

## Steps for Dilemma Reflection (version 2.1)

*This version was developed from existing sources by Karim Benammar, Victor van den Bersselaar and Cris van der Hoek.*

The aim of Dilemma Reflection is to give participants insight into the position from which they and others reason. This reflection tool does not provide a solution for the dilemma.

### INPUT

**Step 1** The facilitator or a participant chooses a dilemma from their professional experience. Characteristic of a dilemma is that the actor is really stuck and can't decide between one course of action and another.

Example: May a social worker persuade a mentally handicapped couple who want children to accept a contraceptive injection?

NB: Choose a 'lighter' dilemma the first time so that participants can concentrate on getting to know the various forms of ethics. Also choose a dilemma which everyone can relate to. Every participant has the right to veto a dilemma which they don't want to deal with.

### IMPLEMENTATION

**Step 2** The participants discuss the case in groups on the basis of the question: What would you do if faced with this dilemma and why?

**Step 3** The participants report on and motivate their decision. The facilitator writes their motivation on a flip chart.

**Step 4** The facilitator explains the three main currents in ethics to the participants: duty ethics, consequentialism, and virtue ethics. The facilitator uses examples to provide clarity. It is important to explain that we determine how we reason *based on* these forms of ethics.

**Step 5** The participants discuss their reasons from steps 2 and 3 again and analyse which forms of ethical reasoning underlie their reasoning.

### CONCLUSION

**Step 6** The participants evaluate the reflection session: What did you gain from this? How do you now view the dilemma differently? What was new for you? The reflector is the last to react.

## THE THREE MAIN FORMS OF ETHICS

### Duty Ethics

- Also known as rule ethics; duty ethics; deontology.
- Following ethical and/or religious rules such as the Ten Commandments, the Golden Rule (i.e. treat others as you would like to be treated yourself).
- Act according to what you would wish to become a general law (Kant).
- Concerns the action.
- Philosopher: Immanuel Kant.

### Consequentialism

- Also known as utilitarianism.
- Only the results determine whether something is good or bad. People want to increase pleasure and avoid pain.
- Difference between act utilitarianism and rule utilitarianism
- Concerns the aim.
- Philosophers: Jeremy Bentham; John Stuart Mill; Peter Singer.

### Ethics of Virtues

- The moral attitude and character of the person who acts determine what is good.
- What does the case say about the character of those involved?
- Cardinal virtues: prudence, courage, temperance, justice.
- Care virtues: attentiveness, responsibility, competence, responsiveness.
- Self-determination: carefulness, spiritual courage, willingness to learn, self-discipline.
- Concerns the character of the actor.
- Philosophers: Aristotle; Joan Tronto; Michel Foucault.