

each usually represented by one to four professionals – conservators, conservation technicians, curators and managers.

In a way, the Institute was encouraged to start disseminating the knowledge and experience gained through years of investing in the training of its own staff, first as collaborators of the National Museum and later as specialists in various conservation fields. Thanks to the partnership with ICCROM, many of today's CIC professionals are the former participants and assistants of international courses, while some of them participate in ICCROM programmes as teachers or consultants. Not only are the concepts learned through participation in these courses and projects shared through CIC conservation education programmes, but also the didactic tools and general teaching approach. Sharing conservation decisions is one of the ICCROM international courses that helped in the formulation of the teaching approach in some of the most important conservation training programmes held in Serbia in the last couple of years.

Using the SCD didactic approach

COM system

As Daniela Russo says in the 2007 SCD publication, explaining the basic idea behind the COM technique, “The method is used to facilitate the management of communication processes in working groups. It is based on gathering the opinions of the participants and subsequently organizing these ideas into logical topic groups or clusters” (p. 38). Further on in the same article she adds, “The ultimate step in the process is to formulate an action plan that identifies problems and proposes possible solutions used in visualizing the entire work process of the group” (p. 38). At the very beginning of the COM session of the SCD 2008 course, it was stressed that the COM system is a group moderation method, meaning that it is not an analytical, but a communication tool. Throughout various sessions in the 2008 course, participants tended to use the COM system for all brainstorming-like exercises. This made me believe that COM does facilitate communication in a group and that it specifically might help overcome misunderstandings typical of interdisciplinary teams. The other strong point of this communication technique, which I felt would be useful even before I tested it myself, was the fact that it was ‘showing the obvious’ – and this is not a joke. It shows, or makes visible, something that seems ‘obvious’ once it is made apparent, but which had not occurred to anyone beforehand. That ‘something’, in most cases, is a subtle connection between terms or phenomena or, in some cases, the importance of a certain course of action or an approach revealed simply by giving a title to a cluster. This view of the method is the principal reason why, so far in the teaching approach in CIC training programmes, it has only been used for defining the terms and identifying the key points, and not for problem solving.