

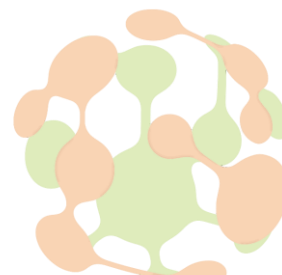


## HOW TO FACILITATE A SHERPA MAP EVENT?

During SHERPA MAP events, in particular interactive workshops and events where co-construction dynamics are relevant, it is essential to ensure a proper facilitation of the discussions and of the exchanges among the stakeholders.

Here below some tips and tricks, as well as suggestions of methods that might be of help to MAP Facilitators and Monitors with the event facilitation process.

- **Manage.** It is important that the facilitator of the event manages the participation, group dynamics in order to achieve the event objectives (possibly established prior to the event with inputs from the target participants).
- **Check in quickly at the start.** A good practice for allowing participants to get to know more about each other and bring their attention into the room, so everyone is mentally present for the conversation is to open the event by a quick check in, by asking questions like 'What is one thing you hope to accomplish in this meeting today', or 'What one word best describes your mood at this moment?' .
- **Focus on the goals.** A brief review of the desired outcomes and agenda items at the opening of an event is an effective way to get the audience aligned toward accomplishing the meeting goals.
- **Encourage and balance participation.** Some participants may be less vocal than others, and their voices are still important. The facilitator should create a safe space for them to engage. An effective way to do it is to ask open-ended questions to draw people out, like, 'What do you think?', 'What would you do?' and 'What other ideas are you considering?'. Another approach is to first split participants into small groups for discussion to encourage participation from quieter team members, and then bring everyone back to the full group and ask for conversation highlights.
- **Capture.** A lot of information is usually produced during an event. It is key that all relevant pieces of information do not get lost. MAP Facilitators, with the assistance from Monitors, should capture information in a comprehensive and organised manner, and ensure that it is accurate, of high quality and in a format that makes it easy to share.
- **Closure.** Before the end of an event, it is a good practice to take some time for wrapping up the most important points (decisions, tasks, next steps) raised during the previous discussions, so everyone knows how to follow through. Restating the key outcomes verbally helps the group feel a sense of accomplishment. Asking participants to verbally check-out gives people a space to express final questions or concerns and creates meeting closure.



- **Assess.** Another good practice is that MAP Facilitators and Monitors cooperate in the revision of the event proceedings, in particular as regards key decisions, points of agreement or disagreement between stakeholders, next steps, etc.) and assess whether the objectives of the event have been met, as well as identify areas for improvement, which is useful to formulate any next steps.

There are a wide variety of intervention techniques. Whatever technique is used, it is important to try to give participants an opportunity to take responsibility for recognizing the situation and deciding what to do about it. Below a selection of basic methods to help the facilitation process are briefly illustrated. These techniques can be particularly useful to make views emerge, as well as to unblock a discussion that is stalling or overcome disagreements between stakeholders.

- **Reinforce agreement.** This facilitation technique consists of reinforcing the agreement participants made previously to regain focus or move the group forward.
- **Make a proposal to participants.** This technique consists of suggesting how to move forward, and in always checking for understanding and agreement with the group before taking an action.
- **Accept, legitimise, deal with or defer.** When a participant brings forward an issue or topic that is unrelated to the meeting agenda, this approach helps addressing the situation in a constructive way.
- **Synthesize.** Several different conversation themes may emerge simultaneously in a meeting, and the facilitator needs to get everyone on the same page before moving forward. This technique consists of asking the participants to take a step back, name the various topics, and decide with the participants which ones to pursue. Alternatively, suggestions can be provided for narrowing the conversation or organizing themes so that the meeting stays on track to achieve the desired goals.
- **Acknowledge.** Acknowledge the statement of a stakeholder to draw the audience's attention on it.
- **Pause.** This technique is useful for boosting the focus of the conversation. Once the main subject has emerged, the facilitator pauses and provides time for silent reflection. Ideally, participants are asked to write down their thoughts to help internalize what has been said and to identify concerns or questions free of the influence of others' opinions.
- **Parrot.** Parrot the statement without agreeing or disagreeing to stimulate a reaction from the audience.
- **Decide.** Decide if the participants can deal with a statement in the moment or if it is better to defer the statement to a later time (or event).
- **Boomerang.** Asking a question back to the participant who asks it or open the conversation to the whole group is an effective technique to consider in order to generate participation and answers from the whole group, not only the facilitator.