

Workshop Title: Negative Capability

Convener's name, organisation : Elaine Unterhalter, University of London

Main issues, questions discussed:

- i) Background history of concept of negative capability
- ii) Ways Elaine has been using the concept in her work on indicators (see www.gendereddata.org) and papers on prison islands and higher education in South Africa
- iii) Use of ideas of negative space/sound to help generate insights into how to use education as a space for creativity and trust; safe space Build courage and a sense of sharing
- iv) Limits in the ways indicators are selected, PISA and some changes that have made and might still be needed
- v) Thinking about the ideas of negative capability to think about different ways of doing evaluations – example of projects that decided not to do mid term evaluations , replacing them with peer evaluations and sense making
- vi) Discussing negative capability and decomposition of existing relationships as a way to think about decolonization . Approaches to how to think about decolonization in relation to work with aid agencies. Decolonization and challenges to own norms and values, considering current and historic forms of racism
- vii) Forms of transformation in South Africa – TRC, legal process, state process. Not each enough on its own
- viii) Thinking about transversal dialogues-rooting and shifting– as ways to deal with topics regarding positionality and othering.

Conclusion – rich discussion

Recommendations: maybe RECI could support academic, NGO discussions about alternative indicators, transversal dialogues in relation to decolonisation