System Change
Friends of the Earth Europe gratefully acknowledges financial assistance from the European Union. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of Friends of the Earth Europe and cannot be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union. The European Union cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information this document contains.
Introduction to System Change 05

TOOLS 07
Pancake game 07
Power Chair

CASE STUDIES
Environmental Caravan, Cyprus 11

SESSION PLANS
Introducing System Change workshop 13
Introduction to System Change

At the Biennial General Meeting of the Friends of the Earth International in Sri Lanka, October 2014, participants discussed ways in which FoEI's work could be evaluated against our vision of system change. After discussions, the BGM agreed concrete guidance for FoEI's programs and activities to ensure that our work was contributing towards system change and not reinforcing the system. This guidance is a living, working document for the internal use of FoEI and will be evaluated and revisited after an implementation period and after decisions are taken on some outstanding issues. Some of these issues are listed at the end of this paper.

WHAT IS SYSTEM CHANGE?

For FoEI, system change means achieving our vision, mission and values. It means building alternatives and replacing the system, not fixing it. We must change the capitalist system, the essence of which is accumulation without end. Some of its components: consumerism, economic and political domination. Elements that need to be changed: energy, food, political and financial power relations, production and consumption. Patriarchy should be addressed. Capitalism divides humans from nature.

FoEI's core values are:

✓ Ecological and cultural diversity
✓ Peoples' sovereignty, human and peoples' rights
✓ Equity and environmental, social, economic and gender justice
✓ The intrinsic value of nature and the inextricable link between nature and people
✓ Participatory democracy and other forms of participatory decision making processes
✓ Solidarity, responsibility and human dignity

SYSTEM CHANGE GUIDANCE

FoEI's work will be evaluated against this guidance to ensure that our work is leading toward system change and not reinforcing the system. We will use this guidance in the planning processes and monitoring of activities.
1. Leads toward living in harmony with nature, within Earth’s limited capacity (ecological limits) and contributes to ecological, social and economic justice
   - Restores the Earth’s ecological cycles, protects and enhances biodiversity and promotes harmony between people and nature;
   - Nurtures the Earth’s ecological and cultural diversity;
   - Contributes to fair and equitable reductions in the use and exploitation of nature capacity (goods);
   -Addresses exploitation including: gender, socio-economic, race, class, age groups, etc.;
   - Contributes to a decrease in overconsumption and challenges the paradigm of consumer society;
   - Contributes to challenging and reducing wealth and resource concentration between countries and within countries;
   - Contributes to a life of dignity for all and promotes fundamental human rights, including the right to food, energy, water, and culture;
   - Promotes access to resources in a just manner without jeopardizing the access to these resources by future generations;
   - Contributes to greater understanding of historical responsibility, ecological debt, and environmental justice, and promotes the securing of redress;
   - Creates and highlights peoples' economic alternatives and / or demonstrates alternative development pathway for people and planet.

2. Contributes to equitable power relations and challenges unequal and dominant power relations
   - Challenges the power of dominant classes and economic inequality;
   - Decreases the power of capital over society and environment;
   - Is built by a process called social and political accumulation, where we invest in spaces to learn together and each activity or campaign builds on past experience and knowledge;
   - Challenges and does not reinforce existing financial and economic structures and should be built on peoples' demands rather than those of dominant classes, technocrats, etc;
   - Supports affected communities and contributes to the political awareness of people, taking into account class issues;
   - Contributes to or advocates equal division of all forms of labour, decision-making and knowledge among different gender, races, classes and age groups

3. Contributes to peoples’ sovereignty and builds power of the people.
   - Builds and contributes to peoples’ sovereignty, including by empowerment based on FoEI's vision, mission and values, and human, social and cultural rights;
   - Contributes to increasing democratization, participatory decision-making and peoples’ control over the state and state decision-making.
4. Challenges corporate power and builds the power of the people.

- Contributes to reclaiming the state and international spaces from the influence of the corporate sector;
- Contributes to the reversing of privatisation of public and common goods and services and wealth accumulation;
- Contributes to the reversing of privatisation, commodification and financialisation of nature;
- Promotes and contributes to the end of corporate impunity and advances our ability to bring corporations to justice.
- Does not promote corporate social responsibility or voluntary corporate accountability mechanisms;
- Challenges and does not give legitimacy to the current financial structure and its dominance over political and democratic decision making spaces, eg. Lending, so called technical cooperation or policy making by big financial institutions.
Tool: The Pancake game

WHAT IS THIS TOOL AND WHY USE IT?
This role play/simulation has been used by Lars Igeland from FoE Sweden with groups of 10-15 people, aged 15 upwards. It is a way to explore issues (including local democracy, trade and the food system), as well as how to campaign and build alliances- starting from a relatively simple situation to dig deeper into these issues.

HOW TO RUN IT
Explain to the group that this will be role play in the form of a TV show, where everyone gets a chance to represent a character or role. Divide the group into small groups (2 or 3 people), who will play the following roles: School students; global pancake producing company; local politicians; local pancake co-operative. You could also add the role of European Commission. As facilitator, you will play the role of the TV show host.

THE SETTING
The school students are complaining about the poor quality of the pancakes that they are being served in the school canteen. The quality has decreased since the local council decided that the schools could no longer produce their own pancakes, but had to buy the cheaper frozen pancakes made by the global pancake producer on the other side of Europe.

INSTRUCTIONS
Give the small groups 10 minutes to prepare their role, (in different rooms, or different parts of the room so they can’t hear each other). You can give extra information to each of the groups to help them understand their role. The global pancake company and local pancake co-operative should invent names for their businesses, and the local politicians should decide which political party they represent.

THE ROLE PLAY
After 10 minutes, bring the small groups together in the “TV studio” (a semi-circle of chairs). Each small group should have a name card in front of them showing their role. Explain that as on all TV shows, you should not talk over each other, and give others a chance to speak. As TV host, you could have one of the pancakes on a plate (represented by a circle of dish-cloth, or paper).
Begin the “show” by explaining that the students had contacted the TV show to complain about the pancakes, and giving the students 1-2 mins to introduce their complaint. Then you can introduce each of the other groups in turn, giving them each 1-2 mins to introduce their positions. Allow some debate between the small groups. Encourage each of the participants to say something. You can ask provoking questions to get the discussion going. End by asking each group in turn what their next steps will be. Give the final word to the global pancake company, as sponsors of the TV show!

De-rolling:
To help get out of the role, you could: get people into pairs with someone from a different small group and ask them to explain something to each other (what they had for breakfast). Changing seats and removing the name cards could also help.

Debriefing:
Begin the debrief by asking each of the small groups how it felt, and whether they felt strong in their position. Try to steer the discussion away from the quality of pancakes, and towards the underlying issues.

Finish off with the question:
what are we going to do together? This could lead to ideas about actions, further study, training in preparing counter-arguments for media work or campaigning.

Possible variations
You could ask what this tells us about the world today, and who has the most power? Does this fit with what you’ve been taught about democracy? Would the situation have been the same 30 years ago? Is this the way it should be in the future? Who are the possible allies?

Depending on the issues you want to address, and what comes out of the group, the debate could then in the direction of lobbying, democracy and corruption, local economy vs. global trade, power of the media, neoliberalism in education, greenwashing and labelling, etc.

Reference: Based on the a workshop delivered by Lars Igeland at the European School of Sustainability, Sweden, February 2016
Case study
The Environmental Caravan – Cyprus

Context and problem to be addressed

✓ Reaching out to local communities, addressing local environmental and social problems, community organising and support, promoting environmental justice issues, creating local groups.

✓ More specifically the problem to be addressed was the similarity and the repetition of similar people present in the events. Outreach to different audiences and different target groups.

✓ Solving environmental problems outside the city in which we mainly operate.

Who was involved
Friends of the Earth Cyprus staff, local communities, local youth groups, local community leaders.

Which strategies and activities were used
Contacting local youth groups, community leaders, other local organisation, mayors and informing them on our idea of implementing a workshop in their village with their support. During the communication we aim to book a one on one personal meeting. During the meetings the topic of the workshop is being discussed with the local community leader or youth group which follows the interests of the community (e.g. agroecology if the operations of the area are agricultural based). The activity is based on popular education workshops.

Using popular education methodologies
During the workshops, there is a presentation on our group and our network focused on the activities, programmes and campaigns we are doing. This presentation involves visual material such as pictures and videos from our actions and activities, and it is on an informal level providing room for questions and discussion between the participants. This presentation introduces our organisation to the community, builds up a relationship with the participants present due to the informal methodology used, and introduces the general discussion that will follow.

In specific cases, the presenter is introducing an environmental justice topic for half hour, in a semi-formal way including a powerpoint. In certain cases, we have found that this is needed in order to show in depth a campaign that you work with, and offer the people your experience on a subject. This topic is linked with the demands of the community and their general needs and character. Then, open the space for discussion on the issue or any other issues that concern the community.
In other cases, after the general presentation of the FoE group the discussion opens with problem posing questions, some examples include are the problems in your areas? What are the things you see that you don’t like? This is how the conversation moves onto talking to about other topics too. This discussion can take up to 1.5 hours, it’s amazing how much information people give when you give them space.

By providing a safe discussion space for these communities, we are removing the “expert” element from ourselves. If this seems difficult at the beginning we provide them the option of doing a common action, or support them in any way they choose on an idea they have to solve an environmental problem in their area.

**Linking to system change and local to global**
The caravan idea helps spread out our work to more remote areas and promote environmental justice campaigns, increasing the level of public awareness. Additionally, the activity is linked to system change by providing visibility of the organisation and the work we do, by building relationships with local community groups and leaders, building partnerships, engaging our volunteers and other activists, building up public support to our work and ensuring in a way public support in our future actions.

During the workshops, the needs of each community or community group is recorded, including what concerns people and their everyday lives and their concerns are incorporated into our work, which might shift the campaigns of the future and shift them towards what people actually care about.

**Lessons learnt**
The open space discussions always move into something else, sometimes an environmental issue that is outside the scope of the visit, or the initial topic presentation that was prepared. The facilitator should allow the conversation and the discussion to shift in different areas, and try to dig into the problem and into the issue in order for the community to find the answers to their problems themselves and the ways of how we can support their struggles or their environmental issues.

There is an average of 20 people are present in each workshop. This is a fairly manageable number for a facilitator and allows the methodology of open space discussion. The focus is not on the quantity of people, but on the quality of people and the level of representation of a community. The ultimate focus is to establish a relationship with a community, record the environmental issues they face and work in cooperation on resolving that issue.

Follow up with meetings with the community leaders is essential. You need to keep communication and maintain the relationship established, and ultimately work together on an environmental issue. Success would be the community to ask for a follow up and inviting you to the local festivals that are organising, and also other communities that have seen your work to ask for a visit in their own premises.
Session Plan:
Campaigns for System Change

OBJECTIVES
✓ Introduce the FoEI system change guidelines
✓ Contextualise how our campaigns can contribute to system change
✓ Provide support for groups putting it into practice

Time needed: 1hr 45 minutes

ENERGISER – 10 MIN

PRESENTATION – 10 MIN
Present the FoEI guidelines (see page 4-6) with open questions from the floor
Share how School of Sustainability uses and approaches the guidelines

ROTATING CASE STUDIES – 50 MIN
Part 1: Introduce four to five local approaches or campaigns that contribute to some or all of the guidelines. Each group with an example is asked in advance to prepare maximum five minutes about their work, and how it contributes to the System Change criteria – 5 min each/ 30 min total

Part 2: Market place – 20 min
Set up a table or spot for each case study/criteria, and allow for 20 minutes free roaming for more in-depth and personal discussions about each example and how it works towards system change

Example case studies:
✓ Croatia- SoS Ja Jadran campaign
✓ FoEI – mapping resistance and common resistance targets
✓ YFoEE – internalised system change and development of equality and interculturalism manifesto
✓ FoE Slovakia waste pickers and recycling work
✓ FoE Denmark mass mobilisation for democracy and against TTIP

Plenary: Introduce questions to think about, and discuss after the break
how do we work for system change
- In the way we organise ourselves
- In the groups and communities we work with
- In our events
Come up with a tool or activity to educate around system change through campaigns