

Participatory dialogue as a tool for creating an inclusive society

Introductory remarks by Minu Hemmati

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Dialogue

The process of coming together to build mutual understanding and trust across differences, creating shared meaning, developing positive outcomes through conversation.



Based on mutual respect, listening, learning, authentic expression.

A key catalytic mechanism in social integration processes, weaving stronger social fabric, building social capital, creating shared power through participation and joint learning.

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Plus:

- *from the e-dialogue summary - some important points / aspects where dialogue plays a key role, e.g. shared vision; education; equal opportunities for active participation; inclusive policies and institutions.*
- *reference to Otto Scharmer's 4 fields of conversation, including generative dialogue.*

Unity Within Diversity

In inclusive and fair dialogue we respect our differences.

We celebrate our diversity as an essential, beautiful, and necessary part of all life.

Shared vision of collective engagement in building our futures unites us, in diversity.



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“Multi-stakeholder partnerships”

“Public-private partnerships”

“Sustainable development partnerships”

“Corporate stakeholder engagement”

→ creating spaces where platforms of dialogue can develop, collective leadership can emerge, and joint action can be initiated.

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Examples of multi-stakeholder partnerships:

Leadership for Conservation in Africa initiative → forming partnerships between business and conservation in African countries and at the regional level, generating investment in tourism and other development, generating platforms where contentious issues can be addressed (e.g. fossil fuel extraction in protected areas).

www.sanparks.org/groups/lca/

Ecoagriculture Partners → forming partnerships between researchers and communities for knowledge exchange and capacity building, marrying biodiversity conservation and food production.

www.ecoagriculturepartners.org

Action Research in the Generative Change Community → partnering with organisations and projects that aim to create dialogic change processes and benefit from process design, facilitation, and rigorous monitoring of the process.

www.generativedialogue.org



'Platforms' for dialogue

- 'keeping sets of people in creative interaction'
- 'relational platforms for the adaptive and continued generation of solutions'
- 'generate processes that produce solutions and potentially transform the epicenter of relationships in context'

(Lederach 2005)

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"Too often we build a platform that produces a solution and then deconstruct the platform, assuming the solution has permanence. Experience suggests the opposite. Solutions are ephemeral. Permanency is found in adaptive platforms capable of continuous response...keeping sets of people in creative interaction".

Drawing a meaningful distinction between this idea of platforms of change and the products of change, Lederach says, "Solutions create a way out, an exit from an episodic issue. This clearly alleviates systemic anxiety at any given moment, but must not be mistaken for the capacity to generate processes and solutions in an ongoing way. Agreements may solve a specific problem. Platforms, however, generate processes that produce solutions and potentially transform the epicenter of relationships in context. ... what we need are "relational platforms for the adaptive and continued generation of solutions".

Lederach, J. P. (2005). The moral imagination : the art and soul of building peace. Oxford ; New York, Oxford University Press. p85

Building Effective Multi-stakeholder Partnerships



- Joint, purpose-led process design
- Building relationships of trust
- Understanding the context
- Ensuring ownership
- High quality facilitation
- Continually review process and learn
- Ensure appropriate resourcing & support
- Invest in capacity building: participation, dialogue, leadership

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Slide showing a few lessons learned from the fields of sustainable development partnerships and conflict resolution.

→ Multi-stakeholder partnerships are essential cells of change as they provide spaces where dialogue can be created and nurtured - continuously, creating critical platforms, fora, weaving webs of relationships that include more and more stakeholders and people, thus contributing to culture of dialogue.

→ Governments to support multi-stakeholder partnerships as part of an overall strategy to build culture of dialogue.

→ Governments to support the inclusion of specific groups in such processes and projects.

Hemmati, M. & Spies, C. 2006. Multi-stakeholder Processes and Conflict Transformation - Concepts and Lessons Learned. Unpublished Manuscript.