



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Grassroots women leaders and organizations from every region of the world have developed and shared these empowerment tools over many decades. We honor each of you and the communities, networks and movements we have built together. We offer our deepest thanks for your contributions to grassroots women's empowerment within the Huairou Commission and beyond.

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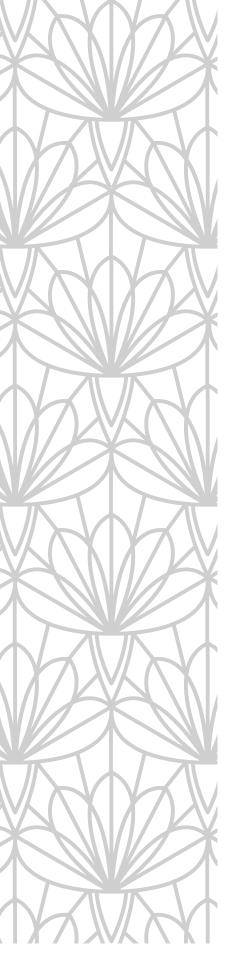
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WELCOME TO THE GRASSROOTS WOMEN'S COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT TOOLKIT!

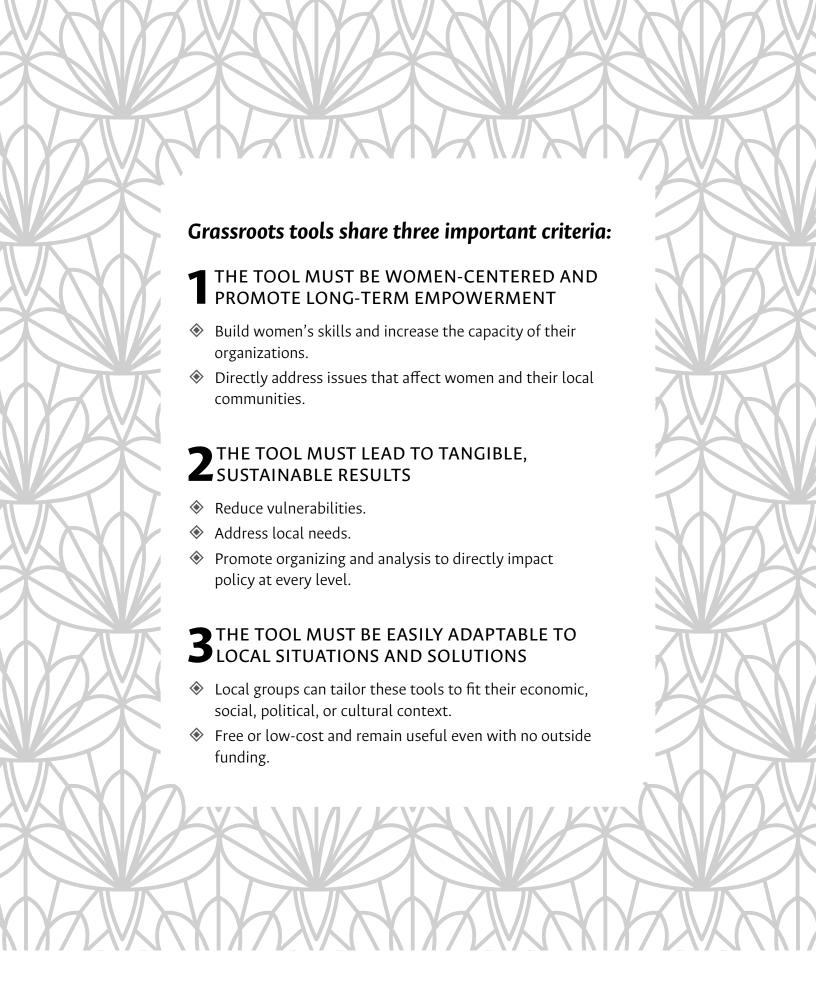
All over the world grassroots women are creating effective and sustainable approaches to community development and movement building. This Toolkit includes powerful tools used by grassroots leaders of the Huairou Commission. The Huairou Commission is a grassroots women-led network and social movement made up of thousands of urban, rural, and indigenous groups in 42 countries working to improve the living conditions, status, and quality of life of women, their families, and their communities.

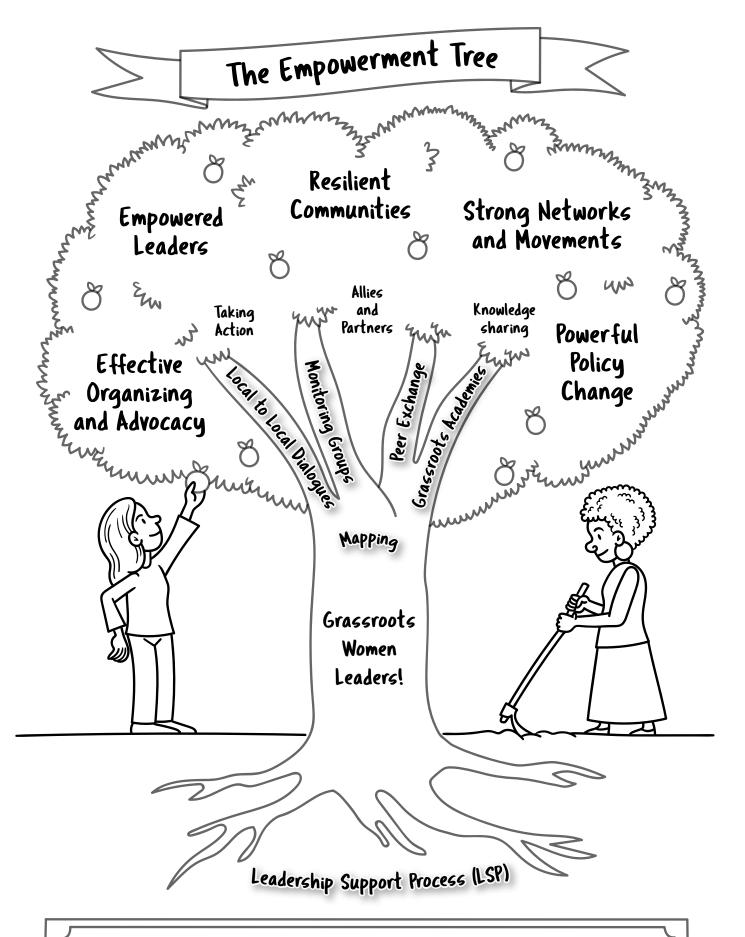
Six Core Tools

The Grassroots Women's Community Empowerment Toolkit includes six core tools and methods – Leadership Support Process, Community Mapping, Local-to-Local Dialogues, Monitoring Groups, Peer Exchanges, and Grassroots Academies. These tools grew out of the values and vision of grassroots women. We use them to build strong, connected leaders, partnerships, and movements able to tackle the challenges our families, communities and regions face every day. These tools have survived the test of time because they work.

These six Core Tools support six common outcomes and goals. They:

- 1) Are oriented toward leadership, partnership and movement building.
- 2) Increase voice and visibility of grassroots women.
- **3)** Position women as experts, researchers, organizers and teachers.
- **4)** Create opportunities for learning, knowledge creation and knowledge sharing.
- **5)** Develop women's leadership, organizing capacities and skills.
- **6)** Put women's priorities and practices on local, national, regional and global agendas by directly influencing policy and practice at every level.



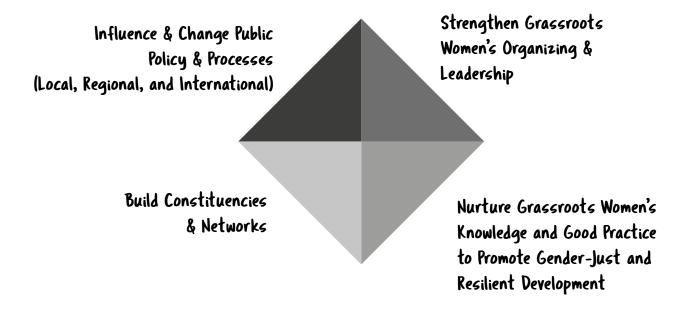


HUAIROU COMMISSION

Grassroots Women's Community Empowerment Toolkit

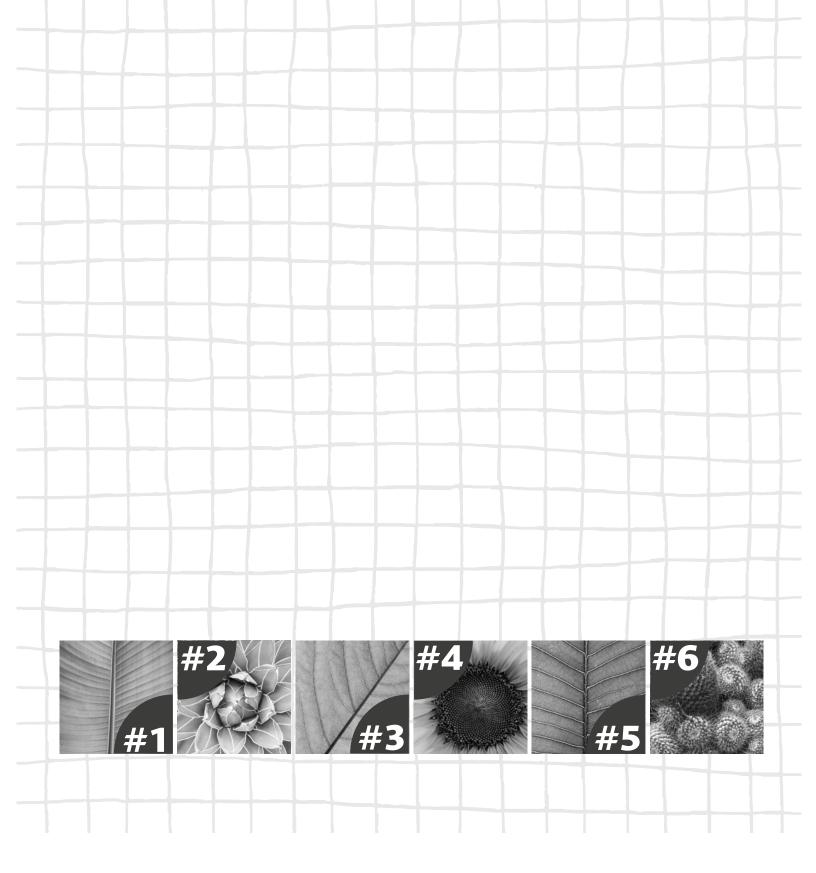
Huairou Commission's Theory of Change

Huairou Commission members and strategies are guided by a Pathway of Change known as 'The Diamond.'



- ◆ Influence and Change Public Policy and Processes: Members organize participatory research and use their findings to create strategies that promote resources for grassroots initiatives and form agreements with local officials.
- ◆ Strengthen Grassroots Women's Organizing and Leadership:

 Members mentor and support other women as they take on new leadership roles as trainers, mobilizers, risk mappers, monitors, fund managers, and advocates.
- Nurture Grassroots Women's Knowledge and Good Practice: Members design and invest in women-led, innovative solutions to improve housing, infrastructure, basic services, and livelihoods. These projects become models for building up together with the community, local authorities and other partners.
- ◆ Build Networks and Coalitions: Members link with other women's groups and form networks that share knowledge and practices, and plan, implement, and evaluate projects together. They also build partnerships with government officials, donors, researchers, and NGO leaders who champion grassroots women's roles in advancing community resilience.





LEAD ERSHIP SUPPORT PROCESS (LSP)



What is the Leadership
Support Process?

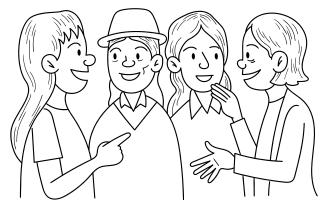
Leadership Support Process (LSP) is a sustainable leadership and community empowerment model developed by grassroots women from around the world. The many principles, skills and tools of LSP guide us as we build strong leaders, communities and global movements.

LSP principles are at the heart of all our work including the Community Empowerment Tools and the Huairou Commission's Pathway of Change (the 'Diamond'). The Leadership

Why Use the Leadership Support Process?

Support Process evolved from the Neighborhood Women's movement and the work of Groots International and the Huairou Commission.

- LSP trains and sustains effective, well connected grassroots leaders grounded in self-reflection, and mutual respect and support.
- LSP builds a foundation of trust and understanding among group members. This culture of sharing and appreciation reduces misunderstanding and conflicts.
- LSP helps grassroots women become empowered advocates for ourselves and our communities by building confidence, self-expression and strong communication skills.
- LSP strengthens organizations, partnerships, and movements that are rooted in values and vision and guided by principled agreements.



There are 5 Elements of the Leadership Support Process (LSP)



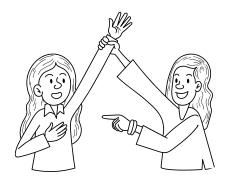
We start with VALUES and VISION

Start by defining what is important to do and why. Values are what we believe in. A vision is a dream plus a commitment to make that dream happen. When we identify our shared values and create a vision together it becomes the roadmap that guides all our actions.

We set GROUP STANDARDS together. We make BASIC AGREEMENTS

Next, our values guide us as we decide how we want to work together. Holding ourselves to these agreements is a self-empowerment tool. Honoring our agreements lets us work together effectively. They help guard against misunderstanding and guide us as we handle conflicts.



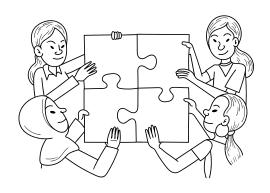


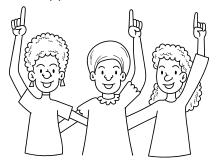
3 We RESPECT and SUPPORT ourselves and each other as LEADERS

Leadership can be defined as a decision to see that everything around you goes well. Anyone can decide to do this. No title is needed. But taking responsibility as a leader can be difficult. Leaders are most effective when they learn from each other and get and give support.

We become ALLIES and PRINCIPLED PARTNERS by honoring DIVERSITY

To achieve our goals we need the best ideas we can find and a diverse group of strong partners and allies to carry out our plans. Seek out people with different perspectives, skills and cultures. Listen with respect and learn from their experience. Look for ways to support each other's work with integrity.



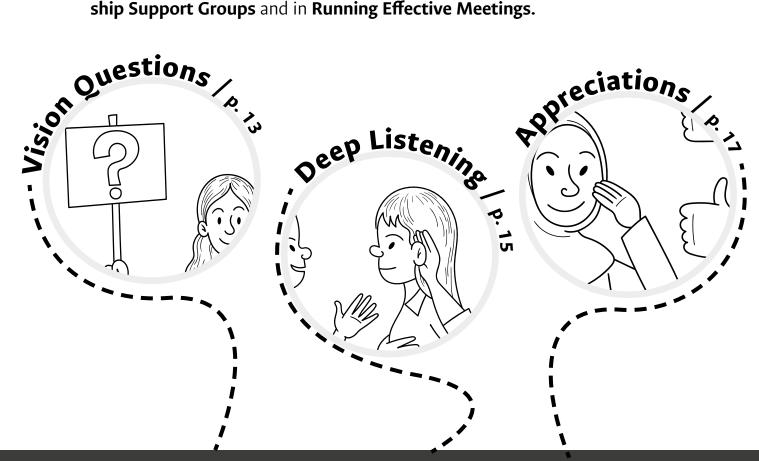


Second Second Second Participation and Participation and appreciation for our efforts! Taking time to notice what is going well - not only what is hard or still needs to be done - sustains our work. Methods that promote full participation ensure that everyone is respected and is involved in making decisions that affect her. This is how empowered leaders develop.

An Introduction to Leadership Support Process SKILLS, METHODS and TOOLS

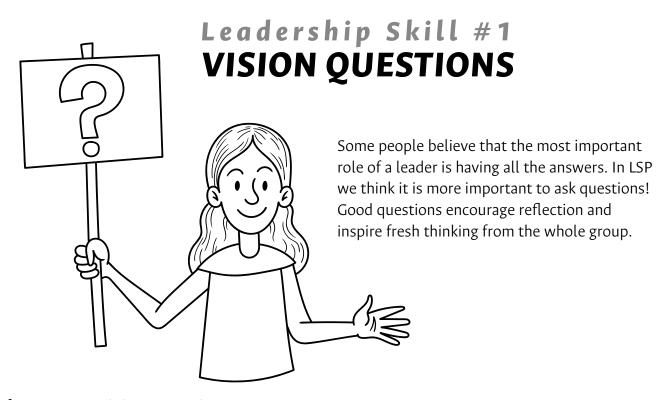
Leadership Support Process weaves together many empowerment building skills, tools and methods. LSP grows out of **The 5 Elements** and these five principles are a part of everything we do.

In this brief Introduction to LSP, we first will focus on Three Important Leadership Skills 1) Vision Questions 2) Deep Listening and 3) Appreciations. Next we focus on Leadership Support Process in Action with three examples that show how LSP can be used while Making Basic Agreements, in Leadership Support Groups and in Running Effective Meetings.



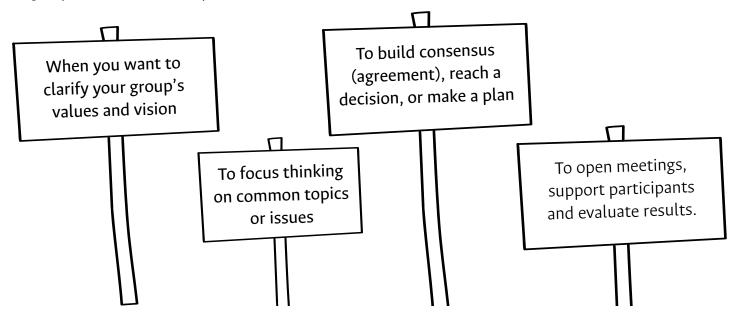
3 Important Leadership Skills

3 IMPORTANT LEADERSHIP SKILLS



When to use vision questions

Vision questions can be used in any situation. Use vision questions to guide group discussions, planning meetings, leadership support groups and training workshops. The list is endless. You can even use them at home with your family! Use them in small groups of 5 or with groups of 50! Use vision questions:



Some guidelines for making vision questions

- Focus on learning more about people's experiences, strengths, and needs. Bring out the positive contributions a person may have forgotten or never known.
- Keep your question 'open-ended' to encourage people to say whatever is on their mind.
- Set time limits and give everyone equal time to respond to the question.
- Ask questions that are appropriate to the situation and group members.

To write a good vision question, first ask yourself:

- What is the purpose of the group or the meeting?
- What questions reflect the group's purpose?
- How can I ask the questions so that each person speaks from their own experience and not in a vague or general way?
- How can I make sure women's experiences in this community are heard and celebrated?
- How can I say the question so that no one is intimidated or overwhelmed by it? (For example, you can ask for **one** important thing about a topic rather than asking what is important about the whole topic).
- How do these questions help move us toward resilience, empowerment and action?



Vision questions can be used to guide any type of discussion. Here are two examples:

Sample vision questions focused on leadership

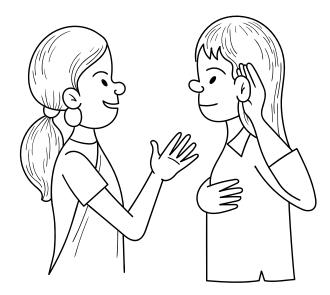
- What is one positive experience of leadership that you have had?
- What would it look like for you to exert your full leadership potential on behalf of your deepest values?
- What would that be like?
- What has held you back?
- What support would make a difference?

Sample vision questions for a policy discussion on housing

- What kind of housing have you lived in?
- What was good and what was difficult about it?
- What do you think is most important to change? Why?
- What recommendations do you have for change?
- What could you do to make that change happen?
- What holds you back?
- What is your first (or next) step?
- What support will help you take that step?

3 IMPORTANT LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Leadership Skill #2 DEEP LISTENING



It can seem so simple but **Deep Listening is a powerful leadership and community development tool.** How often do people truly listen to a woman in a way that allows her to learn and grow? Deep listening is healing. It is a skill, an empowerment tool and a sign of respect.

In LSP, we have learned that really listening to someone helps them:

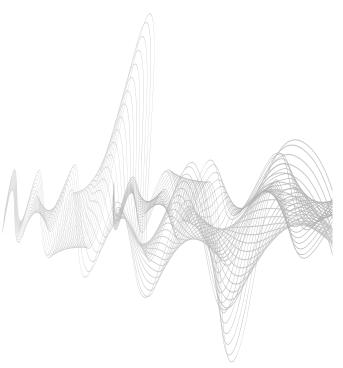
- clarify their own thinking and then share their ideas
- become more focused and effective as group members
- learn new information more easily and grow as leaders
- become more connected and confident
- process emotions and heal from trauma

When to use Deep listening

Deep Listening is useful in everything we do. It is at the core of many LSP tools such as

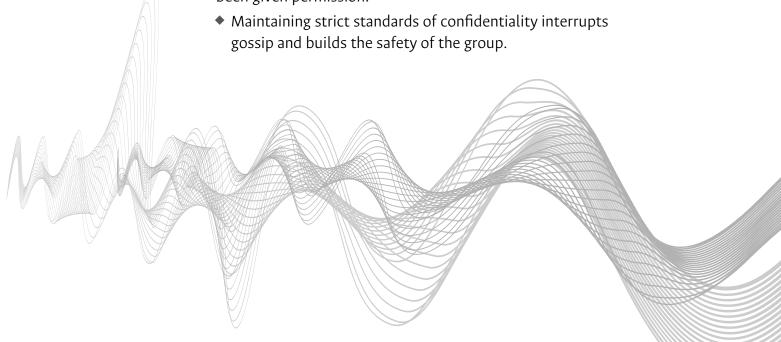
- Leaders Support Groups,
- Listening Exchanges,
- Personal Support Go-Rounds,
- ♦ Topic Groups,
- Allies Panels and more.

When it is your turn to speak, others will listen deeply with full respectful attention and without comment or interruption.



Guidelines for deep listening sessions:

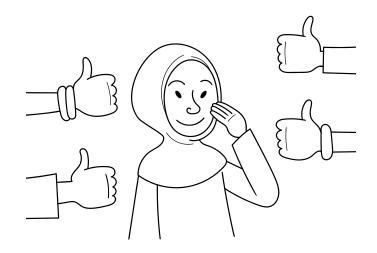
- Each person has an equal amount of time to speak. This can be 'free', meaning the speaker says whatever is on their mind, or it can be 'focused' on a topic.
 - Setting a timer helps ensure equal turns
- Listen deeply with respect, with an open mind and an open heart.
- This is not a conversation. But brief comments or questions to encourage the speaker (not to satisfy your own curiosity) are OK.
- No 'advice' and no 'judgements'.
- Emotional expression is natural! Releasing emotions is how we heal from hurts, fears and painful experiences.
- ♦ End on a positive note, For example, take a moment to say one thing you are looking forward to.
- Respect confidentiality! Before you start, it is essential that everyone agrees to keep what they hear as confidential and not refer to it, even with the speaker, unless they have been given permission.



3 IMPORTANT LEADERSHIP SKILLS

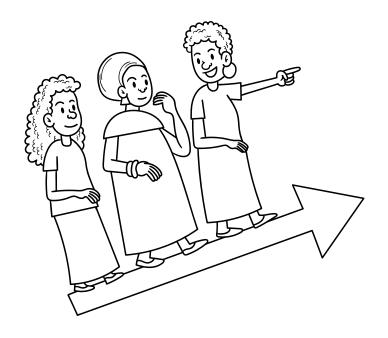
Leadership Skill #3 APPRECIATION

Appreciations affirm the contributions of group members and reinforces self-esteem. They strengthen our relationships and build a positive view of women's leadership.



Start with Strengths

We have a choice about how we see the world. A traditional approach to leadership and community development is to focus on problems. People see only what is wrong or missing. But this is only half of the story. Think of a glass of water. Do you see the glass as half full or half empty? Grassroots women know that every person (including you!) and our communities have many talents, strengths and assets to build upon. This empowering choice - to focus on assets and strengths, and not only problems and vulnerabilities - is the basis of **LSP Element #5 - We Use Appreciation and Participatory Meeting Methods.**



- **Lead with the positive.'** Appreciate what is right and strong, not only what is missing or wrong with yourself, with other leaders and in our groups and communities.
- This highlights possibilities and leads to positive and empowered action.
- We are **NOT ignoring problems** or pretending they don't exist. Instead we train ourselves to **consider strengths and possibilities first** before letting obstacles block our creativity or overwhelm us.



When to use Appreciations? Answer: All the time!

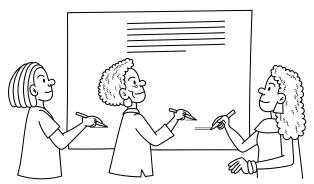
- For example, appreciation or saying what went well is a powerful way to end meetings.
- Go around the circle and ask each person to say something they are glad they learned or something positive about themselves, the leader or the group.
- When appreciating each other make sure that everyone is the 'receiver' and well as the 'giver.' For example, you could ask each participant to appreciate the person to their right. In this way, every woman will be included.

Appreciation is an essential skill that supports and sustains leaders.

Offering empowering appreciations can be your 'superpower' as a leader. But it takes time to hone this skill!

- Thoughtful appreciations help us recognize strengths and gifts in ourselves and in others.
- Receiving appreciation is like water for a wilting plant.
- This encouraging approach is an important part of leadership development and mentoring as we grow our next generation of leaders.
- Personal appreciations can turn a difficult situation around. When tensions arise between leaders or in a group, take the time to do a round of thoughtful appreciations. Appreciations can remind us that we are valued and have common commitments.
- A good appreciation rejects the myths we believe about ourselves and each other ("I'm not smart" or "I can't lead"). They remind us of what is true and let people know we believe in them. They counteract the harmful messages of oppression that we may have internalized.
- Practice looking for the gifts or strengths in someone else that they may not yet see in themselves. A thoughtful appreciation lets the other person know that you see and respect *them*. It is important to be sincere and truthful.

Leadership Support Process in Action PUTTING LSP SKILLS, METHODS AND TOOLS TO WORK



Making Basic Agreements

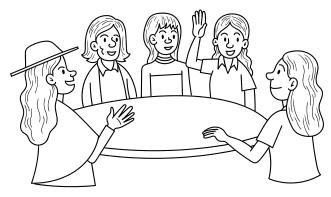
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Leadership Support Groups

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LSP Tools for Meetings and Groups

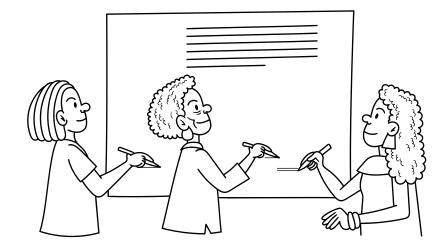
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Leadership Support Process in Action

Making Basic Agreements



WHAT?

What are Basic Agreements?

In LSP we **Set Group Standards Together and Make Basic Agreements (Element #2)**. Basic Agreements define how we want to work together and reflect our groups **Values and Vision (Element #1)**. Clear standards set a tone of respect and empowerment. When everyone has agreed on how we want to work together there will be more harmony. Making agreements is a good idea in other settings as well such as in families and in work settings.

Making Basic Agreements is an example of a **Participatory Method (Element #5)**. This is important because, when someone is involved in creating something, they understand it well and take pride in their work. Clear agreements cut down on confusions or misunderstanding that lead to conflict.

WHY?

Why are Basic Agreements important?

- They remind us of our values
- Clear agreements create safety, build trust and reduce misunderstandings
- It takes leaders out of the role of 'mother' or 'enforcer.'Everyone is responsible to remember these commitments.
- They honor and preserve diversity because they encourage everyone's participation.

HOW TO MAKE BASIC AGREEMENTS

STEP 1: Remind the group about your values and vision

STEP 2: Do a brainstorm session by asking each person to answer the question,

- "What do we need to do to make sure our work together goes well and reflects our values, vision and priorities?" Write all ideas down so that everyone can see what was said.
 - **TIP:** At this point, focus on recording each persons' own thinking rather than debate or discussion. Questions to clarify a point are OK.
- Another option is to first have everyone take time to write down their ideas and then ask each one to share their best idea(s) with the group.

STEP 3: Ask people to talk about what they see

"What stands out? Is anything missing? Are there any points that are basically the same idea and can be combined (go ahead and 'lump' these together)? Is there anything that needs further discussion?"

STEP 4: Decide on your group agreements.

 Any number is fine but more than 10-15 can be overwhelming.

STEP 5: Post your Basic Agreements in several places so they are easy to see, or send them out to everyone.

- Designate at least one person to remind us of our promise to abide by the standards. You may also choose to read them at the start of each meeting.
- Basic Agreements should become part of your group culture.



TIPS FOR MAKING AND USING BASIC AGREEMENTS

- Everyone should be involved in creating them. It doesn't have to take long. Choose a facilitator.
- Make them **flexible and able to**change as needed but beware of
 being too flexible and letting your
 meeting become chaotic!
- Make them sensitive to diversity and oppression issues. Good agreements encourage us to be courageous and go against societal messages that we should be quiet or small (internalized oppression).
- Take a stand do not compromise on your group's or the Huairou Commission's principles. Reflect the group's true values!
- Make them appropriate for the group that will use them (so a Leadership Support Group could stress confidentiality while a business meeting might emphasize staying on task).
- When someone breaks an agreement, remind them in a thoughtful way about the agreements. Also, if an agreement gets broken a lot, look to see if it needs to be changed (rather than throwing out agreements in general).

EXAMPLE BASIC AGREEMENTS:

- Full Attention. We listen respectfully to each other. Avoid interruptions, cross talk, and "side meetings". Cell phones are off except for emergencies.
- **Full Participation.** We encourage everyone to speak, but also respect the right to 'pass.' Ask again at the end of the go-round if they wish to speak.
- **No Put-Downs.** We don't engage in 'put downs' of ourselves or anybody else.
- **No Advice.** We don't comment on what other people say or give advice except when asked for.
- **Lead with the Positive.** We start with what is going well before focusing on problems. No complaints without offering a solution.
- Speak from your own experience. Use 'I- Statements'-especially when disagreeing.
- **Culture and Spirit.** We share our cultures in many ways such as song, food, rituals, stories and dance.
- **Personal Confidentiality.** We don't repeat personal information shared at meetings unless the speaker gives permission.
- Full Respect. Even if we disagree with someone's ideas or beliefs, we treat the **person** with respect.
- **Personal Responsibility.** We take responsibility for getting our own needs met.
- **Stay with the Group Task.** We stick to the agenda.
- Respect Time. We start and end meetings on time. Give everyone equal time.
- **Appreciations and LSP.** We take time to appreciate each other using LSP methods
- **Cameras on during virtual Meetings.** Make your face visible on screen when possible as a sign of respect



Leadership Support Process in Action

Leadership Support Groups

Leadership capacity building for grassroots women

One crucial thing that grassroots women have learned over the years is that growing and sustaining effective leaders requires good personal support. Leadership support groups provide this critical support.

WHEN?

- As soon as you have found 4-8 other women you want to meet with, women who have something to offer the community, form a Leadership Support Group. Every grassroots leader will be stronger with good support around her:
 - \triangle Meet on a regular schedule of your own choosing.
 - △ Meet for as long as it is useful (many groups have continued to meet for many years and sometimes for decades).
- ▲ Leadership support time can also be included as a part of any gathering.

WHY?

Leadership Support Groups

- ▲ Build a base of support, trust and connections with our peers.
- Are a place to learn and explore our own thinking and ideas.
- ▲ Help us challenge each other to act boldly as leaders
- Build a culture of solidarity. We are not alone and others 'have our back'.
- ▲ Build confidence and nurtures our growth as leaders:
 - △ Ask, 'What do I want to learn?' and 'Who can I learn it from? What is the next step in my leadership? Who can help me take this step?
- ▲ Build alliances across traditional divisions of class, race or ethnicity, tribe, religion and more.
- Celebrate our Sisters!

HOW TO RUN A LEADERSHIP SUPPORT GROUP

- ▲ Meet on a regular basis.
- Designate an organizer and a facilitator for each meeting. Rotate the jobs so the work is shared.
- ▲ Plan your meeting well:
 - △ Try to balance the meeting topics. Recommended format: 1/3 personal discussion, 1/3 planning discussion, and 1/3 discussion of social issues.
 - \triangle Use Vision Questions.
- ▲ Meet in a place where people feel safe and try to limit interruptions:
 - △ Arrange for help with children if needed.
- At the meeting, the facilitator uses **LSP Meeting Methods** (see 'Using LSP Methods in Meetings and Groups' on page 26) and makes sure that:
 - △ each woman is warmly welcomed into the circle and is treated with respect.
 - \triangle everyone speaks and has equal time.
 - \triangle each meeting has time to reflect on issues of common interest.
 - \triangle each meeting has time for personal support.
 - \triangle confidentiality is respected.
 - \triangle $\,$ we stick to our basic agreements.
 - \triangle the meeting ends on time.



Take time to reflect after each meeting. What went well? What could go better? How can we make the meeting better for all of our members next time?

SAMPLE FORMAT FOR A LEADERSHIP SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

- Culture and Spirit: Share a blessing or a poem! Sing! • (To welcome everyone and start in a positive way).
- Opening Circle and Check-in: 5-15 minutes • Example Opening Circle questions:
 - - ▶ What is one thing that went well for you this week?
 - ▶ What is one thing that was difficult for you this week? Personal Check-in time can be done as a Go-round in the whole group or in a Listening Exchange.
- **Go-round** on community issues using a Vision Ouestion (prepare this before you meet) - 40 minutes For example:
 - ▶ What are the hopes you have for women in this community?
 - What is one thing you could do to make the hopes of women come true?
 - ▶ What support is needed from others or from this group?
- **Go-round** on the next steps using your vision question - 40 minutes.

For example:

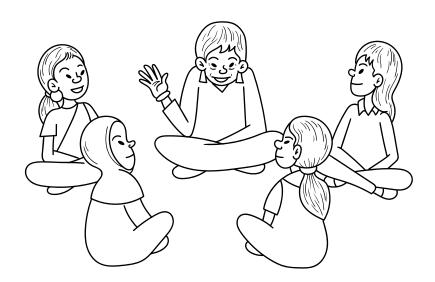
- What do you think are the next steps to action?
- ▶ Who will help with [each of] these steps?
- ▶ What support do they need from us?
- Small three-way group sharing - 15 minutes on personal leadership issues.
- **Appreciations** - 5 minutes.
- Closing Circle 2 minutes per person
 - For example:
 - What is something that happened in our meeting today that you'll remember?
- **Celebrate** (Culture and Spirit) 5 minutes Sing a song! Dance! Let it shine!



Leadership Support Process in Action

LSP Tools for Meetings and Groups

LSP tools are flexible and can be used in any gathering or meeting. Below are possible ways to incorporate LSP into your meetings:



Opening Circle

Most groups start with an **Opening Circle** or **Go-Round**. Each person introduces themselves (unless all are well known to one another) and is asked to share their thoughts on 1 or 2 simple questions.

- Often one question shows respect for each person's life, family or culture:
 - Ask, 'What is something new or good in your life?' or 'What is one thing people here may not know about you?'
- The second vision-style question can reflect the topic of your meeting:
 - Ask, 'Who has been a role model for your leadership?' or 'What do you hope to learn or do today?'
- Keep answers short so that each person gets about the same amount of time.
- Culture and Spirit you may also want to ask one person to share a unifying song or story.



To set a positive tone of respect. To make sure each woman is 'seen' and welcomed. To introduce participants to one another and deepen relationships. To help create a safe space and build community.

Check-In's or Listening Exchanges

Check-in's are done as a full group go-round. A **Listening Exchange** is a small group of 2-4 people. These tools are based on Leadership Skill #2 - Deep Listening (described above) - no interruptions, listen with respect, equal time and confidentiality. For more information about Deep Listening, see Leadership Skills #2 on page 15-16.



This helps to focus the meeting when people arrive or to re-focus at any point during the meeting, as needed. It helps people let go of troubles and worries and arrive in the 'present moment' more able to focus on the task at hand. Also used to help people process information and clarify their own best thinking on a topic. Listening with respect is a powerful contradiction to oppression.

Go-Rounds

Go-Rounds are a chance for everyone in the group to speak or respond to a question. Anyone can pass if they wish. The turns are strictly timed and no one speaks twice until everyone who wants to has spoken once. A new topic may not be introduced until the go-round is complete.



A go-round gives everyone an equal opportunity to be heard by responding to an issue, topic or question. It is especially useful in times of conflict.

Vision Questions or Topic Discussions

Vision Questions are designed to draw out women's experiences, strengths, and needs. Vision questions always ask: What is possible? What holds us back? What might be a solution? For more information about Vision Questions see Leadership Skills #1, see page 13-14.



When we keep our focus on values, vision and mission, it ensures we are building toward the future we want to see. Well framed questions that are values-driven help avoid patterns of resignation, self-defeat, and stagnant thinking. They open our minds to new ideas and help build hope.

Appreciations

Appreciations are a powerful way to end meetings by having people say something positive about themselves, about each other or the group. For more information about appreciation, see Leadership Skill #3, see page 17-18.



Appreciations affirm the contributions of group members and reinforces self-esteem. Helps build relationships and a positive view of women's leadership.

Closing Circle

The segment that ends the meeting is the **Closing Circle**. It can include reflections about the meeting (ex. "What's one thing you liked or learned?"), appreciations of oneself or the leader, and other participants. Often a forward-looking question is also asked ("What is one thing you are looking forward to or plan to do?"). The meeting may close with a **Culture and Spirit** offering such as a song, dance, poetry or a prayer.



It serves as a review of the work of the meeting and highlights what was successful. It helps build solidarity and sends people back into their lives uplifted and hopeful.



SAMPLE BUSINESS MEETING FORMAT USING LSP TOOLS

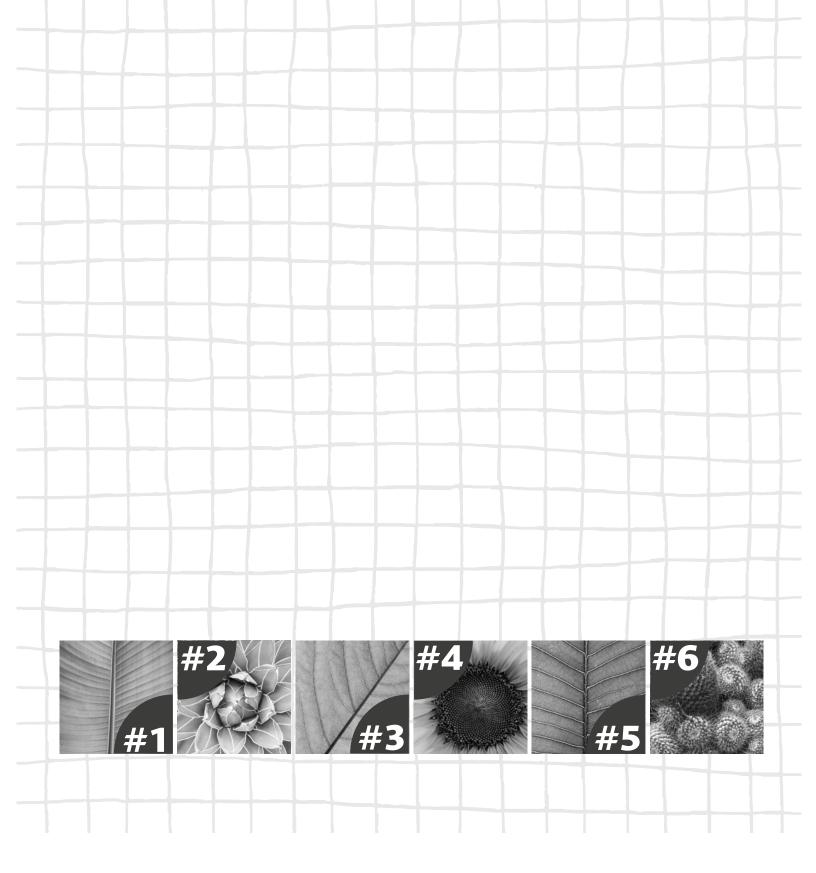
Opening Circle

- a) Go-Round Each person introduces themselves and speaks briefly to say something good or new in their life (this way everyone is welcomed and gets warmed up to contribute to the meeting. (1 minute each or less)
 - b) You can include Culture and Spirit as you open your meeting (3-4 minutes). Optional
- **Personal Check-In** (with or without a topic).
 - a) Optional but recommended as a simple way to help everyone be ready to focus on the work and to build relationships
 - b) Can be done in small groups of 2 or 3 as a Listening Exchange (3-5 minutes each) or as a brief goround in the full group (1-2 minutes each)
- If needed, remind people about your Basic Agreements (30 seconds) or make Basic Agreements to guide your work together (10 minutes). Optional
- Report(s) from different work groups.

 a) List unresolved issues on big paper so everyone can see
- **5** Go back to issues listed for general discussion
- Make decisions and agreementsabout next steps

7 Closing Go-Round

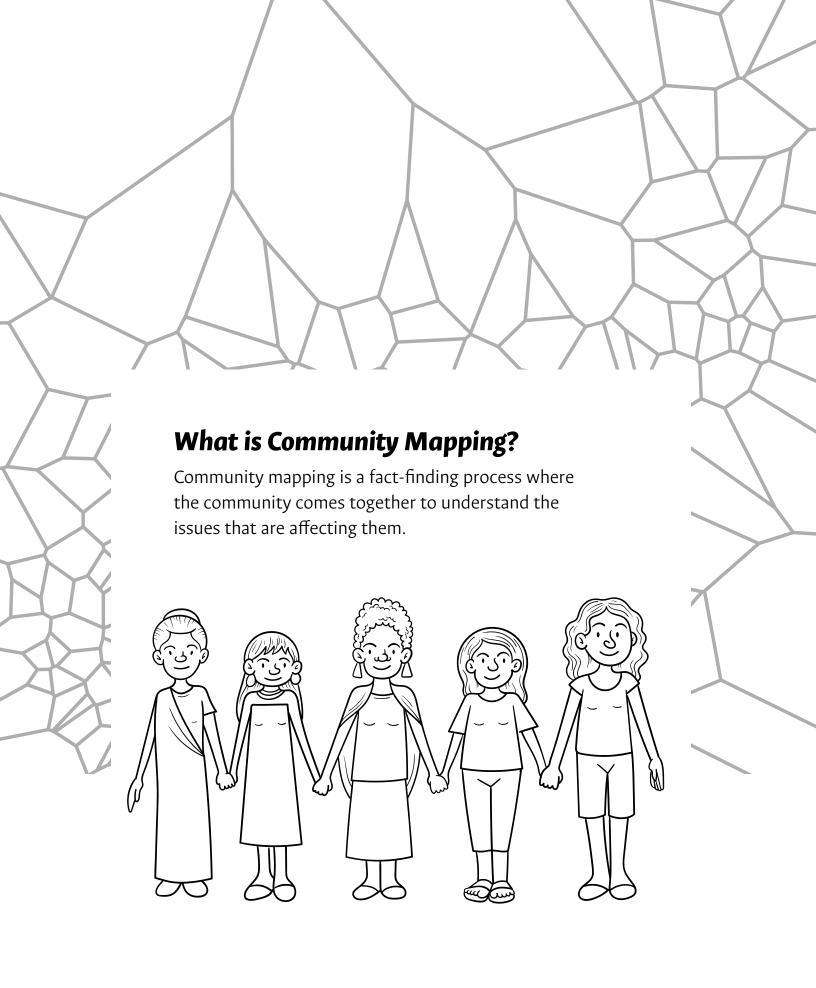
- a) Assessment What went well and any suggestions for what might be improved (1 minute each)
 - b) Appreciation Can be of the leader, each other or yourself (1 minute each)
 - c) You may want to celebrate in some way with Culture and Spirit or some refreshments

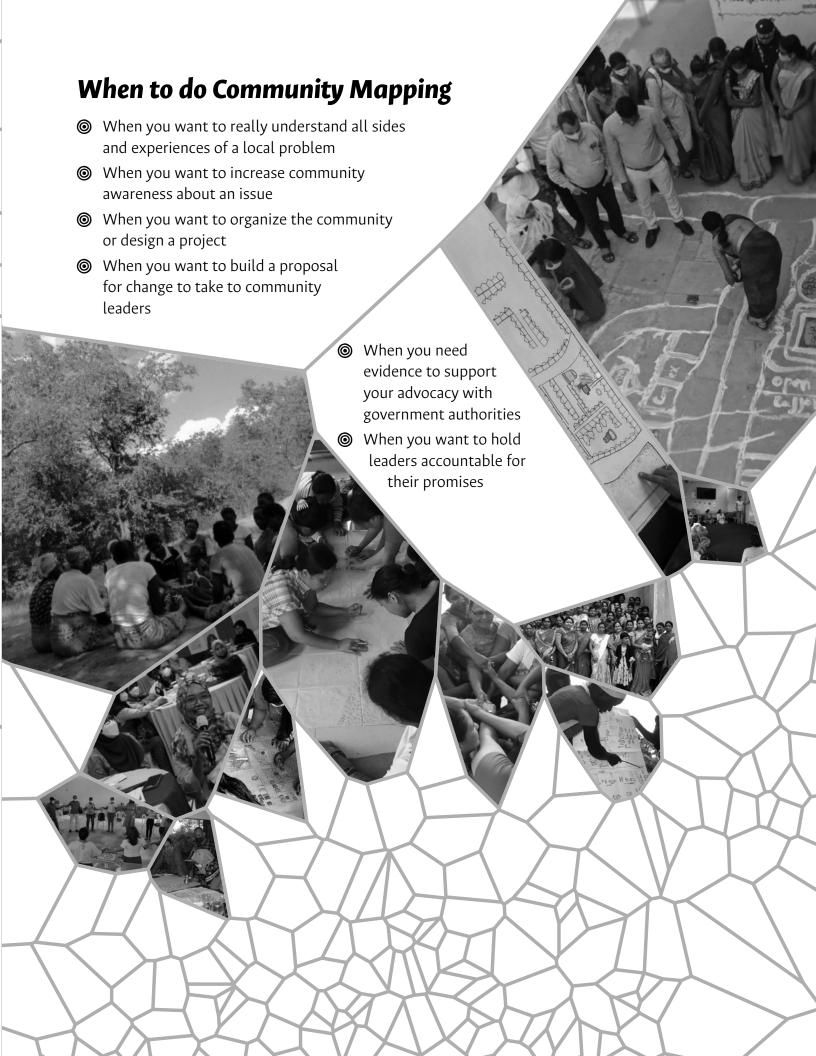












Why do Community Mapping?

Grassroots communities are experts about the issues we face. When grassroots women 'map' the experiences of real people in our community we can understand a problem from all sides. Then we can raise awareness about issues, organize, work with other groups, and push for changes we want. Remember: Information is power!



Mapping helps grassroots women understand our strengths and our problems better.

- We learn about the size of an issue, who it affects, and how it affects them.
- We get information on community resources and gaps.
- We identify individual cases of injustice.

Mapping unifies and mobilizes all stakeholders.

- Anyone can be involved in it, including all community members and local partners.
- It creates shared awareness about the root causes of a problem.
- It helps people form key questions and decide on shared strategies for action.



Mapping helps grassroots women advocate for change.

- We get the facts and analyze the results ourselves.
- It helps us identify allies and make connections with power holders.
- When repeated, it helps us see progress and holds leaders accountable.

Mapping builds the power of grassroots women:

- We become experts in the information we gather.
- We hold knowledge that others, like government officials, may not be able to get.
- Mapping leads to woman-led governance.

The Community Plan and Prepare / p. 37 There is more than one right way to do mapping. **Conduct Your** Mapping **Grassroots women from Activities** all over the world adapt / _{D. 39} the steps below to fit their local situation. Analyze Your Results Confirm Your Results in a Community Validation Meeting / p. 47 Share your Results Publicly / p. 48 Reflect on the Mapping Activity and Outcome (Evaluation) / p. 50



Plan and Prepare



1.1 Decide on your central research question

- What do you want to learn and how will the information be useful?

Ask questions such as:

- What are the strengths of our community?
- What issues are you concerned about?
- What do we need to learn more about?
- How will the information help us create change?

1.2 Decide who your 'stakeholders' are

- Who is affected by this issue in good and bad ways?
- Include people from all ethnic and racial groups, all age groups and all geographic areas (rural, urban, peri-urban).
- Key stakeholders are decision-makers, influencers, allies and even opponents who can help achieve 'buy-in,' strength, and long-term support.

1.3 Decide where your mapping project will happen

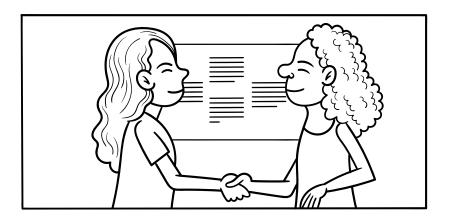
Set geographic boundaries using markers that the community knows.



1.4 Decide the best way to answer your **central research question** - What is the best way to gather the information you need?

Think about how much time the activities will take and what each will cost, including paid and volunteer people, meeting spaces, food, etc. Remember that many activities don't require money.





1.5 Choose and train your community researcher team

- Choose people who are thoughtful, responsible, work well with others and are part of one or more stakeholder groups included in the mapping process.
- Give your team the tools they need (survey, guide, map, etc.) and a chance to practice their responsibilities before they meet with stakeholders.
- Train your team to be honest, show respect, and ensure confidentiality.
- Make sure each community research team has an interviewer and a note-taker. Note-takers must be able to write down or draw everything that people say or do.
- Pair experienced leaders with emerging leaders to build skills.



Conduct Your Mapping Activities

Use one or more of the 4 common mapping activities to gather the information you need about your issue (descriptions of these activities below):



4 Types of Mapping Activities

1. Community Survey

WHAT: A community researcher reads a set of questions to people and notes their responses.

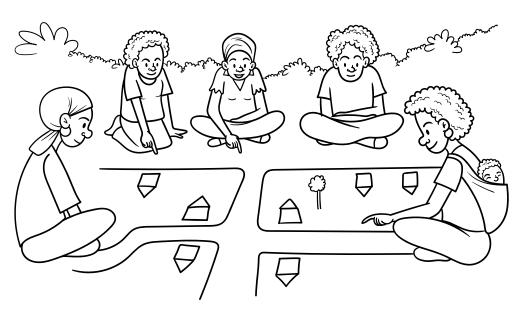
BENEFITS: This is a quick way to identify problems and issues in the community.

Information you can gather in a survey:

- Basic information (such as age, gender, marital status, education level).
- Anything that can be counted (such as children or land).
- Opinions on specific questions or issues (for example "agree/disagree" or "often, sometimes, never").

- A survey should take 10-20 minutes per person.
- Before you begin your research, test your survey with several people to make sure the questions are clear (SEE TIPS FOR WRITING GOOD QUESTIONS).
- Remember your audience. Use simple and easy-to-understand words. Be sensitive to how some questions may make people feel.







2. Community Map Drawing

WHAT: A group of community members create a map or draw on a map to show where people are affected by certain issues.

WHEN: Visual maps help us to see patterns and draw conclusions.

- Usually a group of 12-25 participants works well.
- Map-drawing takes about two hours. Meet in a location that is easy for people to get to (indoors or outside).
- You can use whatever you have on hand to make a map such as sticks to draw in the dirt and pebbles or grain to represent houses or livestock and so on. Chalkboards or paper and pencil are often used.
- Facilitate discussion about the map. Ask: What patterns do you see? Where is there more or less? What could this mean? How can we begin to correct a gap or problem?
- Be sure to record the information! You can do this by drawing a picture or taking photos if it is not possible to take the map with you.





3. Interviews

WHAT: Community researchers visit with stakeholders and ask them to speak in depth about the issue.

WHEN: These types of interviews give us more detailed information about how and why problems exist in the community, or how different issues connect.

- Plan to interview several people to get more in-depth information.
- Plan for each interview to take about an hour.
- Design questions that are open-ended and ask about individual experience or opinion ("What do you think about X" or "How are you affected by X")
 - O You may also choose to conduct **Key Informant Interviews** with people who know many other people or are experts on a certain topic. Create questions that ask about group experience ("How is this community group impacted by the issue?")
- Before you before you begin your research, test your survey with several people to make sure the questions are clear.
- Before ending the interview, read a summary of your notes to the person interviewed and ask if it accurately represents their perspectives.

Conduct Your Mapping Activities



4. Focus Group Discussion



WHAT: A group leader or facilitator hosts a certain group of stakeholders and asks them to discuss an issue and its causes together.

WHEN: Use this approach to understand how a particular group sees or experiences a situation.

- Invite 3-20 people to participate.
- You can hold different focus groups with different groups of stakeholders. Keep the questions you ask the same from group to group to compare their answers more easily.
- A strong facilitator should lead the discussion, keep the group on track, ask follow-up questions, and make sure everyone participates and feels safe addressing sensitive issues.



Conduct Your Mapping Activities

- A strong **note-taker** should write notes about what everyone says in the discussion. The note-taker should summarize the notes at the end for the group so they can verify accuracy.
- Some example questions: "How does the problem affect you and others in your community?" "What do you think are the causes of the problem?" "What do you see as solutions?" "What roles can you or others play in the solution?"
 - O You could also lead a "**SWOT Analysis**." 'SWOT' stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. The group talks about their thoughts on the issue related to each SWOT question and organize them on paper or a chalkboard so everyone can see them. The facilitator then asks the group to look for themes and relationships, and discuss ideas on how to move forward using this information.





Analyze Your Results

The information you have collected – survey answers, maps, and notes – is known as data or evidence. In this step you find the meaning in the data and use it to tell a story.

3.1 Be clear on what you want to understand. Before you start, read your central question again.



3.2 Organize your data.

- ♦ Count the responses for each survey question.
- Put similar ideas from interviews into groups.
- ♦ Identify places on the map with or without a type of resource.



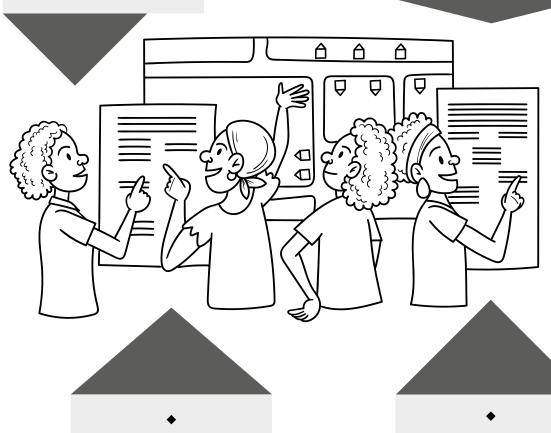
Analyze Your Results

3.3 Look for patterns or themes and think about connections between them.

♦ Look at the data in different ways:

Which issues are raised the most often? The least often? By whom?

How do people in different neighborhoods or different stakeholder groups respond to the same question?



What is different and what the same across different groups or locations?

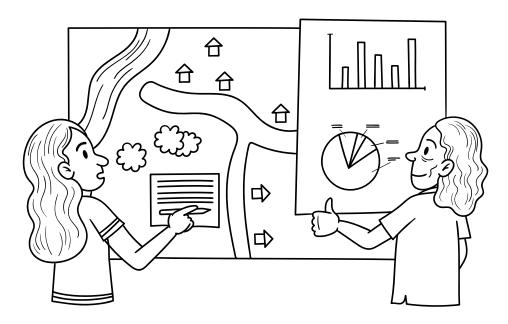
How does a resource (or lack of it) in one location connect to problems there?



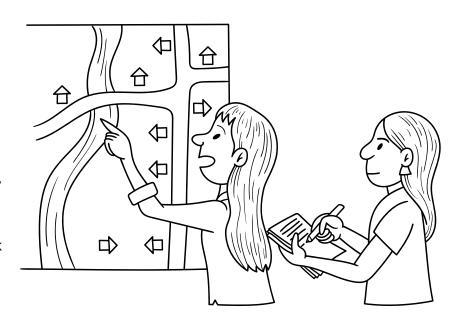
Analyze Your Results

3.4 Create a report to share your information and recommendations.

♦ Your report will include everything you did (your process), everything you learned from your mapping activities (your analysis) and your recommendations.



- Think of the best way or ways for different audiences and stakeholders to understand what you did and what you learned
 - ♦ A report can be written document or an oral presentation, or both.
 - Use appropriate language and make it easy to understand.
 - Present your information in different ways, including visual charts, pictures, stories, or other ways to show your data.
- Be sure to acknowledge and thank the people who participated and helped you!



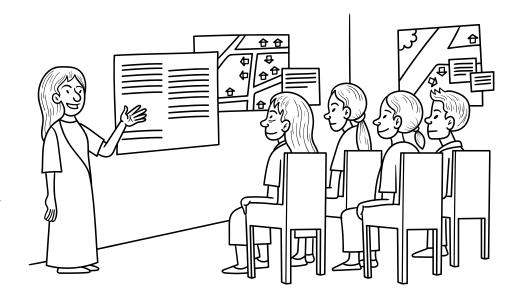


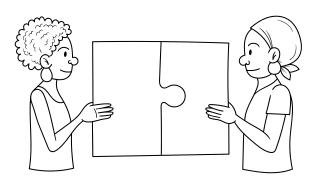
Confirm Your Results in a Community Validation Meeting

Before you share your report, be sure to confirm your data and recommendations with the people who provided the information during your mapping process. These discussions will build further trust and respect, help you organize your community, and prepare for public meetings.

4.1 Share your results with many different stakeholders in a group.

You do not need to meet with everyone who participated in your mapping activities.





4.2 Resolve any disagreements on your results or recommendations.

- Use voting or a survey tool to understand how many people support each point of view.
- Discuss a resolution or any key information that you need to include in the report.

4.3 Discuss how to present this information to the wider community or decision-makers.

- ▲ Who does this information affect?
- Who needs to be included in public meetings and what roles do they play?



Share your Results publicly

It is time to use your mapping data to advocate for change.



5.1 Decide your goal or goals for the meeting. Public meetings can:

- Raise community awareness about issues.
- Build community investment in making change.
- Mobilize stakeholders to create plans and form partnerships.
- Pressure power holders and decision-makers to act on policies or spending plans.

5.2 Invite your audience.

- This is an opportunity to bring together different groups of people and invite the media.
- You may want to hold different meetings with different groups of people depending on your goals.





Share your Results publicly



- 2.2 Make Tour Agenda and Trepare.
- Know your audience and present your results and recommendations in appropriate ways.
- You may want to follow this basic meeting process:
 - 1) Give an overview of the whole process (Why you did it, how, who participated).
 - **2)** Present the major results and recommendations.
 - **3)** Ask attendees what data they have in support of or in opposition to your results.
 - **4)** Discuss how your recommendations can be achieved.
 - **5)** Create a plan for next steps.



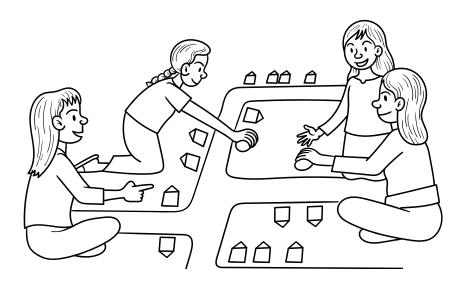
5.4 Host Your Meetings. Tips for success:

- Make sure you have a note taker for every meeting.
- Use photos, stories and testimony from interviews to keep it interesting.
- Share the microphone. Ask others to deliver parts of the presentation.
- Be confident. You have valuable information to share!



Reflect on the Mapping Activity and Outcome (Evaluation)

After you complete all the steps above, it is important to evaluate your mapping project. This will help you understand what went well and how it can be better next time.

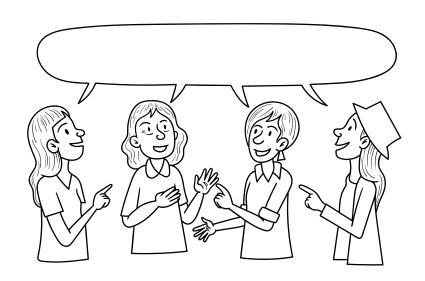


who participated in the mapping activities from start to finish to participate in the evaluation. Tell them that you want to know what they thought about the process and what came out of it.

6.2 Conduct 2 Types of Evaluation:

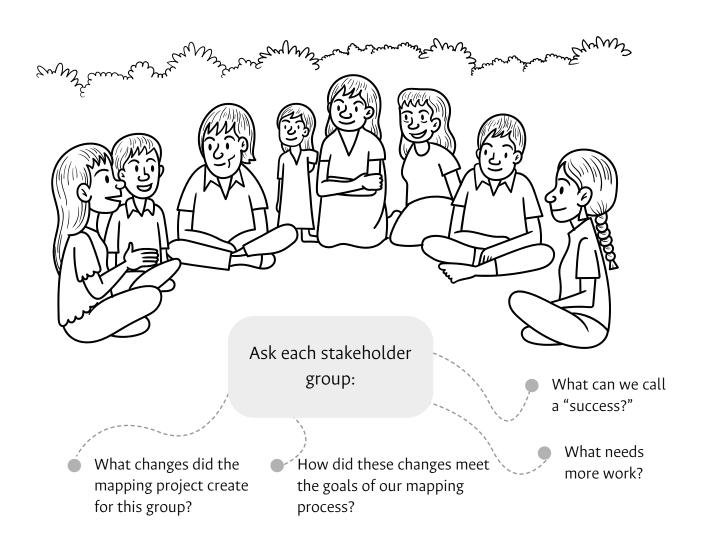
Process Evaluation (how did the mapping process go?): Review what happened during the mapping process, step by step, from the planning to the final meetings.

- At each step ask:
 - O Why did we make that choice?
 - O What was the impact of that decision?
 - O What would we do again next time and what would we change?



Reflect on the Mapping Activity and Outcome (Evaluation)

Impact Evaluation (what was the result of the Mapping project?): Review what has happened in the lives of the lives of grassroots women and our communities and with local organizations and institutions because of the mapping project.

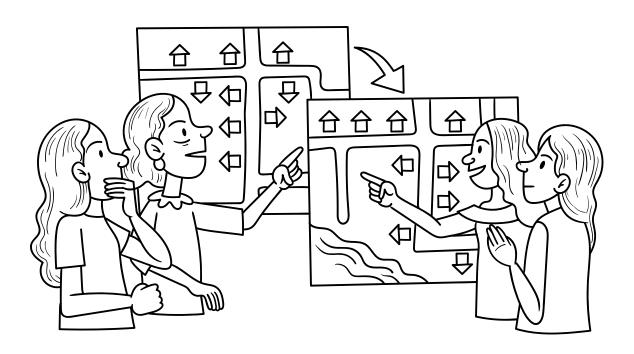


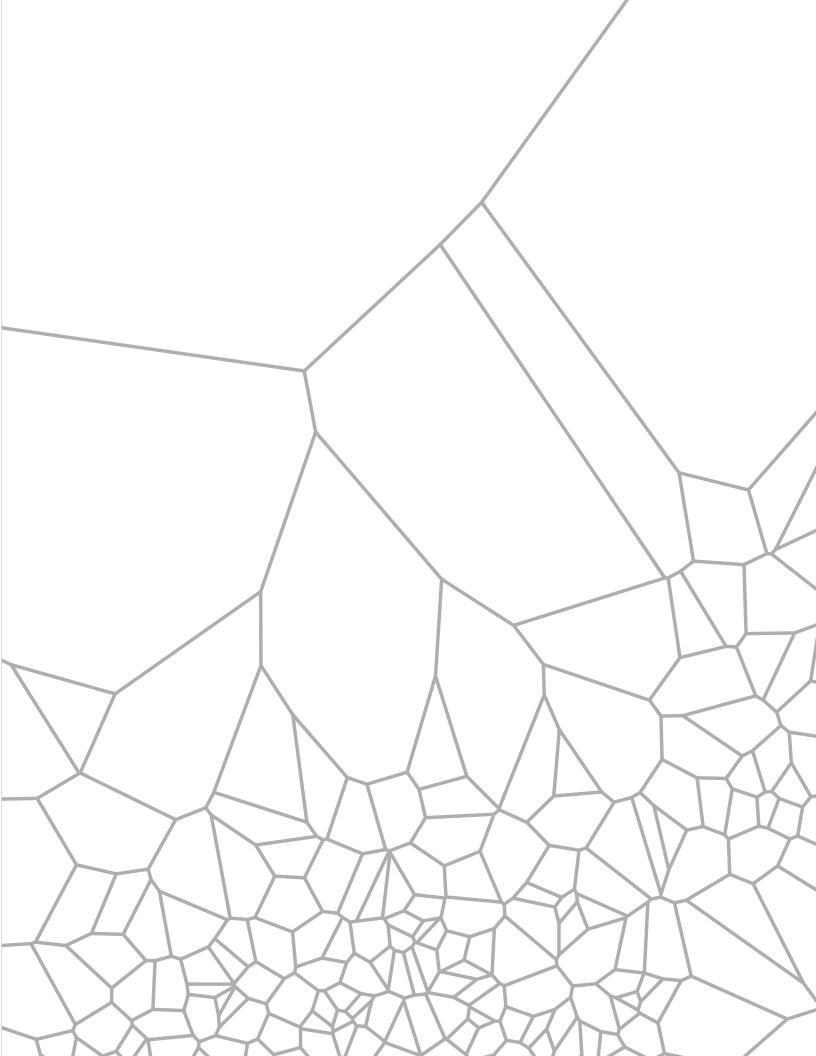
Reflect on the Mapping Activity and Outcome (Evaluation)

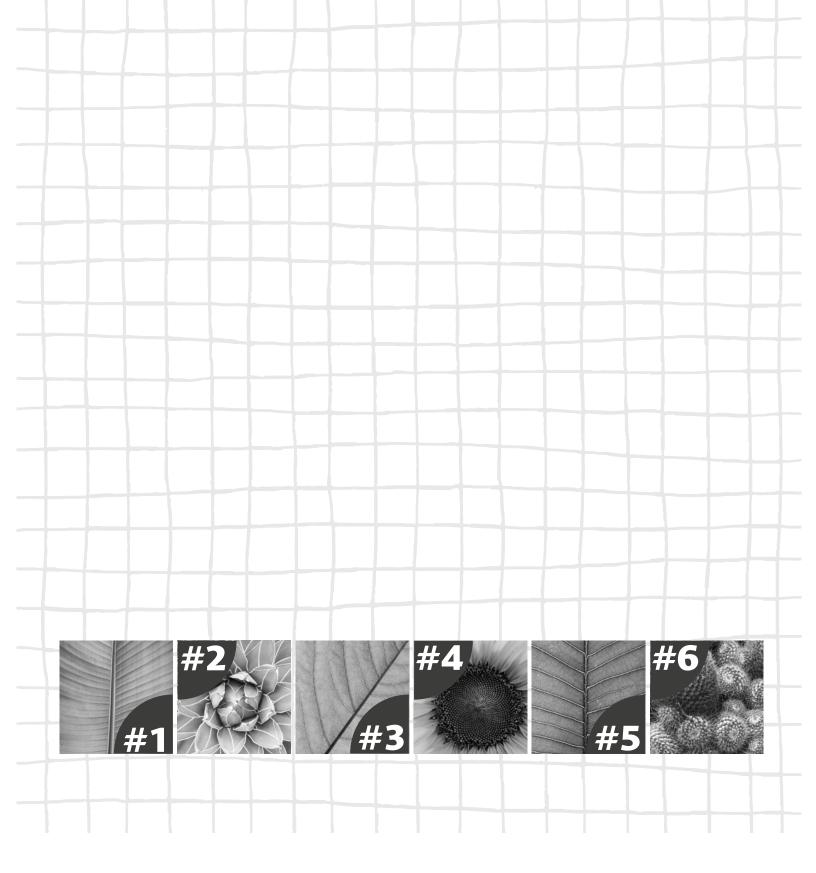


6.3 Re-Mapping is when you repeat the mapping process at a later time

- Re-Mapping helps to see what progress has been made on an issue since the first mapping process. How are things different now? Why?
- It is a useful accountability tool with government authorities or other partners. Are people doing what they said they would do?









LOCAL-TO-LOCAL-TO-LOCAL-DIALOGUE



What is a Local-to-Local Dialogue?

Local-to-Local Dialogues ("Dialogues") are a grassroots women-led strategy to build support for their priorities and improve access and control over resources and services.



When to do Local-to-Local Dialogues:

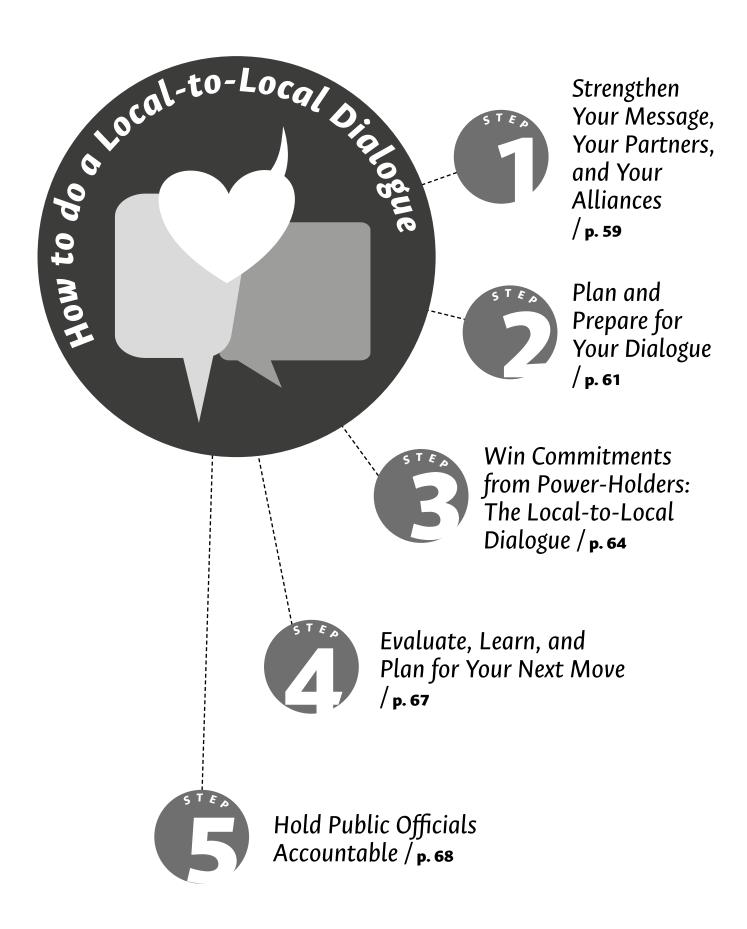
- When you have information to share after the completion of a mapping or audit process
- When you want to build or strengthen your partnerships
- When you have a proposal for change to take to community leaders
- When you want to hold leaders accountable for their promises.

Why do Local-to-Local Dialogues?

- Dialogues place grassroots women's priorities on local government agendas and influence decision-makers. They shift power and foster political transformation.
- Dialogues move grassroots women from beneficiaries to effective citizens and show that they play meaningful roles in influencing public decisions.
- Dialogues raise awareness about issues with partners and strengthen alliances, forging paths toward collective action.
- Participation in Dialogues builds grassroots women's leadership and organizational skills.

"WOMEN HAVE TO COLLECTIVELY ADDRESS PROBLEMS IF THEY WANT SUCCESS. TAKE COLLECTIVE, NOT INDIVIDUAL PROBLEMS TO OFFICIALS"

- HAMIYA YACIZI, GRASSROOTS WOMAN, TURKISH WOMEN'S COLLECTIVE





Strengthen Your Message, Your Partners, and Your Alliances

1.1 Organize a planning meeting to strengthen your message and your partnerships

- Include anyone who was part of your community mapping and research activities.
- Host the meeting when grassroots women can attend.



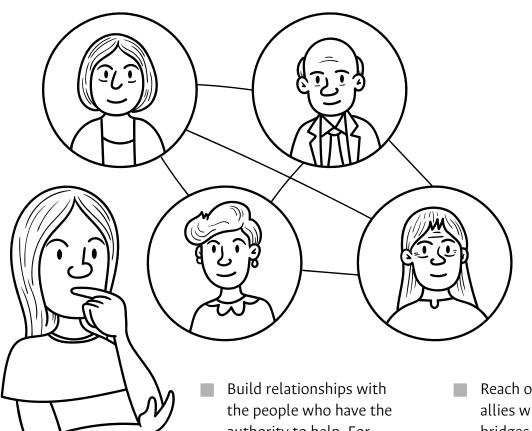
1.2 Build consensus around the priority issues and the changes you want

- Remind participants about your issue, who is affected, and any new information you have learned.
- Do a "Gender Analysis" discuss how these problems affect grassroots women and girls more or differently
- Collect examples and testimonies from people who experience the problem.
- Discuss and decide on the specific changes that are needed.

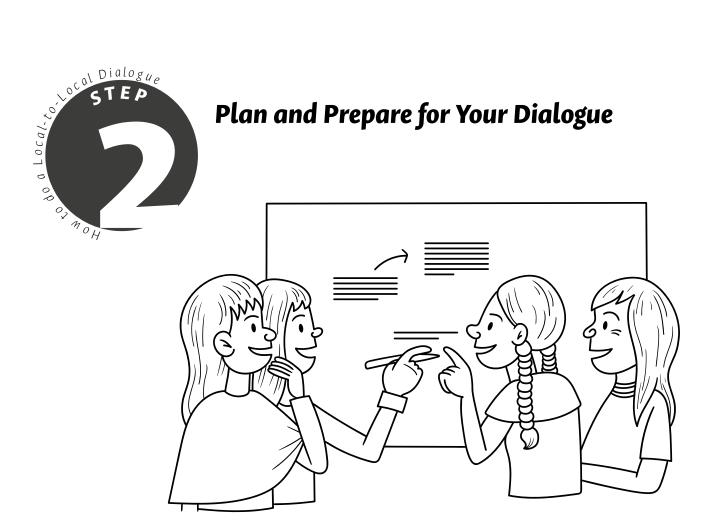


Strengthen Your Message, Your Partners, and Your Alliances

1.3 Set up small meetings or interviews to learn more about the issue and ways to solve it



- Build relationships with the people who have the authority to help. For example, key government workers, tribal authorities, or the housing authority.
- Reach out to potential allies who can help build bridges between you and the people who can make the changes you want. These may be other community members, organizations, media, agency representatives and elected officials.



2.1 Research the targeted decision-makers

- Investigate what each person cares about and what their office can do to help your cause.
- Think about a "win-win" how can your proposal also give them a chance to win broader support, save money, be more efficient, etc.?
- Timing is important for example, use elections to have a dialogue with candidates and put your issue on their agenda.

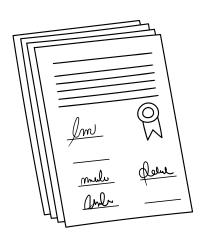
2.2 Write your invitation letter

- Host a meeting and invite the people who can make the changes you want. Or request to meet with them at their office.
- Summarize your findings and connect each finding to specific things that you want them to support or speak about.
- Include the map or the findings from your research project in this invitation.
- Include your contact information.
- Follow up with a phone call if you do not get a response in reasonable time.



2.3 Inform your allies and ask for their support

- Identify people or organizations who are trusted and respected by the community and by the officials you are targeting, such as churches or business groups.
- You can organize people to be present outside the meeting room to show support.
- Don't forget to contact the media.





2.4 Write your proposed agreement

- Sometimes the local officials will say they agree with you in the meeting, but don't follow through on their promises. Prepare an agreement document with a clear list of things you want officials to do – and places for everyone to put their signatures.
- Organize the agreement according to your findings and connect each finding to a change you want.
- You may want to ask for dedicated funds, actions, or people who will deal with the issue. But also give officials ways to be helpful beyond money like visiting your community or talking to other decision-makers about your work.



Plan and Prepare for Your Dialogue

2.5 Train your presenters

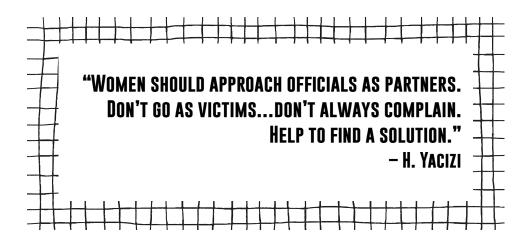
- Host a preparatory meeting with the grassroots women and allies who will attend the Dialogue.
- Create an agenda for the meeting. Make sure everyone is clear on what the goal of the meeting is, what role they have, and who will say what.



- Conduct a role play to practice for the meeting. Think about all the questions that officials might ask and prepare responses.
- You can also invite new members to attend this preparatory meeting to strengthen the team of grassroots women that are working together.



Win Commitments from Power-Holders: The Local-to-Local Dialogue



To organize your thoughts, think





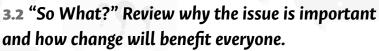


Win Commitments from Power-Holders: The Local-to-Local Dialogue





- Acknowledge the presence and significance of the people who are there.
- Present what you have to share and what you want to achieve though this meeting.



- Share findings and testimonies that are relevant to the decision-makers.
- Mention your allies who are in support of the plan, and how you and other women support their interests too.
- Note how changes will both help the community AND support their cause, enhance their prestige, save money, be more efficient, etc. Show all of the potential impacts!
- Point to related examples that others are doing across your regional or global network.

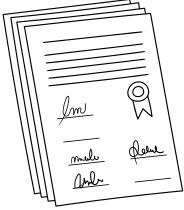




Win Commitments from Power-Holders: The Local-to-Local Dialogue

3.3 "Now What?" Present the specific things that you want officials to support and get commitments from them.

- Have your agreement document with you and read through it together.
- If officials are open to discussing details about each of your asks, create a workplan or timeline that says who will do what and by when.
- Look for consensus and collaboration. Most of the changes you want will benefit both the community AND the officials in some way!
- Sign or formalize it somehow and consider how laws can be written to support your issue after they leave office.





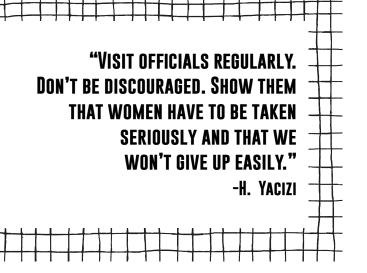


Evaluate, Learn, and Plan for Your Next Move

4.1 Gather everyone for a reflection meeting.

- ▲ Celebrate your successes so far!
- Discuss both the high and low points of the experience. Ask participants: What did we do well? What could we do differently next time? What do we do next to get the changes we want?
- Hold a Leadership Support Group.
- Make one plan to strengthen the group and another plan to follow up on the commitments from the Dialogue.





4.2 Continue to build alliances and strengthen your network

A Set up meetings with allies to discuss how to work together to ensure the commitments from your Dialogue are completed.



Hold Public Officials Accountable

5.1 Plan next steps to hold government officials accountable.

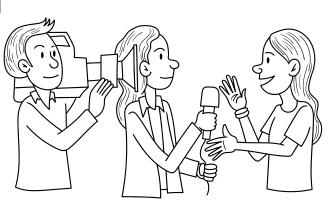
- Ask for a follow-up meeting.Make an appointment first!
- Go to their offices and remind them of the agreement that they signed.
- Approach all meetings in the spirit of collaboration and mutual benefit.



5.2 Work with the media to build public awareness and keep pressure on officials.

- Focus attention on your issue, your partners and your activities so far.
- Set up interviews with journalists.

- Write 'letters to the editor' to be published in local papers
- Ask them to reach out to officials and other for a follow-up story





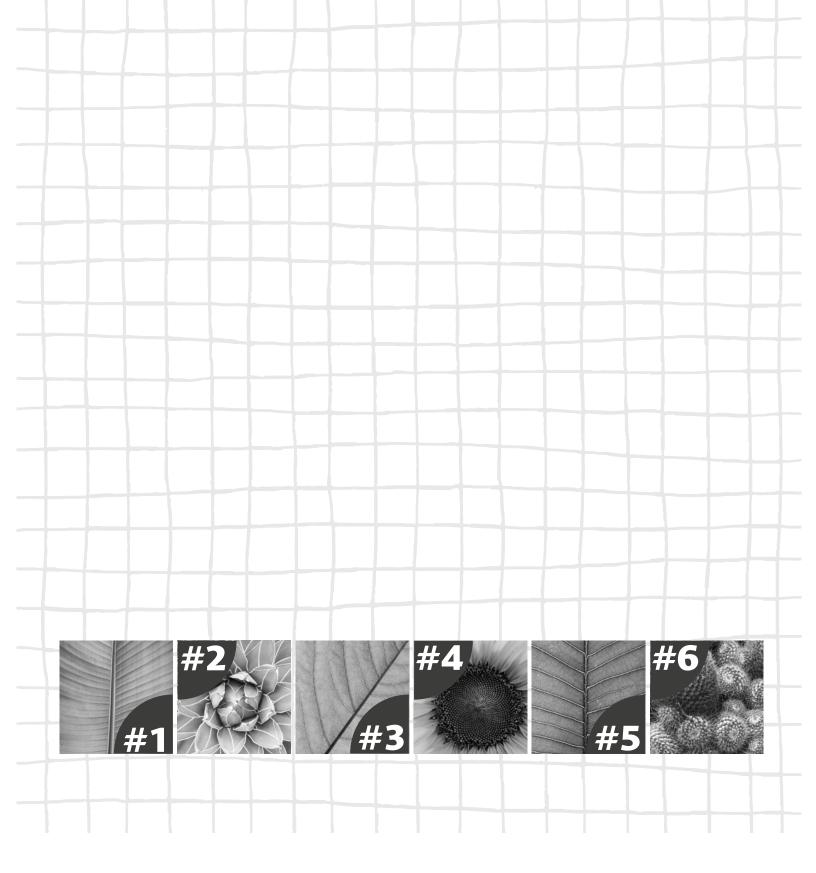
Hold Public Officials Accountable

5.3 Organize public activities to demonstrate power and unity.

Use Re-mapping: repeat the mapping or audit process to see what changes have happened since the Dialogue. How are things different now? Why?



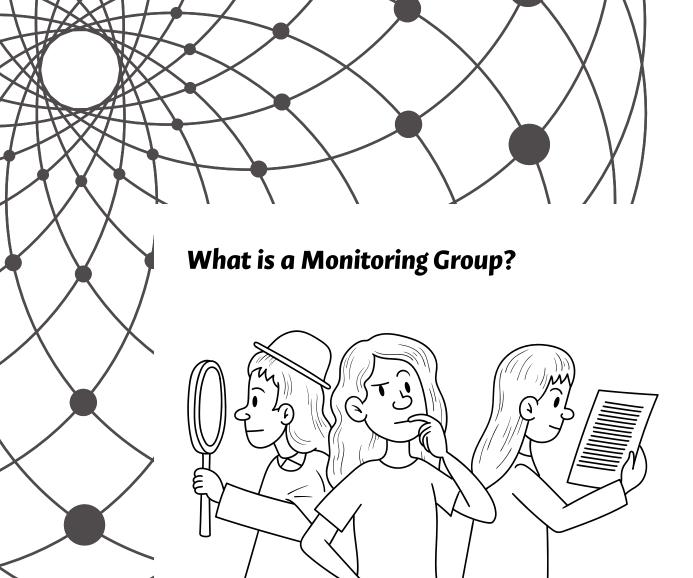
- Marches, creative public actions, and collective activities to improve the community like tree-planting, debris removal, celebrations also build support and energy.
- Keep these events fun and open to the public.
 - Invite the media and your targeted officials to each of them!





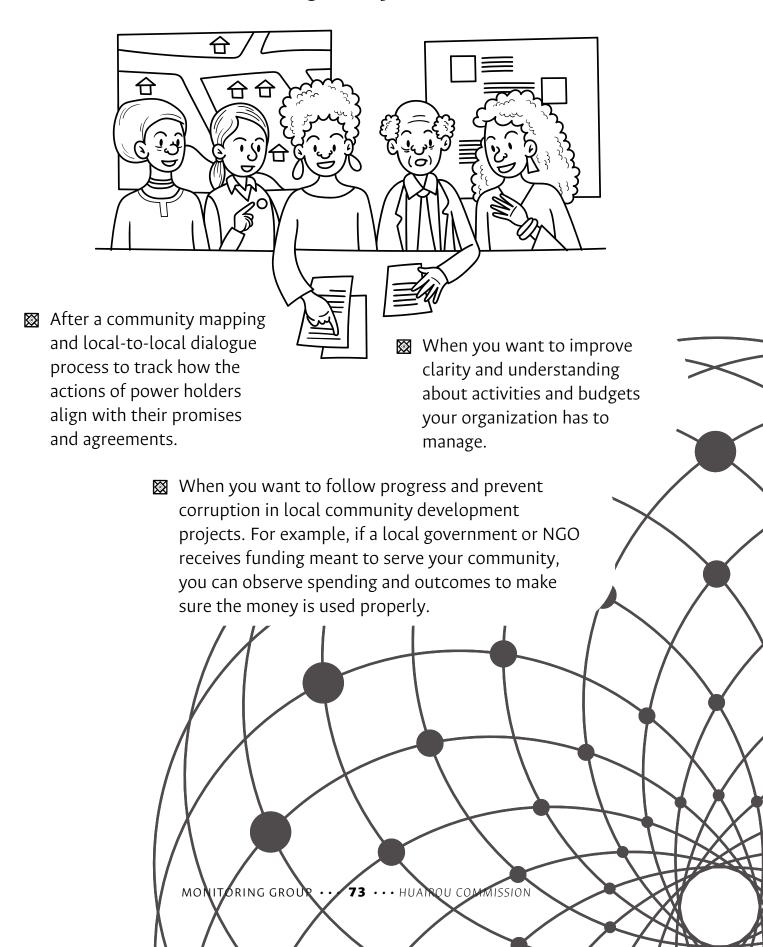






Grassroots women and their communities form Monitoring Groups to make sure local power holders do what they are required to do and what they said they would do. Around the world there are different names for this tool, including Monitoring and Follow-up Committee, Watchdog Groups, Citizen Participation Groups, and Assessment, Oversight, Accountability or Transparency Committees.

When to Use a Monitoring Group:





Why Use Monitoring Groups?



Monitoring activities bring attention to grassroots women's rights, property, assets, and fair use of resources.



They help communities maintain their political, social, economic, and cultural gains.



They position grassroots women as empowered leaders and help them to participate in resource management and decision making.

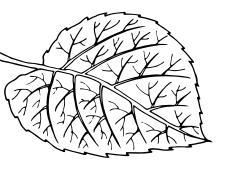


They shift the discussion from individual problems to collective solutions.



They are a training opportunity for emerging grassroots women leaders. Ongoing organizing activities build leadership skills and confidence.

Monitoring Groups demonstrate how Huairou Commission core tools, including Leadership Support Process (LSP), Mapping, Dialogues, Exchanges and Peer Learning, can be combined for increased impact on any issue or in any setting.



"YOU MUST RAISE YOUR VOICE IF YOU WANT TO SEE CHANGE."

- RELINDA SOSA PÉREZ, CONAMOVIDI



WATCHDOG GROUPS: THE FIRST MONITORING GROUPS

"The first Watchdog groups were created to address injustices by institutions that were supposed to right the wrongs done to women who had been denied access and control of land. These Watchdog groups came out of an action plan from a local-to-local dialogue where grassroots women had convened all those institutions (chiefs, land control boards, community traditional leaders, paralegals, religious leaders, etc.). In this dialogue, the women presented a mapping report which showed how those institutions were not responsive - and sometimes even contributed to worsening the situation when a woman's land had been grabbed. The Watchdog group was a platform to bring representatives from those groups together to ensure they hold each other accountable.





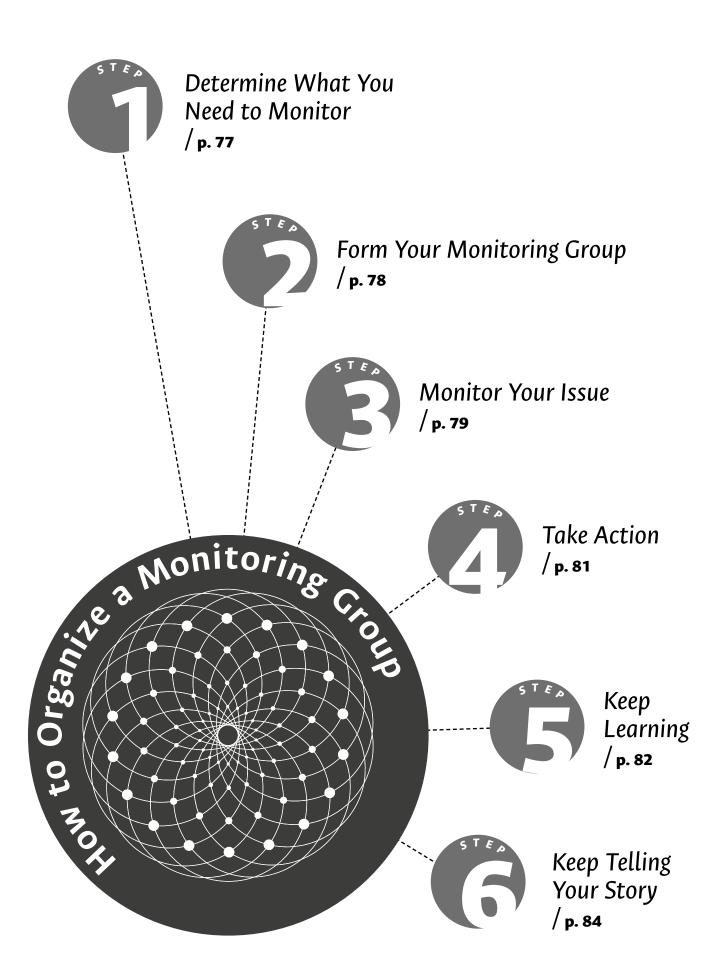
The groups developed a report card on how land cases were handled through those institutions. They discussed cases one by one and picked out the violations or errors that institutions had made. In some cases the Watchdog group members reported those institutions to their higher offices like District Commissions. The Watchdog groups followed up to ensure justice for the women, and even helped recover the grabbed land and resettled the women - especially widows and orphans - back in homes.

They also mobilized support to reconstruct houses that had been damaged during evictions by inlaws or cruel family members. They also worked to help the widow and the family make peace again without compromising the widow's land.

We now have over 21 Watchdog groups and now most of them have trained paralegals that help make sure their actions are compliant to the Kenyan Laws like the Land Act and the Kenyan Constitution. We are also using the Watchdog group model to track government budget expenditures and allocation of resources. Now big organizations join the Watchdog group."

-VIOLET SHIVUTSE, SHIBUYE, KENYA







Determine What You Need to Monitor



1.1 Review the outcomes of Mapping and Local-to-Local Dialogue activities.

- This knowledge about your community and the commitments made by power holders serves as a basis for follow up.
 - ☐ Review the actions or changes that you want to observe.
 - ☐ Discuss how you will hold local leaders accountable.



Form Your Monitoring Group

2.1 Grassroots women lead the creation of the group

- Bring together women and men from the community who are directly affected by your issue.
- Include other community leaders from different institutions that have the same interest in the issue.



- Depending on your issue, even members of the targeted institution can join the group so that they work together with the community to promote accountability.
- Recruit 15-25 members in total

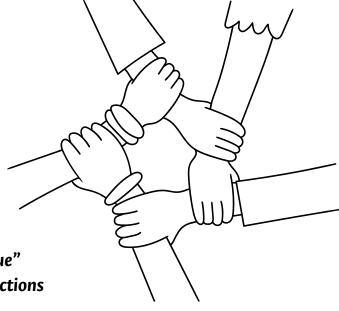
WHAT YOU MONITOR DEPENDS ON YOUR ISSUE! FOR EXAMPLE...

IF YOUR ISSUE IS DISINHERITANCE, YOU MAY LOOK AT SPECIFIC LAND DISPUTE CASES AND DEVELOP WAYS TO WORK WITH LOCAL OFFICIALS. IF YOUR ISSUE IS GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON DISEASE PREVENTION, YOU MAY FOCUS ON WHAT SERVICES HAVE BEEN PROVIDED AND WHO IS BEING SERVED.

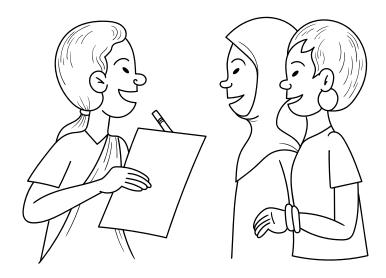
-RELINDA SOSA, GROOTS PERÚ / CONAMOVIDI, PERÚ







- 2.2 Decide how you will "monitor your issue"how you will observe and keep track of actions you want (or don't want) to happen.
- You may use community surveys, consult public records, or make notes of relevant activities or decisions, depending on the information you need.
- Decide who will do what monitoring actions so you have the information you need.
- Make sure that grassroots community members run the group do not leave it to the leaders from institutions to make decisions alone.



2.3 Decide when your group will meet.

- Communication is important. Be sure to have regular meetings with your Monitoring Group so everyone is up to date on all activities.
- Keep simple records of your meetings and activities.



Monitor Your Issue



3.1 When you meet, discuss your monitoring data.

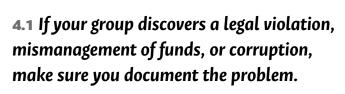
- Make a "scorecard" to track actions around the issue being monitored.
- ♦ Look at all the information that your group has collected and look for patterns.
- Ask what else you need to know. Make a plan for how you will get answers.
- At the end of each meeting plan your next meeting date and what you will do together.

3.2 Tell other key people about your discoveries.

- Many allies may be interested or could help you to hold leaders accountable. Discuss the pros and cons of involving each partner before you contact them.
- You can also raise awareness about your focus issue at public gatherings such as forums, funerals and church groups.



Take Action



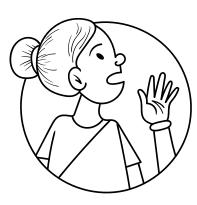
▲ If you file a claim, it is important that your group has evidence to support it.

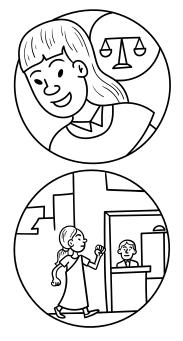
4.2 Discuss the different pathways to reach your desired outcome and decide together on an approach that will lead to success!

- Discuss the specific people or offices that need to hear your message.
- Consider the pros and cons of public vs. private confrontation/dialogue.

4.3 Identify any issues or safety concerns and use your allies.

- ▲ If there is corruption, it is likely that your monitoring activities will feel threatening to some officials or politicians.
- Recruit and consult anti-corruption advisors and discuss what they say with your team.
- A You may also work with formal legal or accountability systems by filing cases, accessing appropriate documentation, making sure rulings and charges are carried out.







Take Action

4.4 Agree on your message and stick with it.

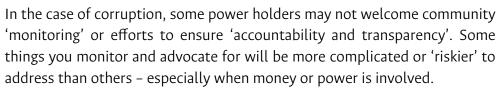
- ▲ It is important for everyone to present the same message.
- It can be helpful to have a short 30-second version of your message.

4.5 Go into meetings with officials with a cooperative spirit

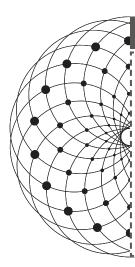
- Assume that everyone wants what is best for the community.
- When appropriate, a mediation process often involves elders, community leaders, tribal chiefs, and local government officials.







To be effective and ensure the protection of members, it helps to be united in your purpose and well connected to supportive partners. This increases your 'credibility' - meaning that your team is trustworthy and must be taken seriously.





Keep Learning



5.1 Continuously check in with your community

- Use your "scorecard" of actions taken to understand if the Monitoring Group is helping to improve the issue.
- Discuss future actions you can take.
- This is an opportunity to raise awareness about your issue and recruit new Monitoring Group members, especially if you learn about new issues to monitor.

5.2 Be open to change

- You might discover that there are many more cases to investigate than your group had planned. This means that a lot of people know about the issue and also know where to report. Don't feel overwhelmed you can create more Monitoring Groups, or gather more cases to show that the problem you are addressing is very big.
- Remember that this process takes time It's a journey!

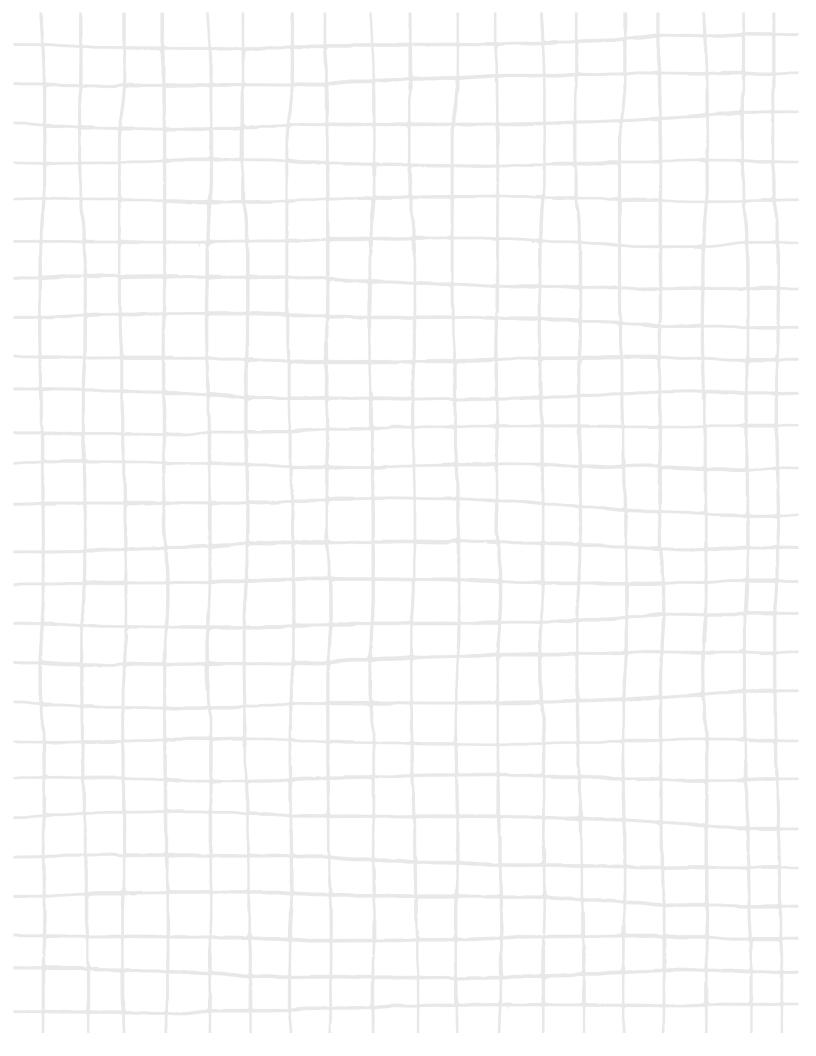


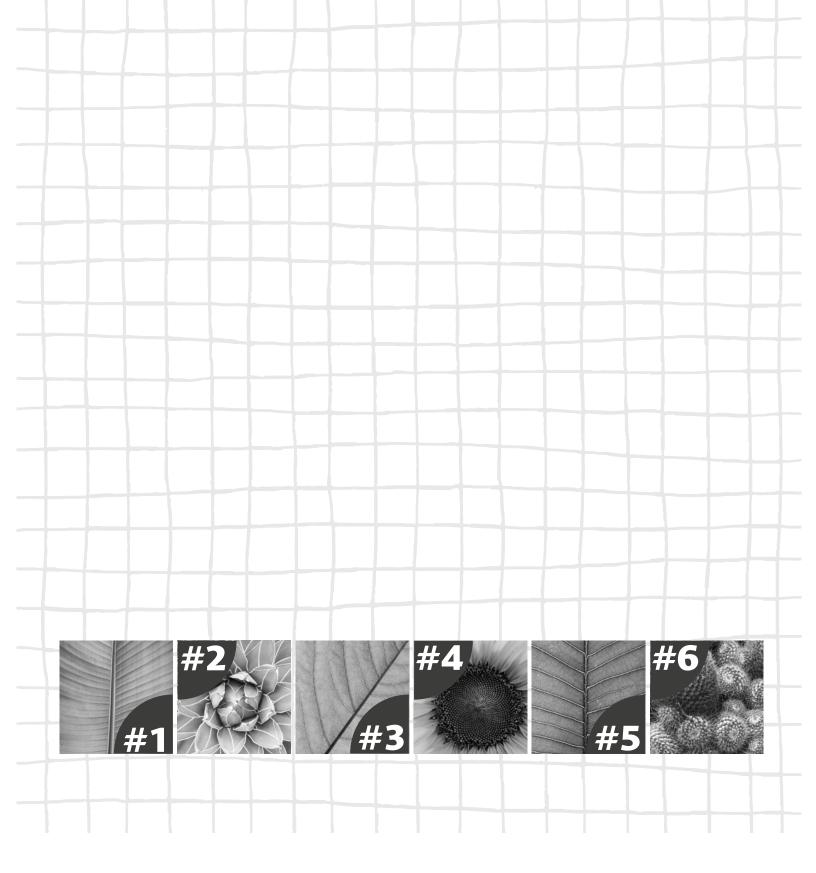
Keep Telling Your Story



- Document your "lessons" and "best practices" that can be replicated or used by others.
- A Peer Exchange format or Grassroots Academy can be effective to promote learning by both groups.



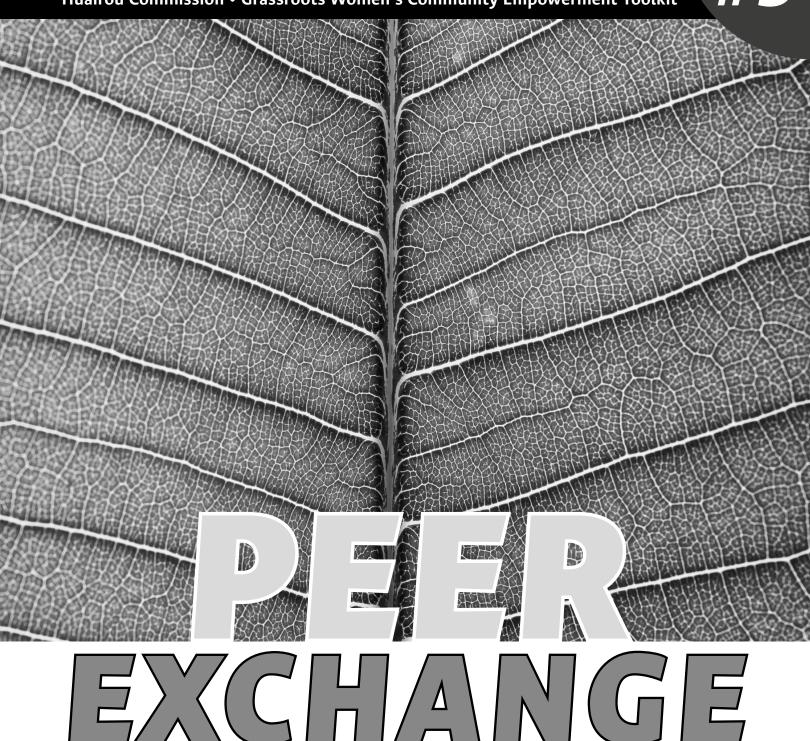






#5

Huairou Commission • Grassroots Women's Community Empowerment Toolkit





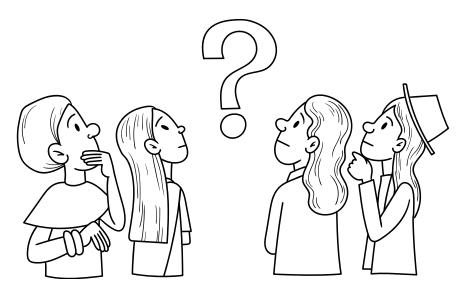


A Peer Exchange is an event where grassroots women teach each other and learn from each other about our successful local practices. Exchanges can focus on any topic of common interest to expand the impact of practical knowledge.

> "WHEN WE SPEAK AND LISTEN AND SHARE WITH EACH OTHER, WE SEE THAT **WE ARE ALL COMING FROM THE SAME EXPERIENCES AND SITUATIONS. WE GAIN** TRUST IN EACH OTHER BUT ESPECIALLY IN OURSELVES.".

> > RELINDA SOSA, GROOTS PERU / CONAMOVIDI, PERU

When to do Peer Exchange



- When there is a need for your group to learn new information and skills. For example, people in your group may want to learn about permaculture farming strategies.
- When you see an opportunity to build strong connections and strengthen social movements at local, regional, national, or international levels.

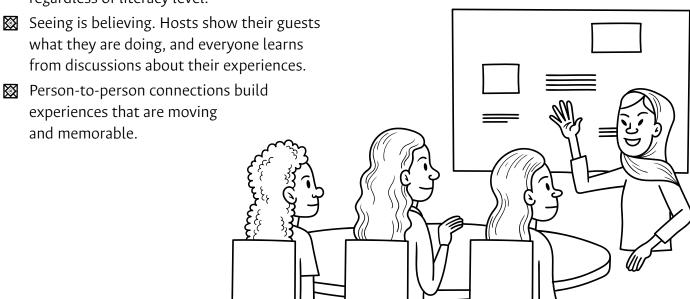
"WE IDENTIFY OURSELVES AS A PEER LEARNING COMMUNITY. EXCHANGES ARE AN ESSENTIAL PART OF TRANSFORMING OUR COMMUNITIES."

JAN PETERSON, NATIONAL CONGRESS OF NEIGHBORHOOD WOMEN, USA.

Why Hold a Peer Exchange?

They make learning effective and fun

Hands-on learning methods engage participants regardless of literacy level.



They celebrate and grow local knowledge and skills

- Mosts and guests focus on finding common solutions to shared problems, and learn together.
- What we learn we share. We learn new ways, examine what we learn, and adapt it to our own environment.
- Mew knowledge stays in the hands of grassroots leaders.

They empower grassroots women as leaders and experts

- Exchanges are grassroots led. We set the learning agenda, develop the lessons and facilitate the learning.
- ☑ Grassroots women are both the learners and the teachers.

They strengthen grassroots women's movements

- Exchanges bring together grassroots women to build trust, hope, and life-long relationships with their peers.
- They help people to see individual problems as system-wide issues and build collective ideas and strategies.
- They break down isolation and build solidarity between organizations.

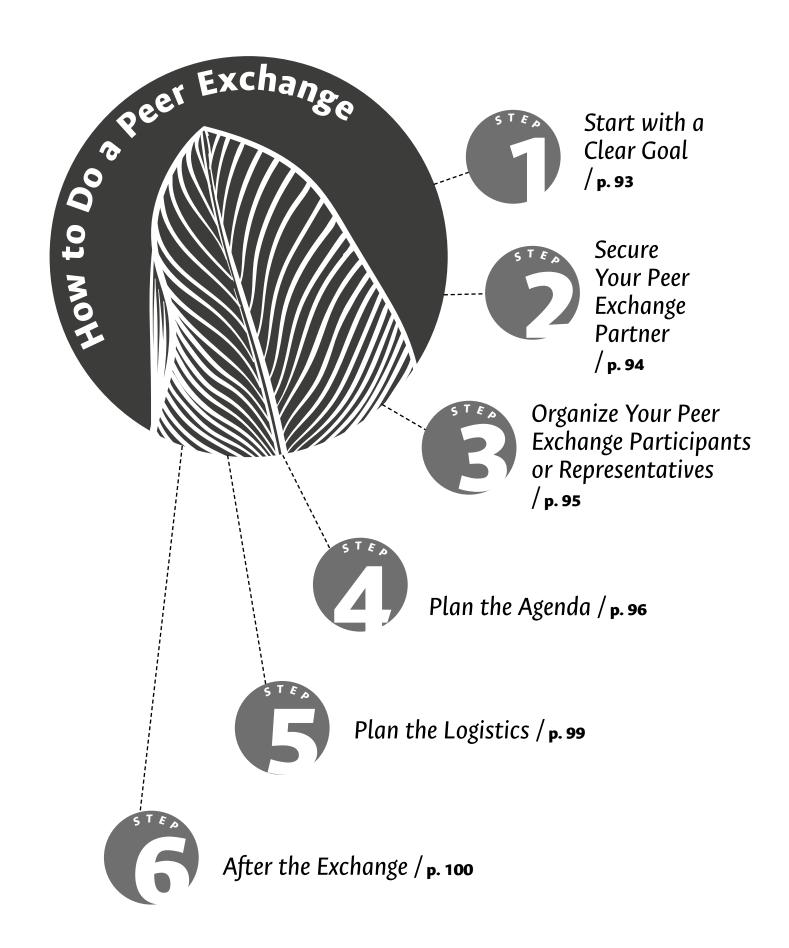


"I USE THIS TOOL AS A WAY FOR GRASSROOTS WOMEN TO UNDERSTAND YOU ARE NOT ALONE. YOU ARE ABLE TO COME OUT OF YOUR SITUATION."

-FATI ALHASSAN, GRASSROOTS SISTERHOOD FOUNDATION (GSF), GHANA

They attract the attention of people who hold power

- Governments often pay attention to local grassroots women when they see them hosting exchanges and teaching other groups.
- Institutions want to be associated with the success of local groups.

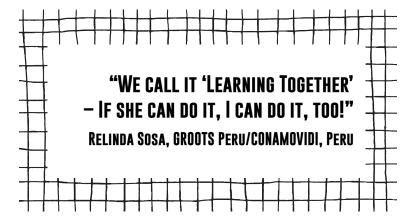




1.1 Organize group discussions to help you decide what you want to do

- Hear from as many local women as possible
- Ask questions like:
 - ☐ Why do you want to do an Exchange?
 - ☐ What are your goals?
 - ☐ What grassroots group or groups do you want to meet with?
 - ☐ What do you want to learn from them?
 - ☐ What skills do you want to build?
 - ☐ What do you want to share?





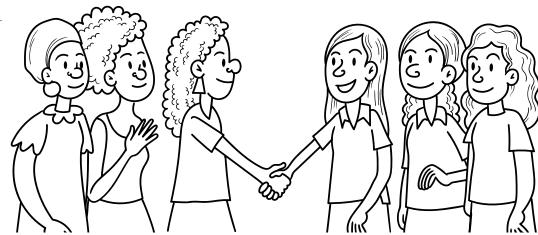


1.2 Clarify your learning goals

- Create a 1-2 sentence statement about what you want to learn and why. Examples:
 - Learn how to begin a savings and credit group in order to start our own businesses.
 - ☐ Learn how to use new irrigation practices in order to maintain our farms during times of drought.



Secure Your Peer Exchange Partner



2.1 Find the right Peer Exchange partner

- Get ideas from other groups that you know.
- Connect via mail, the internet, or phone.

Ask:

- O What do they know or do related to your issue?
- O Are they interested in hosting some members of your group for a Peer Exchange?
- O What resources would they need to make this possible?

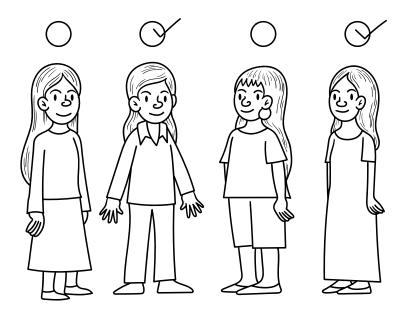
2.2 Make a Shared Agreement

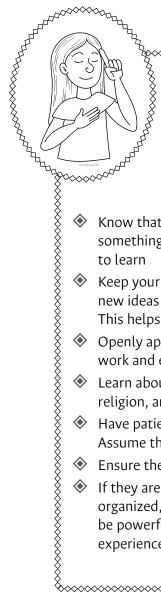
- Once you decide who your Peer Exchange partner will be, write up an agreement to be signed by both organizations.
- Include in the Agreement:
 - O Your learning goals
 - O The number of participants
 - Length and location of the meeting, and any known details about lodging, transportation, and food that will or will not be available.





Organize Your Peer Exchange Participants or Representatives





THINGS TO REMEMBER AS A PEER EXCHANGE ORGANIZER OR PARTICIPANT

- Know that each person has something to teach and something to learn
- Keep your mind open to feedback, new ideas and new experiences.
 This helps build trust
- Openly appreciate each other's work and effort
- Learn about one another's culture, religion, and way of living
- Have patience and understanding.
 Assume the best about one another
- Ensure the safety of all participants
- If they are carefully planned and organized, Peer Exchanges can be powerful and transforming experiences for everyone.

3.1 Select the representatives from your group to attend the Peer Exchange

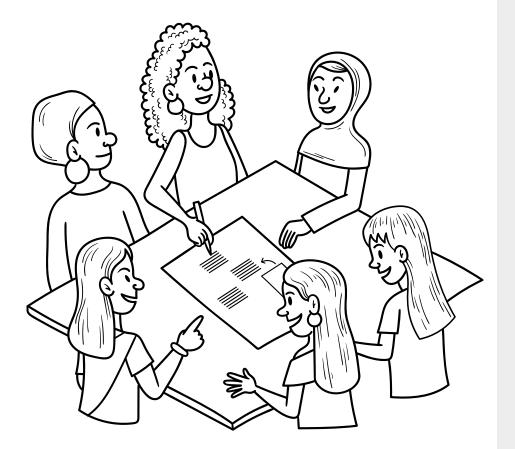
- Develop criteria.
- Key questions to ask:
 - Who can best represent your group's learning interests?
 - \Diamond Who can teach your group's practices?
 - Who can learn new practices from others, and then explain them to women at home?
 - Who can build relationships and help strengthen your network?

3.2 Develop expectations for your group's representatives.

- Include participant commitments to the Peer Exchange event and their organization.
- Include participant responsibilities before, during and after the Peer Exchange, including sharing their learnings after the Exchange.



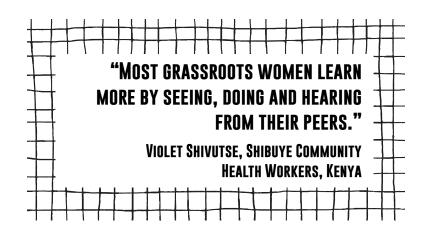
Plan the Agenda



PARTICIPATORY PLANNING IS VERY IMPORTANT.

Leaders, grassroots women, and members from both groups need to be involved from the start.

- Get to know each other even before your Exchange begins
- Be clear about roles and who will do what jobs
- Keep in mind that
 Exchanges work best
 when the same host
 and visitor teams
 learn together and
 build relationships
 every day of the
 exchange





Plan the Agenda

What will you do during your Peer Exchange?

4.1 Learning Activities

- Organizing a mix of presentations, site visits, discussions and 'hands-on' workshops helps everyone learn.
- ▲ Consider including a meeting with elected officials.
- ▲ Include a daily reflection, with questions such as:
 - △ What was learned today?
 - \triangle Is anything confusing?
 - △ How is the Exchange going (include the positive as well as challenges)?





4.2 Sharing Activities

- Make time to get to know each other and share some history of each group.
- ▲ You can ask:
 - \triangle Why did you organize?
 - △ What was going on in your region or territory?
 - \triangle How did you get involved?



Plan the Agenda

4.3 Support Activities

Use Leadership Support Process tools and methods to build relationships and support leaders.

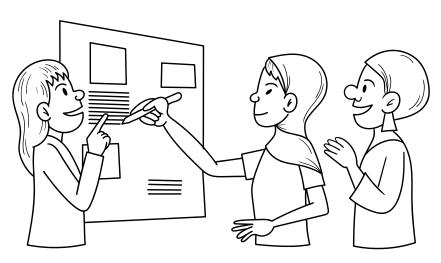


For example:

- △ Feedback and appreciations
- △ Leadership support groups
- △ Cultural Sharing such as songs, dances, food, or craft projects

4.4 Reflection Activities

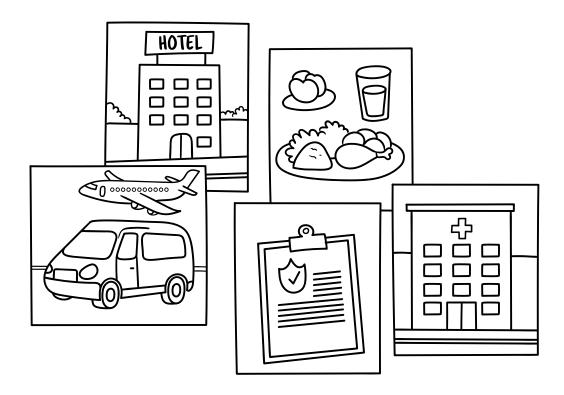
- Make time for participants to plan how they will share what they learned after the Exchange.
- ▲ Leave time in the agenda to plan for follow-up activities and decide on next steps.
- ▲ Include a final reflection/assessment of the event.
- Decide how you will document your Exchange and record what you have learned.
 - Written and visual documentation such as pictures or drawings are both important.





Plan the Logistics

5.1 Organize all the details such as lodging, food, transportation, and caring for visitors' health and safety



- If you have participated in an exchange before, remember good things and difficult things from that experience.
- You may want to get travel insurance and plan for any possible health emergencies.
- Consult with your supporting organizations or the Huairou Commission on these issues.





After the Exchange

6.1 Reflect on the Experience



- Evaluate your experience by asking questions:
 - O What did we learn about through this Exchange?
 - O What was successful. Why?
 - O What was challenging or unsuccessful? Why?
 - O What was the most life-changing or eye-opening part?
 - O Did we achieve our goals? Why or why not?
 - O What would we do differently next time?
 - O How can we build on the experience?



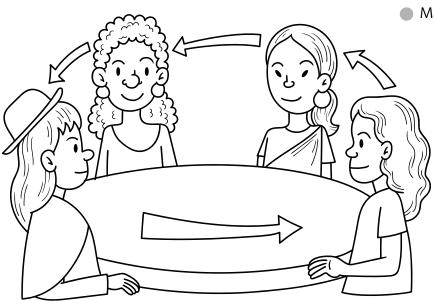
After the Exchange

6.2 Share what you have learned to multiply the learning!

- Summarize experiences, new ideas, and any conclusions in a short (1 or 2 page) report.
 - O Distribute the report to as many communities, allies and partners as possible.
- Organize a presentation for the community.
 Talk about what the exchange was like and what you learned.

Tips:

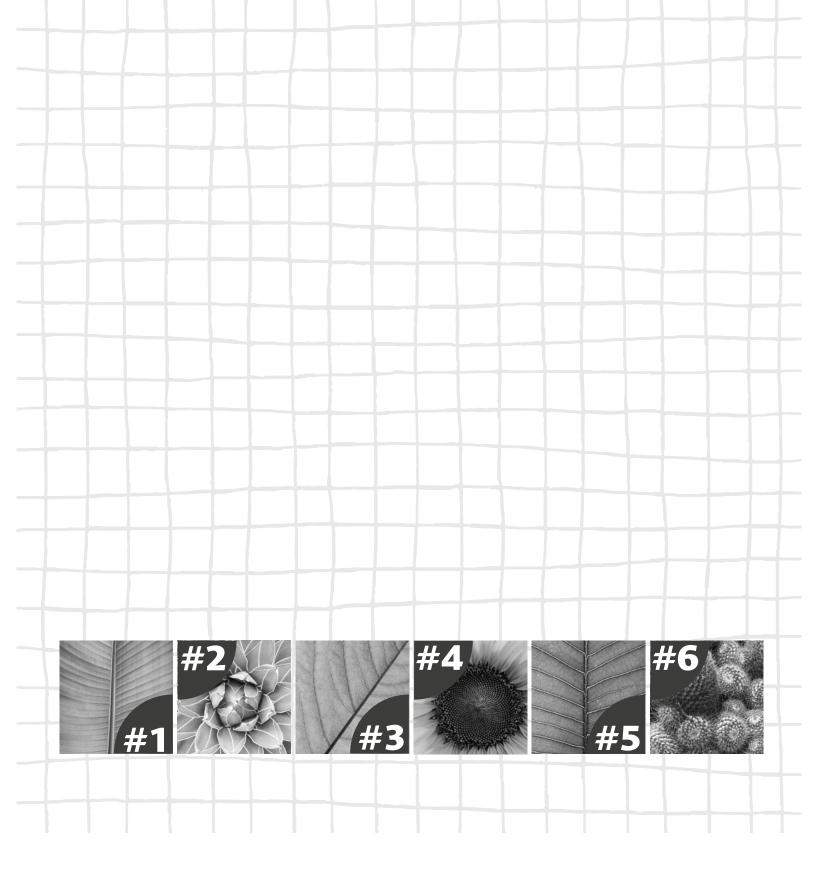
- O Use photos or pictures.
- O Do a series of hands-on trainings to share skills.



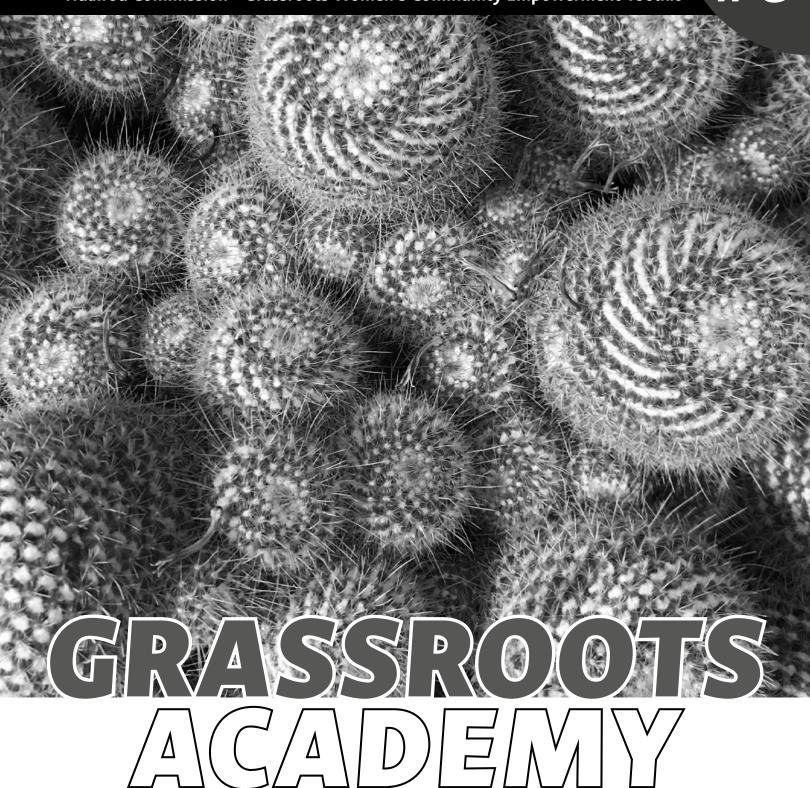
- Maybe set up a meeting with local officials. Talk to them about what you did and why it is important to them- Or you can invite them to your community meetings.
 - You may want to share your story through local and social media.

6.3 Nurture the Sisterhood!

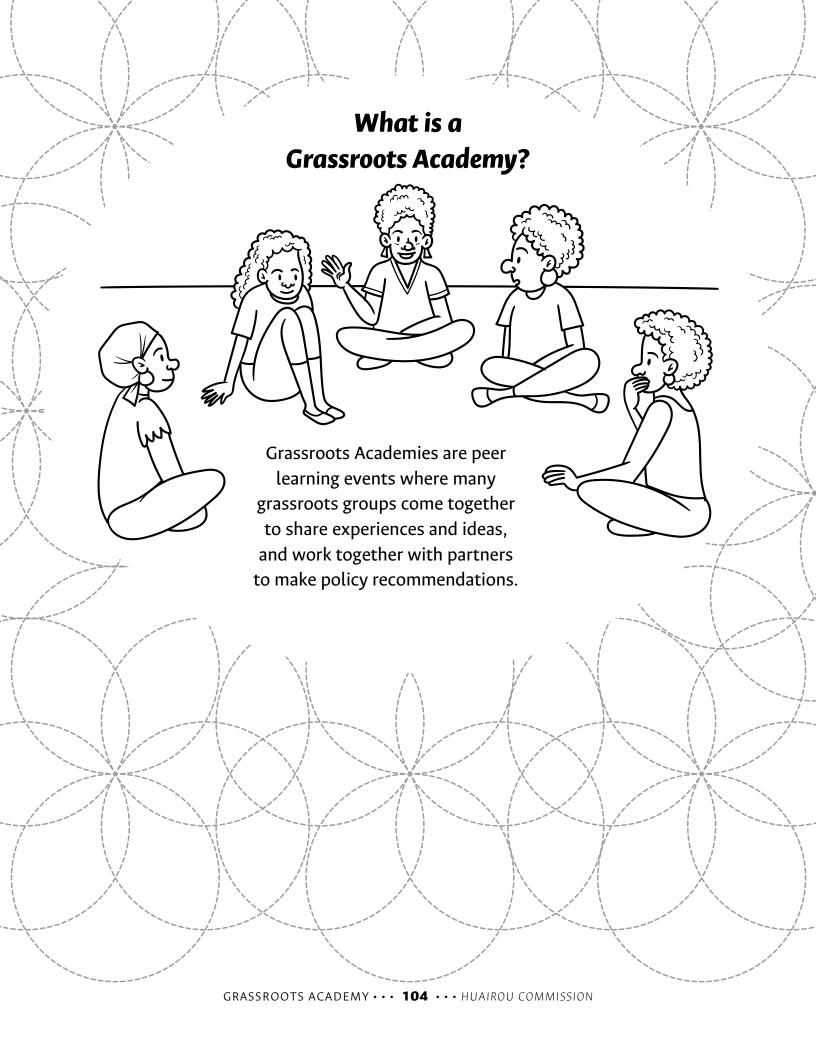
- Keep in contact with your new relationships and share about new developments.
- Follow up on any opportunities that opened up or partnerships that formed as a result of your Exchange. Keep in mind that Exchanges build movements!











When to Have a Grassroots Academy





When your group wants to exchange ideas with similar groups and create shared agendas.



When you want to draw attention and educate the government or other outside organizations about the work of grassroots women.



Before a national, regional, or global conference to prepare for influencing policies at the conference.

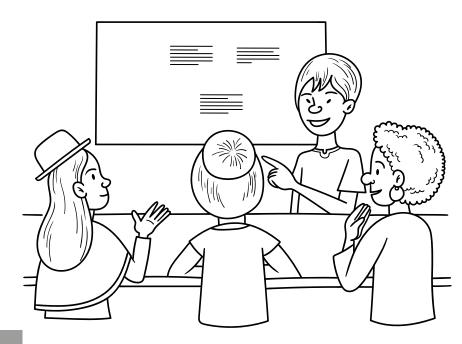




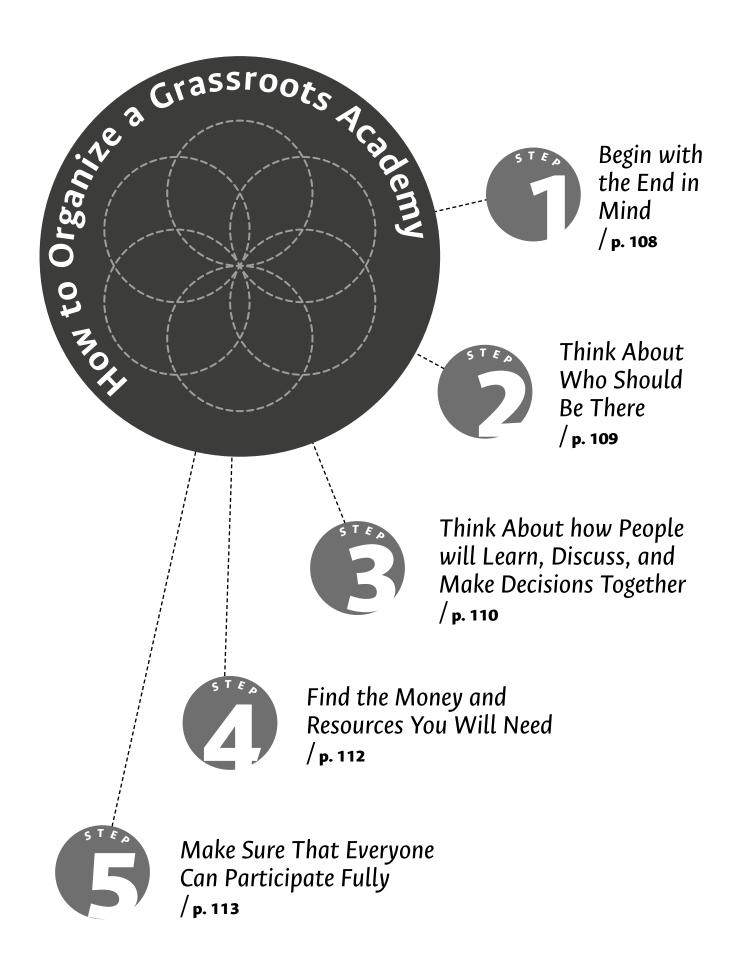


Why Conduct a Grassroots Academy?

- Academies show global audiences that grassroots women hold deep knowledge about their communities and have solutions to their biggest problems.
- Academies help grassroots women form alliances with other groups, governments, NGOs, funders, and academia and plan across regions to influence change at the local, national, regional or global level.



- Grassroots women use their experiences gained at the academy to shape their plans in their home community.
- Grassroots women gain recognition from their local community by attending Academies.
- In the host community, Academies are important opportunities for local people to learn about global initiatives.
- Academies also give the host organization recognition by their local governments and create partnership opportunities after the event.

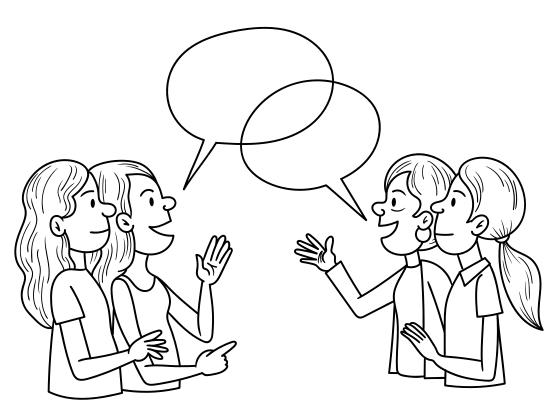




Begin with the End in Mind

1.1 Set the Goals for the Academy

- Ask yourself: What will success look like when we complete the Academy?
- You may want to use this meeting to organize with other groups, educate your host community members, prepare for a conference, or a combination of these.



1.2 Identify Discussion Topics

- For example: climate change, education, or housing rights
- If your Academy is to prepare for a global meeting, that agenda may shape your plan and the message you will take to the global meeting.



Think About Who Should Be There

2.1 Identify key partners, allies, and supporters connected to the goals of the Academy



- Find out who is doing something that others want to know about and invite them to make a presentation, including examples of what they do.
- This is an opportunity to create and strengthen key alliances. Engage stakeholders before, during and after the Academy.
- Include the local community so they can learn about your issues and meet other groups doing similar things or with similar goals.

2.2 Identify the target of your message

- Think about who can influence the outcome of the meeting.
- Inform and invite government officials well in advance.
- Choose your group's delegation based on the goals of the Academy and meet ahead of time to discuss how they will engage partners and leverage the networking opportunities.





Think About how People will Learn, Discuss, and Make Decisions Together



3.1 Consider the Meeting Activities

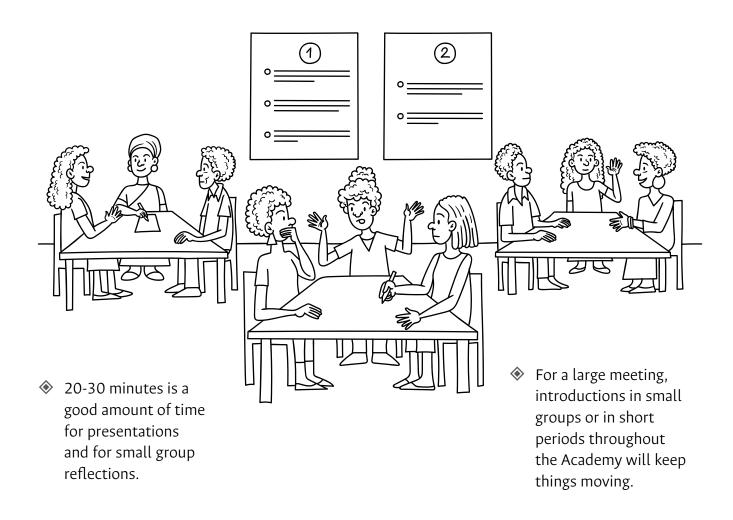
- Depending on the goals, the Academy may be a local event with a few partners or a regional event with hundreds of participants, and last from a day to a week.
- Make time for openings and closings, setting agreements, and for Leadership Support Groups and Grassroots Women's Caucuses.
- Introduce Huairou Commission and the host organization on the first day.
- Plan for a mix of presentations and small group reflections.
- Include evening activities, tours of your area and nearby sights, "ice-breakers" and group building games.



Think About how People will Learn, Discuss, and Make Decisions Together

3.2 Create an Agenda

• Include time for full group sessions, small group discussions, breaks, and fun activities.





Find the Money and Resources You Will Need

4.1 Create a list of costs

▲ This includes food, housing, materials, local transportation, interpreters, meeting space rental, etc.



▲ The cost of your event will vary depending on the size, location, partners, and how long it lasts.

4.2 Make a strategy to cover your costs

- ▲ Talk to partners about supporting specific items on the list.
- ▲ Find people who can give their time, skills, or other resources.
- A Hosting your Academy just before another regional or global gathering can be a good way for attendees to cover some travel expenses.

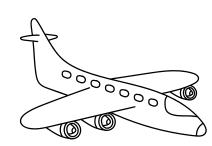


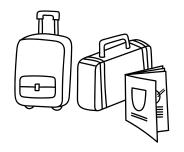
Make Sure That Everyone Can Participate Fully

5.1 Invite Your Attendees

- Give people enough time to make travel arrangements.
 - Share the agenda in advance especially with the presenters and officials who are invited.

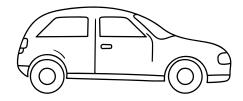






5.2 Organize the Logistics

- All aspects will need to be considered: lodging, food, interpretation, internet, transportation, plane travel, visas, and caring for the health, safety and comfort of all participants.
- Put together a team of dedicated organizers to oversee each logistical piece.
- Assign someone to meet with language interpreters regularly throughout the week to support and motivate them.

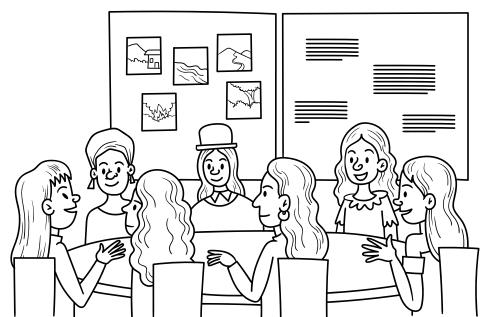




Make Sure That Everyone Can Participate Fully

5.3 Ensure the Academy is Friendly to Grassroots People

- Make sure the agenda is centered around grassroots priorities.
- Make sure to plan for appropriate language interpretation.



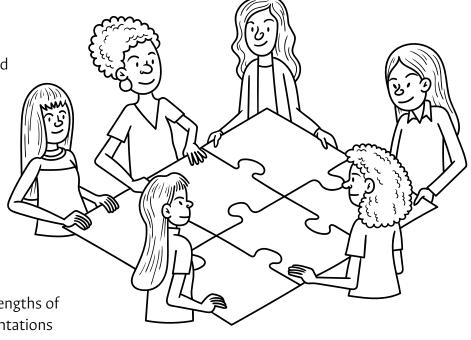
- Make sure that the way people speak is understandable to everyone avoid acronyms and academic words.
- Presenters should be from grassroots communities. Professional partners are playing a supporting role.
 - Support grassroots women to take notes and report back from small groups. It doesn't matter what language they speak (good interpretation should ensure that they are understood).
 - Use ice-breakers and group building games.
 - Make presentations on chart paper instead of screens.
 - Share culture and spirit many times during the meeting.



Make Sure That Everyone Can Participate Fully

5.4 Set Up a Safe and Collaborative Space

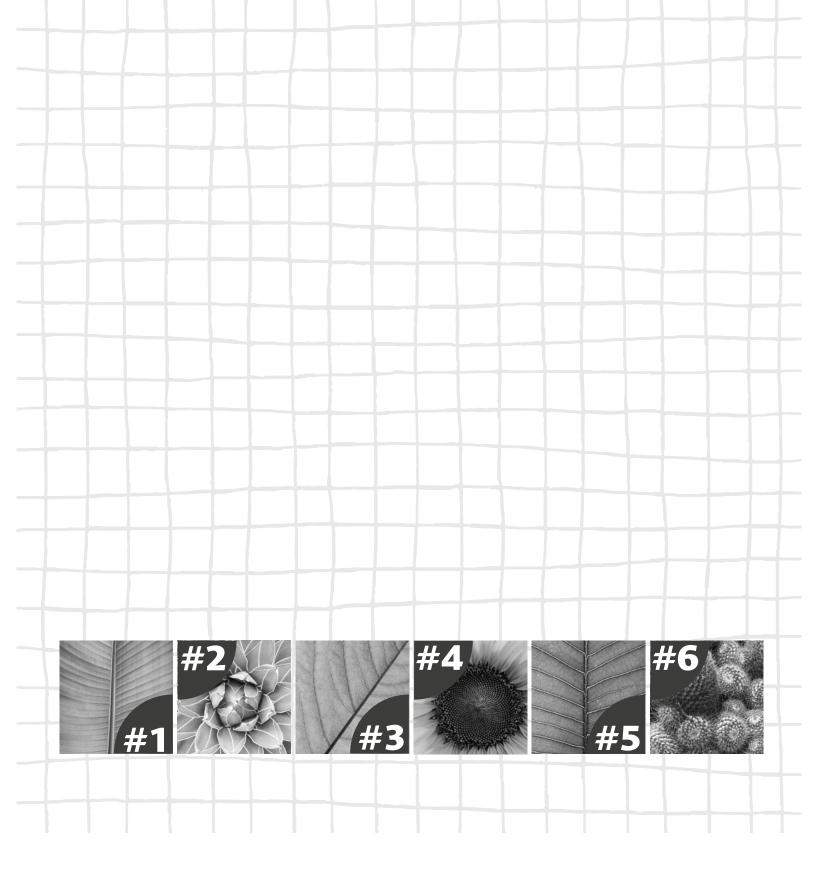
- Make basic agreements; set ground rules to build trust and help people feel at ease.
- Use support groups and Women's Caucuses daily.
- Ask people to identify the strengths of each other's work after presentations or after visiting a group in a community.
- Sit in groups or at round tables during plenary presentations and discussions.
- Facilitate discussion: provide a reflection guide with a few simple questions at each table. You may even want to train a team of facilitators who encourage inclusive conversations.



"THIS IS A GRASSROOTS ACADEMY.

AN ACADEMIC CONFERENCE."

IF WE'RE NOT CAREFUL IT CAN BECOME









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SECTION 1: How Do Adults Learn?

Think about the last time you learned something.

Many psychologists have studied adult education. Their research tells us that for people to learn well:

- They need to feel respected for their existing knowledge and experiences.
- They need to understand why this new knowledge or skill is important to them
- They need different ways to engage with and understand the topic.



As a trainer or a mentor, we can use this information to help people learn. Here are **three key practices to support adult learning**:

Establish a "safe" learning environment where people feel comfortable talking about their ideas and trying new things.

2

Help them connect their life to what you are teaching.

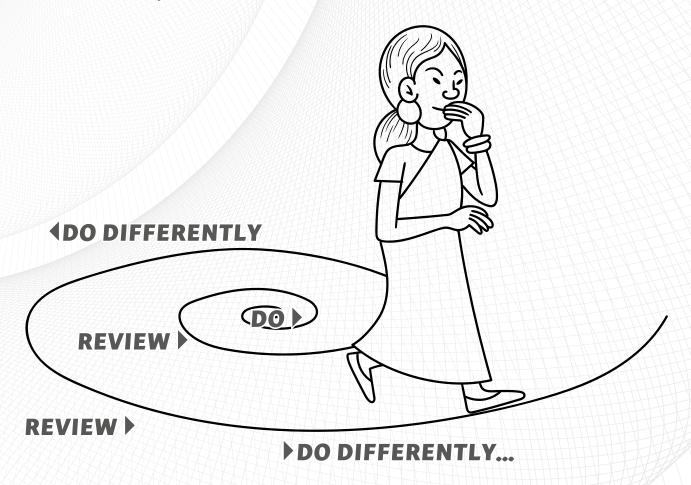
3

Include fun and different ways to learn, such as watching a demonstration, talking about it together, AND practicing a new skill. Use "experiential education" techniques (see section 3).

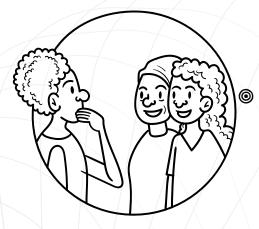
SECTION 2: The Adult Learning Spiral

Most people learn in a similar way: they experience something, think about it and make a conclusion (using new information or not), then do something – or do it differently – based on this conclusion.

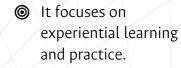
Then the cycle continues:



The Spiral Model helps us to plan training events so that we can help learners to go through this natural process. Benefits:



It forces the trainer to think about the experiences and needs of the learners.







It makes time for reflection and thinking about how to apply the learning.

This process could be shown as a circle or cycle. We chose a spiral to show how knowledge and skills keep increasing each time you go around the steps.

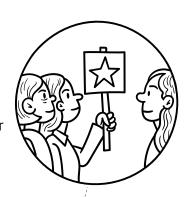
See sample Agenda in Section 4 on page 127.

How it works:



Apply new knowledge or skills in the world.

Participants use their new skills and information in their lives. After this experience, further reflection starts the next turn of the spiral.



Practice/ strategize/ plan for action.

Participants try or "play with" what they have learned and plan for how they will use it after the training.



Start with experience and knowledge of participants.

Part of this is helping learners to recognize and honor what they already know.



Add new information and theory linked to what people already know. This can be the hard part, depending on what you have planned for the training, especially if the level of experience of your audience surprises you.



Identify patterns and themes in the information.

This needs to include all the voices in the room and recognize differences as well as similarities.

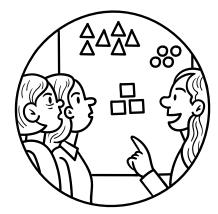
Below are examples of questions you can ask at each stage to guide learners through the spiral.

Examples of Questions to Promote Learning Along the Spiral:



1. Start with experience and knowledge of participants:

- What has been your best/worst experience with _____?
- What do you normally do when _____ happens?
- How do you feel about your experience with _____?
- What's most important about doing _____?



2. Identify patterns and themes:

- Who else has been in this situation?
- What patterns/themes do you see/hear?
- What do you notice about the types of experiences?
- What is the same/different?
- What other options are there?
- Whose perspective is missing?



3. Add new information and theory linked to what people already know:

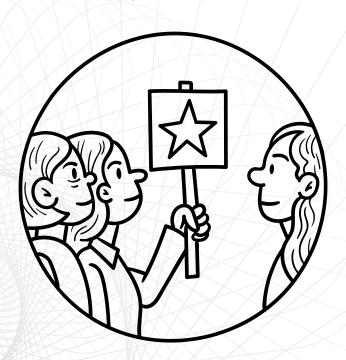
- How does this new information relate to your own story? To your life?
- How might this new knowledge or skill bring together the different experiences in this group?
- Where are you skeptical? What new questions does this raise?
- How does this new information or theory change your understanding of the issue?
- What new insights do you have?



4. Practice/ strategize/ plan for action Questions for reflection after practice:

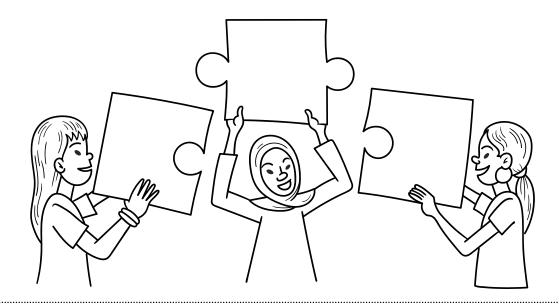
- ▲ What came up for you during this learning experience?
- ▲ How might you use or apply what you've learned?
- ▲ What will you do differently as a result?
- What changes can you influence in your life? In your family? In your school? Etc.
- ▲ What can you do as an individual? As a group?
- ▲ What will you do next?
- ▲ What other information do you need?

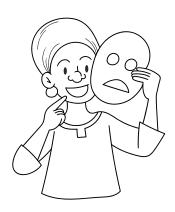
5. Apply new knowledge or skills



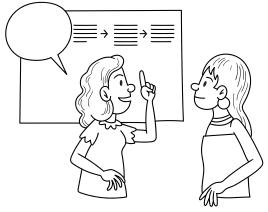
SECTION 3: Experiential Education Techniques

Huairou Commission members often use experiential education techniques to share knowledge, skills, and practice skills.





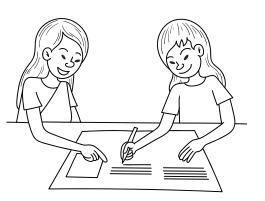
Role play: People act out different roles and then discuss the experience. Helpful for understanding different perspectives or feelings in a situation.



Theater or Structured Dialogue:

Students read or act out a pre-set script or story related to what they are learning.
Useful to practice specific language or generate key insights

Peer teaching: One learner teaches others about the topic and is supported no matter their ability. Useful to build confidence and practice supporting each other.





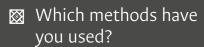
Active listening: One speaker talks while one or more people give their full attention. This can help learners to collect their thoughts or practice speaking about what they have learned.



Music / singing: Songs, lyrics, chants, rhythms or poems are used to help students learn or remember key points, messages, language, or steps in a process.



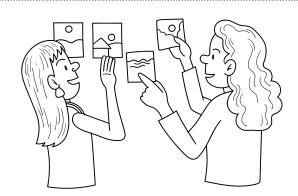
Hands-on demonstration: The teacher guides learners to practice a new method in a "low-risk" setting. Learners then reflect on how they want to improve and what support they need.



What other methods would you add to this list?



Tell me about this picture: Use photos and pictures to prompt discussion. This is useful to begin visioning, goal-setting, or teaching certain techniques.



Picture Stories: Learners move pictures into a process or sequence. Useful to help learners think about each step in a new skill or method.

SECTION 4: Example Tool Transfer Workshop

- This sample is based on the Adult Learning Spiral Model.
- A different person can lead each step of the agenda, or one person can lead the entire workshop.

Agenda	PURPOSE FOR THIS STEP	TIME (APPROXIMATE)
Welcome and Introduction (LSP style)	Create a "safe learning environment"	15 min
Overview and purpose for the training ⊙ Goals for the training ⊙ Overview of training agenda	Help them connect their life to what you are teaching	10 min
Overview of whole tool: What, Why, When, Major Steps Discuss people's experiences with the tool How have they used it or seen it used? Which parts of the tool are they confident about? Which parts of the tool are unfamiliar or seem difficult? What parts do people want to understand more or practice more?	Learning Spiral steps 1 and 2	30 min
 Review tips for leading each step ⊙ Focus on the parts people want to practice ⊙ Use experiential education activities to help learners practice the steps 	Learning Spiral step 3Include fun and different ways to learn	30 min
 Help trainees/learners plan how they will use the tool or teach it to others. Key areas: Leadership skills (public speaking, clarity on purpose, recruiting participants) Materials (such as posters, copies of tool, pencils) Meeting logistics (place, food, travel) Recording the event (photos, written or taped testimonies) 	 Learning Spiral step 4 Include fun and different ways to learn 	30 min
Conduct Post- training evaluation (see template below)		10 min
Closing (LSP style)		15 min

Tool transfer workshop self-evaluation for trainees / learners:

Instructions:

- **1)** Review the statements in the center column and the meaning of the numbers.
- 2) Ask Trainees to rank themselves on the following statements2 times at the end of the training:
 - Circle the appropriate number in the LEFT SIDE column to rank your knowledge or confidence now - AFTER the training.
 - THEN, circle the appropriate number in the RIGHT SIDE column to rank what your knowledge or confidence was BEFORE the training.

Please circle the answer that best describes how you feel:

SCALE: 1 = Strongly di	sagree 2 = Disagree	3 = Agree	4 = Strongly Agree
------------------------	---------------------	-----------	--------------------

Now (After the training)		ING)		BEFORE THE TRAINING		G		
1	2	3	4	I know the steps of the tool	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	I could lead this process alone	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	I could lead this process with someone else	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	I feel prepared to teach members of my community or organization how to do this.	1	2	3	4





Tool Transfer Reflection for Trainers or Mentors:

Please reflect and then answer these questions after your tool transfer training.

Tool:						
Na	Names of trainer(s):					
Da	te of training:					
# c	of trainees:					
1)	What went well about the tool transfer meeting with trainees/learners?					
2)	What was challenging? What would you change for next time?					
3)	What Experiential Education activities did you use?					
4)	How did they work?					
5)	What changes, if any, will you make next time you lead this training workshop?					

