

Serious Fun



Facilitating interactive games for adaptation and disaster risk reduction



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Serious Fun - Facilitating interactive games for adaptation and disaster risk reduction

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welcome

Experiential Learning about Climate Change Adaptation

Climate Change Adaptation and DRR processes are challenging and complex processes - and can at times be very confusing. Sometimes this confusion leads to simplified messages which may scare people or lead to frustration and fatalism.

None of these feelings are particularly helpful to promote active participation and agency or to release the creativity we need to think about creative and constructive adaptation strategies.

This deck of flash cards is a collection of short exercises that you can use in your practice as appropriate to create spaces and interactions that generate energy and creativity, and to allow participants to explore climate change challenges experientially.

There are many different ways to include these exercises in ongoing processes such as workshops, team meetings or study groups. Your creativity is the most vital ingredient in this process - so we hope you can take some inspiration from these cards to design and facilitate creative adaptation learning processes!

How to use these cards...

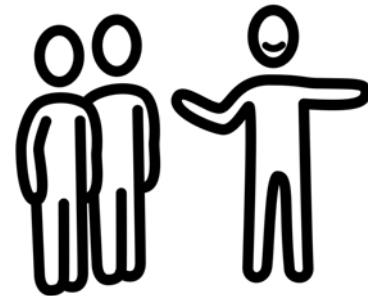
There are different categories:

Introductions

Warming up

Energizing the group

Exploration



Choose the cards you think might fit your next workshop or team meeting - and facilitate with an open heart and mind!

Facilitating experiential learning processes

When facilitating experiential learning processes it is important to find the "magic mix" of providing a safe space and creating enough opportunities for individuals in the group to explore new experiences, arrive at new personal reflections and share insights. This might mean different styles and tolerance for exploring new aspects in different groups.

Because all people are unique and have unique experiences, every group will be different and have a different dynamic. As the facilitator the challenge is yours: keeping in touch with the group processes is important. The process should provide enough excitement to get the imagination going, while always providing a safe and respectful space for learning for all participants - regardless of gender, race, age or status.

Some of the exercises are more challenging than others - you will find the rating of the exercises in the top bar:

- ★ Easy exercises, gentle, not too daring or adventurous
- ★★ Somewhat challenging, needs careful facilitation, check if this is appropriate for the group
- ★★★ Challenging, needs skilled facilitation, are the most adventurous, can be challenging for some groups and individuals

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** For these games you can watch the facilitator instruction video on www.climatecentre.org*

Meet my daughter...

Objectives:

To introduce group members at the beginning of the workshop
To create a relaxed atmosphere

Process:

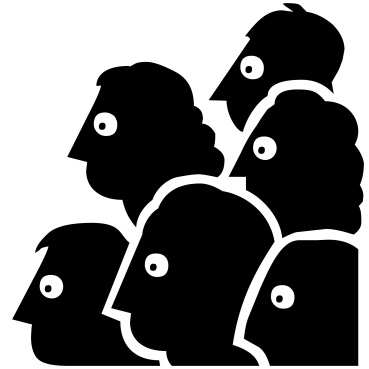
1. Place 2 empty chairs in the front of the group, or in the circle (if that is the seating arrangement).
2. One by one, each participant will take a seat to introduce an imaginary person sitting in the other seat.

Explain: *The person you will introduce in the other chair is actually yourself!*

But you will speak from the perspective of someone who knows you:

"May I introduce you to: (give your name), who is my (give relationship to you)" i.e. my daughter, my neighbor, my father, my colleague, etc.

3. Ensure each participant has a turn to introduce him/ herself via the 'proxy' friend/ relative.



Debriefing:

It might be useful to have a short reflection after the introductory exercise:

Is there anything new we learnt about each other?

How did it feel to see yourself from the perspective of another person?

Materials needed:

2 chairs

Caution:

Ensure everyone is sticking to the third person perspective in their introduction... and do so gently.



Relevance for adaptation and DRR processes

Working in complex adaptation processes often entails working in diverse teams. This introductory exercise can create a relaxed atmosphere and allow participants to share some personal stories about themselves.



My Passion

Objectives:

To introduce group members at the beginning of the workshop
To create a relaxed atmosphere

Process:

1. Present the task: each participant is asked to introduce her/ himself using three steps: My name, Where I am from, and what I am passionate about.

(It helps to write this on a flip chart)

2. Ask each participant to introduce her/ himself to the group.
3. Thank each participant for the introduction.



Debriefing:

It is not necessary to do a debriefing after this introduction.

Materials needed:

Flip chart if available

Remember:

An opening energizer can set the scene for an entire meeting or workshop. Therefore it is important to create a warm and open atmosphere. Ensure everybody gets a turn.

You can also use a soft ball as a token to indicate who is 'it' - the participant who catches the ball has a turn to introduce her-/ himself.

You can also use an additional question (instead of the passion) relating to the purpose of the meeting.



Relevance for adaptation and DRR processes

Working in complex adaptation or DRR processes often entails working in diverse teams. This exercise allows every participant to share something personal with the group - setting the scene for the workshop.



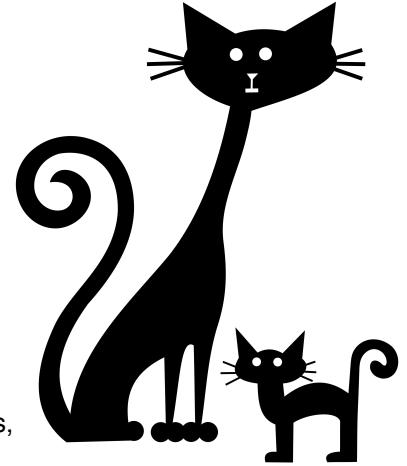
Animal Crackers

Objectives:

To introduce groups members at the beginning of the workshop
To create a relaxed atmosphere

Process:

1. Each participant draws a slip of paper at random (from a hat or basket) that bears the name of an animal on it.
2. Without revealing the text on the card (or, for groups with multiple languages, animal image) to any other participant, each participant must silently act out the animal written on their slip of paper (to make it easier you can add sound).
3. Since each animal slip should be one of a pair, participants must observe what others are acting out and make a best guess about who their “match” is.
4. Get to know your partner - and once everyone is paired up, ask each participant to introduce their partner to the team.



Debriefing:

It is not necessary to do a debriefing after this introduction.

Materials needed:

Hat, bowl or basket - a small piece of paper with an animal name (or picture) for each participant (2 per animal). If you have pairs of small plastic or wooden animals you could use these instead.



Relevance for adaptation and DRR processes

This exercise can help you create a relaxed atmosphere for learning and a new way of getting to know team members.

Game # 4

*Video

★★ energizing

Balancing Act

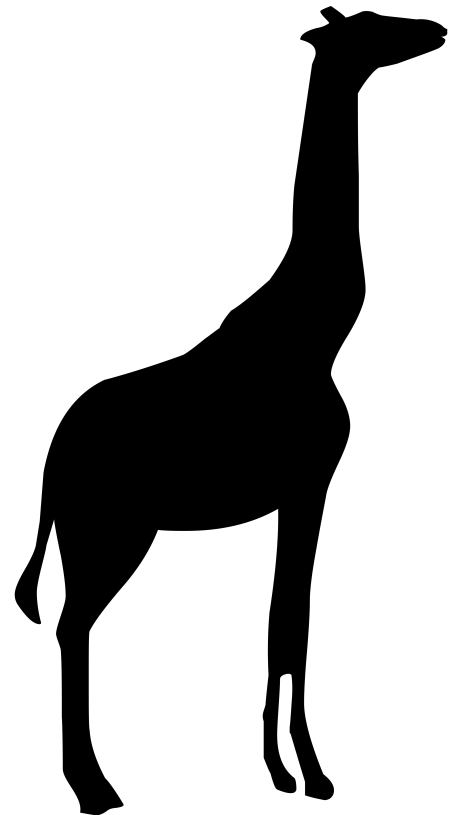
Objectives:

To energize the group

To reflect on taking risks and solidarity within the group

Process:

1. Each participant receives a bean bag to balance on his or her head. Explain the rules of the game: once your bean bag is on your head, you can move - if it falls, you will have to freeze until another participant replaces the bean bag on your head again.
2. Ask participants to move around the room. Then ask them to greet each other, etc.
3. Introduce an appropriate climate hazard - e.g. "the flood is coming and you must get to drier ground fast (run!)", or "you have to cross a river in flood (jump!)", etc.
4. Once you feel the energy is good - stop the game for a round of reflection.



Debriefing:

How did you feel during this energizer? Why was this exercise easy for some and more difficult for others? How did it feel to be helped? How did it feel to help someone?

Did you take any personal risks for another person? How did this feel?

How did the external climate hazard affect your feelings / behavior?

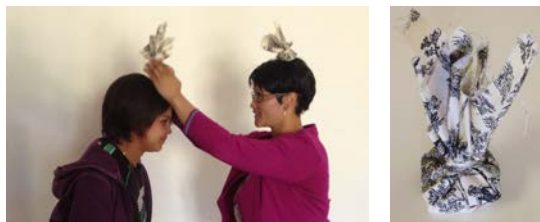
Materials needed:

Bean bags (10 x 10 cm piece of fabric, filled with beans, tied closed with a string)
(one per participant)

Remember:

Participants are not allowed to touch their own bean bags.

Ensure that there is movement in the group and encourage some risk taking, if appropriate.

**Relevance for adaptation and DRR processes**

Planning for climate change adaptation or DRR means being prepared for all eventualities. Unexpected events might call for extensive networks and acts of solidarity.

Game #5

*Video

★★ energizing

Jungle Jam

Objectives:

To energize the group

To explore different ways of experiencing our surroundings

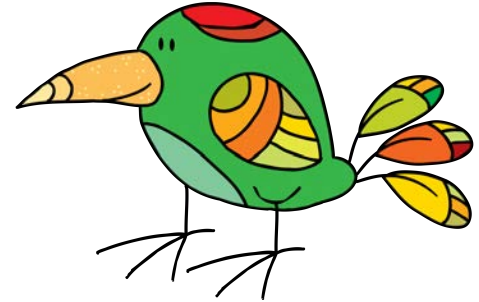
To create a calm atmosphere

Process:

1. One or two volunteers are blindfolded. The rest of the participants are spread throughout various parts of the room.
2. Once the game has officially started, non-blindfolded participants make jungle animal noises at random. The blindfolded participant(s) must go around the room and try to tag the sources of noise.
3. When a jungle animal participant has been touched by the blindfolded participant, they must freeze and be silent. The blindfolded participant must tag all remaining jungle animal participants until background noise has stopped completely.
4. Reflect on the experience and different ways of perceiving your environment.

Note:

Not suitable in cultures where touching is considered inappropriate. Also, some participants may be uncomfortable with the idea of being blindfolded - they can also just close their eyes.



Debriefing:

What are different ways of perceiving our environment? How does this relate to adaptation?

What are possible different perspectives on planned adaptation interventions?

Materials needed:

none

**Relevance for adaptation and DRR processes**

Adaptation and DRR processes explore complex social and ecological systems. This exercise helps us explore different ways of "seeing" a situation.

Game # 6

*Video

★★ warming up

Farming Juggle

Objectives:

To energize the group

To reflect on decision making under stress and while handling unexpected tasks

Process:

1. Participants form a large circle.
2. A facilitator, standing within the circle, throws the first ball to a "community member", announcing that the farming in the community is going well. Participants must keep the ball in motion by continuously throwing it around the circle, not letting it touch the ground or stay in any one participant's hands more than 2 seconds if possible. Allow some time for the group to find their rhythm.
3. At any time throughout the game, the facilitator may introduce new balls into the circle, either announcing their entrance in advance (e.g. "you are dealing with a specific livestock disease amongst your sheep" or "there is conflict in your community") or springing it on the circle of participants as a surprise ("there is a flash flood"). Either way, participants must try to keep as many balls circulating and off the ground as possible.
4. Close with a round of reflections: How did you experience the game? What does this mean for adaptation for farmers and organizations?



Debriefing:

Allow time for critical reflection by participants after the game:

How did you feel in the first stage of the game? By comparison, how did you feel when multiple balls were in the circle?

Seeing as it is virtually impossible to keep *all* balls from dropping on the ground, how did you / the group prioritize which balls to put the most energy into catching? What qualities (e.g. size, colour, texture) might have played a role in this decision?

Materials needed:

up to 6 different balls (differing in size and material)

Remember:

For safety reasons, the balls should be fairly lightweight and of a softish material. Also, if playing indoors, plenty of space should be set aside to play the game.

Variation:

You can play this with a different story line too, to illustrate compounding stressors: e.g. an office situation, or implementing an adaptation process.

**Relevance for adaptation and DRR processes**

When farming under unpredictable conditions, farmers face many stressors. Too many stressors distract and confuse. This learning exercise explores how farmers often have to make choices regarding what pressures to give attention to. A good dynamic exercise to explore complexities and the compounding effect of stressors.

Blind Chicken

Objectives:

To reflect on communication and interpretation within the group

To explore flexibility

Process:

1. Two chairs are placed facing opposite directions (i.e. one facing West, one facing East). Three volunteers are selected from the audience: 1 volunteer is designated as the “host” while the 2 other volunteers are asked to be “blind chickens.”
2. Each “blind chicken” begins by standing behind their respective chair. The host, standing at the front of the room, is given a complicated position for both blind chickens to achieve through his/ her guidance.
3. The host calls out various commands for the “blind chickens” to perform. The commands should ideally involve movements around or on the chairs (e.g. take two steps forward; touch the chair with your right hand, etc.). However the host cannot see the chickens, neither can the blind chickens see each other.
4. Blind chickens perform commands without looking at one another. When the facilitator thinks she/ he has completed the task she/ he may turn around, and the game is over.
5. Reflection with the group: What did you observe? What does this mean for adaptation processes?



Debriefing:

The debriefing process includes a sharing of the experiences of host and the chickens.

Then the other participants are asked to share their observations.

How does this relate to adaptation processes?

What supports effective communication? What undermines effective communication?

How can we actively promote effective communication within adaptation processes?

Materials needed:

Two chairs

**Relevance for adaptation and DRR processes**

Adaptation and DRR measures are often specific to their context - and are interpreted through these lenses.

This energizer explores the different ways of understanding the same instructions - and allows us to explore how to rather use participatory processes in adaptation, with full ownership of stakeholders, rather than implementing foreign ideas that cannot be clearly communicated.

Game # 8

*Video



warming up

Adaptation Labyrinth

Objectives:

To reflect on communication and leadership within a group

To explore the importance of a joint vision for adaptation and DRR processes

Process:

1. Draw a labyrinth on a sheet of flip chart paper and set it out on the floor in the middle of the room. Gather the group around the flip chart and ask every participant to take one string until all strings are allocated.
2. Explain the task: You as a group will have to navigate a challenging task - encountering unforeseen obstacles. Insert a narrative that suits the group: e.g. you need to plan and implement and Adaptation Project (or DRR project) - mark the middle: "you have successfully implemented the project!"- Navigating the pen with the string puller, move through the labyrinth. Start on the outside and only move the pen by pulling on the strings. Participants are allowed to talk and strategize. Indicate where the starting point of the labyrinth is.
3. The group navigates the labyrinth. You can introduce obstacles such as climate events (e.g. flood or landslides) that block the way and will force the group to find an alternative way.
4. Once the group has reached the middle - have a short round of reflection.



Debriefing:

The debriefing process includes a sharing of the experiences of all participants:

What was your experience? What made the task easy? What made it difficult?

How were decisions reached? What happened when an unexpected event occurred?

Materials needed:

String puller with pen, drawing of labyrinth

**Relevance for adaptation and DRR processes**

This exercise explores group decision making and the challenges that people may experience with communication while implementing a joint vision! It is interesting to also reflect on what would happen if for example men and women were trying to get to different final destinations - and to compare this with experiences of participants involved in adaptation processes.

Climate Message

Objectives:

To explore how complex climate messages are transferred
To discuss options for appropriate use of climate messages

Process:

1. The workshop participants are divided in two groups. (if the groups are larger, there can be more groups). All groups stand or sit in a line.
2. Explain the setting: there are different extension officers that have been tasked to share the seasonal climate forecast with the farmers of their area. They hold a meeting with lead farmers and pass on the seasonal forecast message. They are careful not to oversimplify to not obscure uncertainties in the seasonal forecast.
3. The first person in the row will be told the seasonal forecast. It contains detailed data and some recommendations (see an example on reverse).
4. Ask the persons to pass on the message considering two rules: a. no repeating of the message - it can only be told once and b. no notes may be taken.
5. Once the message reaches the end, ask the last person to write down the message that has reached them. Read the message and share the original message with the group.
6. Reflect on the experience and what this means for planning climate change adaptation strategies using seasonal forecasts.



Debriefing:

The debriefing can include the following questions: How did you feel when receiving the message? What made it easy, or difficult to communicate a climate message? What does this mean for our practice in using climate messages?

Materials needed:

The climate message on a piece of paper.

Ensure that the forecast is relevant and realistic for the area you are working in. You can also use a quote from an actual seasonal forecast. Here is an example:

Currently we are experiencing a strong ENSO signal- and are in an El Nino phase. There is a 60% chance that there will be less than average rainfall and a 45% chance that the maximum temperatures will be lower than average for the months of November - December - January. The long term forecasts show that there is an increased chance that the central parts of the country might experience drier conditions or even drought conditions.

**Remember:**

Be strict with the groups and ensure that no questions or clarification are asked.

Relevance for adaptation and DRR processes

Complex climate messages often cause more confusion than clarity. This light hearted exercise can open the space for an exploration on the effectiveness of seasonal forecasts and how to communicate them effectively without oversimplifying the message.

Game # 10

*Video



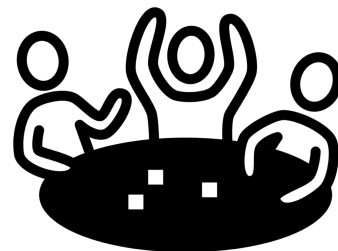
Exploration

Tipping Point

Objectives:

To explore the fragility of complex systems

To reflect on risk taking strategies, collaboration and how small decisions can have big consequences



Process:

1. Place the special table (see picture on reverse) in the middle of the room and ask participants to form a circle around it. Introduce the narrative: this table is representing a complex system and that the different types of blocks are resources that keep the system healthy.
2. Ask the group to split into 2 or more groups (depending on the size of the group) - and explain that each group representing a country could decide to either harvest/ mine resources (take a block) or to invest/ plant a block (place one on the board). Only when the group has a block available are they able to invest. Explain that each block is worth one point - the four special blocks are worth 10 points each. If the system is stable (and the table is in balance) the harvesting/ planting is continuing. If the system collapses all countries are in trouble and the game is over. If all countries manage to play for 5 rounds without the system collapsing the game is over and the countries are managing to maintain the complex system balance.
3. Each groups received 2 blocks starting capital. Ask the groups to take turns - basing their decisions on the needs of their country while considering the stability of the system.
5. The game is over when the table tips and all blocks fall to the floor - or if the groups have finished 5 rounds (can be adjusted).
6. Reflect on how decisions were made, what different strategies were used within country and how this relates to experiences on the community, national or global level. Use the talking ball to throw to participants and summarize reflections.

Debriefing:

The debriefing is an important part of this exercise. It can include the following questions:
How did you make decisions within your group? What was your strategy? How did you feel?
How does this relate to tipping points in real life?

Materials needed:

A table that rotates on a round joint as per illustration below.
20-30 wooden blocks or figures
4 larger wooden blocks or glass tokens in another color

Remember: Allow participants within the groups to strategize and encourage them to take their time.

**Relevance for adaptation and DRR processes**

The energizer explores the interlinkages in complex systems - and how once a certain threshold is reached the system can collapse. Also useful to illustrate the concepts of tipping points and to explore what motivates individuals and groups to take risks even though a tipping point might be imminent.

Race for Risk Reduction

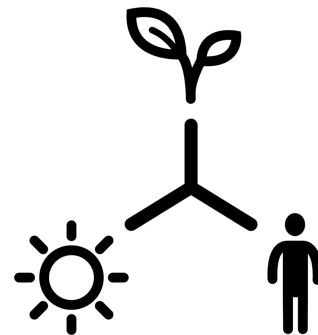
Objectives:

To explore thinking and decision making under pressure

To explore communication with decision makers under pressure

Process:

1. Divide participants into two groups. Explain the narrative: *"You are living in two regions and can make use of many opportunities out there for risk reduction - however only certain opportunities can be accessed in any round. The deck of cards signifies these opportunities."*
2. Then reveal the existing opportunities by turning over a number of cards per round - the 'match card' is placed on a special colorful piece of cardboard. Explain further: *"The 'match card' explains what opportunities you can use this year. Each team designates a player who should collect as many cards as possible with at least one matching criteria (e.g color, shape, number). The group scores one point for each card picked up. However if a player picks up a card that does not match the score for the entire round is zero points."*
3. Play the game:
Trial round: play a trial game and ensure that all participants understood the criteria for collecting cards
1st round: place 10 cards on the table- then turn over the card to match and place on the cardboard
2nd round: place only 3 cards - explain that there are scarce opportunities
3rd round: place 20 cards on the table in an interesting pattern
4th round: place all cards on different locations in the room and keep one card to place on the colored piece of paper or board.



Debriefing:

The debriefing can include the following questions:

How did you feel when you were able to pick up cards?

Did you find all matching cards?

How did you communicate with your team while under pressure?

How did you communicate with the decision maker?

Materials needed:

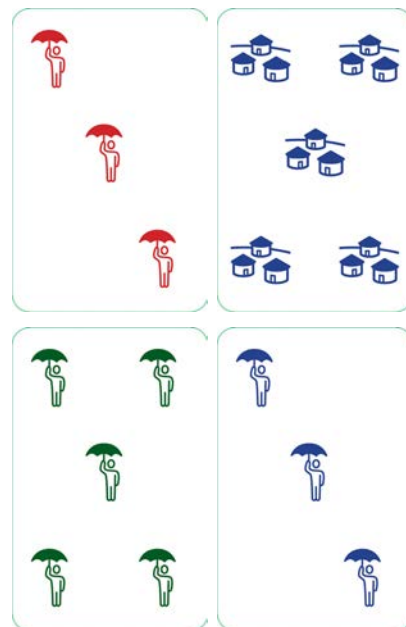
A deck of cards with different shapes, colors and numbers

A table

A colored piece of paper or board

Remember:

Maintain pace while placing the cards on the table and encourage the teams to effectively communicate with their decision maker.



Relevance for adaptation and DRR processes

Adaptation processes often aim at trying out new strategies for dealing with climate variabilities and change. The game can support a discussion on seeing all possible opportunities while planning for adaptation and disaster risk management under pressure.



Evaluation

Objectives:

To reflect on an event, process or activity

To give and receive feedback

To plan for improvements in processes using the feedback in the future

To create the opportunity to reach closure on a particular process



Process:

1. Sit in a circle and brainstorm: What went well? while thinking about small and more substantial aspects of the process. Ask every team member/ participant to contribute, even in a small way. Document your reflections.
2. In the next round explore what did not go so well. Remember to thank participants for their feedback (and do not respond to the feedback). Document these reflections too.
3. In the third round reflect on what should be changed if you were to run a similar meeting/ training/ workshop again - collect ideas and ensure that they are specific enough to be implemented the next time!

Debriefing:

This is a reflective exercise - take the time it needs and do not rush it.

Materials needed:

Flip chart if available - otherwise notebook

Remember:

A final reflection provides many opportunities for learning: it provides open spaces for giving and receiving feedback, inspires reflection and possibly surface new innovative ideas and can be a good way to close a process. Remember to ensure that this is a safe place for all participants to provide feedback - and make sure only questions of understanding are asked. An evaluative process is also an opportunity to surface tensions that may have arisen in the workshop and resolve them.

If successful and this process is a positive experience for all it can strengthen the bonds between the participants of such process.

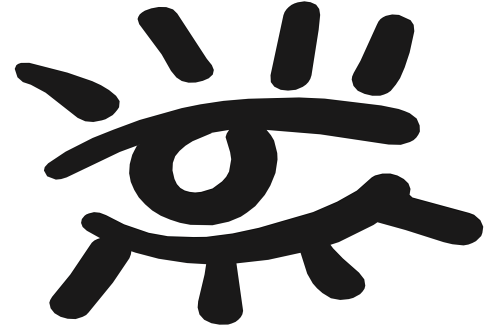
**Relevance for adaptation and DRR processes**

Adaptation processes have to be very reflective and flexible if they are aiming to address a complex and a possibly dynamic situation. It is important to embed this deep element of reflection so we can learn from our practice and improve the processes aimed towards sustainable livelihoods and adaptation.

Drama skits

Objectives:

To explore challenges that participants encounter in their work life
To discuss possible processes or solutions to these challenges



Process:

1. Ask participants to slip into groups of 3-6 participants and to reflect in their groups on challenges they are encountering in their workplace (or while performing a specific task or operation).
2. Encourage each group to select on a several challenges that they can depict in a role play or short drama skit.
3. Allow the groups to come up with a creative drama skit, support if needed and requested by the group.
4. Ask the groups to present their skit to the plenary and ensure that this is done in a quiet space.
5. Reflect after each skit by asking what participants understood from the skit. Allow the actors to clarify their message and to expand on it.

Debriefing:

The debriefing can include the following questions: What did you see in the skit? What were the main challenges identified? How could these challenges be possibly addressed?

Materials needed:

none

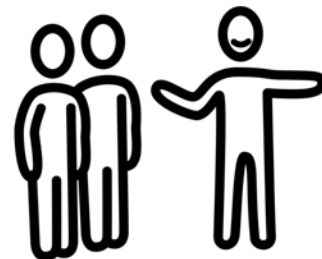
Remember:

Encourage the groups to be active and creative - and allow the groups enough space and time to present their performance. It is good to maintain a serious and appreciative atmosphere throughout the exercise.

**Relevance for adaptation and DRR processes**

Adaptation processes are often complex and can present many challenges that are often not surfaced. This exercise can support a process of sharing some of the challenges encountered and to discuss possible solutions with the group.

Gender Walk



Objectives:

To explore gender dynamics within a community

To reflect on how adaptation measures can effectively address gender dynamic

Process:

1. The setting of this exercise is explained: Every participant will receive a piece of paper that will describe his or her role in the exercise (e.g. male headmaster of the school, single mother with 2 children, girl looking after the goats, wife of the local chief, male farm worker, etc). Participants are asked to assume these roles for the duration of the exercise. Ask participants to keep their roles secret for the duration of the walk.
2. Participants are asked to stand on one side of the room - or if outside on one end of a long line.
3. Read out the list of questions (either from the back or make up your own). If a participant can answer the question with a "yes" they may take one step forward. All other participants must remain where there are.
5. Read out the list of questions in this way.
6. Reflect on who could move forward the furthest. Ask participants to disclose their "roles" and reflect on their feelings.
7. Reflect on the experience and what this means for planning climate change adaptation strategies considering gender differences and power relations.

Debriefing:

The debriefing is the most important part of this exercise. It can include the following questions: How did you feel when you moved forward? How did you feel when you stayed behind? Why could you move forward? Why could you not move? What does this mean for considering gender in adaptation projects?

Materials needed:

Small pieces of paper with the roles for participants: villagers (e.g. herd boy, village chief, wife of the teacher, woman teacher, woman Minister of Parliament, male farm worker, women chicken farmer, etc)

A list of questions to ask in the course of the walk (please make up your own questions that you consider relevant)

The president of the country is coming for a community visit. Are you invited?

Do you qualify for a loan at the local bank?

There is a problem with the drinking water. Will you be able to buy drinking water at the shop?

Are you working less than 8 hours per day?

Are you able to travel to a national meeting?

Are you able to attend the local climate change workshop?

etc.



Relevance for adaptation and DRR processes

Gender differences are often neglected when implementing adaptation projects. This exercise can show how important it is to have a good idea about gender dynamics and to include this in the project planning stage and all subsequent implementation processes.

Negotiation Game

Objectives:

To explore the challenges of negotiating while having scarce resources

To reflect on the challenges of climate negotiations



Process:

1. Divide participants into three groups. Ask each group to decide on a name for the group and share this with everybody.
2. Allocate one of the resources to each group (e.g. group 1 all papers, group 2: three blunt pencils, group 3: the sharpener). Explain that this is a negotiation game - and that no violence is permitted (Ensure a safe space for all as a facilitator!)
3. Explain the task: Each group must submit as many cards as possible with their name to the facilitator BEFORE the 5minutes deadline.
4. Ask participants to play and negotiate- enjoy the energy...
5. After 5 minutes do a countdown: 10 seconds until the secretariat closes - then count down: 9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1 - closed! Do not accept late submissions. Count the number of papers with names on - and write this on a flip chart.
6. Ask participants to reflect on the experience and what this means for negotiating collaborative action while having access to scarce resources.

Debriefing:

The debriefing is the crucial part of this exercise. It can include the following questions: How did you feel during the game? What frustrated you? What was elating? How does what happened relate to real life situations (e.g. climate negotiations)?

Materials needed:

3 blunt pencils (that do not write at all), 1 pencil sharpener, 20-30 small pieces of paper (8x8cm or similar)

Remember: Do not interfere with the negotiations between the groups. Point out during the reflections that the assumptions that a) there would be a winner and b) the group with the most cards with their name on it would win were incorrect. There is no winner in this game.

**Relevance for adaptation and DRR processes**

Negotiations over scarce resources can be extremely challenging - especially when influenced by agendas driven by power and self interest. Adaptation and DRR process require us to be more effective negotiators.