



## 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 – After Action Review

#### WHAT

##### **After Action Review**

An after action review (AAR) is a tool to evaluate and capture lessons learned. It takes the form of a quick and informal discussion at the end of a project or at a key stage within a project or activity. It enables the individuals involved to:

- review what has happened
- summarise new knowledge

decide what action should be taken next.

#### WHY

AAR provides a platform for team to discuss what happened and why; and what to do differently the next time. By formalising the way knowledge is extracted and recorded, it can readily be made available to colleagues and other teams facing similar challenges.

#### HOW

An AAR involves major team members and is conducted as soon as possible after the specified stage, project or event. It is structured as an informal brainstorming session to build consensus on the following questions:

- What was supposed to happen?
- What actually happened?
- Why were there differences?

- What did we learn?
- What do we do the next time?

You may want to ask some more probing questions in these areas:

- What did we set out to do? What were our objectives and deliverables? What did we actually achieve?
- What went well? What could have gone better? Why did it happen like that?
- What did we do? What would we do differently next time? How does this affect the next stage?
- What needs to be disseminated to whom and how?

It is important to create an atmosphere of trust and openness, and to emphasise that this is a learning event, not a performance evaluation. It is also important to focus on improvement and to ensure that any mistakes made or poor practice identified can be turned into a learning opportunity.

The review outcomes are normally captured during the session, on flip chart paper or electronically. This will depend on who the information is intended for and how it will be used. By recording and storing the outcomes of the AAR on an intranet or website, those involved can refer back to what they have learned.

The material can also be shared with those who may benefit from the acquired learning, particularly those who are working on a similar project or activity.

An independent facilitator may be appointed to help draw out answers, insights and issues, and to ensure that everyone contributes. Alternatively, the AAR could be facilitated by someone from the project team.