

# The Art of Community Hosting

A foundational guide for job growth and community prosperity



ABioSA ORIENTATION MANUAL

FEBRUARY 2024

VERSION 0.1



**forestry, fisheries  
& the environment**

Department:  
Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

THE ABS  
CAPACITY  
DEVELOPMENT  
INITIATIVE



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Economic Affairs,  
Education and Research EAER  
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO

Authors: Monika Adelfang and Joyce Stenstrom with Inge Adelfang-Hodgson

Artwork: James Durno and Sally Whines

Design: Sally Whines

Photography: Brett Eloff

Quiet Insight LLC was commissioned by the project ABioSA to facilitate an alternative community engagement approach. This booklet is part of the co-creation process of this pilot project. ABioSA is funded by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), integrated in the governance structure of the ABS Initiative, and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. Although every effort has been made to provide complete and accurate information, GIZ, SECO and QI make no representations or warranties, express or implied, as to its accuracy at the time of use. The Quiet Insight Approach is the methodology informing the Art of Community Engagement Process. [www.QuietInsightGroup.com](http://www.QuietInsightGroup.com)



## Contents

The Art of Community Hosting .....	2
The purpose of this document. ....	3
Who is the Community? .....	3
Nurturing Community .....	4
What is Community Hosting? .....	5
Hosting Community Gatherings. ....	6
Hosting Community with three gatherings .....	6
Gathering 1: Meeting each other close to the land .....	6
Gathering 2: Appreciating realities more widely and deeply.. ..	7
Gathering 3: Inviting possibilities for all of us.. ..	7
Calling people to convene at each Gathering.. ..	7
The Wayfinder – Creating possibilities while community is forming .....	7
Learning to be a Host.. ..	7
Hosting is about convening a space that encourages dialogue .....	7
Hosting is multi-partial. ....	7
Seeing participants as your neighbours .....	8
Utilising the wisdom of the circle .....	8
Participants do not volunteer other participants.. ..	8
Appreciating the power of ritual. ....	8
Good hosting develops trust and a positive reputation .....	9
The importance of Co-Hosting .....	9
Hosting Skills and Resources. ....	9
The Art of Community Hosting – Foundational Training Programme for Co-Hosts .....	9
Preparing Day Programmes for each Gathering .....	9
The ABioSA Wayfinder – Discovering socio-economic and bio-cultural pathways together.. ..	9
The essentials of Hosting Community .....	10
Hosting Gathering 1: Meeting each other close to the land. ....	12
Hosting Gathering 2: Appreciating realities .....	17
Hosting Gathering 3: Inviting possibilities.. ..	21
Preparing to be a Host .....	25
Hosting Resources – Addendum .....	26
Invitation Guidelines.. ..	26
Day Programmes for each Gathering .....	27
Overview of the ABioSA Wayfinder. ....	30

## The Art of Community Hosting

**“What is realistically achievable that does no harm and leaves no one behind?”** This is an essential question to ask within a multi-stakeholder landscape. Considering the Access Benefit Sharing (ABS) needs and challenges in facilitating bio-cultural community protocols, agreements, and strengthening the human resolve to steward sustainable use for the benefit of people and the natural environment – is the backdrop informing this document – *The Art of Community Hosting*.

This document is an invitation to leaders, professionals, and government officials to host ways of bringing diverse groups of people together in an inclusive way. The process of hosting invites renewal, creativity, and momentum as people choose for themselves what is plausible given their current realities and resources.

At the same time, all involved discover the strengthening support of belonging and being a recognised contributor within an affiliated value chain network. In the end, it will be people turning towards each other that will steward sustainable use and value for their own benefit and for generations to come.

If you want to go  
quickly, go alone.  
If you want to go far,  
go together.

African Proverb


## The purpose of this document

Getting to know a community and becoming a community organised around an evolving purpose does not happen by chance. Communities grow into and sustain themselves through kinship and a sense that an individual, a group, or an organisation's contribution is part of a wider social web. Within this social context, it is possible to be united in co-operation with one another to realise a shared vision; a vision that benefits and enhances the collective as well as the individuals or groups making up that community.

Communities in their becoming, forming, changing, and flourishing will experience highs, plateaus, and lows. It is part of community life to deal with difficulties, disagreements, and conflicts just as it is part of community to feel empowered and supported by the momentum of many people pulling together.

We wrote *The Art of Community Hosting* as a guideline for individuals and organisations to begin an engagement process that invites many different role-players, stakeholders, and partners to find their way together.

This guideline provides an orientation on how to support people and organizations in their self-organisation towards becoming a thriving community. This publication is about guiding those whose role it is to bring people together and create the opportunity for meaningful dialogue in a way that lets diverse role-players and stakeholders discover the potential and power of their partnering and co-operation.



Whatever  
the problem,  
community is the  
answer.

Margaret Wheatley

## Who is the Community?

To use this guideline, we do need to get clear on what we mean by community. In the language used within biodiversity and biotrade under the umbrella of ABS, it has become an accustomed turn of phrase to talk about community as local communities who live near the genetic resource (i.e., plant materials like seeds, fruits, cuttings, pollen). Coupled with this reference to local communities comes the holders of traditional knowledge. Traditional knowledge holders have a long history with the indigenous environment and an intergenerational relationship with the land and their local community of place. **When we refer to community in this publication, we included both local communities and traditional knowledge holders and we expanded the idea of community even further.**

In essence, we work with community by looking at the social web that makes up a Sector in the Bio-economy. We start with people who are often the most marginalised actors in a Sector, namely local

communities. However, we also include all value chain actors such as local and global businesses, and supporting actors such as government, NGOs, and consumers. This definition of community also prompts us to consider society at large and the natural environment.

This wide framing of community is necessary in order to recognize how important our contribution is within the bigger context. We come to know that our role as an individual or organisation matters; it matters for us and for all involved.

As a host engaging communities, you are inviting role-players and stakeholders to discover the power of their role, their voice, and the value of co-operation for themselves and all in the Sector. To be a host you need to see yourself as a nurturer; you are inviting the people you engage with to discover their potential and create their own possibilities for transformative change and innovation.



## Nurturing Community

Many of us have not experienced the potential of a flourishing community. We need only consider the degree of conflict, inaccessibility of many marginalised communities, and aggressive competitiveness in the world to see that we often struggle with forming and sustaining real community.

People may have doubts, fears, and disbelief that a flourishing community is even possible. The idea of this may seem beyond reach, especially when economics and profit are involved; this is even more so in a sector with a long history of social fragmentation and marginalisation for many and with youth who may be feeling particularly disillusioned and frustrated. Thinking about community from a local context to a global context exponentially adds to the diversity, complexity, and challenges. Yet this complexity is realistic and must be faced no matter where we are in relation to an industry or sector.

We have found the process of community building begins when individuals and organisations are ready and eager to step up to the challenge and they, more than outsiders, recognise the potential inherent in community. They become the role-models and the supporters of the engagement process. These kindred spirits strengthen the potential inherent in communities becoming, forming, changing, and flourishing.

We have discovered different ways<sup>1</sup> that invite people to come together and problem solve in community. It requires hosts who put the welcome mat out and bring people together.

The hosts create the space for potential to be unlocked by the people involved.

---

<sup>1</sup> Discoveries stem from the ABioSA Community Engagement Pilot Project in the Honeybush Sector applying the Quiet Insight Approach and InnovationCircle™. This publication was written so that those not experts in the above approaches, could find their way with community engagement.

## What is Community Hosting?

We use the word hosting with intention. A host has a gracious orientation of including and welcoming everyone present. Everyone is acknowledged and no one is an outsider. Hosting is focused on creating connection and shared ground, finding a common point of departure, and creating an atmosphere where, despite the differences in the room, we share a kinship in looking after something that is important to all of us.

Community hosting is **not** about...

- facilitation towards defined objectives
- presenting to others
- consulting others
- promoting a subject or pushing an agenda
- holding a formal meeting with an agenda and minutes

Community hosting **is** about...

- Creating connection and a shared basis to relate to each other
- Creating opportunities to discover our individual and collective hopes, ambitions and purpose, and what is currently feasible
- Including and recognising all voices — especially those that have not been heard or ignored
- Inviting dialogue about complex and important topics
- Having an unwavering confidence that a community will find their way — even when the issues and challenges are big

In this way, community hosting prepares the ground for more formal engagements where people feel inspired to contribute and participate. It opens the possibility for meaningful and productive conversations that are supported by purposeful agreements that everyone can believe in and rally around.

## Hosting Community Gatherings

Community hosting follows a journey of three events which aim to develop and strengthen our capacity to relate to each other and turn to each other as we tackle social, ecological and economic challenges impacting us. Overtime, as we grow in

community, we grow and mature in our roles as stewards — stewards of sustainable growth and sustainable use for our own benefit and for future generations to come.



## Hosting Community with three gatherings

Community hosting takes the form of three gatherings. Each gathering has a particular purpose. As the group moves from the first gathering to the next, the participation base can grow. That is, from one gathering to the next, new stakeholders or role-players can be included.

As it is not the role of the host to bring new participants up to speed with what has come before, it is important for continuity that a core group of people attend all three gatherings. A community engagement journey consisting of three gatherings:



### Gathering 1: Meeting each other close to the land

The first instance of coming together begins with local communities and community leaders. The physical place or location of the first gathering is important in that it should be within the geography of where the plant resource grows; this helps surface the traditional knowledge about the customs and norms of working and living in communities that work directly with the land over time.

It is vital to engage with elders, women, and youth in the local community as they are essential voices that need to be included in the process of Gathering 1. Gathering 1 may consist of a few events that are ideally held within the geography of that local community (e.g., their community centre) and within walking distance for some.

This gathering sets an inclusive foundation for nurturing community within a Sector. We start with people who are often the most marginalised so that everyone has an acknowledged footing to confidently share their perspective and bring forward their voice.

People share their personal perspectives and this sharing raises the issues that will guide this community engagement process. In other words, the first gathering creates the basis for further engagement in the form of important topics and questions for the next gatherings.

Refer to **Hosting Gathering 1** for guidelines on how to prepare for, invite participants, and host events that engage local communities, traditional knowledge holders, young adults and women.

### Gathering 2: Appreciating realities more widely and deeply

The second gathering provides an opportunity to look at focus areas as a collective. The focus areas that were highlighted in the previous gathering are introduced as topics that participants will unpack further at this gathering. Participants begin to share actual experiences of examples, stories, or anecdotes about the subject matter. As we listen to contrasting worldviews and diverse perspectives, it is essential to keep solutioning and action plans at bay as participants engage with this step.

Hosts invite participants to share their experiences about the chosen topics in a variety of ways. Through participants sharing examples and talking about their experiences, a rich picture is created that can be encouraging and stimulating for participants.

The participant base can grow with the second gathering to include different types of stakeholders. For example, you may have already met with local



communities and traditional knowledge holders, now you include processors.

Refer to **Hosting Gathering 2** for guidelines on how to prepare for and host this event.

**Gathering 3: Inviting possibilities for all of us**

The third gathering lets participants establish a foundation to work with. Participants create a shared departure point that inspires individual and collective efforts within the same direction.

The outcome of Gathering 3 holds great potential as it invites people to take further steps, create new

partnerships, and tease out the necessary building blocks for a realistic vision that includes everyone and leaves no one behind.

Refer to **Hosting Gathering 3** for guidelines how to prepare for and host this event.

**Calling people to convene at each Gathering**

As we have seen, *The Art of Community Hosting* consists of three gatherings. But who calls people to a gathering? Who sends out the invite?

The invitation would come from either an organisation, government department, community leader representing a particular geography, company or Sector Board who is initiating this

dialogue process. Hosts can be representatives of the inviting party, or they can be independent individuals who have been commissioned to act on behalf of a Sector stakeholder.

It is important that the initiating party maintains a Sector-Wide focus. Refer to the addendum for a guideline on how to word a hosting invitation.

**The Wayfinder - Creating possibilities while community is forming**

The Wayfinder is a dialogue tool that can be integrated into the process of community hosting.

It includes more structure into the process community hosting. The Wayfinder is used in conjunction with several training sessions in its use.

**Learning to be a Host**

**Hosting is about convening a space that encourages dialogue**

Hosting is more than organising. Each gathering is convened in a friendly and respectful atmosphere. The host looks after more than the practical set-up requirements of the event. An important focus is the tone that is established as people meet.

In many cases participants may have travelled quite a distance, on arrival offering them a cup of tea and rusks, or sandwich would go a long way as a welcoming gesture.



**Hosting is multi-partial**

The host role-models a “multi-partial” orientation. In others words, the host is on everybody’s side and offers everyone the chance to participate.

Multi-partial also speaks to remaining interested and engaged with what is being shared, even if you personally differ in your opinion.

This form of holding is essential; as a host you are in service of supporting participants in growing their confidence, clarity, and connection with one

another. To create the space for this means that all participants are treated as important.

---

### **Seeing participants as your neighbours**

As host, you relate to your participants as neighbours. There is nothing you are fixing; you are not rescuing or putting yourself out there as an expert on the subject being discussed. A big part of neighbourliness is the capacity for deep listening. Maya Angelou's saying, "people don't

remember what you said, but they do remember how you made them feel" applies to the role of the host. Hosts create the atmospheric conditions where people feel valued and good about their experience.

---

### **Utilising the wisdom of the circle**

The geometry of Africa is the circle. An important aspect of the host's role is to keep the dialogue in a circle format. Hosts keep bringing attention to forming a circle, especially after breakout activities. The centre of the circle can become a meaningful

communal space where objects can be placed which highlight something special or significant about the gathering or community.

---

### **Participants do not volunteer other participants**

When people feel something is important to say, they say it themselves rather than volunteer someone else to speak on their behalf. The host's

role is to keep people accountable to speaking up for themselves.

---

### **Appreciating the power of ritual**

Using ritual and inviting others to express meaningful rituals that are part of their community life is something hosts bring attention to and weave into the programme. When meeting with community leaders, it would be good to find out about any meaningful ritual they would like to bring to the gathering.

Rituals can also take the form of small activities that become meaningful, like taking a group photo or making time to enjoy the products together that come from the genetic resource, for example a tea tasting ceremony.

---

### **How do we respond when something goes wrong?**

Hosting is a mindset where you believe in the possibility of community. If participants become impatient, frustrated, angry, or sad...as hosts you simply meet people where they are at. More than anyone, the host needs to trust the process and believe that people will work things out to the extent that they can. A host is not simply hoping

that everyone will have a good time; rather, they are creating an environment for people to feel safe, seen, listened to, and valued, especially when difficult things are felt or said.

## Good hosting develops trust and a positive reputation

The outcome of good hosting generates goodwill and a positive association with the dialogue process. When people can come together through fruitful conversation and form a community around shared interests that they feel motivated

to take further, the process becomes valuable to the growing community involved. A good rule of thumb for the host, is that each gathering keeps calling people to participate, as their experience of the process was considered worthwhile.

## The importance of Co-Hosting

Given the intensity of hosting these kind of gatherings, two hosts are necessary. Co-hosts learn

to navigate together in order to fully engage with the participants.

## Hosting Skills and Resources

### *The Art of Community Hosting* - Foundational Training Programme for Co-Hosts

Before initiating community events where you apply the art of community hosting, attending the training programme for co-hosts is necessary. The training programme is focused on co-hosts (two hosts working together) and runs over three days. The training programme is offered in two formats,

face-to-face or virtual.

The training programme focuses on the inner orientation of the host, guides the design of the day programme for each gathering, and orientates hosts to use the ABioSA Wayfinder.

### Preparing Day Programmes for each Gathering

Hosts prepare for a Gathering by designing a Day Programme for each Gathering. A day programme helps you prepare for the event. It should not be considered a fixed agenda, as hosting requires that you adapt the programme to the situational needs and happenings within the group. This also helps hosts relax with the process, as you are not ticking

off agenda items off a list. Another way to think about the day programme, it is giving you a high-level map of the process that guides the hosting process.

Refer to the Addendum for a few examples on how hosts can design day programmes for each Gathering.

### The ABioSA Wayfinder - Discovering socio-economic and bio-cultural pathways together

The ABioSA Wayfinder is a dialogue tool that supports the hosting process. The dialogue tool facilitates small group dialogue between different stakeholders within a sector. The purpose of the dialogue is to discover opportunities together that stakeholders feel empowered to act on. The dialogue process consists of three structured conversations. Each conversation can be integrated

into the Day Programme of Gatherings 1 to 3.

Refer to the Addendum for an overview of the ABioSA Wayfinder.

## The essentials of Hosting Community

The following essentials include some of the hidden aspects of the hosting role. These are the things that hosts tend to in preparation for gatherings and are often completed behind the scenes.



- Begin by reaching out to individuals in the community. Get to know who is in relation with or close to the biological geography of the genetic resource.
- Where possible, source lists of contacts from other stakeholders. It is important to make time to follow up and approach people on the list via phone calls and email.
- When preparing to engage with community leaders and local communities, find out from different people what ritual is fitting. Ask if people would be willing to do the ritual at the gathering.



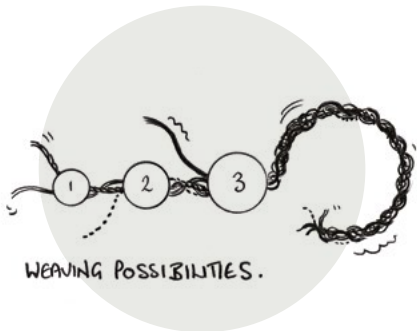
- From the beginning as the host prepares to set-up this community engagement process, they keep focused on nurturing connections.
- All points of contact outside of the three gatherings are opportunities to listen to and appreciate the experience and participation of individuals who are supporting the preparatory steps. Even if these individuals do not participate at the gatherings, they are part of the wider relational field.
- Talk to others and find out from stakeholders and other partners who they would recommend and why. You are trying to find people who are contributors, have a service orientation, and a developmental mindset. Your intention from the beginning is to be inclusive but at the same time minimise “fire starters”<sup>2</sup> - that is anyone who intentionally disrupts the engagement process

### Follow up on referrals by existing stakeholders



- As hosts, it is important to talk to others about who they could recommend. Ask for referrals and contact individuals to find out their availability. This is a good preparatory exercise before confirming the dates of each gathering.
- Finding participants to join is an ongoing process as the three gatherings take place.
- It is good to ask people what their initial desire is to participate, realising that this could evolve as time goes on. This is important to know as it clarifies their level of participation and commitment.

2 Fire starters are people who instigate and like to fuel conflict. **High Conflict** by Amanda Ripley



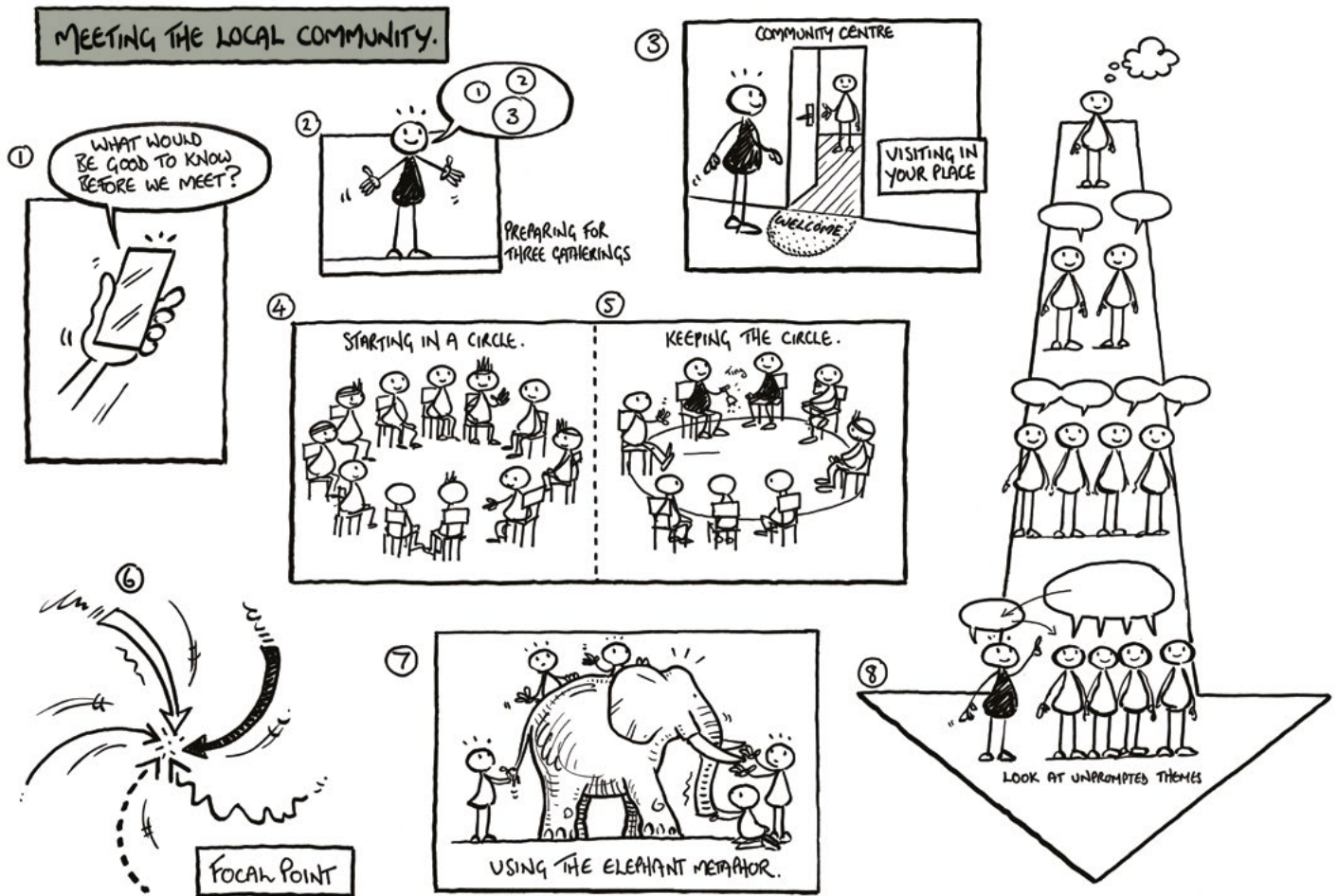
- The host intentionally increases the participant base as the process moves forward. In Gathering 1, the focus is on the local community; more people related to the sector are invited to participate in Gatherings 2 and 3.
- Although the host does not take minutes, they do provide continuity by giving an opportunity for participants to recap and remember what happened at the previous meeting. This also helps participants welcome and orientate new participants as they join the process.
- After Gathering 3, the host may write up the outcomes for the community and distribute it to participants. This is where the hosts' role ends and the participants take things into the wider community.



- In instances where there are participants who cannot attend Gathering 2, you could offer them the option of an online gathering. See the details of Gathering 2 for more details.
- Some participants might attend the online gathering and then attend Gathering 3 in person. Others might just be able to contribute at the once off online meeting.

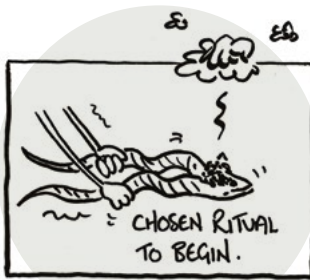


## Hosting Gathering 1: Meeting each other close to the land

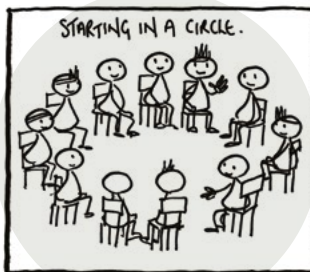


- As hosts, you meet everyone at the door with a warm and friendly greeting. This is a critical step as it sets the tone that everyone is truly appreciated and welcome. Remember you are welcoming participants into the process but they are welcoming you into their community.
- Give participants a name tag and marker pen which they can complete themselves.
- Consider having multiple first gatherings with the community. For instance, you may have a gathering inviting community leaders and members from the local community which includes young adults. You could also host a second gathering inviting only women from the local community. In this way Gathering 1 extends an open invitation out to the local community and at the same time, the community gets to voice and develop their perspective in a way that is heard and valued.
- Use the opportunity of completing the event register, to meet people. In this way use the required registration process, to warmly welcome participants.

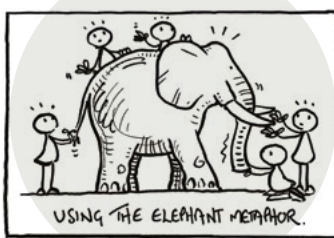




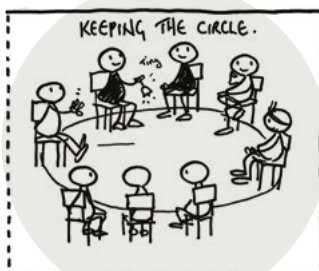
- Let the leadership choose the ritual they would like to open the gathering with. This can be discussed beforehand and included in the timing of the gathering. A ritual can also be brought in as the gathering begins. The ritual should help make meaning for that point in time. It can be a song, a poem, a saying, a prayer, or a story. Whoever suggests the ritual, holds the ritual.
- The ritual can be anything from a chosen cleansing ritual, presenting participants with flowers or something from the natural environment that is representative of that location.



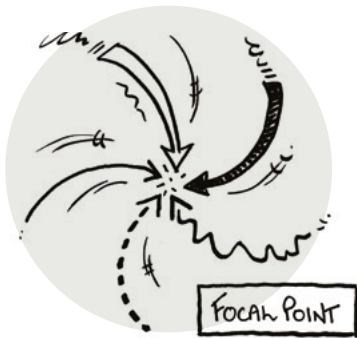
- Have the room set-up in a circle—just chairs no table; this, in and of itself, is an important ritual of unity that sets the tone. The circle arrangement also suggests that every person in the circle is a potential leader.
- Begin the gathering sitting in the circle and invite introductions by going round the circle.
- The host sets the example by introducing themselves first.
- Introductions are brief and include — stating your name, what you prefer to be called, where you are from, and what brought you to this gathering.
- Be mindful that some people might feel uncomfortable about sitting in a circle at first. This is natural. The host keeps a relaxed holding as people find their comfort with the set-up.



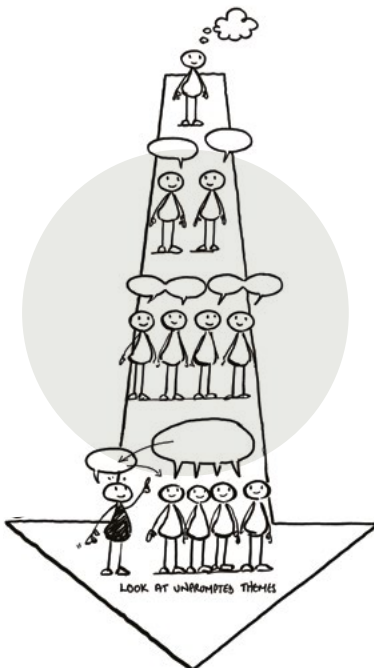
- To appreciate the diversity in the room, the host introduces the first elephant metaphor. This helps position that we all see an aspect of a situation and no one sees all of it.
- The elephant metaphor is the beginning step of accepting diversity while growing towards a community voice.



- Once the introductions are complete, go around the circle and hear from everyone about their interest in the topic. Participants keep their contributions to 2 minutes at most.
- This round of circle sharing can be framed with inviting questions like...  
 What would you like to know more about?  
 What about this subject is important to you?  
 (Participants choose which question they are more moved to respond to.)



- The hosts highlight all the perspectives by sharing a summary of topics or themes that came up. For example, if someone is talking about wanting training, the topic or theme would be skills and training.
- The host can talk about the topics in terms of observing similar topics and which topics were mentioned were unique or a standalone.
- You could jot the topics on a flipchart for the group to see.
- Looking at the diversity of perspectives and topics, the hosts introduce a group activity that generates more ideas about the listed topics and invites the weaving together of multiple perspectives.



- The hosts now formulate a question for the group activity. Based on the topics shared, the question participants are invited to respond to could be one of the following:
  - What opportunities do YOU see for making progress with this challenge?
  - What ideas or actions are important to consider?
  - What will be supportive? (you could consider it in different ways—to women, to young adults, etc.)
- The host introduces the group activity. It is called “1-2-4-ALL”<sup>3</sup> and explains the process of the group conversation.
  - After the host introduces the question (see previous bullet), each participant has 1 minute to individually reflect in silence.
  - The host rings the bell.
  - Participants find another person to share their reflection with. Participants talk in pairs for 2-3 minutes.
  - The host rings the bell.
  - The two participants now pair up with another two participants. A person from this foursome is designated to share with the entire group after this step. The foursome talk about what has come up thus far and reflect on what was similar and what was different. Participants share for 4-5 minutes.
  - The host rings the bell.
  - The hosts invite everyone back into the circle and everybody listens to the feedback from the designated speaker representing the group of four participants.

3 Adapted from **The Surprising Power of Liberating Structures** by Henri Lipmanowicz and Keith McCandless



- As each group shares, the hosts reiterate the key points that a group shared.
- The hosts listen for topics and questions that come up. As each foursome provides feedback, the host can ask clarifying questions if it helps the group convey their perspectives.
- The hosts add to their current topics or use the additional perspectives to add to the list of topics on the flipchart.



Some general points about breakout activities:

- When there are breakout sessions, the chairs get moved. It is the hosts job to ensure that the circle is maintained when participants return. The hosts ring a bell as a prompt to call everyone back into the circle.
- It is important that no one is an outsider to the circle; even observers are included in the circle.



- Create an opportunity for participants to connect and talk to each other during the gathering. For example, you might invite participants to brew a cup of tea and enjoy it together; you could also go outside and take a group photo.
- Be mindful to create time for people to connect with each other outside of the formal gathering.

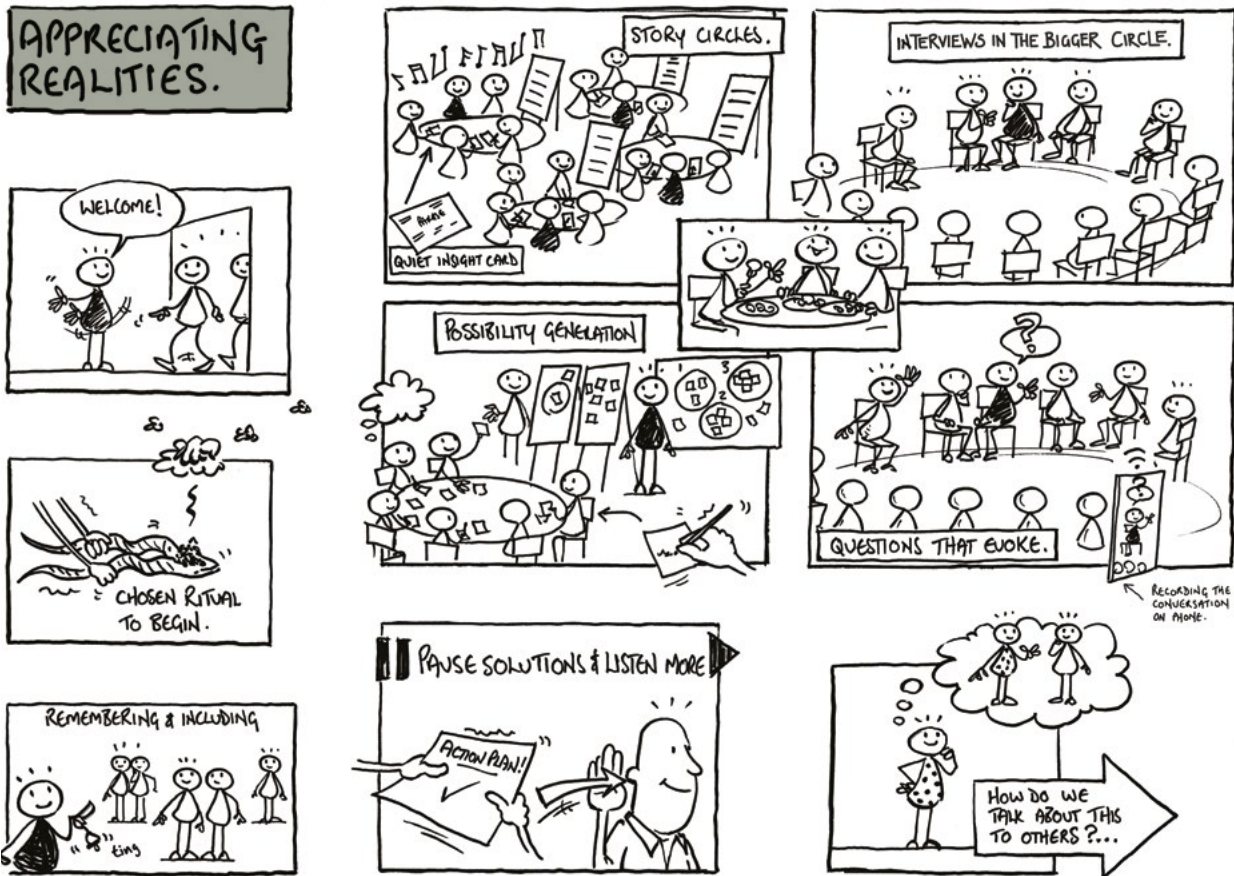


- The host invites participants into the closing circle. Each participant is asked to share which theme, topic, or focus area that was spoken today is uppermost in their mind. Participants can also conclude with sharing a question they have that may be top of mind.
- The gathering is concluded by talking about the two subsequent gatherings. The community is to choose amongst themselves who are the representatives that will continue and be present at the next two events.
- The process for keeping participants informed about outcomes is discussed amongst participants. The participants decide on how they will remain connected with the core group of participants who will attend all three events.

For example: they nominate a contact person, who becomes the admin person of a WhatsApp group.



## Hosting Gathering 2: Appreciating realities



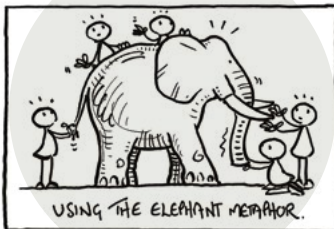
- As hosts, you meet everyone at the door with a warm and friendly greeting. This is a critical step, as it sets the tone that everyone is truly appreciated and welcome.
- Give participants a name tag and marker pen which they can complete themselves.



- Begin Gathering 2 with the chosen ritual. We recommend doing the same ritual as was selected for Gathering 1. In this way, the ritual can grow in meaning; it continues to remind all of us that there is something special and important about meeting in this way.



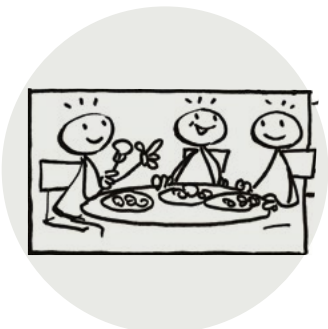
- Gathering 2 begins in the circle. Previous participants, newcomers, and hosts all participate by sharing their name and briefly mentioning their relationship with the genetic resource.



- Introduce the Elephant Metaphor again. This helps to orientate newcomers and remind previous participants of our first gathering.



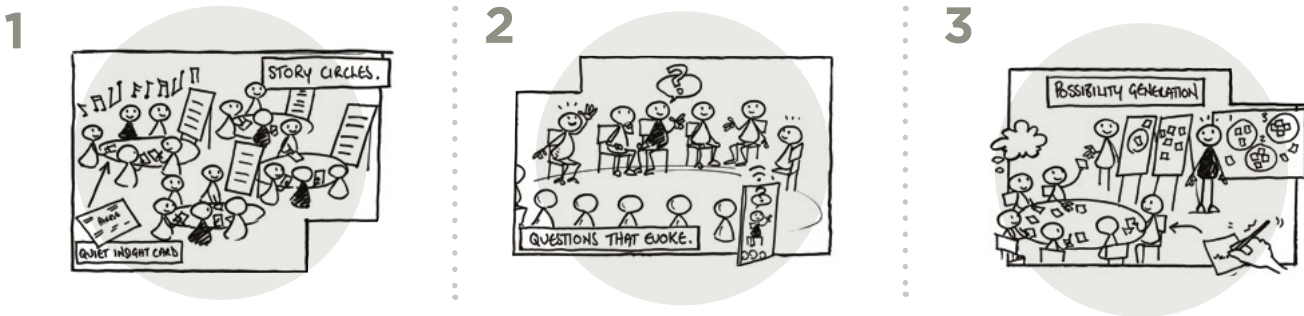
- Participants who attended the first gathering reflect on the key perspectives that were previously raised. As they do this they get to share with others and at the same time welcome the newcomers into the process.
- The host rings the bell or plays a bell sound. Each participant finds another person to talk to. Participants do this in standing for about 2-3 mins. They share the key points that they remember from the previous meeting. When the host rings the bell, each participant finds a new partner. The host repeats the process about 5 times.



- Creating opportunities for participants to connect outside of the formal gathering is important. If you offer lunch, don't rush it; make sure it is spacious and gives people time to informally connect.

Gathering 2 is designed for small group activities to run in parallel. Subgroups of participants rotate through these activities.

- This requires a large enough space or different spaces, so that the small group activities don't interfere with the other small group processes.
- The small group activities are less focused on the output and more orientated towards letting participants relate to one another informally. Give some thought to how these subgroups are formed, to make sure that people have a chance to be with other participants with new perspectives.



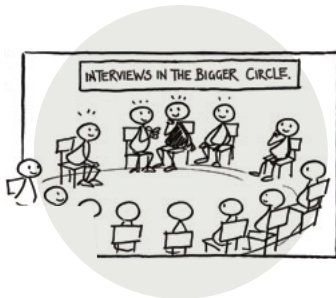
- 1
  - The host introduces a form of Story Circles<sup>4</sup>.
  - Story Circles are designed to prompt quiet in community, bring out various perspectives on a topic and develop the skill of really listening.
  - For the Story Circle process steps and inquiry tools refer to the **Wayfinder, Conversation 2: Finding the Community Story**.

- 2
  - The host can use the format – *Interviews in a smaller circle*.
  - The host invites a participant to respond to a few questions. The host selects 2-3 questions<sup>5</sup> from the list below:
    - What is oversimplified about this issue?
    - What do you want to understand about another side of this issue?
    - What do you want others to understand about your perspective?
    - What's the question nobody is asking?
    - Where do you feel torn relative to this issue?
  - After the interview, people from the small group can share comments and ask questions. It can also happen, based on what is shared, that another participant becomes the interviewee.
  - Each interview in a small circle lasts about 30- 45 minutes.
  - Hosts may want to record these interviews on a smart phone. The recorded interviews help inform the next session and is something that can be shared with other hosts to support preparation.
  - As a host, it is important to ask yourself what you are truly curious about. People will open up more if they sense you are truly interested.

4 Story Circles are based on the Quiet Insight Approach and using different inquiry tools.

5 Questions came from the book **High Conflict**, by Amanda Ripley.

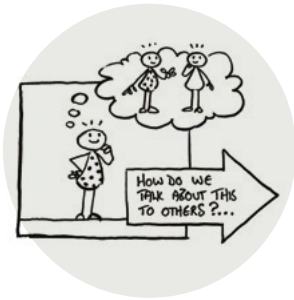
- 3
- The host can use the format – *Possibilities Brainstorm*.
  - Participants sit around a table in groups of 3-5. The host asks them to think about ideas that can support some of the challenges the group has been talking about.
  - Individually, each person silently reflects and writes an idea on a post-it note. One idea per post-it note. Invite each person to think about 3- 5 ideas.
  - Each person places their post-it notes on a flipchart and briefly talks about their ideas. Everyone simply listens to rather than discusses what is heard.
  - A person is nominated by the group to help collect similar ideas. Then the group gives the ideas that have been clustered a title.
  - Ideas that remain as a stand alone are not discarded.
  - If there are multiple small groups doing this activity, the host places the outcomes of all groups together. In this way, the whole group can appreciate the ideas that people are sitting with. This activity does not lead to actioning; rather the ideas that are shared here will come up again, be adapted, and further developed by the participants in Gathering 3.
  - This activity helps to release pent up energy especially with the more action orientated.
  - When the whole group returns to sit in the circle, everyone can appreciate the different ideas that were generated as part of the exercise.



- The host can use the format – *Interviews in the bigger circle*.
- The host considers asking 1 to 2 participants to share their story in an interview which is witnessed by all sitting in the circle. The host chooses a participant that they feel has something important and informative for the group to hear at that time.
- The host asks questions that draw out the experience from the participant and is relevant to where the group is at. An interview in the Circle last for about 10-15 minutes.
- First thing about something you have picked-up on. Be attuned to new things that seem extremely important for the group to hear and how you will ask questions to illicit the insights from an experienced person. It is important to approach the participants you would like to interview beforehand to request their participation.



- Be mindful that some people will desire quick action. As host, you are there to trust the process that taking things a bit more slowly will pay big dividends.
- In this way, we avoid taking action prematurely before everyone is really onboard.



- Participants are encouraged to talk about their experiences with others. Especially if they want to recommend someone to participate in the next gathering.
- Participants, however, are discouraged from posting things on social media as this can lead to misunderstandings, such as the feeling of being excluded.



- Ask participants to share a word or short phrase that captures what they are feeling right now.
- Mention the last gathering and invite participant to approach you to recommend other stakeholders who could potentially be included at Gathering 3.

### Hosting Gathering 3: Inviting possibilities

The illustrations show various activities:

- INVITING POSSIBILITIES:** A laptop displaying a Zoom meeting interface with a speech bubble saying "ONLINE STORY CIRCLES."
- REUNION TO PREPARE:** A group of people sitting around a table, some with laptops, appearing to be in a meeting.
- APPRECIATING RITUAL:** A person performing a ritual with a large snake-like figure on a stage.
- WELCOME! WELCOMING A LARGER GROUP:** A group of people standing and talking, with one person saying "WELCOME!"
- RELAP WITH PANEL CONVERSATIONS:** A group of people sitting in a circle, with a question mark above them, suggesting a panel discussion.
- BUILDING PERSPECTIVES & SURFACING QUESTIONS:** A group of people sitting in a circle, with one person speaking and others listening.
- DISCOVERING POSSIBILITIES TOGETHER:** A large room with people standing around a table, looking at a board with "THEME" and "NOTES" sections. A sign above says "DISCOVERING POSSIBILITIES TOGETHER".
- MUSICAL CHAIRS:** A person sitting on a chair, with a sign that says "MUSICAL CHAIRS".
- LEAVING WITH NEW RELATIONSHIPS:** A group of people walking away from a room, with a sign that says "LEAVING WITH NEW RELATIONSHIPS".



- Participants that have formed part of the first two gatherings have discovered the support and value of a wider network of acquaintances.
- As hosts, continue to nurture this by providing an opportunity—shortly before Gathering 3 commence – for a reunion meeting.
- The purpose of reunion meeting is to simply enjoy one another’s company and the bonds that are beginning to form. Budget permitting it is ideal to meet with previous participants. You could plan to meet with them earlier that morning, before Gathering 3 begins.
- Hosts share with participants the programme for Gathering 3. Participants are invited to join the hosts in welcoming newcomers at the door when the final gathering begins.



- Hosts and a few participants stand at the door to welcome newcomers and previous participants to the gathering.
- This is an important shift to include the wider community in taking on the hosting role.

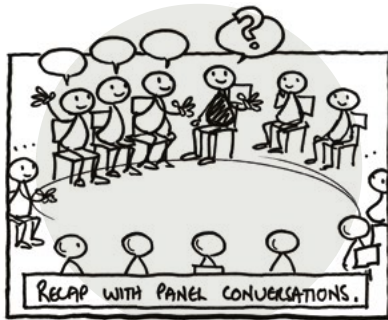


- Begin Gathering 3 with the chosen opening ritual.
- This can be a traditional opening or a poem, quote, or piece of music that is relevant to the meeting.



- Begin in the circle. As part of the introductions, participants and hosts share something meaningful. For example, they may be asked to recall a person from their life who holds a quality that would be valuable at this gathering and “invite” them into this space.
- Participants are also invited to briefly talk about their relationship to the genetic resource or who they represent.





- Based on the topics that participants had identified at the previous gatherings, the hosts pre-selects 3-4 people to speak to the topic.
- The host would conduct a panel interview within the circle.
- Hosts could use the Quiet Insight format - *Panel Interviews within the Circle*
- The panels are about drawing out emotional realism, specifically from the people closest to the genetic resource. The selected participants should be those who have demonstrated a real passion about the topic.
- The host asks a person on the panel an opening question. Based on what is shared, the host asks others on the panel to add to it. A panel interview is about 20-30 minutes.

- As people are listening to the panel interview, they will no doubt have comments and questions of their own. After observing the panel interview, participants break up into small groups.
- Each small group selects a spokesperson to share the comments and questions of their group.
- First each person sits in silence to gather their own thoughts. Then, as a small group they say more about this topic and note any questions that come up. Each spokesperson shares this with the wider group.
- For this activity, groups can capture their thoughts and questions on flipchart paper.



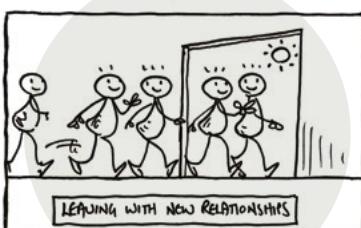
- After three rounds of panel interviews and small group discussion, the hosts list the subjects that came up when the spokespersons gave their feedback.
- Participants are then invited to select the topics they are most interested in. Each person chooses three topics in order of preference; this helps the hosts form the groups for the subsequent groupwork.



- Participants form small groups according to the topic that was their first preference. Each group nominates a topic host. Each group considers their topic and talks about the possibilities available. They also identify realistic next steps that are plausible for participants to action themselves. This is a short, timed exercise.
- The topic host stays where they are and everyone who is not the topic host goes to the group of their second topic preference.
- The topic host summarises what the previous group shared and the new group builds on the ideas.
- Time permitting, participants could be invited to join a new group of their third topic preference.
- The topic hosts then present back to the whole group. The programme hosts time the feedback of each group.
- The hosts are responsible for helping the group remember what was put forward by providing a summary of what each topic host shared.



- The third gathering closes in the circle where each participant shares their personal next step in support of this community effort.



- Participants leave having formed new relationships supported by a shared basis to move forward.

## Preparing to be a Host

Preparing yourself for the hosting role requires an inner clarity and ease with the engagement process. We have found that as participants realise changes for themselves, the work of hosting is also an invitation towards our own inner growth.

Hosts are required to attend a three-day training which will support them in using the exercises of the three gatherings which will, in turn, support communities in choosing and realising change for themselves.

# Hosting Resources – Addendum

## Invitation Guidelines

Below is a suggested template that can be used as the initial invite to initiate the Art of Community Hosting. Text which is underlined can be edited as needed or change the template to fit your purpose and the sector that is forming part of this community engagement process..

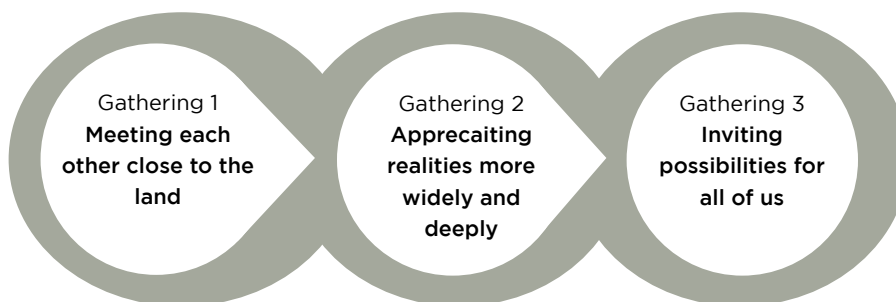
Dear \_\_\_\_\_

We would value your input and participation at this Community Engagement Process for various Stakeholders in the Honeybush Sector. This gathering is being organised and hosted by the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE).

The type of engagement process was piloted within the Honeybush Sector in 2023 by GIZ and DFFE. It was incredibly worthwhile for participants. Previous participants spoke about the process being instrumental in:

- Forming new connections and networks between actors within the Honeybush Value Chain. In particular highlighting possibilities that include indigenous knowledge and empower women and the youth in local communities.
- Creating a multi-stakeholder collaborative approach for identifying opportunities, enabling dialogue that addresses issues more rapidly in support of developing this Sector and uplifting local communities. This engagement approach aims to prepare stakeholders to confidently engage in ABS negotiations by creating a shared footing to mutually explore options for monetary and or non-monetary benefits. This community engagement process encourages a shared resolve to realize the benefits for local communities, the conversation and sustainable use of Honeybush.

We would like to include more people and widen the participation base within the Honeybush Sector. Through a structured process consisting of three gatherings, we bring together multiple perspectives, depicted here:



Currently we are at Gathering 1 of the approach. At each Gathering the participation based grows to include more stakeholders. Participating in this event is a meaningful discovery process establishing a solid footing for Value Chain Actors to work from. Our intention is to stimulate good collaboration and potential future innovations that support growth and sustainable use in this Sector.

Please let us know if you can participate by \_\_\_\_\_ July by writing to \_\_\_\_\_.

We hope you can join us.

Kind Regards,

## Day Programmes for each Gathering

### Day Programme for Gathering 1: Meeting each other close to the land

The day programme is for a Group Size of between 15-25 participants

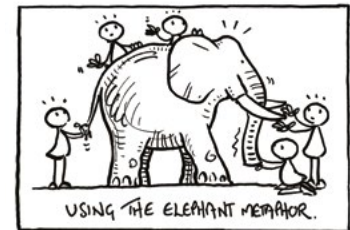
Day Programme	Timing	Comments
<b>Welcome &amp; Settling In</b>	30-45 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remember name tags and marker pens</li> <li>Welcome snack and drink (especially for participants who have travelled a far distance).</li> </ul>
<b>Opening with a ritual</b>	5-10 mins	The ritual can be a variety of things. For example, it could be a cleansing ritual or presenting participants with flowers or something from the natural environment that is representative of that location.
<b>Introductions</b>	20-30 mins	Participants introduce themselves <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State Name</li> <li>What your preferred to be called</li> <li>Where you are from</li> <li>What brought you to this gathering?</li> </ul>
<b>Sharing the elephant metaphor</b>	5-7 mins	To appreciate the diversity in the room, the host introduces the first elephant metaphor. This helps position that we all see an aspect of a situation, and no one sees all of it.
<b>Voicing our interests about the topics</b>	45-60 mins	This round of circle sharing can be framed with inviting questions like... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What would you like to know more about?</li> <li>What about this subject is important to you?</li> <li>(Participants choose which question they are more moved to respond to.)</li> </ul>
<b>Break</b>	15-20 mins	
<b>Hosts highlight focal points that came from the sharing</b>	10-15 mins	The hosts highlight all the perspectives by sharing a summary of topics or themes that came up.
<b>Discussion activity - 1-2-4 All</b>	90-120 mins	Participants respond to one of the following questions (as chosen by the hosts): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What opportunities do YOU see for making progress with this challenge?</li> <li>What ideas or actions are important to consider?</li> <li>What will be supportive? (you could consider it in different ways—to women, to young adults, etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>Lunch Break</b>	60 mins	
<b>Closing Circle</b>	45-60 mins	Each participant is asked to share which theme, topic, or focus area that was spoken about today is uppermost in their mind.

#### Pointers for the Host

*Remember you are welcoming participants into the process, but they are welcoming you into their community.*

*Whoever suggests the ritual, is the one to hold the ritual or help organize it.*

*The host sets the example by introducing themselves first.*



*Participants keep their contributions to 2 minutes at most. The host sets the example by doing this first.*

*The host can talk about the topics in terms of observing common themes as well as topics that were unique or a standalone.*

*The host introduces the group activity. It is called "1-2-4-ALL" and explains the process of the group conversation.*

*The gathering is concluded by talking about the two subsequent gatherings.*

## Day Programme for Gathering 2: Appreciating realities more widely and deeply

The day programme is for a Group Size of between 20-35 participants

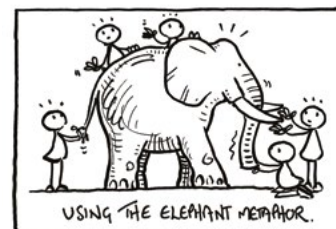
Day Programme	Timing	Comments	
<b>Welcome &amp; Settling In</b>	30-45 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remember name tags and marker pens</li> <li>Welcome snack and drink (especially for participants who have travelled a far distance).</li> </ul>	
<b>Opening with a ritual</b>	5-10 mins	Repeat the chosen ritual from Gathering 1. Let participants who previously participated do the ritual.	
<b>Introductions</b>	15-30 mins	Previous participants, newcomers, and hosts all participate by sharing their name and briefly mentioning their relationship with the genetic resource.	
<b>Bring in the elephant metaphor again</b>	5-7 mins	<p>Revisit the elephant metaphor as a refresher for previous participants and to introduce newcomers.</p> <p>This establishes the purpose for what is to follow - 'Remembering and Including'.</p>	
<b>Remembering and Including</b>	15-25 mins	Participants who attended the first gathering reflect on the key perspectives that were previously raised. As they do this they get to share with others and at the same time welcome the newcomers into the process.	
<b>Break</b>	15-20 mins		
<b>Group Activities that run in parallel</b>	90-120 mins	Organize the activities that run in parallel with participants rotating through them in small groups.	
		<table border="1"> <tr> <td><b>Story Circles<sup>6</sup></b></td> <td><b>Interviews in Smaller Circles</b></td> <td><b>Possibilities Brainstorm</b></td> </tr> </table>	<b>Story Circles<sup>6</sup></b>
<b>Story Circles<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>Interviews in Smaller Circles</b>	<b>Possibilities Brainstorm</b>	
<b>Interviews in the Bigger Circle</b>	10-15 mins	Hosts interview 1-2 participants with the whole group together about something that is important for all to hear all at once.	
<b>Lunch Break</b>	60 mins		
<b>Checking-in</b>	30-40 mins	<p>Ask participants to share briefly 'one thing' that stood out from the previous group activities.</p> <p>The host briefly reviews the topics that came from the Possibilities Brainstorm.</p>	
<b>Closing Circle</b>	15-30 mins	<p>Conclude with a word or phrase.</p> <p>Participants are introduced to Gathering 3 and are encouraged to share their experiences from Gathering 1 and 2 with others.</p>	

### Pointers for the Host

*Some participants will have attended the first gathering while others will be participating for the first time.*

*Remember everyone needs a special welcome.*

*Ask previous participants to stand, then ask new participants to stand. Everyone can get a sense of how participation is growing.*



*The number of parallel activities depends on the number of hosts. At least one host is present per group activity.*

*Think of a theme and participant who brings important experience that can energize the group.*

*Participants keep their contributions brief. Just one idea.*

*Participants are invited to recommend stakeholders in the Sector that could attend Gathering 3 (last event).*

<sup>6</sup> For the Story Circle process steps and inquiry tools refer to the ABioSA Wayfinder, Conversation 2: Finding the Community Story.

## Day Programme for Gathering 3: Inviting possibilities for all of us

The day programme is for a Group Size of between 25-50 participants

Day Programme	Timing	Comments				
<b>Welcome &amp; Settling In</b>	30-45 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remember name tags and marker pens</li> <li>Welcome snack and drink (especially for participants who have travelled a far distance).</li> </ul>				
<b>Opening with a ritual</b>	5-10 mins	Repeat the chosen ritual from Gathering 1 and 2. Let participants who previously participated do the ritual.				
<b>Introductions</b>	15-25 mins	Previous participants, newcomers, and hosts all participate by sharing their name and briefly mentioning their relationship with the genetic resource.				
<b>Panel Interviews within the Circle</b>	10-45 mins (10-15 mins/round)	Panel Interview Round 1	<b>Break</b> (15 mins)	Panel Interview Round 2	<b>Lunch Break</b> (60 mins)	Panel Interview Round 3
		Small Group Reflections Round 1		Small Group Reflections Round 2		Small Group Reflections Round 3
<b>Small Group reflections and discussion</b>	60-90 mins (20-30 mins/round)	Small Group Reflections Round 1		Small Group Reflections Round 2		Small Group Reflections Round 3
<b>Voting on topic preferences/interests</b>	10 mins	Each person chooses three topics in order of preference; this helps the hosts form the groups for the subsequent groupwork.				
<b>Break</b>	15 mins	←				
<b>Discovering Possibilities</b>	45-60 mins (15-20 mins/round)	Small Group discussion (1st Preference)		Small Group discussion (2nd Preference)		Small Group discussion (3rd Preference)
<b>Overview of Possibilities</b>	45 mins	Topic hosts share a summary with the wider group.				
<b>Closing Circle</b>	15-30 mins	Conclude with a word or phrase. Participants share their personal next step in support of this community effort.				

### Pointers for the Host

*The format for Gathering 3 is intentionally fast paced. As the day progresses the pace picks up, this is important for generating community momentum.*

*Time permitting, participants could be invited to join a new group of their third topic preference.*

*If costs permit, participants would break for dinner and resume the next morning. If not, this is simply a short break.*

*Note: Topic hosts are not the same as Programme Hosts.*

*Think about taking a Group photo that can be shared with all participants.*

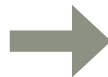
# The ABioSA Wayfinder

## Discovering socio-economic and bio-cultural pathways together

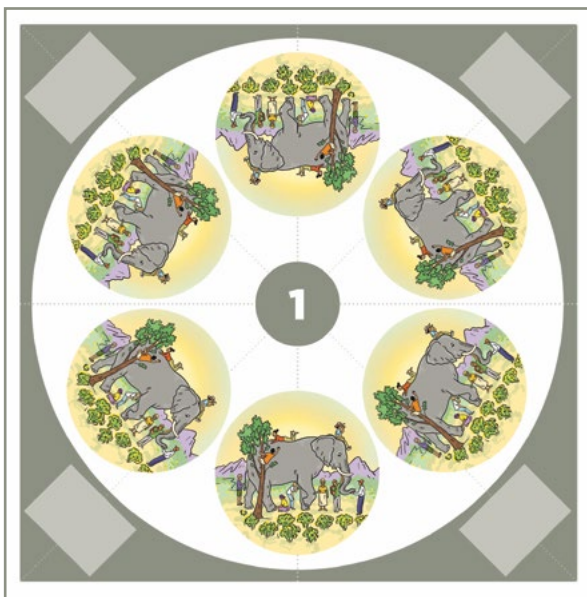
*Creating opportunities while Community is Forming*

The ABioSA Wayfinder<sup>7</sup> is a dialogue process which consists of the following three conversations:

### Conversation 1: Finding what matters most as individuals



### Conversation 2: Finding the Community Story



Conversation Table Mat 1

Conversation Table Mat 2

Conversation Menu Card

Conversation Menu Card

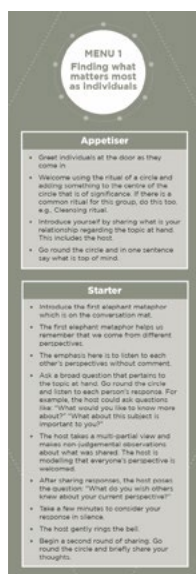
Deck of Glyph Cards

Deck of Glyph Cards



Deck of Strengths Cards

Quiet Insight Cards - Stages Set



7 The ABioSA Wayfinder is based on the methodology of the Quiet Insight Group. [www.QuietInsightGroup.com](http://www.QuietInsightGroup.com)



### Conversation 3: Finding how we move forward together



Conversation Table Mat 3 ▲

Conversation Menu Card ▶

Deck of Glyph Cards ▶



Quiet Insight Cards - Stages Set ▶



The Wayfinder can be used in two ways:

1. It can be used as a standalone tool when working with a small group of 4-8 individuals.
2. As an additional support when working with larger groups. The Wayfinder Conversation can be included into the Day Programme of each gathering.

In both cases, hosts need to attend the foundational training programme for co-hosts.

