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SADRI FOUNDATION



FREEDOM TO LEARN

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Act on Education

How to positively change your school community



This resource guide is aimed at energetic teaching folk who are able to pull a leading team of facilitators together

Perhaps a young teacher, ready to explore creative techniques, will work together with 2 older students as a support team

...and together, lead an AoE success.

This resource guide is dedicated to the all the children they will have the honour to work with.

Why is an Act on Education Programme Good for Your School?

It works! Don't just take our word for it:

Here are some people who are doing it right now in their schools and communities:

"The approach is unique in Nepal, the DoE hasn't seen anything like it and it works! The MEET programme was a direct result of the Theatre Event"



Gita Ghimire
Dep. Of
Education



Sunita,
Mahindra
Boudha School
AoE member

It was an amazing relief to tell to my group my hardship, the support from all of them has made me feel so happy. We can help each other now. Actually we have confidence that we can talk to the teachers **and** to our parents and solve our difficult issues. Life is better now than before!

"This guide gives you not only the 'how to' but the 'why to' for a teacher who may be looking to undertake such a project. The games and exercises have also proved an excellent tool for teaching in the classroom"



English
Teacher,
Sutakhan
school

“At the beginning, we didn’t have much belief in this programme because many outside people come in our schools, talk a lot, and leave. But this group really has a very effective method of working with our children. We are really happy for this group to continue working here because Act on Education makes a big difference to learning in the school and to the children.”

Shram
School
Head
teacher



“Actually, it is like a learning game through fun activities. We are learning many skills very significant to our life through different fun games. Like working in a group, loving and helping each other, problem solving and making school a place easier for us to learn in”

Makhamali,
Bouddha H. S.
School, AoE
Member



“We couldn’t have realised that our children are suffering from their long distance journeys to school, AoE made us realise this – and do something about it. Now the problem has been solved, some of the children can now stay in a rented room near the school, they are less tired, not late, and come to school more regularly.”

Kushdevi
school
Head
teacher



Alright alright.....now it is our turn to tell you why!!



Cause it's amazing!! Well pretty good anyway – we are going to show you in pictures because we know you don't want too many words! Here are some of the changes that have happened to AoE schools....



Better School Morale



Less violence in school and the home



Increased school attendance



Parents involved and valuing their children's education



More girls attending school



Increased support from local NGO's



Effective local and national advocacy for changes in education



Community engagement valuing school as a hub of the local community



Dialogue with stakeholders who can make key changes



Access to staff training



Children's Support Groups for sensitive issues such as sexual harassment and violence

“A young person is not a vessel to be filled but a fire to be lit”

(Plutarch, AD100)

After years of experience we have an in depth understanding of how a totally holistic approach is required if change is to be lasting and sustainable.

What is our ethos?



It is a holistic approach, there is no culture of blame. From our experience we have an acute understanding that national public education is struggling because of a very wide variety of reasons –all of these need to be addressed for positive change, step by step. A good place to start is with the children who experience it every day.



We firmly believe in the power of youth led action within schools. Everyone of our AoE young participants have ceaselessly amazed us with their resourcefulness, understanding and articulation. Their capacity for change is enormous. Using creative methods they can use these natural abilities for positive actual change, from despair to more than hope, to a wholesome happy and sustainable school community and a life of learning.



The Act on Education model has been developed over the last 3 years with over 260 leading young Nepali Government School students working in 13 government schools on a creative community building programme. Applied Drama, Art, Theatre for Development and music as a key element to the success of the process.

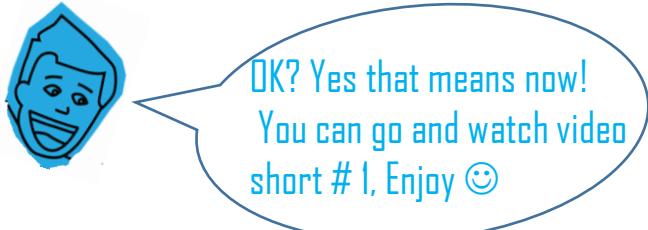


It is community led, with local young people often taking a leading role. Through this AoE process, groups of young, often extremely marginalised and disadvantaged students, struggling to manage school life, are able express and explore the harsh daily difficulties they face, devise solutions to alleviate them and learn key skills in advocacy and action in order to activate those solutions, *always* working carefully and effectively alongside all the key stakeholders.

So How Do You Use this Resource Guide?

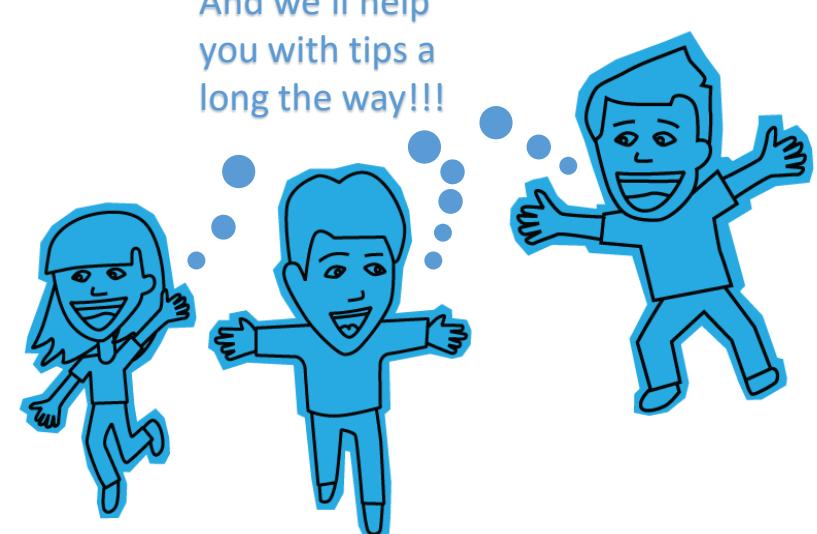
- With great difficulty! He hee! Only kidding! In fact all our authors (adults and children) have put loads of effort into making sure that it is as easy and practical to follow as it possibly can be.
- We have created a visual model of the process that will guide you through, step by step, take look at it on the next page. This will help to find the section you need, and quickly.

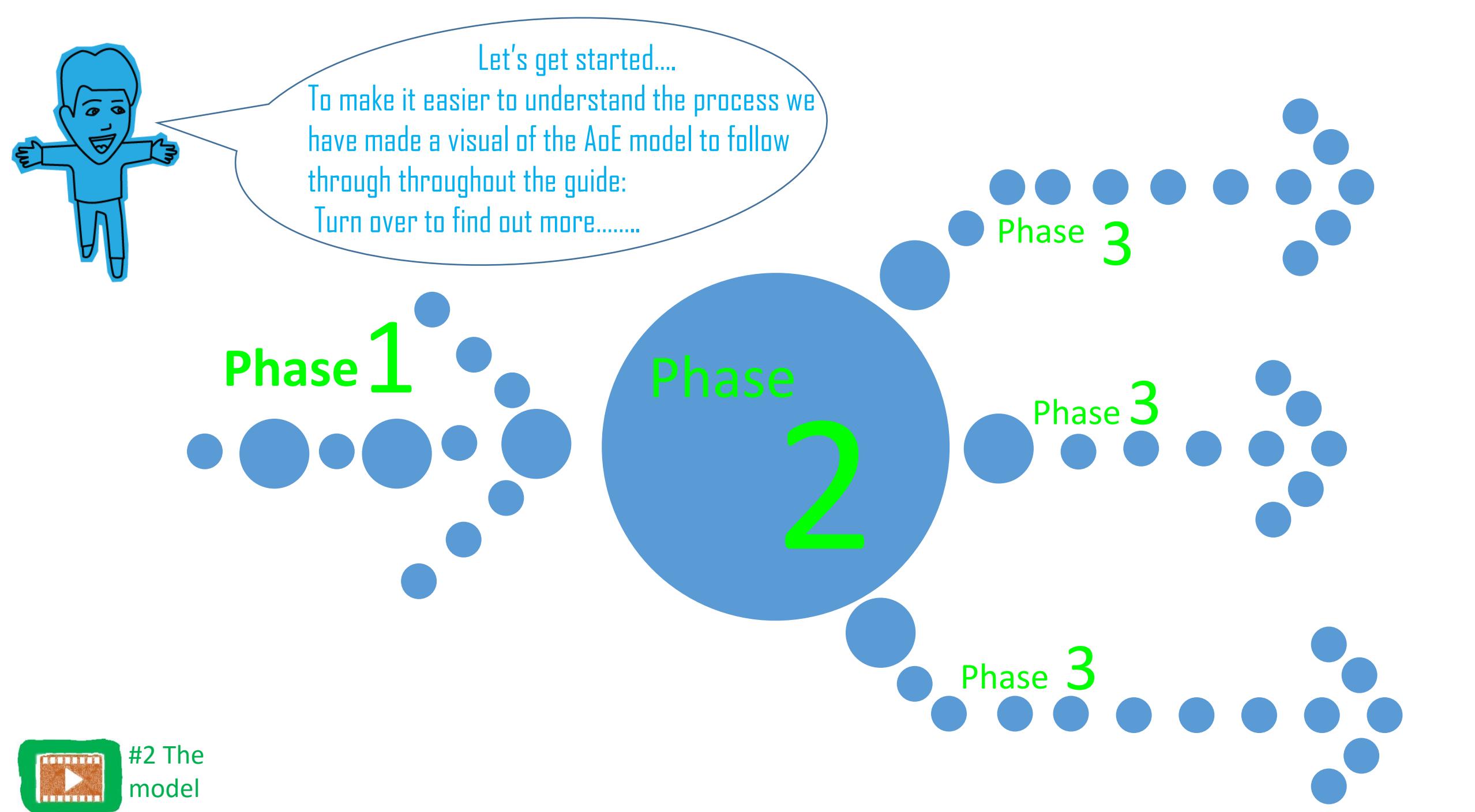
- You can run your own AoE without anything other than this book, but to make it even easier you have the DVD shorts (you will have received them in the AoE package but if you are accessing this online please get in touch) They are like mini training sessions and when one is relevant there will be this symbol:



#1 why Act on Education?

- There is also a website with other tips and info if you need it. You can contact us on our SMS service for advice or training if you need it too! We also have a two day facilitating training workshop that can be offered if a number of schools in your district are undertaking an AoE.



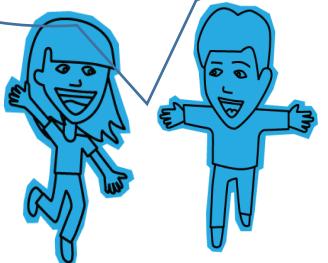


Phase 1:

This creates the heart of your AoE process. Over 3 months a series of 12 or more 1.5 hour long creative workshops cultivate integrated cohesion and a sense of community. **Everyone is seen and heard** in the group and participants express and explore possibilities that could solve their extremely difficult problems.



It will certainly be intense, probably emotional, at times frightening, and often uplifting. It will bring you together like no other experience. Be prepared to open up, make lifelong friends and life long change ...



Phase 2:

Event

The first major change phase - all your hard work put into the context of an audience of relevant 'stakeholders' and using it to initiate the solutions you have devised. It often takes the form of a performance: drama has the capacity to send a quick, clear message to many people. All the influential people/groups attend, so that may be these people...



teachers



Other school students



Parents and the local community



SMC



Ngo's and INGO's



Carefully facilitated and monitored discussions take place here. Make sure that you agree and write down the pledges and points of action! Everyone meets in a neutral space and this is where you can obtain promises for action for phase 3!



Head teachers



Local community leaders



Other charitable organisations



National politicians

Phase 3:



Then.....all the **action**! This is where all the outcomes devised over the last 2 phases start to be implemented. It may be many series of meetings (e.g. for organising a water supply), or it may happen very fast, (employers lessen a work load to allow more time for study, or a parent sends their daughter to school for the first time!)



Continuing advocacy programmes for the young people with key stakeholders



Teachers presenting much needed school equipment to students



School meals funded by a local NGO



A sustained student/parent/staff cleaning rota

AoE Hazard alert! This phase will needs commitment by the key stakeholders (they may be sooooper busy – so 5 minutes here and 5 minutes there to organise those meetings will be well worth it in the long run – honest! We will take you through how to approach this....don't worry 😊



Don't forget workshops can also continue in the form of a regular school club.! Its fun to do that and carry on working all together!



The reason we do it like this is because....

There are different levels of young people actually feeling ownership and conducting power in community. They are the future of your community indeed society! We nurture and respect them now, they will be nurturing and respecting of their community

Children are organised to carry out a political protest carrying placards

Children sing and dance at an event but have little idea of what it is all about

Articulate children are selected to sit on a discussion panel with no substantive preparation and no consultation to their peers

A group of children is organised to do community work but they are informed of its purpose and feel ownership of the issue

Assigned but informed

A group of children are consulted by a city mayor about a certain question, their opinions are taken seriously.

Consulted and informed

Children are asked to participate in planning a playground

Adult initiated shared decisions with children

Children produce their own school newspaper or radio programme

child-initiated and directed

Children identify a problem in their school, initiate a project to solve it and convince adults to run it.

Child-initiated, decisions shared with adults

Manipulation

Decoration

Non-participation

Tokenism

Degrees of Participation



We wanna help you
get here!

Seems daunting? It is!!



Make sure you have a team – it is impossible to undertake this kind of process alone, **GET SOME HELP**. We cannot stress that enough, a **TEAM** is **ESSENTIAL**



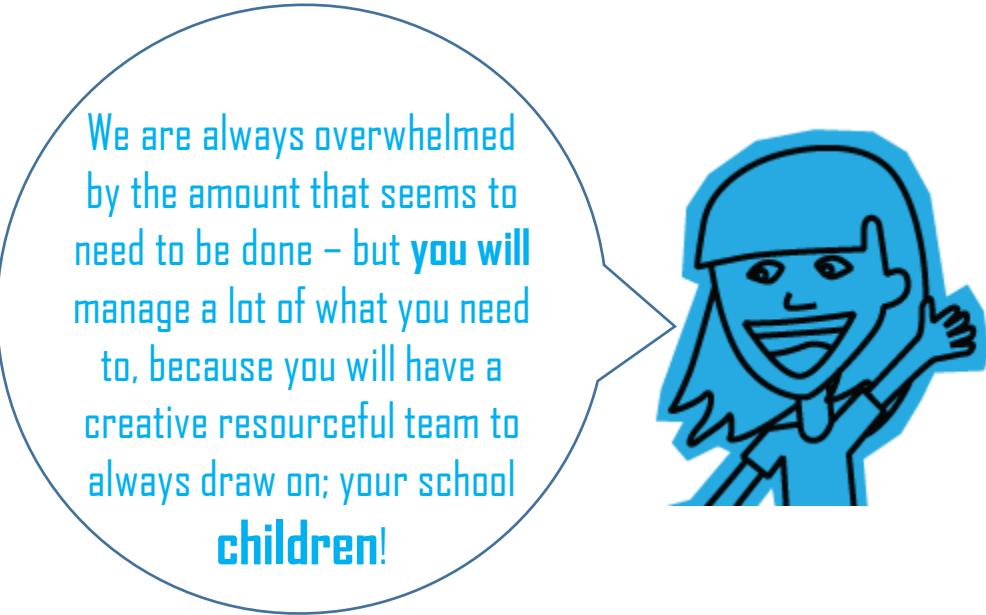
Don't forget we can offer training if there are a few schools in your area interested.



Use our SMS service for questions and help if you need it!



#3 Be calm, deep breaths!



But it will be **worth every moment** and ounce of effort you put in – there isn't a more rewarding task.



Know your community!

Before you begin you must have a ground base of local knowledge and insight into your school and wider communities. The likelihood is that you do, as you are living and eating within the community where you work, so your understanding might already be intricate – if not don't worry just be open to finding out!

First of all find out what resources you can utilise: extra curricular activities already in existence in your village or school community; traditional cultural and creative practices; school children's clubs that work towards similar goals:



Especially in more rural schools the community may have traditional cultural practices already in place – such as drama marriage performances, cow festivals, local *Jatra* and *Mela*



One school was already working with a local NGO who ran a child rights club. The school and NGO teamed together to run the AoE programme with the existing group who already had a weekly meeting time and place. They used what was already there – perfect.



We have had local youth workers take on AoE which really works as they already have extra curricular activity experience and some skills to manage workshops.



Show respect for your community's individuals, their practices and traditions. It is so important that you value and appreciate the work already being done – remember this is NOT a blame game!! The point to this process is that everyone works together toward a common goal – better access to, and quality of, education – this will never happen if you don't cultivate respect.

Who do you already know that will be interested in helping or getting involved in your AoE process? Use what you know!

As part of ‘knowing your community’ you also need to be aware of the other commitments the children may have

To help you on your way here are a few likely ones:

Religious holidays such as

Dashain,

Tihar,

Chhath,

Idh,

Christmas,

Buddha Purnima

Check all your School Term dates!

etc. etc. etc!

Make sure this isn't going on...



Oops!



To start, this is all you will need.....

A creative motivated facilitator.



SPACE! One of your classrooms,
preferably one with a door.
Outside is too distracting.



A Group! Around 15-20 10-15yr old
young people.



That's it!



So, you're going for it, What is a facilitator? Have you got what it takes?



SPACE facilitator Suresh says: "Use your face to be expressive. I find I need to find lots of empathy and compassion so I have to remember I am working with children who are brave enough to ask for help and try and sort out their problems....oh and I have to learn it is ok to make a fool of myself! It makes the children more comfortable then if they do to!"

You will need to:



Be confident in front of your whole group



Be inclusive and welcoming with your words, body language and actions



Develop an agreed culture of mutual respect and appreciation



Play equal status – you are not a teacher in this context! And the young people are choosing to be there – respect that.



Plan well! Learn the workshop plan in your head and you can keep a note on the side to remind you when your mind goes blank!



FLEXIBILITY – cannot emphasise this enough – be ready to go with the flow and change the plans if necessary – inevitable they will always change anyway!



Embrace chaos – there will be plenty and out of chaos can come wonderful things – do not be afraid of it but use it!



4 To be a facilitator

SPACE – how you can make it yours.....

The space you use for your workshops in phase 1 needs to be changed before the young group arrive. It needs to say to the group “come in! we want you here with us!” “We can’t wait to work with you!” Just by the change in space – it is pretty easy:

 Move the desks/chairs to the sides to clear a large space

 Put any materials that look colourful in the centre of the space to gather around in a circle

 If you have time then you can make a banner, or posters, or get some flowers – anything!

 When the group arrives one of the first things you can do is to use creative art exercises to decorate the space give ownership to the group.



This is dull, like every day ☹

space lookin' good ☺



An equal inclusive circle ☺



Setting up your AoE process and finding your group

Before you begin the workshops in earnest you will need to clear the whole thing with the head teacher and other staff. If you are already a teacher who is facilitating the AoE then you will know how to go about meeting with the teachers, school management and other staff. If you are not sure the best way to set up and conduct a meeting then here are our tips.....

 Be respectful – whatever you may think of the leading staff of the school – that is what they are and they deserve respect. You are more likely to gain respect in return with this approach.



Be clear from the start while also being open to their views and requests! Set out your plans, that you won't take time out of school hours, what the aim of your AoE is, how it might benefit the school – how they would like it to benefit the school.



Make sure they understand it will be mutually beneficial, perhaps show the resource guide and showing what has happened in other AoE schools – how it will benefit their school community and their position as teachers etc....



5 Initially Establishing your AoE

How to find the most appropriate participants, or as we like to call them “change makers”!

After talking the initial meeting with the head teacher you will have asked him/her to nominate the students who will benefit the most from AoE: and there is a difficulty here as they are often the most overworked, vulnerable and marginalised children in the school. Take some time to go and track them down and briefly chat with them to find out what will work best for them.



A few other points before you embark upon Phase 1: A Listening Box

You can have a listening box somewhere like outside of the school office. Keep it there at all times (with permission of the head teacher.) And when you are in school you can check to see if there are any ideas/complaints/concerns about the school and about AoE. This is a good way of getting information from people who may not normally speak up. Also it is an opportunity for people to feed back to you anonymously. Ensure your actions are responsive and sensitive. You can get the group to decorate and put a notice on like this:

“Good ladies and gentlemen of our lovely school, this is our listening box! Please feel free at any time to take a piece of paper and write down any

Ideas! Concerns! Complaints! Our Act on Education

Team will regularly check the box and will always act upon any comments or ideas you may have. We are eager to hear your thoughts.....”



You can add something like this too, if necessary...

Alert! Alert! Teachers! Use these ideas in your lessons – they work in class as well as after school clubs!



"My teacher has started getting us to play games so we learn English words , like all walking around the room, she shouts out an adjective and we have to walk like that! It makes our lessons fun and I remember the words, and the walk, long after that!"



Every Single game and exercise in this resource guide is a fantastic tool for learning anything! It just so happens that *we* use these as tools for initiating collective change in a community. Teachers can always use them for any subject! Be creative how you apply "Image Circle"(pg ?) to understanding a Nepali text, or "5 word blast" (pg ?) to get kids thinking quickly and learning vocabulary. Use "Yes, let's, and" (pg ?) for imaginative story telling and creative writing. These are just a few examples *all the games can apply*

Always make sure your team is aware of the sensitivities working with very vulnerable young people.

BE Sensitive, BE Patient, BE Responsive, BE Flexible

ALWAYS keep in mind:

-  They may be experiencing some very difficult issues outside of your project work so have compassion if they do not respond how you wish, and do not show them any anger, it will only make it worse.
-  They may have very little confidence and low self esteem, so may need more encouragement and support.
-  They may not have been asked for their own opinions and ideas before, and therefore feel there is very little value to them.
-  Due to their lack of confidence, they may not value the work they produce at first, even if it is good! So be positive and patient.
-  They may not have good articulation skills and find it hard to communicate – with you as well! There are many games and exercises to work on this during the Phase 1 section.
-  They May find some of the subject matter expressed and explored during the workshops hard to deal with, there is advice a techniques about this is phase 1.

Permission and Consent

When you work with *anybody* it is always best practice, and respectful, to get consent and permission for any activity, data or images that you will use during the work, or in any part of life actually!

Always make it clear we images will be created (so filming even with phones etc is being carried out) Here is a sample text for a form you can use:

Dear parent or guardian,

We will be using photography and film throughout the AoE project. The images will be used during the sessions, may be put up locally in school and in other public places, used in flyers, posters and online for the AoE website as well as advertising any performances or screenings the group may present as well as streaming participant's films. The filming will also be used as part of the drama process and perhaps distributed on DVD's to all the group members at a later date. We will, of course, not print or distribute any names or contact details of the children involved.

To comply with the Data Protection, we need your permission before we can photograph or make any recordings of your child. To give permission, please sign and date the slip below and return it to us next week.

Many thanks,
Your Act on Education Team

Are you happy for images of your child to be taken for the purposes of the drama process? Yes/no (delete as appropriate)

Are you happy for those images to be used publicly for the above purposes? Yes/no (delete as appropriate)

Name of child participant:

Name of parent/guardian:

Signature:

Date signed:



!!! And **ALWAYS** remember...

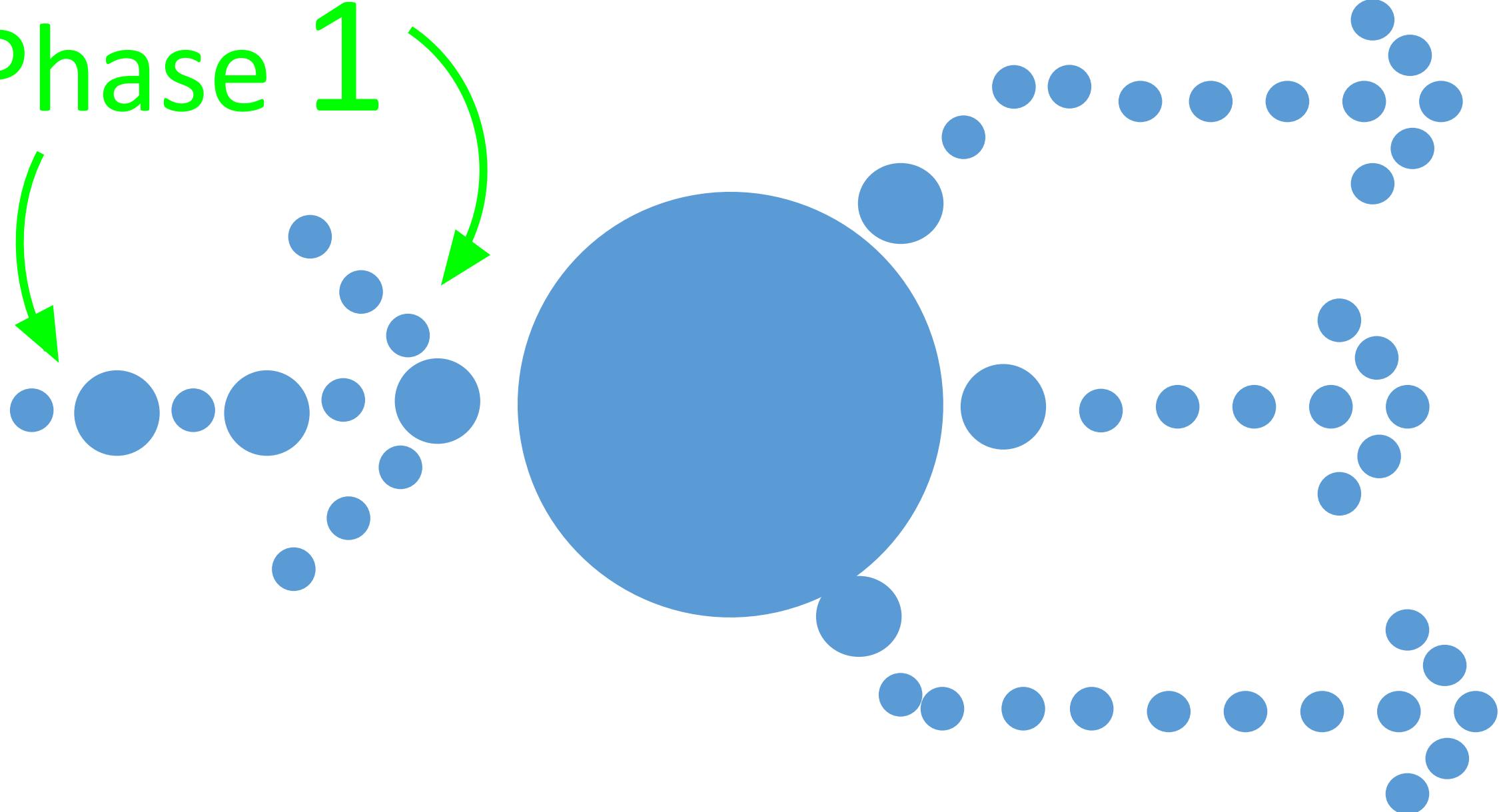


“If you have respect for people *as they are*,
you can be more effective in helping them
to become *better* than they are.”

John Gardner, 1950



Phase 1



Phase 1

Once you have all you need you are ready for **The First Step:** In this section we are going to give you enough info to run a series of workshops that will get your group unravelling difficult issues and focusing on the possibilities for solution action ('action' as in change, not as in 'action' movie with fight scenes though - ok?!)



The process is simple when you get it (honest!) The drama *will come* to your group in some form or other naturally. It is inherent to every human on the planet: we all know how to 'play a part' in life. There is no need to approach it as performance but as a fun way to bring you all together as equals and begin to explore the possibilities for a better school life – indeed may be a better life full stop!

If you are lucky enough to have money for these – they will always help a session!...shhhh....mmmm biscuits.....

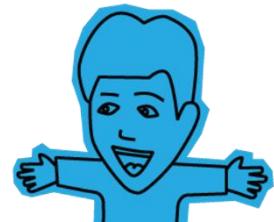


Make a contract, together, all agree it, and all sign up to it!

At the start of every new AoE we always gather together and develop a set of rules for us to work together by. These are suggested on a Big piece of paper:



We always pin ours up on the wall
every week for all to see!



Evaluation will make your work responsive and therefore more effective!

Here's how.....

Place anything in the middle of the room - the bin, or a bag, whatever – then say “this bag represents that today you felt the session was mega helpful and you worked out loads of idea with friends, the walls represent you feel totally lost, today was a waste of time and you can’t understand how you will ever manage to change anything!” (or whatever subject you want them to give you feedback on) Ask everyone to place themselves in the room depending on where they feel they fit after today’s session.....

Don't panic! Evaluating can be very simple! You just need to be up for listening and willing to change your practice in response (of course fits in with great facilitating skills ;-))



Every single session you do some kind of evaluation with your group, and you can create your own ideas of how to ask them so they are honest with you but here are some ideas:

Ask your group how they felt the session went today in still images, i.e. use “Image Circle” (pg ...) to assess the work so far.....



Hand out pens and small pieces of paper at the start and end of a session, ask everyone to anonymously complete sentences starting with “today I learned.....” and “today I had some difficulty with.....” and “next week I would like to do more of.....” and then fold up the paper and place it into a bag, or hat, or bucket for the facilitator to read later.....

.....then always, **discuss and ask questions!**
Find out why, what that means, and then consider what you can do about it. Remember you can always SMS us for help if you are stuck!

Phase 1:

So, as we already said, one of the first things it is nice to do is to create your room as a special space. Here a couple of opening exercises that work well:



We are in colour!

Have some colouring pens/pencils and enough A4 sheets for each group member (including the group leaders) ad have them all out ready in the centre of the circle you will form as a group.



Everybody is encouraged to make a poster about themselves – anything they like, it may be pictures of things they enjoy doing, a particular favourite flower, a swirling pattern of colour. As long as they make it theirs and it represents something of themselves.



Then put them all up on the wall to make a mosaic of each showing very visually the group and decorating the space.

Own the Room!

Everyone stands in a circle ready. The facilitator explains that this is now 'our space', for the next hour. We must feel it is ours to enjoy! So lets have some fun doing just that. We can start by racing to touch each of the four walls and then come back to the circle – as fast as you can!



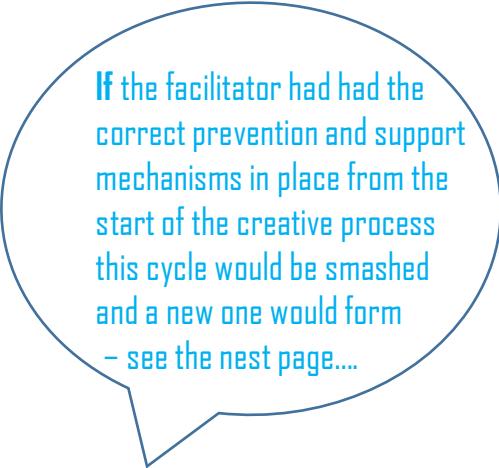


And don't worry! Remember this...

Drama is immediate – more so than art or music, there are no notes to learn, no paint and paper to get hold of – we can begin in a moment. Children especially are able to play and empathise easily. The simplicity with which they see life is something older folk can often only distantly remember before minds cram up with the contradictions and complexity of life! *But* as the great facilitator Chris Johnston tells us “we all feel pain, experience joy and learn to ‘act a part’” from the moment we get up everyday – using drama comes more naturally than you may think – so don’t be too scared!

There are dangers that you need to be aware of:

When working with drama there are certain sensitivities that **must** be adhered to: Let us explain in a story:
The first story is of a well-meaning process but ***without*** sensitive and careful facilitation:



If the facilitator had had the correct prevention and support mechanisms in place from the start of the creative process this cycle would be smashed and a new one would form - see the next page....



Shamser's difficulties really began when he realised, through his part in the drama improvisations, that the violence he experienced at home was unbearable. He could see no escape. Without the support systems in place and the positive focus on solutions and help, he was unable to cope, he only saw that his life was a mess, his family were unhappy and he felt helpless. After a short time he was clinically depressed and became quite ill as a result, suffering long term depression which had a negative impact on his school attendance, life/school experience and his learning. His father was often angry and abusive at home so Shamser ran away. He became aware through his new experiences of life outside school and home that alcohol may numb the pain he experienced. Encouraged by his new peers to drink, he became addicted and so followed his father's footsteps into a life of abuse and violence. In this case AoE would have a terrible effect but....

And here ***with*** sensitive and careful facilitation:

Shamser had been made aware in the AoE workshops that sensitive issues may unfold that would be extremely difficult to explore. The facilitator made sure the AoE became a safe place to explore difficult personal problems by spending a few weeks on team building and confidence boosting exercises first. As a result Shamser then knew he was surrounded by a group of young people in similar situations, and not alone in his suffering he may be about to emotionally unpack. He knew that if his emotions became overwhelming he was able to talk to the facilitator in confidence. In fact the facilitator noticed that he was uncomfortable and unusually quiet so he approached him at the end of a session one day. Shamser felt able to admit his feelings and the facilitator was able to guide him in a number of ways. He also secured the support of a local agency that offered childhood support. Through various creative methods he worked with his AoE peers to find ways of negating the behaviour such as that of his father. In fact domestic violence became the subject of the group's phase 2 event and Shamser's family were persuaded to attend. At the event a dialogue developed between professional counsellors in the local hospital to deal with his father's alcohol abuse. A local NGO signed Shamser onto their register for additional emotional support. And slowly Shamser grew in confidence. He had friends he knew understood, he had a support network around him, and an improved relationship with his family. He and his family were in regular contact with school and the AoE facilitators in case things started to slip. He and his family valued school more, he was able to attend all his lessons, he passed his SLC and went on to become an excellent understanding teacher – and then education minister, and then prime minister!!!!



Well, the end may be a bit exaggerated but you get the point! Turn over to find out the best measures to take for securing a more nurturing and sensitive environment.....

Prevention and support systems to put in place:

Make sure that right from the start that it is clear that *everybody's* opinion and emotions will be valued and respected. Everyone taking part must nurture a culture of respect. In case of any difficulty there are certain channels to express their emotions in case they need to - make sure participant's all know that this is likely and will not make them unusual!



Put in place a systems of evaluation and expression, i.e. A 'listening box'. If a participant feels they need extra support they can take a piece of paper, fill it in and post it – as the box can also be used for evaluation and complaints there is no stigma attached. At the end of every session the facilitator **must** make time to check any notes.



The facilitator **must** always be ready to be available at the end of a session for a private 'chat' if anyone wants to approach them.



Be watchful and notice if a participant presents emotional behaviour: perhaps they become unusually quiet, they become distressed during an improvisation or exercise after certain issues have been raised.



6 Dealing with too many worms

Prevention and support systems to put in place (continued):



Always be aware of any subject matter that may unleash memories or extreme emotions in children that they have not yet dealt with and do not know how to. Certain issues might trigger particular difficulties. This will depend on your group and their situation. Always consider in your preparation what the emotional consequences might be, and make sure your planning reflects that.



Make sure you are *not* the only pair of eyes and ears by ensuring that your team are aware of such emotional risks within the process. Communicate with each other regularly and make sure that you raise the subject of any particular children who may be vulnerable to such difficulties in your workshop evaluation.



Use what and who you know! Remember you know your community, you also have relevant support groups in the useful contacts section at the end of this guide. You can also contact us with any questions or difficulties.



“In its most archaic sense, theatre is the capacity possessed by human beings – not by animals – to observe themselves in action. Humans are capable of seeing themselves in the act of seeing, of thinking their emotions, of being moved by their thoughts. They can see themselves and imagine themselves here and imagine themselves there; they can see themselves today and imagine themselves tomorrow.”

Augusto Boal, 1992

And so to the workshop plans...The Heart of your AoE process: Creative Workshops with young people

Start with an introductory meeting with head teachers and key staff

Items to include on your meeting's agenda.

- Why you are doing AoE? What is the point? *E.g. Benefits for the school, the children, the community*
- Where and how often will the AoE work? *E.g. once a week, after school for 1.5 hours for roughly 12 weeks*
- What kind of support are you asking for from the school? *E.g. free room hire, help with finding the students who will benefit most from the process etc*
- What questions do the school have for you? *Make sure you are open to questions in the meeting invite the input of the school staff and other stakeholders.*

You can get more information on how to conduct this on page 19. There are a few tips on how a meeting should be conducted with key staff so take a look before planning...



A couple more tips before you begin...

- 🕒 As an AoE team you should work at the school but not make any disturbance to the regular study of the young students so keep it out of school timetabling.
- 👉 For the workshop 20 students and a teacher representative are required. Among 20 half of the students need to be girls.
- 👂 We use drama as a tool to make children learn not only drama techniques but also working together, respecting, helping and loving each other. This kind of transformation is not possible in less than 12 weeks which is what we have planned as a structure for you here. Each workshop 1.5 hours long.
- 🕒 Every session should start with all the group in a circle, this makes sure everyone is on an even footing and physically brings the group together ready to work together. Check if anyone has any question before the workshop begins.



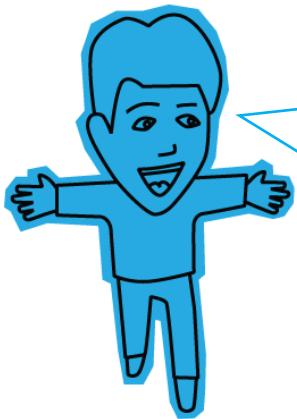
And...Forum Theatre – a quick explanation for facilitators!

Augusto Boal in 1970 started Forum Theatre to bring about social change. In Nepal it has been slowly gaining popularity and success as a tool for change in communities. It works best in small performances within communities – such as your school – where actors perform real life difficulties that the audience, made up of local community members, recognise. The difference from other forms of theatre were the performance will ‘give’ a message to the audience in order to make audiences aware of a certain subject or campaign for change is that a Forum theatre audience are asked for solutions, indeed invited to come and try to solve the problems that the performers portray. Most state school communities in Nepal don’t have time, skills and confidence to discuss the problems openly. Carefully managed and well performed, this is a perfect medium to allow a community to do just that, and in a relatively short space of time solutions will be devised and ‘performed’.

- 👉 Your group, not you, must choose what the subject matter will be; use the workshops to find the most prevalent difficulties the students face and then work on those in the drama (we show you how in this resource!)
- 👀 A good study on the subject matter, spend time in the workshops exploring the problems that your group want to portray, make sure you know all about it too, and think about possible solutions
- 🗣 When the performance is finally devised and the group begin to practice their Forum Theatre, you need to find a ‘turning point’ and STOP the play at that point, ready to invite the audience for suggestions. (We work on this in workshop 4)
- 👁 Make sure you have clarity on who is the ‘oppressed’ and ‘oppressor’ in the play.
- 👉 While creating the plot, the oppressed and oppressed character should be willing to make changes in order to create solutions.



Evaluation – every workshop must have one!



Actually during school lessons children are very rarely asked what they thought of the lesson! They are not asked to advise how to teach a subject better, or what they would like to do more of – they relish the opportunity to do so and often have great ideas!

Why?

Because AoE has to be responsive, otherwise it will not work! Evaluation is an essential part of each session because it gives enough time for the children to express any problems with or suggestions for the process. Their ideas should inform your facilitation and action over the coming weeks. It also gives confidence to the young people that they have ideas of value and will be listened to. There are different ways of doing evaluation – here are a few ideas:

Whole Group Listening

Everyone stand in a circle. Explain that we are about to listen to any concerns or positive comments anyone may have. Going round the circle in turn ask them turn in turn what they feel about that day's workshop, anything they want to do more of, or never do again! And why? Encourage critique, honesty and make sure everyone knows that this is you asking and checking their feelings about the process to make sure it is of value to them!

Listen (truly listen and show that you are!) to their answers and perhaps have a paper and pen so you can note down any ideas.



More evaluation ideas:

Still Image Evaluation

Everyone stand in a place. Explain that we are about to listen to any concerns or positive comments anyone may have.

Explain they have to make a suitable still image individually or in a group to show their concerns or comments

See their image carefully, and ask questions if you feel it is appropriate.

Never ignore their comments always acknowledge them even if they seem silly, make it clear you have listened and understood what they have said!

Note down their ideas, comments, concerns...

Address their views while preparing for next workshop or your project structures



This is an example of positive feedback, a still image representing how they feel they are working together.

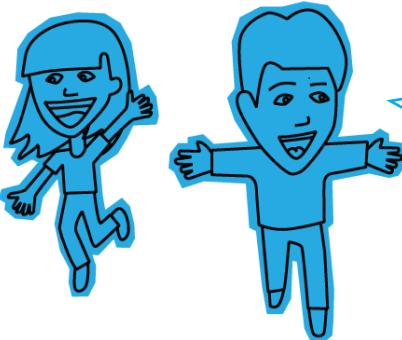
Anonymous Conversations

The facilitator leaves the room for a few minutes. Ask one of the more confident young people to lead a conversation as to what they truly think of the project or workshops so far.

They are to note down their thoughts on a large piece of paper, then the facilitator returns to the group, and the group leader explains the conversation and the notes to the facilitator.

This way no-one in particular is known to make the comments and so they are more free to express them!

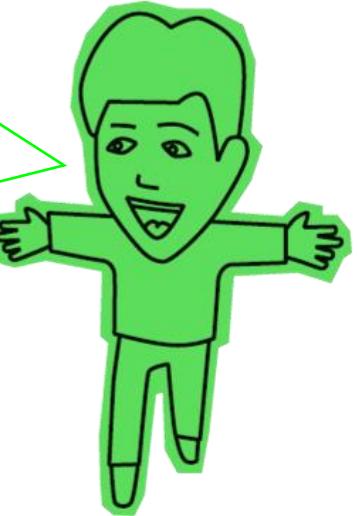
...you can get creative with how you extract information from your group members, so try your own methods but make sure you do it at ***every single session*** !!
Remember you can always use the AoE sms service if you are unsure how to respond.



Ask the group to take pictures of their still image feedback, or ask them all to write anonymous notes and put them into a bag for you to look at later, as them to find 1 comment each from another member, the tell it back to the group....etc etc!

And so to the workshops....

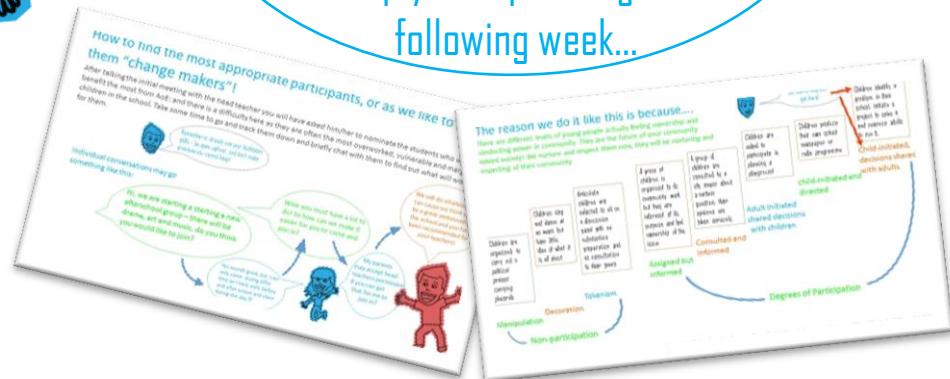
We have put together a rough guide for games and exercises you can use for your twelve week workshop plan – Phase I. It is not set in stone but designed to be flexible – which you always should be! You will need to add, or take away games as suite your purposes best....



At some point in the first two or three sessions make sure you make time for designing the contract – we haven't put that in a workshop structure as you will need to judge the best time to fit that in a session depending on your group, but it is vital you do it early on in the process.



...AND *keep*
referring to the tips in
the first section of this guide,
refreshing your memory can help when
a workshop doesn't go so well, the tips
will help you in planning for the
following week...



Name Game 1: Circle Dance!

Why play this game?

This game will help to know and be familiar with each other and also helps to focus at the particular subject matter. Also gives everyone a chance to perform without realising it – everybody watches and listens to them which feels good

How?

Ask the participants to stand in a circle

Ask one of the children to stand and say their name and do an action that they think represents them a little – any action!

The whole group then copies the action and name all together.

The person to their left then does the same with their name and an action

And again the whole group copies with their name!

Repeat the process until everyone has a turn

Ask them then to choose a song they all

know, then all together do everybody's actions in the order they did them order while singing the song all together! This makes a performance!



Body Wave: a body confidence game

Workshop 1

Why?

Through the help of this game we can make a group laugh, make our physical balance and create different characters on ourselves. We can also work out what it might be like to walk in someone else's shoes....

How?

In a circle count 1, 2, 3, 4 and ask them to move their body from head to feet making their move as a wave in the ocean

Call out FEEZE! And they must stop suddenly whatever position their position is in

Then they have a little experiment, walking around to see what it feels like with that particular stance that is not natural to them.

Ask them to go and meet their friends with their new walk and a new voice that may go with the new body stance

After a while ask them to come in the circle and repeat the process for some more times.

It is meant to be fun and some great characters can come out of it!

Explain that the way we use our bodies makes up a big part of who we are! You can lead this into learning to walk confidently and seeing how it makes them feel, walking as if they are afraid – discuss the differences.



Getting into groups....

Workshop 1

Why?

Through this game, we will learn the importance of listening other people, making a good balance of our body and decreasing distance among friends so that we can become close to them and working together will be easier

How?

Ask everyone to walk around the room, anywhere. They should all be aware not to touch any of their friends and not to speak while walking. When they start walking call out a particular number and ask them make a group of that number. This is a great way to get people into groups.

You can make this more competitive if you feel it is right for the group: The participants who don't make it fast enough into a group have to go out from the game. Repeat the process until the winner is announced. – This game can be inclusive when you ask those that are out to call out the number so they are not upset to be 'out'.



“Yes and!...” Introduction to improvisation”

Improvisation is what we do all the time in life!
So this kind of ‘impro’ shouldn’t be too hard at first, as long as it isn’t in front of everyone, which is why we start impro in small groups.



Why?

Quick thinking, responding to situations, working together, space awareness, working through real life situations in a fictional context.

How?

An Impro game called “Yes and!...” Get the group into 2’s or 3’s using “getting into groups” (see page 42) Explain that this is a positive game to support each other in ‘play’ and ‘performance’ because in improvisation as in life nothing works if we don’t work together and ‘block’ each others stories and ideas.

Ask the groups to choose who in their group will go first. This person then makes a suggestion of something to ‘do’ and play act out. The suggestion can be as wacky or real as they like, e.g. “climb up the steep hill to rescue the goat” or “venture into that alien space ship that just crashed into the field!!!”

Together they ‘play’ the idea, whatever it is, as a group, having fun in imaginary role-play.

Then someone else in their small group says – “yes! And....take the goat back to my father down the steep path into in the village” or “press all these wobbly controls in the space ship’s control room and see what happens!” again the group go and play act the suggestion until someone else in their group says, “yes! And....” etc...

Each group plays this at the same time as every other group, so no-one is ‘performing’ in-front of anyone, but just playing! It is a safe method start to improvisation – if there is the enthusiasm to show some back to the group then that is also a good way of starting out performing to an audience!



Warm up, have a laugh, and get ready for the session ahead!

Why?

Because doing something as a whole group that takes everyone from being tired and ‘still’ not perhaps ready to be creative and imaginative is vital for learning and working actively! This is good for any kind of lesson!

How?

This is simple: standing all in a circle say hellos etc. Then explain that we are all about to warm up – every part of our bodies to get ready to work together.

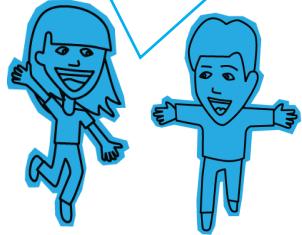
You have this chewing gum which is imaginary. As facilitator start to chew the gum, gradually exaggerate chewing, use all your face, blow bubbles, get it stuck in your teeth, and get everyone else to also chew their imaginary gum! You can take it out of your mouth and pass it on!! Get people laughing and making ludicrous chewing gun faces. Then stop.

Again imaginary, explain you are covered in mosquito bites – is any one else? You have an amazing itch, all over your body, everywhere!! Driving you crazy, you just can’t stop itching!! Everyone has the same problem, and you all itch, completely over the top, when everyone is moving and had a good go at it, stop and say great! We are warmed up ready.....let’s start...

Character development animal fun!

Workshop 2

Discovering how body language comes across in drama makes you realise how it portrays feeling in real life!



Why?

This exercise encourages creativity as children have to think and work individually and imaginatively.

They learn to be representational way in their body language.

Think more critically about themselves, their actions, how their bodies transfer information to others.

Character development and exploration for performance.

How?

Ask them to walk anywhere inside the room and find a space

Call out different character names, can be human or animal such as: 'tiger', 'snake', 'police officer', 'president', 'thief' and so on.

Then ask them to choose an animal that they feel represents themselves the most. Give the group a few moments to try this out individually around the room.

Bring the group back into the circle. Some of the children can perform this to the whole group and then discuss why do they choose that particular animal? What are its strengths? What are its weaknesses? How do you apply that to your own lives and characters? E.g. Pema thinks of himself as having the 'temper of a tiger', so as a facilitator you can ask why? And when do you lose your temper? Does it help? What else could you do? Leave plenty of time for this discussion, giving the opportunity for everyone to be seen and heard and use your facilitation skills to develop a relevance to the participant's everyday lives. Note down any poignant issues that may be relevant to the children struggling with attending school or managing school work.



Introduction to the reason for a ‘play’:

Workshop 2

Why?

Early on in the process it is a good idea to introduce what a ‘play’ is, as after all, the group will be performing, in one way or another, at their event in phase 2!

How?

Explain to the group the concept and reason for the phase 2 event: positive real CHANGE for their school communities. Part of this process will be to make a dramatic performance! At this stage it is good to establish what a ‘play’ is! Start with these points:



What is a play?



A play is a means of expression

Expression means to express oneself. As a teacher expresses himself by teaching, a journalist expresses himself by writing, a student expresses himself by studying and an actor expresses himself by acting in a play. You will express yourselves through your AoE!!



What is an expression?



If students can express themselves by studying then why do we need a play?



There are so many other means of expression. Doing play is one of the most clear and dynamic methods.



How is this so?



This medium is understood easily by ‘people’ i.e everyone! In every culture and class of society, because no reading or writing or language is needed..



What are the elements of a play?



The most import elements of the play are:
a) meaning b) storyline c) actors d) Audience

Warm up:

Why?

This exercise works on physical balance, develops patience, listening, teamwork skills



How?

Ask the group to begin walking around the workshop space. It is good if you have a drum they can walk around the room to the rhythm of the beat and then stop when you stop playing.

When you stop call out an instruction such as “jump up and down!” or “catch your nose!” or “get 6 elbows together!” or “roar like a bear!” or “play football” or “be an eagle soaring in the sky!” anything you can think of that gets the group moving, working together, laughing and ready for the workshop.

Put the drum down, thank the group for warming up and start the session...



Introduction to the image theatre: Instant Image!

Workshop 3

Why?

There are so many ways to perform a play. In still images the 'statue' does not speak or move - but the actors should have a goal to express a feeling or meaning in body language alone. Still image work can be used in the classroom to explore literature and comprehension on a variety of subjects.



How?

Ask the group to walk around individually.

With a drum or clapping your hands, ask the group to walk to the rhythm.

Then stop the beat and call out an emotion (happy/terrified/sad/ecstatic and so on) They must show that emotion in an instant, without hardly even thinking, an immediate statue. This is a 'still image', *no* talking, *no* moving but expressing and emotion with only a 'snap shot'.

Repeat the process a number of times, calling out different feelings. When someone does something very effective ask them to hold it while everyone takes a look at their still image.

After a few times, when everyone is holding an image, explain that you will walk around the room and tap a few of the group on the shoulder. When you do they're to call out a single word expressing their image – (not the one you used) For example it could be that they are holding an image of laughing so the word they call is "friends!" or they are crying, so "missing" might be their word etc

In itself this can show you a lot about the group, and also can make a moving performance. Pick up on certain words and ask questions, encourage the group to study each others images, and different group members can 'mould' their friends image to make it clearer for the audience (i.e. move their arms up slightly, or suggest a bigger smile). All this aids the group to develop their understanding of expression.

This work is specially for the first steps in developing good communication skills. It simplifies down body language in an 'instant'!



Still Image: exploring a problem

Workshop 3



Why?

Group still Images provide an opportunity for the group to learn self control, working together well as a team, and creatively and clearly portray *without words*, the subject they are exploring. It also allows you to gauge how much understanding your group have of the aims of the project e.g. representing the issues effectively to an audience.

Teachers can use this exercise to explore other learning objectives in a classroom setting.

How?

In 2 separate groups ask the students to spend a few minutes discussing some of the problems they think prevent their access to and quality of education. Then choose one specific problem (e.g. overwork at home)

Remind them that they have all signed the confidentiality agreement so all things discussed should be kept within the space of the workshop and *no further*. Remember, between facilitators, keep an eye on the groups to make sure anyone who may get upset is supported....

This is a step towards making more clearly defined stories in the groups steps towards their final forum theatre performance in phase 2!

Don't jump too quickly into live spoken performances, let the group understand the idea of structure first. It clarifies the stories: *situation, problem, solution, future.*



Continued on the next page!...

Continued...

Workshop 3

Then ask each group to devise 4 group still images - like a statue, ABSOLUTELY STILL and with *no words!* (you will be surprised how difficult this can be for children) The images should portray

a) the difficult situation *now*

b) the *cause* of the situation

c) a possible *solution* to the problem

d) An ideal *future!*

Give them time to work on these and offer help and support where needed, this will take at least 20 minutes to get to this stage in the exercise.

When they are ready, ask each group to show their Images as a performance in front of the rest of the group. After watching their work, facilitate a whole team discussion about their ideas, their performance, and the subject matter. Everyone must remember the contract rules of respect, listening, working together. Encourage other group members to move the still images around to portray any new ideas suggested and see how that might change the outcome of the future image. Take a few notes and make sure you come back to these issues and solutions when developing the event.

Make sure you congratulate everyone on working together to solve difficulties they are facing – that is of course why they are here!



Warm up: ‘Ice and Water!’

Workshop 4

Why?

This is great to energise the group when they may be a little lethargic and tired from an already long day! Stimulates the mind in a fun way, encourages creativity and respect for each other in the group. This game help us work in a group together. This game is played in many schools of Nepal.

How?

Start in a circle.

Choose a leader from the group. To make the game more fun, give a name to the leader such as a security guard/thief/sweet shop owner!

Participants should run anywhere in the room (be careful that they don't push or pull their friends)

The leader chases them (in character) and tries to touch on the shoulder/arms/legs as many participants as fast as he can!

If the they are touched they have to freeze as a statue as if frozen in time (here they are being chased by a polar bear and they are freezing penguins!)

Other running participants should try to touch their frozen friends to make them unfreeze

The leader tries to ‘freeze’ as many participants as he can and other running participants try to unfreeze as many friends as they can!

The game will come to a natural end when everyone is energised and ready for the workshop ahead.



Think Quick!

Workshop 4

Why ?

This play makes participants more creative, which helps for improvisation skills in life and in drama – brain practice and quick thinking! It also develops the skill of English speaking if you do it in English and Nepali if in Nepali! You can do a similar exercise with numbers for maths, just replace the letter with a number and sums how to get there!

How?

Ask the participants to stand in a circle.

Give a ball to one group member and then ask them to pass it on so the ball goes all around the circle.

Play music closing your eyes (any kind of music will do, a drum, a radio or simply clapping hands!)

Stop the music! Who has the ball?

Then call out a letter and ask the person holding the ball to make five words beginning with that letter as fast as they can!

Repeat the process as long as the momentum of the game feels good, and plenty of people have had a turn.



Image Theatre Practice:

Workshop 4

Why?

This builds on the images the group have already worked on, and helps them to clarify their performance messages and ideas for an audience of stakeholders. What are their ideas? How well can they convey them?

How?

From a small group of the participants ask them to make a small image play based on their own life story (they are to choose another story they haven't presented in the previous week)

Ask them to make the images of before and after the incidents happening in their subject matter, portraying a story process and time.

Ask them to perform the images and carefully offer technical ideas and suggestions as in Still Image Exploring a Problem - but this time more briefly.

Now, ask the group to add a small amount of words and movement into their performance. Choosing key words that they think will express the situation in the story in the most effective way. Suggest they keep it simple to convey the meaning!

Using these key words they can begin to develop a dialogue for the particular images, using improvisation they can try out a few different situations and ideas for solving the problems in their performance.

The whole facilitating team must walk around offer help to the groups, get involved, watch their ideas, make suggestions, discuss the subject matter, what solutions might work best "if her father was going to continue to beat her, what can she do to make it stop? Try running away, what happens? Try talking to him, what would you say, how will you convince him to stop?" The group act out their different ideas all playing the different characters and see what happens, how do different characters react? After practising these together in their groups a few times, present some of the work to the rest of the group. Performances won't be perfect!! At this stage do not worry it is the meaning that is vital to the process.

Take notes on problem identification and solutions that were presented.

Warm ups!

Workshop 5

Make a shape

Why?

Quick fire games gets people working together to time, focuses concentration, builds teamwork. Can also be used for number or letter recognition in Maths and English subjects, or even in geography and history! Energises the group.

How?

In smaller groups of about 5, perhaps choose those who haven't often worked together to work together for this simple exercise.

Ask the group to make a shape (such as triangle, square etc) in 30 seconds. (Time it on your watch or a clock which helps build the tension! Do this 3 times or so.

Then start with letters, Nepali or English, and again they have 30 seconds.

You can also move onto objects such as a tree, or a mountain, or scenes such as festival, or classroom



Line up

Why?

This gets the WHOLE group working together towards a common goal. Gets them moving, talking, focusing on the outcome.

How?

Ask the group to line up in the order you call out – this may be tallest to shortest, where your birthday is in the year, names in alphabetical order etc.

You can vary the game a bit, for example, do it in silence, do it with your eyes closed, time it and see how fast they are!

Inside Out body talk

Workshop 5

Why?

With a fun start to the work this is a good way of developing an understanding of difficulties raised amongst the group. It provokes deeper discussions in small groups and later as a whole group. The exercise is also good for any learning that involves 'people' i.e. history, literature, cultural studies etc. (you can put internal thoughts/ feelings of a historical character and external facts such as where they were from, what their job was, what they looked like and wore etc)

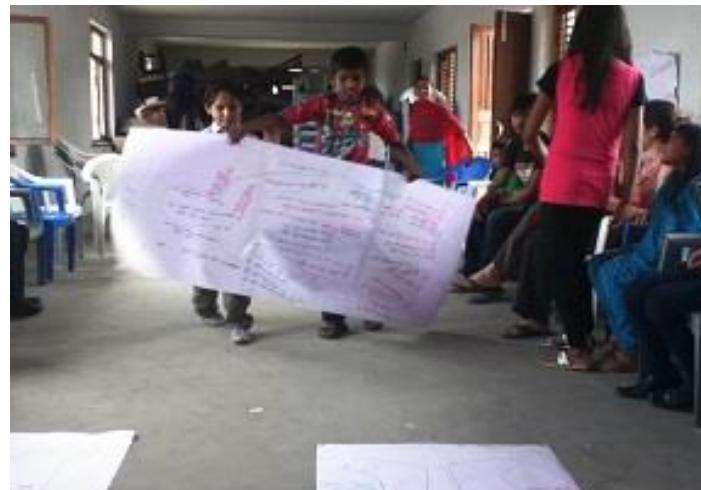
How?

Form groups of 4/5 children. Provide each group BIG paper, tape and a marker. Ask the group to stick together the big pieces of paper.

Ask 1 child to lie on the paper and ask another child to draw the outline of their body on the paper.

When the outline of a body is drawn on the paper then ask them write down difficulties they are facing, practical and emotional, inside the outline of the drawing and also ask them to write the ideas for physical and practical solutions outside of the outline.

When the group has finished, the whole group comes together and each in turn presents their papers provoking discussions and further ideas for change! Use your facilitating skills here to ensure meaningful and useful discussions!



Then at the following workshop put them up on the walls as a reference display!

Warm ups!

Workshop 6

In the middle if...

Why?

This is a good calm down game, gets everybody interested in each other's ideas, and you can find out a little about your group too.

How?

The whole group stands in a circle.

To start with the facilitator leads the game by saying “in the middle if....” and then adds something like, you have white socks, you like football etc.

Whoever that applies to then steps into the circle.

After the first few goes and the group understand the game, then group members may have ideas so they can also say “in the middle if “you have black dhal for breakfast....” “you walked an hour to school today” you live with your aunt....” etc



“In the middle if ...you had a ride on a motorbike this week”



“In the middle if ...you have Dhal Bhat Power!”



“In the middle if ...you have no brothers”

Warm ups!

Workshop 6

Can't catch my back?



Why?

This is a game that requires lateral thinking, and develops a little competitive spirit. Group members also need to balance, think and act at the same time!

How?

Divide the group into pairs. Ask each person to put one hand behind their back and keep it there leaving one hand free. The aim of the game is to touch the hand your partner has behind their back before they touch yours.



Doesn't sound too hard
until you try it -
This can become mayhem
but is very fun!! ☺

There is a variation which is much more high energy and can be played in pairs or as a whole group:
Each player has to touch the back of their opponents knees without the back of their knees being touched.

Improvisation starter game

Workshop 6

Why?

This game is fun, a little energetic but not too much, focuses on imaginations, creative thinking, problem solving, and quick response drama. They improvise and devise within the context of a fun game. (ready for the devising work coming up next)

How?

Ask the group to all line up along 1 wall facing into the room.

The group will then be given dilemmas such as...

- ⌚ the floor is now a bog, thick and muddy, they HAVE to get to the other side. They all do it acting out getting through.
- ⌚ Then you can say, there is a raging river, how will you make it across – you have to get there to make it home?!
- ⌚ Now there is a blazing fire across the middle of the room and they HAVE to get to the other side to save themselves!
- ⌚ There is a wild animal prowling, how do you get past?

They must act these out with creative ideas, working together or alone, anything they can think of!



Putting out the fire with water



A happy group having defied an angry tiger with tricks!



Getting across (or drowning in) a raging river!

Improvisations and Devising

Workshop 6

Why?

This is to begin devising the different ideas for the play. The groups by now should be at the last stage of problem identification. From workshop 6 you will move into how to express that problem to the community and other key stakeholders in order to put real change into action!.

How?...

In groups of 5 Use the posters made from last week as a point of reference for the work:

Ask the participants to read aloud their problems and the possible from last week

...Ask each group to select a major problem and prepare a small play based on this, make sure each group selects a different problem.

See the performances and the voice level, overlap, entrance to the stage and give suggestions to correct it if they have some problems on it.

Evaluate the performances as a facilitator as well as peer to peer help. Story needs to be clear and understandable to the audience! Take notes on each.

The posters MUST be kept safely for confidentiality and also to keep for reference in future workshops.



Warm ups...

Workshop 7

Why?

Whole group listening and concentration, awareness of others, working together.

How?

This is a very simple game but very hard to play. First the group stands together in a circle. A good one, where everyone is ready to listen and focus.

Then the facilitator calls out a number from 1 through to 10 (any more than 10 and the game become extremely difficult – only for experts!) the number that is called is the number of people that should then step forward into the circle.

Inevitably at first always the wrong number of people will step forward, the key is to become accutely aware of everyone else in the circle and think quickly as a whole group.

Finally and with a bit of practice the right number of people will start to step forward – it is magic when the group manage it! They are always so pleased with themselves and it give confidence to move on to the work in hand.



The facilitator makes gets the group in a definite circle.



In the circle explaining the game



The elation when the right number of people step forward!

The next series of workshops will be based around developing The Event (phase 2). There are quite some factors to consider and the process has to be owned by the group members, the AOE process is all about advocacy that makes effective change for the children! There is no point making a beautiful play, but then it doesn't make any difference to their day to day lives...AoE members are changemakers!

Begin by starting a conversation a little like this:

"Dear Friends please listen carefully. When we talk about preparing a play for change, the clarity and simplicity of the story is very important. We have been searching and exploring your stories – all about you and your lives. You have thought and worked hard about identifying the issues you want to change, now it is time to begin working on getting those stories told to those who can make changes, this is called Advocacy.

There are so many methods of devising a storyline" ([Take out some examples of newspapers, magazines, books, and if you can, use clips from our website of AoE kids performing, or other plays you have seen on websites such as YouTube](#)) "Take a look at these – these are examples of how stories can be told, there is no reason why you can't do the same! We Today we need to think about...."

WHY? WHO? HOW?

Why? Why do we want to make changes?

Who? Who should we tell and who can make the changes with?

How? How shall we tell the story

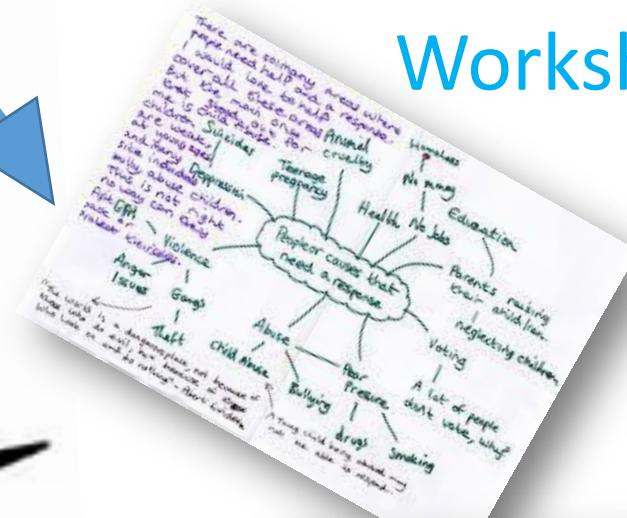
Then open the floor for questions and ideas. Get a good writer in the group to write all the ideas down – you can brainstorm them and then clarify the main points of action.

Workshop 7

When all the ideas are down on the group's brainstorm it may look a bit like this:

Then compile all the ideas into a “Together Let’s” list....Think about adding:

- Finalise most important issues to address at the event, those foremost in the groups mind, and those where action can be taken. (see pg ...)
 - Set time and date for event, where and when is best for the most number of people?
 - Design invitations, what is the most effective way to make sure your audience of stakeholders come?
 - Research best NGO's local to your school who might support our ideas
 - Write a press release outlining the purpose of the event and who will be coming.
 - Get stories rehearsed and ready to perform so the message and stories are clear.
 - Designate certain jobs (so Manuka and Moona will design the invites, Aryan and Sunita will write the press release etc

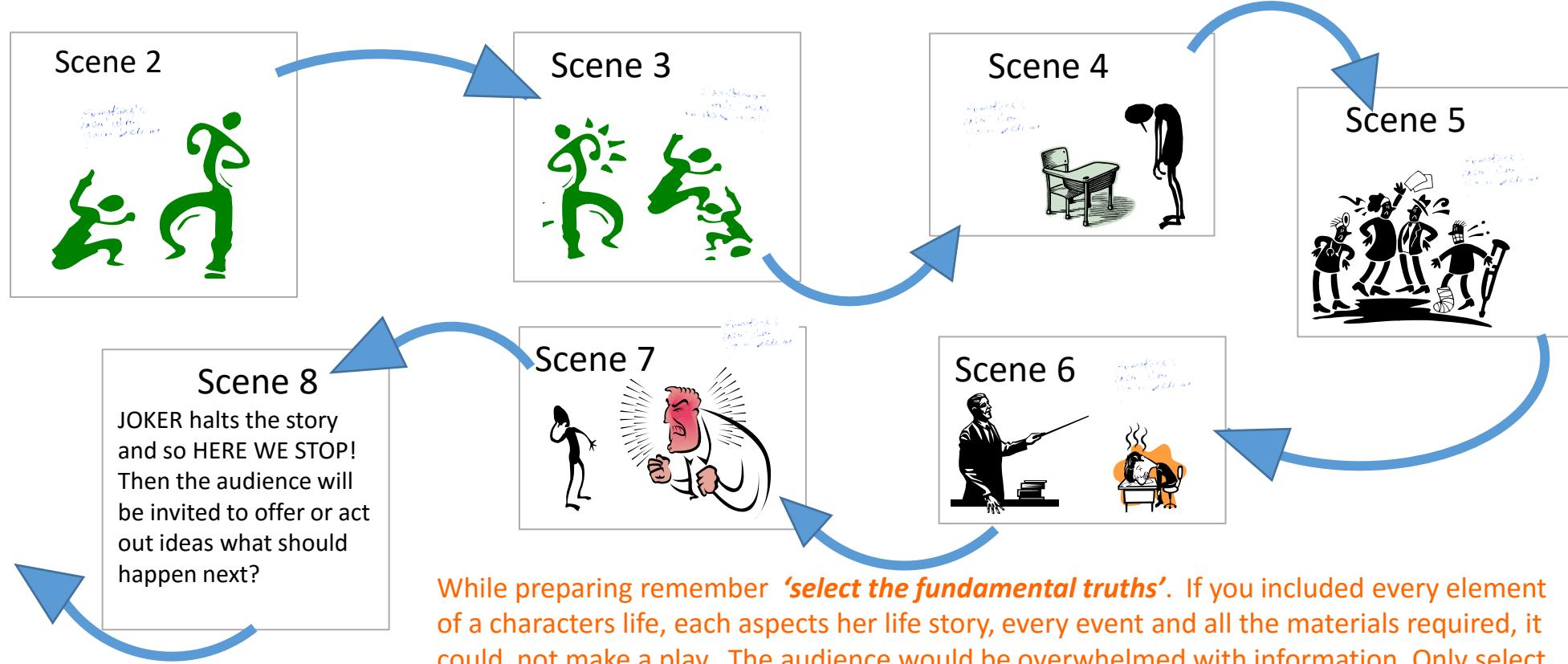


Story Board

Workshop 7

Storyboarding for the performance will take some time – allow at least 30 minutes for each group. It does not need to be detailed, as the performances will be ‘practised improvisations’ as opposed to formal scripted plays. The most important element is for the characters to profoundly convey the meaning of the story so the audience understands and is willing and compelled to propose solutions at the final turning point of the play (here shown in scene 8).

For each scene you need to
Decide the
location
characters
what happens
Start and finish of each scene.



There may be 2 or 3 interventions from the audience for each short play the group performs at the event. Your AoE performers should be prepared to respond in character to each of the stakeholder audiences suggestions! You will practice them in the coming weeks so don't worry! ☺

While preparing remember '**select the fundamental truths**'. If you included every element of a characters life, each aspects her life story, every event and all the materials required, it could not make a play. The audience would be overwhelmed with information. Only select the most relevant representations to get the meaning across. Give an audience credit for filling in minor details themselves while they watch the story. Keep props to a minimum. Use music to convey feeling if you can or want to, but keep it simple. **KEEP IT SIMPLE!** You don't want to get bogged down in details, just keep the most important and valid points.

Now check the first stage if Phase 2
so you can begin preparations!



House Man Wind Warm Up

Workshop 8

Why?

This game is fun! Gets everyone moving, listening and flowing instructions. It is a good laugh for a group, and everyone has to look out for each other in order to survive.

How?

Get the group to divide into smaller groups of 3, (if everyone has attended you will have 2 people spare).

Ask 2 of the 3 to join hands in a roof formation and the 3rd to sit in the ‘house’ as the ‘man’ (as in the picture).

The two group members left are also going to be a ‘man’ for the starting point of the game.

Now everyone is ready the facilitator calls out instructions. These are:

- “House!” All the people who are making a house move around and form houses over other ‘men’ (who have stayed in position)
- “Man!” All those playing the ‘man’ move around the room and find new ‘houses’ (who have stayed in position)
- “Wind” Everyone moves around the room forming new ‘houses’ and ‘men’!

At the soonest opportunity the two spare will jump in and form half a house or a man, the idea being that there will always be a couple of people out trying to get in, which raises the stakes for everyone getting into formation quickly before they are left out.



Counting Games

Workshop 8

Why?

Concentration, Group awareness, Comradery, listening, focus. Of course this is good for maths, you can do it with times tables or other number patterns depending on the age of the group.

How?

Ask all the participants stand in a circle.

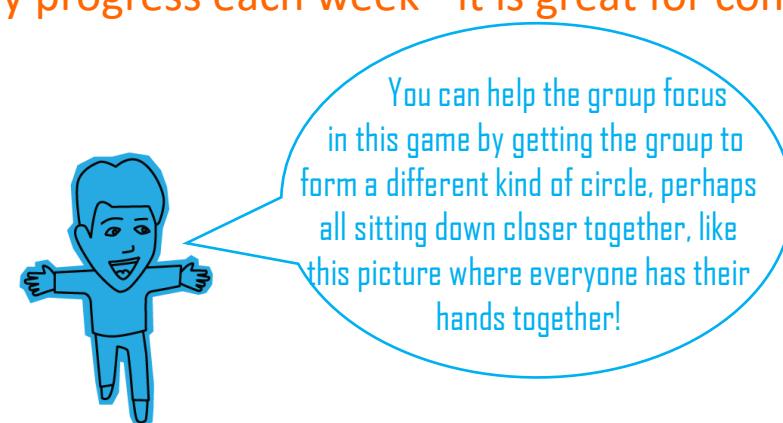
If they are 20 in total, they have to count 1 to 20 one by one and then back down again (20 to 1). The idea is to get the counting as smooth and rhythmical as possible.

In this process any of them should not repeat the counting. If so then they have to start the process again from the beginning! (They have to really concentrate and work as a team to get this to work.)

Variations:

Easier: ask a group member to choose any sound they can make, then the whole group have to pass it around the circle one by one, creating a sound scape. If they get good at this you can make it harder by passing two sounds, each in a different direction!

Harder: The whole group count from 1 upwards without establishing an order to count in i.e. *anyone* can call a number at *any* time, but, if they call out at the same time as another person then the counting goes back to 1. This is difficult! You can always do 5 minutes each week and see how they progress each week - it is great for comradery!



Finalising the Storyline

Workshop 8

At this stage, you will have prepared an outline stories based on the daily lives of the young AoE members and the reasons why their access to and quality of education is failing. All the suggestions and improvisations should have been instigated and led by the students themselves. Now it is the facilitators job to you are develop the quality of the advocacy to ensure that your group are listened to and actions taken! Very often these actions have an impact on the whole community not only your group – the work you are doing is invaluable and NEVER think otherwise.

Have confidence!



So, first of all you need to finalise the storylines and event agenda with the group.

Read aloud the performance stories scene by scene together in a circle.

Talk about each storyline and make sure all the participants feel the performances will be representational of their own lives.

Decide which order will be most effective.

Walk through the performance scene by scene with the whole group watching and ensure as a group generally people are happy with the final “performance” you will show to all those invited.

Any final suggestions and note those down and act on them.

REMEMBER: The stories need to be stopped at KEY turning points so that the audience can be invited to get involved in the play and explore some changes to!

Make sure everybody knows what they will be doing at the event!

Give everybody enough time to practice their stories through – and offer help where needed!



This group is ‘walking’ through their scenes, not acting as much as ‘walking’...

Warm up: Wheel of life!

Workshop 9

Why?

Gets people moving in ways they have not done before. Raises energy levels without generating chaos, enhances observation skills, develops awareness of body language and expression, as well as being fun!

How?

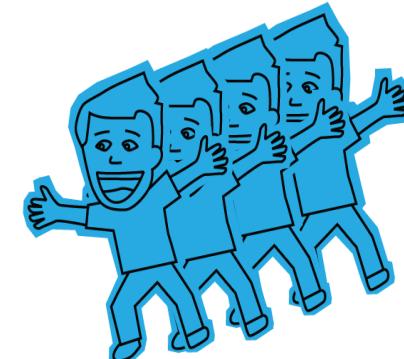
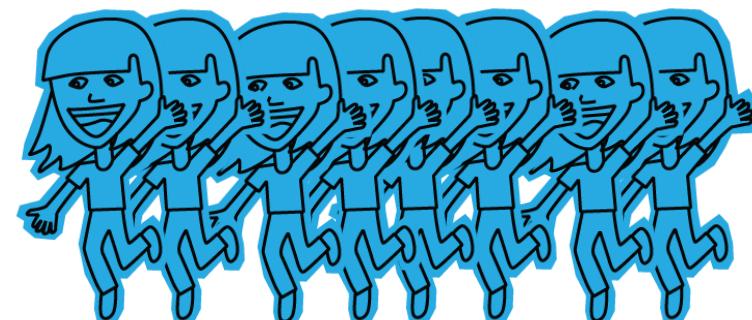
Starting in a circle ask everybody to turn and face the person on their left. (Everyone should be facing the person on their left's back)

Then ask everyone slowly to start walking forwards keeping the formation of a circle so the whole group is walking around a little like a giant wheel.

Choose a someone to be the first in the the game by creating a different movement to their usual walk (this can be very simple; lifting 1 arm up and down. It can be more complex; a comical walk with massively bent knees and a nodding head)

When they have started to walk their own different way, the person behind them in the walking wheel has to observe and copy exactly, the person behind them then has to copy as well, until everyone in the circle is copying the movement of the first, the whole group walking in a wheel with a different walk.

The facilitator then shouts out “CHANGE!” and the person behind the first then does their own movement and the whole groups copies, observing carefully and all trying to be exactly the same. Don’t give too long for each person otherwise the game lasts too long, it works well as a quick fire game and moves into the Mirror exercise very well.



Mirror Game....

Workshop 9

Why ?

Observation, concentration, movement, working together, nurtures understanding, peer support.

How?

This game is divided into 3 steps:



Step 1

Ask the group to get into pairs. One will be A and the other B.

The tell the group person A will be the 'mover' and B will be a 'mirror'

Then A (the mover) should do an action and the mirror should copy, exactly, observing carefully and clearly mirroring their partners actions.

The Mover should also give their partner support by moving carefully and clearly – otherwise the game is hopeless! (Remember to point out that is what life is like – supporting each other by being clear and working together! – The same when they perform at their event)



Step 2

The process is in this step will be as in step 1. However the participants must start to use their bodies in unusual ways, slowly and carefully still. It can be in any way and represent something or nothing, as long as it is quite large movement



Step 3

The process in this step is as in step 1 and 2, but participants pay most attention to expression or emotions and feeling in their movements.

Sometimes music or rhythm can help to give extra meaning to their mirror performances.



Performance Practice

Workshop 9



Don't speak over the top of each other! **One voice at a time** and loud and clear so the audience can hear the story.



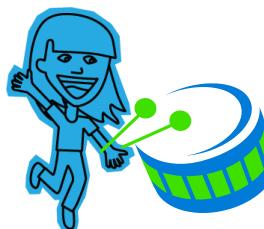
Face the audience! Audiences always need to see your faces, then they can understand the story. Decide where they will be and practice (in a circle around the play, or at one end of a room as in a conventional theatre?)



Here everyone is practicing! Going over their story performances to make them good! You can also inject more interest try asking the group to perform the whole story while: Crying, being angry, laughing! This encourages a new energy into performances and often get the young performance more confidence to use emotion where needed.



Will you have any music? If so how and when in the story? (A drum can signify a scene change for example)



The Knot

Workshop 10

Why?

Developing teamwork, listening, observation, group morale, problem solving, physical warm up, balance and concentration.

How?

With difficulty!! (only kidding) This game is tricky though when done properly and requires a group who has been together for a little while and are ready to work together.

There are two ways to do this exercise, the first easier and the second a little harder:

Either: stand in a circle and holding hands. Get a couple of group members to hold their hands up high like a bridge. Ask the other side of the circle to walk through the bridge (WITHOUT anyone letting go of hands!!)

Then repeat the process with a few other group members – BUT EVERYONE IS STILL HOLDING HANDS! – the group should end up in a big tangled knot.

Then as facilitator stand back and ask the group, carefully and slowly to untangle themselves.

Or: (this is harder)

Stand in a circle very close together.

Ask everyone to reach out their left hand and catch hold of another persons' hand.

Then the same with their right hand, until everyone is holding a hand of another's.

Make sure that two people are not holding each others hands exclusively otherwise they will be a very small circle!

You can always ask the group to do it in silence too! And join in too!



Forum Theatre: and so....to prepare for it!

Workshop 10

By now you will have probably talked to your group about the Forum Theatre element of the event. (page 39) You group need to be very prepared for the audience to be invited in to intervene at key points in the storyline. You will need to cover the following 3 points:

Where is the most effective place to stop the performances? What are the KEY turning points? i.e. at what point in the story could positive changes be made?

Discuss the characters in each story, which might be the change-makers? Which characters might decide to do what? For example a child might ask his father for time off labour on the farm to do homework, the father might a)agree, b)be angry and beat the child, c)not be able to change the child's workload even if he wants to, so d)another character has to come in and make that possible – who? How will the child/father react? They will need to know their character well, they can practise and 'try out' all the different possibilities with their groups.

You will need to decide who will be the joker. Perhaps choose all the facilitating teach to try out the Joker role – practise it! Do event rehearsals, even invite some friends in to be a 'test' audience, the joker can then practice facilitating before the actual Event in phase 2.



Forum Theatre: The Joker

Workshop 10

For the performance part of the event you will need a “Joker” this can be either one of the facilitating team or a more confident older student. However we would advise a facilitator as the role holds a tonne of responsibility during the event, which may not be fair to give to one of the children.

The Role of the Joker

The joker in the forum theatre plays the role of a bridge between the audience and actors. Forum theatre is impossible to perform without the Joker and a confident Joker at that. Here are a few tips to help you perform the joker role more confidently:

The Joker is an *essential* player in the forum theatre. The play cannot move ahead without the Joker. The Joker works as a bridge between the audiences and the actors. S/he must be clear and have a thorough understanding of the issues being discussed. S/he must also be very clear about the direction he should take to the dialogue between the young performers and the stakeholder audiences, protecting both, at the same time as balancing a careful and perhaps tense relationship between the two parties. BE careful, analytical, subtle and respectful.

-  Remember you know your community and you know your group, so have confidence explaining the purpose and process for the days event.
-  Introduce and start the performance part of the event with a brief introduction to the *process* of devising the stories and the *purpose* for doing so. (i.e. by exploring real life issues and performing them to this particular audience in order to invite key people to come forward and help solve these difficult issues in a creative and inclusive way)

••• A few more Joker tips•••

- 💡 The plays will be performed and will stop at a key turning point in the story (such as a father about to beat a mother, or a teacher berating a child for not doing their homework) the actors freeze (as in still image). At this crucial stage, the Joker enters, walks amongst and again addresses the audience. *Be relaxed* (the audience may well be more nervous than you as you are asking *them* to think and perform with people watching!)
- 👀 If no-one is coming forward (they usually, carefully, do) then start ask specific questions that you have prepared before - “should Sunita take action against her drunken father?” “What kind of action?” How will he react do you think?” Don’t tell us, come and find out!!” And so you hook in audience members to swap with the actors and see how they react to certain ideas.
- ✋ Go on as long as there are ideas and the discussion is fresh, if the momentum starts to fall, move on to the next story. In the post performance discussion you can come back to the ideas and get action plans in place.
- 📞 Make sure someone else on your team is writing down all the ideas! The pressure is not all on you then... GOOD LUCK!



If you are nervous about taking on an audience of stakeholders, see if you can muster some adult friends to come along to a rehearsal with your group. With them acting as the audience you can have a go at playing the joker. Try a few different approaches out. It will surprise you what the results might be! And you will gain confidence for the real thing.

Final Preparations!

Workshop 11

Pay attention to the following:

The current status of the play, are the performers making the stories clear?

Do they know when to stop? Have they practised testing out different endings to the play?

Are there any costumes that the group are using? Do they help clarify the story? Do they give it an extra artistic flare that makes the story more watchable? Make sure they do otherwise don't have costume.

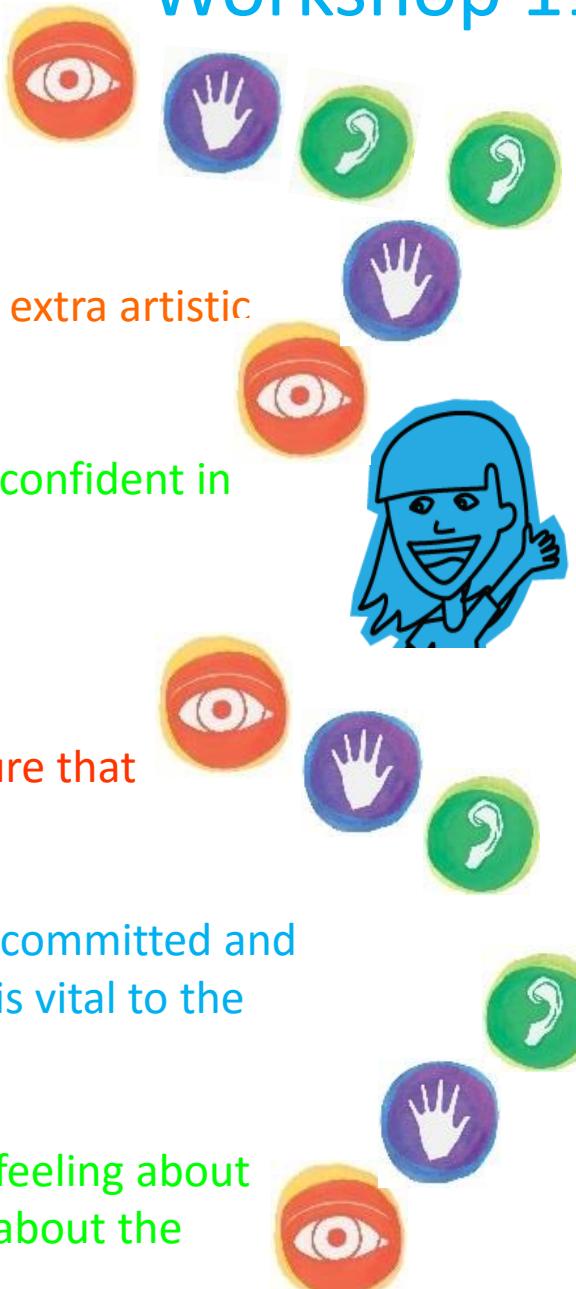
What kind of props are the group using? Again, do they aid the storyline? Are the group members confident in using them? Make sure they don't distract from the audience.

Remember – keep it simple!

Make sure your final rehearsals use involve everything that will be used in the event, this makes sure that everyone is prepared as they can be.

Ask participants to be ready for the performance in the following week, at this stage they are fully committed and anyone of them who cannot come must speak up otherwise – at this stage everyone of the group is vital to the change process!

Because of your regular evaluations you should all have a good understanding of how everyone is feeling about the process so far. Use all the support mechanisms you have to make sure anyone who is nervous about the performance, or anxious about the audiences reaction can talk it through, and is supported.



Ready for the performance element in phase 2?

Workshop 11

It is very helpful to draw up a list of the things you need to do, it is easy to forget on event day. Make sure that all the facilitating team are aware of the items on the list too – you are a team so work together on this! Include on the list: If you have all the props and costumes ready in the correct places before the event begins.

Make sure you have cleared a size big enough for the ‘stage’ area and the space for where the audience will be is also welcoming and clear (you can decide if they will want seats or not etc) Also decide where any musicians (if you have them) will sit so they do not take over the stage.

Give plenty of time for the group members to arrive and get involved in setting up – but not so early that they get nervous, or actually hinder the preparation time because there are 20 of them running about nervously! (45 minutes should be enough time)

And **CHILL Maaaan** – remember “more haste less speed” as the English saying goes. You can do no more now, the event is here, be confident and give an air of belief in what you are all doing!



Here are 4 examples of the way you can organise the layout of your AoE phase 2 performance – inside or outside

By now you are at the stage where Phase 2 will begin.....but first here are some extra activities and resources you may want to use for your workshop activities

And don't forget mix and match – you don't have to run the sessions as we suggest, also help is at hand on the SMS and the website should you need it

Just for fun:

Why? The games on this page are mainly light-hearted games that can lighten a heavy mood when the other workshop subject matter is quite heavy and intense...

Honey I love you

Sitting in a circle

The leader turns to the person on their right and says "Honey I love you but I just can't smile"

The person next to the leader now turns next to them and repeats the phrase and so on all the way round the circle

The object of this game is not to laugh!!

See if you can all manage it as not laughing is harder than it sounds. Group members are free to add energetic impro too!

Splat

This is a firm and fast, favourite, little hard to explain but give it a go – young people LOVE it!

Stand in a circle

Someone stands in the middle and become the 'chief splatter'

They choose someone in the circle to 'splat' by pointing at that person with both hands and shouting "SPLAT"

That person then has to duck down and the two people either side of the them turn and face each other, and put their hands up to point and spat at each other.

The 'chief splatter' in the middle has to decide who was the quickest to splat, whoever it was stays in, the slowest sits down.

As the group becomes smaller (i.e. those left standing) it is more tricky to be aware of who is the nearest person wither side of you.

Stuck in the Mud

Someone is chosen to be 'it'

'It' chases everyone

When someone is caught they have to stand together with their legs apart (in a star shape) – they are 'stuck in the mud'

To free them another person can crawl through their legs

The object of the game is for 'it' to get everyone 'stuck in the mud'!

Simple!

“Four Word Build”

Why? It gets young people to develop ideas for solutions, evaluating ideas, and negotiating as a team towards the simplest most effective action.

How?

You need: Small pieces of paper and pens for each person and big paper and big pens for the later stage.

A given theme that has been raised by the group previously eg: *What is needed to encourage more girls to come to school?*

Ask the group to individually answer the question in four words or short phrases.

Then start to pair people to share their ideas and agree on 4 between them.

Then ask the pair's to make 4's ad narrow it down to four again.

Then the 4's make 8's. Then 8's make 16, or the whole group at this stage.

The facilitator steps back and let's the group start negotiating themselves.

After a given amount of time the facilitator asks the group to present their ideas back.

Facilitators ask participants to feed back and write up the ideas: to see how turn over!



...continued from four word build:

Ask questions such as.....

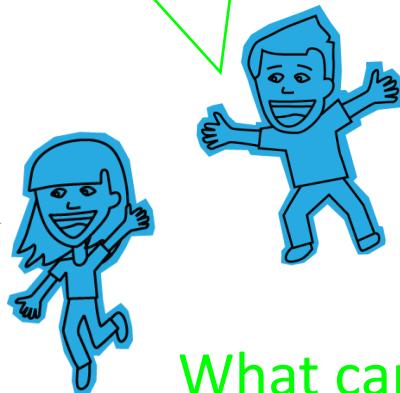
Encourage extensive, thorough thinking, which
to make the solutions viable and realistic:

*What do you already
understand about doing
something like that?*

*What do you mean
by that? Can you describe it
more clearly for us?*

*How can this
method now to
make more girls
feel comfortable
coming to school?*

*How can we get more parents
to feel value in their daughters
education?*



....and consider how
the solutions can be
sustained by asking:



What can we do right now?

.....**Tomorrow?**

.....**In a week?**

.....**In a month?**

.....**In a year?**

Then write it all down ready to use for the event!

Image Circle....

Why? This exercise enables a facilitator to read the understanding of a group. Participants see visually what certain subjects mean to them in an immediate context. Can delve into understanding subjects in depth.

How? Everyone stand in a circle facing outwards. Call out a word from the drama/brainstorm/poem that has just been created e.g. "alcohol" The group is given a few seconds only to think about what that word means to them literally or in an abstract way. On the count of 3, ask the group to turn into the circle, holding a large physical image. Encourage their images to be as large as possible. If an individual is finding a large image hard encourage them by pretending there is an exaggeration dial and pretend to turn it up!

You can develop this exercise by bringing together into the circle images that are similar. Pop up each group or statue as if they were an exhibition in a gallery. All look and ask the following:

Ask the audience

If you could make a headline for this image what would it be? And who would the headline be for?

How does it make you, the audience, feel to look at those images?



Ask the performers

What does it feel like to hold that image?

Ask the group to make the images come alive for a few moments with a single word, or a phrase or movement.

Trust Circle

Why? This can work well in a classroom setting when you want them to start working together on a project – in fact doing it in smaller project groups can also work well. It is a good measure of how ‘together’ a group are, as this game is prone to get participants giggling and mucking about when they should be focusing – really it only takes 1 participant to ruin the whole thing. So it can only be done when the group knows each other well and can carry out calm and silent exercises – and if they do - the results are magic! The feeling of being able to trust the rest of the group with your whole self and also the feeling of being totally trusted is a very positive experience. *Be careful though* there is a lot at stake in this relatively simple exercise.

How?

One Person stands still with their hands down by their sides.

As many people as possible stand round them as close as possible with their hands a few inches from their body ready to catch them

The person in the centre starts to fall, keeping their feet rooted to the ground, onto the surrounding hands and is gently pushed back and forth across and round the circle

The aim of the exercise is for the person in the middle to trust those around them and just and ‘let themselves go’. It is best, if they feel able, to do it with their eyes closed, enhancing the experience of absolute trust.

Variation: You can also do this in groups of 3. Two stand either side of the person in the middle with their hands out ready to catch the middle person, who is gently rocked on their feet but it does need very careful monitoring in case as people can of course fall and not be caught.

Plan your event, use the balloon to ask your group these questions:



- 👉 Get a BIG piece of paper ad draw a hot air balloon.
- 👁️ In the basket write –'What will get it gas to get it off the ground?' (what will get your event going?)
- 👂 Draw guide ropes from the balloon and write 'what is tying it down?' (difficulties, foreseen problems)
- 👉 On the ground draw grass and note down – 'what is it standing on?' (what is the basis of the project?)
- 👁️ Around the balloon write – 'What will make it fly?' (how will we get the results we want?)
- 👂 Above the balloon into the sky write 'the sky is the limit!! What will make it SOAR?!' (what will get your solutions into action and change your community forever?!)

Phase 2:



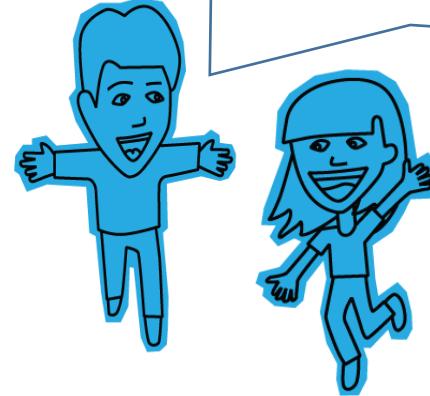
Event

Phase 2: This is not an easy task! So here we will carefully guide you through that process, but it will take initiative and thoughtfulness from you and your team of facilitators. How?...

“Young people oppressed - who experiencing poverty, violence, overwork, lack of education, *every single day*, will be able to work out ideas for change and have the skills and confidence to meet eyeball to eyeball with those who have the power to make the changes - with real results. That is true advocacy.” Joey Owen

Young people creatively perform and meet with relevant stakeholders at an advocacy event

Knowing *how* to have a voice, and then *how* to make it heard, is a form of power. Here we make that power to go onto to convince adults to work with us and make changes!



Your AoE facilitating team have overall responsibility for the event. In the next few pages we will take you through how to set it up, conduct all the proceedings effectively, record the discussions between stakeholders and the pledges and promises for actions that can be taken and take important evaluation material.

The next few pages will help you to:

Remember you are organising your AoE event by engaging all the relevant stakeholders such as SMC, PTA, School head teacher, teachers, parents, children all the best people to invite as discussed and agree with the whole group in phase 2, so think about the best way to approach them to convince them it is worth coming to your group's amazing life changing event!

Where is the best place to hold the event? organised at the school premises where the change is sought, as that is almost certainly a central place for all to attend

How issues are raised by the young group members and possible solutions put forward through creating effective dialogue.

Timetabling Phase 3 where the changes will take place.

After Workshop 7 the event planning should begin: Here's how...

Explain to your whole group the concept, aims and structure of the AoE event:

-  That the event will start with introductions from an 'MC' and the reason everyone has been invited.
-  That the MC then hands over to the 'Joker' and the young people to begin their performances presenting their real life difficulties to the stakeholder audience. The Joker explains the process to this point.
-  The Joker then stops the performance at a key turning point in the story and invites the audience to come in and intervene, offering their ideas of how to solve the problems presented. The young people can also show the solutions they devised during the process of their AoE workshops. The process may be repeated if there are 2 or 3 stories presented by your group.
-  The Joker thanks everyone and hands back to the MC.
-  The MC then announces a break and offers drinks (tea is good) and encourages discussion amongst the audience and the children.
-  The facilitating team will walk around listening and joining some of those discussion and taking notes.
-  The MC will then ask that everybody listens for a few minutes while he sums up a few of the solutions and who has pledged to take action. (These actions will be recorded in a number of ways)
-  The MC Thanks everyone for coming on behalf of the group, a can also show there respect and say goodbye and thank you and the event ends.

We will take you through
how to undertake much of
this in the next few pages
don't worry!



The event, especially when it involves audience participation can be very scary and you will feel nervous about taking it on! That is totally natural (don't worry the adrenaline will help anyway! so here are a few tips...)

Have a planning meeting with facilitators, helpers and supporters.

By starting in week 7 you are leaving enough time for planning so you are not rushing around last minute and you are giving plenty of time for the chosen stakeholder audience to be able to respond and agree to attend.

With a steering group of young group members (perhaps 4 or 5 from your group) chair a meeting to decide the following:
Set the date, time and the venue!

-  Make sure that you don't organise it on the same day as another community event, or when there is a festival or you may get minimum audiences! (It may not be possible to predict, but also try to avoid days where there may be a strike.)
-  Most often the best place to hold the event is at school: It is a central venue for the community, everybody knows where it is, the young people feel most comfortable there, the school staff will be there already and often there is already a decent sized room or a outside playground that can be used.

Who will be invited?

-  Although you haven't decided on the problems at this stage you should have an idea of the difficulties that will be presented at the event.
-  Who might be influential in helping to solve these problems? Who needs to know about them? Think about those close to the children as well as high status politicians or school governors etc.
-  Draw up a list – Include the Local Media,

Design the event banner and invitation cards

-  Make sure you include date, time and location. The Name of your Group and that it is an Ac on Education Event to improve the access to and quality of education in your school.
-  Please make sure you credit the process to "Act on Education" and the website address where possible then people will know where find us, and learn more about the AoE process!

Inviting Influential stakeholders at the Event



Why Invite them?

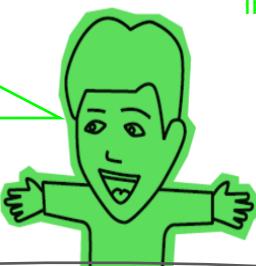
Stakeholders are people who have an interest and a 'stake' in the issues that are being advocated. They are able to contribute in changing the situations presented by the children. Without them the event is pointless!



Who are they?

They can be:

Officials from Department of Education, District Education Office, Member of Parliament, local government bodies people, major political parties leaders, key civil society members, parents, teachers, School Management Committee members, local businesses, NGO's, WHOEVER you think can make the changes.



How to Invite them?

Write letters, send invitations you have designed, publishing public notices and posters, loudspeaker announcements leading up to the event, and social and electronic media campaigns (SMS/facebook/whatsapp etc.)
Choose what is most appropriate for your target audience.



If you can meet stakeholders...

Wherever and whenever possible go and meet them face to face – this makes such a difference. Be POLITE and show RESPECT, Explain a little about the process and that you would be so grateful and honoured for them to attend as you would value their opinion and see them as the change-makers in the community and that they may prove very helpful to the children in their community. Treat everyone with respect regardless of their status, remember anyone can make positive change!



A facilitator meets with a civil servant to explain the AoE process and the Event

...Then make a record of who responds and whether they are coming! Write it down in a register...



Make sure you delegate!! Don't take on everything yourself, the facilitating team, the young people and the school staff who are helping can help!



Organising 'house keeping' for the event.

To ensure that the school is ready for the event there must be a meeting with everyone involved (perhaps take 15 minutes at the end of a session to do this) An 'event team' can be mobilised to set up the appropriate venue for organising the event on the day. The facilitator should play the role of the leader and make sure everyone knows what their role is:

For example 2 teachers and 4 children will come early and set out the chairs and clean the floor.

2 older group members will go and make sure the tea is ordered for the correct time in the event.

A facilitator will bring the kataks and flowers to present to key stakeholder guests and a young group member will lay them out ready.

4 young people will be on the door welcoming the audience in. Make sure someone writes down the jobs and who will do them, these can be posted on the wall so it is clear who is doing what.



There will probably be other jobs, these are examples, and other jobs may also closer to the day itself, so make sure there are a couple of spare people coming in early to help if needed.

Choosing the Master of Ceremony (MC)

Who will conduct the event?

Think carefully about this as it is a *key* role. If you are lucky enough to have a young participant confident and capable to take it on then discuss that with them and with the group and go for it! That is the best scenario. However this has to be the lead facilitators decision, you need to know and trust them to say the right thing and to react to audience questions. They can of course be helped on the day perhaps supported by a facilitator or even have 2 young people doing it as a pair. However, if in the end, you need to choose one of the facilitators as MC that is also ok.



A young AoE participant being MC at his school Event in Phase 2



Being the MC at an event is a daunting task!

Choose someone in the group who is confident to take it on, one of the louder characters who is happy to speak up in front of a group. And run through the schedule with them a few times to make sure they are not feeling a bit lost when they stand up on the day!

Tips for the MC...

- The program should be conducted based on the designed schedule, and stick to it otherwise the MC can easily get lost and the event can unravel somewhat!
- Make sure that the MC practises the role a number of times – perhaps doing some role-play: the whole group play the audience and ask questions, act out different scenarios and work out the best way for the MC to react.
- Be confident! Especially if you are young, then people will admire the fact you have had the courage to put yourself in that position! You can do it!
- Remember you are representing your group, by the time of the event you will know them well, have developed a trusting and supportive relationship, so feel them supporting you while you are up there being the **Master!**

Make your audience of stakeholders feel respected and welcomed – feed their egos a little! They have come and therefore they are willing to listen and help.

-  During Phase 1 your developed performance will have been carefully and sensitively put together.
This is the first step into prevention of an angry crowd!
-  Remember this is NOT a blame game!! Everybody is there to explore the children's ideas for possibilities!!
-  Emotions can run high, but the young people may have worked through much of that in phase 1 and should now be ready to stay calm, respectful and more productive at the event.
-  They may also clam up, especially at the sight of any high-powered, high-status stakeholders. The 'practice event' will have helped alleviate this a little, and plenty of preparation and 'pep talks' will also help.
-  After the actual performance and forum theatre event, ask all the group to divide into smaller groups (it helps if you have tables and chairs all ready out.) No more than groups of 10 and no less than 4.
-  If there is an argument or fight of any kind you can manage that with respect and calm tactics, and any other common sense actions that come to mind at the time! However if you have prepared that is very unlikely indeed – *Remember your facilitation skills and use them here!* We have never had any incidence of a disruptive kind at any event, so it is very unlikely.

How to welcome the important guests, the audience!



Ask a small number of students to be the welcoming committee! They can stand in a line by the entrance to the event and show the honoured guests to their seats in the audience. (by honoured we mean every guest! (stakeholder) For the more high status stakeholders such as politicians, head teacher or SMC and so on - it is nice to offer them flowers as a token of appreciation. If flowers are not possible the young welcomers can offer a sweet smile and "nemaste" with the utmost respect.

Take a register, you can make this beautiful and get the children to design a colourful design, or just have plain paper on a clip board – but keep it safe! Get everyone's name, age, and address and position in the community as well as *contact details* where possible. This is very important, each audience member needs to be known to have participated, and each of them that offers a commitment will be part of future meetings of one kind or another!



Dialogue during your AoE Event:

It will usually come in this approximate order and led by the joker:

When the play gets stuck with a crucial issue and cannot move ahead, the joker appears and tries to take the play ahead in a constructive more positive way by asking questions to the audience.

The Joker will concisely re-cap to ensure everyone knows the story so far and the probable consequences as thing stand.

HOWEVER – s/he will say - we can make changes here, that is why this event is taking place! We can all look for different and more beneficial outcomes!

So, now the joker asks directly for solutions – how can things be improved? Which character can make a difference? Are there outside characters that need to be involved?

Then several solutions will be suggested by audience members. They will be encouraged to come and improvise with the actors, test their idea and see what happens. The joker can pause the drama at any moment to dig deeper into what is happening and why, and to ask for further suggestions.

This process continues until each issue has been addressed and the audience and actors understand the solutions that work well. Then the joker will ask for real life commitments that these actions can be taken by the stakeholders present (including the young group members!)



Remember! While asking the questions, the joker should be confident, fluent and taking everything easily. Don't be afraid of pausing and thinking in front of the audience – it gives them a chance to think too!

Be positive! Look for the solutions that are there in the dialogue and point them out! Praise people for their fantastic and productive ideas!



Recording everyone's commitments and pledges for action

After the break the MC and facilitating team will then get all of these commitments and pledges recorded - this is *vital*! You will need to publicly record the pledges of action from the stakeholder audience and the children so you can refer back to them in Phase 3 when the action is or is not being taken and should be! Here are some methods for doing this:



Have a number of BIG sheets of paper stuck to the wall, and as people offer the actions they will take, write it on the wall for all to see!



Ask one of the 'chief' guests to stand and say a few words to everyone about her or his views of the event and what actions they feel will now be taken by the various stakeholders who have attended. (Also is always good to add how wonderful it is that they have participated and helped these young students in need – as this will make them feel appreciated, important and encourage them to do it!)



If you have access to a camera or smart phone that records sound or video, go around the room during the discussion after the Forum Theatre and record interviews of pledges for action.



Have a number of 'pledges sheets' – small pieces of paper with pens for people to write their ideas and pledges for actions and hand them in to the team. Better if they add their name to the pledge so you can contact them afterwards! You can ceremonially put them in a basket – "The basket of Action for Better Education!"



An employer signing her 'pledge sheet'



Facilitating team recording a teacher's pledge



Head Teacher addressing event

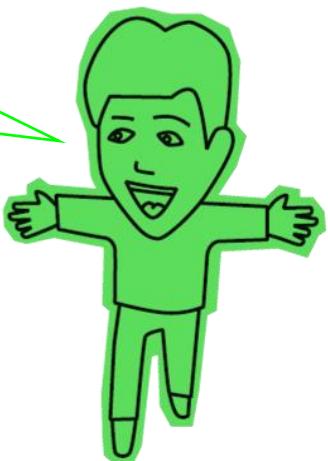
And a couple more tips....



But be careful not to let the event go on so long it feels like forever! If it feels like the discussion or Forum theatre is dragging – move on.



Remember to thank everyone for their time and effort in coming, and their fantastic pledges which will help these children and the community and make improvements to everyone's lives!



And wrap up! Reminding everyone that you (i.e. the AoE team will be in touch in phase 3) and let's look forward to the action!



Also remember to thank those who have helped make the event possible, the steering group who organised housekeeping, room hire, refreshments etc.



Look people in the eye and take notice of everyone!



Listen carefully and respectfully and encourage the audience to do the same.



Take Action! There is no point to the event if there is no action to take place!

Event Evaluation is Essential and can be a fun element to the proceedings!

Evaluation must be as much part of the event as any other. It is essential and interesting to get the feedback from the young people and the audience for using phase 3 and to improve your AoE in the future – here are some ideas but you can think of plenty!

Be creative in the way you get their evaluation!

If you have a phone that records sound you can do short interviews... or a camera could take short video! You can use social media to spread some of the more important messages!



Other ideas are:

Have a comments book

Make paper aeroplanes that audiences can write their feedback on and send across the event space for others to read! (Make sure you collect them though!)

Traditional methods such as a multiple choice, brief, questionnaire for people to fill out. A feedback tree, where people hang written ideas with string to a tree nearby!

You can have a wall full of large pieces of paper with questions on it and a basket of pens for people to answer questions on stuck on the wall.

Ask everyone's views on things such as:

How effective was the event?

How much they enjoyed it or didn't!

if they thought it would be of any use in the future?

If it met their expectations?

if they found it difficult, emotional, or if it made them angry?

if they have further suggestions to make changes happen?

if they believe that the pledged changes will happen?

You can provoke discussion this way to and have a live talking wall that is an excellent record of the ideas and views of the day

Some picture examples of AoE events:



This is a large event, as people arrive, organisers have invited local media, all of the school and every possible stakeholder! As you can see they have outside space which they have utilised with chairs



Here parents are taking part in the dialogue, there are microphones on offer for a larger event. If yours is a small event you don't need to worry – microphones are not necessary!



And do not worry if it feels that some people are not participating enough – they will be listening and taking in all that happens – they just may prefer a back seat to the proceedings! Make sure anyone out of the action is asked for their views and commitment's in the discussion s during the break.



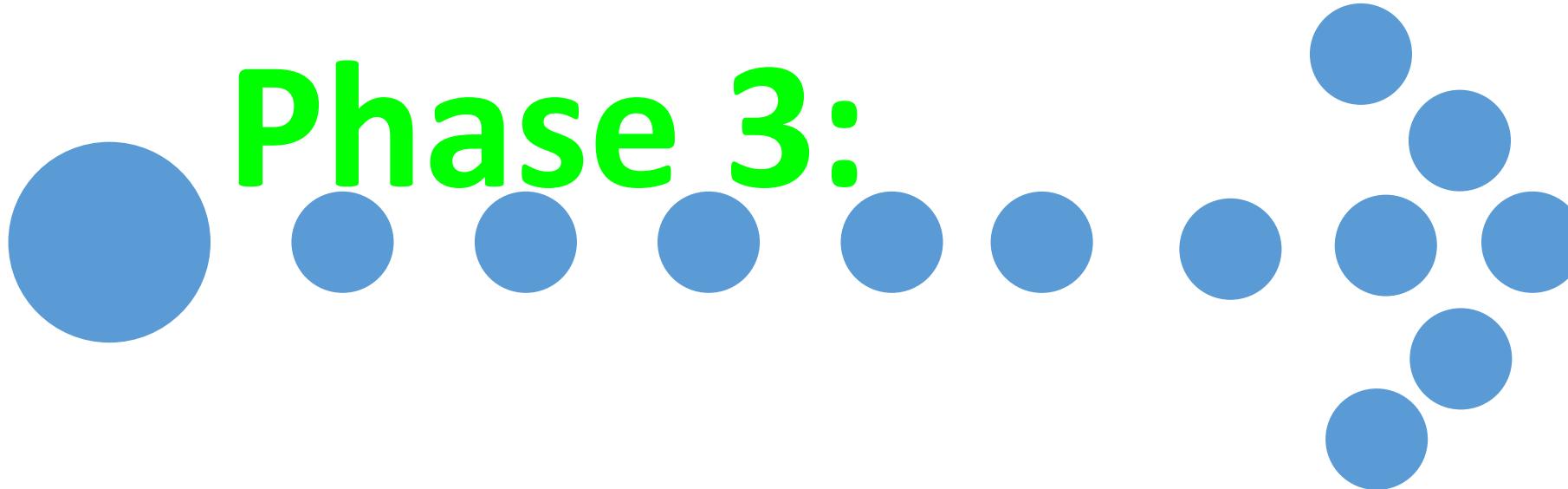
Here teachers, parents and politians take part in the Forum Theatre. These are taking place in classrooms, playgrounds, and out in the street. Really there are many places you can hold your event, it doesn't have to be on a grand scale, but it can be – you choose!



Students can perform anywhere, in any room as long as you can make space for the stakeholder audience...



Phase 3:



Phase 3:



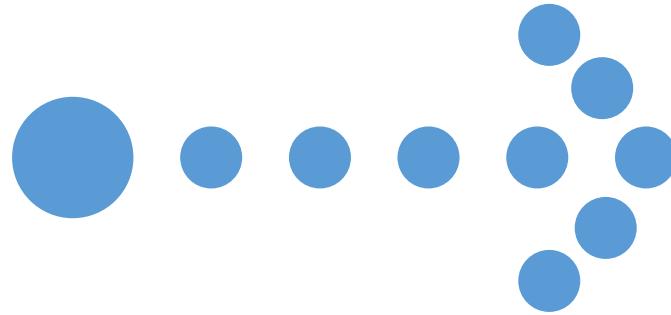
And action! Now for the sustained changes.... Here are some tips on how to keep the community engaged and the changes real.

-  Prepare a list of the problems raised and commitments pledged by different stakeholders during the event and publish them as much as you can where appropriate i.e. school newsletter, posters posted around school and the community, and send it to as many of the key stakeholders as you can so they have a formal written account.
-  Your AoE team now need to have a meeting and set appropriate timetable for follow up meetings with stakeholders and the young AoE group, evaluating progress, affirming action and reminding those who, for whatever reason are not carrying out any change.

At the meetings in Phase 3:

-  If the commitments have been undertaken and changes are happening, express your sincere gratitude to those stakeholders helping to create better access to and quality of education for the vulnerable young people involved.
-  If the commitments have not yet taken place, or the stakeholders are unable to fulfill their promise then you need to carefully and politely facilitate a discussion as to why, and what else can be done. There may of course be very many reasons for this: They may need more time, they may not have the resources, they may have attempted their idea and it hasn't worked as they hoped! More often than not the problem is time, or other pressing issues take over in their lives, so kindly reminding them of their promise often encourage the action to be taken.
-  After a second reminder the chances are that stakeholders will take the action and the issue will be addressed for the young people, and if not, remember that everyone who has been involved (which will often be well over 100 people!) will know what has been promised and who has or has not taken positive action as agreed in the event – it might be worth reminding them of this!

Here are the 3 predominant problems that have consistently been addressed in AoE projects Nepal.

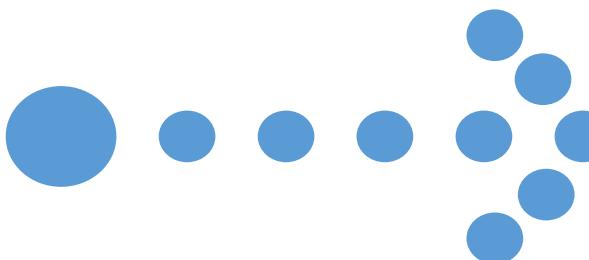


1: Lack of stationery materials for school works and home works

Solution: An AoE group designed the 'Mit' programme whereby private schools and public schools were developed as their 'Mit' (kindred spirits). Children from private schools collected stationery materials which were handed to the children at public schools.



Funding can also be raised with INGO's if the AoE group set up meetings with the relevant charities. Here children in the UK are learning about Nepali culture and holding their own event selling tickets and raising money for stationery for their Nepali counterparts.



2: Violence – corporal punishment, sexual harassment, drunken and domestic violence.



Sadly, violence, domestic and in school, has been an extremely prevalent problem in all of the AoE groups to date. Violence is an issue in communities across Nepal.



Using the AoE method and bringing together health workers, alcohol abuse NGO's, local VDC personnel and the children's family has alleviated some of these difficult issues, and the issue of violence been addressed, and still is being. Coping mechanisms is an essential part of the process.

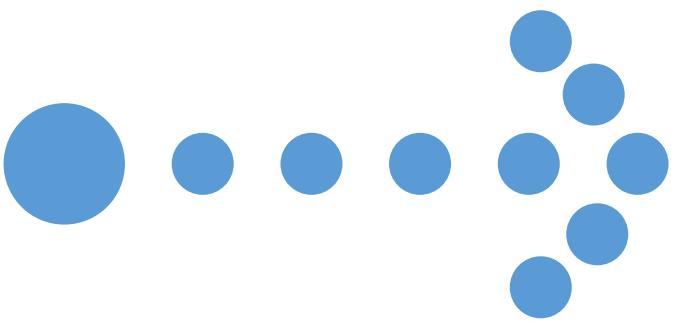


Here health workers discuss alcohol abuse and violent behaviour with local men.



The situation for many of the children has greatly improved but the work goes on, which is the nature of AoE, it transforms attitudes within communities which slowly but surely has been changing from one family to the next.

Discussions ongoing – here with a local father during one of the children's performances



3: Overwork, domestic bondage, labour for employers and homework from school. Many of the AoE group members working up to 6 hours a day outside of school hours.

Using the creative AoE method, facilitators and children are able to establish effective advocacy channels with the key stakeholders who are primarily those who generate the overwork: parents, teachers and employers.



Children overworked, tired and afraid of the consequences



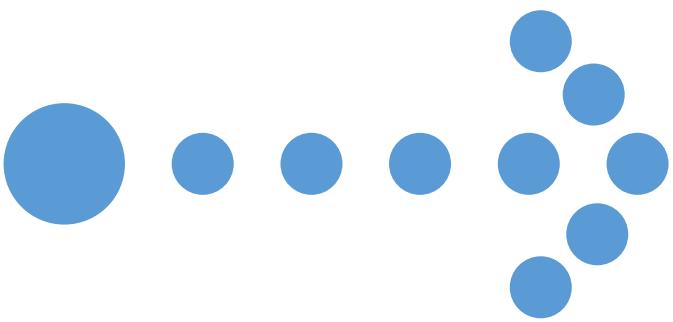
Taking part in the AoE process as a group and expressing the difficulties and developing ideas for positive change to this problem to present to the stakeholders



The AoE team organise the young people with all the relevant stakeholders (parents, school staff, SMC, VDC) to have meetings discussing the impact of overwork on the children and how to create less working hours for them.



After better communication, a shift in relations occurs resulting in further understanding between the young people the adults at school and home. This in turn generates and actions solutions such as **homework clubs** in school, **parents taking on more domestic work**, **employers also allowing time for the children's homework** in their work timetable, **playtime allowed at school**: less pressure allowing for children to have more freedom and space to learn.



4: Lacking adequate toilet facilities, a playground and safe drinking water. Amongst other difficulties this effects learning causing dehydration, spread of illnesses, prevents older girls attending school during menstruation, and nowhere to play and be refreshed ready for the afternoon lessons.

In co-ordination with school administration, PTA and SMC, AoE facilitators and young members have been successful in solving these problems in school.



Before



After!



Local tradesmen and farm workers came together to fix the playground.

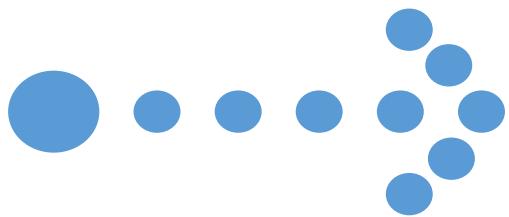


In some cases funds were generated after an advocacy campaign to the local government body to fix the water supply.



Young students, parents and teachers established a cleaning rota to improve the state of the toilets, classrooms and playground.





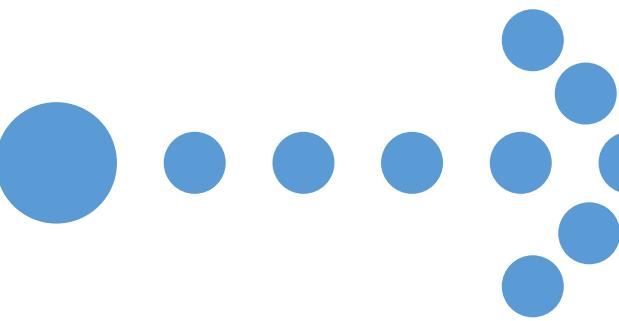
Other developments and extra benefits that can be generated from the work undertaken by AoE members.

There are also many unseen advantages undertaking an AoE project. Not only practical changes, but the change in how children are able to cope with the difficulties thrown at them. Creative Community Building is not just about cleaning toilets, or getting more stationery, it is about community cohesion, learning to support one another, and working together for positive social change.

The National Press have already reported AoE programme work across Nepal on television and in newspapers. This increases your advocacy and markets your cause to a wider audience. (In fact as a result of reading an article one of the most popular singers of Nepal, Kunti Moktan started giving music classes every week in some of the AoE schools!



As well as this, other schools in the surrounding area, when they see the progress your school has made, will take a great interest. This gives your school more influence and credibility as a central element of the community.



Press articles from the AoE model advocating the benefits, like these:

सरकारी र निजी विद्यालयले मीत लगाए

शैक्षिक सुधारका लागि सरकारी र निजी विद्यालयबीच एकअर्कामा सहयोगको भावना तथा शैक्षिक आदानप्रदान लागि स्पेस नामक संस्थाले आज मीत अभियानको थालनी गरेको छ।

स्पेसले कमजोर आर्थिक अवस्था भएका अभिभावकका छोराछोरी अध्ययन गर्ने सरकारी विद्यालयहरूका बालबालिकासँग उनीहरूकै समस्याबारे उनीहरूकै सहभागितामा बाल नाटक गर्दै आएकामा अब थप अभियानको थालनी गरिएको सो संस्थाका कार्यकारी निर्देशक श्रीकृष्ण थापाले बताए।

अभियानअन्तर्गत आज पाँचवटा निजी विद्यालयले पाँचवटा सरकारी विद्यालयका लागि शैक्षिक सामग्री हस्तान्तरण गरियो। उपस्थित निजी विद्यालयका प्रिन्सिपलले सरकारी विद्यालयका प्रधानाध्यापकलाई हात र गला मिलाएर अभियानको थालनी गरियो।

निजी विद्यालयले उपलब्ध गराउने शैक्षिक सामग्री र पुस्तकको सूची स्पेसका कला निर्देशक सुरेश चन्दलाई उपलब्ध गराइएको थियो। संस्थाले सम्बन्धित विद्यालयमा सामग्री हस्तान्तरण गर्नेछ।

कार्यक्रममा काठमाडौँ इन्टरनेशनल स्कुल, गौरीघाटले सुन्ताखान मावि, बालुवालाई, सनसाइन बोर्डिङ स्कुल, गौरीनगरले महेन्द्रबौद्ध उमावि, बौद्धलाई, क्याम्बिज पब्लिक स्कुल, वानेश्वरले श्रम राष्ट्रिय मावि, कुमारीगाललाई, कुमारी बोर्डिङ स्कुल, बौद्धले बाल व्यावसायी केन्द्र मावि, सिफललाई र भ्याली भ्यु बोर्डिङ स्कुल, मध्यवानेश्वरले कुशादेवी उमावि, काखेलाई मित लगाएर सहयोगको घोषणा गरेका थिए।

अभियानबाट आफूहरू उत्साहित भएको सहभागी प्रधानाध्यापकले बताए। कार्यक्रममा निजी तथा आवासीय विद्यालय अर्गानाइजेशन (प्याब्सन) का उपाध्यक्ष सानु अमात्य, शिक्षा विभागका अधिकृत गीता घिमिरेलगायतले अभियानको सफलताको कामना गरीन्। रासस

स्पेसका मीत अभियान

निजी विद्यालयबाट संकलन गरिएका शैक्षिक सामग्री सरकारी विद्यालयलाई



बुलाआमा भज्ञुरी गर्ने। टेलागाडा चताउडेन। भ्रनेको बेला पैसा हुने। भिटो मसियो खाने त परे जाओस। विद्यालय जान एकजोर चप्पल संयोग हुन। अफ कापी-कलामको के कु। आठ विचाको एउटै कापीभा लेख्नपछि। कापिलोकाही कलाम नभएर हाती छरपेटिएपछ। गुहकारी नगरको भ्रने शिक्षकले गाती गर्ने। पिच्छु।

यो कुनै दूरदराजको कथा होइन।

राजधानीको बाल व्यवसायी केन्द्रमा अध्ययन गर्ने विद्यार्थी गोमा राहको सम्भाव्य हो।

एकजोर चप्पल, एउटा मिसाकलम, एउटा कापी नभएर बीचै श्वेत स्कुल छोड्नुपर्छ तात्पर्यानी र आसपासका सामुदायिक विद्यालयका केही विद्यार्थीले।

यस्तै समस्याहरूलाई लिएर स्पेस नामक संस्थाले तीन वर्दीखो सकारी विद्यालयमा नाटक देखाउंदै आएको छ। स्पेसका कार्यकारी निवासी श्रीकृष्ण थापाका अन्तरार सुरु-सुरुका दिन बोल्न लजाउने बालबालिका अविलेख थक्काएर आपासा सम्पर्या व्यक्त गर्न्छ।

गरिबको छोराछोरी पढाने सकारी स्कुलको पर्यावाची बेको सामुदायिक विद्यालयमा

Once phase 3 is well underway your AoE did it! Just look at how the process made your community fly – all those little changes *led by your school community* working together, setting your school on a course for the skies!!



A little bit about us....

The original AoE facilitating team are Suresh Chand, Shree Krishna Thapa , Salik Bhandari of SPACE Nepal and Joey Owen of Freedom to Learn



Freedom to Learn is a UK based charity which works to provide the opportunity of education in South Asia. Offering resources and support to non-profit organisations with a similar work ethic, goals and ethos FtL is committed to raising public awareness about the importance of a holistic approach to education and development work, facilitating and mentoring education based development projects in the UK and South Asia.

Education is key to lifting children and their families out of poverty. Ensuring quality access to and quality of education is fundamental to helping young people and families acquire independence and an imperative degree of emotional and financial security.

Joey Owen has 14 years of experience in engaging and facilitating young people in community projects in the UK, India and Nepal. A traditional educational approach, as well as creative and arts based methods to facilitate young people's learning and development is a key element to the devised Creative Community Building Model and espouses the holistic approach to community development Freedom to Learn champions.



Every child strives to find his or her own space in the world, a place to live, a school to go to, a supportive community to grow up in, and a dignified position in society. Every child wants and needs to have a secure space, a space where the fundamentals of life are available. Education is available. Justice is accessible. Opportunity for progress is equitable. SPACE is working with children in public school in Nepal to achieve this mission. We use theatre skills as one the creative tools for the purpose.

Founding chair of SPACE, Shree Krishna Thapa shows high aspiration in social change. He is one of the pioneers of using theatre and community drama to educational reform in Nepal. Graduated in performing art, Suresh Chand has worked more than 15 years in theatre field who designs the theatre programs to have the long term impact on children to lead their lives positively. Active and energetic, Salikram Bhandari, has also worked in the theatre facilitation, video /photography. He has also good skills of coordinating media. He has also been working since the inception of this organization.