













Evan Sedgwick-Jell

#### \* Contributors \*

Eva Chatrain, Kiara Kolisch, Amanda Majuri, Shesica Paez Gularte, Babacar Mahamadou Toure, Eireny Akubeze, Eliza Jones, Roberto Francisco Molina, Pawkara Ávalos Donoso, Daniel Andrés, Flores Moreno, Kenner Leiva Perez, Jami Ojala, Zaklin Ferencek & Iris Garcia



























Fabiana Montiel & Álvaro Ferreira

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## Youth Leadership

# Tookit

In the IFM-SEI, we wish to fundamentally challenge the ways in which leadership is seen in our societies. Unlike in business or party politics, we do not see that are certain people who are obvious or natural leaders, whose job it is to lead others who are not.

We wish to embody and create in our organisations, communities in which all are able to be empowered to take on leadership roles in different contexts, so that this absolute division between leaders and led is questioned. These are the democratic socialist values that underpin our work, and we view leadership as, more than anything else, producing and reproducing the spaces where this equality can be lived, organi-

sed through activities and advocated for beyond our own movements, in wider society.

The activities that we organise call specifically for children and young people to step into all sorts of leadership roles: organising workshops and camps; sitting on the boards of their local branches and national organisations; taking part in political actions and demonstrations; running groups for

children younger than themselves and acting as peers; representing the organisation in coalitions, youth councils, at the international level at summits, or in the IFM-SEI; and lastly and most importantly, taking responsibility for the creation of a better future through our ongoing political and educational work.

And while we recognise that anyone can be a leader, we also see that it is important to give individuals who are willing to step into such roles, the tools through which to do this. This is of especial importance in the context of children's and youth organisations, which always experience that same tension between specific legal duties for the protection of children and youth, and that value so central to the IFM-SEI, of being not just participated in and influenced by the young people composing them, but being truly youth led.

In a world of adult power, and the structural dismissal of children's rights to step into leadership roles and be responsible for organising themselves, we must recognise, that even while IFM organisations represent some of the spaces of best practice for children's leadership, there is still much work to be done. We are committed to empowering our young members, and giving them the tools that they need to be able to carry out this work, and not to simply sit symbolically on boards and councils, or merely to be 'consulted' about matters which concern them.

In this spirit, this toolkit has been created by these young people themselves, in a number of seminars and activities, based on their own experiences, and concrete challenges and practices within their own organisations. It comprises a number of examples of leadership practices, as well as accompanying activities for you to use in your own group meetings, workshops, camps, and other events. There is also a a card game included, to reflect on different leadership qualities.

We, the young authors of these acitivities, and the adults who have facilitated these processes and edited and designed the final toolkit, wish you well in your engagement with the following pages, and look forward to continue to build a world together, in which any child and young person can be a leader!

In friendship,

IFM-SEI and the toolkit authors and creators

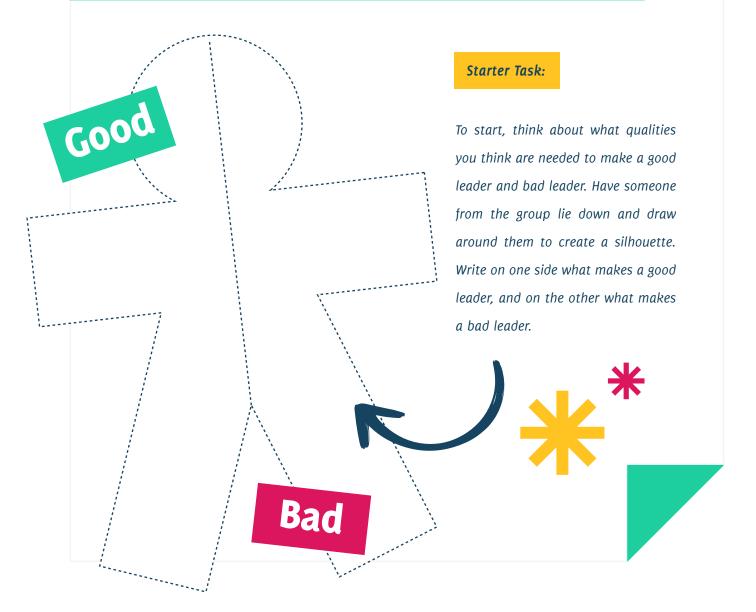


## Introduction

A leader is someone who develops and puts into direction the ideas of a group.

A leader is important as they act as the force motivating groups to work together.

They not only lead but support and collaborate with the group. We need a leader to manage and guide the actions that are conducted in the group.



Main

The following is a list of leadership qualities developed by young people taking active leadership roles in the organisations.

#### Empathy -

- \* Understanding of other
- \* Be sensitive
- \* Be able to put yourself in the shoes of another person
- \* How: be unbiased and listen to all fairly. Be friendly and approachable, creating a relationship and environment that is open. Practice it by thinking critically about how it would makes the other person feel.

#### **Decision Maker** -

- \* Be direct and forward
- **\*** Be critically thinking
- \* Well ordered mind
- **\*** Firm
- Confident
- \* Clear
- \* Democratic decision process
- **\*** Motivator
- **How:** Create safe spaces free that is inclusive for all to share for votes and discussion where all are included.

#### Humility -

- \* Modest
- \* Respectful
- \* Take into account the opinion of other (democratic practices)
- \* Sincere
- \* How: create open and safe environment for people to feel comfortable to share. Create democratic practises such as voting on decisions.

#### Communication -

- \* Listen to all
- \* Transparent
- \* Be clear and simple in what you say
- \* Constant information flow
- \* Concise
- \*\* How: Being open and sharing every step of the process with others making sure they are informed. While also getting feedback and checking in that all is understood by others.

#### Responsible -

- \* Accountable
- **\*** Moral compass
- \* Take up firmly your role within the group
- \* Disciplined
- \* Integrity (The quality of being honest and strong moral processes.)
- \* How: practing great time management, making sure to cover all bases of the work. While also maintain the interest of everyone and not just your self.

#### Activity

## Forum Theatre, Good Leader/Bad Leader

Duration: 45-50 minutes \* Target group: 10+ people

#### **₩** Ain

The overall aim of the activity is to empower young people to engage in practical discussion around leadership.

#### \* Materials

No materials need just enthusiastic young people.

#### \* Description-

We want you to get you to put on your acting hats. Role play a range of scenarios that present both a good and bad example of leadership.

This activity encourages young people to think about what makes a good and bad leader, critically thinking about how bad leadership can be changed. The activity should allow young people to work together to create a range of scenarios that help them think profoundly about leadership.



Get into groups of 4 (But the groups can also be dependant on the size of the group).

02

Spend 20 minutes thinking and planning a scenario of good or bad leadership. Think about the things previously discussed above. Make sure all are involved and have a role in the acting if they feel comfortable. It does not need to be Oscar award-winning.

03

Firstly, run through the scenario with no interruptions. Discuss what was presented in the theatre either good or bad.

04

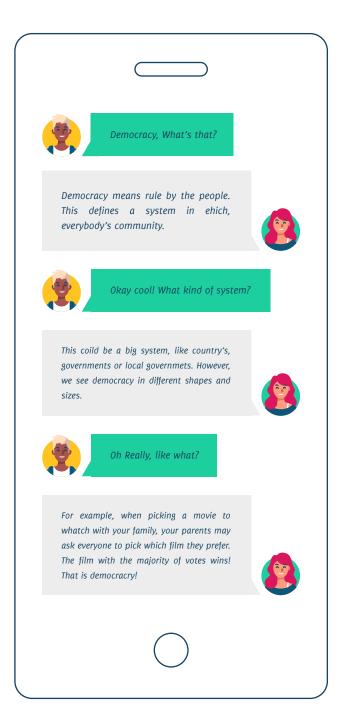
Second time, run through the scenario again opening the floor to the audience who can tap into to the scenario make it better and show an example of good leadership. "tapping in" means that anyone can clap, and then swap themselves into the play, then clapping again to restart the action.

05

Once all the scenarios are ran through have a discussion about everything they have seen and each can make a point about what they took away from the scaenrios.



#### 1 · Democracy, What's that?



Now you have learnt the definition of democracy, let's see how it links to IFM SEI!

organization. This means that the voice of young people are as equally valued and heard.

### Some democratic example in IFM-SEI

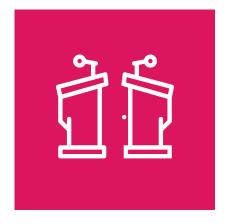
- \* A constitution
- Democratic Election
- A congress (The highest structure)
- \* Every organization is represented in the congress
- \* Any changes has to be approved by the Congress

#### 2 · How do I built a democratic group?

Having a democratic structure in your group or organization is important. Here are some explanations of how to build one.



A Congress/ council / parliament are important in a community during the process of decision making.



It is formed by representatives, they represent a group and their ideas. Their role is to convince the majority so their ideas will be voted on. They have been elected by the majority to be their voices.



Once representatives have shared their ideas, it is election time! People will vote for the idea they prefer, the majority wins!

#### Reflection

- Do you have a Congress or a Council in your organization?
- \* Do you know your representatives?
- \* Do you know how to share your ideas and opinions with your organization?





#### $3 \cdot \text{How can I, as youth be active?}$

Youth participation is more than necessary in a youth organization. Growing inside a youth rganization has to bring a lot of advantages and opportunities. Here is a list of examples that can be implemented in every organization. We strongly believe that young people should have their opinions heard inside any organization.

#### Stay active

Let a space for young people to stay active in the organization when they are not participant anymore

#### Shadow method

Give the opportunity to a young person to observe and be the "Shadow" of leader. The young people will be able to obseve and see how things are done in the inside

#### Suggestion box

Create a suggestion box so young people can write their ideas about an activity, a project, food... Once a week, choose one or two ideas and discuss it with your group

#### 4 · What could possibly be wrong with democracy?

In all democratic systems there is a form of opposition, a good leader is someone who knows how to deal with the opposition. For example: what can be done is to try reducing the opposition by talking with them and reaching a consensus!



#### The characteristics of good democratic leadership:

**Collaboration:** the leader retains the final decision but they have to listen to everyone's opinion and encourage everyone to share their thoughts.

**Engagement:** a leader should support all the members so they feel more engaged in the process

Creativity: creativity should be encouraged by the leader.

#### Activity

## **Mock Debate**

#### \* Duration

This activity could be shortened down to an hour session, or could be extended to sessions over a month's time. This can also be done over a camp period.

#### \* Target Group

Any, altering the timeframe of the task depending. For younger participants, an older advisor can be used within each session.

#### \* Aim

To allow children to participate in a political process, make political arguments, and experience having to try and reach people with their ideas. To reflect on the form of our democracy.

#### \* Materials

Paper (large for posters), pens/markers (different colours), phones/cameras for video messages, something to use as a ballot box.

#### \* Description

This activity shows a democratic process and its structure, and allows the children to participate in one. It brings together all the ideas in a personal way, so that the children can connect to the subject. It also gives the children a space to express their own ideas, and gain confidence in sharing them.



#### Forming

\* Aim: In this session, the children will form their government. Deciding on ideologies, policies and group roles.

After the children have been given a brief explanation and overview of governance and governmental structures, they go off to form their own 'governments'. This can be done independently, or in larger groups up to 12. The children then have an allotted time period to decide on what they aim to do as a government and how they will try to succeed in the election.

#### Starting Presentations

\* Aim: To give the children a space to share an overview of their government.

The children will rejoin, and give a speech to the others in the group about their government. In this, they explain what their government stands for- going through a list of the policies that they have decided on. This helps the children with public speaking, and also active listening.

#### Creating Materials

\* Aim: This is when the children have a space to start work on the physical aspects of their campaign.

The children will go off in their groups or individually and create materials that they are able to use within their campaign. Examples of this can be a poster, leaflets, a video advert, a social media campaign and tokens. This can be dependent on both what materials the group has to offer, and what the children choose.

#### Campaigning

\* Aim: In this section of the activity, the groups will use the materials they have produced to campaign within the group.

The groups will be given a space, which can range from a small group session to expanding up to a month. These groups will use their created materials and media to gain support from others- this can be presented to other young people, group leaders and others from differing from other organisations if done over a camp.

#### **Debate**

\* Aim: to allow the young people to present their ideas, and learn about the other governments ideas. This also gives them a chance to practise public speaking and engaged listening.

This will be near the end of the activity, being at the end of a session, end of a month or camp. Each group will have an elected group member to be involved with a debate, which will be held in front of the others. The debate will consist of an opening statement, and then comments to the other candidate. This fosters a sense of confidence and respect.

#### Election

\* Aim: This is where the young people can see the structure of an election in person, and have their voice heard.

In this, there will be a mock ballot box, which can consist of a separate room, or separate table, depending on resources. Every person, being a young person, leader or member

of another organisation who is at the camp has a vote. They have an allotted time to go to the voting station, and check the box of the party they favour. They are not allowed to vote for their own. Afterwards, the votes are counted from at least two unbiased persons. When the votes have been counted, they are shared with the group. The winning party will then have a chance to speak to the group. Depending on time and resources, there can be a space to hold an election party and celebrate the idea of democracy and the triumphs of the young people.

#### >> Reflection

\* Aim: To allow the young people to look back on their experiences and achievements of the whole activity.

The facilitator can ask questions to the entire group, or go into smaller reflection groups depending on sizing, about how they have felt.

Possible questions are -

- \* Did you enjoy the task, if so what did you enjoy the most?
- \* Did you feel like it was fair?
- \* What struggles did you have in completing the task?
- \* Is there anything that you would do differently?
- \* Did the task meet your expectations?

Share your results and your campaign with the #iamyourleaderIFM



## Activism & Active participation

Activism is a way to promote changes in society through our actions and peaceful protests.

It is the bravest way to express ourselves, as young people we exercise our freedom. We use this for the construction of a more just and equitable society. We are the change and we must be aware of the real impact of our involvement in activism and ensure that our actions are fair and ethical.

\* Why is it important?

#### Activism:

- \* Promotes participation and plurality.
- \* It unlocks enormous potential for human development.
- \* It gives us personal growth and expands knowledge.
- \* Peaceful expression of civil liberties.

#### Active participation:

- \* Development of a better democracy and construction of citizenship.
- \* Generates citizens committed to their community.
- \* Identifies problems and works to find effective solutions.
- \* Effective way to promote change and improvement.

#### \* How do we change the world?

As a 16 year old teenager, I feel capable of making changes in the world, I am young, and I know it, by actively participating in my group and community I know that I am a support to social growth, and so we can all do it, either by giving ideas,

participating in conferences, young people are enthusiastic. Let's take advantage of this and be part of the change.

Qualities of a good activist: sense of community, confidence, passion, commitment, critical sense, desire for change).

- \* Which of these qualities are in you?
- \* Where does an activist participate?

An activist can participate in a wide variety of venues and platforms depending on the cause and effort.

#### \* How can I get involved?

Contribute your best, give your opinion, participate in campaigns, join an organization, commit to small actions, be willing to participate, share with people with the same values.

## How to have an active participation (Examples)

- \* Participate in volunteer activities, there are many non-profit groups like the ones you belong to.
- Participate in discussion groups and online communities.
- \* Participate in local activities and community events
- \* Participate in social networks, and follow campaigns, share publications on global or local issues.
- \* Participate in demonstrations, direct actions and campaigns.





#### **Activity:**

# Action Planning

Duration: 1 hour \* Target group: 8-20 people

#### \* Aim

To think about different forms of activism and political messages

#### \* Materials

Paper (large enough for posters), pens/markers (different colours)

#### \* Description

After thinking about different social problems, the participants will think about how to highlight them through activism. This activity is about preparing children and young people for active intervention in politics!



- O1 Everybody writes down a political/social problem that they
  see as important on a piece of paper, then fold up the
  paper and put these in the middle of the room
- O2 The group is divided into smaller groups of 4-5 people
- O3 Each group takes a problem, and must then plan a means of addressing it. Their task is to:

- \* Create an exciting poster for the a demonstration!

  Think about the message, the image, the important details, and how to catch people's attention
- \* Plan a demonstration! How will you make it exciting? Will there be speeches? Music, bands? What will the banners and placards say? Where will the demonstration go from and to?
- \* Plan an action! This should be something with a few people to raise awareness, some examples are banner drops, sit-ins, blockades or binging an important message to a meeting about a particular topic. Be creative in thinking about planning an action and discuss example that you already know.
- The groups feedback each others campaigns, and discuss how well they might work in the real world. This can be extended into thinking about using some of the methods for future activism if appropriate.



Create an exciting poster for the a demonstration! Think about the message, the image, the important details, and how to catch people's attention

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The groups feedback each others campaigns, and discuss how well they might work in the real world. This can be extended into thinking about using some of the methods for future activism if appropriate.

\* Why is Reflection Important?

Personal Growth: Reflection helps you recognize your strengths and weaknesses, allowing you to develop a deeper understanding of yourself. It cultivates self-awareness, which is vital for effective leadership.

Encourages Continuous Learning: Reflection enables you to learn from your experiences, identify new opportunities, and adapt to changes. It fosters a growth mindset, which is essential for success.

O3 Improves Decision-Making: By reflecting on past experiences, you can identify patterns, make connec-

tions, and develop critical thinking skills. This enables you to make more informed decisions, enhancing your leadership capabilities.

Promotes Emotional Intelligence: Reflection helps you understand and manage your emotions, and empathize with others. Emotional intelligence is crucial for building strong relationships and fostering teamwork within NGOs.

In this toolkit we are focusing on two different levels of reflection: personal reflection and reflecting inside our own organisations.

Use the following to structure processes of reflection throughout educational processes such as workshops and seminars, as well as more generally as an ongoing part of your work:

#### **Personal Reflection**

Personal reflection involves examining your thoughts, feelings, and actions to gain a better understanding of yourself. Here are some tips to practice personal reflection:

O1 Set aside time: Dedicate some time each day or week for reflection. Find a quiet, comfortable space where you can focus on your thoughts.

Ask yourself questions: Reflect on your experiences by asking questions such as, "What did I learn from this experience?", "How did I feel?", or "How can I improve next time?"

**Keep a journal:** Writing your thoughts and feelings down

Encourage peer feedback: Facilitate opportunities for team members to provide constructive feedback to one another, fostering a supportive and collaborative environment.

Reflection is a powerful tool that can transform your leadership journey, both personally and within an NGO. By embracing reflection, you can become a more self-aware, adaptive, and effective leader. Remember, the key to success lies in learning from your experiences and growing with each step. So, start reflecting today and unleash the full potential of your leadership!

Reflection inside our organisations

Organizations benefit from reflecting on their ways of working by identifying strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. This self-assessment fosters a more inclusive, supportive, and productive work environment, ultimately contributing to increased engagement levels. Moreover, reflection helps organizations adapt to changing circumstances, align their values with their actions, and promote a culture of continuous learning and growth, ensuring long-term success and a positive impact on their missio

Here are some ways to promote reflection within your organization:

- O1 Organize regular meetings: Schedule meetings where team members can share their experiences, discuss challenges, and celebrate successes.
- O2 Conduct evaluations: Assess the effectiveness of projects, programs, and campaigns. Use this information to improve future initiatives.
- Promote a culture of learning: Encourage open communication and create an environment where team members feel comfortable sharing their thoughts, ideas, and experiences.
- D4 Encourage peer feedback: Facilitate opportunities for team members to provide constructive feedback to one another, fostering a supportive and collaborative environment.

Reflection is a powerful tool that can transform your leadership journey, both personally and within an NGO. By embracing reflection, you can become a more self-aware, adaptive, and effective leader. Remember, the key to success lies in learning from your experiences and growing with each step. So, start reflecting today and unleash the full potential of your leadership!

#### Activity

# Reflection Inside our Organizations

Duration: 30-45 minutes \* Target group: 12+ people

#### \* Aim

To reflect on how young people are included in decision making in their organizations, or perhaps other contexts, such as school, or their families.

#### **\*** Materials

The flowchart quiz included in this toolkit.

A discussion is held comparing different levels and asking the questions: why are the individual levels what they are? Why is participation better in some contexts than others? What might be done to change the participation level?

# # Description In small groups, young people answer the flowchart quiz to reflect on participation within their organizations. After doing the quiz, the results are discussed. Steps: O1 Split into smaller groups. O2 The groups should work through the quiz on participation, to work out which 'level' their organization/school/family etc. is on The results of the groups are shared







#### \* Introduction

Skills and competencies are acquired by leaders to perform different actions. Skills and competencies are guided by a person's intention and executing them entails a process, which starts by identifying and differentiating the two. On the one hand, skills are a person's ability to do something correctly and with ease. On the other hand, competencies are those individual characteristics (motivation, values, traits, etc.) that enable a person to perform optimally. Put simply, skills are concrete things that we are good at, competencies are the qualities that enable this skill to be practiced well in different contexts: for example someone may have the skill of delegation, and the competencies of teamwork, communication and a sense of fairness. The competencies in this case ensure that the skill is well practiced, as otherwise, the simple skill of being good at delegating work can lead to people feeling as though they are told what to do, or that tasks are unfairly allocated.

#### \* How can I use my skills?

The first step is to consider what skills you have, then recognize that these skills will drive you to get better results in what you do, you can use your skills since you wake up, for example if you are energetic you can spread your energy and happiness to other people.

From different spaces in our organizations we can be friendly and work as a team to achieve better results, always use your resources, what you have within reach, give the best of you in every moment and never do things by obligation this will make you enjoy the process more and will make you discover new skills.

#### \* How can I have good competencies?

#### \* Be curious

Always ask questions when you don't understand something, never stay in doubt about anything, always clear your doubts, this is a way to learn.

#### \* Confidence

Trust in your abilities and put them into practice in order to develop your competencies because if you trust in yourself you will be more motivated and you will focus more on the positive.

#### \* Adaptability

Having the ability to adapt to any situation will help you develop your competencies because you are able to adapt to anything, you can grow, work and lead from any space and inspire many more people to be so.



#### Activity

## What's my skill?

Duration: 20 minutes \* Target group: All ages · 5-15 people

#### \* Aim

To show participants what skills they have.

#### **\*** Materials

A4 Paper, Pens, Tape

#### \* Description

In this activity the participants write skills they think the other person has, after they have completed this task, they will sit in a circle to discuss the results.



- 701 Tape a sheet of paper on everyone's back and give them pens.
- Walk around the room writing the skills that you think the person you're writing on has on their back. Do this with as many people as you like, ideally all participants. Everyone will be doing this task at the same time.
- After everyone has written down everything they wanted to say get everyone to sit in a circle.
- O4. Everyone may now take their paper and read what others have said about them.

- Discuss one by one, share what you've read and tell they others how you feel about it (if you agree or disagree).
- Have an open discussion about why people wrote down certain things.



#### Game

## **Youth Leadership Card Game**

Imagining, Reflecting & Leading



- 1 Everybody gets 8 cards
- Players take it in turns to read one of the questions/statements
- All players choose the card that fits to this
- The cards are put in the middle
- Players can then guess ONE which card belongs to one of the players, by placing a counter (numbered 1-8, relating to the players themselves)
- One by one, the players reveal their cards, and explain why they choose them.
- Any player who guessed a card for the person can say why, which associations they had, and can see if they guessed correctly (this could be played with points, but the aim of the game is mainly to reflect on our leadership skills)
- The players can also explain why they choose a particular card



- \* Choose the card that matches/represents how you personally reflect?
- \* Choose the card that represents your participation level in organisation?
- \* Choose the represents the support that you would like to get from other leaders?
- \* Choose two cards that represent your competencies as a leader?
- \* Choose a card that represents how you feel when you do public speeches?
- \* What is your biggest challange as a leader/youth worker?
- \* Choose a card that represents a good leader?
- \* Choose a card that represent a person that is actively listeniing to other people?
- \* Choose a few cards that represent your strong skills, competencies?
- \* Choose a card that represents skills you want to improve more?
- \* Choose a card that gives you the power to work on socialist change?















