Below is a list of participatory activities that PEN International uses during workshops and trainings to get meaningful feedback and input from participants.

1 COMMUNICATING EXPECTATIONS
What you do: all participants and facilitators write down one thing they want to get out of the workshop or training, and then each participant in turn reads out their expectation while putting it up on the wall.

Why: this exercise can be helpful in a number of different ways. Firstly, for the facilitators to ensure that they are meeting everyone’s expectations; secondly it actively focuses participants in what they want to achieve; thirdly, if there are people coming from different viewpoints it helps to create a common understanding between a group; lastly it can be useful to go back in the end in order to evaluate how useful the workshop was in the short term.

2 DAILY FEEDBACK OR ‘A-HA!’ MOMENTS
What you do: every morning participants start the day in small groups and discuss the key learning from the day before. This can be explained as their ‘ah-ha!’ moments – the information or activities that stuck in their heads and made them think differently.

Why: the process of reflecting on the day before in a group helps to remind participants of their gained knowledge, cementing the key points in their longer term memory as well as sharing this new knowledge with the whole group. It also enables the facilitators and organisers to assess how useful the sessions were without overtly asking for feedback.

3 TRIADS (SEE SUPPORTING DOCS)
What you do: in groups of three (a triad) participants explore the issues or challenges identified by each member of the triad. They work together in triads at various times during the week to consolidate and apply the learning from the course to the issues each triad member has brought with them to explore. Each person will, in effect, be a client seeking help from the other two participants who will work as organisational development consultants. The exercise is not a role-play, but an opportunity to explore a real organisational issue with help from other participants and to gain some ‘hands-on’ experience of helping others with the challenges they are facing.

Why: the aim of this exercise is to help participants to apply learning from the workshop to a real issue they are facing in their Centre. It also helps to build networks and for Centres to share common challenges and learning.

4 KEY LEARNING AND THREE KEY LEARNING QUESTIONS
What you do: on the final day of the workshop or training, participants are given time to sum up their three key learnings in their triads. They are also asked to brainstorm ‘what went well’, ‘what could have gone better’, ‘what advice you would give to the facilitators’.

Why: this is useful for consolidating and revisiting the learning from the week, as well as being a good way of analysing how effective the workshop has been for the participants and which elements to adjust going forward.