

SUSTAINABLE DECISION FINDER

The SDF is the result of a cooperation between the independent applied research Lab G-Lab-2b and Pompeu Fabra University, which has recognised the SDF, through a committee, as an innovative practice aimed at improving cooperation and reducing conflicts.

Authorship

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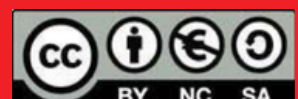
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Universitat
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G-LAB-2B

EXPLORING
INTERCULTURAL
COMMUNICATION



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01

The Sustainable Decision Finder (SDF) is a deeply democratic tool that emerges from ECOOPx research, dedicated to the study of intercultural cooperation in contexts of crisis and conflict.

02

Conceptual foundations /1

SDF arises as a direct response to a social structural problem: the difficulty of managing highly diverse groups in a collective decision-making environment.

The research, through the six-dimensional **ECOOPx model**, shows that processes based solely on preferences tend to polarize, reproduce a logic of winners and losers, make minorities invisible and generate passive resistance.

03

Conceptual foundations /2

The SDF attempts to change this logic and **transform resistance into an active democratic element** to make more inclusive, more consensual and more sustainable decisions.

In this way, all voices count, even those that usually remain silent or do not have enough strength in a traditional binary vote.

This makes SDF a deeply democratic tool.

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SDF can be applied to any discipline or social scenario, in the educational field, in seminars or group work, in reverse classroom modalities, democratic voting in general, or conflict resolution method.

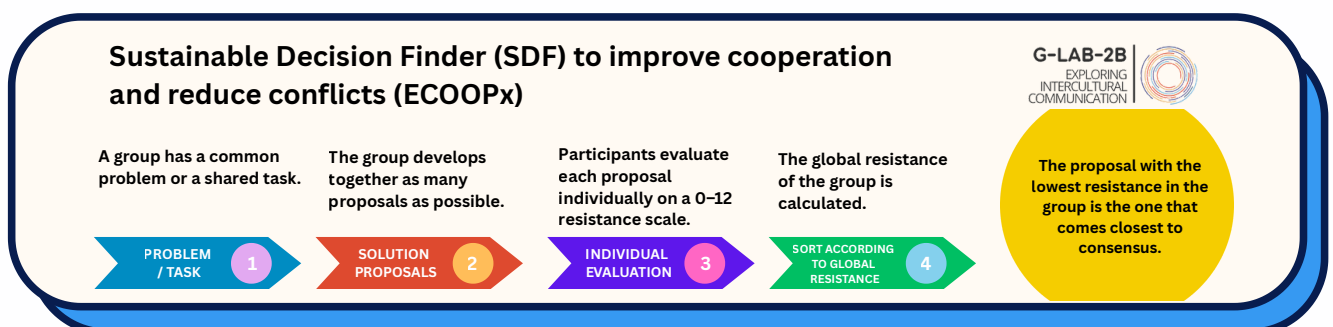
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How it works / 1

The functioning of the SDF is simple and yet rigorous.

First, the group starts by visualizing a problem or a common task.

Then, different options or solution proposals are generated, including a passive option. In practice, the process unfolds as a safe, structured and sensitive space for dialogue.



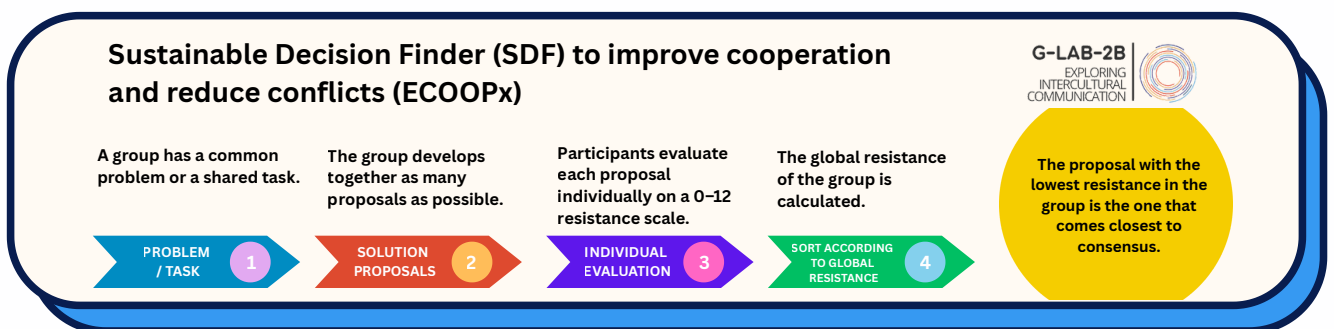
All options are then individually rated by all participants. Each person rates all proposals on a resistance scale from 0 to 12, where 0 means no resistance and 12, a lot of resistance.

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How it works / 2

By adding up the results of each option, we can detect which one generates the least resistance and, therefore, which one has the greatest chance of being adopted by the group as a whole in a stable and sustainable manner.

Everyone is responsible for the outcome.



Important: When extreme resistances (11 and 12) appear in the agreed result, they are not ignored. On the contrary, they are considered a warning sign that requires reopening the dialogue, better understanding the objections and adjusting the proposal until the friction is reduced to a reasonable degree.

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Case study /1

Using AI in the classroom

Description

Students and faculty are seeing the use of generative artificial intelligence in academic work becoming more common. This poses a shared problem, as it affects the quality of learning, equity among students, and assessment.

Faced with this situation, the group must decide how to regulate the use of AI in the classroom in a responsible, fair, and academically demanding manner.

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Case study /1

Using AI in the classroom

Step 1. Visualizing the common problem

Problem: how to regulate the use of generative AI in academic work within a university subject.

Step 2. Generating options in a shared dialog

Proposal 1: allow the free use of AI

Proposal 2: allow the use of AI, but declaring its use, and requiring a high level of depth, argumentation and own creativity

Proposal 3: prohibit the use of AI in all works

Passive solution: do not establish any specific rules

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Case study /1

Using AI in the classroom

Step 3. Individual assessment of resistance, scale from 0 to 12

Participants	Proposal 1	Proposal 2	Proposal 3	Passive solution
Student A	2	1	9	6
Student B	4	2	7	5
Student C	5	4	3	6
Student D	6	3	4	7
Professor	7	2	3	8
Total	24	12	26	32

Step 4. Identifying the option with least resistance

Proposal 2 is the option that accumulates the least total resistance, with 12 points. Therefore, according to SDF, it is the most sustainable and acceptable proposal for the group as a whole. However, the difference with Proposal 1, which obtains 24 points, shows that there is also a significant preference for more open regulation. On the other hand, Proposal 3 and the passive solution generate more resistance and appear as less viable options for the group as a whole.

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Case study /2

Rules of coexistence and cultural conflicts in school

Description

In a school, some misunderstandings and tensions have appeared between students and families from different cultural contexts. The differences in the way of understanding certain rules of coexistence, communication with the school and some everyday situations have generated discomfort and concern on the part of the educational community. Faced with this situation, the center must decide which measure to prioritize to improve intercultural coexistence.

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Case study /2

Rules of coexistence and cultural conflicts in school

Step 1. Visualizing the common problem

Problem: how to improve coexistence at school in the face of tensions and misunderstandings between people from different cultural contexts.

Step 2. Generation of options

Proposal 1: strengthen the rules and apply clearer sanctions in the face of conflicts

Proposal 2: organize spaces for mediation and intercultural dialogue between school, students and families

Proposal 3: offer specific training to teachers on intercultural management and coexistence

Passive solution: maintain the current operation without introducing any new measures

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Case study /2

Rules of coexistence and cultural conflicts in school

Step 3. Individual assessment of resistance, scale from 0 to 12

Participants	Proposal 1	Proposal 2	Proposal 3	Passive solution
Family A	3	2	4	8
Family B	5	2	3	7
Teacher 1	4	3	2	8
Teacher 2	6	3	2	7
School management	5	2	3	9
Total	23	12	14	39

Step 4. Identifying the option with least resistance

Proposal 2 is the option that accumulates the least total resistance, with 12 points. Therefore, according to SDF, it is the most sustainable and acceptable proposal for the group.

Proposal 3, with 14 points, also appears as a viable and close option, while Proposal 1 generates more resistance and the passive solution is clearly shown to be the least suitable.

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Case study /3

Participatory budgeting

Description

In a town, the city council is promoting a participatory budgeting process so that citizens can decide which community project they want to prioritize with a portion of the municipal budget. There is no specific problem to solve, but rather the desire to build something useful and shared for the town as a whole. After two sessions of dialogue and brainstorming, in which citizens present various needs, interests and proposals, different project options are identified. The town's 600 residents can then evaluate these options, mainly digitally, or in person if they need to.

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Case study /3

Participatory budgeting

Step 1. Visualizing the common goal

Common objective: to decide which community project the people should promote first within the participatory budgeting process.

Step 2. Generation of options in two dialogue sessions

Proposal 1: create a youth space with activities and a meeting area

Proposal 2: promote a community garden open to schools, families and the elderly

Proposal 3: organize a stable cultural and intercultural program throughout the year

Passive solution: do not promote any new projects for the time being

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Case study /3

Participatory budgeting

Step 3. Individual assessment of resistance, scale from 0 to 12

Participation is mainly managed through a digital application, but in-person support is also provided to ensure that older people or those with more difficult access can participate. The table below shows only a simplified simulation with 6 participants to illustrate how the process works:

Participants	Proposal 1	Proposal 2	Proposal 3	Passive solution
Neighbour 1	2	4	3	8
Neighbour 2	3	2	4	7
Neighbour 3	4	3	2	8
Neighbour 4	5	2	3	7
Neighbour 5	3	4	2	9
Neighbour 6	4	3	3	8
Simulation total	21	18	17	47

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Case study /3

Participatory budgeting

Step 4. Identifying the option with least resistance

In this reduced simulation, Proposal 3 is the option that accumulates the least total resistance, with 17 points. In the real case, the final result would be obtained from the aggregated ratings of the 600 participants.

Thus, SDF allows us to more robustly identify which proposal is the **most sustainable and acceptable for the people as a whole.**

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Important notes

+The SDF does not seek a compromise between parties, but rather the **construction of consensus**. It is not simply about everyone giving in a little, but about finding the option that the group can best assume collectively, with **less resistance and greater sustainability**.

+The objective of the SDF is to help **balance power** and to prevent an option from being imposed simply because it has more power and mobilizes more support through its campaign to impose interests. It is based on dialogue, listening and a more balanced distribution of power. **Its core is not to win or satisfy interests**, but to find the best possible solution for everyone.

+The SDF methodology may require more time at the beginning, but it often **saves time later, because it facilitates more sustainable decisions**. A traditional binary vote may be faster for making a decision, but it can also be more fragile and more likely to require reopening the process later on.

+**In large groups** or populations, the SDF needs digital support to speed up the process and ensure its viability.

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Explanatory video – SDF



SDF can be applied to any discipline or social scenario, in the educational field, in seminars or group work, in reverse classroom modalities, democratic voting in general, or conflict resolution methods.

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ECOOPx Research

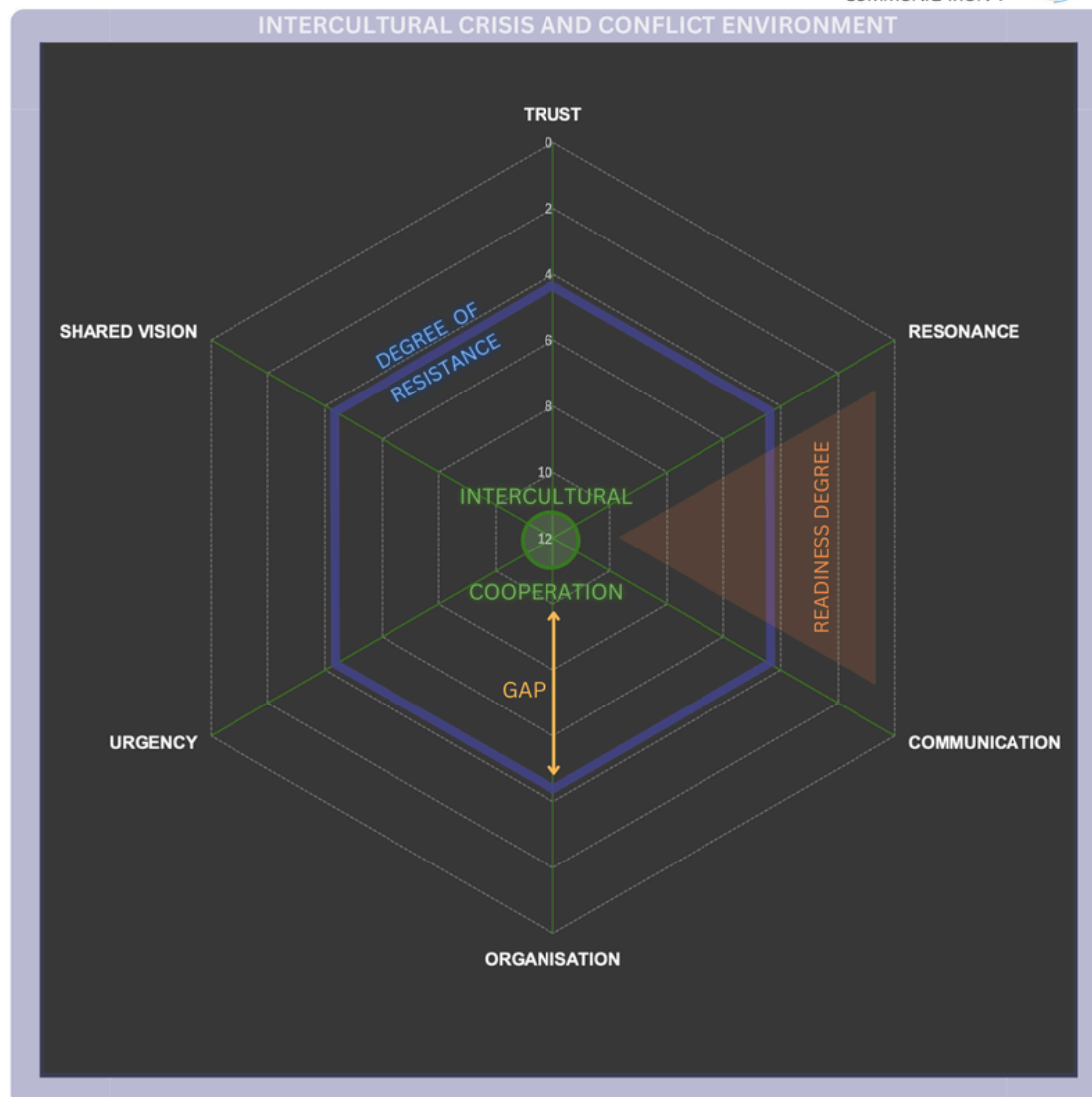
The Applied research methodology and the developed six-dimensional model, **ECOOPx**, **help to explain why, despite having more information, knowledge and technology than ever before in history, we, as a global society, continue to face major difficulties in cooperating** in a truly sustainable way when confronted with global challenges such as climate change, armed conflicts, or the dysfunctions of the economic and social system.

At the same time, ECOOPx is not only an analytical framework, but also research **oriented towards generating tools and practical instruments for real transformation and improvement, such as the SDF**, as well as spaces for dialogue, books and interdisciplinary courses, including some developed within the international programs at University Pompeu Fabra.

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ECOOPx Research

G-LAB-2B - ECOOPx Model



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