



## Tales from a Bedouin Tent: Experiencing the power of storytelling at the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation's 'Dare to Share' Knowledge Fair

### Prologue

*In March 2004 Sparknow was mandated by the Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation – with whom they had been in partnership for two years – to conceive and realise a three-part contribution to a 2-day knowledge fair at the organisation's headquarters in Berne. Inside and all around a specially-constructed Bedouin 'storytelling tent', the team aroused the curiosity of both the resident 'hosts' (who were for the large part, short of time) and the visiting 'travellers' (who were readier to take time, tell and listen), inviting them to step over the threshold – for many a leap of faith - to spend time exploring unfamiliar approaches. On the first day we ran two short workshops, to give people a taste and sensitise them into a more conversational mindset, then spent the remaining time collecting stories and recording them in a 'scrapbook' which was used to feed the story of the Fair that we told to an interested public at the 'Learning across Borders' conference at the end of that week. We later gave the scrapbook – unfinished – to our client, as a parting gift.*

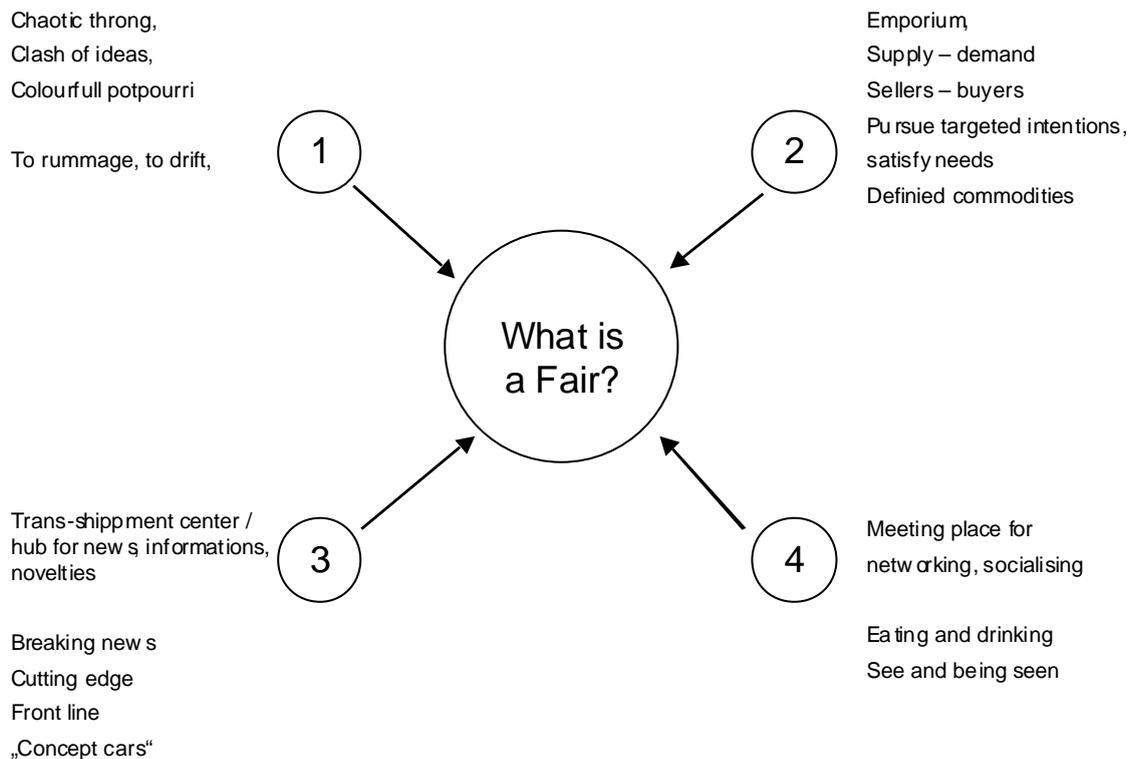
### Situation

In the autumn of 2003 the SDC announced it was planning to host a large "Dare to Share Fair" on its premises – an ordinarily austere and sterile-looking building made of glass and steel in Ausserholigen, Berne on March 30-31st, 2004. Open to some 200 to 300 persons from SDC (headquarters, Co-ordination Offices, SDC -funded projects) and SDC partner organisations in the South, the East and the North the intention was to bring people together to share the ways they learn from experience. In a Final Event on April 2, 2004 – the "Learning across Borders" conference - SDC would then share and discuss the results of the Fair with an interested public for a better contribution of knowledge and skills to development.

By this point, Sparknow had already completed more than a year of work with the organisation, and this partnership had proven the benefit gained by creating opportunities for 'face-to-face' knowledge exchange, including storytelling techniques in particular. In partnership and over the space of six months we fine-tuned an approach following which were mandated to collaborate with the SDC's Knowledge and Research Thematic Service to contribute towards the event in three specific ways : i) the design and hosting of a Bedouin 'storytelling' tent; ii) the design and delivery of two 90-minute workshops to sensitise and equip people with story skills and iii) to work as part of a special team of 'observers' including a journalist, lessons learned specialists, cartoonist, photographer and a TV crew to help evidence the Dare to Share Fair. Our role was to write a story to be both told live at conference later that week and recorded on the CD-ROM of the Dare to Share Fair along with the other highlights contributions. It was hoped these activities would contribute towards the development of SDC's competence in learning and knowledge sharing and to build competence of its collaborators and partners in knowing how to learn and to share knowledge and experience in "good" practical ways.

## Intervention

In the opening speeches the Dare to Share Fair was positioned as a 2-day knowledge fair focusing on creating both the favourable conditions and the right tools for learning across the international co-operation community. Regarded as an experiment, one involving risk and uncertainty, the organisers were explicit in regarding it an adventure into the unknown. It was clear they were enthused by how many people had taken the time to join them on the journey, and it was all credit to their vision that so many had indeed come to engage in something extraordinary – not presentations of projects and programmes, not a PR-platform for the selected contributors but something enriching for both sides of the equation. The Fair itself was a huge success, and here, before we go into the detail of the story contribution, are the lessons learned:



A fair in order to be a fair...

... needs to be concentrated spatially and thematically to assure the hustle and bustle of a fair, the clash of ideas. Elements such as long workshops prevent from strolling through the market and are out of place.



... needs to find a balanced presence of sellers and buyers. Organisers need to assure, that all of them assist and, for this purpose, that they realize their prospective benefit.

... needs to showcase innovations and novelties. As this is not guaranteed by itself, it's the responsibility of fair organisers, to scout around and bring them in.

... needs to provide space and ambiance for people to network and connect, in a word to live, love and laugh. As eating and drinking are the most human amongst all strivings, they deserve special dedication.

*Gabriela Neuhaus (Offroad Reports)/Marc Steinlin (Helvetas)*

So how did we use storytelling as part of our contribution to ensure the Fair really was a Fair?

Our contribution was broken down into three parts: 1) the tent; 2) experiential workshops; 3) a 'Dare to Share Fair' story.

### **1. The tent**

In June 2003 we met with Manuel, Ernst and Tonino and had a pretty exciting brainstorming session, and from that the idea of a creating a 'Majilis'<sup>1</sup> area was born – such a space promised to be perfect for encouraging sociality and conversation. The idea at this stage was regarded as 'fine in theory' but no-one really believed at this point that it could ever be practically realised. As time went on the idea evolved and the Marjilis became a Bedouin tent, namely because we wanted to refer to cultures that SDC and its partners had regular contact with, to create a symbolic statement for SDC's work via the creation of a temporary meeting place in the Fair. In September 2003 we suggested they combine this with an experimental workshop using objects to trigger and pass on learning. The creation of an interactive exhibit/display/ installation from these objects would then act by breaking the constraints of limited time on such occasions. We suggested that they work with us to create a brave provocation, surprising people out of their comfort zones and making them reconsider what they think they know about 'KM' or the themes of the conference. By October they were sold on the idea. This was the email that inspired the final form of our contribution:

*"During previous brainstorming sessions with Ernst and Tonino, and with you, Manuel, we discussed the physical layout of the event and the opportunity to create new spaces within the familiar Head Office building. We understand that you believe storytelling has a significant role to play and that Sparknow will be present. Recently you expressed a preference for the idea of creating a 'story room' and in perhaps making an experience that feels a little like the one we made for delegates attending the KM Europe 2002 conference in Den Haag. What follows is a scenario of what could be, followed by the practical/ technical requirements involved in making this happen (not included here):*

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<sup>1</sup> 'Majilis' - The concept of discussion and consultation has been present in Oman throughout its history. The word *majlis* covers many types of meeting places, from the elected chamber to a domestic dwelling. The concept of an information majlis, either virtual or real, is a very strong one. Discussions are intended to lead to a consensus.



### *The storytelling tent*

*When you walk in this tent, it will not feel like the rest of the fair. As you enter you will be asked to take off your shoes and leave them by the door. Someone will stand by the door with a jug and a bowl, and wash your hands as you arrive with water scented with orange blossom oil. You will enter a calm and colourful place, an informal place that encourages people to relax and have long conversations. The room inside will feel intimate and will be scented with incense. The walls will be covered with coloured cloth and fabrics from all over the world and the floor covered with comfortable warm rugs, throws and cushions. People will be seated comfortably on the floor in circles, around low tables. Someone will be circulating with a tray of Turkish Delight' and topping up your glass of peppermint tea. In a little dark, perhaps even candle lit, corner there will be a large wooden box – a treasure chest full to the brim with objects from all over the world – artefacts from every continent, strange and bizarre items with unusual qualities plus ordinary or every-day things part of everyday life. This box will sit arousing curiosity in the corner until the workshop is in full swing.*

*During the Dare to Share Fair this room will function as a place for relaxing, enjoying each other's company. Between workshops the tent will perform the role of a nurturing meeting space encouraging both private reflection and meaningful encounters between friends and strangers, for offering and receiving pertinent stories from experience participants feel could be of value to others. Its role is also to disrupt normal patterns of activity, to slow people down enough to create deep exchange. Outside the tent we will make room for an installation to emerge from the products of conversations going on inside.*

We also attached two images – of a Kazak yurt and a Bedouin tent - as inspiration. By December idea had been further refined. The 'Turkish Delight', orange oil, ceramic jug and bowl had been forgone – in order that we did not make a faux pas by mixing cultural references - and what remained was the core of an idea that was later realised beyond all our expectations.

By February 2004 the SDC had found a team to make it happen – Janine Thomet – an interior decorator – and Christian Häuselmann – in charge of logistics for the Fair. Together they breathed life into the idea. When the Sparknow team arrived at the headquarters building (a steel and glass construction which feels, by the residents' own admission usually quite sterile) to set up on March 29<sup>th</sup> – the day before the Fair - we passed through a thoroughfare of market stalls being hurriedly assembled and walked towards the back of the building, where the usual walkways that connected two halves of the 'banana' as they call it were covered in a dense foliage. Under this 'palaver tree' or their '*arbre à palabre*' (a specially created set of 'green' areas – one on each floor, complete with stuffed flamingos and monkeys, dangling from vines and the sound of birdsong, between the two halves and suspended in mid-air) was our tent. It was perfect. The team had taken the spirit of the idea on completely. We were also thankfully at the quieter end of the hall, just off the main drag. Being sensually arresting it acted as a strong symbol of good knowledge management – a place for face-to-face meeting, a sign of positive disruption, of slowness, taking time and taking the risk to join in an experiment with strangers and leave as friends.

Interestingly the space performed a more useful role in the time between workshops – where we were just the hosts and we could invite people to come in and sit a while at their own leisure, without any particular end in sight apart from their curiosity. If brave enough to step over the threshold (this involved taking off one’s shoes, bending down and entering the darkness, not knowing if someone inside would speak your language) people remarked on its qualities as a haven of serenity in such a thriving ‘marketplace’ of ideas and knowledge – an environment which for many was ‘overloaded’ with things to see and hear. For us it was also a tangible representation of our core values, particularly those we seek to enhance through our work with the SDC – slowness, elegance and good conversation.

There were some drawbacks, however. Quite early on we recognised that its theatrical look was putting some people off, especially those who felt they lacked the time to engage with it or didn’t want to be seen to be ‘slacking off’ at work (this was especially true for SDC staff working in the building). To counter this worked hard to ensure that what went on in the tent was recorded and displayed for all to see in their own time. We used postcards like those below:



<p>Dear storyteller,</p> <p>Tell a stranger about a time when you've experienced 'culture clash.'</p> <p>After telling your stories to each other, discuss:</p> <p><i>What made these experiences so memorable? What emotions were involved?</i></p> <p><i>What positive consequences were there?</i></p> <p><i>What did we learn?</i></p> <p><i>What did the stories have in common with each other? What made them unique?</i></p> <p>If you have time, please take a moment to record your stories in the 'Fair Tales' book. Thank you!</p>	<p><small>Image (overhead) by Stephanie Colton, Sparknow</small></p> <p><b>Shaman circles local businessman in the Centro Histórico, Mexico D.F., in preparation for the Día de los Muertos or Day of the Dead celebrations, October 31<sup>st</sup> 2003</b></p> <p><small>"On a recent trip to Mexico I was lucky enough to witness the spectacle of grief and mischief that is 'Day of the Dead'. By contrast with the UK, the remembrance of deceased loved ones is a cause for overt celebration, rather than private reflection. For both observing visitors and celebrants, the festival is a fascination – a heady mix of pre-Hispanic and Roman Catholic rituals, perfectly symbolising the spiritual conquest in Mexico which was due in part to the Spanish conquistadors' clever incorporation of pre-Hispanic elements into the religion of Christianity they taught. It is said that the rapid encroachment of U.S. culture intensified since the enactment of the North American Free Trade Agreement triggered people into more active enactment and preservation of Mexican traditions."</small></p>
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and story-templates to access and shape people’s diffuse commentaries into condensed and transferable stories. These were stuck either to pin-boards around the tent or in the scrapbook we’d brought for a different purpose, but ended up using as a consolidation device. In this way the active installation became a work in progress that never stood still, always inviting comment with the use of white space left unfilled. This was in contrast to contributions such as the



market stalls whose visible content was fairly static or the workshops where the learning was situational, retained by the participants only.

## 2. Experiential workshops

On the first day of the Fair we ran two short workshops in the tent during which visitors chose artifacts from our collection which helped them tell a story about a moment in which they felt part of a community/ team or network. These small fragments of private experience were shared between strangers and then woven together to create a stronger version that could be written into the template we had devised specially for the task. Our intention was to create the space for strangers to find resonances within their narratives and so create something from this which represented a combined view, weaving these disparate threads into a common story. The template was designed specifically for the task. Its simple format allowed people to ask questions of the teller whose answers could then be condensed to fit the format. The final story held traces of memories from all group members, even though the core was usually from just one person's experience. The template we used was:

TITLE:

AUTHORS (including organisations):

LANDSCAPE (description of time and space)

DWELLING PLACE (precise location of the action)

CHARACTERS (including their attributes)

OBJECTS (the VISUAL HOOKS)

CENTRAL DILEMMA/ PROBLEM (which leads to...)

ACTION (that includes obstacles, helpers and a turning point)

RESOLUTION (including MORAL/ LESSON)

*NOTE: Also available on request is a short document called 'The Boy with the Mirrored Eyes' describing one Sparknow team member's experience of ending up, by chance, as a participant in the first workshop. This record outlines the process of working together to develop a group story using our 7-part template, and includes the story itself.*

All stories were displayed immediately after the workshop on the pin-boards nearby, and then held together in the scrapbook we presented to the client at the end. Almost all participants asked to take a copy of their group's story away with them after the event; an eventuality we had not anticipated.

The following day one of our team was participating in a workshop run by another SDC partner – Bellanet - about 'Before, during and after' knowledge-sharing mechanisms. To warm up the room, we were asked to go around, introduce ourselves and say what the biggest thing we had learned so far at the fair was. One woman – the woman that left the tent to take a phone call during our workshop – introduced herself and said: "I learned that I can sit in a tent with strangers and hear and tell stories, and learn something really valuable from that." Other references to the storytelling tent were made, all positive, and it became clear that we had made a real impact. Only later did it emerge that our tent had become for many the emblem of a major lesson participants had learned about knowledge management – the value of face-to-face sharing rather than relying solely on complicated ICT projects.



### **3. A Dare to Share Fair story**

The third element of our contribution – the writing of a specially-commissioned 'Dare to Share Fair' story - meant playing the part of 'travelling collectors' within a team of special observers that included a journalist, lessons learned specialists, a cartoonist, a photographer and a film crew. Together we were charged with evidencing the highlights of the Fair and presenting them back to an interested public at the 'Learning across Borders' conference in Hotel Allegro, Bern on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2004.

The story was written by our team of three while lying on a hotel bed eating brioche the day before the conference. Our brief was not restrictive; we were given freedom to place emphasis on any aspects we discovered during the Fair, though we were given some helpful suggestions of where to look. As a team of three we brought different perspectives to the mix, including insights from traditional storytelling, markets and exchanges and anthropology. Working as a team we spent the time between workshops picking up stories from both the travellers and hosts as we moved around the fair and then finally spent a day in our hotel room, weaving this material together to form a compelling narrative to be performed by one of us at the conference.

Following three days of being both travellers and hosts, we gathered in one of our hotel rooms to make the story. Using the scrapbook of stories and images we had collated in the tent as well as notes from our personal laptops to refresh our memories we pooled the things we'd noticed individually to get a shared sense of what we'd encountered. Once we had decided the story should be told from the point of view of the three storytellers we used the template for creating group stories we'd made for Tuesday's storytelling workshops to build the structure.

We decided the story style would be reflective, looking back on what had happened, discussing whether the tone of the story should be argumentative, which in some ways makes for dynamic entertainment, or constructive, building 'noticings' on top of one another. We settled on 'building', being more consistent with our core value of seeking mutuality in dialogue and being appreciative – building not blocking. Once we began creating the story this way, we soon noticed how each successive 'noticing' refreshed the whole.

A set of major themes emerged at this point and using these as a starting point we chose five 'archetypal branch stories' to illustrate them. These stories were chosen because they were both universal and specific, as specificity creates the most conducive environment for the transfer of knowledge. We decided not to name those whose stories we told, instead identifying them using their country of origin, or the location in which the story took place as we felt that this strengthened the story's universal qualities. By recalling and telling each of these stories in turn, the remaining two listeners were able to create the links between them.

Once we'd written the basic structure of the story, one of us suggested we write it out, word-for-word. At this point the story performer asked we stop writing mostly because at the moment you write something down, people feel obliged to be faithful to the text and not to the essence of the story. Of paramount importance was that the images were strong enough to negate the need to remember it verbatim. A story told needs spontaneity to stay alive, and the teller needs to be able to really inhabit it, make it their own. As such it was agreed that the broad sequence of events and the links would be the only thing written down before the telling. This involved a great deal of trust from the other tellers. After a break, the tellers reconvened and the story performer put forward her perspective on how the story could start and end. All



agreed that the story had taken on a great shape, and so all that was left was to feed her with additional visual hooks and threads to inspire the performance.

During a live storytelling performance changes to a story occur, shifts of emphasis, contractions and expansions. There are many reasons for this: one of the main ones is that the audience is as much a part of the telling of the story as the teller. Another is that the teller is seeing images and painting them in words, capturing the emotions as well as the sights and transferring all that to the audience. This occurs whether one person or a thousand are listening.

What is presented below is an excerpt from the story, as it was told live at the conference (in the left hand column) and an excerpt from the original structure which runs in parallel, showing how the story evolved during the process of telling:

<p><b><i>Excerpt from version told live at the "Learning Across Borders" conference on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2004</i></b></p>	<p><b><i>Excerpt from original structure prepared from the consolidated observations of the three Sparknow team members</i></b></p>
<p><i>The third one said, 'I noticed something else too. The generosity of all of the people who were here. Starting with our hosts. When the call went out, that we asked them to send out for us, for objects to do the work that we needed to do, some beautiful and wonderful things came. And I noticed also that on the table where we laid out these objects, there was a time stamp machine. Time is an important and sometimes misunderstood thing.'</i></p> <p><i>'What do you mean?'</i></p> <p><i>'Well in another life, time was very important to me. I had to use one of those time-stamp machines, and I noticed how our hosts would arrive and they would pick up their cards to put into the machine and they would stop and they would take the time to look at all of the different objects on the table and some of them even came back, made the time to come back and look and see what was new, what had grown.'</i></p> <p><i>'Do you remember some of the stories?'</i></p> <p><i>'Ah, yes. There was one in particular which came to me from one of our hosts, who I had met outside, juggling a cup of coffee, a</i></p>	<p>[Objects as friendship, then objects as memory is bridge, with background context of what it is to travel and what it is to host]</p> <p>Objects offered when host called for them to help storytellers in their work, objects as memories bursting from cupboards. Located on a table where a timestamp also sits. Uneasy conjunction of two kinds of time – long slow time including rhythm and memory, and unitised time, clocking in and out. The disturbance to the normal time-stamping habits, the interruption which for some is good and for others and irritant (note time-stamping orders is also in the memory of one storyteller from a previous work life, so this is particularly noticeable to her) – something all storytellers noticed, but one in particular.</p> <p>[Time, fast, slow, making, stealing etc is bridge, with some reference to the disruption to the host of the activities of the traveller]</p> <p>Isn't it funny how when the Minister came she observed that the fair was 'giving people time' and at the same time there was the man from the host, juggling his coffee, croissant and cigarette and bemoaning the lack of time in his diary because of pressing engagements, but when he took a risk and stole time to go</p>



<i>croissant and a cigarette. And he had spoken about how he had stolen time to make his way around the fair. He should have been in his office preparing a presentation for a conference but he had to get out, he had to see. And he said he was glad that he had done so, because two wonderful things happened to him. First of all, he met someone he had not seen for 18 years. Second of all, someone in that fair gave him a piece of knowledge that he was then able to use in his presentation, so actually, they cut his work in half. You see time, making time, is a wonderful thing.'</i>	to the fair, he found exactly what he needed – hearsay from travellers conversations, plus two storytellers conversations with the individual  [Being a warm host is the bridge to the next story]
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## Impact

All aspects – the tent, the workshops and the story – were very well received. Our tent became for many the symbol of the fair, reinforcing the organisers' aspiration that people would enter as strangers but leave as friends. We certainly noticed people leave the tent after our workshops only to reconvene in the groups they had formed to eat lunch together and talk of other things, swapping business cards and promising to collaborate in some way in future.

In terms of learning, we heard comments that our interventions had prompted some to realize that most knowledge is not held in data-bases but is negotiated, between people, exchanged in face-to-face interactions using techniques like storytelling.

Our contribution had worked with other more hidden dynamics. Many of those who came to the Fair were bursting to tell their stories because of their relative isolation in the field. It played to a latent readiness to share, to meet with like-minds.

Some of those we engaged took time to see the value. For example there was one woman whose workshop experience had been a little uncomfortable. It took real effort on all sides to find a path through two years of project experience in Tanzania, identifying just one story that would serve as a teaching device about the ways in which we can become part of teams. By the end of the session we had made real progress, but were out of time. Although at the time we knew she had left without properly reflecting on the process or drawing any conclusions to make connections with her own work, on the last day – just after telling the story at the 'Learning across Borders' conference, she came to find us, saying she had thought hard about it and after more quizzing had begun to understand.

The week after the Fair we received two emails from the organizers, thanking all those who contributed for their 'courage and preparedness' to share their experiences, and were given special mention:



*"... to the story-tellers from Sparknow - Carol Russell, Stephanie Colton and Victoria Ward - that introduced us to a world that we might have forgotten during "development"*

And another from one of the two main organisers:

*"Thanks for your contribution -- it was a colourful masterpiece!"*

### **The artefacts story – an accidental result!**

Just prior to the event we realised that our bags were full and there was no way we could carry the box of objects we needed to use as props in our workshops all the way from the UK. It made perfect sense – if he had the time, which in fact, he did not – for Manuel to help source these things. He was already there and so were the people who might have brought things from their work in other countries. So a fortnight before the Big Day we sent an email asking his help and in return he said:

*"Would you see small objects that many of us had brought home from somewhere and that you find in their offices, on the desks, at the walls (pictures, small boxes, carved items, etc.)?"*

*"Yes," said we, "that is exactly what we are looking for! As many of these objects as you can find, please" And so it was that a couple of days later we got this message:*

*"Almost everything is now ready for the "physical construction" of the Fair! We remain curious to see how people will move around and take the own initiative to share, to meet, to ... That's to be seen next Tuesday morning after 9 am!*

*The call for artefacts is turning into a fantastic project! We might easily collect 40 or more. We are still collecting. This is a provisional list of items that might give you an idea of what these objects are. We might look at them once you are here. I'll leave the decision to you what you would like to use."*

It came with this list:

#### **LIST/ CATALOGUE**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Artefact</b>
Sandra Bernasconi	AIDS T-Shirts and cap Small bicycle made from wire, with SDC logo Souvenir with solidarity ribbon AIDS (South Africa)
Roland Anhorn	Aids-Prevention – Senegal
Manuel Flury	Nepalese wood carving (small door entrance)
Anja Prodoehl / A Schmutz	LUFO Lamp (Kerosene Lamp that provides power to a transistor radio) China
Thomas Zeller	Mini animal drought plough

Written by Stephanie Colton, Carol Russell and Victoria Ward. Agreed by the client 18-10-04



Markus Baechler	Mini post-harvest maize silo (Central America) Mini anti-person Mine from Kosovo Case of a grenade from Sarajevo (souvenir style)
Susanne Zumstein Helen Keller	Grazing horse (Bangladesh) Small Buddha Flags (Nepal) Nepal calendar (cloth) with Hindi images Doll from Cameroon Indian painting on cloth
Hans Schellenberg Sabine Brüscheweiler / Brigit Hagmann	Date box with hand of Fatima (Tunisia) IBU (wooden owl) - mascotte
Andreas Gerrits Philippe Besson	Wood carving from Mozambique: women portrait Buddha Statue

So what had happened behind the scenes?

Shortly after receiving our message, Manuel - busy rushing around making the final arrangements for the Fair – had sent out a call for objects to 50 or so of his close associates, people he knew might be sympathetic to the cause. One of these friends happened to be the only person who still held the power (following the arrival of the intranet) to send a message to 'everyone@deza.admin.ch', and thinking it a worthy cause, took it upon himself to forward the message. The response was phenomenal. Now bearing in mind that over the last few years Manuel had been working hard trying to encourage people to be more forthcoming with their own stories, it was a huge surprise to be suddenly deluged by people from all over the organisation, bringing him weird and wonderful objects and bursting to tell him what they meant, what significance they had... the stories, in other words. It was a huge and unexpected win for both Manuel and the storytelling cause. Suddenly the history and experience of parts of the organisation was out of people's heads, on the table and being made into both a catalogue and an exhibit. So we took the opportunity to with both hands...

Although the objects were used to good effect in the workshops we ran, they ended up performing a much longer function. We covered a table in some Ghanaian fabric one of us had brought along, and made a display of the artefacts next to our tent. With little need for prompting, many owners of the things came to visit us and tell us the stories connected to their things – there was a man who etc, a woman who had etc... We took a Polaroid picture of those who came, holding their objects, and wrote a postcard about each thing, which we then attached with a piece of string to the object concerned and stuck on the wall. Over the course of two days the display grew and became a focal point for conversation and interest. It was also a source of annoyance because the old 'time stamp' was on the table too – and some workers (who were not given the time off to rummage, browse and stroll around the fair) were visibly irritated about having to reach through the web of threads and things to punch their card at the start or end of their working day. So it was a disruption to some, but a positive one that held a lens up to otherwise hidden organisational/ cultural/ patterns. At the end of the Fair, on dismantling the tent and the displays we'd created, we filled a Sari-fabric covered journal (which had in no time become a scrapbook, given no-one had time to sit and write on their own, privately... it was more a place for networking) with the remnants and postcards in order to create an unfinished record for Manuel who could go on collecting long after the Fair had ended. It was a real example of the value of slowness. For us the really interesting thing was that previously Manuel had been actively seeking to elicit stories, and now when they came to him



spontaneously he neither had the time nor the room to take them all in! So we slowed it down...