


Exploring by Theatre

 **Step:** Two - Choose an issue!

 **Time:** 1 hour

 **Space and materials:**

- Room allowing to sit in circle, re-arrange theatrically and work in small groups;
- Copies of the 4 parts of the annex (at least one copy per group).

 **Description of the tool**

By using theatre, this tool explores different aspects of the concept 'Technology Justice'.

1. Divide the participants into small groups (3-5 people) and use the annexed materials to assign three dimensions of 'Technology Justice' to different groups.
2. Ask the groups to imagine how their issues influence the real life of people around the world and to act one such situation out with a short theatre play. You can discuss the issue further after each performance or discuss the issues together after all performances.
3. After the theatre performances, make sure to introduce the definition of 'Technology Justice' (part 4 annexed) and discuss it together with the participants. Ask how they understand each point.
4. At the end debrief with the following questions:
 - How do you feel about the idea of 'Technology Justice'? What do you like and don't like about it?
 - Is it realistic for 'everyone to have access to technologies essential to life'? Why?
 - There are predictions that access to the Internet will become a basic right (human right) by 2023. How does this relate to the idea of Technology Justice?
 - Why technological know-how and research mainly happens in the Global North? Try to think of as many factors as possible. (And no, people from the Global North are not 'naturally smarter'!)
 - Find examples of technological innovations that emerged in the Global South. It is important not to picture this part of the world as 'poor, uneducated, undeveloped and sad place'.
 - How do you feel about the exercise and what have you learnt?
 - How did you manage to imagine how the big issues affect the everyday life of people? What experience did you use?
 - If issues affect people, is the opposite true as well? How can people influence issues? How can we?

Annex: Technology Justice aspects and definition¹⁰

Part 1: Inequitable access to existing technology

Billions of people around the world still do not have access to technologies that could assist them to meet their basic needs. The energy sector provides a clear example: 1.2 billion people have no access to electricity, although the technology, the knowledge, and the means for everyone on the planet to have access to some form of modern energy exists.

Traditionally, improving energy access is focused on connecting households to the electricity grid. This approach often neglects those living in remote, rural locations where grid connection is not prioritised, nor, in some cases, possible. It means that for hundreds of millions of people energy access will be as difficult as it was decades ago.

Part 2: Innovation ignoring the poor

One trillion dollars were invested in research and technological development in 2010. This investment remains mostly physically located in the global North and is more likely to be driven by the market than by global priorities. Health research is one clear example of this: just 10 per cent of worldwide expenditure on health research is devoted to the problems that afflict 90 percent of the world's population – this is the so-called 10/90 gap. One positive trend is a growing proportion of research and development taking place in the Global South, but national innovation and research capacity still need to be strengthened. If it is not, then the South will still need to rely on technological transfer from the North which can create a dependency on external knowledge and capacity and put communities at risk.

Part 3: Unsustainable use of technology

The choice and use of technology can have both positive and negative impacts, on us, on those sharing the planet with us, and on future generations. Those who produce and use technology don't always bear the full costs of its production and use. One clear example is climate change, in part caused by a systematic reliance on fossil fuel-based technologies, particularly by industrialised states. Yet, it is some of the world's poorest people, often in countries with limited access to those same technologies, who are already bearing the devastating effects of climate change. These people, as well as generations to come, will be forced to deal with the environmental impacts of the technology choices we are making today. How technologies are designed, produced, and used can cause negative impacts at a more localised level, too.

Part 4: Definition of Technology Justice

The world with Technology Justice would be one in which:

Everyone has access to existing technologies that are essential to life; and

The focus of efforts to innovate and develop new technologies is firmly centred on solving the great challenges the world faces today: ending poverty and providing a sustainable future for everyone on our planet.

¹⁰ Annex (with adaptations) from <http://infohub.practicalaction.org/oknowledge/handle/11283/556995>