POPULAR EDUCATION

TOOLS FOR SYSTEM CHANGE

*Resources, Case Studies and Tools for training
and events in the Friends of the Earth Europe network*

School of Sustainability

Friends of
the Earth
Europe

POPULAR EDUCATION

Content

Common Curriculum Popular Education

Foreword

Popular education is the cornerstone of Friends of the Earth Europe's School of Sustainability (SofS). We honour its essential role in our transformative and organising work towards system change! In the past three years, we have strived to arrive at a shared understanding of what popular education means to us and how it influences our work. Together with the 22 member groups who were part of SofS and with Friends of the Earth International, we have built our foundation of critical pedagogy. The journey towards system change brought deepened analyses and ongoing internal transformation - a slow, yet radical and empowering journey! We would like to share with all of you what we have experienced in our period of learning and unlearning.

Popular education has allowed us to work on our praxis by connecting theory to practice. We have discovered ways on how we could break some barriers to participation and inclusion through learning not only with the head but also with the heart and hand. We have built and sustained relationships in the network focussing on needs assessments, collective creation of meaning and our potential to take action to address the issues together. An intrinsic part of our application of popular education is the recognition of the inner wisdom of everyone. Furthermore, we were guided by the framework of tracing the root causes of issues through a wider systemic lens.

This has shed further light on various strands of work linked to capacity building, campaigning, solidarity work and movement building through a people-centred approach. It has been key in facilitating our anti-oppression work linked to unpacking power and privilege on the personal, organisational and societal level. We are still learning and we know that it will be an ongoing process to acknowledge our privileges and ensure we contribute to people's emancipation. Popular education means that learning starts from our own experience. This includes a necessary reflection of our ways of working, and finding ways to better support people disproportionately impacted by social, economic and environmental injustice.

This module contains tools, case studies, session outlines and other resources on how we have learned and applied popular education in practice. We consider this as a living document which has an inherent potential to take new forms and we invite anyone to adapt it to the needs of the group they are working with.

The modules we have created within the European School of Sustainability as well as our Tools for System Change website (http://virtual.foei.org/trainings) are part of our attempt to take a snapshot of the inspirational and transformative work within the time capsule of School of Sustainability and beyond.

May this be an additional source of energy and inspiration towards our agency of change!

Written by Shenna Sanchez, Friends of the Earth Europe

Introduction to Popular Education

The roots of Popular Education

The term Popular Education was introduced by Brazilian Educator Paulo Freire. The form of education he practiced and advocated for was one that stood in stark contrast to the formal education he experienced. Whereas formal education was directed to imparting knowledge into the heads of learners, Popular Education begins with the experience of the learners as the source of knowledge. Rather than being passive receivers of knowledge, learners are active in producing knowledge about the world around them. This means that the educational process is directed is directed towards the development of a critical consciousness and ultimately the liberation of the learner. Education then becomes the practice of freedom.

Popular Education today

Popular Education is now frequently used as an umbrella term to describe educational methods that seek to develop critical consciousness in learners. Many educators have drawn on and developed Freire's ideas, including bell hooks, who has challenged some of the sexism in his original work. The work of Training for Change, a US-based activist training organisation, draws heavily on Popular Education as popularised by Paulo Freire, but builds in other concepts to develop what they call a "Direct Education" approach.

Popular Education in the European School of Sustainability

The European School of Sustainability was inspired by the School of Sustainability in Friends of the Earth Latin America & the Carribbean, whose approaches draw from the Latin American history of popular education and Paulo Freire. We have sought to learn first from our sister School, and received training from them in 2016 during the first European-level School of Sustainability event. We have also learnt from the expertise of popular education organisations in Europe such as LABO, and from Training for Change in the US. Friends of the Earth groups across Europe have been adapting these approaches in their own contexts, as well as bringing new ideas and tools that have emerged from their own practices.

Core concepts in Popular Education

Here are some of the core concepts that inform the European School of Sustainability's educational methods, drawn from the work of the Trapese collective:

1. **A commitment to transformation and freedom –** At the heart of popular education is a desire not just to understand the world, but to empower people so they can change it.
2. **Learning our own histories not his-story –** Although there are always at least two sides to every story, the vast majority of official history is exactly that his-story, written by the literate educated few, mainly men, not by peasants, workers, fighters, or women. We are taught about leaders of world wars and histories of great scientists, but not much about the silent millions who struggled daily for justice. These are the ordinary people doing extra-ordinary things who are the invisible makers of history.
3. **Starting from daily realities –** Looking at how problems and issues affect people in their daily lives
4. **Learning together as equals and showing solidarity –** Popular education aims to break down the relationship between teachers/ students and educators and participants.
5. **Getting out of the classroom –** Learning can take place everywhere and anywhere
6. **Inspiring social change –** enabling participants to feel connected to wider issues and to be take action on the issues that concern

Written by Fiona Ranford, Friends of the Earth England, Wales, Northern Ireland.

TOOLS

Water pouring

TIME NEEDED: 15-20 minutes

PREPARATION NEEDED:
You will need a glass for every participant in the workshop, and a full jug of water.
The chairs in the room should be organised into rows facing the same direction.

Why use this tool

This tool is a great way to support participants to understand the difference between formal educational models and popular education models. It is an ideal activity to begin a training for volunteers or staff members in popular education methods.

Description

1. Once the room is prepared, invite participants to take a seat in the room and take a stand in front of the group. Welcome them to the workshop.
2. Next, walk between the rows and give each participant a glass one at a time. Don't simply pass a stack of glasses down each row but give a glass to each individual.
3. Then walk between the rows again and pour water into each of the glasses. Take your time, and don't worry if the water distributed is not equal.
4. Once everyone has received water in their glass, ask participants to speak with the person beside them for a couple of minutes and answer the question: *How did that experience feel for you?*
5. After a few minutes, invite people to get up and move around the room. Encourage them to chat to people and if they want to, exchange water with each other.
6. Next, invite people to share reflections on that experience to the full group. Ask: *How did that feel to you? Did it feel any different to the first experience? Which experience did you prefer?*
7. After gathering some reflections, explain that the first experience sought to represent something of what traditional education, sometimes known as "banking education" does. It:
    a. Assumes that the teacher has all the knowledge (represented by the water) in the room
    b. Creates a one-directional flow of knowledge between the teacher and the student

10

      c.   Assumes the learner has no knowledge of the subject.
8. On the other hand, the second experience was more similar to a popular education approach. It:
      a.   Assumes that all people in the room already hold knowledge
      b.   Encourages the sharing of knowledge between participants
      c.   Considers the teacher's role to be one of enabling knowledge to emerge, and understands that the teacher also learns from the students.

Facilitator considerations

If you have a large group, the first part of this activity can be quite time consuming. But don't rush it, this is another part of the experience which the participants can then reflect on and compare to their experiences of formal education – for example, being bored at school.

Written by Fiona Ranford, Friends of the Earth England, Wales, Northern Ireland. Based on an activity by LABO.

Image theatre

TIME NEEDED:
30 – 40 minutes

PREPARATION NEEDED:
Coloured papers to write words that participants come up with when hearing the term popular education.

Why use this tool?

This is one of the ways to set the tone of an activity or gathering inspired by popular education. It is also a way to demonstrate learning and sharing through a head, heart, hands approach.

Once there is a distinction made between formal education and popular education, based on the experiences of the participants, a collective harvesting can take place of the group's understanding of what popular education means and where it comes from.

Description

In advance, it could help to write keywords from established popular education references such as Paolo Freire. This way, there could be an opportunity to build on the collective knowledge of the group and mention the keywords: people-centred education, critical consciousness, collective learning, experiential, reflection, action, Brasil, Nicaragua, liberation movements, emancipation, change, etc.

- ✓ Invite the group to stand and to form a circle. Once everyone is in the circle, ask all of them to turn their backs from the circle
- ✓ Initiate a short grounding exercise which includes making everyone notice the space they are in, the ground they are standing on, the way their weight is distributed to their feet, the different sensations in the face or body and the freedom to do what they need to feel more comfortable, the thoughts they might have and to allow them to pass by, the manner in which they are taking in air.
- ✓ Share with the group that we have different ways to express our thoughts and experiences. One of them is through the body. There's a tendency to focus too much on thinking and speaking while we could also express ourselves by listening to our body.

- To try this out, say one word for example, "peace". Ask everyone to express through the body and face what they think and/or feel when hearing the word "peace". On a count of 5, everyone will face the circle with their body and facial expression. When everyone has faced the circle, thank everyone for the images they are sharing.
- Pick one or two examples where anyone is welcome to describe what they see. This could also be a way to present how we can make *observations* based on the visual aspects we see e.g. hands are open, smiling faces, etc. This is in contrast to the general tendency to make *interpretations* and *assumptions* beyond what is visible.
- Invite again everyone to turn their backs from the circle. Try another word. Count to 5 until everyone faces inwards.
- This time, say "lecture". Remind everyone to take a moment to remember how their experiences were like. There might be more than one memory coming to mind, ask them to pick one specific memory and notice the sights, sounds, feelings that comes along with it. Allocate at least 20 seconds for them to come up with a frozen image. On a count of 5, ask everyone to face the circle.
- Ask the group "What do you see?". Collect the visual observations one by one and check with the person(s) who had been expressing the images what they are trying to portray. Then proceed with the "following questions, with the possibility for the group to elaborate together:
    - "What are similar gestures?"
    - "What are unique gestures?"
    - "How was your learning experiences during lectures?"
    - "What was your role in the learning experience?"
- Summarise the different experiences shared when hearing the word "lecture". Connect this to the various experiences linked to lecture and other tools being used in formal education.
- Finally, say the word "group learning". Repeat the steps above.
- Ask the group to make observations in the outcomes of this exercise compared to the previous one on "lecture". Harvest the different experiences linked to group learning. Connect this to the participatory, inclusive and people-centred approaches of popular education.
- Thank and invite everyone to take a seat and find a comfortable spot or position. Present that you will collectively go deeper into popular education approach on a flipchart and coloured papers with keywords. Ask everyone to have a quick flipchart harvest of keywords linked to group learning.

- Then pose the question "What comes to mind when hearing the term Popular Education?". Allow the group to share additional keywords. Build on the contributions of the group.
- Add your prepared coloured papers with keywords as needed (for example, people-centred education, critical consciousness, collective learning, experiential, reflection, action, Brasil, Nicaragua, liberation movements, emancipation, change).
- Check with the group what they think of the words. See the possibility of telling stories together on the origin and roots of popular education. Invite questions.
- Recap the final result of the flipchart harvest.
- Ask for feedback and/or evaluation from the whole session.

Additional elements or variations

The 2 main words can also be exchanged with "formal education" and "informal learning" or specific activities which your group could associate to these two main terms.

Facilitator considerations

- It is ideal to first have group building such as name games, getting to know each other, and theatre warm-up exercises to prepare participants to be in the learning/discomfort zone.
- This tool can complement the sessions linked to expectations and maximising/minimising learning.
- The timing would be preferably in the beginning of a gathering, activity or event in order to set the tone.
- Mention the possibility for anyone who feels uncomfortable to opt out of the image theatre exercise.
- The amount of time needed could increase depending on the size of the group.

Written by Shenna Sanchez, Friends of the Earth Europe

TIME NEEDED:
2 hours of preparation; 1 - 2 hours of mapping; 0.5 - 2 hours of feedback

PREPARATION NEEDED:
Flip chart, some markers, small papers (could be post-its) if you have not prepared the questions, pencils for each participant, eraser for yourself

Why use this tool

In this tool, people are asked to rate questions on a 10-point scale and afterwards you can use graphs of the ratings given to analyse the results. It takes a while but is very rewarding if the right questions are asked.
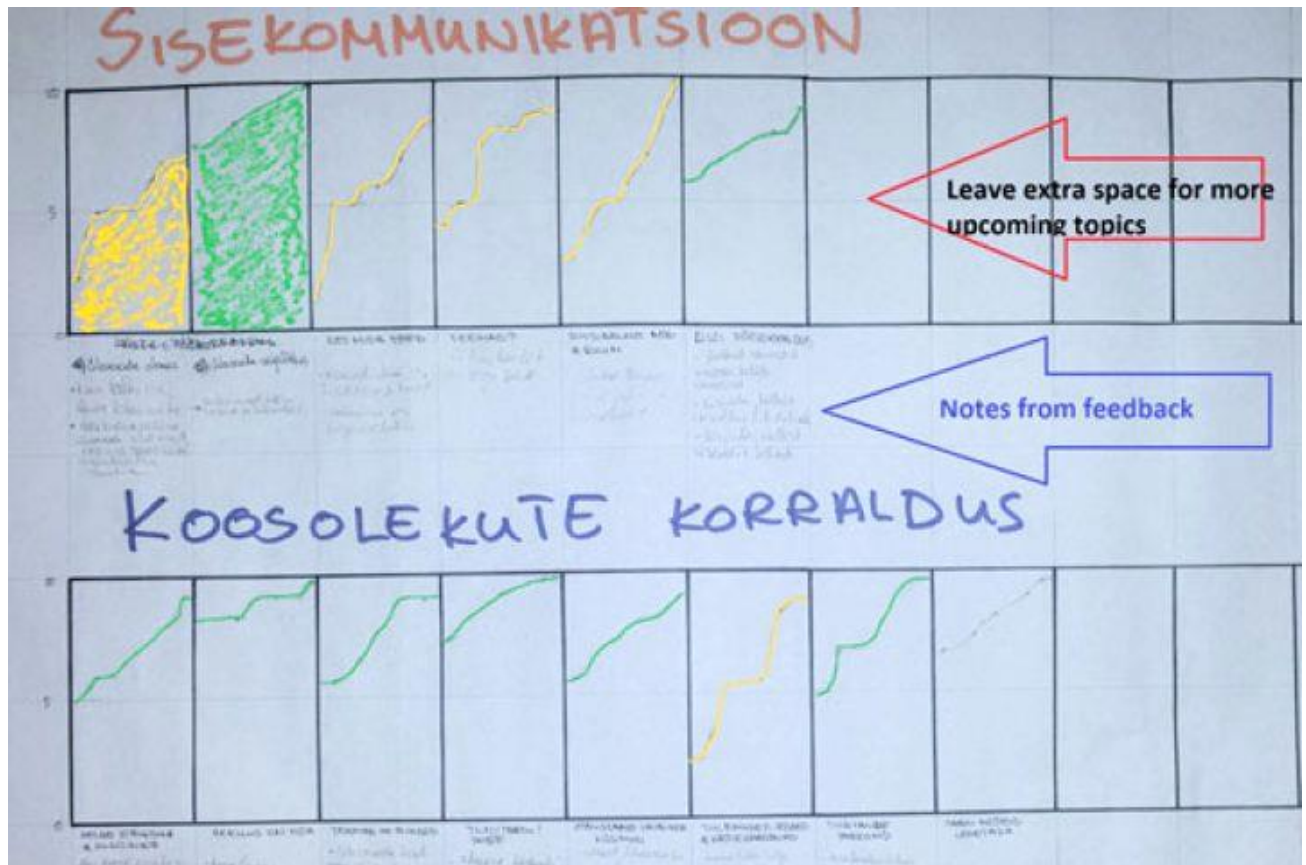It can be used to analyse problems, map issues, get feedback, set priorities, and create good input for some kind of strategy process, for example to evaluate internal communication ways of working in your group.

Description

Preparation (2 hours)

✓ Map the areas you want to explore in main categories, e.g. internal communication, working culture, physical working space, meetings.

✓ Translate each issue into smaller easily measurable sub-questions.
Example 1: if you're looking at internal communications, it would be a good question to ask "Internal communication: 1) using the mailing list is effective (0 points = not at all, 10 points = it's perfect)". Explanation: people are sending relevant information; content is clearly marked (is it FYI, need to act quickly, etc.); amount of information is reasonable; etc.
Example 2: if you're looking at working culture, it is not a good question to ask: "Working culture: 1) we don´t have a problem with gender equality (0 points = yes, we do, huge problem; 10 points = no problem at all)".
Why? Because it could be hard to rate if you have not given much thought to gender equality; most people would rather say that there is not a problem because they are used to be treated like this or treating others in an oppressing way.
You could ask like this: Working culture: 1) Men and women have equal responsibilities and possibilities (0p = they do not have; 10p = yes, they have). Explanation: men and women equally do different tasks: cleaning the work space, taking notes, represent organisation in media and meetings, etc.

- ✓ If you think of the questions in advance, print them with enough copies for each participant.
- ✓ Draft the graph areas on the flipchart.

Mapping (1 to 2 hours, depending how many questions there will be and how they are harvested)
- ✓ You have to make sure that people will understand what they are rating. So, it is good to read each question aloud, then explain it, and also give the questions to each person on a separate piece of paper (where they also can write down their points). Let participants comment if something is unclear.
- ✓ When people have marked their points down on their own paper you can either ask people to mark their points on a flip chart or collect them yourself and mark scores on the graph area. I prefer the latter in bigger groups (5+ people) otherwise it might get too messy.
- ✓ After collecting the scores, you can draw the graphs. For better visuals you can use colors: red if there are many answers below 5, yellow if there are values both above and below 5, and green if most are above 5. Red areas will be the ones that need attention urgently. Some problems might need a systematic change and further discussions and are not as easy as fixing light conditions in the office.

Feedback (30 mins to 2 hours, depending how deep you want to dig and how much focus is set on problem solving or the purpose is just to reflect and summarise)
- After the graphs are ready you should have a feedback circle – ask if people want to comment why they gave the points the way they did. And then with a group you can try to find solutions or next steps to solve or improve the situation. Its is helpful to have someone take extra notes, but you can also write some key words under each graph.
- If you are mapping some internal issues, you can ask the same questions after a year to see if the improvements were helpful.
- After the meeting you can type in the results in excel to have more precise results.

Additional elements or variations

It is an option to have something like world café sessions beforehand, to map the questions and issues with the group. If possible, have the world café session one day earlier to have some time to analyse the questions with a few people and make the wording concrete. And to give the group some rest.

Facilitator considerations
- If you prepare the questions in advance, leave some empty spaces where the group can add relevant topics or questions.
- Make sure people know what they rate.
  0 = huge problem, poor situation;
  10 = not a problem at all, everything is good;
  x- or not rating = this issue is not relevant or do not know.
  You can reverse the scale (10 = huge problem), as long as this is clear and everyone is using the same system throughout the exercise
- When formulating questions, bring examples from their everyday life, so it will not be abstract.
- I would recommend not to have more than 15 sub-questions.
- Ask people to write their answers down on their own paper first, otherwise they may be influenced by other people's opinions.
- Make sure to agree at the beginning if the answers are anonymous or not.

Written by Kai Allikas, Eesti Roheline Liikumine / Friends of the Earth Estonia

Conceptual dialogue -TV Show

TIME NEEDED:
60 – 90 minutes

PREPARATION NEEDED:
- ✔ Identifying and briefing the speakers
- ✔ Creating the materials for the "TV show" (a theme tune, a flipchart with the name of your TV show, etc.)
- ✔ and for the audience participation (post-it notes or paper for people to write their "tweets", a mock "microphone", etc.)

Why use this tool
The tool can be used to introduce complex, conceptual or controversial issues from a variety of perspectives. As it is based on a TV show (or other popular or familiar format), it encourages engagement, and allows for a more entertaining structure than a traditional panel discussion.

Description
- ✔ As the "host" of the TV show, you will explain the the participants that they are now the audience of a TV show that will be exploring a particular topic with the input from a range of speakers. There will be a possibility to use "twitter" to as questions or give input to the discussion. The idea of a TV/radio show allows a lot of creativity in the introduction (e.g. inventing the name of a TV show, such as "People Power TV", and using jingles).
- ✔ Introduce the speakers, and invite them to sit at the front of the room. Each speaker should be given a few minutes to introduce the concept from their own perspective- based on their own experience and their own political perspective. A few questions for each of the speakers can be prepared in advance, but the "host" should know the topic being discussed, and be able to ask follow-up questions and questions of clarification.
- ✔ After the first round of speakers (not more than 30 minutes), the audience can interact through "twitter", ask participants to submit their questions or comments on a piece of paper (maximum 280 characters!), or the participants can call in (as with a phone-in TV show).
- ✔ The host, or a co-facilitator, should keep time, and ensure that all "tweets" are read out. Towards the end, the speakers can be asked to give a summary, wrapping up any loose ends or giving a summary of what has been said.

18

Additional elements or variations

- ✔ Videos or audio clips can be used to introduce topics for discussion.
- ✔ The "TV show" can continue with small group discussion, perhaps with one of the speakers in each group. Each small group can then "tweet" their feedback.
- ✔ In an event of several days, this tool can be used several times (maybe at the same time every day, as a TV show that happens every day at the same time.)
- ✔ You can adapt the format to copy an element of popular culture from your country e.g. a café discussion.

Facilitator considerations

- ✔ It is important to choose the right people as speakers (ideally, people who are able to speak in front of the group, but can keep their input brief).
- ✔ Ensure there is a diversity of genders, as well as experience/perspectives among the speakers.
- ✔ The tool works best when there is a good preparation of the TV show format, and where the facilitator is able to get into the spirit of a TV show host.

Written by David Heller, Friends of the Earth Europe, based on a tool from the Sustainability School of FoE Latin America and the Caribbean: http://atalc.org/escuela-la-sustentabilidad/

Hassle lines

TIME NEEDED:
45 – 60 minutes

PREPARATION NEEDED:
- ✓ Co-facilitator to brief one of the lines
- ✓ Flipchart with "observation role" if you are using observers.

Why use this tool

This tool can be used...
- ✓ as a relatively simple way to structure a role-play, to give people experience of a particular situation;
- ✓ for a very wide range of scenarios related to communication, dialogue or confrontation between a pair of people;
- ✓ to give people experience (confronting someone who is aggressive, or in a position of authority), and allow reflection on this situation;
- ✓ to practice a particular practical skill (talking to a journalist or police officer during an action).

Description

- ✓ Split the group in half, and have each half of the group line up facing a partner. Make sure everyone has a partner by asking them to take the hand of their partner. If you have an odd number, the co-facilitator can join one of the lines to make an even number.
- ✓ Explain that this role play will be done in pairs. Each time, you will be given a different role to play, and your partner will be given a different role. You should play the situation in pairs, not as a whole line of people against another line.
- ✓ Take line A to one side of the room, and brief them with their role for the first situation. Your co-facilitator should take line B to the other side of the room, and brief them with their role for the first situation. Ensure everyone understands the situation. You can ask people to think about a new name for themselves to help them get into the role, and think about the first thing they will do or say.
- ✓ When the two lines have been briefed, bring them back together, make sure everyone is facing their partner, remind them that it is a one-on-one exercise (not as a group against a group), and tell them to "start".

- ✓ After some time (this might be 2-5 minutes depending on the scenario, or certainly when you notice that all pairs have finished their role-play), tell everyone to "stop". Do a very short "de-rolling" exercise: ask everyone to tell their partner what they had for breakfast, where they last went on holiday, etc. or to jump up and down on the spot 5 times.
- ✓ Then ask the pairs to de-brief – in their pairs. You can start by asking people to describe how it felt, before going on to reflect on what happened. The exact questions to discuss will depend on the purpose of the exercise. If your scenario is based on dialogue, you might ask people to ask whether the communication was effective, or had the desired effect. If you are role-playing a conflict scenario, you might ask what were moment that the situation escalated or de-escalated. Ensure you give enough time for the de-briefing, as this is where a lot of the learning takes place.
- ✓ Bring the two lines together facing each other, and give everyone a new partner. The easiest way to do this is to move everyone in line A along by one person (just ask the person at the nearest end of line A to go the far end of line A, and the rest of line A moves along by one person).
- ✓ You can repeat the exercise (briefing, role play, de-rolling, de-briefing, find a new partner) 2 or 3 times- with a slightly different scenario each time.
- ✓ After the final de-briefing in pairs, bring the group together, and de-brief as a big group. It can be useful to go through each of the scenarios in turn, asking first someone from line A to give their reflections on the first scenario, and then their partner from line B. Focus on what worked well in each scenario, what people did which helped the situation.
- ✓ This can be a moment to ensure that any conceptual or general points are brought out from the group depending on the purpose of the exercise. This could include tips or hints for how to deal with this kind of situation in the future, generalisation or concepts on how conflict and escalation/de-escalation works, etc.

Additional elements or variations

- ✓ It may be useful to split the group into 3 lines, and so each pair also has an "observer". Introduce the questions for observers at the start of the exercise (what did you observe, what do you think worked well, or could have been improved in this situation, did you notice anything which changed the dynamics), and write them up on flipchart so that you don't have to brief the observers each time. You should then have at least 3 scenarios, so that each of the lines has a chance playing the "activist" role, the "opponent role" and the observer. When you ask everyone to find a new partner, just ask the

21

person from the far end of line C to move to the near end of line C, and have the rest of the line move down one.
- ✓ There is literally an unlimited number of scenarios that can be role-played in this way. By shaping the scenarios, you can create some very specific dynamics within the role plays.
- ✓ This is one of the most powerful tools in the trainers' toolkit. Almost every trainers' collective we know has their own ways of facilitating this exercise!

Facilitator considerations
- ✓ Some people, and some groups, will find it harder to get into the role play. It can be useful to do a warm-up before this.
- ✓ It is important to ensure that people have got out of their roles, especially if you have introduced confrontation in the scenarios. Ensure that you or a co-facilitator are able to spot any people who are still in their role, or need some support to deal with any issues that may have been brought up.
- ✓ Make sure you and your co-facilitator are absolutely clear which lines each of you are briefing with which scenario!

Written by David Heller, Friends of the Earth Europe

Problem posing

TIME NEEDED: 40 – 60 minutes

PREPARATION NEEDED:
Identify one or more person who can be a "problem holder" who is willing to explore this issue/problem with a small group.

Why use this tool?

This tool enables participants to gain a deeper understanding of an issue or problem that should be resolved, rather than jumping straight to "problem solving". It can be used to tackle issues that have been raised during an event, or problems/issues that participants are dealing with in their practice outside the event.

Description

This exercise works best in small groups (6-8 people). In case there are more participants, you can ask people to form small groups at random, or based around their interest in a particular topic.

Each small group needs to identify one person (the "problem holder") who brings a problem to the group.

Each small group then self-facilitates the following steps:

1. Problem-holder introduces the problem
2. Other group members asked clarification questions, to which the problem-holder can respond
3. Group asks questions to help the problem-holder think through the problem more deeply (without the group offering answers). Problem-holder responds to these questions. (Approx. 20 minutes).
4. All members of the group take it in turns to attempt to re-phrase what they think the problem is.
5. The group asks further questions to help problem holder explore solutions to this problem. Again, the problem-holder can respond.
6. Finally, the problem-holder outlines a plan of action for how they will begin addressing the problem.
7. All participants reflect on the process - was it useful? How did it feel?

Additional elements or variations

- ✓ You can decide whether the plan of action (and a short summary of the problem) will be fed back to the plenary, or whether it will stay within the small group.
- ✓ The same structure can be used in groups that will meet more regularly, with a different person bringing a different problem to the group each time.
- ✓ Instead of introducing their problem in words, the problem holder can show an image or drawing that represents the problem.

Based on an exercise facilitated by Sophie Manson (Friends of the Earth Europe) and Sofie Petersson (FoE Sweden).

Collective reading

TIME NEEDED: 3 – 6 hours

PREPARATION NEEDED:
- ✔ 2 copies of the book you've chosen
- ✔ post-it and pens
- ✔ copies of book cover, table of content, back cover

Why use this tool?

This tool aims to develop the critical sense of the topics in a book or longer text. The objectives are:
- ✔ to popularize reading and make difficult books understandable by anyone;
- ✔ to carry out a collective and critical activity;
- ✔ to create a common understanding about a specific topic;
- ✔ to deeply understand that no knowledge is neutral, that there are always different points of view.

The collective reading method originally comes from popular workers' groups in the late 19th Century. It has become a popular education tool in the 1950's.

Description

Locate the book and its author:
- ✔ The trainer chooses a book they have previously read, and that is relevant to the seminar's topic (here, the history of popular education). A relevant book could be *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, written by Paulo Freire.
- ✔ The trainer introduces the author of the book: who he or she is, why, when and where this book was written.
- ✔ The trainer invites the participants to comment on the book's title and everything the group can say by observing (not reading) the book. Usually the group will state facts ("the book is big, colourful, the image makes me think about….") and make some hypothesis about the book's content.
- ✔ The trainer literally cuts up the book, by dividing equally the number of pages to the number of participants. We don't mind about the chapters (this step can be done before the session to avoid losing time).

Reading:
The trainer distributes a part of the book to each participant and asks them to note three things on post-it notes:

- ✓ A "gift sentence": something they want to keep because it's relevant for themselves, or of particular interest.
- ✓ A "key word" that represents their feelings about what they have read.
- ✓ Something that they don't understand well, that they would not be capable to explain to someone else.

The participants take time to read their part of the book. They can move to a quiet place if needed. Count approximately 45 minutes of reading for 15 pages.

Restitution/feedback:
- ✓ Each participant is invited to present a post-it to the group, and give a brief explanation about it.
- ✓ When it echoes someone else's thoughts, that person can present their post-it to the group, etc. This allows each participant to express their feedback.
- ✓ The trainer will encourage all the participants to present their post-it to the group. This method allows all the participants to have a global understanding about the book, and to exchange different points of view and feelings.

The time needed depends on how much time you have, and how deep you want to go. It's always good to ask participants to talk briefly and to summarise. Some participants will probably try to resume entirely what they have learned: this is not the goal of the method. One or two sentence(s) should be enough to summarise the chapter they have read, the participants will learn more with the post-it explanation.

Closing:
After the restitution, ask the participants how they feel, what they take with them from the experience. This will allow the trainer to adapt the tool for the future workshops. Often, participants are interested to learn more about a specific topic after the session: it's an opportunity to invite them for a next session about the topic or to give them references to read.

Facilitator considerations

If there are complex concepts in the book, it's good to be prepared and able to give simple and clear explanations to the group during the feedback and/or to add information to what the participants explain to the group with their post-it.

Additional elements or variations

- ✔ A similar exercise can be done using a series of quotes, for example the *Popular Education quotes* at the end of this booklet.
- ✔ Texts can be discussed in pairs before feeding back to the whole group.

Written by Celine Racine, Friends of the Earth Wallonia

The Pancake Game

TIME NEEDED: 60 – 90 minutes

PREPARATION NEEDED:
Enough chairs for each participant, 5 pieces of A4 card or thick paper that can be folded in half to make name signs, circle of cloth or paper 20 cm in diameter (to represent a pancake).

Why use this tool

This is a role play to explore issues including local democracy, trade and the food system, as well as how to campaign and build alliances- starting from a relatively simple situation to dig deeper into issues.

Description

The role play is based around a response to school students who are complaining about the poor quality of the pancakes that they are being served in the school canteen. The quality has decreased since the local council decided that the schools could no longer produce their own pancakes, but had to buy the cheaper frozen pancakes made by the global pancake producer on the other side of Europe.

✔ Explain to the group that this will be role play in the form of a TV show, where everyone gets a chance to represent a character or role.

✔ Divide the group into small groups (2 or 3 people), who will play the following roles: School students; global pancake producing company; local politicians; local pancake co-operative. You could also add the role of European Commission. As facilitator, you will play the role of the TV show host.

✔ Give the small groups 10 minutes to prepare their role, (in different rooms, or different parts of the room so they can't hear each other). You can give extra information to each of the groups to help them understand their role. The global pancake company and local pancake cooperative should invent names for their businesses, and the local politicians should decide which political party they represent.

✔ After 10 minutes, bring the small groups together in the "TV studio" (a semi-circle of chairs). Each small group should have a name card in front of them showing their role. Explain that as on all TV shows, you should not talk over each other, and give others a chance to speak. As TV host, you could have one of the pancakes on a plate (represented by a circle of dish-cloth, or paper).

- Begin the "show" by explaining that the students had contacted the TV show to complain about the pancakes, and giving the students 1-2 mins to introduce their complaint.
- Then you can introduce each of the other groups in turn, giving them each 1-2 mins to introduce their positions.
- Then allow some debate between the small groups. Encourage each of the participants to say something. You can ask provoking questions to get the discussion going.
- End by asking each group in turn what their next steps will be.
- Give the final word to the global pancake company, as sponsors of the TV show!

De-rolling:

To help get out of the role, you could: get people into pairs with someone from a different small group and ask them to explain something to each other (what they had for breakfast). Changing seats and removing the name cards could also help.

Debriefing:

Begin the debrief by asking each of the small groups how it felt, and whether they felt strong in their position. Try to steer the discussion away from the quality of pancakes, and towards the underlying issues.

Finish off with the question: What are we going to do together?

This could lead to ideas about actions, further study, training in preparing counter-arguments for media work or campaigning.

Additional elements or variations

You could ask what this tells us about the world today, and who has the most power? Does this fit with what you've been taught about democracy? Would the situation have been the same 30 years ago? Is this the way it should be in the future? Who are the possible allies?

Depending on the issues you want to address, and what comes out of the group, the debate could then go in the direction of lobbying, democracy and corruption, local economy vs. global trade, power of the media, neoliberalism in education, greenwashing and labeling, etc.

Written by David Heller, Friends of the Earth England, Wales, Northern Ireland. This role play has been used by Lars Igeland from Friends of the Earth Sweden with groups of 10-15 people, aged 15 upwards.

Political Weather Forecast

TIME NEEDED: 20 - 30 minutes

PREPARATION NEEDED:
Draw a sun, cloud, and a storm image (like a weather forecast) across the top of a piece of flipchart paper to make a simple chart.

Why use this tool

- ✓ Popular Education seeks to value the knowledge within a group.
- ✓ This tool helps a facilitator to find out what environmental, social and political issues a group is aware of, and to initiate conversations within a group about why these issues might be significant.
- ✓ It can help you to identify issues of particular interest to the group, which they may want to investigate further.
- ✓ It is a good way to prepare a group to explore issues that are important to them, rather than issues pre-determined by a facilitator.

Description

1. Give each participant two or three post-it notes and ask them to write down two or three stories they have heard about in the news or on social media in the last few weeks or months. You can narrow the discussion down to a particular topic or focus. For example, you could ask people for stories they have heard about migration, the environment or the economy.
2. Ask people to put their post-it notes under the sun if it is good news, under the storm cloud if it is bad news, and under the cloud if they aren't sure or think it could be either.
3. Once all the stories are on the flipchart, go through them one at a time, asking for details on the story, asking who else heard about it, and clarifying confusion about the story where necessary.
4. Group together stories that are similar or connected.
5. Ask participants why they put the story where they did on the chart. Ask other participants whether they agree, and explore different opinions where there is disagreement. Where relevant explore different sources of news and why they might report stories differently.

6. This can be the starting point for some rich conversations about current issues and how they affect the lives of participants in the room as well as other people locally, nationally and across the world.
7. If you want to choose one issue to discuss more in depth, you can ask each participant to put a dot beside the story or cluster of stories they are most interested in.

Facilitator considerations

It's important to acknowledge in this exercise that not all the news we hear is necessarily factually correct.

Where there are questions about the accuracy of the news, it is a great opportunity to ask whether we can always trust what we read, who owns the media, and what stake they might have in telling us some news stories over others.

Written by Fiona Ranford, Friends of the Earth England, Wales, Northern Ireland. Based on an activity by LABO.

A picture tells 3 words

TIME NEEDED: 15 minutes

PREPARATION NEEDED:
- Printed or drawn pictures (at least A4, at least 1 picture per 6 people), related to the topic you are talking about.
- Optionally: the same photos on power point.
- Some tape or tackit to attach photos to the wall, some post-its and pens.

Why use this tool

This exercise can be used to…
- make an intro to a topic;
- sum up an activity;
- divide people in smaller groups;
- raise questions the facilitator needs for the session;
- let people get to know each other better.

It involves moving around in the space, pictures and discussion in smaller groups.

Description

- Place the pictures around the area (on floor or walls) leaving enough space between them to allow people some space to gather and talk (take at least 1 picture for 6 people).
- Add one post-it and pen to each picture.
- Let people choose one picture and ask them to:
  1. gather in a small group around the picture
  2. share among the group why they chose this photo and their name
  3. agree in the group to choose 3 words (could be noun, adjective, …) or questions which describe the picture or the mood of group for choosing the picture or something similar and write them on one post-it
- Ask people to sit down to their places if they are finished
- Show the photos using power point and let the group whose photo is displayed read out their 3 words/questions. Or walk around the area and go from picture to picture – but this way not everyone might be able to see the picture well.

32

Facilitator considerations

Some photos tend to attract more people than others, so groups won't be even sizes. Consider also using different kind of pictures: photos, sketches, abstract painting-like etc.

Written by Kai Allikas, Eesti Roheline Liikumine / Friends of the Earth Estonia

Moving debate

TIME NEEDED: 30 minutes

PREPARATION NEEDED:
- ✔ Decide on the statements you will use. Are you going to focus on a particular theme such as climate justice, economic justice, transition from fossil fuels?
- ✔ Create an 'agree' and 'disagree' sign and stick them on opposite sides of the room
- ✔ Print sheet of statements for the debate

Why use this tool

This tool is used as a way to explicitly show the variety of views in a room, and encourages participants to verbalise their opinions, oftentimes having to argue them in front of their peers. This is excellent practice in communications, and also gives the facilitator an opportunity to get an overview of the level of knowledge and experience in the room.

Description

- ✔ The facilitator explains the activity to the group, that a series of statements will be read out, one at a time, and that participants are invited to place themselves on an imaginary spectrum line between agree and disagree. Where they place themselves corresponds to their level of agreement or disagreement with the statement.
- ✔ The facilitator surveys the room, and often will encourage participants to be true to themselves with regards to where they stand, as it is very easy to be swept along by the actions of the crowd. The facilitator also explains that if any participant is swayed by another's answer, they are encouraged to move along the spectrum line in accordance with how the response has changed their mind.
- ✔ Once all participants have chosen a spot, the facilitator asks the group for comments or reactions to the statement. They may ask particular individuals why they are standing where they are, if nobody offers a response to the group.
- ✔ In order to encourage debate, the facilitator may turn from one polarity of the spectrum to the other.

Additional elements or variations

This can be made into a spectrum cross, whereby there are 2 factors to consider in the decision of body placement instead of just one (agree/disagree). For example, it could be used in a session on Non-Violent Direct Action, and the x-axis might be usefulness of action, and the y-axis could be ease of action. Any factors can be substituted in.

Facilitator considerations

It is important that participants respect each other's viewpoints, even if not wholly agreeing with them. If the debate begins to arouse a sense of conflict, unease or disrespect, the facilitator must be confident that they can diffuse the situation. Often this can be done by encouraging the participants to foster an air of respectful disagreement. It may be necessary to follow this activity with one that cultivates a strong group dynamic.

The facilitator must also restrain themselves from giving an opinion in this exercise. They can summarise, paraphrase and project what the participant says, and supplement with relevant information if necessary, but they must not imply that there is a right or wrong answer to each statement as to do so would jeopardise the reasoning behind the use of this tool.

Written by Meaghan Carmody, Friends of the Earth Ireland

Climate Outburst

TIME NEEDED: 3 hours

PREPARATION NEEDED:
- ✓ You will need a large enough room for the small groups to be able to work with enough space between them.
- ✓ Materials: Large sheets of paper, limited number of pens (3 per small group), bell, stopwatch, flipchart/pin board

Why use this tool

This tool is a playful, time-restricted brainstorming to collect participants' first associations with a specific topic. It can be used as a starting point/warm-up for a workshop on climate justice and it can help to get a short overview of the level of knowledge within a group.

Description

1. Divide participants into at least two groups (not larger than 5-6 persons per group). Give each group a large piece of paper and not more than three pens.
2. The facilitator reads aloud a climate related term (a word or phrase). Following a common starting sign (bell), the groups have to note down as many associations as they can think of in relation to the announced term within 30 seconds (or more). This is repeated in up to four rounds.
3. After all the rounds, each group reads out their associations for each term. There should be room to explain certain words if necessary.
4. The facilitator decides: For each association that matches the term, the group gets one point. For a term that does not fit, a point will be deducted.
5. The group with the most points wins. However, the focus is not on competing against each other, but to get into the topic.

Additional elements or variations

The game can be played with as many terms as you wish. The more terms you use, the longer the game takes.

Facilitator considerations

You should use at least four terms. To test whether the participants understand the rules of the game, you can use an example, e.g. 'summer'.
Possible terms: greenhouse effect, climate change, climate negotiations, (climate) justice

Written by BUNDJugend / Young Friends of the Earth Germany

CASE STUDIES

Summer camp
Friends of the Earth Croatia

Summary

A 7-day residential Summer school at Zelena akcija's Solar Academy on Sholta Island

Who was involved

- ✔ We had 25 participants coming from different parts of Croatia, from rural small towns and big cities.
- ✔ Our main participants were mostly students who are volunteering in their own fields of interest, or communities, and staff of other environmental/social NGOs. The age of participants varied from 19-40 years, which had a beneficial effect on the group dynamics.
- ✔ Some of them were drawn mostly by the pedagogy of the oppressed that we said we are using and other by environmental/systemic issues we are covering.
- ✔ We also had 4 places available for our activist group. Afterwards, we were happy to see more people interested in joining this group.
- ✔ We also had 3 people from the collective "Taste of home" who are migrants that joined us as part of the program but also as participants, and 2 persons from Volunteer Centre Zagreb who held us a workshop on self care and introspection. These visitors proved to be of high value!

Purpose

- To explore topics of domination and oppression, power and privilege, conscientiousness and liberation;
- To debunk the myths through education, activism and advocacy and its understanding by using and exploring Pedagogy of the oppressed (Freire) and Theatre of the oppressed (Boal)
- To explore the topics of economic, social and environmental justice and re-think our understanding of sustainability
- To make a clear connection of global and local (migrants, refugees, depletion of resources, valorisation of nature, post-colonialism, etc...)
- To share stories of solidarity and to explore how to take care of ourselves
- To provide opportunities for people to get to know each other and learn from each other's experiences and inspire people to get involved
- To bring friendships to a whole new level by understanding what solidarity really is

Using popular education methodologies

- Our camp coordinator, who had considerable training in popular education methods and in education itself, had envisaged the whole programme with a focus on head, heart and hand principles wherever possible, and focussing on the way we listen to each other, being aware of our dominant positions as well as our oppression. This was also a way to encourage those who learn differently or are less outspoken, let them be heard and integrate them into the group.
- As this was the first time we used this type of methodology throughout the summer camp, all 4 workshop facilitators were given prior training in popular education methods. Their experience at the summer camp would enable facilitators to use these methodologies in the next event with more confidence. They were supported to design their session using a joint template to define content/activity and desirable change/learning outcome.
- As a kick-off, we had 30 minutes of lecture and problem posing, just to provide basic information, present a question and discuss in groups – and ideally spark the passion to learn and explore more.
- Special attention was given to taking care of individuals (as we were a small group of 30 people including staff), to the way everyone expresses, how they feel, and how they see things. Of course, the focus also was on getting to know each other and working/sharing together whether through affinity groups or random groups during the problem posing.

40

- We had two optional activities. One was "Taste of home" - cooking a dinner of national dishes, together with two migrants from Ethiopia and Senegal who now live in Croatia and to share recipes and stories. The second one was a *Forum theatre* workshop, that was attended by 17 of 25 people and turned out to be a great success, because people were just overwhelmed after they played a role they only listened about or were bystanders in. We used lots of games (energizers/ de-rollers), films, role play, theatre, and quizzes, creative workshops (poster and card making), engaged in cleaning the camp and played some music together.
- We had practical workshops on media work and composting
- Every evening we screened a film at our E?! Fest (Environmental film festival) that contributed to a topic we worked on, and after film we would have a conversation about the film or the questions that arose watching it.
- Ground rules were set the first day and were repeated as much as needed.

Engaging with system change and connecting local to global

- All of the workshops actually focused on understanding system change, causes of social, economic and environmental crisis as the crisis of humanity, understanding what oppression is and how we carry this oppression in ourselves and we exercise the same patterns towards the others, making more oppressed people.
- The first step was to understand the concepts of oppressor and oppressed and to learn about the tools of awareness (conscientisation). Next challenge was getting acquainted with the problems that human rights and environmental defenders face in the whole world when trying to oppose their oppressor (especially the big companies).
- We also showed the connection of local to global when talking about the effects of what and how we consume and dispose - from coal for our power plants to what we wear and eat. We talked about climate change and its false and real solutions (using a quiz), and about economic, social and environmental justice. We discussed post-colonialism, possible solutions and valorisation of nature (here, for example we used the *Problem posing* tool).

What we've learnt

- The most valuable moment was our chat among affinity groups at the end of each day. After that we would all talk in the circle where groups and individuals would share their day. This was their safe place and everyone looked forward to this. Great emphasis was put on making sure everyone is

encouraged and has an equal opportunity to speak and to be listened to with respect.

✓ We also learned about the importance of engaging in all these methods of popular education and that we should continue using this "template" we have for this summer camp as it can be used by many, just changing the topics you want to cover. We want to continue working on this topic primarily through understanding the power relations and then connecting it to local/global, environmental/systemic problems.

✓ What we learned as a team of first-time facilitators is that good programme and meticulous planning is really important, as well as every-day meetings, especially before the sessions to go through the agenda and re-check individual roles. This also leaves room to support each other if someone is not feeling well that day. This worked well, but needs to be improved in our case as it was the first time for everyone so the main leader (facilitator) felt really overwhelmed and it builds up during the 7 days of the programme, and it can lead to a detachment from the whole group in one point of the time (and we want to avoid this).

✓ 5 days after the camp, we did a final group evaluation ourselves. This was really important in planning the future summer camp, as the comments that came up can be used for planning other events as well.

Follow up

We finished the notes made during and after the lectures, with photos and important web links (to learn more about the topics), and sent them sent to participants. We also created a closed Facebook group for people to continue exchanging ideas and news and for us to be able to invite them directly to engage in more Friends of the Earth Croatia activities. Finally, we created a memories recap for the website.

Written by Aleksandra Schindler from Zelena Akcija / Friends of the Earth Croatia

Eastern and Central Europe Member group gathering

Summary and Context

Over the past three years, we have been learning and unlearning a lot about organising gatherings and meetings with our member groups. One of these was the historical first meeting of Eastern and Central European member groups of the Friends of the Earth Europe network which also included colleagues from Bankwatch.

Through previous School of Sustainability spaces such as our European-level meetings, these member groups had expressed the need to understand better each other's historical background, organisational capacities and priority topics as well as activities. In addition, they asked for a nurturing and safe space to be heard in relation to the uniqueness of each group. The gathering aimed to shed light on the diversity of region and to break the misconception that the region is homogenous. This influences various strands of our work within and beyond the network, from capacity building to wider movement building.

We all convened in an eco-center in Slovakia to go deeper into the challenges and to explore how we can collectively address the issues.

In the meeting, we discovered the uniqueness of each member group as well as various ways to apply popular education approaches in engagement with the network and to come out as a stronger united front. There is a need to explore the possibilities for collective action, as a key part of the emancipatory nature of popular education.

As such, the purpose of the event was to understand the context of the countries (history, political background, a bit of culture and society in general), and the work frame of organizations (size, context, issues and topics worked on, as well as methods and the meaning of "activism"). The event also explored challenges and problem, needs and expectations from the network, and created space for honouring each other and celebrating. The event also aimed to create specific plans for future, possibilities of engaging, and ways to support each other, if needed. The intention was to create an open atmosphere, enabling to think, share and analyse how to make our work more inspiring, productive and linked within the network.

Who was involved

We have prepared this meeting with representatives of the majority of Eastern and Central European member groups as well as colleagues from Bankwatch. Within School of Sustainability, we have a clear intent to get to know better our host organisation and the allies they work with. In this case, we visited a school and a biomass facility which CEPA/Friends of the Earth Slovakia has supported through campaigning and cooperation with community based projects.

Using popular education methodologies

✓ This meeting was born from the identification of needs and going deeper into the framework which the member groups are operating in. The preparation team sent a need-based assessment questionnaire to the member groups (before the event) to define cues for the gathering's scope and agenda. We have noticed in other gatherings how this has boosted the motivation and engagement of the participants. The questionnaire consulted the participants on their groups' size, structure, current work, future regional or international topics of interests, among others. The results have guided us in defining the goals of the gathering.

✓ In most gatherings or meetings, it is important to have an agreement of the group's shared commitment and responsibility to ensure that we will achieve the objectives. The preparation team has set the tone as early as in the process of agenda drafting during the brainstorming and consultation stages. In addition, we start our School of Sustainability gatherings with a

round of expressing expectations, what maximises our learnings and participation, what minimises our learning and participation, and if needed we formulate a group agreement (http://virtual.foei.org/trainings/tools/group-agreement/).

✓ In the agenda preparation, scoping and methodological planning, we apply Emergent design, a framework for the implementation of systemic change in education and learning environments. In this casel, we reserved spaces in the agenda for any aspects possibly missed during the consultation period with the groups. This allows shaping the agenda in an ongoing way during the gathering to meet new important discussions which need to happen as well as assessing in which spaces those could be had during the gathering itself, beyond the gathering as a follow-up activity, etc.

✓ Throughout the duration of the School of Sustainability, we've focused on building relationship and trust, and arriving at a shared vision of what we want to achieve and how to achieve it. In every gathering we make sure to facilitate group building activities, for example: getting to know each other games, energisers, trust-building activities, and a diversity welcome (http://virtual.foei.org/trainings/tools/diversity-welcome/) which we adapt acknowledging the various roles, groups, emotional/physical/mental states of people present, etc.

✓ As part of the *Problem posing* method, we had a role play storytelling of each member group's history leading up to the current political context, including one interesting fact about their country which is not widely known and one item that represents the country. This reflects the heads, hands and heart approach of popular education.

✓ Upon having identified the common threads, the preparation team created a framework which allowed participants to go deeper, and arrive at a shared understanding. We had world café sessions with three rotating tables. The three themes were based on the problem posing exercises of the first day: 1) History (Post-Soviet), 2) Topics and activities and 3) Organisational capacity. Participants were asked to name specific challenges under each theme. This has fed into our joint reflection and deepened awareness of the challenges faced, shared post-Soviet history and how this influences the scope of work they are doing on the ground.

✓ As another component of decoding the problems identified, we proceeded with enriching and synthesising the needs assessment with a *Mapping of issues and setting priorities* (see tools section). This mapping has been guided by the outcomes of the world café sessions earlier. Everyone was asked to rate every question in 10-point scale and afterwards we have created graphs to present the most important aspects and challenges. This mapping

requires significant amount of time but is very rewarding if the right questions are asked. This has taken around 3.5 hours and could be prolonged to allow time for:

- o Preparation: 2 hours, formulating the questions in advance and drafting the graph areas on a flipchart
- o Mapping: 1 - 2 hours, depending on number of questions and how they are harvested
- o Feedback: 0.5 - 2 hours, depending on how deep the collective reflection goes. Is there a focus on a transformative practice and problem solving, or is the purpose only limited to reflection and summarising?

Linking to system change and local/global issues

✓ The feedback part has raised the importance of looking at the system change framework in terms of how we can build people power to dismantle inequitable and dominant power structures. We found the mapping exercise very useful in analysing problems, getting feedback and setting priorities. This has been a starting point to gather collective input for long-term planning e.g. strategy process, evaluation of internal communication ways of working in your group, etc.

✓ As part of the transformative practice and applying the learnings from the gathering into action, this was followed by a commitment circle in order to identify how to take forward in various levels (from personal to organisational) the outcomes of the gathering, the follow-up activities and discussions to continue tackling the challenges raised, etc.

✓ As part of the transformative practice, we had a *Conceptual Dialogue* through People Power TV sharing of the various ways the member groups are working and how some of these could be relevant as well as useful for the other member groups.

What happened

We have identified the most important challenges faced:

✓ Lack of activism culture, difficulty to mobilise activists in the streets
✓ Varying understanding on gender justice perspective
✓ Need to defend true democracy in the light of shrinking civil society space
✓ Difficulty to keep a flat way of working/structures
✓ Difficulty to develop a more inclusive structure

This gathering became one of the sounding boards to contribute in the long-term thinking and strategic planning of the network. The focus was on continuous capacity building and support, continuation of the unpacking of power and privilege in the network (internal transformation towards system change), etc.

This gathering has given birth to joint work, e.g. a joint fundraising application from Baltic member groups, Russia and Denmark to the Nordic Council of Ministers on continuing the SofS ideology of environmental transformative education linked to energy topic, Danube river funding, Zero-Waste, etc.

What we've learned

- ✓ We have learned the importance to allocate enough time for the commitment circle to tackle the follow up of gatherings: clear next steps, who is responsible, when, etc. As this is usually part of the end of the gatherings/meetings, it tends to be cramped up as the previous sessions take up more space together with emerging issues.
- ✓ The visits and exchange we've had with the local allies and partners of the host organization were very insightful. We recommend for cross-country, regional or international meetings to consider incorporating it in their agenda as it brings to light how member groups work. This proved to be inspirational especially from a campaigners' point of view.
- ✓ The preparation team recommends allocating time every day to deal with emerging issues, assess where those could be dealt with and if within the agenda of the gathering, how to incorporate them on the agenda.
- ✓ We also encourage trying other methods on problem posing such as Action Learning Sets to enable participants to gain a deeper understanding of an issue or problem that should be resolved, rather than jumping straight to "problem solving". This embodies empowerment through tapping on the problem-holder's agency for change. In addition, this could lead the way to finding other aspects needed to have an informed decision on the issue: where necessary information could come from, from whom, what range of support is needed and where that could come from.

Listen to the podcast recorded at the event
https://soundcloud.com/foeeurope/episode-14-school-of-sustainability-a-heart-to-heart-approach-to-activism

Written by Shenna Sanchez, Friends of the Earth Europe

Scented stories / Stejjer Imfewha
Friends of the Earth Malta

Summary

The Stejjer Imfewha project brought together storytelling, artistic workshops, and the experience of herbs, flowers, and spices to communicate the unique experiences of migrants on the island.

Context

The workshops come at a time when immigration is altering Malta's social structure. The idea is to approach conservation through the lens of ethnobotany, the study of the cultural and traditional significance of plants, as a way to bring people together and foster an awareness of conservation.

Stejjer Imfewha has taken several steps to ensure there is a legacy to this project. Significant documentation - visually, orally and in written form - has been included as part of this project's process and outputs. These have been documented in blogs on the project website, photo albums, posts on the Facebook page and in a book.

The book captured all the narratives and key information obtained during the workshops, and is one of the key outputs of this project. It is a legacy not just for the project but also in terms of documenting traditional and cultural heritage.

Overall, the project contributed to FoE Malta's knowledge development and ongoing learning process. Stejjer Imfewha has given us the opportunity to collaborate with artists, migrant associations and introduced new and creative spaces to share ideas, to dialogue, to discover and explore our relationships with each other, and nurture a sense of shared community.

The project has also helped the development of FoE Malta by reaching members of the public that may not have been aware of refugees and irregular migrants before this project. From project managers, to the general public, FoE Malta approached many people outside of the sector that brought fresh and exciting ideas to address our values and mission.

We have also strengthened our visibility in Malta, and formed strong partnerships with a number of national institutions, especially through our collaboration with Integra Foundation.

It has also allowed us to give the Integra Foundation clients (refugees and irregular migrants) an opportunity to learn and participate in artistic activities.

Who was involved

A small action team was forms, consisting of facilitators, artists and irregular migrant advisors (that worked on the project that Stejjer Imfewha drew inspiration from).

Efforts were also put towards creating a Facebook group and website, whereby

calls for participants were made. Press releases were issued in parallel. Potential participants were interviewed and their commitment was confirmed. Local youth organisations (MOVE Malta) were given a private tour and a simple art workshop allowed kids to try the solar paper technique used by one of the artists, displayed in the art exhibition.

Using popular education methodologies

The project was divided into 6 stages:

1. **Encounters**
   The encounters took the form of informal thematic workshops/sessions between participants. Multi-media artists were encouraged to produce works

of art individually, and offered support to participants during these workshops. We endeavoured to have as much diversity as possible with regards to age groups as well as ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds to make this project as fulfilling and interesting as possible.

2. **Creativity Sessions**
These followed the encounters and saw a small participants-artist group meet up informally to allow the participants to explore and interpret their journey throughout the encounters in an artistic way. The works produced from these sessions were featured in the publication and used in the artistic production.

3. **Research**
The project collected information from the encounters, but also from beyond by speaking to people who hold traditional knowledge on the uses of spices and flowers.

4. **Publication**
This was a 'coffee-table' type publication which allows people who did not participate in the project to still take on a journey of discovery through the artistic contributions of the participants and artists. It also serves as documentation of the traditional knowledge gathered throughout the project.

5. **Theatre/Artistic production**
Similar to the publication, the artistic production brought the project to people who did not participate. The production was based on the narratives and outputs of the Creativity Sessions and Encounters.

6. **Multi-sensory sessions**
Open to the general public. Participants explored and interacted with each other, using spices, flowers and the narratives and traditional knowledge which came out of the encounters in an artistic and creative way that would challenge their previous conceptions. Participants of the sessions were invited to taste, smell and feel different flowers and spices while being taken through an artistic journey through the narratives.

Linking to system change and local/global issues

The workshops come at a time when immigration is altering Malta's social structure. The idea is to approach conservation through the lens of ethnobotany, the study of the cultural and traditional significance of plants, as a way to bring people together and foster an awareness of conservation.

What happened

✓ Stejjer Imfewha began by creating a website and Facebook group, to establish an online presence and to assist with dissemination of information to the community. For this project we engaged the community by inviting them to participate in workshops and creative sessions. In parallel to the online calls, we issued a press release in newspapers. One of the major target groups was the migrant community and the Integra Foundation approached its own clients, as well as advertised the project through other similar organisations.

✓ A diverse group of participants was selected and brought together. They came from different cultures and nationalities living in Malta, and during the workshops we organised, they shared with and learned from each other the personal, cultural and traditional knowledge and stories they had about flowers, herbs and spices. After narrative workshops, we held creative sessions and allowed the participants to actively participate in art workshops such as book production, clay work, writing, photography and theatre, enabling the community to learn creative and artistic skills.

✓ The second phase of the project saw the outputs of artistic work – some created in the workshops by the participants, others by audio digitalisation, documentation in books, artistic interpretation of participant stories and ethnobotanical information – displayed in a public art exhibition. The public art exhibition was a free event, which ran from the 27th May to 26th June. It had a launch and a closing event, which were widely promoted to the public online and in national newspapers. It was decided to keep the exhibition alive and accessible to the local community.

- The last workshop was completed in December, and instructions for artists were given to commence with their projects. Documented narratives and materials were also handed over to persons putting together the book. After each workshop, these narrativ, together with photographs taken during the workshops, were documented online on Facebook and the website blog. Interviews were conducted and articles were written about this project on Mongabay, and Encore magazine.

- Efforts were increased in preparation for the project exhibition. A curator was contacted and secured, and preparations were handed over to the curator, once an agreement on concept was made.
  Artists and venues were secured and promotional efforts were made to ensure the exhibition reached as many people as possible.

- Exhibition launched on 27th May, and closed on 26th June, each with their own events to celebrate the work of the artists and the participants of the project. The exhibition closing had its own specific story sharing and book-launching event. Participants from the workshops were invited to share the stories that were captured during the workshops and the book. Guests were also able to order books.
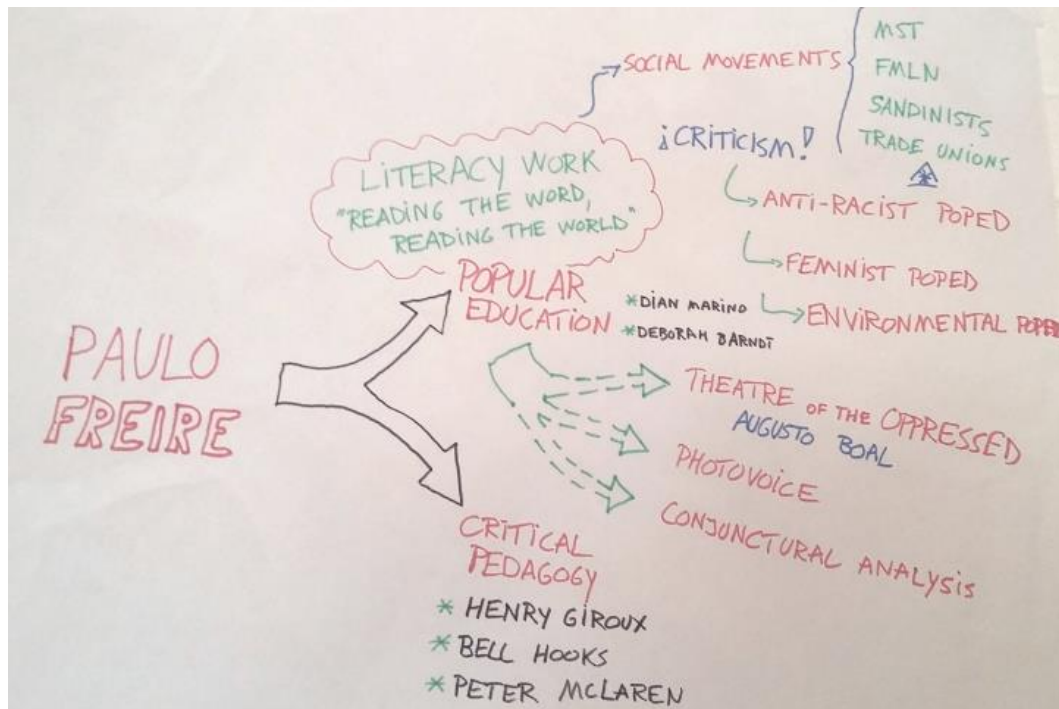

What we've learned

This project helped us get in closer contact with migrant associations and migrants themselves. Since this was one of our first collaborations it of course had its own issues and difficulties which we have overcome in order to make the project a successful one.
The results were in fact very encouraging and will hopefully lead to further collaborations in the near future.

Written by Friends of the Earth Malta

SESSION PLANS

Introducing Popular Education

TIME NEEDED: 2 - 3 hours

PREPARATION NEEDED:
Quotes or concepts written or printed on paper, and cut into "jigsaw pieces". There should be one quote or concept per paper.

Understanding Popular Education

✓ Begin with the *Water pouring exercise* (see tools section) to show hierarchy and the transfer of knowledge in traditional education. This is the "banking model" where the teacher is depositing knowledge to the pupils.

✓ Participants are then encouraged to share water between ourselves. This demonstrates the dialogical learning method. It needs a facilitator or an educator to direct the process. Circles are important in this work.

✓ All activities must have goals and objectives. Some can act as diagnostic tools to see what is going on in the group. For example, the *Climate outburst* exercise (see above) can help you to get the feeling of what the issues are in the room and the struggles that the group faces.

Types of education

- **FORMAL education** – the type of education provided by the state.
- **NON FORMAL education** – any educational activities outside the formal education system. Popular education is part of non-formal education. Non-formal education is not empowering in itself.
- **INFORMAL learning** – it is not education but a learning process including social contacts and procedures. E.g you may learn not to touch a hot object not because you are taught not to, but because you learn from your mistake.

Spectrum line activities

1. Ask people to stand in a line without talking in the order of shortest to tallest
2. Ask people to stand in a line without talking in the order of youngest to oldest
3. Ask people to stand in a line without talking in the order of how experienced you feel at doing popular education.

- Everyone is then given a piece of a "**jigsaw puzzle**" that when put together among the participants some other people, spells out one of the "concepts in popular education" (see below). This activity enables you to form groups that had people with different levels of experience in. The complete puzzle should show the concept on one side, and the description on the back.
- Ask the groups to discuss initial ideas on the meaning of the concept they have been given. Half way through the exercise, encourage the groups to turn the paper around and build on their thoughts in the light of the description on the back. The Popular Education quotes could also be used for this exercise.

Concepts in Popular Education

- **Problem posing**
  We need to get as close to the roots of the problem as possible. Ask people questions in response to their answers, and focus on the quality of the questions. The educator needs to promote these questions, discussions and critical thinking, but not too much. The answers must not all come from the educator and the group needs to find the answers. The educator will ask another question and dig deeper to the root cause. Encourage participants to participate and be aware of their own knowledge and power.

✓ **Hegemony**
Hegemony means the accepted ideas in society as the norm. We need to be conscious that hegemonic ideas are present within the FoE group i.e. the green hegemony within the federation.

✓ **Solidarity in Popular Education**
Popular Education should be non-hierarchical and educators should make it a secure and safe place for people to share, as well as taking the same risks as participants. E.g The theatre of the oppressed is an invitation to change an oppressive situation in a public space. We need to run the same risk if we're going to advise people and give out solutions, although running the same risk can never be fully formed. A solution might be to denounce the privilege you have e.g. while middle class and beware of the sense of guilt.

✓ **Facilitator – trainer – educator**
There is not one distinct role, they all relate. A facilitator is not a sole role, it can also be an educator. In one training event you may switch between the roles. We need to think what is our role in each session (e.g. if there are many people sharing experiences then facilitator, if the outcome is practical in a session then trainer). For each role you must have the methodological tools needed to reach the intended outcome.

✓ **Culture of silence**
The culture of silence refers to the situation where we are not challenging, speaking up, or questioning in a learning space. This is usual in a formal education system, and it strengthens hegemonic ideas.

✓ **Generative themes**
An educator can search for generative themes in a group that act as a starting point, ensuring that education begins with the group. You can use diagnostic tools to get to know the issues/themes that are live in a group. These generative themes emerging from a group can be translated into "codes" that indicate a problem. These can then be unpacked, with the aim of taking people from naïve consciousness to critical consciousness.

✓ **Embodied practice**
This involves doing activities that engage with the head, heart and hands. Popular Education should work with the whole body and being instead of only thinking or only doing. Formal education instead divides children

according to disembodied criteria e.g. who is better in maths. But holistic knowledge includes all three forms of learning.

- ✓ **Praxis**
  An action needs a reflection. When they are combined they reinforce each other, creating new insights and bringing yourself forward.

Theatre of the Oppressed exercises

- ✓ *Columbian Hypnosis*: Pairs take turns in "hypnotising" their partner using their hands. They try leading each other simultaneously, and then try leading two people at once. They then chose a body part of another group to follow. The activity ends with a reflection on how they felt in different roles at different times. This can be used to draw out metaphors about how power and systems operate.

- ✓ *Image theatre:* People take turns to enter the circle and make a pose, seeing their bodies as "intelligent clay" and interpreting the image in different ways. The image can then be animated (see also tools section)

Key differences between formal & popular education

	Formal education	Popular education
Aim	Gain practical skills Acceptance of authority Socialising into the system	Develop critical consciousness Linking the theory of campaigns into skills
How	Learners receive knowledge Emphasis on the results	Emphasis on the process Different learning systems Problem posing
What	Rational – Fact based information	Exploration of alternatives

Note: Non formal education can have its basis on formal education (e.g. skills for cv development). Popular education is mostly non formal, the techniques can be used in different ways.

Based on session plan from Jeroen Robbe, LABO vzw

Labour market and working life

TIME NEEDED: 2 days to 1 week (this version is 3 days)

PREPARATION NEEDED:

- As a location you need a classroom or something similar for the first and the last day. Day 2 will be a day to visit different actors/companies.
- Whiteboard or flipover + post-its, paper and pens
- Equipment to display the movie "Can we do it ourselves" – on YouTube
- Select and make printouts of literature on the topic to all participants. These can potentially be distributed some days in advance.
- Organisation of the visits:
    - Arrangements with host companies (topic, target group, time frame)
    - Time and place for lunch (incl. budget)
    - Transportation (incl. budget)

Why use this tool?

Young people often hear how 'real life' is about career and performance; about making money to be able to consume. Many students worry about their future working life. Some of them will have already experienced burnouts during their studies and heard about work-related stress and a growing insecurity in the labour market. But what are the actual tendencies related to work and which alternatives exists? What kind of working life do we wish to have and how do we get there?

The current social-economic model, with its focus on growth and competition, raises questions about sustainability, environmental impact, lack of resources and overconsumption. In this sense, the workshop can also potentially be linked to project days on resources and consumption.

The goal of this workshop is to give the students an understanding of current tendencies, challenges and alternatives related to labour market, working life and professional organisation. To demonstrate how current working models are linked to specific economic and political paradigms with certain motives and consequences. Simultaneously the goal is to foster new ideas about a future working life among the students and create a sense of possibility towards change and individual choices.

58

Description

In this workshop, we employ the principle "Reality check > Reflection > Action" from Popular Education. Based on the life of the students, 'Reality check' covers the student's personal reality, while 'Reflection' is represented by a discussion of the conditions for the labour market as well as by the meeting with the actors. 'Action' is framed as a future-oriented-workshop and concluding reflections of the experiences of the participants and how these experiences affect future considerations and choices.

Day 1, morning (about 2,5 hours)

Personal reflection and talk in plenum on the question: *What do you wish for your future working life – and what wouldn't you wish for?* (Around 30 min)
- The students reflect individually and write notes on post-its. The post-its are placed on a whiteboard/flip chart. The group discusses their reflections, which is expected to contain both personal wishes/fear and different knowledge/attitudes to the current labour market. In this way we get an overall idea of the reality of the participants, whose experiences and ideas will function as a basis for the rest of the workshop.

Reading and discussion of literature in small groups (around 1 hour incl. short break)
The literature can be a mix of factual texts about the labour market as well as debate papers on exclusion and burnout, competition and (in)security in work life, growing economy vs. lack of resources, alternative work initiatives, sharing economies and division of labour as well as professional pride etc.
Number of texts and groups are selected on the basis of the capability and number of participants. We employ the 'satellite model', where the group is divided in three subgroups. At first these groups read a specific text only given to them, after which they divided themselves into new subgroups where the assigned text is presented and discussed. In this way, a great amount of material and perspectives on the topic is covered.
Alternatively, the literature can be distributed in advance to a) give the students time to individual reading and b) save time
- One person from groups a, b and c team up and share reflections (around 30 min.)
- Satellite group – part 2: The groups team up in new constellations and share reflections in their new groups.

- ✓ Concluding discussion in plenum – optionally with a mind map to outline challenges and solutions etc. (around 30 min.)

Day 1, afternoon (around 2,5 hours):
- ✓ Lecture on cooperatives and economical democracy (around 30 min)
- ✓ Watching the movie Can We Do It Ourselves? (1 hour + 15 min break): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZfaFriFAz1k
- ✓ Concluding discussion and preparation of questions to the visits/hosts the following day (around 45 min)

Day 2, full day:
Visit different actors representing different sides of the labour market. The students present their questions and engage in discussion with the hosts, while the teachers stay in the background and supplement if necessary.
The teacher, the group of students and the specific context define the schedule of the day.

Day 3, morning (around 2,5 hours)
This day involves a lot of talking and discussion. It can be made more easily accessible and physical through changes of location (outside, different places e.g.) as well as shortenings of a few sections to instead do practical work.
In this version the 'Future oriented workshop' takes one day, which in most descriptions is considered as a minimum. The amount of time given to specific sessions and discussions – and the overall day – depends on background knowledge of the group; do they engage themselves in long, detailed discussions or shorter talks. If you don't have a full day, the Future workshop can be shortened into two brainstorms with a critique-section and a section of utopia and ideas, as well as a concluding discussion of thoughts and choices about the future evoked among the students the two previous days.

Recapitulation on day 1 and 2: Personal reflection and talk 2+2 (15 min)
The participants team up 2+2 and reflect on the following questions:
- o What kind of knowledge have you gained these two days?
- o Did something make you wonder?
- o Can you use parts of your new knowledge in your personal life?
- o Did some of the knowledge give you new ideas about a future work life or society?

Future oriented workshop about labour market and work life – phase 1:
Critique phase (1 hour incl. break when needed)

Brainstorm/critique in plenum of the current labour market/working conditions, conditions of production, lifestyle etc. – What does not work in this sector? (Around 45 min)

- ✔ Necessary information about the workshop is presented
- ✔ The teacher or a person chosen from the group takes notes and writes everything on a flipchart. There should also be a 'facilitator' of the meeting (perhaps the same person) who makes sure that the brainstorm doesn't turn into a discussion
- ✔ Only critical statements – short, precise and easy to write
- ✔ The student should be able to speak freely and be serious about their own and others' statements at the same time.
- ✔ A high pace is suggested to create a nice energy, short statements and impulsiveness make sure that the critique doesn't turn into apathy.
- ✔ It is not allowed to comment, but elaborative questions are ok.
- ✔ Participants are invited to think broadly and use all the read and discussed material from the last two days to cover all links between the labour market, working life, economy, production, consumption and lifestyle (Visualising/drawing lines between the different topics can help understand interrelations)
- ✔ The most important points of criticism are selected (Note: The number of points are determined by the number of groups/pairs at disposal)
- ✔ The selection can be based on a vote, where participants get 2-3 votes to place freely, after which the most critical points are selected. Potentially several topics can be linked and included in the selected ones.
- ✔ Together the group finds headlines for the selected topics.

Group formation around the topics (about 15 min)

- ✔ The participants choose a topic to work on and team up.
  Everybody gets the opportunity to comment on topics of the other groups – to give inputs and inspiration for the following working process. The groups take notes of the comments themselves.
- ✔ 15 minutes' break

Future oriented workshop phase 2: Group work around visions, ideas and solutions: Big problems raise big ideas (1 hour incl. break when needed)

In each group, the participants re-brainstorm with a new instruction in mind: the discussion now has to centre only around visions and dreams to replace current problems. How do I wish things to be? (Around 15 min)

- ✔ Necessary information about the workshop is presented
- ✔ The session can take place as walk and talk. If so, the groups must meet again after 15 minutes to have further discussions.

- Participants take turns to come up with statements. Once again the rule is not to comment, criticise or start a discussion. In this phase everything is possible. Utopias are allowed to deal with more than just one specific problem.
- During the session, the teacher help the students follow the instructions and ensure a nice and creative atmosphere.
- Finally the group chooses 1-2 visions or ideas to work with. The focus of the visions can be both on a broad or more personal level; on societal changes, concrete solutions to alternative ways of organizing or life choices. In regard to this, it would be interesting to reflect upon how the chosen level affects other levels as well.

The group proceeds more systematically to formulate alternative solutions (about 25 min)
- If the groups seem to have enough knowledge and input, this and the next session can take place outside, with the groups working at different places.
- The teacher ensures that the participants still think creatively, but at the same time relate to how their suggestions solve or change the points of criticism that were basis for the ideas. (Laughter is important for development of ideas and helps to think creatively)
- The teacher encourages the participants to use inputs from the first two days (the written material, discussions and visits) and can contribute with points forgotten or hard to formulate for the students.

The groups prepare presentations of their vision(s) and solutions including: What kind of problems is this project to solve/How will the project bring change/What kind of knowledge is necessary to realise the project/How will the project affect other points of critique already discussed/Remarks on potential possibilities and challenges (About 20 min)

Day 3 – Afternoon (About 2,5 hours):

Future oriented workshop phase 3: Phase of realisation (About 1,5 hours – depending on number of groups incl. break when needed)
- The groups take turns to present their ideas including: 1) The critique point functioning as a starting point for their project; 2) Their ideas/visions; 3) The concrete idea and reflections on how this will create change/solve the problem; 4) Knowledge or ideas still needed.
- Each presentation is around 5 min. This is followed by a dialogue in plenum with elaborative questions and ideas to further development of the project or suggestions on where to find useful, supplementary knowledge.

- The feedback should not deflate ideas or only emphasise barriers for the project. Potential barriers can be presented as things to work on. The purpose is to be visionary; not necessarily to be able to account for all the details of the project.
- It is encouraged that the presentations are creative, artistic, offbeat etc.
- The inputs of the presentations are noted, drawn, colored etc. on a flipchart.
- After the presentations of each group, we discuss in plenum how the different solutions/ideas and visions can be linked and combined, also to topics from the previous days.

Recapitulation (40 min)
- The participants team up in pairs. They discuss what they have been inspired from and things they would like to know more about. Do they feel inspired to take some of their new knowledge into action – in their own life or in new project/interest etc.? (15 min)
- We gather up and share reflections. Potentially the participants can write down an individual objective; a promise to themselves, a wish for the future, an idea to be realised etc.

Facilitator considerations
- **The size of the group** should ideally be between 6-12. It is important to have a certain number of participants in order to have a basis for discussions and for the workshop about economical democracy. At the same time the number of participants should be limited in order to get access to the companies we would like to visit.
- **Target group**: The workshop is mainly for high school students and young adults just about to enter the labour market. However, the workshop can also benefit adults wishing to understand general and own working conditions. Depending on the group of students, you can choose to focus more or less on challenges and alternatives rather than factual knowledge about the labour market. In this version we have mainly focused on the first mentioned, although it is not certain that all students possess fundamental knowledge about the labour market and work life.
- **Action**: Based on the Popular Education principle 'Reality Check > Reflection > Action' we aim to create action: 1) Based on the participant's own lives, realities and concerns/dreams, 2) Through the meetings with the various actors as well as the future workshop focusing on alternatives (either in society or in a personal level). If possible, the future workshop can address a

concrete future project, which the students can continue to develop and work on.

- ✓ **Activity and practise:** The workshop is quite theoretical. In this sense, some of the activities will benefit from taking place outside. If you choose to include the role play to exemplify economical democracy, this activity contributes with play and movement. Likewise, the visits in day 2 will give an element of practical activities in the workshop.
- ✓ **Theory:** The students have different background knowledge. It is important to carefully assess the expected level in discussions and chosen written material. From our experience, students can easily relate to topics and issues even with little background knowledge about the labour market and working life.
- ✓ **The balance between value-laden and open spaces:** It is important that the teacher is aware of own positions and how these are employed in the workshop. The teacher shouldn't dominate the discussions and promote certain solutions or address certain issues. The meetings with the different actors as well as the discussions among the students will ensure the contribution of other perspectives.

Written by Anna Roene, Friends of the Earth Denmark

Forum Theatre Workshop

TIME NEEDED: 3 hours

Why use this session outline

- ✔ A picture is worth a thousand words!
- ✔ Forum theatre is one part of the Theatre of the Oppressed developed by Augusto Boal
- ✔ Forum theatre is a form of improvisational theatre in which the audience with the help of intermediate-JOKER, that facilitates forum play, helps the audience in solving some social, environmental or whatever other problem close to them, appears in the form of Forum play
- ✔ For successful use of this technique the most important is to develop a good Forum-story or a small theatre play in one or few scenes, not longer than 10 minutes (preferably 5 min), that will be introduced in the Forum play with the intention of solving it

Description

GENERAL RULES TO FOLLOW FOR A FORUM THEATRE

1. Scene must deal with some sort of oppression. It has to contain at least one political or social mistake that will be addressed and discussed.
2. In the classical view of TOO we have 1 main oppressor and 1 person oppressed and their conflict and this is the minimum for the story:
    a. victim of oppression (protagonist)
    b. the oppressor (antagonist)

    but it is very useful to have

    c. witnesses/ bystander's (tritagonists) which with their silence, passivity, resignation or fear make possible for the oppressor to oppress its victim without a problem. They can also be potential helpers that can show the victim possible positive solutions to the problem.

65

3. Conflict always has to end with defeat of the oppressed (defeat is important here because if you show the victory right away than it is like offering an instant solution)
4. Characters have to be recognisable to the audience.
5. When looking for solutions violence cannot be used.
6. There are no magical solutions.
7. It is important that the development of characters is logical and that they are active because they have to inspire the audience to get actively involved in the scene.
8. We need to show an authentic picture of the world
9. During the play, the JOKER or facilitator allows intervention of the audience in the scene. Using the word "STOP!" during the scene, the audience changes the world from what it is to what the world might be. This can be done by asking actors questions, by giving them new assignments or by playing roles in the scene.
10. Story must contain the possibility to make a change, because otherwise it becomes "fatalistic" theatre. When we choose the scene we have to "ask" good questions and the audience needs to find an answer
11. The only character that cannot be changed is the Oppressor.

GROUP BUILDING EXERCISES

50' TOTAL – Warming-up exercises
Important note: always take care of others and yourself!

5' Brain teaser

- ✓ Everyone stands in a circle holding hands. They listen and follow commands of facilitator. When the facilitator says "jump left", "jump right", "jump back" or "jump front", everyone follows the command and also repeat it out loud. For example: They jump left and say at the same time "jump left".
- ✓ The next moment is to do the opposite of what you say, which means they say "jump left" but they jump right and they say "jump front" but at the same time they jump back. This is done quickly. It's group exercise to follow and listen. It also warms up the body.

15' Colombian hypnosis

- ✓ Games are at the foundation of Theatre of the Oppressed, and no game characterises it better than Colombian Hypnosis. Played in pairs.

One player holds their open hand, fingers upward, about 15 cm from their partner's face. The first then starts moving their hand about slowly, while their partner tries to keep their face at exactly the same distance from their hand, as if being pulled or pushed by the hand. After a couple of minutes, switch sides and partners.

✓ The hand can't move too fast and it cannot be stopped. Persons can be put in many crazy and uncomfortable positions, and hypnotising power can be moved from one hand to the other. Like that, we can activate a whole range of forgotten muscles and to become aware of our bodies. One person can also lead two people at the same time. It's important that each person gets to lead another person.

✓ This game puts the topic of oppression and domination into the spotlight and it is interesting to hear how people felt when they led or when they were led, and what they liked better and why.

5' Starry eyes

✓ People walk around the room following the facilitator's instructions called as numbers: 1 means walking very slow, to 10 running, 0 means stop. The idea is that everyone becomes aware of everyone and that the group is moving like one.

✓ At one point, the facilitator calls to stop and find a pair. 2 people then gaze at each other's eyes and walk around the room following the tempo the facilitator gives them (changing it all the time) and they cannot quit the eye contact.

✓ This exercise is intense as people do get uncomfortable at some point when intensively looking at someone's eyes, but it also connects them.

25' Living statues

People stand *face to face* in two lines and in pairs.

✓ while one line makes a living statue of something they like, their pairs who are across from them, have their back turned away.

✓ then the pairs in other line turn around and they watch the living statue of their pair and they need to remember all the details they see. They turn their back again.

✓ the living statues then add up a new detail to their statues or they just move a little bit

✓ partners turn back once more, and they need to shape the living statue back to their original position.

- if the modification is not correct the living statue goes back to their original position.

Afterwards, the partners exchange roles.

HOW TO DO A FORUM PLAY (70')

- 30' minimum preparation simultaneously for each group
- 20' group 1 performance (5 min for Forum play scene)
- 20' group 2 performance (5 min for Forum play scene)

(In case you have 2 groups – recommendation is not to have more than 8 persons in one group so that everyone finds a role)

To separate people in groups, you can choose the easiest way, counting 1-2-1-2- or more, depending how many groups you need. Then "one"'s join group 1, "two"'s join group 2, etc.

People in each group can share stories where they have witnessed or have been part of or have heard of an oppressing situation. The group then chooses a scene/scenes of what they want to share and they prepare it in a 5-minutes scene.

- Group plays a scene of oppression of 5 minutes in front of the other group.
- The first time the scene is played it happens as it was planned.
- The second time the scene is played, the JOKER (facilitator) is introduced. The Joker's role is to follow the scene, to ask people and encourage them to change something in the scene.
- When the group plays a scene for the second time, the public can intervene in the story and try to change the situation. One person says "STOP!" and goes into the scene to exchange one actor. The original actor steps out for now. Changes can occur on 1 or more protagonists, and the actors in the scene need to react to these changes. Anyone can be exchanged but the oppressor. Why not? Because by changing the oppressor, oppression does not stop. We need to change the system that allows this oppression.
- The scene comes to its end and we try to make a change. In case we do not succeed, we can play the same scene over and over until we find a solution (if we have time for this, which we usually don't). However, if we do not succeed, we remember where the problem is and we can discuss this during the reflection time.
- After 20' we change groups.

When deciding on story you can follow on these questions:

– Is the problem realistic or recognisable in real life? – Is the story understandable? – Is the oppression visible/easily recognisable? – Is it clear who is the oppressor and who the victim? – Do we care about the victim? And why? Do we relate? – Is it clear what the victim wants? – Is there space in the story for intervention? – Is there moments in which protagonist or some of bystanders could change the outcome with different set of behavior that can lead all in positive outcome?

When developing characters, it would be good to:

– decide on age and gender – education or occupation – family situation – professional situation – relationship to other characters in the story – characterisation of protagonists: psycho-emotional characteristics, how they act and behave – status: the way they see themselves and how others see them – motivation in the scene: what the character wants in life and why.

AFTER THE PLAY (75')

60' REFLECTION TIME

(it can take less, depending on the group and what they want to share)

15' DE-ROLLING OR WASH OFF

Making Rain
Everyone stands in a circle. Beginning with the leader, all the participants follow a series of motions like a wave creating the effect of a storm approaching, staying on and then drifting away. The participants join in one-by-one. You start after the person on your left has started. This way the sound builds and moves.

- Rub palms together (rising wind)
- Snap fingers (first drops of rain)
- Pat hands on thighs (harder rain)
- Pat hands on thighs & stomp feet on floor simultaneously (adding thunder to rain)
- Just pat hands on thighs (thunder moves on)
- Snap fingers (rain is stopping)
- Rub palms together (winds moving on)
- Put hands at your sides (storm moves on)

Pass the gift

Everyone gets into a circle. You use your hands to mime a flower and pass it on to the person on your left. The recipient of the imaginary flower can either pass it on to the next person or transform the gift into something else. All this is done silently. End with applause.

Facilitator considerations

- ✓ **Ensure group trust and safe space.** This is done through warming-up exercises, so it should be planned well depending on if you do a Forum play with the group that is familiar or group that meets for the first time.
- ✓ **Reflection time.** This might be the most important part of the whole exercise. Make a comfortable circle and ask everyone how they feel and why (sometimes the change did not happen, or the scene wasn't put well in order to solve it, or there are personal reasons someone just froze, wanted to react to injustice they witnessed in the scene but just didn't). Make sure to cover it all and let people express themselves respecting time you have.
- ✓ **De-rolling or wash-off.** This is very important to take away any negative connotations or comparisons of characters with actors that played those characters, or simply to shake off all the negative or confusing feelings the scene might have stored in participants.
- ✓ When we perform the scene we must be careful not to make the "problem" individual, or blame it on the oppressed. The problem must always be systemic in nature!
- ✓ We must fight the easy belief the *Oppressor is inherently bad and the Oppressed is inherently good.*
- ✓ Forum theatre does not necessarily offer a solution. The main aim is to show the problem well and brutal as it is, because there are no easy solutions to heavy problems.
- ✓ Sometimes it is enough to just show the problem to the audience. It is not important that the characters see it accordingly.

Written by Aleksandra Schindler from Zelena Akcija / Friends of the Earth Croatia

QUOTES

Popular education quotes

These quotes that can be used to explore concepts of Popular Education, and as basis for discussion. One possible methodology is to print the quotes on pieces of paper, and spread them around the room. People can then gather in small groups around one quote they find particularly interesting or challenging.

Questions you could ask:

- What does this quote mean for the education work we do?
- What barriers are there for this kind of education?
- Based on this quote, what is one problem or question you would like to pose to the whole group about popular education?

We must never merely discourse on the present situation, must never provide people with **programmes** *which have little or nothing to do with their own preoccupations, doubts, hopes and fears... It is not our role to speak to people about our own view of the world, nor attempt to impose that view on them, but rather to dialogue with the people about their view and ours.*
Paulo Freire

To educate as a practice of freedom is a way of teaching that anyone can learn. The teaching process comes easiest to those of us that believe our work is not merely to share information but to share in the intellectual & spiritual growth of our students. To teach in a manner that rejects & cares for the souls of our students is essential if we are to provide the necessary conditions where learning can most deeply & intimately begin.
Bell Hooks

Those truly committed to education must reject the banking model in its entirety, adopting instead a concept of people as conscious beings, and consciousness as consciousness intent upon the world. They must abandon the educational goal of deposit-making and replace it with the posing of the problems of human beings in relation to the world. "Problem-posing" education rejects communiques and embodies communication.
Paulo Freire

There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.
Audre Lorde

The value added from the teacher is only partly the content we present in the course. Our larger contribution is in our ability to assist participants to access the knowledge that is already present in the group, to generalise from it, and apply it.
George Lakey

In their political activity, dominant elites use the banking concept to encourage passivity in the oppressed... and take advantage of that passivity to "fill" that consciousness with slogans which create even more fear of freedom. This practice is incompatibly with a truly liberating course of action, which by presenting the oppressor's slogans as a problem, helps the oppressed to "eject" these slogans within themselves. After all, the task of the humanists is surely not that of pitting their slogans against the slogans of the oppressors, with the oppressed as a testing ground.
Paulo Freire

"Engaged" is a great way to talk about classroom practice. It invites us always to be in the present, to remember the classroom is never the same. Traditional ways of thinking about the classroom stress the opposite paradigm- that the classroom is always the same, even when the students are different. To me, the engaged classroom is always changing. Yet this notion of engagement threatens the institutionalized practices of domination.
Bell Hooks

Our European School of Sustainability project brings together 23 groups from across Europe, Young Friends of the Earth Europe and Friends of the Earth International. Inspired by the Latin American Escuela de la Sustentabilidad, and driven by popular education techniques, the project aims to strengthen the regional network of Friends of the Earth Europe, and create common political analyses of system change from a social justice, environmental justice and human rights perspective. Exploring and building understanding on transformational education, will help challenge oppression, power and privilege in our work and the issues we are campaigning on.

http://virtual.foei.org/trainings/

School of Sustainability

Friends of
the Earth
Europe