+ RESILIENT

Mediterranean Open Resources for Social Innovation of Socially Responsive Enterprises

LOCAL GROUPS FACILITATION SKILLS

Lead Partner

Document classification:

WP n°:	1-3
Activity n°:	1.3 – 3.4
Deliverable	D. 1.3.2 Local groups facilitation skills
Author(s):	Sandra Rainero – Veneto Region
Contributors:	Online resources
Type:	INTERNAL DOCUMENT
Dissemination level:	Website
Revision:	Draft 1 – 20.08..2018 Draft 2 – 08.10.2018 Final version – 10.10.2018
Due Date:	10-2018
Date of submission:	08-10- 2018
Short description	This toolkit gives references for facilitating local working groups. It contains tips and methods for facilitation via references and templates for reporting meetings and results

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The purpose of these guidelines is to help the coordinators of the regional groups of the + RESILIENT partners to improve facilitation of local events and meetings. These notes complement the guidelines on Regional Stakeholders' Groups mobilization and will be integrated after an online training session with all partners as foreseen by the application form. This toolkit supports the operations of the groups as already described in the D. 1.3.1 Local stakeholders' mobilization. It provides some general guidelines (first part), some a list of reference with useful tips and methods (second part) and templates to report the work of the local groups.

A special session to share and to improve this document with the contribution of all partners will be organized in the first year of the project.

PART ONE: BASIC GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATORY FACILITATION

WHY IS GOOD FACILITATION IMPORTANT?

+ RESILIENT foresees a central role of regional stakeholders as it is the local dimension where the common challenge will be made meaningful and the participatory approach of the project takes shape. To make the RSG protagonist of territorial development, it is necessary to bring local stakeholders together frequently in order to coordinate, plan, and make decisions. + RESILIENT places a strong emphasis on participative approaches, and promotes tools and methods that underpin interactivity, exchange and learning. In this respect, as already pointed out in D 1.3.1, local RSG coordinators have two main responsibilities:

1) they are charged with running local meetings and events, bringing stakeholders together, leading the process of learning, assessing (M1), implementing and transferring (M2) and support capitalization (mainstreaming and cross fertilization- M3).

2) They act – together with selected RSG members- as a conduit for the transnational dimension – by participating in the TAB and to make sure that the transnational and regional dimensions are consistent with the goal, by sharing with and learning from other partners knowledge and ideas to be adapted and exploited at territorial level.

As the word say, facilitation is the process **of making something easy or easier**, in participatory work, it means to have efficient and inclusive meetings to make decisions and act, by enabling insights and using /sharing knowledge. Facilitating means to create a **shared responsibility** among all participants.

RSG AND PCG Coordinators have an important facilitation role in

- Enabling multi – stakeholder involvement in learning and co-production
- Supporting exchange and learning
- Adapting the general themes to the local contexts, priorities, systems and cultural frameworks

What you need for facilitation of meetings?

What are the skills good facilitators own and what tasks should they be able to carry out? At the end of the day, what are the features of a meetings that can make it enjoyable and fruitful? Good facilitation entails several different roles and tasks, sometimes these are taken on by one person – the facilitator, however there's no reason why they can't be shared between one or more people in the meeting.

The main skills include:

- Communicating clarity about the purposes and with language that all participants understand
- Active listening
- Respect for different perspectives and styles
- Neutrality for roles and opinions
- Capacity to observe content and process
- Assertiveness and expertise to keep dynamics towards the shared purposes/goals

The Tasks for facilitating a meeting include:

- *Planning and preparing*
- *Introducing and welcoming*
- *Supporting participation*
- *Using tools and methods*
- *Keeping to task and time*
- *Clarifying, summarizing, synthesizing*
- *Supporting decision making*
- *Challenging negative behavior*
- *Recording action points*

Facilitation roles include:

- *Speaker and informer*
- *Input moderator*
- *Dynamics observer*
- *Timekeeper*
- *Note taker*

It is sensible, and also good for professional development, to think about a team approach and co-facilitation, allocating these roles to different team members.

PART TWO: METHODS AND RESOURCES FOR FACILITATION

How to develop facilitation skills

Learning by doing is one of the best ways to become a better facilitator. There are also lots of resources, films, toolkits to help along the way (see below references). Regardless of the techniques you use, there are some basic attitudes and behavior that can help anyone become a good facilitator (does it remind you of when you went to school? Yep!!!):

- Develop confidence through practice and experience
- Rehearse
- Breathe to overcome nervousness
- Prepare!!!

Checklist for meeting and event preparation

Planning and preparation are the key ingredients of success in meetings. The time invested in creating the agenda, thinking about what methods and instruments to use, organizing the space and equipment, briefing speakers and managing expectations…all make a difference. You may want to keep in mind the following list for planning RSG meetings:

- Purposes
- Agenda
- Timing
- Number of participants
- Space, layout, equipment, refreshment, comfort
- Methods
- Contributions by participants
- Recording

It's good to have some sort of feedback or evaluation mechanism after the meeting. Following some simple ways to reflect and get feedback

The wall of thoughts: The facilitator writes down on a series of flip-chart sheets some questions relevant for the meeting's goals. Stick it on the wall. At the very beginning of the meeting participants are invited to answer the questions on the wall and even to comment on other people's answers. At the end of the meeting (or whenever the facilitator or participants feel it is the right moment) a discussion about the thoughts on the wall is necessary and helps evaluating the achievements.

Three-word review: A simple method to be used at the end of a meeting is the "Three-word review" where participants are asked to write down for themselves three words that describe their feelings about the activity. Then participants are invited to call out their words which are noted down on a flip-chart. After that, a discussion about the meaning and relevance of the words can be initiated. This commonly leads to a lively discussion. The "Three-word review" involves all the participants from the start which makes it often easier for those who are usually not the first to speak, to contribute to the discussion. A variation on this is the "Telegram" in which participants give a general impression about a day or meeting. Participants are invited to think for a few minutes about the day or session and then to share their opinion with the group in three words: a positive word – a negative word – a concluding word.

Message in a bottle: This is a very simple activity to be performed at the very end of the meeting as well as at the end of each activity. Give the participants a small sheet of paper and a string; ask them to think about a message about the most relevant achievement as if they have to put it inside a bottle and throw it in the sea. Think about the sailor fishing the bottle, reading the message and reflect on such achievements could have an impact on other people.

Idea Generation

If your meeting aims at generating ideas (as it will be the case in the project + RESILIENT) you can use different activities and exercises can help groups to come up with ideas together to co-create solutions and initiatives. Some of the tools include:

- Negative brainstorming
- Exploring walks
- OST (open space technology)
- Lego
- Brainstorming
- Quiet-storming
- Future/back-casting
- Hackathon, Hackdays
- OPERA
- Start Stop Continue Improve

References

There are countless resources you may find online or in libraries, again, you will need to adapt it to your contexts. Here a short selection of online resources.

Community Toolbox http://ctb.ku.edu/en

Mindtools- www.mindtools.com

Nesta toolkit http://diytoolkit.org/

Seeds for change http://www.seedsforchange.org.uk/

Gamestorming website: https://gamestorming.com/