FACILITATOR'S GUIDELINES

Preparation and planning

Setting the learning goals and choosing a scenario

The first step in implementing a social simulation is defining the learning goal and considering the circumstances/conditions (timeframe, competences, level of studies, number of participants, etc.). The scenarios differ in length, the number of groups and in other aspects.

Time planning

The times given in the timelines of the simulation scenarios are recommended, they can be adjusted according to the specifics of the situation. We strongly recommend not shortening the debriefing phase: allow your students to reflect and share their experience! However, it is possible to split the debriefing session in two parts and organize one part immediately after the simulation and the second part the next day.

In our experience, it is best not to plan breaks during the simulation but go with the flow instead and let the groups retire occasionally. Make sure that there are refreshments provided/available to students for the "basic" and "advanced" scenarios.

Arrangement of the groups for simulation

It is important to think about how to group your students: to take into consideration whether the students already know each other, or they are divided into groups randomly right before the simulation. If students do not know each other beforehand, you must provide them some more time to get acquainted with each other, and during the simulation they need some extra time for them to agree on communicative rules, channels and provide more time for discussions, especially if those activities are online. We advise dividing students into groups considering their personalities. For example, students with strong leadership skills should be separated into different groups or more introverted students to groups where they could better voice their opinions.

Briefing phase and giving instructions

The simulation starts with a briefing phase when students are given instructions about what is going to happen. Acquainting oneself with the scenario and with descriptions of the organizations and class instructions takes some time and effort. You should plan plenty of time for the briefing since it is a very important step for social simulation – if instructions are clear and students' questions are answered, the rest of the simulation will go quite smoothly and stay in flow. During the briefing phase it is important to explain to the students what is expected of them and what they will have to do. This means also managing expectations of what are the aims of the simulation and what are the learning outcomes of the simulation.

For the "basic" and "advanced" scenario, the simulation participants get the materials and worksheets on the day of the simulation. That means that a good portion of the simulation time must be put into getting familiar with the documents and asking questions. For the "short" and "online" scenario, the introductory phase has been shortened on the day of simulation by giving students some pre-simulation activities. In that case, students are divided into groups and get some background materials (e.g. the scenario, individual worksheets, and descriptions of their organizations) with instructions a few days before the

simulation. In such a way students have more time to work through the topic, acquaint themselves with their organization and come to the simulation better equipped.

Implementation of simulation

It is important to guide students through the simulation with precise (prepared but adjusted) instructions and sufficient information for them to be able to decide for the course of action. Asking questions if there is something unclear should be encouraged, and students should have an opportunity throughout the course of simulation to ask. However, you need to be careful not to give one group more information than to another. If the question points to a potentially misunderstood element, it is best to ask everybody's attention and clarify the matter for all. For a successful simulation we advise to involve at least two (or three) facilitators. It is best when each of them has a certain role and they have agreed beforehand who will be responsible for what. One, for example, can focus on instructions and answering questions; the other one on observing and time keeping. If you are doing the simulation online, it is advisable to involve one additional person ("a technical advisor") who can help with emerging technical issues.

Roles of facilitators during the simulation typically are the following:
- giving instructions before the simulation
- keeping time and reminding time limits to participants
- answering the questions that participants have during the briefing and during the simulation
- monitoring the course of action to see if the participants have understood their tasks
- observing to notice learning points to discuss in the debriefing phase (e.g. conflicts/discrepancies in group work; strategies that are used; excellent performances; mistakes that are made). These aspects should be written down to remember and systematically addressed during the debriefing phase.
- adjusting the course of action in simulation if necessary
- in some simulation scenarios, facilitators provide extra stimuli in the form of compromising information (we call them "skeletons"), gamification elements, or extra information.

Role of observers
If there are enough students or participants, the facilitator can appoint observers. Each organization (group) has its own observer. The task of the observers during the whole simulation is to observe the work of the groups and make notes on leadership, situation analysis, interests, strategic planning, negotiation, etc. In the simulation materials you will find an observation form.

Inter-group and in-group discussions
The facilitator can act in two ways: either by being very present in all steps of the simulation (e.g., following the group discussions, monitoring the intergroup negotiations, etc.) or letting the students find their own way and not interfering too much. The second approach means that there could be more time needed for group discussions and also inter-group negotiations, and also in the debriefing session more time should be reserved for student reflections on their experience. The time limits set for different steps of the simulation may increase the stress level for students, and this is an important aspect that should be touched upon during the debriefing.

Reputation and political influence points

Reputation and political influence points are included only in the "advanced" scenario.

If the aim of the simulation has a **communication focus**, **reputation points** for groups can be used. The participants are encouraged to plan their communication activities in the simulation in a way that would increase their reputation (in the eyes of the wider public), including, for example, trying to appeal to common societal values or "higher goods". Journalists are the group that has the right to decide about the increase of reputation of all other groups - the timeline indicates the steps during the simulation when this can be done (presentation of groups' initial position, TV debate, and roundtable discussion). We suggest that journalists have 12 points at the beginning that they can give to other groups. Journalists must develop criteria for giving the points to other groups. It is possible for the journalists to decide to not give any reputation points during the simulation as well.

Political (influence) points can be used when the simulation has a **negotiation focus**. The participants need to negotiate with various partners and form coalitions to gain as many political points (and political power) as possible. Each group has a certain level of **political influence (points)** at the beginning. The ministries could have more political influence points, the civil society organizations - fewer (the facilitator can decide this during the preparation phase). To get more political influence points during the simulation, coalitions with other groups must be developed. For each established coalition, the groups receive one additional point of political influence. Before forming a coalition, the coalition partners agree on how they cooperate and announce it to the facilitators.

Both the reputation and the political influence points can be used in one simulation simultaneously if this suits the learning goals.

Skeletons

In the "basic" and "advanced" scenarios **skeletons** are used. Skeletons are compromising information either about a member of the group or the organization. In the "basic" scenario only the journalists know the skeletons of the groups from the very beginning, and it is up to journalists to decide what they do with the secrets of the groups. In the "advanced" scenario the compromising information can be leaked at various steps during the simulation to some selected groups based on the facilitator's decision. However, it would be advisable that no group has compromising information about all the other groups.

Special events

Special events are: 1) presentation of the group's initial position (advanced scenario), 2) TV debate, and 3) roundtable discussion. It is the duty of the facilitator to prepare the events and brief the groups about the rules and course of the events (e.g. the sequence of the speakers, time limits for each presenter, etc.). Journalists must prepare their questions for the TV debate beforehand. It must also be decided during the preparation phase who will moderate the roundtable discussion.

Debriefing

One of the main principles for carrying out a successful debriefing session is to make sure that every student feels involved and is given the opportunity to share emotions and experiences. Based on the choice of the scenario, the facilitator must plan the sequence for the reflections (e.g. when the observers share their impressions, when the facilitator introduces his/her conclusions, etc.). Based on the notes from the simulation, the supervisor should ask questions first to guide students to think through the most crucial

parts/elements. If the group is large (more than 12 people), some smaller parallel group discussions could be arranged to allow everybody to verbalize their experiences and be more involved.

It may happen that after a successful and tiresome simulation participants do not have much energy to dedicate to reflecting and analysing. Therefore, with longer scenarios or online events, debriefing is better to be organized separately at the next meeting. Some individual reflection sheets could be given to fulfil immediately afterwards when the memories and emotions are still fresh.

It is advised to ask open questions during debriefing. Some examples for the questions:
- What went well during the simulation? What did not go that well? Why?
- Describe your main gains obtained from the participation in this simulation. What did you dislike / were not happy about during and after the simulation? Why?
- What skills that you have you could use? What new skills did you test?
- What did you expect to happen before the simulation started? What did happen? Why was there a difference between what you expected to happen and what did? How and why did the group shift away from the initial plans and aims? Were there any wrong assumptions or expectations before the simulation? What were these and why were they there?
- When were you most frustrated? Why?
- How did the teamwork go, were there any disagreements?
- How well did the set roles work? Did you make changes in the work process?
- How well did you guess the interests/objectives of the other groups? Based on what information did you make the assumptions?
- Could time pressures have been alleviated by organising the group's work differently?
- Was the goal of the activity always clear?
- Were the instructions always clear? What improvements would you suggest to the organisers of the simulation? What is the rationale behind your suggestions?