



**“Leaving the space of a forest”**

*A tribute to Jon C. Jenkins*

# # 5 MAY 2010



*Europe is one of seven regions within the International Association of Facilitators. The IAF Europe team members volunteer their time to plan and support activities and services for IAF members living in Europe, supported by Entendu Ltd.. Contact us at [pamela.lupton-bowers@iaf-europe.eu](mailto:pamela.lupton-bowers@iaf-europe.eu); [gary.purser@iaf-europe.eu](mailto:gary.purser@iaf-europe.eu); [kristin.reinbach@iaf-europe.eu](mailto:kristin.reinbach@iaf-europe.eu); [rosemary.cairns@iaf-europe.eu](mailto:rosemary.cairns@iaf-europe.eu), or speak with Ben Richardson or Nicki Cadogan of Entendu at [office@iaf-europe.eu](mailto:office@iaf-europe.eu).*

## ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

The IAF Europe Newsletter is published monthly by the IAF Europe Regional Team for members of the International Association of Facilitators living within Europe.

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**Cover picture:** Family, friends, students and colleagues of Jon C. Jenkins bade him farewell in story. At the end of the celebration of Jon's life held in Groningen on April 13, each person took a balloon, wrote something they were grateful for in Jon's life, or a reflection. And together they released the balloons, carrying their memories of Jon.

We thank Maureen for posting these pictures on Facebook for those of us who could not attend the service, and for allowing us to include the pictures in this month's Newsletter.

Jon's career in facilitation spanned more than 40 years. He helped to create social change in developing and developed countries, facilitated or helped facilitate participative consultations in 19 projects in 11 countries, and taught more than 100 two to three day modules on individual and social change, community development, facilitation, and education methods. He designed curriculum or programs for KPN Telecom and the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) in India, the USA and Europe, among many others. He and Maureen worked all over the world with ICA between 1968 and 1984, and ran their own company, Imaginal Training, from 1991 onwards.

Jon authored or co-authored six books and wrote countless articles. In 1980, ICA named him Master Pedagogue. He created and maintained the IAF Methods Database, and authored the International Facilitator's Companion 2nd Edition in CD-ROM jointly published by the Training Department of KPN Telecom and Imaginal Training in 1996. Between 2001 and 2006, he was the IAF board member responsible for communications and publications.

Elsewhere in this Newsletter, you can read about what Jon's life meant to facilitators in Serbia, and to his students at the Intercultural Competence and Communications Centre at Hanze University in Groningen, Netherlands.

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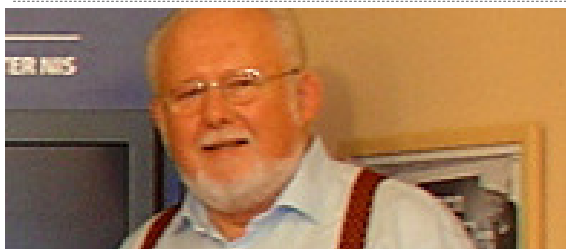
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AND **THINGS ARE HAPPENING**  
FAST WITH A GATHERING MOMENTUM.

BEN RICHARDSON

# IAF Europe Conference 2010: Latest News

By Ben Richardson

## Official Website

The official conference website at [iaf-europe-conference.org](http://iaf-europe-conference.org) went live on April 19th and registration began. We hope you will find the site more informative and interactive than in previous years. As well as being able to register for your delegate place online, the 'My Contribution' page will allow you to;

- Submit your proposal to present or run a workshop
- Apply to exhibit or offer sponsorship
- Make your suggestions and offer ideas.

In addition, you may

- Share your thoughts with more than 80 other facilitators on the conference's Facebook page.

## Raising Awareness in the Baltic Region

Although much of the marketing activity has been through our regular channels in Europe and globally, there are opportunities to expand our focus into new parts of the Europe region. We have made contact with facilitators in Estonia and with the Russian Association of Trainers who

may send a delegation. For the first time, conference flyers have been circulated in the Russian language.

## Extended Deadline for Presenter Proposals

There has been a good response to the invitation to submit proposals for presentations and workshops. But in order not to restrict the wide range of sessions that are needed to support the conference's key themes, the deadline for submissions has been extended to Friday May 14th. After that deadline, all proposals will be reviewed and the formal part of the programme will be developed.

Remember: Whether you wish to run a workshop/session at the conference or you are thinking about running a pre-conference event outside the formal programme, contact the Conference Office and we will be happy to help you.

## A Good Finnish Welcome

Apart from the formal programme, the Finnish planning team are taking the conference motto, 'Welcome to



Finland' seriously. They are designing a comprehensive range of sessions, activities and excursions that will introduce participants to the unique traditions and cultures of Finland as well as how these fit into the art and mastery of facilitation. These activities will include; bonfires and Lappish tents, participatory future telling and Nordic pole walking. Music, dance and singing will all take a key part in this unique experience.

Following the conference there will be further opportunities to make the most of your stay in Finland by; taking a guided tour of Helsinki, an overnight trip to Tallinn or hiking in the Finnish wilderness. There will be more information on these opportunities soon.

### Keep up to date with progress

In order to keep up to date with progress we suggest that you join the conference Facebook page where developments will be announced. You will find a link on the Conference home page. Otherwise, view the conference website regularly for updates.

### Early Bird registration

With a good initial demand for delegate places, please be aware that there are just a few Early Bird places left for IAF Members. Please register soon to take advantage of the Early Bird discount.

### Scholarships

As in previous years, the IAF Europe Region is offering a number of scholarships to those individuals who are actively involved in facilitation in Eastern and Central Europe or working in/with community-based organisations throughout Europe. The scholarship will contribute towards the full registration fee for this year's Conference. This will include the two nights' accommodation and meals from the opening of the conference on Friday evening to the Sunday lunchtime conference close. The cost of transportation, pre-conference workshops and other personal expenses are not included in the scholarship.

If you would like to know more about the application process, or you would like to recommend someone else for a scholarship, please contact the Conference Office.

### The Conference Office

The conference team are always available to answer your questions and advise you about any aspect of the conference. Simply contact: Ben Richardson or Nicki Cadogan at [conference@iaf-europe.eu](mailto:conference@iaf-europe.eu)  
Phone: +44 (0)1923 271150 or from Finland just dial 09 2316 5522



Jon facilitating Divčibare workshop, 2001 (Photo: Rosemary Cairns)

## “Leaving the space of a forest”

By Rosemary Cairns

Some years ago, when I lost a treasured academic mentor, a friend wrote of her that “some people when they are on earth occupy only the space of a tree, but when they leave, they leave the space of a forest”. So it is with the passing of our friend and colleague, Jon Jenkins.

I don’t any longer remember when I first met Jon. It seems I have always known him and Maureen. So in the fall of 2001, when I had just started work on a very challenging community development project in western Serbia and had to organize a retreat for the entire staff – and then realized almost at the last minute that I could not myself facilitate it, it was Jon I asked for help.

Could he suggest anyone who could help us with this, I asked. He replied, almost instantly, that he had a few suggestions but he himself also was available. And so, at almost the last possible minute, he hopped on a plane and came to Belgrade. We had arranged for others to pick him up and bring him to the workshop location high in the mountains, at Divčibare, about 3 hours southwest of the

Serbian capital.

The evening of his arrival, he phoned me (I was living in Užice, the regional centre of Western Serbia, about four hours southwest of Belgrade by car) to say that the hotel only took Visa and he only had Mastercard – and his luggage hadn’t arrived. We sorted all of that out, and he arrived in Divčibare just before the workshop was due to start – a highly challenging situation for any facilitator.

While we talked on the phone that evening, we had also talked about the project, Community Revitalization through Democratic Action, and about the workshop. Jon, from his wealth of experience with similar activities elsewhere in the world, didn’t need to get more of a detailed briefing than that. I remember the chief of party, after speaking with Jon at lunch, asking “how did you get him up to speed so quickly”. I said that I didn’t need to – Jon knew far more about this work than I could ever hope to know.

## A challenging workshop

That was a challenging workshop, from many perspectives. The meeting room wasn't ideal, but the hotel was located in one of our CRDA communities, and part of our job was to revitalize those communities, so investing our money there helped in achieving our overall goals.

And, as I learned much later, the grantee organization (I worked for the sub-grantee organization) did not brief its staff in the same way I had briefed my community mobilization team, so they didn't know much about the project goals and activities. Thus Jon's knowledge from working all over the world, and his ability to work with people from a variety of backgrounds and experiences, was a huge asset to the workshop.

Jon subsequently came to help our community mobilization team with a variety of strategic planning activities and other workshops. He had such breadth of experience to draw on that he could suggest an approach that suited any situation. I remember, as our team was working on evaluation, that he introduced us to the "after-action review" – and then apologized, realizing that the term's military connotations might have unfortunate resonance for local people who had been bombed just two years earlier.

It was that sensitivity, and genuine concern for people, that marked his work as a facilitator. For facilitators in Serbia, who were new to participatory processes, his knowledge was a great treasure from which we all benefitted. The IAF Methods Database that he created and managed was an encyclopedia on which Serbian facilitators regularly drew.

He was present, as facilitator, for the final workshop I attended just before my CRDA contract expired. I had become, in some peoples' minds, the "identified problem" in project implementation, and it was easier for them to blame me than to understand the actual challenges we all faced. Jon's presence, and his professionalism and kindness, made that workshop much easier for me. (Not to mention the huge bottle of Scotch that an American colleague, responsible for economic development, gave me at dinner on the workshop's final night along with the remark that he and I worked together like oil and vinegar, and together made a great salad!)

## Inspiring a network

Jon was the inspiration for the creation of the Serbian Facilitators Network. In Stockholm, during the 2006 IAF Europe conference, he suggested to Suzana and Sladjana that they should contact me to see what we could create together. So Suzana did, and I travelled five hours by bus to Niš for meetings several times, and together we created the SFN as a voice for facilitators in Serbia, and one which is now working to make sure that I am not the only CPF in Serbia. Without Jon, that would not have happened.

Jon and Maureen then came several times to Belgrade and to Niš,

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*Your spirit, however, lives on in all the facilitators here who have learned so much from you, and are putting those lessons to work in making life better for people all around Serbia in projects both big and small.*

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to run workshops for facilitators here, and these workshops have built a strong capacity among facilitators here. Serbian facilitators have always felt Jon was a resource on which they could draw. Said one, who had worked with Jon since those early CRDA days, 'I had so much more to learn from you' – and it was a feeling widely shared as we all coped with the shock of learning that Jon had left us over the Easter weekend.

Jon had a gift for conversations that mattered. I remember sitting with him and Maureen at lunch during the 2007 Edinburgh IAF Europe conference, at a time when there was discussion about the future of IAF Europe representation, and he asked if I might be interested in becoming involved. He thought I might be good at it, he said. And so, when the call went out in the summer of 2008 for people interested in joining the IAF Europe team, I felt enough confidence to put my name forward. If Jon thought I could do it, I could!

And I remember his delight when he saw the very first IAF Europe Newsletter that Chris Grambow and I produced. His words of praise gave me a tremendous boost, and a determination to keep on producing a Newsletter that he would enjoy just as much.

I will miss you, Jon. We will all miss you. Your spirit, however, lives on in all the facilitators here who have learned so much from you, and are putting those lessons to work in making life better for people all around Serbia in projects both big and small.

## “Your life made ours better”

*By Sladjana and Bojan | Mobilis Ltd*

The Serbian Facilitators Network organized, at the beginning of March 2008, a four hour workshop with Jon and Maureen in Niš. We had a unique opportunity to observe two of them working and presenting us with the “Wall of Wonder”.

That workshop was the best of all we attended ever – facilitation magic, absolutely perfect!

A book we got from Jon and Maureen that day (“9 Disciplines of Facilitative Leaders”) is one of those we read over and over again.

Jon was a great support online as well - he was always so patient and ready to explain and support us when we had questions related to IAF methods database.

As Seneca wrote: “As is a tale, so is life: not how long it is, but how good it is, is what matters.”

Your life made ours better – thank you Jon, we will miss you!

*Jon and Maureen with the Serbian facilitators who attended their March 2008 workshop in Niš (Photo courtesy of Suzana Zivkovic)*







The ICCC team (Hanze University photo)

# ‘A life we would all aspire to’

By Scott Herrington and Parisa Taghipoor

*For the past four years, Jon taught communication and facilitation skills at the Intercultural Competence and Communications Centre in the School of Communications and Media, Hanze University of Applied Sciences, in Groningen, Netherlands. His teaching made a huge impact on his students, as you can see from the tributes on his Facebook page. Lekje Smit kindly shared with us the eulogy written by two of Jon’s students, Scott Herrington and Parisa Taghipoor, who read these words during the celebration of Jon’s life held in Groningen on April 13.*

## Introduction

(Scott) For those of you who don’t know us, my name is Scott Herrington and this is Parisa Taghipoor, both of whom, as many of you, had the pleasure of being Jon’s students over the past years.

On such an occasion, considering the man Jon was, and what he held dear in his life, it was thought to be entirely appropriate to hear some words on behalf of all his students, both past and present. On behalf of all his students, it is an absolute privilege to be given this opportunity. Thank you.

## Starting with a story

In traditional Jon style, I’d like to begin by telling you a story. Just eight short weeks ago, Jon set us the task of performing a presentation, the subject matter of which would be... ourselves.

At first impression, a fairly simple task. Challenging a 20 something year old student to talk about him or herself, is much like challenging a clock to tell the time, nothing comes more naturally to us. There was of course a catch. It had to be done in three minutes.

Not being the type of man to set a task he’d be unwill-



*Sharing stories at Jon's memorial service (Hanze University photo)*

ing to accept himself, Jon performed his own three-minute presentation just a couple of weeks ago. Well at least, we think it was three minutes, we'll never really know since he conveniently forgot to time it... but we gave him the benefit of the doubt.

Watching Jon recount all 67 years of his life in three minutes was like watching a hurricane storm through the room. He told us of his childhood, his time spent in the navy, proudly spoke of his family, presented us with a map of the world saturated with pins representing places he'd set up projects, told us of the books he'd had published and ended with his time at ICV. He concluded, as he began, with the resounding words; "I am Jon Clifford Jenkins."

What followed was a palpable silence. We were left almost as breathless as he was, as we tried to absorb the whirlwind ride he'd just taken us on. Without exception, we were all left with the same thought. 'Wow! This man had truly, truly lived.'

## **A rich and varied life**

We were a class of international students, a class you'd be hard pressed to find with collectively more experience and ambition – yet even if we'd grouped our experiences together, Jon would still have beaten us hands down. We could not help but be envious of his wealth of experience and adventure. A life, in short, we would all aspire to.

Little did we know at the time how tragically complete his presentation actually was.

His incredibly rich and varied existence was one of the things that made Jon a unique teacher and an absolute pleasure to be taught by. Like Santa Claus, he had a seemingly bottomless black sack of goodies, in the form of true stories he'd experienced while on his travels. He had one for every occasion.

These stories enabled him to speak with an unrivalled authority, they brought our lessons alive, and ignited our minds, catalysing thought, debate, self reflection and ultimately learning, in a way very few teachers could ever



*(Left) Family, friends, colleagues and students celebrated Jon's life April 13 in Groningen. (Right) They prepare to launch their balloons, each carrying a story about Jon's life. (Hanze University photos)*

dream of.

So few teachers rise to the responsibility with quite the same passion and enthusiasm as our mentor Jon Jenkins did. He encapsulated many things we admire in a person and especially a teacher. His enthusiasm, patience, kindness and dedication were tangible.

He took great pride, and dedicated a great deal of his life, to benefitting others. He left this world having had such a positive impact on all whom he'd met and all whom he taught. He left this world undoubtedly a better place for having had him in it. A more noble, admirable and inspiring legacy I cannot imagine.

### **A role model for us**

(Parisa) I think we all agree, especially considering present company, teachers play one of the most important roles in any young adult's development, outlook and life. I know I don't speak for myself when I say Jon has certainly had an effect on mine.

He was not just a teacher to us, but a mentor, an advi-

sor, a counsellor and a friend. To many of us students he was a role model. He was undoubtedly a great man and his loss will affect many, especially, his ICV students.

He always had a kind word and an appreciation for his students. He listened with intensity to the thoughts and opinions of everyone in the classroom. He respected all religions, all cultures, and each human being. The wisdom this man owned was so much more than I personally will ever reach. He joked with us, made us smile, laugh, think and wonder. Therefore, we admire him. Receiving a compliment from him meant something.

It wasn't just that he brought his lessons alive with case studies from his seemingly unending repertoire of personal experiences. It wasn't just because it was clear to all in the classroom that he truly enjoyed his work and appreciated every opportunity to hear the thoughts, opinions and stories of his students.

So, on behalf of all Jon's students, past and present, we'd like to thank Jon for all he'd accomplished and done for us.

# Celebrate Open Space's 25<sup>th</sup> birthday in Berlin!

By Mia Konstantinidou

For all those spontaneous & curious people out there: pack your bag, book a flight, train or bus to Berlin: May will be a special and exciting month!

The 18th World Open Space on Open Space (WOSonOS), the annual gathering of the global Open Space community, is taking place in Berlin this month!

The first Open Space on Open Space (OSonOS) gatherings were initiated by Harrison Owen (the originator of Open Space Technology) in North America in the 1990s. For the first time in 2000, the OSonOS took place somewhere else: Berlin, Germany.

Over the past 10 years, it travelled around the globe: Berlin 2000, Canada 2001, Australia 2002, Sweden 2003, Goa 2004, Halifax 2005, Moscow 2006, Kiev 2007, San Francisco 2008, Taiwan 2009.

And here we are now, a decade later back in Berlin. A special occasion in itself, for the 18 years that it is annually taking place, for the 10 years travelling to the different continents, and not least: 2010 is the 25th anniversary of Open Space Technology.

By coming together, we can celebrate its discovery, development, all the contributions within the community to us as individuals, facilitators, organizations, communities... and how? Of course by gathering in an Open Space!

## May 13-15 Berlin

The Open Space in Berlin, facilitated by a colleague from Belfast, Northern Ireland, will last 2.5 days, starting Thursday May 13th at 9 a.m. and ending Saturday May 15th at 1 p.m.

On Wednesday May 12th, there will be a Welcome Reception from 4 p.m. – 7 p.m. at the venue with local goodies and specialties that the participants from around the world will bring with them for that occasion.

This year, the Berlin Open Space cooperative (boscop) has the honor to be the host of the event. But the gathering itself, independently of place and time, is always driven by the passion of a growing number of Open Space practitioners worldwide coming together for learning from

each other, sharing, discovering, exploring.

Twenty-one co-invitors from 15 countries committed themselves to come to Berlin and spread the word in their communities and networks. Now, on April 28th, we are already 157 participants from 30 countries and all continents (except Antarctica) – more registrations coming in every day.

Knowing that many people enjoy coming to Berlin for this occasion, boscop intends to create more space for integration and collaboration by organizing workshops before the WOSonOS with colleagues who have influenced our practice.

## The Genuine Contact Way

Birgitt, one of the most experienced open space practitioners, and Ward Williams, originators of the Genuine Contact Program, were invited to hold their Learnshop "The Genuine Contact Way" from May 6th through May 8th in a beautiful setting just outside Berlin. The workshop will



© Genuine Contact Program



Sandra Janoff & Marvin Weisbord at the Workshop 2009 in Amsterdam organized by KaapZ

cover key concepts of this holistic approach to organizational success. As part of this, participants will explore the Medicine Wheel Tool.

Members of the local Genuine Contact community and boscop have invited them because they have taken the open space philosophy to another level and created their own school & community of practice.

[www.genuinecontact.net](http://www.genuinecontact.net)

### Leading Meetings that Matter

Sandra Janoff and Marvin Weisbord, the originators of the Future Search process and co-directors of Future Search Network, will hold their workshop "Don't Just Do Something, Stand There! 10 Principles for Leading Meetings That Matter" from May 9th through May 11th in Berlin. boscop invited them because we see a philosophy that not only coheres with that of the Open Space facilitator: to be "present and invisible at the same time", but breaks it down into 10 manageable pieces that are tangible, applicable and sufficient to manage a meeting and can be continually practiced and integrated into every facilitator's practice. ([www.futuresearch.net](http://www.futuresearch.net))

### There is still room!

For all interested in coming to any of those events, there are still places available. Want to join?



Sign up at: <http://en.boscop.org> or write an email to: [mia.konstantinidou@boscop.org](mailto:mia.konstantinidou@boscop.org)

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

*Mia Konstantinidou has worked as a facilitator and trainer since 2002. She has trained in Open Space facilitation with Michael M Pannwitz and Jo Töpfer; the anti-bias approach with BDB e.V., Technology of Participation with ICA USA, and Future Search and the art of large group facilitation with Marvin Weisbord and Sandra Janoff.*

*Since January 2002, she has been involved in 50 Open Space Technology events in Germany, Chile, France, Poland, Sweden, South Africa, Suriname, Turkey and the USA, and together with her boscop colleagues, has held OST Trainings in Germany, Chile, and South Africa. The next OST Training for German speakers will take place in June 2010 in Germany. Mia serves on the executive board of boscop eg, and is an active member of ICA Germany and Future Search Network.*

*The berlin open space cooperative eg (boscop) is a cooperative of 11 Open Space facilitators, one company and one supporter who facilitate Open Space events. Since 1996 boscop members have facilitated more than 380 Open Space events, and more than 1,000 people have participated in their trainings in more than 12 countries. visit [www.boscop.org](http://www.boscop.org) to learn more.*



*Courtesy of Paul Z. Jackson*

# Applying Improvisation - an emerging network

*By Paul Z Jackson*

As any facilitator will tell you, while it may be crucial to have a clear plan for your session, it's even more important to be ready to improvise. The skills of responding in the moment by being utterly present to what is going on as your event unfolds are at the heart of successful facilitation.

Improvisation is traditionally associated with jazz and theatre, particularly the comedy exemplified by the likes of Paul Merton and Josie Lawrence in *Whose Line Is It Anyway*. Now the skills of impromptu performance are moving into the workplace, thanks to a community of facilitators, trainers and workshop leaders, gathered in The Applied

Improvisation Network (AIN).

This network of practitioners and clients value the use of improvisation skills in organizations to improve relationships, increase authenticity, promote spontaneity, foster trust and build communities of practice. All in non-theatrical contexts.

More than 1400 business professionals and academics have joined the network - free at <http://appliedimprov.ning.com> - and hundreds have attended international conferences in Europe, North America and Japan, and are actively engaged in AIN regional groups.

## Breaking the isolation

It all began about ten years ago, when I met two other facilitators who were also presenting workshops with improvisation in the title at the International Alliance of Learning (IAL) conference in Florida.

As a comedy producer at the BBC, I'd set up various shows on radio and on stage, and had taught improvisation skills to Rob Brydon, Ruth Jones and Julia Davies (familiar now through Gavin and Stacey) and also to BBC management colleagues, initially just for fun.

Each of us at the IAL had learned about improvisation independently, recognising its value for unleashing energy, creativity and team-work in business settings. Yet we were operating in professional isolation, delighted to find each other and we couldn't help wondering if there were others.

It turned out that there were – perhaps a few dozen who were already selling such services and documenting their experiences, and hundreds more who could see the potential for getting involved, learning and developing the field.

We put together a mailing list, a newsletter and then gathered a group of 30 or so pioneering applied improvisers for our first conference in San Diego in 2002. Since then our real-life and virtual community has grown year by year, and shows no sign of slowing.

## Growing improvisationally

What's fascinating is to see an organization develop by applying improvisational principles to its own activities. Somebody initiates something and if others decide to join in, then it builds. We follow the energy. Everything about the network has started spontaneously and emerged organically.

All contributions to enhancing the AIN are voluntary, and anyone with a passion can join and contribute to the various organising teams – to produce conferences, marketing materials, discussion themes and so forth.

Apart from the joy of finding others who are using similar techniques and a common vocabulary (“Yes, and”, “offers and blocks”, “structure and freedom”), we get to see each others' work through case studies. It's clear that the main current applications of improvisation are in problem-solving workshops – when you improvise, you discover and enhance your creative resources; in presentation skills – helping speakers to get in the moment, to connect with and respond to their audience; and in team-building – improvisation is built on collaborative activities, the essence of teamwork.

And while there is a great deal of variety in how each practitioner goes about their work, some common 'best practice' has emerged. The importance of the briefing and debriefing, for example, is a recurring theme. It's no use getting a bunch of sceptical managers to engage in an activity that has no clear purpose or is even merely 'fun'. The business value must be apparent if the session is to succeed.

You can join the AIN and learn more at: <http://appliedimprov.ning.com>

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



*Paul Z Jackson, is a facilitator and trainer, whose books include *Impro Learning*, *58½ Ways To Improvise In Training*, *The Inspirational Trainer* and (co-author) *The Solutions Focus* and *Positively Speaking*. He is co-founder of the Applied Improvisation Network, and is a member of IAF. Contact [paul@impro.org.uk](mailto:paul@impro.org.uk)*

## Participatory development assessment

# Subjective truths

By Ton Dietz, Francis Obeng, Jerim Obure, Fred Zaal

*The starting point for development evaluations should be how the recipients of development assistance experience change, rather than the set perspectives of the evaluators. This article, which is excerpted with permission from The Broker August 4, 2009, describes a participatory development assessment (PDA) methodology developed by a team of researchers from the Netherlands, Ghana and Burkina Faso in an attempt to develop a more convincing approach to participatory evaluation. To read the full article, see <http://www.thebrokeronline.eu/en/articles/Subjective-truths/issue/15>*

The development industry is probably one of the most evaluated professional fields.<sup>3</sup> Evaluations primarily involve project and programme assessments, and are undertaken by a host of researchers and consultants. More comprehensive evaluations assess the impacts of development interventions on particular sectors such as education or water supply and sanitation within a country or region, or of development approaches such as microfinance.<sup>5</sup>

Among development and evaluation practitioners, 'stakeholders' participation' has become a key phrase. Robert Chambers of the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), UK, has led the way in increasing the attention given to the poor in development and evaluation approaches.<sup>6</sup> Evaluations have thus shifted away from purely 'technocratic' and expert-oriented towards stakeholder-inclusive and participatory assessments.<sup>7</sup>

By the 1990s, participatory approaches had become accepted practice, at least on paper.<sup>8</sup> But some observers began to question how they were being applied, and especially the lack of attention paid to power structures and the added learning obstacles. This successful concept became blurred by many alternative interpretations and strayed from the original intention. The same happened with the overarching concept of 'participation'.<sup>9</sup>

This article describes a participatory development assessment (PDA) methodology developed by a team of researchers from the Netherlands, Ghana and Burkina Faso in an attempt to develop a more convincing approach to participatory evaluation. It is a joint effort by the Amster-

dam Institute for Metropolitan and International Development Studies (AMIDSt) at the University of Amsterdam, the University for Development Studies in Tamale, Ghana, and Expertise pour le Développement du Sahel (EDS), Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. The initiative is funded by three Dutch development organizations – the interchurch organization for development cooperation (ICCO), *Woord en Daad* and Prisma.

### The PDA approach

Unlike many other development evaluation methods, where the starting point is a project, programme or sector, PDA is an 'upside-down' or reverse approach.<sup>10</sup> It seeks to draw out the collective 'experience of change' by the population of an area, and the total set of interventions, including those regarded as 'development initiatives', that people think have played a role in their experience of change.

In these assessments, it is not the expert evaluators who assess the changes and the effectiveness of development initiatives, but representatives of the local population. Although outside experts organize and facilitate workshops where local people can take stock of their experiences and assist in analyzing the findings, PDA is intended to be a self-help evaluation tool that can be used by any local agency.

During the workshops, the participants share their subjective understanding and judgements of development initiatives and their impacts on the process of change in their communities.<sup>11</sup> Three types of 'research area' are



examined: those where funding agencies have been active in the past and are continuing their assistance to the local communities in the future; those where funding agencies have been active and have recently stopped their assistance to communities in the area; and those where no funding agencies have been active in the past (Dirk-Jan Koch refers to these as 'development orphans' and 'blind spots'<sup>12</sup>).

The research team has recently tested the PDA approach in northern Ghana and southern Burkina Faso, areas where the three PDA funding agencies have long been active.<sup>13</sup> Typical research areas are neighbourhoods in and around small administrative centres, with between 20,000 and 50,000 inhabitants spread over several villages.

Workshops in a particular research area bring together approximately 60 people. These include 10–15 'officials' representing local government departments, NGOs, chiefs and religious and social leaders, as well as 45–50 people from the villages, with a balanced representation of young and old, male and female, literate and illiterate, and socio-cultural groups such as Muslims, Christians of various denominations and indigenous religions. The intention is to gather a diverse group of people from each research area and to work with them in various subgroups that reach in-depth judgements of the changes they have experienced.

Later, the judgements of these different groups can be compared – for example, those of men versus women, officials versus villagers, old versus young – and any differences in opinion can be further explored during subsequent workshop sessions. Based on their extensive network in the region, UDS-Tamale and EDS-Ouagadougou select workshop participants using these guidelines.

## Workshop agenda

A PDA workshop takes place over three days at a location where accommodation and meals are provided so that the participants do not have to return home in the evening. During the first day the participants present and discuss their own development stories, in separate groups of relatively old and relatively young women, and of relatively old and relatively young men. Local officials take part in these discussions, often in the group of relatively old men.

Following Anthony Bebbington's useful and influential approach, the participants discuss the changes they have experienced in six 'domains' of their lives:<sup>14</sup> in the

natural environment; the physical environment; human capabilities (education levels, health status); economic facilities; social capabilities; and cultural institutions. For each of these domains, the participants compare their current situation with that of their fathers or mothers when they were the same age. Thus the groups articulate the changes that have taken place over the past 25–30 years. They assess the changes as 'positive' or 'negative', and then qualify these assessments by adding negative aspects of the changes they considered to be positive, and vice versa. Once they have concluded these assessments, the groups list the most important events that have occurred over the last three decades.

The groups continue to discuss their perceptions of wealth and the attributes typical of the research area that determine whether someone is considered to be very rich, rich, average, poor or very poor. In addition, the participants are asked to fill in a questionnaire with questions about themselves, their parents, siblings and children. Their responses can be used as additional material that can be compared with those of their next of kin. The participants complete these questionnaires over the three days of the workshop. Those who can't are helped by those who can.<sup>15</sup>

On the second day, the participants work in separate groups. The local officials form one group so that they can express their views without influencing the villagers. The other participants are split up into three to five subgroups. The day begins with a stocktaking of all development initiatives that have been launched in the research area over the past 30 years. The participants list the name of the initiative, the sector in which it took place, the initiating agency or agencies, the financial donor(s), the period during which the initiative was 'active' and other relevant details. In practice, the initiating agencies can be divided into six main groups: government agencies, faith-based NGOs (including the development branches of churches and mosques), non-faith-based NGOs, private sector agencies (such as private banks or telecom companies) and local private initiatives.

After this stocktaking, the groups are split into male and female subgroups that then assign values to each 'project' ('intervention' or, better, 'initiative'). First they rank the projects on the basis of their usefulness and actual impact they have had on peoples' lives. Subsequently, each initiative is assigned to one of the following five categories:



Participatory planning: African villagers make their own development plan using a self-made map of their area. Photo courtesy of <http://www.padev.nl/>

<b>1</b>	relatively new and still too early to say anything certain about impact;
<b>2</b>	very much disliked and should never have been launched;
<b>3</b>	looked good on paper but produced very few outputs, or had a negligible impact;
<b>4</b>	some visible or tangible outputs, but not sustainable;
<b>5</b>	lasting positive impact ('successful initiatives, also in the medium and long term')

The groups could further differentiate the initiatives with a lasting positive impact into those that reached many people, and those that affected the lives of only a few.

On the third day, the subgroups formed at the start of the second day select the five 'best' and five 'worst' initiatives from the long list they compiled the previous day. For each of the five best initiatives they decide which wealth class benefited the most and which the least. They

do this for each of the projects by distributing ten stones among the five wealth classes distinguished on day one.

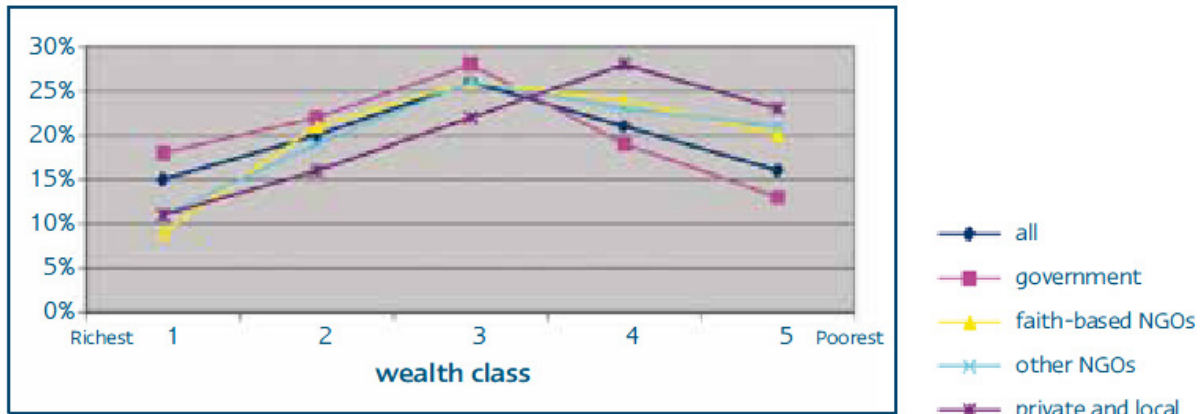
In the most recent workshops, the participants also tried to attach values to the distribution of benefits immediately after a 'project' had ended. By repeating the exercise in the future, it should be possible to compare any shift in opinion about a successful initiative over time.

### The PDA research: initial results

The initial results of three of the six PDA evaluations held to date are now available, and have been sent to the communities in Ghana and Burkina Faso who participated in the workshops.<sup>16</sup> In the following we provide a few highlights, focusing on the workshop held in the village of Sandema in northern Ghana.

The assessment of perceived 'changes' in Sandema revealed a rich diversity of opinions and attitudes. This reflected a multitude of subjective views of the changes that have occurred as mixtures of 'good' and 'bad'. However, underlying this diverse spectrum of opinions some clear general features can be identified.

Differences in opinion are apparent between men and women, between old and young, and across village communities. Assigning values to the impacts of change



Impact of 55 development initiatives on wealth classes in Sandema, northern Ghana

involves a process of negotiation among many people who occupy different positions in society. For individuals as well as for groups, this often results in 'yes, but ...' responses in the case of changes that are valued as mostly positive, and 'no, although ...' responses in the case of changes that are judged as mostly negative.

There is a strong cultural component in assigning values, and a historical path-dependency in judgements. People tend to judge certain changes in the context of their own experiences, or those of their ancestors. It is not always clear what is fact, fiction or myth.

But, as Thomas's theorem states, what is important is that people's opinions and behaviours are based on these mixtures of what they regard as relevant truths, even if these are obviously 'wrong' or 'distorted'. Evaluations often conclude that x% of development projects have failed, or y% have been successful, judgments that often are picked up and magnified by the media, public opinion makers and political entrepreneurs. However, the truth can not be captured in such simplistic conclusions and villagers and local officials in areas such as northern Ghana and Burkina Faso will brand them as simplistic generalizations or distortions of the truth as they see it.

The organization of this workshop using Bebbington's 'capitals and capabilities' approach<sup>17</sup> proved to be very useful indeed. Separating 'changes in social capabilities', which include 'changes in political power', from 'opinions about cultural change', appeared to be enriching, although with obvious misunderstandings between participants and facilitators about the difference between 'social' and 'cultural'.

In Sandema the workshop participants assessed the success or failure of a total of 341 development initiatives. The graph above illustrates the combined results of the values attached to the 'best' initiatives (55 of them) and their impacts on the five wealth classes. It shows how a basically qualitative approach can yield rather robust quan-

titative results.<sup>18</sup> The results probably come close to intuitive assessments of those who are familiar with the area, but the differences between the 'types of development agent' are subtle in degree, and should discourage us from making simplistic judgements.

It seems that many Ghanaians, whether literate or not, are experts in the subtleties of complexity thinking.<sup>19</sup>

## Footnotes

- The Deep Democracy debate was started in The Broker 10 ('Civic-driven change'), while the well-being debate was summarized by Romesh Vaitilingam in 'Well-being: A new development concept' (The Broker 12).
- For an overview of a recent debate in the Netherlands about the ins and outs of Measuring Results for Development visit [www.dprn.nl](http://www.dprn.nl). In a recent Letter to Parliament, the Netherlands Minister for Development Cooperation, Bert Koenders, wrote that 'Development cooperation is among the most researched and evaluated policy domains in the Netherlands (Ontwikkelingssamenwerking behoort tot de meest onderzochte en geëvalueerde beleidsterreinen in Nederland, 'Modernisering draagvlak ontwikkelingsamenwerking'; 11 May 2009). Classic texts, which were the basis of a lot of 'evaluating development' exercises with a rather technocratic and expert-driven approach, include Casley, D.J. and Kumar, K. (1992) *The Collection, Analysis, and Use of Monitoring and Evaluation Data*. World Bank.
- See, for example, Hulme, D. (2000) Impact assessment for microfinance: Theory, experience and better practice. *World Development*, 28(1): 79–98. For interesting examples in many fields, see [www.iaia.org](http://www.iaia.org) of the International Association for Impact Assessment (based in North Dakota, US). They define 'impact assessment' basically as an ex-ante activity ('Impact assessment, simply defined, is the process of identifying the future consequences of a current or proposed action'), but there are many ex-post lessons as well. With PDA we use the word assessment in an ex-post way: people assess the past development trajectory, and the initiatives of the agencies involved. An interesting example of a combination of ex-ante and ex-post impact approaches, based on the experiences of GTZ, is given by Douthwaite, B., Kuby, Th., van de Fliert, E. and Schulz, S. (2003) *Impact pathway evaluation: An approach for achieving and attributing impact in complex systems*. *Agricultural Systems*, 78(2): 243–265.
- Robert Chambers' most influential publications include: *Rural Development: Putting the Last First* (Longman, 1983); *The origins and practices of participatory rural appraisal*, *World Development*, 22(7), 1994; *Poverty and livelihoods: Whose reality counts?* *Environment and Urbanization*, 7(1), 1995; and *Whose Reality Counts: Putting the Last First* (IT, 1997). Together with others he was involved in the famous World Bank-funded exercise 'Voices of the Poor' (see D. Narayan, R.Chambers, M.H. Shah and P. Petesh (2000) *Voices of the Poor: Crying out for Change*. There is a host of related methods, with names like 'sondeo', 'rapid rural appraisal', 'participatory appraisal', 'inclusive assessment', and so on. One of the first texts was Hildebrand, P. (1981) *Combining disciplines in rapid appraisal: The sondeo approach*. *Agricultural Administration*, 9(6). This has inspired us to do 'sondeos', when we started our research programme to support the Arid and Arid Lands Development Programme in

- Kenya in 1982. Perhaps the most useful summary of these approaches is Schönhuth, M. and Kievelitz, U. (1994) *Participatory Learning Approaches, Rapid Rural Appraisal, Participatory Appraisal: An Introductory Guide*, GTZ Verlagsgesellschaft: Schriftenreihe der GTZ, No. 248. Recently, Chambers has further shifted the approach to what he calls PLA: Participatory Learning and Action (e.g. *Participatory Workshops: A Sourcebook of 21 Sets of Ideas and Activities*, London: Earthscan, 2002) and *From PRA to PLA and pluralism: Practice and theory*, in Reason P. and Bradbury, H. (2007) *The Sage Handbook of Action Research: Participatory Inquiry* (London: Sage, pp.297-318).
7. See Scriven, M. (1980) *The Logic of Evaluation*. Inverness, CA: Edgepress; Greene, G.B. (1988) Stakeholder participation and utilization in program evaluation, *Evaluation Review*, 12(2): 91-116; Guba, E.G. and Lincoln, Y.S. (1989) *Fourth Generation Evaluation*. London: Sage; Garaway, G.B. (1995) Participatory evaluation, *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 21-1: 85-102; Keough, N. (1998) Participatory development principles and practice: Reflections of a Western development worker, *Community Development Journal* 33-3: 187-196; Jackson, E.T. and Y. Kassam (1998) *Knowledge Shared: Participatory Evaluation in Development Cooperation*, West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press. Themessl-Huber, M.T. and Grutsch, M.A. (2003) The shifting focus of control in participatory evaluations, *Evaluations* 9-1: 92-111; Holte-McKenzie, M., S. Forde, and S. Theobald (2006) Development of a participatory monitoring and evaluation strategy, *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 29-4: 365-376; Forss, K., S. Kruse, S. Taut and E. Tenden (2006) Chasing a ghost? An essay on participatory evaluation and capacity development, *Evaluation* 12: 128-144. Obure, J. (2008) *Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation: A Meta-Analysis of Anti-Poverty Interventions in Northern Ghana*, MSc thesis, University of Amsterdam (unpublished).  
An interesting recent Dutch PhD study about participatory monitoring experiences is: Guijt, I. (2008) *Seeking Surprise. Rethinking Monitoring for Collective Learning in Rural Resource Management*, Wageningen University and Research Centre.
  8. A good overview is presented in Estrella M. (ed) (2000) *Learning from change. Issues and Experiences in Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation*, Participation in Development Series, London: ITDG. See also Roche, C. (1999) *Impact Assessment for Development Agencies*, Oxford: Oxfam and Novib.
  9. A classical text is Oakley, P. (1991) *Projects with People: The Practice of Participation in Rural Development*. Geneva: ILO/WEP. Recent critiques include: Cleaver, F. (1999) Paradoxes of participation: Questioning participatory approaches to development, *Journal of International Development*, 11-4: 597-612; Kapoor, I. (2002) The devil's in the theory: A critical assessment of Robert Chambers' work in participatory development, *Third World Quarterly*, 23-1: 101-117; Platteau, J-P. and Abraham, A. (2002) Participatory development in the presence of endogenous community imperfections, *Journal of Development Studies*, 39-2: 104-136; Cornwall, A. (2003) Whose voices? Whose choices? Reflections on gender and participatory development, *World Development*, 31-: 1325-1342; and Williams, G. (2004) Evaluating participatory development: tyranny, power and (re)politicisation, *Third World Quarterly*, 25-3: 557-578.  
A special branch is PTD, Participatory Technology development. For an evaluative overview see: Joss, S. (2002) *Toward the public sphere: Reflections on the development of participatory technology assessment*, *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society*, 22-3: 220-231.  
A recent textbook with a lot of useful insights about 'participatory research' is Laws, S. et al. (2003) *Research for Development. A Practical Guide*, London: Sage, for Save the Children.
  10. This approach – described as 'toppled or overturned' – is used by Sjoerd Zaanen and Ton Dietz in an article for the *Netherlands Yearbook on International Cooperation 2008: Assessing interventions and change among presumed beneficiaries of 'development': A toppled perspective on impact evaluation* (2009, forthcoming).
  11. As in the various contributions about 'well-being' in the recent issues of *The Broker*.
  12. See D.J. Koch (2009) *Aid from International NGOs: Blind Spots on the Aid Allocation Map*. PhD dissertation, Radboud University Nijmegen, Routledge. D.J. Koch (2007) *Uncharted territories, The Broker* 3.
  13. In September 2008 three workshops focused on the first type of areas: in Langbensi in the eastern part of Northern Region Ghana, in Sandema, Upper East Region Ghana, and Tô, in southern Burkina Faso. In March 2009 these were followed by three workshops about the second type of area: in Nandom in Upper West Region, Ghana, Lasei Toulou in the western part of Northern Region, Ghana, and in Silly, southern Burkina Faso.
  14. Following an adjusted version of Anthony Bebbington's approach: Bebbington, A. (1999) Capitals and capabilities: A framework for analyzing peasant viability, rural livelihoods and poverty. *World Development*, 27-12: 2021-2024.
  15. When a participant hands in the forms, each form is checked in a personal meeting with the facilitator who coordinates this exercise.
  16. We hope that all 'open source reports' of this research programme will be available in September 2009, at [www.participatorydevelopmentassessment.nl](http://www.participatorydevelopmentassessment.nl). The Sandema report is available at [https://home.medewerker.uva.nl/a.j.dietz/publications/page\\_under\\_3.3](https://home.medewerker.uva.nl/a.j.dietz/publications/page_under_3.3). The Langbensi and Tô reports, and the student reports, will also be available soon. Martha Lahai recently finalized her MSc thesis at IDS on *Participatory Evaluation: Perceptions of Local People on Long-Term Impact of Development Interventions in Northern Ghana* (Amsterdam, 2009). She compared the findings of part of the Langbensi study with findings at a more local level, repeating the exercise there, to identify differences between 'regional' and 'village-level' approaches.
  17. As developed by Bebbington, see note 19.
  18. For a recent discussion of quantitative and/or versus qualitative methods of impact evaluation (by Sabine Garbarino and Jeremy Holland, March 2009, for DFID and the GSDRC), View PDF.
  19. See Fowler, A. (2008) *Connecting the dots. The Broker* 7.

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# Not your father's PowerPoint presentation

By Gillian Martin Mehers

I had a design conversation this morning for a one-day workshop that featured 10-15 participants each individually presenting project ideas, one after another. How do you make that interesting (after the third one)? Why not a pecha kucha<sup>1</sup> or an Ignite<sup>2</sup> (the tag line is "Enlighten us but make it quick")?

Both are presentation techniques with origins in the design and IT world which give presenters 20 slides on autochange at 15 seconds (ignite) or 20 seconds (pecha kucha), for presentations that total no more than five or six minutes. Both are now global phenomena, yet far from being household words.

Pecha Kucha<sup>3</sup> has a good website with samples, and here's one using Pecha Kucha for sustainability<sup>4</sup>. Some good videos of Ignite presentations are on the Ignite Oreilly<sup>5</sup> site, with more on Igniteshow<sup>6</sup>).

These techniques shifts the whole emphasis refreshingly onto the story and the images and makes it much more fun and creative. One website said, "This is not your father's PowerPoint presentation." It all might sound intimidating, but even bad ones are really good (or at least funny and only last 5 or 6 minutes anyways.)

So there are new ways to do presentations, there is also new software for that. Lizzie wrote recently in our blog about Prezi<sup>7</sup>, and what about Keynote<sup>8</sup> that I recently heard enthused over by a super smart 11-year old attending a workshop with his mother (a reaction to the slideset no doubt).

## Alternatives to PowerPoint

In fact, there are 40 listed in wikipedia under presentation programme<sup>9</sup> from AdobePersuasion to VisualBee<sup>10</sup>. It probably has never crossed your mind to try anything but PowerPoint, but if you only have 6 minutes to present something or if you want to get people's attention in a long series of presentations (or just a long day), it might be worth trying a new format.

Or what about a completely new format for the workshop itself (or at least Day 2)? We have written about using Open Space Technology<sup>11</sup> in the past and how that technique helps to organize and support learning. There are a range of Unconference<sup>12</sup> techniques that are being used (many again conceived in the IT sector, and often focused on sparking innovation and creativity enhancements).

I heard at last year's Online Educa<sup>13</sup> about the Foo-Camps<sup>14</sup> and BarCamps<sup>15</sup> that started 5 years ago and promoted as "user generated conferences". Again the content is brought by participants, and schedules are gen-



erated by those with ideas to share and develop with others. A typical FooCamp schedule board looks like this<sup>16</sup> (lots of intriguing titles - I like the scribbled out session called "Howtoons" - I would have gone to that one.)

Again, the objective is to provide those people who seem to have at the top of their Job Description: "Go to Meetings", with a new and refreshing frame. A 2006 article about this was explicitly headlined: Why "Unconferences" are Fun Conferences: Unconferences - meetings organized on the Web or on the fly - are becoming the no-b.s. alternative to industry gabfests<sup>17</sup>. The mention of "organizing on the Web or on the fly" comes from the fact that many pride themselves in being organized in less than a week, and are "evangelised" or promoted using mainly web tools.

Some recent social applications include CrisisCamps<sup>18</sup> held to promote relief efforts for the Haiti Earthquake. They are also short, with one day or half day formats, and a panoply of parallel, one hour sessions. (And perhaps also a driver for the creation of Ignite or Pecha Kucha type presentation formats).

## Skip the talking

All this is still a lot of talking. What about having a whole session where no one talks at all? Maybe something like a Dotmocracy<sup>19</sup> session could be a calming and still productive way to spend an hour after lunch. I have seen this done for evaluations, but not as it is described here as a way to gather inputs on a specific idea. If you look at the template<sup>20</sup>, it is obvious how you can use this for brainstorming, and you don't even need those sticky dots that can be a pain to cut anyways. This looks like something that could also work with very large groups, similar to the Camps and Pecha Kuchas described above.

Maybe I am oversensitive to boring. And yet, there are productivity gains to be made from spicing things up, speeding them up, tapping into enthusiasm and creativity, and cross-sector learning from the IT sector - not just from their methods, but also from their eternal willingness to borrow, adapt and mash things up.

And for Facilitators, boring is not what we want to pop into people's minds when they think of our work (I was going to say "is the kiss of death" but that sounded rather unappreciative). At least there is no shortage of intriguing pathways to explore, these are just a few, if we want to help try to bring an end to boring.

## Footnotes

1. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pecha\\_Kucha](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pecha_Kucha)
2. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ignite\\_%28event%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ignite_%28event%29)
3. <http://www.pecha-kucha.org/>
4. <http://www.odnny.org/node/1757>
5. <http://ignite.oreilly.com/>
6. <http://igniteshow.com/>
7. <http://welearnsomething.blogspot.com/2010/03/preparing-presentation-read-this-praise.html>
8. <http://www.apple.com/iwork/keynote/>
9. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presentation\\_program](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presentation_program)
10. <http://www.visualbee.com/>
11. <http://www.openspaceworld.org/>
12. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unconference>
13. <http://www.online-educa.com/>
14. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foo\\_Camp](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foo_Camp)
15. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BarCamp>
16. [http://admin.oreillynet.com/images/foo/saturday\\_10\\_thru\\_2.jpg?forceadmin](http://admin.oreillynet.com/images/foo/saturday_10_thru_2.jpg?forceadmin)
17. [http://money.cnn.com/2006/06/05/technology/business2\\_unconference0606/](http://money.cnn.com/2006/06/05/technology/business2_unconference0606/)
18. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crisis\\_camp](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crisis_camp)
19. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dotmocracy>
20. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:BikeCamp09-Dotmocracy-37.JPG>

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# Updates from Chicago - a message from the European Rep

By Pamela Lupton-Bowers

I'm taking this opportunity to share with you some of the events of the IAF North American conference and the IAF global board meeting which ended on Saturday. Unfortunately I was unable to attend the conference so I will use quotations from David Spann, US regional representative on the IAF board, to give you a taste of that event. Of course I recommend that you go to the website <http://www.iafna2010.com/> and check out the activities in more detail.

"The conference was simply incredible. While Jan Means and her team worked tirelessly behind the scenes, attendees were making old and new connections, re-establishing bonds with colleagues, and as Meg Wheatley said in her keynote address, "Walking Out and Walking On" to new ways of helping the world collaborate.

There were lots of great sessions including our first ever "Fishbowl" experiences, in which attendees got to witness "facilitation-in-action" by several facilitators including Jo Nelson, Gary Rush, Gary Austin, Nadine Bell and Tammy Adams.

We even overcame the fact that several key individuals couldn't make the cross-Atlantic trip because of the Icelandic volcano.

In one poignant moment, Maureen Jenkins, who had tried valiantly but to no avail to get on any available aircraft heading towards the U.S., joined us via Skype in the memorial session designed to recognize the life work of her husband, Jon Jenkins. It was as if Jon and Maureen were once again linked in their effort to assure that we didn't forget the past, and simultaneously open the way for new possibilities in building community through facilitated relationships. Thank you, Maureen, and thank you, Jon.

Overlooking the reality that some rooms were too cold, some too hot, some darkly lit and in some cases locked without notice, most everyone could be seen with a smile on their face, deep in conversation, laughing, and generally enjoying the experience and relationships they shared during the conference week."



Gary Austin facilitating, from the UK, via Skype, because the volcano grounded all flights to the US. (Photo courtesy of Jo Nelson)

## Renewed optimism

I attended my first IAF board meeting on Saturday and although it was a challenging meeting, I left with a renewed sense of purpose and optimism for the potential of this organisation that we belong to.

We talked about IAF's overall mission and vision, and the answer to Meg Wheatley's question: "for the sake of what does IAF go forward?" Each of us had listened to multiple discussions, begging us in one moment to consider a wider population of people who facilitate regularly but who are not professional facilitators as our key market, and on the other hand to focus solely on the core group that started this organization - those who facilitate professionally for a living.

In the end, we noticed that this was not an "either-or" argument, but rather a "yes-and" conversation about the possibilities IAF has to affect collaborative relationships around the world. Through much deliberation, we agreed

about two general goals:

- Continue focusing on the development, certification and sustenance of those who facilitate professionally
- Extend our offerings to those who may not ever want to be a professional facilitator but who want to improve their facilitation skills because it helps them build stronger communities, better results at work, or simply because they like building stronger collaborative relationships.

This direction fits perfectly with the view of my own facilitation community in Geneva. Many of the people in our group are not or have no desire to be professional facilitators; yet many of them facilitate in the functioning of the work, and others are interested in facilitation because they often need to bring in facilitation services or to build them in house.

And indeed later this month May 21, we will be running a one day mini-conference in Facilitation in Practice with a focus on the wide variety of applications for facilitation skills: facilitation for leading, for project management, for learning. Join us if you are in the neighbourhood, as we have several great speakers, including Lindsay Wilson, Manager of IAF's CPF programme, and Pepe Nummi, chair of the 2010 IAF European Conference in Helsinki. (You can register at [www.gfn-net.ch](http://www.gfn-net.ch))

### **Practitioner Program**

In the same vein, IAF is also developing two new certification programmes: The Practitioner programme is

intended precisely for those people who facilitate, but who may not do so to the exacting requirements demanded of the neutral CPF, and the Trainer Facilitator. This latter designation will be interesting to many of you who deliver in house training and recognise the value of brain friendly learning which requires a facilitative rather than directive approach. We hope to be offering these recognition programmes soon.

The new board decisions will also have some impact on our growth and development in Europe. The board has agreed that groups who decide to form a chapter can benefit from a group rate that will allow them to keep part of the membership fee in the chapter, enabling them to collect resources that can help with start up costs. Any new member now joining IAF will be recommended to join through a local chapter. Our own Chapter representative Kristin Reinbach will be working with groups to establish chapters throughout this year. Contact her to get help in setting up and IAF Chapter and in benefitting from this arrangement.

One conference session explored the impact of generations on IAF membership, made clear that we are not taking advantage of the many social networking possibilities to extend our welcome to younger facilitators and potential IAF members. We will be seeking your expertise to help us set up some of the more applicable virtual networks that will help IAF Europe facilitators to reach out and support one another.

### **Smaller, nimbler conferences**

Another lesson learned is that the huge conferences that have so long been the model for the IAF Global and North America are really not the best model for our organization. The successes of regional conferences here and in Asia have shown that smaller, more nimble conferences are the way forward. This won't change a lot for us in Europe but simply confirms that we have a successful model that our members appreciate.

We hope you will demonstrate that appreciation by supporting this year's conference in Helsinki. It certainly is shaping up to be an interesting event.

All in all, it was a charged meeting and I believe that the recommendations and outcomes will help make our organization and profession even stronger. I wish you all every success in all of your various facilitation endeavours and hope that you will support your own chapter and local conferences - for your sake and for ours.



*Photo courtesy of [www.iafna2010.com](http://www.iafna2010.com)*



# Welcome, new and returning members

(April 2010)

We are delighted to welcome new members who joined IAF in April:

- Ann Alder, UK
- Francis Barrett, UK
- Louise Booth, UK
- Raymond Brennan, UK
- Tina Buhl, Denmark
- Violet Dalton, UK
- Michael Dill, UK
- Hugh Donald, UK
- Maud George, UK
- Lorraine Gillies, UK
- Linsay Graham, UK
- Ross Grieve, UK
- Rachel Helms, UK
- Axel Jürgens, Germany
- Anne Nixon, UK
- Calum Strang, UK

- Rachel Weiss, UK
- Margo Welsh, UK

We are equally delighted to welcome back the following members who renewed their memberships during April:

- Jonathan Bradley, UK
- Lesley Ann Cramman, UK
- Susan Donnan, France
- Jonathan Dudding, UK
- Nicola Edson, UK
- Sylvie Gelin, Switzerland
- Joy Kuhl, Germany
- Ewa Malia, Poland
- Sladjana Milosevic, Serbia
- Erik op ten Berg, Netherlands
- Rob Stroober, Netherlands
- Ria van Dinteren, Netherlands
- Sarah Willis, UK

## Facilitation Workshops and Meetings 2010

Find out more details about specific events listed here by visiting the Workshops and Meetings section of the IAF Europe Forum (<http://www.iaf-europe.eu>) If you would like to let others know about an event you are organizing, please email [rosemary.cairns@iaf-europe.eu](mailto:rosemary.cairns@iaf-europe.eu).

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### MAY 2010

- Introduction to Group Facilitation, May 11, Manchester UK (ICA:UK)

- The Genuine Contact Way: A Hol Approach to Organi 6-8, Berlin, Germany (Birgitt & Ward Williams)
- Don't Just Do Something, Stand There! Leading Meetings that Matter, May 9-11, Berlin, Germany (Sandra Janoff & Marvin Weisbord)
- Introduction to Group Facilitation, May 11, Manchester UK (ICA:UK)
- Making consultation meaningful, May 12, Devon, UK (Consultation Institute)
- Group Facilitation Methods, May 12-13, Manchester UK (ICA:UK)
- 18th World Open Space on Open Space (WOSonOS), May 12-15, Berlin, Germany (boscopeg)



- Maximizing Participation – How to Hold Large Scale Interventions, May 13, Glasgow (Kinharvie Institute of Facilitation)
- Consultation Before and After, May 13, Bedfordshire, UK (Consultation Institute)
- Group Facilitation Methods, May 18-19, Belfast, Northern Ireland (ICA:UK)
- The Facilitative Trainer, May 26-27, Glasgow (Kinharvie Institute of Facilitation)
- Resilient Cities 2010 Congress, May 28-30, Bonn, Germany

## JUNE 2010

- Facilitation Facilitation Skills Training Public Programme, June 9-11, London, UK (circleindigo)
- CPF Certification Event (in Dutch), June 17, Rossum, The Netherlands
- June 23 - deadline for submitting Part 1 documents for CPF Certification Event to be held Sept. 23 in Netherlands
- Group Facilitation Methods, June 29-30, London, UK (ICA:UK)
- Accountability works! sustaining outcomes in changing times, Jun. 30 – July 1 July, London (The Centre for Public Scrutiny)

## JULY 2010

- Deadline for submitting Application Part 1 for Certification Event in Helsinki Oct. 13-14
- Participatory Strategic Planning, July 14-15, Manchester UK (ICA:UK)
- IEMA Change Management workshop, July 20, Leeds UK (facilitator Penny Walker)
- July 23 - deadline for submitting remaining Part 1 documentation for CPF certification event in Netherlands Sept. 23

## AUGUST 2010

- Aug. 13 - deadline for submitting remaining documents for CPF Certification event in Helsinki Oct. 13-14

- “Co-creating a New World of Organizations & Communities”, the 2010 OD World Summit, Aug. 22-26, Budapest, Hungary
- Aug. 23 – invitations extended to stage 2 for CPF Certification event in Netherlands Sept. 23

## SEPTEMBER 2010

- Invitations to Stage 2 of Certification event in Helsinki extended Sept. 13
- Skilled Facilitator workshop, Sept. 13-17, London UK (Roger Schwarz)
- Advanced Skilled Facilitator Workshop , Sept. 20-21, London UK (Roger Schwarz)
- Group Facilitation Methods, Sept. 21-22, Manchester UK (ICA:UK)
- CPF Certification Event (in Dutch), Sept. 23, Rossum, The Netherlands.
- Action Planning, Sept. 23, 2010, Manchester UK (ICA:UK)
- Applied Improvisation Network Conference, Sept. 24-26, Amsterdam, Netherlands (AI Network)

## OCTOBER 2010

- IEMA Change Management workshop, Oct. 12, Newcastle upon Tyne (facilitator Penny Walker)
- Group Facilitation Methods, Oct. 12-13, London, UK (ICA:UK)
- Facilitator Certification Event, Oct. 13-14, Helsinki, Finland
- **IAF Europe 2010 Conference, Oct. 15-17, Helsinki, Finland**

## NOVEMBER 2010

- Introduction to Group Facilitation, Nov. 16, Manchester UK (ICA:UK)
- Group Facilitation Methods, Nov. 17-18, Manchester UK (ICA:UK)

**IAF EUROPE  
CONFERENCE  
PARADOXES IN FACILITATION  
HELSINKI, FINLAND. 15-17 OCT.**



# Latest Journal Issue – Hot off the press!

By Stephen Thorpe

Issue #10 of the IAF's Group Facilitation: A Research and Applications Journal is now available to IAF members.

Group Facilitation is targeted directly at providing information to the professional group facilitator, and focuses on examining the "science" side of the "art and science of facilitation" in a format that is useful to both practicing facilitators and academics.

As facilitators continue to investigate and explore the emerging and contemporary questions facing them, the Journal will continue to fulfill its role in the sharing of facilitation knowledge.

This issue is full of interesting new articles. It includes a classic from Group & Organization Studies by Bruce W. Tuckman and Mary Ann C. Jensen, reviewing the popular forming, storming, norming and performing model of small group development – a review that concluded with the addition of the ad-journing stage.

Also in this issue is an article analyzing cases of facilitators' working 'in the moment', plus there is an article that revisits the Devil's Advocate technique and offers suggestions for practice.

Finally, there is the introduction of a Negotiated Performance Appraisal Model for improving organisational performance appraisal. Reviews of two new books provide food for thought. Just take a peek at what's inside...

## Introduction

Overview of Issue 10 by Stephen Thorpe, Editor

## Articles

- 'In the moment': An analysis of facilitator impact during a quality improvement process by Erik Shaw, Anna Looney, Sabrina Chase, Rohini Navalekar, Brian Stello, Oliver Lontok and Benjamin Crabtree
- Facilitating Problem Solving: A Case Study Using the Devil's Advocacy Technique by Ryan T. Hartwig



- The Negotiated Performance Appraisal Model: Enhancing Supervisor-Subordinate Communication and Conflict Resolution by Gregorio Billikopf

## Classics

- Stages of Small-Group Development Revisited by Bruce W. Tuckman and Mary Ann C. Jensen

## Book Reviews

- Don't Just Do Something, Stand There: Ten Principles for Leading Meetings That Matter by Marvin Weisbord and Sandra Janoff - Reviewed by Shankar Sankaran
- Standing in the Fire: Leading High Heat Meetings with Clarity, Calm and Courage by Larry Dressler - Reviewed by Cindy Tonkin