Designing a process for a group working on a complex task:
A checklist for facilitators and project leaders

	Is it in this case particularly important to be careful about ...	Because otherwise there is a risk that ...	Assess importance: − not important/relevant * somewhat important ** important *** very important	Notes on how to support the task
I. ATTENTIONAL SUPPORT	**1. Issue focus** ... formulating the issue/problem/task in such a way that participants are clear about and agree on the focus of the work?	Participants are concerned with very disparate issues and are not able to engage meaningfully in shared concerns.		
	2. Structuring work process ... structuring the work process clearly, so that the team focusses on one type of task at a time rather than talking about all kinds of things at the same time?	The group jumbles storytelling, complaining, inquiry, analysis, idea generation, evaluation, etc. without completing any task.		
	3. Learning ... supporting participants to reflect on insights and learning at regular intervals, in order to strengthen long-term learning?	Participants do not notice insights and skill acquisition and therefore relapse into conventional patterns after the process, instead of applying new knowledge and skills.		
	4. Decongealing ... supporting participants in stepping out of ingrained frames of mind in order to approach the issues in creative and openminded ways?	Participants remain limited by unreflected assumptions, patterns of reasoning and positions.		

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II. RELATIONSHIPS	**5. Safe space** ... building a sense of safe space, where participants feel at ease with the context and with each other?	Participants feel insecure, are reserved and hold back.		
	6. Rapport ... creating favourable conditions for participants to connect with each other, establish rapport and even build long-term relationships?	Conversations remain on a superficial level due to lack of rapport and trust; failure to establish lasting personal relationships that might ease communication in future interactions.		
	7. Open up communication ... intervening in order to open up communication so that participants can speak freely about personal experiences, concerns and ideas, even if these may concern sensitive matters?	People do not express their personal experiences; there are topics that are unspeakable even though they might be crucial to include in deliberations.		
	8. Dialogue in diversity ... surfacing and transforming tensions and conflictual relationships among the participants, so that differences in perspectives and interests can be worked with productively?	Conversations are permeated by debating, lack of openness; thinking remains restricted to pre-existing perspectives.		

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III. ATTITUDES/FEELINGS	**9. Management of energy levels** ... designing the work process in order to support energy levels and concentration?	People get bored and become distracted and/or passive.		
	10. Commitment ... taking care to mobilize the participants' sense of hope about achieving meaningful outcomes and thereby personal commitment to engage in the team's work?	People feel powerless and therefore not motivated to engage actively; People expect that someone else should take action.		
	11. Focus on possibilities ... shifting the focus from talking about problems, obstacles, blaming and frustrations towards possibilities?	Participants remain fixated in a position of frustration and blaming; There is a lack of creative and realistic ideas about action.		
	12. Expansion of scope of care ... supporting the expansion of the participants' scope of caring to include a larger whole?	People remain identified with partial interests and have a narrow focus of attention.		
	13. Accountability ... strengthening the participants' feeling of accountability for taking action and achieving desired outcomes?	No action ensues, because noone feels accountable.		

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IV. UNDERSTANDING	**14. Self-clarification** ... clarifying the participants' own concerns, needs, interests and preferences?	Participants are weakly committed, because proposals and decisions are not anchored in true needs.		
	15. Complexity awareness ... supporting an inquiry into the complex conditions, causal connections and potential consequences so that participants gain a more comprehensive understanding of the issue complex?	The quality of proposals and decisions is low because significant aspects of the issue complex have not been considered.		
	16. Whole system/Context awareness ... supporting the emergence of a stronger whole system and context awareness?	The need to adapt to changing conditions is ignored; Focus remains narrow and strategies only address parts of the system; Time horizon is short.		
	17. Stakeholder awareness ... developing an awareness of the spectrum of relevant stakeholders and an understanding of their respective interests and perspectives?	Significant stakeholders are not considered in strategy development.		
	18. Perspective awareness ... supporting an increased awareness of the respective properties of different perspectives that may be used in making sense of the issue, so that participants can productively use several perspectives when deliberating causality and actions?	Participants remain embedded in monological perspectives; measures do not draw on the richness of different perspectives; Conversations tend to develop into debates between fixed positions.		
	19. Common ground ... developing a shared description of the issue complex and consensus on recommendations?	Communication breaks down because of disparate narratives of the situation; Action is impeded by unresolved conflicts about appropriate strategy.		

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V. EMPOWERMENT AND CREATIVITY	**20. Mobilize individuals' resources** ... creating favourable conditions for mobilizing individual participants' knowledge, skills, creativity and other resources, so that they become available for the team's work?	Outcomes remain suboptimal, because available resources are not mobilized in the process; There is a failure to surface creative ideas; Unintended negative consequences of measures taken follow, because significant factors were not considered.		
	21. Creativity ... creating conditions that stimulate a high level of creativity in developing ideas?	Outcomes remain suboptimal because creative ideas fail to surface.		
	22. Preempt domination ... preventing asymmetrical power relations (such as differences in status) from dampening open and democratic communication?	Persons with high rank or expansive personalities dominate conversations while others remain silent.		

VI. DECISIONMAKING & COORDINATION OF ACTION	**23. Decision-making** ... supporting the decision-making process, so that the process leads to well-founded concrete decisions?	People talk a lot and generate ideas, but firm decisions are not made.		
	24. Support implementation ... organizing the different steps in implementing decisions?	Agreed measures are not implemented, because accountability is unclear, or implementation is poorly organized.		