



CONVENE & CONNECT

Convening is the art of bringing the community (of practice) and relevant stakeholders together to connect members and engage them in meaningful conversations. The diversity of a community and a risk-free and inclusive environment help develop conversations and engage members.

Start small, create the conducive environment to convene and network people.

Proper community management to ensure diversity of views, prioritize equity for access to opportunities and resource and where everyone feels they belong and can actively participate.

Diversified, equity and inclusiveness environment where there is diverse representation, fairness and everyone feel valued and heard.

Activities oriented to developing the practice – Practice Matrix

WHAT

Practice Matrix

In some ways, a practice matrix is a more disciplined and systematic version of a booth gallery. It is a way to share what everyone is doing and how well.

WHY

To systematically get a synoptic view of how everyone in a community or across communities approaches a particular challenge and explore what to do about it.

HOW

We start by brainstorming specific questions that participants have about each other's contexts, projects, challenges, and aspirations: What do you need to know about each other systematically in regard to the issue at hand? This initial brainstorming can be done as a whole group, in affinity breakout groups, as a café, or even in advance by a small group.

Sample format for a practice matrix

Questions for each other	Project 1 answers	Project 2 answers	Project 3 answers	... Project X answers	Row analysis across projects
Question 1					
Question 2					
Question 3					
... Question Y					

After this discussion, we create a big matrix on a wall or on an online spreadsheet. In the first column, we write the questions that came out of the brainstorm. The rows thus represent each question. The other columns represent each participant or their team/organization. All participants fill in their own column, answering the question(s) on each row.

Once the matrix is filled out, we invite the community to reflect on the synoptic view it offers. First, if participants are not very familiar with each other's context, we ask each of them to comment on their own column, so people gain a coherent sense of each context. Then we put people in pairs or small groups to analyse rows. They inspect the row they are given and look for patterns, overlaps, or gaps. They report back how the community as a whole currently addresses that particular question, where there are gaps and opportunities, and what new joint learning is possible. We often include an extra column in the matrix to post the results of this row analysis right on the matrix.

Reflecting on the row analysis often leads to the creation of small practice groups to explore how the community could make progress on the issue.



Using colours on the Practice Matrix