

SIMULATION GAMES IN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION



The topics of international cooperation are marked by high complexity. This comes from, among other factors, the involvement of many actors from different sectors and from the necessity of decision making in dynamic contexts. The goal of our work is to make this interdependency and conflict dynamics experienceable. To accomplish this, we use the method simulation gaming.

Alongside the effective and sustainable comprehension of complex correlations which the method provides, it is also suited for testing alternative courses of action and for improving collaboration between different actors. Simulation games are therefore an excellent tool, both for the field of training and qualification of specialists as well as for practical project work on site.



THE SIMULATION GAME METHOD

Simulation games are an interactive method which models reality. The core of a simulation game is a complex problem for which a solution must be found. During the simulation game the participants take on the roles of different stakeholders and interact with each other in a prestructured framework determined by game rules.

The course of the game is divided into different phases in which the players' actions continually allow new situations to arise and to these situations they must react.

GENERAL LEARNING GOALS

Within the general learning objectives, we determine specific learning objectives in consultation with the client

IMPROVEMENT OF THE COOPERATION BETWEEN CENTRAL ACTORS

By taking on different roles, the simulation gaming method lends itself brilliantly to the development of a deeper understanding of different parties' positions and the logic of actions and needs behind them. Through this roleplay, existing conflicts of interests will of course not be erased, but the respective interests and needs of the parties will become comprehensible and areas for cooperation visible.

These experiences can be used to improve the cooperation between institutions or to contribute to a peaceful conflict resolution in conflict situations.

OUR OFFERS

In the last years we developed different workshops and seminar formats. Some examples include:

- » Implementation of simulation game
- » Creation of simulation games
- » Training for the implementation and development of tailor-made simulation games
- » Creation of scenarios for the future

Please feel free to contact us.

TESTING OF ACTION STRATEGIES AND DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVE PATHS TO SOLUTIONS

Simulation games offer a safe space to experiment with procedures. In the laboratory-like situation created by the game, new and creative problem solving strategies can be

tested. This aids in developing new options for action in retracted situations and in applying these options to real problem intricacies. The boundaries and possibilities of these alternative approaches are tested in and can be evaluated during the simulation game.



UNDERSTANDING COMPLEX RELATIONSHIPS

Due to its dynamic course, new situations and challenges are constantly developing during a simulation game. Because of this, complex relationships become experienceable in an interactive way and the experiences become understandable through the follow-up reflection and evaluation.

This allows the participants to gain a better understanding for the consequences of decisions in complex systems and helps them to apply this understanding in their own sphere of activity.

TARGET GROUPS AND FORMATS

One strength of the simulation gaming method is its extreme flexibility regarding the previous knowledge and needs of the particular target group. From meetings lasting just several hours with school classes to multiple-day crisis simulations for specialists, simulation games can be modified in complexity and length to fit the needs and interests of the target group.

Due to the experience-based approach, the method is also suited for communicating complex topics to participants with heterogeneous educational backgrounds.

CONTACT:

We are always searching for new cooperations and partnerships, in order to link our activities and to increase their impact. Feel free to approach us:

Florian Dunkel

Director

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OFFERINGS

We are always happy about new challenges. Our offers include, among others, the following formats:

- » **Custom-made simulation games:**
We develop new simulation games on different topics in close coordination with the client to ensure the game is adapted precisely to the needs of the target group.
- » **Implementation of existing simulation games:**
Our portfolio already includes many dozen simulation games on a multitude of topics, which we are happy to adapt and implement for different target groups and event formats.
- » **Trainings for simulation game leaders:**
In this format we educate simulation game multipliers to apply the method with their individual target groups.



SUBJECT AREAS

In the following section we will introduce, with examples, areas of method implementation for diverse topics in international cooperation. All our formats have the goal of improving cross-sector cooperation, especially between actors from the government, economy and civil society spheres.

A. GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRACY

- » Participation
- » Decentralization
- » Corruption

B. SECURITY, RECONSTRUCTION, PEACE

- » Education of Specialists
- » Concepts of Conflict Transformation
- » Conflict Resolution

C. CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT, RESOURCES

- » Climate Change
- » Resource Depletion

D. MIGRATION

- » Improvement of Local Integration
- » Legal Frameworks

GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRACY



The construction of democratic structures forms an important basis for peaceful and sustainable development. In addition to the work with governmental institutions, this also involves the inclusion of relevant actors from civil society and economy and a stronger awareness among the population for democratic processes.

PARTICIPATION

The question of including different interest groups in political decision-making processes is extremely important for the construction of democratic structures. In this respect, the method can simulate an exemplary procedure of civic participation in order to sensitize local administrations to the possibilities of this approach.

EXAMPLE: For the *Konrad Adenauer Foundation* in Chile we developed a custom-designed simulation game in civic engagement on the municipal level and implemented it on site with local trainers within the scope of a training of trainers.

Simulation games can also be used to strengthen civil society structures in this field, for example to test strategies in the exertion of influence on political decision-making processes.

DECENTRALIZATION

Decentralization reforms constitute a promising approach for the stabilization of democratic systems, especially in countries with strong regional differences and heterogeneous population structures.

EXAMPLE: We developed and implemented on site a simulation game for the *Heinrich-Böll-Foundation* Morocco, the content of which aimed to make the Moroccan judicial system transparent in regard to the accountability of politicians and to analyse the possibilities of decentral influence.

Simulation games custom made for the particular in-country situation can help to develop meaningful competence dispersion for the political levels, to make clear potential difficulties in implementation and to conduct accordant adaptations. Furthermore, simulation games can help to analyse the causes behind the frequently existing discrepancy between written laws and lived practice.

FIGHTING CORRUPTION

It is one of the most complex topics in international cooperation. Interventions in this area requires a highly systemic approach as a change by a single actor is not enough to break through existing structures. In this regard, simulation games can make an important contribution to the sensitization on the subject matter and, through evaluation, can give illuminating clues as to which approaches are promising as well as to the reasons why these approaches often fail in reality.

EXAMPLE: In cooperation with *Transparency International* we implemented a workshop in Tunisia on sensitization for central stakeholders in the region. The central goal was to find approaches for solving this complex problem.

SECURITY, RECONSTRUCTION, PEACE



Unresolved conflicts between population groups, a lack of security and territorial disputes pose a central obstacle to development in many nations. In this area our offering encompasses both the simulation of actual conflict situations as well the creation of semi-fictitious scenarios, which reproduce prototypical conflict dynamics such as secession conflicts. The offering is therefore suitable for both the content-based education of specialists to be sent to crisis regions and for the direct work with conflicting parties on site.

TRAINING IN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Specialists in crisis regions can gain a better understanding of possible courses of action in dynamic conflicts and can test how to handle stress situations and unpredictable moments in the field. In the case of post-war societies, strategies which could contribute to sustainable stabilization can be developed through simulations. At this juncture, conflict simulations constitute an ideal link between already available knowledge and its application in complex situations on the ground.

EXAMPLE: For many years we have implemented a one-week training for future peace and conflict consultants at the *Academy of Conflict Transformation*. The goal is to prepare the participants comprehensively for the complex situations they will encounter on site.

FUNDAMENTALS OF CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

Many local and international actors working in conflict situations are only superficially acquainted with the basic concepts of conflict, violence and peace. However, in order to be able to work effectively in such situations, at least basic knowledge in this area is required. In the framework of our formats participants learn the corresponding theoretical foundations and can apply these directly during a simulation game.

EXAMPLE: At the *German Federal Foreign Office* we have implemented many workshops for young international diplomats, giving them the basic theoretical and practical foundations of conflict transformation.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT ON THE GROUND

In addition to educating specialists, the method can also be used for the resolution of actual conflict scenarios. Simulation games offer an excellent opportunity to change perspectives and develop empathy for the positions of the opposing side - a basic prerequisite for a constructive dialogue. In particular, the application of semi-fictitious scenarios makes it possible to break apart a retracted pattern of thought and to develop new possibilities for solution.

EXAMPLE: Aided by the *zivik program from the German Federal Foreign Office*, we implemented conflict simulations on the Nagorno-Karabach conflict with participants from Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. The goal was to develop alternative action and solution options for the gridlocked conflict.

CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT, RESOURCES



An equitable and sustainable handling of shrinking resources constitutes one of the biggest challenges to stability for many nations. In many places these challenges are intensified by climate change. In order to counteract the conflict potential brought on by climate change, long-term strategies that incorporate the needs and interests of multiple interest groups are necessary.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Adjustment to climate change constitutes one of the biggest tasks for many countries, which need comprehensive strategies. Custom-made games can simulate dealing with the consequences of climate change for specific countries or entire regions.

As a result, an understanding for different options for action can be developed. Through the involvement of diverse actors and their specific interests conflicts of interest and dilemmas can be dealt with, which potentially conflict with the implementation of urgently needed measures.

EXAMPLE: For the *German Federal Foreign Office* we developed and implemented a simulation game with a climate related crisis scenario for 14 diplomats from island nations.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The depletion of resources, especially in fragile states, often accompanies conflicts and can strengthen existing conflicts. The question of the distribution of scarce resources such as water and energy can also create conflicts. Here too, simulation games can demonstrate the needs of different interest groups (government, industry, environmental organizations, effected area residents) in order to develop options for action in a safe space.

The method can be deployed for example in the training of future specialists enrolled in „mining governance“ courses of study in order to strengthen their consciousness of a conflict-sensitive approach to depletion plans. Likewise, the method can be used to more strongly involve the local population in the planning and implementation of material depletion plans.

EXAMPLE: For prospective mining engineers we, together with the *GIZ Afghanistan*, developed a draft of a didactical concept with the goal of sensitization of participants to a conflict-conscious way of dealing with the depletion of resources. Due to the heightened security situation, the concept could not yet be implemented.

MIGRATION AND FLIGHT



Migration movement will in the coming years remain one of the biggest global challenges, whether it be caused by armed conflicts or the intensified environmental conditions. A successful dealing with the resulting difficulties requires both the establishment of effective integration measures on the local level and of judicial frameworks on the national and international level.

LOCAL INTEGRATION

The integration of migrants often creates big challenges for local municipal administrations, especially if the municipality is already struggling with economic and social problems. Conflict potential with the local population is abundant, especially when special support measures are specifically aimed at migrants.

Simulation games can be helpful in planning conflict-sensitive integration measures which include the perspectives of multiple interest groups.

EXAMPLE: In cooperation with the *GIZ Morocco* we implemented simulation game workshops for local administrations, migrants' unions and civil-society organizations to gain a better understanding of the different perspectives and to develop together initiatives to improve integration efforts.

LEGAL FRAMEWORKS

A sustainable handling of results of flight and migration requires the creation of legal frameworks and treaties on the national and international level. This pertains for instance to the questions of distribution of large flows of refugees, to the legal status of refugees or the financing of protective measures. Included in this is the controversially discussed creation of a climate refugee status, which would have far-reaching results.

Simulation games can help to attain an understanding for the different positions during the development of treaties and to make the difficulties and common interests visible. In an expanded version, simulation games can also be used to make the impacts of legal regulation on local work experienceable for decision makers.

EXAMPLE: On behalf of the *Heinrich Böll Foundation*, we implemented a simulation game workshop on EU migration policy for representatives of the Moroccan civil society. The goal of the workshop was to strengthen the voice of Moroccan NGOs in the discourse.

REFERENCES

In the following we want to draw your attention to some selected workshops or workshop-series we have implemented in the last years, in order to give you a more concrete idea of our work. At the same time we got familiar to adapt to new topics and different target groups. For any kind of request, please do not hesitate to contact us.

YOUTH AND RELIGION IN KYRGYZSTAN

German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ)

giz In 2017 we developed a simulation game for the GIZ in Kyrgyzstan with the tensions between religious and secular groups in the society as the central theme. The process was implemented by training multipliers who afterwards organized workshops for local youth in seven locations. In addition, the needs and interests of youth in religious education were raised in an interactive way in the workshops.

Contact: Oermann, Christiane: christiane.oermann@giz.de

MÍ COMUNA, MI PAÍS - CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN CHILE

Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Chile (KAS)



We developed a custom-made simulation game about civic engagement on the municipal level for the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Chile, implemented it there and passed the knowledge on to local trainers in the context of a training of trainers. Within the framework of the simulation game the participants try out different, real existing mechanisms for civic engagement. At the end, the students had a clearly increased awareness of the available mechanisms and their functions.

Contact: Klein, Andreas: Andreas.Klein@kas.de

INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS IN MOROCCO

German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ)

giz In 2017/18 we implemented many simulation game workshops in Morocco for the GIZ in cooperation with the Moroccan interior ministry. The target group of the workshops consisted of representatives from local municipal administrations, national agencies, migrants' unions and civil society organizations. The goal was to create a better understanding of the different perspectives and the development of common initiatives for the improvement of integration efforts.

Contact: Rhorfrani, Lamia: lamia.rhoufrani@giz.de

CLIMATE-INDUCTED CRISIS SCENARIOS

German Federal Foreign Office



During our frequent simulation game workshops as part of the international diplomats program of the German Federal Foreign Office, we developed a game about dealing with the results of climate change for a group from the Pacific island states. This included prototypical challenges for the region and gave the young diplomats the opportunity to try out different solution strategies and to discuss the need for strengthened international cooperation.

Contact: Behr, Heinz-Peter: 1-da-col@auswaertiges-amt.de

JOB MARKET INTEGRATION OF WOMEN

German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ)

giz In the context of the ECONOWIN program, we developed a simulation game in 2018 with the discussion about the role of women in Moroccan society, and the special focus on women in the job market, as the central theme. The multiplier training for representatives of educational establishments ensured that the game was disseminated across different parts of the country.

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ACADEMY FOR CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

forumZFD



We have been a part of the full-time course at the Academy for Conflict Transformation of the forumZFD since 2015. Here we use simulation games to offer the participants a safe space in which to apply and test the conflict resolution techniques they learned at the academy.

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CONTACT:

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