# Kosovo School

## *Mediation*

# Training Manual

**Balkan Sunflowers**
Volunteers for Social Reconstruction

# Kosovo School Mediation Training Manual

**November 2012**

**B a l k a n   S u n f l o w e r s**
Volunteers for Social Reconstruction

## Acknowledgements

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# Welcome!

Providing quality schooling and education for children is a challenge locally and globally. As in other parts of Europe, teachers in Kosovo say one of the main problems – as relates to the education of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians – is communication between parents and the schools. Teachers argue that parents from the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities take little interest or do not support the education of their children. Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian parents often complain: that schools do not understand the specific needs of their children, that teachers are unable to fulfil or respond to requests from the parents (or the children), and that schools do not pay enough attention to their children.

To this end, the Council of Europe (CoE) initiated training for school mediators from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, and teachers and directors from cooperating schools. In 2010, the CoE asked Balkan Sunflowers (BSF) to develop and implement a School Mediation programme. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) provided administrative and financial support to this project since 2010, and continuing throughout 2012.

**What is a Mediator?**

What does 'Mediator' mean in the context of this Mediator's programme? Our practice differs slightly from the more traditionally understood work of a mediator. A 'mediator', in the traditional context, does not belong to, or come from either side of a 'conflict'. For example, a mediator would neither represent a school community nor a family. In our context, however, the mediator does in fact belong to the community he or she is assisting.

In our programme, the work of a mediator focuses mainly on facilitating communication and contact between school(s), municipal education departments, families, local Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities, and the learning centre, if there is a learning centre in the town.

The mediator's concrete tasks include:
- Reacting promptly to get children back in school when they drop out of school;
- Reacting promptly to improve children's attendance to normal standards when they have irregular school attendance;
- Informing the community about ways to access schooling;
- Informing the community about the schools' activities in order to improve the education of their children;
- Raising community awareness about the importance of regular school attendance;
- Encouraging continuing education to the highest level possible, for both boys and girls;
- Constantly informing the staff of the learning centre on the topics taught in school and on the progress and difficulties encountered by children, to help learning centres work most successfully with the children;
- Informing the school and the learning centre about the needs, opinions and concerns of the parents and their communities;
- Mediating conflicts between various stakeholders with direct or indirect impact on the education of children;

- Encouraging and facilitating participation of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian parents in school meetings and activities;
- Working closely with involved teachers to develop and model community-school cooperation;
- Contacting children and families of recent returnees to help get them in school or in contact with services that support education for these children;
- Informing and if necessary assisting parents to enrol their children early in first class;
- Informing (and assisting) students to apply for scholarships, and take national tests for passing to higher levels of education;
- Observing and assessing status of children in schools.

▶▷Don't forget: The mediator represents an important role model for the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian children. S/he also plays an important role in developing confidence on the part of parents and the community members that the school is committed to provide quality education to their children.

**Using the Manual**

We hope you find this manual helpful in your work. This manual will guide the course work for the twenty modules that are designed to be the basis of the school mediator approval process. It is a 'work-in-progress'. We are continually seeking suggestions (from others and ourselves!) to improve it. The training themes listed below do not represent a complete or final description of all modules. We are thankful to, and look forward to on-going input from, partners such as the Ministry for Education, Science and Technology (MEST), OSCE), People In Need (PIN), CoE – and most important, you!

Themes listed may involve very different kinds and lengths of training. However, all modules seek to provide 'hands-on' guidance and practice to deepen one's skills in these areas. Individual situations vary. Communities vary. Municipalities vary. Hence, as you explore and 'practice' what is discussed in the modules, you may discover that some material is more relevant to your specific situation, and some less so. The order of the modules is not etched in stone. Depending on dynamics, timing, moods, or urgencies, together with the facilitators and programme organisers you might decide to set aside one module for another. For example, you might discover that the module on working with parents should follow the module on working with the community. In summation, we encourage you to adapt the modules' order and supplementary materials to the needs of the group and the facilitators. Facilitators, mediators, or other participants in the modules will note that some statements are directed towards the mediator whilst others are intended for the facilitator. This may appear confusing, but it seemed the most efficient way to address two groups in the same volume (since there are no separate volumes for facilitator and mediator). You will also notice that some exercises are incorporated into the main body of the module and others are considered supplementary. This is due to the flow of the text, nothing more. Finally, you will also note that some topics are mentioned in multiple modules. Repetition can be a useful pedagogical tool. Sometimes it is important to look at the same question or topic from multiple perspectives and in different contexts.

Nevertheless, the core competences and skills development include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Thorough understanding of how relevant education institutions function, e.g. schools, municipal education directorates;
- Management of delicate, sensitive issues with families and school communities;
- Efficient technical communication skills;
- Maintaining confidentiality;
- Inter-experiential and intercultural awareness, communication;
- Mastering team work and cooperation with other entities in your community;

Dear Mediators and Facilitators, many themes addressed in this manual are very complex and, indeed, tomes would be required (and in many instances already exist) to adequately do justice to the intricacies and nuances of these vast fields. Therefore, the themes of conflict transformation, understanding family and community, group dynamics, child psychology, self-awareness, development, education, and the like are merely being touched upon here, directly or indirectly. A fundamental intent of this text is to whet one's appetite with a desire for further reading, learning and exploring.

**Notes to Facilitator:**

Every facilitator has his or her own rhythm, sense of order, or relevance of workshop themes and exercises. As facilitator, you might wish to use the exercises differently, e.g. with different modules. Please feel free to match the modules with exercises as you see fit. And, let us know what was best for you!

We look forward to your feedback – to hear what has been helpful, what you would like to change, or to hear your suggestions for additional topics for the manual and its modules.

We wish you much success and gratification in your work.

Karmit Zysman
Prishtinë/Priština, 2012

## *Purpose and Direction of the School Mediators Project*

The primary goal of this project is to keep children from Kosovo's Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in school.

Pupils leaving school during the school year, or not continuing with a new year – that is, interruption, termination, or 'dropping-out' – creates a threat to the betterment of the individual child's well-being, and leads to a stagnation in the growth of the community.

While the most visible goal of this project is to keep children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in school, that is not all. The project aims to:

- Decrease the number of drop-outs and return drop-outs to school;
- Prevent drop-outs before they happen through positive and early interventions;
- Increase contact, trust and cooperation between communities and parents on the one hand and schools and teachers on the other;
- Increase participation of young people from these communities in all levels of education, so also supporting access to secondary schools and higher education;
- To sensitise teachers;
- To end front-back row segregation in classrooms, and other forms of non-inclusive and unprofessional practice;
- To support school efforts to improve the environment for children from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities to participate in Kosovo schools.

### Overall plan for the Mediator Programme

The overall plan for the Mediator Programme is to prepare mediators who serve Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities for eventual formal approval of the training programme by the Ministry for Education, Science and Technology (MEST) in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), and eventual certification of, and support for the mediators on the municipal level.

*Phase One:* Mediator Programme proves successful in 2010 and 2011;

*Phase Two:* During 2012 1) a curriculum for school mediator training is designed and is met with approval by MEST, 2) Twenty training modules are completed;

*Phase Three:* Mediator Programme gradually transitions from BSF implementation to that of the Municipal Directorate for Education (MDE). Mediators in this program are fully or partially brought into the MEST or MDE system and budget for 2014.

The Council of Europe ROMED Programme develops, trains, facilitates, and advocates for implementation of Roma Mediator programmes throughout Europe. In Kosovo, the School Mediator programme serves Egyptian, Roma and Ashkali communities. ROMED has trained trainers from Kosovo. The Kosovo programme will continue to look to ROMED to share best practices, and develop effective activities and networks.

During the current year, 2012, 14 School Mediators are working in 10 municipalities. With success, hopefully, this Kosovo School Mediator programme will be incorporated into public institutions and adopted in additional municipalities.

### *The European Code of Ethics for Mediators*[1]

The Mediator…

**1**      respects the human rights and the dignity of all persons and acts with honesty and integrity in performing his/her duties. By showing clearly this human rights perspective and respect for human dignity, the mediator will have the trust of both Roma community and public institution, and will be respected as a professional with specific tasks. The mediator will thus be also a role model for members of Roma community and for the staff of the institution interacting with Roma.

**2**      works to ensure equal access to rights while respecting legal requirements and administrative procedures. The main mission of the mediator is to ensure that members of the Roma communities enjoy full access to their rights and are supported in overcoming the possible barriers which can hinder real equality in rights. This means sometimes that special measures need to be taken in order to take into account the specific needs and possibilities of the Roma. However, these measures should not be individual exceptions from complying with administrative requirements. When it is necessary, the mediator should indicate to the institutions concerned that a change in a specific procedure is needed. This approach is the only one compatible with the principles of democracy and rule of law.

**3**      is responsible to help those concerned to find mutually satisfactory solutions but does not have the responsibility to provide solutions to all problems raised by beneficiaries or by the staff of the institution. The mediator will listen to the needs of the members of the Roma community and of the staff of the institution and will help them understand each other. The mediator does not have look for "who is to blame", to decide what is the best solution, nor to tell to the Roma or to the staff of the institutions what to do. His/her role is to ask those concerned how they want the situation to change, what they can do for this and what support will be needed from the mediator. This makes the mediator impartial, but not uninvolved, and careful to address in a balanced way the needs of Roma and of the staff of the public institution. This also prevents abusive requests and unjustified pressure from both parties.

**4**      is proactive, has prompt reactions and develops sound prevention activities. In many cases, Roma people do not know the rights they have and how to enjoy them. Thus, the mediator will be proactive, will not just wait for a problem to appear but analyse permanently the situation and raise awareness of all stakeholders on the issues identified. Prompt responses are given to all cases and situations signalled by community members or staff of the institutions. The analysis of the various challenges and solutions found leads to ideas for well planned prevention activities, avoiding repetition or extension of problematic situations.

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[1]   European Commission, *European Code of Ethics for Mediators*, 2012.
http://ec.europa.eu/civiljustice/adr/adr_ec_code_conduct_en.pdf (Accessed 11 September 2012).

**5**     keeps confidentiality of the information obtained in the course of professional activities. All information obtained in the process of work will be kept confidential, will not be disclosed to other persons or institutions, unless there is an explicit agreement of the person who provided the information, and with the only exception of situations when the safety of a person is threatened. Those who speak to the mediator should be informed about the commitment to confidentiality. No person, even the head of the institution employing the mediator, is allowed to ask the mediator to break confidentiality. Information obtained which is of general interest can be communicated in a way to preserve the anonymity of the source, with the agreement of the source.

**6**     does not use his/her role and power to manipulate or to harm others. The role of the mediator provides access to information and a series of contacts within the community and the institutions. The mediator should not use the power generated by this information or the prerogatives connected to the role of mediator to manipulate of harm other people.

**7**     respects the traditions and culture of the communities, provided that they are compatible with the key principles of human rights and democracy. Some communities have specific traditions, ways of life and cultural norms, different from those of the majority society. The mediator will get to know these traditions and norms, respect them, and support outsiders o understand and respect them as well. The only exception is when some community norms or customs are not compatible with the principles of human rights and democracy.

**8**     will treat all community members with equal respect and disclose publicly situations of conflict of interests. Regardless of their gender, age, status in the community, etc., the mediator will show equal respect to all beneficiaries and deal with their requests in a transparent and fair way. When somebody is given a priority on a matter, the reason has to be clear for all and justified. When relatives of the mediator or other persons close to the mediator are involved in a conflict, the situation should be indicated and external support for mediation should be requested.

**9**     makes a clear distinction between professional and private activities. It is necessary for the mediator to make explicit the boundaries between professional activities and private life. Having a strong commitment for the problems of the community does not mean being available at all times for requests of community members. Community members should be informed about the work schedule of the mediator and about the ways to contact the mediator.

**10**     collaborates with other mediators and with other professionals. The mediator is a professional which needs to maintain strong collaboration with other professionals (health professionals, social workers, teachers, etc.) in order to accomplish his/her tasks. Mediators will support each other in their work. All mediators will use opportunities available to them for exchanging experiences and for sharing successful solutions and useful information.

### *A Glimpse at the Life Situation in Ashkali, Egyptian and Roma Communities in Kosovo and its Affect on Education[2]*

The 'Communities' present a mixed picture of a situation in flux, with some improvement in conditions and perceptions, but with daunting long-term economic and social challenges.

Kosovo's Strategy for the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo, education section, begins: 'An analysis of the situation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in the education system in Kosovo paints a very bleak picture. The situation is characterized by a low level of general attendance in compulsory education, a very small amount of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians attending higher education or university education, very few teachers of Romani, Ashkali or Egyptian origin and a high drop-out rate, in particular of girls.'[3]

The Kosovo Foundation for Open Society (KFOS) 2009 baseline survey found that 19.93% of respondents had not finished even one year of school, 96% had not completed 'obligatory' levels of education, only 12% had participated in 9-12 years of school, and only 2% had completed secondary school, with 13 or more years of education.[4] 'While 11.2% of men have not finished any year of education, namely are illiterate, this percentage among women is three times higher. 30.2% of female respondents said they never enrolled in school.'[5] The KFOS report found minimal differences among the three communities, a conclusion with which we, for the most part, concur. Overall, KFOS reports an average of 5.6 years of education completed.[6]

Early school leaving or 'dropping-out' of school can become a misunderstood and overlooked phenomenon. When a child is in the middle of the second year of school, for example, and stops attending school, everyone understands that as 'dropping-out'. These children are most visible to schools. However, the reality includes far more children than this narrow confine describes. To better define the drop-out reality and to frame solutions, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology issued Administrative Instruction 7/2011, which states, '"1. 'Person that leaves school' is that student, who quits schooling before the end of compulsory education with law. 2. 'Person who leaves school' is that student who even after finishing compulsory school education continues but leaves it in a later period, before the aimed end. 3. 'Person who leaves school' is also that child or youngster who is not registered in school and thus does not follow compulsory education according to law.'"[7] MEST therefore recognises 'leaving school', 'school abandonment', and dropping out as including not only children who leave during a class year while they are at an obligatory age of attendance, but also children who never start school, children who complete a school year but do not start the next school year though they are still of an age legally obligated to attend, and young people who have passed the legal age of obligation but leave

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**2**   Material in this section draws on the Balkan Sunflowers Education Survey: Rand Engel and Enver Gashi, Education Survey (working title) (Prishtinë/ Priština: Balkan Sunflowers, 2012). Draft version, therefore final content and page numbers not available.

3   Office of the Prime Minister, *Strategy for the Integration of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo 2009- 2015*, December 2008, p 20. http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/zck/repository/docs/Strategy_for_the_Integration_of_Roma,_Ashkali_and_Egyptian_communities_2009-2015.pdf. (Accessed 5 November 2012).

4   Kosovo Foundation for Open Society,(Nait Vrenezi and Jusuf Thaçi), *The Position of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo* (Prishtinë/ Priština: Kosovo Foundation for Open Society, 2009), p. 34. http://kfos.org/the-position-of-roma-ashkali-and-egyptian-communities-in-kosovo-baseline-survey/. (accessed November 6 2012).

5   *Ibid.,* p 35.

6   *Ibid.,* p 36.

7   MEST Administrative Instruction 7/2011 on Creating and strengthening of teams for prevention and response toward abandonment and non-registration in compulsory education, 14 October 2011; updated by the MEST with Administrative Instruction 19/2012.

school in the midst of a school year. This is an inclusive definition. If we apply the standard that includes obligatory attendance in education – from age 6 until completion of the ninth class at around age 16[8], including children who never started school – the drop-out rate for the three communities in Kosovo is over 90%.

There are a number of potential obstacles to success for Egyptian, Ashkali, and Roma children in Kosovo. Balkan Sunflowers, from our own experience, the experience of others shared with us, and review of the literature finds the list of perceived obstacles as follows[9]:

- Economic factors:
  - Inability to afford school books and materials;
  - Lack of shoes, socks, clothing;
  - Lack of warm clothes to be able to sit in cold classrooms;
  - Lack of conditions for proper hygiene;
  - Children must work to support the family;
- Health issues, related to economics:
  - More days of illness;
  - More communicable illness;
  - Scabies and head lice;
- Social issues:
  - Related to extreme poverty;
  - Related to hygiene;
  - Lack of parental support;
  - Children must take care of younger children, help with house work;
  - Undervaluing girls' education;
  - Resistance to girls' inclusion in education past puberty;
  - Early marriage;
  - Lack of self-confidence;
  - Feeling of insecurity in school;
- Learning Issues:
  - Poor foundation and falling further behind;
  - Non-diagnosis of poor eyesight, hearing or other disabilities;
  - Hyper activity, behavioural issues;
- Discrimination:
  - From teachers: segregation in classes, humiliation, non-attention;
  - From other children: bullying, exclusion;
  - On the way to or from school;
- Language:
  - Attending school in other than mother tongue;
  - Returnees speaking only 'western' languages;
  - Don't understand in class;
- Access:
  - Distance from school;
  - Difficult conditions to get to school;
  - Lack of civil registration documents.

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[8] Law No. 04/L –032 on Pre-University Education, 16 September 2011.
[9] Engel and Gashi, *op cit.*

# Module 1 – Planning: What Helps Us to Be Organised

**Purpose:** To jointly explore ways to improve efficiency of day-to-day and long-term organisation

**Important point:** To be aware of our own organisation, planning habits and considerations – the good ones and those that need improvement

**Outcome:** Mediators use and experiment with organising skills and resources.

**Materials:**
- Flip-charts, markers, tape
- Forms mediators use during their rounds
  - Week Report Template
  - Weekly Database
  - Exercise – the planning process

**Group Brainstorming and Discussion**

Discuss these questions either in large or small groups.  Include in your discussions the points from the list, 'Planning Considerations', below the questions,

- Imagine a 'day in your life as a mediator' and imagine the best planning and organising. What would that be? How would good organisation affect you?
- Now imagine a 'day in your life as a mediator' and imagine the worst of planning and organising. What would everything look like? How would you be affected?

1. What comes to mind when you think of a 'well-organised' person? Trainer can mention a few examples to start the discussion:
   - Does this person remember names or things he must do?
   - Does this person complete tasks relatively efficiently?
   - Does this person always have pen and notebook to take notes?
   - Does this person plan ahead and is s/he mindful of time?
   - Does this person keep a "To Do" list?

2. Why is it important to be well-organised? In whose interest is it to be well-organised?

**Planning a Meeting or Event**

- Invitations, announcements
  - How much time do you send them out in advance of the event?
  - How do you determine to whom you send the invitation?
  - What method do you use to inform people of the meeting?
    - Email – advantages and disadvantages
    - Posted or hand delivered letter – advantages and disadvantages
    - Word of mouth – advantages and disadvantages
    - Is telephone SMS ever acceptable?
  - Do you do follow-up phone calls to confirm attendance? How many days in advance do you do the follow-up phone calls and how many times do you call to confirm attendance?
- Planning the meeting itself

- o Be clear on the meeting's goals
- o Make an agenda for a meeting
- o Set the agenda ahead of time and send it with an invitation
- o Include in the agenda – for purposes of clarity and transparency – that there is time for comments and questions that are not already on the agenda
- o Set the amount of time for each agenda point; check with people for agreement if you believe the time planned should be increased
- o Let people know the duration of the meeting so they don't have to ask when the meeting begins or ends
- Leading meetings
  - o Know the purpose of the meeting and what it is you want to know, understand better, or decide at the close of the meeting.
  - o What do you want to accomplish during the meeting?
  - o How do you ensure that everyone has the opportunity to express their ideas, opinions?
- Meeting records
  - o Attendance lists. Use a sign-in sheet at every meeting;
  - o Take notes. Keep good notes of the meeting. Details are very important, e.g. statistics, dates, names. What, who, where, why, when, how long? Your immediate thought or reaction to what is discussed or decided.
- Keep your notes organised. Improve meeting skills by trying out the tips above, by asking people you think are good at meetings how they do it, by looking at tutorials on YouTube.

**Doing What? Doing When?**

- Tasks or 'To Do' lists
  - o To Do or Task lists are the record of what you want to do, said you would do, were told by someone else they would do, a promise you made, a promise your co-worker made, reminders, a record;
  - o Making notes about what we must do on a piece of paper, the back of something else is not reliable – especially as we have more to do;
  - o Excel is also a good way to keep a To Do list on your computer. Here is a sample:[10]

| Date | Priority | Description | Who | Due Date | Date Done |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8-Aug-12 | | Milaim start as Mediator | Driton | | 9-Aug-12 |
| 8-Aug-12 | A | Ck Obiliq municipality | Driton | | 15-Aug-12 |
| 8-Aug-12 | | Report folder | | | |
| 8-Aug-12 | C | American women - tapes, DVDs….. | | | |
| 9-Aug-12 | B | Water company - take old meter and all paperwork | | 24-Aug-12 | |
| 10-Aug-12 | B | Ck REF - scholarships - Survey book to Prizren Discuss cooperation Notfiy Osman of trainings | | | |
| 10-Aug-12 | C | merrjep.com - used items | | | 14-Aug-12 |
| 13-Aug-12 | B | http://www.ted.com/talks/pam_warhurst_how_we_can_eat_our_landscapes.html | | | |
| 13-Aug-12 | A | Obiliq LC: | | 20-Aug-12 | 27-Aug-12 |

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[10] In this sample, the user keeps all finished items on the To Do list. When something is finished the date done is entered, the size is reduced and made italic so it is clear what is finished and what remains.

- o Another way to keep a Task list is connected to Google mail which is also your NGO/school mail account. You can activate the Tasks list from the Menu bar "More" option and then keep tasks connected to your mail. It may even figure out your task! If you command it to add an email open to your task list, it will try to figure out the task from the email itself. (Check it... it could be wrong.)
- Calendar. It is hard to keep appointments if you do not know when they are. There are many ways – choose what works best for you.  Here are some options:
  - o Memory.  Our description for this method is, 'Good luck';
  - o Pocket calendar. Many people carry a small calendar, printed new every year, that is easy to hold in a shirt pocket. They write down new appointments in the calendar immediately because it is always with them, and check it often – at least every morning – to be sure they do not forget something;
  - o Smart phone. Of course, more and more people rely on their phone for their calendar and set reminders so they do not even have to remember to check it;
  - o Print calendar. There are many websites that allow one to print nicely format- ted calendars for free.  Search ('Google') 'print calendar' and choose;
  - o Calendar attached to your system mail account. Select 'Calendar' on the menu bar. You can add items to this calendar, print the calendar, and share it with others. Suggestion: make checking your calendar every morning a habit;
  - o If something needs time to prepare, remind yourself on your calendar before it is due, to give yourself time to get it done;
  - o An important tip: use only one calendar – choose what you like and use it.

**General advice for being more organised**

- Tips
  - o Ask questions until something is clear;
  - o Be consistent with tasks;
  - o Details are important;
  - o Improve planning skills by trying out the tips above, by thinking about how you can improve, by looking on Google for 'planning tips', 'planning skills', 'plan- ning', etc. and trying out recommendations that you like;
  - o Being well organized, being a good planner, getting better results are all skills that can be learned;
  - o Improve computer skills by going through menus and trying out new parts of the programs, by asking people who know more, by looking at tutorials on YouTube, by taking courses;
  - o Have a work space that is comfortable for you and organised;
  - o If you have a work space – a desk, an office – that you have long used, get rid of things (paper, tools) that are never used;
  - o The better your notes, the easier it is to write reports since you already have the information you need;

Managing your work means balancing 1) the goals and results you wish to achieve, and 2) the ways you wish to attain them. Often we get caught up in the process and forget our ultimate goals. Likewise, we also sometimes forget to analyse *how* we want to get somewhere. The *how* and the *what* are both important. The *what* is the end result, but the *how* has to do with our or- ganisation skills and our 'people skills'. This issue will continue to be elaborated on in other

modules because, for mediators, it is very important to be able to understand and to maintain the equilibrium between 'how' and 'what'.

## *Exercise 1 – The work cycle of a mediator (ROMED)[11]*

**Duration:** 1h30

**Objectives**

- To know the work cycle approach and clarify the role of the mediator in each phase
- To identify advantages and threats associated with including this approach in the work of mediators

**Resources needed**

- Computer with video projector;
- Presentation and handout on the work cycle: (Annex: Participatory Work Cycle Management)

**Description of the session**

The first part of the module is a presentation by the trainer of the approach based on the work cycle. This starts with emphasizing the difference between a day-by-day organisation of the work and a more structured work, based on the work cycle. (20 min)

Participants will be divided in four groups:
- Two groups are asked to identify what the advantages of such an approach are.
- The other two groups will identify the key challenges of an approach based on a work cycle organised in a participatory way

Then, the two groups which had the same task will negotiate a common list of advantages or challenges. (40 min)

A representative of each group will present the results. In a discussion in plenary, the two lists are compared and participants are asked to reflect on the following questions:
- Are the advantages bigger than the disadvantages or challenges?
- Are the advantages important enough to make an effort to overcome the disadvantages or challenges?
- What is needed to reduce the impact of the challenges identified?
- Would the use of a participatory work cycle approach improve the overall status of the mediator and the effectiveness of the work?

Following the discussions, there might be amendments to the lists, which should be done, provided that the group agrees on that. The two lists will remain displayed and might be modified during the next activities. During the following modules, references will be made to these lists (for example, how the use of a non-violent communication approach, presented in the next module, can help overcome some of the challenges). (30 min)

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[11] ROMED Programme, *Trainer's Handbook* (Strasbourg, Council of Europe and European Union, 2011 – internal working document), p. 27, Module 6. Small adaptations appropriate to Kosovo are made for this publication.

## Exercise 2 – *Maximizing Strengths, Minimizing Weaknesses in Planning*[12]

**How can you maximize your strengths and manage your weaknesses in the planning process?**

Being clear on your strengths and how to maximize these, as well as your weaknesses and how to manage them, helps you do the best job you can in the action planning process.

| My strengths | How to maximize these |
|---|---|
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

| My weaknesses | How to manage these |
|---|---|
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**Anticipate obstacles you may need to overcome and opportunities to embrace in the process**
Thinking about likely obstacles you will need to overcome and opportunities to embrace in the action planning process from the start will better enable you to be proactive and manage the process as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Describe obstacles that you anticipate:
1.
2.
3.

What might you do to counteract these?
1.
2.
3.

Describe opportunities that you could embrace:
1.
2.
3.

**Describe what your colleagues in the organization need to know (a) about how they can contribute and (b) in order to answer questions about the process. How will you ensure they have this knowledge and information throughout the process? Describe your plan.**

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[12] Excerpted from: *A Guide to Participatory Action Planning and Techniques for Facilitating Groups*, pp. 19-20. http://www.ramsar.org/pdf/outreach_actionplanning_guide.pdf. (Accessed 6 November 2012).

# Module 2 – Planning: When Unexpected Things Happen

**Purpose:**
1. To explore ways together to maintain flexibility while keeping things on track
2. Through discussion become more aware of our own organisation habits: good ones as well as those that need improvement.
3. Think about the relationship between trust-building or breaking and good planning.

**Outcome:** Mediators will increase their skills in responding flexibly to changing situations.

**Materials:** Flip-chart, markers

**Group Brainstorming and Discussions[13]**

1. What do we do when things seem to fall apart?
   - 'But we decided….and now we want to change...'
   - We don't let the 'little things' bother us. We select our 'battles' because we only have so much energy and time in one day.
   - Recalling goals and priorities
2. When is too much organising inappropriate?
3. Ownership in organising and communicating: How are decisions made? How do we achieve agreement on how we communicate and organise? When is 'horizontal decision-making' useful? When is it not?
4. Discuss the 'What goes wrong' list below. In general, how do we respond to 'emergencies' or unanticipated, e.g. not thought of, not considered, not planned ahead of time) changes or difficulties. What can we learn from thinking about some of these examples?

**What goes wrong?**

> Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter.
> Try Again. Fail again. Fail better.
> *-Samuel Beckett, Irish Playwright (1906-1989)*

We as humans are not perfect. Hence, what we do, create, plan is also not going to be perfect. However, contrary to popular belief, this is not a reason to not attempt to do the best that we can do. Here are some examples of things that can go wrong.

- Planned materials missing, not available, not ordered, forgotten, or in fact not planned;
- Guest speaker cannot come, and lets you know last minute or not at all;
- Guest speaker or presenter cannot come and gives you enough time to plan some-thing else;
- Poor attendance of planned participants;
- Air conditioning is not working (as example of many possibilities);
- Too much background noise;
- A partner takes a negative, hostile, or non-cooperative position;

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[13] Discussions may take place in small groups reporting back, in a large group session, or in the group as a whole.

- Others attack or critique what you are doing or your plan for the activity;
- It starts very late;
- You make a mistake. Someone else makes a mistake;
- There is no money.

Trust building is a very important theme for mediators and is all too frequently overlooked and underestimated as we plan and organise. Discussed below are three issues relating to building trust. Due to the importance of trust building, you will also encounter it throughout the manual in different contexts.  For example,

1. What does it mean to trust someone?  How do you individually build trust?
2. What are important ways that you seek to build trust?  What characteristics do you rely on?
3. How can good organisation improve trust-building?
4. How can good organisation hinder trust-building? When can it interfere with 'relationship-building'?

**Organizing merely for the sake of organizing**

In addition to the value that good organisation adds to one's work and efficiency, good organisation and planning also provide tremendous help in building trust among us. If we 'promise' to do something, no matter how good our intentions, eventually we can cause a serious rupture in our relationships if we are not able to keep our promises. And, good organisation and planning help us keep those promises! Hence, a good exercise is to think about some moments where we, or someone else, did not follow through on a promise made (or where it was understood that a promise was made by one of the parties) that affected a relationship. Try to think of instances where we failed – not others. Sometimes it is more difficult to be self-critical! If we failed to follow through with a promise, we must think what *each* party – including us – might have done differently.

▶▷Don't forget: Trust enables us to give, *and be given*, the benefit of the doubt. Generally speaking, we tend to give the benefit of the doubt to people we 1) like, 2) trust, 3) know are not 'against us', and the like. Contrarily, we less frequently give the benefit of the doubt to those we don't know well, 2) don't particularly feel comfortable with, etc.

**Result (What) and Process (How)**

Managing your work means balancing 1) the goals and results you wish to achieve, and 2) the ways you wish to attain them. Often, we get caught up in doing the work and forget our ultimate goals. Likewise, we also sometimes forget to analyse how we want to get somewhere. The 'how' and the 'what' are both important. The 'what' is the end result, but the 'how' has to do with our organisation skills and our 'people skills'. This issue will continue to be elaborated on in other modules because, for mediators, it is very important to be able to understand and to maintain the equilibrium between 'how' and 'what'.

**Who gets credit for what?**

In  a world that revolves round competition and rewarding 'success', or 'winning', taking credit for something one has done or said can be very preoccupying and drain our energies.  On the

other hand, sincerely giving credit is very difficult for many people much of the time. The giving and taking of credit can make and break a trust in a relationship that can be very difficult to repair. What does giving or taking credit have to do with good organisational skills? Everything! We organise to get things done – a party, a conference, a meeting, a publication, a programme. If we are not careful to give credit to people who helped to accomplish our tasks, that is, to get things done, we have ignored an essential aspect to working effectively together.

In order to build trust with those with whom we are working, it is often necessary to 1) put our own needs aside and graciously give credit to someone else's idea or plan in order to preserve a relationship.

## Exercise 1 – Planning an Event

This simple exercise involves triads - three people per group. Scenarios can be predetermined by the trainer/facilitator or created on site.

In the triad format, two people plan an event or attempt to coordinate an activity they both are involved in. The third person listens, observes, and provides feedback to the other two triad members as to what might be useful to change, or not, in their planning and organising. Unless time is very limited, the three people rotate roles.

After the 'triads' are complete, everyone regroups to talk about observations, experience. In addition, the important question of how to ensure that one remains consistent is addressed throughout the facilitated discussions.

Don't forget to include some unexpected 'emergencies' in your role playing. You can refer to the section, 'What goes wrong?' above.

## *Exercise 2 – Scheduling*

*First discussion:*

Facilitator asks participants to think of one or two 'cases' where scheduling a particular event was challenging. This 'case' can be acted out in a Fish Bowl setting with an outer circle commenting and providing suggestions.

Some topics to consider:
- Planning ahead. Don't leave things for the last minute. How do we maintain flexibility whilst planning ahead?
- Asking for help. For many, this can be uncomfortable. For others, asking for help is easy. Why is asking for help difficult for some and not for others?
- Anticipating. Things will unexpectedly arise that can put everyone's schedules and plans in a tizzy. Having a plan 'B' or plan 'C' is wise. Why do we sometimes have difficulty doing this?
- What scheduling techniques work best for participants? Writing plans, dates, times, people involved, etc. in a notebook? On a computer? In the mobile telephone? On the wall? On backs of envelopes?

*Second discussion:*

Facilitator will introduce several good scheduling methods that can be used with a computer/internet as well as those that do not require technology. The participants will experiment with these models and discuss the benefits and disadvantages of each. Ultimately, the group can select a method to use in the future, if they wish.

# Module 3 – Case (Client) Management

**Purpose:** To become proficient in all stages of client management

**Important point:** Detail and consistency are two main features to good client management

**Outcome:** Mediators use the 'case' method efficiently in all relevant situations

**Materials:** Forms to practice with

**Group Brainstorming and Discussion**

1. One definition of case/client management: a collaborative process of assessment, planning, facilitation, referral, and advocacy in order to meet an individual's/client's needs. What does client management mean to you?
2. Discuss your experience with detail-oriented work. What did you find difficult? What came easily to you?
3. What are some aspects of client management that you enjoy doing and what don't you enjoy doing? How do you accomplish what you don't enjoy?

**The Many Stages of Client Management**

Your trainer, an expert in client management, will lead you through some exercises that will help you:
- Recognise and respond to needs;
- Become more proficient in maintaining efficient records; and
- Help you develop better open and consistent communication with your clients.

Look at some of the below-mentioned stages and questions that involve client management and assess how well you perform these tasks. Then, in groups of either two or three, role play some of the more challenging aspects of client management, such as uncooperative sources or clients. Feel free to include additional stages from your own experiences.

- What is a case?
  - Terminology: case, client
  - Recognising and becoming aware of a case; what is a case? What basic, initial information is needed to open a case?
    - How do we become aware of a case?
    - How do we determine which approaches to use with which clients once we have aware of their needs?
  - What are sufficient reasons to open a case (see more below)
  - Opening a case
  - Who is a Client?
- Who might you work with on a case – the stakeholders?
  - School directors and/or teachers
  - Municipal offices
  - Parents
  - Other organisations, leaders from the community

- Up-coming events/meetings
- Pupils, themselves
- Religious leaders
- What could working with stakeholders mean or involve?
- Gathering information
- Finding support
- Referring to another stakeholder for action
- Deciding on interventions or activities together
- Informing

- What are reasons to open a 'case'?
  - Child has dropped out of school
  - Child's school or learning centre attendance is poor or become poor recently
  - Child's school work has gotten worse
  - Teacher, parent or centre believes something is causing emotional problems for the child
  - Lack of some material items (clothes, shoes, eyeglasses, etc.) is keeping the child from school
  - Alleged discrimination or humiliation from teacher or other children
  - Some form of institutional discrimination such as segregated classrooms or minority children placed only at the back of a classroom

- What types of incidents or experiences might cause a child to drop-out or become inconsistent in school attendance?
  - Parent-generated such as:
    - wants child to work or beg
    - wants child to take care of siblings
    - wants child to help around the home in cooking and cleaning
    - wants child to take care of sick family members
    - is afraid of girls' situation with puberty
    - is unable or willing to send children because of lack of warm or good clothes, shoes, school books
    - thinks child is too small or unhealthy
    - does not believe in or trust schools
    - pulls child out rather than fights perceived discrimination
  - Teacher-generated:
    - humiliates child
    - pays no attention
    - makes discriminatory comments
    - yells a lot
    - physically punishes
  - Child-generated:
    - bored by school
    - wants to get money for poor family
    - wants to get married
  - School Director-generated
    - segregated classrooms
    - school atmosphere discriminatory
    - reinforces 'institutional' barriers
  - Peer-generated

- - disagreements,
  - bullying
- Documenting a case
  - What kind of information do you need
  - Clear and informative writing
    - Just the facts!
    - Impressions
  - Research methodology
  - Using case report forms, record-keeping
  - Details – will make your life easier
  - Subsequent documentation – what do we do to complete a client's profile?
- How do you obtain information in an efficient way?
  - What information, who do you ask, what do you ask?
  - What is the best way to do that?
  - How do you do this?
  - How consistently/regularly do you do this?
  - What do you do if one of the parties does not cooperate?
  - Sensitive issues
  - Family relations
  - Gender sensitivity
- Following-up and following through
  - Goals and urgency
  - Keeping the record
  - Timing and efficiency in learning about and responding to cases
  - What is 'closing' a case
  - Case work involves a lot of follow-up – being thorough and consistent
  - Follow-through helps build trust and vice versa (!)

### *Exercise 1 – Interaction with public institutions (ROMED)*[14]

**Duration:** 1h30

**Objectives**
- Develop skills for effective communication with the staff of public institutions
- Develop empathy with the staff of public institutions and ability to identify appropriate strategies
- Develop case management skills

**Resources needed**
- Flipchart paper, markers;
- Place to display results
- Handout: Critical incidents analysis form

**Description of the session**

Introduction about types of interactions between mediators and the staff of the institutions in the framework of the role of the mediators:
- Agreeing on a contract with the head of the institution and initial introduction to the staff;
- Mediator attends staff meetings;
- Mediator as moderator of staff – community meetings (planning, monitoring and evaluation);
- Mediator as facilitator of communication: staff – community member (10 min).

**Group work:**

Participants split into groups to discuss the following questions:
- Identify what expectations mediators have from the head and staff of the institution;
- Identify what expectations head/staff of the institutions have from the mediator.

Then, in mixed groups, participants discuss about what can be done in order to maintain a positive relationship and to support the work of the mediator, to have realistic expectations and to accomplish them. Results are presented on a flipchart paper. (30 min)

For the next part, in groups of 5, participants choose one specific case from the experience of one of them. The group will analyse the case and identify three types of ideas:
- How were the Code of Ethics' principles reflected in how the case was managed?
- What skills were needed for the mediator to manage successfully the case?
- What lessons can be drawn from analysing the case in order to improve future management of such cases?

An alternative way to organise this session is to make a simulation of situations which involves interaction of the mediator with the head of the institution (other than the discussion in the preparatory phase with the head of the institution, which was done in a previous session), by applying the principles set in the session on building trust and consensus.

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[14] ROMED Programme, *op cit,* p. 32.

# Module 4 – Communication: Practical Skills and Tools

**Purpose:** To become more efficient while demonstrating good cooperation skills through communication

**Important point:** Being aware of our words and our actions is crucial to good communication. Being aware of how we communicate is crucial to successful mediation.

**Outcome:** To better practice techniques and skills that lead to more effective writing, speaking, emailing, phoning, etc.

**Materials:** Flip-charts, markers, tape, attachments

> I must beware of my thoughts, for they may become my words.
> I must beware of my words, for they may become my actions.
> I must beware of my actions, for they may become my habits.
> I must beware of my habits, for they may become my character.
> I must beware of my character, for it may become my destiny.
> *- Lao Tsu (?)*

**The 'nuts and bolts' of good communication**

*Writing emails.* Write clear, efficient emails telling all important information: who, what, where, when, how (and sometimes 'why).

*Respond to Emails.* Respond to emails in a timely fashion. Waiting a week or two is not efficient and seems disrespectful. Hint: If you cannot reply to an email because it requires a long answer, send a quick reply to the sender. Assuming the email does not need an urgent response, confirm that you did receive it and that you will respond within the next couple of days when you have more time. – Ask 'is it okay if I respond over the next couple of days? Is there a deadline to my response?' The sender should also mention that s/he needs a response by such-and-such a date. Don't forget: non-communication is miscommunication!

*Email hints.* Some other questions to consider regarding emails:
- Do you have contact information at the end of each of your emails? You can add it to your email so it is automatic.
- Sometimes are you exchanging too many emails and realise that it might be better to call each other on the telephone? Call if you need to settle the simple question, e.g. a meeting point, or confirming a meeting, or obtaining a contact of someone else.
- Do you check your emails regularly and consistently? Once a month, even once a week, is neither consistent nor convenient for others. (Checking them constantly is not recommended either!)
- If you know that you will not be able to check your emails for a period of time due to travel, family matters, etc. how do you let people know that you will not be checking your email?

- When you have a new or different email address, how do you let folks know?
- Do you become frustrated when you do not receive a response from someone? Do you think others might be frustrated with you when you do not respond?
- What might be some situations when you 'really don't want to respond to someone'?
  - You don't have an answer to the question;
  - You don't want the person to know you don't have an answer;
  - You don't like to be the bearer of bad news;
  - _____?
  - _____?

*Mobile phones.* As with any tool, (e.g. hammer, wrench, screwdriver) mobile telephones are enormously useful. Nowadays, we simply cannot imagine not having them. They help us during times of emergency. They help us in our work and our social life. However, as with any tool, if we don't use it properly we can hurt others and ourselves. If we don't hold a hammer properly, or we use the wrong screwdriver with the wrong screw, we don't get the job done.

*Telephone etiquette.* Some points to consider about mobile phones:
- When should we turn them off? How do we know if we are conscientious about this?
- When should we not answer the telephone? Is it rude – or is it polite and respectful – to answer the telephone saying, 'Call me back later' or 'I can't talk. I'm in a meeting/cinema/wedding/funeral'? Why?
- What do we do when we do not have credit in our telephones? Especially when someone else, such as an organisation, is purchasing our phone credit? Is this a luxury or our right?
- If our call doesn't reach the intended person, should we continue calling until we reach that person? Alternately, if someone calls us unsuccessfully, should we call the person back?
- Is it a problem to talk with someone over the telephone if there is a lot of noise on either end of the phone, especially if planning is taking place?
- When is it acceptable – or not! – to call someone and hang up because you don't have enough phone credit?
- Is fiddling with your telephone rude or disrespectful when someone is speaking – either in a group or one-to-one?
- Is it better to make appointments immediately, while talking, or to agree to talk again to make an appointment? What could happen in the meanwhile that would prevent an appointment, 'that coffee break', from taking place?
  - Someone could run out of phone credit by then and not be able to call to confirm a time and place;
  - Someone could forget;
  - Others plans might have to be made in the meanwhile;
  - _____?

▷▶DON'T FORGET: Whether communicating on the telephone or in an email, people cannot see your facial expressions. What does this mean? Sarcasm, irony, humour might easily be misunderstood. A 'golden rule' when using these tools is: keep it as simple as possible. Since email

has become a preferred mode of communication, etiquette has been developed. There are many rules, but one of the most important is to avoid using capital (large) letters. USING CAPITAL LETTERS IS LIKE SCREAMING. We don't want to scream whilst we communicate in person (unless we need to save someone's life), so we should not 'scream' in our emails.

***Note taking.*** What is the purpose of taking notes? When and for whom do we take notes? Generally speaking, we take notes for ourselves. This is good news. It means our penmanship does not have to be beautiful. Our writing style doesn't have to rival that of Dostoyevsky. We take notes because no matter how good are our memories, we do not remember *everything*! And, by the way, people memorise different things differently. Some people have difficulty remembering where they put the car keys but can remember the names of everyone they have ever met over the past sixty years. Others remember historical dates and places but forget what they are supposed to bring to tomorrow's meeting. Our minds deal with short-term and long-term memory differently. This is fine. It is human. But, that is why we take notes.

> The wise person writes things down;
> The 'not-so-wise' person keeps everything in his head.
> *-Albanian proverb*

***Scheduling.*** Scheduling can be more or less challenging in different contexts and environments. Remember how difficult it was to schedule meetings, events, get together socially in Kosovo in 1999? For those of us who did not have telephones or cars, it was especially frustrating. Conditions play a role in our time and scheduling efficiency. Some people have scheduled days. They work outside the home, perhaps have many meetings... Others are overworked in the home, such as young mothers. When we interact with people with different rhythms to their days we learn to adjust our planning and we compromise. Of course, this is not always easy.

What are some examples of challenges to scheduling?
- Some people do not like to use the telephone.
- Others are not comfortable using email.
- Sometimes it is 'embarrassing' or uncomfortable – especially for shy people – to call/write to someone.
- Others feel it is 'not their job' to initiate such contact.
- Sometimes we don't want contact a particular person for a personal reason.

Whatever the reason, it is important for us, as individuals, to know – to be honest with ourselves and others - what we do well and enjoy doing, and what we don't do well, or do not like doing. Once we 'know ourselves' we can manage these skills that are so important to being efficient in our scheduling and planning. This process also requires tremendous compromise.

# Module 5 – Understanding Others and Ourselves: A Glimpse into the World of Psychology

**Purpose:** Mediators will understand better psychological factors in the actions and behaviour of children, parents and other stakeholders.

Let's be honest. This was a very challenging module to write. Why? Because it touches on very complex, nuanced, and easily misunderstood themes. Also, this module introduces concepts belonging to a field – psychology - that in and of itself has not had much exposure in Kosovo until recently. In fact, before the war, there were only a few trained psychologists in Kosovo who looked at motivation, emotion, needs, fears, etc. in holistic ways. Another reason this module was difficult to prepare is because with such involved topics, one knows one is not doing justice to these themes. After all, it would be like someone saying, 'I have one hour for you to tell me everything about war and peace'. Yet, the themes in this module are so very fundamental to our work as mediators that one cannot ignore them, despite the minimal coverage. And last, there is a risk. As a mediator, it is important to gain some insight into the motivations of our and others' behaviour. However, to act upon our insights is quite another matter. Here is where a trained psychologist or psychiatrist must be consulted.

➡**VERY IMPORTANT:** the purpose of this module is to become minimally familiar with limited concepts in psychology. This manual cannot train us to become psychologists. Acquainting oneself with central themes in psychology helps us learn what motivates us – our hearts and minds – to do the things we do. This understanding also helps us to develop an appreciation for and, hopefully, compassion for, and sensitivity towards people's situations. This may make one a more effective mediator when interacting with the variety of people and concerns that one encounters.

**Surveys, Interviews, Questionnaires, and more!**

So, how do we come to know what others are thinking or feeling about a certain topic or worry? This is a question that has puzzled social scientists - particularly psychologists - and philosophers for many decades. For its part, in the world of academia, many tools have been used each with their own successes or failures.

One such traditional tool is the **survey or questionnaire**. Surveys usually contain pre-determined and very specific questions that require precise responses. They are frequently quantitative in nature: How many? How much? What percentage? From which period to another? Information gathered for such surveys can provide tremendous insight about a situation or series of conditions. A survey can let us know that a certain community has a very high literacy rate or low employment rate. It can tell us how many children in a given place receive regular vaccinations.

**Individual interviews and focus groups** can also elicit such information, but their structures can elicit additional qualitative information because both the focus group and the individual interviews are in person. Again, though, the give-and-take between questions and answers is controlled like a 'guided' discussion. Questions are prepared ahead of time but allow for unforeseen follow-up questions. A good interview or focus group meeting (with several people simultaneously) is like a guided or structured discussion. In a focus group, for example, the participants recount their experiences during their school days and respond to additional, spontaneous questions asked by the facilitator such as, 'how did your parents help you with your homework.'

A third approach to understanding what people are thinking is the '**Listening Survey**'. During listening surveys, unstructured conversations take place and the facilitator just listens. A single, general question (not a closed question, but that will open many themes) is put forward and the group talks and shares their experiences and viewpoints in a relaxed environment.

**Abraham Maslow and the Hierarchy of Needs**

One particularly useful framework for the **Listening Survey** is the **Hierarchy of Needs**. The original Hierarchy of Needs was articulated by a famous professor of psychology, Abraham Maslow[15], in the 1940s and 1950s. Since then, many practitioners, scholars, educators, business people, leaders, etc. round the world have made adaptations both in categories and sub-categories as well as in ranking. Some practitioners suggest that in fact there is no hierarchy and that all needs are, in their own special ways, of equal importance. Many people believe that an event, concern, or feeling is not necessarily limited to only one of the categories. As is the situation with human minds and emotions, there are no 'right' ways to interpret such a framework. Rather, the value this framework offers is its guidance that helps us understand these universal human needs. Moreover, these categories provide a lot of opportunity to learn about an individual or a community's needs.
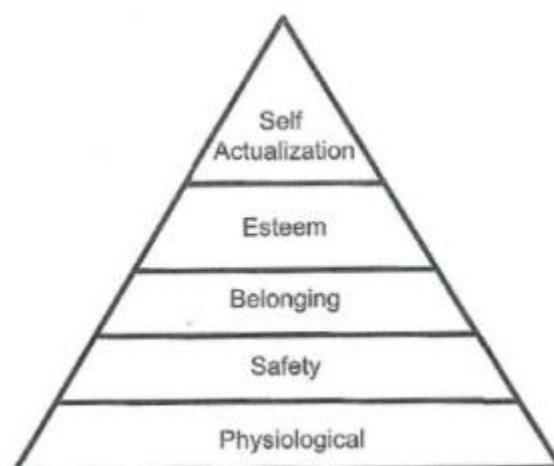


Generally speaking, the *Hierarchy of Needs* is as follows:

→ *Physical needs*

Basic needs include breathing, shelter, clothing, food, sleep, water, sanitation and hygiene, competent health care. These are basic to individuals as well as to a community. An absence of any of these can sometimes stymie individuals (or a community) from recognising or seeking other important needs reflected in other areas of this hierarchy. When you listen to people, do you hear desperation about the lack of these needs?

→ *Safety and security - physical safety (absence of threat or reality of physical harm) employment, resources, family, health, property, etc*.
A question: What are the comfort zones of a group or individual? When the comfort zones change, is there a threat of danger or a risk to physical safety? When a boy visits the local youth centre, how will he be treated? When a father returns home after looking for work, how will he

15    Abraham Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* 3rd edition. (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1987).

treat his wife? The universal existence of harmony and tension between men and women, family members, children and adults, colleagues, etc., are 'favourites' for people to talk about and hence, offer a good opportunity to learn by the listening team.

→ **Belonging/being cared for** – *friendship, family, community, colleagues, etc.*
Groups tend to have a basic set of beliefs, ideology, religion, ethics, or even something that may not be easily named or categorised through which they perceive the world, life cycle events, etc. These sets of beliefs help a community or individual to be grounded and connected with others in the same community. What do you hear being said about these needs?

→ **Esteem** – *self-esteem, confidence, achievement, respect of others, respect by others, etc.*
In this instance, we can talk about both the self-esteem of an individual, family, or that of a community, neighbourhood, or other group of people like a religious community or an association. How do people feel about decisions that are made which affect their lives? How do they feel about the *ways* in which the decisions are made? Do people feel respected? Or, do they feel a lack of respect? How is a group affected by its past (this question could easily relate to the next category as well!)?

How does education relate to this particular need category? Is there a recognition that there is value in education? If not, why not? Listening to what is *not* said is just as important to *what* is said in conversation. As a mediator or facilitator during your visits, what are you *not* hearing in the conversations??

→ **Self-actualisation** – *morality and ethnics, creativity, lack of prejudice, importance of values and a healthy approach to discerning likes and dislikes, etc.*

For example, one aspect of this category could be recreation. What hobbies do members of a group have? What do they do for relaxation and enjoyment? What about sub-groups? What are their methods of enjoyment? If men of a particular group like to watch football, what do the women of the group like to do? And, in keeping with search for self-actualisation, can the women really act on their likes? If they like to sit with friends to talk, sing and drink tea, do they have time to do that? Does the family or community structure allow for this? How do we come to terms with what pains us? Stereotyping, anger, paternalistic attitudes are unfortunately pervasive in our world. How we manage and choose to respond to them is how we approach our need for self-actualisation. Here, listening is imperative; feelings about these issues might be expressed in various ways.

As the group talks, the mediator, or facilitator begin to listen to comments relating to all these needs. They listen for the spoken and the unspoken. For example, whilst a parent talks about his fear of his daughter being taunted on her way to school, he, *in passing*, mentions that he told the teacher who didn't react to his concern. He doesn't' dwell on the fact that the teacher didn't respond, but the mere fact that he mentions it strikes a chord in the facilitator. Would the father have mentioned it had it not affected him somehow? Which areas within the hierarchy have been affected? Concern for the daughter's safety more noticeably relates to 'Safety and Security'. When the teacher did not respond to a father's concern the category of 'Belonging', 'Esteem', or even 'Self-actualisation' became important.

The facilitator or mediator notes very carefully the emotions, and the ways of expressing the emotions: belligerence, aggression, passivity, phlegmatism, selfishness, egotism, lack of courte-

sy, etc. The mediator does not judge or condemn such methods of expression (unless it is doing harm to another person).

What are some questions you might consider?
- Which types of issues seem to evoke the strongest emotions (positive and negative)?
- Which types of issues do people tend not to mention?
- How do people explain why they are doing something a certain way?
- _____?

▶▷Don't forget. As with any attempts to better help people, the Listening Survey, too, involves observation. But it also involves discretion. No one likes to feel they are being spied on or judged. The mediator must be careful to let the person(s) s/he is listening to know that s/he is doing that and, perhaps even, why: to help, not to harm. Otherwise, people might feel embarrassed or manipulated – even if that is not the intent. Instead of people understanding that you are listening closely to people in order to better understand a situation, suspicion can set in.

Discussion for whole group:

Where do you think might be some good places and times to listen to people?
- Market place?
- Homes?
- Events like festivals, weddings, oda?

What steps would you take so that people don't feel uncomfortable or suspicious?

> Every day People straighten up the hair, why not the heart?
> — *Ernesto 'Che' Guevara*

**Aggressive, Passive, Assertive Behaviours**

Expressing our likes and dislikes, anger or frustration, or delight and happiness, as well as our private or personal boundaries has been a life-long quest for many people. The lexicon of psychology was enriched in the 1970s with a concept we refer to as assertiveness. The term assertiveness was conceptualised as an alternative communication style, strategy or behaviour to aggressive or passive behaviour. We frequently hear the terms aggressive and passive used when describing personalities or ways of communicating. 'He is very aggressive' or 'He is very passive'.

When you hear these words used to describe someone, what comes to mind for you? Before reading the piece below on assertiveness, do some brainstorming on your perceptions about the three behaviour/communication types.

**Aggressive**

- pushy
- loud

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- selfish
- manipulative
- rude
- _____?

Can you think of some instances where it might be appropriate to be aggressive? Describe an example or two.

**Passive**

- weak
- easy to take advantage of
- uncomfortable with expressing needs, wants, interests, questions, opinions, etc.
- doesn't stand up for beliefs, own or others' rights, or needs
- quiet
- afraid to make decisions
- frequently overlooked and underestimated, particularly when credit or positive acknowledgement is due
- _____?

Can you think of some instances where it might be appropriate to be passive? Describe an example or two.

**Assertiveness**

Assertive communication involves respect for the needs of oneself and of others. It also tries to distinguish an action from an actor, focus on the issue, not the person.

**Assertive**

- balanced personality
- uses good judgment
- mature
- professional
- can voice preferences, questions, positions, values
- _____?
- _____?

**Understanding and using assertiveness, passivity or aggression**

**Aggression and Passivity**

A common trait assigned to passive communicators is that they do not 'defend' their needs and cannot always be relied on to defend the needs or rights of others, even if they morally agree with those needs or rights, etc. Passivity should not be confused with amoral or unethical behaviour and thought. Their interaction with aggressive people can lead to them being abused or manipulated, for example. They are not likely to risk attempting to influence others but are at risk of being easily influenced by others. Aggressive people are frequently concerned with their own needs and do not take others' needs into consideration.

**Passive-aggressive**

Another psychological communication style is called passive-aggressive. This, too, is a complex behaviour pattern. It sometimes involves those who are seen (and see themselves) as passive. However, at some point a passive communicator may 'attack', partly due to a 'build-up' of frustrations and anger. This 'attack' may not be clear; it could involve subtle insults, or humiliating comments, negativity, sullen silence, resistance, procrastination, sulking, chaotic behaviour, blaming others, and so on. They may be unable to balance stating their needs with respecting others and their needs. They can move from being meek or withdrawn to threatening and cajoling.

Incidentally, assertiveness can also be very useful in the group context when one group is requesting, or responding to a request from another group.

**An assertive person…**

- Overcomes fear of expressing himself, (needs, desires, feelings) in respectful tones;
- Is willing to defend herself against aggressive people with firmness, resolve, but respectfully and calmly;
- Knows his rights *and* responsibilities;
- Knows how to control her anger (not to be confused with suppressing one's anger) and can discuss the causes of the anger rationally;
- Knows when good competition is healthy and when it interferes, e.g. when it is important to accomplish a given task through compromise instead of always needing to be 'right' or to 'win';
- Is gracious in his acknowledging other's accomplishments, good ideas, good works, etc. (which is *not* the same as flattery!)
- Has strong, overall self-esteem (by the way, knowing and admitting one's weaknesses is also part of having self-esteem);
- Has healthy, long-lasting friendships.

Manuel Smith, in his book, *When I Say No, I Feel Guilty*[16], describes some of the many coping methods of assertive behaviour. Here are two examples.
*1. Negative inquiry* – involves the request for more specific criticism for purposes of deeper understanding. Example: please tell me more about Xhavit. What makes him a difficult pupil in your class? Please explain in more detail why you think Mr. Gashi is not a responsible parent.' Negative inquiry becomes an opportunity to solve a problem.
*2. Negative assertion* – is when one agrees with the criticism whilst pursuing one's ultimate goals. Example: 'You are correct. Including parent activities requires a larger budget. Nevertheless, they would really strengthen an already great programme'.

*Additionally, 'I' statements* can be used to express one's feelings and needs without judging or blaming other people. Example: *I do not feel respected* when you do not respond to my concerns and frustrations. This is different from: *You* never listen to me!

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[16]   Manuel Smith, *When I Say No, I Feel Guilty*. (New York, NY, Bantam Books, division of Random House, 1975), pp. 100-120.

## Exercise 1 – Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow): An Adaptation

Development is about the people and the way we live, not about objects or services given to them. No one can develop other people; a community or a society does this for itself. The energy and values rise from within and express themselves in everyday activities, and in concrete plans and action.

However, it is possible to facilitate a community process during which people come together in order to,

- Start to listen and to support each other;
- Identify their problems and the needs which are not being met;
- See what is blocking them from meeting these needs;
- Recognise fruitless ways of trying to satisfy these needs (false satisfiers, i.e. alcohol);
- Agree on ways of moving towards true satisfaction of these needs;
- Plan action together to make their lives more fulfilling.

**Wheel of Fundamental Human Needs**

- Draw a circle with spokes/a wheel
- Written in each space between the spokes can be the following words (or others that you think are important):
  - Schooling
  - Shelter
  - Water
  - Food
  - Electricity
  - Love
  - Family
  - Freedom
  - Identity
  - Participation
  - Health
  - Protection (safety, security)
  - Empathy

**The Wheel and its uses for long-term planning**

Either as a group or in small groups, look at each of the categories in the spokes of the wheel and think back to the five categories or levels of needs in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Discuss where and why would you place the needs listed above in the hierarchy? Remember, some needs are be equally appropriate for several categories. Then, shade in the spokes of the wheel according to how you see these needs are being addressed. Then discuss the ways in which the needs are not being met, what are the impediments, and what can each of us do to enter that stage of self (community)-actualisation.

▶▷Don't forget: Try to apply what you know about assertiveness!

# Module 6 – Communication: Awareness and Reflection

> A compromise is the art of dividing a cake in such a way that
> everyone believes he has the biggest piece.
> *-Ludwig Erhard, German politician (1897-1977)*

**Purpose:** To explore the many aspects to cooperative communication that enhances day-to-day interaction

**Important Message:** Much interaction is compromise. Compromise is not a sign of weakness nor does it suggest that one is wrong or right. Rather, it helps accomplish our tasks that we set before us.

**Materials:** Flipcharts, markers, tape

Frequently when we think of communication, what first comes to mind are such concerns as: 1) Are we speaking loudly or softly enough to be heard? 2) Is the person with whom I am speaking listening to *me*? 3) And, in this technology-saturated world, we think of communication in the technical sense.

Communication is all of that. Yet, communication is so much more. Here are some key components:

## Working with difference and otherness

Experience with 'difference' varies from individual to individual. Culture, language, ethnicity, nationality are some of the more obvious differences, but there are also differences that relate to a individual or group experience such as war, dictatorship, poverty, wealth, etc. 'Otherness' in our context refers to anything that is 'other' than to what we are accustomed. If we are not accustomed to reading, we may not appreciate the importance of reading glasses. If we are poor, we may use our material possessions differently than might an individual who was born into wealth. Difference and otherness will be further addressed in the Iceberg of Identity exercise in this module.

## Assumptions

Assumptions are expressed in many ways. As humans, we generally like to understand (or be believed to be understanding) why something is happening (or not). This can be a very good trait to possess. Such a trait can sharpen our analytical skills. It can put order and bring simplicity to what might otherwise be very complex.

However, assuming also can mislead us. For example, sometimes we incorrectly assume that:
- Someone has done or not done something;
- Someone has understood an assigned task;
- Someone has completed an assigned task;
- Someone is 'out to get us' particularly if the relationship with that person has been difficult;
- Others will respond or think the way we do;

- Others' intentions despite what they say.

**Listening and Observing**

Sometimes the difference between successfully or unsuccessfully completing a task, or a strong or weak relationship, has as much to do with how issues are discussed as with what is being discussed. 'How' we discuss something can affect a group's ability to reach a decision. The 'how' can be very difficult to discern because frequently we are not aware we are communicating poorly. We can more easily detect things in another person's behaviour, but our own behaviour can be unconscious. Behaviour can certainly also be intentional, but for now, we will focus on unintentional communication behaviour. Hence, we often hear comments about disrespect during conversations, e.g. 'You were glaring at Sevdia the entire time she was talking', or 'Why are you always interrupting Mirko?'

What to observe or listen for in a group? We have all spent a good part of our lives in groups of various sorts, e.g. work, family, classroom, NGO, but do we take time to stop and observe what is going on in the group or to understand why members of that group behave a certain way? It is difficult to observe and participate at the same time, but it is a skill that can be gained with practice.

Observing and listening happens – and can be developed – at three levels:
1. Content: What is the group talking about? What is each person saying?
2. Non-verbal expressions: What indications are people using to demonstrate their reactions? For example, gestures, tone of voice, body language, facial expressions, order of speaking, etc.
3. Feelings, attitudes, concerns, hidden agendas: These factors have an important effect on the life and work of a group and must be taken into account. Sensitive observation of the words and non-verbal expressions can give us clues about their feelings, but these clues can easily be misinterpreted, and so if they seem important they should be checked with the person concerned, e.g. 'What are you thinking about that suggestion, Nybevete?'

One of the easiest aspects of group process is to observe the pattern of communication:

- Who talks?
  - For how long?
  - How often?
- Who do people look at when they talk?
  - Other individuals, possibly potential supporters?
  - The males in the group, the females?
  - The older or younger or the person with more schooling?
  - No one
  - People they know
  - People they don't know
  - Scanning the group
  - The ceiling, the table?
- Whom do we interrupt?
  - People with whom you are familiar?
  - People with a certain professional position?
  - People you don't know and whom you assume you will not have to meet again?
- What style of communication is used?

- o Strong statements
- o Questions
- o Gestures
- o Laughter
- o Incomplete sentences or thoughts, etc.?

Good observation skills enable us to detect clues about other important dynamics or reactions that may be going on in the group. What are some reasons why good communication is important?

- To convince
- To explain about something/how to do something
- To share factual information
- Tell a story
- To share an experience or feeling
- To complain
- To warn someone of impending danger
- To cheer someone up
- _____?

If we think of all the various communication we do every day, we realise how important observation skills are. After all, think how enjoyable it is to watch the eyes of someone telling a good story. In some cultures it is not common to speak directly to what one wants or likes or doesn't like. To know what a person really thinks or feels, sometimes we need to rely on the body language, or non-verbal communication.

Here are some ideas for various forms of listening.

*Listening to everyone can make the planning and implementation of the programme go more smoothly.*

Confronting, challenging, appeasing, managing, transforming, etc., are all ways we communicate with those we wish to convince to do something. We want to avoid negative confrontation or even too much appeasing. Listening to your counterpart is central to a fruitful dialogue. Let's review different levels of listening styles.

1. Inattentive or non-listening. Someone who is 'inattentive listening' is really just not present. You might just as well be talking to a wall. The person you are speaking with is not concentrating; may not even know he is not concentrating. In addition to being disrespectful, it breaks down trust. Sometimes we are not in the mood or in a position to do anything but listen passively. If this is the situation, we need to be aware of our actions so that we can honestly say, 'I'm sorry. I am preoccupied, or I can't hear well. So, would it be okay to talk about this in an hour or so, or tomorrow?'

2. 'Pretend' listening. We've all seen people doing this. They use superficial, perfunctory nods, smiles and lots of 'po, si jo', or 'po, e di', 'ashiqare', smiles, etc. In such situations the person is not concentrating. His/Her eyes are moving about, not looking at the person who is talking. The person will not remember anything because he was not really hearing what was said, let alone listening. Adults will frequently do this with children. So-called 'powerful'

people, or 'famous' people will also frequently do this. They may be too focused on themselves to pay any attention to others. But, on the other end of the spectrum, busy parents will do this too. Men will sometimes behave this way when women are speaking especially if the men are conditioned to not take women seriously. This type of listening is also disrespectful. The two challenges for the person speaking are 1) to be aware when he is doing this and to stop!, and 2) to be able to detect this in others and decide how to respond.

3. <u>Selective listening.</u> The selective listener chooses what he wants to hear and intentionally (or perhaps un-knowingly) disregards or dismisses another person's views. S/he absorbs only a certain type and/or amount of information because 1) S/he already has a strong view – either opposing or agreeing or different, 2) S/he is resistant to the speaker for one reason or another, or 3) S/he is jaded and has 'been there, done that' and really isn't curious about hearing more. Borrowing from radio language, s/he is 'tuning out'.

4. <u>Listening and misunderstanding.</u> Unconsciously projecting one's own interpretations is hearing something quite different than what is said. It is 'convinced' of what is being said, even when the message is entirely different. The old saying goes, 'We hear what we want to hear and disregard the rest.' (Lyrics from 'The Boxer'). The misunderstanding listener is interested in what is being said but perhaps for a different reason than the person speaking. Here, one is listening, especially as compared to the above situations, but one is focused on oneself, not the speaker. You are applying your own interpretations, assumptions and projections to what is being said. For example, arrogant people fall into this trap of mis-listening. This type of listening is dangerous as it leaves the listener with wrong impressions, and misguided as to the facts, feelings, or needs of the speaker. As with most modes of listening they are very ingrained.

5. <u>Projected listening.</u> Another dangerous form of listening is when the listener assumes that the speaker is not telling the truth (perhaps because the listener would not tell the truth were he in the speaker's position). For example, a government official pleads to be believed that he is not embezzling funds. Perhaps those who do not believe him would themselves embezzle if they could?

6. <u>Listening with empathy.</u> This is the all-time favourite among folks working on new approaches to communication and conflict transformation. Understanding and checking facts and feelings, the listener is engaged with full attention to the sounds, and all other relevant signals, including voice, pace and volume of speaking, facial expression and other body language. Here cultural or other aspects of the speaker's identity will also be noticed by the listener, e.g. non-use of native language, shyness, embarrassment. The empathic listener is able to understand the importance of a point being made by the speaker or a feeling held by the speaker. This is empathy at work. There are certain tragedies that cannot truly be 'understood' in the common sense of the word. However, empathy involves having feelings for the person's predicament, not patronising the person by saying, 'yes, yes, I understand what you are experiencing', as unless you have had a similarly traumatic experience, you can't fully understand. However, you can *empathise with the existence* of the pain and sadness the person is experiencing. Rephrasing, asking questions are also central to empathic listening.

**Providing, Receiving, Responding to Feedback and Criticism**

What do we think and how do we feel when we are being ineffectively criticised or being given unhelpful feedback?

Do we respond differently to criticism depending on the types of criticism, the source of the criticism, and the way it is delivered? Our own moods at the time? Most certainly we do. Do we distinguish between criticism and feedback? While the two approaches might seem the same, they are in fact quite different. Let's explore some of those differences.

> *He who cannot dance will say the drum is bad […of bad quality].*
> *- Ashanti wisdom*

**Examples of Effective Criticism or Feedback**

1. 'You were very patient when you were talking with Ferid. That is great. It gave you the opportunity to understand Ferid's difficulties he has raising his children. Have you thought about encouraging him to do x as a way to keep his children in school? The next time you speak with him, think about mentioning that to him. Also think about how your colleagues might help you to help him.'

2. 'You have a lot of good information in your presentation. What other ways of presenting it so that its impact is really for the next time?'

3. 'I understand your concern about Group X in your neighbourhood. I, too, am concerned. I noticed your encounter with them yesterday was very frustrating. What else do you think you can do to improve the situation? Do you think you could manage it differently next time you encounter each other? Is there something that someone can support you with in your efforts?'

4. 'Your timeliness in you deadlines has so much improved. I hope you have also noticed and that you feel good about that. I would also like to discuss the content of your weekly reports with you. I think we need some more detail about your home visits. Shall we talk about how to introduce more detail? Let's look at this example here, for a moment…'

What do you notice about these examples? Can you provide some examples of effective feedback? What makes the feedback effective?

**Providing effective feedback (or constructive criticism, or a constructive critique) is…**

- Forward thinking and acting. It doesn't dwell on what already took place. It focuses on the opportunities for improvement for the future;
- Demonstrating to the recipient that the provider wants to be supportive and genuinely cares about the people involved in the programme as well as achieving great results;
- Acknowledging that recipient is serious and desirous of improvement;
- Acknowledging that the recipient might, him/herself, be aware of the areas requiring improvement;

- Delivered by those who are consistent – as much as is humanly possible - with their own advice and their own actions;
- Focused on specifics of the task;
- Also acknowledging the positive;
- Encouraging positive counter-feedback;
- Using 'I' statements. Example: 'When you interrupt (specific behaviour), I feel you do not value my input (expression of your thoughts or feelings), and I would like for you to not interrupt me when I am talking (behaviour –change request).';
- Not attacking the people involved; does not leave the recipient of feedback with the impression that the comments are personal;
- Involving focusing on the benefits of change and not how a person should change (very difficult);
- Encouraging us to be secure in admitting our weakness and our strengths – a true sign of healthy self-esteem;
- Allowing us to focus on our own behaviour and to not become distracted with others' behaviours (even we are convinced others are not behaving or communicating effectively).

**Examples of Ineffective Criticism or Feedback**

- 'You were not able to get your points across to Ferid. He still doesn't understand or change his behaviour'.
- 'No one understood your presentation. There was too much of x and not enough of y.'
- 'You must never do that again with Group X. You have just made everything worse.'
- 'Look, my friend, if you don't improve your report writing, you're really going to suffer. I'm telling you this for you, not for me.'

What is missing in these sentences? What makes them ineffective?

**Ineffective feedback (or destructive criticism or critique) is…**

- Judgemental and accusatory;
- De-motivating;
- Sometimes hypocritical;
- Sometimes just another person's opinion that does not necessarily have the best interest of the project or the people in mind;
- Not offering suggestions on how to improve – it just says what is wrong;
- Beginning with phrases such as, 'you should', 'you never (always)',
- An 'action-stopper', it can bring all work to a halt;
- Involving making negative assumptions about another person's motives;
- Creating feelings of anger, defensiveness;
- Focusing on how a person should change (very difficult much of the time) instead of looking at the benefits of change which is what feedback does;
- Sometimes a desire for 'revenge';

- Appearing to undermine the person or the idea for personal gain, e.g. 'even if people don't accept my idea, at least they won't be accepting someone else's idea either;'
- A possible sign that the person giving harmful criticism doesn't like the entire idea or project or task or people involved;
- Intensifying, or 'encourages' already existing difficult behaviour, e.g. belligerent, aggressive, passive, passive-aggressive, phlegmatic, selfish, egotistical, discourteous, defensive;
- Facetious or sarcastic.

**Confidence-building measures**

This is a term that became widely used during the Cold War when an escalation of the arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union (and their respective military alliances, NATO and the Warsaw Pact) was a preeminent security concern. It is also a term that was used daily throughout the work of what was then the Conference on Cooperation and Security in Europe (CSCE), the diplomatic process that evolved into what we know today as the Organisation for Co-operation and Security in Europe (OSCE). Confidence-building measures (CBMs) historically were used in the context of international political or military negotiations and relations to reduce tensions, or fear of attack by one or both parties, thereby reducing the threat of violent conflict.

For our purposes, though, confidence-building measures are also *essential* for Mediators. Confidence-building measures help to develop trust and improved communication between parties – among Mediators, schools, families, municipalities, ministries, etc.

Here are broad categories that include confidence-building measures you may already be using or may use in the future. They are confidence-building measures because the add to 'confidence', or strengthen a relationship. The gestures might simple or complex, but they signal a desire to reach out and communicate. The underlying belief here is that if two parties are at least talking and acknowledging each other, there is more of an opportunity to repair or build upon a relationship. Can you think of some specific examples? Can you describe when you might have used a confidence-building measure, or an instance when one might have been used?

- Transparency and clarity
- Advance planning and notification
- Anticipation of a potential challenge that could lead to prevention of a large scale problem
- Pro-active initiative
- _____
- _____

- ▶▷Don't Forget: Acknowledged, public (!) appreciation of someone's action; give credit when credit is due. Don't be afraid to demonstrate genuine appreciation and wonderment.

## *Exercise 1 – Iceberg of Identity*

**Importance of Identity in Conflict Management**

We need to consider how we deal with identity when thinking about how we manage or transform conflict. Identity – which can mean many things – plays a very influential role in determining how an individual or a group might look at, and address conflict.

Some of you may have heard of something called the iceberg concept of culture and identity. The metaphor of an iceberg is used because an iceberg is both above water and below water. As with us humans, an iceberg also has a section that can be more easily seen, observed or recognised and another section that is not as easily seen or understood.

The facilitator may list a few samples and ask for more examples from both categories before a discussion ensues.

*'In awareness', observable.* This first group of concepts reflects that which is generally more noticeable or obvious, 'above water'. That is, here it is relatively easier to ask questions and learn about these aspects of someone's or a group's identity. Information is transferred with a basic question and a basic answer. For example, 'what games do children play in this country', or 'who are your country's favourite writers or actors, etc.'

- Fine arts
- Literature
- Drama
- Folk music and dance
- Games
- Food
- Dress
- language
- _____?

*'Out of awareness', not as noticeable or obvious, subterranean.* These aspects of identity are more complex. They can be more difficult to notice and to understand. Yet, these are sometimes the more important aspects of identity. Not being able to recognise, understand, or be sensitive to, can cause a sorts of misunderstandings, embarrassment, hurt, disrespect – intentional or not. Our perceptions and responses to these points below are very much connected with our value systems, our traditions and practices that are all part of our identity. The concepts that are 'out of awareness' require more observation, listening, curiosity, patience and willingness to understand (regardless whether one agrees with responses or not).

- Concepts or ideas of beauty; not the same question as 'do you think *x* is beautiful';
- Notions of modesty (again, not whether *x* or *y* is modest, but rather how do you perceive modesty? What does the idea of modesty mean to you?)
- Patterns of superiors/subordinate relations;
- Ideas governing child rearing;
- Definitions of sin, truth, honesty;

- Rules of descendancy, e.g. how do you pass on tradition? What do you consider important to pass on? How do you view inheritance? Which factors are important when thinking about future generations in your family?
- Tempo of work and importance of time;
- Notions of leadership;
- Patterns of group decision-making;
- Attitudes to the dependent;
- Approaches to problem solving;
- Concepts of status mobility;
- Eye behaviour and other facial expressions;
- Social roles in relation to status by age, gender, class, education level, etc.
- Conversational patterns in various social contexts;
- Concepts of past and future;
- Patterns of handling emotions;
- Notions about logic and validity;
- Preference for competition or cooperation;
- Concepts of logic and rationality;
- Notions of adolescence;
- Arrangement of physical space;
- _____?

**Difference between 'in awareness' and 'out of awareness'**

Consider these two types of questions.

First statement: How do we decide or determine what we value? This first statement is inquiry-based. For example, 'I am curious to know what thought process you go through to determine or decide what values are important to you.' This is an out of awareness concept. It is not easily grasped or understood because they are complex, because they are questions one does not ask upon meeting someone for the first time, they are considered private, etc. Remembering the iceberg, this category of questions is 'under the water'.

Second statement: What are your values about topic *x*? While this statement is also inquiry-based, it is more direct. And, the answer will be more direct. I value the importance of family, friends, or earning a lot of money, or contributing to my community, my faith/religion, etc. These statements are 'more above the water'. However, which religion one holds, or how much money the person wants to earn, etc. are 'below the water questions'.

Why is it important to understand the role of identity, you might ask? The reasons are several. The better we understand the various aspects of our identities, the better we will be able to understand and know others (and ourselves).
- This helps us to interact more effectively with others.
- We become more aware of what might be a sensitive topic for someone.
- This enables us to show more empathy and wisdom in knowing how to approach a topic with someone.
- Which topics are best discussed when alone? Which topics require more time to discuss and hence, require us to be more aware of time constraints?
- _____?

## Handout 1 for Exercise 1 – Triggers

*From prejudice to triggers.* A trigger can cause us to 'prejudge' a statement before we heard the end of the sentence or comment. Moreover, it can cause us to respond or think a certain way about the person making the statement. It evokes certain emotions - positive, negative or both.

Triggers are words or phrases that evoke emotional reactions, anger or pain connected with past or present experiences, other individuals. Triggers can also be based on existing stereotypes, e.g. Gjakovars are wealthy and ambitious, always the political leaders in society, or, '*We* don't do x.' Triggers can also be centred round issues that we take seriously and that are part of our identity (see previous exercise, 'the iceberg of identity').

**Common triggers** can include:
- I do not see difference among people, for me they are all the same. [What do we really mean when we say this?]
- What do 'they' really want?
- I believe that men are born to be leaders.
- That's a woman's/man's job.
- If people are just willing to work hard, they could achieve whatever they want. If they don't achieve, they are just lazy.
- Group y hates us.
- We were better off when x existed.
- She's too young/old to know anything about topic x. [For example: Someone born after 1945 will not have experienced World War II, but that doesn't exclude the possibility that the person has done a lot of reading and learning about the war. Here we have different kinds of 'knowing'.]

What triggers can you think of?

**Reactions to Triggers**

- Rationalisation
- Confusion
- Confrontation
- Silence
- Ignoring
- Surprise
- Avoidance
- Defensive attacks
- Shock
- Labelling
- Discussion
- Misleading interpretation

## Exercise 2 – An Exercise in Perspective and Empathy

**Objectives:** Participants will
- Understand that there are always two sides (sides) of each story.
- Appreciate the importance of hearing both sides (sides).

**Materials:**
- A story: *The Malicious Wolf* (see next page)
- Copy of Little Red Riding Hood
- Poster paper, markers

**Stories and discussion:**

- Read or tell the story *Little Red Riding Hood*
- Group discussion:
  - What has happened?
  - How do you feel about Little Red Riding Hood?
  - How do you feel about the wolf?
- Read or tell the story The Malicious Wolf, handout See next page
- Group discussion:
  - What is the difference from the Little Red Riding Hood story?
  - Is there something similar?
  - How do you feel about the wolf when you heard the story of Little Red Riding Hood?
  - Now when you hear the story of the wolf, how do you feel about the wolf?
  - How do you feel about Little Red Riding Hood before Listen to this story?
  - How do you feel about Little Red Riding Hood now?
- Small group work:
  - Assign students to work with partners or in small groups, think of another story in which one party seems absolutely right and another wrong. Tell the story from the perspective of the other side.
  - They can choose from the witch in Hansel and Gretel, the Giant in Jack and the Beanstalk, the wolf in Three Little Pigs, etc.
- Tell us the fairy tale on which you worked today. Sometimes we hear only one side of the story. In our lives, as in the stories you better understand conflicts if the hear the views of both parties.

## *Handout 2 for Exercise 2 – The Maligned Wolf: a Reading*[17]

The forest is my home. I live there, care for it, and try to keep it in order and clean.

And one sunny day I was cleaning up some rubbish that campers had left. Suddenly I heard foot-steps. Standing beside an oak I saw a small child on the path carrying a basket. I was a bit dubi-ous about this little girl because she was dressed all in red; her head was completely covered as if to keep people from knowing who she was. And of course, I stopped to examine. I asked who it was, where she was going, where she came from, etc. She showed me a song and dance for her visit, with lunch in her basket, to her grandmother's house. She seemed to be an honest per-son, but it was in my forest and seemed suspicious to me because of her strange clothes. So I decided just to teach her how serious it is to flaunt through the forest unannounced and dressed very funnily.

She left to continue her path, but I ran to her grandmother's house. When I saw the good old la-dy, I explained the problem and she agreed that her granddaughter must learn once and for all. The old woman agreed to hide while I call to the girl. In fact, she hid under the bed.

When the girl arrived, I invited her into the bedroom where I was lying in bed dressed like her grandmother. She came with her cheeks so pink, but said something nasty about my big ears. I was offended earlier, but I did my best to be calm this time saying that my big ears help me hear better. Now, what I mean was that I liked it and wanted to pay attention to what she said. But next she made an insult to my eyes. Now you can see how I began to feel for this little girl who had a good face, but in fact was very mean person. So I turned the other cheek, then told her that my large eyes help me to see better.

Now let's face it: no wolf could eat a little girl. Everyone knows this! But the little girl started cry-ing and ran home. I began to follow to calm her. I took off grandmother's clothes, but it only be-came worse. Suddenly the door opened loudly and a big woodsman stood with axe in hand. I saw that, and it was clear that I was in big trouble. Behind me was an open window and I left fast.

I would like to say that this was the end of this. But grandmother never told my side of the story. After a short time word was out that I was disgusting. Everyone started to stay away from me. Most do not know anything about a little girl dressed in funny clothes, but I have not lived happi-ly ever after that.

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[17]  Gerry Dunne, *Impact! A Self-Esteem Based Skill Development Program for Secondary Students* (California: Innerchoice Publishing, 1993).

### *Exercise 3 – Strategies for Building Trust and Consensus (ROMED)*[18]

**Duration:** 1h30

**Objectives**
- To understand the communication approach which can facilitate a successful implementation of the various phases of the work cycle;
- To develop communication skills for successful communication with and between members of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities and the staff of public institutions

**Resources needed**
- Computer
- Video projector
- Presentation and handout (Annex: Skills for effective communication)

**Description of the session**

Participants are put by pairs, to sit with the back to each other. One member of each pair gets an envelope with pieces of paper of different shapes and colours. The other member gets a white sheet of paper and coloured pencils. The first member of the pair will use the pieces of paper in the envelope to build a complex shape. Then, s/he will describe to the other partner the shape. The partner will have to reproduce the shape on the sheet of paper, based on the description heard, but without seeing the shape which is described. At the end, the original is compared with the drawing. A simpler version of the exercise can consist in giving the same set of pieces of paper to both partners. In this case, the shape is reconstructed by positioning the pieces of paper, not by drawing. (10 min).

Based on the exercise, the trainer asks participants to reflect on the communication process. Was the communication effective? What challenges appeared? What facilitated the communication? The trainer gathers ideas expressed and insists on the importance of explicit and specific communication, together with active listening. (5 min)

The next part of the module is an input by the trainer, based on slides presentation, on rules for constructive and non-violent communication (30 min)

For the following part (15 min), groups of three persons are created and members of each group take turns in the following roles:
- Mediator (using non-violent and constructive communication)
- Staff of the institution or member of the Roma community (complaining)
- Observer (checks if the rules introduced are being respected)

In groups resulting from two smaller groups joined together, participants share and discuss what they noticed as observers. The conclusions of each group are presented in plenary. The module will close with a general reflection on the way non-violent communication approach is useful for the communication of a mediator with the various people involved at local level. (30 min).

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[18]   ROMED Programme, *op cit,* p. 28, Module 7.

Dialogue cannot exist without humility

How can I enter into a dialogue if I always imagine that others are ignorant, and never become conscious of my own ignorance? How can I enter into dialogue if I see myself as a person apart from others – if I see them only as 'it' not as another 'I'? How can I enter into dialogue if I consider myself a member an 'in group', the owners of truth and knowledge, the 'pure people'?

If I am closed to, and even offended by, the contribution of others; if I fear being displaced, how can I hold a dialogue?

At the point of encounter there are neither utterly ignorant people, not perfectly wise people. There are only those who attempt together to learn more than they know.

*-Adapted from Paolo Freire, 1975.*

# Module 7 – Conflict Transformation, Negotiation, Mediation

**Purpose:** To develop a broad and practical understanding of the forms and dynamics of conflict and conflict transformation with an introduction to negotiation and mediation.

**Important point:** Conflict is a natural and inevitable process common to all important relationships. Conflict is part of life. What makes conflict dangerous, however, is our inability to use conflict management or transformation strategies.

**Topics to be addressed**

**Negotiation and Conflict Management**
- Understanding and recognising the impact of motive, interest, and incentive
- Problem description, analysis
- What do we do when we are hesitant to do or say something that might help transform conflict?
- The importance of understanding a situation from others' points of view, as well as our own
- Approaches to researching the problem
- Knowing our counterparts (partners, 'adversaries')

**Mediation principles**
- Be non-judgmental
- Maintain confidentiality
- Preserve respect
- Use *active listening* – enabling others to be heard, understood and respected
- Provide and receive feedback

**Outcome**
- Understand how, and accept that, conflict is natural and a part of our daily lives;
- Know that conflict has both positive as well as negative sides;
- Be familiar with various styles we use to deal with conflict and to recognise what can be helpful and what might not be so helpful in managing conflict;
- Discover and be mindful of our own styles and approaches of managing conflict;
- Be able to use basic negotiation and mediation skills in managing conflicts;
- Feel comfortable with these techniques so that they naturally become a part of our daily behaviour.
- 

> Managing and Transforming Conflict:
> We must arrive at a point where we are in control of the conflict
> and not where the conflict controls us.
> *- a practitioner and scholar of conflict transformation and management*

**Introduction – Understanding Conflict in Relation to Ourselves and Others**

There is a saying, 'In order to know what something is, one must try to forget what one *thinks* that something is'. The same could be said about conflict and the various complexities involved in the transformation of conflict. Why? Because the topic 'conflict' carries a certain amount of baggage and preconception - all of which is not necessarily wrong, rather just incomplete.

*Why do we learn about conflict management or conflict transformation?*

A brief explanation: One important reason we learn about conflict management is because we have become tired and frustrated with dealing with conflict in ineffective and hurtful ways. Look around: ourselves, our communities, societies, the world. On an individual level, not managing conflict brings us a multitude of challenges: fatigue, anger, loss of appetite, lack of energy, depression, stress on the heart, in the stomach, loss of friends, distance from family members, to name a few!

Conflict can sometimes be *synonymous* with dissatisfaction. And, it can also be a *result* of accumulated dissatisfaction. If someone is dissatisfied and says and does nothing about the cause of the dissatisfaction, then unmanaged conflict might just be unavoidable.

True, conflict is part of everyone's daily lives. However, we can gain the skills to negotiate and solve problems - skills that will help us approach conflict not as a crisis but as an opportunity: for creativity, for growth, for positive change.

Conflict management has been gaining acceptance in various sectors over the past twenty years – business, government, education. It is a phrase applied to a range of skills and activities that share concern for responding to conflicts. Conflict analysis and skills development are employed in order to promote fairness, justice, respect, and other interests for all those involved in a conflict situation.

*Managing conflicts consists largely of collaborative problem solving, negotiations, group process facilitation, arbitration and mediation.*

The idea of non-violent, collaborative problem solving, and problem posing – a useful 'first phase' of problem solving; before we begin problem solving, it is useful to 'pose' (ask) questions and to frame a problem - in order to manage conflicts is increasingly viewed as a critical skill. Many communities, societies, and institutions are turning to the field of conflict transformation to help address some of our world's most pressing and systematic problems: rampant violence, lack of trust in a justice or political system, family relations, domestic violence, community disputes, discrimination and prejudice, poor labour relations, organisational and institutional gridlock, poverty, and other social problems. In practical terms, conflict transformation is approached through various strategies including specialised services, skills training and programme development, mentoring and role modelling, all of which is part of the Mediators programme in which you already participate!

*Specialised services* involve the engagement of individuals with expertise in this field to intervene and provide such services as group and meeting facilitation, arbitration and mediation. Specialised services also include the design of education and training programs.

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*Skills training* includes assisting others in acquiring skills necessary for resolving inter- and intra-personal conflicts, negotiating effectively, functioning in collaborative groups, using consensus decision making, and mediating the disputes of others.

*Programme development services* relate to the design, implementation and evaluation of pro-grammes intended to, among other things, institutionalise the capacity to be a role model, and to mentor others in one's community.

A first step in promoting constructive responses to conflict is to gain an understanding about conflict. Managing conflict is difficult for many of us because not many people have taught us how to analyse and transform differences in cooperative, nonviolent ways. However, appropriate responses *can* be learned. Conflicts abound in part because individuals have different fears, values, needs and desires. Understanding causes of conflict can sometimes lead more efficiently to a positive transformation of misunderstandings, frustration, anger, and ultimately how we manage our fear.

**A word about 'transformation' and 'management'**

You will note 'transformation' and 'management' are frequently used in this manual. This is not accidental. Many conflicts cannot, unfortunately, be 'resolved' – that is, completely fixed or finished. In your further contact with the growing study and practice of 'conflict resolution' you will note that 'resolution' is used quite frequently. However, increasingly, 'transformation' and 'management' are used by practitioners working in post-war societies. This is *not* to say that some lesser conflicts are *not* resolvable. However, many are not.

In our context, 'management' enables us to have a better sense of being a part of 'transforming' conflict. It gives us a sense of positive control over an otherwise potentially elusive endeavour. *Resolving* a conflict can be very daunting whereas *managing* a conflict is more practical and gives us a certain power to be part of a pro-active process.

Transformation implies that something is 'reworked', 'analysed differently, creatively'. If you think of an electrical transformer that converts one form of electrical voltage to another, you will understand what I mean. One meaning of 'transforming' means using what is at our disposal and enabling it to work for us in different situations. It does *not* mean doing away with what we have – we can't always do that. We cannot 'do away' with electricity (and nor do we want to!). Likewise, we cannot *rid* ourselves of conflict! But, we *can* explore how we can use it in different ways. This is what 'transformation' is all about. And, this can be a realistic, practical, effective way – and innovative! – to think about 'transforming conflict'.

**Being communication savvy**

Miscommunication and poor communication can lead to misunderstanding and make conflicts more difficult to transform or manage. Hence, communication skills play an important role in three modules in this manual and are interwoven throughout many other modules, such as 'Being a Role Model', 'Work with Parents and Families.'

**But, what *is* conflict?**

Because local and international media focus more on reports about violent events, it is no wonder that in most people's minds, the word 'conflict' is synonymous with the word 'violence'.

Therefore, there is an urgent need to realise that not all conflicts result in violence. Violence is a *learned* response to conflict. However, if violence can be learned, then positive reactions are possible and *can be learned* as well.

To refresh our memories, once again, here are some core goals to bear in mind:

- Understand how, and accept that conflict is natural and a part of our daily lives;
- Know that conflict has both positive as well as negative sides;
- Be familiar with various styles people use to manage conflict – and to recognise what can be helpful and what might not be so helpful;
- Discover and be mindful of your own styles and approaches of managing conflict;
- Be able to apply basic negotiation and mediation skills in managing conflicts;
- Feel comfortable with these techniques so that they become part of daily behaviour.

**Negotiation**

Conversation or negotiation is a process with two-party consent to regulation changes. We discuss using a variety of styles and strategies. Mainly there are two main orientations or approaches of the talks:
- Opposing/competing
- Problem-solving

Opposing or competing viewpoint
- Emphasises the maximum individual benefits;
- Focuses on the process and the impact to secure benefits;
- Tries to control the program, location, physical preparations;
- Assumes that the parties want the same goals, things and values;
- Hides useful or confidential information and assumes that the opponent does the same;
- Predetermines a 'last line' and strategy and imagines the same for the opponent, in order to establish the last line and conceal one's own;
- Encourages taking positions;
- Assumes that the negotiations are limited to past practice.

The problem-solving model has these characteristics:
- There is the attitude: 'we-are-all-in-this-together'.
- Sees others more as partners than as adversaries.
- Recognizes that all parties have a common positive interest;
- Seeks to fulfil the primary needs and interests of all parties in disagreement (argument);
- Assumes that a certain number of the needs of all parties will establish a more viable solution that can 'match;
- Separates people from the problem;
- Discloses information and waits for reciprocity;
- Values and builds good working relationships;
- Recognises the legitimacy of the values, interests and needs of others;

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- Focuses on interests not positions;
- Makes initial modest requests;
- Creates opportunities for mutual benefit;
- Uses objective criteria;
- Willing to make 'fair' concessions;
- Desires or is willing to gamble;
- The chief results are win / win.

Mediation helps the negotiations. The Mediator normally intervenes in disputes where the parties have assumed an opposing viewpoint. The mediator tries to negotiate change (talks) to a problem-solving approach.

**Negotiating Approaches**

| **Problem Solver approach** | **Adversarial approach** |
|---|---|
| *Communication:* | *Communication:* |
| 1 Open, honest | Secretive, deceitful |
| 2 Convincing (influential) | Coercive, forceful |
| 3 Does not focus on blame, fault, mistakes | Seeks to blame; looks for faults, mistakes |
| 4 Direct | Indirect |
| *Attitudes:* | *Attitudes:* |
| 1 Trusting | Distrustful and suspicious |
| 2 Reciprocal | Individual |
| 3 Focused on the future | Focused on the past |
| 4 Assertive | Aggressive/Defensive |
| *Procedure:* | *Procedure:* |
| 1 Understands from point of view of interest/need | Understands from point of view of position |
| 2 Attacks problems | Attacks people (each other |
| 3 Looks to create opportunities for everyone | Looks for every opportunity to advance own position |
| *Results:* | *Results:* |
| 1 Winner/Winner | Winner/Loser |
| 2 Mutual needs fulfilled | Compromise between the positions |
| 3 Mutual ownership | Posses strength, or desires strength |
| 4 Dignity | Feeling of being embattled, overwhelmed |
| 5 Building of relationships | Alienation |

*Exercise 1: How Do You Perceive Conflict?*

**Materials:** Flipcharts, markers, tape, attachments
**Other necessary things to bring:** A good sense of humour and openness to challenging our existing ways of thinking and doing.

Facilitator writes the word CONFLICT on Flipchart and asks participants: 'What are your first thoughts when you hear the word CONFLICT?' Record to flipchart.

In addition to what the participants offer, some of the below responses can be added:

- To clash
- To be antagonistic
- To be incompatible
- To be contradictory
- To be in opposition
- Conflict of interest
- Disagreement
- Fighting
- Quarrel
- Misunderstanding
- Disunity
- Discrepancy
- Anger
- War
- Hurt, Pain
- Bombings
- Assassinations
- Weapons,
- Enemies
- Hitting
- Yelling
- Hatred
- Abuse
- Humiliation

Important concept: Not surprisingly, almost all of the first thoughts that come to mind when one sees the word 'CONFLICT' seem to have a negative connotation. The facilitator then asks the participants to think of some positive outcomes of conflict.

Again, the facilitator waits to hear what will come to the minds of the participants, and then shares and discusses this list.

- Unity
- Peace
- Togetherness
- Self-understanding and understanding of others

- Brings about positive change
- Intellectual, emotional, spiritual growth
- _____?

Can we therefore say that conflict is both an opportunity and a danger?
- It is dangerous when it harms persons, destroys relationships, or causes other damage;
- It is an opportunity because it causes us to reflect, to clarify, perhaps even to change and adapt.

How has conflict been an opportunity for you? (Note participants' responses). This discussion can take place either with entire group or in dyads/triads.

Conflict can be positive when it:
- Helps open up discussion of an issue;
- Results in problems beings solved;
- Increases the level of individual involvement and interest in an issue;
- Improves communication between people;
- Releases emotions that have been stored up;
- Helps people to develop their abilities.

Conflict can be negative when it:
- Diverts people from dealing with the really important issues;
- Creates feelings of dissatisfaction among the people involved;
- Leads to individuals and groups becoming uncooperative, frustrated;
- Leads to individuals or groups feeling left out, marginalised, humiliated;
- Leads to violence, destructiveness.

The Council of Europe ROMED programme mediator's manual also provides a good analysis. See their website: [www.coe-romed.org/romed-curriculum](www.coe-romed.org/romed-curriculum).

### *Exercise 2 – Personal Conflict Styles: How Do People Manage/Face Conflict?*

The following exercise will help the participants understand their *own present* way of dealing with interpersonal conflict.

The facilitator stands – or a chair is placed – in the middle of an open space in the room. It is explained that he/she/it 'represents' conflict. Once in this position the facilitator will ask the participants to position or place themselves in relationship to how they think they 'normally' handle conflict. The participants might conjure up and recall in their minds a particular conflict they had with a colleague, or family member, etc. Or, they might just think in general terms.

Do they stand right in front of it – face it? If so, the participants who choose this approach to conflict will stand in front of the facilitator. Others may place themselves next to 'conflict', behind it, or far away from it with their backs turned. To encourage this placement the facilitator might say something like, 'I believe you know how you normally or usually deal with conflict. So please quickly position yourselves'. You, the facilitator may also explain that this positioning can be general, or it can be done with a specific conflict or person in mind. When positioning is completed have a facilitated discussion about why people placed themselves as they did, 'why did you place yourself directly in front of conflict? The answer might be, 'Because I like to know what is going on and to find a solution right away'. Another person who might be standing behind the facilitator can be asked the same question. That person might say, 'I don't like conflict – I don't know what to do to.'

Similarly, some participants might think they manage a conflict a certain way and position themselves as such. Others, however, might have other opinions about that person's conflict management 'style'. For example, a participant might perceive himself as a confronter, but is seen by others as an avoider. Light-hearted, good-natured banter about this should be allowed. However, if you, as facilitator, notice that someone is experiencing discomfort – verbally or non-verbally (!) – you should gently interrupt the comments and move on. You might also say something such as, 'I hear a lot of comments about perception of self and of others. This is an important topic that we will discuss later.' During discussion, it should be mentioned that sometimes past experience can be a helpful guide, but sometimes it is not. Most of us apply – as we should – different approaches depending on the situation and conditions. One of the challenges in transforming conflict is to know when to rely on past styles and when to seek new and innovative strategies. We probably don't want to find ourselves thinking, '*This* is how I always deal with conflicts and I'm going to deal with this conflict in the same way', too often because then we limit other possibilities and options.

Secondly, this exercise helps the individual begin to gain insight into the variety of ways we deal with conflict. Sensitivity to one's own conflict resolution style and to that of others may help to more effectively manage conflict.

Discuss these questions about Personal Conflict Styles:
- How do *you* personally handle conflict?
- Have you thought about how your goals and relationships have affected, or been affected by your style of handling conflict?

# Module 8 – Steps to Conflict Transformation

> Conflict is…
>
> -What happens when people disagree
> -Perceived differences of interest
> -An opportunity for positive change

Some first steps to conflict resolution are:
1. Separate people from the problem;
2. Focus on *interests* not *positions;*
3. Create options for mutual gain; and
4. Insist on objective criteria to assess justice.

**Group Discussion**
- Observers guess which style it is being used
- Observers indicate that the solutions are monitored during each style that is used.
- Participants/speakers say what they felt while playing their roles.
- Were styles easy to performers?
  - Why?
  - Why not?
- Discuss strategies or styles suggestions that are used.

**Conflict Themes Management**

People respond differently to conflict. We often use different styles in different situations. Group suggests 'advantages' and 'disadvantages' for each style.

**Avoiding/**leaving means the person is aware that it is a conflict, but chooses not to deal with it. When evaders leave/run away from the problem, it can also remove/avoid the person with whom he or she has fallen in conflict.

Advantages:

Disadvantages:

**Adjustment:** One puts <u>aside</u> personal needs and concerns in order to meet the needs (require-ments) of another person.

Advantages:

Disadvantages:

**Competition**: The person aims to win or make the other person lose. In this style, the person protects his position or pursues personal goals regardless of the other person's needs. This style assumes that to win, the other person must lose.

Advantages:

Disadvantages:

**Compromise** is when a person gives up something in order to gain something else. It is an attempt to achieve average.

Advantages:

Disadvantages:

**Collaboration** is working together in order to meet the needs of both parties. This includes problem solving and assumes that both parties (persons) can meet their needs. The solution is win-win (for both sides).

Advantages:

Disadvantages:

Which style do you use most often in conflict with these people? (Remember: 'conflict' is not assumed to be bad.)

- Spouse
- Parent
- Child or Children
- Student
- Associate-Friend
- Mediator Coordinator
- Mediator

**Methods of Treatment of Conflict[19]**

| Form | Applied characteristics | Convenient when |
|---|---|---|
| Accommodation | - Gives to others when they deserve or maybe even when not deserve.<br>- Reasonable<br>- Glad you admit mistakes.<br>- Smart enough to accept defeat when must<br>- Knows the rules of appropriate exemptions | - You are aware that the other side's position has more merit or justice than yours.<br>- You want to make improvements and adjustments.<br>- Unsettled issues affect other party more than you.<br>- Want to create a 'debt' to collect later from the other side.<br>- The other side has all the winning cards .<br>- You value peace more than the possibility of winning the conflict. |

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[19]   Table extracted from: 'Conflict and Conflict Management' by Kenneth Thomas in: *Organizational and Industrial Psychology Manual*, Marvin D.Dunnette, ed. (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1983).

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Competition | - Having rigid position can intimidate someone who fears disagreement | - It is an emergency situation or crisis.<br>- The decision is not known.<br>- You are sure that you are correct concerning the main issues.<br>- One is defending against possibilities that could develop with a less polemical style. |
| Cooperation | - Presents differences as opportunities to change things.<br>- Sometimes trying to reach consensus is difficult without significant problems. | - Desires of both parties simply are extremely positive for a trade (exchange).<br>- Attempt to gain insight into the ideas or thoughts of another.<br>- Bring diverse viewpoints to understand an issue.<br>- Seeking consensus to have joint action.<br>- Defeating former rivals in society. |
| Compromise | - Perhaps see compromise mechanisms in cynical way so more important than substantive concerns about disagreement.<br>- Able to give and take.<br>- Not concerned about the tense environment in a situation; understanding. | - Objectives are significant but the conflict would cost dearly.<br>- Opponents of equal strength are involved in a zero-sum agreement.<br>- Search for a quick solution to the complicated.<br>- Under deadline pressure<br>- Cooperation or competition has already failed. |
| Avoidance | - Accepts decisions failed.<br>- Keeps contributions to decisions made.<br>- With attention can avoid conflict.<br>- Does not want to hurt the feelings of others<br>- Delegates or leaves conflict to others. | - Opposition is small.<br>- Victory is impossible.<br>- The cost of a solution is less than the damage it causes.<br>- It is useful to let anger and passion pass before dealing with the issue.<br>- Further research is more useful than a quick solution.<br>- Someone else can solve the problem better.<br>- The concern is far away from the central issue. |
| Leaving | - Admits lack of decisions.<br>- Refuses to contribute to decision-making.<br>- Carefully leaves the conflict.<br>- Does not want to hurt the feelings of others<br>- Delegates or leaves disagreements to others. | - Objection (disagreement) is trivial.<br>- Victory is impossible.<br>- Corruption to solve the problem is smaller than the possibility of breaking disagreement.<br>- It is useful to let anger and obsession to spend money to deal with the issue that.<br>- Further research is more useful than a quick solution.<br>- Someone else can solve the problem better.<br>- Concern stays away from the main issue. |

Key Concepts: *'Position'* and *'Interest'*- Refocusing and reconstructing conflict situation

For discussion:

- Position: A fixed idea of how one wants a need met; a demand.
- Interest: The fundamental need to be met, the desired outcome.

The importance of identifying the interests/needs and positions of parties to a conflict might sound an obvious point, but in fact, separating them from each other requires a conscious effort. Many times people argue from positions rather from interests. More often than not, interests can be met whilst positions cannot. Many conflicts erupt or become worse because parties do not recognise the difference. In short, a position is how you expect or demand your needs to be met, or the conditions required to meet your needs. A simple example: your neighbour's barking dog prevents you from sleeping. You confront the neighbour and tell them 1) to get rid of the dog, 2) or otherwise, 'you will do something'. This is creating a ‚position' which is inflexible and leaves the other party with nowhere to turn; this creates an unpleasant situation that could lead to a more serious conflict in the future.

However, had you focused on your 'needs' or 'interests', this conflict might have been more easily managed, or even resolved! Simply put, an interest is a core need or desire or outcome. Unlike a position, though, it does not demand *how* your interests will be met, but leaves open the possibility for discussion. Using the above example, your interest is to be able to sleep. Maybe you or the neighbour can find other ways to solve the problem besides getting rid of the dog.

Positions are rigid. Interests are fluid and provide more possibilities to manoeuvre and negotiate.

Consider the two types of questions: the closed and the open-ended question:

1. *'Do you have disciplinary problems with your children?'* 'Yes.' That's it. You are not able to learn any additional information unless the respondent takes the initiative to say more about the disciplinary problems. This is called a closed question which is much like taking a *position* in managing conflicts. Neither allows for much room for further engagement.
2. *'How do your children express their disciplinary problems?'* 'Well, they do this and that. They behave this way and that...' This is an open question that has led to a more interesting, more complete/detailed answer which then helps you understand the problem better. Identifying interests is much like asking open-ended questions. It gives the respondent flexibility to choose how s/he will answer the question.

In addition to identifying your own interests, it is important to think about the interests of the other party. Going back to our example of your neighbour and his dog, perhaps your neighbour needs his dog on a particular side of the house because that area is less safe. Now, in this case perhaps the two of you have a common concern since you both share that same unsafe space. You have now heard and considered your neighbour's interests/needs. Your neighbour may now realise what is his interest (not his position) and be able to *express* his interests and not his positions. You also realise that you both are affected by that unsafe space and therefore vulnerable, so, what can you do together to make that same space less inviting for thieves?

We have explored *active listening* in previous modules, but it doesn't hurt to recall the importance of active listening in the context of positions and interests. When we are in conflict we

tend to be more concerned about being heard instead of listening to the other party. We talk faster, longer and louder!! Taking time to actively listen will enable both parties to be heard *by each other*. When we take time, make the investment, in listening carefully to the other person, we are more able to identify interests – theirs and ours – and move towards solving the problem, transforming the conflict.

In more complex situations, positions[20] are sometimes connected to power, or rights, or justice. To be sure, positions very are important. They can be part of things that we take very seriously such as our identities, our pride, honour, our values, fears. Positions can be seen as righting centuries of wrongs done to us. However, one must think how to weigh the importance of position with the need or interest in managing conflicts or problem-solving. Of course, we all know that many conflicts defy being managed or transformed, let alone resolved, even when the best of practices are utilised. However, we must endeavour to do our best when we focus on our daily, smaller scale conflicts *before* they become big unmanageable ones.

Interests (the underlying reasons for wanting – or not – something):
- Desires
- Concerns
- Fears
- Loss
- Money
- Employment
- Land
- Property
- _____?

Positions (Rights, Power, can sometimes be intractable):
- Right
- Wrong
- Pride
- Entitlement
- _____?
- 

> Positions – demands, 'y *wants* x, or else....'
>
> Interests – human needs, concerns, fears, values that motivate each party's respective positions

With all this in mind, let's try some exercises!

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[20] In the language of conflict transformation or conflict management, position does not refer to one's title or to one's job position. Rather, position refers to one's demand, or request.

*Exercise 1 – Key Relationships and Potential Conflicts*[21]

First Step: Edit the following list to reflect the key relationships in your area. Add key relationships that matters in your town or community that are not found in the following list.

- Mediator ↔ parent
- Student ↔ student
- Teacher ↔ student
- Teacher ↔ teacher
- Teacher ↔ administrator
- School ↔ parent
- Staff teacher / administrator, other staff
- Mediator ↔ director
- School ↔ school community
- Municipal Education Department ↔ mediator
- Other:_____

Step Two: Select relationships which you would like to discuss with your colleagues. Form into groups.

Step Three: Think and write down things that happen in that relationship: kinds of conflicts, differing viewpoints, interests, or positions. Conflicts are sometimes about 'He said-she said' or receiving and giving instructions, ridicule, harassment, or feeling placed in an awkward situation, etc.

Step Four: Review the list and then suggest (notes table 2) responses to complete this sentence, 'If we choose to cooperate in transforming this conflict, we will: _____'.

Step Five: Finally, write your responses in your group: 'In order to solve these conflicts by cooperating, we will need: _____'.

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## Exercise 2 – Positions and Interests Scenarios

Read together and discuss the positions and the interests of the participants in the following two scenarios. Both scenarios can be discussed in the large group; each group can select one scenario to discuss and then present. Alternately, the Fish Bowl arrangement can be used as well. This is where a small group sits in a circle and discusses a scenario and an outer, large circle provides feedback to the inner circle discussion. Don't forget to consult the interests and positions of the parties (mediators, parents, directors, teachers).

**Scenario Nr 1**

Mrs. Afërdita is a mediator. She is also a grandmother of four. She has lived a hard life, but believes that in a small way she can help improve her community and its children. She is having tremendous difficulty 'convincing' Mrs Kimete, the director of the secondary school in her municipality, to meet with her in order to discuss the situations of five children who have not been attending school for the past few months. She knows she could easily call upon her cousin who was a close school chum with the current Minister of Education. She doesn't want to do that because she knows it is not sustainable. What happens when there is a new minister, for example?

Director Kimete is overwhelmed, underpaid, and over-stressed. Her husband died a few months ago. Her daughter is once again pregnant with a third child and the son-in-law is unemployed. She just doesn't have any more energy to deal with anyone else's problems.

- Step 1: Describe the 'positions' of each party.
- Step 2: Describe the 'interests' of each party.
- Step 3: Describe a problem in this narrative where all parties – Mrs. Afërdita, Director Kimete, families – have shared interests, and their specifics.
- Step 4. Describe where the interests diverge and why.

**Scenario Nr 2**

It started with Minerva being taunted by boys from outside and inside her own neighbourhood, even her distant cousins. Then, when her younger brother Agron started going to school, he also became a victim of bullying. Minerva's and Agron's parents were very concerned but seemed to be stymied as to what they could do. Mirsad, the School Mediator, became concerned after several visits and conversations with the family. He wondered if the local police or the school (because some of the bullying took place on school territory) could do anything. He also wondered if there were other issues preventing the children from going to school. Mirsad, through his inquiries, had heard that the *parents* of some of the bullies are also known to be 'trouble makers' in the neighbourhood...

- Step 1: Describe the 'positions' of each party.
- Step 2: Describe the 'interests' of each party.
- Step 3: Describe a problem in this narrative where all parties – Mirsad, the school, parents of Minerva and Agron, bullies' parents - have shared interests.
- Step 4. Describe where the interests diverge and why.

Part of this activity involves readjusting the descriptions below, to ask questions of all the positions and interests expressed by the parties involved in these two Scenarios. Consider and discuss the following.

**Interests of the Mediators.** We want the children to return to school. We have tremendous satisfaction when we see that our hard work is successful. If we succeed, we will feel more self-confident. We will be less frustrated when we talk with families. Maybe one of the families will become a role model to others. We also want the schools to be more supportive of the children who want to, and should, return to school.

**Position of the Mediators.** Parents must ensure their children go to school. The schools and the DKA's must support these children.

**Interests of the Parents.** We want to know what we can do so the mediators stop tormenting us about our children not going to school. We would rather have the mediators help us to solve our *real* problems. We are concerned about what we shall eat this week. We need our children to help at home so we can go out and earn money. We also need our children to go out and earn money. School is just a waste of time. Look at how many people have an education and they are still unemployed. We're just not convinced that school is needed.

**Position of the Parents.**    We want the mediators off our backs. We know them. We understand what they are trying to do and why. But, they just don't understand us even though we are from the same mahalla. After all, they are getting paid. We are not employed. And, besides, we wouldn't work for the money they say they receive.

**Interests of Teachers/Directors[22].** We don't want the mediators interfering in our work. We want them to believe us when we say we are trying to do our best and that we are not discriminating. We know we are far from perfect, but we are not comfortable with others knowing that we are not always doing our best.

**Position of Teachers/Directors.** We are afraid the mediators will cause us to lose our jobs. We have enough difficulty keeping and doing our jobs. We don't want so many ill-prepared children in our classrooms. They are too much work and too much of a disturbance. So, when kids don't come to school it is better for us.

What about the interests and positions of the children? Is there an interest of the children who are bullying and their parents that can be addressed?

Below are a few questions to ask in order to begin to understand interests/needs, and to distinguish them from positions of parties to conflict. And, sometimes it is good to ask questions instead of making statements. Here are some examples to try in either a large group or small groups.

▶▷**Don't forget:** When you ask questions, be careful of your non-verbal communication, e.g. body language, facial expressions, and also of the tone of your voice. Remember Modules 4, 5, and 6!

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[22]    Directors can also be considered a separate category or party.

1. I would like to hear more about why this is important to you?
2. What ideal situation would exist that would help you meet the needs of the other parties?
3. What are you asking for? From whom are you asking this request?
4. Can you help me understand the misunderstanding or your opposition to _____?
5. If the concern you are speaking of now were to be resolved, i.e. need a new roof, need winter clothing for the children, can you think of anything else – big or small that would prevent you from ensuring that your child goes to school tomorrow?
6. Can you think of other helpful questions? Write your question here: _____ ?

# Module 9 – Working with Parents and Families

**Purpose:** Mediators will expand their understanding of family dynamics and parenting issues.

**Important point:** Many important jobs require training and licenses; parents often start one of the most important and difficult jobs with no training.

**Materials:** Flip charts, markers, tape

### When can too much familiarity help or hinder?

Have you ever found yourself listening to someone tell a joke that you already heard? How do you respond? Do you interrupt that person, saying, 'Yeah, yeah, I've heard that one before', or do you listen to the end of the joke and laugh accordingly? Don't worry. This is not a test. There is no 'correct' answer here. It does, though, illustrate an interesting puzzle. If one is speaking with one's aunt about why her children are not going to school, one may not be applying active listening. Why? Because you know that aunt and have heard her story before, or, for some reason, you just don't take her seriously. If you had a similar conversation with a stranger, you might pay a bit more attention. However, the opposite can also happen. One pays closer attention to one's aunt than to a stranger. These are the sorts of points about which mediators need to be aware. Communication is sometimes about 'codes' – private or hidden ways of expressing something. If we use familiar codes, sometimes we take them for granted and we complete the sentences and thoughts of others and don't listen or empathise. On the other hand, if something is too 'different', we might give up, concluding that everything is just too complicated. Either way, we disengage with that person. The problems accumulate and the mediator's work has now become more difficult.

### Empathy

Being empathetic and showing compassion for someone are not necessarily the same. Briefly, demonstrating compassion sometimes involves a certain sense of sorrow or pity that one feels for someone. Empathy is feeling what the other feels as well as a desire to understand and support.

**Example 1 (sympathy):** 'I feel sorry for Blerta. Her horrible mother-in-law, Drita, will not let her work outside the home; her family could really use an additional income. Her children are older now and she doesn't need to be with them all the time. I just don't understand what Drita's problem is, and why Blerta doesn't just tell Drita to leave her alone and to let her live her life.' Something when we sympathise we are able to care and feel for a person's but perhaps not closely enough to understand interests and needs of everyone involved.

**Example 2 (empathy):** 'I notice that Blerta has been very down lately. She is not her usual self. She wants to look for work but her mother-in-law doesn't agree. I wonder if this is affecting the school attendance of her older son. I wonder if there is something I can do to help Drita or Blerta.' We have empathy for situations people are in, as well as for individuals. We can put ourselves in their position, and observe, analyse, and if appropriate, think how and if to 'mediate'. In traditional mediation, it is the usual practice to receive agreement by both parties to mediate. In our case, the mediator should nevertheless try to analyse the situation and offer support to all

parties involved as much as is possible. Think back to the section on 'interests' versus 'positions' in Modules 7 and 8 (Conflict Transformation).

Being non-judgemental is one of many components of empathy. It is human to hold opinions about situations, issues, etc. Our experiences, cultures, personalities, characters, genes, all play a role in determining how we respond to situations that are disagreeable or uncomfortable for us. Recall the Iceberg of Identity in Module 6 (Communication). Sometimes we voice our displeasures more vocally than other people do whereas other times we keep our thoughts to ourselves. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that empathy is understanding another person's situation, feelings, needs, likes, dislikes, etc., *not* to focus on *one's own* feelings, needs, and the like. Being empathetic means the ability to engage and understand another person whilst putting aside one's ideas about a situation. We listen actively. We respectfully, non-judgmentally engage in a process of inquiry - we ask questions to better understand, but do our best to do no harm. We may not support or agree with what the other wants, but if we are able to listen and understand respectfully we may have a better process leading to a resolution that meets everyone's interests.

This is a skill that is usually developed *and is fundamental for a mediator* in thought and deed, alike. When someone perceives that they are not being respected, which frequently is connected with being judgmental, they may disengage. They may no longer respect *you* and *your* important messages, for example, keep your children in school. Such reactions can be a major de-motivator for the parent, the child and you.

Being non-judgmental doesn't mean that you don't have your own values, principles, and concerns. Rather, it means you withhold judgment for the time being as you focus on your goals: keeping children in school, helping parents to keep their children in school, motivating everyone involved to make school a success for these children and their families.

**Detecting and responding to resistance in self and others**

Resistance is fighting against something, opposing a motion or action. In psychological terms, it can be various indirect forms of opposition. It is a way of showing discomfort with a situation. Sometimes our initial response is to acquiesce to the resistance. We visit a home the family says the boy can't go to school because of this or that reason. We tell them what we think they should do, agree to return next week, and leave. What else can we do?

Here are some signs of resistance:
- Diverting the discussion away from the issue;
- Apologising and defending;
- Blaming others;
- Talking but not acting;
- Denying that there is a problem;
- Forgetting;
- Not listening;
- Listening but not acting;
- Seeking comfort;
- Avoiding communication;
- Believing in technical solutions alone;
- Blaming inadequate resources;

- Having a narrow vision;
- Procrastinating;
- Thinking or voicing, 'that sounds great. Maybe next time.'
- _____ ?

**Something to consider and be aware of whilst making home visits**

In psychology there is a theory called Transactional Analysis (TA). A transaction is an exchange between two parties (individuals, groups) where one says or does something and the other party responds.

TA contends that each individual has different identities and that we have different ways of expressing ourselves or behaving depending on a multitude of situations. This includes what is called the 'Adult, Child, Parent' ways of responding to situations or people. Regardless our age, our maturity, education, experience, and such, we all apply these roles in different situations. It is part of being human. Here are brief descriptions of the three types.

**The Child.** The Child reacts spontaneously, instinctively and emotionally to experiences. The child is sometimes carefree and full of joy and at other times submissive, fearful or stubborn. The child is more concerned with the present and how things will affect him.

**The Parent.** Depending on how s/he was raised, the Parent may emulate her own parents, or other role models in her life. S/he might express her caring and concern in somewhat authoritarian ways, stating, 'you should', 'you ought to', 'why don't you?' And, as we all know, sometimes a parent can be stern and critical believing it is in the Child's best interest.

**The Adult.** The Adult is a reason-seeking individual. The adult is a problem solver and engages in the process of inquiry.

We can recognise when we are behaving a particular way and adapt when necessary. None of these 'behaviours' is wrong. Instead, there are times where it is more appropriate to use one versus another. And, sometimes we use all three at the same time, and we are not always aware we are doing that! By the way, the three character modes generally start to develop in a person from the age of *10 months*.

Think how you might apply each of these modes when you interact with families. And, don't assume that you would act like a child with the children and as a parent with the parents. It is more complex than that!

Here is a scenario: a parent has 'promised' that he would meet the school director about getting his two children back to school even though they have been absent from school for several months. You visit the parent to find the kids still at home and no action being taken by the parent. How does 'the Child', 'the Adult', 'the Parent' in *you* respond?

**Parenting**

Parenting is the name given to principles and practices of parents learning how to be better parents. It is one of the most studied and written about subjects of human topics. If you look at the Internet, just in English, the two words 'Parenting Principles' together shows up in 68,000 web-

sites. The single word Parenting shows up in 315,000 websites. It has been a main subject of every religion, and can be found discussed in Egyptian hieroglyphs, ancient Chinese texts, and so on. We may guess that people have been trying in various ways to do the best they can for their children, and observing how their animal neighbours cared for theirs, since long before there were villages, towns or cities.

In the course of our work, we will see many instances of parent behaviour that we might doubt, or indeed, deeply reject. Indeed, there may be cases that legally or morally should be reported to legal authorities.

If there were standard and agreed principles or advice on parenting, there would not be tens of thousands of websites on it. Principles are influenced by many variables (culture, psychological perspective, religion, one's own parents, economics, the political environment, even a favourite sport) which can combine into many, many different sets of advice. Still, to stimulate thought, following is a list of some possible principles. Do think about it.

**Parenting Principles**, from multiple sources. Parents:

- **Give children your time.** Children, particularly in their early years, want to be with parents. Eating meals together, fishing, kicking a football, reading to them, going for walks together. All are important. Consider that these activities make the child or the relationship the focus. When parent and child are in the same room watching television, there may not be much child-parent relationship-building taking place, and sharing the same space without interaction may not answer to the child's need.
- **Give children love.** Children develop most as a reflection of parents' love. There cannot be too much genuine love. Physical holding is particularly important in the first years of life. Make sure they know you love them.
- **Set limits and boundaries**. Children need to know what is allowed and what is not. Try to set boundaries in positive ways. Saying 'no' or 'don't' is not enough. Even very young children can understand explanations. Where possible offer alternatives. So, instead of 'no', give or allow something else instead. As children get older, you can expand the boundaries. Be willing to discuss reasons for boundaries with children – and be able to change as a result of what the children might say or demonstrate to you.
- **Do not use harsh punishment**. Harsh punishment includes physical punishment such as hitting, slapping or spanking; withdrawal of love; isolation extreme restrictions; and verbal abuse, or threatening or unkind facial expressions. There is no doubt that changing these things when they are already part of the parent-child relationship will be difficult. When possible, from the beginning practice positive discipline.
- **Be consistent in discipline.** Children do need to understand that there are rules and that there can be punishments. It is important to be consistent: consistent in how the child is disciplined, consistency among how various children in a family are treated, and indeed consistency in the adult's behaviour. It is difficult to teach a child not to argue constantly if the parents model arguing all the time. Children will imitate the bad habits we might have as adults, such as smoking, using inappropriate language, loud voices, etc. Being consistent does not mean not having the ability to change or make a compromise.

- **Give children tasks appropriate for their age.** Children want to learn, experience challenges, and be able to show you what they have done. It is important for children to positively develop their own personalities. Therefore it is important for children to do more and more on their own, as the grow.
- **Believe in them.** Praise successes, encourage efforts, and do not 'knock them down.' The world may try hard enough to tell them there is something wrong with them; they need you to help them trust themselves and believe in themselves. That starts with you demonstrating to them that you believe in them.
- **Model behaviour.** What you do is worth 20 of what you say. If you are respectful there is a better chance they will be. If you are careful to take care of physical things, they probably will too. If you visit the school to talk with the teacher, they will understand better to go themselves. They will grasp the idea that there are these adults – parents and teachers – who do care about me.
- **Let the child grow.** When the child is small you must provide all of their security, but as they grow, they experiment with independence. Let them. When they want to learn and gain abilities, support it if legal and appropriate for their age.
- **Treat children with respect.** A child is a small human, and a dependent human. Love is all-important, as surely you love your child. Respect is all-important too. Even if they are small and dependent, they want to be valued and to be seen as real people, with feelings and needs and dreams. Treating children with respect does not mean spoiling them, or giving them 'honours' that perhaps should be reserved for elders. It is recognising their humanness, and all the potential and reality that promises.
- **Be honest.** Some things are difficult. Some things that you want to give them, you cannot. Some situations – perhaps a parent or grandparent's illness – could be very difficult for them. Honesty may involve being honest with oneself and one's own fears first.
- **Encourage them to solve problems.** Whether there is a problem with a friend, with homework, with a bully, with making something, with being able to kick a ball where one wants – solving a problem can be a child's greatest joy. They enjoy what they have done and build self-confidence. You can encourage, be there with them, ask questions, laugh and cry with them... hopefully they will solve the problem. Solving it *for* them does *not* solve the problem.

### Exercise 1 – Find the Sources of Motivation

Question for discussion: How can you find out about a person's motivation? With so many difficult problems, lack of resources, very slow progress, lots of visits, conversations, we might feel de-motivated.

Therefore, the natural question is, 'what motivates us?'

When someone is motivated they look forward to something, they enjoy something. What determines whether someone changes the daily regimen? If we usually receive guests in the evening and all of a sudden, we decide to go out for the evening, what motivated us to do so? Why does someone remember something and not another thing? What makes an adult choose to impart one piece of information or values to their children or friends, and not another piece of information? What determines what someone will focus on, ignore, dislike, or like? One skill of the mediator is to understand and apply the dynamics of motivation.

In a Fish Bowl discuss or brainstorm, to the fullest, the following questions:
- What motivates parents to be more supportive of their children's schooling?
- What prevents parents from being motivated to support their children's education process?

Remember, the "Fish Bowl" is a discussion technique. One group, in a circle, discusses a topic or argues an issue. A second group, seated around the first group, observes. The second group will then reflect on the discussion of the first group. The reflection could be on quality of arguments, new ideas that stimulate them, quality of listening, suggestions, and so on.

## Exercise 2 – Home Visits: Two Case Studies

Participants form two groups. One group describes a home visit to a family that led to a positive result, namely, a child returned to, or registered for school. The other group selects an instance that did not lead – or has yet to lead – to a positive result. These can be a real story, a mixture of several stories, or a realistic fiction.

Act out, or discuss the following points. If you decide to do a skit, select a point in your skit where you stop mid-action or mid-sentence. Ask the other group how they might complete the skit. It is not important to complete the skit with a 'happy ending' or not. It is important that the skit be as realistic and detailed as possible. Ideally, the length of the skit should be approximately 20 minutes and the discussion should be about 20-30 minutes. The purpose of the skits and discussions are to bring about some real suggestions to make home visits more beneficial, in addition to portraying a detailed picture of situations.

What happened? How did the discussion take place? What ensued?

Describe the content of the discussion and the environment and the way the discussion took place.
- Were you invited into the house?
- Were you offered tea or coffee?
- Who was present?
- Which family members did the most talking?
- What did each of them say? How did they say it?

Think how you responded to the comments made by the family.

Note down:
- What do you think you might want to do differently the next time you visit? Why do you think you might want to change something?
- Were you able to detect any 'hidden' messages? That is, how well were you able to detect that which was not said, but somehow might be a significant motivation to send or not to send their children to school?

### *Exercise 3 – Parenting Principles*

Individually, score the Parenting Principles from 1 to 5.

- 1 Strongly Disagree,
- 2 Disagree,
- 3 Not know,
- 4 Agree,
- 5 Strongly Agree.
- Make some notes for yourself on your reasons for your scores.

In small groups discuss the Parenting Principles and your evaluation of the principles. Discuss these questions:

- Which of these suggested principles do you see commonly around you?
- Which of these principles do you not see?
- What results do you see from these being or not being common practices?
- When you think about these principles is there anything you would like to change in your own parenting practices?
- What support would parents need to be able to make changes?
- How does this discussion relate to the work of the Mediator?
- Is there anything that you think is appropriate for you to do with parents when you see a need for change?

Are there other questions you would like to ask others in the group?

# Module 10 - Working with Parents and Families: Planning an Activity

**Purpose:** To brainstorm and strategise about a parents' or families' activity.

**Outcome:** A first activity – that will hopefully lead to regular activities – that serves to motivate parents to become more engaged with their children's education

**Materials:** Flipcharts, markers, tape

**Warming up**

As a first brainstorming exercise, for ten minutes or so, think about and discuss the quotation below:

> If you want to build a ship, don't drum up people together to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea."
> — Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

Discussion points:
1. What does this quote mean to you? How do you interpret it?
2. Thinking about your own lives – work, family, etc. – what does the 'ship' signify for you?
3. Think of three to five families whom you have come to know well through you work as mediators. How do you think they would interpret this quote?
4. Would they like it? Would they think it silly?
5. What would their first reactions to it be?

You might wonder why this discussion is relevant to strategising and planning a programme with parents. Understanding the primary focus of a plan or strategy is always a good place to start. And, for our purposes, parents and extended family members are the focal point.

**Let's start!**

In groups of three people, discuss the following points and write responses on large sheets of paper.
*Practical questions to address*

1. Diagnosis – What is the primary problem?
   - Why might one organise activities with parents and families?
   - What activities would you organise?
   - What approaches and strategies would you use to involve the parents in your plans?
   - Which needs are being addressed by organising parents' activities?
2. Objective – what do we want to achieve and when?
   - This week, this month, this year?
3. What are possible ways to achieve this objective?

- Brainstorm for proposals or suggestions on three levels. The first level can be very general, but the next two levels should be more specific.
4. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each idea, proposal or suggestion?
   - How much time is required? Money? Personal effort?
5. Which proposal should ultimately be accepted and acted upon?
   - How will decide which proposal to implement?
   - What needs to be done?
6. Discuss commitment. It is one thing to brainstorm an idea, and quite another to commit to actually transforming it into a real project or programme. This discussion might be the more intense and time-consuming. Are you ready for the next step? Reread the above quote: has the imagination begun? If not, you may not be ready for step 8.
7. Once a concept is agreed upon, begin thinking about the details of implementation.
   - Assuming an actual proposal is enthusiastically accepted by all, let's look at the groups or individuals that are at present apathetic or passive, or even antagonistic to the planned proposal.
   - Which of these groups or individuals are potential 'contributors' or potential 'spoilers'?
   - What would each have to gain if the plan is implemented?
   - These are the possible groups. Are there others?
     o Municipality
     o School
     o Mediators
     o Learning Centres
     o Parents!
     o Community-based NGOs
     o Kosovo-wide institutions
     o _____?

# Module 11 – Being a Role Model

**Purpose:** To examine why and how role modelling is essential to a mediator's work

**Important point:** By being a good role model:

- We try to be alert and considerate all day, seven days a week, about our own actions and behaviour and how we affect other people.
- We try to change some of our habits when necessary.
- We, ourselves, try to do what we ask of others.

**Outcome:** Mediators understand how they can serve as role models for parents and children and commit to doing the right things in their own lives and families and accept role model responsibilities.

**Materials:** Flipcharts, markers, tape

With the growth of media industries and the ever-increasing effect that television and the internet have on users, viewers or listeners, many concerned adults and young people world-wide have become very critical, if not cynical, about the extent to which media and technology have encroached further in our daily lives. This has resulted in many articles and books that address the effects of media on people, young and old, and hundreds of pieces of legislation are being debated about extending or curbing the media and the reaches of technology.

Directly and indirectly, television and the Internet have helped us to learn about and connect with the world around us in various ways. However, because so little is filtered via the Internet, in particular, reliance on one's own judgment or the judgment and intervention of a parent or a teacher on behalf of a child, for example, is imperative. These guardians are not always available and absence of good judgment and positive intervention are forsaken. Therefore, the need for positive role models or mentors becomes increasingly indispensible.

### Role models – the good, the bad, and the really ugly

Let's be honest with ourselves. Most of us on this planet are not *great* role models – after all, being or emulating a good role model is difficult when life interferes with us. Yet, many of us are good role models, some of the time. And, many people have only been exposed to negative role modelling either personally or are saturated with dangerous and devastating role modelling that has ultimately led to strife, armed conflict and war. Let's think about this for a moment. On the day-to-day scale of things, do we know people who throw cigarettes and other rubbish on the street? Do we know people who shout a lot? And, worse, do we know anyone who beats his wife or children? Or, do we know anyone personally or through television programmes who is making 'quick money' whilst boasting about having dropped out of school? What about the adult bullies in a neighbourhood or in positions of power?

And, what about entertainers, athletes, and the politicians of our world? Which ones can you think of who are good role models?

But, again, for our purposes, *one* of the reasons why positive role models are so important in our communities is because they can be 'upstanders', someone who 'stands up', people who act, who help. They can signal an acceptance to 'doing the right thing'. A positive role modeller can

help to *develop confidence* in children and adults. A role model can be very effective in convincing a couple to support their daughter who strives to go to university. Why? The role model can be effective because he has supported *his* daughter in that way.

When we reflect on the experiences that shaped us when we were young, we often remember a special adult in our lives. It might have been a teacher, older relative, community member, or other caring adult that made a big impact on us. We see these role models as being important in shaping our lives. And that's no surprise — research shows that positive adult role models have a tremendous impact on young people and can have the following benefits:

- Higher levels of self esteem;
- Improved school attendance and performance;
- Greater aspirations and expectations for their careers;
- Better social network and healthier relationships with friends, family, colleagues, etc.

A positive role model need not be a Ronaldo or a billionaire for young people, especially, look up to you. In fact, many youth consider their best role models to be caring friends and relatives. Most people have the potential to make a positive difference in someone else's life. These are a few things to keep in mind:

- Take the time to share your special skills and help out at the same time. Perhaps a family's car needs a small intervention but they can't afford to take it to a mechanic. As a role model, you can help. Better yet, you can show the person what you did so that he can do it himself next time. As a role model you have helped this person to learn a new skill. Perhaps you enjoy reading and would like to help your neighbour learn to read.
- A positive role model demonstrates his care for someone. Transparency and consistency in expressing this care is tantamount.
- Model integrity by following through on any commitments or promises you make. That is why it is very important to think long and hard before making any promises (or leaving people with an impression that you made a promise).
- 
- ▶▷Don't forget: As a role model and mediator, it is important not to confuse 'not making promises or commitments' with 'not wishing to be helpful'. This is not always easy to do. It requires a lot of thought and effort!
- Model hard work, a positive attitude, and respect for others. Avoid making negative comments about colleagues, community leaders, partners, etc. with whom you disagree. And, be careful of the non-verbal communication – the body language. As we have discussed in earlier modules, the non-verbal communication can sometimes be just as impactful as our words. This is not easy! **A tip:** if you must express your anger or frustration about something or someone, as do we all at one point or another, select a *close friend who respects confidentiality and has good judgment* and share your frustrations with that person! ☺
- Be sure that you 'walk your talk' by modelling respect and trust among colleagues and others. A role model 'models'. It is not always necessary for a role model to 'tell'. He is convincing because he is genuine and people notice that. How they decide to respond to that is another matter, but the first step to change is being the change oneself.

## *Exercise 1 – How do you Integrate Role Modelling with your Goals?*

Either with partner or in a group – perhaps in the Fish Bowl – discuss how one's behaviour or acts might help to 'convince' a parent to send his child to school. Think of a specific parent. It is easier to think of specific examples whilst thinking of an individual parent or couple rather than thinking of 'parents' as a large group. The latter can be too overwhelming.

▶▷Don't forget: managing a problem is sometimes easier when the problem is broken down into smaller sections, such as, thinking about specific parents and how one might approach them.

As you dialogue, you might wish to share stories and experiences that reflect positive values, such as when a friend treated you with caring honesty or a colleague behaved responsibly.

## *Exercise 2 – Personal Role Models*

List one or two people you consider role models. Use actual names as much as possible, even for those role models who may be only known to you or your immediate circle of acquaintances.

Sit with a partner and talk about your role model. Remember to pause enough so that your partner can ask you questions. Questions should include the following:
1. Why is this person a positive role model?
2. Why is this person special for **you** (NOT what makes this person special, in general)?
3. Write a list of characteristics, qualities and traits you think your role model possesses.
4. What specific examples of role modelling did you actually observe this person doing?
5. How is your role model imperfect? In other words, give an example or two of something your role model did that might not be something that you'd like to model. Explain why, despite your role model's imperfection (since no one is perfect), you, nevertheless, consider this person a good role model for you.
6. Describe a specific situation in which you found yourself where you behaved a certain way, or managed a problem about which your role model would be very proud.
7. Describe a situation in which you found yourself where you behaved a certain way, or managed a problem about which your role model would wish to guide you differently.

Next, with your partner, think of a realistic scenario that has caused particular challenges for you. Share this situation with your partner and ask your partner to provide suggestions as to how to manage the situation using 'lessons' from *his own* role model. Then, ask your partner to describe a situation and you think of your role model and how s/he would manage or resolve the problem.

# Module 12 – Working in the Community

**Purpose:**     Through discussion and role playing, participants will gain a direct understanding of some of the challenges inherent in community work.

**Materials:**   Flipcharts, markers, tape, additional material as needed

Community education programmes are essential to any society. They are also probably some of the most complex and difficult kinds of programmes to develop and implement for several reasons. For example, one reason is that there is always a tension between 1) efficiently completing tasks now and being seen as committed, serious, trustworthy, and 2) building the relationships that can pave the way to long-term success. With a lot to accomplish each day, there isn't always time to have that cup of tea.

In a refugee camp during the conflict in Kosovo, a camp leader, himself a refugee, was overheard saying, 'I realise all these people [international aid workers] have a lot to do and I am really thankful for their help, but I don't understand why they don't want to sit and talk with us'.

This comment reflects the challenges that 'providers' face in their interaction with 'recipients'. It reminds us of the intricate relationships between the **'recipients'** (beneficiaries, those being helped, etc.), and the **'providers'** (donors, benefactors, helpers, etc.) in, for example, post-war, transition societies. What is a School Mediator?

People who work in their own communities, like you, the mediators, are often sandwiched between the 'providers' and the 'recipients'. You are recipients in that you work with a programme that is dependent on the support of others but you are also providers in that you provide a needed service to the children in your communities.

**Some principles of community work**

Communities are groups of people – the interaction of families, neighbours, local institutions. Community work implies efforts to facilitate and enable members of the community to work together for common goals. School Mediators work in one field of interest: the relationships of children and their families with schools and learning, which is one form of community work. You as Mediators can improve your understanding of your work and your results by learning from many others. And others can learn from you as well. This includes 'values', 'action guidelines', and activities. Here we'll list examples of value statements, and work guidelines – as examples! – before doing some exercises.

*Community Development Values*. The following 'Values Statement' example comes from a small English community organisation. Many other statements would serve just as well:

> [23]Community development workers support individuals, groups and organisations in this process on the basis of certain values and practice principles.
>
> **The values at the core of community development are:**
>   • social justice

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[23]   Community Development Exchange <http://www.cdx.org.uk> (Accessed 11 September 2012).

- self-determination
- working and learning together
- sustainable communities
- participation
- reflective practice

The practice principles that underpin these values are:

**Social justice**

- respecting and valuing diversity and difference
- challenging oppressive and discriminatory actions and attitudes
- addressing power imbalances between individuals, within groups and society
- committing to pursue civil and human rights for all
- seeking and promoting policy and practices that are just and enhance equality whilst challenging those that are not

**Self-determination**

- valuing the concerns or issues that communities identify as their starting points
- raising people's awareness of the range of choices open to them, providing opportunities for discussion of implications of options
- promoting the view that communities do not have the right to oppress other communities
- working with conflict within communities

**Working and learning together**

- demonstrating that collective working is effective
- supporting and developing individuals to contribute effectively to communities
- developing a culture of informed and accountable decision making
- ensuring all perspectives within the community are considered
- sharing good practice in order to learn from each other

**Sustainable communities**

- promoting the empowerment of individuals and communities
- supporting communities to develop their skills to take action
- promoting development of autonomous and accountable structures
- learning from experiences as a basis for change
- promoting effective collective and collaborative working
- using resources with respect for the environment

**Participation**

- promoting the participation of individuals and communities, particularly those traditionally marginalised / excluded
- recognising and challenging barriers to full and effective participation
- supporting communities to gain skills to engage in participation
- developing structures that enable communities to participate effectively
- sharing good practice in order to learn from each other

**Reflective practice**

- promoting and supporting individual and collective learning through reflection on practice
- changing practice in response to outcomes of reflection
- recognising the constraints and contexts within which community development takes place
- recognising the importance of keeping others informed and updated about the wider context[24]

Guidelines for action in community work could include many different things: kinds of activities, ways of working, etc. Here is a short list as examples:

- Community mapping: people, institutions, responsibilities;
- Community mapping: relationships (See exercise 4 below);
- Develop Action Plans;
- Support, develop, join, empower... working groups or task forces;
- Analyse existing activities, programs, and projects – what is successful or not, what is well-served or not;
- Study community development or political organising strategy (Gene Sharp, Mahatma Gandhi, Saul Alinsky, etc.) Share or discuss with local colleagues.

Note to the Facilitator: Because community work requires a lot of discussion, this module includes several different exercises intended to explore some of the important aspects of cooperation in a community. Most likely, there will not be sufficient time to use all exercises. Use the ones you feel appropriate.

- Exercise 1 relates to some of the personalities and parties usually involved in community development as touched upon in these first two pages.
- Exercise 2 is using what we have to improve and strengthen a community.
- Exercise 3 challenges us to understand how perspective affects people's opinions, decision-making, and priorities. It should be used together with either of the first two exercises.
- Exercise 4 enables us to more deeply analyse relationships in a community.
- Exercise 5 reminds us of key points for intercultural communication, and
- Exercise 6 concerns participatory planning.

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24  Enterprise and Entrepreneurship in the Community, *Community Development Principles and Practical Actions*, <http://localenterprise.wordpress.com/2009/03/27/community-development-principles-and-practical-actions> (Accessed 11 September 2012).

### *Exercise 1 – Who are these Stakeholders and What do they want from me?*

Think of a complex situation in the community where you work and live that might be affecting your work as a mediator. It might be the lack of adequate services in the public housing complex in Plemetina/Plemetin, or an imminent decision by the powers-that-be to close a school that has until now served your community. It might be an on-going political rivalry that has become so acrimonious that it has begun to interfere with the daily lives of your neighbours, perhaps affecting rubbish collection, building a road through your neighbourhood, or the like. It also might be a rivalry between possible community projects, for example, a football field versus expanding a school.

How would you go about addressing the issues? How would you decide what will affect the families in your neighbourhood or municipality? How will you decide *if*, *how*, *when, and to which extent* to respond or react? Who might be your partners? Who might be your competitors or even adversaries? Once committed, how would you involve others?

Think of the different types of recipients and beneficiaries. Don't forget to mention the role models! Adding to your own specific experience and interaction with providers (donors) and other recipients (beneficiaries), local, national, international, perform a short play/skit about your selected community project. As you develop the play, don't forget to role play various possible ways people deal with conflict (Modules 7 and 8).

After the play is over, discuss these questions in a Fish Bowl:
1. As a mediator, in which situations might you be perceived by local recipients as a provider? Do *you* see *yourself* as a provider?
2. How does it make you feel to be perceived as a donor, if that is the case?
3. How does being seen as a recipient or provider help and hinder your work as mediator?
4. Does a provider only refer to a donor of financial support?
5. Who are the other stakeholders in your community and what are their 'interests' and 'goals' (Remember Modules 7 and 8, 'interest v. position')?
6. Make a list of those people or institutions in your neighbourhood, community and/or municipality. Rank them from 1-5 in terms of their ability or desire to cooperate or be effective (1 - most effective, 5 – least effective). Whom would you approach to address the problem posed in the play?

▶▷ Don't forget: in your play you might wish to have the problem solved, if you think that is reasonable. However, it is not necessary to 'resolve' the problem, especially if, 'in real life', it might not be resolvable. The purpose of the play is to look at the process and the various players in a community and to gain a deeper understanding of interest, motive, position, goal, hidden agendas, and clear objectives.

### Exercise 2 – Using the Resources that You Have

**How to prepare**

- The organisers or facilitators need to collect boxes of assorted oddities: old pieces of cloth, coloured paper, pens or pencils, small tools, plastic bottles, leaves or twigs, etc. **Each box should contain about 15 items and the contents of each box should be different.** There must be one box per every 4-5 people in the group.

*Facilitator's explanation to the group*

1. As we know, one of the difficulties in development or education is being able to have good cooperation. We are all so busy we don't have time to think about some of the finer aspects to cooperation. This fun, but sometimes *also* frustrating exercise, will give us the opportunity to think about and to practice our skills in cooperation.
2. Ask the participants to divide into groups of 4-6 people and to stand around one of the tables in the room. Then give each group a box that was earlier prepared.
3. Each group has a box of things and the task of each group is to build or make something that is either a symbol of something or is functional.
4. The group **must work in silence.** They must find other ways to communicate with each other.
5. Participants may also use other items – beyond what they have in the box; they have coins, telephones, etc. to add to their creation – if they wish.
6. Each group will have 15 minutes to complete the task.
7. After ensuring that everyone understands the instructions, a signal will be given to begin work.
8. After 15 minutes have passed (or when the groups are finished) stop the exercise.
9. Ask everyone to walk round and look at each thing that has been built and see if they can recognise what has been built. Remember, no talking!
10. Everyone votes which group built the most creative and most understandable/clear piece. They vote by clapping. No group can clap/vote for its own creation. The group that gets the loudest clapping wins the prize.

*Questions to discuss – either in the groups or in whole group*

- What helped cooperation in your group?
- What hindered cooperation in your group?
- Were there times when someone was frustrated? Why? What could you or the group have done so that you would not be frustrated?
- What new insights do you have about cooperation?

How would you relate this exercise you just completed to 'real world' work with a community? Exercises serve as examples, metaphors of real situations. Their simplicity can be very valuable in helping us to step back, reflect, and distance ourselves momentarily from what can otherwise be a very intense and complex situation or condition. Distancing ourselves can sometimes bring a freshness or clarity. Exercises also help us remember that when engaged in very serious work, it is healthy to occasionally do something light-hearted and fun.

### *Exercise 3 – Your Standpoint is Your Viewpoint[25]*

**Purpose:** The purpose of this little exercise is to examine what happens when we 'see things as the only way things can be'. It can help us understand that a viewpoint comes from where one 'sits' in society. Our views, priorities, needs, and values are profoundly affected by our personal experiences or backgrounds.

**Preparation:** This skit requires three people, two chairs and a door.

**Scenario:** Two participants sit facing each other with one person facing the door and the second person sitting with his back to the door. If there is more than one door, it is very important to ignore the other door/s. The third 'actor' approaches his two seated colleagues and asks, 'Where is the door?' They both respond immediately, and at the same time. The one facing the door says, 'in front'. The one with back to the door says, 'behind'. The third person asks again, 'where?' and the responses continue, 'in front', 'behind', with each seated person trying to shout more loudly than the other.

The skit ends.

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[25]   Sr Jane Vella and Sr Rosaria Drew, 1975, handout.

### *Exercise 4 – Mapping Your Community*

As we have emphasised in other modules, understanding relationships between and among people helps us to accomplish our tasks or goals.

Sometimes it helps to draw a diagram of individuals about whom we know, or those we work with, or might work with in the future. Through a drawing or 'mapping' we can more clearly visualise the quality of relationships between individuals or groups.

On a large piece of paper, map out your community. The below diagram is a sample of what your map might look like. Different colour lines can signify different types of relationships. There are many possibilities for different scenarios beyond the four described below. How many other colours and types of relationships will depend on how deeply the group wants to explore this issue? The five examples below serve as core categories.

Green - strong, reliable relationship exists. Trust has been built, mistakes understood and successes appreciated and acknowledged, e.g. with thanks and positive reinforcement, and feedback.

Blue – good relationships are being developed. Until now, there has been no opportunity to work together, however, the individuals seem to have a lot in common – may have even had personal, informal contact at family or other events. There is a sense of compatibility. Neither party should take the relationship for granted. Nothing – yet – has challenged the positive direction that trust building is heading.

Red – Relationship is unstable. Whether previous experience, personal incompatibility, other issues, this relationship needs some help. Confidence-building measures are most likely non-existent and other forms of trust building have either never been attempted or they resulted in some form of a negative experience.

Purple – Relationship is non-existent. And, depending on how the individuals perceive and deal with new relationships, in general, this one could go in any combination of directions. Refer to Module 5 (Understanding Others and Ourselves).

Orange - Relationship you might wish to develop but you need to consult others, analyse the kind of relationship you wish to have before deciding how to build the relationship. This sort of carefully thought out relationship might be with a political party or a major company. With all partnerships it is important to know if and what are the 'strings attached' and this is what distinguishes a partnership from an individual friendship. Partnerships are professional, courteous, with each party having specific, and sometimes conflicting, interests (whereas a friendship views the relationship itself as 'the shared interest'. In strong relationships, such discussions can be quite open and frank since both parties trust each other and are willing to give the benefit of the doubt.

In the case of 'orange' category relationships, you need to do some important analysis. If we partner with Group X on issue A, does mean that we are expected to cooperate on issues B and C with the same group? In other words, how would such a working relationship be limited, yet very successful?

As you begin your mapping process, think of all the actual, potential, former relationships one might find in a community. Think of concrete examples, concrete projects or joint work on which you have embarked. Here are some examples of some of the parties. The colours of the map outline below and those of the descriptions do not match due to technical/computer difficulties. It is not important which colours are used, but the descriptions' colours should match the mapping colours.

- Government workers
- Senior government officials
- Political parties
- Local NGOs
- Kosovo-wide NGOs with representatives in your community
- Kosovo-wide NGOs without representatives in your community that are nonetheless developing projects
- Health professionals
- Education professionals
- _____?
- _____?

And, don't forget the kids and youth!

*Exercise 5 – Interaction with members of the Roma communities and facilitating intercultural communication (ROMED)*[26]

**Duration:** 1h30

**Objectives:**
- To develop communication skills adapted for a successful communication with Roma community members
- To develop positive attitudes and ability to overcome simplistic perceptions and prejudice

**Resources needed:**
- Computer and video projector
- Slides presentation and handout: Intercultural Communication

**Description of the session:**
The trainer makes an introduction about the importance and the challenges of a good communication with the members of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. The trainer will emphasize that in an interaction, behind visible behaviour and behind what is being said, there are reasons, evaluations, decisions, thoughts, which might not be so obvious, particularly when differences in cultural background and/or social status are involved. (10 min)

Mini Forum Theatre[27] (1h): Participants identify situations of miscommunication between Roma community members, mediator, and the staff of public institutions. One situation is selected and participants take up roles related to the situation (including the two parties concerned, but also other relevant stakeholders). The other participants will be the audience. The "actors" play the situation. After each major scene, the trainer asks the audience about, what they think is the problem in the scene and invites them to try out and show "on stage", how they would behave to improve the communication. Afterwards the statements and behaviours of the spectators are analysed. For each of the attempts, actors and members of the audience will express their thoughts and the reasoning behind their performance choices.

The last part of the module will be a debriefing focusing on feelings, key ideas learned and concluded with comments on how the mediators can:
- React in difficult situations revealed in the play;
- Help community members convey their message to staff of public institutions;
- Help the staff of public institutions to understand better the underlying assumptions and judgments beneath the behaviour and reactions of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian community members.

Forum Theatre methods are useful in many contexts. We will revisit this method in Module 15.

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[26] ROMED Programme, *op cit.,* p. 31, Module 10.

[27] Forum Theatre is a method developed by Brazilian playwright and director Augusto Boal and is used as a tool to engage communities all over the world about social transformation in their communities (or beyond). The story of the play/scene is developed based on a real life experience of participants. The actors are non-trained, non-professionals - ordinary people - playing something directly related to their life, while the audience, consists of community members. After the play the "curinga" (moderator) of the group is inviting the spect-actors, to show on stage, what they would have done, if they would have been in the same situation. The 'forum' after the play consists of acting interventions on stage and dialogue about the possibility to apply the proposals to change the situation in real live, which might give concrete ideas for the the possibilities for change in on-going challenges or real conflicts right on the very next day.

### *Exercise 6 – Participatory, Transparent and Empowering Planning (ROMED)*[28]

**Duration:** 1h30

**Objectives:**

- To understand the principles and the practical steps of a participatory planning session involving community members and staff of the institution.
- To develop the skills which mediators need to facilitate successfully this process.

**Resources needed:**

- Computer with video projector;
- Slides presentation and handout depending on the option chosen: Planning with Grow or Guidelines for participatory planning
- Work cycle on a flipchart sheet

**Description of the session:**

This module will be implemented as a complex simulation. After a brief review of the whole work-cycle and of the main principles of non-violent communication, the trainer introduces the key elements of a participatory planning process. This can be based on the GROW model or on a simple planning process where participants are presented the conclusions of the initial assessment and are asked how they can contribute to an improvement. For both options, the organisation of the simulation is the same.

Participants will choose or be assigned roles covering the variety of stakeholders involved in this process in real life, as well as several observers.

At different moments in the simulation the trainer will pause the simulation and engage in a discussion with participants on:

- The tasks they have corresponding with the planning phase;
- The way the players use non-violent communication principles;
- Similarities and differences between their local contexts;
- Risks to take into account;
- The most effective strategies for success.

A final discussion will review the key conclusions and lessons learned by participants in the exercise, emphasizing the elements that contribute to an empowerment of the Roma community and an increased accountability from the side of the staff of the institution.

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[28]    ROMED Programme, *op cit.,* p. 30, Module 9.

# Module 13 – Your School as a Partner

**Purpose:** This module provides an overview of working with a school as a partner. The interests and needs of schools should be clearer along with ideas how to work more closely with schools.

**Materials:** Flipcharts, markers, tape, additional material brought by the facilitator as well as the representative from the Ministry for Education, Science and Technology as mentioned in section below, 'How systems and institutions work'.

**Facilitators:** In addition to a training facilitator, it is recommended to invite an education representative: from a municipal directorate of education and/or from the MEST for a discussion with mediators. The facilitator might be asked to moderate the discussion.

Educators and education administrators are among the most pressured and overwhelmed professionals in any society. They have limitless responsibilities to many sectors in a society: parents, each other, ministry (government), local municipal structures, pupils, donors, etc. Even determining their own priorities can be wrought with frustrations. Schools are increasingly relying on different approaches to addressing the various demands placed on them. One such approach is the use of mediators such as you who serve as conduits between schools and families

It is very helpful to understand how things work in schools, in the municipalities and the MEST. You should understand:

1. The formal aspects: the structure of education departments, responsibilities, budgets, the Strategies, and
2. Informal aspects: what are the interests and needs of schools and education departments; how do they see their roles, challenges, and futures; what may they want and accept from you, and what not?

The guest presenter and the facilitator will now supply you with up-to-date information about the following:

**How systems and institutions work**

- The training will answer these questions in more detail:
- Curriculum development and dissemination;
  - http://kkapk.armods.com/
- Organigram of Ministry of Education, Science and Technology; Tasks of Municipal Education Directorate;
- How people spend their days helps us to better plan our own work as well as be considerate of others' schedules;
  - A typical day at school – directors;
  - A typical day at school – teachers;
  - A typical day at school – secretary;
- School days – annual schedule, holidays, hours;
  - www.masht-gov.net/advCms/#id=1316
- Requirements to pass from class year to class year; conditions (missed days, behaviour, notes) that could prevent passing from grade to grade;
- Conditions for students to return to school;

- What is the role and structure of anti-dropout committees;
- Requirements for registration in first class year;
- Requirements for registration in secondary school.

**Interests and Needs of Schools and Teachers**

Teachers and school directors are often hardworking dedicated professionals. Sometimes they are not. Some may have once been dedicated but lost their motivation. Many continue, despite many obstacles, to do the best work they can for children. It is important for a School Mediator to be able to be empathetic with education professionals. In discussion, consider these questions. Either divide in groups or use the 'Bird Cage' format.

- What is it like to have a class of 30-40 children often missing class materials to work with?
- Teachers are expected to change to new methodology and curriculum, but have no personal experience of these methods; how do they make this change?
- If a child is disrespectful or disruptive, the teacher may not know what to do. What should they do?
- A teacher may believe they are not discriminating at all and are helping all children, but blame some children for poor hygiene or behaviour or not understanding; what can they do? Are they discriminating? Are they if they put children at the back of the room?
- If a teacher wants to do 'the right thing' but are under pressure to somehow discriminate from some parents, what should the teacher do?

**Role of Families[29]**

1. What are the obligations of parents or other family members (guardians) tasked with caring for the children?
   - What responsibilities should parents require of children, at different ages?
   - Should parents make children go to school if the child does not want to
   - Should parents make children go to school even if there are problems such as discrimination or bullying? What should parents do in those cases?
   - What can parents do anything in their homes to support education even if they are themselves uneducated?
2. Because many parents themselves did not attend school, they might find school intimidating and might be reticent to meet with school officials. This is where you can step in and be a bridge to communicate 1) the needs, concerns, fears, and responsibilities of the parents to the schools, and 2) the concerns, needs, requirements of the schools to the parents. ▶▷Don't forget: As you know, these are some of the significant moments where good communication skills (and patience!) are so essential, and hence, why many modules include discussions and exercises about the many faceted aspects of communication.

Here are additional matters to brainstorm and discuss with the facilitator and the education (school, municipal or ministry) representative.

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[29] See Modules 9 and 10 for additional focus on parents and families. See also ROMED Programme, *Trainer's Handbook* pp. 30-31.

- What are some effective ways to help parents really understand how educational institutions work?
- In which ways might schools assure parents that they are truly mindful of families' needs and concerns?
- How do the Parents Councils function in each municipality? What role might you, the mediator, have?
- How can a mediator be pro-active in her/his relationship with the schools whilst not offending or embarrassing others?

### *Exercise 1 – Interaction with Public Institutions (ROMED)*[30]

This exercise explores the interaction of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian community members with public institution (school, employment office, healthcare service).

**Duration**: 30 minutes

**Objectives:**
1. List the challenges, issues and difficulties perceived in the relation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians with the education/employment/access to health services
2. Compare opinions regarding the challenges identified and categorize the challenges

**Resources needed:**
- A4 paper sheets, markers;
- Place to display results

**Description of the module:**

Divided in small groups of 4-5 persons (if possible, people from the same area should stay together), participants are asked to discuss and agree, based on their experience, on five main challenges they consider associated with education/employment/access to health services of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians. Each issue will be written on a separate piece of paper as a statement as concise but also as clear as possible. To facilitate understanding of the task, the trainer will show an example, writing with a marker a common challenge on an A4 sheet of paper. (15 min)

All papers will be displayed on a wall in a random order, regardless of the group that produced them. Participants are given a few minutes to read all statements. Participants may ask clarification questions. After a short common reflection on the similarities and differences between the issues identified they will be categorised in clusters. This will be done by two volunteers from the group, guided by all participants. Challenges that are similar will be joined together. A trainer will ask for confirmation and comments from participants and will stimulate a joint reflection on the main categories resulted. (15 min)

During the next training sessions, whenever appropriate, trainers will make connections with the categories and issues identified.

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[30]   ROMED Programme, *op cit.,* p. 17, Module 2.

# Module 14 - Cooperation with Law Enforcement

**Purpose:** To understand how law enforcement can support regular school attendance; to improve relations between children and their families and the authorities

**Important point:** How to do no harm

**Outcome:** Establish steps towards municipality-based cooperation between police, families and schools

**Materials:** flyers, contact information, and other materials distributed by the police, regulation on obligatory school attendance, attachments to this module

**Special need:** Guest speaker from community policing

The following questions are suggested for discussion with a Community Policing representative or other appropriate representative. Are there are other questions you need to know?

**School Attendance**

1. What does the law say about obligatory regular school attendance?
2. What are the legal ramifications and results for parents if their children are not regularly attending school? Is this enforced anywhere in Kosovo?
3. What can our local/municipal-level police do to support regular school attendance?
4. What can the police and the courts do on the Kosovo-wide level?
5. When might it help to have the police visit families and when might it do harm?
6. How can the police be positive role models and 'advocates' for regular school attendance?
7. What support and assurances can the police give to parents?

**Police-Community Relations**

1. How can the police assist with and enforce security of and safety for children as they go to, attend, and return home, from school?
2. How might the police assist in discouraging bullying and taunting of children to and from school?
3. How might they ensure that improper behaviour on the school grounds does not take place?

**Exercise:** Plan follow-up activities to pursue with community police in your municipalities. How can we start?
- What are expectations of all parties involved: the police, the families, the schools, the children and youth?
- What are the first concrete steps to be taken to solidify this partnership? Who needs to do what first?
- What steps need to be taken after first meeting is held by all parties involved?

# Module 15 - Problem Solving, Problem-Posing

**Purpose:** To examine different aspects of problem solving: recognising when a problem arises, assessing the problem, managing, perhaps solving, the problem, dealing with decision making

**Important point:** To understand that problem solving is a cooperative effort; everyone can help to manage or solve a problem

**Materials:** Flipcharts, markers, tape

**Themes:**

- Managing challenges in decision making
- Stages of Problem-posing and Problem-solving
- The Human Factor

To a large extent, posing and solving problems involves making decisions. Making decisions can by a scary process, in part, because do so requires us to do things we might not otherwise, do. Or, at least not in the ways that we think we would do them. In short, we are talking about dealing with change. Decision making is not merely assessing the actual decision made. It involves examine the process. Are people being asked to do something? Are they offering to do it without being asked? Are they doing something they have never done before or don't like to do? And, who decides when a decision must be made? And by whom or how many? Is a decision to not make a decision necessarily a resistance to change? All these questions and more necessitate a certain understanding of some snags in decision making. Making decisions can be seen as synonymous with action, movement, success that can be measured or proven, with change! If we are not content with a decision, we frequently want another decision, but we are not sure if we want the change that can accompany a new decision.

Below are some points to think about in relation to problem solving, decision making and dealing with change:

**Challenges to making decisions**

- Fear, Resistance, Change, Consequences, Risks
- What keeps me trying when I am convinced nothing will help or improve a situation?
- What if being part of a solution might require me to do things I don't want to do?
- Blaming others, blaming self

**Stages of Problem-posing and Problem-solving**

Critical thinking requires focus, attention, and creativity. Initially, it involves suspending judgment. It also involves thoughtful inquiry and when necessary leads to an analysis that naturally leads to an evaluation, assessment and possibly action. You are probably familiar with the expression, 'thinking outside the box'.

> We cannot solve our problems with the same level of thinking
> that created them.
> - *Albert Einstein*

**The Human Factor**

***No one is indispensable*** - Delegate or authorise. When we work with other people, there are plenty of instances when and reasons why work can take more time than anticipated. One such reason for a slow-down can be due to a lack of a plan for delegating work and 'allowing' others to make decisions. A director or project manager who does not delegate can also be very irritating to other team members.

***Transparency*** – As much as we try, we cannot always know what we are going to do ahead of time. This is perfectly acceptable. However, if transparency exists throughout a working relationship, then difficult moments will pass more smoothly because trust has been built among partners and colleagues. These are some ways to enhance transparency.

- Together decide on a clear goal.
- Together decide who has primary responsibility for a decision and in which instances. This does not mean that others do not provide input, but someone needs to coordinate all that input.
- Support the stimulation, enthusiasm and exchange of ideas. Be sincere.
- Explore ways to test suggestions.
- Conscientiously and genuinely encourage group participation in decision making.
- Collectively decide which approaches or methods will be used to come to an agreement, e.g. consensus, majority vote.

**Change can be frightening**

Telling someone to 'change', 'do something differently', is probably one of the most useless pieces of advice – made more so when not accompanied by some suggestions as to how to 'change'.

Here are some reasons why 'change' is a challenge for many of us:

1. What are we being asked to change? A habit that we were never even aware we did? Example: interrupting, or 'making a face' when we hear something we don't agree with; speaking loudly and lengthily thereby preventing others from speaking (and the speaker from listening).
2. Perhaps we are being asked to change a way of doing something that is closely connected to our identities, or something that our families have been doing 'for centuries'. Example: taking off one's shoes when one enters a house. Or, not requiring young men to help clean the house and prepare meals.
3. Does changing make us feel foolish, or vulnerable? Do we need to 'be strong' before a certain person or group and will exploring a change in how we do things be humiliating or affect our honour? Example: if a parent shows fatherly affection towards his daughter in public. Or, a community leader publically supports (and practices himself) a tax on cigarettes and alcohol.
4. Does changing require too much energy and time? Even if we know there might be a long-term benefit, we are impatient and dare one say, lazy! Can you think of an example?

5. Is it dangerous to change? Example: a teacher decides he wants to introduce an innovative curriculum in his class, but he knows the director will not like it for various reasons. He could lose his job. He could be ostracised by his peers, right?

6. Do we always have the right resources to change? Sometimes changing for the good, costs more money. Example: buying a hybrid automobile is a change that is good for the environment. However, 'hybrids' are very expensive. Or, buying clothing for all children so they may go to school is expensive. It is cheaper to keep the kids at home (!).

An important part of the dialogue about change includes understanding how difficult it can be for all the above mentioned reasons as well as others. What are some other reasons you can think of that make 'changing' difficult? Once people are aware of these difficulties, then once can move to the next level of looking at interest and need (Module 7 and 8).

**Decision making: different kinds of responses during the decision making process**

*Involvement in Decisions*

Old school thinking on decision-making was pretty basic: the person in charge makes the decisions and tells others what to do to implement those decisions. The end. For the past twenty-five years or so, corporations, universities, agencies, etc. have realized that this kind of decision-making is not necessarily the most fruitful, effective or sustainable. Managers, directors, supervisors or all types understand the value of inspiration in the work place. Good intentions aside, however, decision making is still difficult. These are some issues that have been known to arise during the decision-making process.

*'To decide is not to decide'*

Generally people don't like this kind of 'decision'. It leaves many unanswered questions. What leads us to this point? Sometimes when someone makes a decision (even in the form of a light suggestion) and it drops like a stone in water. It doesn't go anywhere. What does this say for the person who made the decision to decide? Will this be encouraging for him in the future?

*Authoritarian decision*

While all concerned might agree with this one-person decision, in the end, there may be no one round to implement it because people didn't think it such a good idea, but didn't challenge it. What might be some reasons that people don't challenge decisions at the time?

*Majority vote and Consensus*

If the group is actually quite small then majority vote might not be the best option simply because there might be one person who does not agree with the majority decision and the effect could be quite damaging given the small size of the group. In this instance, decision making by consensus might be more effective.

Consensus building involves negotiation. This means mustering all one's knowledge and preparation for being a good negotiator: applying interest versus position skills, active listening skills, empathy, (see Modules 6, 7 and 8). Consensus involves accommodation and compromise. In the

end, the group may decide to hold fast to the original decision, but they will do so with more people pro-actively agreeing which means they can depend on pro-active support.

▶▷Don't' forget: Who makes decisions? Certainly, not everyone needs to, nor should, always be involved in every decision. The people who participate in making a decision should be those who will most be affected by the outcome of the decision.

Now that we have explored what can happen *during* the decision making process, let us take a look at what can *affect* the decision making process.

It happens so frequently that we do not always notice. A new piece of information, strong objection or approval, jealousy or respect, humiliation, or servility, to name a few, all affect an upcoming decision. As we saw above, a decision making process can become paralysed or hastily agreed upon only to find out later that people really didn't like the idea. So, what leads us into such situations? Here are a few examples.

*Fear of consequences; not wishing to take a risk*

What will people think of me? Will I lose face or respect? Or, more concretely, will I lose my job or family support if I take a certain decision?

*Conflicting loyalties*

Will I be seen as unreliable or untrustworthy? A traitor? Will I be seen as putting my own interests before those of my family or my team?

*Hidden agenda*

A person wants the group to support a certain proposal or decision for reasons that are not shared with the group. This is also a great trust-breaker. If you want applicant A instead of applicant B for the job, should you admit that applicant A is your cousin? Well, if you are open and the cousin is indeed qualified – perhaps even more qualified than the other applicant, would this be advisable to discuss with the team? What do you think? Remember, what you are willing to recommend to others, you need to be prepared to do yourself!

*Interpersonal or intergroup conflicts or dislikes*

We can't get along with everyone all the time.  That is just a fact of life. Power struggles, ego, jealousy and fear – the main motivators of human behaviour – emerge and can prevent a decision from being made. As a trained Mediator, you have the wonderful opportunity to help both parties discuss and help to bring about a decision.

*Inadequate leadership*

Interests frequently collide. However, an inexperienced leader will stifle a good discussion that is ultimately essential for decision making. A common mistake of an inexperienced leader is lack of sensitivity and understanding of the kind of support required for all those involved. Decision making might be taking place on an *ad hoc* basis with little to no thought about how a decision should be made.

## Exercise 1 – 'Acting Out' about Change

Calling for change and dealing with change are two very interrelated parts of a process, yet are in fact quite different. When someone announces that he is bored, what are some of the undercurrents of this statement? Is a request for change one of them, perhaps? And, when people say they don't like change, would they really prefer the opposite – a static existence where the same things are done in the same ways each day? Let's explore these and related sentiments relating to change in this exercise.

**Theatre of the Oppressed and Forum Theatre**

*Theatre of the Oppressed* was published and developed as a theatre methodology by Augusto Boal, a Brazilian playwright and actor. It is largely based on the book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, by author Paulo Freire, a well-known educator and Boal's good friend. One important part of Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed is Forum Theatre**.** In addition to reviving theatre in a depressed social environment at the time, Forum Theatre encouraged community discourse and action during Brazil's dictatorship era (1964-1985) during which Boal, himself, was a victim of torture. Because Forum Theatre is so universally successful and participatory (the audience is referred to as 'spect-actors', not spectators), it has become one of the most successful practical tools to address all kinds of issues relating to power and powerlessness, human rights violations, etc. It has also been used in Kosovo with families of missing persons.

**How Forum Theatre works**

Participants can either remain as one large group, or divide into smaller groups to address more than one topic in the skits. Once that decision is made, the 'spect-actor/s' act out a scene depicting a situation they would like to address – in today's exercise, issues relating to 'dealing with change'. As the skit is performed according to plan/script, the other spect-actors watch and think of ways they might improvise. When they have other ways of seeing a situation, they call out a word, 'change'. At this point, the spect-actors adapt their skit. If the other spect-actors see other ways of dealing with the problem, they shout 'stop' and they then must 'complete' the skit as they see it, to which others can also respond.

Participants should brainstorm about topics they would like to act-out. Making decisions and making change are two interrelated processes required for improving our lives – even if the decision is not to change! Topics you could act out could relate to a family situation such as an intergenerational disagreement, or you might select a problem in a community, or a misunderstanding between colleagues. As participants, think of something that is important and real for you. Think of something about which you and your group need to make a decision. What would need to change? How might you need to change something in your life?

One skit should last approximately thirty minutes to one hour. Naturally, this will depend on the complexity of the topic you have selected, number of original spect-actors, etc.

▶▷Don't forget: Problem solving means breaking down the problem into manageable parts. Don't try to solve it all at once.

# Module 16 – How Health and Social Services Can Help You and Your Community

**Purpose:** To understand how health and social services can support the needs of the families with whom we work; to improve relations between children and their families and health workers and institutions

**Important point:** How to do no harm

**Outcome:** Establish steps and strategies towards cooperation with municipality-based health houses, private clinics, and the Prishtinë/Priština Hospital, NGOs providing social services, municipal social work centres, etc.

**Materials:** Flyers, contact information, and other materials available to the public: hours of operation, names of heads and other staff of hospital departments and of municipal health houses and social work centres

**Special need:** Guest facilitators from the health sector and social services sector.

*Note to facilitator and organiser:* Consider inviting both facilitator and guest presenter(s) to overlap. Having both representatives talking with each other and with the mediators together might generate some good strategies to address shared concerns, challenges, ideas, etc. The result could be a dynamic programme benefiting all concerned. It is *not* recommended that this first encounter take place over lunch. It is too difficult for everyone to be engaged, included, and attentive during meals.

The medical and social work professions, as with any other sector, have their own hierarchies and functionality. Understanding how these hierarchies work, e.g. when and whom to approach about any issue, is essential to strengthening relations with social service professionals and health professionals.

▶▷Don't forget: It may not always be necessary to 'go to the top' to request something. In fact, sometimes it can hurt the relationships and hence, the ultimate objective.

**Questions to consider and ask of the guest facilitators**

1. What specific services do health professions provide? How do families become aware of such services, e.g. vaccinations, annual check-ups? What can the mediators do to encourage this communication?
2. What other obligatory services can you think of?
3. What specific services do social centre workers provide? How do families become aware of such services?
4. Which local non-governmental health, wellness, and social services exist in your community that might partner with the mediators and the health houses or the social work centres? Handikos, Mother Teresa, centres for social work, Red Cross, youth centres?

**Building a sustainable relationship – outreach**

1. How can health and social service professionals help families with first-year pupils get ready for school?
2. What legal obligations do the health and social services have in ensuring that children register for school?
3. What discussions – and hopefully actions – can be taken jointly by families and health social service professionals to benefit the wellbeing of children so that they can focus on their school attendance and their studies?
4. How might it be possible for health and social service professionals to make occasional home visits whereby both parties are satisfied with the services provided and received, respectively?
5. How can social service and health professionals be positive role models and 'advocates' for regular school attendance?
6. Which discussions need to take place that would make it possible for the schools, local social and health services and families to be aware of family health issues that arise? In smaller communities, generally speaking, it is easier for this 'relationship circle' (parents, teacher, child, health professional) to be solidified. People know each other and their health issues. If a teacher or health house nurse or social worker know that little Samir's mother is ill and having difficulties that are preventing Samir from attending school, what role can each play to improve Samir's home situation?
7. There are many ways to make a relationship with a healthcare provider or a social service worker a long-term, positive one. How this is done will depend much on the individuals involved, the communities, and the like. What points need to be considered in *your* community?

**Exercise:** Plan an activity to involve a healthcare giver or social service worker in your neighbourhood or school in your municipality. For example:

1. What would you do to plan for a visit of a healthcare provider to your community? What are the expectations of all parties involved: the healthcare professional, the families, the schools, the kids, etc?

2. What are the first concrete steps to be taken to solidify this partnership? Who needs to do what first?

3. How does one get to a 'first meeting'? Who needs to do what? What steps could be taken *after* a first meeting takes place?

4. What might be the challenges or impediments to your programme?

# Module 17 – Human Rights and Dignity: Legal Frameworks

**Purpose:** Mediators should know human rights documents legally in force in Kosovo, how they can explore these documents, and how they can act on them.

**Important point:** Rights are a fight worth fighting for.

**Materials:**
- Flip-charts, markers, tape,
- Legal documents and texts that guest expert brings to distribute:
    - The constitution
    - MEST documents concerning Ashkali, Egyptian, and Roma education
    - Documents relating to practice and policy of municipal institutions concerning Ashkali, Egyptian and Roma communities
    - European Code of Ethics for Mediators, European Commission[31]
    - Relevant international human rights legal instruments
    - Relevant European Commission/Council of Europe human rights documents
    - Strategy for Integration of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo – Education Component
    - Strategy for Integration of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo

**Links and Appendices.** A table following this module lists major human rights documents and links to find them on the internet. Links may also be directly accessed at this website: www.the-Strategy.org.

**What are human rights? A brief overview**

To a certain extent the answer to the question posed in this title is 'everything'. 'Our' [human] rights, in the broadest sense, encompass everything about us: our private lives and our public lives, how we think, feed and clothe ourselves, our homes, our families, neighbourhoods, communities, societies, how we live and how we die, are some examples.

Some human rights instruments are specific to individual countries while other instruments have a more universal nature and are considered international human rights instruments.

For some, human rights are:
- Generally accepted principles of fairness and justice
- Universal moral rights that belong equally to all people simply because they are human beings

For others, human rights are:
- Natural rights
- God-given rights
- Rights flowing from nature

Some differences of opinion concerning which human rights are the most important will appear on lists among people from different political cultures and different societies. For example, peo-

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[31]   This document is included in this manual, note 1, supra p. 8.

ple in the United States historically often list political and civil rights such as freedom of speech, religion, and freedom from discrimination, whilst people from what used to be called the socialist-block countries would emphasis economic and social rights such as food, shelter, education, housing, health care. In South Africa and the Philippines the right to vote is a major human right. Some of the rights listed are so commonly accepted, that states or other political units that violate these rights are considered criminal. Other rights, particularly as they depend on varying levels of economic development, are more like 'values' that are aspired to. Whereas environmental rights are rarely respected anywhere.

**Partial List of Civil and Political Rights:**

- Right of people to participate in their government;
- Right to life, freedom and safety;
- Right to freedom of expression and communication;
- Right to equality before the law;
- Right to a fair and public trial;
- Right to be free from unfair imprisonment and expulsion;
- Right to be considered innocent until proven guilty;
- Right to freedom from torture and cruel and degrading punishment;
- Right to freedom from interference in your home;
- Right to leave your country and return (freedom of movement);
- Right to freedom from discrimination;
- Right to freedom of association and assembly;
- Right to own property and not to be deprived of it without accountable reasoning;
- Right to decide how and what your children will be taught so long as there is no threat to or violation of other people's existence.

**Partial List of Social and Economic Rights:**

- Right to employment;
- Right to equal pay for equal work;
- Right to work and choose your kind of work;
- Right to a decent home, and nutritious food;
- Right to adequate health care;
- Right to a free education;
- Right to form and join a trade union;
- Right to earn enough pay to support your family;
- Right to be protected in illness and in old age.

**Partial List of Environmental, Cultural and Developmental Rights:**

- Right to freedom from pollution or other activities that harm the environment;
- Right to a clean and healthy environment;
- Right to a safe environment;
- Right to healthy, non-soiled food that is free of poisons and toxins;
- Right to live in a country that is able to develop its economy without imposition form other countries;
- Right to enjoy the cultural and recreational life of the community.

**Human Rights as Related to Assertiveness**

- We all have the right to have respect from other people.
- We all have the right to have needs and to have these needs be as important as other people's needs
- We have the right to ask that other people respond to our needs and to decide whether we will take care of other people's needs
- We have the right to have feelings – and to express these feelings in ways which do not violate the dignity of other people (e.g. the right to feel tired, happy, depressed, angry, lonesome, silly)
- We all have the right to decide whether we will meet other people's expectations or whether we will act in ways which fit us, as long as we act in ways which do not violate other people's rights.
- We all have the right to form our own opinions and to express these opinions
- In addition we have the right to
  - determine how we spend our time
  - decide what we will do with our bodies
  - do what we want with our property
  - politely, but firmly refuse requests without guilt
  - politely and respectfully make requests
  - respectfully express our feelings, opinions, desires, and thoughts

...regardless of gender, age, economic, social class or level of schooling as long as we act in ways which do not violate the rights of other people.

One question that is often raised compares a 'human rights values' approach to a 'legal' one. What best serves the victims of discrimination and brings about change in society. Those advocating the 'values' approach want to use persuasion, respect, perhaps shame to promote honouring human rights. They want to convince the society as a whole, including the perpetrators to better recognize values voluntarily. They want to appeal to common values. The advocates of a legal approach want strong laws on human rights and strong enforcement of those laws. When they see discrimination, they want to take it to the court, or, for example, have someone lose their job. What do you think?

## Exercise 1 – Text Review, Analysis and Discussion

After participants form small groups, they are given several passages or articles from several in-ternational human rights instruments and those generated by the Kosovo government. Each group, with the guidance by the facilitator and the guest expert, will discuss their assigned pas-sages and present their findings to the larger group.

Here are some questions to initiate discussion.

1. Brainstorm and make a list of all the rights you can think of (before you look at prepared list with the guest expert!) How do your lists compare with the guest expert's list?
2. How do you interpret the select passages given to you? Be sure you are given a variety of rights, e.g. economic and social rights, cultural rights, political rights...
3. What differences and similarities do you notice between the international human rights in-struments and those of Kosovo? Where is there harmony between theory and practice, and where is there a divergence between practice and theory?
4. Which international and local documents have more power? And what does that power en-tail and in which situations?
5. As a mediator, which three articles in which human rights instruments do you see as easiest and most realistic to implement?
6. Kosovo: what governmental body is responsible for which document? What is the practical and real significance of these pieces of legislation?
   - A Law (passed by the Kosovo parliament) or in effect from prior administrations
   - An Administrative Order
   - The constitution
   - Human rights documents of inter-governmental organisations:
   - Helsinki Final Act, UN Declaration of Human Rights
   - European Convention on Human Rights (Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms)
   - Universal Declaration of Human Rights
7. Who (what groups) might be most affected by the human rights related to assertiveness? Why?

### Here are the relevant documents and links:

| Title / Description | Link |
|---|---|
| **Kosovo Laws** | |
| The constitution | http://www.kushtetutakosoves.info/repository/docs/Constitution.of.the.Republic.of.Kosovo.pdf |
| Law on International Agreements, Law No 04/L-052 of 2011 | http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/Law%20on%20international%20agreements.pdf |
| The Anti-Discrimination Law, Law No. 2004/3 | http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/2004_3_en.pdf |
| Law on The Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Communi-ties and their Members, Law No 03/L-047 of 2008 | http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/2008_03-L047_en.pdf |
| Law on Ombudsperson, Law No o3/L – 195 of 2010 | http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/2010-195-eng.pdf |
| Law on pre-school education, Law No. 02/L-52 of 2006 | http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/2006_02-L52_en.pdf |

| | |
|---|---|
| Law on pre-university education – Law No 04/L-032 of 2011 | http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/Law%20on%20preuniversity%20education.pdf |
| Law on Social and Family Services, Law No 02/L-17 of 2005 | http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/2005_02-L17_en.pdf |
| Law on the Social Assistance Scheme In Kosovo, Law No. 2003/15 | http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/2003_15_en.pdf |
| Law on Travel Documents, Law No 03/L-037 of 2008 | http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/2008_03-L037_en.pdf |
| | |
| **International Human Rights Instruments** | |
| Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10 December 1948 | http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml |
| Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, Approved and proposed for signature and ratification or accession by General Assembly resolution 260 A (III) of 9 December 1948 | http://www.hrweb.org/legal/genocide.html |
| Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, adopted on 28 July 1951 by the United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Status of Refugees and Stateless Persons convened under General Assembly resolution 429 (V) of 14 December 1950, entry into force 22 April 1954, in accordance with article 43 | http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/refugees.htm |
| Convention on the Political Rights of Women, opened for signature and ratification by General Assembly resolution 640(VII) of 20 December 1952, entry into force 7 July 1954, in accordance with article VI | http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/e2cprw.htm |
| International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, Adopted and opened for signature and ratification by General Assembly resolution 2106 (XX) of 21 December 1965 | http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cerd.htm |
| International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI) of 16 December 1966 | http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/ccpr.htm |
| International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI) of 16 December 1966 entry into force 3 January 1976, in accordance with article 27 | http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cescr.htm |
| Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 18 December 1979, entry into force on 3 September 1981 | http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm |
| Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 39/46 of 10 December 1984, entry into force 26 June 1987, in accordance with article 27 (1) | http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cat.htm |
| Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, as amended by Protocol No. 11, Rome, 4.XI.1950 | http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/005.htm |
| European Social Charter (revised), Strasbourg, 3.V.1996 | http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/163.htm |
| Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, 2000 | http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text_en.pdf |
| Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, Adopted by General Assembly resolution 47/135 of 18 December 1992 | http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/minorities.htm |
| UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, Adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization at its thirty-first session on 2 November 2001 | http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/diversity.htm |
| Document of the Copenhagen meeting of the conference on the human dimension of the CSCE, Copenhagen, 29 June 1990 CSCE Helsinki Document 1992, Helsinki, 10 July 1992 | http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/14304 |
| Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, Strasbourg, February 1992 | http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/html/157.htm |
| European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, Strasbourg, 5 September 1992 | http://conventions.coe.int/treaty/en/Treaties/Html/148.htm |
| Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice Adopted and proclaimed by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization at its twentieth session, on 27 November 1978 | http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/race.htm |

### Exercise 2 – Cultural differences, equal access to public services and human rights (ROMED)[32]

*Case studies*: Critical incidents from the work of mediators
*Only one case should be used, depending on the type of mediators. Other similar cases inspired by local reality can be described for the other groups*

#### Health
*An Ashkali woman, 17 years old, mother of 2 children, finished only primary school. She gets high fever and abdominal pain. The family calls the ambulance and the ambulance refuses to come because the neighbourhood in which she lives is famous as a* Gypsy *one. Finally the family gets her to the emergency room at the hospital and the doctor gives her some initial treatment but says he cannot keep her for more than 3 days in the hospital as she is not insured. After her mother-in-law complains, a nurse comes to her to get her hospitalized in another location. She is put in a hospital room which the nurse describes as being 'the room for the ones of your kind'.*

#### Education
*A Roma couple has two sons and one daughter. In mid-September, they returned to their place of birth after spending the past six months in another country. The older son was accompanying them, while the daughter and the younger son stayed with the grandparents. The mother goes to school to register the younger son in the first grade (as he just turned 6). She is told that her son will be in a class with only Roma children. The head teacher says that this is because they all registered late for school and that anyway it will be easier for the Roma children if they are together. Since the class has been set-up at the last moment, it will use as classroom a former storage room and desks which are still functional after a few classrooms have been refurbished during the summer. The mother also asks how her older son can return to school to finish compulsory education. She is told that after leaving school last spring, the older son has to repeat the year. The teacher in charge of that class is called but she complains and says that she does not want the boy in her class, as they are already too many pupils, since a group of four new pupils joined the class coming from another school. The mother does not mention anything about the daughter, who is twelve years old and is expected to stay home and take over some of the household's responsibilities.*

#### Employment
*A young Roma man comes to the Employment office to ask for support in getting a job. He stays in a queue, waiting for his turn to speak to a person at the information desk but, just before his turn comes, another person comes and steps in front, getting immediately an appointment with an adviser. The young Roma asks why that happened and he is told that 'it's an engineer and he does not need to wait after you'. Finally, the young Roma gets to speak to an adviser and is asked to provide a proof that he is unemployed and a CV. The young Roma does not know what a CV is and has no idea how he can obtain the proof of unemployment. He is embarrassed to admit this and he tells the adviser he will come back with the requested documents. In fact, he gives up and goes to find a new job on the black market through an influential person recommended by his uncle. After his departure, the adviser says: 'Where is my pen? I cannot find it anymore, I'm sure that gypsy took it from me'". At the end of the day he finds his pen under the table.*

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[32] ROMED Programme, *op cit.,* pages 65-66.

***Handout – Cultural differences, equal access to public services and human rights***

*Case analysis form*

1.  Check the simplified version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (next page) and identify the rights that in this case are violated or limited. Whose rights are violated? By whom?

2.  How should representatives of the institution respond to the situation?

3.  If you were confronted with this situation, as a mediator, how would you act? Explain what you want to achieve, why and how.

## *Abstracts of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*[33]

**Summary of Preamble**

The General Assembly recognizes that the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world, human rights should be protected by the rule of law, friendly relations between nations must be fostered, the peoples of the UN have affirmed their faith in human rights, the dignity and the worth of the human person, the equal rights of men and women and are determined to promote social progress, better standards of life and larger freedom and have promised to promote human rights and a common understanding of these rights.

**Summary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

1. Everyone is free and we should all be treated in the same way.
2. Everyone is equal despite differences in skin colour, sex, religion, language for example.
3. Everyone has the right to life and to live in freedom and safety.
4. No one has the right to treat you as a slave nor should you make anyone your slave.
5. No one has the right to hurt you or to torture you.
6. Everyone has the right to be treated equally by the law.
7. The law is the same for everyone, it should be applied in the same way to all.
8. Everyone has the right to ask for legal help when their rights are not respected.
9. No one has the right to imprison you unjustly or expel you from your own country.
10. Everyone has the right to a fair and public trial.
11. Everyone should be considered innocent until guilt is proved.
12. Everyone has the right to ask for help if someone tries to harm you, but no-one can enter your home, open your letters or bother you or your family without a good reason.
13. Everyone has the right to travel as they wish.
14. Everyone has the right to go to another country and ask for protection if they are being persecuted or are in danger of being persecuted.
15. Everyone has the right to belong to a country. No one has the right to prevent you from belonging to another country if you wish to.
16. Everyone has the right to marry and have a family.
17. Everyone has the right to own property and possessions.
18. Everyone has the right to practise and observe all aspects of their own religion and change their religion if they want to.
19. Everyone has the right to say what they think and to give and receive information.
20. Everyone has the right to take part in meetings and to join associations in a peaceful way.
21. Everyone has the right to help choose and take part in the government of their country.
22. Everyone has the right to social security and to opportunities to develop their skills.
23. Everyone has the right to work for a fair wage in a safe environment and to join a trade union.
24. Everyone has the right to rest and leisure.
25. Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living and medical help if they are ill.
26. Everyone has the right to go to school.
27. Everyone has the right to share in their community's cultural life.
28. Everyone must respect the 'social order' that is necessary for all these rights to be available.
29. Everyone must respect the rights of others, the community and public property.
30. No one has the right to take away any of the rights in this declaration.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights has been adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10th of December 1948, now celebrated as the International Day of Human Rights.

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[33]  Human Rights Education Associates, www.hrea.org, HREA Resource Center, http://www.hrea.org/index.php?base_id=104&language_id=1&erc_doc_id=5211&category_id=24&category_type=3&group= (Accessed 11 September 2012).

*Exercise 3 – Cultural Differences, Equal Access to Public Services and Human Rights (ROMED)[34]*

**Duration:** 1h30

**Objectives:**

- To connect the work of the mediator with the principles of human rights and non-discrimination
- To reflect on the possible conflicts between cultural differences and human rights principles in the work of a mediator

**Resources needed:**

- Handout with case study/case studies (Annex: Critical incidents from the work of mediators
- Handout with analysis form (Annex: Case analysis form)
- Handout with simplified version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Flipchart and markers

**Description of the session**

Participants are divided in groups of four and each group receives the handout with a case describing a critical incident in the work of a mediator. It can be the same for all groups but it is better to have different cases. All cases should be directly relevant for the group members. Each case should present a controversial situation where several human rights are being violated and where rights are being violated both by members of the Roma community and by staff of a public institution.

Participants read the case individually. Each group receives the handout with the analysis questions and with the Declaration of Human Rights and will discuss the case with the aims of:
- Identifying what rights have been violated and in what way;
- How the work of a mediator can contribute to eliminating the violation of rights and to preventing such situations from appearing in the future.

Each group presents the conclusions (starting, if appropriate with reading loudly the case) and gets feedback from trainer and participants.

The session ends with a general discussion on:
- The importance of the human rights background for the work of the mediators
- The contribution a mediator has for ensure equal access to human rights and preventing discrimination
- Limits in the acceptance of cultural differences, defined by human rights principles
- Strategies for the mediator to convey (in a way that can be understood and accepted) to the staff of the institution and to the members of the community the idea that his/her work is grounded on the protection of human rights.

Key ideas resulted from the discussion can be written by the trainer on flipchart.

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[34] ROMED Programme, *op cit.,* p. 25, Module 5.

Alternative options:

- Depending on the group experience, the case studies can be prepared during the first part of the session by the group members. Thus, the first task of each group would be to identify and describe a case. The cases are then passed over to the next group, in order to be analysed and the rest of the process can go on as described above.

A good option could also be that the group, or a part of the small groups, works based on other international documents related to human rights which contain provisions directly relevant for the work of the mediators (European Social Charter, Convention for the Protection of the Rights of the Child).

*Exercise 4 – Dealing with Sensitive Issues in Relations with Institutions (ROMED)*[35]

**Duration:** 1h 30 minutes

**Objectives:**

- To develop the capacity of participants to understand and identify the types of re-action the institutions they are working with have and should have in a situation when a discrimination complaint is received
- To stimulate reflection on the way a mediator can contribute to building trust be-tween the community and the institution
- To equip participants with a tool for understanding different types of involvement of community members in relation with institutions

**Resources needed:**

- Handout: Dealing with sensitive issues in relations of institutions with Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. Responding to discrimination complaints and building confidence through participation
- Computer
- Projector
- Slides presentation with the Ladder of Participation

**Description of the module:**

The following activities and discussions are intended to build capacity for dealing with sensitive issues in relations between institutions and Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. In the course of responding to discrimination complaints there is an opportunity to build confidence through participation.

- Divided in small groups of 4-5 persons, participants receive the first pages of the handout and are asked to read individually and answer the first question in their group. (10 min)
- The answers of the groups are collected. (5 min)
- Participants are asked to answer the second set of questions and discuss the an-swers in their groups. (15 min)
- Groups share key ideas from their discussions. (15 min)
- A trainer presents the Ladder of Participation below. (App 17-2) (10 min)
- In groups, participants answer the questions. (15 min)
- Groups present their conclusions, followed by a general discussion around what the mediator can do to help institution and community to move up on the Ladder of Participation. (20 min)

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[35] ROMED Programme, *op cit.,* p. 25, Module 21.

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*Handout – Dealing with sensitive issues in relations with institutions...*[36]

**A tool for analysing reactions of schools to threats on their public image: Benoit's Image Repair Strategies**

The table below illustrates the different types of reactions an institution can have to a situation in which its public image is being threatened.

| **Denial** | |
|---|---|
| *Simple Denial* | **Act did not occur; I did not do act; act is harmless**<br><br>"None of the facts mentioned in the complaint is true; some elements may be true but they are exaggerated and taken out of context." |
| *Shifting Blame* | **Another did the act**<br><br>"It is their fault. Nothing can be done until the Roma do not change their behaviour and their attitudes." |
| **Evade Responsibility** | |
| *Provocation* | **Act responded to prior offence from victim**<br><br>"We know from previous experience the way they react to such situations, so we had to make all we could to avoid risks to our staff." |
| *Defeasibility* | **Can't control situation**<br><br>"Our initial review has confirmed your report that some of the staff in our institution does sometimes display inappropriate behaviours. We appreciate your calling this to our attention." |
| *Accident* | **Unforeseen consequence**<br><br>"In any institution you can find from time to time unfortunate incidents, but this is really an exceptional case for our work." |
| *Good Intentions* | **Meant well in doing act**<br><br>"We have to take into account the priorities. We want to make sure that Roma are treated well and get quality services, but, of course, we cannot satisfy completely everyone." |
| **Reduce Offensiveness** | |
| *Bolster* | **Stress own good points**<br><br>"The quality of the services provided by our staff is excellent; We have obtained high scores at all the evaluations for the past years." |
| *Minimize* | **Act is less offensive than it appears**<br><br>"This is something that can happen everywhere but it's insignificant compared to the efforts we are making to improve our services. In fact, if it wasn't for your organisation, those concerned would have quickly forgotten this incident." |

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[36] ROMED Programme, *op cit.,* pages 112-115.

| | |
|---|---|
| *Differentiate* | **Act is less offensive than similar acts**<br><br>"The point here is that one cannot measure the capability of staff and the quality of the work of an institution just by looking at the number of claims of discrimination; there are also other elements that need to be taken into account." |
| *Transcend* | **More important issue**<br><br>"What we are trying to achieve with quite great efforts is to improve the general quality of services for <u>all</u> beneficiaries." |
| *Attack Accuser* | **Reduce credibility of attacker or claim that victim deserved it**<br><br>"You use the money that you get from our government/the EU/these foreign agencies to ruin the image of our public institutions and you harm all our attempts to build a better situation under these difficult circumstances, instead of using it for a good purpose, to really benefit the disadvantaged families or to make them become more responsible." |
| *Compensate* | **Offer money, goods or services**<br><br>"Within our institution, we have a number of procedures in place to examine the circumstances when this type of situation occurs, checking whether or not the standards were met. In case the abuse is confirmed we will take the appropriate measures to compensate the respective person." |
| **Corrective Action** | **Repair damage; prevent recurrence**<br><br>"Within our institution, we have a number of procedures in place to examine the circumstances when this type of situation occurs, checking whether or not the standards were met. In case the abuse is confirmed we will take the appropriate measures to compensate the respective person." |
| **Mortification** | **Apologize; ask for forgiveness**<br><br>"On behalf of our Principal and of all our teachers I am authorised to express our deep regret for the situation that occurred. We do not have excuses for letting this happen, it is our error, we apologise and we express all our sympathy for the concerned family". |

This model can be applied to reactions of a public institution to complaints of mistreatment and discrimination against Roma, Ashkali or Egyptians; made by a local NGO active in the field of non-discrimination.

- Which of the strategies described above should be used by institutions to react to discrimination complaints?

**Think about the institution(s) you are working with.**

- Were there complaints of discrimination during the past few years? If yes, how did the institution react? How it should have reacted? If there were no complaints, why is this? (Is it because there was no discrimination? Because people were not aware of being discriminated against? Because they did not know what to do or whom to address to complain? Etc.)
- Imagine that an act of discrimination occurred recently in the institution you are working with and that the person(s) affected contacted an NGO and filed an official complaint against the institution.
- What can you do as a mediator is such a situation?
- Now, think how such situations can be prevented?
- What generates a positive image of an institution among the members of the Roma community? Who can play a role in building a positive image of the institution among the Roma community members?
- What can you do to support the institution to build a positive image in the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, while complying with the Code of Ethics? Who can give you suggestions about this and how to proceed to obtain them?

**Building a positive climate: prevention and effectiveness through participation**

Ensuring a sustainable positive climate of confidence and cooperation between the institution and the Roma community can be achieved through participation. A relationship based on participation will help prevent frustrations and conflicts and will also increase the effectiveness of the work of the institution with the Roma.

The table below (the Ladder of Participation) presents different types of relation an institution can have to the citizens[37]which benefit from its services. They are useful to identify how real participation is differentiated from other forms of interaction of an institution with its beneficiaries.

- Analyse the way the institutions you are working with are interacting with members of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities.
- What option(s) in the table describe best the reality?
- What can you do to support the institution(s) to move up the ladder of participation?

| The ladder of participation | |
|---|---|
| Participation | Residents and/or their legitimate representatives participate in the decision-making process regarding how the institution relates with the beneficiaries. They are consulted about the way institution informs beneficiaries, and about the way institution requests feedback. Their suggestions are discussed and taken into account when possible. When they cannot be accepted, this is explained and alternative options are negotiated. |
| Consultation | An open consultation process is organised and residents or their legitimate representatives are asked about how they would like the institution to |

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[37]    ROMED Programme, *op cit.,* pages 112-116.

| | change. The decision on whether to take these suggestions into account or not is made by the leadership of the institution. |
|---|---|
| Feedback request | Institution has a system to collect feedback from residents about the way the institution is functioning (through the mediator, through questionnaires, feedback forms, etc.) but there is no indication that the opinions of residents are taken into account. |
| False representation | One or several members of the community are appointed as representatives and invited to consultative meetings. They have no real power to influence the decision-making process, do not consult with other members of the community, and serve as a cover for the institution to show there is consultation with residents. |
| Information | Information is transmitted to residents (in various ways, including through the mediator) to make sure they know about their rights, responsibilities and the services provided by the institution. However, the communication is only one-way, from the institution towards the residents, with no interest in residents' perspectives. |
| Manipulation | Meetings with community members are organised, but their real aims are<br>- to show there is openness towards citizen's views, without taking them into account<br>- to provide a framework where residents can express their frustrations (but without any practical consequence)<br>- to persuade residents to adapt to the way the institution is functioning. |
| Closed institution | Institution functions based on clearly established rules (usually decided from outside), without room for flexibility and without any concern for transparency or accountability.<br>Residents are expected to get the information about how it works and to comply with the requirements, if they want to benefit from the services. |

# Module 18 – Assessing and Evaluating What We Do

**Purpose:** To jointly explore ways to improve efficiency of day-to-day and long-term organisation through strategic assessment and evaluation.

**Important point:** Think of assessment as a valuable tool, not a burden.

**Materials:** Flipcharts, markers, tape, In-take form

Assessment and evaluation are different processes with different objectives. Assessment looks at skills, attitudes, knowledge or products with the future in mind. Can this student succeed in university; can this company make the product we want. Closer to our interests, can this person perform the work of a Mediator? What can be done to improve performance? Why was there a good result? Evaluation concerns the quality of outcomes already achieved. Was the work done? Did the student learn what they were supposed to learn? Was there success or failure? How do we determine what is successful? How do we determine what is failure? It concerns the quality of what was already done.

When we report on a project, we may be doing both: Did the project do what was promised in the proposal? How well? That is evaluation. Are the capacities ready for the next step? What needs to be improved? How do we respond to strengths and weaknesses? That is assessment.

In this module we will look at assessment and evaluation in several contexts:
- What assessment and evaluation is or should be as part of the daily work of Mediators?
- What is assessment and evaluation for the project and donors? How can Mediators contribute to this process?
- How do we assess and evaluate this training and certification programme?

**Assessment with children and families**

Mediators are *not* professionals or specialists in education, in psychology, in health, or in social services. Professionals in these fields can do assessments according to the standards of their work. An educator can assess the child's school skills, needs, and capacities to advance. A psychologist can assess if there are learning disabilities, if there are personality issues that need help. A health professional can see if there is a health condition interfering with success in life, if eyeglasses are need, etc. A social services professional can assess family situations, family dynamics, and the potential need for intervention on family issues. A Mediator has different objectives. You are more 'general'. You are performing assessment that may in some cases make you like a traffic director. Are there issues that may mean children are having difficulties or not returning to school? What is the source of obstacles and challenges? What needs to be done or whose help is needed?

Opening a 'Case' is recognizing that you have, perhaps informally, begun an assessment. You may recognize that other interventions including professional assessments from specialists are needed.

What assessment factors are relevant to the children?
- Are they attending school? Regularly?

- Are they attending a Learning Centre programme? Regularly?
- How are they doing in school? How are their grades, their attitude? Any serious learning problems? Accomplishments?
- How are they feeling in school? Are they happy or comfortable with teachers, other children?
- Are children registered for first class? For secondary school?
- Are they interested in continuing with university?

Please see Module 3 Case (Client) Management for a more in-depth review of these themes.

What assessment factors are relevant to the donors?
- How do you know that what you are doing is working/helping?
- What are the goals and indicators used in the project proposal?
- How are we measuring? Are we tracking, recording, and proving everything that is an 'indicator'? Are we comparing our indicators accomplished to what we wrote we would do?
- How do we intend in the next reporting period to improve the program?
- What are the accomplishments of the program?

**Report Writing - Rationale**

Mediators, with local partners, volunteers and/or other staff, are responsible to assess and report on their work and cases on a regular basis. Your organisation wants a reasonable balance between doing the work and reporting on it. For example, two to three hours per week in reporting may be reasonable to ensure that enough useful information flows to our office and to the donor.

Reporting and assessment can be thought of as part of a circular process, a process leading from identification of needs to design of responses (projects, interventions), to implementation, to reassessment, to redesign or new programs, and so on. That is, the reporting and assessment is intended to be functionally useful. Think of reporting and assessment to have at least these goals:

- To inform stakeholders (donors, beneficiaries, other agencies) on work in progress;
- To force you to reflect on and improve your work and results rapidly and steadily;
- To enlist help in solving problems;
- To inform others of program or program elements that may be usefully used as a model elsewhere;
- To design or redesign, to prepare new phases, to choose new actions or follow-up to achieve the results – the results being returning children to school, preventing dropouts, improving relationships and the climate in the schools for success, etc.

For a donor, the most important reason is that they provided the funds and need to know how their money is being spent 1) so they know they have used their funds wisely, and 2) because they may want to continue funding the programme, and 3) need to plan their future funding. Assessments are very useful to look at what we have done, helping us to solve problems and making improvements rapidly.

There is a built-in bias to under-report lack of success. However, it is in our own interest not only to highlight success but to constructively highlight where we must improve as quickly as we can.

Mediators use several forms (templates) for reporting:

**Weekly report.** The form of the report allows Mediators to write the complete activities from the week just finished and the plans for the next week. Mediators write activities for each day with bullet points to include all the information; they refer also to the other forms such as Database and Client Report. These reports are due *every week* for the week completed. The supervising agency will archive all these reports.

**Client Report.** In mediation it is important always to keep records for every case that you are working on. The Client Report is meant to keep the history of the case. In the form of the Client Report, you can write all steps that have been taken. "Client" is a respectful term. We should think of the Mediator working for the Client. Each Client report has its own referral number and other information for the file. This allows having a history of the Client's situation and the steps that have been taken on it.

**Database.** In order to have better data and a better overview for all activities, it is important to have numbers. The Database has 11 Questions which each Mediator has to record accurately each week: how many times they visited families, how many times they visited institution, and also other numbers such as the dropouts and also returnees in school.

**Report writing – Style and Substance**

Attention to the following points will make reports more useful.
- Use the form or template provided by the organization or the donor.
- Whether writing sentences or bullet points, write clearly.
- Check your grammar and spelling.
- Short clear sentences help the reader, and can also make translation easier for speakers of other languages.
- Start sentences with a capital letter and end with the proper punctuation.
- Don't report things that are clearly part of the everyday requirement. "I came to work at 8:30." Of course you did. That is your contract. Do not write it in a report.
- It is not necessary to write that you worked late. You might write, 'I had an evening meeting with School Director Berisha to discuss a specific topic.'
- Don't write things that would be clear without you writing them. If there is a section in the report called "Meetings", in that section, you did not need to write "I met with Mayor Agimi at the Municipality building." Just write: Mayor Agimi. If there was a specific topic (and there should be!) clearly note the theme and the result.
- Data. Data is numbers: how many meetings, how many participants, how many children having trouble in school, how many parent visits. Accurate data guides planning. Inaccurate data is a kind of lie, and destroys trust when it is seen to be inaccurate.
- Appendices. Appendices include data or provide proof. Proofs are: photographs, copies of MOUs, sign-in sheets, list of kids and their demographics, or samples of worksheets that you have used or created.

- The report should show clearly and honestly what has been achieved – and what has not. Do not use numbers because you wish to make the reader happy. Use information to reflect reality. If the number of parents' visits is low, the number should not be hidden or inflated. The people involved in the programme need to work on what can be done to increase the number of parents' visits. If the data is incorrect, the planning and implementation will be misguided which will lead to an ineffective programme. A bad or weak week is acceptable. Not accepting responsibility is not acceptable.
- The report should show what is "next" – what you, the school, the community, the child, the parents or whoever is ready for, and what not ready for. What is needed for the next step?
- The report can have a Table of Contents if it is more than 6 or 7 pages long. It may be useful if there are a variety of different sections and it will save time for anyone using the report.
- The purpose of the report is not to brag. It is not only to show what you did. Rather it is to let the reader or donor know that the grant money is being spent well and what is done with those funds.
- It evaluates the quality of what was done, and assesses strengths and challenges for next steps.
- Do not use the same material you used in your last report.
- Describe an activity in detail if allowed by the format and you believe it can give a good, accurate picture of your programme. For example, if your kids did a skit about social workers' visit to a village, why was that skit chosen? What is the theme? Who chose the skit? What was the purpose of the skit? What is the message of the skit according to the kids, and you? You can also give some examples of the scenes from the skit.

**Overall Programme Evaluation**

An overall evaluation of the school mediator programme will be periodically performed. Guidelines for such an evaluation are found in the following supplement, a ROMED guide to evaluation.

## Supplement 1 – Evaluation phase in the work of the mediator[38]

After months of work it is time to stop and look back at what has been done and at what has been achieved, as well as to look at how the current situation is. This is the evaluation. It's like pushing the rewind button to see again the movie of what happened and like looking in a mirror to see how you (as a group of stakeholders) look now. Evaluation is the last phase in the work cycle of the mediator, after the preparatory phase, the planning and the implementation and monitoring. It also makes it possible to start a new cycle, as it offers information to be used for a new plan.

The mediator is accountable to:
- The employer
- The local Roma community
- Possibly to other institutions or organisations

So, the evaluation will be done for them, but also with the aim of self-improvement and of improving future work

The purpose of evaluation
- Is not …
  - To find out who has done a good job and who hasn't
  - To identify who is guilty for not achieving the results expected
  - To prove that everything is perfect and that you did a great job
- Is…
  - To review activities and identify what worked well and what did not work well
  - To reflect on what has been done and learn from successes and failures
  - To measure the effects of the work and set the basis for the planning of the next cycle of activity

Evaluation is a process that needs to be planned and prepared. Its goals are best achieved if it is a participatory process in which various relevant stakeholders are actively involved.

You should not do the planning of evaluation alone, by yourself. You should convene a meeting with several key stakeholders, from both the institution and the community, people who know the situation, the work done and who have been involved in the planning process. Together, you should find answers to the following questions:

**What is going to be evaluated?**

There will be two elements to look at: the activities in the plan and impact of these activities on the situation of Roma and on their relations with the institution. More precisely, what is going to be evaluated depends on the institutions you are working with. For example, if you work with a school, you might want to look at attendance of Roma children in school and extracurricular activities, attendance of parents at school activities, school results of Roma children, relations and attitudes in school between Roma and non-Roma, etc.

**What are the objectives of the evaluation?**

Here you should define more precisely what you want from the evaluation, based on the general statements on the purpose of evaluation mentioned above.

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[38] ROMED Programme, *op cit*, pp. 117-120.

**What methods and instruments will be used to collect information?**

You will need to collect facts (what has been done), figures (numbers, percentages, etc), and opinions/perceptions/attitudes, from various stakeholders in the community and institution(s). Where do you get this information from? How? Who can contribute? Of course, your reports are a valuable source of information but you might need also some more. You might have someone from the institution prepare a statistic; you might decide to define a few questions which you ask people in the community and/or institution and make an overview or summary of their answers, etc.

**What norms and standards need to be taken into account?**

There are some elements that you need to take into account when you plan this process: for example, legal requirements, administrative procedures of the institution, limitations of access to some data, etc. In some cases, for example, in order to ask children questions, you need the agreement of the parents. The Code of Ethics is also an important reference and you should check if the plans you make are compatible with the Code.

**Who is going to be involved in the evaluation process?**

A very important decision is about whom you are going to invite to take part in the evaluation. For sure, they should be both people from the community and staff of the institution(s). It is important not to involve too many people, but to have a group representing the main categories of stakeholders.

**Who is going to be the facilitator of the process?**

The evaluation meeting needs someone to act as facilitator, to make sure that everybody gets to speak, that no one is monopolising the discussion, that the attitude is positive and constructive, that the interventions are not deviating from the subject, etc. This can be you, the mediator, but it can also be someone else you trust, possibly someone from an NGO you are working with or one of the members of the team that is working with you in the planning of the evaluation.

**What resources and how much time will be necessary and how can we increase efficiency?**

List what you need for collecting the information and for the evaluation meeting (meeting room, etc). Estimate how much time will be needed to prepare the meeting (collect and organise the information) and how long the meeting should be.

**What types of resistance we might expect and how to overcome resistance?**

Knowing the people you invite and the topic of the discussion, think about what can go wrong, what opposition you might get in the group and how you can counter this.

Once the plan is ready, you need to make sure that it will be implemented and that within a reasonable time you will have the information collected and organised and that everything is prepared for the evaluation meeting.

When information is ready, you convene the evaluation meeting, according with the plan defined during the evaluation planning meeting. The participants will be the people who participated in the planning of the evaluation but also others.

The facilitator of the meeting will start by specifying the object and objectives of the evaluation, that all the discussions in the group will remain confidential, that they are expected to produce a better understanding and a constructive analysis of the work done and of the current situation, and that each person should focus on his/her own area of responsibility and not on blaming others. All opinions will be listened and will be considered important if they comply with the principles of nonviolent communication. Then the information gathered is reviewed and discussed by the group, taking into account both facts and opinions.

Conclusions will then be formulated, pointing out what has improved, what worked well, what did not work well and what are the priority topics on which to focus in the future. The group will then also decide what information from the discussions will be communicated to others outside the group. Once this is decided, the group will identify the best ways to communicate the results to those that might be concerned.

By using such an approach you, as mediator, will
- Get a more clear picture of the results of the work done
- Build additional support both within the community and within the institution
- Have more legitimate conclusions to present to the local stakeholders

To summarise, the whole process of evaluation will consist in:
- Gathering a team including people from the community and from the institution(s), and also, possibly, other key stakeholders
- Organising an evaluation planning meeting
- Collecting the information, based on what has been agreed during the planning meeting
- Organising a participatory evaluation meeting
- Writing the report and presenting its key findings to various relevant stakeholders

# Module 19 – Dynamics of Minority-Majority Relations

**Purpose:** Mediators should understand how race, cultural differences, discrimination can affect children and families, and how to transform difficult challenges in these issues to positive outcomes.

**Materials:** Flipcharts, markers, tape

**Outcome:** Mediators increase understanding and skills for working with complex and challenging issues around discrimination and majority-minority relations.

**Attention Mediators and Facilitators:** Some of this material may be very hard to read and consider. The language of prejudice is used for discussions purposes only. Even hearing or reading it in this context could be disturbing.

Here are some very broad questions for facilitated discussion: What do we have in mind when we think of minority-majority relations? What are all the associations that come to mind when you think of 'majority' and 'minority'?

When, no matter how hard we try, do we just have to acknowledge and take joy in the fact that there really is much in common between the two groups. For example: let's take a moment to recall basic arithmetic. Some cultures use a dot (·) to signify a multiplication: 5 · 4 = 20. Others use an 'x': 5 x 4 = 20. Yet, the concept that is the numerical value of the equation is the same. Not only is 'five times four *always* going to equal twenty', but the numerical value of 'five' is the same in all cultures. 'Five' is 'five' in Spanish, Albanian, Roma, Serbian, Arabic, German or English. This is a simple example depicting the universality of many things in life. Love, death, sickness, etc. are also universal. We may celebrate love, remember those who have passed on, treat illnesses differently, but their *existence* is universal – shared by minority and majority groups alike.

But, we humans are a confused lot. Sometimes we like to belong, in fact, need to belong. Other things we want to be different, unique. We don't want to stand out. Young people (and many adults!) want to wear similar clothing, listen to similar music, engage in similar leisure activities. One recalls a discussion with a middle-aged man who said he didn't like to read books. Why? Because, he said, no one else in 'his world' did and 'he felt funny', and they would tease him. Perhaps, he also felt he'd have no one with whom to discuss the books! On the other hand, some also like to hold a minority way of thinking. Perhaps it makes them feel wiser, that their ideas are 'one of a kind'.  And, much of the time, we seek out both. We like to be recognised for doing something that has not been done before - hence, inventors. At other times, we don't want to be different, to be noticed – one of the benefits to belonging to choirs.

All this makes a lot of sense. What is tricky is when we do something beneficial, but perhaps not readily accepted by others. Or, when we do something that has never been done before. Then what happens? We may be accused of being insensitive or disrespectful. We are then in the minority (even if doing what we did is ethnically or morally the right thing to do, or it gives us pride).

Being a member of a minority or majority group can relate to that aspect of the iceberg (recall the Iceberg of Identity!) that is below the water – how we think, our opinions about something,

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our values, etc. Other ways we belong to a majority or minority group can be based on age, or geography, (e.g. do most people in my community live in villages or towns or cities), religious affiliation or identity, profession, and so on.

For now, though, we shall explore two categories of our identities that are, at least initially, part of the iceberg that is above the water. They can place us either in a majority or minority group: ethnicity and gender.

**Conditioning**

One particularly big influence on how we express our identities is through conditioning. What exactly is conditioning? Many scholars and psychologists continue to debate whether conditioning is good or bad. This issue will not be resolved here and there is no real 'right' answer. Indeed, this is a big topic, far too big to delve into detail in this module, but here are some general components to conditioning.

Conditioning addresses how we learn things, how we adapt, and how we develop habits. It is 'what we are used to doing'. Conditioning is a behavioural process and it is a form of learning. It is a reaction or response as something becomes predictable due to past direct or indirect experience – reinforcement, in other words. For example, children raised during times of civil unrest or armed conflict might automatically avoid picking up coins from the street as adults because they are *conditioned* to believe that explosives are placed inside the coins. Someone whose house has been robbed multiple times might be *conditioned* to keeping lights on whilst asleep. Children raised in abusive home environments may shudder or flinch when an adult raises his hand in the child's presence.

Whether and when we find ourselves either in a minority or majority position, we may think and act depending on our *conditioning*. This is also applicable to groups that have been suppressed and are no longer in that situation. The absence of earlier suppression does not necessarily guarantee a 'freedom' from conditioning. In fact, freedom, or drastic change in an intergroup or intra-group relationship can introduce further, new conditioning. As relationships and status of minority or majority groups change, so can the conditioning.

Here are some examples of experiences (either as minority or majority groups or as individuals from majority or minority groups) that *might* condition us to act certain ways. Of course, there is no ONE way of acting. These are merely examples that have been observed over time.

| Feeling/fear of | Conditioning |
|---|---|
| Bullying | Quickly walking to school; not going to school |
| Loud environments, e.g. lots of shouting | Not accustomed to listening |
| Humiliation | Focuses on self or one's group to ensure no more humiliation and abuse by a (perceived) stronger group |
| Manipulation | Hesitancy to become involved in, to volunteer, to try something new – even if the 'something' is a beneficial thing |
| Poverty | Frugal use of home finances due to poverty |
| Curiosity | Open-mindedness, desire to learn despite all odds, belief that it is possible to learn from everyone and everything – the good and bad lessons alike |

**Gender**

Let's take a look at gender for a moment. What do we mean when we talk or hear about gender? We hear it referred to a lot, but perhaps we don't think of it in terms of a part of identity. Again, this is another big topic, but for our purposes, *gender refers to the expectations individuals or society have of someone because they are female or male.* This is different from sex. Sex is the physical, biological difference between women and men. It simply refers to whether one was born male or female. When we look at differences between men and women, or girls and boys, it is very important to understand the distinction between sex and gender because it is the latter that relates to majority-minority issues (even if women are numerically at a given place and time in the majority). The main sex difference between women and men is that women can bear children. The main gender difference between women and men is that women as a group (improvements, individual examples, etc. notwithstanding) continue to have a lower status than men in both traditional societies as well as in so-called 'developed' societies. To be sure degrees and expression, level of acceptance, etc. are different; nevertheless, the problems exist and therefore create a minority-majority tension around gender. Below are some questions relevant to relationships between women and men, and hence minority and minority belongingness regardless which gender group belongs to the majority or minority. This leads us to looking at what affects us as adults today. Messages are often internalised and thought of as natural – and through conditioning – leave us with stereotypes of each group such as, 'it is natural for women to be submissive and men to be powerful'.

What other examples can we think of, in the context of gender, that are due to conditioning?

- When you are denied the right to decide for yourself, what conditioning could result from that?
- When, as a woman, do you feel your opinions and needs are not taken seriously? Are you conditioned to assume it is because you are a woman? How do you know that?
- As a man, do you feel you are responsible for everything? What might have conditioned you to think that way?
- What might you be conditioned to expect of the woman's role in the family? The man's role?

**Ethnicity, Race, Nationality**

As we turn to the very complex issues of race, ethnicity, nationality, and culture, we must bear in mind that it is important to establish some working definitions and descriptions for the purpose of this module. Due to time and space and the demands of the Mediator programme, as facilitator and as participant you will undoubtedly notice that many concepts presented in this (and other) modules are brief and simplified. For that we apologise. However, it is our hope that a deeper exploration into these topics will evolve during your discussions. Let's begin.

*A privileged group, on a societal level has the power to*

- Define what is acceptable, correct, 'normal'

- Set the rules and decide how they will be implemented at all levels (reminder: negligence or lack of attention is also a form of decision-making)

*An excluded (oppressed, marginalised) group*

- To a certain extent internalises its own oppressed condition, and thus,
- Does not necessarily pay attention to excluding others in their own group
- Might even collaborate with the privileged group at times

This particular relationship can contribute to potentially already existing tension (around matters that may initially be seen as separate, but that also might be intertwined) between the privileged group and the excluded group and it takes very concerted efforts on the part of all parties to build trust.

**Race**

Generally speaking, race is a sociological, psychological, political, or historical perception. Race, historically and politically, has been distorted grotesquely over the centuries, as it was applied to blood, or skin colour, and other physical features. In fact, it is an artificial concept. The only 'race' is the human race. Nevertheless, 'racism', has become way of thinking and acting that is part of the more generally used term, xenophobia.

Ultimately, xenophobia – a fear of foreigners or things foreign, e.g. different, other, strange, not 'mine' or 'ours', attacks ethnicity, religion, gender, age, geography, family, clan, and the like.

**Attitudes**

Attitudes are beliefs or systems of belief that we all hold. There are many types of negative attitudes/ beliefs, as you will see below.

Attitudes (thinking, talking)

*Prejudice* occurs when we 'pre-judge' something or someone based on insufficient information, or on stories relating to a personal encounter. Prejudices might be positive but that is not too common. Usually, they reflect envy or are negative.

Examples of behaviours arising from prejudices:

- Clutching one's purse when a black youth walks by you;
- Looking away when one sees a poor person;
- Running up to an elderly person to help them cross the street
- Talking loudly to someone who is deaf or doesn't speak your language.

*Stereotypes* can also be negative, positive or reflect envy or other insecurities on the part of the possessor of the stereotypes. Stereotyping assumes that a group and everyone belonging to that group have certain common characteristics.

In developing this module, we initially included a number of stereotyped, bigoted, and extremely derogatory types of comments as examples. We used some simple 'street' talk comments about.... Albanians, Serbs, Roma, Jews, Arabs, Swiss, Americans, old people... After all, we decid-

ed we did not want to put any of this in print. However, we do believe it is necessary to confront these kinds of sometimes misguided and sometimes hateful and frightening speech. Practice exercises during training will explore this difficult material.

*Bigotry* is a more intense form of prejudice.

*Internalisation of racism, ethnocentrism, xenophobia* generally hold the belief that oppression, discrimination, and the like, are inevitable and there isn't much one can do. This internalisation leaves an individual or group with very little confidence or self/group esteem.

The cycle (should be drawn in a circle with arrows pointing in cyclical direction) includes, 'I am nobody → I behave as though worthless → I am treated as worthless → S/he/they is/are worthless ... and round and round goes the damaging cycle.

Cross-group animosity/hostility can leave a group – big or small - in the middle of a big, violent mess. This is otherwise known as being between 'two – or more – fires'. Group A – oppressed, supports oppression of Group B by participating or agreeing with attitudes, behaviours, values, infrastructures, etc. of Group C, the dominant group.

**Behaviour (acting, being)**

*Discrimination* is the practice or act of treating individuals or a group on the basis of assumptions stereotypes, prejudices, xenophobia.

*Scapegoating* is the act or practice of assigning one's own individual or group's failure to persons or groups instead of understanding the real cause of failure. Scapegoating is blaming a convenient group that is usually vulnerable.

**Example:**

Blaming, as in expressing prejudice against an entire people because the university administration belongs to that people and your daughter did not get accepted to the university. There may be scores of reasons why your daughter was not accepted including possibly the reason you think. But assuming it is so does not make it so. This needs to be analysed and dealt with.

Sometimes 'entitlement' accompanies scapegoating in the form of seeking 'revenge'. Group X has been oppressed for decades/centuries and feels entitled and it will blame Group Y if its demand is not fulfilled. This sense of entitlement can cause further animosity. Yes, Group X deserves and has a right to call for a fair chance, but not everyone in Group Y is to blame. Perhaps certain individuals in Group Y are to blame, but there may be other individuals in Group Y who are actually helping Group X. Stereotyping does not take into consideration this dynamic.

*Ostracising* is a form of bullying. It is active, and frequently physical. This behaviour, too, is based on abovementioned attitudes.

*Marginalising* is an early stage of de-humanising (which has led to genocide in recent history). Marginalisers discount and disregard the needs and existence of other groups. They push them aside – politically, physically, emotionally. This behaviour is an acting out of the above attitudes.

So, where does hatred fit into these dynamics? What do you think?

## *Exercise 1 – Self-Assessment of Non-Discriminating Behaviour*[39]

**Introduction**

The purpose of this exercise is to give people time to reflect on their own behaviour in relation to xenophobia, prejudice and discrimination. It may be done individually, with no discussion, or in small groups.

This activity acknowledges that everyone on this planet holds prejudices in one form or another. Some might be minor (prejudice against loud people or tall people). The challenge before us is to recognise, admit and then hopefully work on our prejudices so that they do not become behaviours. The benefit to using small groups is that by voicing our attitudes, we somehow have become transparent and can support each other – without initial embarrassment since the difficult phase of admitting and talking over our prejudices will have already transpired.

Procedure

- Rate yourself on the checklist that has been given to you using '5' as highest and '1' as lowest mark. Try to be as honest with yourself as possible.
- When you have completed the checklist, make a list of areas in which you think you need improvement.
- Create specific goals for becoming more non-discriminating in your thoughts, words, and deeds.

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### *Handout – I Rate Myself on Prejudice[40]*

_____1. I educate myself about the culture and experiences of other religious/ethnic/economic/gender, etc. groups through television and films, reading, workshops, newspapers, talking with people who know such things, etc.

_____2. I reflect on my own childhood/upbringing to analyse where and how I might have received racist, sexist, anti-'other', and other prejudiced messages.

_____3. I look at my own attitudes and behaviours as an adult to determine how I may be supporting (even unconsciously) or combating (also even unconsciously) xenophobia in our society.

_____4. I evaluate my own use of language to see if I use terms or phrases that are degrading or hurtful to another group.

_____5. I avoid stereotyping and generalising about people based on their group identity such as religion, gender, nationality, etc.

_____6. I value cultural differences and avoid statements such as 'I never think of you as a _____', which discredit differences.

_____7. I avoid statements such as 'They are such good musicians, those Ashkali' or 'such nice man came into the store the other day – he was an Albanian'.

_____8. I am aware of, and can explore and discuss with comfort, issues of xenophobia, racism, pluralism, etc.

_____9. I am open to having someone of another group point ways in which my behaviour or expressions might be insensitive.

_____10. I give equal attention to all colleagues whom I supervise or work with, regardless of nationality, religion, socio-economic class, family membership or physical ability or appearance.

_____11. I am comfortable giving constructive feedback to someone of another race, gender, age, etc. about something professional or related to our friendship.

_____12. I include materials about all groups in my programmes even though other groups may not be represented, e.g. I talk about needs and fears of religious communities not present in my community, or of people with different sexual orientation, because pluralistic programming is important to all and I realise that it is the principle of the matter.

_____13. I make special efforts in my job and social life to develop practices that are inclusive, such as scheduling meetings, locating meetings, or being sensitive to others' financial constraints, etc. when needed.

_____14. I consciously monitor TV programmes, newspapers and advertising for prejudiced or stereotyping content due to ethnicity, gender, class, etc.

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[40] Anti-Defamation League, *ibid*.

_____15. I monitor the environment in my home, my office, my house of worship, and my children's school for sensitivity towards other groups.

_____16. I feel free to ask people who use prejudicial language and behaviour to refrain, and am comfortable stating my reasons.

_____17. I am willing to be proactive within my organisation to achieve goals set for diversity hiring and programming.

_____18. I am actively against xenophobia of all kinds in my personal life by supporting campaigns or other public initiatives.

_____19. I am aware of the ways that I and my group benefit from those who do their best to be inclusive regardless what others in their groups do or say.

Areas where I need to improve:

My personal, realistic goals are:

# Module 20 – Resources

**Purpose:** Mediators should be aware of resources available, know how to use the resources, and have confidence to go to these resources for information, materials, or assistance.

**Important point:** Ability to access and use resources can multiply one's impact.

**Materials**: Flip-charts, markers, tape.


The following categories of resources will be introduced in this module:
- Human resources
- Legal and human rights resources
- School Mediation Resources
- The internet


Human resources
- Our NGO office and staff
- Other School Mediators
- Experts in the Council of Europe mediator programmes
- OSCE Kosovo field staff – communities, human rights, etc.
- Municipal Departments of Education in their own municipalities
- School – teachers, directors, secretaries that they work with
- Parent-teacher councils
- Anti-dropout groups in their municipalities
- Departments of Social Welfare in their communities
- Social service NGOs working in their communities, particularly the Red Cross, and Mother Teresa Society
- Strategy Advocates programme
- Police
- Hope and Aid Direct
- NGOs working with similar concerns, such as Save the Children, Initiative 6, The Ideas Partnership, Terres des Hommes, Forum Syd, Health for All, etc.


Legal and human rights resources
- The-Strategy, org – links to human rights and legal framework documents
- Ombudsperson's Office
- Partners for Kosovo
- Center for Legal Aid and Regional Development (CLARD)
- Civil Rights Program Kosovo (CRPK)
- European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI)
- Roma and Ashkali Documentation Centre (RADC)
- Lawyer's Association (NORMA)


School Mediation Resources
- Richard Cohen, *The School Mediator's Field Guide*, (Watertown, MA: School Mediation Associates) 1999

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- Richard Cohen, Students Resolving Conflict, (Tucson, AZ: Good Year Books) 2005
- http://www.schoolmediation.com This website has newsletters with hundreds of articles, many of which will be interesting to mediators.
- http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/roma/schoolMediators_en.asp The Council of Europe's school mediation programme with links to many other resources.
- http://coe-romed.org/european-guide School Mediator Guide from the Council of Europe, on line in French, English and Romani, is also translated into local languages. This is a practical guide that is extremely useful alongside this curriculum.
- http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/roma/Source/Mediators_EN.pdf - A Council of Europe training guide for School Mediators.

Using the Internet
- http://www.soros.al/2010/foto/uploads/File/internet.pdf

### *Exercise 1 – Using the Internet*

**Goal:**   Be able to use the internet to find useful information and resources.

1. Participants will work at computers. First assignment: can participants identify, address line, form of an internet address, find a search engine, use search terms.
2. Participants will list five things they would like to learn more about. Suggested that the five things could include: 1 health, 1 something to buy, 1 work-related, 1 history or culture, 1 on something very interesting to them.
3. Participants will look for information they can understand and use on those five things.

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Researching on the internet – Getting information in your own language. Here are the steps:

1. Try to find interesting information already available in the language you speak. If you do not find it, it is time to look at English language websites for what you want.
2. Go to website: http://translate.google.com/#submit
   - Type search terms into the translation box. If you want to look for information about parents and school drop-outs, you can type in the translation box: school drop-outs par-ents [Albanian or Serbian].
   - You now have search terms in English. Of course you can try many other words that might help find what you want.
3. Search for English language websites. If you see a site that looks like it might have infor-mation, it is now time to translate that site into [Albanian, Serbian].
4. At http://translate.google.com/#submit, type or copy-paste the website address in the translation box
   - Press <enter>
   - You now have the website in your language!



Choose language translating from

Choose language translating to

Translation box

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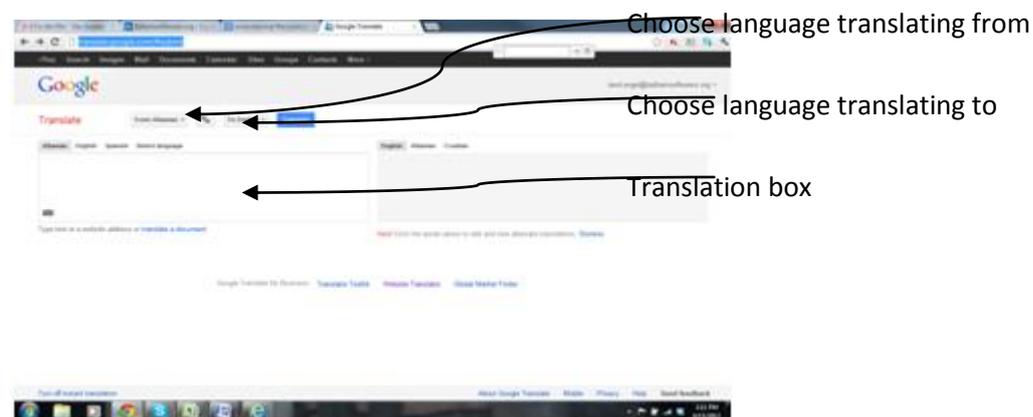
## Exercise 2 – Identifying human resources

Goal: Support Mediators in networking more successfully, and consulting more people for better information, better cooperation, and better results.

Discussion on using human resources. Divide into groups of 3-4 participants.

1. What is a 'human resource'?
2. List human resources you have contacted or worked with in the last three months, consulting the suggestions above. Who? Was it helpful? How?
3. Describe two problems or issues that you are working on now. What human resources – who in your municipality or beyond – might be able to help or cooperate with you on this problem? Why and how?

# Kosovo School

## *Mediation*

# Training Manual

**OSCE** Organization for Security and
Co-operation in Europe
**Mission in Kosovo**