A DIALOGUE GUIDE FOR CSOS:

METHODS AND ISSUE-BASED APPROACH

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INTRODUCTION

This guide was prepared to compile our experience in two problematic fields we focus on and to share our experiences with other CSOs. i) CSOs are usually seen as ineffective by the public, citizens and other stakeholders; ii) CSOs only develop relationships with other CSOs that work in the same field and that are similar. These two issues are significantly intertwined. CSOs cannot contain experience in areas with a different worldview and/or in different fields; they develop their relationships based on where they stand regarding the issue and not focus on the issue itself. This causes the same issue not to be nourished from differences in terms of both worldview and issue and as a result, knowledge and experience generated cannot be extended to differences and thus becomes ineffective. This ineffective state becomes visible both to citizens and public administration (Perceptions and Approaches to Civil Society Organizations, YADA Foundation, 2015).

The main weakness of many studies carried out in order to strengthen the dialogue of CSOs with each other and public administration is reminding, underlining or experiencing methods and opportunities that make dialogue possible for only those that are alike. However, the main point that prevents the differences from coming together and seeking cooperation is that a similar polarization is observed in the civil society just in the political and social sphere. In this respect, this polarization should be underlined, current conflicts should be discussed and an effective roadmap that could eliminate this polarization should be planned.

This guide offers an "issue-based" approach for the dialogue between civil society organizations. The main basis of this approach is to develop skills so that institutions are not limited only to their worldview, they can talk and discuss an issue they are trying to resolve by not crossing the borders of this issue. We wanted to record our experience we gained in the light of our knowledge and field studies on this approach and to share it with CSOs. We hope that this guide will give ideas and inspiration on why it is important and effective for different CSOs to get together with their experience and expertise, without leaving aside their differences and how this can be possible.

DIALOGUE AND ISSUE-BASED DIALOGUE

WHAT DO WE UNDERSTAND FROM DİALOGUE?

It is possible to say that a dialogue can take place at different levels from gathering together for an event to cooperation. On the other hand, the lack of social dialogue and the impact of political conditions causes possibility of different levels of dialogue to vary. In an environment where polarization increases and differences avoid coming together, it can be an important acquisition for differences to come together and speak and listen to each other actively. Ideally, the institutions should engage with all stakeholders through cooperation in all situations and levels about the issue they focus on while seeking solutions.

Based on this, it is possible to talk about the following steps in which the base of the pyramid describes the situation that is the furthest from the ideal:



The possibility of a dialogue between different civil society organizations (associations, foundations, platforms, initiatives, social initiatives, etc.) usually takes place at common events providing a common ground. Thanks to this common ground, these institutions get the chance to discover common problems, realize their unique contribution to the solution and come together for finding a solution. Issue-based dialogue is also an original approach to establishing this common ground.

ISSUE-BASED DIALOGUE

Issue-based dialogue can be defined as different CSOs with different political, social, cultural, ethnic, etc. backgrounds and working in different fields to come together around a common issue/topic; to discuss such issue in line with their differences and experiences and discover possibilities for cooperation during these discussions. It is of utmost importance for the resolution of issues for institutions from different political and thematic backgrounds to work together based on a strategy they built together for the solution of the problems, without focusing on each other's ontological differences.

The active participation of CSOs in decision-making mainly depends on the dialogue. According to YADA's "Perception and Approaches to CSOs in Turkey" research both public authorities and citizens believe that participation of CSOs in decision-making is a prerequisite for democracy. However, both citizens and CSO representatives underline the lack of communication, dialogue and cooperation between CSOs.

One of the most important findings revealed by the research was that both citizens and public administrators view CSOs as ineffective, confrontational and lacking the ability to negotiate. This ineffectiveness is possibly caused by the lack of dialogue among CSOs. The research revealed that CSOs rate their performance and reputation as 8.5 out of 10 and other CSOs' performance as 5.7. The main issue here is that CSOs do not follow each other's work and efforts and are not positively affected by each other. As the political and social polarization in Turkey is reflected to the cooperation between CSOs; CSOs assess each other not with the issues they address but with their identities. Yet, if there is no reason to discuss their existence and ontologies, CSOs may come together on a common ground and work together on their common issues. CSOs to get together enhances their impact capacity and accelerates the path to solution. Accordingly, the need for a negotiable civil society also becomes evident.

There are two main factors required for issue-based dialogue: 1) Creation of a common ground

where everyone will feel equally belonging to and able to share and 2) rationalist and neutral methods for conflict resolution due to differences getting together. In the following sections, sample practices, approaches and methods will be provided about these two factors.

EXAMPLES OF INSTITUTIONS AND PRACTICES ON ISSUE-BASED DIALOGUE APPROACH

The concepts of conflict resolution, common ground and dialogue are used in many fields from politics to academia, from professional life to everyday life. When we consider these concepts in terms of civil society, especially in the areas of war and physical conflict, there are processes in which civil society is the subject in order to establish peace.

While there are numerous institutions working for peacebuilding in the world, the number of institutions focusing on the solution of social problems and creating and establishing conflict resolution and dialogue in this field is very small. When the theoretical and practical contribution to the field is considered, the Search for Common Ground and Berghof Foundation are revealed as examples.

In Turkey, while there are important areas of practice for peacebuilding in the political space, it is observed that the information and experience of this field is not reflected adequately to the practices of the civil society. In this respect, examining the "Meydan" (Square) model of YADA, which accepts the transformative power of civil society and is nurtured by national and international conflict resolution practices, will be guiding in terms of building dialogue-based common grounds.

SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND[1]

With headquarters in Washington and Brussels, active in geographies spanning from Africa to the Middle East, from Europe to the United States, the Search for Common Ground's main aim is to end violent conflict. Its focus area is "conflict transformation" method, which is based on developing common solutions for the everyday conflicts of the parties. The method is based on bringing together the differences and establishing a common discussion practice.

It carries out its works under the headings Dialogue+, Media+ and Community+. Within the scope of the Dialogue+ program, it performs works for national or international individuals to discover common goals and to take action together striving for these goals. Within the scope of the Media+ program, it creates content on the discussion on main causes of violence and overcoming differences to share through media. On the other hand, under the Community+ program, support that will establish a ground to societies who

1 https://www.sfcg.org/

take steps to resolve conflicts at the local level is offered. All these works are conducted together with artists, children and youth, media workers, soldiers and law enforcement, political leaders, prisoners, religious leaders and women.

BERGHOF FOUNDATION

The Berghof Foundation defines itself as an independent, non-profit CSO supporting efforts to prevent political and social violence and to achieve sustainable peace through conflict transformation. Acting with the mission of "creating space for conflict transformation", the Foundation develops partnerships for creating non-violent responses to conflict-related challenges of the parties and creates knowledge, skills and resources for this field. Berghof Foundation makes significant contribution to the field of conflict resolution and peacebuilding through its activities and guides it prepares.[2]

Founded in 1971 during the Cold War and based in Berlin, Berghof Foundation conducts its activities in Africa, the Caucasus, Latin America and the Middle East & North Africa and focuses on 3 main topics: 1) research on conflict transformation 2) mediation and dialogue support; and 3) peace education and global learning.

"MEYDAN" (SQUARE) MODEL

"Meydan" (Square) model believes in the transformative power of civil society in democratization and builds grounds for the civil society to talk to each other regarding common issues, to listen to and understand each other and develop collaborative solutions by including their fields of expertise and differences in these efforts.

"Meydan" (Square) model developed by the YADA Foundation was implemented for the first time in June 2018 and continues to bring together civil society organizations around a common issue in different sizes and with different contents.

2 https://www.berghof-foundation.org

"MEYDAN" (SQUARE) MANIFESTO

The Square exists to become a common civil society ground that can deepen the issues addressed by it against the polarizing effect of politics created by turning the ethical, religious and cultural identity-based diversity into a power-oriented shallow competition.

The Square exists to become a respected civil society platform that has an impact on the opinions of citizens and in decision-making of public administration, politicians and the private sector.

The Square exists to enable the Turkish civil society to face the contribution it provides to polarization, create a democratic discussion environment where no one claims more rights than the others and talk without trying to convince each other to become similar.

The Square exists to enable Turkish civil society's possibilities of cooperation with those who are unlike, to create a new dialogue, discussion and cooperation model.

The Square exists to share the skills of civil society organizations to adopt, discover, define, raise the agenda and to provide information and solutions to social and environmental issues.

The Square exists to be an area of conversation, instead of debate on a common ground shared by those who support different identities and issues in civil society.

The Square exists for CSOs to explore, carry to the agenda, discuss solution options, to listen, tell what they know, understand what they learn and to be able to accumulate information on the issues of Turkey.

The Square exists for those without a word to discover their words, to enable them to say what they have to say.

This Square was established for everyone: There is room for everyone in the Square!

"Meydan" (Square) Meetings:

- "Come to the Square to Talk About the Cities. That Belongs to All of Us!", Istanbul, June 20, 2018
- "Refugee Issue, Whose Issue Is It?" Ankara, November 13, 2018
- "Where do Local Governments Stand in Education?", Istanbul, July 30, 2019

"Meydan" (Square) Workshops:

- "Opportunities for Education and Cooperation", Istanbul, April 4, 2019
- "Being Disabled in Turkey", Diyarbakır, June 25, 2019
- "Living Together in the City: Where Does Civil Society Stand?" Ankara, June 11, 2019

The Square brings together the different actors of civil society on two common grounds as "Square Meetings" and "Square Workshops". The "conflict areas," which mature after the "Square Meetings" with wide participation and potential cooperation grounds are deepened in Square Workshops held with smaller groups.

The Square events focus on the following 3 key criteria in order to reinforce a culture of negotiation while determining a key issue:

- Serving the establishment of coexistence and social peace,
- Where CSOs may continue common discussions on a common ground, including their differences,
- Selecting an issue that will bring together different institutions from different backgrounds and fields of operation.

After these selections, the main conflict areas of all themes are identified. While determining these areas of conflict, attention is paid to diversity of the fields of operation and also, representation of different political backgrounds. For example, when an event in the field of education is being set up, the focus is on approaches of both CSOs that focus education, art education, education of disadvantaged groups, sex education and also CSOS that focus on issues such as religious education, educational problems of Alawites, contemporary education opportunities.

The main philosophy behind Square meetings is not for the participating individuals and/or institutions to come to a mutual agreement, call each other to their own positions and try to persuade each other but create a basis for negotiation. In this respect, it is expected from these individuals and/or institutions to express themselves with regards to the issue, establish opinions in line with their expertise and background. Existence of an environment in which there is room for discussion, also help explore possible collaboration opportunities in some cases. If such opportunities are explored, it becomes possible to experience the processes in which their own fields of operation are reviewed, and the support required in these fields are sought and which result in short term and solution-oriented collaborations in the final stage[3].

3 For sample reports of the Square events, please see: http://meydanda.org/sehir/, http://meydanda.org/multeci/

DESIGN OF COMMON GROUNDS ENABLING DIALOGUE

In this section, we will discuss ways to build inclusive and solution-oriented common grounds that will strengthen the dialogue between CSOs by following national and international negotiation practices.

FIRST STEP: IDENTIFYING THE NEED FOR A DIALOGUE AND AREAS OF CONFLICT

The prerequisite for creating a common ground that will enable dialogue and allow negotiation is to determine the need for dialogue. The following set of questions can be used as a guide in identifying the need:

- What are the main factors that turn the matter we're dealing with into an "issue"?
- Who are the representatives and subjects of these factors?
- What should be done to eliminate these factors? What are the obstacles in doing them? What are the resistance points or cooperation potentials?
- What is the place of CSOs in this picture?
- Where does civil society see the solution at? Are there differences in solution suggestions?
- Who are the representatives of the approaches that represent different solutions? Do these representatives get together? If not, what are the obstacles in them getting together? How can these obstacles be overcome?

The critical point in asking all these is the organization organizing the event to carry out a research by putting aside its own position and observe all possible positions and that will include all different institutions and positions. This research can be carried out through extensive social research; however, a well-designed desk research will also provide important clues. At this stage news published on Civil Pages[4] on this issue may be an important source.

SECOND STEP: DETERMINING THE METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The findings of the desk research represent an important beginning in terms of revealing the areas of conflict and the representatives of this approach. In the second stage, it is necessary to decide how a ground for negotiation that will bring differences together and do not allow any dominant position can be established by participative methods.

4 Civil Pages, www.sivilsayfalar.org

Asking the following questions may contribute the determination of the methodological approach at this stage:

- **Purpose:** What is the purpose and the intended result of the dialogue?
- **Target group:** Who are expected to become a part of this dialogue? Have all relevant stakeholders been considered in a way that they can be involved in this dialogue?
- **Group size:** What is the size of the target group? How many people/institutions are expected to be involved in this process?
- **Environment and infrastructure:** What kind of resources do we have to conduct this dialogue? How can we use, and which resources can we use?
- **Language:** If the parties to the dialogue speak different languages, what measures can we take to make communication possible? Do we have opportunities to meet the necessary translation requirements?

The methods to be followed in determining the methodological approach will vary according to the size of the obstacles. For example, in a picture where dialogue has never been established and it is not possible for institutions to physically get together, it may be possible to bring institutions together on an online discussion environment, by allowing them to turn this gathering into a joint text. When working with institutions that are concerned about getting together and do not have such kind of practice, but these concerns can be overcome in certain ways, close idea exchange meetings can be held. Such meetings enable mutual exchange of ideas and also the representatives of the organization can act more freely and analyze existing obstacles more clearly.

In cases where different institutions and organizations get together through certain meetings but are so far from cooperation, meetings with open invitation, with high participation using different methods stand out. While the content and moderation of these meetings is harder, it may help establish important grounds for the institutions with potential.

THIRD STEP: SET UP OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE

After having decided on the methodology of the meeting, reviewing the following technical details is critical to identify the infrastructure of the negotiable common ground:

- **Requirements for the protocol:** What are the ways to overcome the obstacles of participation in the dialogue environment and to make it possible for everyone to participate in the dialogue? For example, can the required leaves be taken for an officer to participate to a weekday meeting? Or can the women's needs be met in a dialogue meeting with a group of women who have problems leaving the house? Or will the needs

of the group be met in a meeting to be held with religious groups (prayer times, etc.)?

- **Timing:** When is this dialogue supposed to take place and is this a suitable time frame for the targeted individuals? The date proposed for the event should not coincide with religious and official holidays and it is important for participation for such date not to be right after or before such holidays.
- **Determining a suitable place for dialogue:** If a meeting where participants physically get together is agreed; the venue should allow all participants to easily see and hear each other. It may be useful to examine the possibilities and limits of the venue and review the possibilities such as a circle arrangement that allow panel and play set up. At the same time, it should be considered whether the venue is in a central location, that there is nothing about the venue that represents something with regards to the polarizations to be discussed, that it is "neutral" and is located in a neighborhood where all participants will feel comfortable.
- **Food and beverage organization:** The presence of areas where participants can get water, tea/coffee during the meetings is important for the healthy continuation of the meeting. In addition, lunch should be organized in long meetings for the meeting not to be interrupted. It is important to observe people with different preferences and sensitivities (vegan/vegetarian, allergies, etc.) during the organization of the meals for the course of the meeting.
- **Making the venue suitable for the meeting:** Measures to ensure that all participants feel comfortable during the meeting should be taken; music suitable for the venue and the nature of the issue should be played; low-cost small decorative elements such as small potted flowers may also motivate participation.

FOURTH STEP: DETERMINATION AND INVITATION OF PARTICIPANTS

The process of invitations and the determination of the participants is the most important stage for the preparation of a platform for dialogue. The approach of participating individuals and institutions and the diversity in their political/religious background should always be considered at each stage.

- **Preparation for invitation:** The invitation texts should be clear, explain the scope of the event and should be simple and legible. Preparing an application form to accompany the invitation at this stage is also crucial. Thus, it is possible to learn the name, phone number, corporate information and also their motivations and expectations from the meeting (measures for the confidentiality and storage of personal data should be taken for such documents requiring such information and the

reference laws should be examined). Thanks to this information, a pre-study of participant profile can be carried out and the content of the meeting can be revised according to the feedback of the participants.

- **Invitation type:** It is important that the invitation to the events is first an open call. However, open call invitations have limits in terms of reaching the target audience and ensuring group diversity. In this respect, in order to achieve diversity, direct invitations should be sent out in addition to the open call. In order to achieve this, a list of related institutions and individuals should be prepared, and these lists should first be contacted online and then by phone and it should be confirmed that the invitations have been received. It is also important to work with individuals who previously worked directly with institution at the stage of list preparation and forwarding of invitations. Especially support of participants who are knowledgeable about the areas of conflicts and in direct contact with the parties of the conflict at meetings that are expected to create a ground for dialogue, directly enhance the efficiency of the meeting thus the diversity of participants.
- **Scheduling of Invitations:** The invitations should be made in a timely manner, if possible, at least 2 weeks and at most 1 month before the meeting. If application method has been used for the invitations, the deadlines must be set for the confirmation mails and calls should be made after all these invitations are forwarded in order to finalize the participation status.

FIFTH STEP: MANAGEMENT OF THE MEETING AND COLLECTION OF OUTPUTS

In order to direct the flow and outputs of the meeting correctly and improve efficiency, it is necessary to determine the meeting principles and to agree with the participants on these principles at the beginning of the meeting. These principles can be grouped in three main categories:

1. Principles with regards to the type and content of the communication and dialogue to be established during the meeting,
2. Principles regarding how to share the information and knowledge produced during the meeting,
3. Principles for practice for a better meeting.

1. Principles regarding type of communication and dialogue can be reviewed at each meeting depending on the requirements of the meeting however, for dialogue, especially issue-based dialogue to occur, it is important to adopt the following basic principles:

- Listen, understand and avoid interfering with other participants,
- Be open to the point of view of other participants,

- Not to call any idea as good or right and to focus on just hearing ideas,
- Not to invite anyone to their own position; not try to persuade,
- Rather than striving for ideas to be shared, focusing on the open sharing of different ideas.

2. The principles of knowledge and sharing relate more to how organizers of the meeting get the approval of the participants about the method to be followed in sharing the produced information:

- Where and how the meeting outcomes will be shared should be clearly noted.
- If reporting is carried out with methods such as taking notes on the computer and taking audio records to be decoded later, the approval of the participants regarding these methods should be obtained.
- The approval of the participants should be obtained for sharing the photos taken during the event together with the reports or related news texts.

3. Principles for practice for a better meeting may vary from meeting to meeting. The main examples that may apply to all meetings are as follows:

- Compliance with the scheduled times and presence of all participants at the meeting place before the stated time.
- Use of devices such as mobile phones and computers only when it is necessary for meeting.
- Compliance with predetermined time intervals during speeches; respecting the time allowed to other participants.

After all these principles are stated, the approval and feedback from the participants should be obtained. The agreed principles to be hanged in a visible location at the meeting hall might be beneficial for referencing the agreement when necessary.

SIXTH STEP: REPORTING AND SHARING OUTPUTS

Compiling the meeting outputs and sharing them with the participants in the approved manner is obligatory for an effective meeting. It is necessary to ensure that all discussions are reflected on the reports and that they are classified and analyzed in an understandable manner. The report should be easy to follow with short, brief and intermediate headings. In addition, a flow of information is needed to help track down the opportunities for communication and collaboration in issue-based dialogue event reports. Another point is that if direct quotes will be given in the report, the approval of the quoted individuals should be obtained and if possible, anonymized.

DIALOGUE BASED PRACTICE METHODS

The differences being together brings along certain conflicts that may contribute to the solution and both the design and moderation of the process gain importance. At this stage, there are different internationally accepted methods and "tactics" for correct and efficient management of the process. We compiled a review of these methods in this section.

After the goals and criteria for the content are determined, the methods for achieving these goals should be determined. Some of these methods can be listed as follows[5]:

- Open space technology
- World Café
- Mind Mapping
- Common Ground

OPEN SPACE TECHNOLOGY[6]



Time: 1+ hour (as long as you want)

Group size: 15+

Materials: Note papers or post-it, large poster, pens/markers, tape

5 When compiling information on the methods, the "Facilitation Based on Earth" file of Yesworld! And EKOIQ Journal 78th Edition. For full methods and detailed information, see. https://www.yesworld.org and http://ekoiq.com/arsiv/ekoiq_sayi_78_d.pdf

6 For more information on Open Space Technology, visit openspaceworld.org.

Purpose of the Method

Open Space Technology (OST) is a method that discovered coffee breaks are the most productive part of conferences. Because coffee breaks provide a productive ground for people to meet and explore the issues, they are most interested in. In this respect, they allow discussions and workshops under participatory leadership. OST enables seeing a "summary" of the group as it supports self-designed learning.

Practice Steps

A. Remind the principles and rules and agree: There are 4 main principles and a rule for the correct implementation of OST. 4 main principles are;

1. **Anyone who decided to participate is the "right" person:** Do not focus on who is missing and does not participate. The presence of those who decided to participate in the conversation is enough for the start of a fruitful discussion.

2. **Focus on the achievements of the discussion, not on expectations:** Try not being guided by expectations. Do not worry about what might happen; focus on what is happening, what the discussion will bring.

3. **It starts when it starts:** Whenever you start, this is the right time for that discussion.

4. **It ends when it ends:** Manage your time. If you think that the discussion has matured or deepened, you may finish the work before the time reserved. Or if you need more time, you can create more time.

The main rule determined to enhance the impact of OST is called "two feet law" The rule underlines that the group is given the freedom to participate or not to the discussion and an unstructured discussion environment is provided. The participants have the freedom to go anywhere they think they will learn from and/or contribute to. In this respect, participants may enter any kind of discussion environment; attend a single discussion or not participate in any discussions.

B. Specify topics: Hand out a pencil and a piece of paper to take notes. "Now take a few moments and think about what you want to talk about in this part of the event, which topic you want to raise. Write it down on the paper/post-it whenever you are ready."

Give the group a few minutes to write. Write topic suggestions in a visible place and if possible, together with the person making the suggestion, add a heading to the topic.

After you write all the topic suggestions in an area visible to everyone, invite those who provided a suggestion to give a short introduction speech (half a minute), to share detailed information

about the topic they want to discuss and to invite other participants to the discussion. Ask the owners of the topic suggestions to determine where they want to have the discussion before they start their discussion, and to indicate where they should come when inviting participants to the discussion.

C. **Watch open space discussions:** Participants can join the OST method in 3 different ways: 1) Suggest a topic they think should be discussed and invite the participants to the discussion; 2) Participate to discussion of topics and become a participant of the group; 3) Visit, listen and contribute to discussion groups without focusing on a topic. The participants may contribute to the discussion by selecting one of these 3 roles. Moderators may visit or participate to discussion groups and take notes.

WORLD CAFÉ[7]

Time: 30+ minutes (as long as you want)

Group size: 8+

Materials: Large Poster, Pens/Markers
Note papers or Post-it, Tape (optional)

Purpose of the Method

World Café is a very simple, effective and flexible methodology for hosting large-scaled group dialogue as a means of collectively developing ideas. The purpose in this method is to obtain a collective result by enabling the accumulation of different ideas in a cumulative manner.

Practice Steps

1. The number of tables are determined according to the number of individuals and the topic to be discussed; there should be at least 2 tables to use this method.
2. For an effective discussion, there should be at least 4 and a maximum of 10-12 participants at each table. Make as many rounds as there are tables.
3. Determine the topic of each table. The main topic of each table should be fixed throughout the discussion.
4. A facilitator/moderator should be present at each

7 You can find out more about World Café at <Theworldcafe.com>

table and facilitators/moderators should stay at their tables throughout all sessions to manage the discussions; becoming the memory of the table.

5. Participants divided into different tables should discuss a different question/issue. Thus, various issues are brought to the agenda and discussed at the same time.
6. A large poster and different colored pens should be present at each table, the question/issue should be written on the poster before the session and preparations should be made by adding tables, etc. if necessary.
7. The moderators should introduce themselves to the table at the start of the first session. After this brief introduction, the participants should discuss their ideas about the topics set for their table; moderators should simultaneously note down keywords of the discussion on the poster.
8. If there is a large number of participants (10-12) at the table, the moderators can give everyone a turn respectively in order to use the time efficiently and give everyone a say by keeping time. The duration of the session may vary between 15-40 minutes depending on the number of participants and the topic.
9. The participants should switch tables (if there are 2 tables with each other, if there are 3+ tables by moving to the table on their left/right) after the first session and settle in their new tables.
10. Once everyone is settled, the moderators remaining at the tables should summarize the discussion with the previous group and the contributions of the participants and request contribution from the new group. Thus, all participants can express their opinions on all topics/questions and contribute. Using a different color pen in each round can be useful to keep track of which contributions were made in which round.
11. After all rounds are made, what was discussed during all sessions should be shared with the whole group by the table moderators. A table or presentation template can be created to summarize what was discussed. The expression times of table outputs should be equal or close to each other.

MIND MAPPING



Time: 45 m + hour (as long as you want)

Group size: 1+

Materials: Large Poster, Pens/Markers

Purpose of the Method

Mind mapping technique offers a concrete view of ideas, thoughts about a topic, issue or a concept and how they are connected. While it can be done individually, it can also be done as a group. The events motivate participants to think about the agenda and to warm them up. It is usually implemented after the introduction before to the main session. In maps created as a group, the participants get the opportunity to compare their knowledge with the group.

Practice Steps

1. **Determine the Concepts**
   Specify concept(s) that reflect the purpose of the event with your team. You can aim to create small maps by selecting multiple concepts or to create a large map by selecting the main concept related to the topic. For example, if the agenda is human rights, you can focus more on the human rights concept or use two different posters with the concepts right and human.

2. **Invite participants to take part.**
   Write the concept(s) you determined in capital letters in the middle of the poster and circle the concept. Tell the participants that they can share the first words that come to their minds when they see the concept. Ask them if they associate the words they say with the main concept or another word related to the main concept. Mark the connections between the words.

3. **End when you are sure everyone is done.**
   The ideal time for the mind mapping ends with the participants saying all the words about the concept. If you think that participants still have something to say, you can say that participants who understood the method may keep adding words to the map throughout the event.

COMMON GROUND

Time: 20+ minutes (as long as you want)

Group size: Unlimited

Purpose of the Method

It enables participants to learn about each other in a short time. It helps discover similarities and differences between individuals who have little or no knowledge of each other. This warms up the group and prepares them for the next session.

Practice Steps

1. Ensure that the participants sit in a circle, then explain the method.
2. Ask participants to share a sentence about themselves, specific to them, describing themselves or explaining themselves. Note that they should take a step forward while doing this. The person taking a step forward should wait a short while before stepping back.
3. Say to the other participants to take one step forward if they agree with that person, if they believe they have same characteristics or if there are any similarities between them. If the other participants agree with what has been shared but not fully, they can also take a half step, or simply extend the tip of their foot. Participants are not obliged to take any steps even if they find similarities. The choice is entirely up the participants.
4. After the sharing and with the other participants taking steps and some standing where they were, an inner circle is formed. After a short while for all participants to see each other, the participants should return to their initial places. Allow someone else to share and proceed in the same manner.
5. Decide what time to end the session depending on the group dynamics. Encourage those who have not shared anything at the end of the first 10 minutes.

CONCLUSION AND ASSESSMENT

The mission of CSOs to influence the society's opinion and decisions of the decision makers reveal their potential to play a transformative role in resolving many social issues. On the other hand, research demonstrate that the civil society in Turkey is very successful in describing social and environmental issues, analyzing causes of issues and creating knowledge regarding these issues, however, is inadequate to influence opinions of citizens and decisions of the politicians and public administration.

The civil society publishes reports and engages in projects regarding issues from environmental problems to children's rights, from social gender inequality to animal's rights, from human rights violations to urban issues. However, this knowledge and experience is often not well known among the actors of the civil society or is limited in reaching the target audience. The main cause of this problem, which reduces the impact of civil society, is building barriers based on identities and themes.

Becoming introverted due to identities is the reflection of Turkish politics on the civil society. CSOs working on religious identity, ethnic identity and cultural identity are experiencing some kind of introversion and do not engage with other identities that do not resemble them. When they do engage, it is observed that such relationship is a more confrontational and non-negotiating one. Thematic introversion is shaped around the issues. Environmental organizations only focus on the environment and women's organizations on women's issues and there is no link between them. The lack of relation between CSOs that explore different issues and seek solution; lack of a negotiating environment, render civil society ineffective against decision makers and also, causes an important loss in terms of democracy in Turkey.

Lack of dialogue is one of the main reasons that weaken the power of CSOs to influence decisions and opinions. CSOs cannot contain experience in areas with a different worldview and/or in different fields; they develop their relationships based on where they stand regarding the issue and not focus on the issue itself. This causes the same issue not to be nourished from differences in terms of both worldview and issue and as a result, knowledge and experience generated cannot be extended to differences and thus becomes ineffective.

Issue-Based Dialogue approach is a new agenda for strengthening civil society dialogue. Presence of a process in which differences come together, different political parties get together and resolve issues is only possible by the right acts of actors at the right time, who are willing to proceed this process

and follow up the dialogue in Turkey with different factors and in the daily life among civil society. Therefore, different actors carrying out studies on issue-based dialogue has the potential to contribute to increasing the influence, strengthening of civil society in Turkey and then, establishing social peace and democratization. In this respect, we hope that this guide will be enriched with the contributions and feedback of the institutions and individuals carrying out studies in this field and contribute to the diversity of cooperation-based dialogue approaches.

WORLDWIDE EXAMPLES FOR NATIONAL DIALOGUE

NATIONAL DIALOGUE EXAMPLE: TUNISIA[8]

During our study visits in Tunisia to develop this guide, we met with different actors working on the National Dialogue process in Tunisia. We can summarize the unique characteristics of this movement and the processes that can set an example for Turkey based on what these actors shared about the National Dialogue process in Tunisia:

Tunisia, with almost all of its population, is officially a Muslim country. While intense conflicts due to minorities/majorities are rare, main tensions are between secular/laic and religious sections of the society. This tension is in line with the course of the political conjuncture over the years. After the ruling of the French ended, Tunisia became independent in1956 and the Republic was in 1957. This was made possible by the resistance that took place since the 1930s under the leadership of Habib Bourguiba and the main feature of the early period republic was a dominant management approach based on secularism and modernization. This period, known for the prohibition of polygamy, became renowned with its pro-Western policies. General Zeynelabidin bin Ali replaced Bourguiba, who was head of state until his death in 1987. Bin Ali, who won 99% of the votes in the parliamentary elections in 1994, while standing out with his pro-Western policies with his management approach, established policies that paved the way for an important resistance with the increase in human rights violations and the decline of democratization. Thus, Tunisia became the country where the Arab Spring started as a resistance symbolized by the peddler Muhammad Buazizi burning himself alive. This process, which resulted in Bin Ali fleeing the country in 2011 is now deemed as a "revolution". The political figure that came to fore after Bin Ali's departure was Rachid Ghannouchi. Ghannouchi initiated the process that has led to the establishment of the En Nahda party, which is still the head of the government and described as Islamist and governs the state[9]. What distinguishes Tunisia from many countries in its own geography is the effort to find a solution with the participation of political parties and civil society from different opinions throughout all these political crisis and difficulties.

8 Interviews were held in Tunisia with six people working in national and international non-governmental organizations, parliament and academia.

9 For more information see: http://www.aljazeera.com.tr/ulke-profili/ulke-profili-tunus

There are three main dimensions to these tensions, which resisted democratization and had a negative impact on this process:

1. **Political**
   The most important resistance against democratic transformation are the institutions and opinion leaders who are directly tied to the previous regime.

2. **Economic**
   The economy in Tunisia has been in the hands of an elite group for years. The economy is determined by monopolies. This leads to concrete inequalities where the administration of the economy is left to "30 families". This changes during the democratization process and these families made gestures that had a negative impact on the process.

3. **Management of natural resources**
   Water shortage and land management became the most serious issues on the public agenda during the transformation process. There are still demonstrations about access to water almost every month.

However, despite these resistance points, the main factors that enabled the search for a solution, steps towards democratization and the dialogue a result are the support and confidence of the government, unions, international civil society and actors in the process and the lessons learned from the negative processes in neighbor countries.

The union appears as the civil society actor that creates a ground enabling the whole process. The unique feature of the union in Tunisia is that it consists of teachers from all over the country. This enables the union to get organized and become stable and at the same time, be effective in all regions of the country regardless of political engagement and regional differences. While the union tends to be on the "secular" side of polarization, its unique feature in this respect forms an important input for the public opinion.

The constitution, established in 2014, is an important milestone for the democratic transformation that took place in Tunisia. It is said that the constitution is a living document that narrates the Tunisian democracy. The main actors in the establishment of the institution are the civil society, intellectuals and the middle class.

However, it is not possible to assert that all social groups in this picture and their participation in the civil society in particular was balanced. Most of the CSOs in Tunisia are accused of "elitism". Another criticism is that CSOs establish a "secular culture" at their workplaces: In the picture described as "People are afraid of praying in these institutions", civil society to be a part of this polarization is expressed as a serious issue. In addition, another factor

supporting the polarization among Tunisian CSOs is them "to choose sides" for financing. There is a distinctive separation between institutions supported by the government or international institutions. The lack of public support for civil society in Tunisia constitutes an important obstacle.

Despite all these difficulties, the main factors behind the implementation of a "National Dialogue", which also includes social consensus, are as follows:

- National dialogue was not the result of a single trial but the result of a long process.
- A feasible roadmap was a prerequisite. The scope had to be limited in order to achieve this. Detailed studies for scope, road map and milestones were carried out.

Within the scope of these works;

1. A list of individuals and institutions that did not allow dialogue was prepared.
2. Possible positive and negative impacts were assessed.
3. Practice partners were identified. Selective inclusion principle was applied; all institutions and individuals representing national dialogue were involved.

Why did this succeed only in Tunisia while many similar steps have been taken in many other countries? The answer can be summarized as follows:

1. **Peer-to-peer capitalism - Network connections**
   Tunisia not having oil is a deterrent factor for the pragmatic elite section. All circles and all parties of the polarization are aware that a national conflict means everyone will lose, therefore, they can compromise from their positions.

2. **Geopolitical location**
   Tunisia is geographically on the border and far from other "foreigners". It is not a key country in the international/regional order. Regional forces/conflicts do not have a major impact on Tunisia.

3. **Having local mediators**
   National dialogue experience is an important example as it is an efficient process and the Tunisian workers' movement is an important input. The Trade Union is not a political party, but a political partner however, it has the potential to mobilize people on the streets.

4. **Learning from neighbors**
   The civil war in Algeria in the 1990s is deemed as the "black decade". In addition to this experience, the many examples from the other countries in the geography are very deterrent examples.

APPENDIX - BASIC CONCEPTS[10]

Active listening: People in conflict are often more concerned with winning the argument than listening attentively. Active listening is a structured form of communication that focuses the attention on the speaker in order to improve mutual understanding and facilitate problem solving.

Active speaking: Active speaking is a communication process whereby a speaker directly addresses the other with respect, honesty and compassion. Active speaking is a courageous, creative act that usually requires the speaker to rise above their fears and concerns.

Peacemaking: Peacemaking refers to neutral third parties that support conflicting parties in reaching a balanced solution through dialogue.

Peacebuilding: Peacebuilding refers to a post-conflict approach that is aware of the need for reconciliation, develops the capacity to resolve conflicts and works towards sustainable peace. It has all kinds of approaches, processes and stages that will provide the transformation required for more manageable peaceful relations and administrative structures. Peacebuilding is different from peacemaking and peacekeeping. It is different as it does not take place in response to an existing process but by taking the initiative with a logic that will form its own process.

Conflict resolution: Conflict resolution aims to build an acceptable process for the parties by addressing the behaviors causing the conflict of interest and conflict and thus, build relatively harmonious relations and outputs.

Conflict transformation: Conflict transformation aims to transform the way individuals and communities perceive their differences and enable the transformation from hostile (win-lose) approaches to collaborative (win-win) problem solutions. Transformation of a conflict is a long process intertwined with society. It develops knowledge, understanding and abilities that enable people to come together in peace. Overcoming fear and insecurity, dealing with stereotypes and perceptions, learning how to communicate effectively are important steps in re-defining relationships to provide social justice and equality to the parties in conflict.

Conflict - violence: While conflict by nature is not negative or non-destructive and even generate

10 The definitions of the concepts are adapted from the link: https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/commonly-used-terms.pdf

positive results, violence always leads to damage and destruction.

Conflict management - conflict resolution: Conflict management includes actions to prevent a conflict from escalating. It usually is not concerned with and does not seek solutions to rooted problems at the center of the conflict. To the contrary, conflict resolution seeks solutions to the rooted problems at the center of the conflict.

Conflict management: Generally, includes actions to prevent a conflict from escalating. It means controlling the intensification and effects of a conflict through negotiation, intervention, corporate mechanisms and other traditional diplomatic methods. It usually is not concerned with and does not seek solutions to rooted problems at the center of the conflict.

Adversarial versus cooperative approaches to conflict: Adversarial approaches to settle disputes occur when parties in conflict perceive themselves as opponents competing for mutually incompatible outcomes. By contrast, the cooperative approach to conflict merges resources to seek solutions that address everyone's interests and are mutually beneficial.

Negotiation: It is effort for conflicting parties seek to reach a common solution by discovering and observing each other›s needs, concerns and interests.

Common ground approach: It is a method used to resolve disputes, where the parties understand and respect their differences and strive to find a mutually beneficial agreement. It is sometimes called the cooperative, collaborative or win-win approach and can be applied to all kinds of conflicts, from small everyday ones between individuals to the larger ones that divide communities.

Common ground media: It supports the transformation of conflict into collaborative action via communication channels such as radio, TV, movies, print and internet. The aim is to show that the controversial problems can be examined in an informative and entertaining way while encouraging the search for resolution.

Arbitration: The conflicting parties discuss their problems before including an impartial third party; if the parties cannot resolve the conflict through dialogue, the third party involved gives a binding decision on both parties.

Impartiality vs. Neutrality: While full neutrality may not be accomplished, neutrality may exist. Being neutral is working with people on both parties, however the aim is to bring people to talk and to develop dialogue.

Peacemaking: Peacemaking is the official or unofficial diplomatic effort intended to end the conflict between conflicting parties. The aim is to carry a violent conflict to a nonviolent stage where

differences are resolved through negotiation, mediation, reconciliation and arbitration. International organizations serve as peacemakers and act as neutral third parties or provide other non-violent conflict resolution channels. For example, international courts.