Youth-Focused Dialogue

Adaptation of the Reflective-Structured Dialogue Approach for Vulnerable Youth

A Practitioner's Guide

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Preface

The inspiration for this guidebook is the person navigating the transition from childhood to adulthood under conditions of conflict-induced hazards and violence. During the last two years, talking with and listening to the Caraga Region and Northern Mindanao youth reaffirmed that monologues and thinking alone are not the smartest ways of finding solutions to common problems.

Like all other humans, the youth require communication and coordination of actions to ensure their well-being and development in a rapidly changing world. There are places where conflict-induced hazards present formidable challenges and create enduring trauma, but also present opportunities for the youth to help shape the change that impacts their lives, to be the agent of change.

Diversity is commonplace in languages, cultures, gender preferences, ethnicities, and ways of seeing the world. It takes no effort to throw ideas, speak at, or speak past each other in everyday life. There are a lot of unfinished conversations in classrooms, on the street, on the internet, or even in some households where children and parents living together find no time to sit down, talk, and listen. The problem with talking is when no one is listening. This happens even in situations of nearness, where physical proximity can sometimes trigger misunderstandings instead of nurture oneness.

Experience of conflict-induced hazards and violence is a compelling argument for the youth to take on the challenge of sharing concerns, thinking together, and finding ways of reducing vulnerabilities and improving capacities. The Youth-Focused Dialogue is one tool they can use to find shared meanings, explore solutions, and forge unity. Seventy youths from the Caraga Region and Northern Mindanao-LGBTQIA+, indigenous youth, farmers, fishers, out-of-school, in-school, differently-abled youth, and young women victims of violence have tried it in 13 dialogue events during September and October 2021. Their collective experience has helped shape the process guides you will read in this guidebook.

While this tool is about youth, by the youth, and for the youth, it is also for you, even if you are already an adult.

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Consultant
Como Consult GmbH

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

BARMM	Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
CAPID	Strengthening Capacities for Dealing with Conflict-Induced Forced Displacement in Mindanao
CBRS	Citizen's Band Radio Service
CICL	Children in Conflict with the Law
CWC	Center for the Welfare of Children
DAR	Department of Agrarian Reform
DILG	Department of the Interior and Local Government
GIDA	Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
IATF	Inter-Agency Task Force
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IP	Indigenous Peoples
LCE	Local Chief Executive
LGC	Local Government Code
LGU	Local Government Unit
LYDC	Local Youth Development Council
LYDO	Local Youth Development Office
LYDP	Local Youth Development Plan
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
MSWDO	Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office
NCIP	National Commission on Indigenous Peoples
NYC	National Youth Commission
OPAPP	Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process
OPAPRU	Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace, Reconciliation, and Unity
OSY	Out-of-School Youth
PYDP	Philippine Youth Development Plan
RLGM	Responsible Land Governance in Mindanao Program
RSD	Reflective-Structured Dialogue
SK	Sangguniang Kabataan
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
YFD	Youth-Focused Dialogue
YO	Youth Organization
YOUCAP	Youth for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence in Mindanao Project
YVCA	Youth-Focused Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment

1. Introduction

The Philippines enables laws related to youth welfare and development. These include the 1974 Child and Youth Welfare Act, the 1995 Youth in Nation-Building Act, and the 2015 Sangguniang Kabataan Reform Act. Correspondingly, there are enabling structures at the national level (such as the Center for the Welfare of Children (CWC) and the National Youth Commission (NYC) and local level (such as local youth development offices (LYDOs), local youth development councils (LYDCs), and the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK), which form part of local legislative councils). The national youth agenda is currently enshrined in the Philippine Youth Development Plan (PYDP) 2017-2022, and local youth agendas are supposedly enshrined in the local youth development plans (LYDPs).

Vulnerable youth need to find themselves in local youth development plans, programs, and budgets from the grassroots. However, local youth development planning still need to be further strengthened to align with the needs of young people, especially vulnerable youth groups. Some local government units (LGUs) do not even have LYDPs. Those that have sometimes just focus on a list of projects, and proposed budgets seem to not always be based on assessments of the youth situation and evidence-based prioritization of needs and formulation of strategies.

LGUs, SK, LYDCs, and youth organizations (YOs) need a platform that provides a space for listening to the voices of the vulnerable youth.

In response to this need, the Project "Youth for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence in Mindanao (YOUCAP) pilot tested two inter-related tools: The Youth-Focused Vulnerability-Capacity Assessment (YVCA) and Youth-Focused Dialogue (YFD). In partnership with local government units, the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) and local youth organizations, YOUCAP pilot tested the YVCA in the municipalities of Talisayan (Misamis Oriental), Carmen (Agusan del Norte), Gigaquit (Surigao del Norte) and Iligan City in 2021. The YFD was subsequently tested in the same areas, except Iligan City, also in 2021.

YOUCAP is a project of Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) in cooperation with the government of the Republic of the Philippines represented by the Office of the Presidential Advisor on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity (OPAPRU).

The YVCA is a youth-led, area-based, and participatory process of identifying conflict-induced hazards,most vulnerable youth groups, and measuring levels of vulnerability and capacity. The results of the YVCA were subsequently used to inform the formulation and/or enhancement of LYDPs. The same results were also used as a reference for deepening and exploration of doable solutions through the YFD. This is where dialogue plays an important role in crafting youth-led and gender and culture-sensitive and peace-promoting strategies.

Role of Dialogue

Dialogue is a capacity development tool. It supports the development of individual and organizational capacities of state and non-state actors for implementing strategies for gender-sensitive and culturally aware youth development and peacebuilding. It is a way of addressing deficits in democratic governance. It helps promote the culture of cooperation and participation necessary to make societies resilient and democratic governance sustainable (Pruitt and Thomas, 2007). It addresses gaps in an individual's capacity to exercise political agency and respond to their challenges. It also promotes non-violent approaches in the ways of working of governmental, civil society, private sector, and community-based organizations. It also seeks to revive an age-old tradition as part of modern institutions.

Dialogue between individuals and groups has been part of human civilization. It has formed part of the system of interpersonal and inter-group communication. In the past, migrant settlers in Mindanao called this dialogue tradition panumbalay (visitation) and pakighinabi (conversation). The Manobo indigenous people in Agusan del Sur call it panumbayay (when one family or community visits another) and panumbayaday (when the visited family or community returns the gesture). Somehow, many factors contributed to the erosion and ultimate loss of the tradition.

Hence, there is a need for concerted action to the tradition and adapt the system to new conditions.

One tenet of systems theory posits that the system is defined by the patterns of interactions and relationships that are reciprocal and mutually influential (Scuka, 2005). The system evolves or collapses depending on its flexibility and adaptability (ibid.). In areas heavily stressed by violent conflicts, the traditional approach collapsed or took backstage. Traditional systems of social trust give way to suspicions and enmities. Freedom of thought, beliefs, and ideals that would have been the motor of change has become a demarcation line that emphasizes cleavages more than bonds of unity.

Bringing back the tradition of dialogue and restoring the system is difficult. In a 1999 book, A Simpler Way, Margaret Wheatley and Myron Kellner-Rogers argue that the only way to know a system is to play with it and find the freedom to explore new information and new connections. Zappen (2004) cites the rebirth of dialogue from the traditional association with the dialectical and rhetorical tradition

of the philosophies of Plato, Socrates, and Aristotle towards a dialogical approach that is responsible and accountable to other people. The dialectical and rhetorical tradition is very distinctive in the legal profession. Lawyers are trained to engage in debate and rhetoric to prove who is right or wrong or who is guilty or not guilty. The same tradition strongly influences the interpretation and execution of overlapping land laws and policies at the risk of dividing rather than uniting communities.

Not everything, however, can be resolved through dialogue. When the conversation is about right or wrong, justice or injustice, guilt or innocence, and parties hold on to their judgments and assumptions, the matter will require other forms of intervention such as negotiations, mediation, arbitration, or adjudication. In highly escalated conflicts, peacekeeping intervention of the police or military may be required.

Recent GIZ Experience in Mindanao

In 2018, the project implemented by GIZ "Strengthening Capacities for Dealing with Conflict-Induced Forced Displacement in Mindanao" (CAPID) implemented dialogue promotion as a field of action. It developed the Reflective-Structured Dialogue (RSD) Approach in the context of conflict-induced forced displacement (CID). The project re-introduced and re-examined the dialogue tradition and proposed exploring new information and connections while simultaneously building local capacities for facilitation. CAPID supported twenty dialogue events in Gigaquit (Surigao del Norte), Tandag City (Surigao del Sur), Carmen (Agusan del Norte), Prosperidad (Agusan del Sur) and Butuan City.

The CAPID supported dialogues were of two types: (a) multi-stakeholder pilot dialogue events conducted in each municipality or city; and (b) focused dialogue events with specific interest groups such as youth, women, and indigenous peoples (IP). The focused dialogues were follow-up dialogues intended to reach out to specific groups whose voices could not be adequately heard in the multi-stakeholder dialogues.

The dialogue events brought together internally displaced persons (IDPs), host communities, frontline offices of local government units, and concerned regional agencies of the national government into a series of face-to-face interactions and direct communication. At the same time, these events were didactic, demonstrative,

and modeler. Firstly, they were designed to teach and build local capacities so that the facilitator is a guide and resource rather than an indispensable authoritative figure. Secondly, it was demonstrative because the methodological approach and process flow enabled others to know how to do it. Thirdly, the pilot dialogues were flexible models that could adapt to specific contexts, particularly, type of actors involved, priority issues and concerns, and the concerned local government units or national government agencies that communities needed to engage.

In late 2019, another project implemented by GIZ, "Responsible Land Governance in Mindanao" (RLGM), adapted RSD to the context of governance of land and other natural resources with particular focus in Agusan del Sur and Misamis Oriental provinces. The adaptation primarily focused on land conflicts induced by intra and inter-community competition over scarce land resources, overlapping rights claims, conflicting physical boundaries, differential access to information, and overlapping policies and mandates of land management agencies of the national government. The RLGM dialogues brought together indigenous peoples, migrant settlers, and concerned land management agencies such as the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), and Land Registration Authority (LRA).

This guidebook has benefited from the experience and results of thirteen (13) youth-focused dialogues and three (3) round-up dialogues. Chapters 4 and 5 elaborate on the context and rationale of RSD adaptation to YFD. Chapters 6 to 8 provide an overview of the concept of dialogue, the RSD approach, and the adaptation focused on vulnerable youth. For readers interested in initiating a youth-focused dialogue or series of dialogues, Chapter 9 provides a practical guide for organizing these dialogues. Chapter 10 is for learners and practitioners in dialogue facilitation. It provides a step-by-step guide in facilitating dialogue.

The combined purpose of this manual is to provide a guide for learning the concept of dialogue, the reflective-structured dialogue approach, adaptation to youth-focused dialogue, and a guide for actual practice in organizing and facilitating dialogues.

Specifically:

1 To develop individual capacity (of state actors, civil society actors, youth leaders, and others) to facilitate youth-focused dialogues using the RSD approach.

2 To encourage (state, civil society, and youth) organizations to adopt dialogue as a way of working and an approach in aid of planning, programming, and budgeting; and,

3 To encourage the youth, especially the most vulnerable, to use dialogue as a platform for developing their capacity as active agents of change.

The manual neither aims to complicate simple conversations nor reduce them to a scientific technique called dialogue facilitation. Neither is this designed to produce experts in techniques as if dialogues could no longer happen without them. The aim is to multiply the ranks of believers and practitioners who can reproduce themselves by sharing experience and knowledge. Through the diffusion of knowledge and expertise, people in need of support would have easier and neighborhood access to dialogue facilitators. Through the same diffusion, other actors – be they local chief executives, officers and staff of frontline government agencies, civil society actors, and leaders of youth organizations – would adopt dialoguing to fulfill their mandates.

2. Purpose of the Manual

This manual is primarily intended for state actors involved in youth-related policy making, planning, programming, budgeting, and youth leaders and civil society actors involved in youth organizing and advocacy for youth development and welfare.

Specifically:

☑ **Local Government Units (LGUs)**, specifically, local chief executives and heads of planning, social welfare and development, disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM), local youth development office and legislative councils, especially the youth representatives in the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK).

☑ **Youth Leaders**, especially those whose organizations form part of local youth development councils, faith-based youth organizations, and peace advocacy organizations and networks.

☑ **Dialogue advocates**, or individuals and groups of individuals who promote dialogue to address challenges. These individuals are not necessarily those vested with formal authority. They can be anyone from a community, government agency, or a private organization; and,

☑ **Process facilitators.** These people have latent and acquired knowledge and skills in facilitating dialogues (and associated skills such as mediation of conflicts). In the CAPID and RLGM experience, dialogue process facilitators emerge from the ranks of local core groups, youth groups, and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) practitioners.[1] They learned through observation and from CAPID and RLGM supported training. YOUCAP also supports and coordinates local core groups in Iligan City, Talisayan (Misamis Oriental), Carmen (Agusan del Norte) and Gigaquit (Surigao del Norte).

☑ **YVCA Teams.** These are members of local core groups who co-organized and co-facilitated the Youth-Focused Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (YVCA) workshops. They include staff of local government offices and leaders of youth organizations.

For information and learning, this manual will also be helpful for the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the

3. Target Groups

[1]MHPSS refers to a range of activities or responses aimed at protecting and improving mental health and psychosocial wellbeing. Psychosocial refers to the combination of psychological and social behavior, for example, how an individual's emotions or feelings related to others in a social setting. The GIZ guiding framework for MHPSS in the context of conflict and displacement emphasizes a holistic approach that includes satisfaction of basic needs such as shelter, safety and security, food, and water (GIZ 2018a).

Peace, Reconciliation, and Unity (OPAPRU), the National Youth Commission (NYC)[2], and the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC)[3] and other groups and individuals who are directly or indirectly involved in youth development and welfare activities.

4. The Context: Youth Exposure and Vulnerability to Violence

[2]The NYC is the government's premier agency mandated to formulate policies and set the direction and priorities of youth development programs and activities. It was established in 1995 by virtue of Republic Act 8044 or the "Youth in Nation-Building Act of 1995".
[3]The Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC) is an agency attached to the DSWD. It was created through Presidential Decree 603, otherwise known as the Child and Youth Welfare Code in 1974. It is mandated to coordinate the implementation and enforcement of all laws and formulate, monitor, and evaluate policies, programs, and measures for children.

In the Philippines today, there are around 30 million young people between the ages of 10 to 24 years old (https://philippines.unfpa.org). The number represents close to a third of the total population, a sizable segment that demands attention and appropriate policies and investments that could help unleash its full potential.

Who is the Youth?

There is no international law that defines youth. The United Nations (UN) defines youth as those persons between the ages 15 and 24 years.[4] This definition is without prejudice to other definitions by member states. It is a fluid definition that suggests the transition from childhood dependence to the independence of adulthood. The World Health Organization (WHO) adopts the same definition but adds a category of 'adolescents' (ages 10-19) and "young people" (ages 10-24).[5] The fluid definition of youth intersects with the definition of children. The 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as any person under 18 (unicef.org). In the European Union Strategy for Youth, the term 'youth' refers to teenagers and adults aged 13 and 30, and the EUROSTAT statistics consider the youth population to be aged 15 to 29 years old (www.fra.Europa. EU).

Philippine law also sets age as a marker for determining who is a child, youth, and adult. The 1974 Child and Youth Welfare Code of the Philippines (Presidential Decree No. 603) defines youth and children as persons below 21.[6] In 1989, Republic Act No. 6809 (An Act Lowering the Age of Majority from Twenty-One to Eighteen Years) lowered the age marker to 18. The 'Age of Majority' refers to when a child becomes an adult, acquires full legal capacity, and is liable for any contractual obligation (EU).

In 1995, a new law – Republic Act No. 8044 (Youth in Nation-Building Act) disaggregated children and youth and redefined youth between ages 15 and 30.[7] The youth age group is also used differently by national government agencies such as the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) (15-24 years old), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) (15-21 years old), Department of Health (DOH) (10-24 years old) and Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) (15-18 years old).[8]

A more recent law – the Sangguniang Kabataan Reform Act of 2015 (otherwise known as Republic Act No. 10742) defines youth as persons between 15 to 30 years. However, Section 10 of the same law provides that only persons aged 18 years but not more than 24 years (among other considerations) are qualified to become an official of the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK).

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[4]United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/56/117 in 2001, the Commission for Social Development Resolution E/2007/26 and E/CN.5/2007/8 in 2007 and the General Assembly resolution A/RES/62/126 in 2008.
[5]See: https://www.who.int/southeastasia/health-topics/adolescent-health

[6]This law created the multi-sectoral Council for the Welfare of Children.
[7]This law created the National Youth Commission.

Being a youth is more than just belonging to an age group. Youth is a non-homogenous segment of the population whose ages straddle between childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. It must be viewed from social, economic, political, and environmental dimensions. Socially, they comprise diverse ethnicities, sexual and gender identities, religious affiliations, political beliefs, and cultural milieus. Economically, youth belong to various income brackets, including those at the lowest income and food capacity levels.

Politically, some youths have access to power and resources, while those who have less are in the margins of power distribution and decision-making. Geographically, youth are in urban and rural settings and coastal, lowland, and upland ecosystems. The spatial distribution indicates variability in exposure to conflict-induced and natural hazards. Among the youth are sub-sectors that comprise the most vulnerable on account of age, gender, ethnicity, geographic isolation, income status, and physical and psychological disadvantage.

Youth Exposure to Violence

In a 2004 study, Sanidad-Leones (n.d.) cites that 5.8 million Filipino children and youth were at risk. They include 3 million children with disabilities, 246,011 street children, 64,000 victims of armed conflict, 2.4 million who are exposed to hazardous working conditions, 4,097 sexually abused, 11,317 children in conflict with the law (CICL), 3,694 abandoned and neglected, and 100,000 commercially sexually exploited. There were 244 CICL in the Caraga Region (229 male and 15 female) and 461 in Region 10 (438 male and 23 female) during the same period.

A 2016 baseline survey commissioned by the Council for the Welfare of Children and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) involving 3,866 youth aged 13-24 years old in 172 municipalities nationwide reveal that eighty percent (80%) had experienced some form of violence in their lifetime, whether at home, school, workplace, community, or while dating. The prevalence of violence was 81.5% among males and 78.4% among females. Sixty-six percent experienced physical violence during childhood, and more than half of the cases (60%) happened at

[See: Velasco, D. (n.d.) Rejecting "Old Style" Politics? Youth Participation in the Philippines. (Available at: http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/philippinen/04526/countrypapers_philippines.pdf)

home. The proportion of physical violence was highest (75%) among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transexual (LGBT) children and youth compared to heterosexual males and females.

In a 2017 study[9] through focus group discussions with 118 youth aged 13-18 years old in Ozamis City, Zamboanga del Norte, South Cotabato, and Sarangani (all in Mindanao), World Vision cites issues such as bullying between different ethnic groups, presence of multi-level non-state armed groups and risks of recruitment as combatants and marginalization of indigenous peoples that prompt IP youth to join non-state armed groups and radical groups.

The 2016 findings of the Council for the Welfare of Children and UNICEF and the 2017 findings of World Vision resonate with the results of the YOUCAP-supported Youth Vulnerability-Capacity Assessment (YVCA) workshops conducted in Talisayan (Misamis Oriental) and Carmen (Agusan del Norte) in May 2021. In the said workshops, vulnerable youth cite risks and vulnerabilities to conflict-induced and natural hazards that affect their welfare and development. The category of conflict-induced hazards includes insurgency and crime against persons (such as illegal drugs, sexual abuse).

Youth Vulnerability and Participation in Violence

Vulnerability to violence has two dimensions: exposure and sensitivity. The first is external and situational, while the other is what Mackenzie et al. (2014) describe as an inherent vulnerability. A person's sensitivity or inherent vulnerability may be derived from internal attributes such as ethnicity, gender, age, physical disadvantage, geographic isolation, and income status, among others. Conflict affliction and youth exposure to violence do not mainly result in the victimization of youth and children. The same environment can also trigger and nurture violent responses.

Proneness to conflict-induced hazards (due to exposure) combined with sensitivity can lead to two consequences: one, victimization and suffering; or two, resocialization towards the persistence of the same conditions that cause the suffering. Resocialization happens when a new type of socializing agent, such as non-state armed groups, violent extremists, and other purveyors of violence, can recruit youth into their organizational domains.

Alford et al. (2005) cite the heritability of political attitudes and ideologies. This means that youth can inherit the political attitudes and ideologies of their families and communities, including those that lean on the side of violent means of transforming conflicts.

Based on results of a 2017 survey involving 2,300 youth in five universities and high schools in 10 local government units in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), Casey and Pottenbaum (2017) cite the following:

[9]See: World Vision. (2017) Voices of Children and Youth in Peace, Reconciliation and Security: A perspective of 118 children and youth from the Multi-faith, Multi-culture, and Multi-ethnic context in 3 provinces and city in Mindanao, Philippines, A Research Report. (Available at: https://www.youth4peace.info/system/files/2018-04/19.%20FGD_Philippines_WorldVision_0.pdf)

34% reported that real power in their communities is held by those with guns, with 58% of Notre Dame University-Cotabato students agreeing.

22% agreed that the only way to get respect in their community was to carry a gun, with 38% of high school students in Sulu agreeing.

39% agreed that it was appropriate to use violence to protect their communities.

32% agreed that using violence to enforce religious morality in their communities is appropriate, with Muslim respondents (39%) more likely than Christians (22%) to agree.

Youth respondents' pro-gun and pro-violence views indicate vulnerability to inheriting temperaments and ideologies of families and communities affected by violent conflicts. Similar findings were shown in the 2016 baseline survey conducted by the Council for the Welfare of Children and UNICEF, specifically:

Two out of 30 respondents (7%) admitted that they were combatants or assisted older warriors fighting against enemies.

Two out of 5 respondents (39.5%) reported that they committed some form of physical violence against another child.

More males (42.7%) indicated that they were perpetrators of violence compared to females (36.3%).

Thirty-eight percent of respondents reported using psychological violence (shouting, insults, humiliation, verbal abuse, and derogatory language) against other children.

41.4% reported that they engaged in **bullying**.

More males (2.8%) than females (1.2%) reported that they were perpetrators of sexual violence.

The consequence of violence to any person could be both physically and psychologically severe. The impact of some forms of violence results in double victimization in terms of long-lasting injuries and lingering trauma. In other forms, like sexual violence, the immediate injury is expounded by the stigmatization of the victim.

Youth victims of violence respond differently, as can be gleaned from the findings of Casey and Pottenbaum (ibid.) and CWC and UNICEF (ibid.). Some passively respond to the victimization and completely rely on external support. Others dwell on vulnerability as a weakness and refuse to disclose the traumatic experience even to family and friends.

Youth responses to violence could take several paths, namely:

Passivity and dependence on external actors. This includes those who withdraw and/or refuse to.

Passivity with resentment and susceptibility to further exploitation by vectors of violence.

Active non-violent response, the assertion of rights, and pursuit of roles as agents of change.

There is a need to change perceptions of youth being passive victims or victims susceptible to becoming actors of violence. YOUCAP seeks

to support active and non-violent responses to conflict. As this manual aims, dialogue is one tool that nurtures processes leading to youth development as active agents of change.

"Vulnerability is the birthplace of innovation, creativity, change"

Dr. Brené Brown,
Huffington Foundation Endowed Chair

Quoted by Rachel Caldwell, "The Power of Vulnerability in Conflict Resolution," July 30, 2018, EDRBlog.org.(Available at: https://law.utah.edu/the-power-of-vulnerability-in-conflict-resolution/)

5. The Rationale for Youth-Focused Dialogues

Youth transitioning from childhood dependence to adult independence is fragile in the human life cycle. As emerging adults that have not yet assumed family and work responsibilities, this period is characterized by identity explorations, feeling in-between, instability, self-focused enjoyment, and thinking of future possibilities (Arnett, 2006). This is also a period with considerable changes in political and civic orientations (ibid.). The bandwidth of changes includes interests in non-political arenas such as lifestyles, the internet, consumer habits, and music choices (Hooghe and Stolle, 2003).

In growing up, young people exhibit differences in movement (or staying still at home), emotional excitement, and social interaction (Buss et al., 1973). The temperamental differences may steer youth's choices of activities and experiences (Sapiro, 2004). The transition from a focus on self to recognition of civic identity and responsibility towards society needs a process through which outward-focused value orientation forms part of the youth's identity (ibid.).

Recent studies suggest that despite the high prevalence of experience of violence among both boys and girls, only 10% of the affected disclose the incidents. They disclose them mainly to friends and, to some extent, to their mothers (Council for the Welfare of Children and UNICEF, 2016). Only 29.2% of children are aware of the services they could utilize for their needs (ibid.). On the other hand, local government officials and school teachers are perceived to have a low capacity to respond to violence against children (ibid.).

The lack of disclosure or reluctance to do so indicates deficits in youth political agency to improve their living conditions and environments. On the other hand, reliance on a few socialization agents, such as family and community, may also be detrimental to youth welfare and development. Casey and Pottenbaum (2017) cited that exposure to violence and/or being raised in conflict-affected environments provides a fertile ground for the continuation of revenge as a way of life and possession of guns as a sign of strength and importance (ibid.). This tendency falls under what Buss et al. (1973) described as inherited temperaments of the most proximate socialization agents. In this scenario, the challenge of promoting a culture of peace and non-violence gets harder.

The business case for youth-focused dialogue stands on the following grounds:

The notion of political agency and the youth as agents of change; and,

The function of socialization during the transition period and the role of socializing agents in shaping youth perspectives.

Political Agency and Dialogue

Any person who has the capacity to act is an agent. A person who has the capacity to participate in a common exercise of political power is a political agent (Sanchini et al., 2019).

Political agency is a process – from focusing on self to civic engagement and political participation. Youth are not just passive objects of socializing institutions but are active agents in their socialization (Amna et al., 2009).

Studies show that political agency needs a combination of a positive sense of self and awareness of value coupled with a personal belief in the efficacy of participating in political action (Sta. Maria and Diestro Jr., 2009). The youth need to believe that they can make a difference. It is important to provide the youth with favorable conditions for achieving a sense of personal agency. Interpersonal communication and dialogue are some of the ways of creating those conditions.

The opportunity to communicate with others and the corresponding ability of others to be receptive is already an exercise of a political agency (Tedin, 1980). To be heard by others is already a social condition for the youth to express political agency (Sta. Maria and Diestro Jr., ibid.).

Scholars cite differences in the exercise of political agency according to contexts. Enhanced political agency processes are observed in urban or modern society settings because of the relative freedom from traditional constraints of family and community (Shanahan, 2000). This is manifested in greater flexibility to select institutional involvement, organizational participation, and interpersonal relationships (ibid.).

In rural communities, attachment to the community is found to be high among teenagers, especially females. (Amon et al., 2008). This is brought about by the "sense of place" or the meanings and qualities that a person associates with the given community (ibid.). It is also in rural communities where relationships and connections to other people are more dominant and where direct verbal communication is the norm (Bauch, 2001). Trust and commitment found in rural communities provide the stimulus for socialization towards youth civic engagement (Salamon, 2003).

Rural and urban settings are contexts that should be considered in the conduct of youth dialogues. The youth in both settings should navigate the influences of various socializing institutions in their day-to-day existence. In the dialogue, the youth will have the opportunity to speak and listen and interact with peers.

Socialization and Socializing Agents

Socialization is the process of adapting one's behavior to the norms of a culture and society. In a country like the Philippines, where diversity of cultures and societies is predominant, the youth socialization process could be complex. In such a culturally diverse society, multiple socializing agents act on behalf of the larger organization. The dominant agents are the family, school, community, peers, and media. In many cases, the State, churches, military, and private firms also strongly influence the youth.

Youth need to sort out and make sense of various influences from socializing agents such as family, school, media, etc. Family is believed to have the deepest socializing influence on children and youth. However, parents have been hypothesized to shape adolescence through various unidirectional mechanisms (Pancer and Pratt, 1999). This includes transfusion of so-called heritable temperaments and ideologies (Alford et al., ibid.). This could lead to tension between the narrow politics of the family and the broader civic engagement of the youth (Amna et al., 2009). Parents are also known to show tendencies of regulating peer group activities of their children or delaying the transition from childhood, adolescence, and adulthood.

Schools are also powerful socializing agents. They shape views of children and youth through the provision of knowledge and skills as preparation for their future (Campbell et al. 1960; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996; Holmberg and Oscarsson, 2004; Milner 2002; Nie, Junn and Stehlik-Barry 1996; Niemi and Junn 1998; Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995). However, school teachers have limits. Findings from the 2016 baseline survey conducted by the Council for the Welfare of Children and UNICEF show that school teachers are perceived to have a low capacity to respond to violence against children. It is one thing to have the capacity to teach and another to address issues and concerns happening outside the school.

The media is also a strong influence in all its forms (print, television, radio, social media, and others) because it has increasingly become part of family, peer, and school contexts. However, youth and children are seen to be passive recipients of information (Chafee and Yang, 1990). Media, by its nature, is largely a unidirectional mechanism that constantly feeds information, including

the so-called "fake news" which can distort the minds of recipients as well as other information that a recipient does not necessarily need. For example, media can induce recipients to recognize non-basic and artificial needs in the product markets.

Scholars make a distinction between traditional media and social media. The latter traces its roots to the computerized community bulletin board system in the late 1970s, rapid expansion with the emergence of the internet in the 1990s, and a boom in social media platforms since 2000 (Scott and Jacka, 2011). The availability of user-friendly platforms has encouraged wide adoption, connectivity, and information exchange.

It has also been mainstreamed in the business practice of private firms.

Open access to social platforms has encouraged freedom of expression and unfettered exchange of information. Hidri (2012) describes social media as the "fifth power" (the "fourth power" being traditional media) that is influencing the public sphere and public opinion.[10] It has become an arena of opportunities as well as a minefield of risks and raised problems of communication ethics (Scott and Jacka, ibid., Hidri, ibid.).

Social media and youth political agency can be mutually influential. The challenge is how to correspondingly promote communication ethics and social responsibility. From the perspective of the youth, the challenge is how to use social media to develop local capacities and empowerment.

Peers are attractive to youth and children because this is where they find another sense of belonging. Studies show that adolescents choose peers who are like themselves (Dishion, Patterson and Griesler 1994; Hartup 1996; Kandel

1978, 1986). However, peers are also a source of tension. Studies show that peer relationships affect family interaction (Dishion et al., 2004). This happens when the desire of the youth to assert independent choice clashes with the desire of parents to regulate the choice of peers. On the other hand, peers themselves are a source of risk. Recent surveys and the results of the YOUCAP-supported YVCA workshops also indicate the incidence of physical and psychological violence among peers.

The concept of youth-focused dialogues is a proposition to provide a peer-based mechanism for socialization that leads to developing the capacity of the youth to make sense of the variety of influences from other socializing agents. The ultimate purpose is to support the

development of the political agency of the youth. Dialogue provides a platform for recognizing youth agency among peers and other institutions – a young person's world of political participation that incorporates the other's support and approval – and vice versa.

The positive sense of self and awareness of relevant values outside of self could be reinforced by welcoming others (Sta. Maria and Diestro Jr., 2009). Tedin (1980) suggests two nurturing conditions for the exercise of political agency: one, the opportunity to communicate political subjects with others; and two, the receptivity of these ideas by others with whom the youth have emotional ties, such as family and friends.

6. The Concept of Dialogue

It is likely to confuse dialogue with any other conversation or discussion that involves two or more persons. It is very common for public officials to claim they had been in dialogue with constituents because they had engaged the "other side "in community meetings, assemblies, or consultations. We have seen a lot of these meetings and assemblies, especially with so many government programs running in parallel to one another. Some speak louder than others in most meetings, and the louder they speak, the less eager the silent ones are to speak. Some meetings degenerate into unfinished conversations or meetings that exclude those supposed to attend (Wheatley, 2009).

In his article "On Dialogue, "David Bohm (2004) introduces a critical indicator of how an exchange between two or more parties is not a dialogue: the existence of hierarchy and authority. The exchange of opinion and spirited search for who is right or wrong is also not a dialogue. Indeed, every person necessarily has an opinion based on certain assumptions or interpretations of events or behavior based on their cultural background. When they come together to discuss and independently pursue or defend their opinions, they are not necessarily in dialogue with one another.

There is no singular and exclusive definition of dialogue except its starting point that you need at least two or more persons engaged in a conversation. And yes, it is a conversation, but it is not just any conversation. It is a conversation with the following attributes:

- It is an artful conversation – the art of thinking together (Isaacs, 1999). It has a design and process flow. It has a beginning, a middle, and an end. It is like a story woven together by the dialogue participants. It has a shared meaning that holds people together (Bohm, 2004).

- It is a collective way of opening and re-examining judgments and assumptions (Bohm, ibid.). While we come to the dialogue circle with pre-disposed emotions and prepared assumptions and opinions, we should be ready to listen to what others have to say. As each one speaks, each one listens.

- It is a conversation with a center, not sides, where no one's singular position is final (Isaacs, ibid.). It is not a forum for analyzing and winning an argument (Bohm, ibid.).

- It is a conversation where human beings come to meet as peers, not as roles or functions (Wheatley, 2009). The dialogue circle is not where a professor, government official, or business manager comes with hats representing their power and resources. Like others, they come as peers – as human beings equal to others.

- The dialogic aspect focuses on relationships that simultaneously deal with similarities and differences (Baxter, 2004; Nagda, 2006).

Components of Dialogue

There are three basic components of dialogue, namely:

1 **Actors.** In the youth-focused dialogues, the principal actors are specific vulnerable youth groups such as indigenous youth (IP youth), Muslim youth, internally displaced youth (IDP youth), youth with physical and psychological disadvantages, out-of-school youth (OSY), boys/young men and girls/young women, especially those that have experienced traumatic physical and psychological violence and youth from geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDA). During the first round and during the round-up dialogue, they will be joined by local government representatives. Also included as dialogue actors are the organizers, facilitators, and support team.

2 **Substance.** This is a collage of issues, interests, concerns, aspirations, beliefs, and assumptions that are competing and contradictory until participants find common ground and common interests. The agenda will revolve around conflict-induced hazards, violence, vulnerabilities, and capacities in the youth-focused dialogues.

3 **Procedure.** This is the sequence of moves with agreed rules that guide the actions and attitudes of dialogue participants and facilitators.

External Environment

Every dialogue is based on context and objective. Initiators, like agencies of a Local Government Unit (LGU), take into consideration the logic of intervention.[11] In consultation with prospective participants, the initiators jointly assess the situation to formulate the rationale for holding the dialogue. The rationale is embedded in the common appreciation of the contextual conditions. Particular attention should be given to vulnerable youth's needs and interests, especially under conditions where much of their voices remain unheard.

The following conditions must be available before holding a dialogue:

- Collectively identified the need for a dialogue.
- Demand and readiness of participants to engage in dialogue.
- Favorable security conditions for holding the dialogue.
- Absence of threats (such as from spoilers) that will put the dialogue process and the participants at risk.

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[11] In the Philippine setting, local government units (LGUs) refer to sub-national political and administrative structures of government, specifically, provincial, city, municipal or barangay. A province comprises several cities and municipalities while a city or municipality comprises several barangays.

Characteristics

Many characteristics distinguish dialogue from other forms of conversations, such as meetings, workshops, assemblies, and consultations.

Equality.

Equal voice regardless of a formal status in any organization or institution (Mallory and Thomas, 2003). Equality also means equal curiosity, desire to listen, and equal interest in establishing relationships with dialogue partners.

Direct communication.

Participants speak directly to one another rather than through third parties and neither through the facilitator.

Explicit communication.

For others to better understand what is said, what is felt, how it's felt, and what is meant should be said directly through words and physical gestures.

Reciprocal communication.

Often, when people talk, others do not truly listen. In a dialogue, those who are listening let the speakers know that they're listening by asking questions and validating that their messages are understood and that their feelings are felt.

Active listening.

This forms part of the idealized behavior aspects of dialogue participants: voicing, listening, respecting, and suspending (judgments) (Isaacs, 1999).

Safe space.

The climate of the conversation should be safe, respectful, and free (Bohm, 2004). There are ground rules to ensure that the dialogue circle is a safe space. While each has equal space to speak, no one is coerced to talk. While everyone is introduced, each person's identity and other personal data are protected.

Accountability in our words and actions.

Our beliefs are readable from what we say and how we act, and negative beliefs prevent us from turning to one another (Wheatley, 2009). Proactive accountability means focusing on positive beliefs and corresponding words and actions.

Open space.

This is for the articulation of someone's ideas with the ideas of others. Compared to the dialectical conversation driven by conviction and shaped by the rhetoric of persuasion to determine who is right or wrong, dialogue strives for responsiveness and accountability (Zappen, 2004).

Flexibility.

We have our own ideas and assumptions, but when we come to the dialogue circle, we should be ready to list judgment and modify our long-held convictions (Wheatley, ibid.; Romney, 2005).

Empathy.

This means understanding and sharing another person's feelings and making that person know and feel that we know what they mean and how they feel (Scuka, 2005). This is different from sympathy, where we feel and show pity for the misfortune of others. Empathy itself is an art of balancing essentials of human attitude and behavior: cognition (thoughts based on our intelligence), emotion (or how we feel), and conation (or how we express or act our thoughts and feelings).

Dialogue and Decision Making

Dialogue is not a magic pill. The process provides an opportunity to share experiences, issues, concerns, and aspirations, but it does not necessarily lead to life-changing decisions. The sharing leads to exploring solutions and the strengthening of relationships that encourage participants to continue the conversations in their communities. Participants succeed in identifying common ground, determining priorities of joint solutions.

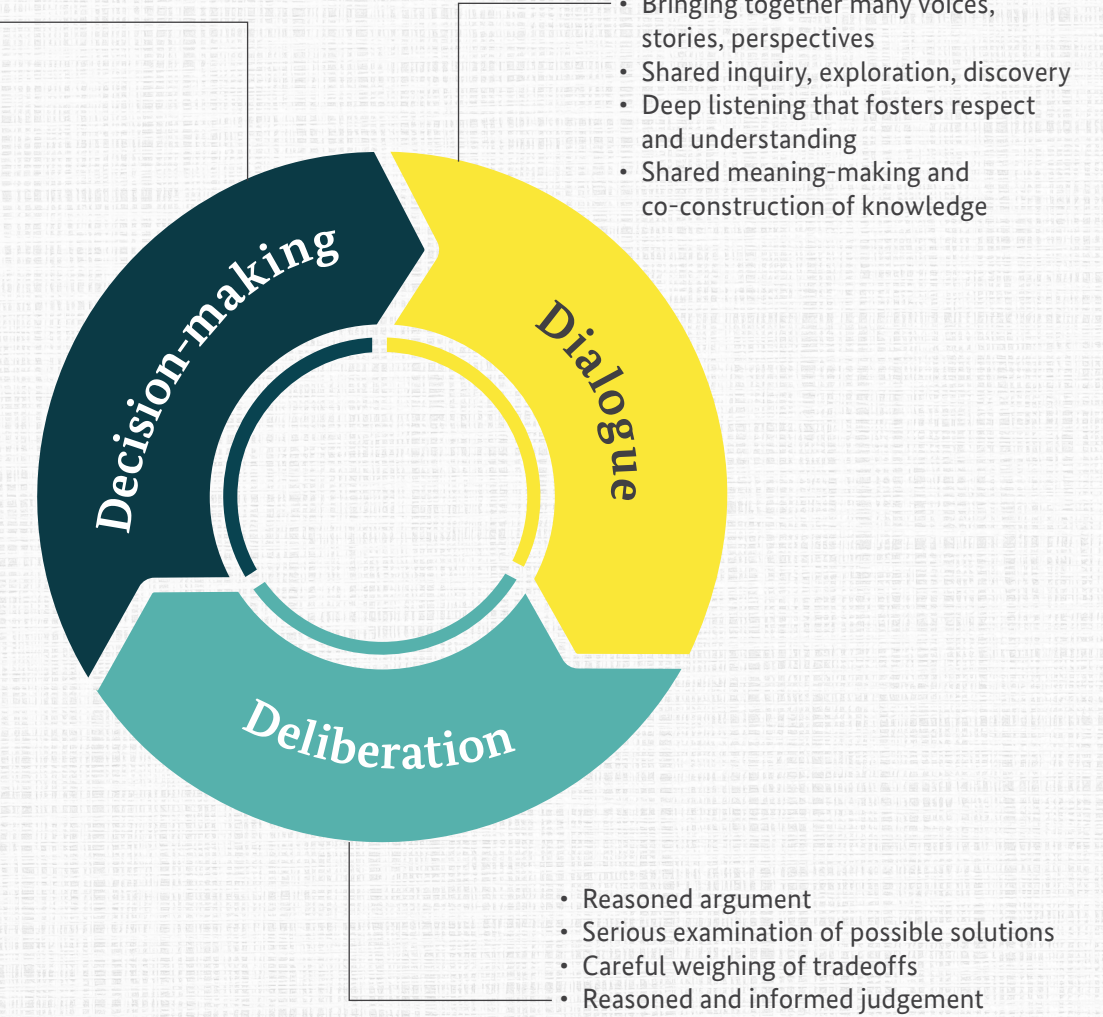The proposed solutions are usually bi-directional and multi-level. The participants can act upon some solutions and to which they make commitments. The more difficult solutions need to be relayed to decision-makers of local government units or national government agencies for appropriate action.

The most significant result of GIZ's Mindanao experience on the dialogue has been the evolution of democratic citizen-government engagements where the decision-making orientation of the latter is informed by those who are most in need.

Figure 1. Dialogue and Decision Making

- Authority decides
- Negotiation
- Consensus
- Vote

- Bringing together many voices, stories, perspectives
- Shared inquiry, exploration, discovery
- Deep listening that fosters respect and understanding
- Shared meaning-making and co-construction of knowledge

Decision-making

Dialogue

Deliberation

- Reasoned argument
- Serious examination of possible solutions
- Careful weighing of tradeoffs
- Reasoned and informed judgement

The Reflective-Structured Dialogue approach was pioneered by the Interfaith Mediation Centre, Public Conversations Project, and Collaboration Specialists in 2014 as a dialogic approach to peacebuilding with particular attention to interfaith dialogue.[12] This approach has two interlinked aspects: (a) the reflective aspect and (b) the structure.

The reflective aspect emphasizes the process by which a participant can examine their articulations, listen to their voice to deepen understanding of values, re-examine assumptions, and identifyblind spots. One may ask a simple question themself: "What if I am wrong? How would the others feel?"

The structure aspect refers to the design (the participants, the context, and the enabling environment for the dialogue to happen), the procedure (the sequence of moves or process flow and the ground rules), and the objectives of the dialogue. An RSD Manual and Guide for Practitioners has been developed by CAPID and handed over to the DILG Regional Office 13 (Caraga Region). A copy of the RSD Manual accompanies this document as a reference.

7. The Reflective-Structured Dialogue (RSD) Approach

[12]See: Interfaith Mediation Centre, Public Conversations Project, and Collaboration Specialists. (2014). Reflective Structured Dialogue: A Dialogic Approach to Peacebuilding. Retrieved from: https://www.whatisessential.org/sites/default/files/Reflective%20Structured%20Dialogue.pdf

8. Youth-Focused Dialogue: Adaptation of the Reflective-Structured Dialogue (RSD) Approach

The Youth-Focused Dialogue (YFD) is YOUCAP's adaptation of the RSD approach with modifications on participants' purpose, composition, and procedure.

Among the most notable adaptation features are contained in the following matrix:

Table 1. Features of the YOUCAP RSD Adaptation

Features	Table headline	YOUCAP RSD Adaptation
Dialogue participants	An equal number of Muslims and Christians	Vulnerable youth regardless of religious affiliation.
Tool of Facilitator	Scripture – the Qur'an and the Bible	Religion-neutral communication tools.
Starting point	The facilitator uses prepared opening questions.	Participants are primed through warming-up exercises and space for storytelling.
Endpoint	Peace action planning	Mapping out long-term and immediate and practical solutions and sorting out which ones could be acted upon by the dialogue participants and which ones should be relayed to higher authorities and decision-makers and integrated into the local youth development plan.

The primary purpose of the adaptation is to offer dialogue as a socializing mechanism and platform for vulnerable youth to develop their capacity as active political agents of change. This aim requires the corresponding capacity of state actors, civil society organizations, and youth organizations to provide the proper enabling environment for dialogue.

This purpose addresses the issue of unheard voices of the youth elaborated in Chapter 2 of this manual: in particular, the phenomenon of non-disclosure and reluctance of violence-affected youth to engage and seek support from other actors and, on the other, the potential of youth getting involved in the persistence of violence.

Other Key Features of the YFD

In addition to the basic characteristics of dialogue discussed in Chapter 4 of this manual, the YFD contains the following distinctive features:

Process ownership.

The dialogue participants – the vulnerable youth - own and drive the process with the help of a facilitator and MHPSS support team. As part of the dialogue design, participants acquire prior knowledge of the RSD methodology and procedure before tackling the substance of the dialogue.

Agenda.

Dialogue initiators and organizers do not impose a prepared agenda for the participants. After sorting out the issues and concerns generated from the priming session, the participants themselves define the agenda – or the priority topics. Based on experience from the CAPID and RLGM pilot dialogues, the priming session generates a vast collection of issues and concerns

that, even if clustered, can still run up to 10 categories. With the help of the facilitator, the participants do a ranking exercise to determine the top three (3) topics as the main

agenda of the dialogue. It must be re-emphasized that the prioritized agenda of the dialogue serves as

a guide for focusing and centering the conversation. Every agenda item remains open to varied experiences and multiple perspectives.

Storytelling.

Similar to the CAPID and RLGM adaptation, the most distinctive feature of the YFD is harnessing the power of storytelling and collective narrations of shared experience. This tool is not just for artists like novelists and filmmakers. In dialogue, the telling creates a 'clicking experience' in someone's brain, allowing them to understand what another is saying and helps create a faster and stronger connection between people (Miller, 2014). Experience from the CAPID and RLGM pilot dialogues demonstrates how people from different villages and ethnicities, income classes, and genders establish better connections when they share common experiences and share the same feelings. A story in the wrong hands can be devastating (Miller, ibid.). However, the RSD approach provides a space that assures the safety of the storytellers.

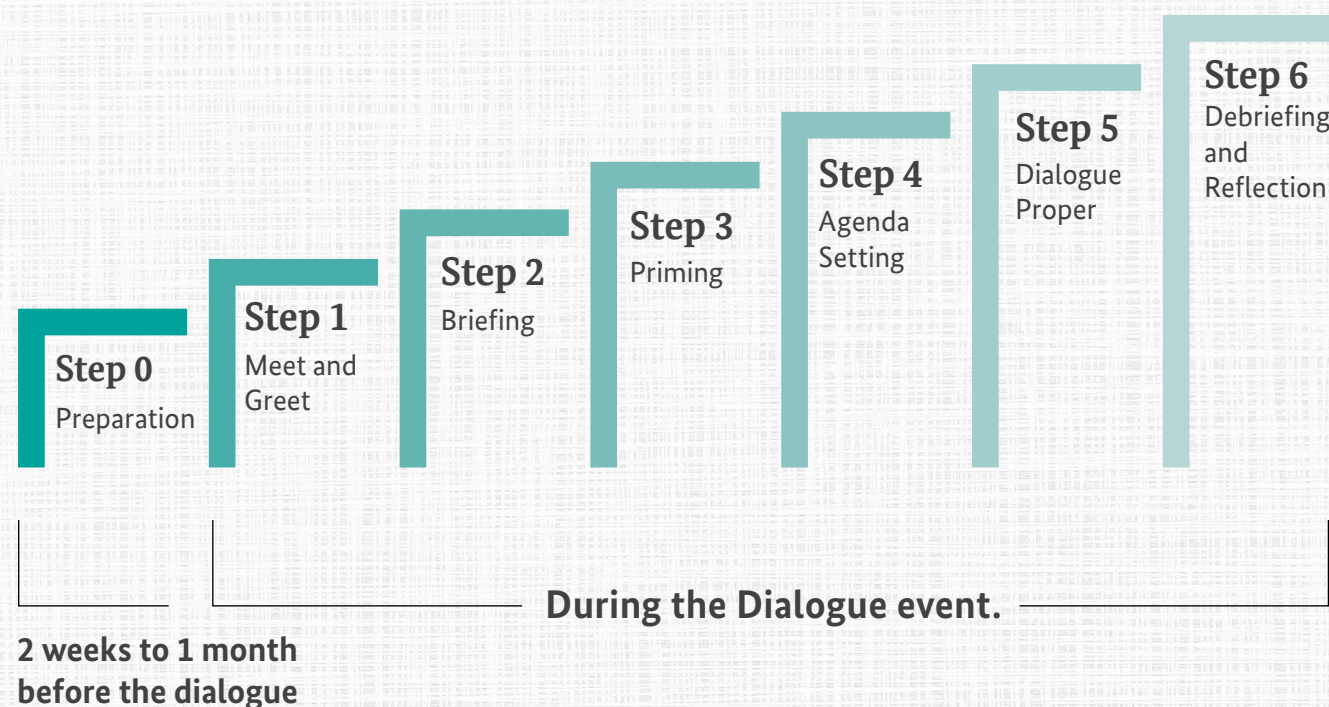### Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS).

Another distinctive feature of the YFD is the integration of MHPSS support, most especially the psychosocial aspect, throughout all stages of the dialogue process. This includes the utilization of stabilization techniques for handling participants that have gone through traumatic experiences.

9. How to Organize the Youth-Focused Dialogue

There are seven steps in the whole YFD process (see Fig. 3). Six of the seven steps happen during the actual dialogue event. This chapter focuses on Step 0 – the preparation stage, which comprises the organizing part of the dialogue.

Figure 2. The Seven Steps of the YFD Process

Step 0 — Preparation
Step 1 — Meet and Greet
Step 2 — Briefing
Step 3 — Priming
Step 4 — Agenda Setting
Step 5 — Dialogue Proper
Step 6 — Debriefing and Reflection

During the Dialogue event.

2 weeks to 1 month before the dialogue

Good preparation is key to the success of dialogue. Experience suggests that it takes at least two weeks to prepare the dialogue. The sub-processes include the following:

Table 2. Sub-steps in organizing a YFD

Form the local core group.	The local core group is the operating structure comprising the initiators/organizers and local facilitators. The members come from the ranks of local government agencies, including officers of the SKs, and officers of local youth organizations. Most of them would be afforded opportunities for enhancing capacities in dialogue facilitation, MHPSS, conflict sensitivity, and Do No Harm.
Conduct context analysis	This is to situate the dialogue within the overall political, economic, socio-cultural, and environmental situation of the area and initially identify conflict-induced hazards, their impacts, and the most affected youth groups. If a YVCA had been conducted previously, the results of the YVCA could be used as the substitute for the context analysis.
Identify prospective youth participants in the dialogue.	The identification will be based on the result of the context analysis, identified conflict-induced hazards, and the affected youths. If a YVCA had been conducted, the result of that workshop would already include the identification of vulnerable youth groups.

Conduct pre-dialogue consultations.

Participation in the dialogue is voluntary. It is important to consult with the prospective participants to generate acceptance of the dialogue process as well as give them a preview of the concept, methodology, and procedure.
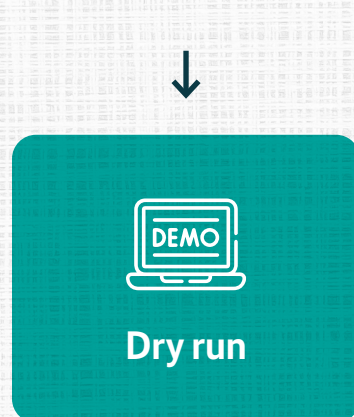
Prepare the dialogue event.
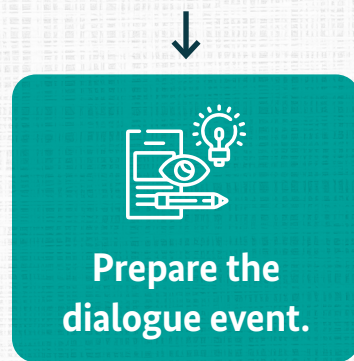
This includes agreement on the date, venue, and time, as well as sending out invitations. The send-out of invitations is important to prevent conflicts arising from the arrival of un-invited participants and potential spoilers.

Constitute the facilitation team.

The core group designates the facilitator and co-facilitators. The facilitation team then agrees on task allocation and delineation of roles.

Onsite preparation

This happens at least one day before the actual dialogue. The initiators and facilitating team double-check the facilities of the venue and preposition the equipment and supplies such as pinboards, meta cards, notebooks, pens, manila sheets, crayons, pentel pens, flip charts, medicine kit, and beamer). During the onsite preparation, the lead facilitator conducts the final briefing and reviews the process flow in detail.

Dry run

The facilitator and co-facilitators go through the six-step process of the dialogue event and rehearse their roles. The dry run also helps anticipate what could go wrong and how to overcome this.

In dialogues with vulnerable youth, the ideal scenario would be the prior conduct of a YVCA. Results of the YOUCAP-supported YVCAs identified the following groups vulnerable to conflict-induced hazards and violence:

- Indigenous youth groups (IP youth)
- Muslim youth
- Internally displaced youth (IDP youth)
- Youth with physical and psychological disadvantages

- Out-of-school youth (OSY)
- Boys/young men and girls/young women, especially those that have experienced traumatic physical and psychological violence.
- Youth in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDA).

If no YVCA had been conducted prior to a YFD, organizers should prepare for and convene the opening round.
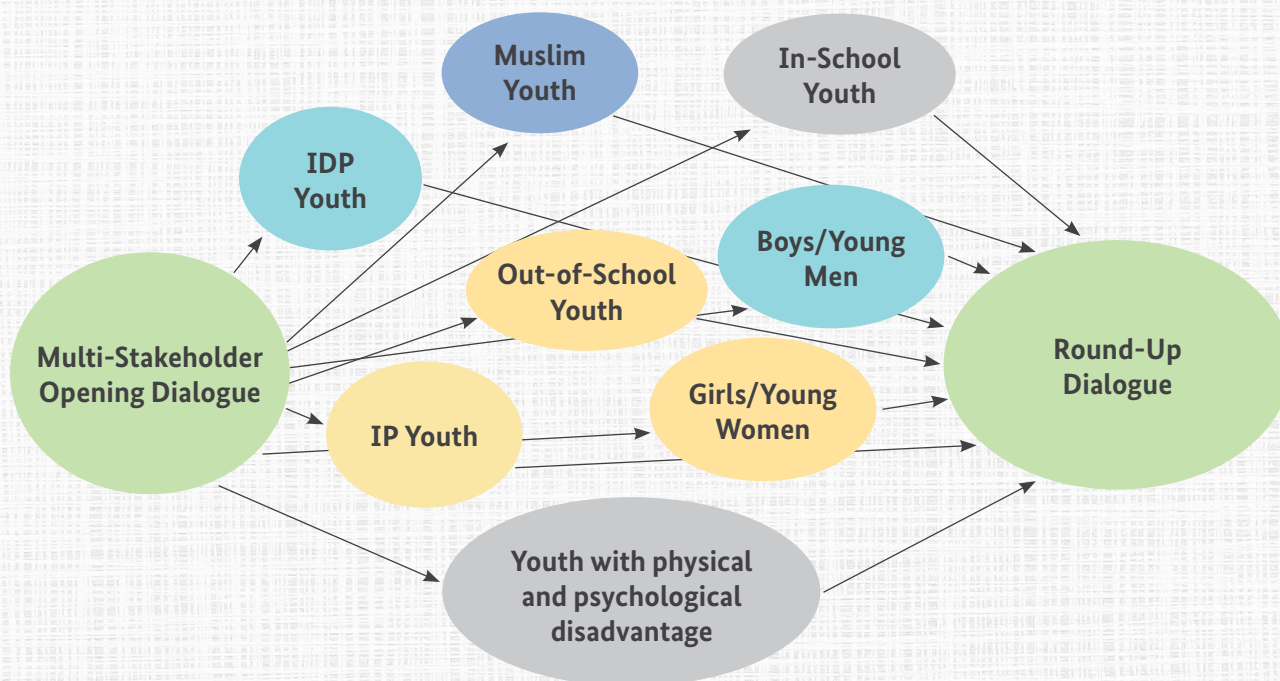
The Dialogue Cycle

In organizing dialogues, it is important to note that the YFD is not a one-off event. The dialogue with vulnerable groups could be a series of dialogues with several groups confronted with similar hazards or parallel dialogues with groups experiencing different types of hazards. A dialogue event constitutes a dialogue round that is connected to several other rounds. The different dialogue rounds culminate into an endpoint called the round-up dialogue.

Figure 3. The Dialogue Cycle

The Opening Round

The dialogue cycle starts with an opening round. This round aims to establish markers of issues, problems and concerns, and initial recommendations. The opening round is a multi-stakeholder dialogue of different youth groups, local government officials, and youth-serving non-governmental organizations dialogues with vulnerable youth. If a YVCA had been conducted, the result of the YVCA could be used as a proxy for the opening round.

The opening round will be followed by a series (or parallel) focused dialogues with specific groups of vulnerable youth groups and correspondingly focus on group and hazard-specific issues, concerns, and proposed solutions for improving their situation. The markers would be enhanced by the voices of specific vulnerable youth groups whose voices may have been heard during the opening round but not amplified at length and discussed in depth.

The Round-Up Dialogue

The conclusion of the dialogue cycle is the Round-Up Dialogue. This event shall involve representatives of the focused dialogues and government representatives who participated in the first round. The round-up dialogue aims to examine all the priority issues and concerns and recommendations discussed in previous dialogues and agree on priorities from where proposed solutions and recommendations would be formally transmitted to local authorities and concerned national government agencies.

Among the lessons learned from the experience of the YOUCAP-supported round-up dialogues in Talisayan (Misamis Oriental), Carmen (Agusan del Norte), and Gigaquit (Surigao del Norte) is the need to strengthen the preparation with government actors. Some of the recommendations could not be responded to by the LGU because these were within the mandates and responsibilities of national government agencies.

Why Large-Format YFD is Not Recommended

There is no scarcity of options for large-format dialogues that can bring together as many participants as possible.

Equally, there is no scarcity of reasons why large group formats do not apply to the reflective-structured dialogue adapted for youth:

- **Firstly, purpose.** The purpose of the youth-focused dialogue is to provide a safe space for youth who may not have shared their experiences, thoughts, and aspirations before (except to a few people). Large-format dialogues are not an ideal setting for assuring the safety of space. The largeness may even be intimidating to traumatized persons.

- **Secondly, sensitivity.** Vulnerability to and impacts of conflicts and violence are too sensitive, especially highly traumatic experiences that require specialized handling techniques.

- **Thirdly, technical and financial costs.** Large-format events require substantial costs and technical requirements that make planning itself already complex.

- **Lastly, the state of local markets in terms of technology and services for large events.** The application of large-format dialogue events will require moving youth participants from rural areas to big urban centers to participate in the dialogue.

The best approach is to organize dialogues with small groups such that there is ample time for each participant to articulate their voice. Group size is psychologically important in generating a sense of confidence and safety that one is not talking to a large and unknown audience. Organizing small-group dialogues is also easier in arranging the date, time, and choice of venue.

The dialogue event comprises six (6) steps (see Fig. 4). This procedure of the whole conversation guides the facilitator and the participants into finding themselves in the process. The dialogue is a story. It has a beginning, a middle, and an ending. Each of the steps will be discussed in detail in the following pages.

Figure 4. The Dialogue Event in Six Steps

Step 1
Meet and Greet

Step 2
Briefing

Step 3
Priming

Step 4
Agenda Setting

Step 5
Dialogue Proper

Step 6
Debriefing and Reflection

During the Dialogue event.

10. How to Facilitate the Youth-Focused Dialogue

There are preliminary activities to take care of before initiating the dialogue sequence. Organizers should assign a team to usher in the participants, assist them in registering and signing consent and other forms, and orient them about the venue's facilities. Participants' prior informed consent to taking photographs and video is necessary. Participants also need to sign a health checklist if this is required by local authorities, especially during a pandemic. Table 3 elaborates the details of arrival formalities.

Table 3. Ushering the Participants to the Dialogue Room

Registration.	**What to prepare** Attendance sheet with pre-listed names.

Signing of consent and other forms.	**What to prepare** Consent form (and health checklist form if required by local authorities). Persons in charge need to explain why they must sign the forms to the participants.

Distribution of provisions.	**What to prepare** This includes pens, notebooks, and other necessary items (including face masks and face shields as part of health protocols under situations of the pandemic).

Ushering participants to their seats.	**What to prepare** U or C-shape seating arrangement.

Informing participants of the starting time of the activity.	**What to prepare** Programme of activities posted on the wall.

When all preliminaries are completed, and everyone is ready, the master of ceremonies announces the commencement of the activity. Step 1 begins.

Step 1: The 'Meet and Greet'

This step consists of a number of sub-activities around the core process of letting participants, organizers, and facilitators know one another. Table 4 elaborates the sequences.

Table 4. The 'Meet and Greet' Sequence
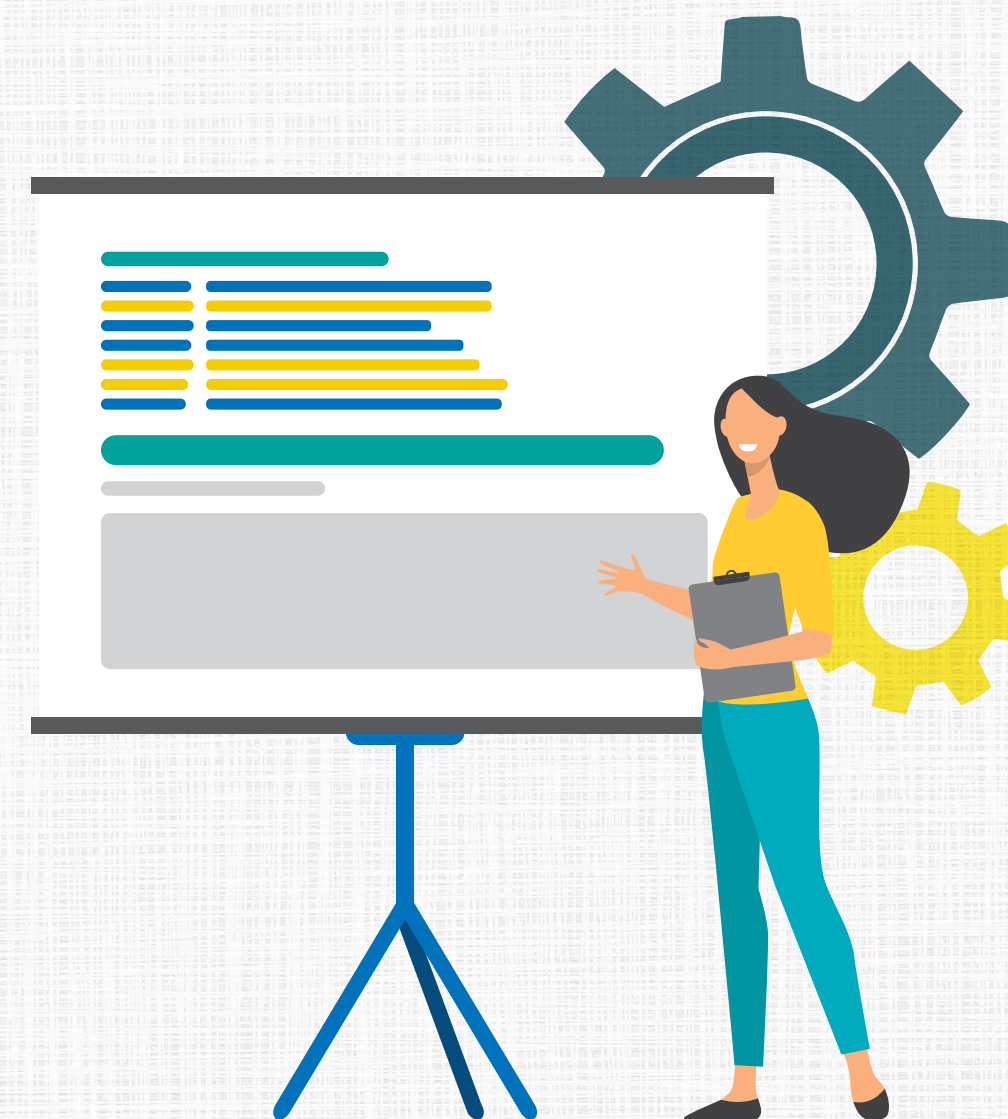
Invocation	The participants usually begin with a prayer as part of cultural sensitivity and religious literacy. When there is a mix of religious affiliations, different prayers are said. Alternatively, a moment of silence is taken for participants of various faiths to pray in their own way.
Singing of the national anthem	This is done when the dialogue is organized by the local government units or a national government agency and happens on a Monday in a government facility. On other occasions, participants waive the singing of the national anthem.
Welcome message	A representative of the organizers gives the welcome message. If the event is organized by the local government unit or a national government agency, the highest-ranking official present gives the welcome message.
Meet and Greet	This is the core activity of Step 1. The facilitator and co-facilitators work together to creatively encourage participants to know one another. There are suggested tools in Annex 1 (Tools for the Meet and Greet).
Expectations Check	The facilitator asks the participants to share thoughts on what they expect from the dialogue. Co-facilitators distribute metacards and pentel pens for participants to write their thoughts. All the written expectations are posted on a wall or a pinboard. Participants will revisit the expectations during the debrief and reflection.

Step 2: Briefing on the YFD Methodology, Procedure, and Rules

In Step 1, the participants shall have acquainted themselves and warmed it up with the facilitators and one another. It is important to brief them on the YFD methodology, procedure, and ground rules. This process enables the participants to take a grip of the whole process. The sub-steps are elaborated in Table 5 below:

Table 5. The Briefing Sequence

Sub-steps	Activity Description	What to prepare
Introduce the objectives of the dialogue.	Elaborate two sets of objectives: • The organizers' objective is to provide a safe platform for articulating issues. • The objectives of the participants (as articulated during the pre-dialogue consultations) are to share experiences and views on conflict-induced hazards and their vulnerabilities and explore solutions.	Visual presentation of the objectives on the screen, flip chart, or pinboard.
Present the YFD methodology and procedure.	• Give a detailed presentation of the concept, methodology, and the process flow of the event. • After the presentation, open the floor for clarificatory questions and suggestions.	Visual presentation of the main points on the screen, flip chart, or pinboard.

Sub-steps	Activity Description	What to prepare
Agree on ground rules	• Present the list of basic rules and open the floor for additional suggestions from the participants. • Agree on additional rules.	One slide on the list of basic rules.

Ground Rules

The dialogue is an equal and safe space. There are rules to follow to strengthen the sense of safety and equality. It is during the briefing that the facilitator introduces the ground rules. These are details of the code of conduct for the dialogue, explaining the behavior expected of the participants and all others in the room.

The ground rules of the dialogue are founded on the principles of Do No Harm, non-violence, conflict sensitivity, cultural sensitivity, gender sensitivity, and respect for religious freedom. These include:

• Respect confidentiality and non-attribution. Participants may share the result of the dialogue with their family, peers, or community but may not divulge and attribute specific ideas to any participant.

• No gun, bladed weapon, or any instrument of physical violence may be brought to the dialogue.

• Speak for oneself. Use the "I" instead of "we" and give a human face to the other participants by refraining from using "you" or "them."

• Feel free to express your feelings and feel free to pass if you are not ready to talk. Also, do not pressure others to talk if they are not ready.

• No shouting or name-calling.

• Respect for equal time and space and desist from monopolizing the conversation.

• Listen actively. Do not interrupt while others are talking. This includes unintentional interruptions such as making phone calls or short message service (SMS) on mobile phones during the dialogue.

• No violent communication, whether it is verbal or non-verbal. This includes the prohibition of cursing, labeling, and finger-pointing.

• Ask genuine questions and do not assume that you know what the other person is talking about. Be prepared to review your assumptions.

Ground rules are ideally created and agreed to by the participants themselves. That the facilitator initially shares are rules already being practiced in other dialogues. Additional rules may be applied based on the consensus of the participants. What is important is that participants willfully agree to adhere to the rules. The same rules also apply to the organizers, facilitators, and support team.

Step 3: Priming

As the term suggests, priming is about stimulating the participants to open up and share their aspirations, experience, and concerns. This activity is done using creative approaches for self-expression (such as body movements and the use of images and sounds). At this stage, the facilitator harnesses the support of co-facilitators. Ideally, they would have undergone training or have acquired familiarity with MHPSS.

Table 6. The Priming Sequence

Sub-steps	Activity Description	What to prepare
Warming-up exercises	The support team (of co-facilitators) selects 1 or 2 tools for the warming up exercises.	List of tools to choose from. Find some examples in Annex 2 (Tools for Priming).
Short briefing on the objective and procedure of the priming	• The facilitator explains the objective and procedure of the priming.	Visual presentation.
Forming of breakout groups	• The support team sub-divides the group, usually by geographic origin (or where they come from), making it easier to prepare a common map. • The sub-grouping may also be random to ensure diverse experiences and opinions. • Each group designates a group leader, documenter, and rapporteur.	• Manila sheets • Pentel pens • Crayons • Metacards

Sub-steps	Activity Description	What to prepare
Introduction of theme and tools	• As a guiding parameter for the priming, the support team encourages participants to focus on a theme on conflict and violence and how these affect their lives. • The team introduces the tools and allows time for questions and clarifications. • The team informs participants about the availability and location of materials and supplies they can use.	PowerPoint guides them using storytelling tools, historical timeline, cartogram-mapping, and seasonal calendar (See Annex 2: Tools for Priming).
Breakout sessions	• Accompanied by a co-facilitator (member of the support team), each sub-group proceeds to a designated location for the breakout session. • The co-facilitator reiterates the procedure and encourages the group to self-manage the discussion. • The discussion begins with round-robin storytelling and proceeds with the use of other tools such as cartograms, historical timelines, and others. • The session runs for 45 minutes to one hour. In some cases, the session may be extended.	• Manila sheets • Pentel pens • Crayons • Metacards

Sub-steps	Activity Description	What to prepare
Synthesizing sub-group output and preparation of the presentation for the plenary sharing.	• Each group prepares a presentation. • The designated documenter leads in compiling the data. • The designated rapporteur organizes the data and goes through a dry rehearsal to get initial feedback from their group. • If a laptop is available, the group may prepare a PowerPoint presentation.	• Pinboards • Metacards • Pentel pens • Manila sheets • Multi-colored crayon • Beamer
Presentation of sub-group outputs	• Give each group 10 minutes to present and additional 5 minutes each for –QandA • After all groups have presented, give an additional 5-10 minutes for follow-up questions and clarifications. • During the presentations, the co-facilitator notes the core issues, concerns, and propositions on metacards and places them on the pinboard.	• Pinboard • Flip chart • Beamer • Laser pointer
Synthesis	• The facilitator synthesizes the results. • Participants validate the synthesis. • Facilitator reiterates the validated synthesis and closes the session.	• Pinboard • Metacards • Flip chart

At the center of the priming activity is the stimulation of the participants to trust one another and share each one's perception of the world around them. The first step is a twist to storytelling. Participants share how they perceive the context, the conflict-induced hazard/s, violence affecting their welfare and development, and vulnerabilities.

Sub-group facilitators then make follow-throughs to visualize shared experiences, shared vulnerabilities, and shared aspirations with the use of other tools such as historical timeline, cartogram, or spot maps (such as the location of significant events and other features like location of schools, evacuation centers, shelter, and support for traumatized persons[13], health clinics or natural resources important to food and other needs).

At the start, it often happens that the ideal characteristics of dialogue may not yet come into play. The priming activity may be characterized by competing views, intermittent debates, and highs and lows of emotions. Hence it is important to have psychosocial support in ushering participants to dialoguing.

At the end of the break-out sessions, participants return to the circle for a plenary presentation of the results. The lead facilitator synthesizes the discussion while a co-facilitator organizes the discussion points (usually issues, concerns, problems, and needs) with metacards on the pinboard.

At the end of the synthesis, a recess is called for to allow the participants to unwind.

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[13]The Department of Social Welfare and Development, for example, runs shelters and provide support for girls and women victims of sexual violence and human trafficking.

Step 4: Agenda Setting

A key feature of the YFD is the agenda-setting that is done by the participants themselves. Organizers do not decide the agenda. Participants do not come to the dialogue circle with a pre-set agenda. They freely decide on the agenda after the priming session.

After the priming session (Step 3), participants return to the plenary. The facilitator takes their place with the pinboard showing the synthesized issues, concerns, problems, and needs. They then guide the participants into a process of sorting and reduction. The aim is to determine the top three priority topics for the dialogue. The facilitator should make sure the determination process should be inclusive, participatory, and consensual. The following table describes the agenda-setting sequence.

Table 7. The Sequence in Agenda Setting

Sub-steps	Activity Description	What to prepare
Warming-up exercises	The support team facilitates a creative exercise to stimulate the participants further.	Select tools described in Annex 1 and Annex 2. Participants may also decide what energizing tool to use based on what they know.
Reiteration of the procedure and ground rules.	• The facilitator starts the session with a short review of the procedure and the agreed ground rules. • The facilitator emphasizes prioritizing and focusing on three (3) major topics.	• Relevant information on PowerPoint slides or flip chart • Beamer • Flip chart (if there is no beamer)

Sub-steps	Activity Description	What to prepare
Sorting and clustering of issues and concerns and initial prioritization.	• The facilitator recaps the synthesis validated in Step 3. • The facilitator and participants jointly re-examine the issues (written in metacards) raised during the priming. • All issues are sorted out, and similar issues are grouped as one. • Participants initialize and determine priorities by placing the metacards on the bubble chart. • The bubble chart has three sizes (small, medium, and large). The large bubble represents top priority, the medium represents medium priority, and the small represents least priority.	• A bubble chart is drawn on a manila sheet (see Annex 3: Tools for Agenda Setting) • Metacards • Pentel pens

Sub-steps	Activity Description	What to prepare
Ranking of priorities and agreeing on the agenda of the dialogue.	• The facilitator challenges the participants to focus on the top three priority issues. • Co-facilitator prepares two pinboards: one that contains the synthesis and another for the ranking. • Introduce two ranking techniques: simple voting and pair-wise ranking. • Participants choose which ranking technique to use. • Participants undertake the ranking exercise to determine the top three priority agendas. • The facilitator asks participants to reconfirm the top three chosen topics as the agenda of the dialogue.	• Ranking chart on manila sheet. • Participants may also choose to repeat the bubble chart until only three issues / topics remain in the large bubble.

ⓘ Step 4 is concluded when the participants have identified three priority topics as the agenda of the dialogue.

Step 5: Dialogue Proper

The participants remain in the circle. The facilitator comes in to recapitulate and reconfirm the priority topics agreed in Step 4 (Agenda Setting), reiterates the ground rules agreed in Step 2 (Briefing). Participants then agree on the sequence of the three topics to be discussed.

The dialogue is conducted in a round-robin format, beginning with the participants' first topic. Each participant is given up to two minutes to share views or put forward recommended solutions. Participants speak sequentially in a clockwise sequence to enable equal space, then counterclockwise on the second topic and back to clockwise on the third topic. At any time during the sharing, any participant may ask clarificatory questions. A participant may not be coerced to voice their opinion. They have the right to "pass" or waive their right to speak.

The facilitator synthesizes the discussion at the end of each round.

It is important to write the main points on metacards and pin them on the wall or pinboard for participants to track what has been discussed.

Tensions often arise when participants clash over individual views and preconceived opinions over a certain issue. The facilitator's task is to ensure non-violent communication and to keep the dialogue on track. As a basic rule, participants can agree to disagree over certain issues. However, such an agreement should be based on a clear understanding of the issues.

Dialogue participants usually prefer visual information over other formats of communication. Sometimes, what people say and mean are lost in the verbal exchange. There are various ways of visualizing verbal information with aids such as pinboards, whiteboards, meta cards, flip charts, and colored pens. Among the common techniques are the following:

- Word clouding or collecting a word or phrase and visualizing (writing) it on a board or flip chart with a distinctive size and color for emphasis.

- Bubble charting or collecting and writing keywords or short phrases inside bubbles with different sizes for emphasis.

- Segmented arrows to emphasize visions, strategies, or proposed solutions.

At the conclusion of the three sharing rounds, the facilitator prepares and presents the overall synthesis. The synthesis may be in the form of a summary table (see Table 8).

The facilitator then calls for a short break. During the break, co-facilitators may offer to facilitate a relaxation exercise (such as deep breathing or group massage).

Table 8. Dialogue Synthesis Template

Topic/Agenda

A. **Issue**
"What is the problem?
How and why did it happen?"

B. **Concerns**
"How has the issue impacted the participants and their communities?"

C. **Proposed Solutions**
1. What can be done by the participants themselves?
2. What needs to be raised to the local government unit and/or concerned agencies of the national government.

Step 6: Debriefing, Reflection, and Closing

There are three sub-activities in Step 6: (a) Debriefing; (b) Reflection; and (c) Closing. This is done while the participants remain in the circle. At this point, the facilitator calls on the support team to lead the activities. The co-facilitators bring in the list of expectations written on metacards during Step 1. Participants are asked to revisit their expectations as a reference for measuring the level of satisfaction from the dialogue.

Debriefing is a process of assessing the results, measuring the participants' level of satisfaction (or dissatisfaction), and identifying rooms for improvement. It is like asking the participant to assess how much of their expectations have been achieved. The exercise may be preceded by an introductory question: How do you feel, and what can be improved?

After that, participants share views on the following criteria and guide questions (see Table 9):

Table 9. Guide for Debriefing

Criteria	Guide Questions
Psychological satisfaction: emotional and mental satisfaction based on three basic psychological needs for personal well-being, namely: • Autonomy, or feel that your actions align with your interests and values. • Competence, or feeling that you have mastery over your environment; and, • Relatedness, or feeling that you are close and connected to others. (See: Milyavskaya et al., 2013)	• Were you mentally and emotionally prepared to deal with the other participants at the beginning of the dialogue? • Were you mentally and emotionally satisfied after the dialogue?
Procedural satisfaction: the feeling that the procedure clearly outlines the process' beginning, middle, and ending.	• Are you satisfied with the procedure? • Did the process flow or sequences clearly guide you on how to act or behave in relation to the overall purpose of the dialogue?
Substantive satisfaction: the feeling that the results are in line with your interests and values.	• Are you satisfied with the results, specifically, the issues, concerns, and proposed solutions?
Relational satisfaction refers to the third basic psychological need for well-being: one feels close or connected with others.	• How do you assess the quality of interpersonal relationships developed during the dialogue? • Do you feel more (or less) connected with the others?

Not everyone may share their assessment of satisfaction either due to time constraints or fatigue. To capture everyone's view, the facilitator asks the participants to evaluate the dialogue on a prepared rating scale with four guide questions:

Table 10. Guide for Rating of Satisfaction

Rate the following according to the level of personal satisfaction	Rating Scale (1 being the lowest and 5, the highest)				
	1 (Not Satisfied)	2 (Slightly Satisfied)	3 (Satisfied)	4 (Very Satisfied)	5 (Extremely Satisfied)
Psychological satisfaction					
Procedural satisfaction					
Substantive satisfaction					

Each participant will be given three (3) pins, one pin for each question. They will place only one pin in each row based on their assessment of personal satisfaction. The rating scale is based on the following:

1. Not Satisfied - the needs and expectations were not met.

2. Slightly Satisfied – some expectations and needs were not, but others were not.

3. Satisfied – the expectations and needs were met, but nothing more encouraged the participant to say "wow."

4. Very Satisfied – the expectations and needs were met with additional surprises that enhanced the experience.

5. Extremely Satisfied – the experience consistently exceeded expectations with many "wow" factors.

Measuring satisfaction is one thing. Reflecting on the results is another. Reflection is the process of stepping back, looking inside oneself, and reflecting on the process and results of the dialogue. The facilitator provides the following guide questions.

- **How did I do in terms of participation in the process?**
- **What is my important takeaway from the result?**
- **What will I communicate to my peers (other youth), family, and community?**
- **What vulnerability shall I give primary attention to?**
- **What capacity shall I focus on improving?**
- **How can I work with others to pursue the recommended solutions?**

The sharing should be free-flowing. If the facilitator notices a lull or long silence, they may randomly prompt a participant to re-start the sharing.

The reflection session culminates with a group activity called 'Dream Weaving.' In this activity, each participant visualizes their dream in life into an object, any object of their choice, on a 12x4-inch metacards. The chosen object is drawn repeatedly on the same card until the card is full. Once everyone has completed the drawing exercise, they will weave the cards into a mat to form a collective dream. A sample is shown in Fig. 5 (see Annex 4: Tools for Debriefing and Reflection).

The woven dreams symbolize the participants' commitment to work together in overcoming hazards that pose barriers to the achievement of their dreams.

Figure 5. Sample of woven dreams

Source: YFD of victims of violence, Talisayan, Misamis Oriental, 10 September 2021,

Closing

The same way it formally began, the dialogue should also be ended officially. However, this closure merely represents the culmination of the event. Participants are reminded that the dialogue is part of a cycle, and a round-up dialogue will be conducted somewhere at the end.

The dialogue ends with a closing message from one of the organizers. The facilitator may also opt for a more participatory closure by inviting a representative of the dialogue participants to make a closing statement. On some other occasions, a closing prayer is done as the final act of the event.
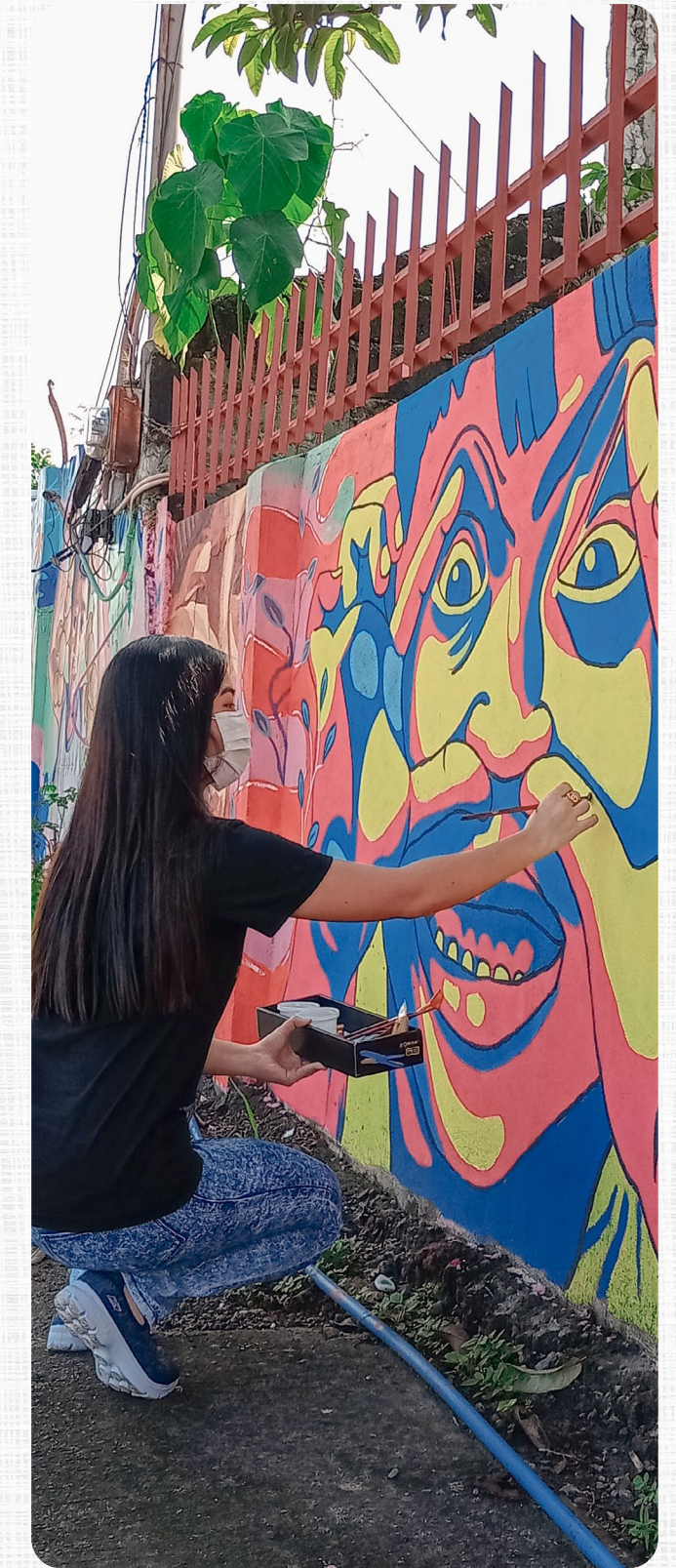
Who is a dialogue facilitator?

There is no single descriptor of a dialogue facilitator. The task has many attributes that describe the identity of a facilitator:

- ✓ A process manager.
- ✓ A smoothener who stimulates conversations.
- ✓ A tracker who keeps the dialogue on track.
- ✓ An intervener when things go wrong.

Certainly, a dialogue facilitator is not:

- ✗ A fountain of wisdom, resource person, or provider of knowledge or answers to all questions.
- ✗ A power figure who is at the center of the conversations.
- ✗ A receptacle where stories, opinions, concerns, and recommendations are thrown into.
- ✗ A physician or lawyer who gives prescriptions.

11. Tips for YFD Facilitators

The basic understanding of facilitation is about how the act makes things easy or easier. Imagine a traffic officer in the middle of a street crossing where cars are coming from four directions, all eager to cross. Smoothening the traffic flow is facilitation. But this is just an analogy to visualize what facilitation is all about.

What does it take to facilitate a dialogue?

There is a distinction between facilitation, moderation, and mediation. Forester (2009) proposes a delineation based on the conflict gradient: facilitation of conversations in a dialogue that contains a mix of agreements and disagreements; moderation when the conversation erupts into debates; and mediation and negotiation when the conflict reaches an impasse.

Facilitation is expertise, but this expertise is not about an all-knowing facilitation expert who can answer or provide solutions. Unlike training or similar group activities that focus on content and process to ensure broad participation or teaching where the focus is on content, facilitation focuses on process. The content aspect is integral to the interests and objectives of the dialogue participants. The facilitator merely facilitates the achievement of the objective through moderation of communication and interpersonal interaction.

The following characteristics typify facilitation in conflict contexts:

1 **Focus on the process.** The focus of the dialogue is not the facilitator (e.g., as the provider of information and knowledge). The focus is on the process and how the participants can sensitively and genuinely navigate the issues, concerns, interests, and relationships. Unlike mediation and negotiation, where the facilitator may stand out as a powerful figure, the dialogue facilitator is a guiding figure that provides greater latitude for the participants. Their impact on the conversation is indirect. They accompany the participants without necessarily becoming a leader who shows the way based on a prepared agenda.

2 It is about **managing social relationships** (Mitz, 2018). This is about providing the structure – setting the stage, taking care of a favorable seating arrangement, defining roles, outlining the procedure, and introducing ground rules. Notwithstanding the structure of the dialogue, the role of the facilitator is never scripted. Managing social relationships does not follow a script. The facilitator must be prepared to deal with matters beyond their prior knowledge and understanding. Persons overwhelmed by adverse experiences (such as IDPs) have limited bandwidth due to invisible trauma (World Bank, 2014). The facilitator needs to harness tools and techniques to encourage them to speak and express their feelings. This is doubly difficult in dialogues where participants come from different villages and are of diverse ethnicities and languages. Language has social meanings, and people interpret experience and opportunities through cultural lenses (ibid.). Some participants may be unduly misunderstood just because other participants are not familiar with the language's social meanings.

3 **Preparations and preworks.** In conflict contexts, the facilitator's work goes ahead of time (Susskind and Thomas-Lamar, 1999). Managing social relationships in a dialogue is better done if the facilitator does their homework ahead of time. This means undertaking analysis of contextual conditions (such as prevailing conflicts), mapping impacts, recognizing invisible trauma, and knowing the actors. Knowing the actors means holding pre-dialogue consultations to know their conditions and to socialize the dialogue process. Onsite preparation is also necessary. This includes identifying a suitable venue and determining appropriateness for the required seating arrangements.

Most of the facilitator's work happens before the actual dialogue.

4 **Keeping the dialogue on track** without disrupting the process (Scuka, 2005). This is often tricky, especially when one imagines a driver going off track and the facilitator is tempted to take the driver's seat. Keeping the dialogue on track (when it tends to go off track) means using tools and techniques to guide the participants without necessarily taking over the leadership of the process (see the following section on techniques and tools).

Appropriateness of the Physical Set-Up

The physical configuration of any group activity is as important as the objective of the activity not only because of the need for a comfortable space but also because of the symbolism of the geometry of the space. Paul Collins (2009) provides an elaborate description, meanings, and advantages and disadvantages of shapes of meeting room configurations. Most of us are already familiar with the following configurations:

1 **U-Shape.** This is a popular setup for workshops, focus group discussions, or teaching. Participants do not feel preferential seating because they have an equal view of the person in front (either the meeting leader, presiding officer, facilitator, or instructor). However, this is not appropriate for dialogue because the person in front becomes the center of attention.
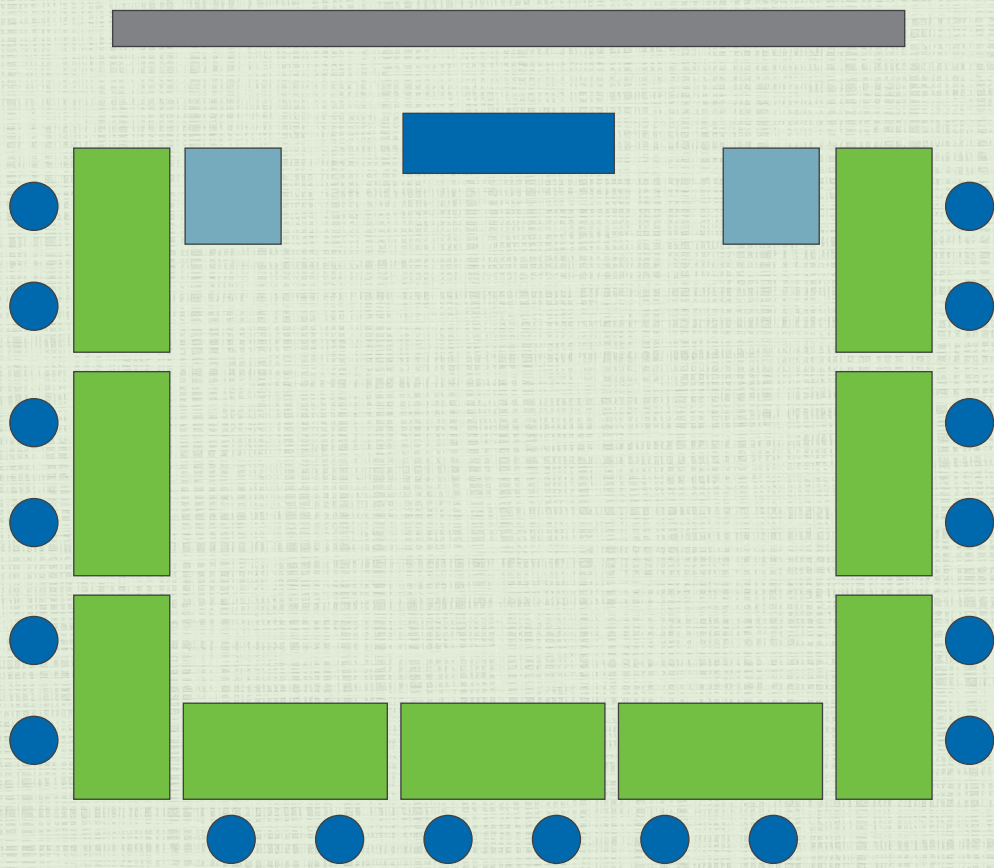
2 **Hollow Square.** This is a variation of the U-Shape arrangement and is sometimes called the 'closed U.' Participants are seated on three or all sides, but there is the emphasis on the side where the meeting leader sits. Again, this is not conducive to dialogue. The setup is rigid, and, on the horizontal or vertical planes, participants tend to sit confrontationally against one another.
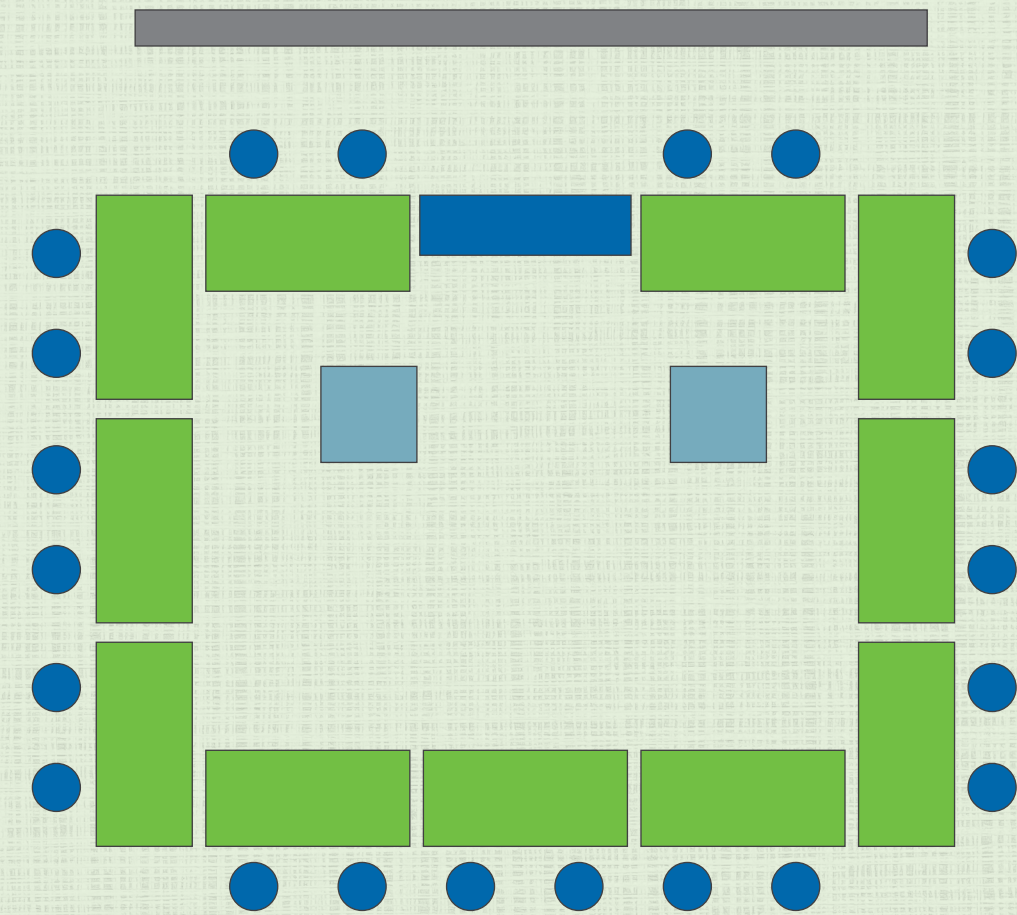
3 **Octagon.** This is a softer variation of the Hollow Square. With the multi-sided setup, participants have an equal amount of space. Still, the focus is on the power figure at the designated head of the configuration.
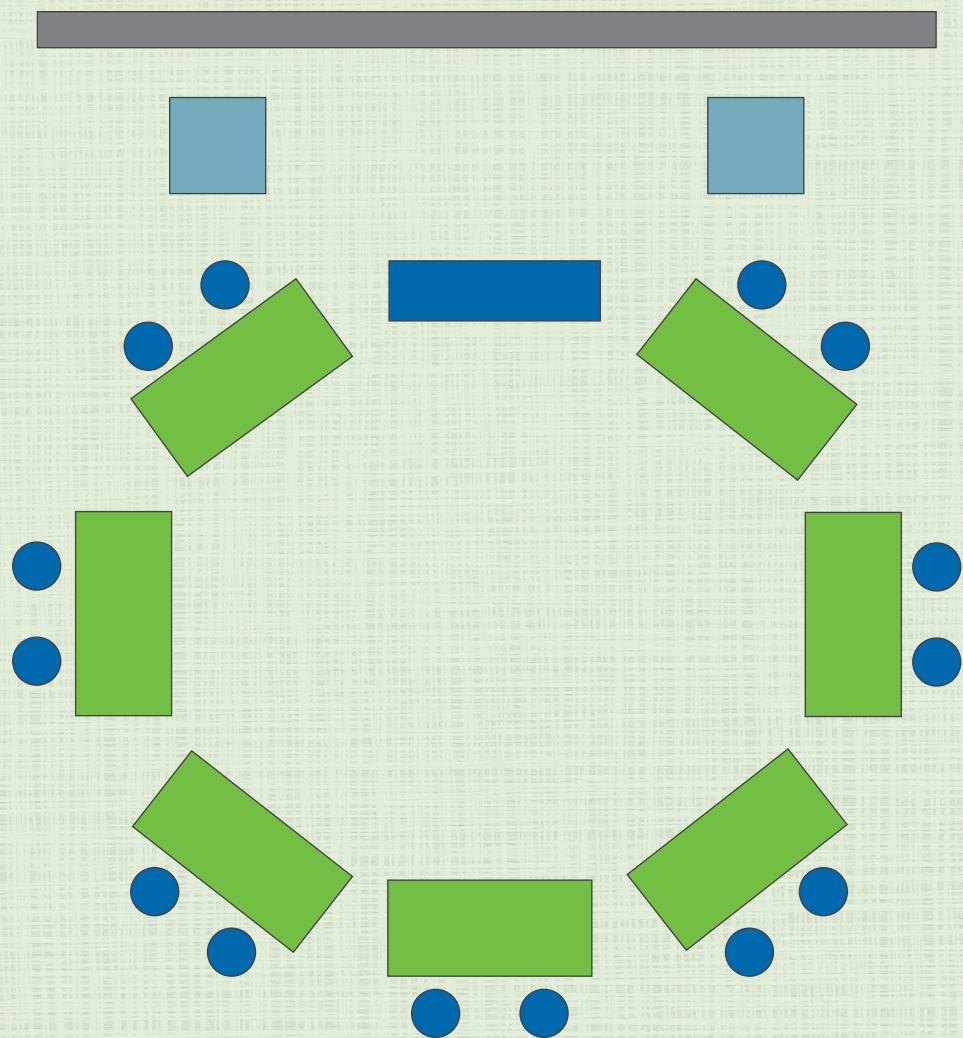
4 **Rectangular or Square Clusters of Team Tables.** This consists of separate tables scattered in a big room. This is ideal for break-out sessions when sub-groups do individual exercises. The setup also doubles up as a setup for lunch breaks. This setup is sometimes used in the YFD during the priming session when participants are divided into sub-groups.
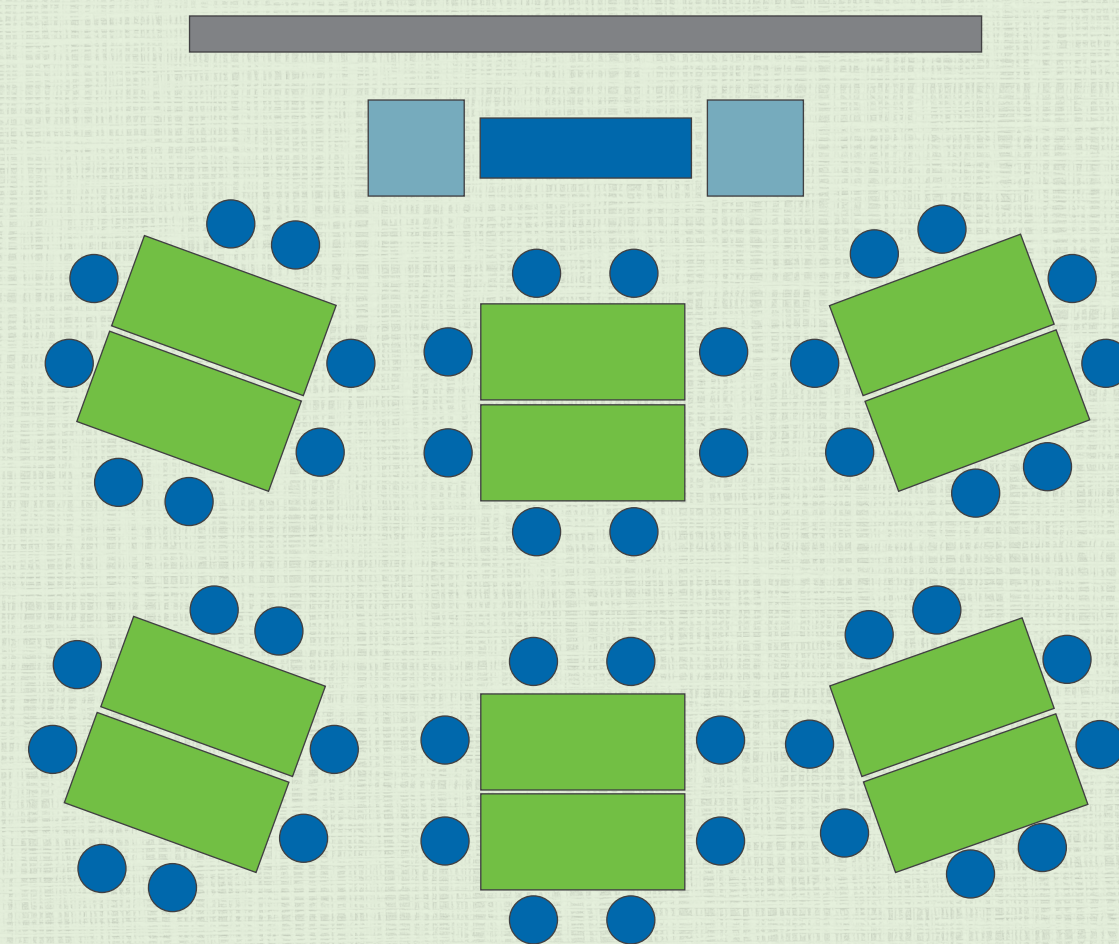
5 **Semi-Circle.** This is a variant of the U-Shape configuration but without the tables in front of the participants. This is popular for workshops, teaching, giving audio-visual presentations, or small group meetings where maximum participation is encouraged. The openness gives a sense of freedom. In the YFD, this configuration is used during the initial stages, such as giving the welcome message, preparing the creative introductions, and briefing on methodology and procedure.
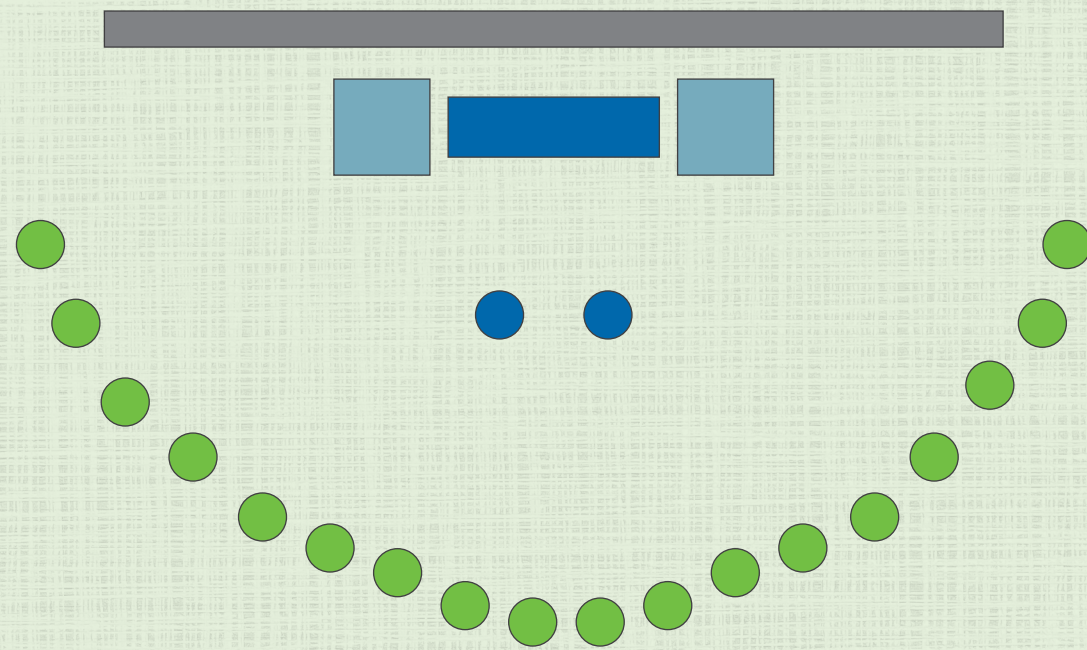
6 **Fishbowl (Double Circle).** This configuration is a variant of the circle where participants are seated in two concentric circles with enough space between them to distinguish those who are inside and outside the fishbowl. Unless a facilitator or meeting leader uses the space within the circle, participants will have a sense of freedom and ownership of the exercise. This setup is often used when there is not enough space to accommodate participants in one layer. The disadvantage is that participants outside the fishbowl may feel discriminated against by the preferential seating (i.e., who sits in the first and second layers). Hence, it is important to hold a briefing to explain the purpose of the seating arrangement. The setup is ideal when the activity design allows observers to sit around the principal participants. In rural villages of the Philippines, politicians use this setup for election campaign meetings with local leaders and followers.
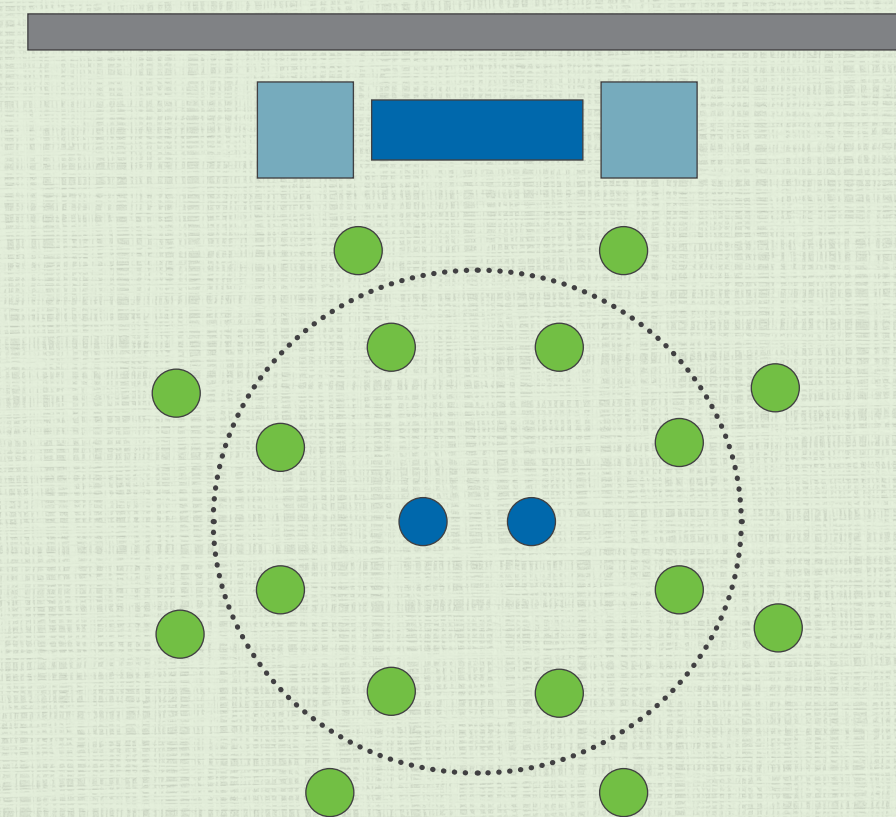
There are other physical setups like classroom, multi-tiered classroom (also known as the Harvard Style Classroom), auditorium seating, and boardroom seating. Like the other configurations, these are designed for specific contexts and purposes of meetings. The configuration gives prominence to a power figure such as the meeting leader, presiding officer, facilitator, or teacher.

The Circle: The Ideal and preferred set-up in YFD

The ideal and preferred configuration for YFD is the Circle. Participants are seated in a single-layer circle around a space. Unlike a roundtable, there is no table nor any other physical object that blocks the participant's view of one another.

Why circle? Because it has an intrinsic and symbolic value. It symbolizes peace and unity (Pease and Pease, 2006). It has also been used by prehistoric humans sitting around bonfires, by Native Americans praying, dancing, singing, or performing games in circles or in modern-day youth campfire talks to share stories (Falout, 2014). Forsyth (2006) describes the circle as a sociopetal (in contrast to sociofugal) space that encourages social interaction. These concepts are sociological adaptations of the imaginary concepts of centrifugal force and centripetal force that describe a linear motion along a curved path – the former fleeing from the center while the latter moving towards the center.

This configuration possesses the following advantages:

- The open space inside the circle gives a sense of fluidity and sense of freedom.

- The amount of space between participants avoids the compression effect and allows each participant to freely move their eyes around the circle.

- The circular arrangement gives no sense of preferential seating nor gives prominence to a permanent power figure.

- Unlike other configurations like squares, rectangles, or U-shapes, no hard edges put a participant in an awkward spot.

When preparing the seating arrangement, organizers usually leave a one-seat space anywhere in the circle. This space is reserved for the facilitator to come in and out as needed. It is occupied only during these circumstances:

- To initiate the sharing rounds, keeping a tab on the allotted time per participant and moderate the QandA to clarify points shared.

- To intervene when necessary to pause, address tensions, and keep the dialogue on track.

- To visually take note of the three major topics in the agenda, conclude and synthesize the discussion after each topic has been discussed.

- When all topics have been covered, and everyone has spoken, give an overall synthesis and conclude the discussion. They then call on the MHPSS support team to organize relaxation exercises before the next stage of the dialogue.

The non-permanent occupation of the facilitator's seat in the dialogue circle is based on the following considerations:

- Fundamentally, they are not a participant but a process facilitator.

- Their physical location within the circle should not be perceived as the seat of a powerful figure and center of attention.

- Outside of the conditions when the facilitator needs to intervene, participants should be encouraged to talk and speak with one another. Having a central figure within the circle can lead to a 'volleyball' tendency where participants talk to the facilitator rather than among themselves.

Tasks and Guideposts

The task of the facilitator is multi-faceted, and capacity requirements are interdisciplinary. In addition to process facilitation, the knowledge and skills include familiarity with the basic principles of conflict sensitivity, gender sensitivity, cultural sensitivity, religious awareness, and Do No Harm. The facilitator must also have good social skills, emotional quotient, and communication skills, especially non-violent communication.

It is hard to find ready-made facilitators. They must be someone who finds dialogue as a vocation or calling that gives a sense of purpose. Anyone, however, could be a facilitator. They may be your neighbor, a displaced person, a member of a host family, a health worker, social welfare staff, or staff of a non-governmental organization.

During project preparation, YOUCAP has been able to organize local groups in Iligan City, Talisayan (Misamis Oriental), Carmen (Agusan del Norte) and Gigaquit (Surigao del Norte). Except for Iligan City, the local core groups comprise previous core groups of CAPID and RLGM with the addition of Local Youth Development Officers (LYDOs), officers of the SKs, and officers of local youth organizations.

The following matrix outlines the task of dialogue facilitators and the guideposts that serve as markers on what and what not to do during the dialogue.

Table 11. Tasks and Guideposts for Dialogue Facilitators

Task	Description	Guideposts
Create favorable environment	• Hold pre-dialogue consultations and other pre-works. • Encourage and promote respect for diversity of opinions and views. • Give a preview of what happens during the dialogue. • Brief organizers on favorable locations and seating arrangements.	• Do your homework ahead: analyze context and conflicts, examine impacts, know the actors, and assume that some may carry invisible trauma. • Cooperate with local partners to organize the dialogue event. • Socialize the dialogue process (methodology, approach, and procedure). • Organize the team. • Ensure favorable seating arrangements.
Stimulate: get participants to talk and share their concerns, feelings, and interests	• Creative exercises to stimulate the brain and bring down inhibitions. • Visualize interests and aspirations. • Ensure equal and safe space.	• Adhere to the principle of no coercion and the right to "pass."

Task	Description	Guideposts
Keep dialogue on track	• Guide the conversation • Sensitively intervene when tensions arise from disagreements and heated debates. • Periodically summarize discussion points. • Discreetly offer options.	• Do not take over control of the process. • Do not provide answers and neither impose solutions. • Be prepared to moderate when the disagreements escalate or mediate when the conflict reaches an impasse. • Correct misconceptions but do so with respect.
Ensure safety and equality	• Facilitate agreement on ground rules. • Remind participants of confidentiality rules. • Provide equal time and space for all participants. • Be familiar with MHPSS and stabilization techniques for traumatized participants (or ensure that expert support is available).	• Avoid blaming any participant. • Constantly remind participants of the agreed procedure and rules.
Be a model	• In active listening • In building interpersonal relations • In adhering to the rules • In maintaining confidentiality and data privacy	• The simple guide is walking the talk and meaning what you say.

Task	Description	Guideposts
Be a partner	• Everyone in the room is equal. • Every person in the room has knowledge and expertise. • Promote cooperation and search for common ground.	• You are not a powerful figure but a guiding hand. Avoid being the center of attention. • Do not wear a hat that makes you a representative of a company or government agency. • You are not the only expert in the room. Participants have their own expertise. • Do not monopolize the conversation.

Techniques and Tools of Facilitation

As discussed earlier, the facilitator's task is to make things easy or easier. Their role is not to complicate simple solutions. Simplifying, however, is not equivalent to enhancing efficiency like one does in the quick and cost-effective production of outputs. Conversations do not move in a straight line and could be messy (Wheatley, 2009). The facilitator needs to let go of the impulse for efficiency by providing, but not imposing, quick solutions (ibid.).

When conversations become messy (such as during intense disagreements and heated debates) or when participants show impatience and weariness, the facilitator harnesses techniques, and tools

How to keep the dialogue on track

• **Conversational techniques** to help participants communicate effectively (Fisher and Ury, 1981). This can be as simple as asking the participant to slow down, lower the tone of voice, and speak more clearly. Another technique is to encourage other participants to ask clarificatory questions to help a participant explain themselves better. When the need arises, the facilitator can intervene by asking: "May we know how others think... Does anyone else have an idea? Can we give a chance for the others to share their views?"

• **Stabilization techniques for dealing with traumatized persons** to observe core rules for dealing with trauma and traumatized persons. A special training module is available for this purpose.

• **Tactical use of 'turns-of-phrase'** filters interactions and reorient the conflict to constructive ends (Leonard and Yorton, 2015). For example, suppose a participant emotionally and strongly puts forward an opinion or judgment. In that case, the facilitator can intervene by saying: "Yes, but... what if we step back and review the assumptions." This way, the debate can be sensitively reoriented towards a constructive route.

• **Probing.** This is to help the participant clarify their point and encourage others to ask questions. When needed, the facilitator can initiate the probe by asking questions like: "Can you say more on that? Can you paraphrase, or could you say it differently? Can we check whether this is consistent with available data?"

• **Periodic summaries.** Summing up or synthesizing what has transpired in the conversations is already part of the procedure. However, the facilitator can apply the tool if and when contradicting views and judgments accumulate and need to be sorted out. Applying this tool is a way of asking participants to slow down and pause to sort out issues. However, the facilitator must guard against possible misunderstanding that the synthesis had already concluded the conversation.

How to prevent and manage tensions

- **Relaxation Exercises.** Another effective tool for bringing the dialogue back on track during a heated conversation is pausing and relaxing. When this happens outside of the scheduled coffee break, the facilitator can harness creative tools that involve physical movements.

- **Invoke Do No Harm, conflict sensitivity, and non-violent communication.** It is important to consider that language is the vehicle to express beliefs and practices (Karmsch and Boner, 2010). Dialogue participants may be diverse and speak different languages. The views expressed in language depend on and reflect the culture passed on from the past and passed on to the future generation (Gillanders and Castro, 2011). Some may articulate views and feelings non-verbally or through facial expression, body movement, or eye movement. The facilitator should remind participants to avoid hurtful language and/or non-verbal communication and be sensitive to one another's culture, gender, and feelings.

- **Pause and reiterate agreed ground rules.** This reminds the participants of what has been agreed upon during the briefing (Step 2). If needed, call for a break to cool heads down.

Adapting to Situations of Pandemics

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a tremendous impact on public health, personal safety, the economy, social relations, and the financial resources of the government. To control the spread of the virus, the government has imposed restrictions on movement and social and economic activities since March 2020. GIZ has also implemented policies and guidelines related to the movement of staff and consultants and the conduct of field activities, among others. The Philippines' Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF) provides regular guidance on COVID-19 classifications of regions, provinces, cities, and municipalities and the corresponding restrictions related to travel and meetings, among others.
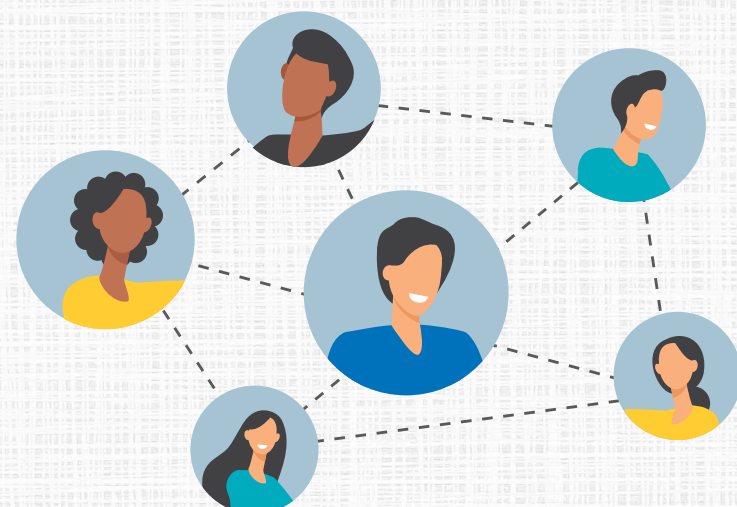
Pandemic-related restrictions are calibrated according to trends (rise or decline in infection rate), reproduction number, and service capacity of COVID-19 hospitals. More recently, the vaccination rate has been added as a criterion for Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) calibration. The periodic calibration results in uncertain highs and lows imposed on specific areas. This

uncertainty affects the planning and conduct of face-to-face activities.

A fundamental characteristic of dialogue is direct communication. In high-context cultures, direct communication includes verbal and non-verbal communication. Essentially, this requires in-person or face-to-face communication. This form of communication is even more required when discussing sensitive issues such as violence and its impact.

The easy way out is to shift to virtual platforms. However, GIZ experience in Caraga and Region 10 has shown that virtual platforms cannot replace face-to-face dialogues, especially in the context of conflicts and violence. Secondly, the availability of gadgets (such as mobile phones, modem routers, and laptops) and access to the internet are more challenging in rural areas than in town centers. The shift to purely virtual platforms might have the unintended effect of excluding those with no internet access.

The challenge, therefore, is how to sustain face-to-face dialogues under conditions of restricted movement and the number of participants in group activities. In the case of YOUCAP YFDs, the best approach was to locate virtual platforms as a support measure to develop local capacities for dialogue.

In real terms, virtual platforms can be used to train local facilitators. This training includes knowledge, skills, and techniques in facilitating dialogue and competencies in preparing and organizing dialogue events. With the availability of local capacities, face-to-face dialogues with small groups can be self-organized – in line with existing regulations to restrict movements – by the youth and conducted in their home communities.

A group of 3-5 trained local facilitators would be sufficient to kick-off (or continue) focused dialogues. During practice and experience, they should expand their ranks from LGU staff, youth organizations, and other community-based organizations or even from among the dialogue participants.

12. Learning from Experience

The lessons that inform the YFD are based on the dialogue experience of CAPID and RLGM. The YOUCAP-supported YFDs have reaffirmed these lessons.

a) **Pre-works.** This term does not explicitly appear in the literature on dialogue and mediation. In the CAPID, RLGM, and YOUCAP experience, pre-works pertain to the preparatory activities necessary to create a favorable dialogue environment. With pre-works, dialogue organizers and facilitators can better understand the context, gain prior knowledge of dialogue participants, and socialize the dialogue methodology and procedure to induce demand. Pre-dialogue consultations created conditions for socializing the RSD and previewing the dialogue process.

b) **Role of MHPSS.** Dialogue is not just a technique or procedure designed to reach agreements. It is a transformative process that necessitates active ownership of the participants. In the context of conflict-induced hazards and violence, the application of the approach considers the unmapped invisible trauma affecting the attitude and behavior of affected youth. The dialogue process

itself needs to integrate MHPSS.

c) **Priming.** This step in the dialogue does not commonly exist in dialogue processes. CAPID introduced this step as an immediate prequel to agenda-setting. This is a critical step in stimulating participants to trust one another – warming up, bringing down inhibitions, articulating ideas, and pouring out feelings. This is also an important step in sorting out the natural accumulation of diverse issues, concerns, interests, and aspirations. The effectiveness has been reaffirmed in the YOUCAP-supported YFDs with additional learnings on how to deal with traumatized participants.

d) **Formation of Core Groups.** This was an intended strategy for dialogue promotion. During implementation, the core groups evolved into informal and voluntary circles of interlocutors between dialogue organizers, local authorities, and communities with broader functions. Core group members became human multipliers for the dissemination of ideas, the establishment of links, and the development of local capacities. As initial targets for capacity development activities, the core groups became the source of local
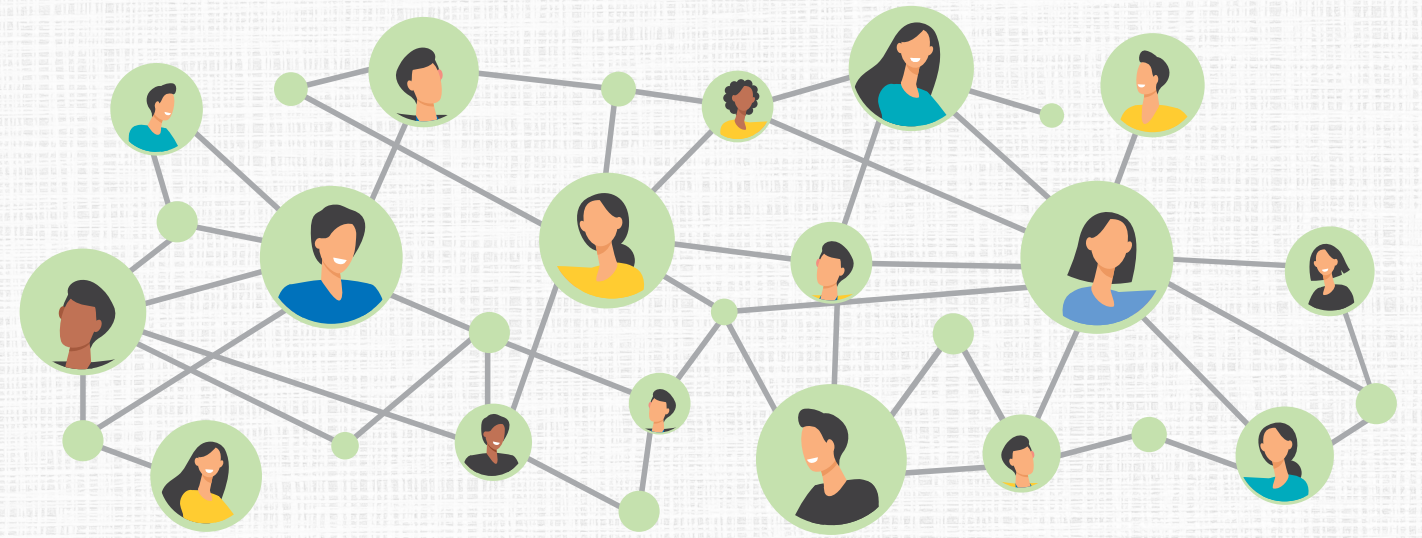
dialogue facilitators and MHPSS practitioners.

e) **Dialogue Promotion-Capacity Development Combination.** Promoting YFDs through the socialization of the concept and methodology, training local facilitators, and pilot-testing the dialogues has a capacity development function. It builds the individual capacities of youth facilitators and dialogue participants, but it also encourages government, youth organizations, and youth-serving NGOs to integrate dialoguing as part of organizational culture. In due time, it becomes a norm and a manifestation of institutional capacity.

f) **Focusing.** The YVCA workshops' inclusivity served to examine conflict-induced hazards and violence, identify the most vulnerable youth groups, and determine levels of vulnerability and capacity. The results indicated the need for the vulnerable youth to deep dive into the issues themselves. The YFD became a platform for each vulnerable youth group to deep dive, deepen understanding of the issues, and explore solutions.

The "Whys" of Success

Why did vulnerable youth come to the dialogue table? What results did they expect? What have been the tangible impacts that magnetized their attention?

In the YOUCAP experience, the following factors could be observed:

A. **Localized steering.** YOUCAP and LGU partners engaged and formed task teams to steer dialogue processes. These teams comprised local core groups and heads of local government agencies. The task teams got informal political mandates from local chief executives (LCEs) and coordinated with the SKs and local youth development council members.

B. **Tangibility of results.** The dialogues were not just conversations. They were structured and results-oriented conversations. The solutions mapped out from the dialogues were presented to local authorities and national government agencies during the round-up dialogues. During the round-up dialogues, the youth interacted with government actors to secure commitments of support. This comes parallel to the integration of the YVCA results to the LYDP.

C. **Empowering element of the approach.** Global experience in post-conflict disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) suggest that it is hard to find processes that young people inform; it is even harder to find processes informed by girls; usually, mothers are stigmatized in post-conflict situations (World Bank 2014). The YFDs served as a platform for youth-led and gender-equal processes of collectivizing issues and concerns, as well as exploring doable solutions.

D. **Transformative element.** Although the long-term solutions to the impacts of conflict-induced hazards and violence are still on the horizon, doable solutions are already informing the enhancement of the LYDPs, as well as relevant youth-oriented programs of the LGU and the national government. Process-wise, the YFDs helped transform the quality of the relationship between vulnerable youth, local authorities, and national government agencies.

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Annexes

Annex 1: Tools for the Meet and Greet

Blind Drawing

This is a creative exercise for a pair of participants to get comfortable with one another. It is done in five simple steps:

1 Participants stand up. Each is given a bond paper, cardboard, and marker pen.

2 Each participant chooses a partner.

3 Partner A draws the face of B, and Partner B draws the face of A.

4 The partners show each other's drawings and exchange notes about who they are and what they do.

5 When the partners have warmed it up, they begin to exchange views and find a common understanding of concepts such as peace, conflict, dialogue, displacement, and others.

Passing the Ball

This is a creative exercise of encouraging spontaneity in how a person introduces themself to the group. It is done in six simple steps:

1 While standing, the facilitator and participants form a circle.

2 A co-facilitator distributes colored pins and asks each participant to choose at least three pins of different colors. The facilitator also picks three pins of different colors. The participants do not yet know what the pins are all about.

3 The facilitator briefs the participants on the purpose and procedure. They then explain that each color of the pin represents a question to be answered.

For example:
Green: What is your name and age?
Blue: What is your favorite color and why?
Red: What is your favorite movie?
Yellow: What is your goal in life?

4 Orange: What and when was the happiest moment in your life?

5 While holding the ball, the facilitator shows the pins they picked and answers the questions. They then pass the ball to another person in the circle at random.

6 The ball is passed around until everyone has spoken.

Ahum-Aha

This exercise is about synchronizing or coordinating body movement based on a vocalized signal from a leader. There are four types of signal and corresponding body movement.

Ahum – step to the left
Aha – step to the right
**Yes – step forward**
No – step backward

The number of steps depends on how many times the word is uttered. The leader makes different combinations and numbers of utterances to make the exercise more interesting. The first person who makes a mistake becomes the new leader.

This is done in six simple steps:
1. Form a circle.
2. The facilitator briefs the participants on the procedure, the words and corresponding body movements, and the rule that the person who makes a mistake becomes the new leader.
3. The facilitator acts as the first leader and shows the way.
4. A volunteer takes the lead until someone makes a mistake and becomes the new leader.
5. The exercise ends when the group movement has been synchronized, and no one makes a mistake.
6. In the conclusion, the facilitator asks the participants how they feel about the exercise

Yes

No
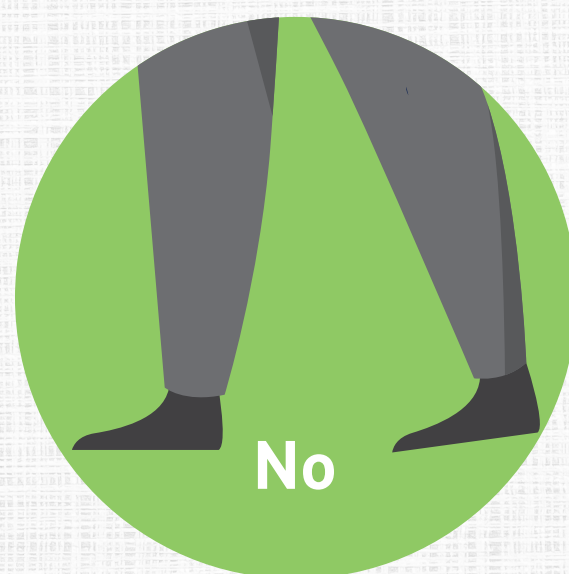
Mirroring

Mirroring is designed to consciously imitate the action, speech, or attitude. This exercise is about leading or taking responsibility (saluhan), sensing (pakiramdaman), and trust (tiwala). Eye contact is crucial to this exercise. Eye contact is important for the leader to gain trust (tiwala) that the other will follow. Eye contact is important for the other team member in sensing (pakiramdam) what the other is about to do/act. The action is to be followed by any of the following: gesture, movement of hands and feet, facial expression, speech pattern, the sound of the voice, or any other action.

The exercise will be conducted in four rounds: (a) the first round within the pair, with one member acting as the leader; (b) second round, still within the pair but with a change of leadership; (c) third round, two pairs combined into a new group, and (d), fourth round, a much bigger group comprising several groups.

First round: Participants form into pairs of two persons each. Each team looks into each other's eyes. One pair is assigned to take the lead in making a body movement that the other member of the pair must follow. The lead person makes different kinds of movement until the other can perfectly mirror their movement.

Second round: Participants remain in the same pair, but the lead person changes. Like the first round, the lead person makes different kinds of body movements for the other team to follow until the latter perfectly mirrors the movement of the lead person.

Third round: Two pairs combine to form one group.
1. The group members form a closed polygon in the shape of a diamond. They designate a lead person.
2. The lead person makes a body movement to be followed by the other members of the group.
3. The leader person, however, can decide to transfer the leadership

to another person on their left. The rule is that if they look at the person either on their right or left, that person takes the lead.

4. The exercise continues until each member has taken the lead.

Fourth round: All groups combine to form one big group. They imagine that they are sub-groups within one big community.

1. The big group designates a lead person.
2. Each sub-group is assigned a space with a particular function within the community. For example, sub-group 1 is home, sub-group 2 is a school, sub-group 3 is a farm, sub-group 4 is an evacuation center, and so on.

3. The leader then gives the instruction for all sub-groups to simultaneously execute actions pertinent or appropriate to the function or space they are assigned.
4. The exercise ends with a quick reflection on what the exercise means to the individual and the group.

Annex 2: Tools for the Priming

Storytelling

Storytelling is a flexible data collection tool. In a conventional interview, the researcher comes in with a list of questions and extracts information from the subject (informant). The informant drives the process in storytelling, and the researcher documents the narrative. The process comes in different forms and platforms. Stories can be visualized using video, dance, theatre play, photo exhibits, sketches, maps, drawings, or storyboards.

In indigenous people's communities, you will not find media platforms that you usually find in urban areas. But the community has a way of sharing narratives of individuals, families, and groups that do not require a television set, stage, or digital projector. It would be best if you appreciated the community's way of storytelling under whatever circumstances.

What is storytelling?

- It is a tool for gathering narratives loaded with information.
- It is unstructured; flexible; informal.
- It explores the way people interpret the world around them and their place within it. This is something difficult to understand by other means (such as a survey or a regular interview).
- It captures the participant's self-expression (Sanders, 2000).
- It is a precursor to more formal and structured methods (Harrington and Mickelson, 2009).
- It can be the story of a group for further discussion and analysis (Wilkins, 2004).
- It includes stories of the past and future aspirations that are told in the present time.

The key to storytelling is about how the storyteller views the world around them and their location within this context. It is not about how the researcher understands the world of indigenous peoples from their lens and their priority interests as written in the interview guide. There is no survey questionnaire, no interview guide in storytelling. You do not intimidate the storyteller with a long list of questions. You are there to listen, not to ask and extract information. Once you display your

questionnaire, the storyteller might tell you what you want to know. When that happens, the story is no longer their story but a story that is shaped by your line of questioning.

Cultural awareness and sensitivity are required to apply storytelling into indigenous people's communities. Indigenous peoples have their way of narrating the story. It is called Dasang among the Higaonons and Tinotuyay among the Manobo. These are oral renditions that are usually preceded

by a ritual. Real-life stories have no clear beginning and no clear ending. The story unfolds according to the life-and-death cycle of an individual but does not necessarily end in the death of one individual. The life of an IP individual is connected to the community. The story is lived and shared by the succeeding generations.

In the YFD, storytelling is used during the discussion on the conflict context and youth experiences in dealing with conflict-induced hazards, such as how

they coped with or adapted to the hazards. The process is divided into steps: first, the preparation; second, the actual conduct – the story-building process; and third, synthesizing and linking of information from individual and group stories to information generated from other sub-groups during the breakout sessions.

Preparation

1. Identify the domain of the story – the topic/s of interest. Do not plan or attempt to cover all domains (demographic, economic, physical, political, social) from one storyteller or a group of storytellers in one storytelling session. Take note that you have other tools.

2. Identify individuals and groups who have stories to tell. In ethnically diverse communities, make sure you hear the story from different perspectives. Reliance on a single story may harm.

3. Proceed to Step 2.

Step 2

Story Building

1. Give an overview of the domain of interest: the conflict context and the conflict-induced hazard experienced by the participant.

2. Let the storyteller decide where and how to begin the story.

3. Take a mental note of the narrations. You may have permission to take notes or record the narration on an audio recorder in some circumstances.

4. From time to time, guide them back to the topic of interest. But don't impose if they prefer not to talk about a certain topic. Mediate the story by showing maps, photographs, or data from other sources.

5. At the end of the conversation, collect your thoughts and organize what you heard.

Step 3

Synthesizing

This activity is done after collecting the individual stories. The idea is for the participants to see their own stories and come up with a common group story.

1. Share what you have heard from them (from the individual storytellers and from the group).

2. On a manila sheet, ask participants to put a timeline and share important events for each period. You can also use a map to pinpoint locations and dates of events.

3. Let participants analyze the timeline and map and identify common issues and concerns.

4. Close the session with a short reflection.

Seasonal Calendar

This tool is a visual method for illustrating the distribution of changing phenomena across a timeline (calendar). Seasonality pertains to the occurrence of a phenomenon (for example, harvesting) at fixed points in the calendar and similar occurrences of other phenomena in other points of the calendar.

In North America and Europe, people adjust, and certain types of activities are reshaped owing to the impacts of autumn, winter, spring, and summer. In the Philippines, people adjust to climatic changes and weather patterns.

In the YVCA, a seasonal calendar is a tool for understanding how youth respond to or cope with the seasonality of conflict-induced hazards. For example: what sort of conflicts arise during the dry season when water is scarce, what period of the year when armed conflicts escalate, and affected communities are forcibly displaced. Although this data can also be generated from interviews or focus group discussions, the seasonal calendar presents a

unique platform for the youth to visualize those variable phenomena affecting their lives.

It is important to note that some seasonal phenomena recur at fixed points in time (e.g., fiestas, religious festivals). In contrast, other phenomena (such as dry season and wet season) may no longer recur at exact points in the calendar as they used to. The seasonal calendar exercise allows you to dig deeper into understanding the differential impacts of seasonality on the role, rights, and welfare of youth and the differential impacts of conflict-induced hazards according to gender, ethnicity, religious affiliation, physical disadvantage, or geographic isolation.

Procedure

1 Participants' introduction. Give time for participants to know one another.

2 Briefing. Take time to explain the purpose of the exercise and the basis of the selection of participants.

3 Agenda-setting. Reconfirm with the participants whether they are comfortable about the topic of conflict-induced hazards.

4 Prepare the calendar. There are many ways you can sketch the calendar on the ground or have it prepared beforehand on large manila sheets. As a facilitator, make sure the note-taker or documenter can copy the calendar exactly on small pieces of paper or take photographs.

5 Collectively produce the seasonal calendar. As a reference, ask participants to name the main seasons of the year (for example, planting season, harvest season, rainy season, dry season, enrollment, school semester, school summer breaks, Christmas breaks, epidemics, pandemics, etc.).

6 Ask participants to indicate which types of conflict-induced hazards occur at which season.

7 Ask participants to visualize highs and lows or emphasize the degree of intensity of each hazard. Participants can use a number of possible symbols such as numbers or checkmarks (e.g., 5 check marks to indicate high intensity, 1 for very low intensity, etc.). If the calendar is sketched on the ground, participants can use stones, seeds, dry leaves, twigs, or branches, or sticks to indicate the degree of abundance or scarcity.

8 Analyze. Ask participants to examine the relationships of the individual phenomenon. The easy way to start is to pair the phenomena that occur simultaneously in the calendar, then let them ask the questions and find the answers. For examples:

• Why do conflicts escalate during droughts?
• Why do insurgents come to the village during the harvest season?
• Why is domestic violence high during enrollment periods?
• Who are the most vulnerable?

9 Synthesize. Group together with the different types of hazards occurring in each season, then summarize all the possible explanations for their occurrence and the impacts on the youth.

10 Concluding the activity. Reflect on the process (strength, weakness, potential) and the implications of the information collected on the most vulnerable youth groups.

Tableau

This creative exercise stimulates inter-personal communication and coordination within a group. This is done in seven simple steps:

1 Divide participants into groups. The smallest group should have at least three (3) members. Be flexible. If the total number of participants is 15, you may create 3 to 4 groups. Each group is given a number.

2 Each group finds a space within the room (e.g., corner, center) with enough room for movement.

3 The group (for example, Group A) agrees on what story to tell and what frozen image (tableau) to show. For example, the story is about a young adult stopping schooling due to displacement from armed conflict.

4 When Group A is finished, Group B and C will interpret the action and its story.

5 Group A responds and explains the frozen action (tableau) and its story.

6 Once all groups have created and presented their works, the facilitator encourages them to deepen the discussion by sharing the backstory (or what happened before the action) and the subsequent story (or what happened after the action).

7 After this exercise, the same group (or a reorganized group) shares experiences in conflict-induced displacement and other topics.

Historical Timeline

Individual experiences are unique, but they often happen in common historical contexts. The best way to better understand individual experiences is to put a historical context to each event. This is done by transposing significant events in the individual stories to a common historical timeline.

After the storytelling, the historical timeline is best used to put together significant events in the stories on a common timeline. The facilitator encourages the participants to be spontaneous – beginning and ending the story the way they choose.

This is done in six simple steps:

1 Prepare a matrix of the historical timeline on a large manila sheet (see the following slide). You can place the sheet on a wall or the floor in the middle of the circle where the participants are seated.

2 Brief participants on the procedure.

3 Participants write significant elements of the individual stories on metacards (see column 1 of the matrix).

4 Participants post the metacards on the applicable columns and rows of the matrix.

5 Participants discuss similarities and differences of the experience, impacts, ways of coping and external support.

6 Facilitator synthesizes the results.

Sample Historical Timeline Matrix

Significant elements of the story	2000-2005	2006-2010	2011-2015	2016-2020	2021-
Incidence of conflicts and violence					
Effects on the person					
Ways of coping					
Support from family					
Support from peers					
Support from government					
Support from non-governmental organizations					

Cartogram

While the **Historical Timeline** provides a temporal dimension to the shared experiences, the cartogram is designed to provide a spatial dimension. The tool is similar to spot mapping, specifically, overlaying important events and impacts to specific locations (names of communities such as barangays or sitios) on the map.

The cartogram is a good supplement to the historical timeline. It can be done quickly after the group has finished completing the historical timeline. This is done in five simple steps:

1 Participants draw a simple map indicating names and locations of communities cited in the historical timeline.

2 On metacards, they write the following: significant events, year/period, impacts, ways of coping, external support.

3 Participants highlight the community where the event happened or had been affected by the event by putting a circle on the location on the map.

4 Participants overlay the metacards on the affected communities. Participants can also show the dynamism of the cartogram by placing arrows to indicate the direction of movement (e.g., the direction of movement to avoid harm or move to an evacuation center).

5 In the plenary, the group shares the cartogram with the historical timeline.

Techniques in Dealing with Traumatized Participants

Traumatized persons are those who experience excessive physical arousal that does not allow the brain to turn into a stable autobiographical experience. The response is a lingering reaction to terrible events of the past. Anything associated with the terrible incident triggers unpredictable psychological and physiological reactions. In the experience of YOUCAP-supported YVCAs and YFDs, facilitators encountered difficulties in dealing with unpredictable reactions such as weeping, being physically present but mentally and emotionally detached from the group, or simply refusing to talk.

A traumatized person in the dialogue group must get the assurance of support and a sense of security. First, facilitators, co-facilitators, and other participants need to adopt the following basic rules:

- ☑ Be calm.
- ☑ Guarantee safety regarding physiological well-being and physical and psychological integrity.
- ☑ Respect the "stop signal" from the traumatized person.
- ☑ Do not ask for trauma details.
- ☑ Focus on the survival resources of the person and then offer everyday resources that make daily life possible and more manageable.

Some Techniques

When the unpredictable reaction of the traumatized person occurs, the facilitator can take the following steps:

1 Invite the person to breathe deeply, in and out, at 5-second intervals, to establish heart coherence.

2 Offer to drink water or coffee together.

3 Encourage the person to orient their body awareness here and now. The person might already be disoriented, and they need to be assured that they are in a safe place.

4 Let the person rest (deep breathing, consciously yawning, placing one hand on the forehead and the other on the back of the head slightly above the neck, placing one hand on the stomach and the other tapping on the breastbone twelve times).

5 Look at the person's resources for survival. In the YOUCAP-supported YVCAs and YFDs, these resources – such as the ability to sing, dance, or draw – were subsequently volunteered by the traumatized persons themselves.

6 If the person is not ready to talk or share, encourage the person to build a virtual container or safety box to pack and park all unpleasant memories and triggers. He/she opens the box only when they are ready to work on them.

7 Install a safe space for a specific group of persons if needed and ask others to leave the room.

8 Create a new space when the person perceives that the previous space is no longer safe. This could be as simple as moving to another room or a corner in the garden outdoors where the person can relax.

The above mentioned techniques are means of coping and avoiding harm. It is important to recognize that the dialogue is not a therapy session. It is just some kind of psychological first aid demanded by the situation. The traumatized person will need more appropriate interventions outside the dialogue.

Annex 3: Tools for Agenda Setting

Bubble Chart

The **Bubble Chart** is a simple tool for sorting and determining priorities. The YVCA is used to determine the top five priority hazards, top five most vulnerable youth groups, top five priority vulnerabilities, and top-five priority capacities. The tool is used after the thematic discussions and when the next step is to determine the priorities.

As a guide for participants to determine their choice, three bubble charts are prepared: small, medium, and large. The small bubble represents low priority, the medium bubble represents medium priority, and the large bubble represents high priority.

Sample Bubble Chart

Large Bubble (High Priority)

Medium Bubble (Medium Priority)

Small Bubble (Low Priority)
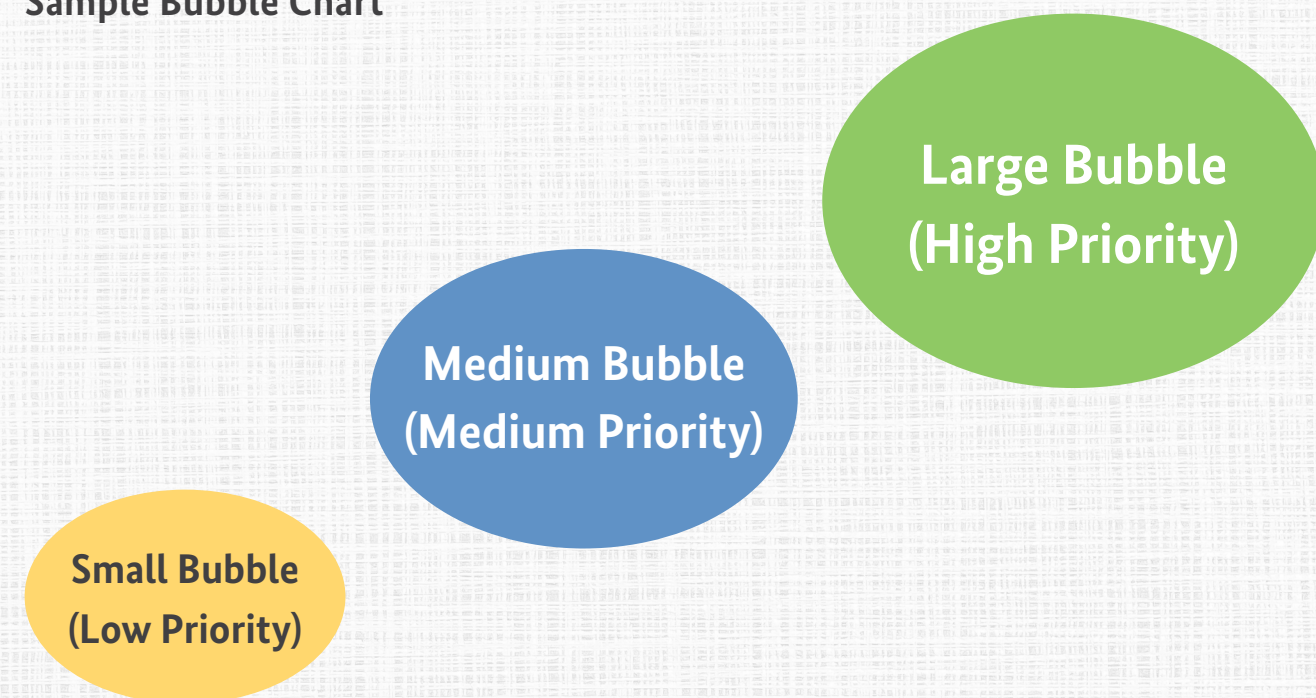
Procedure

1 Brief participants on the purpose and procedure.

2 Draw three bubbles on a manila sheet: small, medium, and large.

3 Select a conflict-induced hazard and the most vulnerable group.

4 Ask participants to write all the identified vulnerabilities (or capacities) on metacards.

5 Ask participants to self-determine which vulnerabilities (or capacities) should belong to which size of the bubble and place them on the chosen size of the bubble.

6 After all the hazards are placed on specific bubbles, ask participants to explain their choice/s. Then ask participants to reaffirm their choices.

7 Remove all metacards in the small and medium-sized bubbles.

8 If the metacards (vulnerabilities or capacities) are more than five, repeat the exercise or use another tool such as pairwise ranking until only five vulnerabilities (or capacities) are chosen as a priority.

9 Once the five vulnerabilities (or capacities) are chosen, ask participants to review and analyze their choice. Make sure that the choice is consensual or that no one feels excluded.

10 Reflect on the result.

Pairwise Ranking

The **Pairwise Ranking** is a tool for scaling down choices or preferences from a big number to a smaller and more manageable number. If the youth, for example, have identified five important priorities and the challenge is to identify only three topmost priorities, the course of action is to compare each option with another to find out what is more important; then continue testing until each option has been compared with another. The scaled-down and most important options are then ranked based on the number of times an option has been selected compared with another.

This tool can be used as an alternative to the Bubble Chart and when the sorted priorities are more than five. For example, there are seven priority vulnerabilities to armed conflict: (1) recruitment to the insurgency; (2) dropping out of school; (3) forced displacement; (4) loss of belongings; and (5) getting killed.

The **first step** is to create a matrix using the options as headings of both rows and columns. The options are numbered 1 to 5. The numbered options in the rows and columns are intended for pairing and comparing which one is better than the other. Hence, it is important to blacken the cell that cannot be compared. For example, if Row 1 and Column 1 intersect, the cell is therefore blackened because the two are the same and cannot be compared.

Sample Step 1

Option	Option					Score	Rank
	1. Recruitment	2. Dropout	3. Displacement	4. Loss of belongings	5. Getting killed		
1. Recruitment							
2. Dropout							
3. Displacement							
4. Loss of belongings							
5. Getting killed							

The **second step** is to compare and choose one or the other. In our example below:

- Dropout (option 2) is chosen over recruitment (Option 1)
- Recruitment (option 1) is chosen over displacement (option 3)
- Recruitment (option 1) is chosen over the loss of belongings (option 4)
- Recruitment (Option 1) is chosen over getting killed (option 5)
- Dropout (option 2) is chosen over displacement (option 3)
- Dropout (option 2) is chosen over the loss of belongings (option 4)
- Dropout (option 2) is chosen over getting killed (option 5)
- Displacement (option 3) is chosen over the loss of belongings (option 4)
- Displacement (option 3) is chosen over getting killed (option 5)
- Loss of belongings (option 4) is chosen over getting killed (option 5)

The **third step** is to add up the number of times an option has been chosen. In our example:

- Recruitment (Option 1) has been chosen three (3) times
- Dropout (Option 2) has been chosen four (4) times
- Displacement (option 3) has been chosen two (2) times; and,
- Loss of belongings (option 4) has been chosen once

In our score sheet, Option 2 (Dropout) has the highest score of 4, while recruitment (option 1) gets the second-highest score of 3.

Sample Step 2

Option	Option					Score	Rank
	1. Recruitment	2. Dropout	3. Displacement	4. Loss of belongings	5. Getting killed		
1. Recruitment		2	1	1	1		
2. Dropout			2	2	2		
3. Displacement				3	3		
4. Loss of belongings					4		
5. Getting killed							

Sample Step 3

Option	Option					Score	Rank
	1. Recruitment	2. Dropout	3. Displacement	4. Loss of belongings	5. Getting killed		
1. Recruitment		2	1	1	1	3	
2. Dropout			2	2	2	4	
3. Displacement				3	3	2	
4. Loss of belongings					4	1	
5. Getting killed							

The **fourth step** is to rank the options. The option with the highest score is ranked #1 and so forth. In our example, the top priority option is Option 2 (Dropout), the 2nd priority option is recruitment to the insurgency, and the third is forced displacement.

The **final step** is to analyze the result and discuss the implications: first, how the youth can deal with the priority vulnerabilities using their inherent resources and capacities; second, how these priorities will be recognized and integrated into the Local Youth Development Plan (LYDP).

Sample Step 4

Option	Option					Score	Rank
	1. Recruitment	2. Dropout	3. Displacement	4. Loss of belongings	5. Getting killed		
1. Recruitment		2	1	1	1	3	2
2. Dropout			2	2	2	4	1
3. Displacement				3	3	2	3
4. Loss of belongings					4	1	4
5. Getting killed							

Annex 4: Dream Weaving - Tool for the Reflection Session

Dream Weaving is a process connecting an individual's dream to those of other dream weavers. It is a way of creating conditions for a person to sense that they are surrounded by other persons who also are hoping to achieve their dreams. The notion of weaving symbolizes collectiveness the mutual commitment to work together in dealing with hazards that pose barriers to the dreams.

This exercise is done in eight simple steps after the sharing of reflections:

1 Each participant is given a 2"x 6" (inches) strip of white Cartolina, a marker pen, and a crayon.

2 The facilitator asks each participant to select one image that best represents their dream or vision.

3 Participants repeatedly draw the image on the strip of Cartolina until the strip is full. They also choose their favorite color.

4 When all have finished their drawings, the facilitator asks them to form a circle while seated on the floor.

5 Each participant shares thoughts about their dream/vision and why they chose the image and the color. Depending on group size, you may allocate 1 minute to 2 minutes per participant.

6 After the sharing and reflection, participants weave the strips of Cartolina until they form into a tapestry.

7 Allow some minutes for participants to walk around and appreciate the tapestry.

8 At the end of the session, encourage the participants to decide who will safely keep the tapestry for future reference. The tapestry created by the group can later be woven with tapestries of other vulnerable youth groups to form a bigger tapestry of different youth groups in a municipality, province, or region.

Youth for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence in Mindanao (YOUCAP), Philippines Project

About the Design:

Mindanao, the Philippines' second largest island, has rich and diverse cultures. These distinctions have long been a source of contention. It is time to rebuild a culture of peace regardless of faith, tribe, or gender.

A rich, bright, and unique clothing pattern emerged from several Mindanao tribes textiles. The textile designs were woven together to form a pattern (banig). This, like weaving (banig), represents collaborating on ideas, approaches, dialogue, and participation of youth and other stakeholders to promote a culture of peace. Combining fabrics created pixels that resembled the vibrant, contemporary, and youthful traditional banig.

The three hands represent Mindanao's three peoples: Muslims, Christians, and Indigenous People. This is a symbol of cultural and social unity in Mindanao. These hands represent the project's education, civil society, and government partners, both state and non-state.

These elements form a modern peace sign and the letter "Y," representing Youth, the sector at the center of the YOUCAP project's activities. Also, the letter "Y" stands for YOUCAP, a project that works with partners to strengthen state and non-state actors in Mindanao to contribute to culture-sensitive, gender-sensitive, and youth-oriented peacebuilding and non-violent conflict transformation.