
Ethics for Humanitarian Innovation

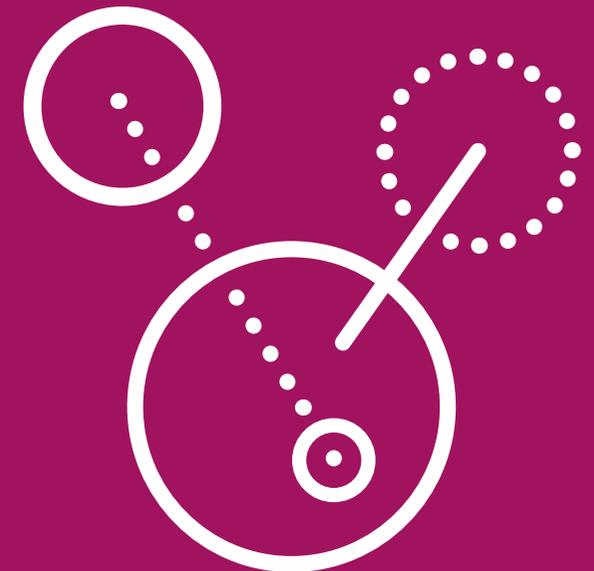
Toolkit

Created by

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Virtuous Circle

How will you support ethical humanitarian innovation across your work?



30–45 minutes



A4 Print



Focus:
Organisations and partnerships



Use with:

- Values Clarification
- Ethics For Action
- REACH

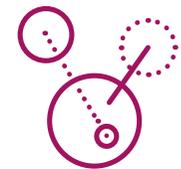
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Introduction

The virtuous circle of organisational ethics

In ethics, a virtuous circle occurs when ethical acts positively reinforce future ethical acts. The Virtuous Circle tool helps identify policies, processes and people that support ethical reflection or decision-making within an organisation or team – reinforcing the virtuous circle.

The tool highlights three foundational areas that can influence your organisation's 'ethical climate':

- Ethical resources
- Ethical practices
- Ethical expertise

These three areas create the foundations for how people respond when facing ethical issues. The tool also asks vital implementation questions to prompt discussion.

This exercise is intended to help you mainstream ethical consideration in your organisation, through both formal and informal structures. It should also serve to help create a system of accountability for innovators and oversight of innovation projects.

By regularly reviewing these **implementation questions** and updating the three **foundational areas** (through ensuring adequate resourcing, reviewing practices, and developing expertise through training etc), an innovation project can be sure of a strong ethical base.

Understanding the tool

The What, Why, Who and When will help you understand the purpose of the tool.

The **step-by-step guide** on page 3 and **Guidance notes** on page 4 will lead you through the process of effectively applying this tool to your team or organisation..

For the conceptual background and development process of this tool see page 21 of the **Background paper**.

What: A set of questions to review and address periodically, to ensure that organisational plans, policies and processes are grounded in principles of ethical humanitarian innovation, and contribute to a virtuous circle.

Why: Ethical issues are best addressed in an environment where transparent and accountable systems exist. Teams and organisations can work proactively to establish structures and climate that foster ethical innovation.

Who: The points raised by the tool are relevant to all innovation stakeholders working in any capacity around innovations. This includes members of innovation teams and their partners, as well as organisational leaders and decision makers.

When: Ideally, the questions in this tool would be addressed before embarking on **Ethics For Activities** tool for a specific project, and then periodically reviewed once innovation-related work has begun.

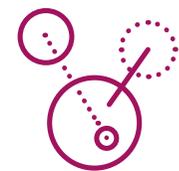
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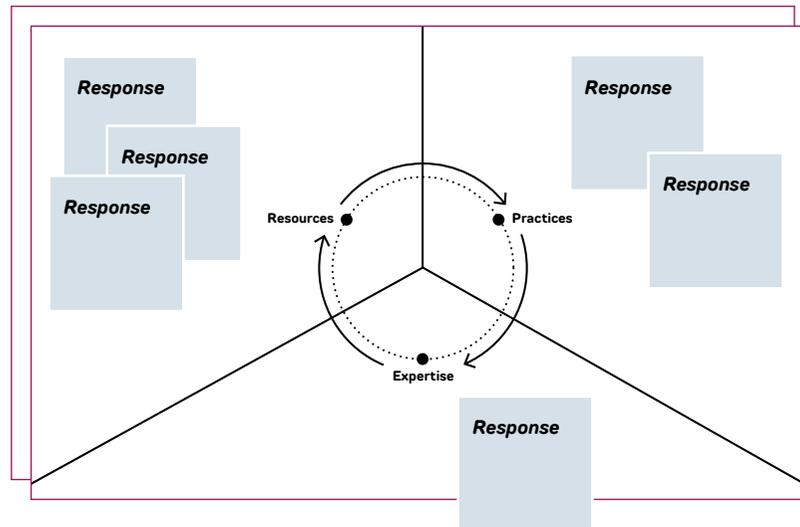
- 1. Start by asking an **open question** from the **resources column** in the **Guidance notes**. For example:

What high-level policies do you have in place that might guide ethical decision-making?

2. Capture each response on a sticky note and place them in the **Resources** section on the canvas. Respond to all the questions that are relevant to your team or organisation.

3. If you get stuck or need some inspiration, pick a related question from the **checklist** in the **Guidance notes**. For example:

Do you have a set of core values?



4. Once you've completed the **open questions** for the **Resources** section, repeat for the **Practice** section, this time using the **open** and **checklist questions** from the **practice column** of the **Guidance notes**. For example:

How do you facilitate timely access to resources that support ethical innovation practices?

7. Set a specific schedule for revisiting this tool, and assign the individuals responsible for organising and participating. Document your discussions and use these as a starting point for the next time you use the tool.

6. Once you have responded to all the questions that are relevant to your team or organisation, revisit the **checklist questions** on page 4. Use the responses on your canvas to think about these questions:

**What are you missing?
What do you commit to putting in place to build an ethical climate?**

5. Finally, complete the Expertise section using the **open** and **checklist questions** from the **expertise column** in the **Guidance notes**. For example:

Who can you draw upon to support discussions and deliberations around ethical issues?

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When using or facilitating this tool, start with the **open questions** to identify any relevant resources, practices and expertise that you have in place to help create a strong ethical basis for your work – and to identify what is missing. Then use the **checklist questions** to spark further discussions of what you need to have in place.

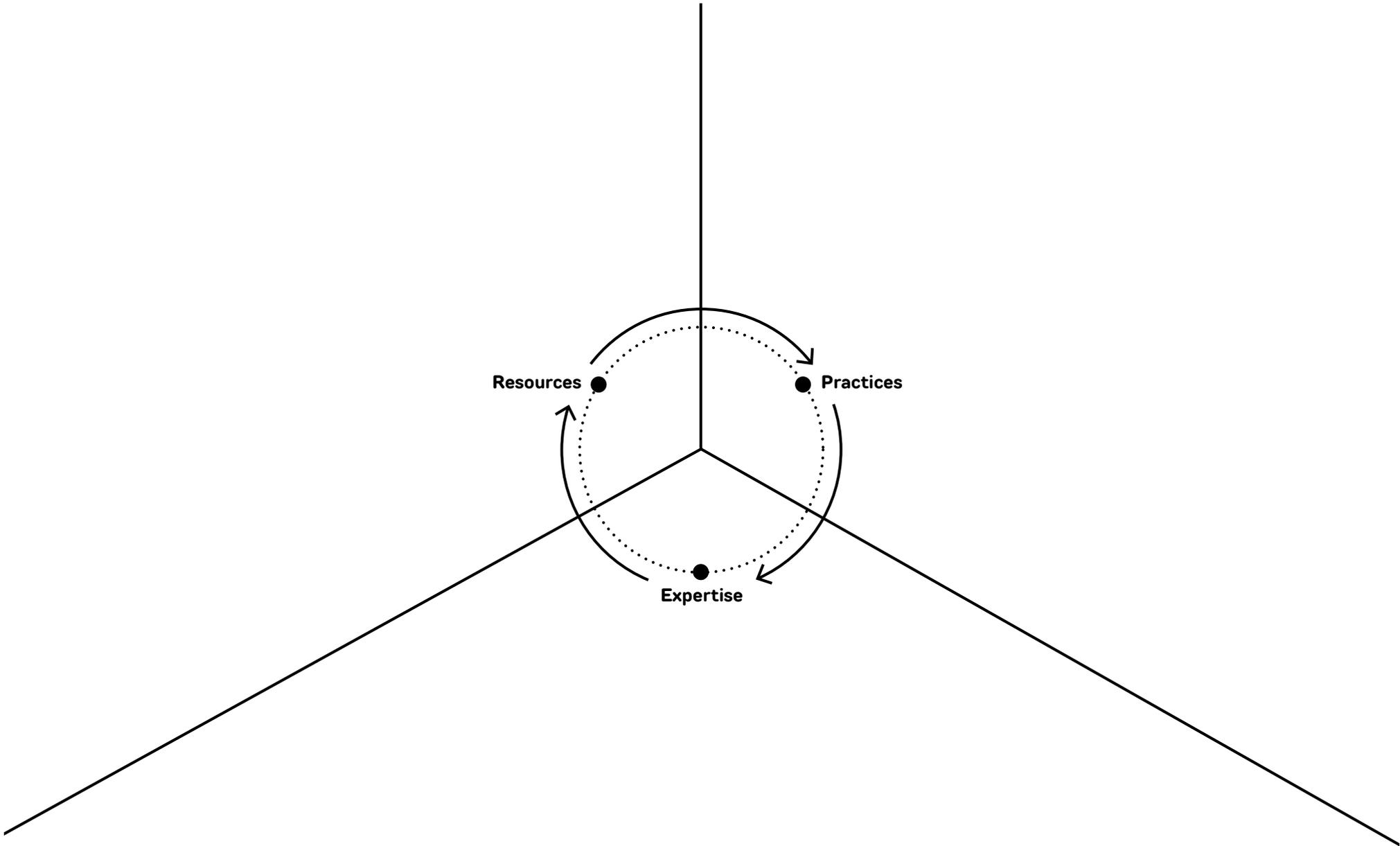
	Resources	Practice	Expertise
Open questions	<p>What high-level policies do you have in place that might guide ethical decision-making?</p> <p>What other organisational documents might have ethical dimensions?</p>	<p>How do you facilitate timely access to resources that support ethical innovation practices?</p> <p>How do you document experiences and maintain institutional memory about ethical issues?</p> <p>How do you learn from ethical challenges, and share what is learned with others?</p>	<p>Who can you draw upon to support discussions and deliberations around ethical issues?</p>
Checklist questions	<p>Do you have a set of core values?</p> <p>Do you have a code of conduct?</p> <p>Do you have a policy on conflicts of interest or who you will accept funding from?</p> <p>Do you have guidance for data protection and stewardship?</p> <p>Do you have resources in place to support staff in navigating ethical issues and facilitating ethical practices?</p> <p>Do you have clearly defined accountability commitments that link to your core values?</p>	<p>Do you have regular, protected time to discuss issues of concern and reflect on the ethics of your actions?</p> <p>Do you have an ethics review process that project stakeholders can access?</p> <p>Do you have a system to report ethical issues related to your project?</p> <p>Do you have processes in place to solicit and respond to feedback, including complaints and recommendations, from end-users?</p>	<p>Do you have specific individuals or groups, such as ethics advisors or a review committee, that support ethical reflection?</p> <p>Do you have someone allocated to manage ethical concerns, support ethical practice, and document learning?</p>

- Introduction
- Understanding the tool
- Using the tool
- Guidance notes**
- Canvas

Note: If you don't have a facilitator, nominate one person in your team to lead the use of this tool.



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Ethics For Activities

How will you support ethical humanitarian innovation in every activity?



45–60 minutes



A4 Print



Focus:
Project planning



Use with:

- Virtuous Circle
- Values Clarification
- Foresighting
- Case studies

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Introduction

Ethical considerations for every activity

Ensuring that ethical considerations are taken into account from the outset of an innovation journey, and attended to as it progresses, is essential. By drawing attention to salient features of the journey and helping teams anticipate potential ethical issues, this tool supports the articulation of a well-considered and ethically sensitive innovation design.

The questions included in this tool should act as a push toward clarifying key issues related to engagement, communication, accountability, fair practices, and preparation for managing uncertainties. Some questions will spark discussion and encourage shared decision-making. Others will need to be revisited and revised based on new information and evolving circumstances. They are meant to draw attention to ethically-significant issues, and can act as an aide-mémoire for your team to ensure vital questions are not overlooked.

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What: A suite of questions that correspond to different sets of activities along an innovation journey, and some that span its entirety. The questions promote planning and reflection to develop ethically robust projects.

Why: There are both cross-cutting and specific ethical considerations for different activities along an innovation journey. This tool invites preparation, reflection and articulation of how they will be addressed at each stage to help build a project that aligns with articulated values.

Who: This tool can be used by all project stakeholders. It is best used as part of an inclusive process involving members of communities affected by crises.

When: Ideally at the outset of any new phase of work. This tool should be revisited regularly throughout the innovation journey.

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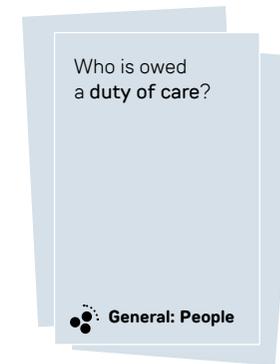


Toolkit

Using the tool

- 1. Start by printing pages 6–14 and cutting out the individual cards. Identify the activity cards that best match the **activity** you are interested in (Pilot, Scale, and so on). Put the rest to one side.
2. **Sort your chosen cards in the order that you wish to address them.** You might lay them out for all to see in order of most important to least, or leave them in a pile with the card you wish to address first face-up on the top of the pile.
3. Read the first card – your highest priority – aloud to the participants and place it in the **Questions** field on the canvas. (If you can't decide on a priority, start with a **General** question).

Activity questions			
What is at stake and for whom? General: Process	Who will benefit from scaling, and will these benefits be shared fairly? Scale	How will you ensure that any decision to stop the pilot won't result in harm? Pilot	
Response	Response	Response	Response



4. Each canvas is designed to accommodate four questions. Place the question card above one of the four **Response** fields and capture your response in the space provided.
5. **Repeat for each card** in your priority decks.
6. Start a new canvas for each set of four cards.

Before moving on, consider **taking a photo** of the canvas you've just completed for your records.

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When using or facilitating this tool it is essential to recognise that teams are likely to be engaged in multiple activities at any one time and will likely move back and forth between them. Some teams may want to focus their attention on just one activity or insist that their work does not face ethical challenges. In these cases, facilitators should use the card deck – and case studies – to encourage a healthy discussion about the different ethical challenges a project might face.

Using the cards

1. Print

Print pages 6–14 on card, rather than paper, if possible. Paper is fine, but shuffling will be more difficult and the cards will tear more easily.

2. Cut

Cut out each card with scissors, craft knife/ruler, or whatever is available.

3. Use

Collect all cards of the same type (identified by the **action indicator** in the box at the top of each card); you should arrive at seven piles. Place them all face-up, ready to be used by the participants.

4. Add

Encourage the team to add their own ethical questions on the blank cards, and include these in your discussions.

Anatomy of a card

What is at stake **The question**
and for whom?

 **General: Process** **Activity indicator**

This is the primary way to group cards. There are seven activity sets: one for each innovation activity described in the Humanitarian Innovation Guide and one general set divided into people and process-focus.

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Note: If you don't have a facilitator, nominate one person in your team to lead the use of this tool.



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Activity questions

Response

Response

Response

Response

<p>Who stands to benefit?</p> <p> General: People</p>	<p>Who is being heard and who is not being heard?</p> <p> General: People</p>	<p>Who is accountable and to whom?</p> <p> General: People</p>	<p>Who is owed a duty of care?</p> <p> General: People</p>	<p>What is at stake and for whom?</p> <p> General: People</p>
<p>What risks are being created and for whom?</p> <p> General: People</p>	<p>What are the expressed needs and goals of the community affected by crisis?</p> <p> General: People</p>	<p>What are the costs and benefits of acting now?</p> <p> General: People</p>	<p>What is the best way to invest the resources you have available?</p> <p> General: Process</p>	<p>How are power dynamics considered and accounted for?</p> <p> General: Process</p>



How can you ensure **meaningful collaboration** with the community you seek to serve and other stakeholders?

 **General: Process**

How will you **learn** from what goes wrong or doesn't work?

 **General: Process**

How will you **monitor, mitigate and respond** to ethical issues and risks?

 **General: Process**

How will you ensure **equity and fairness** in the distribution of benefits, costs and risks?

 **General: Process**

How will you **monitor progress** against objectives?

 **General: Process**

How will you ensure **inclusive practices**?

 **General: Process**

How will you ensure **responsiveness** to the needs and demands of the community you seek to serve?

 **General: Process**

How will you work to support and maintain **equitable partnerships**?

 **General: Process**

How will you **communicate** your ethical approach with others?

 **General: Process**

How will you **manage expectations** of the community you seek to serve and other stakeholders?

 **General: Process**



How will you consider issues of **fairness in participation**?

 **General: Process**

How will you ensure you always **respect** the dignity of people affected by crises?

 **General: Process**

What **permissions or consent** are needed for a given activity?

 **General: Process**

How will you assess the likelihood of your ethical strategies being **successful and sustainable**?

 **General: Process**

How might your **principles** inform your choices, designs and strategies?

 **General: Process**

How will you evaluate the **trade-off between risks/potential harms** and benefits at each stage?

 **General: Process**

How will issues of ownership, authorship and **intellectual property (IP)** be managed?

 **General: Process**

 **General: Process**



How will you ensure your problem identification process is appropriately **robust and responsive** to the community you are working with?

Recognition

How will you manage any **conflicts of interest** in prioritising and selecting problems?

Recognition

Who will be **included** in the identification of problems?

Recognition

What are your **criteria** for prioritising and selecting problems to respond to?

Recognition

How will you ensure your problem identification process is **inclusive** of groups that are disproportionately excluded?

Recognition

What is your plan for identifying **priority problems** to respond to?

Recognition



What is your plan for **identifying existing solutions** or ideas?

 **Search**

How will you **identify others** who may already have pursued this path and developed a solution?

 **Search**

Who will you **engage in your search** for solutions or ideas?

 **Search**

How will you assess whether an identified solution **can or should be sourced locally**?

 **Search**

How will you assess whether a solution is **a good fit** for the problem at hand?

 **Search**



<p>Who do you need to involve in adapting the solution to the context?</p> <p> Adaptation</p>	<p>What aspects of the proposed solution, its management and the setting for deployment require attention?</p> <p> Adaptation</p>	<p>What adaptations might be required to ensure accessibility and inclusivity?</p> <p> Adaptation</p>	<p>What might be displaced if a new solution is implemented in the context?</p> <p> Adaptation</p>	
<p>How will you assess relevance of the solution to the context?</p> <p> Adaptation</p>	<p>How will you take into account the particular needs of the population affected in adapting the solution?</p> <p> Adaptation</p>	<p>How will you identify any new risks created with the application of a new solution to the context?</p> <p> Adaptation</p>		



Who are the **stakeholders** that should be involved in this process?

Who are you designing for, and how will you make **access** to the solution equitable?

How will you ensure **alignment of your intentions** with the aims and priorities of your organisation or other stakeholders?

 **Invention**

 **Invention**

 **Invention**

How will you ensure the invention process and resulting solution is **responsive** to needs and demands?

How will you determine whether the invention process and resulting solution requires **independent ethical review**?

How will you determine whether or not **elements of a solution** might already exist?

 **Invention**

 **Invention**

 **Invention**



What measures are in place to **reduce the risk** of harm and to manage any instances that might occur?

 Pilot

How will you determine whether implementation of your innovation means an **independent ethical review** is warranted?

 Pilot

How will you manage expectations in relation to the **uncertainties inherent in the pilot** as well as its temporary nature?

 Pilot

How will you **evaluate the pilot** and ensure learning and feedback is generated and used in decision making?

 Pilot

How will you ensure that any decision to stop the pilot **won't result in harm**?

 Pilot

How will you **ensure appropriate research methods**, consent processes and confidentiality measures are being applied?

 Pilot



What will be the **criteria** for making a decision on whether to scale?



What level of scale is **appropriate and relevant** for this solution?



How will you evaluate the **trade-off between risks/potential harms and benefits** in scaling the innovation?



How will you **evaluate the success** of your scaling strategy?



How will you determine your **scaling strategy**?



Who will decide that scaling is justified and lead on your scaling strategy?



Who will benefit from scaling, and will those benefits be shared fairly?



Values Clarification

What key values will you prioritise and operationalise?



15–30 minutes



A4 Print



Focus:
Stakeholder alignment



Use with:

- Foresighting
- REACH
- Case studies

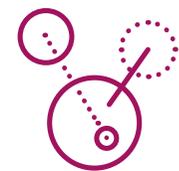
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Clarifying your values

The Values Clarification tool will help you articulate and refine what really matters along your innovation journey. It encourages a clear, actionable, consistent language around values; language that will be used and understood by every member of the team.

Articulating your values helps your team (and others) to distinguish right actions from wrong, and understand what is truly important in the development of your innovation. In using this tool, you should reflect upon and discuss the values you have identified for your project, and write a short statement about why each one matters. This helps you to express your values in terms that are relevant to your work, and meaningful to your team and other project stakeholders.

You might draw on resources such as organisational resources or guidance documents, or guidelines specific to your particular area of innovation (eg, digital innovation) in creating your values. The **Guidance notes** on page 4 also provide insights into some of the most common values we have identified in humanitarian innovation. It is not an exhaustive list, but might offer some inspiration.

The values you identify as you use this tool can be transferred to the **Foresighting** tool. Meanwhile, the responses to the **Ethics For Activities** tool can help you identify ethical challenges in the **Foresighting** tool. The Values Clarification tool can also be used as an articulation of project values within the REACH tool. This will help you examine how values may be in tension with one another, or with the values of other stakeholders.

Understanding the tool

The What, Why, Who and When will help you understand the purpose of the tool.

The **step-by-step guide** on page 3 and **Guidance notes** on page 4 will lead you through the process of effectively applying this tool to your team or organisation.

For the conceptual background and development process of this tool see page 21 of the **Background paper**.

What: Helps teams to identify and clarify the ethical values they want to uphold in their project. The tool helps teams to develop a shared articulation of these values, using accessible, actionable and consistent language.

Why: Clear, common values are the foundation of project-design decisions and of value-sensitive or values-based approaches. Having values specific to a project can help bring abstract concepts into operational reality, and can foster closer collaboration and discussion between project partners and others.

Who: This tool can be used by humanitarian innovation teams and their partners and collaborators, and to support engagement with members of communities affected by crisis.

When: The tool is most relevant in the earlier phases of a project. It can also be used later and in combination with the **Foresighting** or **REACH** tools.

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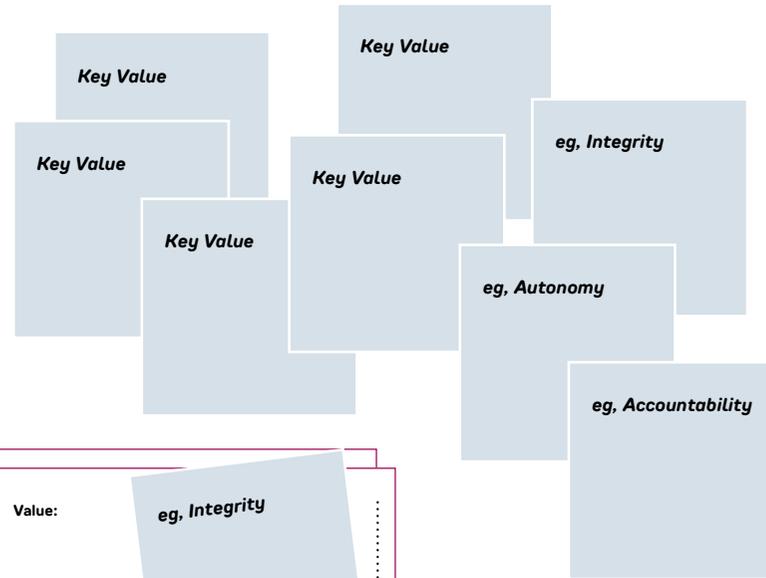
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Using the tool

- 1. Begin by capturing values on pieces of paper or sticky notes (one value per note), drawing from organisational guidance or common values from the particular domain of innovation. If you do not have any identified values, use the table of suggested values in the **Guidance notes** as a starting point. A brainstorming exercise (see **Guidance notes**) will help you to come up with your own.
2. Arrange your values face-up on a flat surface.
3. Identify your values and consider how they might relate to one another. Try to identify six that you'd like to develop into a statement.



<p>Value:</p> <p><i>[example] Key Value</i></p> <p>Value statement:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>	<p>Value:</p> <p><i>[example] Integrity</i></p> <p>Value statement:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>	<p>Value:</p> <p><i>eg, Integrity</i></p> <p>Value statement:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>
<p>Value:</p> <p><i>Key Value</i></p> <p>Value statement:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>	<p>Value:</p> <p>Value statement:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>	<p>Value:</p> <p>Value statement:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>

4. Move the sticky note to the space on the value canvas, or write the value directly on the canvas.
5. Now describe how and why this value is important for your team and for the work you are doing. Repeat this step until you have filled the page, or when you are satisfied that you have captured all your relevant value statements.

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Some participants/teams will find it easy to identify five or six values, while other groups may not. For those that struggle, consider a brainstorming exercise. Start by asking participants to generate their own priority values on sticky notes. What are the principles that guide their organisation or sector? What qualities do they consider important in their partners and colleagues? If they continue to struggle, offer some inspiration from the table below. All participants should be encouraged to prioritise their values. How they prioritise is up to them, but you might like to ask about project or organisational priorities or how their values might clash with one another, and which would take precedence.

Some common values in humanitarian innovation projects

Accountability	Equity	Integrity	Trust	
Autonomy	Experimental rigour	Justice		
Collaboration	Honesty	Openness		
Dignity	Humility	Ownership		
Do no harm	Inclusivity	Sustainability		



Value suggestion

These values are only suggestions. Use these as inspiration for your own, or use your own if you already have them in place.

Blank fields

Space for your own project and organisational values.

You can cut out these values and place them on to the values canvas if you wish.

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Note: If you don't have a facilitator, nominate one person in your team to lead the use of this tool.



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Value:

Value:

Value:

Value statement:

Value statement:

Value statement:

Value:

Value:

Value:

Value statement:

Value statement:

Value statement:

Foresighting

What ethical challenges do you anticipate and how will you address them?



30–45 minutes



A4 Print



Focus:
Project planning
and risk mitigation



Use with:
– Values Clarification
– Ethics For Activities

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Planning for the future

The Foresighting tool helps teams to structure a system of accountability before decision-making begins, clearly linking the team's values – as identified in the **Values Clarification** tool – with an approach to mitigating ethical challenges (as defined below). This tool, and the resulting values-based strategy, can be revisited later in the innovation journey, when an ethical challenge has arisen and the strategy is successfully enacted.

If a decision made while facing an ethical challenge leads to a negative outcome, this tool can also be revisited to assess why that outcome may have transpired and to determine how the strategy can be adapted to mitigate future risks.

Most projects will face challenges that threaten or complicate a team's ability to complete their activities while remaining true to their values. These can be considered 'ethical challenges' if one of the following is true: A situation in which personal or institutional values are in tension or threatened, and 1) all options require sacrificing something of ethical significance; 2) there is uncertainty or disagreement about what the best course of action is, or 3) the ethically preferred option is clear but cannot be acted upon. Such challenges can result from external forces such as political instability, or internal forces like a communication breakdown with a community.

Example: One of your key project values is 'inclusion', so you have planned to form a representative advisory group as one of your project actions. However, you have identified that it might be difficult to engage with a particular marginalised group within the community. Your strategy should address this challenge.

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What: A tool that prompts anticipation of ethical challenges in three workable sections associated with planned project actions, and bases mitigation strategies in team values.

Why: Values need to be made explicit, and applied in a consistent and tangible way to the actions and activities within an innovation journey. This will help prepare teams with a system of decision-making that encourages accountability.

Who: This tool is best suited to humanitarian innovators, and may be used as a reference point in consultations with donor liaisons/grant managers.

When: This tool is most useful in the design phase of an innovation journey, when the problem and team have been defined, and there is a need to develop strategies for risk mitigation. It can be returned to at various points in the innovation journey, for example when an ethical challenge has been encountered and there is a need to confirm the effectiveness of the strategy, or to consider when it might be appropriate to make values-driven adaptations.

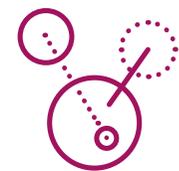
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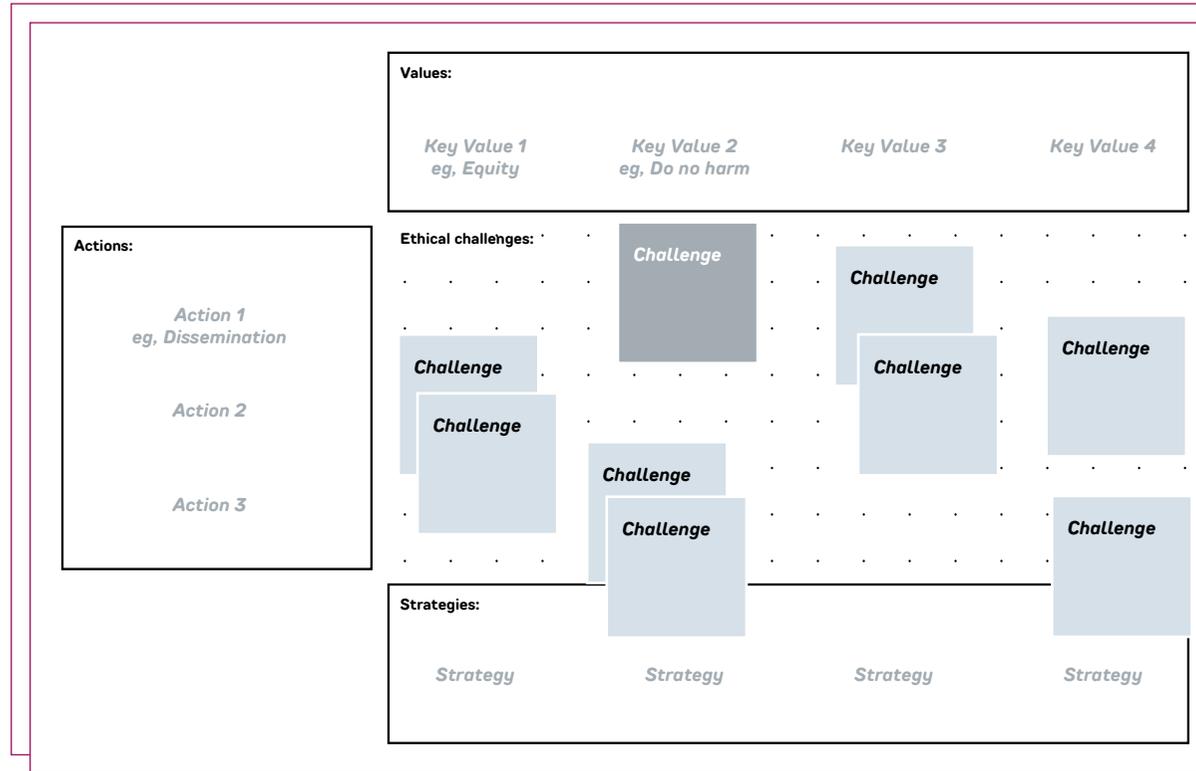
→ 1. Begin by capturing your first project or organisational value in the values field.. You can use the values identified through the Values Clarification tool, or draw from existing ones.

2. Now, identify your first project action.

3. Next, identify the anticipated **challenges** associated with the first project action and value. Responses from the **Ethics for Activities** tool may inform the challenges generated in this step.

The challenges fall at the intersection of an activity and a value.

Start by capturing as many challenges as you can think of, then sort them so that they line up with the corresponding activity and value, as shown in the example (the darker sticky note on the canvas relates to Action 1 and Value 2).



4. Finally, generate a **strategy of actionable items** in response to the anticipated challenges. This can be a sentence, paragraph or bullet points

Your strategy should resolve the challenges in a way that promotes the key values you have identified – ideally addressing a number of challenges to each value under a single strategy.

5. If **additional space** is required for further actions, you may connect additional template sheets or extend with blank paper and sticky notes.

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Page 3 gives instructions for how an innovation team should work through this exercise. The main steps are explained in more depth below:

Values	If the team has worked through the Values Clarification tool already, they should use the results of that discussion in the values field of the foresighting canvas. Other teams who may have well-established values already may not need the Values Clarification tool and simply add their own values .
Actions	In this section innovation teams must think about the specific project actions and/or tasks they will undertake. The actions do not need to be in chronological order, and do not need to span the entirety of the innovation journey (eg, all the actions could relate to piloting). However, the team will benefit from addressing the most complex and important actions – those they see as critical to the success of the innovation. The actions can be shared in as much, or as little detail as desired.
Anticipated challenges	<p>This section requires innovation teams to examine the project actions they have identified as being critical to the success of their innovation, and to consider the ethical challenges they may face while pursuing these actions. Responses from the Ethics for Activities tool may inform the challenges generated in this step.</p> <p>Once the teams have identified their anticipated challenges, and written these on sticky notes, they should arrange these in relation to the values and actions (sorting them into their corresponding rows and columns – see step 3 on page 3). The aim of this step is to link values and challenges to actions, and prioritise them – certain values may be more important to uphold with certain actions, or certain challenges may be applicable to more than one action.</p>
Values-driven strategy	This is the critical last step in linking the previous three sections. Innovation teams should consider each of the challenges in turn, and how they could adapt project plans to minimise or mitigate the anticipated ethical challenges. They should consider how the identified values could inform their responses.

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Note: If you don't have a facilitator, nominate one person in your team to lead the use of this tool.



Toolkit

Responding to an Ethical Challenge (REACH)

How should you respond to an immediate ethical challenge?



60–90 minutes



A4 Print



Focus:
Risk mitigation



Use with:
Foresighting

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Introduction

Responding quickly and responsibly to ethical challenges

REACH (Responding to an Ethical Challenge) helps teams work through ethically challenging situations and make considered decisions supported by clear ethical rationales. It supports a spirit of learning, accountability and improvement. Though designed for use as a team, it can also be used for individual reflection or training activities – for example, to analyse a case study (see the Case studies document for examples) – or for team debriefing after a challenging situation has passed. We recommend that teams document their process, the options and rationales considered and selected, and how the situation unfolded.

Understanding the tool

The What, Why, Who and When will help you understand the purpose of the tool.

The **step-by-step guide** on page 3 and **Guidance notes** on page 4 will lead you through the process of effectively applying this tool to your team or organisation.

What: A tool to structure team deliberation or individual reflection when confronted by an ethically challenging situation.

Why: Having a structured approach to respond to an ethical challenge supports well-considered decisions making based on clearly articulated ethical rationales.

Who: Humanitarian innovators, their partners, and communities affected by crisis.

When: At any point in an innovation process when the team encounters an ethically challenging situation, especially one they had not anticipated or one in which there is uncertainty or divergent views about how to respond.

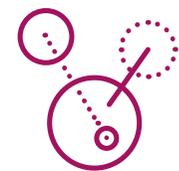
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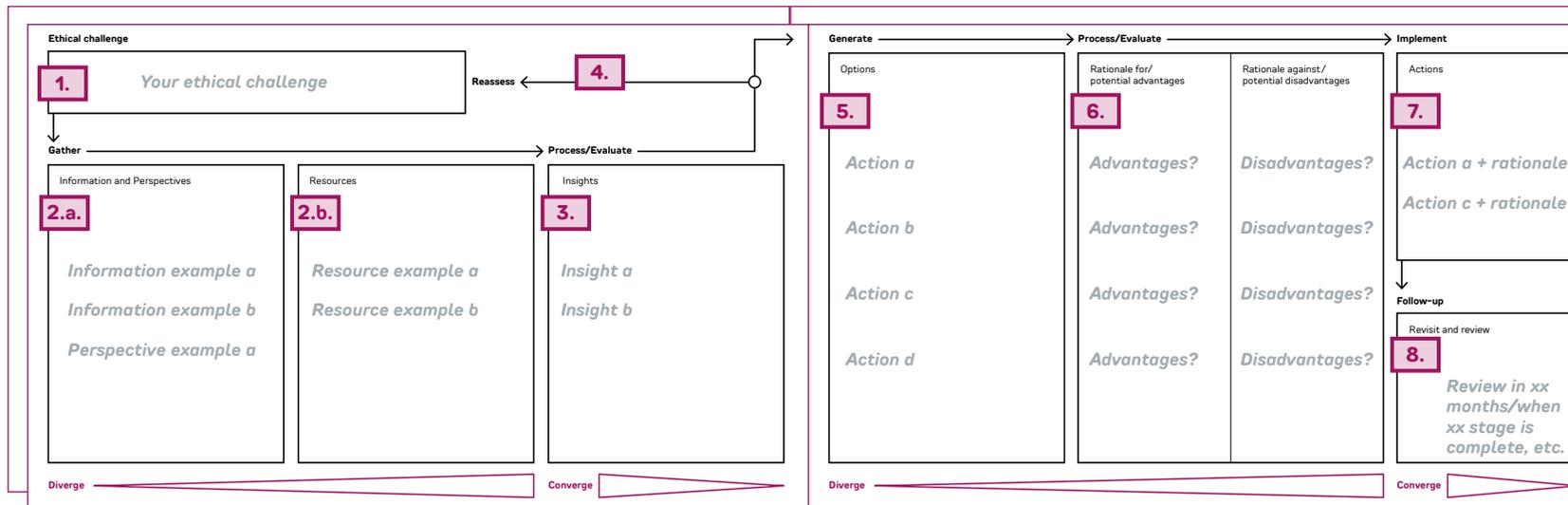
→ **1.** Write the challenge you are responding to in the **Ethical challenge** box. What are the ethical dimensions to this situation? What project or organisational values are at stake?

3. Evaluate all the information, perspectives and resources you found. Prioritise the most important and think about how they can support you in moving forward on the innovation journey. Capture your insights in the Process/Evaluate field.

4. Does the **ethical challenge** need to be revised, in light of the information you've gathered? If so, rewrite the ethical challenge and start the **Gather** process again. If not, move on to step 5: **Generate**.

6. Now, make a case **for and against** each of the options you have generated.

7. Finally, evaluate each of your options and identify those with the most favourable case for **implementation**. Use this field to develop clear, actionable and ownable tasks.



2.a. Gather more **information** and seek out other **perspectives** that might help inform your understanding of the situation. Write directly onto the canvas.

2.b. Continue by gathering all the relevant **resources** available to your project, team or organisation.

5. Next, think about how your information and resources can fill knowledge gaps and generate options for action, eg, by asking "How might we overcome the challenge?" Write your options in the **Options** column.

8. Remember to **come back to this tool** to evaluate the outcome of the implementation. Consider taking a photograph of the completed tool for your records or audit trail of decision making, and to facilitate learning.

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Guidance notes

Step 1. Clarify the ethical challenge

When confronted with an ethically challenging situation, it is easy to narrow our focus to just two options: “Should we do X or Y?”

We need to resist that impulse. In this first step, we’re trying to assess the ethical content of the situation, including what values are at stake or in tension, and for whom. We can start by naming or reviewing the ethical values or humanitarian principles and identifying those that might be in tension or threatened in this situation. For instance, might efforts to be accountable actually lead to harm for members of a local community? We must consider how the situation is seen from different perspectives, that might include partners, collaborators and community members, taking into account their views and involving them in this process.

Step 2. Identify, information, perspectives and resources

a. The next step is to gather information and perspectives relevant to the ethical challenge. This can be done in different ways, depending on the context; this might mean referring back to a Memorandum of Understanding or formal agreements, or finding out more details about community structures.

b. Different innovation teams will have different ethical commitments and ethics resources available to them, such as humanitarian principles, your team’s core values (see the Values Clarification Tool), mission statements, professional codes of ethics, the NGO/Red Cross Code of Conduct, or other key policy documents. The important thing to ask is: “How do these resources shed light on this ethically challenging situation, and what insights can they offer?” We must also consider local or international laws and regulations, so we are aware of any legal implications.

This step will help identify points of uncertainty and where knowledge gaps exist. This might include gaps that cannot be filled within the time frame in which a decision must be made (capture this limitation).

Step 3. Process, evaluate and focus

Next we need to review all the information, perspectives and resources collected, and discuss and decide which are the most important – that is, “Which ones are most likely to help us respond to the problem we’re facing?”. Write down the most useful sources of information and resources in the Process/evaluate box.

Step 4. Revisit the ethical challenge

By now we might be developing a better understanding of the ethical challenge from step 1. This can be a good moment to go back and revise that ethical challenge to something more accurate or nuanced.

Step 5. Generate options

We can move on to listing the possible options (including, perhaps, doing nothing) or clusters of options – the actions you might take to respond to the challenge.

Step 6. Explore the ethical arguments for and against each option

Think about the ethical rationales that could support or oppose each option. Consider the possible consequences of each option – its risks and its benefits.

Step 7. Implement

Now you’ve outlined the arguments for and against each option, and their possible consequences, you can think about which, if any, you

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Note: If you don’t have a facilitator, nominate one person in your team to lead the use of this tool. When facilitating this tool, discuss each step as you come to it, using the additional information on these pages.



Toolkit

want to implement. You need to critically review and look at which option is supported by stronger ethical rationales. The goal is to identify the best option under the circumstances.

Then you need to plan for implementing the chosen option/s: What will be done? By whom? When? And who should be informed about the decision? It is possible that you will need to explain the decision-making process and reasons for the choice to partners and other stakeholders.

Step 8. Evaluate and follow-up

What needs to happen after the decision is implemented? For example, some people may need support if the situation was stressful or if there was conflict in the decision-making process. You should consider a timeline for revisiting the decision in order to review, refine, or reconsider, if necessary. It is important to see the process of ethical deliberation as an opportunity to learn as a team and improve your capacity to respond to future challenges. Are there any appropriate channels for sharing your experiences with others, to deepen the knowledge around ethics for humanitarian innovation?

Finally, it is a good idea to document this ethical decision-making process. A photograph of the completed canvas and a thorough write-up is a good starting point. If the outcome of the decision is questioned, the rationales will be clear, and they can be revisited and improved upon as needed. You will not have room for this on the canvas, agree on a tool that is accessible to all stakeholders.

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Ethical challenge

Reassess ←

Gather

Process/Evaluate

Information and Perspectives

Resources

Insights

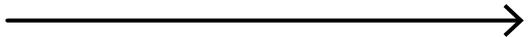
Diverge

Converge

Join this page with the next page to make the full worksheet



Generate



Process/Evaluate



Implement

Options

Rationale for/
potential advantages

Rationale against/
potential disadvantages

Actions

Follow-up

Revisit and review

Diverge



Converge



Join this page with the previous page to make the full worksheet

Icebreakers and exercises

How do you open and close a workshop?



5-10 minutes



A4 Print



Focus:
Setting the tone
Parting message



Use with:
Any and all

Icebreaker

Closing exercise



Toolkit

Icebreaker: Ethical experience

Materials

List of movement statements

Setup

Participants stand in large open space, tables around the outside perimeter

Description

Have all innovators stand in a circle, facing inward, and close their eyes. For each statement that they believe applies to them, they take a step forward. After people have moved an adequate amount, have the innovators open their eyes, to realise that ethical challenges are common (and in this exercise, recognising that fact literally brought them closer together) and that they are not alone in their experiences.

Statements (facilitator may choose at random):

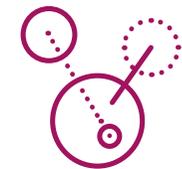
- I am not sure what ethics is.
- I am not sure what the differences are between ethics, values and principles.
- Sometimes, I have to compromise between what I think is right and what my team thinks is right.
- Sometimes, I have had to do things just because a donor expected it.
- I have presented outcomes or expected impact that I am uncertain of.
- I have encountered challenges with bribery.
- My innovation may put my own safety at risk.
- I have ignored an ethical issue hoping that it would just 'resolve itself'.
- My innovation may put the safety of my staff or implementation partners at risk.
- I have faced situations where the right, or ethical, thing to do is not the legal thing to do.
- My innovation may put the people who we aim to serve at risk.
- I am concerned about partnering responsibly.
- I have faced challenges finding a way to pilot my innovation in the context it was designed for.
- I am not sure what mechanisms or resources exist in my organisation to resolve or escalate ethical challenges.
- I feel a pressure to scale my innovation beyond the context it was designed for.

... feel free to add more statements!

Icebreaker

Closing exercise

Note: If you don't have a facilitator, nominate one person in your team to lead the use of this tool.



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Closing exercise: Taking the thread home

Materials

- Ball of yarn
- Scissors

Setup

Participants stand in a large open space, tables around the outside perimeter

Description

Step 1

One participant starts with the ball of yarn, and is prompted to say one thing they learned about ethics, or would like to go home and discuss with their team. They then toss the ball to another person, while holding onto the thread in the other hand. This repeats until everyone has engaged and a web is formed. The facilitator discusses the literal web of connections that each of the innovators has contributed to, and how ethics works best in a relational sense – when we hold each other and ourselves accountable.

Step 2 (optional)

The facilitator then pinches and cuts at the centre, leaving everyone holding a thread of the network. This thread represents the start of the conversation at home. While many workshops will leave participants with worksheets or paperwork, when they reach into their suitcase, pocket or wallet after this session and find this bright thread, they'll be reminded of the conversation around ethics, and prompted to start weaving their own web of accountability and ethics at home.

Icebreaker

📋 Closing exercise

Note: If you don't have a facilitator, nominate one person in your team to lead the use of this tool.



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