

ToolKit

03

The Art of Facilitation



World Union of
Catholic Women's
Organisations





Dear sisters in faith,

Welcome to this dedicated module on the **Formation of the Facilitator**. This workbook is designed to equip you with the practical tools and spiritual disposition needed to facilitate Conversation in the Spirit.

The facilitator is not a 'leader' in the worldly sense, but a guardian of sacred space. Your role is to **ensure that the 'deep waters' of the Holy Spirit are reachable for every participant.**

This workbook is your companion in **developing the interiority, listening, and humility** required to lead others on this journey. Thank you for stepping forward to serve the Church in this vital role.

The World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations (WUCWO), created this toolkit thanks to the public resource materials made available by the General Secretariat of the Synod, as well as other synodality schools and institutions with whom we walk together in this mission.



THE FACILITATOR



A facilitator in Conversation in the Spirit is a guide who **manages the process** [not the content] of a spiritual dialogue, **ensuring a safe, respectful environment** where participants can **listen to one another and the Holy Spirit**.

They **foster deep, prayerful, and mutual conversation**, encouraging everyone to share while encouraging **openness to divine guidance**.



THE ROLE



Establishing a
Sacred Space



Facilitating
prayerful
preparation



Explaining the
process



Managing time
and structure



Active
listening



Encouraging
equal
participation



Guiding the
process



"I" to "WE"
move



Collecting the
fruits

SELF-ASSESSMENT AND DISCERNMENT TOOL FOR FACILITATORS

INSTRUCTIONS

Please reflect on the following statements and rate yourself honestly on a scale of 1 to 5.

1 = I find this very difficult / This is not my natural style.

3 = I am comfortable with this, but need practice.

5 = This is a natural strength for me / I practice this regularly.

SPIRITUALITY

A facilitator must first be a person of prayer to recognize the movements of the Spirit.

- ☐ I am comfortable with prolonged periods of silence during a meeting.
- ☐ I can distinguish between my personal opinions and a "nudge" from the Holy Spirit.
- ☐ I am willing to set aside my own "agenda" or desired outcome for a session.

LISTENING

The facilitator creates a "safe space" where every voice feels sacred.

- ☐ I can summarise what someone else has said without adding my own interpretation or judgment.
- ☐ I can listen to someone I strongly disagree with without preparing a rebuttal in my head.
- ☐ I am sensitive to the "unspoken" (body language, tone, or those who are hesitant to speak).

MANAGING GROUP DYNAMICS

The facilitator ensures the process is respected so the Spirit can move.

- ☐ I feel comfortable gently interrupting someone who is speaking too long to ensure others have space.
 - ☐ I can remain calm and neutral if a "tension" or conflict arises in the circle.
 - ☐ I am able to synthesise diverse points of view without losing the "prophetic" or difficult edges.
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RESPECT FOR THE PROCESS

The facilitator acts as a guardian of the method, timing, and focus.

- ☐ I can manage the flow of the meeting with patience, keeping track of time while maintaining a prayerful pace.
 - ☐ I am disciplined in ensuring that each of the "Three Rounds" follows its specific purpose without skipping steps.
 - ☐ In the third round, I can help the group move from "I" to "WE," identifying common ground and shared calls to action.
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HUMILITY AND SERVICE

The facilitator is a servant of the group, not the "leader" of the group.

- ☐ I am comfortable being a "secondary" presence, letting the group's dialogue be the focus.
- ☐ I can accept feedback from the group on my facilitation without becoming defensive.
- ☐ I see my role as a "bridge-builder" rather than a decision-maker for the group.

SCORING YOUR JOURNEY

Total points from all 15 questions (Max score: 75):

60–75 POINTS: NATURAL FACILITATOR

You have a strong foundation in both the spiritual and technical skills required. Your challenge is to remain humble and continue "emptying yourself" to let the Spirit work.

45–59 POINTS: DEVELOPING FACILITATOR

You are comfortable with the process but may struggle with specific areas. Consider co-facilitating with a more experienced partner to gain confidence.

BELOW 45 POINTS: FACILITATOR-IN-TRAINING

You are at the beginning of this beautiful service. It may be beneficial to continue participating as a member for a while longer to deeply observe the rhythm of the Spirit.

FACILITATOR TRAININGS

WUCWO SCHOOL FOR SYNODALITY: WOMEN'S MISSION IN THE SYNODAL CHURCH

"It is important to encourage the formation of facilitators, whose contribution is often crucial to the process of discernment."

– Final Document XVI Synod of Bishops General Assembly, October 2024, 86

**WUCWO School
for Synodality.**
Facilitator Training



[Watch now >](#)



WUCWO



FORMATION COURSES FOR FACILITATORS



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DISCERNING
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Discerning
Leadership



UK School for
Synodality



Ignatian Encounter
Ministry

Ignatian encounter
ministry



École de Synodalité de DAKAR
Une autre manière d'être Église

Ecole de synodalité
de Dakar



Centro Evangelii Gaudium

Centro Evangelii
Gaudium



WWOX

MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES



Training Video

Ignatian Encounter Ministry



Tip Sheet

Ignatian Encounter Ministry



Group conversations guide

Archdiocese of Washington



Gospel conversations guide

C.S. Lewis Institute



Document UISG



Powerpoint



PRAYER THE FACILITATOR'S BLESSING

(The group stands in a circle. Each member extends one hand toward the facilitator as a sign of spiritual support and accompaniment.)

Lord Jesus, we thank you for the gift of our sister, whom you have called to facilitate our journey together. We recognize in her a heart that is open to your Word and a spirit that seeks to build bridges of peace.

Lord, grant her the grace of a 'Listening Heart'. Give her the patience to hold our words and silences, the wisdom to guide our voices, and the humility to step back, so that Your Spirit may always be the true leader of this circle.

Lord, grant her the gift of 'Parrhesia' and Peace. May she be a guardian of our sacred space, protecting our diversity and nurturing our unity. When tensions arise, make her a channel of Your peace. When we are weary, make her a witness to Your hope.

Lord, protect her and sustain her. As she pours herself out in service to us, may she be refilled by Your grace. May she never feel alone in this task, knowing that the Holy Spirit walks beside her.

We ask this in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.



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