



Guidelines for SHARMED-like projects



1. General objective

SHARMED-like projects regard the promotion of new experiences of teaching and learning, with specific consideration for respect of cultural differences and promotion of intercultural dialogue. This is possible by fostering equity in participants' contributions to classroom interaction, and by enhancing empowerment and recognition of children's contributions. In this type of project, the core aspects of teaching and learning processes are the following:

1. Collection and use of visual materials, in particular photographs, regarding children and their families' memories.
2. Production of children's stories about their personal memories in classroom.
3. Facilitation of description, comparison and sharing of photographs and stories through dialogic communication.

The general objective is thus producing, comparing and relating in a dialogic way, children's memories of personal and cultural roots in multicultural classrooms, through the collection and use of visual materials (in particular photographs) and providing opportunities for children's choices of these visual materials and the narration of their contents and meanings.

2. Specific objectives

Specific objectives of this type of project are the following:

1. Integration between facilitative methodology and competence in dealing with and comparing visual materials (in particular, photography).
2. Application of facilitative methodology and use of visual materials in different areas of teaching and learning (oral communication and writing, Art, History, Geography, Intercultural Education).
3. Development of synergetic connections in the school (among teachers) and between schools and their contexts (among teachers, external experts and families).
4. Reflection on assumptions and tendencies in classrooms and schools, opening up and questioning them, with the possibility of imagining new ones.
5. Training programme for the involved teachers based on a training package, including a Massive Online Open Course (MOOC).
6. Collection of visual materials, which can be included within the web platform www.sharmed.eu (archive, tools to understand and teach the meaning of visual memories), to promote exchanges among the classrooms and to disseminate in European countries.
7. Analysis and evaluation of classroom activities regarding the meaning of (a) sociocultural context of schools and children, (b) facilitative methodology and use of visual materials, and (c) children's participation and narratives.

3. Key-concepts

An expanded version of the key-concept for a SHARMED-like projects, including the references, can be found in the final report, on the SHARMED website (section Publications).

Narratives

Narratives are social constructions, in which the observed reality is interpreted and ‘storied’. They are constructed in communication and are situated as well as historically and culturally grounded. Narratives can regard the narrating self and/or parts of society in which s/he lives (families, nations, school, healthcare services, etc.). They are plural, and sometimes competing.

The production of narratives in interactions does not only regard the contents, but also and above all the **rights** associated to the activity of narrating. The rights of narrating are important for three reasons. First, each participant may contribute to constructing and negotiating a narrative as teller, co-teller, listener, or elicitor of new narratives. Second, narratives can be either first-person narratives (someone narrates about her/himself) or vicarious narratives (someone narrates about or on behalf of someone else). Third, narratives can receive different comments from different participants; in particular, each narrative can be followed by response narratives that refer to it, and this enhances the production of **interlaced** stories.

The interactional construction of narratives can give meaning to autobiographical **memory**. Narrating autobiographical memory is an interactional achievement involving those who share and/or are interested in sharing memory. In telling their narratives, participants create and recreate their memory in the light of their present needs and concerns, defined in social interactions. The interactional production of a narrative of autobiographical memory highlights the meaning and development of the identity of the narrating person. This self-history is linked to personal preferences, interpersonal relationships or group membership.

Two main types of narratives of memory can be produced in interactions: (1) declarative narratives, referring to facts, data or events that are recalled; (2) semantic narratives, referring to the general knowledge of the world (ideas, meanings and concepts). Semantic narratives activate ideas through remembering, enrich the narratives of autobiographical memory.

An important aspect of the production of narratives is their degree of “tellability” in public contexts, such as classrooms. The tellability of narratives may be limited by a sense of irrelevance, by contents that are considered inappropriate (e.g. sexual contents, private contents), and by embarrassment in telling a story in public.

Photographs

Photographs are media that can trigger the transformation of individual traces of memory into material, perceivable forms. Photographs are thus activators of memory, connecting the lived experience with data that are external to this experience. They unlock memories and allow knowledge to be transferred from past to present. On the one hand, photographs are visual forms, transmitted through the media and across contexts, retrieved and manipulated through these media. On the other hand, photographs are media that can take narrative forms in communication processes, retrieved and manipulated through these narrative forms.

The production of narratives depends on past actions (taking pictures) that become important in the specific context of the narrative. The use of photographs to trigger narratives involves much more than simply recalling

details of what occurred in the recorded events. Photography is a powerful medium for social engagement, enhancing narratives and inviting connections. In particular, photographs can stimulate personalised and interactive narratives in educational settings. They elicit children's comments or responses to visual forms and are the starting point of dialogue in the classroom. Children can participate in classroom communication through, about and with photographs.

SHARMED proposes to use **private** photographs regarding what children consider relevant for their memory. Narratives can focus on both photographs and on what is behind and beyond photographs: (1) the social and cultural context of the photographs and (2) new stories linked to the photographs. Therefore, narratives of past events can evolve into narratives of children's lived experience, behind and beyond photographs. Any telling of past events can evolve in other types of narratives, starting from co-telling and listeners' comments. The complex chain of telling, co-telling and comments enhances a variety of narrative forms.

The use of photographs can:

- (1) connect what is in the frame with what is behind the frame of the image, i.e. the story of the photograph and the situation or circumstances in which it was produced;
- (2) enhance declarative and semantic narratives of children's memories;
- (3) promote first-person and vicarious narratives, the interlacement of narratives and thus the production of new narratives.

Agency

Agency is a key concept to understand children's actions. It is the particular form of active participation enhancing social change. Showing agency means showing the availability of choices of action, opening different possible courses of action. Agency means that active participation shows the availability of choices of action, which can enhance alternative actions, and therefore change of communication processes. In classroom interactions, agency is shown by the attribution to children of rights and responsibilities for constructing knowledge (**epistemic authority**), for instance rights and responsibilities of narrating and interpreting. Agency implies that children's actions are not simple outputs of children's experience of adults' (teachers') inputs: they are not determined by adults' (teachers') actions.

Children's agency is related to existing social structures and relational constraints. Structural limitations of individual participation in social processes are unavoidable, and particularly relevant for children. However, the range of individual actions can never be completely predefined by social structures and relational constraints. While children's active participation can happen anytime in communication, with predictable consequences, the achievement of children's agency needs the promotion of specific opportunities of children's action as choice and construction of knowledge. It needs **promotional** forms of communication.

Facilitation

Promotion of children's agency means that children's availability of choices of action depends on adults' choices of action. This paradoxical condition originates from the position of children, who have no access to the most important decision-making processes in social systems; this position determines the differences between children's opportunities and adults' opportunities to practice agency. In these conditions, children'

exercise of agency is based on the combination between children's choices of action and adults' actions that promote these choices. This combination is named **facilitation**.

Facilitation is a form of communication that aims to change the hierarchical distribution of epistemic authority in the adult-children interaction, affecting the hierarchical differences between adults' and children's roles and expectations. Facilitation includes any organized sequence of adults' actions that enhance children's agency and children's actions that display agency. Facilitation gives positive value to (1) children's active and equal participation, (2) the treatment of children as persons who can express their own perspectives, experiences and emotions, and (3) expectations of unpredictable personal expression. Facilitation enhances and promotes **dialogue**, as a specific form of communication in which adults' actions support children's self-expression, take children's views into account, involve them in decision-making processes, and share power and responsibility with them.

Facilitation can enable the construction of narratives in classroom interactions, which shows children's autonomous production of knowledge. Facilitation of narrative production deals with children as agents who can choose the ways and contents of narratives regarding their perspectives and experiences. Facilitation of narratives, displaying children's epistemic authority, is the social condition of children's agency in the classroom.

SHARMED proposes ways of facilitating the interactional production of narratives about memory, starting from photographs. Facilitation can (1) promote children's agency as epistemic authority, including children's autonomous initiatives in narrating and in constructing their contingent identities, and (2) promote dialogue among children, and thus interlacement of different narratives, including narratives of present social experiences.

Conflict management

By enhancing children's agency, facilitation can enhance the emergence of conflicts in the classroom. Facilitation has not the direct function of helping the participants to manage their conflictive relationships: it is associated with co-operative and relation-oriented communication, rather than with the management of conflictive communication. Therefore, a difficult aspect of facilitation is the management of possible conflicts. Conflicts may block or challenge the conditions of classroom interactions. However, they may also provide a starting point for new conditions of communication, for instance for ways of facilitating classroom interactions. Conflicts may open up new possibilities for facilitative actions, creating opportunities for children's expressions of intentions and narratives.

In the classroom, conflicts are often managed through judgemental actions, siding with a "right" party against a "wrong" party. According to this right/wrong distinction, participants: (1) give more value to their own action than to their interlocutors' understanding, (2) show certainty of their own understanding, attributing errors to their interlocutors' actions, (3) show indifference towards the consequences of their own actions on their interlocutors, (4) lack any explicit attention towards their interlocutors' feelings and thoughts.

Mediation of conflicts aims to avoid these right/wrong distinctions: the function of mediation is to lead the parties to settle their conflicts together, rather than through a judgement. Mediation is a way of co-ordinating conflicting parties, dealing with their opposing preferences and supporting the transformation of their relationships and narratives. Mediation means enabling parties to find their own solutions of conflicts and helping them to appreciate each other and to work together. Mediation facilitates and encourages participants'

contributions, check reciprocal understanding, and avoid dominance behaviours, which can block communication. In other words, mediation is a collaborative dialogic process.

Facilitation may enhance mediation by (1) distributing active participation fairly in the interaction and (2) showing sensitivity for the participants' interests and/or needs. Facilitation can empower children's actions by treating their disagreements and alternative perspectives as ways of enriching communication. It can promote participants' empowerment in defining conflictive issues and autonomously deciding about them, by fostering their mutual recognition of points of view. Facilitators may actively solicit children to introduce and deal with conflictive issues and constructing narratives about them. Thus, facilitation can support children's observation of conflictive relationships from new points of view.

Multicultural classrooms: production of small cultures

In the school system, multicultural classrooms are often observed as based on cultural variety of children's backgrounds and identities. This is an "essentialist" view, which presents children's individual behaviour as entirely defined and constrained by their cultural membership. Essentialism takes for granted that cultural identities are determined before communication and emphasizes intercultural dialogue as acknowledgment of difference among cultural identities.

Facilitation focuses on the construction of narratives in classroom interactions, rather than on cultural variety of children's background. Therefore, facilitation focuses on the ways in which narratives present **cultural** issues and meanings of identity. These are personalised narratives of **small cultures**: contingent constructions of cultural meanings through dialogic negotiation. This means adopting an anti-essentialist view, observing identity as fluid, malleable, and contingently constructed in communication, without insisting on predefined cultural identities..

Facilitator's actions risk promoting essentialist narratives of cultural identity when children's personal experience and knowledge is used to facilitate dialogue on cultural issues and identity. However, the relevance assigned to children's agency can prevent the categorisation of children as members of cultural groups and the narrative of primary cultural identities, by promoting personalised versions of cultural meanings. Facilitation may enhance narratives of small cultures as encapsulated in children's personal experiences and depending on these experiences. Facilitation can thus focus on **personal** experience and knowledge, **deconstructing** narratives of cultural identity.

In this perspective, a classroom is "multicultural" as it is the communicative production of personalised narratives of small cultures, rather than the sum of individuals with different cultural identities.

4. Target groups and partners

The most important target group of a SHARMED-like project is native and migrant-background children. We suggest so start from the age of 7/8 for reasons of effective participation in communication, but it is also possible to experiment this type of project with smaller children. There is no upper limit, in principle. The second target group is children's parents, who are invited to support the project and the children in their choices of photographs, as well as in responding to a questionnaire if this is part of the project (see Section 8). The third target group is teachers and educators who are invited to collaborate to the project supporting the activities and motivating children and their parents.

SHARMED-like project benefit from local, regional and (possibly) national partnerships and sponsorship. Partnership and sponsorship ensure a network in which a project can be enhanced, avoiding isolated and frustrating experiences. The first, obvious but important, stakeholder is governmental or regional school institutions. A second stakeholder is local and regional administrations, which can give support to educational policies. Other possible partnerships include local foundations, local associations and NGO's enrolling experts and professionals working with children (in particular with migrant children). In general, the constitution of a **stakeholder committee** is recommended to support the activities and multiply impact of the initiatives, by influencing local, regional and (possibly) national practice and policy.

5. Planning and organisation of activities

The organisational plan of activities must be adapted to local conditions. However, we suggest some steps of preliminary organisation, accomplishment of activities and types of activities.

Preliminary organisation

1. Defining an accurate plan of the activities (including objectives, type of proposed activities and agenda of meetings) as a document to be distributed to the host institution and stakeholders.
2. Ensuring the interest of the host institution, i.e. the school or institution hosting the activities. This certainly requires meetings to explain the activities, after the distribution of the written plan. It is never possible to be certain that a written document has been read and understood, therefore an accurate oral presentation is very important. This may also require a formal letter, attesting the interest in the planned activities, addressed to the proponent. The letter is important to document participation in the project.
3. Choosing the classes or groups that will participate in the activities. The way of doing this choice depends on the identity of the proponent. In any case, principals and teachers should be involved. This choice should be based on criteria that ensure some interest in the project. Moreover, in this phase a provisional "essentialist" guide for choosing is the presence of several migrants in the classroom.
4. Ensuring clear information to the children and their parents/guardians. This requires new meeting with both types of subjects, organized by the school/institution.
5. Once formalized the institutional participation and the interest of children and parents, the first operational step is training participants (teachers, educators, facilitators). Some notes about the training are provided below.

Organisation of the activities

1. Collection of the photographs or other types of image: it is not necessary that all materials are photographs taken by the children or their parents; for instance, materials from the internet are equally relevant. In any case, this requires to ask both children and parents to look for photographs and, if relevant, to talk about photographs that are not remembered or personally experienced by the children. This should ensure that children are able to narrate the content and the context of the photograph. The choice of photograph is absolutely free, for what concerns content and context, but for whatever reason the child should consider it important. The photographs can be either in digital and paper format. The paper format should be digitalized, to be used during the activities and possibly to be archived. A

suggestion is asking to bring one photograph for each child, to avoid strong differentiations (some children could bring several photographs) and establish equity from the beginning, also for what concerns presentations and narratives.

2. Acquisition of parents' consent to use the photographs. The consent to use them in the school context depends on the local organizational context. For instance, in Italy schools often obtain a general formalized consent to use visual materials in schools. The consent for other uses (e.g. archiving the photo) requires a specific consent. The type of required consent depends on the local context, but it should respect the European Union General Data protection regulation 2106/679.
3. Scanning of the paper photographs to show them during the activities and to archive them (if possible). The photographs should be shown on a video, so that all children can see them while they are described. If this is not possible for technical reasons, digitalized copies of the photograph can be distributed in the classroom. Digitalisation is also useful for a quick return of the photographs.
4. Start of the activities. The acquisition and preparation of the photographs can take a while; therefore, it is important to plan the activities two months after the beginning of the process of acquisition. The activities are provided in a series of meetings with the children, which are organized according to the school timetable.
5. Organisation of the activities. The organization must be adapted to the local planning and reflection about how is better to work with the photos. The number and the content of meetings, therefore, can be chosen locally. What follows is one possible organisation among others, based on the experience of SHARMED.

Types of activities

First type of activity: seeing, describing and discussing the photographs. This initial phase might be a group activity, rather than based on individual presentations. This allows for enhancing dialogue from the beginning. The children can be divided into small groups, each of them working on few photographs (e.g. 2 or 3) that have **not** been brought by the members of the group. At the end of the group workshops, the children can present their reflections, followed by the narratives of those who brought the photographs. Depending on the way of facilitating, each presentation of the group and each narrative describing the photo can be followed by:

- Children's narratives going behind the photo (declarative and semantic narratives)
- Classmates' questions
- Dialogue between the children
- Comparison between photographs.

Another way of implementing this phase could be starting from similarities and differences between photographs identified either by the facilitator or by the children. This could promote connections between photographs and stories.

This type of activity can be extended to a number of meetings that is decided according to the facilitator's aims and the children's interests. A suggestion, however, is to avoid an excessive extension, in order to keep interest high and avoid that the activity is interpreted as a routine. This type of meeting provides a large amount of materials, which can be exploited in future classroom activities.

Second type of activity: written description of the photograph. This description can be either free or guided by some written guidelines (the second option was chosen in SHARMED). This should however follow the

oral description to avoid that the latter is viewed by the children as a repetition. This written description can provide useful materials for further activities in the classroom.

Third type of activity. At the end of the first type of activity, the children are invited to take a photo. If they (and their families) have not a device to take photographs, they are invited to take the photo with the help of devices possessed by their classmates or teachers. The collection of this second photograph may need 2 or 3 weeks. Therefore, this type of activity should be planned after three weeks. The activity with the new photographs can be similar to the first type of activity. However, some creative variations can be introduced for what concerns the presentation of the photo, in order to avoid repetitions. One possibility is asking to the children to make a short audio or video recording in which they describe the photograph, autonomously or through some short questions from the facilitator (this was the option chosen in SHARMED). Other possible ways can be chosen locally. In any case, starting from the presentation, the process is similar to that of the first type of activity. The difference concerns the fact that the children can tell about their choices: this enhances more personalized narratives.

For what concerns **the first and the third types of activity**, a potential problem concerns the claim of inequalities in narrating stories in the classroom. It is therefore necessary to be very clear from the beginning about the aims and the time used for the activities, suggesting the importance to participate not only through the presentation of the photograph and the narrative around the photographs, but also through questions, comments and any other dialogic intervention during the activities.

Another potential problem is the emergence of delicate situations, both from the tellers (emotional telling) and their classmates (e.g. insults, making fun). In these cases, facilitators should avoid any type of censorship and sanction, supporting emotions in affective ways, on the one hand, and mediating conflicts on the other.

Fourth type of activity: use of the collected materials for further teaching or educational activities in the classroom or in other educational institutions. This is of course dependent on local conditions and situations. What is important is that materials and narratives are exploited in educational contexts, establishing narratives and dialogue as basis of education.

6. Evaluating the activities. At the end of the activities, it is helpful evaluate them (see section 8), for instance through a questionnaire or a focus group. At the end of the activities, a short meeting may be planned for administering these tools. Evaluation should not be conducted by the facilitator, in order to ensure children's privacy.

6. Methodology

The methodology of the classroom activities is very important. In particular, it concerns the ways of facilitating the activities and the types of narratives that can be expected.

An extended version of the analysis of methodology can be found in Issues 1-8 of the SHARMED Policy Briefs and in the final report on activities. Both are freely available on the SHARMED website (Section Publications). Methodology is a complex issue, which deserves great attention. Here we provide some short guidelines to the expanded use of these materials. In what follows, we link the comments to some examples

included in the Policy Briefs. The archive (Section 9) and the MOOC (Section 8) include several video-recordings of the activities, adding further opportunities of reflection about the transcriptions. The archive also includes the photographs that have been collected during the SHARMED project.

Use of photographs to enhance narratives of memory

In a SHARMED-like project, photographs are the systematic point of departure of the proposal of innovative education. There may be different ways of connecting photographs and narratives. The simplest transition to a narrative is based on **the description of the iconographic elements** of an image, i.e. what is represented in it (see Example 5, Policy Brief 1).

A second type of transition is based on the **inclusion of the photograph in a stream of personal experiences**, thus moving to tell what is not evident in the photograph itself, as outside its frame (relationships, places, events, et.) and as a memory evoked by the photograph (see Example 3, Policy Brief 1).

A third type of transition is based on the **reference to the function of the photograph**, by defining its importance for children (why did the child bring it?) and how it was used by children or other people (e.g., as a way of remembering) (see Example 6, Policy Brief 1) .

A fourth type of transition is based on **looking at the photograph as a tangible object** and describing its technical aspects. In these cases, children talk about the support, the surface, the format, the quality of preservation of the photos they are handling. In other cases, they comment some elements of the photographic composition, such as light or perspective (see Example 7, Policy Brief 1)

Finally, the transition can be based on **the link between the photograph and the child's personal emotions**. There are also cases where there is not a direct correspondence between what is represented in the photograph and the feelings expressed by the child (see Example 8, Policy Brief 1)

Children can choose a specific way of transition from the photograph to the narrative; sometimes however they can be guided by facilitators. In general, anyway, facilitation consists in leaving them this choice and supporting it.

Children's ways of narrating

What types of narratives do the children choose to tell and discuss with classmates and facilitators? Of course, there is not something as a catalogue of possible narratives. However, the children's choices during the SHARMED project can provide some orientation to what can be expected in a SHARMED-like project.

Narratives of the children's self. These narratives include stories about children as persons, their past, their characters, their opinions and emotions, their experiences, and their important relationships. Children show their interest in displaying their identities in classroom interactions, their own specificity and autonomy, observing the changes and continuity in time that made them unique persons. In particular, children love stories about trust and friendship, preferences, experiences, beliefs. Sometimes, children remember these stories, other times the stories have been told to them by parents or grandparents.

Family narratives. These are stories regarding family members: parents, grandparents, uncles, siblings, cousins. They describe these family members, their life experiences, which sometimes are painful, children's relationships with them. The stories regard the most affective relationships involving children. Through these stories, children define either their family identity, or affirm their autonomy from family.

Narratives of personal life. These stories include events (e.g. weddings, feasts, school trips), places, sport experiences, beloved animals (above all cats and dogs) and objects (such as toys, puppets). The narrated events, places, sports, animals and objects affect children's life experience and the formation of their personal identities. These stories show emotional traces left in children's memories, often connected with their important relationships or social roles. Some stories also contribute to highlight family identities. Through narratives of personal life, children construct their identities in relation to what they experienced, and their needs and feelings.

Narratives of migration. These stories regard experiences connected to separation from beloved persons and places, ways of living the journeys to new countries, experiences of returning to places of origin, aspirations to return in the future or lack of interest for this return. These stories are generally linked to personal aspirations and feelings, frequently to family bonds and only sometimes to the construction of national or group identity. Through these stories, children construct their identity much more frequently in relation to their family bonds and/or to their unique and specific desires, aspirations and feelings, than to the group of which they feel to be part.

Narratives of historical events and situations. The first type of stories is linked to grandparents' or great-grandparent's life experiences, often related to war, which were told to the children by the protagonists or by their parents. This type of stories regards children's family heritage, transmitted through different generations, and constituting part of the family identity. It was particularly frequent in the Italian setting. In many cases, the children also display their sorry about not having spent enough time with dead grandparents or also great grandparents. The second type of stories regards the direct experience of war, in the German setting, where some refugee children have participated in the activities. These stories are more delicate as they regard experiencing wars and fleeing, like having to flee from a conflict zone or having a boyfriend who is a soldier. These stories represent painful direct experiences for the children and remained largely unexplored in the German setting, probably for the facilitators' perception of delicacy. Narratives of historical events can also enhance discussions about different perspectives on being soldiers and on war.

Children can tell their stories either as first person stories or as third person (or vicarious) stories. **First person narratives** regard children's lived experiences. Frequently, children are the source of these stories, which they experienced and remember. In some cases, however, children do not remember the stories, as they were too young at the time of events. In these cases, even if children possess the most direct knowledge in the classroom, and they are protagonists of the story, they cite a different source, such as a parent or grandparent.

Third person (or vicarious) narratives are stories with other protagonists, such as relatives, friends and classmates. Sometimes, third person narratives are reported narratives, as the source is not the child. In case of vicarious narratives about relatives, the source can be the protagonist of the story, or another relative when the protagonist died. Vicarious narratives can also be promoted by facilitators, for instance in small group activities where children are invited to interpret and narrate the photographs of other children. In other cases, the source of third person narratives are the narrating children, who have a direct memory of experiences of other persons.

Transition are also between the narratives produced in the classroom.

Change of teller. This type of transition may be accomplished by children, but it may also be promoted by facilitators. When a child narrates a certain type of experience, other children can intervene spontaneously to narrate similar experiences they lived. The facilitator can promote the narrative of an experience, extending participation to other children, by asking if they lived something similar.

Modes of production of narratives. They are transitions from the third person to the first person. This transition may be promoted by the facilitator, after small group activities, which are concluded through a third person narrative concerning a classmate's photograph, and followed by the "true story" of the child who brought the photograph. This type of transition allows children to tell stories about other children's photographs, using imagination and creating connections between stories. Facilitators can invite those who have direct knowledge to tell their versions, after the previous third person versions.

Different types of narratives, moving from a photograph to another one. This transition can be promoted by facilitators, and accomplished by the children or by facilitators themselves, when they explore a specific theme. The new narrative can be linked to something invisible in the photograph, behind its frame.

Occasionally, the production of narratives may be difficult. First, narratives can have problems of **relevance**, as they do not interest the audience, in particular when the tellers are not able to connect the photograph to the story, which they do not know sufficiently well. Secondly, narratives can have problems when they include delicate issues or taboos, conveying a transgressive identity of the teller. Usually, stories that include delicate issues are not allowed in communication, especially in educational contexts. They can lead to a negative evaluation of the tellers, when they tell of their unusual or nasty behaviours. Children can also enact nasty behaviours during the activities. These problems were not frequent during the SHARMED activities and can be overcome with facilitative actions.

Facilitative actions

Invitation children to talk. Invitations promote both the beginning of the process of communication (presenting the photograph and the narrative) and its continuation (inviting to add details and to ask questions to the presenter). There is a variety of types of possible invitations.

1. **Inviting to present** is the first and most obvious type of facilitative action, which can enhance a child's story (Example 1, Policy Brief 2). The facilitator's invitation can be stressed in several ways: for instance, through prefacing, interlocutory and verbal forms (see Example 2, Policy Brief 2).
2. **Inviting to ask** is a way of expanding the child's narrative by inviting the classmates to ask questions (see, Example 3, Policy Brief 2).
3. **Inviting to add and expand** may be addressed to the classmates. In example 8, the invitation to expand follows a non-verbal signal (raising hand). The child who raised her hand asks a question to the child who is narrating and the latter answers to the question (see Example 5, Policy Brief 2). These invitations may also be addressed to the child who is narrating (see Example 6, Policy Brief 2).

It can be useful to combine different types of invitations, regarding presentation, additional elements, expansions and questions (see Example 7, Policy Brief 2).

It may be noted that problems can arise when the invitation is too general, therefore expansions are not sufficiently oriented, or when it is too specific, therefore the topic of the expansion cannot be shared or valued as interesting by the other children.

Questions. Questions enhance the production of narratives. Different types of questions can be combined for this purpose. Through this combination, facilitators can become co-tellers of narratives, thus supporting their production. There are two important aspects in asking questions: (1) the way of starting the sequence of questions, and (2) the way in which the sequence chains different types of questions.

1. **Focused** questions aim to enhance a short answer, such as a yes or no, or a choice between two alternatives. This does not imply that the answer is short, but certainly invites a short answer.
2. **Open** questions suggest expanded answers, as they do not provide any suggestion about possible answers (such as a yes/no, or possible alternatives). Given that they do not provide any suggestion, when open questions work well, they enhance expansions of narratives. Open questions are useful to start to develop children's narratives.

Open questions can be followed by series of focused questions, to check and clarify these narratives (see Example 8, Policy Brief 2). Focused and open questions may be combined, thus enhancing checking, clarification and expansions of children's narratives (see. Example 9, Policy Brief 2). Series of questions are particularly effective when focused questions and open questions are combined and alternated. This combination allows to check and clarify, on the one hand, and to enhance expansions, on the other (see Example 12, Policy Brief 2).

Continuers and repetitions. These are minimal types of feedback showing attention to children's contributions. They have the function of supporting children's active participation and production of narratives.

1. **Continuers** are very short feedback that invite children to continue to tell. They include interrogative confirmations, short confirmations and para-verbal signals (see Examples 1-4, Policy Brief 3).
2. **Repetitions** reproduce the previous turn or part of it, thus showing listening and encouraging further talk (see. Examples 5 and 6, Policy Brief 3).

Continuers and repetitions can be used independently from social and cultural contexts. They display "active listening", i.e. sensitivity for the expressed contents, in particular for needs and feelings. Repetitions of words or parts of sentences show listening more explicitly than continuers. This however does not mean that they are more effective in enhancing narratives.

3. **Acknowledgment tokens** have the function of recognizing the importance of specific aspect of children's stories and comments. These are claims of receipt of the prior utterance, stressing interest, surprise, or affect. Acknowledgement tokens can show a positive feedback more clearly than continuers and repetitions. They have the function of showing recognition of the interlocutor's right of talk. This type of feedback does not invite to continue to talk, but it shows interest or concern (see Examples 7-11, Policy Brief 3).

Formulations. These are utterances that elaborate the gist of previous utterances. Formulations are a powerful type of support for children's utterances. The facilitators can use two types of formulations to give feedback to the children's stories and comments: (1) **explications** of children's utterances, which clarify their contents; (2) **developments** of children's utterances, which add information to their content while preserving a clear reference to it (see Examples 12-15, Policy Brief 3). Formulations frequently follow question-answer sequences: facilitators start with a question, then they formulate the children's answers. Facilitators'

formulations? pay attention to children's stories successfully. Children's expansions of stories and comments signal that formulations are successful in enhancing the interactional production of narratives.

However, formulations can also be followed by very short confirmations (see Examples 14-15, Policy Brief 3).

Formulations can be prefaced by acknowledgements and followed by questions (see Example 17, Policy Brief 3).

Questions enhance children's immediate reactions. Adding questions after formulations does not seem particularly effective in enhancing children's contributions when questions are focused. It seems more effective if questions are open. It is important to observe that combining formulations and questions is a way to speed the interaction up, rather than to give more space to children's contributions.

Facilitators' personal contributions. They can be useful to enhance children's narratives. However, they can also be a risky way of imposing facilitators' points of view. Therefore, personal contributions are risky facilitative actions, which need much attention.

- 1. Personal comments** are "upshot" formulation, i.e. a formulation that, rather than elaborating the gist of children's previous utterances, creates new meaning, which is thus authored by the facilitator. Facilitators' comments add meanings to children's narratives. Their general function is stressing the relevance of these narratives: comments can be effective way of supporting children's contributions, giving them a positive meaning (see Example 1, Policy Brief 4). Comments can also enhance children's reflection (see Example 2, Policy Brief 4). Comments undermine children's agency when they interrupt children's narratives or deviate them towards objectives chosen by the facilitator, without the children's involvement (see Example 3, Policy Brief 4).
- 2. Appreciations** provide affective support to children's autonomous actions, showing that children are doing well. They can concern children's personal attitudes, shown by their narratives or comments, positive interpersonal relations, event and facts (see Examples 4-5, Policy Brief 4). Appreciations regard children's actions, relations and experiences and are ways of supporting children's narratives. The problem of appreciations is that, if they are not systematic, they can be seen as selective, as a sort of assessment, differently distributed among the children; if they are systematic, they become a routine that can interrupt children's narratives. Therefore, it is important to limit appreciations as support of narratives that are particularly delicate, for their content or the relations that they include.
- 3. Personal stories** are a way of showing their involvement and their closeness to children, thus enhancing children's narratives (see Example 6, Policy Brief 4). Providing personal stories is a way of upgrading facilitators' contributions. However, facilitators can also show that they have a "story" to tell, thus improving children's perception of them as committed persons, rather than as interpreters of a routine based on their role.
- 4. Displacing utterances** consist in enriching a narrative through a story or a comment that surprises and entertains children, thus opening to unpredictability of narratives. Displacing utterances can be affective support of children's narratives, comments on children's small and funny family stories, or funny comment on children's experiences (see Example 7, Policy Brief 4). Displacements have a double function: (1) creating a positive and funny relation between facilitators and children and (2) giving space to unpredictability as emerging from personal contributions. Stressing unpredictability through displacing utterances shows that conversations are open to any possible contribution. However, the use of displacements requires a strong interest in working with humour and unpredictability.

Comments, stories, appreciations and displacements are useful when they enrich the interaction.

Non-verbal actions (gestures, facial expressions, nodding, smiling etc.) are also important in supporting facilitation.

Styles of facilitation. Facilitative actions can be combined in different ways; thus different styles of facilitation can be observed. During SHARMED, it was possible to observe the following styles.

1. Facilitation based on a **great variety of supporting and enhancing actions**, combining several questions and formulations, with the support of minimal feedback, personal stories and displacing utterances to establish a funny context and to stress the variety and unpredictability of narratives and comments. Narratives can be continuously enhanced and supported, through a great number of facilitative actions, provided in separate utterances. This combination of actions seem effective in enhancing expansions of personal stories, promoting a great number of narratives, also linked to the same photograph, and developing without a precise order.
2. Facilitation based on **complex utterances working as key point of reference** for the development of facilitation. In particular, formulations, comments, personal stories and appreciations are combined in the same utterance. This choice provides enhancement of children's stories through a complex utterance, showing the facilitator's warm involvement and working as connectors among different stories. These complex utterances are effective in enhancing interlacements, based on children's long stories, and in enhancing ordered sequences of children's contributions.
3. Facilitation based on **minimal feedback**, such as continuers, repetitions and acknowledgment tokens, few direct questions and formulations and **systematic invitations to ask** addressed to classmates. These exchanges between facilitators and children are based on the presupposition that children's autonomous participation must be the primary focus of facilitation, while facilitators should be less active. This is a more "classical" form of facilitation, based on active listening and minimal interventions, aiming to enhance the autonomous voice of children. These actions are effective in leaving the floor to children for autonomous contributions, without facilitators' direct coordination, and separating the narratives through an ordered presentation of the photos.

The difference between styles of facilitation may depend on the type of setting, including the school systems, the class composition and the prevailing ways of communicating in classroom contexts, but also on the facilitators' feeling of comfort in acting. Cultural and personal factors are intertwined and it is impossible to separate them. This may mean that facilitation can be different in different situations and that what can be expected is that different facilitators can adapt facilitation to their styles and contexts.

Children's initiatives and feedback

It is very probable that children positively react to facilitators' invitations and questions, minimal feedback and formulations. They tell their stories when supported by facilitators. However, their contributions are not limited to these situations, but they include a series of further interesting actions.

Rejecting formulations. Children can take the opportunity offered by formulations to assert their authority about knowledge (see Example 7, Policy Brief 3).

Taking unpredictable initiatives. Initiatives are unpredictable as they are not enhanced by facilitators. These initiatives can be responses to other children, requests of taking the floor, interruptions of conversations and stories. Children's initiatives are important, as they highlight children's agency, as agency is shown by unpredictable actions. Children's unpredictable contributions challenge facilitators' coordination of the interaction, which should ensure that children participate without disrupting stories and violating other children's rights to talk. In these situations, a basic distinction is between facilitators' coordination of children's initiatives, on the one hand, and children's interruptions of conversations and stories, on the other, which enhance the facilitator's management.

- 1. Children can take the floor and discuss, putting aside the coordinator.** In these cases, the facilitator can live room to their contributions, without interrupting their discussion (see Example 8, Policy Brief 4). In some other situations, the facilitator's coordination can regard the children's requests to contribute. The facilitator gives the floor to the children, then coordinating the interaction (see Example 9, Polcy Brief 4).
- 2. Children can interrupt the conversation to ask questions or to make comments.** Facilitators can manage these interruptions in different ways. Firstly, facilitators can **clarify the meaning** expressed by the interrupting children or **respond** to the interruption (see Example 19, Policy Brief 4). Facilitators can also **discourage** children' interruptions when their interest in the ongoing narrative prevails or they stress that the right of talking does not admit interruptions. A rather mitigated way of discouraging interruptions consists in giving a short feedback and then returning immediately to the ongoing narrative (see Example 11, Policy Brief 4). Facilitators can **avoid responding** children's interruptions if they think it is important to continue to support the ongoing narrative (see Example 12, Policy Brief 4).
- 3. Children can enhance conflicts.** These conflicts can become relevant in two ways: as narratives and as disputes between children in the classroom. In the first case, facilitators need to understand how narratives are relevant and should be enhanced. In the second case, facilitators need to manage interactional conflicts. The two cases can also be combined. The quality and quantity of interactional conflicts can depend on the context.

Conflict management

Facilitation of narratives of conflicts and management of interactional conflicts can include tentative forms of mediation. It is impossible to suggest all possible ways of mediating. What we can say is that during SHARMED activities mediation was based on three types of action. These are certainly not the only possible actions, but they can be a useful reference for mediation in case of facilitation.

- 1. Inviting children to reflect on accuses.** These invitations avoid that accuses become judgments and enhance the telling of different views, which are thus intended as different social constructions (see Example 1, Policy Brief 6).
- 2. Presenting personal stories.** These are ways of discouraging unproductive conflicts, and avoiding to accuse someone (see Example 2, Policy Brief 6).
- 3. Managing reflection.** This type of action leaves room to the children but concluding with a personal comment about the advantages of reflecting (see Example 3, Policy Brief 6).

Conflicts can also be **avoided or ignored**, thus privileging the smooth production of narratives (see Example 4, Policy Brief 6). Avoiding and ignoring may be considered a positive way of acting, as it does not emphasize conflicts. However, conflicts that are not managed can become, or remain, unresolved in the classroom. Conflicts are symptoms of relational problems, which in the long run can destroy positive relations in the classroom. Avoiding their management may be a good solution for the contingent continuity of facilitation, but it may also be a negative perspective for the classroom.

Challenges for facilitation

The most important problem of facilitation is the **upgrading of facilitators' epistemic authority** (authority in producing knowledge), that limits the promotion of children's agency.

Epistemic authority is a very delicate issue for facilitation. Facilitators are active in producing knowledge by coordinating interactions. It is illusory to think that authority in producing knowledge, while coordinating interactions, can be cancelled. However, facilitation aims to use this authority to upgrade children's authority in narrating, commenting, showing their feelings, i.e. in displaying their agency. Facilitation fails when facilitators' authority does not enhance children's agency: in these cases, the upgrading of facilitators' authority undermines children's construction of knowledge. Problems of epistemic authority regard ways of checking children's knowledge and guiding conversations towards certain outcomes, regarding relations and behaviours.

For what concerns ways of checking of children's knowledge, facilitators can initiate a so-called IRE sequence (Initiation, Reply, Evaluation). The facilitator initiates this type of sequence through a question and concludes it giving an evaluative feedback to the child's reply.

Facilitators can also direct conversations, guiding them towards positive social relations or providing normative directions. In these cases, facilitators' actions reduce children's authority by assimilating it to deviance and obedience (see Examples 6-7, Policy Brief 6).

Other two types of problem of epistemic authority are (1) lack of focus on children's contributions and narratives, and (2) missed opportunities to enhance children's agency and narratives (see Example 8, Policy Brief 6; Example 9, Policy Brief 7).

Narratives of small cultures

Narratives of cultural differences are based on the comparison between different cultures. The frequency of these narratives depends on three factors: the style of facilitation, the social and cultural context of facilitation and the children's interest and motivation. It is therefore very important to reflect about what facilitation means in the so-called "multicultural classrooms" (see Examples 1-3, Policy Brief 7). Cultural comparisons are contingently constructed in the interaction, through the active participation of the facilitator, above all through his formulations. Comparisons however do not necessarily lead to stress cultural differences. Moreover, this type of narratives can also show the impact of the Eurocentric narrative on children who originate in non-European countries (see Example 4, Policy Brief 7).

Migration determines the necessity to take into account both origins and new contexts of life. The outcome of this double consideration is unpredictable, as it can lead in different directions. Facilitation can highlight these different directions, providing important elements of knowledge about the children's orientations. Children's

identities can be presented as cultural identities, uncertain identities, or personal identities rejecting belonging (see Examples 4-8, Policy Brief 7).

7. Plan of evaluation

The suggested plan of evaluation of the activities is available on the SHARMED website (Section Your SHARMED). Evaluation can range from few and basic activities (a simple and anonymized questionnaire administered to the children at the end of the activities to assess them) to a very complex plan. This depends on the resources that are available and on the degree of interest in exploiting evaluation for understanding and learning. It seems rather improbable that the complete plan used for the SHARMED project is used in many other contexts, due to its complexity. This complex plan was realized in order to create the training package, these guidelines and the materials included in the archive, that is to provide tools for applying activities elsewhere. This is not, of course, the objective of SHARMED-like projects.

8. Learning Platform (Training)

The SHARMED **Learning Platform** (in the SHARMED website) includes the training package and the online course in three languages (English, German and Italian). Therefore, the Learning Platform enhances the provision of the training for teachers, educators and facilitators in two forms: (1) face-to-face training of one day, based on a training package and (2) Massive Online Open Course (MOOC).

Both these forms of training include the following eight modules, regarding facilitation methodology in SHARMED-like projects:

1. Introduction to SHARMED
2. Activation during the classroom workshops (use of photographs, use of invitations and questions)
3. Types of feedback to children's production of narratives and other contributions
4. Facilitators' personal contributions to the classroom interaction
5. Reaction to children's initiatives
6. Complexity of facilitation
7. Conflict management and challenges during facilitation
8. Intercultural narratives during facilitation

A questionnaire will allow the trainees' assessment of the training (see the evaluation package, SHARMED website, Section Your SHARMED).

The training should be taken before planning and delivery activities with children. The training relies on the discussion of examples from facilitation processes, therefore it is a precious resource toward the implementation of projects based on SHARMED. On successful completion of the training package, trainees will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of a range of concepts and debates underpinning theories and principles of 'facilitation' 'dialogic discussion and 'children's narratives'
2. Critically evaluate the relative balance of powers and accountabilities between children, teachers, facilitators, curricula, and routines

3. Know and be able to analyse critically how the role of adults can open or close down spaces for children to lead, share, narrate, question and negotiate within provision that is led via facilitation that promotes child-initiated pedagogy
4. Be able to evaluate the congruence between selected characteristics and traits within the process of facilitation and related themes, analysing how facilitation translates into practice
5. Examine personal/professional perspectives and reflections on particular challenges and strengths identified around the use of facilitation within educational contexts that affect how children's voices and narratives are engaged with and heard, or not

Face-to-face training

A training handbook is available to guide the organisation of activities in the Learning Platform. The aim of this methodology is to support trainees to explore the concept of facilitation and related themes to plan and use facilitation within future practice. Trainees are supported to critically analyse the processes and themes linked to facilitation and provoked to reflect how skills and teaching strategies:

- (1) Can be transferred between teaching and facilitation
- (2) Can further develop and be challenged to promote children's autonomy, voice and participation.

Implementation of facilitation within an educational context will be explored in view of impact on practice aiming to promote the voice, expression, role and spaces belonging to children. Over the training, trainees undertake self-audits of their own practice, impact and context enabling them to construct (1) an action plan towards the use of facilitation, (2) develop teaching strategies, (3) identify/sum up pedagogical philosophy. Training is to be delivered through a combined learning approach based on workshops to allow reflection on examples of facilitation relevant for the topic of the specific module. Workshops allow to work independently, in pairs or in small groups to analyse materials.

Training is therefore mostly 'group-led' with trainer's role modelling 'facilitation'. Transcripts of facilitation example to be discussed are available as an appendix to the training handbook. Transcripts provided in the handbook are accompanied by analytical notes to support trainers in leading the discussion. Transcripts and transcript analysis/notes provided in the handbook are to be utilised by trainers freely as a resource to support knowledge, to aid memoire and to project promotion capturing facilitation impact. Material in appendices aim to underpin and provoke trainer/trainee discussion and knowledge exchange. The training includes eight modules regarding facilitation methodology: Introduction, Activation, Feedback, Facilitator's personal contributors, Reactions to children's personal initiatives, Complexity of facilitation, Management of conflicts and problems, Intercultural narratives and facilitation.

These modules can be delivered all together or separately depending on trainers/trainees availability. During delivery, the trainer will manage timing, style and how tasks flow, depending on cohort input and needs. The training handbook provided a modules plan meant to guide the organisation of modules and activities for each module. However, trainers can deliver and use suggested material/plans in relation to experience, cohort demand and context whilst adhering to SHARMED project aims.

Besides facilitating activities, a pivotal aspect of trainers' role is to provide feedback to trainees. Feedback shall be helpful and informative, consistent with aiding the discussion, learning and development process. The nature of the feedback shall be determined during training delivery and may take a variety of forms, including

verbal comments, individual and group feedback, or other forms of effective or efficient feedback to provoke discussion and reflection.

Massive Online Open Course (MOOC)

Published on SHARMED website, the MOOC is based on the same structure and philosophy of the short training package, which is largely extended to include more examples and specifically designed tools for self-assessment. The MOOC is a tool for self-learning based on a modular framework, promoting autonomous learning with videos and documents such as transcripts and slides. The MOOC and its materials are available for an unlimited number of users with different backgrounds, professional profiles and aspirations. The only condition is the interest in expanding knowledge on the application of facilitation within SHARMED-like projects. Trainees have to register beforehand but all they need is a computer, smartphone or tablet with internet connections. The very nature of a MOOC allows trainees to learn at home conveniently, flexibly and at their own pace.

The organisation of modules will follow the organisation of modules in the short training. However, an introduction to the rationale, aim and use of the MOOC is provided in Module 1. Differently from the face-to-face training, the module will be followed by activities for self-assessment in order to support the trainees to verify the achievement of the module's learning outcomes. Self-assessment consists in short quizzes. The successful achievement of all MOOC learning objective will depend on passing the threshold of a final test, summarising the themes of the overall MOOC.

9. Archive

The **SHARMED archive** is hosted by the Glocal Campus, an institutional online platform developed by the University of Jena, together with other partners, which extend it worldwide, involving by now 70 universities in 27 countries. The Glocal Campus aims to promote the sharing of knowledge among people and institutions throughout national and disciplinary borders. Access is possible through the SHARMED website (Section Archive).

The archive includes three types of media: (1) all the collected photographs, which were authorized through the informed consent form, in Italy, Germany and United Kingdom, (2) the texts written by the children about these photos, (3) several (selected) video-recordings of the activities. Photograph, text and video regarding the same narrative are linked to each other so that users can easily switch between the three media. The archive is available in three languages (Italian, English and German).

The archive is protected through username and password. These are provided to members of educational institutions and organisations that make a formal application. This is necessary to ensure the respect of children's rights. The users are requested to use the photographs only for educational purposes and their publication out of the archive is not allowed.

The archive can be used in two ways: (1) to find inspiration about the types and use of materials; (2) to use directly these (anonymised) materials in the classroom activities, whereas it is not possible to collect new photographs. In both cases, it is useful to be aware of the types of photographs, narratives and the methods used in the SHARMED project. The archive, therefore, is an additional source of knowledge and inspiration, but it cannot replace adequate knowledge acquired through the training and the careful understanding of the methodology. On the one hand, the archive can be used to activate facilitation in the classroom, about different topics and in different areas of learning. On the other hand, the archive can inspire teachers, educators

and facilitators in the construction of their own archives.

The archive offers three different ways of searching for the included materials.

Browsing with filters. The users can restrict their research through selecting the following categories.

1. Type of visual material (photographs, videos, stories).
2. Schools (towns, countries).
3. Gender of the child who brought the photograph (female, male, other).
4. Age of the child who brought the photograph (from 8 to 15)
5. Class attended by the child (from 1 to 7).
6. Author of the photograph (child, parents, close person, other, unknown)
7. First picture or second picture (see Section 5).
8. Photograph found in family album, online
9. Primary keyword (animal, ceremony, changing, character, close persons, emotion, event, family, holidays, friend, me, objects, place, leisure, sport).
10. Sub-keyword (admiration, disapproval, agreement, disagreement, appearance, disappearance, birth, death, conflict, peace, departure, return, meeting, separation, happiness, sadness, comfort, discomfort).
11. Keyword regarding process, only for videos (narratives of the family, narratives of the self, personal life stories, stories of history, stories of migration).

Browsing by map, showing where the photographs have been taken. The photographs are localized on a world map which can be clicked on.

Browsing by timeline, giving the chance to view and search the photographs according to the date when they have been taken.

10. Strategies of dissemination

Dissemination of a SHARMED-like project may concern the project, its methodology and tools and its outcomes. Dissemination should start from the beginning of the project and develop as a continuous process. The project, the tools and the outcomes can be disseminated above all at local level (parents, other schools, possible external partners), but also at the level of wider institutions in charge of educational policies. The dissemination should address both the involved actors, institutions and organisations, and the actors, institutions and organisations that are not directly involved in the project but that can be interested in it.

In particular, dissemination should impact on teachers, families, children and policy makers. Through dissemination, the project can be transferred into policy actions in schools and educational services, implementing dialogic practices and creative participation. Basic strategies of dissemination are explained in the following points.

1. Dissemination should be based on the selection of contents to be disseminated through the collaboration of teachers, facilitators and involved children.
2. Local networking should be created and kept updated through regular communication and direct involvement, in sharing these contents. Networking is important to transfer tools and outcomes. Networking can include contacts with other schools and local policy makers, cooperation with

institutions, organizations and associations focusing on education, professionals and researchers, promotion of meetings and publications.

A list of the possible activities to disseminate tools and outcomes is the following.

1. Use of the network members as multipliers of information and know-how.
2. Construction and use of a website with regular update, promoting download of materials and active participation (including online open sessions).
3. Construction and management of social media profiles (e.g. Facebook; YouTube; Instagram; Twitter etc.) to establish a continuous and dynamic news update and to promote online interaction and active creation of contents.
4. Development and mailing of texts to inform local media about the project and its outcomes.
5. Structuration and moderation of a wiki space.
6. Use of the relevant mailing lists, professional, institutional and research networks.
7. Participation in other networking activities and seminars/conferences.
8. Publications in journals, magazines, newspapers.
9. Communication of results in networks and organizations working on the issues included in the project (e.g. intercultural dialogue, migration, citizenship, visual methods).