

Forum Theatre Exercise, focused on FORB violations and social conflict

Length		2-6 hours depending on group size and how in-depth one wants to go
Difficulty		Advanced
Group size		Small to medium
Aims	<p>To let participants explore the connection between violations of FORB and social conflict in an interactive but safe environment through Forum theatre.</p> <p>To increase participants understanding of FORB violations by allowing them to use all their learning styles and senses.</p> <p>Forum theatre also allows participants to draw strongly on their own experiences and knowledge of their local context when describing violations and developing suggested strategies to counter act these and any related social conflicts.</p>	
Description	Forum theatre exercise with the purpose of allowing participants to explore and increase their understanding of FORB and other human rights violations, and social conflict through drama	
Materials	<p>Room with enough space for drama activities</p> <p>Separate spaces for smaller working groups to prepare and rehearse without disturbing each other</p> <p>Watch</p> <p>Assorted items that can function as props</p>	
Source	SMC	

Tips for facilitators

If the group is not used to doing drama or forum theatre, facilitators will need to spend time warming the group up, so that they are comfortable with the idea of improvised drama and feel safe acting together. Dramatisations of violations of

FORB can be quite lively and can potentially trigger traumatic experiences among participants. It is wise to place a forum theatre exercise towards the end of a training, when participants feel safe in the group. Facilitators need to be prepared to care for participants reminded of trauma.

This exercise only draws upon some aspects of the Forum theatre methodology developed by Augusto Boal. For more information on Augusto Boal and Forum Theatre please see for example, <http://teh.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Art-for-ART-FORUM-THEATRE-Route-9.pdf> or <https://vimeo.com/90907536>

Outline and instructions

Drama warm up	15-30 min
Optional warm up forum theatre scenario	60-90 min
Forum theatre scenarios on FORB violations (Remember to include short breaks!)	90 min-3 hours

Drama Warm up

To get everyone in the mood for acting and improvising it would be good to start off with some warm up drama exercises. Facilitators should choose exercises that you know and feel comfortable leading.

Optional warm up forum theatre scenario

To help the group warm up to the concept of Forum theatre it can be a good idea to experiment with a ready-made, non-threatening, fictional warm up scenario. In cultures influenced by British culture, the group may be familiar with the English nursery rhyme Jack and Jill, which offers quite a good warm up scenario.

Jack and Jill went up the hill
To fetch a pail of water
Jack fell down and broke his crown,
And Jill came tumbling after.

Up Jack got and home did trot,
As fast as he could caper;
And went to bed and bound his head
With vinegar and brown paper.

When Jill came in how she did grin
To see Jack's paper plaster;
Mother vexed did whip her next
For causing Jack's disaster.

Divide the participants into groups and ask them to, based on their own cultural context, come up with an imagined dramatized scenario elaborating further on the events in the rhyme. The elaborations should include one or several clearly defined perpetrator/s of an injustice, one or several clearly defined victim/s and

one or several clearly defined passive bystanders. The drama should always stop when the story reaches its most intense moment.

The following questions might help the groups to get their imagination going:

- Why did Jack and Jill have to go up the hill to fetch water?
- What really happened to Jack and Jill once they were up at the hill? Why did Jack fall and what happened to Jill?
- Why is Jill blamed for Jack's disaster? Are there gender dimensions that can be explored further here?

The groups are then asked to act out their scenarios in front of the whole group.

Each scenario is first played up in plenary without any intervention from the audience. After each drama, the audience is asked to think about how any violations or injustices they saw could have been prevented, stopped or remedied. (This can either be done silently by individuals or using discussions in small groups). The drama is then reenacted with the audience being invited to intervene and act out how they would prevent/stop/remedy the injustice.

The same procedure is then followed for each group. Depending on available time and the number of participants one can also choose to only allow one group to complete the repetition with intervention from the audience so that the remainder on the session can be focused on FORB violations scenarios.

Forum theatre scenarios on FORB violations 90 min - 3 hours

(Remember to include small breaks!)

The exercise follows the same pattern as above, but with participants asked to develop their own scenarios illustrating violations of freedom of religion or belief in their own cultural context. These scenarios should include one or several clearly defined perpetrator(s) of an injustice, one or several clearly defined victim(s) and one or several clearly defined passive bystanders. The drama should always stop when the story reaches its most intense moment.

The groups act out their scenarios in front of the whole group. Each scenario is first played up without any intervention from the audience. After each drama, the audience is asked to think about how any violations or injustices they saw could have been prevented, stopped or remedied. (This can either be done silently by individuals or using discussions in small groups). The drama is then reenacted with the audience being invited to intervene and act out how they would prevent/stop/remedy the injustice.

The drama is then reenacted with an extended invitation to the audience to get on stage and act out how they would prevent/stop/remedy the FORB violation. The same procedure is then followed for each group. After each re-enactment discuss the strategies the audience used to try to stop violations. Can we, as individuals or organisations, use any of these strategies to tackle violations in real life?

Source: SMC

HANDOUT

Group instructions

In your small group prepare a short play showing scenario from your own cultural context in which freedom of religion or belief is violated. The scenario should include:

- one or several clearly defined perpetrator/s of an injustice
- one or several clearly defined victim/s and
- one or several clearly defined passive bystanders.

The scenario should stop when the story reaches its most intense moment and should be no more than 5-10 minutes long.

Feel free to use whatever available props you can find!

Look after each other!