

# SUPPORTING PARTICIPATIVE DYNAMICS



CIVIL SOCIETY  
FOR SOCIAL CHANGE



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# **SUPPORTING PARTICIPATIVE DYNAMICS**

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# INTRODUCTION

## WHERE DOES THIS DOCUMENT COME FROM?

This document is aimed primarily at facilitators from member organisations of the Train To Transform collective. It is a training booklet that will enable those organisations who wish to set up a training course specifically dedicated to building the capacity of those responsible for supporting participative processes. The booklet is the result of the intersection between the experiences of several member organisations of the collective and was co-produced by the "Co-production: supporting participative processes" working group.

This working group was set up after the "Open Doors" session organised by the Participation group in July 2023, with the aim of comparing experiences from the collective's Participation Fund with experiences outside this framework too; in particular FDH's experimentation with social transformation action in France. Members of Duhamic-Adri, Fedina, FDH, MPP and UGPM took part in this work. The group met four times between October 2023 and March 2024, in order to devise a joint training course on supporting participative processes.

The training sequences presented in this booklet are therefore inspired by the practice of several member organisations and have been rethought by the working group to adapt to this particular topic. This training module reflects the desire of the collective's member organisations to constantly improve our practices and know-how, so that together, we can move towards social transformation!

## HOW TO USE IT?

In this booklet, you'll find position guidelines, tools, activities... Everything you need to set up your own "Supporting participative dynamics" training course!

The working group has drawn up six training sequences, i.e. six sessions that can be used "à la carte". Each sequence lasts between 30 minutes and 2 hours, and each organisation can adjust the time to suit the number and profile of participants. Some (such as sequence 1) are icebreakers, while others (such as sequence 3) offer time for getting used to the tools.

The order in which the sequences appear in the booklet is only a suggestion. Everyone is free to pick and choose from the sequences that interest them.

For example, you could suggest the following sequence, for a total duration of half a day:

- The "Letting go" sequence
- The "Four corners debate" sequence
- The "Anti-participation advice" session

If on the other hand, you choose to do all the sequences, you will need to allow for two half-days (again, you don't have to do them in order!).

## HOW DO YOU RUN THESE SEQUENCES?

Setting up these training sessions can be more complex than it seems... because it involves running an in-house training session! Facilitating training sessions for your colleagues requires you to think about your position beforehand, so that the magic of training works!

To help you approach this calmly, here are two general pieces of advice, which correspond to the "two pillars of the facilitator's position" (that can be found on the Atelier de la Transformation Sociale website):

<https://atelier.fdh.org/en/take-action/our-principles/article/the-two-pillars-of-the-trainer-s-posture?lang=en>

- As a starting point, the facilitators use the experiences and knowledge of the participants. In order to avoid a vertical transmission of information (from top to bottom) and to enable everyone to take better ownership of the content of the training session, it is important to always start from real-life experiences.
- This is only possible if the facilitator ensures the training framework is safe for all: it is important to ensure that everyone feels free to speak, that comments are kind and that those who wish to participate can do so. The person in charge of the training session ensures that everyone's personal circumstances, timetables and training objectives are respected!

These principles are particularly true in the context of this training module; since it is aimed at those people who are responsible for supporting action (field workers, promoters, volunteers, etc.), they must have the necessary space to share their experiences, without being judged. The facilitators will make sure that all contributions are valued, and that the individual expertise of those who are already involved in these participative processes is recognised!

Now it's your turn!



# LETTING GO



## OBJECTIVE

Experiencing a situation over which we have no control, individually and collectively.



## EQUIPMENT

- Blindfolds (scarves, masks...)
- Chairs and tables, or anything else that can be used as an obstacle



## DURATION

Between 30 minutes and 1hour (depending on the number of participants – maximum 20).



## GETTING STARTED

### 1 / Before participants arrive

Arrange the room in such a way as to create an obstacle course: i.e. a course that the participants will have to complete in which they will have to step over, go around, dodge, go under or go between items of furniture.

### 2 / Start the activity

- Introduce: The aim of this activity is both to allow participants to experience a situation over which they have no control, and also to build an initial emotional bond with the emotions/feelings/sensations that can be experienced when accompanying a participative process.
- Ask participants to form pairs, preferably at random.
- Hand out a scarf or mask to each pair.
- In each pair, one of the participants is invited to blindfold himself or herself and stand at

the start of the obstacle course. The other person, the one who is not blindfolded, holds the hand of the person who can no longer see. Together, they must complete the obstacle course without the blindfolded person touching any of the objects in their path.

- All the pairs are invited to set off on the course. Gradually, the facilitator can choose to make the course more difficult: by suggesting that participants are guided by the sound of the voice rather than by the hand, or by moving certain objects each turn, for example! After the first turn, the roles are swapped! The person who was blindfolded becomes the guide, and vice versa.
- The activity ends when all the groups have completed the obstacle course.

### • **3 / Once the activity is over**

- The facilitator suggests that participants take off their masks, and gather together in a circle, in the centre of the room.
- The facilitator asks the participants to express how they felt when they were blindfolded. Care must be taken to ensure that the participants have enough time to take stock of their feelings. This means allowing for moments of silence, not rushing for the first person to speak.
- The facilitator should ensure that all the participants listen to each other. He or she invites participants to talk and ensures that everyone who wishes to speak is able to do so. He or she should ensure it is a safe framework for participants; making sure that everyone can participate, making time for those who contribute less, and managing people who tend to monopolise the talking. Not everyone feels they have the same legitimacy to speak. Facilitator should pay attention to that in the context of differences of gender, age, seniority...
- Feel free to refer to the sheet "Two pillars of the facilitator's position", on the Workshop for the Social Transformation website:

<https://atelier.fdh.org/en/take-action/our-principles/article/the-two-pillars-of-the-trainer-s-position?lang=en>

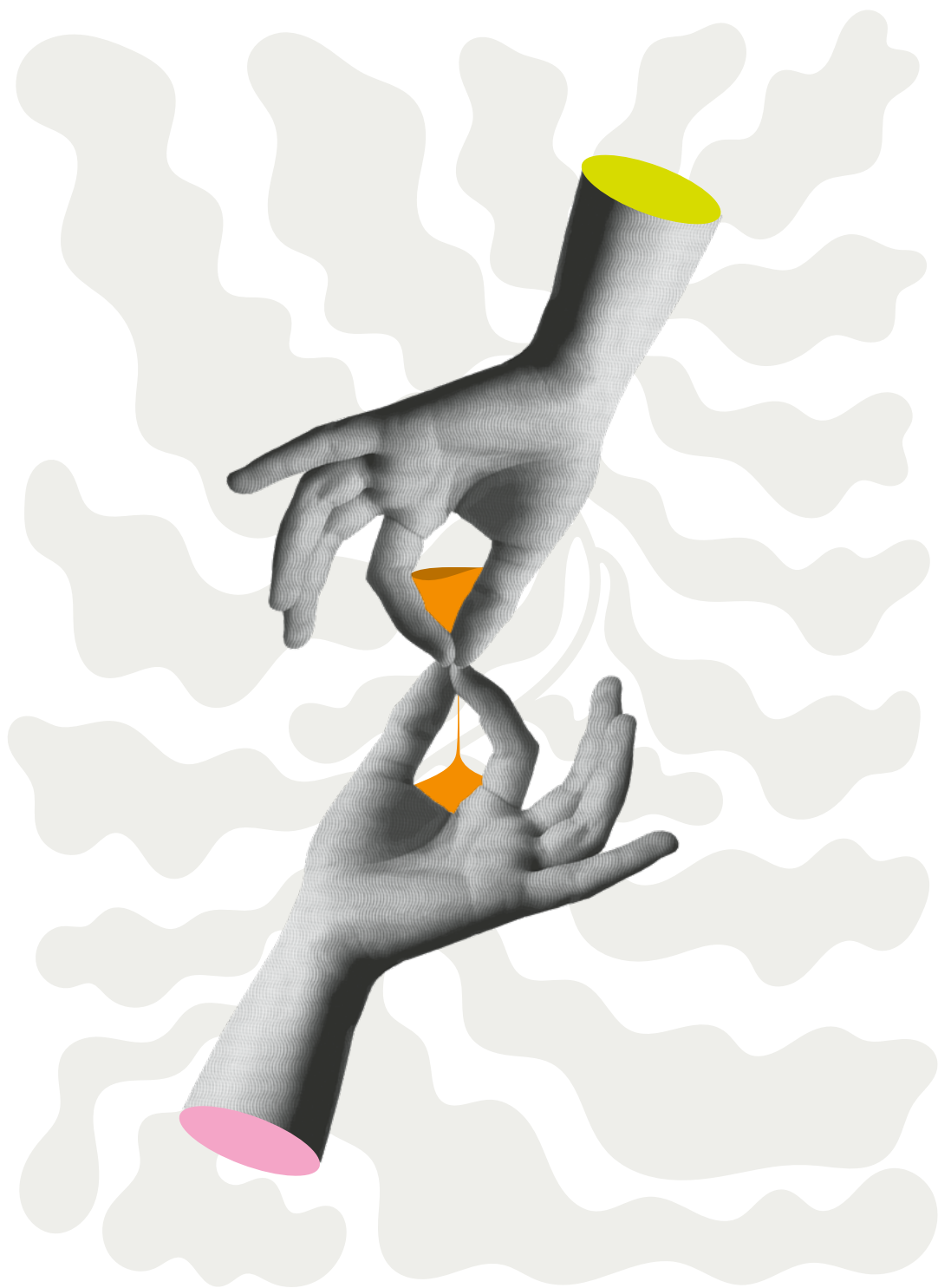
The facilitator is responsible for framing the debate. This means being able to stimulate discussion around questions such as:

- What were you thinking when you set off on the obstacle course without being able to see anything?
- Did you immediately trust the information your partner was giving you?
- What emotions did you feel during this exercise?

### **JUST A FEW POINTS TO HELP US DRAW A CONCLUSION**

Supporting participative collective dynamics requires a certain ability to let go: the field project workers in contact with community groups do not dictate how an activity goes; they support the structuring and implementation of the action.

So, supporting participative processes means not being in control: you never know how the action will unfold, whether it will work or what form it will take. You have to trust the process, just as you would in an obstacle course!



# THE PARTICIPATION LADDER



## OBJECTIVE

Familiarise yourself with the *Participation Ladder* tool and start thinking about the levels of individual participation in collective dynamics.



## EQUIPMENT

- Equipment to show a video to the group (computer, projector or large screen)
- A printed participation ladder, one copy per participant (page 9)



## DURATION

Between 45 minutes and 1.5 hours, depending on the number and profile of participants.



## GETTING STARTED

### 1 / At the start

- The facilitator introduces the sequence: using the "participation ladder" tool. The aim is to collectively question the levels of participation of the people who make up the group being supported. This tool can help participants to better understand collective dynamics and move towards greater participation!
- Distribute the printed ladders. Allow time for participants to become familiar with this tool.
- Once everyone in the group has read the document, the teacher suggests the following activity:

A video showing a participative activity that took place in the area where Adenya operates, in Rwanda, will be shown to the participants. Afterwards, each participant will take 5 minutes to think about where they would place this action on the ladder.

Link to the video:

<https://atelier.fdh.org/en/take-action/our-experiences/participatory-collective-actions/article/an-adenya-participative-initiative-water-source-rehabilitation?lang=en>

## 2 / Debriefing

- The facilitator asks the participants who wish to contribute where they have placed the action supported by Adenya on the ladder, and why.
- The participants discuss their perceptions of the action and the different "levels" of participation indicated on the ladder. If they wish, the facilitator may reopen the debate by asking the participants whether the participative process described in the video echoes an action they have already had the opportunity to support.

## 3 / Second video

- After around ten minutes of debate, the facilitator suggests watching a second video.

This video focuses on a participative activity that took place in the area where Cenca operates, in Peru. It is shown to the participants. Then, individually, the participants take 5 minutes to reflect, and say where they would place this initiative on the ladder. Link to the video:

<https://atelier.fdh.org/en/take-action/our-experiences/participatory-collective-actions/article/a-participatory-initiative-follow-the-talentos-artesanales-group?lang=en>

## 4 / Debriefing

- The facilitator suggests that the participants focus on the differences between the process described in the first and second videos.
- The facilitator therefore helps the participants to move towards the notion of "alliance". Indeed, the Cenca video shows two groups choosing to form an alliance, to carry out an action for social transformation. The facilitator points to the last two rungs of the ladder of participation: it may seem counter-intuitive, but self-management is not, according to this typology, the highest level of participation; "collaborating with others" is considered a higher level! Forming an alliance means putting your power at the service of others: and that's what makes it possible to go further towards the goal of social transformation.

## A FEW POINTS TO HELP YOU REACH A CONCLUSION:

To ensure that participants make the most of the tool, it is important for the facilitator to explain that the goal is not always alliance or self-management. At certain stages in the process, it is natural to be on other rungs of the ladder. Processes are not linear dynamics, and each group has its own journey on the participation ladder!

The participation ladder is a tool that enables us to analyse our practice in a reflective way. Depending on the context and the desired outcome, we can be at very different levels, and that's absolutely normal! This tool invites us to ask ourselves whether all the stages of the process in participative action need to be as participative as possible... or not! There are no right or wrong answers, it's simply a question of being aware of the modalities and framework in different spaces and asking yourself what best meets the objectives that the group has set itself!

**8. Alliance:** People living in the area are free to organise themselves to carry out the action themselves, but they choose to join forces with other players (public authorities, associations, private sector players) to take action. The initiative for the action and its execution are jointly discussed, but outside actors recognise the specific skills of the people living in the area of the action.

**7. Self-management:** The people who live in the area have the freedom to organise themselves to carry out the action themselves, in order to respond to the problem encountered. They do not need the support of outsiders and are in control of all stages of the process.

**6. Partnership:** The action is initiated by people other than those living in the area (political leaders, a company, an association, etc.), but the people living in the area are involved from the outset. The group co-produces the action and ensures that the collective dynamic runs smoothly.

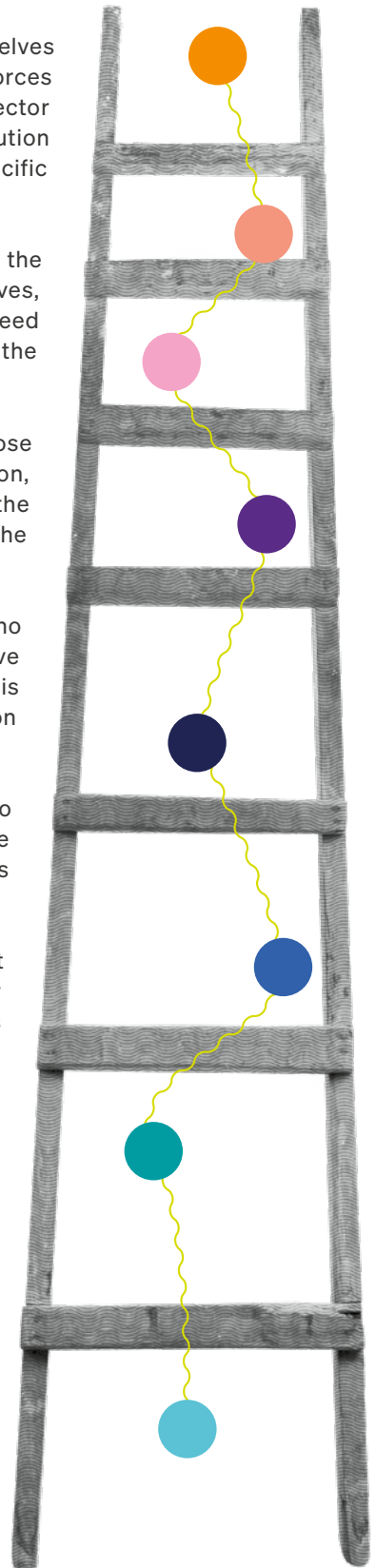
**5. Concertation:** Before the action takes place, the people who live in the area are consulted at a public meeting. They can give their opinions and express themselves freely. Once a decision is taken by the people in charge, it may be subject to negotiation and modification.

**4. Consultation:** Before the action takes place, the people who live in the area are consulted at a public meeting. They can give their opinion, express themselves freely, but the decision is taken by the leaders, and once it is taken, it is not negotiable.

**3. Information:** People living in the area are informed about what is going to happen, and what has already happened. For example: renovation work is going to be carried out on this public building. There is no space for them to react to these announcements.

**2. Decoration:** refers to a situation in which people's participation is highlighted indirectly by those with power. For example, people stop to watch a festive event in the street and dance. The people behind the event then claim that all the people dancing support the cause being promoted at the event.

**1. Manipulation:** describes a situation in which individuals are used to benefit someone or a cause (political, social, etc.). For example, appearing in an election campaign video unaware it is happening, while out shopping.





# POSITIONS AND POWER RELATIONSHIPS



## OBJECTIVES

- Initiate a reflection on the position to be developed to support participative dynamics.
- Initiate a debate on power relationships within collective dynamics.



## EQUIPMENT

Printed character sheets (1 per player) and role-play instructions. The example is set in Senegal, but you're free to create your own!



## DURATION

Between 45 minutes and 1 hour, depending on the number and profile of participants.



## GETTING STARTED

### 1 / Introduce the sequence that will follow

The participants are invited to put themselves in the shoes of characters, during a role play. There are no right or wrong answers, and there's nothing to win! The important thing is simply to play along, to let go.

The facilitator introduces the role-play: *"When you're preparing a joint project as part of a group, certain elements, linked to the context and the position of each person, can sometimes make compliance with these rules more uncertain than you would like".*

**2 /** The facilitator asks 5 volunteers from the participants to nominate themselves, and to divide into groups. The facilitator explains that the game will last about ten minutes. (If several people complete it, one of the facilitators can take part if necessary, to balance the groups).

The facilitator gives each volunteer a character sheet, which they read individually. Each volunteer tells the others his or her first name but keeps the rest of the information secret. The facilitator reads the general context statement to everyone: *"You are a group of friends and you organise a charity event every year in the run-up to Tabaski (muslim feast). Three of you (Binta, Pape and Moustapha) are regulars because you set up this tradition four years ago now. Sophie joined the initiative a year later, when she married Moustapha. As for Ousmane, this is the first time he's joined in. You get together to discuss the organisation of your action and above all to decide what will be done".*

Give the volunteers a few minutes to get to grips with their character, without talking to them. At this point, give the following instructions to the rest of the group: *"During the role-play, carefully observe how the group functions and the position of each character. The aim is to observe and understand, not to judge! The participants have instructions and are playing a character. It's not easy to expose yourself in this way, and we thank them for that".*

### **3 / Starting the role-play**

The facilitator asks the volunteers to sit around a table (in the centre of the room), then tells the participants that the role-play is going to start and last 5 to 10 minutes. The facilitator indicates when the game is over (between 5 and 10 minutes).

During the role-play, the facilitators observe the interaction between the characters (who speaks up more, who makes the decisions, etc.), and also observe who manages to achieve their character's objectives and who "self-censors".

As a reminder: The aim of the game is as follows: the characters must get together to organise an event. During this discussion, every character has personal objectives to defend (noted on the character sheets).

### **4 / Individual debriefing**

Please note that during the various debriefing sessions, the facilitator is responsible for ensuring that no judgement is passed on the contributions. Start with the volunteers, to find out how they felt.

The facilitator asks each of the participants in the role-play to explain the objectives of their character to the others, and then asks them to express how they felt in the group. The facilitator ensures that everyone can speak. Once everyone who has taken part in the role-play has spoken, a time for collective debate can be suggested.

### **5 / Collective debriefing**

What did the others observe, for example with the following instruction: *"And what did the others observe during this role-play? What are your reactions? Let's make sure we remain kind and constructive in our conversations!"*

## ELEMENTS FOR FACILITATING THE GROUP DEBRIEFING:

This activity illustrates that the rules for the smooth functioning of a group can be difficult to maintain, even if you try. The ability to express yourself, give your opinion in a group or to achieve your goals, often depends on your position in the group. This position is linked to personality, but also to social characteristics (gender, age, skin colour, social class, etc.) and to your career path (seniority in the organisation, etc.). To illustrate these points, the facilitator can use the example of someone who felt comfortable (and therefore probably able) to play a character during the role-play. You can adapt this debriefing to your own context.

The debriefing can also focus on analysing who felt authorised to keep to their character's goals and who did not. Some participants may have made concessions to avoid conflict: is this seem to be linked to their position in the group? (e.g. man/woman, seniority in the organisation, etc.).

The facilitator also makes links with the priorities for social transformation, in particular priority 2: non-reproduction of relationships of domination, respect for the voice of all, the level of commitment, the collective spirit, showing that this example illustrates the need for collective awareness on how things work, and sometimes for self-organisation/regulation of the group if necessary.



## THE CHARITY PROJECT

**You're a group of friends that organises a charity every year in the run-up to Tabaski. Three of you (Binta, Pape and Moustapha) are regulars because you set up this tradition four years ago now. Sophie joined the initiative a year later when she married Moustapha. As for Ousmane, it's the first time he's joined in. You meet to discuss the organisation of your action and above all to decide what will be done.**



### **YOUR CHARACTER: BINTA**

#### **Your position within the group:**

You're one of the main members of this group of friends, who you've known since early childhood. Moustapha is actually your first cousin, as he's your aunt's son. You were used to seeing your parents organise this type of action and that's what inspired you. You know Sophie the least because she grew up in France before coming to live in Dakar when she married your cousin. You are active in a number of nature protection associations.

#### **In relation to the charity project:**

You like things to be organised well in advance. You need to know exactly who's going to do what. You hope that by the end of the meeting, dates will have been set, a venue chosen and an organisation put in

place to get things started. You'd like to change direction this year and carry out an initiative linked to the environment instead of collecting clothes for Taliban children as you did last year, but both types of initiative may suit you.

### **YOUR GOALS FOR THIS DISCUSSION:**

- **Dates to be set**
- **For the group to agree on the action to be taken and delegation of roles**

## THE CHARITY PROJECT

**You're a group of friends that organises a charity every year in the run-up to Tabaski. Three of you (Binta, Pape and Moustapha) are regulars because you set up this tradition four years ago now. Sophie joined the initiative a year later when she married Moustapha. As for Ousmane, it's the first time he's joined in. You meet to discuss the organisation of your action and above all to decide what will be done.**

### YOUR CHARACTER: PAPE

#### Your position within the group:

You're one of the main members of this group of friends, who you've known for a long time and are very close to. You've organised a charity event together every year for the last 4 years.

#### In relation to the charity project:

You really want to help organise the event, but you're currently looking for a job so you're not sure you'll be able to make the same financial contribution as the others. You've been to several job interviews and you're waiting to hear back. On the other hand, last time you organised a collection of clothes for Taliban children, you had to convince all your friends and family to donate, so you hated it. You absolutely want the group to organise something else this year.

### YOUR GOALS FOR THIS DISCUSSION:

- That a decision be taken not to organise a clothing collection
- That the dates are set as late as possible so that you have a better chance of finding a new job to be able to participate financially, and that we therefore postpone the actual organisation until later



## THE CHARITY PROJECT

**You're a group of friends that organises a charity every year in the run-up to Tabaski. Three of you (Binta, Pape and Moustapha) are regulars because you set up this tradition four years ago now. Sophie joined the initiative a year later when she married Moustapha. As for Ousmane, it's the first time he's joined in. You meet to discuss the organisation of your action and above all to decide what will be done.**

### TON PERSONNAGE : SOPHIE

#### Your position within the group:

You grew up in France and have been living in Dakar since you married Moustapha three years ago. Since then, you've taken part in the action organised every year with his group of friends, who you like. It's a bit difficult to fit in because they've known each other for so long. What's more, Binta is your sister-in-law and she's older than you.

#### In relation to the charity project:

You would like to propose a new action. You've discovered an association that supports women who are victims of domestic violence and you were very touched by the story of its founder. On the other hand, you want to avoid a conflict with your in-laws at all costs, and you want everything to go smoothly within the group of friends. You don't like tense climates within a group at all.

### YOUR GOALS FOR THIS DISCUSSION:

- Ensure that the action takes place
- Avoid conflict

## THE CHARITY PROJECT

**You're a group of friends that organises a charity every year in the run-up to Tabaski. Three of you (Binta, Pape and Moustapha) are regulars because you set up this tradition four years ago now. Sophie joined the initiative a year later when she married Moustapha. As for Ousmane, it's the first time he's joined in. You meet to discuss the organisation of your action and above all to decide what will be done.**

### YOUR CHARACTER: MOUSTAPHA

#### Your position within the group:

You're Sophie's husband, you're one of the main members of this group of friends, who you've known for a long time and are very close to. You've been organising a charity event together every year for the last 4 years. You're keen to repeat the experience, even though you have the impression that the organisation relies heavily on you and your cousin Binta.

#### In relation to the charity project:

You hope that this year, everyone will pitch in to help organise the event (finding partners, etc.). You'd also like to do the same thing as last year, because you already have this experience and know how to collect and donate clothes to the daaras.

### YOUR GOALS FOR THIS DISCUSSION:

- That the group accepts the idea of a clothes collection
- That the whole group agrees on who does what, and that it's not always down to the same people (Binta and you).



## THE CHARITY PROJECT

You're a group of friends that organises a charity every year in the run-up to Tabaski. Three of you (Binta, Pape and Moustapha) are regulars because you set up this tradition four years ago now. Sophie joined the initiative a year later when she married Moustapha. As for Ousmane, it's the first time he's joined in. You meet to discuss the organisation of your action and above all to decide what will be done.

### YOUR CHARACTER: OUSMANE

#### Your position within the group:

You've always admired your group of friends' sense of initiative. Yet you never asked to join them: you had the impression that Binta and Moustapha wanted to run everything, and that Pape always wanted everyone to adapt to his wishes and constraints. Despite everything, you care about your friends and you want to share this experience of solidarity with them, but you hope that the roles can be more balanced this year.

#### In relation to the charity project:

You hope that this year, the whole organisation won't be based on Pape's constraints or Binta and Moustapha's decisions. You'd like the action to be a collection of clothes for the Taliban children, like last year, because that's what made you want to take part.

### YOUR GOALS FOR THIS DISCUSSION:

- That decisions are taken in the most balanced way possible
- You want the action to be a clothing collection



# BUILDING A DESIRE FOR JOINT ACTION



## OBJECTIVES

- Understand the importance of building on participants' desire for change.
- Experiment with two methods for helping a group to define a shared desire for action.



## EQUIPMENT

- Photolanguage "Desires for action" adapted to the context (around ten illustrations), to be prepared before the training course. Depending on the number of participants, plan several sets of photolanguage, so that there is one photolanguage for every 4 or 5 participants.
- Flipchart.



## DURATION

1h30 to 2h, depending on the number of participants.



## GETTING STARTED

### 1 / Introduce the goals

*"When you help a group to structure itself and build a participative dynamic, it is often necessary to support the group in building a desire for joint action. To do this, you can use different facilitation methods, adapted to the context. During this session, participants will try out two ways of building a vision or a desire for joint action, which they can then re-use with the groups they are working with".*



The facilitator explains that during this sequence, the participants will experiment with two tools that they can then use:

- A "let's dream a little" activity based on the idea of starting from the desire for change to build a shared vision.
- A photolanguage activity called "Desires for action".

The two teaching activities can be complementary, or used separately, depending on the time available and the group concerned.

## **2 / "Let's dream a little!" - 40 minutes**

This activity enables us to create a shared vision based on participants' individual desires for change. At this stage, we're not looking for realism or feasibility, but for creativity!

Instructions:

- Take 10 minutes, individually, to imagine a story with the following instructions:
- *"It is next year. This year, together with several people from your neighbourhood/village, you carried out an action that helped to improve the situation in your neighbourhood/village. Tell us how it happened".*
- *Your story doesn't have to be realistic - on the contrary, you can let your imagination run wild! Questions relating to the feasibility of the action will be taken into account at a later stage.*

Large group - 30 minutes

- After 10 minutes, the facilitator asks the participants to sit in a circle, in a large group, to discuss and reflect on these different stories... without judging whether they're realistic or feasible!

### **Elements for the debrief**

Ask if any volunteers wish to share their story (not necessarily all participants).

Identify the target populations, the types of action envisaged, the problems that the participants were trying to solve and the players they were thinking of mobilising. Identify common denominators. Remain focused on creativity and not the feasibility of the proposed action. Gradually, a few ideas for action may emerge that rally a number of participants.

To facilitate a decision-making session, you can use a vote with several sticks, for example (you can also use a collective decision-making technique that you are more familiar with): the facilitator writes the ideas for action on a flipchart. The participants then each have three votes (this can be adjusted according to the number of suggestions), and they each place one, two or three sticks next to the action that interests them. Participants can distribute their three votes over three different ideas, or use them to reinforce a single idea. This helps to highlight the suggestions that have the most support from the participants.

## **3 / "Desire for action" photolanguage - 40 minutes**

To carry out this activity, it is necessary to identify beforehand the possibilities for action adapted to the context, and to prepare a suitable photolanguage. This photolanguage will

include around ten illustrations presenting different types of action that can contribute to social transformation:

- collective action to protect the environment,
- action to improve the living conditions in a neighbourhood,
- action to show solidarity with people in difficulty,
- action to promote gender equality,
- lobbying local authorities for change,
- information campaigns aimed at the general public about a difficult issue,
- action to create social links between people who don't come into contact with each other very often,
- other ideas...

To create this photolanguage, you can look for images on the internet that illustrate these issues (for example, rubbish on the ground for environmental protection, a radio set for information campaigns, etc.). These are not necessarily images of past campaigns supported by your organisation.

Participants are divided into groups of 4 or 5 for 20 minutes. Each small group has a complete copy of the photolanguage. The aim of the discussion in the small group, is to come up with one or two ideas for action to be discussed by the large group.

Large group - 20 minutes

Each small group presents its idea(s) for action (ideas may overlap). At this stage, it is very important to value all the ideas, especially those that are different from initiatives that have already been carried out in the past.

To facilitate a decision-making session, you can use a vote with several sticks, for example (or another decision-making technique with which you are more familiar).

### **In conclusion**

The facilitator explains that these two techniques ("Let's dream a little" and "Photolanguage: Desire for action!") can both be used to help a group define an idea for collective action. They can be used individually or consecutively if there is time, depending on what seems most relevant to the context.

### **To find out more**

F3E, *Change-oriented approaches. Facilitating a workshop "vision et paths of change"*, Paris, 2018.

# THE ROLE OF EACH PARTY IN PARTICIPATIVE ACTION



## OBJECTIVES

- Identify the different potential roles for facilitators based on the participants' practices.
- Identify the fact that these positions can change depending on the context and the group.
- Identify that roles can be shared with collective members.



## EQUIPMENT

4 posters to be placed around the room: "facilitators" / "community leaders" / "project coordinators" / "community members" ( These headings can be adapted to suit the context, and some can also be added: for example, to distinguish between "central facilitators" and "grass roots facilitators", or "volunteers" and "employees", etc.).



## DURATION

30 to 45 minutes, depending on the number of participants.



## GETTING STARTED

The facilitator presents the aims of this session: to reflect on the roles of each person in participative processes, based on their own practice. The facilitator asks a series of questions. Each time, the participants position themselves under the poster that seems most relevant to them. In some cases, several answers may seem relevant: in this case, people are invited to choose a poster for which they have a concrete example from their own practice to share with the group.

After each question, when everyone is positioned, the facilitator asks participants who wish to do so to explain their choice, and to give examples from their own practice.

Debate questions:

1. Who can initiate a participative action?
2. Who defines the content of the participative action?
3. Who is responsible for involving participants in a participative activity?
4. Who regulates the power relationships within a collective undertaking participative action?
5. Who is responsible for the success of the participative action?

### **Elements for the debrief**

1. Who can initiate a participative action? Participative action can be proposed/initiated by different people. We often have the ideal representation of an action initiated directly by a local collective, but observation of the dynamics of participative action shows that an external trigger is often needed. This trigger can be the proposal of a facilitator, a project team, or the initiative of local players. What's important is what happens next.
2. Who defines the content of the participative action? Although the action can be initiated by people from outside a local collective, it is essential that it is the collective itself that defines the content of the action. The facilitators and project team can support the collective in its reflection (for example, through a vision workshop or a "desire for action" photolanguage workshop) but cannot themselves define the content of the action.
3. Who is responsible for involving participants in a participative activity? Mobilising participants can be a shared responsibility! It also depends on the context and the group: do the participants already know each other well or not? Are they used to organising action together or not? This may or may not affect the need for the facilitators to involve the participants on a regular basis.
4. Who regulates the power relationships within a collective undertaking participative action? The responsibility for regulating power relations within the group is one that can be shared. By virtue of their training, facilitators can take this on. The more the group knows about each other and has received training to make them aware of these power relationships, the more this responsibility can be shared.
5. Who is responsible for the success of the participative action? This is a shared responsibility! The facilitators and the project teams can in no way be held solely responsible for the smooth running of the participative action, which also depends on the collective. That's why you need to let go...

# ANTI-PARTICIPATION TIPS



## OBJECTIVES

- Identify, in a playful way, mistakes to avoid in order to encourage participation.
- Identify good practices to encourage participation.



## EQUIPMENT

An "Anti-participation tips" table, with three columns (before a meeting / during a meeting / after a meeting) for each small group.



## DURATION

45 minutes to 1.5 hours, depending on the number and profile of participants.



## GETTING STARTED

The facilitator presents the objectives of the sequence: we are going to try to imagine all the things we can do to STOP the participation of a group, in a playful way. By reversing the advice, we can then identify good practice.

The facilitator invites the participants to form **small groups of 3 or 4 people**. Each small group is given a table (below) to fill in. Don't hesitate to note down all the ideas, even the most over the top ones!

Each small group brainstorms and writes down its ideas for around 20 minutes.

After 20 minutes, all the participants return to the plenary session and sit in a circle. One group presents its ideas, and the others complete the group by adding new ideas.

At the end, the facilitator invites the participants to "reverse" the advice, thus compiling a list of good practices to encourage participation. From a single bad example, several good practices may emerge, for example:

Tip to hamper participation: *Before a meeting, I don't consult people before setting the meeting time* > Good practice: *I consult people before setting a meeting time. I try to adjust the schedule to what I know about the constraints of the participants (family constraints, work constraints, etc.).*

Tip to hamper participation: *During a meeting, whoever shouts loudest gets to speak first* > Good practice: *I make sure that everyone can take part, by setting up facilitation methods that encourage everyone to speak, including people who are less vocal. For example: work in small groups, speaking tokens, taking turns to speak, etc (other techniques for facilitating and regulating speaking can be suggested).*

Tip to hamper participation: *After the meeting, a 17-page report is sent to all participants, including those who cannot read.* > Good practice: *An effort is made to ensure that the minutes are accessible to everyone, by finding the right form to suit the context, for example: simple, readable minutes are sent out / a summary of the decisions is sent via WhatsApp / a summary of the decisions is given orally at the end of the meeting, etc.*

The facilitator or a participant notes the list of good practices on a flipchart, as the participants contribute.  
At the end of the sequence, the trainer takes a photo of this list and shares it with the participants.

| ANTI-PARTICIPATION TIPS                                                 |                                                             |                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Before a meeting                                                        | During a meeting                                            | After a meeting                                                                                    |
| Example: <i>I don't consult people before setting the meeting time.</i> | Example: <i>whoever shouts loudest gets to speak first.</i> | For example: <i>a 17-page report is sent to all participants, including those who cannot read.</i> |



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