

CROSSROADS

GUIDEBOOK

WORKSHOPS

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Project

Crossroads

Key Action 2 – Small Scale in Youth

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SUMMARY



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INTRODUCTION

The Crossroads Project endeavours to **promote practices of intercultural solidarity and active citizenship** to enhance the diversification of crisis responses among the upcoming generations.

This project aims to **empower young refugees and migrants** to become **active citizens** in their communities; to identify where global issues, which result in migration, intersect with local responses and solutions in a bid to empower a response targeting the intersectionality of global issues.

The project partners will utilise **global citizenship education** pedagogies to develop a suite of non-formal education resources focused on constructive dialogue, and systems thinking approaches for young people and youth workers.

Thinking in interconnectedness (or systems) has been used as a way of exploring and developing effective action in complex contexts, enabling systems change. Integrating these concepts into how we approach intercultural solidarity and address global issues such as the climate crisis, colonisation, and conflict endeavours to **create sustainable long-term change** and **contribute to an European identity**.

**We acknowledge that this article contains some challenging vocabulary, because the topic itself is not simple. But during our workshops with young people, we always explain things in a clear and simple way, making sure everyone can take part and enjoy the experience.*



#01 WORKSHOP

**Identifying the Root Causes
of Global Issues**

WORKSHOP 1



Identifying the Root Causes of Global Issues

1. Understanding Root Causes and Global Issues

The world is facing **multiple interconnected challenges**, from climate crisis and economic inequality to forced migration and political instability. These issues do not exist in isolation - they are part of a larger system where **different factors influence and reinforce each other**.

Most of the time, when we talk about global issues, we focus on visible symptoms - the aspects that we see in everyday life.

For example:

- *We see poverty, but do not always question why certain communities lack access to resources.*
- *We see climate disasters, but do not always consider how industrial policies, deforestation, or economic structures contribute to them.*
- *We see migrants and refugees seeking safety, but do not always ask what conflicts, economic crises, or environmental disasters forced them to move. Climatic migration increased a lot in the last years and even though the risks in certain regions are known, no plan is put in place.*

This workshop will focus on going deeper into these challenges by asking:

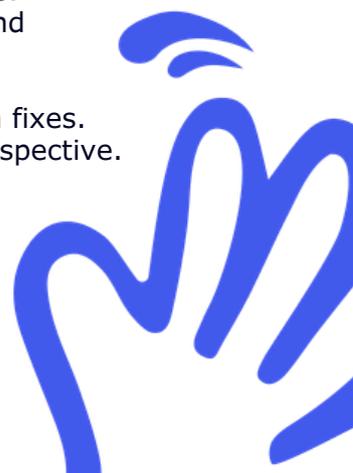
- *What are the real reasons behind these issues?*
- *How do different global problems connect and reinforce each other?*
- *How can we think critically and systemically to find solutions?*

To answer these questions, we will use systems thinking and root cause analysis to explore not just what happens, but why it happens. For more information about these methods, please check the [methodological guide](#).

2. Learning Objectives

By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- **Understand** the concept of root causes and how they shape global issues.
- **Differentiate** between symptoms and root causes in social, economic, and environmental crises.
- **Analyse** how different factors connect using systems thinking.
- **Identify** realistic solutions by targeting root causes instead of short-term fixes.
- **Develop** a critical mindset to explore global challenges with a deeper perspective.



WORKSHOP 1



Identifying the Root Causes of Global Issues

3. Thematic Areas Explored in the Workshop

This session will cover four main thematic areas that **highlight the complexity and interconnection of global issues**:

1. Economic and Social Inequalities

- *Why are resources and opportunities unequally distributed?*
- *How do economic policies, labor markets, and social structures contribute to poverty?*
- *How does inequality lead to other global crises (e.g., migration, political instability)?*

2. Environmental Degradation and Climate Change

- *Why is climate change accelerating?*
- *How are environmental policies, industrial activities, and global economic systems connected?*
- *How do climate issues disproportionately affect vulnerable communities?*

3. Migration and Displacement

- *What forces people to leave their homes?*
- *How do conflict, economic instability, and climate change contribute to forced migration?*
- *What are the long-term solutions to address the root causes of displacement?*

4. Political Instability and Governance Challenges

- *How do weak governance, corruption, and economic pressures contribute to crises?*
- *Why do some regions experience more conflict than others?*
- *What policies or interventions can strengthen global stability?*

Throughout the workshop, these themes will be explored using interactive discussions, group exercises, and problem-mapping techniques to develop a deeper understanding of how global issues are created and sustained.

Why This Workshop Matters

Understanding root causes is the first step in creating real, lasting change. If we only focus on surface-level problems, we risk creating solutions that do not address the real drivers of global crises.

Through this session, you will develop the skills to critically analyse complex issues, uncover how different systems interact, and find pathways toward more sustainable solutions.



#1 OVERVIEW

Approximate duration
3 hours

Identifying the Root Causes of Global Issues

Target Group

- Young migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers
- From 6 to 40 participants. It is recommended to have more than 15 participants for a more complete experience.
- Aged 16-30
- Mixed levels of educational background

Workshop Objectives:

By the end of this workshop, participants will:

1. Understand the concept of root causes and how they contribute to global issues.
2. Develop critical thinking skills to analyse global challenges beyond surface-level symptoms.
3. Apply systems thinking to explore how different social, economic, and environmental factors interconnect.
4. Identify potential solutions based on a deeper understanding of causality.

Key Themes Covered:

- **Global Interconnections:** Understanding how issues such as migration, climate change, economic inequality, and political instability are linked.
- **Root Cause Analysis:** Moving beyond symptoms to explore the underlying factors of global issues.
- **Systems Thinking:** Identifying the relationships between different issues.

TIME	ACTIVITY	METHODS & MATERIALS
0.00 - 0.20	Welcome & Icebreaker	<u>Introduction</u> to the session and objectives - Icebreaker: Two Truths and a Global Challenge
0.20 - 1.00	Understanding Global Issues & Root Causes	<u>Brief presentation</u> on Symptoms vs. Root Causes - Interactive discussion: What global challenges affect your community?
1.00 - 1.30	Break	Informal discussion and networking
1.30 - 2.40	Root Cause Mapping Exercise	<u>Group activity:</u> Participants select a global issue and create a cause-and-effect diagram.
2.40 - 3.00	Debriefing & Evaluation	Group reflection - Individual takeaway actions

Welcome & Icebreaker

(20 min)



Time required: 20 minutes

Resources: Paper, Pens, Flipchart or Whiteboard, Markers

Objective: Help participants get comfortable and introduce the theme of interconnected global challenges.

Icebreaker: Two Truths and a Global Challenge

Introduce yourself and outline the agenda for the day. Then, let the participants introduce themselves.

- Each participant states:
 - Their name.
 - Two truths about themselves.
 - One global issue they believe is important.
- The participants go around sharing with the others about what they wrote. They don't have to share with everyone. Depending on the size of your group it might take longer or shorter.

Understanding Global Issues & Root Causes

(40 min)



Time required: 40 minutes

Resources: Gather enough chairs and balloons so that there are enough for all, look up the necessary data (and maybe calculate it), print the reference maps (optional)

Explanation: During the following activities we are going to be talking about a lot of issues that are global, that affect the whole world, so it's important to understand the background of those global issues.
2 minutes

Explain to the participants that the prepared field stands for a world map, indicate where North and South is, but don't give more details. The idea is that they understand all together where to put the different continents, etc. It should be emphasised that the coming tasks are not about knowledge but only about discussing the respective issue.

Optional: the facilitator can bring objects such as marbles or figurines and enough of them to represent the number of participants as well as the thing being measured. For example, figurines for population, coins for wealth, black marbles for CO2, etc.

Understanding Global Issues & Root Causes

Interconnected world:

25 minutes

At each stage, participants leave behind an object, paper or marker of a specific colour, similar to what they do in stage 3 with the chairs. That way, at the end of stage 5, you could have a visual comparison of the different items. If your group is small, you can give more than one of those items per person at each stage.

Facilitator Notes:

It is suggested to write down (or take a picture of) the real numbers and how participants arranged themselves before and after correction. This could be of certain use depending on the objectives the facilitator chooses to have priority.

Stage 1

The participants are told: "Set yourself in a country of your choice. Any country in the world: where you live, where you were born, where you dream to go... Choose the country and reason you prefer"

→ *This first task is useful to understand the dynamic of the activity and the way they "draw" the world map.*

→ *Ask : "why is Europe in the center?"*

Stage 2

Now the whole group is asked to arrange themselves on the continents according to what they think the world population is spread. They are given five minutes to complete this task. Afterwards the real numbers (and their calculated equivalents for the group) are given.

- Asia: 59% = 18/30
- Africa: 18% = 5/30
- Europe: 9% = 3/30
- North America: 4,7% = 1/30
- South and Central America: 8,3% = 3/30
- Oceania: 0,6% = 0/30

The results are compared and, if needed, corrected.
The participants are asked to remember their position.

Source:

[https://www.worldometers.info/worldpopulation/#:~:text=8.1%20Billion%20\(current\),currently%20living\)%20of%20the%20world.](https://www.worldometers.info/worldpopulation/#:~:text=8.1%20Billion%20(current),currently%20living)%20of%20the%20world.)

Stage 3

For the second stage each participant is asked to grab a chair. The chairs should now be spread according to the share of wealth (GDP) each continent holds. After a maximum of five minutes of discussion the results are presented, compared and, if necessary, corrected. Now participants are asked to take their position from the first task again. This illustrates the wealth/ income per person :

- Asia: 37% = 11/30
- Africa: 3% = 1/30
- Europe: 25,5% = 8/30
- North America: 30% = 9/30
- South and Central America: 4% = 1/30
- Oceania: 0,6% = 0/10

The results are compared and, if needed, corrected.

Source (2023) : <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/gdp-per-capita-worldbank>

Stage 4

Place yourselves in the countries that have the highest immigration rate. According to the migrant population active in the current world, which country has more migrants? As you can see the map is similar to GDP per country, this lets us see what the real motivations for migrants to leave their countries are, better economies and work opportunities. It's also interesting to say that most migrants don't belong to the statistics of GDP per habitant because most of them don't have legal status.

- United States (50 millions)
 - Germany (15,8 millions)
 - Saudi Arabia (13,5 millions)
 - Russia (11,6)
 - Great Britain (9,4)
 - United Arab Emirates (8,7)
 - France (8,5)
 - Canada (8)
 - Australia (7,6)
 - Spain (6,8)
 - Italy (6,3)
 - Turkey (6)
 - India (4,8)
- 
- North America: 37% (11/30)
 - Europe: 30% (9/30)
 - Asia: 28% (8/30)
 - Oceania: 5% (2/30)
 - South America and Africa: 0% (0/30)

Also as a curious fact - Saudi Arabia and Oman have a migrant population of around 50% why do you think this happens?

The results are compared and, if needed, corrected.

Those figures relate to a report from 2019

https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr_2020.pdf (page 25)

<https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/world-migration-report-2024-selected-infographics>

Stage 5

In this round, the participants represent the CO2-emission. Again, participants should be arranged according to what the participants think the emission is spread globally. After five minutes results are compared and, if necessary, corrected.

- **Asia:** Asia is the largest emitter of CO2 globally, accounting for around 50% of total emissions : 15/30
- **North America:** North America, including the United States and Canada, contributes approximately 20-25% of global CO2 emissions : 7/30
- **Europe:** Europe accounts for around 15-20% of global CO2 emissions 5/30
- **South America:** South America's share of global CO2 emissions is approximately 5-10% : 1/30
- **Africa:** Africa's share of global CO2 emissions is relatively low, estimated to be around 5-10% = 1/30
- **Oceania:** Oceania, including Australia and New Zealand, contributes approximately 1-5% of global CO2 emissions. = 1/30

Source map : <https://ourworldindata.org/co2-emissions>

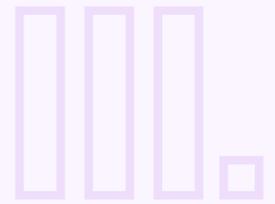
Group Discussion:

15 minutes

Participants take the chairs and form a circle in which they sit down. The facilitator asks if there were any surprises for the participants. If old data was used, it should be asked if participants think that the numbers and continental shares were different now. If yes, why? What happened? Is the spread of the respective item just/ fair? What are the reasons? How can we tackle injustice? How do conflicts in one region of the world reach other places? Why did you set Africa in the middle?

Root Cause Mapping Exercise

1h10



Resources: Paper, Pens, Post-its, Flipchart or Whiteboard, Markers

Activity

Divide the participants into groups of 3-4 participants each to ensure active participation. Each group picks a global issue among the following ones (if you have less than 15 participants, use less global issues, don't make smaller groups):

- **Forced Migration & Displacement** - Why do people flee their countries?
- **Climate Change & Environmental Degradation** - What are the root causes of rising global temperatures?
- **Economic Inequality & Unemployment** - Why do some people have fewer job opportunities?
- **Food Insecurity & Hunger** - Why do millions of people lack access to sufficient food?
- **Gender Inequality & Discrimination** - Why do women and marginalised genders face inequalities worldwide and are more at risk?

Give the instructions of all the steps to the participants. Show them an example of a tree. Then, regularly go and check up on the groups to see if they have questions or if they are stuck. Make sure they have time to prepare all the steps.

Step 1: Draw a Tree (35 minutes for the 3 steps)

- On flipchart paper, draw a large tree with:
 - A trunk (the main issue)
 - Several roots (underlying causes)
 - Multiple branches (consequences or effects)

Step 2: Identify the Roots – The Underlying Causes

- Ask: *What are the deep reasons why this issue exists?*
- Encourage participants to go deeper and connect multiple causes instead of stopping at obvious explanations.

Example for Climate Change

- *Superficial cause: Too many cars → But why?*
 - *Car dependency → Poor public transport → Lack of investment → Government policies → Lobbying by oil companies*

Example for Migration & Displacement

- *Superficial cause: Conflict → But why do conflicts happen?*
 - *Competition over resources → Climate change → Political instability → Economic inequalities*

Encourage cause-and-effect thinking and push participants to dig deeper.

Step 3: Identify the Branches – The Consequences

- Ask: *What happens as a result of this issue?*
- Guide participants to think locally and globally.

Example for Economic Inequality

- *Reduced access to education → Fewer opportunities → Higher crime rates*
- *Health disparities → Lack of healthcare → Increased mortality rates*

Step 4: Present & Discuss (25 min)

Each group presents their Problem Tree in 5 minutes.

Root Cause Mapping Exercise

Question Prompts:

For Identifying Root Causes (The Roots)

- *What economic, social, or political factors contribute to this issue?*
- *How are governments, businesses, and policies involved in this problem?*
- *Are there historical events that shaped this issue?*
- *How does this issue connect to other global challenges?*

For Identifying Consequences (The Branches)

- *What happens to individuals, communities, and countries as a result of this issue?*
- *How does this issue affect future generations?*
- *How does this issue impact the environment, health, or human rights?*

Facilitator Notes:

- **Encourage deep thinking** – Don't let participants stop at surface-level explanations.
- **Encourage active-listening.**
- **Challenge assumptions** – Ask follow-up questions to push for deeper connections.
- **Keep time structured** – Help groups stay on track with the timeline.
- Make connections between groups – Show how different global issues are interlinked.
- **Encourage them to share examples from their regions, families, etc...**

Debriefing & Transition to Next Activity

10 minutes

Ask participants:

- What surprised you most in this activity?
- How is each theme connected to the others?
- Do you notice any similarities in the root causes?
- How did you feel?
- Was it easy? Why?

Key takeaway:

Global challenges are deeply interconnected, and finding solutions requires addressing the root causes, not just the symptoms.

Lead into the next session on "Systems Thinking", showing how different issues interact with each other.



#02

WORKSHOP

**UNDERSTANDING
SYSTEMS THINKING**

WORKSHOP 2



Understanding Systems Thinking

1. What is a System?

Before introducing systems thinking to participants, facilitators must have a clear understanding of what a system is — and what it is not.

Definition of a System (Simple & Clear)

A system is a group of connected parts that work together to serve a common purpose or produce a specific result. *Think of it like a living machine — if you remove or change one part, the entire system is affected.*

Key Points to Remember

1. Systems Are Made of Interconnected Parts and each part affects the other.

Example: In the system of the body, all the organs interact. If you remove one organ, the whole body won't be able to function.

2. Systems Can Be Natural or Human-Made

Example: The water cycle and climate system are natural. The healthcare system, school system, and immigration system are human-made.

3. One system can exist inside another.

Example: A school is part of the education system, which is part of the social support system of a country.

4. Systems Interact With Other Systems

Example: The housing system may impact the health system - poor housing can lead to health problems.

What Is Not a System?

- A random pile of things;
- A box of mixed kitchen tools;
- A group of people standing in a room (unless they're connected by purpose or function).

In other words:

If you take away one item from a pile, the pile still functions as a pile.

If you take away one part of a system, the whole thing may stop working properly.

2. Learning Objectives

By the end of this workshop, the participants will be able to:

- **Understand** what a system is and how different components interact
- **Explore** how complex social problems (e.g. migration, discrimination, climate change) emerge from interconnected causes
- **Learn** to identify patterns, structures, and root causes using a systems thinking approach
- **Use visual tools** (mind maps, iceberg diagrams, system loops) to help participants visualise the complexity of issues.

WORKSHOP 2



Understanding Systems Thinking

Why This Workshop Matters

When young people understand systems, they can:

- See how problems are connected;
- Look beyond “quick fixes” to identify deeper causes;
- Recognise where they can intervene or take action;
- Become critical thinkers and changemakers.



#2 OVERVIEW

Everything is Connected: Learning Systems Thinking to Understand Global Issues

Target Group

- Young migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers
- Aged 16-30
- Mixed levels of educational background

TIME	ACTIVITY	APPROACH
0.00 - 0.20	Icebreaker + Introduction to Systems Thinking	Participatory group game + framing
0.20 - 0.45	What is a System?	Collective definition + real-life examples
0.45 - 1.15	Linear Thinking vs. Systems Thinking	Case-based group work
1.15 - 1.30	Break	Informal time
1.30 - 2.20	Iceberg Systems Model (Group Activity)	Visual mapping of causes/patterns/structures
2.20 - 2.50	Sharing + Discussion	Peer feedback and reflection
2.50 - 3.00	Wrap-up + Evaluation	Final thoughts and feedback form

Welcome & Icebreaker

(20 min)



Time required : 20 minutes

Resources: Ball of yarn or string

Objective: Make visible how things (and people) are interconnected.

Icebreaker: System web

15 minutes

Introduce yourself and outline the agenda for the day. Then let the participants introduce themselves :

- Participants stand in a circle with a ball of yarn.
- One person says their name and a local or global issue they care about (e.g. housing, racism, education) and tosses the yarn to someone who shares a related issue.

With each toss, a **web of connections** forms - a visual metaphor for systems thinking.

WHAT IS A SYSTEM?

(40 min)



Time required: 40 minutes

Resources: Gather enough chairs and balloons so that there are enough for all, look up the necessary data (and maybe calculate it), print the reference maps (optional)

Objectives: Understand that a system is a group of interdependent elements working together toward a purpose.

Interconnected world:

15 minutes

1. Watch this short [Systems video from PBS LearningMedia](#)- (2:30)
2. Ask students to work in groups of 3-4 to create a definition of "system" without technological support i.e. Googling, AI etc. Have one person in each group be the recorder who keeps track of the answer. Ask one person from each group to be the spokesperson - to read the definition they developed.

Group Discussion:

10 minutes

Share the information in section [II - 1. What is a System?](#) , relating it to what the students wrote in their definitions.

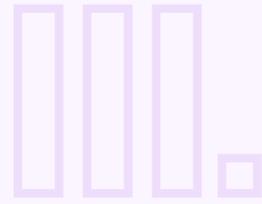
Ask the participants to find some real-world examples such as :

- *Healthcare system*
- *Border and asylum system*
- *Education system*
- *Public transport*
- *Climate systems*

**Invite the participant to think about what is a system and what is not when they are writing their definition*

From Linear Thinking to Systems Thinking

(30 min)



Time required : 30 minutes

Ressources : Pens, Paper

Objective: Help participants move beyond “simple explanations” and begin to think in terms of complex, interconnected systems.

Step-by-Step Instructions :

20/25 minutes

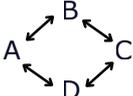
1. Mini-Explanation (5 mins) :

Give a short intro:

“Linear thinking is when we believe that one thing causes another, in a straight line. Systems thinking looks at all the causes, effects, and connections that make up a complex situation.”

Visual Aid Tip: Draw a simple diagram:

- Linear Thinking: $A \rightarrow B$

- Systems Thinking: 

Young people often experience issues like unemployment, housing problems, or racism. These are rarely caused by one single thing. But in everyday thinking, we tend to simplify:

✗ “People can’t find jobs because they’re lazy.”

✓ “People can’t find jobs because of many things: discrimination, lack of networks, legal barriers, education access...”

This activity helps participants see how real-world issues are made up of multiple layers, and that solving them requires thinking beyond a single cause.



From Linear Thinking to Systems Thinking

2. Scenario Group Work (15–20 mins)

Split participants into small groups (3–4 people). Give each group a short realistic scenario related to migration, social exclusion, or inequality. Here are a few examples:

Sample Scenarios (choose 1 per group)

Scenario 1: "Sara Can't Find Housing"

Sara is a 22-year-old refugee. She's looking for housing in a new city but keeps getting rejected by landlords.

Ask the group:

- What's the obvious (linear) explanation? ("She doesn't have money.")
- What other factors might play a role?
 - Legal status
 - Discrimination
 - Lack of guarantors
 - Unfamiliarity with the system
 - Unemployment
 - Poor public transport (can't reach affordable areas)

Scenario 2: "Ali Can't Get a Job"

Ali has been in the country for 8 months and has applied for 30 jobs with no success.

Ask the group:

- What's the simple answer? ("He doesn't speak the language.")
- What else could be going on?
 - Lack of diploma recognition
 - Discrimination
 - No professional network
 - No transport
 - No internet or computer access

Scenario 3: "Mariam Stops Going to Language School"

Mariam, a young migrant woman, dropped out of her French class after 3 weeks.

Ask the group:

- Linear answer: "She wasn't motivated."
- Systems thinking:
 - She's caring for siblings or children
 - The class timing doesn't match her schedule
 - She doesn't feel safe or welcome in class
 - She has no transport
 - She's working part-time
 - She's experiencing trauma or stress

Instructions to Groups:

- Write the linear explanation first.
- Then brainstorm at least 5 interconnected causes that could be contributing.
- Draw a simple map of causes (use arrows to show connections).

Optional: Add consequences too. (e.g. No job → No housing → Stress/mental health issues)

III. From Linear Thinking to Systems Thinking

Group Discussion:

5/10 minutes

Each group presents their issue and map.

Facilitator highlights how one issue leads to others, and how these connections form a system.

Discussion Questions

- Did anything surprise you?
- Did the “linear” explanation hide anything important?
- How would thinking systemically change how we try to solve this issue?

Facilitator Notes:

5/10 minutes

- Encourage empathy: “Could this happen to someone you know?”
- Emphasise: None of these causes exist alone – they build on each other.
- Draw links between group maps to show that many systems are connected.

Understanding Systems with the Iceberg Model

(50 min)

IV.

Time required : 50 minutes

Resources : Paper, Pens, Iceberg example (printed or drawn see annex), Video Projector

Iceberg : Creation

50 minutes

Tell the Participants: Now you are ready to create a systems iceberg model for some problems you might be facing. Watch this video with your participants:

[The Systems Iceberg Explained- \(6:44\)](#)

Instructions for Participants

1. Form small groups (3–4 people)
2. Each group chooses or is assigned a real-world issue (see below)
3. They draw their iceberg on large paper
4. Together, they fill in each layer:

IV. Understanding Systems with the Iceberg Model

Iceberg : Creation

50 minutes

PART	QUESTIONS TO GUIDE
Tip: Event	What is the visible problem or event?
Patterns	Has this happened before? Does it happen often? To whom?
Structures	What systems, services, policies, or institutions shape this situation?
Mental Models	What beliefs, assumptions, or cultural norms might influence this issue?

Suggested Topics for Icebergs:

- A young migrant being denied housing
- A refugee dropping out of school
- A migrant not getting a job after many interviews
- Young people in a city not engaging with local politics
- Discrimination in the healthcare system

Group Discussion:

30 minutes

Each group presents their iceberg briefly:

- *What was your event?*
- *What did you discover under the surface?*
- *What surprised you?*

Facilitator links the examples:

- *"Did any groups mention similar structures?"*
- *"Are there mental models that appear in more than one issue?"*
- *"How might understanding these layers help us find better solutions?"*

To close the activity, ask:

- *"If we only respond to the tip of the iceberg, what happens?"*
- *"What happens if we start to change things under the surface?"*

Facilitator Notes:

- Use simple language and give at least one full example at the beginning.
- Remind participants: there's no one "right" iceberg - it's a tool to think deeper.
- Gently challenge assumptions by asking "why do you think that happens?" or "what might be behind that?"
- Allow bilingual or visual expression if participants struggle with written language.

V. Evaluation & Feedback

20 minutes

- At the end of the session, participants complete a short evaluation form to assess:
 - Their understanding of systems thinking.
 - Their engagement with the activities.
 - What they found most useful and what could be improved.
- Data Collection Methods:
 - Short surveys (Likert scale & open-ended questions).
 - Facilitator observations.
 - Creative reflections (drawings, quotes, or short statements).

#03

WORKSHOP

**FINDING SOLUTIONS
TO COMPLEX ISSUES**

WORKSHOP 3



FINDING SOLUTIONS TO COMPLEX ISSUES

1. What Does It Mean to Find Solutions to Complex Problems?

In this workshop, participants are invited to go beyond identifying what's wrong - and begin imagining what's possible. A complex problem is one that doesn't have a single, clear solution.

It's shaped by many causes, people, systems, and invisible forces. When young people face issues like housing insecurity, discrimination, or exclusion, these aren't isolated events - they are part of bigger systems.

Finding solutions to complex problems doesn't mean solving everything at once. It means learning to:

- **Understand the system behind the issue**
- **Identify points of change within that system**
- **Design small, realistic actions that can lead to bigger shifts over time**

This kind of problem-solving is not about having the "right" answer - it's about practicing critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity in the face of complexity.

2. Learning Objectives

By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- **Understand** what makes a problem "complex" (as opposed to simple or complicated)
- **Shift from problem-based thinking to a solution-focused mindset**
- **Identify leverage points** - small but strategic places in a system where change is possible
- **Practice co-creating** realistic, systemic solutions with others
- **Gain confidence** in their ability to act - even on big issues - starting from their own position in the system

Why This Workshop Matters

Young migrants and refugees often face problems that feel too big or too tangled to solve. They may feel unheard, stuck, or powerless. **This workshop offers a hopeful, structured, and empowering approach:** it shows that even within complex systems, we all have a role to play, and even small actions can matter.

By building on the tools from the first two workshops (root cause analysis and systems thinking), this session helps participants become not just observers of injustice — but agents of change. It reinforces the message that solutions don't need to be perfect or final to be valuable. **What matters is starting the process of transformation — together.**



WORKSHOP 3



FINDING SOLUTIONS TO COMPLEX ISSUES

#3 OVERVIEW

Solving Complex Problems: From Challenges to Systemic Change

Target Group

- Young migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers
- Aged 16-30
- Mixed levels of educational background

TIME	ACTIVITY	APPROACH
0.00 - 0.15	Welcome and Introduction	Creative energiser or systems-thinking recap
0.15 - 0.40	What Makes a Problem Complex?	Real-life examples + small group reflection
0.40 - 1.10	Reframing the Problem	Problem statements + solution-focused reframing
1.10 - 1.25	Break	Informal time
1.25 - 2.15	Leverage Points Mapping	Visual mapping of entry points to change the system
2.15 - 2.50	Mini Solution Lab	Group prototyping: build & present an idea
2.50 - 3.00	Wrap-up + Evaluation	Reflection + 1 key takeaway per person



Welcome & Warm-Up: The Domino Effect

15 min)



Time required: 15 minutes

Resources: nothing

Objective: Get participants thinking about cause-and-effect chains in systems.

Instructions

15 minutes

- Invite participants to sit or stand in a circle.
- One person starts with a "small action" (e.g. "a school closes").
- The next person says what might happen next ("students stay home"), and so on.
- Build a chain of consequences, like dominoes falling.

"This shows how in complex problems, one small event can trigger many effects. Today we'll look at how to change those patterns."

What Makes a Problem Complex?

25 min



Time required : 25 minutes

Resources : Problem cards, flipchart with three columns, markers

Objectives : Help participants distinguish between simple, complicated, and complex problems.

Instructions

15 minutes

Mini-explanation of 3 types of problems (use visual aid):

- **Simple:** One cause, one solution (e.g., a broken glass)
- **Complicated:** Many parts, but can be solved with expertise (e.g., fixing a car)
- **Complex:** Many causes, no single solution, unpredictable (e.g., youth unemployment, racism, climate change, etc.)



What Makes a Problem Complex?

Visual aid that can be printed for the participants:

Simple Problems:

- Have one cause and one clear solution

Example: A flat tire → fix or replace it.

Complicated Problems:

- Have many parts but can be solved with expertise

Example: Fixing a car engine → many steps, but predictable.

Complex Problems:

- Have many interconnected causes, no single solution
- Outcomes are uncertain and involve people, systems, and beliefs.

Example: Integration of migrants → depends on housing, language, legal status, public attitudes.

Card sorting activity (optional but engaging):

- In groups, give them 6–8 real-world situations on cards (e.g. “student fails an exam,” “housing discrimination,” “family loses home in climate disaster”).
- Ask them to sort into simple, complicated, or complex.

Cards that can be printed for the participants:

- A bike tire is flat.
- Someone is refused housing because of their name.
- Your phone battery dies.
- A young person keeps getting rejected from job interviews.
- A bus is late.
- A refugee drops out of language class after three weeks.
- You want to register for school but don’t understand the process.
- Climate change is making summers hotter each year.
- You lose your house in a flood.
- Many migrants in your city can’t access healthcare.

Group Discussion:

- Why did you place each problem in that category?
- What makes a problem feel complex in your own experience?
- Which problems are hardest to change - and why?

10 minutes

Reframing the Problem

30 min



Time required : 30 minutes

Resources: Reframing worksheet (with two columns: “Problem” / “What we want instead”), flipchart paper, markers

Objective: Shift from problem-centred to solution-focused thinking.

III. Reframing the Problem

In small groups, give each team a "problem statement" - either chosen by them or pre-prepared:

- "Migrants face discrimination in housing."
- "Youth can't find stable jobs."
- "People are dropping out of language classes."

Ask each group to complete two steps:

- Step 1: Describe the problem from their point of view.
 - "What's wrong?" "What's difficult?"
- Step 2: Reframe it into a positive goal.
 - "What do we want instead?"
 - "What would success or improvement look like?"

A Printed worksheet can be given to the participants:

Share back:

- Each group reads their "from... to..." statement:
"Instead of: Migrants are excluded from housing,
• We want: A city where everyone can access safe, affordable housing regardless of background."

Group Discussion:

10 minutes

- How did it feel to reframe the issue?
- Why is it useful to focus on possibilities instead of just problems?
- What's the risk of staying only in "problem mode"?

Leverage Points Mapping – Where Can We Act?

50 min

IV.

Time required : 50 minutes

Resources : Paper, Pens, Iceberg example (printed or drawn see annex), Video Projector

Objective: Identify specific places in a system where a small change could lead to bigger improvements.

Instructions: **What Are Leverage Points? (Brief Intro – 5 min)**

40 minutes

Explain to participants:

A leverage point is a place in a system where a small shift can lead to a big impact. It's where change is possible - and where it can ripple out.

Example:

GLOBAL ISSUE: FOOD WASTE

- The Problem:

A huge amount of food is wasted every day across supermarkets, restaurants, and households - even while millions of people face hunger.

IV. Leverage Points Mapping – Where Can We Act?

LEVERAGE POINT EXAMPLE:

Changing supermarket donation policies

Many supermarkets throw away edible food due to strict "sell-by" dates, branding rules, or liability concerns. A leverage point is to change internal policies or national regulations so that:

- Food close to expiration can be safely donated to food banks
- Stores are **required or incentivized** to donate unsold food instead of discarding it

WHY IT'S A LEVERAGE POINT:

- **A small policy** change can lead to a **big shift in behavior** across an entire sector
- It tackles the issue upstream, changing how the system operates
- It creates ripple effects: less landfill use, fewer emissions, more people fed, less guilt from waste

Use a simple metaphor:

Think of a seesaw - the closer you press to the center (the balance point), the more movement you get with less effort. That's a leverage point!

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS (35 MINUTES)

1. In the same small groups, ask participants to return to the problem they reframed before the break.
2. On a large sheet, have them draw a basic map of the system involved in their issue (it doesn't need to be perfect).
 - Who are the stakeholders (actors)?
 - What parts are connected?
 - Where are the bottlenecks, barriers, or entry points?
3. On that map, they identify:
 - What's already working (assets)
 - What's not working / where the system is stuck
 - Where small, realistic actions could make a difference

They then circle or highlight their top 1–2 leverage points.

Group Discussion:

10 minutes

- Where do you think action is most possible?
- What kind of change could that create?
- Who would need to be involved?

Facilitator notes

Use real examples to illustrate leverage points (e.g. a small school workshop on racism reducing tensions over time). Encourage groups to draw messy diagrams - systems are messy! Don't aim for perfection.

Offer a list of possible leverage point types if needed:

- Information
- Relationships
- Access
- Rules
- Narratives
- Behaviors

Walk around and ask questions like:

- "What happens if this part changes?"
- "Who could support this change?"
- "What would success look like in a small way?"

Mini Solution Lab – Co-Create & Prototype

35 min



Time required : 15 minutes

Resources : Paper, Pens, Iceberg example (printed or drawn see annex), Video Projector

Objective: Develop a small-scale, testable idea for creating change based on the leverage point.

Instructions

30 minutes

Each group takes their top leverage point and uses a Solution Canvas (or A3 paper) to design a concrete idea.

Ask them to fill in:

1. Problem they want to address (brief)
2. Leverage point identified
3. Small solution idea (What will they do?)
4. Who is involved?
5. What are the first steps?
6. What resources do they need?
7. What might go wrong and how to adapt?

Encourage creativity: it can be a workshop, a poster, a social media video, a buddy system, a conversation, a walk, a game, a call to action - as long as it's doable.

Optional Game Element:

Draw “challenge cards” that add fun limitations:

- “Do it with no money”
- “Only 3 people can be involved”
- “Do it using food”
- “It must be tested in 1 week”

It adds playfulness and realism.

Presentations (5–10 min depending on time)

Each group presents their idea in 2 minutes max. Encourage visuals, sketches, or a role play if they wish.

Optional: *Do a gentle “applause poll” for each idea (e.g., “Applaud if you think this could work in your community”).*

Group Discussion:

10 minutes

- “These small actions might seem simple, but when they’re based on a real understanding of systems, they have power. What’s one thing you want to carry forward?”
- Quick Circle Closing:
- One thing I learned...
- One action I want to take...
- One question I still have...
- You can close this session by asking:
- “How can we share these ideas with others in a way that inspires action?”

Facilitator notes:

- Remind groups that the goal is not a perfect plan, but a starting point.
- If energy is low, offer materials like markers, post-its, or cards to make it fun.
- Encourage each participant to write down or draw one step they could take after the workshop.

#04

WORKSHOP

**COMMUNICATING
COMPLEX ISSUES**

WORKSHOP 4



COMMUNICATING COMPLEX ISSUES

1. Workshop purpose

Now that participants have learned to identify root causes (Workshop 1), understand systems (Workshop 2), and co-create systemic solutions (Workshop 3), this final workshop supports them in turning those insights into clear, impactful messages. The goal is to **make complex issues visible, relatable, and shareable** — especially with people who might not yet understand or care about them.

2. Learning Objectives

By the end of the workshop, participants will:

- **Understand** how to translate complex ideas into accessible messages
- **Explore** different formats of communication (visual, verbal, written, performative)
- **Identify** their audience and adapt messages accordingly
- **Use storytelling and emotion** to connect with others
- **Create a short, clear message**, campaign or creative output based on one systemic issue

3. Why Is It Important to Tell Our Own Stories - and Frame Issues Ourselves?

In today's world, most stories about migrants, refugees, or marginalised communities are told by others - journalists, politicians, institutions, or social media users - and often without understanding, nuance, or respect. These stories may focus on victimhood, danger, or dependency, reinforcing stereotypes and leaving little space for dignity, complexity, or agency.

That's why it's essential for participants in this workshop **to learn that they have the right and the power to speak for themselves**, to frame their own issues, and to shape how others understand what's really going on.

Framing means choosing what to highlight, what story to tell, and how to tell it. It's not just about communication - it's about power. When young people learn to name their experience, connect it to systems and structures, and communicate it clearly, **they shift from being passive subjects of someone else's narrative to becoming active agents of change.**

In this workshop, we are not teaching participants to simply "raise awareness." We're giving them tools **to build messages rooted in their knowledge, their reality, and their vision of justice.**

// *Because the people closest to the problem often hold the clearest insight into real solutions - and those solutions deserve to be heard.*



WORKSHOP 4



COMMUNICATING COMPLEX ISSUES

#4 OVERVIEW

Communicating Complex Issues

Target Group

- Young migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers
- Aged 16-30
- Mixed levels of educational background

TIME	ACTIVITY	APPROACH
0.00 - 0.15	Welcome + Warm-up	Reconnect, set intention
0.15 - 0.45	Why Communication Matters	Messaging exercise: "Make it make sense!"
0.45 - 1.10	Who Are You Talking To?	Audience mapping
1.10 - 1.25	Break	Informal time
1.25 - 2.15	Storytelling & Framing Activity	Use creative formats to convey complexity
2.15 - 2.50	Create Your Message	Mini campaign or action
2.50 - 3.00	Wrap-up + Evaluation	Feedback and closing reflection



Welcome & Warm-up: “What’s the Message?”

15 min



Time required : 15 minutes

Resources : Video-projector

Objective: Get participants thinking about how different messages shape how we see issues.

Instructions

15 minutes

Facilitator explains the power of storytelling in advocacy:
“Facts inform, but stories move people. Stories make complexity human.”

Show 3–4 real-world examples of successful campaigns talking about complex issues.

- [Dumb ways to die](#): This Australian campaign for safety on the train tracks went viral for the funny and catchy way of saying things
- [Mars Sucks](#): This campaign worked for many reasons but one of them is the interesting way of having the Earth’s perspective
- [Fly the Flag](#): This campaign built on the love Americans have for their country to raise awareness on the oceans. It made it easier for the people to appropriate the cause.
- [6 feet covers](#): This campaign uses pop culture to convey an important message
- [Orange Publicity](#): It shows how ridiculous the argument of women football is worse than men instead of saying it. Strong visual storytelling technique.
- [Dove Real Beauty Sketches](#): It's one of the most original and touching experiments to come from the Campaign for Real Beauty in ages, because instead of making faux protests or annoying graphic designers with filters, they're actually empowering individual women to appreciate their inherent beauty, and in turn, allowing us all to wonder if we've been judging ourselves too harshly.

In pairs, ask:

- *What is the message?*
- *How does it make you feel?*
- *What is missing or misleading?*

Back in plenary, briefly discuss:

“Why is it important to tell our own stories - and frame issues ourselves?”
(see section II-3)

“Make It Make Sense” - Translating Complexity

30 min



Time required: 30 minutes

Resources: Flipchart paper, colored markers

Objective: Practice translating complex ideas into something short, clear, and impactful.

Instructions

25 minutes

In groups, participants pick one complex issue they've worked on (e.g. housing discrimination, language access, legal barriers).

Challenge: explain the issue in three different ways:

- To a child (5–7 years old)
- To a grandparent
- As a one-line protest slogan or campaign message

Present to the group! Encourage creativity, humour, or drama.

Group

Discussion:

10 minutes

- What made the explanation easier or harder?
- Why is adapting to different audiences important?

Create Your Message – Mini Campaigns Lab

2 hours



Time required : 2 hours

Resources: Art materials, phones, paper, pens - keep it open to all skill levels

Objective: Use storytelling to frame systemic issues in relatable, emotional ways.



Create Your Message – Mini Campaigns Lab

Instructions

25 minutes

STEP 1: MAKING THE GROUPS (10 MIN)

Ask participants:

“What social or global issues do you care about or want to explore today?”

Write all the suggestions on a flipchart or whiteboard. Examples might include:

- Access to housing
- Racism and discrimination
- Language barriers
- Education or job access
- Legal obstacles / papers
- Mental health / isolation
- Climate & environment

Make sure to keep the list under 6–7 topics max to avoid too many small groups. You can cluster similar ideas together.

Each participant can vote 3 bars for the project they prefer, 2 bars for the second one and 1 bar for the last one (can be stickers, post-its, or simply raised hands).

Keep the top 3–4 topics with the most votes - those will become group options.

STEP 2: DEFINE THE AUDIENCE (30 MIN)

Each group chooses or is assigned a target audience (e.g. local officials, neighbours, landlords, other youth, NGOs, public opinion).

- On a worksheet or poster, answer:
- What does this audience already know about the issue?
- What do they care about?
- What might be their barriers to understanding or caring?
- What tone/format might connect with them best? (emotional, factual, storytelling, visual...)

Write 3 key messages that would speak to this audience.

STEP 3: CHOOSE A FORMAT AND CREATE (50 MIN)

In groups or individually, participants choose one of the following (or other) formats to tell a story related to the issue:

- 🗣️ A personal testimony (real or imagined)
- 🎨 A short comic strip or drawing
- 🎭 A role-play or 3-scene mini-performance
- 📷 A social media video or photo series
- 📄 A short opinion article or blog post draft

Give about 20 minutes maximum for them to decide on it so they have at least 30 minutes to create it.

STEP 4: PRESENTATION (20MN)

Groups present to each other

Optional : Give awards to each project for something making it special (“Most clear,” “Most powerful,” “Most original” messages)



Create Your Message – Mini Campaigns Lab

Group Discussion:

10 minutes

- One word or sentence each: “I’m leaving with...”
- Written evaluation form with learning outcomes and open feedback
- Invite participants to share their work publicly if they want (optional)

Facilitator notes:

Step 1: Making the groups :

- > Be flexible! The process doesn’t have to be perfect - it’s about helping people land where they feel motivated.
- > If someone is unsure or shy, pair them with someone they feel comfortable with.

Step 2: Creation

- > Go to see all the groups often to make sure they are going well.
- > Make sure their ideas are not too ambitious and can be done in 30 minutes.
- > If their ideas takes more time they can also just present it (for example instead of making a full video they could just present a storyboard)

Evaluation & Feedback:

20 minutes

At the end of the session, participants complete a short evaluation form to assess:

- Their understanding of systems thinking.
- Their engagement with the activities.
- What they found most useful and what could be improved.

Data Collection Methods:

- Short surveys (Likert scale & open-ended questions).
- Facilitator observations.
- Creative reflections (drawings, quotes, or short statements).

#05

Facilitator Guidelines

PRACTICES & CHALLENGES

BEST PRACTICES

- Foster a safe space for discussion, ensuring diverse perspectives are heard.
- Use real-world examples that are relevant to participants' experiences.
- Adapt activities for different literacy levels and learning styles.
- Encourage collaborative discussions rather than lectures.

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES & SOLUTIONS:

CHALLENGE	SOLUTION
Participants may struggle with abstract concepts.	Use visual aids and real-life examples to illustrate connections
Participants might feel overwhelmed by complex issues.	Break concepts into smaller, relatable discussions.
Language barriers may exist.	Provide translated materials and use simple language.



thank you

& NOW LET'S BEGIN !