

Video Worksheet 7: Building community consensus

[Watch video here](#)



Consensus is when everybody involved in a process generally agrees with the decisions or ideas of the group. A facilitator can support building consensus around how to address harms to children by enabling slow, patient community dialogue within subgroups and providing feedback on key points to the different groups. This process should never be rushed. In this way, different subgroups can take into account the diverse viewpoints and eventually come together around the priority harm to children and collective actions.

Enabling a community consensus building process requires a good understanding of local power dynamics. Understanding local power dynamics will help you to understand who the main influencers in a community are, who may feel confident speaking up, who may feel reluctant to participate, and how participants might shy away from disagreeing with people who are more powerful. Understanding these things and finding strategies to deal with them is essential for facilitating constructive community dialogues and building consensus.

Facilitators also need to understand how to be respectful in a particular context. This includes making sure that everyone can participate in discussions, avoiding conflict, and providing feedback on the different discussions to the community.

Learn more

The term 'community' can suggest a group of equal community members. However, within each community there are significant differences of power and privilege. This can influence how facilitators should approach building consensus in the community. Learn how to identify these dynamics in community work. [Read FAC 8: Understanding power dynamics in the community](#) to learn more.

Reflect on your own power as facilitator of this process. In the process of learning about power dynamics, it is also important to think critically about your own power and position relative to community members. You may want to read [FAC 2. What Do I Bring to the Community](#) and reflect on how community members might see you. Also consider whether you are:

- Intentionally or unintentionally favouring particular people or subgroups,
- Observing but also perhaps judging,
- Keeping too much power by making yourself too central in the dialogue process.

Considering these aspects of your own position of power is an important ongoing process alongside learning about local community power dynamics.



Discussion and self-reflection

1. Think of a community consensus building process you have been involved with. Write down some key notes on the process. Is there anything you would do differently or the same next time?