

Annex 2

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS

What is a Facilitator?

Most adults learned in teacher-centered classrooms: teachers talked, students listened, except when called on to ask or answer questions about what the teacher had said. This traditional model assumes both the authority of the teacher and the ignorance of the students.

Fortunately these methods are increasingly being replaced by teaching techniques that relate to the learners' life experiences and appreciate what they already know. Increasingly the learners, not the teacher, is at the center of the experience and share "ownership" for their own learning.

In this collaborative context, the word facilitator is more appropriate than teacher, for all concerned should be peers, engaged in a common effort towards a shared goal. Together they examine their own experiences and seek to come to individual conclusions. The goal is not some "right answer" or even consensus, but the collaborative exploration of ideas and issues. However, mastering the art of facilitation requires both practice and a clear understanding of the goals and methods involved.

A facilitator —

- establishes a collaborative relationship with participants, in which the facilitator is "first among equals," but responsibility for learning rests with the whole group;
- helps to create and sustain an environment of trust and openness where everyone feels safe to speak honestly and where differences of opinion are respected;
- ensures that everyone feels included and has an opportunity to participate;
- provides a structure for learning, which might include setting and observing meeting times, opening and closing sessions, and keeping to an agenda;
- makes sure the "housekeeping" is done, such as preparing materials, setting up the meeting space, notifying participants, and seeing that necessary preparations are made.

A facilitator is not —

- "the person in charge": The whole group is responsible for learning. The facilitator's role is to help that learning happen more effectively. Nor does the facilitator have sole control of the agenda. Participants should have a voice in determining the topics to be covered.
- a lecturer: The facilitator is a co-learner, exploring all subjects as an equal partner and contributing individual experience to that of others.
- necessarily an expert: Although preparing each session, the facilitator may not know as much about a subject as some other members of the group.
- the center of attention: A good facilitator generally speak less than other participants;

instead she or he draws them into the discussion.

- an arbiter: In collaborative learning, no one, least of all the facilitator, determines that some opinions are “correct” or “more valid.”

What Makes a Good Facilitator?

Some qualities of a good facilitator, such as personal sensitivity and commitment, depend on the individual personality. However, experience and awareness can improve everyone’s skills at facilitating.

Sensitivity to the feelings of individuals: Creating and maintaining an atmosphere of trust and respect requires an awareness of how people are responding to both the topics under discussion and the opinions and reactions of others. Most people will not articulate their discomfort, hurt feelings, or even anger; instead they silently withdraw from the discussion and often from the group. Sensing how people are feeling and understanding how to respond to a particular situation is a critical skill of facilitation.

Sensitivity to the feeling of the group: In any group, the whole is greater than the sum of the parts, and group “chemistry” generally reflects shared feeling: eager, restless, angry, bored, enthusiastic, suspicious, or even silly. Perceiving and responding to the group’s dynamic is essential to skillful facilitation.

Ability to listen: One way the facilitator learns to sense the feelings of individuals and the group is by acute listening, both to the explicit meaning of words and also to their tone and implicit meaning. In fact, facilitators generally speak less than anyone in the group. And often the facilitator’s comments repeat, sum up, or respond directly to what others have said.

Tact: Sometimes the facilitator must take uncomfortable actions or say awkward things for the good of the group. The ability to do so carefully and kindly is critical. Furthermore the subject matter of human rights can evoke strong feelings and painful memories. The facilitator needs particular tact in dealing with emotional situations respectfully and sometimes also firmly.

Commitment to collaboration: Collaborative learning can occasionally seem frustrating and inefficient, and at such times every facilitator feels tempted to take on the familiar role of the traditional teacher and to lead, rather than facilitate. However, a genuine conviction about the empowering value of cooperative learning will help the facilitator resist a dominating role. Likewise the facilitator needs to be willing to share facilitation with others in the group.

A sense of timing: The facilitator needs to develop a “sixth sense” for time: when to bring a discussion to a close, when to change the topic, when to cut off someone who has talked too long, when to let the discussion run over the allotted time, and when to let the silence continue a little longer.

Flexibility: Facilitators must plan, but they must also be willing to jettison those plans in response to the situation. Often the group will take a session in an unforeseen direction or may demand more time to explore a particular topic. The facilitator needs to be able to evaluate the group’s needs and determine how to respond to it. Although every session is important, sometimes a facilitator will decide to omit a topic in favor of giving another fuller treatment.

A sense of humor: As in most human endeavors, even the most serious, a facilitator's appreciation of life's ironies, ability to laugh at oneself, and to share the laughter of others enhances the experience for everyone.

Resourcefulness and creativity: Each group is as different as the people who make it up. A good facilitator needs an overall program and goals but may also adapt it to fit changing conditions and opportunities. For example, the facilitator may call on the talents and experiences of people in the group and the community, or participants may suggest resources.

From Part II, "The Practice of Facilitation," *The Human Rights Education Handbook*, Copyright © 2000 Human Rights Resource Center, University of Minnesota



R

RESPONSIBILITY

The ability to take charge of one's life, fulfill one's obligations, be accountable for one's actions and not let people down.

E

EMPATHY

The ability to listen deeply to another person's story or experience and connect to the person's feelings and story.

S

SELF-DISCIPLINE/ SHARE AIR

The act of ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to participate in a group task or a project, and no one dominates the discussion.

P

PARTICIPATION

The act of sharing, joining, or working with others to make decisions, complete a task or initiate a project.

E

ENTHUSIASM

The energetic and unflagging pursuit of an aim or a devotion to a cause.

C

COOPERATION

The important skill that helps us work successfully in groups and interact harmoniously with others.

T

TRUST

The ability to let others know your feelings, emotions and reactions, and have the confidence in them to be supportive and encouraging.

20 METHODS FOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

1. Brainstorming

Brainstorming encourages creativity and generates many ideas quickly. It can be used for solving a specific problem, answering a question, introducing a new subject, raising interest, and surveying knowledge and attitudes.

Most brainstorming sessions follow this procedure:

1. Introduce a question, problem, or topic both orally and in writing on chart paper;
2. Invite participants to respond with as many ideas or suggestions as possible, ideally in single words or short phrases. Encourage everyone to participate but do not proceed in any set order;
3. Explain that until the brainstorm is complete, no one may repeat or comment on any response;
4. Record every response on chart paper. Often, the most creative or outrageous suggestions are the most useful and interesting;
5. Afterward, prioritize, analyze, or use the list to generate discussion or problem solving.

2. Case studies

Give small groups of participants case studies to respond to as primary data for learning. Cases can encourage analysis, critical thinking, problem solving, and planning skills, as well as cooperation and team building. They can be used to set up effective debates (e.g., groups assigned to argue assigned positions on an issue) and comparisons (e.g., different analyses or solutions of problems in the case).

- **Real cases** can be drawn from historical or current events.
- **Fictional or hypothetical cases** might be developed to address particular issues or workshop topics. Fictional situations can often address locally sensitive issues without evoking responses to particular individuals, organizations, social groups, or geographic regions.
- **Fieldwork cases** can be developed participant interviews in the community.

3. Creative expression

Creative expression can help to make concepts more concrete, personalize abstractions, and affect attitudes by involving emotional as well as intellectual responses to human rights. Although facilitators should feel comfortable using these techniques, they need not be accomplished artists themselves. These enriching techniques should not be restricted to children and or groups with limited literacy; adults, especially academics and professionals, often need ways to relate personally to human rights. Because some participants may find non-intellectual methods unfamiliar, embarrassing, or even threatening, provide several choices of expression and be very careful to create a safe, non-judgmental situation.

- **Writing:** Participants might write original poetry, songs, dramas, stories, or essays or compile collections of relevant material from other sources. They might also write letters or editorials on issues that concern them.
- **Graphic Arts:** The possible media are limitless: drawing and painting; making mobiles,

collages, or sculptures; taking photographs; creating installations; designing posters, banners, or tee shirts; etc. To raise awareness, display the results in a public place.

- **Music:** The possibilities of music for learning are limitless. Groups of all ages respond to songs that inspire, energize and link them to historical struggles for justice.
- **Movement and Dance:** These non-verbal arts often permit participants to say the “un-sayable.” Combined with music, they can lead to spontaneous “opera.”

4. Debates and Negotiations

Debates help to clarify different positions on a controversial issue. They usually involve two or several small groups who plan and present arguments on different sides of an issue, which may not necessarily represent their personal views. Debates develop logic, understanding of an issue, and listening and speaking skills. Ideally a debate concludes with all participants being able to vote for or against the proposition and discuss their positions.

- **Informal Debates:** Informal debates can take many forms. Sometimes participants are asked to take a stand on an issue and then explain their position. You might divide participants arbitrarily into two groups, each with an assigned position on an issue. The two groups prepare their arguments with each person in the group making one point for that side. The two sides present their arguments in turn, with all participants speaking. Afterward participants indicate their personal positions, perhaps including “undecided.”
- **Formal Debates:** Role-playing sides in a negotiation process clarifies conflicting positions. These might be simulated international summit talks, labor disputes between workers and management, or even family conflicts. Negotiations differ from debates in that the result is not a “winning side” but a settlement that both sides can accept. Negotiation skills are especially important for conflict resolution and consensus building.
- **Active Listening:** Working in pairs or groups of four, Person A gives one reason for support of an issue. Person B listens and then summarizes or restates A’s reason. Person B then gives one reason opposing the statement. Person A (or Person C in a group of four) listens and summarizes B’s reason and so forth until each person has had a chance to express at least two reasons.

5. Discussion

To keep discussion focused, you might initially pose several key questions. The larger the group, the more likely that some participants will dominate and others remain silent. To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to speak, you may want to divide participants into smaller units. When any discussion concludes, summarize the main points orally and in writing.

- **Small Groups:** Size will depend on time and the sensitivity or complexity of the subject. In most cases each group selects a reporter to summarize its discussion.
- **Buzz Groups:** Participants discuss in pairs for a limited period. This method is especially effective for articulating ideas in preparation for a general discussion or to give expression to personal response to a film, presentation, or experience. After talking in pairs, couples might be asked to combine in groups of four and compare their opinions.

- **Open Questioning:** Facilitators need to develop the skills of keeping the goal of discussion clearly in mind and of asking questions that encourage participation and analysis. Here are some typical forms of open questions:

Hypothetical: "What would you do if...?"

Speculating: "How might we solve this problem?"

Defining: "Can you say more about how that idea would work?"

Probing: "Why do you think that?"

Clarifying/Summarizing: "Am I right to say that you think...?"

- **Rules for Discussion:** One way to help create an environment of trust and mutual respect is to have participants develop "Rules for Discussion":

Ask participants to think of some principles for discussion, which they think everyone should follow.

Write all of these suggestions where everyone can see them, combining and simplifying where necessary. If not already mentioned, you might want to suggest some of the following principles:

- Listen to the person who is speaking;
- Only one person speaks at a time;
- Raise your hand to be recognized if you want to say something;
- Don't interrupt when someone is speaking;
- When you disagree with someone, make sure that you make a difference between criticizing someone's idea and criticizing the person;
- Don't laugh when someone is speaking (unless she or he makes a joke!);
- Encourage everyone to participate.

Copy the list of rules neatly and hang it where participants can refer, add, or make changes to it as necessary.

6. Dramatizations

Many dramatic techniques can enhance learning. Sometimes their purpose is for participants to "experience" an unfamiliar situation or identity (e.g., being a refugee, being disabled) and develop empathy and appreciation for different points of view (e.g., acting the role of a perpetrator, a witness, an advocate). Other dramatizations may serve to concretize concepts (e.g., acting out articles of the UDHR) or analyze conflict (e.g., acting out confrontations between police and demonstrators).

- **Charades:** Working in several teams, participants act out articles of human rights documents, which others must guess. These charades might illustrate rights denied, rights enjoyed, or rights defended.
- **Dramatic Readings:** Participants create presentations by reading from plays, testimonies, stories, or poems on a particular subject.
- **Image Creation:** Ask a volunteer to name a human rights problem from her or his own experience. The volunteer then uses the other participants to build an image of this

problem. Everyone must agree that the image accurately represents the problem. Then ask the volunteer slowly to change the “actual” image into an ideal one (i.e., an example of the situation as she or he would like to see it). Discuss possible agents of change.

- **Puppets:** Participants create puppet shows on human rights themes.
- **Role-Play:** This well-known method can take many forms, but in all participants act out little dramas. Give clear instructions and ensure time for full development and discussion of the role-play, concluding with an explicit restatement of its purpose and learning points. Be sensitive to feelings the drama may evoke in the actors and the audience. Allow times to “debrief” the role-play, asking both actors and audience how they felt. Encourage evaluation of what took place and analysis of its relevance to human rights.
- **Street Theater:** To raise public awareness, especially among limited-literacy audiences, participants perform human rights plays in public places, often inviting onlookers to take part.

7. Energizers

Sometimes the energy level of even the most enthusiastic group lags. Refocus attention with a quick “energizer” activity. The following non-verbal activities can help to raise group spirits, create solidarity, and refocus energy.

Arm in Arm: Ask participants to divide in pairs of equal strength. Explain: “How many times can you put your partner’s hand to the table in 60 seconds? There can be two winners to this game.” Then say “Go” and let participants know when 30 seconds and 10 seconds remain. Those who cooperate will be able to touch many times while those who compete will have few or no touches. Point out the difference between cooperation and competition.

The Chain: Ask participants to stand in a circle with their eyes closed. Move them around, attaching their hands to each other so that they make a knot. Then tell participants to open their eyes and try to untangle themselves without letting go of their hands.

Fireworks: Assign small groups to make the sounds and gestures of different fireworks. Some are bombs that hiss and explode. Others are firecrackers imitated by handclaps. Some are Catherine Wheels that spin and so on. Call on each group to perform separately, and then the whole group makes a grand display.

Group Sit: Ask participants to stand in a circle toe-to-toe. Then ask them to sit down without breaking the connection of their toes. Avoid this activity if members of the group are disabled or elderly.

The Rain Forest: Stand in the center of participants, who mimic your movements, making different sounds and gestures for aspects of the forest (e.g., birds, insects, leaves rustling, wind blowing, animals calling) by snapping fingers, slapping sides, clapping hands, and imitating animals. The resulting sound is like a rain forest.

Silent Calendar: Explain that the whole group must line up in order of the day and month they were born, but they cannot use words to accomplish this.

The Storm: Assign different sounds and gestures to small groups of participants (e.g., wind, rain, lightning, thunder, etc.) and then narrate the soft beginnings of the storm, conducting the various sounds like an orchestra (e.g., “And then the lightning flashes! And the thunder roars!”) through to the conclusion of the storm.

To the Lifeboats! First demonstrate a “lifeboat”: two people hold hands to form the boat; passengers stand inside the circle of their hands. Then explain that everyone is going on a voyage: “At first the sea is calm and everyone is enjoying the trip. Then, suddenly, the ship hits a rock. Everyone must get into a lifeboat in groups of three (or one, or four, etc.)” Participants then scramble to form “lifeboats” and take in the proper number of passages. Usually someone “drowns.” Then take up the narrative again. “Now the ship continues peacefully ... but suddenly a hurricane begins. The ship is sinking. Everyone to the lifeboats in groups of two.” Continue like this through several “shipwrecks.”

8. Field Trips

Sometimes participants need a safe place to learn, removed from the outside world. At other times learning is enhanced by exposure to new people and places, often unrecognized in their own communities. Visits might be to places where human rights issues develop (e.g., prisons, hospitals, international borders, urban centers) or where people work to stop abuses or relieve victims (non-profit organizations, government offices, homeless or battered women’s shelters, food or clothing banks). Prepare participants for any visit (e.g., create preliminary questions and research projects, give background information, specific assignments for observation) and provide appropriate ways to respond to the experience (e.g., journaling, creative expression, small-group discussions) and take action.

9. Hearings and Tribunals

Public testimony can give a human face to both human rights defenders and victims and serve to both educate and motivate those who attend.

- **Live Testimony:** To be effective, hearings with “real” witnesses require careful orchestration of time, speakers, and situation. Take care, of course, to respect both the dignity and privacy of speakers. Hearings might be set up to draw public attention to a problem, raise awareness of a targeted group (e.g., legislative body), or provide an alternative perspective on an issue. Conclude with some action opportunities.
- **Quoted Testimony:** Having participants create a hearing using recordings of live testimony or reading transcripts in the voices of others can be a powerful learning tool.
- **Fictional Testimony:** Participants might also research and write the testimony based on what a person might have said at a trial or hearing about their experience. This method combines elements of mock trial, creative expression, and dramatization.

10. Interpretation of Images

Responding to photographs, pictures, cartoons, or artifacts can illustrate individual differences and evoke feelings about abstract concepts. If possible, permit participants

to choose the image they will examine. Ask key questions for writing or discussion (e.g., “What do you know about this picture? “... think about this picture?” “... feel about this picture?”). Conclude by asking participants to show their picture and summarize their discussion.

11. Interviews

Interviewing provides direct learning and personalizes human rights issues and history. Those interviewed might be family, community members, activists, leaders, experts, or witnesses to human rights events. Participants need to be clear on the goals and desired outcomes for their interviews and to prepare in advance with key questions. They also need to plan how they will document the interview and to understand the ethical implications of how they use the information they obtain. Interviews might be conducted by the whole group, teams, or individuals who later consolidate and compare their results. Careful preliminary research and preparation of questions is essential to effective interviewing.

12. Jigsaw

This methodology builds cooperation and enables participants to teach each other. Divide an issue into several sub-topics (e.g., different arguments for and against the death penalty), and assign each sub-topic to a different small groups (e.g., 5 groups of 5 people). Each group works together to learn more about its aspect of the topic (e.g., do research, discuss, read handouts). When the initial group has informed itself, assign new groups containing one person from each initial group. Each member of the new group is then responsible for sharing her or his information or point of view on the sub-topic, thus covering many aspects of a topic.

13. Journal Writing

Having participants write down their reactions, opinions, and ideas before a discussion not only raises the level of discourse, but also provides them with a written record of their evolving ideas about human rights. Journal writing also reinforces the value of independent, critical thinking. For some participants a journal provides an outlet to express thoughts and emotions too personal to bring up for open discussion.

- Provide enough time for journal writing (10 minutes minimum) at regular intervals (e.g., end of a discussion or activity);
- Never require anyone to read from or show the journal;
- If a participant chooses to read from a journal, no one should criticize the opinion expressed.

A Collective/Community Journal: Invite participants to contribute entries from their journals to a group journal, either reproduced and given to each participant or mounted on a group bulletin board. These may be anonymous.

14. Media

Newspapers, news magazines, and news programs on radio or television can serve as excellent learning tools. Ask participants to analyze the media for stereotypes, prejudices,

and different treatment of similar stories. Questions for analysis might include the following:

- Does the title of the article suggest a view on the issue?
- Are both sides of the issue presented in a balanced manner?
- Are direct accusations made against anyone? Are indirect accusations made? Is any proof offered in support of the allegations?
- Are there direct quotations from people being criticized?
- Are there direct quotations from people in authority (e.g., police, social workers, elected officials)?
- If there are photographs or film footage, is it unbiased? Is anyone made to look especially good or bad?

When participants are sensitized to a particular issue, they often begin to recognize it all around. Encourage them to bring in examples they hear or read in the media. If participants show interest, establish a time in every session to present these examples. Human rights issues in the media may also inspire participants to write to local officials or newspaper editors or to take some other form of action.

15. Mock Trials

A familiar method of law-related education, the mock trial combines role play, simulation, and debate, permitting participants to hear many sides of an issue and recognize the multiple roles and impacts of a human rights situation. They also build familiarity with court procedures and human rights law, as well as the intersection and potential conflicts of international, regional, national, and customary law.

Assign roles (e.g., one group represents the prosecution and another the defense) and explain their tasks (e.g., how to make an opening statement, lead evidence, cross-examine, make a closing statement). Allow time to prepare carefully. Verdicts might be decided upon by a panel of real or role-playing “judges” or by vote of all participants. Cases might be based on historical or current human rights issues.

16. Presentations

Outside resource people can greatly enrich learning, but such voices should never silence or devalue those of participants. Identify people with special expertise in human rights, perhaps because of their information (e.g., journalists, academics, researchers), their work (e.g., judges, medical professionals, government officials, staff of non-profit organizations), or their experience (e.g., former prisoners, refugees) and invite them to speak to the participants.

- Lectures and Formal Addresses: Lectures and speeches should be kept to a minimum as they tend to inspire passive listening and disempowering deference. Several short lectures are more effective than one long lecture. Facilitators should seek ways to permit personal interchanges between speakers and participants (e.g., a shared meal, a question period, small group discussions, an interview technique).
- Formal Panels: In the typical panel format, experts make prepared statements or read papers on a topic, followed by questions from the audience. Usually the panelists do not address each other and only a few assertive participants speak.

17. Research Projects

Projects are independent investigations that permit participants to explore topics in depth and to share their findings with others. Some suggestions for research projects:

- Help participants define their topics precisely and clearly, perhaps in question form (e.g., “How are people of color treated in my school or community?” or “Are schools re-segregating in my community?”);
- Make clear project goals, parameters, and deadlines; suggest research resources and techniques;
- Clarify the way in which results can be presented (e.g., written report, exhibition, artistic expression, poster, or web site);
- Include both objective findings and the participant’s subjective responses;
- Provide a way for participants to present their results publicly so others may learn from their research.

Case Study Research: While library or Internet resources are useful, projects can also draw on interviews and other “live” sources (e.g., studying community immigration patterns in the local cemetery; evaluating the route to school for disability access; creating statistics from personal observation). Such projects develop research skills, independent thinking, and cooperative learning and illustrate the links among issues, the local situation, and the range of conflicting views.

Internet Research: Where Internet access is available, many research projects can be accomplished electronically, including geography, statistics, documents, and newspaper articles.

18. Storytelling

Both personal and traditional stories can be a rich source of relating human rights themes to lived experience. Participants need a receptive audience, often a small group, and control over how much they wish to reveal about themselves. Stories can be retold from a human rights perspective, dramatized, or analyzed in relationship to human rights issues and documents.

To stimulate narratives, ask “How is this an issue in our community?” and encourage participants to offer illustrative stories from their experience. These stories need not be personal; encourage stories drawn from legend, literature, films, television, or local history. Invite historical perspective (e.g., “How was domestic violence handled in your grandmother’s day?”) and analysis of these stories. (e.g., “How might the story be different if told by the police?”).

19. Surveys and Data Collection

- **Opinion Polls:** Conducting a “person-in-the street” survey on human rights issues can provide useful data about the local community. Help participants formulate unbiased questions that will elicit the desired information and discuss the components of reliable data.

- **Documenting Evidence:** Data gathering can also involve observing and recording day to day events related to human rights (e.g., gender roles in the family, number of times participants hear a racial slur).
- **Online Surveys:** Conducting online surveys on human rights issues using such sites as www.surveymonkey.com can provide a quick way to get insights into other students' or teachers' attitudes and perceptions.

20. Webbing Activities

Drawing charts that indicate relationships can help participants to analyze situations.

- **Webbing:** Begin by writing a word, phrase or question in the center of a paper or chalkboard (e.g., "Race"). Circle the word and ask participants to brainstorm adjectives, thoughts, or memories evoked by what is written in the circle. (e.g., "discrimination," "resources," "Gay bashing," "Fear of AIDS"). Write these down and connect each suggestion by a line to the central circle. If participants relate to responses generated by the circled word, write those and connect with a line to the response, gradually creating an expanding web (e.g., "Dyke" or "Faggot" connected to "Insults").
- **Effects Wheel:** Write a question or statement in the center of a circle (e.g., "What if women earned salaries equal to men?" or "In the USA one child in four lives below the poverty level."). Then draw three concentric rings around the central circle. Divide the first ring into three equal parts and write three effects that would result from the statement (e.g., "Greater decision making," "Greater role in business world," "More involvement in investment"). Divide the second ring into six equal parts and write in two effects that would result from each of the three statements (e.g., "Greater decision making," "Greater role in supporting women's concerns," and "More independence"). Small groups might work on the same statement and compare their results. You might prepare a list of relevant questions or statements and let each group choose one to work on.

From Part IV, "Methodologies for Human Rights Education," *The Human Rights Education Handbook*, Copyright © 2000 Human Rights Resource Center, University of Minnesota.

