

## Doc 4.7. Examples of interactive exercises to promote social cohesion through vocational training and education

*These interactive exercises are taken from Guide for TVET practitioners on promoting Social Cohesion and Peaceful Coexistence in Fragile Contexts through TVET. More exercises are available at : [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---emp\\_ent/documents/publication/wcms\\_791844.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/documents/publication/wcms_791844.pdf)*

### Exercise to encourage empathy and appreciation of diversity : “Let’s have a chat”

#### **Materials:**

Prepared handouts for each participant. The handout should have the name of the person to be approached and three questions to be asked. The questions should be designed to help the person asking the question to know more about the participant whose name is on the handout. Some examples for topics could be:

- a. where the person grew up
- b. his/her favourite food or restaurant
- c. what he/she would like to do upon completion of the training
- d. what aspect of the training or work he/she finds most interesting/boring
- e. what music he/she likes
- f. what he/she enjoys doing in his/her free time

Another option is to write the names of each of the participants on individual pieces of paper, which are then folded so the name can’t be read. The participants are then asked to come up with the topics together beforehand in the plenary, and invite participants to draw names and choose three of the topics identified that they would like to ask the person whose name they have drawn. If this option is used check that nobody drew their own name!

#### **Time:**

10–15 minutes to explain the objective and timeline of the exercise. Once everyone has the results and the deadline has passed, schedule a 30–60 minutes plenary session (depending on the number of participants) so that each participant can share their results and techniques.

#### **Objective:**

To build personal relationships between participants from different backgrounds.

#### **Steps:**

1. Invite participants to engage in this activity to learn more about a specific individual in the group without anyone knowing who is finding out about whom.
2. Assign each participant the task of finding out three pieces of information from a fellow participant by a predetermined deadline (this can be over one or a couple of days). Make sure that you assign people in such a way that pre-existing groups (age, gender, ethnicity, citizenship) mix as much as possible.
3. Distribute the prepared handouts. Remind the participants, that they should keep the assigned person and topics a secret.
4. It is important to convey to the participants that the answers must come from

conversation. Individuals will thus need to engage and interact with someone they do not know and figure out how to elicit the responses required through a casual conversation.

5. Once the deadline has been reached, gather the trainees/team members to share with the whole group what everyone has learned, and how the conversation affected each participant. During the debrief, each participant will share his/her experiences and tactics to gather the information and the whole group will learn what to do – and what not to do – to better engage with people they are not familiar with. Potential questions for the debrief could be:

- a. Was this exercise easy or difficult for you and why?
- b. What strategy was useful to elicit the information you wanted to get?
- c. What strategy was not so useful?

#### **Works best with:**

Mixed teams of a moderate size made up of people from different backgrounds. This activity can easily be applied in the workplace or training room since it does not require much material or time. It can be repeated frequently and may help team members or fellow trainees to be acquainted with one another. You can also turn this exercise into a bi-monthly or quarterly activity to sustain and deepen contact. Depending on the composition of trainees/team members, as a trainer or supervisor conducting this activity, you may want to think carefully about the questions to pose. Some trainees may have had traumatic experiences that they do not wish to share but that are, for example, closely connected to the aspect “where they are from”. The questions above are only suggestions, and a careful consideration of the situation and group composition may help you to select the right questions. [Initiatives applied during the project for a Gender-responsive CBT implementation](#)

Emphasis was set on women’s employability, access to technical skills in a range of new non-conventional trades/occupations, training in business development and confidence building skills. A holistic approach on gender training was delivered for (women) participants along with workshops addressed at institutions, their families and communities. Activities comprised group organization for production and marketing to improve women’s bargaining and negotiating capacity, post-training support, and linkages to markets, credit, amongst other support services.

Development of a “Core Group’ of trainers for the BMET/TTCs and partner NGOs on gender dimension: special orientation courses for NGO social mobilisers and continued advocacy at the local level; ToT on gender awareness and workplace environment for local CBT teams (for TTC instructors, regional offices, programme supervisors and social mobilisers of the NGOs). TTCs women instructors were encouraged to become more involved in CBT’s implementation, and interact with the target group as well as preventing gender bias in curricula and training materials. Gender training was integrated into the curriculum together with technical and business skills; user friendly training provision: flexible and practical training curricula, and gender-sensitive modalities (timing, venue, modalities, facilities, child care arrangements).

It was recognized that more attention needs to be given in addressing issues of childcare arrangements at the training venue and making this a part of the policy of all programmes addressing employment issues. Issues of property rights or asset ownership, whether, through inheritance or procurement, affect women’s access to loans and independent business decisions posing barriers to access livelihoods.

## Exercise to encourage conflict resolution and mediation skills - Debate vs. Dialogue

### Materials:

No material needed

### Time:

30 minutes

### Objective:

To understand the difference between a debate and a dialogue;  
To reflect on the effect of our own behaviour in conflict situations;  
To understand the role of communication in conflict management.

### Steps:

1. Ask the participants to work in pairs.
2. Ask partners to stand facing each other, and each person to say the name of one object they can think of (for example, a table, a tool, a working material, cat, flower, etc.).
3. Now, ask participants to debate with each other and argue that their item is better than the other person's item.
4. Give them about three minutes to debate. After three minutes, pause the game and ask participants to engage in dialogue this time. This means asking each other questions about their items, listening to the answers and coming to an agreement between them. Allow them about five minutes for this.
5. At the end of the exercise, start a discussion with the whole group. Questions you can ask to start the discussion might include:
  - How did you feel about each situation (debate vs. dialogue)?
  - How did you react to each situation?
  - How would you behave in real conflict situations?
  - How did things change when you switched from debate to dialogue?
  - Is it difficult to listen when somebody disagrees with you? Why? How did you come to an agreement?
6. Wrap-up by explaining that debate is an attempt to prove that your position is better than the other person's position. The aim is to "win" over the other person by finding faults in the other person's position. A dialogue instead is about understanding and cooperation. The aim of the dialogue is to reach mutual understanding while valuing the strengths of the other person's position.

### Works best:

This exercise works in training room and workplace settings. However, since each pair should be able to engage freely in either debate or dialogue, the pairs should be homogenous in terms of status/hierarchy, i.e., a trainee might not feel comfortable debating with their superior or an elder colleague, but prefer to debate with fellow classmates or people of the same age.