

Strengthening Structures and Networks

Practitioner's Guide
for Leaders of Civil Society Projects



Imprint

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Preface

It is with great pleasure that I see the publication of the manual “Strengthening Structures and Networks: Practitioner’s Guide for Leaders of Civil Society Projects” come to light.

The origins of the publication go back a few years to the first CEC – Civic Education Conference organized by the Goethe-Institut and the Tahrir Lounge@Goethe in Alexandria in 2013, where the conference participants formulated the need for Trainings-of-Trainers in the field of civic education in Arab countries. As a result, the Center for Applied Policy Research (CAP) of the Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich was asked by the Goethe-Institut to implement trainings in Egypt in 2014 and 2015 that focused on issues of tolerance, identity and co-existence, and to publish a first manual on “Citizenship and Co-Existence”.

2016 saw the second CEC – Civic Education Conference, this time held in Hammamet, Tunisia. Again, the conference recommendations stressed the need for training. However, in a context in which civic education structures in Arab countries remain weak and the range of their action limited, CAP and the Goethe-Institut felt the need to go beyond the thematic approach adopted in 2014. The trainings in 2016 in Egypt, thus, focused on organizational development, zooming in on issues such as project development, leadership skills and networking as important ways to strengthen civic education actors both in structural terms as well as in terms of their ability to liaise with key stakeholders.

Yet, we do not want to stop here, but hope to contribute to the development of civic education in Egypt in ways that go beyond the short-term. The Goethe-Institut together with Tahrir Lounge@Goethe has, thus, set up an alumni-program for the seminar participants that offers opportunities to use the acquired skills as well as support and co-financing for follow up projects. We also hope that the publication of the three manuals will be a useful resource for practitioners in Egypt and beyond.

I very much thank Susanne Ulrich, Florian Wenzel, Mohsen Kamal, Helena Matschiner as well as all of the participants of this year’s training series 2016 for their enthusiasm and commitment. It was great to work with all of you!

Dr. Elke Kaschl Mohni

Regional Director of the Goethe-Institut in the Middle East and North Africa

Project Background

Background of the Training of Trainers on strengthening structures and networks

The Goethe-Institut Cairo built up on the experiences of Training-of-trainers (ToT) courses 2014 on 'Civic Education and Co-Existence' and 'Challenges of Modern Societies' in 2015. Units of tolerance, identity and dealing with diversity were offered to representatives from civil society in Egypt. In interactive sessions the participants learned to apply these concepts in their own trainings and professionalized their competency and role as a trainer. Building up Civil Society involved a number of different aspects in the trainings: practitioners have to advocate for certain topics relevant to society; they have to know the tools to practically work with these topics; they have to reflect about their own attitude in doing this.

In 2016, the Training-of-Trainers moved to another important level. On a structural level, leaders of civil society projects have to build up structures that are based on participation and inclusionary processes. They have to cooperate with partners and have to deal with conflicts and also resistance amongst them. This is not only a question of technical project management, but of building up structures of trust and reliability, especially in situations when formal agreements are being endangered for a number of reasons.

The training 2016 therefore focussed on the structural aspects of NGOs in Civil Society in Egypt. It looked at possibilities for comprehensively analyzing and designing internal structures and external networks in a way that enhances personal motivation, allows common visions and uses the resources that are already there.

The training took place on three levels:

1. Learning by understanding: reflecting relevant topics and theories
2. Learning by doing: getting to know and training with practical tools for your NGO Initiating and running a small project
3. Learning by understanding and doing: creating and being part of a network

Overview over the modules

In four workshops with a total of 14 days over the course of 7 months participants analysed the structures and resources of their own NGO projects. They applied practical tools to their own projects in between the modules and reflected about their experience via coachings. Additionally, they started common projects amongst themselves and built up a network which will be affiliated to the alumni activities of the Goethe-Institut Cairo.

The first module "**Reviewing the structures**" sharpened the view on structural aspects of organizing an NGO and networks in the civil society sector. Participants practically analyzed relevant stakeholders in their field and reflected about supportive structures. They were introduced to aspects of strategic thinking concerning the achievement of better impact.

In an **intermediary** meeting with an Egyptian trainer the concepts and practical tools of the first module were being reviewed. Results of the possibility of applying the contents in practice were being shared. Additionally, participants reflected the theoretical background of achieving change in social projects.

In the second module "**Appreciating the Resources**" participants got to know the approach of 'Appreciative Inquiry' (an approach of organizational development) which allowed them to systematically examine the strengths, talents and potential of their organization. They prepared an agenda for using the approach for their organizations and the networks surrounding it. Additionally, the focus of this module was on building a network out of the group of participants itself. Concepts and tools for strengthening the resources and future of the group as a network were being offered.

In the **third module "Reflecting the Outcome"** participants reflected the outcome of their analyses as well as those of their peers. They got coaching on practical experience. Additionally they developed and sharpened projects together in order to also strengthen the resources and the network of the group of participants.

After completion of the ToT in combination with a practical test they received a 'Training Certificate' by the Center for Applied Policy Research (CAP) at the Ludwig-Maximilians-University in Munich.

We hope this "Practitioner's Guide" can be a help for strengthening and professionalizing the building up of NGOs and their projects in Egypt and the region. The participants of the training impressively showed how deep individual change in attitude and role goes hand in hand with achieving social change on a larger and professional scale. We thank all participants of 2016 for having the courage and strength to go their own ways and enrich us with their spirits. This guide is dedicated to them.

*Susanne Ulrich and Florian Wenzel
Cairo / Munich, October 2016*

Introduction to the Practitioner's Guide

This practitioner's guide has been conceptualized, expanded and consecutively adapted to the practical needs of NGOs in Egypt. In this way it reflects the participatory and wholistic approach which will be found throughout the guide. Its tools and approaches can be flexibly used in existing or new NGOs and their projects. Whenever possible, footnotes will provide links to free English resources which can be used to deeper explore any of the subjects.

The manual aims at 'deep change'. This means that we did not want to offer a set or a collection of 'methods' to be simply applied. From our experience, change can only start by one's own reflection and attitude. Sometimes it is just as important which perspective we have on society as taking immediate action. This guide is not about 'solving problems' with smart tools; it is rather about reframing problems and taking fresh and creative pathways into the future.

In the following **Section A** you will find the approach of 'Theme Centered Interaction' which serves as a theoretical frame for connecting topics, contents and facts with human beings. Instead of dividing our personal and private affairs from the things to do in our NGO, here a deep and value-oriented connection is being suggested. When it comes to designing the future in civil society, the approach of the Community of Practice follows from this value basis and provides you with some hints and orientation to what you should really look for when trying to achieve change.

The following sections provide concepts, ideas and activities which can be tried out in your NGO in order to establish such a community of practice.

Section B provides the 'Inquiry Based Approach' which adds a deep individual dimension in order to achieve comprehensive change. Reflecting one's own (stressful) thoughts and inner resources helps develop a productive attitude and role when designing change with others.

It helps you develop a fresh way of looking at the world and the people surrounding you. You might discover blind spots, new insights and shapes and colors in the outside world.

Section C moves to the systemic level and offers tools for analyzing NGOs comprehensively to get the whole picture of internal structures, stakeholders and surrounding networks. Also the time structure, history and imagined future of NGOs is being reflected.

It is a systemic mapping of what you will find when looking at your NGO. You will get a clearer picture and develop a map of the landscape around you.

Section D focuses on the use of resources as a basis for designing the future of NGOs and their projects. The approach of 'Appreciative Inquiry' as a tool for organizational change is introduced and additional ideas for achieving wholistic change are being presented.

Here you will discover your inner and outer forms of energy, like the sun, rain, wind, earth which provide energy for growth. Rather than forcing things to develop in a certain direction, you learn how to nurture your NGO to develop its capabilities to the fullest.

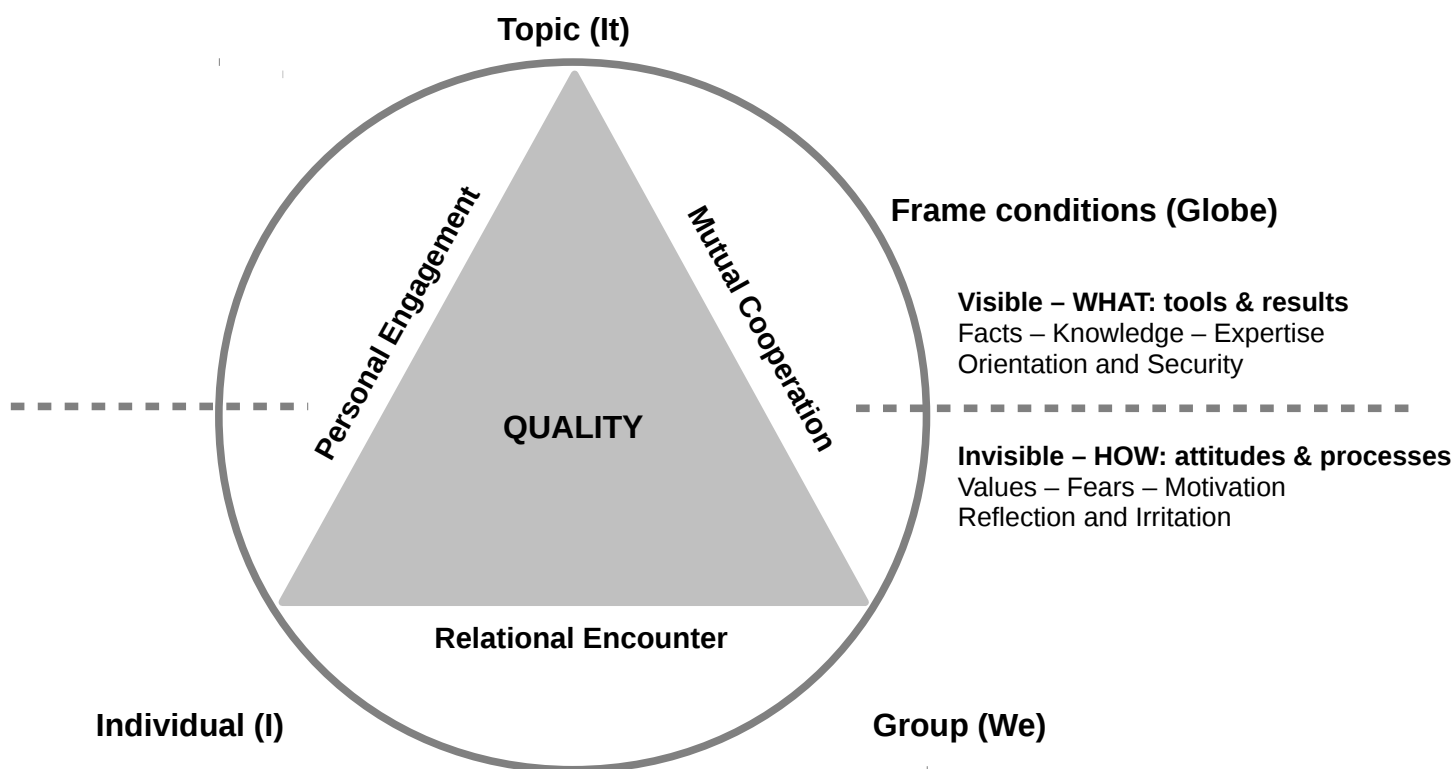
The theory, concepts and activities can be used in flexible ways. It should have become obvious by now that there is no linear way to follow from here to the future. Rather, different activities will add new and ever deeper layers to assessing you and your NGO. New perspectives will arise, some activities will stick closer with you than others.

It is good to start with something that speaks to you, try it out in your NGO and move on from there more comprehensively. Change is possible – watch out for unexpected directions...

A Our Approach

1. Theme Centered Interaction (TCI)

The general approach of Theme Centered Interaction (TCI)¹ centers around transformation on a value basis and tries to lift up hidden and invisible dimensions of learning which are often neglected in existing activist manuals on professionalizing NGOs. With this concept it is possible to reflect and develop NGOs on a deeper and more comprehensive level.



When looking at an NGO, there is always a topic (named “It” in the scheme). This topic might be budgeting, cooperation, reaching target groups, developing new topics etc... These topics are on top, they are in a way the “visible” level of the NGO. In more traditional learning environments like school or university, but also in many interactive trainings working with role play or simulations, this level is the single focus. In order to transport the facts, knowledge and tools, different methodological ways are being chosen but the result of what should be understood, learned and be done is always being derived from the “top”. This is the visible way of reviewing and developing structures and networks. Like with an iceberg, the topic-driven approach is over the water.

¹ TCI was developed by Ruth Cohn in the 1960s when trying to transfer successful principles of psychoanalysis to the pedagogical work with groups. For more background on the concept and its practical areas of use check <http://www.ruth-cohn-institute.org/>

This practitioner's guide suggests a more comprehensive and in a way more radical way of also and equally integrating the "hidden" levels of how development and change can happen. Specifically in the situation of working with a diverse team in an NGO that incorporates people from different backgrounds, there are a lot of unreflected personal values, which guide one's life, attitudes towards who is friend and who is enemy, personal hopes and fears that cannot be expressed directly, and also taboos that cannot be addressed at all. The situation of structural development is therefore also one of individual reflection and irritation with no program or clear-cut direction simply to be followed. Our inner self is a reality that has to be addressed at a deeper level for sustainable professionalization.

All of this can be understood as the invisible level of an NGO. This level has to be respected and in a way be appreciated as the underlying and rooting reality of as well the staff, other cooperation partners and the target groups to be worked with. Often its dimension and force is much bigger than that of the official topic. Comparing the model with an iceberg, only a small part of the reality and the topics of the NGO are visible while most of it is hidden under water.

The main task of the development approach is therefore to provide individual and collective links between the topic and the participants. On an individual basis the connection between "It" and "I" can lead to personal engagement concerning the topic. Especially here, it is crucial to start with the biographical and foundational value system of each participant, trying to make it explicit, before "imposing" abstract ideas of change. If people are being personally irritated by the presentation of something new, they will disconnect from transformation processes and be no longer personally engaged. An atmosphere of openness, participation, and appreciation at the beginning of a development process is an important tool for opening up on personal values, norms, but also prejudices and fears. The role of the facilitator is to provide activities which personally involve the participants via biographical reflection and building upon their inner reality in terms of motivation and fears.

In later stages of the process the mutual support of the participants helps to transform the personal engagement with the topics into collective action. The line between the "It" and the "We" makes it possible to realize mutual cooperation that shows how the group of participants itself can bring about change without imposing it from the top. Projects are being developed independently and responsibly by participants in groups. In cooperating, dealing with difference and conflict, prejudices, building consensus and democratically taking decisions will be experienced. Within the group of participants important skills of community leaders can be thus tried out.

The role of the facilitators is to methodologically guide this process without directing it. Additionally, they provide for reflection units concerning the process and interaction of developing something together.

A third line of interaction runs between the “I” and the “We”. As the individual participants are working and living together during a project and especially in the situation of being members of civil society, a lot of relational encounter will take place. Different from other approaches, this dimension is not to be regarded as informal or leisure time. By comprehending an NGO as a model for community in a nutshell, the interaction within the group apart from the official topic, should explicitly be focused upon and become visible. Here group dynamics are taking place that cannot be “controlled” like knowledge or skills. The group is often “acting” autonomously on this level when conflicts arise. As a learning field it can show participants what might happen when transformational projects are being installed in a community and take unforeseen courses of action. The role of the facilitators is to provide regular space for mutual feedback and reflection on the process and the quality of interaction within the NGO.

Finally any NGO as a whole is being framed by a “Globe”, conditions that are enabling and at the same time limiting what can be achieved. Factors like time, place, temperature, outside political events, pressure by authorities are influencing how large the circle might be. These factors should be reflected by NGOs in order to realistically estimate the possible dimension of change. Outside deficits like the functioning of the juridical system or the executive will not be directly influenced by a change process – they are supporting or hindering factors. It is important to decide where and how societal change can take place via civic engagement by activists and where other approaches (laws, anti-corruption measures, security etc.) are being needed.

This general approach is a comprehensive model for localizing the possibility of societal change in the context of transition to democracy. At the same time, by doing development in this way, important aspects of democratic and tolerance values are already becoming “real” and practical. This should not be understood in the sense of imposing a value system, as resistance and opposition concerning this approach will often also be part of the discussions within the NGO. Nevertheless this approach is one that opens up extensive possibilities for these discussions and as a consequence taking personal and collective responsibility for bringing about change in a way suitable for the context and reality of each community.

2. Building a Community of Practice

The concept of a 'Community of Practice' was coined by Etienne Wenger² and is a comprehensive approach which binds together many strands that are being presented in this practitioner's guide. It is the idea of a humane, wholistic way of living, sharing and working together in a resource-oriented way which uses all we know and we can do.

"Knowledge involves the head, the heart, and the hand; inquiry, interaction, and craft. Like a community, it involves identity, relationships, and competence; meaningfulness, and action. A community of practice matches that complexity." (Etienne Wenger)

With this concept, sharing ideas, meeting and sharing together and doing action come together. This can not simply be done in the way of applying a recipe. Wenger speaks of the need for 'cultivating' such a community. To do this "as a living process depends on some measure of informality and autonomy. Once designated (...) communities should not be (...) over-managed"³ He speaks about nurturing and fostering this like a plant which will not grow faster when you try to pull it. This also means that the idea is that the seeds are all there, we just have to know better to help them grow into living plants. For this, formal strategies are just as important as becoming more aware of informal possibilities of doing things.

Like in TCI, sometimes, the best ideas for change come from an informal setting, in which a specific project or problem was not even talked about. Suddenly a fresh perspective and an idea for productive change arose. Sometimes we spend days and months in trainings and tackling projects and problems – and then there is the one moment that lets us see the seed that has always already been there but we neglected it or it was covered with all of our smart concepts and theories...

That is the reason why in this guide there will be many offers that attempt to use creativity in form of writing, symbolizing, storytelling. These 'analog' and sometimes fuzzy ways of going about this help us leave or 'digital' thinking of good and bad, right and wrong and open new freedoms for us.

Amongst other ideas, Wenger presents 7 important principles for the development of a community of practice which can be a guiding orientation when wanting to achieve social change with your NGO.

2 See his book Wenger, Etienne / McDermott, Richard / Snyder, William (2002). Cultivating communities of practice: a guide to managing knowledge. Boston. Also check his website at wenger-trayner.com

3 Wenger 2002, p- 12

The following 7 principles for building a Community of Practice can be helpful when selecting and doing activities from the following sections. After a session or a training you can always check how it helped you develop these principles further.

7 Principles of a Community of Practice

1. Design for evolution

Do not develop abstract ideas and projects. Build on what is there and use whatever is existing in resources as a starting point.

2. Open a dialogue between inside and outside perspectives

Involve stakeholders who are actively involved in the topic and bring them together with outsiders to discuss and develop new common perspectives.

3. Invite different levels of participation

Distinguish between core group, active participants and peripheral people. Appreciate all levels and use peripheral people to spread the information.

4. Develop both public and private community spaces

Make sure that beyond official events and steps of a project, informal ties and relations are also developed as strong emotional ties.

5. Focus on value

Do not forget to continuously reflect your core attitude and values together. Beyond the organization of a project, it is important to keep the value system explicit.

6. Combine familiarity and excitement

Balance routine working for stability of connections with openness for divergent thinking and activity to bring up fresh excitement.

7. Create a rhythm for the community

Check the right speed and beat of what you are doing – being too slow feels boring, being too fast feels breathless and overwhelming.

B Change from within: The Inquiry Based Approach

Introduction to The Inquiry Based Approach

In order to strengthen structures and networks it seems maybe odd at a first glance to start with self-reflection. How can “going inside” support cooperation for instance? The Inquiry based approach recommends to first of all deal with and reflect personal images, patterns and dogmas. The examination of ‘stressful thoughts’ can lead to completely new insights and perspectives; it can thus develop a new basis of trust and honesty for the cooperation of teams in an NGO. The usual wish to ‘be right’ is being subordinated to finding a ‘bigger and deeper truth’ within oneself. These processes can lead to inner and outer peace and help solving conflicts in a creative and empathetic way.

In the end it only needs one person to end any conflict.

The following activities are useful for groups and on an individual level. They are based on “Te Work of Byron Katie”. More information on this original approach can be found at www.thework.com.

1. Everybody is happy - but me



Through this Inquiry Based Team Building⁴ participants will develop a personal guideline to take individual responsibility for making the most out of a training, a team session or a project to be pursued in an NGO.



Method

1. Let participants or team members fill out the worksheet and ask them to imagine the situation in the future, where everybody will be happy – except for them. They should think of ten reasons, why this could happen. It is important that all of the ten reasons have to do with them directly (eg. Many things have distracted me becomes: I allowed many things to distract me). After they have finished the first list they will be invited to fill out the second worksheet. Here they are asked to turn around all the points of the first one.
2. Let them preserve this paper as their personal guideline. Let participants 'destroy' the first paper with the reasons that could contribute to them being unsatisfied in the end and let them throw these worksheets away.
3. Ask participants if their list of good advice contains ideas that could be helpful for others as well and invite them to share these advices.
4. Invite the participants to check throughout the process whether they are still in line with their advices.
5. Refer towards the end of a session or a project to the personal guideline and make a round in which they share which things they have actively done to make the project, session or meeting a success.

⁴ Based on and adapted from 'The Work of Byron Katie' – see www.thework.com for further information

Worksheet: Everybody is happy but me... Part I

Imagine the last day of the training (or team session or project). Everybody is in a very good mood. Except for you!

Write down 10 reasons how you could have contributed to this state of mind.
(e.g. *I was too busy with other things to concentrate on the training*)

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10

Worksheet: Everybody is happy but me... Part II - Turnarounds

Please turn your reasons into the opposite. (e.g. *I did not allow other things to bother me and concentrated on the training*)

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10

2. Stressful thoughts around my NGO



Through this Inquiry Based Team Building⁵ participants will reflect and work through stressful thoughts they have in connection with their NGO. They will turn around these thoughts and see whether they can also find some truth in this.



Method

1. Let participants or team members fill out the reflection sheet. Ask them to become still and to listen to their inner voice.
2. Explain that the mind is always trying to find proof for its beliefs. If you want to open your mind it is very helpful to find at least three genuine proofs, that the opposite could be as true or even truer, than the original belief.
3. To create an atmosphere of trust and to foster Teambuilding, ask your colleagues to share their experiences around this activity.

Make sure that participants do not think they are looking for 'justifications' of just actions – they will be able to free themselves from stressful thoughts to find peace and freedom for themselves. Also make sure participants do not look for blame to themselves – this would be another stressful thought; with reference to constructionism (see 'Man and Mouse' you can explain how we all construct different realities – we can understand it, but if we really feel this transformation of perspective within ourselves, our range of action and relaxedness will increase.

⁵ Based on and adapted from 'The Work of Byron Katie' – see www.thework.com for further information

Worksheet: Inquiring stressful thoughts about the future

Please write down a concern you have about your NGO.
Make it as short as possible. (e.g. *We will face a lot of difficulties*)

-
- How big is your concern? (1-10) 1 very small, 10 very big _____

- How will your concern influence the way you will contribute to the development of the NGO?
Give 3 examples

1

2

3

- Imagine you would not be able to have this concern. How would this effect the way you would contribute to the development of the NGO?
Give 3 examples

1

2

3

- Turnarounds

Please turn the concern around to the opposite (*e.g. We will face only few or no difficulties OR We will face support*)

and find 3 genuine examples of how this could be as likely as the original thought

1

2

3

- How big is your concern now? (1-10) 1 very small, 10 very big _____
- Please share with another team member or the whole team.

3. Stressful thoughts around cooperation



Through this Inquiry Based Team Building⁶ participants will reflect and work through stressful thoughts they have about cooperation concerning their NGO. They will turn around these thoughts and see whether they can also find some truth in this and new ways to resolve conflicts.



Method

1. Let participants or team members fill out the first reflection sheet.
2. Form pairs to support each other to be guided through the 4 questions and the turnaround questions on the second and third worksheet.
3. Ask your team members to share their experiences with this exercise, but respect if they want to keep their insights for themselves. Make sure that participants do not think they are looking for 'justifications' of actions – they will be able to free themselves from stressful thoughts to find peace and freedom for themselves.

Also make sure participants do not look for blame to themselves – this would be another stressful thought; with reference to constructionism (see 'Man and Mouse' you can explain how we all construct different realities – we can understand it, but if we really feel this transformation of perspective within ourselves, our range of action and relaxedness will increase.

Variation: Stressful thoughts between two people in conflict

Two people in a conflict sit down and fill in the Worksheet by naming the other person and his/her behaviour as the source of stress. They are invited to write down as uncensored as possible how the other person is causing their stress.

Then they read slowly to each other the Worksheet sentence by sentence. The person who is listening is taking some time to look for ways how the specific criticism could be true for the situation mentioned or in general and is then answering with a simple “Thank you”.

After both partners have shared their worksheets, A is guiding B through the worksheet by using the four questions and the turnarounds. It is important for A to stay as open for whatever answers B will find, even if A, as part of the conflict, might have expectations about the “outcome”. (Compare the activity “Three kinds of business”: Who's business are the answers I find? Mine!)

Then B will guide A through the Worksheet. In the end both partners can have a look how the turnarounds, they have found can help them to make a step forward together.

⁶ Based on and adapted from 'The Work of Byron Katie' – see www.thework.com for further information

Worksheet: Inquire stressful thoughts around cooperation

Please fill in this questionnaire:

1. Think of a cooperation with someone:
2. Think of a stressful situation that occurred during that cooperation
3. Please finish this sentence: (in this situation) I am stressed by because *she / he
4. *I want him/ her to
5. *He / she should or *He / she should not
6. *He / she is
7. *I never want to experience again that he / she

Four questions

Take every thought that is marked with a * and inquire in the following way:
(Eg: *I am stressed by William because *he does not appreciate my work*)

The sentence to inquire is "He does not appreciate my work"

1. **Is it true** (*he does not appreciate my work*)? (Yes/ No)
2. **Can I absolutely be sure** (*that he does not appreciate my work*) (Yes/ No)
3. **How do I react, when I believe this thought** (*he does not appreciate my work*)? (Please give examples)

4. **Who / how would I be** (in that situation) – **without the thought** (*he does not appreciate my work*)? (Please give examples)

Turnarounds

Turn the original sentence around: (**he does not appreciate my work*)

A) To the opposite: (*He **does** appreciate my work*)

Find 3 genuine examples how this could be also true or even truer

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

B) To yourself: (*I do not appreciate **my** work*)

Find 3 genuine examples how this could be also true or even truer

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

C) To the other: (*I do not appreciate **his** work*)

Find 3 genuine examples how this could be also true or even truer

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

4. Popcorn work



This activity provides an opportunity to inquire common stressful thoughts in a group of people. Via listening and going through the worksheet each one can gain new perspectives concerning the stressful thought.⁷



Method

1. A group of people looks for a common stressful thought to inquire. Ask the group to identify common stressful thoughts they share together. Select one concrete stressful thought which is shared by everybody and use it for this activity.
2. One of the group will facilitate the procedure of “The Work” by asking the four questions and the turnarounds. After one question has been asked, everybody is invited to look for a true answer and speak it out loud. All answers stay without comment and will show only the truth of the individuals. Sometimes the answers can inspire the others to look into this direction as well. Sometimes the answers do not make any sense to the others. This is perfectly fine and needs to be respected.

The facilitator can also participate and contribute answers. He or she should be sensitive to ask the next question after enough time for everybody to inquire.
3. Ask participants to share their experiences with this exercise, but respect if they want to keep their insights for themselves.

⁷ Based on and adapted from 'The Work of Byron Katie' – see www.thework.com for further information

Worksheet: Our common stressful thought:

Our sentence (stressful thought) to be inquired:

Four questions

1. "Stressful thought": **Is it true?** (Yes/ No)

2. "Stressful thought": **Can you absolutely know that this is true?**

3. **How do you react? What happens when you believe this thought?:**
"Stressful thought"

4. **Who would you be without this thought?:** "Stressful thought"

Turnarounds

Turn the original stressful thought around:

A) To the opposite:

Find 3 genuine examples how this could be also true or even truer

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

B) To yourself:

Find 3 genuine examples how this could be also true or even truer

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

C) To the other:

Find 3 genuine examples how this could be also true or even truer

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

5. Thank you and NO



Participants learn to distinguish between their wish to please others and their wish to stay true to themselves. Thus they improve honest communication with themselves and with others.⁸



Method

1. Participants are asked to think of questions they would like to ask the participant who is sitting next to them on the right side. These questions can be curious, appropriate and inappropriate, they just need to reflect a true interest of the person who asks the question.
Everybody asks his/ her neighbor: "Can I ask you a question?" When the answer is yes, the question is being asked and followed by the question: "Do you want to answer my question?"
2. The persons being asked need to take some time to decide, whether they really want to be asked a question in the first place and whether they really would like to answer the question itself.
3. If they want to answer the question, they say "Thank you for asking and yes."
If they do not want to answer the question, they say "Thank you for asking and no."
4. Then the next person is asking a question. The questions are not being answered in any way at this time.
5. Participants are invited to observe their intentions to be nice or to be polite and should be very sensitive to their tendency to rather neglect their own needs instead of the needs of the other.

In the first round participants often choose easy questions, in the second round they are invited to think of more personal questions, that still need to reflect their interest in the other person.



Reflection

In plenary the participants are invited to speak about their experience with "being true".
If there is still enough time, some questions that had been approved with "Thank you for asking and yes" can be answered by those who still feel fine with answering.

⁸ Based on and adapted from 'The Work of Byron Katie' – see www.thework.com for further information

6. The golden circle



Normally we meet on the level of 'what' we do and sometimes we present to others 'how' we do it. The core of the Golden Circle⁹ is to focus on 'why' we do what we do. This will help us to go deeper and to find out about our motives. Through a 'slow dialogue' self inquiry and understanding of the other will be enhanced.



Method

The Slow dialogue is a method of self-reflection. Everyone gets the chance to reflect on a specific aspect, while being supported by a partner, who will just listen and keep asking the initial question again and again.

Setting: make sure all participants stay in the room and there is a quiet and concentrated atmosphere.

1. Pairs sit together (A +B). A asks the question 'Why are you doing what you are doing?' and just listens what B is saying. He or she asks the question again and again for 10 minutes. Sometimes there might be silence, but A is not making any comments or suggestions and keeps asking the same question again and again to enable B to find deeper answers.

After 10 minutes there is one minute of silence.

2. Then the same exercise is done with switched roles, followed by another minute of silence.

3. In the next step each pair exchanges experiences and insights for another five minutes.

Everybody is asked to write down thoughts and insights.



Reflection

In plenary, there will be a round in which everybody gets a chance to share his or her motivation and stimulus. As always participants are encouraged to take notes if they hear inspiring sentences from other participants.

9 Simon Sinek works with this approach comprehensively, see <https://www.startwithwhy.com/Home.aspx>

7. My personal hero



This activity enhances empowerment and self-appreciation. By turning qualities of a 'hero' on themselves, participants begin to understand and appreciate their own resources and capacities.



Method

1. Participants get the worksheet and are invited to write down the name of a person they admire very much. Someone who is a role model and an inspiration for them. This can be someone dead or alive, famous or from the family or circle of friends.
2. In the next step everybody will look for ten reasons, why he or she is admiring this person. (10 Minutes)
Then they will circle the three most important reasons.
3. Two or three participants are invited to share the name and the list of their personal hero. (5 Minutes)
4. Now the group splits into pairs and will take a look at the qualities that have been circled. For each of these qualities they need to tell their partner three genuine examples how it is true that this quality does also apply to themselves. (20 Minutes)



Reflection

In plenary some participants might share their list by saying "I am ...". In the last round all the participants are invited to share one important quality of their personal hero which they had found to be true for themselves.

Worksheet: My personal hero

1. Please think of a person you admire very much. Write down his/ her name: _____
2. Please write down 10 reasons, why you admire this person.

1.	2.
3.	4.
5.	6.
7.	8.
9.	10.

3. Please circle the three most important reasons (qualities).
4. Now find a partner and read your lists to one another.
5. Find at least three genuine examples for every circled quality, that will show, why this quality does apply also to yourself.

	Example 1	Example 2	Example 3
Quality 1			
Quality 2			
Quality 3			

8. The three kinds of business



In the universe – according to Byron Katie - there are only three kinds of business: Mine, Yours and God's (or no ones). If you are mentally in someone else's business you cannot be in your own business and this can make you feel uneasy or even lost. So when you feel stress it might be helpful to stop and ask yourself: "Mentally, whose business am I in?"¹⁰



Method

1. Provide participants with some examples of different kinds of 'business':

My Business: My mood, my opinions, my perception, my values, my stories about past and future, my acts, my wishes, (...)

Your Business: Your mood, your opinions, your perception, your values, your stories about past and future, your acts, your wishes (...)

God's / no ones Business: The weather, earthquakes, accidents, catastrophes, diseases, population on the planet (...)

2. Let participants fill in the worksheet and reflect with them their answers on the basis of the second worksheet with indications of who's business it is in each case.

3. Advise participants to count during the next break how many times they are in someone else's business mentally. Let them notice when they give uninvited advice or offer their opinion about something (aloud or silently).



Reflection

In plenary let participants share their experiences in being involved in someone else's or no one's business and reflect with them whether they have observed important shifts they want to do for themselves as a consequence.

¹⁰ Based on and adapted from 'The Work of Byron Katie' – see www.thework.com for further information

Worksheet: Who's business?

	Mine	Yours / theirs	God's / no one's
1. An earthquake happens			
2. People are homeless after an earthquake			
3. I want to help people after an earthquake			
4. People should accept my help			
5. My daughter / brother is crying			
6. My mother is depressive			
7. I want my daughter / brother to stop crying			
8. My uncle is alcoholic, sometimes aggressive			
9. I express my opinion about alcohol in the presence of my uncle			
10. My boss should appreciate my work			
11. I should appreciate my work			
12. I am single			
13. I should have children			
14. My partner is criticizing me frequently			
15. I believe my partner is right / wrong			

Reflecting the worksheet

	Mine	Yours / theirs	God's / no one's
16. An earthquake happens			x
17. People are homeless after an earthquake			x
18. I want to help people after an earthquake	x		
19. People should accept my help		x	
20. My daughter / brother is crying		x	
21. My mother is depressive		x	
22. I want my daughter / brother to stop crying	x		
23. My uncle is alcoholic, sometimes aggressive		x	
24. I express my opinion about alcohol in the presence of my uncle	x		
25. My boss should appreciate my work		x	
26. I should appreciate my work	x		
27. I am single			x
28. I should have children			x
29. My partner is criticizing me frequently		x	
30. I believe my partner is right / wrong	x		

C Analysis of the whole picture: Reviewing the Structures

1. Cocktail-Party-Questions on NGOs



Through a set of personal questions participants are quickly exchanging on the topics of their experience with their NGOs. They get an overview of the topic and of the perspectives by the different participants a team session or meeting.



Method

1. Always two chairs are being put together, forming seating locations for participants spread throughout the room.
2. The participants are seating themselves and the trainers announce that several questions will be asked. Then one partner of each pair starts repeating the question, the other partner will give answers for exactly one minute. After that the first partner answers for one minute. Signals are given for the turns.
In terms of who begins, the trainers can creatively think of things like the following: the one with longer hair, with more siblings, who has spent more time abroad, with the darker clothing etc.
3. Then one partner of each pair will leave and look for another chair, then the next question is being asked.

In terms of the questions here is a list that might be adapted depending on the workshop. There should be about 6-8 questions being chosen.

Possible questions:

- Something you like very much about your NGO
- Your personal role in your NGO
- One highlight from the work in your NGO
- Someone or a group you still would like to include in your NGO
- If your NGO was an animal, which would it be?
- One thought you had this morning concerning the session

Variation

Instead of using chairs for the pairs to exchange, the activity can also be done with the participants standing. Half of the group is forming an inner circle, facing to the outside, the other half of the group is forming an outer circle facing to the inner circle so that everyone has a direct partner. After each question either the inner or outer circle is moving one position to get a new partner.



Reflection

This activity can be done at the beginning of a session. It can be used to let participants introduce each other with important aspects they heard.

The reflection can take up different aspects of the activity: participants can share interesting or surprising statements they heard; contradictions and dilemmas between different questions might come up; the setting itself and the way of communication and getting to know the others can be focused upon.

2. Symbols and core sentences



Team members or responsables of an NGO are symbolizing in a wholistic way the status of their NGO and are defining the core, the essence of who they are.



Method

1. Each team member of the NGO is asked to draw the 'here and now' of the NGO as a symbol or picture with colors on a large piece of paper. After this everyone writes two or three 'core sentences' describing the NGO

2. In groups of three or four participants share their pictures which might reveal different perspectives on an NGO.



Reflection

Look at the pictures and discuss the similarities and differences between the pictures. What do we share and what makes us unique? Where could we build alliances or supplement each other with new ideas? How does our own perception on our NGO differ from that of other external people?

3. What is real? - Man and Mouse



Participants will reflect on their own perception and construction of reality. The way we perceive reality is often being seen as the only one and often other and diverse ways of approaching reality are being neglected unconsciously.



Method

1. Split up the group in two. Show to one half of the group the picture of the mouse and to the other the picture of the man (without showing the titles). Make sure each group is not seeing the picture of the other group.
2. Form pairs, always one partner who has seen the mouse and one who has seen the man. Show each pair the 'man and mouse' picture (without showing the title) and ask them to reproduce it together without speaking. It is very likely that each partner will focus on his/her preconceived notion of either having seen the man or the mouse before.



Reflection

In plenary, let the pairs show their pictures and ask which is the best one. Ask them which one is the most realistic one. Start a discussion on preconception and prejudice – how quick we are from focussing on our conception of reality to judging negatively about the reality of others.

Let participants go into pairs again and ask them about cases from their lives when they thought something they think or do was definitely right – and let them find alternative ways of looking at these cases.

Let them share the examples in plenary and discuss about 'inner landscapes' we have: certain ways of going about things seem to be right and possible, other ways are often hard to accept for us. These things we have 'seen' biographically have become part of our inner value system. Diversity means embracing the idea of different ways of tackling reality.

Finally show them a definition of constructionism that shows that we are all looking for a coherent 'truth' that serves the course of our lives – is not an abstract truth, but that which is helpful for us. Sometimes we – alone or together – we have to find new constructions of reality that serve our lives better.

“Human beings actively construct or create their own subjective representation of reality.”

Picture of a Man



Picture of a mouse



Picture of Man/Mouse



4. The river – a biography of me and my NGO



The symbol of a river helps visualizing the biography of an NGO and one's role there. It allows to show resources, skills and networks which have become important. The river symbolizes growth, processes of change and turns in life, fertility, origins and goals.



Method

1. Each participant draws a river representing their NGO life on a large piece of paper. It represents the history of the NGO. They design the river in a way that shows relevant turns of the NGO, shows side rivers which could represent additional resources or networks that came in. Boats might represent members of the NGO that have entered the river. Waterfalls and shallow water might represent unexpected events and passive times in the history of the NGO. Participants can also try to draw themselves on the river. They can show where the river might flow to in the future.

Generally, everyone should be free to design the picture in a way that is fitting for her or him. The symbol of the river is a general frame for symbolizing time, stability and change together.

2. In small groups, they present their pictures to each other, adding important insights from other participants.

3. In plenary a list of all the existing resources, skills and networks that derive from the pictures are being visualized on a board. This list will be used later for developing action plans together.



Reflection

The reflection focusses on common skills and individual differences between the pictures. It focusses on transferring the insights to the future of the NGO

- Which are the most important private and professional resources you can rely upon?
- What are the most important skills NGO leaders should have? Which ones have to be developed further within this group?
- What are important sources of support to overcome impasses in the activities of NGOs?
- Where did you witness limits when it was not possible to progress? How could others support you in such situations in the future?

5. Group dynamics - phases in NGOs



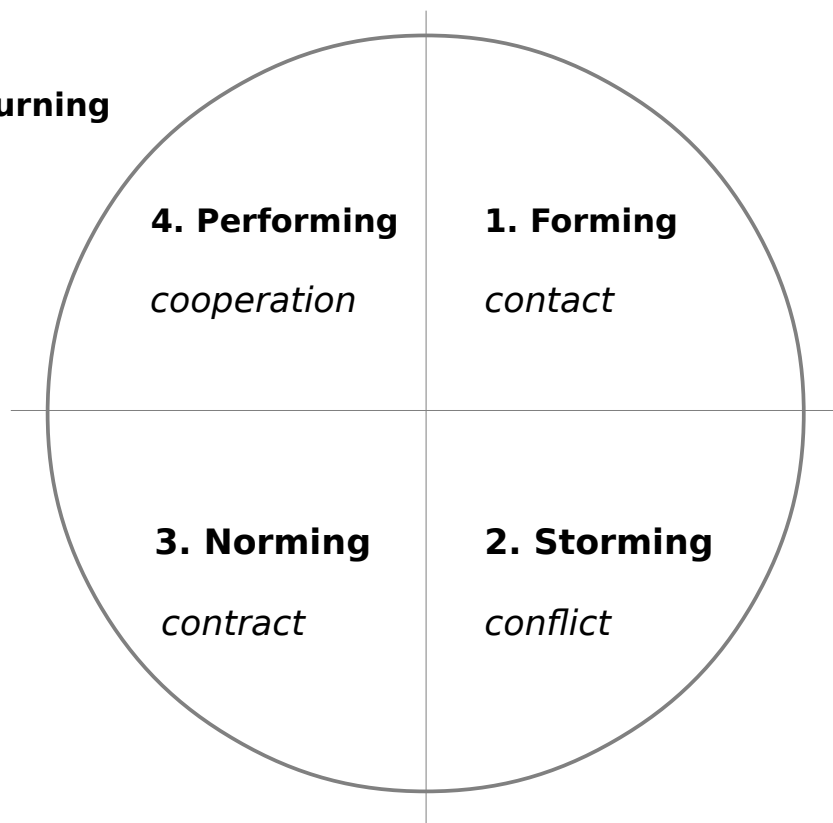
Members of an NGO learn about different phases of their development. They become aware of the relevance of consensus and conflict, of need for collective action and individuality, of possibilities and limits as normal dynamic phases of social systems. They analyze the current status of their NGO and develop ideas for further development.



Method

1. The general phases¹¹ of group dynamics of a social system like an NGO are being presented by the trainers in the form of a circle on a flipchart. They use the background information provided below for this.

....5. Adjourning



11 For the model being used here compare https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuckman%27s_stages_of_group_development and also Stahl, Eberhard (2012). Dynamik in Gruppen: Handbuch der Gruppenleitung. Additional material used from http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_86.htm

2. Participants split into four groups according to the four main phases in the circle. They write cards finding examples of the characteristics of each phase. For this they should take examples from their own NGO.

3. The cards are attached to the visualized circle in plenary and the trainers stress that these phases are normal, but they can mix, be stretched, sometimes can go backwards or start again if new members are entering an NGO.

4. In the same small groups participants are analyzing the current status of their NGO in terms of group dynamics:

- Where are we at the moment?
- What are chances and limits of this phase in our concrete case?
- How could we move forward to the next phase?
- Who is responsible for initiating this moving forward and for whom will this be comfortable and for whom irritating?



Reflection

In plenary all are reflecting the results and the meaning of a time structure in the development of NGOs. The trainers stress that a careful awareness of this is necessary when planning projects in NGOs, when integrating new members and when planning how social change can be achieved. Contacting other stakeholders or NGOs, it is crucial to become aware of where they are at the moment in order to productively interact with them.

As a summary, the trainers can present the general tasks which are important in each phase of group dynamics of an NGO.

Background on Groups Dynamics

When reflecting the structure of NGOs, it is important to focus on the quality of processes as well as results. For this reason, we will focus on the dynamics of groups that develops over time and represents a form of reality that cannot be simply calculated by adding up the characters of the individuals within the NGO. There are classical ways of dividing group processes in 3 to 7 different phases every group runs through. Here we present a model of 5 phases. Take time during a workshop to reflect in which phase you and your NGO might be. Think about ways to move to the next stake in order to get to performing well together.

A Forming

In this stage, most members are positive and polite. Some are anxious, as they haven't fully understood what the NGO is about. Others are simply excited about the task ahead.

As a leader, you play a dominant role at this stage, because members' roles and responsibilities aren't clear. You have to take responsibility and provide orientation. Do not use irony or jokes in this phase, but be clear about goals and actions to be done. You will be the model of orientation in the way you behave and act. You are implicitly and explicitly setting the rules for the NGO. Provide enough opportunities for members to get to know each other and make direct contact with all other members.

This stage can last for some time, as people start to work together, and as they make an effort to get to know their fellow members.

B Storming

Next, the group moves into the storming phase, where people start to push against the boundaries established in the forming stage. This is the stage where many groups fail – yet it is essential if high quality of working together should be achieved.

Storming often starts where there is a conflict between members' natural working styles. People may work in different ways for all sorts of reasons, but if differing working styles cause unforeseen problems, they may become frustrated.

Storming can also happen in other situations. For example, members may challenge your authority, or jockey for position as their roles are clarified. Or, if you haven't defined clearly how the NGO and its projects will be run, people may feel overwhelmed by what you offer, or they could be uncomfortable with the approach you're using.

Some may question the worth of the goals, and they may resist taking on tasks.

Members who stick with the initial tasks at hand may experience stress, particularly as they don't have the support of established processes, or strong relationships with their fellow members.

As a leader, you have to support this phase by focusing more explicitly on the relations within the group. You could use a “discourse on group dynamics” or other approaches for addressing and clarifying hidden and open conflicts and provide possibility for taking responsibility as a group. In this phase you have the chance to bring the topic of democratic processes directly to the issues of the group, be it conflicts like working styles, formal and informal times or being offended by individual members and their previously covered value system. You yourself as a leader might be involved a conflict for your working style, rejection of clear answers etc. Therefore it is always good to have a leading team which can be supportive in this phase. Ask members what they need, provide room for discussing the next steps with the group.

C Norming

Gradually, the group moves into the norming stage. This is when people start to resolve their differences, appreciate fellow members' strengths, and respect your authority as a leader.

Now that your members know one-another better, they may socialize together, and they are able to ask each other for help and provide constructive feedback. People develop a stronger commitment to the common goals, and you start to see good progress towards it. Rules are becoming clear and are accepted for being important regulations of living together.

There is often a prolonged overlap between storming and norming, because, as new tasks come up, the group may lapse back into behavior from the storming stage.

The role of the leader is to step back gradually, but support the group by providing a good frame for learning and developing in groups, individually and by meeting informally. The leader supports the norms established by one in a while shifting to the “meta-level”, addressing the kind of being and working together and providing options for feedback on processes and results.

D Performing

The group reaches the performing stage when hard work leads, without friction, to the achievement of the group's goal. The structures and processes that you have set up support this well. It feels easy to be part of the group at this stage, and people who join or leave won't disrupt performance. Difference is no longer threat, but a resource for being creative.

So one could call this the phase in which democracy and tolerance come to life. This also shows that democracy is not (only) an abstract model or a result, but has to be achieved anew with each group. And it shows it is a long way to work and live together in a way which by itself is a model for civil society.

The role of the leader is to become more and more a part of the group. He or she should be in the background as much as possible and thus provide the chance for the group to autonomously achieve their own projects. There will be a lot of mutual learning on an equal level.

E Adjourning

Many groups will reach this stage eventually. For example, project teams exist for only a fixed period, and even permanent teams may be disbanded through organizational restructuring.

Members of an NGO who like routine, or who have developed close working relationships with other people, may find this stage difficult, particularly if their future now looks uncertain. Normal daily life is coming into focus again, the often quite intense time of learning in a project is about to end. It is important to actively design this phase not too late and to provide enough room for activities as a group and develop perspectives for after this phase when another context with new members and projects will call for another phase of forming.

In this phase the leader will be responsible for times of reflection and looking back to the time past. Working with symbols or stories is a good way for anchoring and securing what has been learned and achieved in terms of processes and results.

Tasks of leading and development in the different phases of Group Dynamics in NGOs

Stage	Activities
Forming	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Direct the group, and establish clear objectives, both for the group as a whole and for individual members.
Storming	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish processes and structures.• Build trust and good relationships between members.• Resolve conflicts swiftly if they occur. Provide support, especially to those members who are less secure.• Remain positive and firm in the face of challenges to your leadership, or to the group's goal.
Norming	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Step back and help members take responsibility for progress towards the goal. This is a good time to do meta-level activities reflecting on the results and processes so far.
Performing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delegate tasks and projects as far as you can. Once the team is achieving well, you should aim to have as light a touch as possible. You will now be able to start focusing on other goals and areas of work.
Adjourning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take the time to celebrate the group's achievements. Take time for looking back and symbolically anchoring the experiences of the processes and results of a project.

6. The Power Molecule – target groups/staff



This activity¹² provides an opportunity for members to examine their NGO in terms of various groups involving power relations. They explore with which groups they have to do in their wider field and who is part of their staff.



Method

1. Let participants collect in plenary all sorts of groups in society they have to do with in the context of their NGO. Write them down on flipchart.
2. Distribute the Power Molecule Worksheet (one to each participant). Ask participants to write the name of their NGO on the line in the center of the “molecule.” Make them write groups relevant to their NGO in the outer circles.
3. Introduce the power aspect that is very relevant when dealing with groups of people. Let them mark groups that are powerful and groups that are less powerful in different colors. Ask them how they would address these group in different ways. Go one step further and let them circle those groups which are part of their NGO (staff, volunteers...)



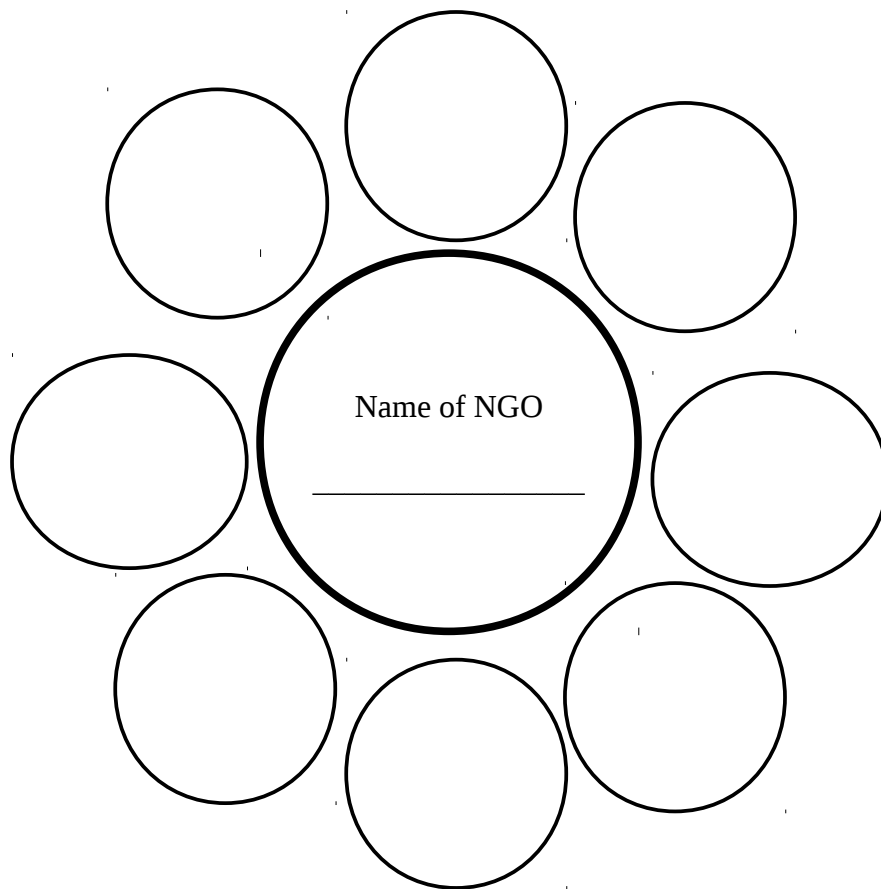
Reflection

Reflect in plenary the role of the NGO in society:

- Which groups with which power does the NGO (aim to) reach?
- Does the NGO structure reflect fair or unfair power relations as we can see them in society?
- Do you belong to a powerful or powerless group? Which consequence does this have for your work and possible blind spots about what your target groups might need?
- Which groups are part of our NGO structure and which do we (only) target?
- Do we want to address groups or individuals as such? Which are advantages and disadvantages?

¹² Adapted from Handschuck, Sabine / Klawe, Willy (2006): Interkulturelle Verständigung in der Sozialen Arbeit. Ein Erfahrungs-, Lern- und Übungsprogramm zum Erwerb interkultureller Kompetenz. München.

The power molecule Worksheet



7. Imagining a fair environment for my NGO



Participants develop visions for their NGO out of their individual talents and resources. They are reflecting the status quo of things and also map possible stumbling stones on the way to their vision¹³.



Method

1. Ask participants to take a piece of paper and ask them to fold it in a way that they have three sections when they unfold it again.
2. Now ask participants to label the section in the middle 'My resources and talents' and ask them to write down all their individual resources and talents linked with dealing productively with diversity.
3. Make three rounds in which each participant shares one personal resource or talent and ask others to enrich their paper by talents they also share or which inspire them.
4. Then ask them to take the right section of the paper and label it 'Vision of a fair environment for my NGO' and let them describe how their NGO could unfold its potential to the full.
5. Ask participants to split up into pairs to present their visions to each other. Ask them to take the left section of their paper and label it 'Status quo' and let participants describe the status quo of their NGO environment. In this section they should leave some space on the bottom of the paper in which they analyze stumbling stones for getting from the status quo to the vision.

In the next steps the pairs are looking for ways to change the status quo in the direction of the vision by making use of the talents and skills and by taking into account the stumbling stones.



Reflection

In plenary, all are presenting their results. They can get additional ideas for change from each other so that their NGO can realize its potential.

¹³ Adapted from Handschuck, Sabine / Klawe, Willy (2006): Interkulturelle Verständigung in der Sozialen Arbeit. Ein Erfahrungs-, Lern- und Übungsprogramm zum Erwerb interkultureller Kompetenz. München.

8. Stakeholder Mapping and Mirroring



Activists learn to regard their community as a network of individuals which might contribute to societal change or might be opposing it. Participants will visualize their map of stakeholders¹⁴ in this activity.



Method

1. Introduce the concept of 'stakeholders' to the participants: stakeholders are those who are part of a project and those who are affected by it. Thus it can also be individuals who are for some reason systematically excluded from a project. For stakeholders something can be lost or won in the process of a project. Stakeholders have to be taken into consideration in the professional as well as the private environments if the project as a whole should come to success. They can be helpful but also a threat.

2. Participants list the individual stakeholders of their NGO on the left side and try to identify what they would regard as success or failure of your project. Beyond this perspective (position) you might identify a basic need which is crucial for dealing productively with the respective stakeholder.

Stakeholder (Name a concrete person!)	His or her (institutional) Function / Role	What is Success for him/her?	What is Failure for him/her?	His/her basic need(s)
1.				
2.				
....				

Fundamental human needs¹⁵ which are deemed to be existential are, amongst others:

- Security / Orientation
- Flexibility / Spontaneity
- Economic stability
- Feeling at home
- Being respected / Intrinsic value
- Self-determination / Autonomy

14 For more information on stakeholder management consult https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newPPM_08.htm and also <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/participation/encouraging-involvement/identify-stakeholders/main>

15 For an extended version see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fundamental_human_needs

3. Now that participants have identified and characterized your stakeholders, they take a large piece of paper and draw a symbolic map on which one can see the positioning and relation of all stakeholders including the community leader. For symbolizing relations, conflicts, hierarchies etc., just common signs such as mountain, valley, highway, building site, rain, sun.... can be used.

They then describe their own role in the picture. Who are they related to the others? Where are lines of trust and support, where is there mistrust and threats?

4. Having done previous analyses, the pictures are introduced to each other in small groups of three participants. With mutual support, everyone in the small group tries to bring about 2-3 changes in their map which are leading in the direction of their project goals and can positively influence the project as a whole (like building a bridge, repositioning a stakeholder).

5. Participants write down concrete consequences: which action do you have to take to bring about this change? How would you describe the support structure (professional as well as personal) of your stakeholder map? Who can you rely on? What has to be done next?

Variation:

Use this workshop group (or your friends, a team, your family...) and let them represent different stakeholders and yourself (no more than 5-7 persons). Position them in the room in such a way which represents the relations amongst them. Give them a sentence on how they would see success in the project from their perspective. After that ask each representative how he or she feels at this position.

Then ask them what they would change and you yourself bring about some changes and ask the persons representing the stakeholders how they feel now.



Reflection

In plenary the participants share their experience with this activity.

- What were surprising new insights?
- Where were new roads of development, which impasses could be overcome?
- Which steps were taken to integrate as many stakeholders as possible?
- Were there limits to integration and why?

9. Stakeholder Integration



Starting new projects in an NGO involves a number of stakeholders. Quite often, opposition concerning a project will arise. The activity shows different strategies for dealing effectively and efficiently with them¹⁶.



Method

1. Introduce the scheme of different risks concerning a project by NGOs and how they can confront individuals accordingly. When proposing action and involving civic engagement from the target groups, there will always individuals who might identify personal and/or factual risks.

<p><i>Factual Risks</i></p> <p>„I'm sceptical about that!“ (40 %)</p> <p>Many see the facts differently</p>	<p><i>Factual and Personal Risks</i></p> <p>„I don't want this at all!“ (5 %)</p> <p>Key opponents</p>
<p><i>No Risks</i></p> <p>„I fully support you!“ (15 %)</p> <p>Key resource persons</p>	<p><i>Personal Risks</i></p> <p>„Slow Down!“ (40 %)</p> <p>Many feel threatened in their identity</p>

16 For more information on stakeholder management consult https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newPPM_08.htm and also <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/participation/encouraging-involvement/identify-stakeholders/main>

You can identify stakeholders according to this scheme. This is how you should deal with them in the following order:

"I fully support you" - Speak with those people and inform them comprehensively and exclusively about the different dimensions of your project. Show them your trust comprehensively.

"I'm sceptical about that!" - Try to convince sceptical stakeholders. Factual risks can be minimized more easily than personal ones.

"Slow down!" - For integrating these stakeholders you need a high quality of process and communication. Building trust and explicitly taking serious their needs is crucial.

"I don't want this at all!" - These stakeholders cannot be convinced. Do not spend too much time with them. Use their resistance as informational hints like: "Did I miss something important?" Try to watch potential influence and danger for your project through these stakeholders.

2. Ask participants to think about a project in their NGO they have been involved in. Who were the important individuals in these categories. How were they being addressed? What could have happened if they had been addressed in the way described above?



Reflection

Let the participants present their cases and use the resources of the group to find alternative ways for dealing with resistance in each case.

D Appreciating the resources: Designing the future

1. Which Resources? - Knowledge Management



Knowledge is one of the crucial resources of an NGO. Dealing with knowledge is important for NGOs as it is situated between information and action. Participants reflect different kinds of knowledge they have in their NGO and how they can appreciate and strengthen each of them.



Method

1. Visualize the solid, liquid and gaseous states of knowledge as a mind-map on a flipchart and explain the different forms of knowledge and their relevance to organizations and they way they are able to act together.

2. Divide participants into groups and let them find examples from their NGO for these different forms of knowledge. They can use the guiding questions from the background information for this analysis of their knowledge resources. They will also determine which type of knowledge is explicit in their organisation and which might be rather hidden or not explicitly been appreciated.

The results of the discussion should also be visualized as a mind map on a poster.

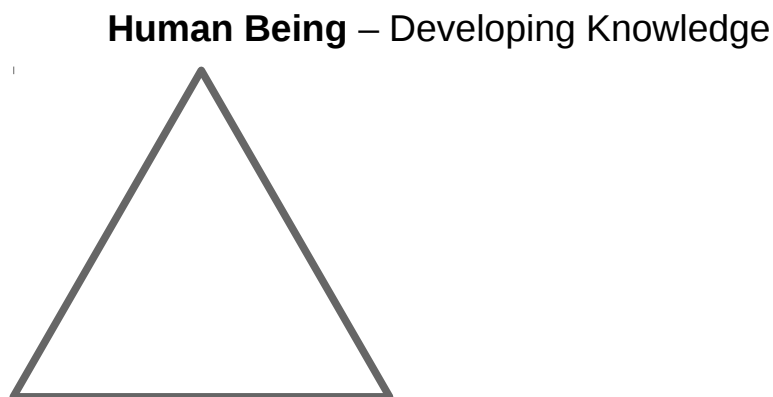


Reflection

Let the participants present their posters in plenary and discuss ways in which they can use their knowledge resources more broadly – especially those which are closer to people and processes and need spaces of sharing instead locations of storing.

Background on Knowledge Management

Knowledge can be located in between **Information and Action**



Organisation –
acquiring and distributing knowledge

Technology –
saving and keeping knowledge

Normally, organizations try to manage knowledge. Facts and figures are being recorded, information is being piled up, papers about core values and procedures are being produced. Many organizations note, while doing this might be useful, over time the relevance of this type of knowledge is fading. The hope that more technology – online files, archives of competencies, tools for collaboratively working – have somewhat innovated the ways of storing knowledge. Nevertheless, there has been an increasing disillusion and also frustration about the extent to which these virtual tools are being used extensively and sustainably by a relevant number of people in an organization. It often seems to be an additional and artificial extra-effort to share one's knowledge this way.

Other types of knowledge seem to be more important when trying to achieve social change. The knowledge base of an organization has different levels. To understand and analyze this is especially important for NGOs which often do not have a very strong level of institutionalization and role descriptions.

Like water, knowledge can be found in different physical conditions¹⁷:

States of Knowledge

Solid –	Knowledge close to Information, can be communicated and transported easily like ice blocks (contents and results) <i>What do we know? Which information is in our NGO? Which data and facts do we rely on? What is documented and clear to all?</i>
Liquid –	Variable knowledge between information and action, its course and process of running can be influenced (everyday action) <i>How do we do things in our NGO? What are important procedures we follow? Which values and attitudes are guiding our work?</i>
Gaseous –	Volatile Knowledge close to action, linked to specific persons and situations, not easy to grasp (unrepeatable processes) <i>Who are key persons in our NGO? What is their uniqueness? What do they know and do which is not easily replaceable by others? Which unique situations cannot be reproduced easily?</i>

With this approach it becomes clear that knowledge is not only something we 'have', which we can keep, but also a process closer to who we 'are' and how we move around in the world. Knowledge is connected to unique and limited human beings.

Thus, it has been argued that especially those types of knowledge which are more fluid or even gaseous, cannot simply be stored. They have to be *shared not in a technical sense, but* as part of social encounters which are a fundamental building block of organizations that are successful¹⁸. Procedures and processes of encounter link information and practice (compare also the idea of Community of Practice introduced in this manual).

17 Reinmann-Rothmeier, Gabi (2001). Wissen managen: Das Münchener Modell. München

18 Compare the approach of Appreciative Inquiry which also deals with knowledge in a non-technical sense, see the publication: Thatchenkery, Tojo / Chowdhry, Dilpreet (2007). Appreciative Inquiry and Knowledge Management. A Social Constructionist Perspective. London. Also compare the approach of the Community of Practice in this practitioner's guide

2. On the road to systemic change – the Vehicle



Using the metaphor of a vehicle, participants reflect about structural elements of their NGO and analyze their NGO in a holistic way through symbolizing.



Method

1. Ask the participants to take a piece of paper and different colored pens and draw the following shapes in whichever size / design they want

- a triangle, a rectangle, a circle, another circle, a half-circle, a long rectangle

2. Now participants are asked to use these shapes for constructing an „innovative“ kind of vehicle which might be flying, hopping, moving... After doing this, they should find a creative title for their vehicle. In a short round everybody shows (not explaining it!) their vehicle with its title.

3. The participants are invited to regard their vehicle as a metaphor for „being on the way“, on the road with their NGO. Individually they are reflecting the following questions with this metaphor

- What is driving the vehicle? Is there an engine, are there external influences?
- Who is on the steering wheel? Are you driving alone or together with others?
- Is there a set direction? Are the road and the goal visible? Are there stumbling stones?
- How do you know the trip was successful, is there an end result for transformation?

4. After that participants exchange with two other participants on these points and take notes on the most important insights concerning the options and limits of moving their NGO. They also try to define the six elements of their NGO, what is essential and what could or even should be put aside.

5. Finally ask participants to tell each other which symbol comes to their mind for each of the NGOs of the others. Every group member then designs a symbol of the status quo of his/her NGO and writes down a core sentence and important elements of the NGO.



Reflection

In plenary, each group presents and visualizes their results. The facilitators lead a discussing focusing on the question when and how the structures of NGOs can become successful and who can contribute what to that.

3. Appreciative Inquiry



Appreciative Inquiry is both a specific methodology and a perspective and has been defined as the study of what gives life to human systems when they are at their best. It stands in contrast to our culture's typical "problem-based" or "deficit-based" mindset. It allows for combining the search for resources and motivations with designing the future together.



Method

1. Introduce participants to Appreciative Inquiry via the half empty / half full scheme and discuss with the participants examples when they have acted in one or the other way.

2. Provide an overview over the following steps of Appreciative Inquiry by visualizing the '4D-cycle' and make sure participants always are clear about which step they are currently. The following 4 phases can be done within one day or can be split to stretch longer. Between the different phases it is ideal to have a break or an evening to settle ideas.

3. Phase 1: Discover what is

Split the group into pairs and let them do the appreciative interview.

The interview has to be adapted to the respective topic which is relevant for the people you are doing it with. You can prepare it with a topic which is relevant for everyone or even develop the topic and the questions for the interview with a core group in a participatory process.

In plenary, let everybody share highlight sentences from the interviews and visualize them. These sentences are like 'jewels' which show what is already there in a group.

4. Make small groups with about 3 pairs (the pairs have to stay together). Let them systematize the findings from their interviews. Someone from the group should facilitate and record the results. Advise them to formulate full and specific sentences. They visualize their resources together on a board by starting from the highlight sentence and then connecting and weaving together what is already the basis of their resources here and now. They will not write down abstract ideas or wishes, but concentrate and their resources. To make it easier, you can ask them to identify the five key resources which give life to their group and identify three criteria that are relevant for developing the respective topic further.

5. Phase 2: Dream what could be

This is a very creative phase in which participants once more work in groups. They focus on the last question from their interviews and transfer their vision into something they present to the group. Depending on the participants, you can guide them with a frame or let them go openly. Forms of showing the vision can be a performance, a song, a poem, a colorful poster, a comedy etc...

In plenary the visions – the dreams of what could be – are being presented. As a facilitator, make sure to reflect the 'visionary core' in each case. What is qualitatively different of what is already there? What inspired you to imagine the future in this way?

6. Phase 3: Design what should be

With phases 1 and 2 the arch between present and future has been established. Now it is about designing what should be done to get to the vision. Also in this phase, it is not about classical planning but about imagining that the vision had already been reached. Participants will identify important topics which forge a way from the present to the future and formulate 'provocative propositions' that go beyond the status quo and are creative ways of stepping forward.

One way to get there is to let small groups formulate a speech in the future, in which they thank everybody for a successful project and describe how they got there. From this speech they can deduct provocative propositions which are collected together in plenary. Once again, as a facilitator, make sure that the language of the provocative propositions is detailed and concrete.

7. Phase 4: Destiny what will be

This last phase of the AI process seems to be classical planning steps. You might combine this with tools like the pyramid of culture from this guide. In this phase participants will sketch the first steps they want to take in the direction of their vision and divide responsibilities. The important point here is that in an AI process this will not be 'duties to be done to solve a problem', but ideally things that grow out of the resources, talents and motivations of the participants that allow them to grow



Reflection

After a longer break, reflect the different phases of the AI process in plenary and make a reality check. Is what has happened really connected to the motivations and resources of the group? Do the results correspond to the topic that was initially set? Are the divided responsibilities such that they are reachable?

The reality check is very important since an AI process can take on an overwhelming dynamic which has to be grounded to stay sustainable in practice.

Background on Appreciative Inquiry¹⁹

Half empty – half full

Large portions of societal thinking are founded on looking for deficits and problems when wanting to solve problems. If change and planning is needed, the focus is on what does not work. In combination with this others are very often being seen as the source of problems. The glass always seems to be half empty. To take action, the causes for problems are being located in an analytical manner, solutions are developed to remedy the problems and actions are being planned. In this approach the removal of problems already implies a clear knowledge of how „things should be“. Problems are being seen as a corruption of a normal state of affairs that is to be achieved in an organization, a project or other system. The weaknesses have to be weakened.

From a different, an appreciative perspective, the glass is not half empty but half full. The starting point is not a deficit-based one, but looks at those things which are already running well, focusses on resources of an organization or project and begins by inquiring personal motivation of those involved in a social system. In that way it begins a process of self-awareness which is not locating problems with others but explores strengths from within. Action is taken by reflecting motivation and resources and from there on extending what works well into wholesale visions for the future. Bits and pieces that are already working well are being enlarged in order to optimize an organization, thereby strengthening strengths. From this perspective the future is yet unknown from the outset but has the potential for creative and new solutions.

These two approaches to organizational planning and change imply very different world views. The deficit-based approach is working in a linear and mechanical fashion, taking apart the structure of a system to fix its bugs. It is based on the assumption that there is some true and false, some right and wrong way to do things. Therefore it focusses on the analysis of facts and figures in order to achieve problem-free structures. The resource-based approach is systemic in that it does not analyze a social system but brings motivations and visions into social interaction by the way of stories and metaphors. It focusses on what is being perceived as supportive ideas and tools for the organization by those being involved, and rules out those things that are being regarded as preventive for a functioning of the system in the future. Therefore its focus is less on facts than on human beings as those who are filling structures and systems with life and optimize it with their motivation and energy. To sum up, a half-empty approach will regard „man as the maker of all things“, doing interventions into a world of objects which are independent of himself and for which he believes to have the power to fix it. The half-full perspective is a more modest one which is aware of the limits of human interference with the world and starts with a „gratitude for the mystery of the world.“

It is important not to confuse the resource based approach with „positive thinking“ which tries to ignore and gloss over problems. Problems do have their important place in organizational change, but they are framed in a different way and not seen as the source of that which will foster productive change. When change is organized by the way of visioning from resources, of course implicitly that means that at present not everything is as well as it could be. Yet the conscience of a „half full“ glass will lead to less frustration and more enthusiasm for taking on new challenges.

19 There are many resources on Appreciative Inquiry online. For a start see: <https://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu/> A basic and comprehensive book by the founders of AI is: Cooperrider, David L. / Whitney, Diana / Stavros, Jacqueline M. (2008). *Appreciative Inquiry Handbook: The First in a Series of AI Workbooks for Leaders of Change*. Chicago

Overview: Deficit versus Resource Approach

Half empty - Deficits

Half full - Resources

Starting point for change	
Lack	Functionality
Deficit	Resource
Problem	Motivation
Fixing the past	Envisioning future

Course of action	
Looking for causes	Reflecting motivation
Analyzing details	Expressing vision
Eliminating deficits	Realizing
Weakening weaknesses	Strengthening strength

View of the world	
Linear causality	Systemic network
True vs. False	Helpful vs. not helpful
Focus on facts	Focus on human beings
Man as the maker of the world	Creative openness for growth

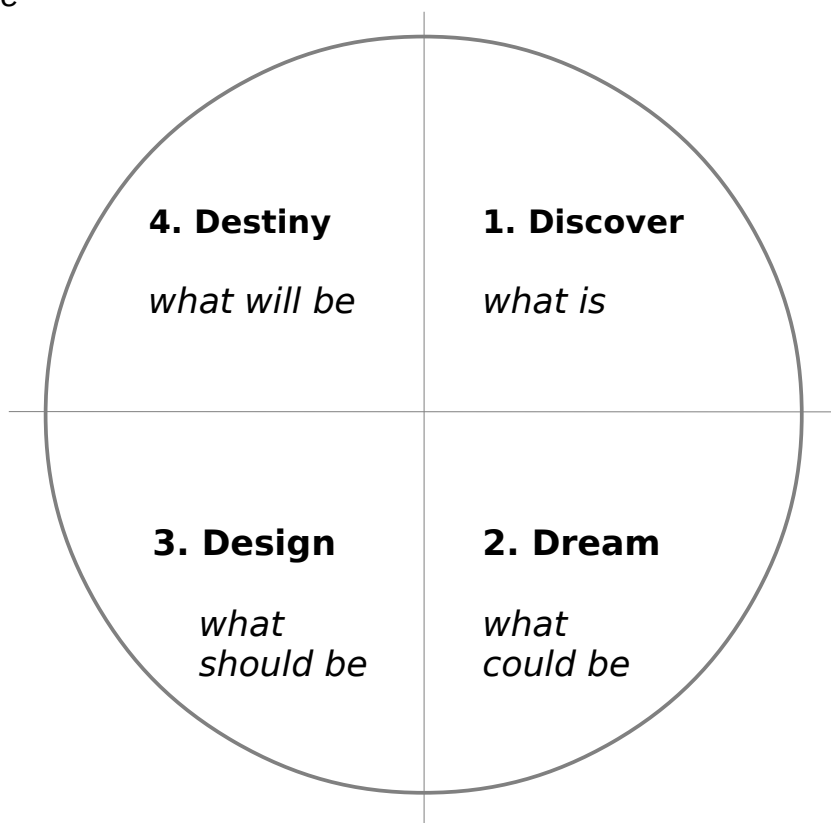
Appreciative Inquiry (AI)

Appreciative Inquiry is an organizational change approach systematizing these ideas with a comprehensive theory as well as a practical concept for workshop settings. It originates in the research of David Cooperrider and colleagues from Case Western Reserve University in the US and was developed in the 1980s. The focus on appreciation is to be comprehended as a value based approach which tries to use the best in human beings and their surroundings. The inquiry is an interested exploration for change with the openness for potential and visions. Change is being regarded organically, the human aspects and the social interaction of a system. Instead of focussing on hard facts and data, the focus is on resource and motivation of people in order to achieve effective and sustainable change. AI has been used in large corporations (e.g. British Airways), city management initiatives (e.g. Imagine Chicago), regional planning efforts (e.g. Upper Austria village renewal initiative), NGOs working in developing countries (e.g. HIV/AIDS strategy for Ethiopia) and most recently in combination with innovative evaluation approaches to social change projects. Since around 1995 it is being adapted within Germany, as an effective and productive means of social transformation for a society with a strong orientation on problems.

The 4D-Cycle of Appreciative Inquiry

Definition

Topic Choice



It follows a different set of steps:

- **Definition** - Topic Choice is either realized by a small team preparing the whole process or it is done by a short appreciative inquiry including the whole organisation
- **Discover** what gives life to an organization; find out what is happening when the organization is at its best
- **Dream** about what might be, what the world is calling the organization to be
- **Design** ways to create the ideal as articulated by the whole organization
- **Destiny** – develop clear activities for a democratic and all inclusive process to make the organization thrive and changes become reality

Definition Phase – Topic choice

Ask simple questions to choose a topic which is relevant for the further development of an NGO:

- What are the factors that give life to our organization when it is most alive, successful and effective?
- What are the possibilities, expressed and latent, that will create a life-sustaining, effective, vision- based organization?

With a core team develop an interview guide as the frame of the AI-process (see below on the structure of the AI interview).

Discovery Phase: Sharing what is there in terms of motivations, resources, talents

Focus on times of organizational excellence, when people experienced the organization as most alive and effective. In doing so, people deliberately let go of analysis of deficits and carefully inquire into and learn from even the smallest examples of high performance, success and satisfaction. They tell stories about all aspects of an organization:

- Inspired leadership
- Generative relationships and partnerships
- Technologies that make work more smoothly or facilitate better service
- Structures that support innovation and creativity
- Planning that encompasses new ideas and diverse people
- Opportunities to learn

In this phase, people share stories of exceptional behavior and accomplishments, discuss the core live giving factors of their organizations, and deliberate upon the aspects of their organization's history, that they most value and want to bring into the future. Members come to know their organization's history as positive possibility rather than a static, problematized, eulogized, romanticized, or forgotten set of events. Empowering and hopeful ideas almost always emerge from stories that are grounded in an organization at its best. Where appreciation is alive and stakeholders through the system are connected in discovery, hope grows and organizational capacity is enriched.

Dream Phase – envisioning what could be

In the dream phase we challenge the status quo by envisioning a preferred future for the organization. This is the time when the organizations stake holders engage in possibility conversations about the organization's position, its potential, its calling and the unique contribution it can make to the outside world. For many, this is the first time that they have been invited to think great thoughts and create possibilities for their organization. Thus, the **dream phase** is both practical, in that it is grounded in the organization's history; and, generative, in that it seeks to expand the organization's potential. It is this aspect what makes the Appreciative Inquiry different from other visioning or planning methodologies. As images of the future emerge out of grounded examples from its positive past, compelling possibilities emerge precisely because they are based on extraordinary moments from the organization's history.

Design Phase – Dialoguing what should be

The design phase includes the creation of the social architecture of the organization and the generation of provocative propositions that articulate the organization's dreams in ongoing activities. Within this process, all stakeholders create a basic structure and discuss the necessities to follow up and put them into place.

Kinds of questions asked are:

- What kind of leadership structure is needed and what is the preferred behavior of the leaders as they do their work?
- What is the organization's strategy and how does it get formulated and carried out?
- What are all of the structure elements needed?

Once there is an agreement on the myriad of possibilities for structuring the organization and an image of how they will function in relationship to each other and to the organization as a whole, the task of the group is to articulate those decisions in **Provocative Propositions**. These statements make explicit the desired qualities and behaviors that will enable each part of the organization to function in a way that moves it toward the higher vision articulated in the **dream phase**.

Both, the **dream** and the **design phase** involve the collective construction of positive images of the future. In practice, the two often happen in conjunction with the other.

Destiny Phase – Co-constructing a sustainable preferred future

The final phase creates ways to deliver on the new images of the future, both the overall visions of the **dream phase** and the more specific provocative proposition of the design phase. It is a time of continues learning, adjustment and improvisation, much like a jazz group; all in the service of shared ideals. The momentum and potential is extremely high by this stage of inquiry. Because of the shared positive images, everyone is included in co-creating the future.

The key to sustaining the momentum is to build an "appreciative eye" into all organization's systems, procedures and ways of working. For example, one organization transformed their department of **evaluation studies** to **valuation studies**, dropping the "e", and with it the accumulated negative connotation that have attached themselves to the word "evaluation".

Others have transformed focus group methods, surveys, performance appraisal systems, leadership training program, into an appreciative process that inevitably creates higher levels of excitement, enthusiasm for the work and commitment from the people involved.

Principles of Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciate

1. valuing; the act of recognizing the best in people or the world around us; affirming past and present strengths, successes, and potentials; to perceive those things that give life (health, vitality, excellence) to living systems
2. to increase in value, e.g. the economy has appreciated in value.

Inquiry

1. the act of exploration and discovery.
2. To ask questions; to be open to seeing new potentials and possibilities.

Constructionist Principle: The way we know is fateful.

Social systems and organizations have to be regarded as human constructions. Images, myths and stories which we have for an organization are guiding our individual reality, our thinking and acting. Not truth is the focus of inquiry, but the interlinking of different perspectives and realities having the potential to form new visions and images that can change systems.

Principle of Simultaneity: Change begins at the moment you ask the question.

Social systems are not a collection of elements which can be changed by a determined and linear intervention from outside. Linear models of cause and effect are useless because of the non-linear complexity of feedback processes, self-reflexion and constantly different interpretations of the „state of affairs“ by all the members of a system. Intervention and inquiry has to be organized as a frame within which the system itself can organize and optimize its self-organization.

Poetic Principle: Organizations are an open book.

Social systems and organizations are like open books with manyfold possibilities for interpretation and inspiration. Their story is always being continued by those involved and provides many chances for entering, pursuing sidepaths and being surprised. Therefore a focus is put on inquiring in an analog way that works with metaphors and stories and watches for language when putting down planning proposals. These factors are crucial for effective change.

Anticipatory Principle: Deep change= change in active images of the future.

Present and future cannot be separated. The way questions are being asked already has consequences for how the future can be imagined. The aim is not a neutral inquiry but one that fosters that which gives life and energy to go forward. The atmosphere of the inquiry which is appreciative leads to future images of an organization that are already changing conscience and action at present.

Positive Principle: The more positive the question, the longer-lasting the change.

The world is not a problem to be solved. Human beings will always be beginners but have the energy and joy to take on new challenges. The focus on the positive lets human beings move forward much faster than a spiral of problems, frustration and blocking by focussing on deficit. The ability for self-organization is being fostered when personal strengths and those of others are being put in the center of inquiry.

The Appreciative Interview as a frame

Formulating an Appreciative Interview is an important frame for the phases of the AI process. It should be based on a topic which could be identified by a core group, e.g. team members or stakeholders of an NGO or participants in a civic society project. It has to be a topic that can be openly discussed and worked at by those involved in the AI process (do not choose topics that will generate demands to others!) The topic should then be formulated in a positive, creative way that points into the future.

With the topic, you then formulate an interview sheet (see example below). The structure of the interview is as follows:

- An appreciative introduction naming the fact that the resources are with the group participating in the AI process
- First question on motivation to be here and to deal with the topic
- Second question on highlight experience in the context of the topic
- Third question on criteria and indicators of success
- Fourth question on own talents and inspirations to become active
- Fifth question on symbolizing a vision concerning the topic

The questions are formulated in a non-directive way. They contain words that are based on experience and feelings. They often contain more than one sentence, they are 'layered' in order to avoid a technical question-response process; they want to induce story-telling and imagination.

You can combine this interview with a number of other approaches in this guide, e.g. the question of 'power within' or the types of knowledge representing different resources. Design an interview in a way that fits the topic and needs of the group you are working with.

Make sure the interview will be in a quiet and trustful atmosphere and give the following tips to your participants:

- Please look for a quiet place and bring your full attention to your interview partner.
- Make sure your interview partner feels comfortable during the whole interview.
- Please be strict about focusing on the positive aspects of the work or the projects described.
- Check with your interview partner whether he or she agrees with the notes taken.

Example of an Appreciative Interview

From a training of NGO representatives on the way to develop projects and a network together

Fostering democracy and human rights Our ways for successful projects

You are all engaged in fostering democracy and human rights and have collected experiences with a variety of situations and settings. You know best what is happening there and what has been working well. We are now coming together to share these experiences. We want to collect moments of success you heard of and bring them together to better know in which direction we move forward as a group. We want to strengthen our strengths and develop a project. We want to become a network of added value for communities of transition.

Please ask your partner concerning the positive experiences he or she has made with fostering democracy and human rights. Imagine that you are interviewing someone after a very successful project. Do not ask like an analyst collecting „facts“ - you want to know the best stories! Watch out for interesting sentences and metaphors and write these down. Let your partner reflect to tell his / her own story and support him / her by open questioning.

1. Please tell me how you have become engaged in your NGO? What was your intrinsic motivation to get into this kind of work? What keeps up your positive spirit to continue this work (despite difficulties)? What are you enjoying most?
2. Can you remember one or two situations which were a real highlight in your context of activism? A moment when you thought: “Yes, that’s how it should always be!” How did you personally contribute to that moment? Who else was important?
3. From your experience: what are key indicators for successful NGO projects in the field of democracy and human rights?
4. Now do not be modest! Tell me what you appreciate most about yourself!
Which of these talents would you like to contribute to a common project of this group? What would really inspire you to move forward?
5. Now imagine, in two years our group is getting the „NGO Democracy and Human Rights Award for transitional countries“. Much has changed and your ideas and talents have contributed much to that. Which symbol or picture do you have for this vision, how does it look like?

4. Creative thinking – positive deviance



When developing steps to get closer to one's core values and one's vision, creative thinking can be helpful. The idea of 'positive deviance' and helpful questions for creative thinking are introduced.



Method

1. Introduce the idea of 'Positive Deviance' to the participants. Ask in plenary whether anyone could think of a 'Positive Deviant' who had faced a challenge like everybody else but has overcome this with 'deviant behavior' in an unexpected way.

2. Split the group into pairs. Ask them to look for a small story from their life when they acted in an 'odd' or 'deviant' way from everyone else which proved to be successful. Ask them to reflect as to how this positive deviance could be used in their NGO. Let them share some examples in plenary

3. Split the group into subgroups working on one project or vision (e.g. based on the Appreciative Inquiry process or the Pyramid of Goals). Introduce them to the three steps of competence, communication and capability which are necessary to develop a comprehensive strategy in project development. Let them reflect and answer the respective questions from the background information with respect to their concrete project.



Reflection

In plenary, collect important insights and visualize new ways that have opened up via creativity. Reflect the invisible barriers we all carry with us when doing things the 'normal way'. Stress the situation of transforming societies as opening up many possibilities for creative thinking and positively deviant behavior.

Background on Positive Deviance²⁰

When analyzing steps to plan the future, we often stick to mainstream options. We also know what does not work at all. What we often miss to see at all are 'positive deviants' who seem to do something with is totally against the mainstream but turned out to be very successful. They might have faced the same problem as everyone else, maybe even more severe, but have shown uncommon behavior or strategies which have proven to be very successful.

Positive Deviance connects with resource oriented approaches: in each community there are already resources to tackle challenges. Additionally, it also connects with the idea that knowledge has to be located strongly with practice; rather than analyzing abstractly and providing expert knowledge in form of information, practices of tackling one's life become the source of change.

All of this leads to more sustainable solutions since they grow from inside instead of being imposed from outside, were they often fade after a project has finished.

One classical example are observations from communities with malnutrition where there were always some positive deviants who had well-fed children and did not suffer from the usual symptoms of malnutrition. One of their (sometimes not conscious) strategy was to use food available in the community which provided all the necessary elements for good nutrition. This food was neglected by most members of the community. Focussing on the strategies of these individuals helped tackle these problems in new and unforeseen ways instead of investing in supplementary diets from outside.

Another example are the 'Yes Men'²¹ who have stopped doing demonstrations and usual protests against dominating political and societal forces. Instead of using anger in their actions, they focused on fun and laughter as the moving agent for their engagement: they acted as if they were representatives of big companies, they initiated press conferences and started websites which claimed to speak in the name of these big players. In their name they advocated for sustainable development and liberal positions. Thus they generated an enormous pressure for the 'real' companies to clarify their positions and initiated public discussions via enormous media coverage.

20 See <http://www.powerofpositivedeviance.com/> and www.positivedeviance.org

21 <http://yeslab.org/>

Thinking creatively in projects²²

Competence – culture of innovation

- Who is doing something similar as us – but much better?
- How would the industry solve such a problem?
- Which rules do we have to break in order to be successful?
- How could we be really thrilled and enthusiastic?

Communication – strategy of inspiring

- Are we seeing the challenges with the eyes of all stakeholders?
- Are the values of our work shared by others? Which values do we share?
- What would stakeholders like if there were no limitations (time, costs, personnel...)?
- Which strategy of communication do we choose?

Capability – power of doing

- Which 'windows of opportunity' could we use?
- How do we secure the potential for added value for all stakeholders?
- Which balance of investment and result is good for us?
- How are we dealing with external resistance (concerning content and person)

²² Adapted from Bertelsmann Stiftung (ed.) (2010). Mehr Strategie wagen. Strategie-Kompass für politische Reformprozesse. Gütersloh

5. The Pyramid of Goals and Risk Management



This comprehensive activity provides NGOs with a hands-on tool of doing project management²³ and always keeping in mind the visible and invisible areas of achieving change.



Method

1. Visualize the pyramid of goals and describe the 'paradox of project management':

Project. Latin: projectum = that which is thrown forward
Management. Latin: manum agere = to take one's hand

The definition of project management involves a paradox: a project is something which is not routine, something unique, new and open concerning its result. At the same time management tries to take this at one's hand, tries to guide and structure it. Only technical solutions will not be sufficient.

2. The participants write down individually important insights from previous activities in which they have worked on their motivation, talents, visions (e.g. Appreciative Inquiry), the quality criteria and skills of NGOs and their personal network of support and human resources (e.g. Mapping and analyzing stakeholders). They should mark the points which seem most important to them and which motivate them for transforming them into action (15 minutes).

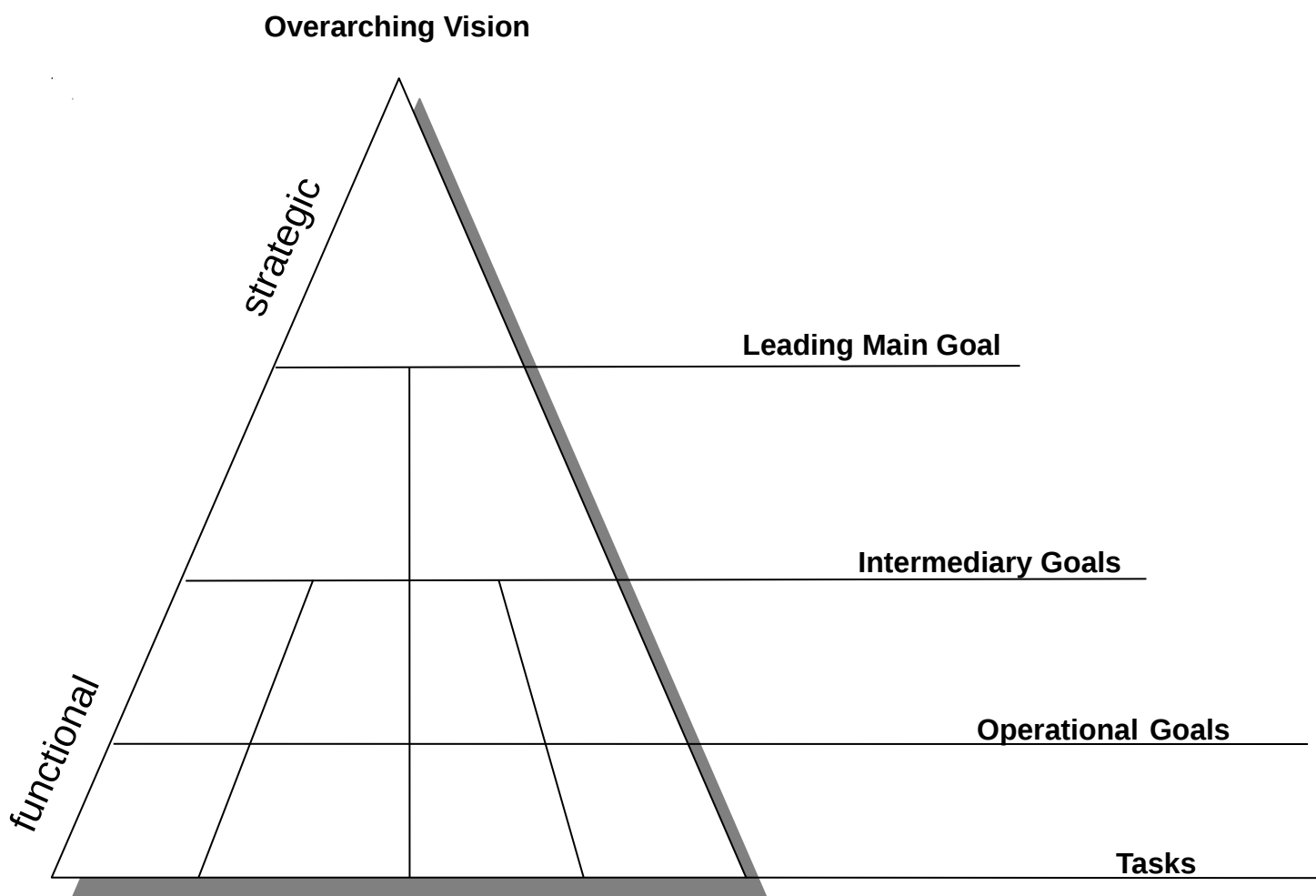
3. Participants are symbolizing a vision for their NGO. They write one sentence which is a title for this vision. The finding and formulation of the sentence is important and might need external support. Only if there is a clear vision in one sentence that really sets free the energy and talents of those doing it, will it be possible to move on.

4. The next step is to formulate a leading main goal for the vision. The leading question when moving down the pyramid is always "How can this be achieved"? Also the intermediary goals are being formulated to show sections that reflect important parts of the NGO achieving its vision. It will be easier when moving further down to define operational goals that are closer in time and easier to see when linked to tasks.

5. Participants do a check on their pyramid of goals from the bottom: for each task they can ask "Why are we doing this?" and the goal above should provide an accurate answer. Checking the operational goal, this goal should be 'answered' by the goal above, all the way up to the vision.

6. Participants are presenting their structure of goals in plenary. They mutually support each other by sharpening and focussing their approach and make it realistic, effective and strategic.

23 Compare https://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_PPM.htm



The trainers are providing some hints on formulating goals:

- Goals should be clear and must be understood by different stakeholders
- Goals should be differentiated between professional and personal goals
- Goals should be differentiated between goals for results and goals for processes
- For the strategic levels, goals should reflect the values of the vision
- For the functional level, goals should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound)
- Goals should be formulated positively as a future state of things. Words like "should", "want", "one must..." have to be avoided. They are not about defining processes (tasks will do this at the bottom level), but about how the world would look like when everything has been achieved.

Goals are not untouchable and should be regularly reviewed during circular reflections of the project:

- Are my goals still realistic and reachable?
- Are my goals still being understood by all stakeholders?
- Are there important new goals that have to be added?

7. The participants are going back to their working groups. They write down their operational goals and develop corresponding tasks for establishing a clear picture of how they can transfer their goals into reality. For each task they have to describe the following points:

- What has to be done exactly?
- Whom and what do you need for this task (stakeholders)? Who is responsible?
- How expensive will it be?
- What is the first step? When does it have to be done?

Pulling all of this together into one scheme, there will be a good structure for the project which contains a timeline and a description of goals and tasks.

Operational Goals and Tasks	Description	Stakeholders and first responsibility	Estimated costs	First step with starting date
Goal 1				
Task 1.1				
Task 1.2				
Task 1.3				
Goal 2				
Task 2.1				
Task 2.2				
Goal 3				
Task 3.1				
Task 3.2				
Task 3.3				

Hints for designing the time structure:

- Frame conditions have to be taken into consideration: holidays when important stakeholders are not accessible
- Buffer time should be integrated for being able to deal with changes so that following tasks do not have to wait
- Estimate costs – if necessary establish a budgetary plan for each task
- **Define one top priority for each month!**
- **Define milestones – times on which you are reflecting the status of the project as a whole and adjust it if necessary**

		↓ MILESTONE 1			↓ MILESTONE 2			↓ MILESTONE 3			
	Est. costs	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Task 1.1	none			■	■	■					
Task 1.2	EUR 500	■	■	■							
Task 1.3	none							■	■		
Task 2.1	none									■	■
Task 2.2	EUR 990	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Task 3.3	none			■	■	■					
Task 3.1	none										■
Task 3.2	EUR 50		■	■							
Task 3.3	EUR 250					■	■	■	■	■	

8. In plenary the projects are being presented and commented upon. As a final step, the group will enrich the projects with a risk analysis. Projects are risky. Success can be threatened, if there are conflicts among stakeholders, if the project has to be stopped, if someone is not fulfilling his / her tasks. Therefore it is useful to focus on potential risks, their likelihood of taking place and measures that could be taken in advance or in the situation of the risk actually becoming reality.

An important distinction is given by the trainers:

- External risks: there are risks beyond our reach such as changes in legislation or funding policies. These should not be explicitly be focused on
- Internals risks: there are risks within NGOs like coordinating volunteers which we can influence and which should be the focus of this activity

After the presentation, the group of participants is identifying 2-4 risks for each project.

The trainers are visualizing the following scheme and ask the responsible participants about the Importance of the respective risk for the success of the project and how likely they think this risk will actually become reality. By multiplying these two factors risks can be better estimated and be focussed upon if they get a high rating. The scheme can be visualized on a flipchart or on the floor so that participants would move from one step to the other.

Participants sit together in pairs to rate their risks and discuss why they gave this specific rating.

Finally the project coordinators propose actions to be taken to meet the risks – be it as prevention or be it on the spot. The group also provides suggestions and enrichment on that.

These can be visualized on the floor as steps to be taken to go around the risk. If the risk factor is very high, actions might be taken that so not go around the risk, but have to take a totally new direction for the project.

This activity can be enriched by using the activity stakeholder mapping to add to the actions those stakeholders which will be supportive of taking the steps needed to confront risks.

Project title:

Potential Risks	Importance for project success (1 = low / 5 = high)	Likelihood of realization (1 = low / 5 = high)	Risk factor (Importance x Likelihood = 1 - 25)	Action to be taken (as prevention and on the spot)
R1:				
R2:				
R3:				



Reflection

In a final round the participants are reflecting the results of their projects as well as the process of developing them. As this is a quite long, intense and complex activity, take enough time to go through the different steps and make sure to coach participants individually and in small groups.

6. Dealing productively with power



This activity helps becoming aware of the productive force of power which is often neglected in NGOs and 'substituted' by participation and collaboration. An exploration of the positive and negative aspects of power is essential for achieving sustainable social change²⁴.



Method

1. Present to the participants the different functions of power from the background information. Dealing with power is essential, especially in NGOs where it is often not talked about, seen as negative but still implicitly working just in any organisation. Power aspects have to be made explicit to control and use them productively.

Alternatively you could develop and visualize the situations of an NGO with different people on a flipchart and show how different forms of power are present there.

2. Divide the participants into small groups and let them find examples from their NGO where there is 'power to, power over, power with, power within'.

3. In plenary, the groups are presenting their results written on cards. The trainers add another dimension of power, the 'three faces' of power:

Open – e.g. *visibly dominating someone else*

Hidden – e.g. *rules that lead to exclusion of non-English speakers*

Invisible – e.g. *deep cultural norms assigning certain roles to men and women*

The group enters into a discussion where they can find which face of power in their NGO and how they can make invisible and hidden faces of power more explicit and transform them positively.

4. The focus is then on how to use power (especially power within) to create social change in one's NGO. Each participant reflects on power resources he or she has and makes a list how they could be supportive or hindering for achieving change. In some cases a power resource can be supportive and preventive at the same time.

5. After the individual reflection, let the participants reflect in pairs which is their 2 most productive and 2 most preventive resources of power.



Reflection

In a final round participants share their most productive power resources and let themselves be inspired by each other.

²⁴ Compare www.powercube.net for a comprehensive analysis of power. There you can download the this publication: Power Pack. Understanding Power for Social Change.

Reflection sheet on power for achieving social change

Power resource	Supportive for social change (Why? Give an example!)	Preventive of social change (Why? Give an example!)
My position		
My capital		
My social class		
My culture		
My gender		
My living location		
My knowledge		
My network		
My physicality		
My personality		
My...		
My...		
My...		
My..		

Background on Power

Often power is seen as a negative concept, but power is not necessarily repressive, prohibitive, or exclusionary (although it can be all of these things): Power can also be positive. The French philosopher Michel Foucault states: "We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it 'excludes', it 'represses', it 'censors', it 'abstracts', it 'masks', it 'conceals'. In fact, power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production"²⁵. So power can be used in a more positive sense, referring to the power to bring about a desired change in personal life or in the structures surrounding us.

Power is not positive or negative by itself, it can have different functions²⁶:

1. Power to

This is a basic expression of power that most of us possess: it may be small and circumvented by various conditions, but we almost always have some ability to act according to our own will.

2. Power over

This is the opportunity to force someone to change their behavior involuntarily. Anyone who possesses such power has the obvious potential to transform situation in a certain direction. However, this expression of power has to be handled with caution. To achieve long-lasting change, power over has to be considered legitimate, e.g. by being executed or mandated by an elected body.

3. Power with

This is the ability to share use synergy and alliances with others, and the ability to combine powers by acting together or bringing together knowledge, resources and strategies collectively. It can reduce social conflicts and creatively build bridges between different interests.

4. Power within

Power within is the capacity to imagine something different and formulate aspirations about change. It is about self-worth and self-knowledge. It is a pre-condition for taking action. Exploring this expression of power is a precondition for expressing power to, power over and power with.

25 Foucault, Michel (1997). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, London, p. 194

26 Hunjan, Raji Hunjan / Pettit, Jethro (2011). *Power: a practical guide for facilitating social change*. London, available at: <http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/publications/power-a-practical-guide-for-facilitating-social-change/>

7. Coaching by colleagues



Instead of trying to eliminate existing problems, participants in this activity learn how to redefine problems as personal challenges. These are presented and the resources of a group of colleagues are used to comprehensively analyse the personal challenge and develop a number of possible perspectives for the future.



Method

1. Introduce to participants the difference between problems and personal challenges²⁷ and visualize this on a flipchart.

Very often we define difficult situations in the context of NGOs as a problem to be solved. Talking about problems implies an external perspective. Something 'out there' has to be solved. The world view connected with this is often deficit based and has the assumption of being able to technically solve the problem in a linear way (compare the approach of Appreciative Inquiry in this practitioner's guide).

The first step is to redefine problems we see in our NGOs, our projects or around us as 'personal challenges'. Personal challenges are

- open question
- contain the word "I..."
- are formulated with a positive potential for the future
- are able to be (partially) tackled by the person having the personal challenge
- deal with values and personal attitude

Example: Someone might formulate this problem: "The problem is that our volunteers are not reliable and do what they want." This sounds not very hopeful and points in the direction of control and sanctions

A re-formulation as a personal challenge might be: "I want to improve my ways of motivating and inspiring our volunteers in what they agreed to do in our NGO." In this way it sounds more creative and pointing towards a new future with new ideas.

27 Schulz von Thun, Friedemann (1999): Praxisberatung in Gruppen, Weinheim und Basel, p. 27ff.

2. Form pairs to collect personal challenges from the participants which will be the starting point for a coaching by colleagues.

Ask each pair to think about personal challenges they want to bring to the group. In each pair the partners help each other to individually formulate personal challenges (they should not formulate one together)

These could be

- A concrete difficult situations in the NGO or a project
- Something about one's own role or decisions to be taken
- General, also theoretical questions of working with an NGO

Variation: to more intensely prepare for the finding of personal challenges, all participants are asked to draw a picture or symbol of a difficulty they face. By looking at the picture together, they develop the formulation of each personal challenge together.

Ask participants to find a pointed 'newspaper headline' or 'film title' for their personal challenge.

3. Ask the participants to individually elaborate their personal challenge in a way that is formulated according to the criteria shown above.

Cluster the challenges on a board and try to find headlines for different groups of challenges. Decide with the group of participants with which challenge you want to start.

It is important to start with a concrete personal challenge of one person and not with general ones. Once you have gone through one concrete case, very often other participants already find new perspectives for their own similar cases.

4. Show to participants the following 7 steps of a coaching by colleagues²⁸ on a flipchart and leave this visible for the following steps. Explain to participants that this method uses the resources and experiences of colleagues instead of relying on external expertise. It is especially useful in situations of NGOs when there is no professional or institutionalized offer from outside.

Then invite the case giver to sit next to you with a 'coaching group' of about 4-5 participants in a separate circle around and facilitate these 7 steps.



Reflection

Reflect the method with participants and make them share where they could apply the coaching by colleagues.

28 Rabenstein, Reinhold / Reichel, Rene (2001). Kreativ beraten: Methoden und Strategien für kreative Beratungsarbeit, Coaching und Supervision. Aachen

The following seven steps should be explained before facilitating the method. *The explanations in italics should not be visualized but give hints to the facilitator when explaining the method.*

Coaching by colleagues – The 7 Steps

1. Presentation of personal challenge with a specific situation by case giver

Speaking to the facilitator / trainer, the coaching group is just listening.

2. Associations by the coaching group: "This reminds me of...when I here this, I Think, I feel like..."

Shows the case giver that he/she is not alone, the problem is expanded to a larger group of people giving a feeling of sharing. There should be no discussion among the coaching group, just sharing similar experiences.

3. Asking clarification questions by the coaching group

No discussion with the case giver, but making the case more clear.

4. Mirroring by the coaching group a: "I as 'case giver' in this situation feel, think..."

Mirroring by the coaching group b: "I as a person also involved in the situation (team member, director, friend, other conflict party...) feel, think..."

Changing perspective, allowing the case giver to hear his/her own voice and the 'other voices' from those affected by the case.

5. Feedback by case giver: "This is correct, this is new and interesting to me, this is different from my situation..."

Case giver shares his/her reactions and thus appreciates the contributions of the coaching group, shares how they function as a resource.

6. Collections of creative future ideas and solutions by the coaching group.

Facilitator writes down each idea without censorship. Everybody can contribute ideas, also the facilitator and those observing the case beyond the coaching group.

7. Feedback on the ideas by case giver: "This is useful, this I tried already, this is not something I will do..."

Facilitator marks with green those ideas which are useful and in this ways highlights new ways to go about with the personal challenge in the future.