



# National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights

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## FACILITATION-FRAMING TOOLS

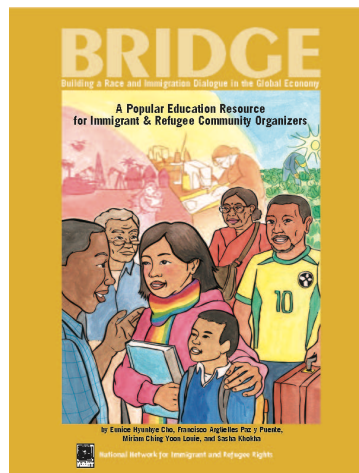
### **BRIDGE: Building a Race & Immigration Dialogue in the Global Economy**

BRIDGE facilitation-framing tools offer a format and guidelines for using popular education to host conversations and dialogues among friends and community, groups large and small, to tackle issues of race, immigration, immigrant rights and social justice and develop plans for local action.

The following excerpt:

## **Our Methodology**

provides a brief background on popular education and is taken from:



For more tools and in-depth curricula, the complete BRIDGE resource offers modules addressing a broad range of topics including: • ***Race, Migration, & Multiple Oppressions*** • ***Immigrant Rights and LGBT Rights*** • ***Immigrant Women's Leadership*** • ***Conflict Transformation in Community Organizing*** • ***Immigration History Timeline*** • ***and more.***

To read a description of all BRIDGE topics/and or to purchase a copy of BRIDGE, go here:  
<http://www.nnirr.org/drupal/shop/curriculum>

## our methodology

### Where Are We Coming From? A Few Words on Our Popular Education Model

BRIDGE is based on a popular education approach. In a few words, we believe that education should be participatory, develop critical thinking and engagement about relations of power, and should support people in organizing to change their lives.

What do we believe is popular education? We believe that:

- Popular education **draws on the direct lived experiences** and knowledge of everyone involved—including participants and facilitators.
- Popular education encourages **active participation** to engage people in dialogues, fun and creative activities, and draws on the strength of our diverse cultures. We learn in many ways—by seeing, hearing, talking, doing, creating, or a combination of these modes. We include dialogues and learning experiences that engage all of our senses, emotions, perceptions, and beliefs.
- Popular education draws on these **multiple modes** of learning: discussion, drawing, writing songs, making sculptures or acting out a skit gives us tools to express ourselves and communicate at all levels of our human experience.
- Popular education creates spaces for **trust and participation**. All education takes place within a larger context of behaviors, attitudes, and values. The ways in which we feel “safe” in a space depends on our own circumstances—our class, our race, gender, sexual orientation, age, immigration status, disability, and many other variables. As facilitators, we cannot remove these differences, but we can acknowledge their existence in order to open a space of more direct dialogue.
- Popular education is clear about its **agenda**. All education reproduces a set of values, ideologies, and attitudes. Popular education is not neutral, but holds a commitment to liberation from oppression at its ethical core.
- Popular education is **accessible** to all participants, and actively works to explore and challenge ways that create unequal access to participation, such as language barriers, disability, and group dynamics.
- Popular education **connects our lived experiences to historical, economic, social and political structures of power**. When our personal experiences are placed in larger contexts and patterns of power, our personal realities are transformed.
- Popular education **explores our multiple identities and experiences** of inclusion and exclusion, oppression and privilege. The underlying truth of

popular education is of the existence of oppression: racism, classism, sexism, homophobia, heterosexism, transphobia, etc. is a reality in all of our lives. Popular education is not about building tolerance, but about building respect, acceptance, equality, and solidarity.

- Popular education **empowers individuals and groups to develop long-term strategies** to transform structures of power and to build a more just society. Popular education and organizing should not be reduced to short-term campaigns, mobilizations, or events, but rather, a democratic process based on values, connected and accountable to concrete needs of a community.
- Popular education **develops new community leaders** to build movements for social change. Popular education is a way to develop new leaders, who will in turn, develop other leaders. This kind of leadership will be based upon concrete experiences of collective action and organizing.
- Popular education **results in action** that challenges oppression, and help develop political spaces that are democratic and equal.
- Popular education **affirms the dignity** of every human being.

## Developing Popular Education in Our Work: *Is It Hot?* Some Critical Questions

As we “cooked up” BRIDGE, we asked ourselves—is it *pico* (Spanish for spicy or hot)? These are some questions to consider when integrating popular education into your work:

- P**articipatory
- I**ntegrated into group needs
- C**ritical thinking/Creativity/Constructive Criticism
- O**rganizing
- S**ymbolic Power
- O**perational Capacity

### **P**articipatory

**In the workshop:** Are we engaging all participants in the learning process? Do our activities and exercises encourage equal participation?

**Outside the workshop:** Who is participating in supporting the education process?

**On a larger scale:** How do people participate in an organization’s decision-making process? Are we democratic? Who defines the agenda, establish goals, and controls resources?

### **I**ntegrated into group needs

**In the workshop:** Are we integrating the experience, knowledge, and skills of the participants? Is the content relevant to the realities and needs of the participants?

**Outside the workshop:** Have we included everyone in the group? Who is included, and who is missing?

**On a larger scale:** Are we connecting the educational topics with the short and long-term needs and goals of the group? Is education integrated into the political work of the group?

### **C**ritical thinking/Creativity/Constructive Criticism

**In the workshop:** Are we raising critical questions of power in our workshops? Are we making space for creativity in our workshops? Do we have mechanisms for feedback?

**Outside the workshop:** How are we reacting to feedback (personally and as a team)?

**On a larger scale:** Is our work addressing the root causes of a problem or only the visible symptoms?

## our methodology

### Organizing

**In the workshop:** Are we creating space for participants to connect knowledge to action and organizing?

**Outside the workshop:** Is our education work connected to organizing work?

**On a larger scale:** Are we creating and strengthening organizations and groups, or are we carrying out events and mobilizing?

### Symbolic Power

**In the workshop:** Are we incorporating the strengths of our many cultures and faiths into education?

**Outside the workshop:** Are we incorporating art and culture as part of our organizing strategies?

**On a larger scale:** What kind of power are we using and creating in our work? Are we clear about who we are? Are we using the tools and language of our oppressors, or are we drawing from our own strengths?

### Operational Capacity

**In the workshop:** Is the process and content of our education work helping to build the capacity of participants and the organization?

**Outside the workshop:** Is our education work helping to address and develop solutions to concrete issues in the group/organization?

**On a larger scale:** Are we responding to concrete needs of the community. Are our operations efficient? What are we doing right? How can we improve?

Adapted from the PICOSO Guide for Participatory Planning, developed by Pancho Argüelles, Universidad Campesina, Estelí Nicaragua, 1991.