Research and Action for Emancipatory Policies for Youth

TOOL SHEET 5

MINDMAP OF VARIABLES

WHERE ARE WE IN THE PROCESS? STEP 3

Timing
45’

Reminder
This part is difficult, so take the time to explain so that you don’t lose the group.

Objectives

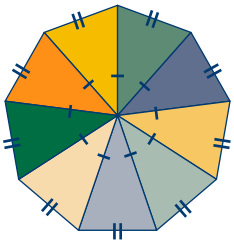
- Analyse the answers obtained in the previous step
- Express the problem/question
- Formulate hypotheses

Description of the activity

Visualise the various elements in the subject to identify variables, then determine what the problem and hypotheses are. This step should enable the group to distinguish between representations and reality (based on theories) in the project.

Equipment

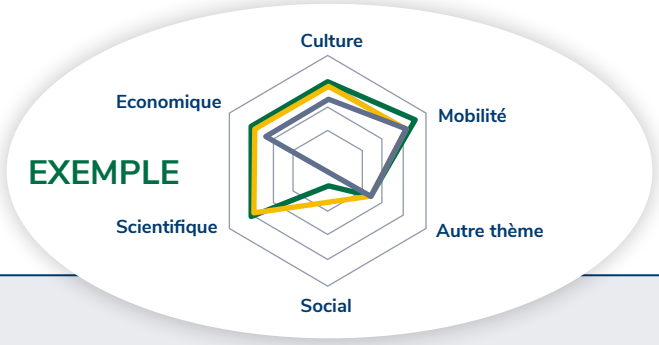
A big sheet of paper or the diagram below



Different coloured markers

Preparation

The facilitator helps the group reformulate the elements obtained through information gathering to identify different aspects and facets of the initial question.



Steps

1. List the various dimensions the group has learned about: what subject is this all related to? What are the different aspects of the problem? Describe the field of investigation (cultural, legal, international, social, medical, etc.) and the links between different dimensions (contradictory in red, complementary in green).
2. Identify variables: what dimension or element could change the problem situation?
3. The Dependant Variable (the phenomenon you’re trying to observe) goes in the centre, and all the Independent Variables (variables that have a potential impact on the dependent variable) are listed. IVs come from the exploration step and the links between the variables serve to determine positive and negative aspects. Mapping like this is useful to build a hypothesis that will meet certain criteria (parsimony, operationalisation, testability, etc.).
4. Express your problem: in a concise sentence, so that it is clear, manageable, and feasible. Add one or two hypotheses to go with it.

Practical use of the tool: