

Games on inclusion of age, disability and gender
in preparedness and humanitarian response

Unconscious bias

Game title: Unconscious bias

Overview: Using a worksheet, players reflect on who they trust and diversity within a given group of people. A debrief focuses on levels of trust and how we tend to form more trust with people with similar identities to us. The session concludes with an optional video and short problem-solving scenario.

Learning objectives:

By the end of the game players will be able to reflect on own unconscious bias and how people's identities (including age, disability and gender) influence our relationships and decisions.

Who should play the game?

Anyone who would like to learn about their own unconscious bias.

Number of players: 2 or more

Materials required:

Resource 1: Print one copy of the Trust worksheet for each player

Resource 2: Print one copy of Trust circles per player or per pair, or flipchart the diagram

Computer with internet connection and speakers to show YouTube video

Estimated time required: 30-40 minutes

Facilitator instructions:

Step 1: Explain that in this game we will reflect a little on our own circle of trust, the diversity in that group and how our unconscious bias influences the relationships we build and the work we do.

Step 2: Give each player a copy of the worksheet already folded along the dotted line so that only the first column is visible. Ask them not to unfold the paper at this stage; they should only see the other columns at Step 4.

Step 3: Ask each participant to think of 8 to 10 people that they trust in their community. These people should not be family members, but individuals they trust or trust more than most. They should then write the names of each of these people in the first column.

Step 4: When everyone has finished, they can unfold the paper and complete the other columns for each name on their worksheet. They can decide what to write and they do not have to share anything specific if they prefer not to.

Note to facilitator: You can edit these columns as appropriate for your context, for example in some contexts you may want to add a column for sexual orientation and/or delete the ethnicity column if you are working in an area with tribal tensions that cannot be openly discussed.

Step 5: When everyone has finished hold a discussion around what they learned about whom they have an affinity with and why.

The information that participants write on the worksheet may be confidential. Explain that they should only share the content if they are comfortable doing so.

- Is there diversity in the group of people they trust with regards to these aspects on the worksheet? What areas have the least diversity? For example, is gender identity the least varied in their group or is it disability or age?
- How might their group be more diverse?
- If their trusted group is not very diverse, what impact might this have?
- What can be done to change this situation?

Step 6: Hand out sufficient copies of the Trust circles (Resource 2) so that everyone can see a copy (one between two or three is normally enough), or draw the diagram on a flipchart or white board. Ask players to think about what the circles mean and facilitate a short discussion.

Note to facilitator: The outer circle represents everyone we know and this group is normally the most diverse. As we build relationships, through sharing tasks and activities, people often move to the level 2 circle. As those relationships become stronger, people finally enter a close group of trusted people, level 3. This group is very often made up of people similar to ourselves – we tend to trust people with whom we identify and have things in common such as gender, nationality, age or religion (and many other aspects). When we then have opportunities at work or in our personal life, we tend to look to that trusted group of people to help with decision-making and to work closely with on larger, higher risk projects. This means that the inner circle of trust becomes the most influential, yet is the least diverse. The implication of this is that we produce a culture whereby power and opportunity often sit within a homogenous group with similar experiences and who see the world more like we do. This is one example of how unconscious bias influences our work and relationships.

Step 7: Ask players to think about how this relates to their work and personal life, the circles of influence and the unconscious bias.

Step 8: If time and technology permit, watch the following video from the Royal Society to help reinforce understanding of unconscious bias. As they watch, ask players to note down the four actions that the Royal Society is advocating to reduce unconscious bias.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=2&v=dVp9Z5k0dEE&feature=emb_logo

After the video ask if participants could begin to take similar actions in their work to reduce bias.

The four actions in the video are:

- Slow down decision making
- Reconsider reasons for decisions
- Question cultural stereotypes
- Monitor each other

Alternatively, read the following and ask participants to explain the situation:

“A father and son were involved in a car accident in which the father was killed and the son was seriously injured. The father was pronounced dead at the scene of the accident and his body was taken to a local morgue. The son was taken by ambulance to a nearby hospital and was immediately wheeled into an emergency operating room. A surgeon was called. Upon arrival and seeing the patient, the attending surgeon exclaimed “Oh no, this is my son!” Can you explain this?

Note to facilitator: In this scenario people assume the surgeon is a man, and forget that the surgeon is his mother due to unconscious bias.

Step 9: Explain that we must work to combat our unconscious bias, the first step is to be aware of our own bias, and then we must act in order to reduce the bias. The games in this pack will help support you to reduce the chances of bias and exclusion based on age, disability and gender.

Remind participants that the biggest barrier to inclusion are attitudes, these attitudes are often a result of unconscious bias rather than conscious discrimination.

Level of facilitation required: Medium

Possible adaptations to game:

You can change the columns of the worksheet to suit your situation, however, it is recommended that you keep the headings for age, disability and gender.

For Resource 2, Trust circles, you can draw the diagram on a flipchart instead of printing the document. Step 8 may also be omitted if there are technology or time limitations.

Suggested games to play after this game:

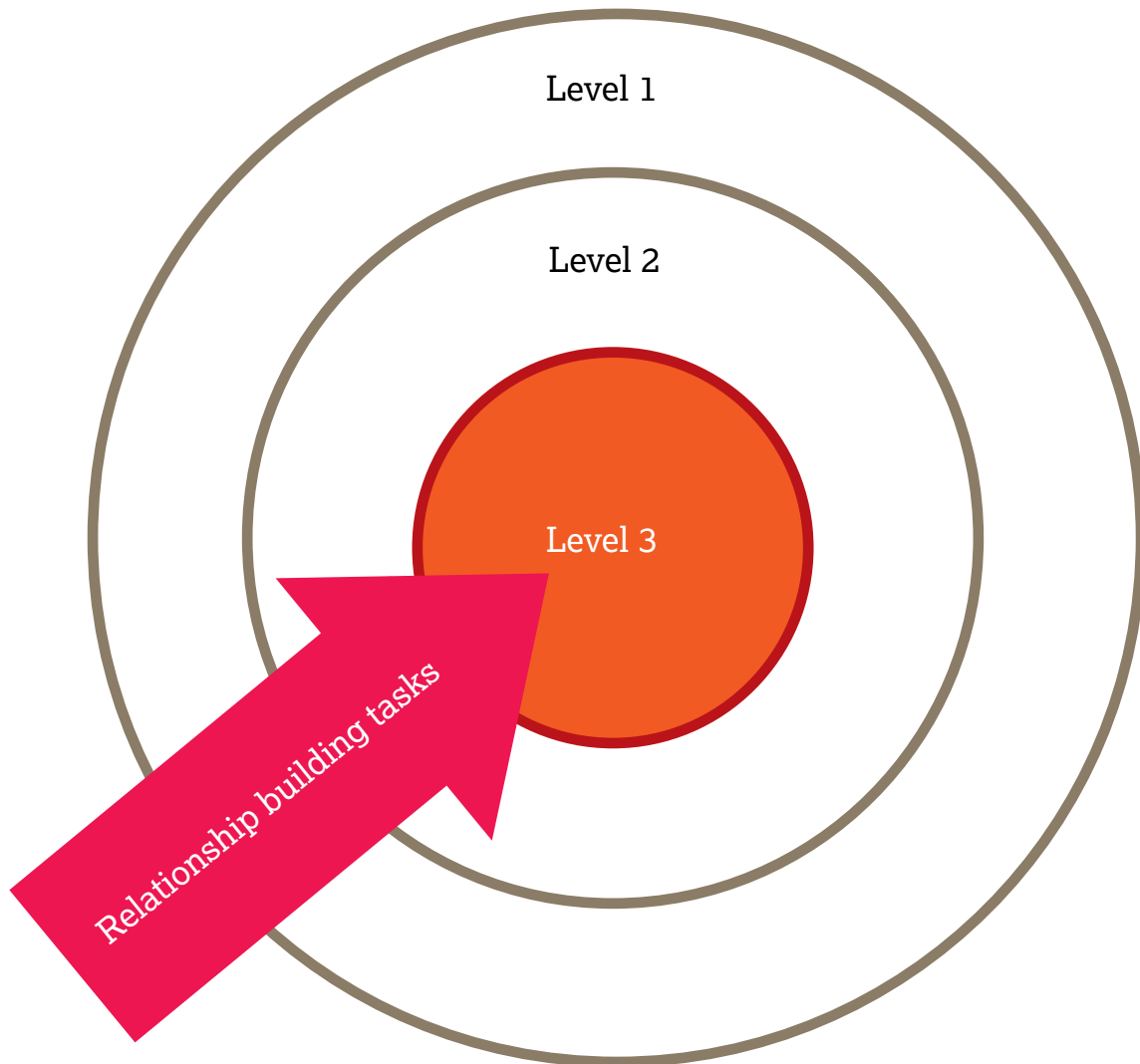
- Attitudinal, environmental and institutional barriers
- Rights-based model to programming

Resource 1: Trust worksheet

Name or initials	Gender	Age	Disability Y/N?	Religion	Education	Ethnicity

Fold here

Resource 2: **Trust circles**



Level 1 = People you know

Level 2 = People you have a growing trust for but not complete

Level 3 = People you turn to for help with decision making and high risk projects