The Inquiry Based Approach (IBA)

- a facilitator's handbook

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SWEDESD is a research and development centre at Uppsala University. The centre promotes education for sustainable development through close collaboration with partner organisations in Africa, southern Asia and Europe.

The Centre for Environment Education (CEE) in India is SWEDESD's main partner in developing the Inquiry Based Approach (IBA). The following organisations have also contributed to the development of the IBA:

ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, Action Centre for City Development (ACCD), SADC-Regional Environmental Education Programme (SADC-REEP), the Stockholm Resilience Centre (SRC), the Swedish International Centre for Local Democracy (ICLD), Global Action Plan International (GAP Int'l) and the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF).

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Rationale and process

1. PURPOSE AND DISPOSITION

The defining challenge for our generation is to create well-being and equality within the ecological boundaries of the planet.

To meet this challenge, we need to confront complex and contested problems such as climate change, food insecurity, growing inequalities, unemployment, poverty, water management, disempowerment and loss of biodiversity. The Inquiry Based Approach (IBA) has been developed by the Swedish International Centre of Education for Sustainable Development (SWEDESD) together with partners to confront these kinds of contested and uncertain problems.

So far IBA has been applied in eighteen cities within the frames of two professional development programmes: the Supporting Urban Sustainability (SUS) programme and the Global Awareness in Action (GAIA) project. The rationale for the IBA is that 1) in modern society, transforming many problems is beyond the power and resources of a single organisation; 2) instead, transformation requires multi-stakeholder collaboration involving stakeholders with differing interests and world views; and 3) focused process design and facilitation are needed in order to overcome the difficulties presented by such collaboration.

Thus IBA has been developed to facilitate multi-stakeholder collaboration for the transformation of situations which are contested, uncertain and complex; known as "wicked situations". IBA has, for example, been applied to improve the quality of life in informal settlements around a polluted lake in Ahmedabad in India; to create livelihood opportunities through increased collaboration between urban and rural stakeholders in Malmö in Sweden; to combine poverty alleviation with preservation of ecosystems in Hoi An in Vietnam; and to create opportunities for citizens of Utrecht in the Netherlands to make sustainable choices in their everyday lives. In each city, multi-stakeholder teams consisting of representatives from five to ten key stakeholders have collaborated.

Transformation of wicked situations often defies conventional policy instruments such as economic incentives, legislation and information. As an alternative and complement, the IBA is intended to facilitate comprehensive, context-specific collaboration whereby stakeholders build trust and apply various forms of knowledge to jointly deconstruct and reframe their understanding and engage in concerted action (see Appendix I for a referenced review of the theoretical underpinnings of the IBA).

Drawing on learning theory and the action research tradition, the IBA revolves around an inquiry, a question that enables collaboration among various stakeholders. Basing the collaboration on an inquiry presents several advantages:

1) It facilitates open-ended exploration. In the beginning of an IBA, the multi-stakeholder team defines an inquiry that the stakeholders are all interested in pursuing. Phrasing the inquiry places emphasis on mutual exploration.

2) It creates shared ownership. The inquiry is an expression of the mutual interest among stakeholders. The joint development of the inquiry results in shared ownership of the collaboration.

3) It enables both co-creation of knowledge and transformation. The inquiry is pursued jointly by the team in cycles of actions and reflections. Thus the collaboration involves both transformation of a wicked situation and co-creation of knowledge.

4) It makes it easier to link the collaboration to ongoing development processes. The multi-stakeholder team phrases the inquiry on the basis of an appraisal of ongoing activities. This allows the stakeholders to ensure that their collaboration is reinforcing ongoing activities rather than creating new, standalone projects.

The IBA is a generic approach that can be tailored to fit a particular wicked situation in a particular context. This handbook provides guidance on how to achieve this. The handbook has been developed for two kinds of users: 1) facilitators involved in multi-stakeholder collaboration related to wicked situations; and 2) anyone who has an interest in reflecting and learning about ways to facilitate multi-stakeholder collaboration for transformation of wicked situations. The handbook can be used as course material in training for facilitators or as a standalone guide for designing and facilitating collaboration.

The handbook is divided into two parts. Part I provide a description of the various dimensions of the IBA and discuss what being an IBA facilitator means. Part II includes a presentation of methods – IBA activities – that IBA facilitators can apply when designing and facilitating multi-stakeholder collaboration.

2. INTRODUCING THE INQUIRY BASED APPROACH

The IBA has been designed to meet process and outcome objectives related to multi-stakeholder collaboration, learning and concerted action.

These objectives are listed together with the three key concepts of the IBA in Figure 1. As portrayed in Figure 1, the three key concepts of collaborative learning, governance and systems thinking constitute the theoretical basis for the IBA.

(Read about the theoretical underpinnings of IBA in Appendix I.)

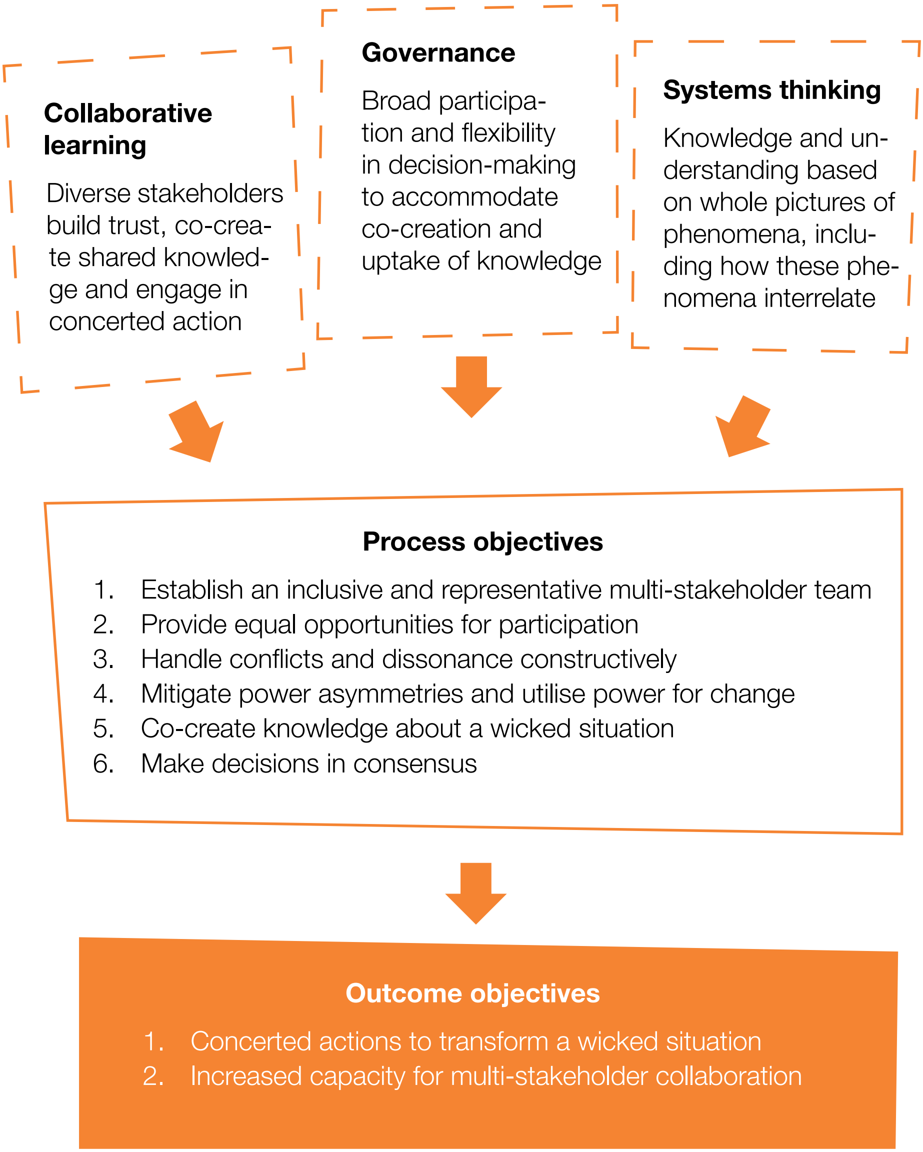

Figure 1. Key concepts and objectives in the IBA

The knowledge, tools and methods developed by scholars and practitioners working with these concepts have been combined and adapted by SWEDESD and partners when shaping the generic outline of the IBA. Inputs based on the three key concepts can help a multi-stakeholder team to achieve the process and outcome objectives. Process objectives 1 and 2 relate to the engagement dimension of an IBA process. These objectives focus on the establishment of a team of participants with divergent interests and understandings. The participants should represent different parts of society, and ideally be diverse in terms of gender, age, ethnicity and social characteristics. Objectives 3 and 4 deal with the deliberation dimension of the IBA: utilising dissonance for learning and compensating for power imbalances. Objectives 5 and 6 deal with the decision-making dimension of the IBA: co-creation of knowledge and reaching consensus on intentions and plans for transformation of a wicked situation.

Fulfilling the IBA process objectives will allow two outcome objectives to be reached: 1) concerted actions to transform a wicked situation and 2) increased capacity for multi-stakeholder collaboration. Outcome objective 1 includes immediate results of the process – concerted actions for transforming a wicked situation, i.e. actions based on pooling and coordination of stakeholders' resources. Outcome objective 2 includes longer-term capacity increases in terms of participants' capabilities and the ability of their organisation to engage in multi-stakeholder collaboration for transformation of wicked situations. Outcome objective 2 is crucial for enabling stakeholders to continue the transformation when outside facilitation is removed, and for institutional development towards more collaborative ways of addressing wicked situations.

Pursuing an inquiry through learning cycles

Aiming to meet the process and outcome objectives and drawing on the three key concepts, the IBA revolves around an inquiry that a multi-stakeholder team develops and pursues jointly through learning cycles.

Figure 2. Learning cycles

An inquiry permits both learning and real change on the ground. It addresses a wicked situation (see theoretical underpinnings in Appendix I) of concern to the multi-stakeholder team as a whole. It guides the learning and actions of the team throughout the IBA process. For example, the Ahmedabad city team who participated in an IBA, was concerned about poverty and vulnerability in settlements around polluted city lakes (the "inquiry situation") and jointly formulated an inquiry into the situation: "How can we improve the quality of life in informal settlements around lakes and ponds in Ahmedabad?"

Throughout the IBA, the multi-stakeholder team engages in consecutive learning cycles while pursuing their inquiries, as described in Figure 2. The team engages in learning cycles of reflection, planning, action and observation (see Appendix I, page 106-109 for a more detailed description). Experiences and learning from one cycle is utilized in the next one. Thus the team gradually furthers its understanding and develops its practice while engaging in actions for change in pursuit of their inquiry. Based on the learning cycles, the inquiry can be modified to incorporate new knowledge and practices.

The learning cycles are intended to bridge the gap between theory and practice by linking the team's conceptualisation with its actions. The types of action can vary from gathering information and bringing in new stakeholders to more resource-intensive transformations of particular locations.

Constructive feedback from "critical friends" is crucial to the learning that occurs throughout an IBA process. These critical friends may be other multi-stakeholder teams, facilitators and/or experts who comment on a team's inquiry at different stages of the process. (See activities 3.5, 4.2 and 5.3 in Part II of this handbook for examples of how feedback from critical friends can be structured.) Evaluations of IBA processes show that interactions with critical friends contribute significantly to a more in-depth understanding of an inquiry situation.

3. THE THREE PHASES OF THE INQUIRY BASED APPROACH

An IBA needs to be tailored to fit the conditions for transforming a specific wicked situation. This tailoring includes taking into account the context in which the IBA will be implemented and the number of teams participating in a process.

In general terms, there are three distinct IBA phases: 1) engagement; 2) development; and 3) institutionalisation. These phases may vary in length and content depending on resources available, the inquiry situation and the characteristics of the team(s) involved.

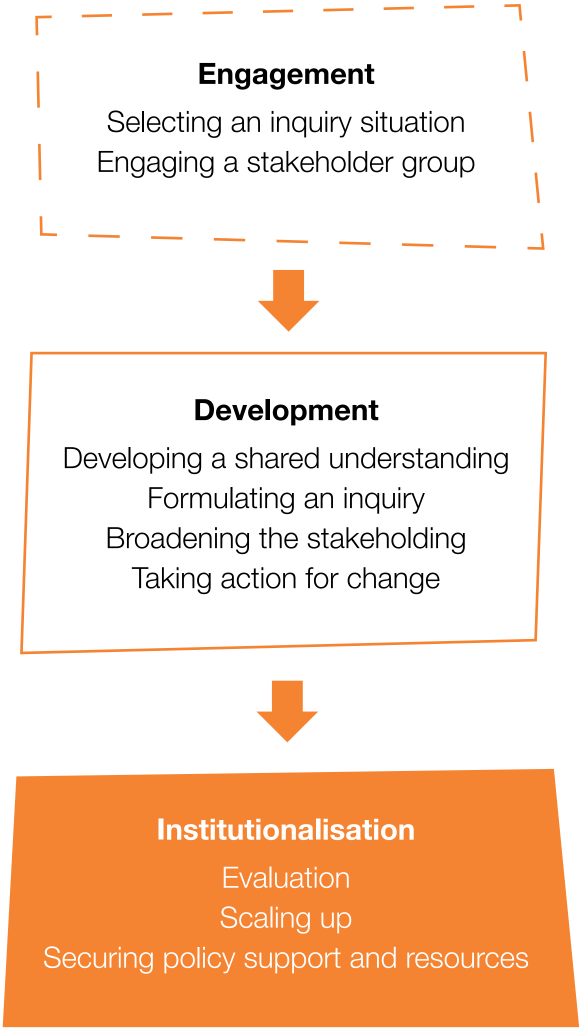

Figure 3. The three phases of the IBA

Figure 3 shows that the engagement phase revolves around selection of an inquiry situation and engagement of a stakeholder team. At the onset of this phase, the IBA is initiated by an external facilitating organisation or a stakeholder organisation involved in a wicked situation (e.g. a governmental agency or a civil society organisation). In both cases the engagement phase typically includes selection of an inquiry situation; initial exploration of this situation through dialogue between the facilitating organisation and one or more stakeholders; mapping of additional stakeholders to involve in the IBA; development of criteria for selecting stakeholders; selection of stakeholders through dialogue between the facilitating organisation and the stakeholders; and engagement of the selected stakeholders in the IBA (a method for mapping potential stakeholders is outlined in activity 1.1 on page 45).

Naturally, if the initiating organisation has limited "convening power" with which to engage all relevant stakeholders, the IBA must start at a modest level with the aim of gradually scaling up activities and bringing in additional stakeholders.

In the development phase, the stakeholders build a shared understanding of the inquiry situation, formulate the inquiry, broaden the stakeholding and engage in actions for change.

A core team of stakeholders is established during this phase. The team jointly formulates an inquiry into the selected inquiry situation, and then pursues this inquiry through learning cycles of reflection and action. As described earlier, actions may vary from gathering information and bringing in new stakeholders to more resource-intensive transformations of a particular location. The inquiry may be revised and rephrased during the development phase on the basis of changes in the understanding of the inquiry situation or the involvement of additional stakeholders.

The institutionalisation phase revolves around evaluation of the previous phases; scaling up actions and making the multi-stakeholder collaboration sustainable by securing resources and policy support. Conclusions and lessons learned are drawn from the multi-stakeholder collaboration and the transformation of the inquiry situation. This phase is directly concerned with the IBA outcome objectives: 1) concerted actions to transform a wicked situation; and 2) increased capacity for multi-stakeholder collaboration.

4. ADAPTING TO CONTEXT

The IBA needs to be adapted to fit a specific context. Each context is unique and must be understood when designing and facilitating an IBA. Experience shows that the context has been beneficial for the achievement of IBA objectives in some processes, while hindering it in others.

For instance, it has been easier to involve, maintain and increase the number and diversity of stakeholders in contexts where there is a history of stakeholder collaboration. In contexts characterised by hierarchical organisational cultures, power asymmetries have presented a challenge as regards dealing with and productively utilising dissonance and power, and made it more difficult to reach consensus decisions and implement concerted actions. Thus one key aspect of IBA facilitation involves adapting the generic IBA to the context in which it will be applied, for a detailed description of different approaches to the understanding of context, see Appendix I, page 109-111.

Here, context is defined as a set of variables that influence the achievement of the IBA process and outcome objectives. Based on this definition, SWEDESD has developed an analytical tool called the Framework for Contextualising IBA (FCIBA) that can be used to identify relevant variables and categorise them as shown in Figure 4.

The variables in the **Institutional settings** category include: 1) governmental regulations which can be supportive or obstructive to stakeholder involvement and collaboration; 2) practices and procedures of the participating organisations and individuals which may support or obstruct collaborative ways of working; 3) resources available for running an IBA process; and 4) the cultures and norms that influence how people in different working positions or roles behave and relate to each other. In an IBA, these variables may influence the establishment of an inclusive and representative stakeholder team, opportunities for equal participation and power relations among team members.

The **Stakeholder relationships** category includes: 1) stakeholders' history of collaboration; 2) the types of relationship among stakeholders that may condition their collaboration (e.g. employer-employee, client-service provider or patriarchy); and 3) the relationships between stakeholders' agendas in terms of commonalities or disagreements. In an IBA, these variables may influence the development of the trust required for dealing with and productively utilising dissonance, conflicts and power, as well as the level of conflicts and power asymmetries that will need mitigation.

Figure 4. Framework for Contextualising IBA (FCIBA)

The **Stakeholders' agency** category includes: 1) skills for and experience of multi-stakeholder collaboration; 2) receptiveness and commitment to collaboration with others; 3) decision-making capacity; and 4) the time that can be allocated to the process. In an IBA, these variables may influence stakeholders' options for moving away from business as usual and utilising conflicts and different forms of power constructively.

The **Situation and inquiry** category includes: 1) the level of contestedness surrounding the inquiry situation, i.e. contestation in terms of diverging understanding, interests and claims; 2) the priority given to the inquiry situation by the organisations involved in the process; and 3) the scope of the inquiry in terms of the goals and actions established by the stakeholders to transform the chosen inquiry situation. In an IBA, these variables may influence the level of dissonance and conflicts that need to be handled, the amount of support and resources given to a process, and the effort and resources required for the teams to reach consented decisions.

An IBA facilitator should use the FCIBA in two steps to assess how context facilitates and/or hinders the IBA. In the first step, facilitators dismantle the context into the four categories in the framework and then use these categories for identifying variables that may influence a process. Here, it is worth asking questions such as: are there regulations and embedded practices that support or challenge the ways of working that are established by the IBA? Does this IBA attract enough resources for stakeholder meetings and for carrying out tasks related to the inquiry? Is there any type of relationship that may restrict the way that people participate and act in this IBA? Are all stakeholders willing and committed to following the IBA way of working? Will the wickedness of the inquiry situation lead to strong conflicts within the team?

In the second step, facilitators study the interaction between the identified variables to find out whether there are any ways of overcoming the hindrances of some variables by means of the opportunities offered by others. For example, facilitators may strategically draw on stakeholders' high levels of commitment and receptiveness to collaboration in order to cope with a lack of resources or regulations supporting stakeholder collaboration.

The FCIBA should be used both before an IBA begins and while it is in progress. Using it before the IBA will help facilitators to design a process based on activities that are attuned to a particular context. Using it during the process will help facilitators to adjust their process design; to include or remove some activities or make use of certain facilitation techniques. Facilitators can tailor an IBA to a specific context by adapting the outline and/or sequence of activities in Part II of this handbook.

5. HOW TO BE A FACILITATOR

Facilitation, which involves supporting a group's learning and action, is often needed to enable collaboration between stakeholders with diverging interests and world views. Without facilitation, there is a risk that conflicts and power asymmetries will prevail. By striving to meet the IBA process objectives, an IBA facilitator will help multi-stakeholder teams to fulfil the IBA objectives (see Section 2).

The facilitator's main tasks include helping to initiate an IBA process by assisting in the selection of an inquiry situation and the engagement of a stakeholder team. The facilitator also leads the design of the overall IBA process and the individual workshops, and facilitates teams through the workshop activities. Finally, the facilitator assists with documentation and evaluation. This section provides reflective reading about the most important aspects of being an IBA facilitator.

Five dimensions of facilitation

To reflect on how to be a facilitator, it may be useful to distinguish five dimensions of facilitation as visualised in Figure 5.[1]

Planning and Design

Valuing

Confronting

Feeling

Meaning

Figure 5. Five dimensions of facilitation

1 The section is inspired by The Complete Facilitator's Handbook (Heron, 1999).

The Planning & Design Dimension. This is the directional, ends-and-means dimension of facilitation: it relates to the IBA process and outcome objectives. Here, you should consider how the IBA methods and activities can be incorporated into a sequence of events to enable the team(s) to reach the IBA objectives. How will the IBA process be designed, and by whom?

The Valuing Dimension. This dimension of facilitation is about appreciation and integrity: it relates to respect for the people you are facilitating. As a facilitator, you aim to create an appreciative and supportive climate in which IBA participants can act with greater confidence and be more in touch with their needs and interests. Here, you should consider how a climate of personal value, integrity and respect can be created.

The Confronting Dimension. This is the challenge dimension of facilitation: it relates to raising awareness of issues adversely affecting the team and the IBA. As a facilitator, you are being asked to deal with the difficult question of how awareness can be raised among participants about behaviours and performances that need to be changed.

The Feeling Dimension. This is the expressive aspect of facilitation: it relates to increasing awareness of feelings, encouraging their appropriate expression and management. As a facilitator, you need to consider how feelings can be recognised, supported and managed so that they contribute constructively to the fulfilment of the process and outcome objectives.

The Meaning Dimension. This dimension concerns how participants make sense of an inquiry situation or other aspects of the IBA process. The key questions to ask yourself as a facilitator are: how can meaning and understanding be extracted from experiences, observations and actions, and how can sense be made of what is happening?

Practical wisdom

As an IBA facilitator, you deal with uncertain, contested, power-laden and conflict-ridden situations – i.e. wicked situations. Thus you are confronted with a number of recurrent challenges. These include involving all relevant stakeholders and dealing with conflicting interests and power imbalances that hinder consensus.

To handle these challenges, you need practical wisdom in your capacity as an IBA facilitator, i.e. the ability to act purposefully in the moment based on values and practical and theoretical knowledge. IBA facilitators must be able to connect to their feelings, relevant theory and experience in the midst of action and make swift choices. For example, you should be able to suddenly alter an activity in a workshop, assign a task to the team or confront a participant in order to help the team to progress. As an IBA facilitator, you have to do more than just rigidly follow the procedures and methods described in this handbook. You need to practise reflectively, finding ways to adapt an IBA or its activities to meet the demands, challenges or opportunities arising within a process. To permit the use of practical wisdom, it is important for facilitators to carefully prepare and plan their work. Coming prepared enables you to improvise and adjust to new circumstances.

As an IBA facilitator, you should pay careful attention to your own learning and view yourself as a co-learner together with the participants rather than as a traditional teacher. To continuously learn and develop as a facilitator, it is important to engage in frequent practice with teams. But the learning does not happen by itself. You need to develop useful learning strategies such as reflecting on past practice experiences both alone and with colleagues, working alongside skilled facilitators, being part of facilitator networks, accessing other facilitators' experiences through written or verbal stories, and reading up on relevant research findings.

Being transparent

Generally speaking, facilitating multi-stakeholder collaboration is easier if you do not have a strong stake in the inquiry situation. Handling power imbalances and managing conflicts is easier if the stakeholders in an IBA team perceive the facilitator to be impartial. It may also be easier for you to devote your full attention to achieving the IBA process objectives if you do not have a strong desire for a particular outcome from the process.

That said, it must be acknowledged that there is no such thing as a completely objective, unbiased and impartial facilitator. A facilitator cannot entirely avoid forming ideas regarding desirable process outcomes. If you practice self-reflection and are aware of and open about your stake or desire for certain outcomes, this is not necessarily a bad thing. Commitment and compassion shown by the facilitator can encourage stakeholders and benefit the process. It might well be possible to provide outstanding facilitation while having a clear stake, if it can be ensured that this does not interfere with the IBA process objectives.

Acknowledging and accepting that the facilitator is not completely objective corresponds to one of the key assumptions in the action research tradition which underpins the IBA (see Appendix I). Just as an action researcher is never completely objective and therefore should be open about and explore his or her presumptions, a facilitator should be transparent and willing to challenge his or her presumptions while helping a multi-stakeholder team to pursue an inquiry. It is crucial that your personal and professional stake is made clear to the stakeholders. You must also refrain from steering the process based on your stake if this would compromise the process objectives. Instead, you have to trust that achieving the IBA process objectives will eventually enable a multi-stakeholder team to make just decisions about their collaboration and the inquiry situation.

Managing conflicts

By definition, wicked situations involve conflicts, and hence conflict management is an important aspect of facilitating an IBA. Even though some conflicts may be so severe that they are beyond your power as a facilitator, you should not be discouraged by conflicts per se. Inclusion of relevant stakeholders must not be compromised in order to avoid existing or potential conflicts. A certain level of dissonance is an important condition for mutual learning and collaboration, and management of dissonance and conflict is an important IBA process objective (see Figure 1 on page 11). Even when a conflict has arisen among stakeholders, a skilled facilitator can turn feelings of dissatisfaction into something constructive – a conflict means that there is energy for questioning and change.

Conflict management should be built into the design of an IBA right from the engagement phase. When a multi-stakeholder team is formed, it is possible to assess the type of conflicts that can be expected and adapt the design accordingly (see activity 1.6 "Managing conflicts", page 57).

Conflicts can take many shapes, and they can be managed in different ways depending on the context and your capabilities as a facilitator. However, based on the literature (for further reading, see the bibliography) and experiences from IBA facilitation, some general advice can be given:

• **Find a common denominator.** No matter how severe and deep-rooted a conflict is, the parties usually have some common denominator – if nothing else, they are likely to feel uncomfortable about the conflict itself and desire something better. Agreeing on a common denominator and a shared intention to improve the situation can be a good starting point in conflict management.

• **Change focus.** It is often useful to try to move the focus of the parties away from the problem and towards possible solutions. In a severe conflict, asking the parties to define the problem may not help when it comes to initiating conflict management – this may do little but cement the positions.

• **Build trust.** Lack of trust between parties may cause conflicts or deepen existing ones and hinder effective conflict management. In and of itself, setting up an IBA and the activities that it comprises is very much aimed at building trust between stakeholders in order to overcome existing conflicts and prevent new ones. To enhance trust, it is often necessary to improve the dialogue between the parties. Many activities outlined in this handbook are intended to foster a constructive dialogue on various issues, including conflicts. Patience is needed, as trust might take a long time to develop. In a heated debate, you can take the discussion to a meta level by encouraging the participants to talk about how to discuss the issue. Table 1 below provides some advice related to communication.

• **Joint fact finding.** If conflicts are caused by disagreement over facts, it might help to make the parties agree to conduct "joint fact finding". This will allow them to move towards a common understanding of the inquiry situation.

• **Bring the conflicts to the table.** In a long-lasting conflict, parties usually feel aggrieved about perceived earlier injustices on the part of their antagonists. While focusing on the future and opportunities to improve the inquiry situation, it may not be possible for you to simply ask participants to forget about the past. Rather, you may have to devote some time to bringing the earlier events to the table and talking them through (again), but with the aim of eventually agreeing that dwelling on past injustices will not improve the present situation.

• **Explore underlying motives.** You can explore the motives underlying the arguments put forward by parties in a conflict by asking stakeholders to express the feelings that underlie their standpoint. In general, it is easier for antagonists to understand and feel empathy with each other's emotions, rather than with each other's arguments. In this sense, you can take on the role of a mediator, trying to find a space where mutual understanding of diverging views can develop. You should not take on the role of a moderator of a debate, as this is likely to sharpen the arguments of both parties and pull them further apart.

• **Set ground rules together with the participants.** You can work together with the participants to formulate the ground rules of a workshop or meeting with existing or potential conflicts in mind. If parties have agreed on rules on how to speak and listen at the onset of the process, it is easy to refer back to these rules if a conflict arises.

• **Work in pairs.** When managing conflicts, it is useful to have more than one facilitator present. The dynamics might be difficult to comprehend and handle alone, and acting as a mediator by yourself can be exhausting.

The table below provides advice for how participants in an IBA can communicate in order to prevent and manage conflicts.

Understand

- Be curious about how others see the inquiry situation.
- Try to understand why stakeholders' stories differ.
- Do not rush to conclusions about the intentions of others.

Listen

- Show that you acknowledge the feelings of others.
- Show that you understand the core message of others.
- Do not pretend to understand if you do not.
- Pose open-ended questions.
- Translate blame, allegations and judgements into descriptions of feelings.

Speak

- Give others freedom to make their own decisions
- Focus on what is most important to you
- Consider the consequenses before starting to push/ignore others
- Be clear about your interpretations and intentions
- Focus on positive consequences from your suggestions
- Express your feelings without turning them into judgements
- Take responsibility for your part in the conflict
- Use “I” instead of “one”, “you” or “everyone”
- Be as specific as possible

Table 1. Advice for communication

Working with power

In general terms, power can be understood as the capacity or ability to direct or influence the course of events and the behaviour of others. Power can be useful or harmful to varying degrees, depending on the context. It can have negative effects as it may obstruct the transformation intended with an IBA, protecting an unjust and unsustainable status quo. But the power you have as an IBA facilitator and the power of the team you are facilitating can also be used to transform the inquiry situation. To understand power more clearly, it may be useful to consider the three “faces” of power. The first face is shown when power is visible and exercised openly, e.g. when a donor defines conditions for the funding for a development project. The second face is more subtle and hidden and often working through systems, e.g. rules and regulations. One example would be a protocol stipulating that presentations in a meeting can only take place through the medium of English, so excluding non-English speakers. The third face is invisible, i.e. power structures are so deeply rooted that people benefiting or suffering as a result of them may not reflect on their existence. One example would be cultural norms or traditions designating certain roles or tasks to women.

An IBA facilitator deals with power at two interlinked levels: 1) the power that influences (hinders or supports) the transformation of an inquiry situation, and 2) the power relations between the team members of an IBA. When dealing with level 1 power, your task is to help participants realise that the combined powers of the stakeholders in a team can amount to more than the sum of their powers in isolation. Here, you can invite the team to consider the following questions: What changes can a team induce through its power? What is the most effective way to use the power of the team? Exploring these questions will help the team to take strategic action and transform the inquiry situation.

When you deal with power relations within the team (level 2 power), you need to make sure that participants, despite their different sources and degrees of power, have equal opportunities to influence an IBA and the decisions made. Here, you can explore the following questions through your facilitation: What are the differences in power between team members? How do these differences influence opportunities for equal participation? Exploring these questions can help you to select activities and facilitation techniques.

The composition of the multi-stakeholder team influences how power is played out at the two levels. For a facilitator, therefore, it is crucial to understand what kind of power is held by the participating stakeholders. You can consider the following sources of power:

- position (authority, mandate to make decisions);
- capital (financial, natural physical);
- labour and consumer power;
- culture;

- location and geography;
- information and knowledge;
- networks;
- technology;
- physicality (e.g. age, sex, health or physical ability); and
- personality (e.g. charisma).

This handbook outlines several activities aimed at helping participants to explore different aspects of power, both in the inquiry situation and within the team (e.g. activities 1.3, 2.3 and 3.2). The following distinction between four expressions of power can be a useful input to these activities:

1. **Power to.** This is a basic expression of power that most of us possess: it may be small and circumvented by various conditions, but we almost always have some ability to act according to our own will. As a facilitator, you should help participants to see their opportunities to express power to in their collaboration.

2. **Power over.** This is the opportunity to force someone to change their behaviour involuntarily. Anyone who possesses such power has the obvious potential to transform an inquiry situation in a certain direction. However, this expression of power has to be handled with caution. To achieve long-lasting change, power over has to be considered legitimate, e.g. by being executed or mandated by an elected body.

3. **Power with.** This is the ability to share power with others, and the ability to combine powers by acting together or bringing together knowledge, resources and strategies. The facilitator should help participants with great power to see potential benefits from sharing it with others.

4. **Power within.** Power within is the capacity to imagine something different and formulate aspirations about change. The formulation of an inquiry is one example of how power within can be evoked. Exploring this expression of power is a precondition for expressing power to, power over and power with.

Finally, it is crucial that you as a facilitator are aware of the power that your role brings. As you work, you will have to switch between different expressions of power to achieve the IBA process objectives. When setting up and designing the overall structure of an IBA, you are exercising significant power over the participants. Sometimes you will also have to challenge participants, using your power over them, to fulfil the IBA process objectives. At other stages of an IBA, you will express your power with participants, e.g. by letting them set the agenda or objectives or inviting them to facilitate certain activities based on their knowledge and experience. As a facilitator, you need to use practical wisdom to make choices between the different expressions of power both when you plan and in the midst of interaction with the team.

Opening up and closing down

In an IBA, a rhythm of opening up and closing down is fundamental. As a facilitator you will guide a team by deciding on the pace of this rhythm and join the team as it moves with it. Moving between opening up and closing down creates a friction that is necessary for learning and change. Opening up involves broadening the perspective and taking into account different values and interests and a wider system of elements such as regulations, trends, power relations and culture that influence an inquiry situation. This is necessary for building trust, co-creating knowledge, reaching out to new stakeholders and deepening understanding of the situation. Closing down involves selecting, prioritising, coordinating and making decisions about directions. This is necessary to enable concerted decision-making and joint actions that utilise stakeholders' different resources. As an IBA facilitator, you need to make use of the IBA activities and your facilitation techniques to open up and close down.


Plan
Act
Observe
Reflect

PART II

The Inquiry Based Approach: activities

Introduction

This second part of the handbook includes instructions for activities designed to develop and maintain an IBA. The activities have been tested in the first two editions of the Supporting Urban Sustainability (SUS) programme (see Westin, et al., 2014) and within the Global Awareness In Action (GAIA) project, facilitated by SWEDESD with partners. This introduction discusses the overall design of an IBA and the general modes of working. The instructions for the activities are found in six sections following the introduction.

Designing an IBA

An IBA includes three phases (engagement, development and institutionalisation – see Section 3, page 15) and consists of a minimum of three workshops (one workshop for each phase) and joint actions by the team in between the workshops. It is recommended that additional workshops are included to maximise learning and collaboration within a team (examples of design alternatives are presented in Appendix II, page 113). A workshop typically lasts for two or three days.

An IBA is designed in two steps. In the first step, the tentative number of workshops is decided upon and the contribution of each workshop to the learning and action of a team is defined. The overall IBA process should be designed on the basis of the three IBA phases, the number of teams that are participating and the context(s) in which the IBA is to be implemented (see Section 4 Adapting to context, page 19-23). An outline of the overall design can be useful when inviting/engaging partners and stakeholders, or for securing resources and legal support. The second step includes detailed design of each workshop. Here, IBA activities are selected and compiled on the basis of participants' and facilitators' needs and experiences from the process so far. This step is taken before each workshop.

When going through the two design steps, facilitators have a selection of activities to call upon that have been developed in previous IBAs. In this handbook, instructions for activities are presented according to six categories:

1. Building a team
2. Creating a shared understanding of an inquiry situation
3. Developing an inquiry
4. Widening stakeholding around an inquiry
5. Action planning
6. Evaluating an inquiry based approach

The six categories roughly reflect the chronological order of activities within an IBA as shown in Figure 6. The engagement phase consists mainly of activities from the first two categories, aimed at consolidating a team and developing a common understanding of the inquiry situation. In the development phase, the activities of the third and fourth categories are used for formulating and pursuing the inquiry and for involving new stakeholders in the process if necessary. Activities in the fifth category should be included at the end of each workshop. The activities in the sixth category are used mainly in the institutionalisation phase to evaluate the process and use the findings to develop capacity and plans for continued multi-stakeholder collaboration.

Figure 6. IBA phases and activity categories

Facilitators can thus use the six categories as a basic guide to the order in which activities are included in an IBA. However, facilitators should be open to altering this order and deciding on different arrangements. For example, activities in the first category, building a team, may be included in the development phase if new stakeholders are involved or if there is a need to overcome conflicts or strengthen the partnership in a team.

To ensure shared ownership and relevance of an IBA, it is important for participants to be able to influence both the overall design and the agenda of each workshop. Participants' involvement can be organised in different ways. In some IBAs it may be necessary to create the design together with some or all participants, while in other IBAs asking for participants' comments on draft workshop agendas may be sufficient.

General modes of working during workshops

For an IBA process to achieve the IBA process and outcome objectives outlined in section 2, it is crucial that stakeholders participate on equal terms and that there is an atmosphere of openness, friendliness and trust in the workshops. Some of the IBA activities in Part II of this handbook are designed specifically to help with achieving this. Furthermore, the IBA establishes certain ways of setting up and governing workshops – general modes of working – that can help to create a conducive environment for collaboration.

At the beginning of each workshop day, participants should be invited to state their expectations. These expectations should be documented on a flip chart and kept visible throughout the workshop. At the end of the day, the expectations should be reviewed and discussed in relation to what has been done and achieved.

A set of ground rules to be followed during a workshop should be agreed upon by facilitators and participants. Below is an example of ground rules that could be adjusted to a particular IBA. The ground rules should be discussed at the onset of a workshop.

- All ideas are valid
- Listen to each other
- Allow equal participation
- Conflicts are acknowledged
- Conclusions are documented
- Do not hesitate to ask when something is unclear

In order to mitigate power imbalances and increase work efficiency in a multi-stakeholder team, it is useful to suggest a set of roles to be distributed among the participants and rotated over the course of a workshop. These roles should be used when the team works independently during activities. Examples of useful roles are:

- The discussion leader keeps the team focused and ensures that everyone has equal opportunities to speak and influence the team's discussions and decisions.

- The timekeeper monitors the contributions of all participants so that time is distributed equally, making sure that the task in hand is completed on time.

- The reporter writes the team's output on flip charts, using speakers' words as much as possible. She or he presents the team's work and outputs to facilitators and fellow teams.

The facilitator should make sure that these roles are distributed among and followed by the participants. In teams where there are severe power imbalances, the facilitator should consider assisting the team or assuming the role of discussion leader.

It is important to maintain clarity regarding the division of responsibility between the facilitator and the participants for managing the IBA. The division should be discussed at the beginning of the process. Suggested responsibilities are presented below.

Participants:
- Contribute actively to the workshop
- Make meaning in collaboration
- Manage the discussions within teams
- Develop an inquiry and actions

Facilitator:
- Set time and introduce activities
- Facilitate plenary discussions
- Keep sight of the purpose
- For some activities, provide inputs in order to stimulate team discussions and learning
- Summarise discussion and outcomes

The facilitator should review these responsibilities and reformulate them if the characteristics of the process and team require it. For example in contexts where there is no tradition of multi-stakeholder collaboration or if there are severe power imbalances within a team, it may not be wise to ask participants to self-manage their discussions.

In the following six sections the IBA activities are presented according to the previously mentioned categories.

1. BUILDING A TEAM

Activities in this section have been designed to engage a team of stakeholders and support deliberation within this team. They will enable identification of stakeholders, team building, collaboration and conflict management.

1.1 MAPPING STAKEHOLDERS

Purpose: For initiators of an IBA to map and select a group of key stakeholders to engage.
Materials: Flip chart paper, Post-It notes, markers.
Time required: 60 minutes.
Working arrangements: Participants first work individually and then make sense together in team(s).

Part 1 Choose one or two colleagues from your organisation (if no colleagues are available it is possible to do this activity on your own). Together, write a list of the key organisations and/or individuals whom you consider to have a stake in the inquiry situation. Use one Post-It note for each organisation or individual. Place the Post-It notes on a large sheet of paper.

Part 2 Consider what type of stake each organisation/individual has in the situation. Consider the following five categories:

- power to make relevant decisions;
- resources (e.g. financial);
- information and knowledge;
- practical skills and capacity;
- being affected by the inquiry situation.

Use colour coding to show what type of stake each identified organisation/individual has. Many organisations/individuals will have more than one stake, so pick the one you think is most important.

Consider whether any stake categories are overrepresented or underrepresented. Can you think of any more organisations/individuals to add to the underrepresented categories?

Part 3 Gather together Post-It notes with organisations/individuals that you consider share important sectorial characteristics – e.g. part of local government, businesses, media, civil society, NGOs, academia, etc. Try to whittle it down to no more than 10-12 clusters.

Part 4 Highlight one organisation/individual in each cluster that you consider to be particularly well connected to others, either in that cluster or in other clusters. Show these links as lines on the paper within and between clusters.

Part 5 Select a suitable number of key stakeholders from your 10-12 well connected organisations/individuals that you would like to engage in the IBA. Apply the following criteria.

- Different stake categories identified in Part 2 are represented.
- Different sectorial characteristics identified in Part 3 are represented.
- Organisations/individuals have mandate to engage in collaboration with other stakeholders.
- Selection of individuals should be as balanced as possible in terms of gender and other relevant social characteristics.

Facilitator preparation: It could be that the person(s) initiating the IBA are the same as the people who will eventually facilitate it. If not, initiators and facilitators should work together as early as possible in the process. To support the initiator, the facilitator should familiarise him or herself with the inquiry situation and the most important stakeholders.

Recommendations for facilitators: It is crucial that the facilitator and the initiator together reflect on the relationship between an IBA process and the existing governance system in which it is applied, both before the onset of the process and continuously as it unfolds. In particular, it is important to understand how the IBA process relates to initiatives mandated through the democratic system. The legitimacy of elected bodies must be acknowledged. Typically, elected bodies should be key stakeholders in an IBA process. Even if not directly involved, it should be ensured that procedures are in place by which significant decisions and action undertaken by involved stakeholders are sanctioned by elected bodies.

Recommendations for process design: Stakeholder mapping is the starting point of a process whereby participation in the IBA is discussed with the identified organisations and individuals. Some of the activities presented in this handbook may be useful in a slightly modified form during discussion with potential participants. This is true of activities 1.4 "Seeing the value of collaborative learning" page 52, and 4.2 "Developing a story to engage an additional stakeholder" page 87, for example.

1.2 GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER'S HISTORY

Purpose: For the participants to get to know each other; to identify differences in world views, interests, experiences and capabilities within the team, and to start to explore possible synergies, dissonance and conflict areas.
Materials: Whiteboard (or flip chart paper), markers.
Time required: 45 minutes.

Part 1 Participants think about key events in their professional and personal lives which are related to the inquiry situation. These events are written down in large-scale timelines on sheets of paper placed on a wall.

This is how the timeline is structured:

1980's	1990's	2000's to present day
What I did?	What I did?	What I did?
Why was it important?	Why was it important?	Why was it important?

Part 2 Participants walk around reading each other's timelines.

Part 3 Participants reflect together on commonalities and differences related to views, interests, experiences and capabilities.

Recommendations for facilitators: In Part 3, encourage the participants, if necessary, to:

- relate events to the inquiry situation;
- discuss whether there are any commonalities between participants that the team can take advantage of;
- discuss whether there are any differences that may present obstacles for the team.

The facilitator should note down differences identified that may have to be discussed and worked through in future activities.

Recommendations for process design:

- This activity can be carried out with one or more teams working in parallel.
- To achieve a more holistic understanding of the team's world views and capabilities, the activity can be combined with other timeline activities (e.g. activity 2.1 "Mapping the history of the inquiry situation", page 61).

1.3 UNDERSTANDING WHY WE COLLABORATE AS A TEAM

Purpose: For participants to understand the nature of wicked situations, and why multi-stakeholder collaboration is needed for transformation of an inquiry situation.
Materials: Flip chart paper, markers.
Time required: 45 minutes.

Part 1 The facilitator introduces the concept of wicked situations.

Part 2 In their team, participants discuss their experiences working with wicked situations in their previous careers and/or current positions. The discussion is based on the following questions.

- What did the situation entail?
- What did you do to address it?
- What was the result?

Part 3 The facilitator introduces the rationale for addressing wicked situations through multi-stakeholder collaboration using the IBA.

Part 4 Discussion in plenary based on facilitator input. The participants deliberate on how their experiences and capabilities, as well as the practices within their organisations, hinder or facilitate multi-stakeholder collaboration.

Facilitator preparation: The facilitator needs to be familiar with the concept of wicked situations and the rationale for multi-stakeholder collaboration through the IBA (see section 1 of Part I and Appendix I).

Recommendations for facilitators:
- The facilitator will benefit from being as specific as possible and basing information on real-life cases.
- If participants find it difficult to relate their practices to the concept of wicked situations, the facilitator should be prepared to introduce detailed examples of multi-stakeholder practice.

Recommendations for process design:
- The activity can be carried out with one or more teams. If the activity is to be carried out with several teams, the facilitator may need to adjust the activity to include interaction between the teams.
- The activity is particularly relevant in teams where there is no tradition of multi-stakeholder collaboration.
- The facilitator should use the activity as a source of information to find out what kind of facilitation the team will need in future.

1.4 SEEING THE VALUE OF COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

Purpose: To introduce collaborative learning and reflect on the opportunities and limitations for practising it within the team. To identify the knowledge that each stakeholder possesses and work out how it can be incorporated into the collaboration.
Materials: Flip chart paper, markers.
Time required: 45 minutes.

Part 1 Individually, each participant thinks of the following questions:
- What knowledge does each person/organisation within the team possess that would benefit me and my organisation?
- What knowledge does my organisation and/or I possess that would benefit this process and the work of others in the team?

Part 2 Each participant briefly states the answers to the questions in Part 1. These are documented in two mind maps (one per question) on flip charts.

Part 3 The facilitator presents the concept of collaborative learning and invites participants to make sense of it.

Part 4 Looking at the mind maps created in Part 2, the team reflects on the following:

1. The knowledge within the team, based on the following questions:

- What kind of knowledge is predominant in our team?
- What kind of knowledge is missing in our team?

2. The learning within the team, based on the following questions:

- What will constrain or facilitate collaborative learning in respect of the two mind maps?
- What is needed to realise collaborative learning in our team? Consider the following examples.

- changes in regulations;
- resources (time, money, expertise);
- changes in practices;
- political will and decision-making capacity;
- participants' receptiveness and commitment;
- trust building;
- conflict management.

Facilitator preparation: The facilitator needs to be familiar with the concept of collaborative learning (see section 2 in Part I and Appendix I).

Recommendations for facilitators:
- If participants have difficulties in seeing the value of collaborative learning, the facilitator can share specific examples of when it has been successful.
- Facilitators should make sure that team discussions during this activity stick to the issue of collaborative learning and do not drift into reflections on action.

Recommendations for process design:

- The activity can be carried out with one or more teams. If the activity is carried out with several teams, the facilitator may need to adjust the activity to include interaction between the teams.

- The facilitator should use documentation from the activity as a source of information for future selection of activities and techniques. The discussion about knowledge within the team may indicate what kind of knowledge inputs the team will need and/or which additional stakeholders should be invited later on in the process. The discussion about learning within the team may indicate which items that can facilitate or hinder continued collaboration.

1.5 EVALUATING COLLABORATION WITHIN THE TEAM

Purpose: For the team to reflect on areas of improvement in their internal collaboration.
Materials: Post-It notes (or similar); whiteboard (or flip chart paper), markers.
Time required: 30 minutes.

Part 1 Individually, participants write their answers to the following two questions on Post-It notes (using one Post-It note per item):
- What works well in our collaboration?
- What needs to be improved in our collaboration?

Participants place the Post-It notes on a whiteboard, grouped according to the two questions.

Part 2 Participants study the mapping and then jointly subgroup the Post-It notes according to similarity.

Part 3 Based on Parts 1 and 2, participants discuss how they can adjust their ways of working, taking advantage of what works well and tackling things that need to be improved. Suggestions for adjustments are listed and commitments are made if necessary.

Facilitator preparation:
-The facilitator should be prepared to suggest possible ways of improving collaboration within the team if participants are unable to do this.

- To prepare, the facilitator can consider the following questions:

- How often does the team meet, and in what way?
- How are discussions documented and followed up?
- How are roles and tasks distributed?
- Are the team's strengths and resources utilised effectively?

Recommendations for facilitators:
- In part 3, help the team to focus on aspects crucial to reaching the IBA objectives.
- If there are lots of suggestions for improvements, help the team to prioritise.
- See whether it is possible to capitalise on the aspects that are working well and use these to overcome problems in the collaboration.

Recommendations for process design:
- The activity should be carried out when the team has been working for some time.
- The activity is particularly important for teams that are having problems with collaboration.

1.6 MANAGING CONFLICTS

Purpose: For participants to explore how they can manage conflicts.
Materials: Post-It notes (or similar), whiteboard (or flip chart paper), markers.
Time required: 60 minutes.

Part 1 Individually, participants identify and write down on Post-It notes the two most important (potential or real) conflicts related to their collaboration and/or their inquiry situation. Participants then place their Post-It notes individually on a whiteboard.

Part 2 To develop a shared understanding of the conflicts, the facilitator assist the group in clustering and linking the conflicts that the team has identified. The clusters and links are organised on the whiteboard. The facilitator then asks the group whether they would like to include additional conflicts to the map they have developed.

Part 3 The facilitator gives an introduction to conflict management.

Part 4 The participants agree on one conflict/cluster which they would like to explore in further detail. They then discuss how they can manage this conflict in their collaboration. As an outcome of the discussion, participants list possible ways of managing the conflict.

Part 5 If time permits, the team can reflect briefly on the lessons learnt in relation to managing the other identified conflicts.

Facilitator preparation:
- The facilitator needs to be familiar with conflict management (see the section Managing Conflicts in Section 5 of Part 1, page 29). The facilitator may, based on their own experience or reading, provide examples of how conflicts have been managed successfully.

- By way of preparation for this activity, the facilitator can consider the following questions:

- Which are the most important conflicts that can threaten the team's/teams' collaboration?
- What is at the heart of the conflicts – what are they really about?
- What are the underlying sources of the conflict?

Recommendations for facilitators: If conflicts arise as part of this activity, the facilitator should assess whether it would be feasible to handle the conflict within the workshop, or whether it needs handling separately. In the latter case, the facilitator can talk to the involved parties separately and help them to work through their differences.

Recommendations for process design:
- The activity can be carried out with one or more teams. If the activity is carried out with several teams, the facilitator may need to adjust the activity to include interaction between the teams.
- The activity is particularly important for teams where there is a strong dissonance among the stakeholders or for teams that are having problems with their work and collaboration.

1.7 SHARING OUR WORK

Purpose: To give participants the opportunity to present their own or their organisation's work via an exhibition and learn about the work of their fellow participants.
Materials: Screens or walls for putting up posters, tables where information can be displayed, pins and tape.
Time required: Depends on the workshop programme and number of team members.

Part 1 Participants are invited to set up exhibitions presenting their work.

Part 2 Participants visit the exhibitions. If time allows, participants can present their exhibitions as well.

Recommendations for facilitators:
- Exhibitions can be set up and visited during breaks or in between other activities in order to save time.
- If it is decided that presentations will be given, timekeeping is important.

Recommendations for process design:
- This activity is useful when participants are eager to showcase their work but there is not enough time to accommodate presentations from everyone.
- This activity can also be carried out in a multi-team setting. In this instance, each team sets up an exhibition that is presented to the other teams.

2. CREATING A SHARED UNDERSTANDING OF THE INQUIRY SITUATION

The activities in this section will help teams to deepen and broaden their understanding of the inquiry situation. They will allow teams to: develop a thorough understanding of how the inquiry situation is influenced by trends; understand fellow team members' views of the inquiry situation; and map measures that have already been implemented to address the inquiry situation.

2.1. MAPPING THE HISTORY OF THE INQUIRY SITUATION

Purpose: For the participants to discuss the history of their inquiry situation and identify differences and similarities in their understanding.
Materials: Whiteboard (or flip chart paper), markers.
Time required: 45 minutes.

Part 1 Participants write down key events that have influenced the inquiry situation over a relevant historic period (e.g. three decades) using large-scale timelines on sheets of paper placed on a wall.

This is how the timeline is structured:

1980's	1990's	2000's to present day
What happened?	What happened?	What happened?
Why was it important?	Why was it important?	Why was it important?

Part 2 Participants reflect together on key events. In what way have these key events influenced the current situation? Which stake-holders were involved in these key events? How does the history influence our collaboration?

Facilitator preparation: If possible, the facilitator can familiarise him or herself with the inquiry situation before the activity.

Recommendations for facilitators: The facilitator should bear in mind that the history can be contested. It is important for the collaboration to identify different understandings of the inquiry situation. At an early stage of the IBA process, it is valuable to display different understandings that can be reconciled later on.

Recommendations for process design:
- The activity can be carried out with one or more teams. If the activity is carried out with several teams, the facilitator may need to adjust the activity to include interaction between the teams.
- The activity can be combined with the personal timeline created in activity 1.2 “Getting to know each other’s history”, page 48.
- The activity can be carried out either at an early stage in the process in order to build a common understanding of the inquiry situation, or later on in order to test the level of common understanding.

2.2. UNDERSTANDING THE INQUIRY SITUATION THROUGH SYSTEMS THINKING

Purpose: For the participants to deepen and broaden their understanding of the situation through systems thinking, and to establish a basis for developing the inquiry.
Materials: Flip chart paper or whiteboard, markers.
Time required: 90 minutes.

Part 1 The team jointly develops a mind map of the inquiry situation. The situation is placed in the centre of a whiteboard or on a paper sheet placed on a wall. Participants name relevant trends (i.e. phenomena that are changing over time, such as more cars, fewer green spaces, increased access to technology) that are linked to the situation, and the facilitator writes them down in the mind map. The person who names the trend says where it goes on the map. This is a team brainstorm, and no censorship or evaluation of the emerging mind map should take place.

Part 2 The team reflects on connections between trends. Instructed by the participants, the facilitator draws connections as arrows in the mind map. The directions of the arrows denote the causality between the trends. There may be feedback loops between trends – these should then be connected by two arrows going in opposite directions. Connections that enforce a trend are drawn in green. Connections that weaken a trend are drawn in red.

Part 3 Participants individually identify the trends that they feel are most significant. This can be done by placing coloured dots next to trends, for example.

Part 4 Participants agree jointly on the three most significant trends. This will serve as a basis for activity 2.3, where current activities to address the situation are mapped, and activity 3.1, where a team develops an inquiry.

Part 5 Participants discuss the mind map based on the following questions: What have we learned from the mind map of the inquiry situation? How does this understanding influence our collaboration?

Facilitator preparation: The facilitator should be familiar with systems thinking and have some experience of systems mapping (see Appendix I, page 103).

Recommendations for facilitators:
- It is important for participants to have a common understanding of what a trend is at the onset of the activity.
- Facilitators should let participants formulate trends by explaining what they mean in specific terms.
- It is better to draw two trends with slightly different interpretations than to collapse them into one.
-It may be useful to take a break in the middle of mapping and let the team revisit it with fresh eyes afterwards.
- The mind map (or a photo of it) should be kept as a reference throughout the collaboration.

Recommendations for process design:

- The activity can be carried out with one or more teams. If the activity is carried out with several teams, the facilitator may need to adjust the activity to include interaction between the teams.
- This is a key activity in the IBA process, and sufficient time has to be allocated to it to ensure a useful output. It is used as a basis for activity 2.3, where current activities to address the situation are mapped, and activity 3.1, where a team develops an inquiry.
- The activity could be repeated several times at later stages of the process when teams have developed their understanding of the inquiry situation.

2.3. MAPPING ONGOING ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE SITUATION

Purpose: For participants to explore their work in relation to their inquiry situation and how their collaboration can build on and reinforce ongoing work.
Materials: Post-It notes (or similar); flip chart paper (or white-board), markers, paper, pens.
Time required: 40 minutes.

Part 1 Each team member individually writes on Post-It notes measures that her or his organisation is currently implementing (one measure per Post-It note) as a response to the most significant trends identified in activity 2.2 “Understanding the inquiry situation through systems thinking” on page 63. Participants then group the measures into two categories: 1) measures that are WORKING WELL and 2) measures that NEED IMPROVEMENT.

Part 2 On a flip chart or whiteboard showing the list of the most significant trends, team members individually place their Post-It notes alongside the trends to which each Post-It note relates.

Part 3 The team discusses the following questions: What are the weaknesses and strengths of existing work to address the trends? What can be used in our collaboration? What could be improved through our collaboration?

Facilitator preparation: If possible, the facilitator can familiarise him or herself with the work of the participants and its relationship to the inquiry situation prior to the activity.

Recommendations for facilitators: It may be difficult for participants to name activities that need improvement. The facilitator should then stress that the purpose is not to evaluate each other's work, but to identify what can be improved through collaboration.

Recommendations for process design:
- The activity can be carried out with one or more teams. If the activity is carried out with several teams, the facilitator may need to adjust the activity to include interaction between the teams.
- This activity should follow on from activity 2.2 "Understanding the inquiry situation through systems thinking" (page 63).

2.4. UNDERSTANDING HOW OTHERS VALUE THE INQUIRY SITUATION

Purpose: For participants to explore the views of other stakeholders and try to reframe their understanding of the inquiry situation.
Materials: Flip chart paper, markers.
Time required: 80 minutes.

Part 1 Participants jointly choose one particularly important or contested aspect of the inquiry situation.

Part 2 Participants set up a role play by dividing the roles between them. Participants should take on the role of another stakeholder in the team, preferably one that is present during the activity. However, if necessary to thoroughly examine different views of the situation, participants can also take on the roles of stakeholders not present, or even stakeholders that are not yet included in the team.

Part 3 Individually, each participant considers how their character would value the selected aspect. What do they like/dislike about it? How do they use it or how are they influenced by it?

Part 4 The role play starts with each character telling the others how he or she values the selected aspect. This is documented on a flip chart.

Part 5 Based on the documentation, the role play continues. The characters discuss commonalities and differences in how they value the selected aspect. Then the characters seek to come to an agreement on how to value the selected aspect as a group. The role play ends.

Part 6 Stakeholders discuss the role play. Did it accurately reflect how the different stakeholders value the selected aspect? Did we deepen our understanding of how others value the selected aspect?

Facilitator preparation: If possible, the facilitator can familiarise him or herself with how different stakeholders value the inquiry situation before the activity.

Recommendations for facilitators:
– Make sure that participants are clear about the aspect that is being valued at the onset of the activity.
– The facilitator should use this activity to identify potential conflicts that may arise from the different ways in which stakeholders value the aspects chosen. The facilitator should evaluate whether changes would be needed to the process design in order to manage these conflicts, or whether it would be better to talk to the involved parties separately and help them to work through their differences (see the section Managing conflicts in Section 5, Part I, page 57).

Recommendations for process design:
- The activity can be carried out with one or more teams. If the activity is carried out with several teams, the facilitator may need to

adjust the activity to include interaction between the teams.

– The activity can be used to illustrate how stakeholders perceive each other. It can also make explicit power imbalances as it allows for stakeholders with little power to take on the roles of stakeholders with more power.

– The general outline of the activity can be adjusted to deal with conflicts emerging during the process. In this case, the role play should focus on the differences causing the conflict.

3. DEVELOPING AN INQUIRY

This section includes activities that will help participants to select and develop an inquiry. These activities will help to ensure that the inquiry reflects the interests of all stakeholders involved.

The activities will also enable participants to identify and reflect on power relations influencing their inquiry; and to effectively use knowledge input to develop their inquiry.

3.1. SELECTING AN INQUIRY

Purpose: For participants to understand the rationale of the Inquiry Based Approach and select an inquiry.
Materials: Flip chart paper, markers
Time required: 90 minutes (possibly longer)

Part 1 Introduction to the IBA by facilitators.

Part 2 Participants revisit the documentation from activities 2.2 "Understanding the situation through systems thinking" (page 63) and 2.3 "Mapping ongoing work to transform the inquiry situation" (page 66). Based on this, they will then make a first attempt to formulate an inquiry. The inquiry should meet the following criteria.

- It should be associated with the inquiry situation and a set of significant trends related to it.
- It should be of shared concern to all stakeholders represented in the team.
- All stakeholders represented in the team should be motivated to address it.
- It should be associated with ongoing activities that are not going well among stakeholders represented in the team.
- It should involve complex elements that are difficult to address for individual organisations in the team, but that could be addressed collectively by pooling knowledge and resources.

The team writes down one or more possible inquiries on a flip chart. An inquiry may, for example, start with “How can we as a team…”

Part 3 If the team identifies several potential inquiries in Part 2, it selects one after having considered the options.

Part 4 Finally, each member in the team should state the stake of his or her organisation in the inquiry. All statements are recorded on a flip chart that is kept for future reference. The statements indicate the relevance of the inquiry to the whole team.

Facilitator preparation: Facilitators need to be familiar with the IBA (see Section 1 and 2 of Part I).

Recommendations for facilitators:
– If a team gets stuck and cannot agree on an inquiry, it is often helpful to interrupt the activity and let the participants have a rest and then start again a while later (perhaps the next day). If necessary and practicably possible, the team can be given a certain amount of time to explore two or three inquiries and pick one at a later stage in the process.
– It is crucial for all team members to have an equal say in the scope of the inquiry, as well as in its precise wording.

Recommendations for process design:
- The activity can be carried out with one or more teams. If the activity is to be carried out with several teams, the facilitator may need to adjust the activity to include interaction between the teams.
- This activity builds on activities 2.2 “Understanding the inquiry

situation through systems thinking" (page 63) and 2.3 "Mapping ongoing work to transform the inquiry situation" (page 66).

- The inquiry should be revisited regularly during the IBA process, see activity 3.5 "Revisiting an inquiry" (page 81).

3.2. APPRAISING POWER RELATIONS INFLUENCING AN INQUIRY

Purpose: For participants to understand how power relations between stakeholders influence an inquiry.
Materials: Flip chart paper, markers.
Time required: 60 minutes.

Part 1 Participants discuss in brief their understanding of power and its influence on decision-making and collaboration.

Part 2 The facilitator provides an introduction to central aspects of power.

Part 3 Making use of the facilitator input, participants discuss and create a diagram showing the power relations influencing their inquiry. They write down their inquiry in the centre of the diagram. On one side of the inquiry, they list ways in which power relations facilitate the work of the team, and on the other side ways in which power relations hinder the work. Links between hindering and facilitating aspects of power are marked by arrows in the diagram.

Part 4 Participants reflect on how to take advantage of facilitating aspects of power and how to mitigate hindering aspects.

Facilitator preparation:

- The facilitator needs to be familiar with the concept of power and how it influences collaboration (see the section "Working with pow-

er” in Section 5, Part I, page 32).
- It is helpful for the facilitator to have a prior understanding of the main power relations to be discussed.

Recommendations for facilitators: For sensitive issues to be discussed openly, it is important that trust has been built up among team members prior to the activity, and that the atmosphere is informal and friendly. If there are issues that are too sensitive to discuss within the whole team, the facilitator should consider holding separate discussions with one or more team members and then repeat the activity.

Recommendations for process design: The activity should be carried out when the team has been working together for some time and trust has been built up among team members.

3.3. USING INSPIRATIONAL VISITS TO DEVELOP AN INQUIRY

Purpose: To learn and draw relevant conclusions based on an inspirational visit, and use these for development of an inquiry.
Materials: Paper, pens.
Time required: 30 minutes.

Part 1 Participants discuss their expectations in plenary. The participants brainstorm possible links between the inspirational visit and planned activities related to the inquiry.

Part 2 Participants work in pairs during the visit. Each pair reflects on the following issues.

- Examples of related practices taking place in the inquiry situation being explored by the participants.
- Ways in which the visit could be used to improve practice related to an inquiry situation.
- One critical question to reflect upon after the visit.

Part 3 After the visit, the team reflects. The emphasis should be on what the experience has implied for their inquiry in terms of:

- Enabling factors.
- Constraining factors.
- Practical possibilities.
- Answers to critical questions.

Facilitator preparation: Prior to the activity, the team should receive some information about the study site in order to prepare.

Recommendations for facilitators: Try to notice if participants lose focus during an inspirational visit. If so, it is often helpful to remind them about links with their inquiry.

Recommendations for process design:
- The activity can be carried out with one or more teams. If the activity is carried out with several teams, the facilitator may need to adjust the activity to include interaction between the teams.
- Inspirational visits can be arranged throughout the IBA process. It is important for participants to be given enough scope to make sense of the visits and think about how they can apply the experience in their inquiry. These visits should not merely showcase best practices; it is quite rare for best practices to be transferrable directly to another location. Visits where practitioners share stories about challenges, difficulties and mistakes can be every bit as useful.
- Typically, inspirational visits should be kept reasonably short in order to maintain focus among participants.

3.4. USING EXTERNAL EXPERTS TO DEVELOP AN INQUIRY

Purpose: To learn and draw relevant conclusions from external experts and use this for the development of an inquiry.
Materials: Paper and pens.
Time required: 30 minutes.

Part 1 Before knowledge input is given, e.g. via a lecture given by an expert, there is a discussion in plenary on expectations. Participants brainstorm on possible links between the input and planned activities related to their inquiry.

Part 2 During the input, participants reflect individually on the following:

- Two existing practices from their inquiry situation that can be related to the input.
- Two ways in which the input can be applied to improve the inquiry situation.
- One critical question to be asked to the expert after the input.

Part 3 After the input, participants work together with the expert to reflect in plenary. Critical questions are asked of the expert and the implications for the inquiry are discussed.

Facilitator preparation: Prior to the activity, participants should receive information about the expert and the input he or she will present. The facilitator can ask the expert to give a short introduction of the presentation before Part 1 of the activity.

Recommendations for facilitators:
The facilitator should try to see if participants fail to follow during a lecture. If so, the presentation should be interrupted for clarifying questions.

Recommendations for process design:
- The activity can be carried out with one or more teams. If the activity is carried out with several teams, the facilitator may need to adjust the activity to include interaction between the teams.
- Inputs can be arranged throughout the IBA process. It is important for the participants to be given enough scope to make sense of the input and think about how they can apply it to their inquiry.

3.5. REVISITING AN INQUIRY

Purpose: To reflect on lessons learnt so far in an IBA process, and to ensure the continuous relevance of an inquiry.
Materials: Paper, pens, flip chart paper, markers.
Time required: 60 minutes.

Part 1 The participants consider what they have learned so far during the process and reflect on whether this has implications for their inquiry. If the team agrees to adjust the inquiry, the new inquiry is written down on a flip chart and the team prepares to present the rationale for the adjustment.

Part 2 The team presents the new inquiry in plenary, and the facilitator and/or fellow teams provide feedback acting as a "critical friend" by:

- saying what they like about the new inquiry;
- challenging the team to think differently about certain aspects of their new inquiry.

The team reflects on the feedback and adjusts their inquiry again if necessary.

Recommendations for facilitators: The activity is an important component in the "opening up" phase of the IBA (see Section 5 in Part I). It is good to encourage participants to be critical about the outline of their inquiry – they should not be afraid to abandon irrelevant aspects of it. To avoid confusion, it must be made clear to participants that opening up will be followed by closing down and more focused action planning so as to enable decision-making and concerted action.

Recommendations for process design:

- The activity can be carried out with one or more teams. If the activity is carried out with several teams, the facilitator may need to adjust the activity to include interaction between the teams.
- The activity should be repeated regularly throughout the IBA to ensure that lessons learnt are incorporated into the inquiry.

4. WIDENING THE STAKEHOLDING AROUND AN INQUIRY

Additional stakeholders typically need to be involved during an IBA. Widening the stakeholding is important so as to develop a deeper understanding of the inquiry and address it with effective action.

The activities in this section will help the team to identify and involve additional stakeholders in their collaboration.

4.1. ENGAGING ADDITIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN AN IBA

Purpose: For the participants to identify additional stakeholders and discuss how these can be involved in the collaboration.
Materials: Paper, markers, coloured dots.
Time required: 90 minutes.

Part 1 The participants jointly write down the names of the organisations currently represented in the team on Post-It notes, one name per Post-It. They then distribute the Post-Its over a large sheet of paper. Then they map the stake of each organisation in the inquiry using different colours. The following stakes should be considered:

- power and authority to make decisions;
- resources (e.g. finance) to make things happen;
- information and knowledge to help make sense of what is happening;
- practical skills and capacity to do things;
- being affected by decisions taken during the IBA.

The team reflects on whether any stakes are missing or underrepresented in the team.

Part 2 Based on Part 1, the team considers organisations that possess missing or underrepresented stakes. Again, the name of each stakeholder is written on a Post-It and placed on the large sheet of paper next to the stakeholders currently involved.

Part 3 The team sets priorities among the identified additional stakeholders and jointly explores which methods that could be used to include them. The table below may serve as a guide for the exploration.

Name of new stakeholder	Why relevant?	What is in it for the stakeholder?	Methods of engagement

Facilitator preparation: It is helpful for the facilitator to make an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the team prior to the activity. It will then be possible to provide suggestions on the type of stakeholders that should be added.

Recommendations for facilitators: Make sure that the team considers at least the following categories of additional stakeholders: local community, civil society, regional or national government, political leaders, media, researchers and business. Be aware of imbalances related to stakeholders such as gender composition and representation of marginalised groups, and encourage the team to consider organisations representing missing stakeholders.

Recommendations for process design:
- The activity can be carried out with one or more teams. If the activity is carried out with several teams, the facilitator may need to adjust the activity to include interaction between the teams.
- The activity can be followed by activity 4.2 (page 87), in which the team develops a common story about their work.

4.2. DEVELOPING A STORY TO ENGAGE AN ADDITIONAL STAKEHOLDER

Purpose: For the participants to develop a story that engages an additional stakeholder in their collaboration, and to practice how to tell this story.
Materials: Paper and pens.
Time required: 90 minutes.

Part 1 Participants discuss: Which stories engaged us in our inquiry situation?

Part 2 The facilitator provides input on storytelling.

Part 3 Based on Part 1 and Part 2, participants develop a joint story about their inquiry situation.

Part 4 The participants perform a role play in which they tell their story to a stakeholder that they would like to engage. This story should aim to build trust and shared meaning. Each city team divides the following roles amongst themselves: “storyteller”, “stakeholder”, “observers” and “recorder”.

Part 5 Participants discuss lessons learnt from the role play. Fellow teams and/or the facilitator provide feedback by:

- saying what they like about the story;
- challenging the team to think differently about some aspects of their story.

The feedback should be documented by the recorder and if necessary used to adjust the story. The team can also consider whether additional stories need to be developed in order to engage other stakeholders.

Facilitator preparation: The facilitator should be familiar with basic storytelling theory; see Appendix I, page 103.

Recommendations for facilitators: Depending on the context, team(s) should typically consider the following stakeholders to include in their role play: media; decision-makers/politicians; local communities and funding agencies.

Recommendations for process design:
- The activity can be carried out with one or more teams. If the activity is carried out with several teams, the facilitator may need to adjust the activity to include interaction between the teams.
- The activity builds further on activity 4.1 “Engaging additional stakeholders in an IBA” (page 84).
- The activity can be combined with activity 5.3 “Planning for action” (page 95).
- The activity can be repeated as additional stakeholders become involved.

5. ACTION PLANNING

This section presents a set of activities that help teams plan their work and make the necessary considerations before swinging into action.

5.1. IDENTIFYING ACTIONS FOR CHANGE[1]

Purpose: For participants to reflect on which change strategies they can utilise to transform the inquiry situation.
Materials: Flip chart paper, markers, sufficient floor space.
Time required: 45 minutes.

Part 1 The team discusses the following questions: what kind of change has taken place because of our work? Why has this change happened?

Part 2 The facilitator presents the four change strategies in the table on next side.

Part 3 Four papers bearing the words 'Personal', 'Relationships', 'Cultural' and 'System' (one word per paper), denoting the four change strategies explained in Part 2, are placed in a corner of the workshop room (one paper in each corner).

Individually, participants consider how they have worked with change related to the inquiry so far. They position themselves close to the paper with the word that describes their work most accurately. If participants work with two or more change strategies, they stand in between the corresponding papers. Each participant explains his or her position to the others.

1 This activity is inspired by an activity developed by Wagening University available on-line at: http://www.wageningenportals.nl/ msp/ (accessed 2014-01-17).

Different change strategies	Interior	Exterior
Individual	**Personal** - focus on individual perceptions and capacity. *Example: helping a farmer to see livelihood opportunities from implementing perma-culture*	**Relationships** -focus on better understanding and communication between people. *Example: helping farmers to connect to a network of practi-tioners in the field of permaculture.*
Collective	**Cultural** -focus on group values and perceptions. *Example: strengthening the sense of place and value of self-reliance in a farming community.*	**System** -focus on institutions, power and regula-tions. *Example: raise taxes on pesticides to make it easier for permaculture products to enter markets.*

Part 4 Participants jointly discuss whether they should adjust their work to emphasise or include change strategies other than the ones prevalent so far.

Facilitator preparation: Prepare the sheets of paper before the activity.

Recommendations for facilitators:
- The activity can be carried out with one or more teams. If the activity is carried out with several teams, the facilitator may need to adjust the activity to include interaction between the teams.
- Help the team to see what change strategies would be useful to reinforce.

Recommendations for process design:
- The activity can be repeated on several occasions during the IBA process.
- This activity can be combined with activity 5.3 “Planning for action” (page 95).

5.2. REFLECTING ON THE SCOPE OF AN INQUIRY[2]

Purpose: for participants to reflect on which actions are feasible and effective to undertake in the near future.
Materials: Flip chart paper and markers.
Time required: 60 minutes.

Part 1 Individually, each participant draws a large circle on a flip chart, with a smaller circle inside it. The circles are labelled "circle of influence" (inner circle) and "circle of concern" (outer circle). Individually, participants write aspects of the inquiry situation that they are concerned about, placing them in either the outer circle (aspects that they are concerned about but have little or no influence over) or the inner circle (aspects that they are concerned about and can influence).

Part 2 Participants share their flip charts with each other and discuss the following questions:

- What do our circles have in common? What are the differences?
- Are we distributing our time and energy between the two circles wisely?
- How can we expand our circle of influence?
- The team jointly documents conclusions and measures that should be taken on the basis of this activity.

2 This activity is inspired by Habit 1: Be Proactive, in The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, by Stephen R. Covey, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990).

Recommendations for facilitators: Try to avoid teams being overwhelmed by the gap between desired and achievable change by stressing the option of starting on a small scale and the importance of taking the first small steps in order to see more clearly what can be done.

Recommendations for process design:
- The activity can be carried out with one or more teams. If the activity is carried out with several teams, the facilitator may need to adjust the activity to include interaction between the teams.
- The activity can be linked to activity 3.5 “Revisiting an inquiry” (page 81).

5.3. PLANNING FOR ACTION

Purpose: For participants to plan actions needed to pursue their inquiry.
Materials: Paper, pens, computer.
Time required: At least 95 minutes.

Part 1 Participants consider some of the following questions as prompts to action planning:

- What else do we need to know to progress our inquiry?
- Who knows or can help us find out?
- Are there things we can start now to progress our inquiry?
- Who else needs to be involved?
- Who or what might get in the way?
- Who in our team will do what?
- How can we ensure regular sessions of reflection, sense-making and further planning/adjustment over the course of the coming period of action?
- How do we record the outcomes of our action and what we learn?
- What is a realistic action plan, given available time and resources?

Part 2 Participants record in a sheet what they plan to do and who will do it (suggestion below).

Actions	Purpose	Responsible	Others involved	Timeline	Funding

Part 3 The facilitator and other teams (if present) provide feedback. This is done by:

- first saying what they like about the action plan;
- then challenging the team to think differently about certain aspects of their action plan.

The feedback from the "critical friends" should be recorded by the team that is receiving the feedback and adjustments made if necessary.

Recommendations for facilitators:

– Listen carefully to the discussions in the team and the presentation of the action plan, and make the team aware of elements that have been overlooked (e.g. action steps that have been identified as important in earlier activities).

– Help the team to strike a balance between ambition and realism when they create their action plan. Make sure that

they consider the time available to team members once the workshop is over.
– The type of feedback given by the facilitator may vary significantly from team to team. Some teams may need to be challenged in order to take on necessary tasks, while for others highlighting the hindering factors will be necessary.

Recommendations for process design:
– This activity is intended to be repeated regularly throughout the IBA. It is typically carried out as the final activity in the workshops.
– In contexts where there is a lack of resources for developing the inquiry and its activities, action planning should include mapping of potential sources of funding.

6. EVALUATING AN IBA

This section includes activities for monitoring and evaluating an IBA. These activities allow teams to describe and understand their learning process, as well as unexpected events and changes in the direction of their collaboration.

Ideally, the activities in this section should be combined with more conventional methods for monitoring and evaluation, e.g. logical framework approaches.

6.1. DEVELOPING A LEARNING HISTORY

Purpose: For the participants to review their joint learning and explore how they can reinforce it.
Materials: Paper, pens of different colours, Post-It notes, scissors, etc.
Time required: 75 minutes.

Part 1 Participants jointly look back on their collaboration so far, revisiting documentation (flip charts, individual notes etc.). Based on this, they identify milestones at which they learned something important. For each milestone, participants discuss what they learned and how that learning came about.

Part 2 Participants jointly develop an illustration of their learning history on a large sheet of paper. This illustration does not have to be created according to a specific format – participants can use their creativity to express their history in any way.

Part 3 Participants reflect on how to reach new learning milestones by understanding how learning came about in the past.

Facilitator preparation: As a source of inspiration, examples of learning histories can be showed at the onset of the activity.

Recommendations for facilitators: The facilitator should be present during the team discussions since these can provide useful clues as to how the facilitation has worked so far and how it can be improved.

Recommendations for process design:

- The activity can be carried out with one or more teams. If the activity is carried out with several teams, the facilitator may need to adjust the activity to include interaction between the teams.
- The activity can be repeated throughout an IBA. Documentation from the activity should be kept, as the first learning history can serve as a basis for new ones.
- The activity can be followed by activity 5.3 “Planning for action” (page 95) to create a plan based on the outcomes of this activity.

6.2. SHARING MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGES[3]

Purpose: For the participants to reflect on and learn from their actions so far.
Materials: Paper, pens.
Time required: 60 minutes.

Part 1 The facilitator shares a story about the most significant changes during the IBA from his or her own perspective.

Part 2 Participants take it in turns to present one story each describing significant changes that have come about due to the collaboration. Stories should have been prepared prior to the activity. After each story, clarifying questions and reflections from other participants are invited.

Part 3 The team jointly lists the most significant changes described in the stories on a sheet of paper.

Part 4 The team discusses what they can learn from the stories, in particular:

- Do these stories represent the kind of changes we would like to see?
- Are there any general patterns that can explain why significant changes came about?

3 This activity is inspired by The 'Most Significant Change' (MSC) Technique - A Guide to Its Use by Rick Davies and Jess Dart, http://www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.pdf (accessed 2014-06-17).

- Can we use such patterns to become better at creating the changes that we want to see in the future? Should we adjust the way we work in any way?

Facilitator preparation: Prior to the activity, the facilitator should prepare a story based on his or her understanding of the IBA process so far. The facilitator should also ask each participant to prepare a story of significant changes related to the process.

Recommendations for facilitators: The discussion in Part 4 can provide the facilitator with important clues as to how to design the future process. Attention should be paid to what made the significant changes happen.

Recommendations for process design:
- The activity can be carried out with one or more teams. If the activity is carried out with several teams, the facilitator may need to adjust the activity to include interaction between the teams.
- This activity can be repeated on several occasions throughout an IBA process in order to keep track of the changes achieved. It is useful to keep documentation from the activity and use it as input when the activity is undertaken again in order to help participants appreciate their progress and further the understanding of how and why changes happen.

APPENDIX I
Theoretical underpinnings of the IBA

Wicked situations and governance

As outlined in Section 1 of the Handbook, the IBA is concerned with complex and contested situations. In scientific literature, they have been coined as “wicked” (Westin et al. 2014; Rittel & Webber, 1973; Ritchey, 2011). Wicked situations typically involve power relations between a variety of stakeholders from a multitude of sectors who often have diverging interests. Confronted with wicked situations, stakeholders need to handle problems that are difficult to define, contested and ever-changing. The understanding of the nature, causes and solutions in these kinds of situations varies among stakeholders (e.g. Rittel & Webber, 1973; Ison, 2010).

It has been argued that transformation of wicked situations defies simple policy solutions. Governance responsibility cannot be reduced to one organisation over another or to a particular geographic scale or level of government over others, because effective governance is the result of multiple and dynamic links and interactions between individuals and groups operating at different levels and scales (Steyaert & Jiggins, 2007). Single discipline, single organisation perspectives are thus rarely sufficient for managing and governing wicked situations, characterised by multiple stakeholders with diverse perceptions of what is at stake and thus what the purpose of any intervention or innovation might be. Instead, comprehensive and context-specific approaches are needed in which stakeholders build trust and apply various forms of knowledge to jointly deconstruct and reframe their understanding of a situation and the solutions needed. Under enabling conditions, this kind of governance based on collaborative learning can lead to shared understanding and shared ownership of concerted action among stakeholders and a gradual transformation of the situation (SLIM, 2004; Verweij & Thompson, 2006; Steyaert & Jiggins, 2007; Ison, 2010).

Scholars have illuminated the difficulties involved in getting multi-stakeholder collaboration and learning off the ground (e.g. Duit, et al., 2009; Scott & Gough, 2003). Wicked situations have a specific history and context that shape current stakeholders' practices and understanding (SLIM, 2004). In every situation there are specific governance arrangements with a broad mix of stakeholders, institutions and locations involved in the policy processes. Levels ranging from global to local, with often overlapping and conflicting jurisdiction, may be involved (Rhodes, 1997; Hajer & Wagenaar, 2003). Deliberate efforts to co-construct knowledge requires societal arrangements that are open to the necessity or potential for change in governance as a result of the collaborative learning process (Steyaert & Jiggins, 2007). Recent thinking and practice (e.g. Voss et al., 2006) shows that reflexivity is an important governance feature to accommodate the application of knowledge developed through stakeholder collaboration. A number of approaches to advance reflexive governance have been recommended. These include integrated (trans-disciplinary) forms of knowledge production; adaptive strategies and institutions; anticipation (explorative evaluation) of the possible long-term effects of different action strategies; the use of iterative, participatory processes in goal formation, and the interactive development of strategies to reach goals (Voss et al., 2006).

Systems thinking

Systems thinking was developed in the twentieth century as a critique of reductionism. Reductionism generates knowledge and understanding by breaking phenomena down into parts and then studying these parts in terms of cause and effect. According to systems thinking, the world is best understood as systemic. This means that phenomena are understood to be an emerging property of an interrelated whole (Flood, 2006).

How to go about building up whole pictures of systems and intervening in them has led to much controversy in systems thinking and practice. The controversy can be seen as originating from different views as to whether reality exists outside of human minds, or if reality is socially constructed by humans. Those who hold the previously mentioned view believe that all phenomena are real systems. Therefore, proponents of this view argue that a systems approach entails qualitative and/or quantitative modelling of real world systems. These models can then be applied as research or decision-making tools to predict events and suggest action to take in order to achieve improvements of systems. An opposing idea in the debate within systems thinking states that while the world is intuitively systemic, characterised by emergence and interrelatedness, we cannot assume that real systems exist outside the human mind. This is because all our understanding of phenomena is based on interpretations made by the human brain. A systems approach will therefore employ concepts such as emergence and interrelatedness to interpret social phenomena, rather than to represent systems as if they actually existed in the real world (Checkland, 1981). Crudely, the field of systems thinking can be divided into these two directions, each of which offers its own knowledge and practice traditions.

The distinction between soft and hard systems thinking is related to the distinction between real world systems and social constructions of systems. The first standpoint above can be understood as hard systems thinking, since it advocates thinking about systems as if they exist in the world. The other standpoint has been described as soft systems thinking, because it assumes only that the social constructions of the world are systemic. One way of distinguishing hard from soft systems thinking is that the former takes an objective stance, while the latter assumes a subjective position (e.g. Flood, 2006; Ison, 2010).

In hard systems thinking, the practitioner sees the world as being made up of systems. In contrast, the practitioner who adopts a soft systems perspective sees situations that are complex and confusing and makes a choice to engage with the situation through a process of inquiry that involves thinking and acting systemically. This position can be described as recognising a system as an epistemological device, i.e. a way of engaging with a situation so as to better know or inquire systemically. This second position implies a more reflexive way of looking at the world (Archer, 2007), in that the practitioner is required to adopt a critical perspective on him or herself ` as well as other stakeholders.

The IBA strives to strike a balance between a soft and a hard systems approach. The key IBA concepts, collaborative learning and governance are developed in the tradition of soft systems thinking. Typically, content input to participants in an IBA process will be based on hard systems thinking. If a balance is struck, the mix between these two research and practice traditions can be fruitful. Dissonance and tensions created between the soft and hard systems traditions can enable learning.

Learning theory

Even if learning programmes are often seen as important for tackling issues of sustainability and development (Folke et al., 2002; Krasny et al., 2010; Sriskandarajah et al., 2010), the build-up of knowledge is often treated in the natural resource management literature as something which will automatically happen over time. However, practitioners and scholars in the field of collaborative learning argue that open-ended, iterative and reflexive design processes, allowing space for mutual inquiry between designers and participants, are necessary for new knowledge to be built. Crucial sequential moments in the design process have been identified, including exploration such as (self-) awareness raising, deframing, deconstruction and reframing, co-creation, experimentation and reviewing (e.g. Wals, 2007).

In the IBA, the key concept of collaborative learning denotes the multi-stakeholder processes of interaction that can lead to concerted action for change and improvements of situations (Blackmore, 2010).

Collaborative learning draws on theories and practice in the fields of experiential learning developed by Kolb (e.g. 1984), drawing on the work of Lewin, Dewey and Piaget, and the inquiry-based tradition of action research originally developed by Lewin (1946) and the increasingly important tradition of social learning in the field of sustainable development (e.g. Ison, 2010; Blackmore, 2010).

Experiential learning theory is based on the idea of learning cycles around (i) specific experience, (ii) observation and reflection, (iii) formation of abstract concepts and (iv) testing in new situations. Learning is considered as reflecting on experience to identify how a situation or future actions could be improved and then using this knowledge

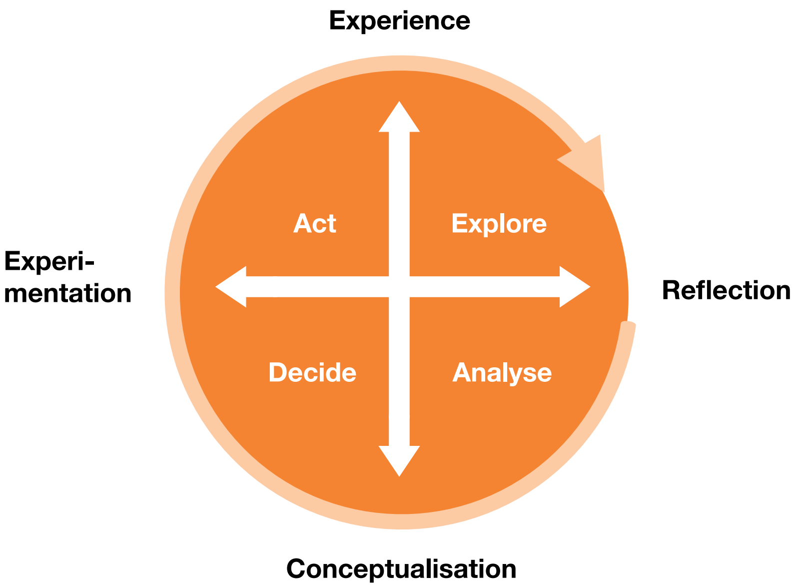

Figure 1 The Experential Learning Cycle

to actually make improvements. Kolb (1983) said that learning runs through a cycle of specific experiences, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation. Applying lessons learnt to future actions provides the basis for another cycle of learning.

The left side of the vertical arrow represents doing tasks, the right side observing tasks. The upper half represents feeling (being creative and emotional), the bottom (logical) thinking. In later work, the experiential learning cycles have been complemented by the notion of individual learning styles. It is said that people often have their own preferences for one of the four learning styles: they are more exploring, analysing, decision-making or acting types.

Inquiry-based learning is a central part of the action research tradition. Action research is research initiated to solve an immediate problem or a reflective process of progressive problem solving led by individuals working with others in teams or as part of a "community of practice" to improve the way in which they address issues and solve problems. Action research involves actively participating in a change process whilst conducting research. Action research can also be undertaken by larger organisations or institutions, assisted or guided by professional researchers, with the aim of improving their strategies, practices and knowledge of the environments within which they practise. As designers and stakeholders, researchers work with others to propose new courses of action to help their community improve its work practices.

Action research is typically an interactive inquiry process that balances problem solving, actions implemented in collaboration, with data-driven collaborative analysis in order to understand underlying causes, enabling future predictions about personal and organisational change (Reason & Bradbury, 2007). Action research challenges traditional social science by moving beyond reflective knowledge created by outside experts sampling variables, to an active moment-to-moment theorising, data collection and inquiry occurring in the midst of emergent structure (Torbert, 2002).

The IBA process builds on cycles of action and reflection based on a jointly shaped inquiry. In accordance with Wals (2007), this allows for an open, iterative and yet systematic learning process intended to enable participants to critically scrutinise and deconstruct the ideas, conceptions and assumptions they have previously held and embrace new ways of understanding their work. This can result in single (first order) and/or double loop (second order) learning, terms originally coined by Argyris and Schön (1996). First order or single-loop learning improves efficiency. It results in improvements of the process whereby learners seek to achieve what they already know they wish to achieve. Second order (double loop) learning improves effectiveness. It forces learners to ask whether what they think they wish to do is really what they should do. It takes them beyond the search for the best solutions and helps them instead to question whether they have really identified the right problem (Argyris & Schön, 1996).

Context and its influence on collaborative planning

As collaborative ideals become widespread and are incorporated into existing policy frameworks, the level of scrutiny of collaborative approaches to planning has also increased. Such scrutiny has highlighted the difficulties and risks involved in successfully implementing the ideals of collaboration and how this was strongly determined by the context in which they took place (Blicharska et al., 2011, Abelson et al., 2007; Ananda and Proctor, 2013; Watson, 2002; Cashmore et al., 2007). Consequently, there has been growing convergence between proponents and critics of collaborative planning on the importance of context in the implementation of collaborative planning ideals.

Different foci to the study of the relationship between context and collaborative planning can be found in the planning literature. The most common approach focuses on the institutional settings in which collaborative processes takes place. This approach is often associated with institutional theory which emphasises the institutional arrangements that are determined by the formal rules, resources and informal norms and procedures that exist in a given context (Blicharska et al., 2011; Raitio, 2012; Healey, 2010). Collaborative processes are considered to be embedded within these institutions, thus having an impact on interpersonal and intergroup communications and outcomes in collaborative planning (Raitio, 2012; Sager, 2001).

Another approach to the study of context focuses on the stakeholders that manage and take part in collaborative processes. This approach is based on the understanding that contextual variables other than those related to institutional settings, such as the existence of pressure groups, strong stakeholders or skilled planners, and how these use their agency to develop and pursue their strategies, also have a strong influence over the implementation and outcomes of a collaborative process (Sager, 2001; Saarikoski et al., 2013; Healey, 2010). Connelly (2010, based on Jessop, 2007) captures this approach in a useful way when saying that participation is shaped by the way in which planners (and other stakeholders) act as individuals working within the limited opportunities provided by governance structures and the prevailing political and social norms and expectations of a specific context. Accordingly, Healey (2010) argues that planners' and other stakeholders' agency and the reality of institutional constraints need to be recognised.

Richardson (2005) shows another focus to the study of context and collaborative planning which centres on the stakeholder relations that are present or emerge in a given process. In his analysis of four cases of environmental assessment, he focuses on the relations that emerge from stakeholders' differences in values, interests and power and how these determine the level and mediation of conflicts and power asymmetries within a process. Another example of this approach can be found in Bugg's (2013) study of a collaborative process for the development of an Islamic school in Sydney. In her study, she shows how stakeholder relations characterised by deep-seated anxieties about ethno-religious "others" significantly excluded supporters of the Islamic school from actively participating in and influencing the process.

A final, but less common approach can be found in studies of collaborative approaches to natural resource management and planning (e.g. Ananda and Proctor, 2013; Andersson, 2006). Using the Institutional

Analysis and Development (IAD) framework developed by Ostrom (1999) and her colleagues, these studies focuses on the attributes of the resource or issue with which the process is dealing.

Andersson (2006) usefully illustrates the importance of this focus by saying that the engagement and interests of a community controlling forestlands containing valuable timber, for example, will significantly differ from a community that owns only degraded forestlands or no forest at all.

The Framework for Contextualising the Inquiry Based Approach (FCIBA), presented in chapter 4, combines the above-mentioned foci for the analysis of context and its influence in IBA processes. Thus the FCIBA focuses on four contextual components: 1) the institutional settings and arrangements in which the studied processes were embedded; 2) the stakeholder relationships existing prior to and emerging during the process; 3) stakeholders' agency and their capabilities to influence both the qualities of the process and the discussion and decisions that emerge from it; and 4) the attributes of the topic dealt with during the processes.

Storytelling

Storytelling is an ancient way of conveying messages, events and values by sharing a narrative (Boyd, 2009, Zipes, 2013). It has been argued that at a societal level, there is a constant struggle between different stories aimed at providing meaning and shaping and changing people's perceptions and behaviour (Sachs, 2012). As storytelling holds pedagogical potential, it is frequently used to reach educational objectives (Birch & Heckler, 1996). It can be a more compelling and effective route of delivering information than merely using dry facts. In a group discussion, storytelling can help influence others and unify the group by linking the past to the future, by transforming problems, requests and issues into stories. When situations are complex, storytelling can incorporate broader perspectives and contexts (Jameson, 2001).

In marketing, storytelling is being used increasingly to attract customers and build their loyalty by giving them a personal link with the message (Giles, 2004, Gillet, 2014). Facts tend to be easier to remember once embedded in stories (Gillet, 2014). In advertising, storytelling techniques such as the "one-minute elevator pitch", aimed at effectively conveying a condensed narrative that arouses the curiosity of the listener, are promoted. In communications discourse, the importance of relating a story to contexts and other narratives that are familiar to the listener is emphasised (e.g. Heath & Heath, 2007).

In the action inquiry literature, storytelling is considered an important means for reflection and making people self-aware of their actions and the thinking underlying these actions. Torbert (1991) identifies four dimensions of conversation that are needed for self-reflection: framing, advocating, illustrating and inquiring. These are also applicable when developing a story. When framing, the speaker names assumptions that bind together the story, i.e. the purpose of speaking; when advocating, an argument in favour of a particular path of action is presented; when illustrating, the advocacy is grounded in a specific example or a colourful narrative; and when inquiring, listeners are explicitly invited to respond.

Storytelling is an important component of the IBA. It is used both as a way of broadening the stakeholding around an inquiry and as a way to monitor and build a common understanding of the IBA process as it unfolds. The deep-rooted notion of storytelling across human societies makes it a universal method that can be applied in most contexts. It permits communication between stakeholders and teams from different cultures and backgrounds. The flexible and inclusive properties of storytelling make the method very suitable for monitoring and documenting in a participatory manner the broad array of expected and unexpected events that may unfold during an IBA. The method is therefore a useful complement to traditional quantitative monitoring and evaluation methods such as logical framework approaches.

APPENDIX II
Possible workshop sequences

Alternative 1 – six month (26 week) process, single team

		Week 1	Week 2-11		Week 12	Week 13-25	Week 26
IBA Phases	Engagement	Engagement/ Development	Development		Development	Development	Institutionalisation
Main task	Identification and selection of stakeholders (see Activity 1.1)	Engagement workshop (2 days)	Action and development		Development workshop (3 days)	Action	Institutionalisation workshop (2 days)
Suggested activities		1.2 Getting to know each other's history p.48 1.3 Understanding why we collaborate as a team p.50 1.4 Seeing the value of collaborative learning p.52 2.2 Understanding the inquiry situation through systems thinking p.63 2.3 Mapping ongoing work to transform the inquiry situation p.66 3.1 Selecting an inquiry p.72 3.4 Using external experts to develop an inquiry p.79 5.3 Planning for action p.95			1.5 Evaluating collaboration within the team p.55 1.6 Managing conflicts p.57 3.2 Appraising power relations influencing an inquiry p.75 3.3 Using inspirational visits to develop an inquiry p.77 3.4 Using external experts to develop an inquiry p.79 3.5 Revisiting an inquiry p.81 4.1 Engaging additional stakeholders in an IBA p.84 4.2 Developing a story to engage an additional stakeholder p.87 5.1 Identifying actions for change p.90 5.2 Reflecting on the scope of an inquiry p.93 5.3 Planning for action p.95 6.1 Developing a learning history p.99		3.5 Revisiting an inquiry p.81 5.3 Planning for action p.95 6.1 Developing a learning history p.99 6.2 Sharing most significant changes p.101

Alternative 2 – one year process, multiple teams		**Week 1**	**Week 2-3**		**Week 4**	**Week 5-7**	**Week 8**	**Week 9-11**	**Week 12**
IBA Phases	Engagement	Engagement/ Development	Development		Development	Development	Development	Development	Institutionalisation
Main task	Identification and selection of stakeholders (see Activity 1.1)	Engagement single team workshops (2 days)	Action and development		Development multi-team workshop (4 days)	Action	Development single team workshops (3 days)	Action	Institutionalisation multi-team workshop (2 days)
Suggested activities		1.2 Getting to know each other's history p.48 1.3 Understanding why we collaborate as a team p.50 1.4 Seeing the value of collaborative learning p.52 2.2 Understanding the inquiry situation through systems thinking p.63 2.3 Mapping ongoing work to transform the inquiry situation p.66 3.1 Selecting an inquiry p.72 3.4 Using external experts to develop an inquiry p.79 5.3 Planning for action p.95			1.7 Sharing our work p.59 2.4 Understanding how others value the inquiry situation p.68 3.2 Appraising power relations influencing an inquiry p.75 3.3 Using inspirational visits to develop an inquiry p.77 3.5 Revisiting an inquiry p.81 4.1 Engaging additional stakeholders in an IBA p.84 4.2 Developing a story to engage an additional stakeholder p.87 6.1 Developing a learning history p.99		1.5 Evaluating collaboration within the team p.55 1.6 Managing conflicts p.57 3.4 Using external experts to develop an inquiry p.79 3.5 Revisiting an inquiry p.81 4.1 Engaging additional stakeholders in an IBA p.84 6.1 Developing a learning history p.99 6.2 Sharing most significant changes p.101		

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The defining challenge for our generation is to create well-being and equality within the ecological boundaries of the planet. To meet the challenge key stakeholders need to overcome their differences and engage in collaboration, learning and concerted action. The Inquiry Based Approach (IBA) has been developed to facilitate multi-stakeholder collaboration for sustainable transformation of complex and contested situations.

Extensive experience from applying the IBA in Africa, Asia and Europe has shown that the approach can help stakeholders to broaden their understandings as well as engage in action for transformation together.

This handbook provides practical advice and hands-on instructions for those interested in facilitating multi-stakeholder collaboration. It covers the most important dimensions of being an IBA facilitator; explains how the IBA can be adjusted to fit a specific context and gives advice on how a facilitator can handle complexity and power.

The handbook also includes detailed descriptions of 23 activities that can be used in the engagement, development and institutionalisation of an IBA. The reader will also find an extensive reference list for further readings.

This handbook is intended to be a living document, i.e. a document that will be updated and improved. Therefore we value inputs and suggestions on how it can be developed.

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