



# NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

## METHODOLOGY AND PRACTICE

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## METHODOLOGY AND PRACTICE

### FORMAL, NON-FORMAL, INFORMAL – WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

The concept of lifelong learning – from our birth till death – involves various types of learning processes. Some are conscious and voluntary, some happen along the way in the context of our socialization, supported by society members – family, friends, peer and other social groups. When it comes to naming those processes, social studies use three basic terms that are used to describe them.

**Informal education** is a continuing process whereby each person acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from educational influences and resources in his or her own environment and from everyday experience with family, neighbours, peers, consumption of goods, library, mass media, work, play, etc. To illustrate it more, here are some examples:

- visits to museums and exhibitions,
- listening to radio or watching TV programmes on educational or scientific themes,
- reading texts on science, education, technology, etc. in journals and magazines,
- participating in scientific contests,
- attending lectures and conferences outside the formal education structure.

**Formal education** corresponds to a systematic, organized education model that runs from primary school to University and is structured and administered according to a given set of laws and norms, presenting a rather rigid curriculum (objectives, content and methodology). It refers to specialised programmes for technical and professional training that involves the teacher, the students and the institution.

**Non-formal education** refers to any planned programme of personal and social education for young people designed to improve a range of skills and competences, outside the formal educational

## NON- FORMAL EDUCATION

...is a planned learning process

...is a personal, social and political education for young people

...is designed to improve a range of skills and competences

...can be conducted outside but

supplementary to the formal educational plan

...is voluntary

...the programmes are carried out by trained leaders



curriculum described above. The main difference lies in these two features that are characteristic for the non-formal education:

- centralization of the process on the student, as to his or her previously identified needs and actual possibilities,
- the immediate usefulness of the education for the student's personal and professional growth.

There is an idea introduced by scholars that has been already put in motion by practitioners – to combine non-formal education methodology with formal education systems in order to benefit more from the fresh and vital methodology of the first one, but to keep the safety basics and frames from the second one. The **transition from only formal to non-formal education** may basically occur in two ways: (1) the founding of institutions specifically destined to the creation and to the implementation of non-formal systems and (2) the gradual advance of non-formal elements into the existing formal structures. In this material and this seminar we will be, obviously, trying to use the second method. I hope that after coming back home you will find those tips and information useful in your classrooms in order to enrich the traditional educational process.

## GENERAL CONCEPT OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

*I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.*

*(Confucius)*

Learning takes place on cognitive, emotional, and behavioural levels. Different individuals tend to learn entering these levels in various proportions – some learn mostly visually and cognitively, it is enough for them just to read and analyse to remember; some others learn better when they may actually try the knowledge out with their senses and bodies, not only mind. The fact for everybody is that we learn better if the topic touches us emotionally.

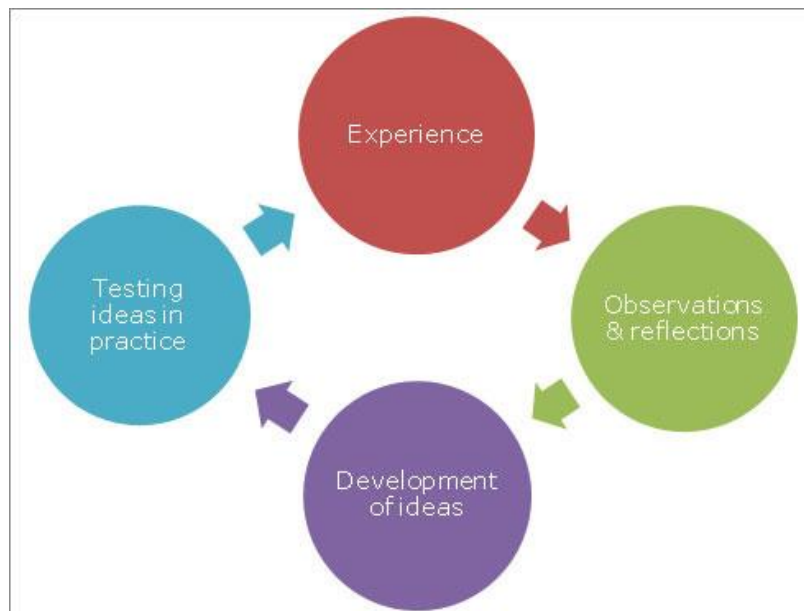
Considering all above, non-formal education (NFE) is based on active participation – doing, experiencing. A central part of the learning process is self-reflection, connected to emotions. All the dynamics in NFE are of an experiential nature (for example, simulations and role-plays) and input will always be interactive (a product of the facilitator and participants; they contribute with their experiences and knowledge).

### David Kolb's Learning Cycle

Kolb introduced one of the essential theories of experiential learning and he was very much inspired by the theories of Kurt Lewin. This theory is used in adult education as well as in working with youths. Kolb's experiential learning theory works on two levels: a four stage cycle of learning and four separate learning styles. Much of Kolb's theory is concerned with the learner's internal cognitive processes. Effective learning is seen when a person progresses through a cycle of four stages: of (1) having a concrete **experience** followed by (2) observation of and **reflection** on that experience which leads to (3) the formation of abstract concepts (**analysis**) and generalizations (conclusions) which are then (4) used to **test** hypothesis in future situations, resulting in new experiences.

1. **Concrete Experience** - a new experience of situation is encountered, or a reinterpretation of existing experience → EXERCISE
2. **Reflective Observation** of the new experience. Of particular importance are any inconsistencies between experience and understanding → REFLECTION, DEBREFIENG
3. **Abstract Conceptualization** - reflection gives rise to a new idea, or a modification of an existing abstract concept → ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS, DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS
4. **Active Experimentation** - the learner applies them to the world around them to see what results it gives → APPLICATION, TESTING IN PRACTICE

Kolb views learning as an integrated process with each stage being mutually supportive of and feeding into the next. It is possible to enter the cycle at any stage and follow it through its logical sequence. However, effective learning only occurs when a learner is able to execute all four stages of the model. Therefore, no one separate stage of the cycle is effective as a learning procedure on its own.



Source: <http://learn.solent.ac.uk/mod/book/view.php?id=2732&chapterid=1112>

Figure 1: Kolb's Learning Cycle

### EXAMPLE

Imagine that you want to learn how to make a bird feeder. First, you start doing it (EXPERIENCE) by using the tools and materials needed (wood, nails, hammer, etc.). You use your previous knowledge and experience, maybe some internet tips. Anyway, you are trying to make it with your own hands. After hours of more or less effective struggle you have something that reminds a bird feeder, but is not exactly how you imagined it. You have a lot of REFLECTIONS on the whole process of making it – what was easy, which part was difficult and why, what went wrong. So you are ANALIZING it, looking for a better solution – what to do next time to make it more like you wanted. And, finally, you start doing it again, TESTING your ideas of improvement in practice. And your next bird feeder looks so much better!

This is how you learn to be a good bird feeder maker. It is the same with every skill and all the knowledge – you need to experience it, reflect, analyse and use this knowledge in the right context.

## TEACHER VS FACILITATOR

When you decide to make your students responsible for the learning process, you are no longer a teacher - you become a facilitator. Your role is no longer to perform in front of the class as an expert and give them lectures. You become a **moderator of the process** that takes place thanks to the dynamics and exercises that you offer.

The definition of facilitation is "to make easy" or "ease a process." What a facilitator does is that he or she **plans, guides and manages a group event to ensure that the group's objectives are met effectively, with clear thinking, good participation and full engagement from everyone who is involved.** The function of facilitation is to keep a meeting or training event focused and moving with all the participants having a chance to take part in the process evenly. Therefore, the facilitator is somehow the keeper of the task and does not influence the final result. The group is giving an input, the facilitator pays attention to the way the group works – the process.

### FACILITATOR'S ROLE IS TO:

- provide materials and a possibility to experience,
- create a non-threatening environment, where everyone is equal,
- ensure that the full potential of the group and each individual is achieved,
- organise the work of a group,
- make sure that the goals are met,
- provide structure for the work, organise space and time,
- help to resolve conflicts.

If you want to be a good facilitator, you need to try hard to **stay objective** – you do not take sides nor add your own opinions. Stay as neutral as you can, respecting values that participants bring into the room. You should also be aware of the diversity and inclusion issues. Every student is unique and may have different view on a subject. Your role as a facilitator is to make it possible for them to express it in a way agreed with everybody in the contract that you make together at the beginning. Make sure that nobody sticks out – if any judgements occurs in the group, you need to react in order to make everyone feel safe.

### BEFORE THE SESSION

- prepare your agenda - methodology, tasks, timetable, materials
- prepare working space- room, chairs, tools

### DURING THE SESSION

- encourage full participation
- be affirmative
- keep the time and rythm
- sum up and wrap the topics
- follow the group dynamics

## Facilitation techniques

What may help to be a good facilitator is to be constantly aware of what you observe, hear and what and why exactly you are saying. There are some communication techniques that are commonly used by facilitators.

### ACTIVE LISTENING

Active listening is a key facilitation skill - without it a facilitator simply cannot do his or her job. When we actively listen we suspend our own thought processes and give the speaker our full attention. We make a deliberate effort to understand another person's position and their underlying needs. We use not only our ears but also our body language, eye contact and where appropriate verbal clues - short questions or comments - to help the speaker formulate their thoughts and let them know that they are being listened to.



### PARAPHRASING

It helps to listen actively. It is a foundation for many other facilitative listening skills. You do it by using your own words to say what you think the speaker said. Thanks to it you not only make sure what the person really said but you also make the participant feel listened to and sometimes it helps him or her to realize that they actually wanted to say something else.

### GATHERING IDEAS

It is helping a group to build a list of ideas at a fast moving pace when you want to gather ideas, not discuss them. Example: *I want you to give me adjectives describing women and men in our society. We will make two list on the board. We have 3 minutes to gather your ideas.*



### SUMMARISING

Summarising reassures speakers they are being heard, and it can also help to focus meetings. Example: *summarising after a period of discussion to clarify where you think the discussion has got to; or summarising after a particularly rambling speaker to ensure that everyone understood the essence of the point that they made.* You may find it helpful to take notes or write up key issues on a flipchart as the discussion happens.

### DRAWING PEOPLE OUT

It is a way of supporting people to take the next step in clarifying and refining their ideas. It makes the speaker understand that you are with her/him and that you understand her/him so far. Example: *paraphrase the speaker's statement and then ask open-ended non-directive questions like "Can you say more about that?" or "What do you mean by ...?"*

### MIRRORING

It is a highly formal version of paraphrasing, in which the facilitator repeats the speaker's exact words.

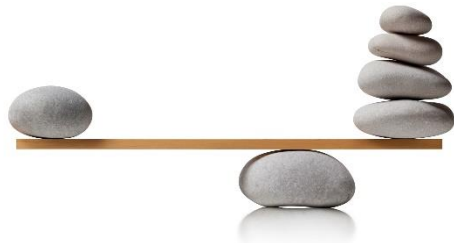
Example: *if the speaker said one sentence, repeat exactly the same again. If she/he said more than one sentence, repeat back key words and/or phrases.*

### ENCOURAGING AND CREATING SPACE

These techniques help to create an opportunity for people to participate, without putting any one individual on the spot.

Example of encouraging: *Who else has an idea? Let's hear from someone who hasn't spoken for a while, etc.*

Example of creating space: *If you don't wish to talk now, that's fine. But if you would like to speak, there is an opportunity.*



### BALANCING

It is a great way to undercut the common myth that silence means consent. It provides space for individuals who do not feel safe enough to express their views because they think they are in a minority position.

Example: *Does anyone else have a different opinion? What do others think? Do you agree with this?*

### INTENTIONAL SILENCE

Do not be afraid of the silence after a hard question or experience that the group has just faced. Or silence during someone's turn. Few seconds of silence give the speaker brief extra quiet time to discover what she/he really wants to say. It also gives time for others to reflect. Keep an eye contact, stay focused on the speaker. Do not say anything, just stay relaxed and pay attention.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF SILENCE



**REMEMBER: As a facilitator you are a role model for the students. The way you act and talk sets the tone for the whole session.**

Regardless the methods and topics that you decide to introduce within the non-formal education, you will remain a facilitator and use the Kolb's cycle in order to achieve educational success. Examples of methodology and methods will be given further down in this publication. A wide range of sources will be listed here to give you an inspiration for your own practice.

## HUMAN LIBRARY

The Human Library is an international movement and a method of promoting an inclusive way to fight prejudice through one-on-one contact with a representative of a minority group (e.g. refugee, unemployed, lesbian or gay, Muslim, person with a disability, etc.). Just like in a real library, a visitor to the Human Library can choose a Book from a range of titles. The only difference is that Books are real people. You read them by having an honest conversation and possibility to ask questions and listen to their life stories.



Source: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/human-books-share-life-stories-at-saskatoon-library-1.1247812>

The idea was created for the 2000 Roskilde Music Festival by a group of Danish activists acting in response to a violent hate crime. The main aim was then to reduce the risk of tension and violence during the festival. From a base in Copenhagen the movement grew and HL are now in more than 60 countries.

In the context of our project, the Human Library can be used within other themes than only challenging prejudice. You can use the method in many creative ways, for example inviting Books connected to science, sports or whatever your subject is, in order to give your students opportunity to get familiar with the topic by having a conversation with interesting people working in the field.

### Planning the Human Library event

1. Plan your objectives.
2. Organise space and divide responsibilities.
3. Select and invite the books and prepare the catalogue.
4. Promote the event.
5. Prepare your students – talk to them about the idea.
6. Set out the rules.
7. Carry out the event (you will need librarians, too!).
8. Evaluate the event together with the staff and the Books.

## HUMAN LIBRARY RESOURCES

[www.humanlibraryuk.org](http://www.humanlibraryuk.org)

[www.slideshare.net/artfusion/the-human-library-guide](http://www.slideshare.net/artfusion/the-human-library-guide)

[www.humanlibrary.org](http://www.humanlibrary.org)

[www.alli.fi/binary/file/-](http://www.alli.fi/binary/file/-)

[/id/720/fid/4605/](http://id/720/fid/4605/)



## METHODS USED IN GLOBAL EDUCATION

Global education refers to the non-formal ways of presenting global issues and connections, giving an opportunity to learn about wider context. Many non-governmental organisations (NGOs) worldwide specialize in this kind of education which often covers also civil society education, human rights education, antidiscrimination education and many others (see below).



Figure 2: Different components of global education

Using non-formal education methodology we can guide our students through many serious and socially important issues. It does not necessarily mean devoting separate working hours – being a school teacher you may easily introduce some topics within your basic formal programme. What is essential here is to enable students to experience what they need to learn. Forget about the lecture, facilitate your group process of discovering some truths by themselves. Remember the Kolb’s cycle and use some of the ideas and inspirations given below and in the publications proposed.

Before choosing separate exercises/dynamics you need to think exactly about the objectives of your work and the group needs, and create the detailed programme afterwards. Here is the list of steps you will take while preparing and conducting the non-formal education session.

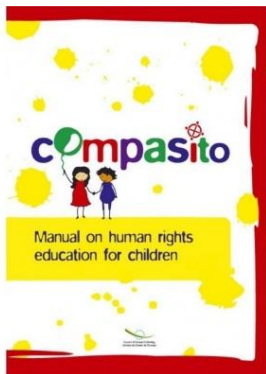
No.	STEP OF PREPARATION	EXAMPLES
1	Define aims and objectives	<p><b>Main aim:</b> Exchanging good practices in antidiscrimination education (AE) in various countries in Europe.</p> <p><b>Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to raise awareness about cultural and social diversity an variety of social identities</li> <li>- to promote equality and respect for human rights and diversity</li> <li>- to enhance the knowledge and widen perspectives on AE in</li> </ul>

		<p>Europe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to increase knowledge about the AE in public policies in each partner country</li> <li>- to learn how to interact with local authorities who can help raising awareness and tolerance</li> <li>- to provide tools for raising self-acceptance, self-esteem and social aspects that affect minority groups representatives</li> </ul>
2	Describe the group and its needs	The group of 25 young activists, age 18-30, from 5 European countries taking part in Erasmus + training in Poland. All the participants have some knowledge and experience in introducing AE into the local policies in their home countries.
3	Set the title, date and time	Antidiscrimination Education Concepts Exchange, 10-14 March 2012
5	Programme & Evaluation	<p><b>DAY I</b> Arrival, Introduction, Integration</p> <p><b>DAY II</b> Presentations of country policies and experience of each organisation</p> <p><b>DAY III</b> Visit to the City Hall, Ideas for cooperation between NGOs and public authorities</p> <p><b>DAY IV</b> Ideas for the future, Summary and Networking, Evaluation</p> <p><b>DAY I</b></p> <p>10:00 - 11:30 Introduction, Ice Breaking activity, Needs and Fears session, Group Contract</p> <p>11:30 – 11:45 Coffee Break</p> <p>11:45 – 13:30 Integration exercise (posters of common things in smaller groups), Presentation of organizations Part I</p> <p>13:30 – 14:30 Lunch Break</p> <p>14:30 – 16:00 Presentation of organizations Part II, final round of the day</p> <p><b>DAY II</b></p> <p>10:00 - 13:00 Starting activity (emotional postcards), Presentation of organizations Part III (including Coffee Break)</p> <p>13:00 – 14:00 Lunch Break</p> <p>14:00 – 16:00 Energiser, activity on identifying methodology used by participants within AE, final round of the day</p> <p><b>DAY III</b></p> <p>10:00 – 11:30 Visit to the City Hall – meeting with the politicians responsible for implementation AE into the local policies (questions and answers session)</p> <p>12:00 – 13:30 Energiser, Working in small groups on identifying ways to cooperate with the local authorities on AE</p>

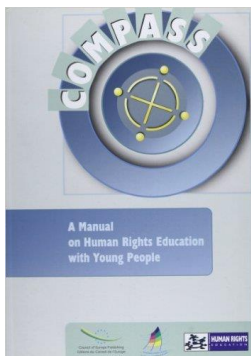
		<p>implementation</p> <p>13:30 – 14:30 Lunch Break</p> <p>14:30 – 16:00 Presentations of ideas, final round of the day</p> <p><b>DAY IV</b></p> <p>10:00 – 11:30 Ideas for the future session – working in groups on posters presenting ideas</p> <p>11:30 – 11:45 Coffee Break</p> <p>11:45 – 13:30 Energiser, Presentation of ideas, discussion on possibilities of networking within the AE frame</p> <p>13:30 – 14:30 Lunch Break</p> <p>14:30 – 16:00 Evaluation sheets, Summing up activity involving movement, Final round</p>
6	Materials needed and space required	<p>Space with 26 chairs</p> <p>Materials: flipchart, markers, pencils and crayons, A4 papers, poster papers, computer, projector, post-it stickers, paper tape, scissors, methodology booklets as an inspiration</p>

## Resources - manuals and handbooks

There is no need to make another book on the methods and exercise that you can freely use while planning your sessions with students or other groups that require civil society, antidiscrimination or global education. Here are some recommendations of resources widely used around the world with brilliant ideas for dynamics during your session. Most of them are available in all the European languages and also online as PDFs.



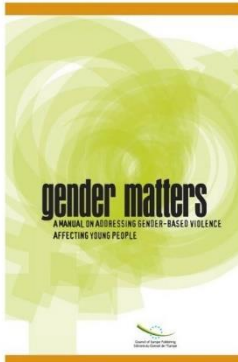
**Compassito. Manual on human rights education for children,**  
Council of Europe, 2008



**Compass. A Manual on Human Rights Education with Young People,**  
Council of Europe, 2002



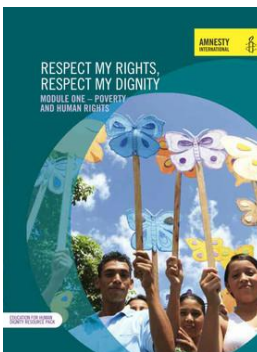
**Global Education Manual**, A.R.T. Fusion Association, Bucarest, 2015



**Gender Matters - A manual on addressing gender-based violence affecting young people**, Council of Europe, 2008



**Rainbow Resources. Compasito. Companion on Sexuality and Gender**, IFM – SEI, Brussels, 2011



**Respect my rights, respect my dignity - Module one: Poverty and human rights**, Amnesty International, 2011

Full **Human Dignity Resource Pack** here:  
<http://www.amnestyusa.org/resources/educators/teaching-guides>

## DRAMA AND FORUM THEATRE

**Forum theatre** was introduced by Augusto Boal as part of what he calls his “Theatre of the Oppressed.” This method is usually used to teach people how to change their world by involving them into the process of creating action, so called 'simultaneous dramaturgy'. In this process the actors or audience members can stop a performance during the scene in which a character is being oppressed in some kind of way. Then the audience suggests different actions for the actors to be carried out on-stage in order to change the way the story goes. Therefore, the forum theatre brings the audience into performance and, moreover, also invites to come on stage and perform their own interventions and solutions to the situation of oppression. This way the audience members become 'spect-actors'.



The method is frequently used as **a tool for anti-discrimination education** of youngsters and adults. Its essence lies in the empowering result for those who suffer oppression.

The elements of **drama** can be used in many ways, on every subject in school or in every educational programme outside the school. You can engage your students to reenact historical figures and events, involve in the drama games during the foreign language class or use it as a part of a social skills workshop (e.g. assertiveness). Performing drama methodology requires good facilitation skills. You need to observe, listen, guide your students through the process of trying out new behaviours. We arrange the situation when a person can actually act and feel in his or her body how it is to say certain things, how it influences others that are 'on stage'. Remember, this is not a theatre – here actors act themselves, so they also confront with their own emotions. Help them out by arranging safe atmosphere, free of judgement and chaos.

Most of the NFE manuals and publications presented in this material offer some kind of drama activity. You will find detailed instructions and guidelines on how to go through this safely.

## FORUM THEATRE RESOURCES

<http://beautifultrouble.org/tactic/forum-theater/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NbYx01re-ec>

<http://teh.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/>

[Art-for-ART-FORUM-THEATRE-Route-9.pdf](#)

<https://www.cardboardcityzens.org.uk/>

[http://www.slideshare.net/openstagetheater/guide-](http://www.slideshare.net/openstagetheater/guide-to-forum-theater)

[to-forum-theater](#)

## **Literature:**

Claudio Zaki Dib, Formal, non-formal and informal education: concepts/applicability, American Institute of Physics, New York, 1988, p. 300-315.

Sabine Klocker, ed., Manual for facilitators in non-formal education involved in preparing and delivering the programme of study sessions at European Youth Centres, Council of Europe Publishing, 2009

Inni to My. Jak poruszać tematykę różnorodności, płci, dyskryminacji ze względu na orientację seksualną oraz tożsamość płciową w środowisku szkolnym, Fundacja Instytut Działań Twórczych, Łódź, 2016

Empowering young women to lead change. A training manual, World YWCA, New York, 2006