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Tips for trainers

From: IIED Part. Inquiry Trainers Guide, Chapter 4 (Draft only)

• 7. Symbolic introductions

Comments

Objective

- To introduce the participants to each other;
- To get participants talking to each other in sub-groups;
- To get the sub-groups motivated by involving them immediately in a successful task;
- To demonstrate a sense of belonging; and,
- To show that you as a trainer want to learn from them also.

This exercise works well to encourage participants to open up and share feelings early in the workshop. The introductions are done through searching for and agreeing on a symbol. These symbol groups can be used for later exercises. If you are not familiar with the region or country, hearing about the symbols is a good introduction to understanding the local value system.

Material

Objects lying around in or near the room that can be used as symbols. Does not need preparation.



Time

10-20 minutes, depending on the size of the group (5 minutes to find the object, 3 minutes introduction and explanation per group)

Procedure

- Ask participants to form in groups of threes and to go outside to find something that they feel symbolises their country, region or organisation;
- Ask them to bring that thing back in five minutes and put it on the same table; and,
- Ask them to introduce themselves and to explain why they chose this thing as their symbol.

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