

Session 8:

Reflections/ Workshop Summary

TIME: 60 MINUTES

ACTIVITIES:

Presentation of workshop summary and key reflections, followed by a group discussion.

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- to pull together and reflect on the main points from the first two days of the workshop;
- to reflect on particularly important themes and undercurrents of the workshop; and
- to provide space for participants to absorb, respond and add to reflections on the workshop.

ADAPTATION NOTES:

Some summary points can be woven into the rest of Day Three.



EXERCISE:

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FORMAT:

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

Reflections/Workshop Summary

TIME: 60 MIN

REQUIRED MATERIALS: NONE

SUMMARY:

A presentation that summarises workshop points and draws out key spoken and unspoken underlying themes.

KEY EXPLANATION POINTS:

A primary task of the facilitators is to listen carefully to participants and to 'reflect' back to them some of the key themes and concerns – spoken and unspoken – raised during the workshop. This is an ongoing process, and part of it will happen during the 'contextual analysis' presentation and discussion on Day Two.

However, it is particularly important that on the final day of the workshop, the facilitators prepare a specific reflection presentation that relates to the themes participants raised on the first two days of the workshop.

This is a time to summarise the workshop and an opportunity to raise deeper, unspoken – yet critical – issues that require participants' attention.

In past workshops, this reflection has addressed themes such as coping with fear, violence, breaking down barriers, grief and dealing with stresses that seem insurmountable.

FACILITATION NOTES:

After the reflection presentation, the group will have an opportunity to respond, to add comments and to elaborate ideas. This is time set aside for reactions, but also can be used to discuss something that is missing or needs more work.

Keep in mind that this can be a difficult process for participants, and reactions can be strong and emotional.

The following is meant as an example for facilitators only – a reflection presentation always should be adapted to the participants' contexts and priorities.



WRITTEN EXERCISE:

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FORMAT:

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

Reflections/Workshop Summary

Reflection Text Example:

Challenging Normalised Violence ***(Nepal, 2008)***

'We want to begin our last day with a reflection. And we struggled with it, because this is a hard and heavy topic. But it is too important to skip – this is what we have been hearing throughout the workshop, and we need to talk about it to push through it.

'We have been hearing about impunity, repressive regimes... the big stuff. We've been talking about silence, violence... and what the hell do we do about it all? And we don't seem to have any answers. So I want to go back to the beginning, and talk about that violence.

'As little girls, then young women, then as adults, you are always given this message – that violence – in all its forms – structural, economic, physical, is normal. That it is accepted – and acceptable. You are made to believe that. And you are taught to shut up about it. To take it, and to accept it. Or suffer the consequences of speaking out. You are told that if you challenge it, if you speak up, you may lose your place in society, your family, your friends. Your life.

'And in whatever form you experience violence – as a survivor, as a witness – as both, you absorb that message into your body. That it's normal. That this is just the way the world works and you can't change it.

'And then one day, you just say... enough. It's not normal. I will not accept this. I will not be silent anymore. I will not be invisible. And you become an activist.

'That's what drives you – that is your fountain of strength, your source of energy, your passion. Your sense of possibility. And your realisation that now

you understand change is possible, you have a sense of responsibility to make it happen. To bring justice, to make that change. And you did it. You succeeded – every single one of you, sitting here in this room – you have achieved so much, you have had the most amazing successes.

'But you have been fighting what feels like an uphill battle for so long. Because you are choosing to stand up to, and uncover, impunity. You are working in hugely repressive regimes. You are trying to dismantle institutional violence, one act of courage at a time.

'And it is no wonder that when you come up against the problems you can't seem to solve – like some of the stories we have heard about in our workshops – a child beheaded because she stood up and said no – a village of women raped, then told to shut up or die... it's no wonder that sometimes, it feels like there are no strategies.

'That this is just too big. That you can't solve this one. That you are just hitting a wall. That, once again, you have to stay silent in the face of violence. And that feeling cuts you off from the source of what gives you your energy. You ask yourself... what if I just can't change this? What if I can't make a difference? But you can.

'We are here, together to break down that wall. Together we can push through it get to the other side and find ways, and strategies to continue speaking out, to stop that violence. You are facing hard problems. Maybe the hardest in the world. There are no easy answers.

'But there are answers. And strategies. You don't have to do it on your own. We're here to find those answers together.'