



Self Assessment tool

All layers - Diagnostic tool

We have developed a **CLIPS-Self-Assessment-Tool** to help groups to analyze their own group. It is a questionnaire that can be found on the internet, downloaded, and completed on the computer. But the result of the questionnaire doesn't tell "the truth" about a project - this is important to bear this in mind! The self-assessment tool enables groups to look at their project with a new pair of glasses, shaped by CLIPS. It gives incentives for communication and sharpens the perception. Here we describe one way how to work with the Self-assessment-tool with groups.



Aims and Objectives

- To give an idea about the strengths and weaknesses of the community from a CLIPS perspective
- To give an impulse for a deep meta-communication about the community.
- To give an impression about the different perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of the group.



Time

70 - 130 minutes (or more - ideal as the start of a longer session to reflect about the community)



Materials Preparation

Each group member is asked to complete the self-assessment-tool on their own at home and to bring their results to the meeting.

A notebook with the [self-assessment-tool](#) file (table "groups") shall be present.

The self-assessment tool can be found and downloaded in the clips.gen-europe.org website in the section "methodology, methods and tools":



Target audience

Community groups



Number of Participants

Minimum 4 – maximum 40.



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CLIPS
METHODS



Duration Activity

5' WELCOME

20' COLLECT THE RESULTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONNAIRES

20' IDENTIFY CRUCIAL ASPECTS TOGETHER

FOR EACH TOPIC 30' MINIMUM TO INVESTIGATE THE CRUCIAL ASPECTS

5' CHECKOUT

INTRODUCTION

WELCOMING- 5 MINUTES

Appreciate the work that people did in completing the questionnaire.

Ask how people felt doing it and if it was interesting for them to do it, and if they are interested in hearing other people's perspectives and compare them.

Point out that nobody's answer tells "the truth" about the project, but that there are many different truths about it and that this meeting is dedicated to discovering them all.

It will be an inspiring journey!

Group work with the self assessment tool

INSTRUCTION 1 - COLLECTING RESULTS OF INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONNAIRES 20 MINUTES

Be well prepared for this part! The best is to have:

- a notebook with the calculation-file already open to calculate mean and variances
- flipchart-paper where the main words of the different points of the questionnaires are already written, and there are two rows for "mean" and "variance" behind it.

Go through the questionnaire and ask the people to give their scores for the different headlines. Someone types these scores directly in the table in the file that calculates the mean and the variance. Someone else visualizes the mean and the variance on a flipchart-paper.

It is recommended to go through the whole questionnaire without rushing, but to avoid discussions at this point. Only after having gone through the whole questionnaire, you will know what are the most crucial points that need discussion.

If you allow discussions at this stage, people might discuss points that are not really crucial.

INSTRUCTION 2- IDENTIFY THE MOST CRUCIAL POINTS 20 MINUTES

This is a moment of sorting and identifying what will be the topics discussed.

There are different reasons why a point can be crucial.

- Aspects in which the project scores low.
- Aspects in which there is a high variance (very different perceptions of different team members) - or aspects, where some individuals rated completely different from others, even if these are "exceptions".
- Aspects in which the score of the self-assessment-tool in one layer of CLIPS and the intuitive ranking of the group for this aspect differs strongly.

Identify the aspects that need further investigation at this point, and mark out why they are crucial. We recommend marking these aspects with a different code (eg: ↘ for low, x for high variance, and D for the difference between a score and intuitive rank)

The "variance" is a unit that tells us how far apart the different results are. It is high when they differ very much and 0 if everybody gave exactly the same score.

It is not important to know the mathematical formula behind it, But for those who are interested, it is calculated as the average squared deviation of each number from the mean of a data set.

Example: If we have 3 scores: 1, 3, and 5, the mean is 3. The difference between 1 and 3 is 2, between 3 and 3 is 0, and between 5 and 3 is again 2. This leads to a variance = $((2^2)+(0^2)+(2^2))/3$

Statistics speak of a **high variance if it is above 1.**



Group work with the self-assessment-tool

Each of the reasons why a topic is identified as needing further investigation and attention calls for a different treatment. That's why we continue with three alternatives - one proposal for each reason. These are proposals of how to deal with it. Experienced facilitators are welcome to add their own expertise and adapt the method to the needs of the situation. We recommend using the self-assessment-tool as the first step in a process that later integrates many different methods according to the needs of the community.

INSTRUCTION 3-A: AN ASPECT IN WHICH EVERYBODY RATES A POOR "PERFORMANCE"

If the group identifies clearly an aspect with a low score, there is probably - but not always - a real need for strengthening this aspect. The next step is to explore if the group agrees that there is a need for a change.

Maybe the whole group doesn't see it as a weakness - this needs to be accepted!

The facilitator should always be aware that there are two possibilities (that are often both true): either the group has a blind spot on this point and ignores something that would be important for them, or this particular part of the CLIPS mode doesn't fit this group, as every group has its very own identity.

Explore this openly with the group.

The next step - if appropriate - is then to develop a strategy that can be applied to strengthen this point. The first step for this can be a talking-stick round about this issue - and then the facilitator can choose out of all the CLIPS methods the suitable one for really tackling the critical point.

INSTRUCTION 3 C - ASPECTS IN WHICH THE SCORE OF THE SELF-ASSESSMENT-TOOL AND THE INTUITIVE CLASSIFICATION OF THE PROJECT DIFFER STRONGLY

Every community member and often every community has an intuitive answer to the question "Is our community doing well in this aspect, or does it need a lot of improvement?" - even before starting to fill out the questionnaire.

Sometimes, this intuitive classification differs from the result of the questionnaire - and people ask: What is right?

Again, there is no right or wrong. This difference is another possibility for self-reflection.

There can be **two reasons** for this difference:

Either the **self-assessment-tool doesn't ask the "right" questions** - if you come to this conclusion, please give feedback to the CLIPS-team,

Or the **self-perception of the group is influenced by some experiences** that give the group the tendency to rate themselves more positively or negatively than the tool does. It can be interesting to explore this.

INSTRUCTION 3 - B - AN ASPECT WITH A HIGH VARIANCE

Aspects with high variance, for which some individuals rated completely different than the others, are one of the most interesting results of the self-assessment-tool. We would recommend dedicating most of the time to the immediate discussion to explore these points.

Some groups want to find out which rating is "the truth" about the project. It is important to increase the awareness, that there is no such thing as "the truth" about the project.

Every answer is part of the truth.

Even if some mark a "1" and others mark a "5" for the same sentence - it's all part of the truth.

Here we come to a point where the group can discover more about the individuals and their differences.

It's important to take time to understand why people came to their decision to give this score. A respectful and explorative conversation about the background and the reasons that lead to giving a certain score **can tell the group a lot about the relationship between the "I" and the "We" - way more than any score that the self-assessment-tool can calculate!**

Often, the insights discovered in these conversations are very important for the group. This is where the self-assessment-tool comes to its full potential.

If there are some people that always answer way more negatively (or way more positively) than the others, this can tell us something about these people. What contributes to their different perspective? What can be learned from this? Sometimes, this can be a signal that there are people that are about to drop out of the group.

Sometimes, it is just proof of different personalities. Some people tend to be optimists, others tend to be pessimists, How can we use their potential? **The people answering rather negatively can be used as seismographs for the project and given more attention**, this is often an important step in integrating frustrated people.

And on the other hand, it is important for people that tend to see the dark side, to increase their awareness that there is a bright side as well.

Example: The self-perception of my community was that we score very low on "intention". The questionnaire leads to a different result and the feedback from other communities was in alignment with the questionnaire. An explanation for this: we are influenced by exhausting discussions we had **about details** in realizing our intention, which gives us the impression that we score low on intention.

But compared to many other communities, we have a very strong shared intention about ecology and lowering our ecological footprint. The SAT increased our awareness of this!

