19	.25
	Post	4.0	4.0	3-5	.76	0.5
In the courts, the judges treat the public with respect and courtesy. (n=6)	Pre	3.7	4.0	1-5	1.37	0
	Post	3.3	3.5	2-4	.82	1.0
In the courts, court personnel treat the public with respect and courtesy. (n=6)	Pre	2.8	3.0	2-3	.41	0
	Post	3.2	3.0	3-4	.41	0
I feel comfortable participating in activities like that of today and contributing ideas to the courts. (n=8)	Pre	4.0	4.5	1-5	1.41	1.25
	Post	3.9	4.0	3-5	.83	1.25

<b>Pre to Post: Engagement with the courts</b>						
Item and total respondent n	Survey	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
The majority of people don't know enough about the courts in order to offer useful suggestions to improve its services. (n=8)	Pre	3.7	4.0	3-4	.52	1.0
	Post	3.3	3.0	3-5	.92	1.25
The community is interested in knowing more about the courts and in participating in educational activities hosted by the courts. (n=8)	Pre	2.8	3.0	1-4	.83	0
	Post	3.2	3.0	3-5	.74	.25
If given the opportunity, the majority of people can and would offer useful suggestions to improve the court's services. (n=8)	Pre	3.0	1.13	1-5	1.13	.25
	Post	3.5	.74	3-5	.74	1.0
I feel comfortable with other people from my community collaborating with the courts to improve their services. (n=8)	Pre	3.5	3.5	1-5	1.19	1.0
	Post	3.7	4.0	3-5	.71	1.0

<b>Post-Survey: Evaluation</b>					
Participant satisfaction					
Item and total respondent n	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
I was satisfied with this community dialogue. (n=12)	3.67	3.5	3-5	.78	1.0
I would like to participate again in similar activities. (n=12)	3.75	3.5	3-5	.87	1.25
Participant experiences					
To what extent did these groups listen to and comprehend the discussion?					
Conversation facilitators. (n=8)	4.5	4.5	4-5	.53	1.0
Participants. (n=8)	4.1	4.0	3-5	.64	.25
Dialogue experiences			Yes	No	
Was the discussion informative? (n=10)			9 (90%)	1 (10%)	
Did you have the opportunity to ask questions? (n=10)			10 (100%)	0 (0%)	
Were those present able to give their opinions publicly? (n=10)			9 (90%)	1 (10%)	
Was there time to debate and converse about the themes? (n=11)			10 (91%)	1 (9%)	
How useful was the information presented? (n=12)			Not at all	0 (0%)	
			A little	1 (8%)	
			A lot	11 (92%)	
Were your questions answered? (n=12)			Not at all	0 (0%)	
			A little	0 (0%)	
			A lot	12 (100%)	
All individuals could participate. (n=11)			Not at all	1 (9%)	
			A little	2 (18%)	
			A lot	8 (73%)	
I felt comfortable enough to share my opinions. (n=11)			Not at all	2 (18%)	
			A little	3 (27%)	
			A lot	6 (55%)	
The dialogue permitted me to see new perspectives. (n=11)			Not at all	1 (9%)	
			A little	2 (18%)	
			A lot	8 (73%)	



## Appendix 2: Youth Survey Response Data Summary – Boys & Girls Club

<b>Pre-Survey: Previous experience with courts</b>		
Item and total respondent n	Yes	No
Have you had any experience with the courts prior to today? (n=15)	5 (33%)	10 (66%)
Previous experiences with courts. (n=15)  Note: For this item, respondents could choose multiple answers. Total percentage may either fall below or exceed 100%.	Witness	1 (6%)
	Defendant	0 (0%)
	Jury	0 (0%)
	Other	1 (6%)
	Plaintiff	1 (6%)
	Educational Participant	3 (20%)
Item and total respondent n	Yes	No
Have you had family, friends or acquaintances with any experiences with courts prior to today? (n=13)	9 (69%)	4 (31%)
Friends, family, acquaintances' previous experiences with courts. (n=13)  Note: For this item, respondents could choose multiple answers. Total percentage may either fall below or exceed 100%.	Other	0 (0%)
	Jury	2 (15%)
	Plaintiff	3 (23%)
	Witness	2 (15%)
	Defendant	4 (31%)
	Educational Participant	0 (0%)

<b>Pre to Post: Attitudes toward the courts</b>						
Item and total respondent n	Survey	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
How would you describe your feelings toward the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico? (n=13)	Pre	4.2	5	2-5	1.07	2.0
	Post	3.4	4	1-5	1.66	3.0
How familiar are you with the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico? (n=14)	Pre	2.5	3.0	1-5	1.22	0
	Post	3.07	3.5	1-4	1.14	1.0
I am confident in Puerto Rico's courts. (n=15)	Pre	3.5	3.0	3-5	.64	1.0
	Post	3.7	4.0	1-5	1.4	0.5

<b>Pre to Post: Knowledge of the courts</b>			
Item and total respondent n	Occupation	Pre	Post
Who is employed by the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico? (n=12)	Court clerk / bailiff	6 (50%)	5 (42%)
	Judge	9 (75%)	9 (75%)
	Lawyers of either party	5 (42%)	7 (58%)
	Police	3 (25%)	6 (50%)
	Prosecutor	7 (58%)	7 (58%)
Item and total respondent n	Functions	Pre	Post
What are the functions of the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico? (n=12)	Apply the law to the facts of the case.	6 (50%)	8 (66%)
	Interpret unclear laws.	2 (17%)	3 (25%)
	Make laws.	2 (17%)	1 (8%)
	Present criminal charges against the accused.	3 (25%)	4 (33%)
	Safeguard the execution of the law.	7 (58%)	11 (92%)

<b>Pre to Post: Perceptions of the courts</b>						
Item and total respondent n	Survey	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
The courts treat people fairly, regardless of race, gender, age, income, or other personal characteristics. (n=12)	Pre	3.1	3.5	2-5	1.08	1.25
	Post	3.6	4.0	2-5	1.07	1.25
I would be comfortable with what the courts decide in a case that is very important to me. (n=12)	Pre	3.0	3.0	2-5	1.09	1.25
	Post	3.1	3.5	1-5	1.31	1.5
The courts have the knowledge and skill necessary in order to adequately do their job. (n=12)	Pre	3.5	3.5	3-5	.94	2.0
	Post	3.3	4.0	1-5	1.44	2.0
In the courts, the judges treat the public with respect and courtesy. (n=7)	Pre	3.0	3.0	2-4	.69	0.5
	Post	3.3	3.0	1-4	1.0	0.5
In the courts, court personnel treat the public with respect and courtesy. (n=7)	Pre	3.0	3.0	2-5	0.9	0
	Post	3.5	3.0	1-4	1.07	1.0
I feel comfortable participating in activities like that of today and contributing ideas to the courts. (n=12)	Pre	3.6	4.0	3-5	.95	2.0
	Post	3.8	4.0	1-5	1.27	2.0

<b>Pre to Post: Engagement with the courts</b>						
Item and total respondent n	Survey	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
The majority of people don't know enough about the courts in order to offer useful suggestions to improve its services. (n=11)	Pre	3.3	3.0	3-4	.47	0.5
	Post	3.1	3.0	1-5	1.27	1.0
The community is interested in knowing more about the courts and in participating in educational activities hosted by the courts. (n=11)	Pre	3.4	3.0	3-5	.67	0.5
	Post	3.7	4.0	1-5	1.29	1.5
If given the opportunity, the majority of people can and would offer useful suggestions to improve the court's services. (n=10)	Pre	3.8	3.5	3-5	0.7	1.0
	Post	4.2	4.0	3-5	.88	1.75
I feel comfortable with other people from my community collaborating with the courts to improve their services. (n=11)	Pre	3.7	3.0	3-5	.69	1.0
	Post	3.9	4.0	2-5	1.10	2.0

<b>Post-Survey: Evaluation</b>					
Participant satisfaction					
Item and total respondent n	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
I was satisfied with this community dialogue. (n=16)	3.8	4.0	2-5	.95	2.0
I would like to participate again in similar activities. (n=16)	3.3	3.0	1-5	1.58	3.0
Participant experiences					
To what extent did these groups listen to and comprehend the discussion?					
Conversation facilitators. (n=16)	3.9	4.0	1-5	1.3	2.0
Participants. (n=16)	3.9	4.0	1-5	1.2	2.0
Dialogue experiences			Yes	No	
Was the discussion informative? (n=13)			13 (100%)	0 (0%)	
Did you have an opportunity to ask questions? (n=9)			8 (88%)	1 (11%)	
Were those present able to give their opinions publicly? (n=11)			11 (100%)	0 (0%)	
Was there time to debate and converse about the themes? (n=11)			10 (91%)	1 (9%)	
How useful was the information presented? (n=12)			Not at all	1 (8%)	
			A little	6 (50%)	
			A lot	5 (42%)	
Were your questions answered? (n=10)			Not at all	1 (8%)	
			A little	6 (50%)	
			A lot	4 (40%)	
All individuals could participate. (n=17)			Not at all	5 (29%)	
			A little	2 (12%)	
			A lot	10 (59%)	
I felt comfortable enough to share my opinions. (n=16)			Not at all	1 (6%)	
			A little	8 (50%)	
			A lot	7 (44%)	
The dialogue permitted me to see new perspectives. (n=16)			Not at all	1 (6%)	
			A little	8 (50%)	
			A lot	10 (63%)	

### Appendix 3: Adult Survey Response Data Summary – San Lorenzo

<b>Pre-Survey: Previous experience with courts</b>		
Item and total respondent n	Yes	No
Have you had any experience with the courts prior to today? (n=25)	21 (84%)	4 (16%)
Previous experiences with courts. (n=19)  Note: For this item, respondents could choose multiple answers. Total percentage may either fall below or exceed 100%.	Witness	1 (5%)
	Defendant	2 (11%)
	Jury	2 (11%)
	Other	3 (16%)
	Plaintiff	4 (21%)
	Educational Participant	12 (63%)
Item and total respondent n	Yes	No
Have you had family, friends or acquaintances with any experiences with courts prior to today? (n=24)	13 (54%)	11 (46%)
Friends, family, acquaintances' previous experiences with courts. (n=11)  Note: For this item, respondents could choose multiple answers. Total percentage may either fall below or exceed 100%.	Other	0 (0%)
	Jury	1 (9%)
	Plaintiff	2 (18%)
	Witness	2 (18%)
	Defendant	5 (45%)
	Educational Participant	5 (45%)

<b>Pre-Survey: Perceptions of confidence and accessibility to the courts</b>					
How does each of the following affect confidence in the court among the communities served by Puerto Rico's courts?					
Item and total respondent n	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
All people that appear in court are treated equally. (n=17)	3.1	4.0	1-5	1.32	2.0
A person appearing in court understands how it functions. (n=18)	3.2	4.0	1-5	1.17	1.75
La Rama Judicial explains how to file a complaint against a judge/judges and/or their personnel. (n=18)	3.2	3.5	1-5	1.20	1.0
A person appearing in court has a lawyer. (n=18)	3.3	4.0	1-5	1.14	1.0
The judges make decisions based solely on the law and the evidence presented. (n=18)	3.4	4.0	1-5	1.09	1.0
The amount of time the court takes to resolve cases. (n=18)	3.6	4.0	1-5	.92	1.0
How does each of the following deter individuals from using the courts to settle disputes?					
Item and total respondent n	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
Thinking that judges will not be impartial. (n=17)	2.8	3.0	1-4	1.13	2.0
Concern of being subject to discrimination. (n=19)	3.0	3.0	1-4	.89	1.5
Lack of knowledge about how the court process will proceed. (n=18)	3.1	4.0	1-4	1.21	2.0
Thinking that the court procedures are very complicated. (n=19)	3.2	3.5	1-4	.92	1.0
The duration of the judicial process. (n=18)	3.4	3.5	1-4	.77	1.0

The cost of a lawyer. (n=19)	3.4	4.0	1-4	.91	1.0
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<b>Pre to Post: Attitudes toward the courts</b>						
Item and total respondent n	Survey	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
How would you describe your feelings toward the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico? (n=16)	Pre	3.9	4.0	3-5	.77	1.25
	Post	4.1	4.0	3-5	.81	1.25
How familiar are you with the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico? (n=17)	Pre	3.1	3.0	2-5	.75	0
	Post	3.3	3.0	2-4	.69	1.0
I am confident in Puerto Rico's courts. (n=15)	Pre	3.6	4.0	2-5	.73	1.0
	Post	3.7	4.0	3-4	.46	0.5

<b>Pre to Post: Knowledge of the courts</b>			
Item and total respondent n	Occupation	Pre	Post
Who is employed by the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico? (n=14)	Court clerk / bailiff	13 (93%)	11 (79%)
	Judge	14 (100%)	11 (79%)
	Lawyers of either party	7 (50%)	1 (7%)
	Police	4 (29%)	2 (14%)
	Prosecutor	13 (93%)	6 (43%)
Item and total respondent n	Functions	Pre	Post
What are the functions of the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico? (n=14)	Apply the law to the facts of the case.	13 (93%)	7 (50%)
	Interpret unclear laws.	4 (29%)	4 (29%)
	Make laws.	2 (14%)	2 (14%)
	Present criminal charges against the accused.	6 (43%)	2 (14%)
	Safeguard the execution of the law.	11 (79%)	5 (36%)



<b>Pre to Post: Perceptions of the courts</b>						
Item and total respondent n	Survey	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
The courts treat people fairly, regardless of race, gender, age, income, or other personal characteristics. (n=15)	Pre	3.2	3.0	1-5	1.15	1.0
	Post	3.5	3.0	2-5	.74	1.0
I would be comfortable with what the courts decide in a case that is very important to me. (n=16)	Pre	3.7	4.0	1-5	1.3	2.0
	Post	4.0	4.0	2-5	.63	0
The courts have the knowledge and skill necessary in order to adequately do their job. (n=15)	Pre	3.9	4.0	3-5	.80	1.5
	Post	4.2	4.0	3-5	.77	1.0
In the courts, the judges treat the public with respect and courtesy. (n=9)	Pre	4.1	4.0	3-5	.78	1.0
	Post	3.9	4.0	1-5	1.36	2.0
In the courts, court personnel treat the public with respect and courtesy. (n=9)	Pre	4.1	4.0	3-5	.93	2.0
	Post	4.3	4.0	3-5	.71	1.0
I feel comfortable participating in activities like that of today and contributing ideas to the courts. (n=16)	Pre	4.2	5.0	1-5	1.17	1.25
	Post	4.4	4.5	3-5	.63	1.0

<b>Pre to Post: Engagement with the courts</b>						
Item and total respondent n	Survey	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
The majority of people don't know enough about the courts in order to offer useful suggestions to improve its services. (n=18)	Pre	3.5	4.0	1-5	1.34	.75
	Post	3.6	4.0	2-5	.86	1.0
The community is interested in knowing more about the courts and in participating in educational activities hosted by the courts. (n=18)	Pre	3.6	4.0	1-5	1.46	0
	Post	4.3	4.0	3-5	.67	1.0
If given the opportunity, the majority of people can and would offer useful suggestions to improve the court's services. (n=18)	Pre	4.2	4.0	3-5	.81	1.0
	Post	4.0	4.0	2-5	.84	.75
I feel comfortable with other people from my community collaborating with the courts to improve their services. (n=18)	Pre	4.4	5.0	1-5	1.04	1.0
	Post	4.3	4.5	3-5	.77	1.0

<b>Post-Survey: Progress on community conflict issues</b>					
During the dialogue, did you make progress in the following areas?					
Item and total respondent n	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
Identifying solutions others have previously considered in conflicts between neighbors. (n=17)	3.8	4.0	2-5	.75	1.0
Understanding how people experience conflict between neighbors. (n=17)	3.8	4.0	3-5	.66	1.0
Sharing ideas about possible solutions for assisting with or resolving conflicts between neighbors. (n=18)	3.7	4.0	3-5	.69	1.0
Sharing new alternative ideas for assisting/resolving conflicts between neighbors. (n=17)	3.6	4.0	3-5	.61	1.0
Identifying the conditions most important that must be met in order to resolve the conflict between neighbors. (n=17)	3.6	4.0	3-5	.61	1.0
Understanding and defining conflicts between neighbors. (n=18)	3.6	4.0	1-5	1.14	1.0
Understanding the possible causes of conflict between neighbors. (n=17)	3.6	4.0	2-5	.87	1.0
Choosing one or more solutions to resolve the conflict between neighbors. (n=17)	3.6	4.0	3-5	.62	1.0
Identifying and classifying ideas about new alternatives for assisting in/resolving conflict between neighbors. (n=17)	3.5	4.0	2-5	.72	1.0
Identifying collaborators and additional resources for handling	3.5	4.0	1-5	.94	1.0

conflicts between neighbors. (n=17)					
List and analyze the pros and cons of the different alternatives to resolve the conflict between neighbors. (n=17)	3.5	3.0	3-5	.62	1.0
Choose a solution to resolve the conflict between neighbors. (n=17)	3.5	4.0	2-5	.72	1.0

<b>Post-Survey: Evaluation</b>					
Participant satisfaction					
Item and total respondent n	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
I was satisfied with this community dialogue. (n=18)	4.4	4.5	3-5	.62	1.0
I would like to participate again in similar activities. (n=18)	4.5	5.0	3-5	.62	1.0
Participant experiences					
To what extent did these groups listen to and comprehend the discussion?					
Conversation facilitators. (n=18)	4.5	5.0	3-5	.62	1.0
Participants. (n=17)	4.5	4.0	4-5	.51	1.0
Dialogue experiences			Yes	No	
Was the discussion informative? (n=15)			15 (100%)	0 (0%)	
Did you have the opportunity to ask questions? (n=16)			16 (100%)	0 (0%)	
Were those present able to give their opinions publicly? (n=15)			14 (93%)	1 (7%)	
Was there time to debate and converse about the themes? (n=15)			15 (100%)	0 (0%)	
How useful was the information presented? (n=15)			Not at all	0 (0%)	
			A little	1 (7%)	
			A lot	14 (93%)	
Were your questions answered? (n=14)			Not at all	0 (0%)	
			A little	1 (7%)	
			A lot	13 (93%)	
All individuals could participate. (n=13)			Not at all	0 (0%)	
			A little	1 (8%)	
			A lot	12 (92%)	
I felt comfortable enough to share my opinions. (n=11)			Not at all	0 (0%)	
			A little	2 (18%)	
			A lot	9 (82%)	
The dialogue permitted me to see new perspectives. (n=13)			Not at all	0 (0%)	
			A little	0 (0%)	
			A lot	13 (100%)	

## Appendix 4: Adult Survey Response Data Summary – Alianza

<b>Pre-Survey: Previous experience with courts</b>		
Item and total respondent n	Yes	No
Have you had any experience with the courts prior to today? (n=11)	4 (36%)	7 (63%)
Previous experiences with courts. (n=11)  Note: For this item, respondents could choose multiple answers. Total percentage may either fall below or exceed 100%.	Witness	0 (0%)
	Defendant	0 (0%)
	Jury	0 (0%)
	Educational Participant	1 (9%)
	Plaintiff	2 (18%)
	Other	2 (18%)
Item and total respondent n	Yes	No
Have you had family, friends or acquaintances with any experiences with courts prior to today? (n=11)	8 (73%)	3 (27%)
Friends, family, acquaintances' previous experiences with courts. (n=11)  Note: For this item, respondents could choose multiple answers. Total percentage may either fall below or exceed 100%.	Defendant	1 (9%)
	Educational Participant	1 (9%)
	Witness	2 (18%)
	Other	2 (18%)
	Plaintiff	3 (27%)
	Jury	4 (36%)

<b>Pre to Post: Knowledge of the courts</b>			
Item and total respondent n	Occupation	Pre	Post
Who is employed by the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico? (n=11)	Court clerk / bailiff	8 (73%)	10 (91%)
	Judge	10 (91%)	10 (91%)
	Lawyers of either party	1 (9%)	1 (9%)
	Police	2 (18%)	2 (18%)
	Prosecutor	7 (64%)	4 (36%)
Item and total respondent n	Functions	Pre	Post
What are the functions of the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico? (n=11)	Apply the law to the facts of the case.	10 (91%)	7 (64%)
	Interpret unclear laws.	6 (55%)	8 (73%)
	Make laws.	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	Present criminal charges against the accused.	6 (55%)	0 (0%)
	Safeguard the execution of the law.	6 (55%)	4 (36%)

<b>Pre-Survey: Perceptions of confidence and accessibility to the courts</b>					
How does each of the following affect confidence in the court among the communities served by Puerto Rico's courts?					
Item and total respondent n	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
La Rama Judicial explains how to file a complaint against a judge/judges and/or their personnel. (n=10)	4.0	4.0	3-5	.47	0
All people that appear in court are treated equally. (n=10)	4.0	4.0	3-5	.47	0
The judges make decisions based solely on the law and the evidence presented. (n=11)	3.9	4.0	3-5	.54	0
The amount of time the court takes to resolve cases. (n=11)	3.8	4.0	3-5	.60	0.5
A person appearing in court has a lawyer. (n=11)	3.5	4.0	1-5	1.04	1.0
A person appearing in court understands how it functions. (n=11)	2.5	3.0	1-4	1.21	2.0
How does each of the following deter individuals from using the courts to settle disputes?					
Item and total respondent n	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
The duration of the judicial process. (n=11)	3.5	4.0	1-4	.93	0.5
The cost of a lawyer. (n=11)	3.5	4.0	2-4	.69	1.0
Thinking that judges will not be impartial. (n=11)	3.4	4.0	1-4	1.03	1.0
Concern of being subject to discrimination. (n=11)	3.2	4.0	1-4	1.08	1.5
Thinking that the court procedures are very complicated. (n=11)	2.6	3.0	1-4	1.36	3.0



Lack of knowledge about how the court process will proceed. (n=11)	2.5	3.0	1-4	1.37	3.0
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<b>Pre to Post: Attitudes toward the courts</b>						
Item and total respondent n	Survey	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
How would you describe your feelings toward the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico? (n=11)	Pre	3.7	4.0	2-5	.90	1.0
	Post	4.6	5.0	4-5	.50	1.0
How familiar are you with the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico? (n=11)	Pre	3.1	3.0	2-4	.70	0.5
	Post	3.7	4.0	2-5	.79	0.5
I am confident in Puerto Rico's courts. (n=11)	Pre	3.5	3.0	2-5	.93	1.0
	Post	3.9	4.0	3-5	.94	2.0

<b>Pre to Post: Perceptions of the courts</b>						
Item and total respondent n	Survey	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
The courts treat people fairly, regardless of race, gender, age, income, or other personal characteristics. (n=10)	Pre	3.2	3.0	2-4	.63	.75
	Post	3.9	4.0	2-5	.99	1.5
I would be comfortable with what the courts decide in a case that is very important to me. (n=10)	Pre	3.4	3.0	2-5	.84	1.0
	Post	4.1	4.0	3-5	.88	1.75
The courts have the knowledge and skill necessary in order to adequately do their job. (n=10)	Pre	3.3	3.5	1-4	.95	1.0
	Post	4.0	4.0	3-5	.67	0
In the courts, the judges treat the public with respect and courtesy. (n=7)	Pre	3.3	4.0	4-5	1.11	1.0
	Post	3.9	3.5	1-4	.69	0.5
In the courts, court personnel treat the public with respect and courtesy. (n=8)	Pre	3.3	3.5	1-4	1.04	1.0
	Post	4.3	4.0	3-5	.71	1.0
I feel comfortable participating in activities like that of today and contributing ideas to the courts. (n=10)	Pre	3.9	4.0	1-5	1.2	.75
	Post	4.8	5.0	4-5	.42	0

<b>Pre to Post: Engagement with the courts</b>						
Item and total respondent n	Survey	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
The majority of people don't know enough about the courts in order to offer useful suggestions to improve its services. (n=10)	Pre	4.1	4.0	3-5	.74	.75
	Post	4.1	4.0	1-5	1.2	1.0
The community is interested in knowing more about the courts and in participating in educational activities hosted by the courts. (n=11)	Pre	4.4	4.0	4-5	.50	1.0
	Post	4.3	4.0	3-5	.65	1.0
If given the opportunity, the majority of people can and would offer useful suggestions to improve the court's services. (n=11)	Pre	3.8	4.0	1-5	1.17	1.0
	Post	4.1	4.0	3-5	.70	0.5
I feel comfortable with other people from my community collaborating with the courts to improve their services. (n=11)	Pre	4.2	4.0	1-5	1.17	1.0
	Post	4.1	4.0	3-5	.54	0

<b>Post-Survey: Evaluation</b>					
Participant satisfaction					
Item and total respondent n	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
I was satisfied with this community dialogue. (n=10)	5.0	5.0	5	0	0
I would like to participate again in similar activities. (n=11)	4.9	5.0	4-5	0.3	0
Participant experiences					
To what extent did these groups listen to and comprehend the discussion?					
Conversation facilitators. (n=11)	4.7	5.0	4-5	.47	0.5
Participants. (n=11)	4.6	5.0	4-5	.5	1.0
Dialogue experiences			Yes	No	
Was the discussion informative? (n=10)			10 (100%)	0 (0%)	
Did you have an opportunity to ask questions? (n=11)			11 (100%)	0 (0%)	
Were those present able to give their opinions publicly? (n=8)			8 (100%)	0 (0%)	
Was there time to debate and converse about the themes? (n=9)			9 (100%)	0 (0%)	
How useful was the information presented? (n=10)			Not at all	0 (0%)	
			A little	0 (0%)	
			A lot	10 (100%)	
Were your questions answered? (n=11)			Not at all	0 (0%)	
			A little	0 (0%)	
			A lot	11 (100%)	
All individuals could participate. (n=11)			Not at all	0 (0%)	
			A little	0 (0%)	
			A lot	11 (100%)	
I felt comfortable enough to share my opinions. (n=10)			Not at all	0 (0%)	
			A little	0 (0%)	
			A lot	10 (100%)	
The dialogue permitted me to see new perspectives. (n=10)			Not at all	0 (0%)	
			A little	0 (0%)	
			A lot	10 (100%)	

**Appendix 5: Court Actor Survey Response Data Summary – All youth and adult engagements**

<b>Pre-Survey: Previous experience with courts</b>		
Item and total respondent n	Yes	No
Have you had any experience with the courts prior to today? (n=10)	8 (80%)	2 (20%)
Previous experiences with courts. (n=10)  Note: For this item, respondents could choose multiple answers. Total percentage may either fall below or exceed 100%.	Defendant	1 (10%)
	Jury	1 (10%)
	Witness	1 (10%)
	Plaintiff	2 (20%)
	Educational Participant	3 (30%)
	Other	4 (40%)
Item and total respondent n	Yes	No
Have you had family, friends or acquaintances with any experiences with courts prior to today? (n=10)	10 (100%)	0 (0%)
Friends, family, acquaintances' previous experiences with courts. (n=10)  Note: For this item, respondents could choose multiple answers. Total percentage may either fall below or exceed 100%.	Jury	1 (10%)
	Educational Participant	1 (10%)
	Witness	1 (10%)
	Defendant	2 (20%)
	Other	4 (40%)
	Plaintiff	5 (50%)

<b>Pre-Survey: Knowledge of the courts</b>		
Item and total respondent n	Occupation	Pre-Survey
Who is employed by the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico? (n=10)	Court clerk / bailiff	10 (100%)
	Judge	9 (90%)
	Lawyers of either party	0 (0%)
	Police	0 (0%)
	Prosecutor	1 (10%)
Item and total respondent n	Functions	Pre-Survey
What are the functions of the Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico? (n=10)	Apply the law to the facts of the case.	10 (100%)
	Interpret unclear laws.	10 (100%)
	Make laws.	0 (0%)
	Present criminal charges against the accused.	0 (0%)
	Safeguard the execution of the law.	1 (10%)

<b>Pre to Post: Perceptions of the courts</b>						
Item and total respondent n	Survey	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
The courts treat people fairly, regardless of race, gender, age, income, or other personal characteristics. (n=9)	Pre	4.6	5.0	3-5	.73	1.0
	Post	4.2	5.0	2-5	1.09	1.0
I would be comfortable with what the courts decide in a case that is very important to me. (n=9)	Pre	4.6	5.0	3-5	.73	1.0
	Post	4.8	5.0	4-5	.44	0
The courts have the knowledge and skill necessary in order to adequately do their job. (n=9)	Pre	4.1	4.0	3-5	.78	1.0
	Post	4.3	5.0	3-5	.87	1.0
I am confident in Puerto Rico's courts. (n=8)	Pre	4.6	5.0	4-5	.52	1.0
	Post	4.8	5.0	4-5	.46	.25

<b>Pre to Post: Engagement with the courts</b>						
Item and total respondent n	Survey	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
The majority of people don't know enough about the courts in order to offer useful suggestions to improve its services. (n=9)	Pre	2.4	2.0	1-5	1.41	2.0
	Post	3.0	3.0	1-5	1.32	2.0
The community is interested in knowing more about the courts and in participating in educational activities hosted by the courts. (n=9)	Pre	4.7	5.0	4-5	0.5	1.0
	Post	4.7	5.0	4-5	0.5	1.0
If given the opportunity, the majority of people can and would offer useful suggestions to improve the court's services. (n=9)	Pre	4.8	5.0	4-5	.44	0
	Post	4.8	5.0	4-5	.44	0
I feel comfortable with other people from my community collaborating with the courts to improve their services. (n=9)	Pre	4.9	5.0	4-5	.33	0
	Post	5.0	5.0	5	0	0



<b>Post-Survey: Progress on community conflict issues</b>					
During the dialogue, did you make progress in the following areas?					
Item and total respondent n	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
Understanding how people experience conflict between neighbors. (n=5)	4.0	4.0	3-5	.71	0
Sharing ideas about possible solutions for assisting with or resolving conflicts between neighbors. (n=5)	4.4	4.0	4-5	.55	1.0
Sharing new alternative ideas for assisting/resolving conflicts between neighbors. (n=5)	4.2	4.0	4-5	.45	0
Understanding and defining conflicts between neighbors. (n=3)	3.7	4.0	3-4	.58	0.5
Understanding the possible causes of conflict between neighbors. (n=5)	4.0	4.0	3-5	.71	0
Identifying solutions others have previously considered in conflicts between neighbors. (n=5)	4.2	4.0	3-5	.84	1.0
Identify and clarify the strengths of communities or groups to resolve conflicts between neighbors or pairs. (n=5)	4.2	4.0	3-5	.84	1.0
Identifying collaborators and additional resources for handling conflicts between neighbors. (n=5)	4.0	4.0	3-5	.71	0

Post-Survey: Evaluation					
Participant satisfaction					
Item and total respondent n	Mean	Median	Range	Standard deviation	50% Interquartile range
I was satisfied with this community dialogue. (n=5)	5.0	5.0	5	0	0
I would like to participate again in similar activities. (n=5)	5.0	5.0	5	0	0
Participant experiences					
To what extent did these groups listen to and comprehend the discussion?					
Conversation facilitators. (n=9)	4.4	5.0	3-5	.73	0.5
Participants. (n=9)	4.7	5.0	3-5	.71	1.0
Dialogue experiences			Yes	No	
Was the discussion informative? (n=7)			7 (100%)	0 (0%)	
Did you have an opportunity to ask questions? (n=7)			7 (100%)	0 (0%)	
Were those present able to give their opinions publicly? (n=8)			8 (100%)	0 (0%)	
Was there time to debate and converse about the themes? (n=8)			8 (100%)	0 (0%)	
How useful was the information presented? (n=8)			Not at all	0 (0%)	
			A little	0 (0%)	
			A lot	8 (100%)	
Were your questions answered? (n=6)			Not at all	0 (0%)	
			A little	1 (17%)	
			A lot	5 (83%)	
All individuals could participate. (n=8)			Not at all	0 (0%)	
			A little	2 (25%)	
			A lot	6 (75%)	
I felt comfortable enough to share my opinions. (n=8)			Not at all	0 (0%)	
			A little	1 (12%)	
			A lot	7 (88%)	
The dialogue permitted me to see new perspectives. (n=8)			Not at all	0 (0%)	
			A little	2 (25%)	
			A lot	6 (75%)	

## Appendix 6: Measures and supplemental materials

### Engagement Form

The engagement form was used to track consistent data about individual engagements held by the PEPP teams in order to be able to look for potential patterns across engagements.



Engagement level  
data form - concise.

[https://www.ncsc.org/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0021/60249/engagement-form.pdf](https://www.ncsc.org/_data/assets/pdf_file/0021/60249/engagement-form.pdf)

### Pre and Post Surveys

Spanish-language pre and post surveys were administered for adult community leaders, youth, and court actors.



Pre cuestionario  
líder.pdf



Pre cuestionario  
joven.pdf



Pre cuestionario  
empleado.pdf



Post cuestionario  
primer evento -líder.p



Post cuestionario  
primer evento -jóven



Post cuestionario  
primer evento -emple

[https://www.ncsc.org/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0013/60250/survey-1.pdf](https://www.ncsc.org/_data/assets/pdf_file/0013/60250/survey-1.pdf)

[https://www.ncsc.org/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0019/60418/survey-2.pdf](https://www.ncsc.org/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/60418/survey-2.pdf)

[https://www.ncsc.org/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0014/60251/survey-3.pdf](https://www.ncsc.org/_data/assets/pdf_file/0014/60251/survey-3.pdf)

[https://www.ncsc.org/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0015/60252/survey-4.pdf](https://www.ncsc.org/_data/assets/pdf_file/0015/60252/survey-4.pdf)

[https://www.ncsc.org/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0016/60253/survey-5.pdf](https://www.ncsc.org/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/60253/survey-5.pdf)

[https://www.ncsc.org/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0017/60254/survey-6.pdf](https://www.ncsc.org/_data/assets/pdf_file/0017/60254/survey-6.pdf)

### Teamwork and communication exercise instructions

The teamwork and communication exercise was employed at both youth engagement sessions and with the San Lorenzo adult engagement participants. The exercise instructions are in Spanish.



Teamwork and  
communication exerci

[https://www.ncsc.org/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/60255/teamwork-and-communication-exercise.pdf](https://www.ncsc.org/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/60255/teamwork-and-communication-exercise.pdf)

## News exercise summary

The radio news summary exercise was employed at both youth engagement sessions and with the San Lorenzo adult engagement participants. The news summaries are in Spanish.



News exercise  
summary adult\_Spanis



News exercise  
summary youth\_Span

[https://www.ncsc.org/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0019/60256/news-exercise.pdf](https://www.ncsc.org/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/60256/news-exercise.pdf)

[https://www.ncsc.org/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/60257/news-exercise-2.pdf](https://www.ncsc.org/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/60257/news-exercise-2.pdf)