

## **Role play: Bringing the system into the room - A micro-entrepreneurship solution for introducing energy efficient stoves for refugee camps in Sudan**

© 2025 by Minna Halme and Sara Lindeman, Aalto University School of Business, Finland. This work is licenced under CC-BY-NC-SA. To view a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>

This role play aims at “bringing the system into the room” in a way, which does not explicitly emphasize systems thinking methods. Its context is micro-entrepreneurship solution for energy efficient stoves in refugee camps, involving multiple stakeholders that represent different Global North organizations active in development aid and local refugees. The exercise encourages the player to step into the boots of the role character to understand their motivations and ramifications of their situated actions through the play.

**Target group:** The role play has been used in courses for multi-disciplinary Master degree courses studying sustainability management topics.

### **Description**

The essence of the role play is negotiating a micro-entrepreneurship solution for introducing solar cooking stoves for a refugee camp in Sudan. In this exercise based on a real case, five stakeholder groups negotiate about the introduction of the stoves for refugee camps during three rounds. Each round marks one year. In the beginning of every round (year) each player (stakeholder) gets more information about the development of the events. Based on the new information, they need to adjust their negotiation strategy and perhaps even their goal.

### **For Teachers/role play facilitators**

An element of surprise is critical for the success of the role play. To simulate the real situation, the players should get only minimal background information about the case at hand before the playing the game. After the game there should be time for reflective discussions. The teacher/facilitator can draft questions for the discussion based on the learning context in which the game is used and the learning goals.

### **Materials**

In terms of materials the exercise involves 5 roles & 3 cards per each role. The first card contains the description of the role and its starting point and aim in the game. The play lasts 3 “years” (= play rounds). In the beginning of each new year the player gets further information pertinent to their role as regards what has happened during the year from the perspective their role.

- 5 roles which the players do not know in advance. They need to learn to know who the other roles (players) are.
- 3 cards per each role. The cards provide information about the role and its aim. The first card contains the description of the role and its starting point and aim in the game. the cards for the second and the third year (play rounds 2 and 3) contain new information about events that have unfolded during the year.
- 3 years (= play rounds). In the beginning of each new year the player gets further information pertinent to their role as regards what has happened during the year from the perspective their role.

### **Case background**

The case draws loosely on the following research, but it has been modified for pedagogical purposes.

Technologizing humanitarian space: Darfur advocacy and the rape-stove panacea  
 Samer Abdelnour. (2014) *International Political Sociology*, pp.145-163