

FACILITATION NOTES FOR LEARNING CIRCLE B:

INTERVIEWING THE COMMUNITY (2 hours, 45 minutes)

Session set-up:

- Outcomes/Agenda Transparencies
- Prepared newsprints for brainstorm activities (See Appendix A)

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand the components of an effective community interview.
- Understand the components of an effective focus group.
- Develop a draft of interview questions specific to their community project.
- Create a timeline and expected outcomes for their own interview process.
- Understand that interviewing is a tool for both the practitioner and the community to listen to each other and gain trust to begin their work together.

Time	Steps	Resources/ Materials
10 min. total	Session Set-Up	Transparency: Outcomes Agenda
2 min.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome participants to the learning circle. 2. Introduce the outcomes for the LC and go through the proposed agenda, asking for clarifications and questions. 3. Setting the context for the LC: beginning with a brainstorm exercise to ensure that all participants' needs and skill development questions are addressed during the next 2 hours and 45 minutes. 	<p>Newsprint:</p> <p>“LC Topic Needs” poster heading with blank body for facilitator’s notes</p>
8 min.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Facilitate idea generation from the large group. Say, “Now we are going to spend a few minutes brainstorming the skill development needs of this particular group. Every person brings a different skill set to the table, and to ensure that everyone has their questions answered and receives the information they want the most, let’s start by coming up with some topics you’d like to have covered in this session that relate to community interviewing and conducting focus groups.” 5. Take note of all the topics generated by the group on the newsprint on the easel or posted to the wall. Be sure to use different colored markers that are contrast with one another but are dark in tone for best visibility. 6. After 5-7 minutes, conclude the topic generation activity 	

Time	Steps	Resources/ Materials
	<p>by reading back the list of topics to the group, asking for additions or clarifications, and then posting the newsprint in a prominent location in the training room so that you may refer back to it periodically during the LC.</p>	
	<p><u>Note to Facilitator:</u></p> <p>As the facilitator, the Topic Generation activity is designed with the intention of letting the participants have a hand in steering the learning circle.</p> <p>This activity was added to ensure that every skill set was addressed and at least talked about to plan for participants with a varied level of experience with interviewing and focus groups.</p> <p>As the facilitator, if you do not feel that you have the knowledge or skills to answer all of the topics generated in the LC effectively, be sure to ask participants to discuss difficult topics in small groups for peer feedback, and to also refer participants to other resources, or otherwise offer to research a question and provide the answer to a participant at a later time.</p>	
15 min. total	Community Interviewing and Focus Groups Basics: Common Fears	Newsprint: 2-4 blank poster sheets
5 min.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Segue into a discussion of the participants' previous exposure to the concept and practice of community assessment. 2. Ask, "What is 'community assessment' and why is it important to community-based work?" Popcorn out responses for a few moments. 3. Facilitate a short discussion of the real experiences the LC participants have had with conducting community assessment so far. 4. Next, facilitate a brainstorm activity around common fears of Interviewers and Interviewees. 5. Set up an easel or post newsprint to a visible wall beforehand. Prepare three newsprints with the following headings: Fears of Interviewers, Fears of Interviewees, Limits and Benefits. 6. Start with the fears of interviewers. Ask, "What might be something an interviewer fears about conducting an 	

Time	Steps	Resources/ Materials
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I might be embarrassed about the topic. • My community might not approve of what I'm talking about. • I am shy and don't want to be interviewed in a group. • My interviewer probably has a hidden agenda. 	
20 min. total	Community Interviewing and Focus Groups Basics: Nuts and Bolts	Newsprint: Focus Groups and Interviews how-to
10 min.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain that during the next 20 minutes, participants will receive a lot of information about what community interviews and focus groups are, participate in a group brainstorm, and then talk about etiquette points. 2. Starting first with Community Interviewing, unveil the "How To...Plan an Interview" newsprint (<i>See Appendix A for examples</i>). 3. The newsprint is separated into three sections: (1) Participants; (2) Planning; and (3) Logistics. Start by asking for any participants with experience conducting interviews to offer their thoughts. Then, proceed as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Participants – Deciding who to interview and how many interviews to conduct. Discuss stakeholder identification and ask for responses from those who have already interviewed on how best to select interviewees, group interviews v. one-on-one interviews, etc. Discuss scheduling interviews (on the interviewees' turf or yours, discuss) and then the importance of professionalism through confirming the appointment. b. Planning – discuss development of outcomes (what is it that you want to achieve by interviewing this person or people; what will change or be different about your project because of this?), how to develop the right questions to ask so that your outcomes are achieved; and what is the overall purpose of your project and how to explain to an interviewee how they fit into the overall picture. c. Logistics – for interviews, these can be minimal, depending on how formal or informal the occasion. 	Newsprint: How To...Plan an Interview

Time	Steps	Resources/ Materials
	<p>Choosing where/when, then figuring out how to handle recording or notetaking responsibilities (if recording, getting permission; if notetaking, ensuring you have the skills and abilities necessary to take accurate notes; if weak in this area, arranging for a notetaker but again asking for permission); and planning ahead for reporting out – where will the interview be published, how, when, and how will the interviewee access the final product; if not published, what will become of the answers; providing for confidentiality and informed consent.</p> <p>4. Next moving on to Focus Groups, unveil the “How To...Plan a Focus Group” newsprint (<i>See Appendix A for examples</i>).</p> <p>5. The newsprint is separated into three sections: (1) Participants; (2) Planning; and (3) Logistics. Start by asking for any participants with experience conducting focus groups to offer their thoughts. Then, proceed as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Participants – deciding who to select and how many focus groups to develop. Remember to refer to the definition of a focus group (see Facilitator’s Note below). Discuss the etiquette around inviting participants, and confirming their participation in a timely manner. Refer back to the earlier stakeholders, discussion for selecting participants. b. Planning – because focus groups are much more specific in their intention, developing the right outcomes is very important – what will be achieved after the focus group is finished, how does the information gathered change the project or affect the community? Then developing the questions that will help achieve those outcomes. What are the main purposes behind the focus group and how to convey that to participants? c. Logistics – providing a skilled facilitator is of primary importance, and stressing that participants in the LC might not be the best choice for facilitating, and that their role may be to recruit a skilled facilitator to take on that responsibility. Making plans for recording and notetaking so that the focus group is properly documented, then providing for a way to analyze and transcribe the data collected, and finally, how and where to 	<p>Newsprint: How To...Plan a Focus Group</p>

Time	Steps	Resources/ Materials
10 min.	<p>report out the information and how to respect confidentiality while doing so.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Answer any other questions about the nuts and bolts of the two types of interviewing before moving into a quick brainstorm on the benefits and limitations of both interview types. 7. Ask participants to first think about focus groups. Ask, “What are the benefits of utilizing a focus group as an assessment tool?” List responses on the newsprint. 8. Next, ask participants, “What are the limitations of utilizing focus groups as an assessment tool?” List responses on the newsprint. 9. In the event of fatigue on the part of participants, or time constraints, you can verbally facilitate a similar discussion about the benefits and limitations of community interviews as assessment tools, without listing answers on the newsprint. 10. Clarify any questions, and then move into a short discussion about etiquette points – the Do’s and Don’ts of interviewing and conducting focus groups. Briefly review the Do’s and Don’ts on the transparency and ask for questions. 	<p>Newsprint: Blank paper with heading “Benefits/Limits”</p> <p>Transparency: Interviewing Etiquette</p>
	<p><u>Note to Facilitator:</u></p> <p>For the purposes of this learning circle, it helps to utilize a common definition of both terms. For this LC, utilize the following definitions, as written by the University of Kansas Community Toolbox (CTB):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Interview:</i> A conversation with a purpose. • <i>Focus Group:</i> A small-group discussion guided by a trained leader. It is used to learn more about opinions on a designated topic, and then to guide future action. 	
35 min. total	Planning Interviews and Focus Groups: Developing Outcomes and Questions	
	1. Explain that for the next 15 minutes, participants will be	

Time	Steps	Resources/ Materials
15 min.	<p>working in small groups of three to help each other start designing their interview or focus group process.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Utilizing the framework included in their participants' packet and put up on the transparency screen, participants will be developing a plan for their own projects on the following criteria: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Overall Objectives – deciding on the purpose of their interview or focus groups. b. Identifying the Audience – who are the participants and what are their community roles. c. Developing Outcomes – what will be different or changed about the project, the participant, or the community as a result of the interview or focus group. d. Information – what kind of information will help make that outcome true – this is a brainstorm exercise that will help LC participants begin to develop their interview or focus group questions. 3. Divide the number of LC participants by three, and that is the number of small groups that should form. Ask participants to count off by that number, or utilize another creative way of separating participants into groups they otherwise might not form. 4. When the groups are formed, ask them to find a comfortable place to meet for the next 35 minutes as they <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Spend 15 minutes planning their interviews or focus groups using the framework given above and contained in their packets; and b. Spend 20 minutes developing their interview or focus group questions based on their planning framework. 5. Advise the LC participants that after they finish planning and developing their draft questions, they will get a 15 minute break and then the second half of the LC will be an opportunity for practicing their questions and receiving feedback from their peers. 6. Circulate through the groups as they work and provide assistance as needed, and announce the time remaining at 5 minute intervals. 	<p>Transparency: Framing the Interview</p>

Time	Steps	Resources/ Materials
	<p>Note to Facilitator:</p> <p>It is important to stress to LC participants that even if creating outlines and frameworks is not their usual style for planning their work, it can be a useful tool and for the purposes of this LC, it would be helpful for everyone to try out the method. Remind participants that once they return to their communities, they will probably have less time available for planning out their interviews, and the more time they spend on planning during the time given here, the better and sooner prepared they will be when they need to conduct their community assessment.</p> <p>Because this portion of the LC can also be the most distracting time for participants, it is helpful to have a few energizing activities prepared that are quick and easy to implement if attentions are running away with the group. Try to put items like Play-Doh, koosh balls, squeeze or tension balls, or other similar tactile objects on the tables. Also, it might be useful to do a little energizer activity between the Framework exercise and the Question Development exercise. It is up to the facilitator to read the group and decide how to proceed.</p>	
15 MINUTE BREAK		
60 min. total	Practice Conducting a Community Interview	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Set up the room during the break with places for all of the triads to sit in their small groups. 2. Bring participants' attention to the transparency screen to go over the schedule for the next hour. 3. Explain that this part of the LC is designed for participants to each have an opportunity to conduct an interview, play the role of interviewee, and observe the interviewer/interviewee dynamic for providing feedback. 4. Over the course of the hour, the participants will form new triads, different from the ones they worked with to plan their interviews, and will have the opportunity to try out their interview questions and receive feedback. Each participant will have 20 minutes in their round to do so. 5. Referring to the transparency, explain the following protocol: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Round One: 20 minutes – 3 minutes for the Interviewer to provide the Interviewee with the background of the role they will play in the interview so they can respond accordingly; 7 	<p>Transparency: Feedback Cycle and Practice Schedule</p>

Time	Steps	Resources/ Materials
	<p>minutes for A to interview B; 10 minutes for B and C to provide A with feedback about their delivery, etiquette, question quality, and overall impressions and ideas for improvement.</p> <p><i>Person A – Interviewer</i> <i>Person B – Interviewee</i> <i>Person C – Observer</i></p> <p>b. Round Two: 20 minutes – same as Round One, only with the roles switched: <i>Person B – Interviewer</i> <i>Person C – Interviewee</i> <i>Person A – Observer</i></p> <p>c. Round Three: 20 minutes – with roles as follows: <i>Person C – Interviewer</i> <i>Person A – Interviewee</i> <i>Person B - Observer</i></p> <p>6. Have LC participants get into new triads, either by counting off or by another creative method. Ask participants to choose a letter: A, B, or C – and to stick with that through the rounds for identification purposes.</p> <p>7. Begin the rounds. Set a timer and let the triads know the time left in 5 minute intervals.</p> <p>8. Circulate among the groups and provide assistance as necessary.</p> <p>9. After 20 minutes, announce the beginning of Round Two.</p> <p>10. After 20 more minutes, announce the beginning of Round Three.</p> <p>11. After Round Three has concluded, ask participants to come together for a final discussion and debrief of the activity, and to discuss carry forward ideas and action plans.</p>	
	<p><u>Note to Facilitator:</u></p> <p>Despite all your best efforts to keep all the participants on track with the timing of the rounds, one or two groups will inevitably move more quickly or slowly than the others. Careful time management on your part will help keep this from becoming a problem.</p> <p>If one or two groups are moving quickly and finish their</p>	

Time	Steps	Resources/ Materials
	<p>rounds before the other groups do, ask that group to create a poster on newsprint highlighting the key learnings their triad gained from the exercise. Let them know that when the group comes together again, they will be asked to present their learnings to the large group for discussion.</p>	<p>Blank newsprint and markers</p>
15 min. total	Close Out Session and Carry Forward Conversation	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bring participants back into the large group for the final discussion. 2. If there was a group or two that created a “Key Learnings” poster, ask them to stand and present their findings to the large group for discussion about what happened. 3. Move on to a short debrief discussion with all LC participants about how the activity worked for them, what happened, why it happened, if they have experienced the same habits or situations before, and what they will do differently now that they have had a chance to practice. 4. Spend the final 10 minutes of the LC facilitating a dialogue with participants about what they will do next with their interview drafts. 5. Ask, “When you get back to your service site on Monday morning, what will you do with this plan and your draft of questions?” 6. Use the responses to facilitate a discussion on action steps and applying what was learned in the session. 7. Ask participants to review the list of LC Topics that was generated at the beginning and check in on whether or not their questions or concerns were answered during the session. Ask peers to respond to a particular topic if they want to, and then make time to meet with any participants afterward who have further questions that time doesn’t allow to answer. 8. Conclude by reminding participants that it’s always a great idea to have a key informant or “expert” look over their draft questions before starting an interview or focus group process, just to ensure that all of the nuances do not offend the target audience or to make sure that the right questions are being asked. 9. Thank participants as they are leaving. 	

Learning Circle “B” – NEWSPRINTS TO PREPARE

Section One

1. Blank newsprints with headings for participant brainstorming:
 - a. *LC Topic Needs*
 - b. *Fears of Interviewers*
 - c. *Fears of Interviewees*

2. Prepared newsprints:

- a. *How To...Plan an Interview*

How To...Plan an Interview
1. <i>Participants – Who? How Many?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Select✓ Schedule✓ Confirm
2. <i>Planning</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ <i>Outcomes</i>✓ <i>Questions</i>✓ <i>Purposes</i>
3. <i>Logistics</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ <i>Where/When</i>✓ <i>Recording/Notetaking</i>✓ <i>Reporting Out</i>

- b. *How To...Plan a Focus Group*

How To...Plan a Focus Group
1. <i>Participants – Who? How Many FGs?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Select✓ Invite✓ Confirm
2. <i>Planning</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ <i>Outcomes</i>✓ <i>Questions</i>✓ <i>Purposes</i>
3. <i>Logistics</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ <i>Facilitation</i>✓ <i>Recording/Notetaking</i>✓ <i>Analyzing and Transcribing</i>✓ <i>Reporting Out</i>