The mosaic of facilitation

A guide to effective community workshops

COMMUNITY WORKS

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Community Works is a company that provides consulting services to organisations and practitioners working in the fields of human and social development in Australia and internationally. The company specialises in community development, rural and remote services, community mental health, research, evaluation and project management. It offers extensive programs of training and coaching tailored to the needs of practitioners in social development.

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Community facilitation; putting the pieces together

Community Works has facilitated nearly two hundred workshops over the last twelve years. This equates to a lot of experience of what works and what doesn't. More importantly, it shows how our partners and clients organise their projects. They commonly include some kind of process that brings people together to learn, to tackle a problem, to share information, to design a program or to explore different perspectives on a subject.

Most of the workshops we have facilitated have involved community people, local, non-government or civil society organisations participating in a social, economic, health or education initiative. The approach we have developed is highly participatory and designed for people who do not necessarily spend much of their lives thinking or talking about projects in workshop settings.

We call this approach community facilitation. It is made up of a mix of methods and techniques for working with people, most of which start with an outline plan for the process and then respond to what people in the group say or do. We have found that there is not a recipe for facilitation that can be provided in the form of a manual. Instead, we see community facilitation as a set of pieces. Let's call them tiles. When applied in the right way, they come together to create a picture. This is the mosaic of effective community facilitation. This guide is designed as an introduction.

Acknowledging the people in the room

Many people in marginalised, disadvantaged or misunderstood communities can feel that they don't know much. They might not have completed many years of education or they might consider themselves to have a low status in the society in which they live.

To get the best out of a group meeting or workshop, participants need to feel respected and valued. And one thing is certain. The group will always represent a wealth of experience and knowledge, no matter who they are. So it is important to acknowledge that at the start of the workshop.

Examples of how to approach this acknowledgement include estimating how many years of experience the group has:

You might want to help me get this right, but I reckon we have over 80 years of experience of small-scale farming in the room today.

Another option is to simply state what is important about the knowledge of participants:

Every young person in the room today knows what it is like to grow up in this place.

It can be good start to the day to ask people to respond to a question that shows their knowledge:

Coming from this community, you would all have favourite places that you know inside out, like waterholes or parts of the local forest. Can anyone tell me something about a place that really only locals would know?

Apart from acknowledging the participants, there may be other important acknowledgements that need to be made. Some communities may wish to commence with a religious or spiritual dedication or reading, for example. Others may have a formal welcome and acknowledgment of the elders.

It is also important to individually recognise key people in the room (like the mayor), the support that may have been received from funders and the work that people or organisations may have done to make the event possible.

Purpose

Sometimes people are invited to the gathering but they are not sure why or what it is for. Even if it is explained to them by other people in the community, they may not fully understand.

So, in plain language, the facilitator should take time to describe the purpose of the workshop. There are different ways of doing this, but straightforward sentences like these are the best approach:

We are here to achieve…

The purpose of this gathering is…

(X leader) suggested we come together to talk about…

The reason we are here is…

Although not everyone will be prepared to read what you might write, it is still valuable to write the purpose on a flipchart sheet and leave it up on the wall. Then the facilitator can refer back to it later, especially if the discussion goes off track and they need to remind people why there are there.

Another reason for writing the purpose is that it can be repeated at the start of new sessions or people arriving late can be referred to it:

Thanks for coming. You are very welcome. Please take a seat and make yourselves comfortable. We talked about the reason for the meeting at the start and it is written up there.

Along with the purpose, participants should be told about the approach the facilitator plans to take. If there is an outline agenda, then it is important to take people through it and explain the logic behind the way it has been organised.

Some people in the room will certainly be shy or nervous, so it is important to reassure them, for example:

This gathering is not a lecture in which one person along speaks. It is an opportunity for all of us to talk through the subjects on the agenda. So I would really like it to be conversational and you should feel free to comment whenever you wish.

You will see that there are some group exercises planned. Please be a part of the groups but there's no pressure for everyone to speak. You can listen if you wish. Only volunteers will be asked to speak in front of everyone.

In talking about the purpose, the facilitator has an early opportunity to establish his or her role. The facilitator is always accountable to someone else. Usually it is the person who has invited them and is paying for the service. Speaking clearly and firmly about what the facilitator is being asked to do and what this means for the purpose of the gathering and the processes to be followed, will give the participants a sense of what they can expect.


RIGHT PEOPLE
FOR SCFC
AWARENESS
IDEA
INFORMATION
HISTORY
WHAT WORKED BEFORE
RESOURCES
LOCAL KNOWLEDGE
OUTSIDE KNOWLEDGE
WHAT COMMUNITY WANTS
REGULAR MEETINGS
STAKEHOLDERS
ORGS
STEVE
SHARON
MEN SHED
SCABIES DAY
COOKING
DANCE
HEALING

Tone

Tone refers to the mood that the facilitator is seeking to encourage, so that the participants achieve the best outcome from the process. In this sense, the word outcome refers not only to some kind of tangible result, like a plan or an agreement. Often, that will not be feasible or expected. Instead or in addition, outcomes can include:

- That participants feel the subjects were properly discussed
- Key issues or areas of concern or dispute were raised (or ventilated, to use a term that works well in this context)
- Participants felt comfortable, respected and able to contribute.

In other words, the process itself may be as important as the tangible results that are achieved. Both are outcomes.

So, what is the right tone? The most effective workshops that I have seen achieve a tone of relaxed productivity. Participants feel they are moving forward but the pace is right for them. The facilitator is not constantly thinking out loud about time pressures and they can see where things are heading. There is scope for a diversion here and there, as well as opportunities for light-hearted reflections as the work progresses.

This point brings us to humour. An important guideline for effective facilitation is that the facilitator should be gently light-hearted when the opportunity arises, but should not try too hard. Facilitation is not a performance. Relaxed, warm, self-deprecating humour can help with the level of engagement of people in the room. Telling jokes or trying to be someone they are not, can often undermine the tone that the facilitator is seeking to achieve.

Of course, in line with good practice throughout a workshop, it can make sense to ask participants about their expectations of tone. Maybe there are people who would like regular short breaks, for example. But it is not always helpful for the facilitator to ask participants their views on the process. Some people will simply want to get on with the work and prefer to leave the process to the facilitator.

Power relations

A tricky subject to talk about openly in a group, which is why it is best not to do so.

The facilitator needs to do her or his best to work out where the power and authority might lie in the group and work effectively with it.

The most important starting point is to understand who was invited but has not come to the gathering. Conflicts, disputes and disagreements are normal and inevitable. They can prevent participation. So the facilitator should talk to the host of the event and learn as much as possible about who is missing and how they might be separately engaged with the process without necessarily coming to the workshop.

Among the people who attend, cultural norms and expectations will have a big influence. In some settings, senior people may do most of the talking and younger people may wait to be asked to speak by the elders. In many situations, men's voices are dominant and women not encouraged or even allowed to contribute. I have also facilitated workshops in which the participants were entirely women because the subject matter was mental health or childhood development and men were busy or did not see it as a subject relevant to them.

A fundamental principle of effective facilitation is that everyone associated with the subject matter should have the chance to participate and contribute. To achieve that, some people will need to be given less space to express themselves, though a respectful appeal to others:

If anyone who wishes to say something and has not spoken so far, please do so now

So, even with a rudimentary understanding of the power dynamics, the facilitator needs to create those opportunities. Group exercises, parallel processes for men and women (or old and young, or different ethnic backgrounds) and the encouragement of individuals to feel they have something to contribute, are part of this work.

Rapport and inclusion

In a group setting like a workshop, participants need to feel welcome, comfortable and respected. This will improve their chances of feeling properly engaged and included in what is happening in the room. All manner of small details can make a difference and the facilitator is often in the best position to anticipate and address concerns. Here are some examples:

Being inside (instead of outside)

Some people who are used to community life and being outdoors most of the time, become very uneasy when they have to be inside for long periods, especially in meetings. I have seen workshops with the same people be a much more positive experience when held in a marquee with the side panels rolled up, compared to a meeting room inside a building.

If the workshop is inside a building, which most have to be because of the need for audio-visual equipment or because the weather is unreliable, then the facilitator can make the space better by making sure window coverings are open and windows and doors too, if the weather is suitable.

Starting a session

Some participants will arrive late. There will be good reasons for that. Rather than waiting for everyone to get there and potentially disrespecting people who arrived on time, it is best to start with an activity that will not be disrupted by latecomers and still enables them to get involved. This is where a good icebreaker comes in.

Fatigue

For participants who are unused to listening and processing information for long periods, a workshop can be a demanding experience. The facilitator should recognise that, regardless of whether there are plenty of group work and interactive exercises and that the pace is right for the group, many people will still find a full day to be too much. This is especially true if there are older people in the room who might be in less than perfect health.

Proper rapport and inclusion means that breaks are provided on a regular basis and, if the energy in the room starts to feel low, then the best response of the facilitator might not be to introduce physical activity like an icebreaker exercise, but to call a break.

Names

The facilitator must use inclusive language. That means remembering the names of as many people as possible, not just those who are more active in the sessions or have status as a good speaker of English or a community leader. The facilitator needs to connect with participants, while not becoming familiar in a way that is locally inappropriate. So, asking for permission to use names or using titles and surname (eg Mrs Jones), is a more cautious and respectful approach.

As with everything else in this subject, much depends on the group, the location and the cultural context. What kind of behaviour and connection are participants expecting with you? A heavy helping of humility on the part of the facilitator will always help.

Methods

Most people associate good facilitation with methods, meaning exercises, games, group work and practical challenges. And so they expect a facilitator to come prepared with those methods and to bring them into play at the right time and for the right purpose.

A danger here is that the methods become more important and memorable than the content of the workshop. In other words, that everyone becomes so excited and interested by the games and exercises themselves, that the results become undervalued or even overlooked entirely.

The next few pages of this toolkit describe tried and trusted methods in facilitation that we have used in Community Works in many settings in many countries. However, they need to be approached with caution because a method used in the wrong place can be worse than no method at all. This is why facilitators who listen to the less enthusiastic participants in a group may sometimes hear:

We just had lunch and the facilitator had us running around the room like chickens

Do we have to do another group exercise when we all know each other and can simply discuss the issue now?

These physical exercises are not appropriate in our culture.

There are many more examples of these kinds of responses to the prospect of a highly-interactive workshop session. So, the facilitator must ask himself or herself some vital questions before designing the program:

- Who is in the group, especially the mix of women and men?
- What is likely to be culturally risky when it comes to group work and exercises?
- To what extent are people in the group going to want to stand up and present ideas, have a group song or perform in some other that way that you had not considered?
- When is fun and laughter welcome and when is it inappropriate?
- Are people comfortable with sitting close to each other, rubbing shoulders and having other possible physical contact?
- How confident will they be about their reading and writing skills?

I have worked with groups in beach locations who have wanted to put on their bathing clothes, play on the beach and go swimming during the workshop breaks. Other groups have had loud debates, talking over one another and banging the table. And some people have wanted to have regular icebreakers involving songs.

But this is not everyone. And sometimes the loudest voices in the group are extrovert personalities. So the facilitator needs to plan, anticipate and react to what is going on in the group in a way that respects the quieter people too.

In the following sections, the methods are grouped into three categories:

1. Methods for exploring views and perspectives
2. Methods for making choices
3. Methods for learning something new.


STRONGER
COMMUNITIES
BETTER CHILDREN
SHANE

Methods for developing ideas

Marketplace

The marketplace exercise always requires participants to prepare something in advance because the idea is that they invite other people to come and see it. However, what they prepared does not necessarily need to be complex or involve a lot of preparation. For example, they could bring a photo or an object that represents the work they have been doing or an achievement they wish to share with other people.

The marketplace works by individuals or groups setting themselves up in a part of the room or the area in which the workshop is taking place. They act as though they are setting up a stall in a market and waiting for customers. Often, having tables set up around the margins of the room is best because it allows space for people to move around in the middle. But it doesn't matter that much. The basic idea is to encourage people to visit whichever stall they wish and to learn about what the person or group at that stall wants to share with them. Stall holders sometimes have an object or photo on their table or they could choose to present a full display with a poster, logo, text and images on the wall.

Real markets are characterised by lots of people milling around and that's what works best for this exercise too. In other words, if everyone stays at the first stall they visit, we don't create the short exchanges of information that help people get the most from interacting with lots of people and projects. The facilitator should encourage participants to move on to a new stall every ten minutes or so, perhaps by calling out that it's time to change or by ringing a bell. But resist trying to over-manage the process or be over-bearing. It is fine if not everyone moves.

Finally, those presenting stalls will need to have the opportunity to circulate too. The best way to achieve this aim is to divide the session into two halves. For the first part, half the participants are stall-holders and the other half are customers. The roles change in the second part, with time allowed for the stalls to be set up in between the two sessions.


FOTO-RELATOS
PEDAGO
EN LAS
CALLES
BICITRECORRIDOS
TERRITORIALES
CULTURALES

Methods for developing ideas

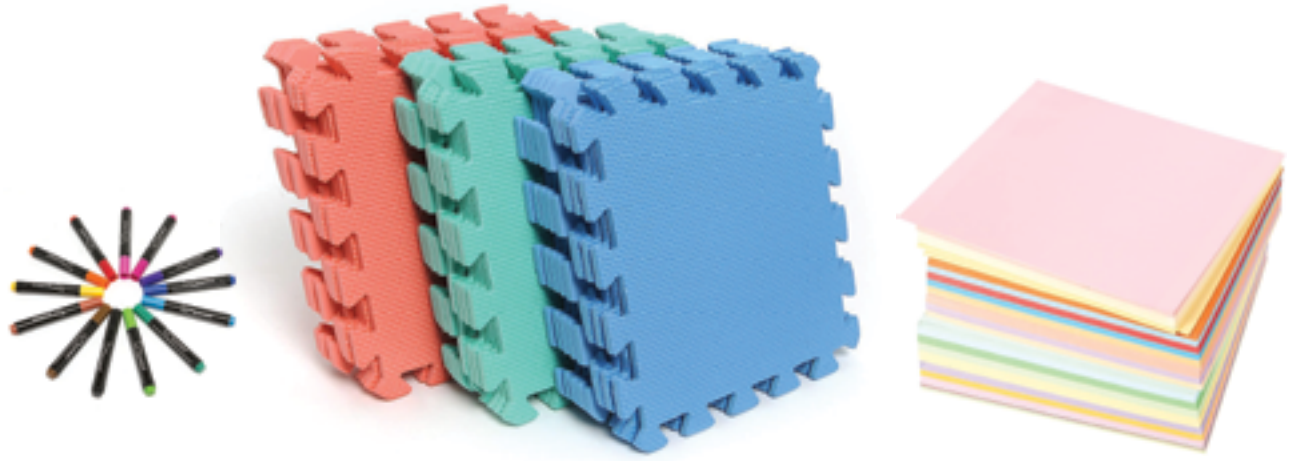
Jigsaw

Sometimes a group will want to use the workshop to develop their ideas or practices into some kind of formal model. In this context, a model refers to a way of working, with its principles, components, processes and activities clearly defined, along with the way they relate to each other. One analogy for this kind of activity is a jigsaw. Each piece of the puzzle has a role to play and the whole picture becomes clear once all the pieces are in place.

There are different ways to facilitate this kind of activity. The simplest is to give groups or individuals some cards and ask them to name the different principles, components, processes and activities. They could stick them on the wall or place them on a table and draw lines or arrows to show how they connect. The modelling part of the exercise comes from working out the best of many options that will exist for how the work should be depicted.

Alternatively, the group of participants as a whole could be ask to list the components, processes, etc. and then together they develop the model. The advantage of doing this exercise in groups is that the results can be compared, which enables improvement to a single agreed model. If the whole group works on it, the process is faster, but perspectives and ideas may be missed as some participants may not get the chance to speak.

The example below used carpet tiles to build a model of governance. Each tile had a previously-agreed component pasted to it and then the group moved the parts around to position them in the way that best represented their understanding. In this case, no lines or arrows were necessary.



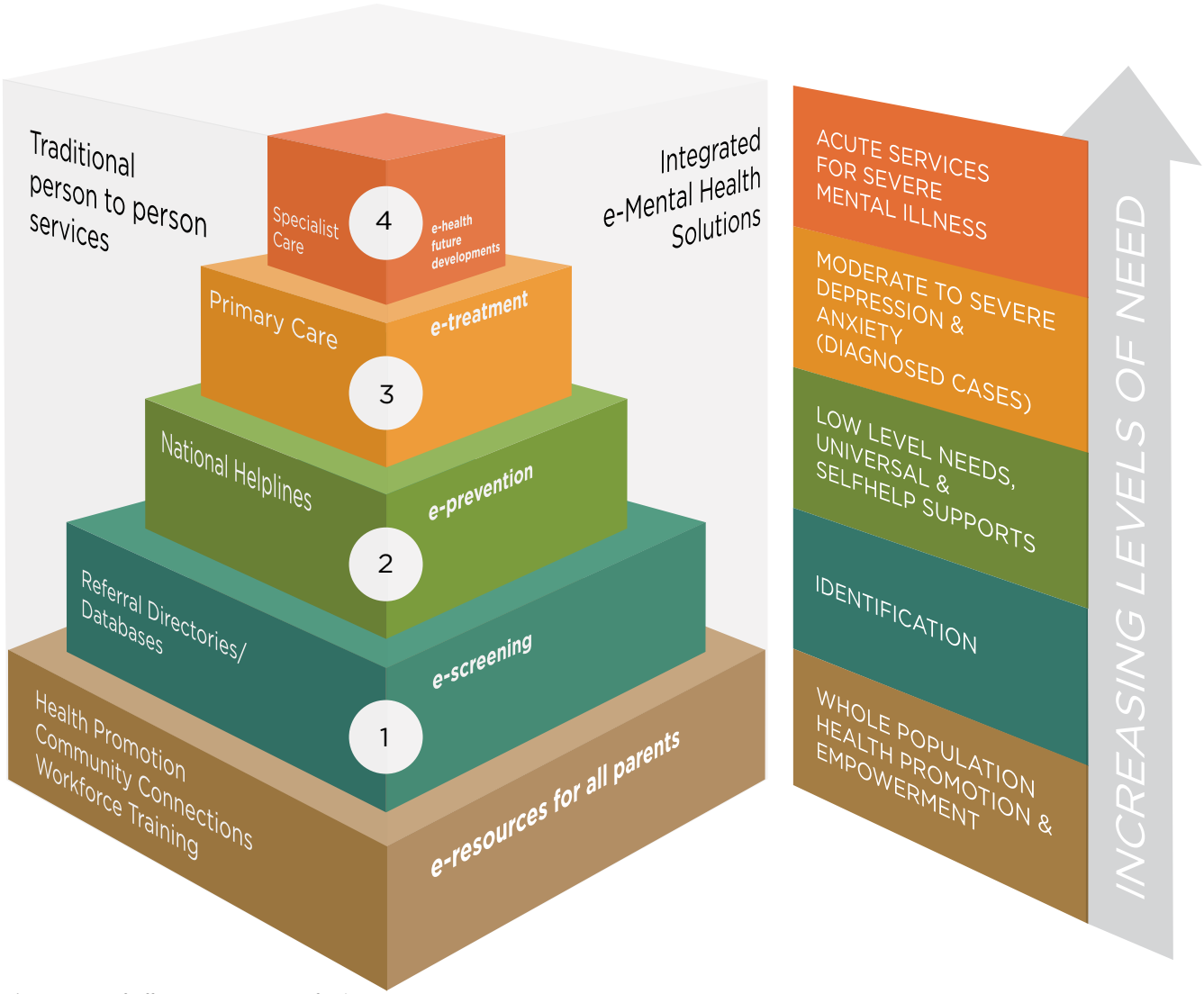
Methods for developing ideas

Building blocks

Related to the mosaic described above, the building blocks method concentrates more on priority work to be done to achieve a result. It is especially useful when a team is starting a new project or program and is trying to work through the complexity of what is needed first, what is most important and how to match activities with the resources they have available.

The most effective approach to the building blocks exercise is usually for the facilitator to draw the blocks on a whiteboard and to invite suggestions from the group as a whole on what the blocks are and where they should go in the diagram. As with the jigsaw, small group work enables higher levels of participation, but there is value in doing one single process for the whole group because then everyone hears the logic behind the ideas of others in the room. Also, the process can help foster team work if the members are new to working with each other.

At the end of the completion of the first version and if they suspect that there could be differences of opinion or individual reactions are being held back, the facilitator can suggest a critical reflection process where. Each person in the room is invited to write down on a card one or more aspect of the diagram they like and one or more they feel could be improved.




TELLING THE STORY
NCLP
ALAWA
NGANDI
RITHARRNGU
NGALAKAN
MARRA
WARNDARR
NUNGUBU

Methods for exploring views and perspectives

Three-card exercise

Using three cards to analyse a subject is a versatile approach to many different situations that can arise in a workshop. The greatest value arises when participants have watched a video or listened to a case study being explained to them. The three-card process encourages people to think about what they have seen, reflect on it, share their reactions and compare them to the responses of others.

This is how it works. The facilitator hands out A5-sized (half A4) pieces of card or paper in three light or pastel colours. The reason for the use of light colours is that what is written on them needs to be seen easily, which is often harder with dark coloured backgrounds. He or she then sticks one of each of the cards on the wall and writes 'Good' on one card, 'Could be better' on another and 'Puzzled or concerned' on the third.

Participants are asked to write their reactions to what they just saw or heard. He asks:

- What did you like?
- What could have been better?
- What puzzled or concerns you?

The facilitator explains that the cards they write are going to be stuck on the wall in the relevant place under the corresponding headings 'Good', 'Could be better' and 'Puzzled or concerned'. The facilitator also tells everyone that the exercise is anonymous and that he will not ask anyone to explain what they have written. The reason is that the exercise seeks to draw out responses that are sometimes personal and perhaps sensitive. We should avoid inhibiting people by making them explain. We also need to trust that nobody will make overly negative comments. For the same reason, the three-card exercise is best carried out by individuals and not in groups.

Usually, it is best that participants stick their own cards on the wall. This may be impractical for a very large group or if there is limited space between chairs and tables for people to move easily. As with other methods we use, once the information is collected and presented, there are different options for what to do next. We have found that, after all the cards are up on the wall, the best step is for the facilitator to invite everyone to stand up and come close to the wall so they can read the cards themselves.

With everyone gathered around, the facilitator then reads out the cards, adds comments and invites others to comment. If there is time, further analysis can come from grouping the cards according to common responses. The facilitator will need to adapt the way this process is done according to the subject matter and its sensitivity. A common situation might be the presentation of a case study of the experience of a community project. Typical comments could be:

Good: The way the project was organised; the role of the elders in providing support: the funds they raised; the partnerships with local NGOs; the comments from one of the teenagers who was involved.

Could be better: It wasn't always clear what they were trying to achieve; some of the delays in the project seemed unnecessary.

Puzzled or concerns you: Why were so few men involved? How will this project have a wider impact for other communities?

In this case, comments are reasonable. The case study is a published document and there is nobody present who might be offended by a more in-depth analysis and discussion. So it might be useful to focus on particular remarks and discuss them further. Much depends on the importance of the subject, the learning value and the appetite of the participants to do this extra work.

It can sometimes be appropriate to take the subject matter even further. So, for example, the facilitator could ask everyone to take their seats again and say 'there are two comments on the wall that we really ought to explore further'. Those comments, or something important related to them, could them be the focus of a mind map exercise to which everyone is asked to contribute through making suggestions and comments.

Methods for exploring views and perspectives

River of Time

Like many methods that have become part of our regular toolkit, the River of Time came about through a challenging situation. Working with people in a remote Aboriginal community, a workshop session became stuck because people were shy or they didn't know what to say on the morning that the work started.

Given that there were plenty of pens and paper and tables, we decided to draw a river to represent all that had happened in relation to an arts centre that the community planned to reopen. The river was shown as two wavy lines. Around ten people were in the room. They all took a pen and, encouraged by questions from the facilitator, drew on, in or next to the river anything that they remembered about the story of the arts centre.

One end of the river, being upstream, was the start of the story. The other end was now, meaning what has happened in the last week or so. People drew buildings, trees, stick figures as key people, logos of organisations, vehicles and materials used in the arts centre. They wrote a few words to show what each part of the drawing was intended to show. Where anyone was uncertain, the facilitator asked them to draw anything that came into their mind. Or he helped draw what they told him.

The process was lively and attracted other people to come into the room to help. Different colour marker pens made the picture interesting. People warmed up to the task quickly as they focussed on the river, rather than sitting in a group and talking about it, which is often harder for anyone to do.

Having finished the drawing, the facilitator then asked the group to think about the future. What did they want to happen? He added a further sheet of paper, extended the river and the group eagerly filled up the next page with their plans.

Overall, this process can serve a number of aims:

- To help people reflect on the past, especially to work out between them the sequence of events and how certain things happened at certain times
- To think about problems that may have occurred previously and how to prevent them in the future
- To support planning for the future, especially in a brainstorming phase where any ideas are welcome
- To remember people and organisations who were previously involved in the work and, if desired, how they could be invited to be involved again.

Methods for exploring views and perspectives

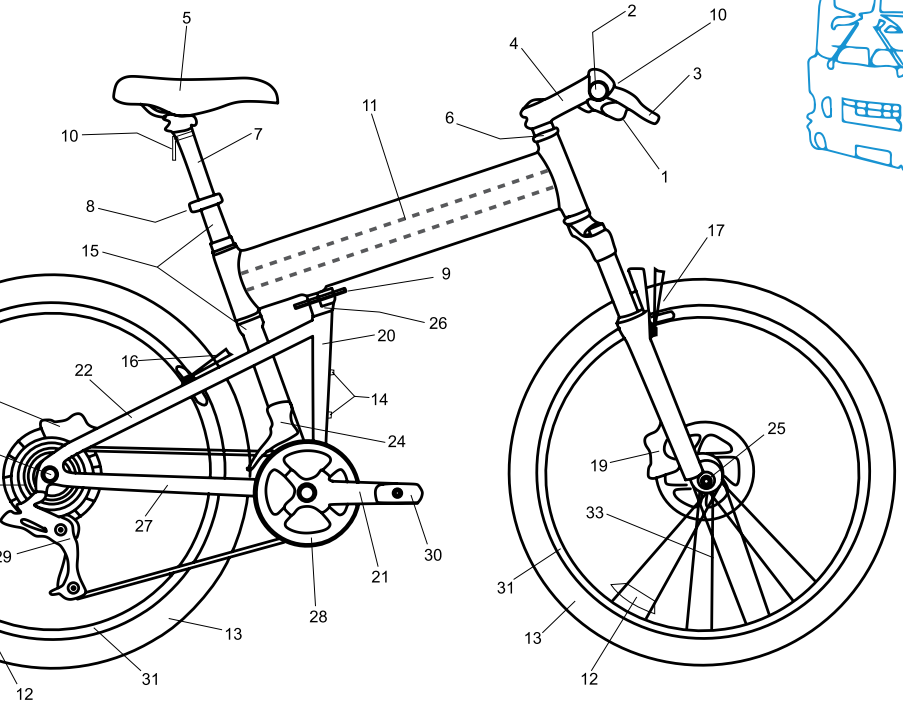
Model-making

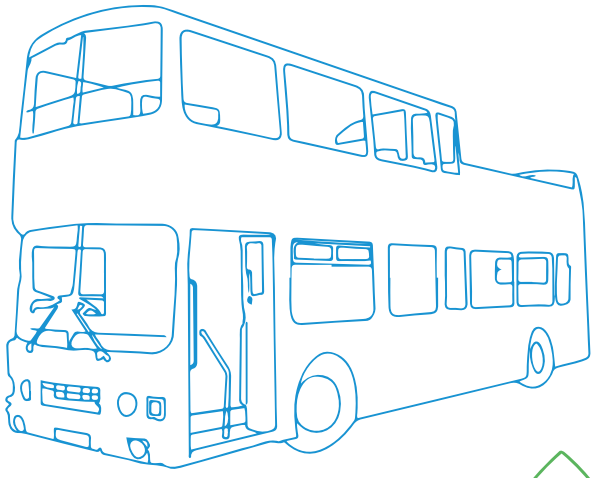
The language of projects and programs can be confusing for people from the community who may not be accustomed to it. Effective workshops need methods that translate unfamiliar terms into more common, everyday objects that people can more easily recognise.

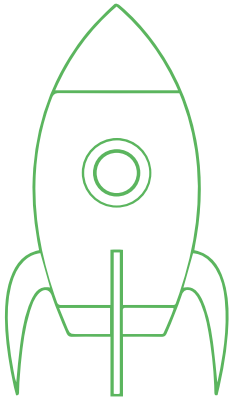
The model-making method began when we started to use a bicycle as a way to describe planning processes. With a bike, there are pedals to propel it, handlebars to steer it and tyres to make the ride smooth. So, questions around important aspects of a project, like 'who is going to be steering it?' can be presented visually and discussed in a workshop setting because pretty much everyone knows what a bicycle is.

Another use of this method is to ask groups to present their analysis of a subject in the form of a familiar object and to name the components. For example, a workshop session might de dedicated to understanding leadership in the community and how to strengthen it. The facilitator could ask the participants to work in small groups and to model leadership by drawing it as an everyday object. In this instance, the groups might produce drawings that depict:

- A rocket, where the engines are the support of the community, the nose is the objectives and the body is made up of democratic principles and transparency
- A bowl of fruit, where the different fruits represent population groups and the bowl itself is the history of the community
- A bus, where the driver is the elders and the wheels are the local plan, the resources and capacity required to implement it.







Compared to other ways of discussing a subject, the value of this method lies in the opportunity for creativity and the visual nature of the results, which often allow for a more open discussion that a set of bullet points might do.

As is the case with other methods in this toolkit, having a focus for the discussion often brings out the best in the contributions of individuals who might otherwise be disengaged. It also separates the people from the subject and so more open and frank commentary is often generated on a drawing of a rocket ship than it would be if the group is talking about the words an individual has spoken on the subject.

Other techniques can be added to this method as a means of strengthening the learning value or the analysis of different perspectives. For example, participants could be invited to stick any comments to each model for discussion later.

Methods for sharing knowledge or learning something new

Fireside chat

It can often we daunting for a participant to be asked to prepare a presentation for a workshop. If people are particularly shy, unaccustomed to speaking in front of groups or they are using the language of the workshop as a second or third language, they may worry about it for weeks in advance.

In these situations it can be less pressure on the individual and more engaging for the other participants to ask them to be part of a fireside chat. The idea is that the person presenting is asked questions in a conversational style by one of the facilitators. They sit together in comfortable chairs, partly facing the audience and partly facing each other. There's usually no fireplace but the ambience is intended to be the same; warm, cosy, relaxed, friendly.

The facilitator introduces the session and starts with one or two open, curious, conversational questions of the participant. The most effective questions usually start with 'please tell me about…' or 'so what is it like to…'. They give the participant the chance to talk about his or her personal experiences. After a while, the facilitator might choose more challenging questions, depending on the purpose of the exercise. Often, the goal of sharing information or learning from a person can be achieved through a conversation that is gently steered towards the topics of most relevance to the workshop session.

Most importantly, a fireside chat can be a very engaging way to communicate. It features a second voice and a curious person who is anticipating what the rest of the participants would like to know. And it avoids the danger of slides with lots of text that can be off-putting for community members who are not accustomed to reading and especially not from a screen. The chat can be complemented by some images presented on the screen to which the participant or the facilitator can refer during the chat.

Methods for sharing knowledge or learning something new

Goldfish bowl

This exercise is to be used with care because it requires confident individuals to role play a process and then other participants to provide feedback. The purpose is to practise skills and learn to apply them. Care is required because those individuals who perform the role play are going to be under scrutiny. So they need to be confident volunteers.

We have mainly conducted goldfish bowl processes as part of training workshops. They can be effective in practising survey and interview methods, for example, or for participants to develop skills in facilitating focus groups. They can be particularly useful where participants have developed a proposal or an argument and they want to practise presenting it.

There are variations on how the goldfish bowl can be facilitated, depending on the objectives of the workshop, importance of the subject and the level of engagement of participants. Options include:

- The role play focusses just on practising the skills, in twos or threes, with the third person asked to provide feedback. In this approach, there is no wider audience.
- The role play takes place in front of the wider group of participants, who provide comments and feedback at the end.
- To foster a high level of engagement and immediate feedback, the group watches the role play and can intervene at any time by raising their hand and stopping the process. For example, they might ask 'can you explain why you said that?' or 'it seems to me that the conversation is heading in one direction that might not be helping the aims of the presenter'. The people doing the role play respond and then proceed until the next intervention.

In each of these approaches, the facilitator should be supportive and encouraging, while making sure the process stays on track. They should add comments or pose questions that strengthen the value of the exercise for the participants.


do we rate the likelihood of sustainability
AMIGO CRÍTICO

Trees and leaves

In any community workshop, a tree is a useful thing. The reason is that almost everyone understands and appreciates trees. Trees have significance in some cultures. And the outline of a tree can be used in ways that enable people to share what they feel is important.

The most common application of a tree outline in our practice is to celebrate achievements. So, for example, if a group of people are coming together in a workshop to review progress or to talk about their respective experiences working on a program, then a good exercise to start the session or the workshop as a whole is to hand out paper cut in the shape of leaves and ask participants to write on the leaf an achievement, an important lesson or a significant milestone of some kind that they wish to share with others.

Once everyone has stuck their leaves on the tree, the facilitator asks everyone to gather around so they can see the tree. He or she pick out leaves, one at a time, and reads them out. For leaves that are not completely clear or invite further explanation, the facilitator asks for the person who wrote it to also explain.

The exercise can be extended to further analysis in three ways:

1. Other features of the tree can be part of the process. For example, a watering can could be drawn on the ground and participants given blue circles representing nutrients, on which they write anything that sustains and nourishes the work they do. Or flowers could be included as examples of outcomes from the work people have done. In this case, a leaf could be, for example, teaching the kids in the community to swim and the flower could be a safer community.
2. Once the tree is completed and has been discussed, the facilitator could ask participants to help group the different components according to themes or common topics. This process helps everyone see a fuller picture of what the information is telling us. A theme could be employment or young people or reduced conflict, for example.
3. Groups could be invited to come to the front of the room and talk about their leaves, flowers and nutrients, so the group hears more about their efforts as a whole and not just individual achievements.


Horse
Program
SKATE
PARK
Baby
fast
Craft
SCHOOL
EMPLOYMENT
WELL BEING
CULTURE
PRIDE
HAPPINESS
CHOICE
WE DECIDE
SELF DETERMINATION
OWNERSHIP
CULTURE
LANGUAGE
EDUCATION THROUGH CULTURE
Family Centre
Teaching Kids to be calm
Bush Tucker program
Child care
Collaboration
Study Tour
Junior Rangers

Conclusion; better results from group processes

When communities and organisations decide to organise a group meeting or a workshop, they do it for the purposes of planning, communication, learning, tackling problems or to serve other important practical ends. Everyone who contributes invests their time and their knowledge. The onus is on running a process that achieves the best outcomes from those investments.

The mosaic approach we have introduced in this publication describes our experience of the most effective way to conduct group processes. It encourages facilitators to be creative and flexible. It advocates for a mix of understanding group dynamics, recognising the constraints that individuals might feel and using methods that maximise engagement.

Individuals come to workshops because they want to see results. The essence of effective community facilitation is achieving the objectives in a way that makes the most of the knowledge and skills of the people who participate. Using the pieces of the mosaic in a creative way is how the picture comes together.


PROYECTO TRABAJO DIGNO
NECESIDAD: ENCONTRAR UN TRABAJ
MEDICIONES DE ESFUERZO
CAPACITACION
HERRAMIE