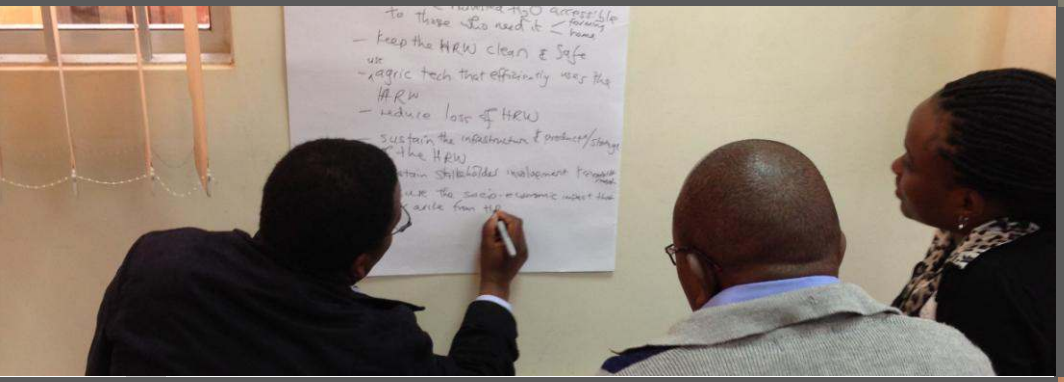
Inspire



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GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE INITIATIVE

LINK Round IV Facilitator Training After Action Report

Training facilitators to leverage collaborative innovation on the African continent

June 2014 • Kampala, Uganda

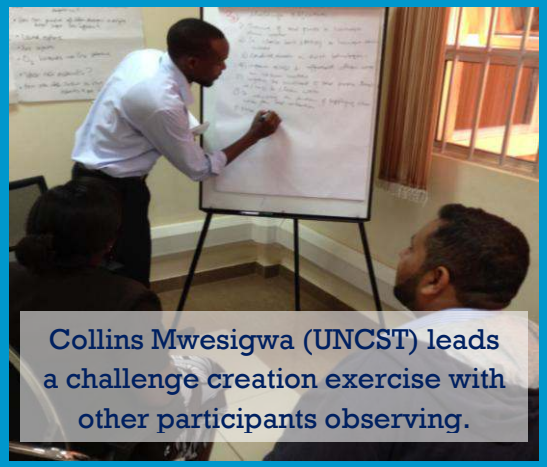
Overview

Heeding the call for leaders with skills to facilitate complex problem solving, the Global Knowledge Initiative (GKI) delivered its first "Innovation Network Facilitator Training" to cultivate leaders equipped to solve global development challenges.GKI prizes facilitation as a process that enables teams to reconcile and capitalize upon distinct incentives, points of view, culture, and terminologies to create collaborative, productive outcomes. GKI recognizes that a well-trained facilitator can unlock a groups' potential to solve complex challenges.

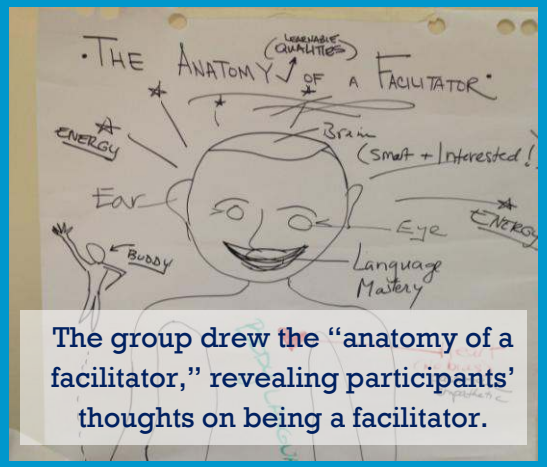
Hosted at the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) in Kampala, Uganda from 23-24 June 2014, GKI welcomed participants from a number of institutions to this inaugural training designed to immerse development leaders in the art of facilitation. The training taught participants the importance of facilitation, and how it could boost their capacity to solve global challenges in teams. Featuring a hybridized training approach that blends a modular architecture with an integrated learning experience—iteratively constructing an Action Plan for cultivating a cohort of facilitators—the training equipped participants with a reusable toolkit that can be applied to a range of facilitation challenges common to both meeting facilitation and network facilitation. Following the training, participants were furnished with vital tools critical to effectively managing networks and stimulating innovation in multidisciplinary teams. This report presents an overview of the tools introduced during the training, key findings, and participant recommendations that GKI will heed in an effort to enhance the relevance and expand the availability of this training practice.

This training was made possible through the generous support of the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The World Academy of Sciences (TWAS) for the advancement of science in the developing world, sharing GKI's unique perspective on the role and importance of collaborative problem solving in science and development, also sponsored 5 trainees to complete the training. Specifically, GKI and TWAS saw tremendous potential in bringing a cohort of TWAS' Young Affiliates together with other emerging African leaders in science to participate in this transformational learning and coaching opportunity.

Participants work in groups to gain consensus on the essential challenge objectives guiding their work.



Collins Mwesigwa (UNCST) leads a challenge creation exercise with other participants observing.



The group drew the "anatomy of a facilitator," revealing participants' thoughts on being a facilitator.

Why Facilitation?

Why is Facilitation Important?

The world is full of complex problems. To solve them, we must be innovative and we must share resources and expertise, a practice we call Collaborative Innovation. While Collaborative Innovation holds great promise, it can be a challenge in its own right. Groups can easily get bogged down in conflicts, tangents, and extraneous details, disengaging from a pathway toward a solution. Further, while the diversity of perspectives and resources brought about through Collaboration Innovation can be a boon to solving a challenge, it can also pose a bottleneck to progress. Facilitation is a process that allows teams to reconcile and capitalize upon distinct incentives, points of view, culture, and terminologies to create a collaborative solution. A well-trained facilitator has the power to unlock the Collaborative Innovation potential of groups, allowing individuals to understand their common objectives and work toward them efficiently and effectively. As described by Dale Hunter, author of *The Art of Facilitation*, a facilitator allows a group "to achieve their own purpose in their own agreed way," serving as the guiding hand that helps them succeed in doing so.

The role of a facilitator is to coordinate distinct and even competing interests to find alignment, identifying a shared goal and sculpting individual ideas into a common definition of the problem to be solved. To do this, the facilitator designs a process—a series of steps to reach a common goal—then guides participants through this process, without pushing participants toward a particular outcome. In this way, the facilitator is a process expert who helps to crystallize the contributions of individuals into a stronger, united vision going forward.

Facilitation helps groups maneuver through the three key components of Collaborative Innovation, each of which signifies a challenge that groups must tackle if they are to successfully implement a collective solution to a complex and shared problem. These components are: collaboration, innovation, and solving problems in teams. Collaboration requires that groups exchange ideas and resources; a facilitator balances the input of many different participants to ensure that they are communicating effectively and contributing to a common end. Innovation demands creativity; a facilitator can guide a group through a problem-solving process, such as Min Basadur's Simplex Process, designed to generate creative solutions by creating space for the generation of new ideas. Finally, to solve problems in teams, groups must align the resources and ideas exchanged through collaboration with their innovation process. This means groups must work together to leap from the familiarity of their individual areas of expertise to an unknown, and perhaps unconventional, process that brings them closer to a shared solution. As an impartial guide, the facilitator helps groups navigate this unfamiliar territory, and intelligently devise, test, and share solutions to problems big and small. This training was designed to impart these skills to a select group of leaders, who are well-positioned to make a positive impact in global development.

Trainings Summary

Overview of the Facilitation Training

A non-profit organization ranked as one of the top 100 social innovators for the next century by The Rockefeller Foundation, the Global Knowledge Initiative (GKI) delivered a Facilitator Training to cultivate leaders who are equipped to solve problems of consequence to global development now and in the future. GKI designed and led the two-day Facilitator Training from 23 – 24 June 2014 at the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST).

To kick off activities, Dr. Ismail Barugahara, UNCST Assistant Executive Secretary, delivered the keynote address welcoming a variety of participants representing the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology, TWAS Young Affiliates hailing from South Africa, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Mauritius, senior leaders from the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM), and Stewards Management Lab Rwanda Ltd. GKI was particularly pleased to welcome a TWAS Program Officer based at the Trieste, Italy headquarters who came to observe the training and gauge the TWAS fellows' receptiveness to it. With support from the African Academy of Sciences, TWAS, and the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the training revealed a tremendous pent-up demand for this unique form of capacity building that endows leaders with the skills required to move agendas, form and sustain networks, and advance innovation in Africa and beyond.

Facilitator Training Overview

Trainees gained stills on topics including:

- Introduction to Facilitation
- Challenge Statement Creation
- Challenge Mapping
- Guiding and Engaging a Group
- Learning to Adapt
- Capturing and Maintaining Momentum
- Setting Professional Goals
- Creating an Action Plan

The Facilitator Training was designed to immerse this powerful group of leaders in the art and practice of facilitation, enabling them to learn why facilitation is important, and how it can boost their ability to magnify the global problem solving capacity of teams. The training equipped participants with skills needed to lead collaborative teams in their efforts to tackle challenges, and contribute to healthy innovation ecosystems in which the impact of researchers, teachers, students, entrepreneurs, and others is amplified.

The sections below offer details on the specific skills and practices learned by the trainees over the course of the two-day training as well as the results of the skills test administered at the close of the training and ideas for next steps.

Day 1 - Monday, June 23, 2014

Introduction to Facilitation: In this module, participants were introduced to facilitation as a process, learning about the important value that facilitation offers teams and networks. After exploring the key aspects of an ideal facilitator, along with the building blocks of facilitation, GKI staff challenged participants to engage in an actual mini facilitation, illustrating the difference between facilitated problem solving and typical meeting formats. The exercise invited participants to immediately step out of their comfort zones and into a creative exercise, brainstorming how they could improve a rocket ship for human space travel. This interactive exercise, facilitated by GKI staff, served as a live demonstration of how a multidisciplinary group of individuals can collaborate and generate innovative ideas as a team. Attendees were asked to highlight current limitations of rocket ships and deliberate new possibilities. The trainees were very engaged during this module, commenting that "it was a challenging experience" and that "it increases your imagination and [stimulates] critical thinking."

Key Facts & Figures

2	days of training
9	modules delivered
12	students trained
113	challenges generated

Challenge Statement Creation:

After an introduction to the four cornerstones of the facilitator training (featured in Annex 1), participants learned about the first of three key Collaborative Innovation (CI) tools explored in depth in the course: Challenge Statement Creation. This tool aids teams in creating a shared and transparent language as they define the problem they seek to solve. This is a crucial step, as it shapes how group members articulate and approach their project going forward. After being taught the mechanics of challenge statement creation, each participant was able to practice creating a challenge statement in a small group. After gaining a better sense of the process, GKI staff elaborated on how facilitating the process differs from participating, highlighting key considerations, along with tips and tricks. Attendees were given the opportunity to practice by facilitating small groups of their peers. Participants actively embraced the tool and enjoyed practicing facilitating its use, remarking that it could help them guide the convening of a network.

Day 2 - Tuesday, June 24, 2014

Challenge Mapping: At the start of the second day of training, GKI introduced facilitator trainees to another CI tool: challenge mapping. Challenge mapping is used in facilitated meetings to identify opportunities for collaboration and bottlenecks to success when tackling a shared challenge. The map—a co-created product assembled by groups of participants—visualizes connections across disciplines and clarifies the scope of project goals. After learning about the mechanics of a challenge map, participants then practiced the process using a sample challenge. Then, transitioning to a facilitator role, attendees were equipped with further instructions to bear in mind when facilitating challenge mapping before breaking into small groups to do so. The GKI team observed the peer-to-peer practice sessions and provided feedback while also encouraging peer reviews. Facilitator trainees found challenge mapping to be most useful in deconstructing complex challenges and understanding how different topics are connected. Delighted with the experience and the perceived value of the tool, one attendee compared challenge mapping to learning a new language, while another participant remarked, "being a facilitator is like being a good teacher or a diplomat," as you must artfully represent and sell ideas to maintain momentum.

Guiding and Engaging a Group: In this module, participants learned several of the key attributes of presentation, especially as they relate to being a good facilitator. Capturing a group's attention and harnessing their collective energy constituted the key focus of the module. An interactive exercise put these skills on display and generated quite a bit of excitement as participants practiced presentation techniques by developing and performing pitches to present and compel a group to try a hypothetical banana, the "Bingbong Banana". Trainees remarked that this was an enjoyable exercise that pushed them outside of their comfort zone, which will often be the case when assuming the role of a Facilitator.

Learning to Adapt: This module gave participants a chance to experience the sometimes hectic and surprising nature of facilitation, with a particular focus on having to adapt a facilitated process to a more limited time-frame. In facilitated workshops, facilitators need to be able to think on their feet to adapt their own plans. In this exercise, participants were required to continuously shorten a lengthy

Participants use small groups in which to practice facilitating the creation of challenge statements used to enable groups to develop a shared vision.

and complex idea without losing the essential message. Participants found this exercise particularly challenging and observed that learning to adapt pre-planned structures is a difficult, but important task, without which facilitations fail to meet their objectives.

Setting Professional Goals: With a particular focus on the four building blocks of facilitation—defining a shared purpose, designing a Collaborative Innovation process, guiding and engaging a group, and capturing and maintaining momentum—participants were given guidance on potential next steps for professional growth as a facilitator.

Creating an Action Plan: The final interactive experience of the training introduced participants to a third Collaborative Innovation tool, Action Planning. Action Planning offers a cornerstone of any successful facilitation, as without clear guidance toward next steps, action is unlikely to proceed from facilitation. Top facilitators construct various tools and methods to capture the ideas of groups and convert them into useful, succinct planners that increase the likelihood of follow-through. This interactive session offered participants a space in which to identify concrete next steps to take following the training in order to build their facilitation skills. Thus, participants applied action planning to the very quest for enhanced facilitation capacity that drew participants to this training in the first place. Participants' ideas are captured in Annex 2.

Results

Results of Evaluation Tests

At the close of the Facilitator Training, 10 of the 12 participants completed an evaluation, which included an assessment of their content expertise as well as a solicitation for feedback and critiques of the two-day training. The evaluation was designed with two primary goals in mind. First, it provided an opportunity for participants to express whether the content and delivery of the training was valuable and well-suited to their needs. Second, it served as a monitoring and evaluation tool to measure learning as a result of the training.

The assessment required participants to answer questions relating to the content taught during the training. Additionally, the assessment prompted test-takers to estimate the likelihood that they would have been able to

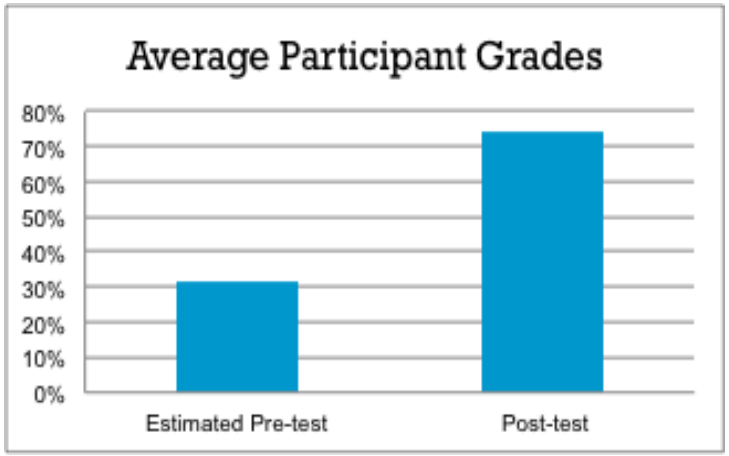


Figure 1: Participants' knowledge of facilitation methods improved greatly compared to their estimate of performance before the training.

Inspired to implement Collaborative Innovation tools in their respective institutions, facilitation trainees pose together at the close of the training at the entrance of the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST).

answer each question correctly prior to the training.[1] Together, these two components provided insight into how much each participant was able to improve their knowledge of proven tools used to spur innovation and collaboration within teams by the end of the training. As can be seen in Figure 1, participants' scores more than doubled compared to what they would have likely score before the training (according to their own self-assessments), with an average of 74.4 percent accuracy in answering questions. The results illustrate that the majority of attendees were able to significantly improve their knowledge as a result of the training.

"This training made complex challenges seem doable. It gives you hope of achieving them."

-Participant, Facilitator Training, June 2014

"This training provides essential skills, even beyond facilitation."

-Participant, Facilitator Training, June 2014

[1] This test uses a "post test, no pre test" methodology, in which trainees estimate the likelihood that they would have gotten a question correct before receiving the training. They answered on a scale with options ranging from "Definitely not" being able to answer the question to "Definitely" being able to answer the question prior to the training. GKI transformed these options into probabilities, which they then were used for comparison to their actual scores attained.

Looking Forward

Participant Recommendations

Facilitator Trainees developed a deep appreciation for GKI coaching on the Collaborative Innovation tools and network management skills unveiled throughout the training. Following a collective recognition of the value these strategies could bring to their respective institutions and initiatives, participants converged on the following key steps as vital to their ongoing success as facilitators.

Increased Exposure to Collaborative Innovation (CI) Tools: Participants expressed a high demand for refresher courses and exposure to additional Collaborative Innovation tools, particularly those CI tools employed by GKI such as challenge mapping. Through additional GKI courses, participants hope to benefit from practice sessions with both experts and their peers to gain a deeper understanding of best-in-class tools used to strengthen their potential to impact science, technology, and innovation for development.

> *"This course has provided me with lots of information and skills to tackle seemingly impossible and unfamiliar areas."*
>
> *-Participant, Facilitator Training, June 2014*

Support in Identifying Practical Applications of Facilitation: Inspired by the utility and direct relevance of facilitation to their work, trainees each expressed their desire to apply these tools in the context of their respective institutions. Participants indicated that they would like to utilize their new learning to foster increased collaboration among their peers. However, to identify the most effective pathways for optimal institutional uptake of facilitation and knowledge transfer, attendees requested GKI support in developing strategies for new and existing initiatives where facilitation or facilitator training could be integrated in their institutions and their work.

> *"I would recommend this course because it is an eye-opener on many facilitation issues, which we think we know about, but we do not."*
>
> *-Participant, Facilitator Training, June 2014*

Creation of a Professional Network of Facilitators in Africa: Participants also called for the creation of a first-of-its-kind facilitators' network in Africa, where experts and hopeful facilitators alike could connect with each other, share knowledge, and build skills as a cohort. The various institutions and organizations represented at the training could serve as hubs for identifying training needs, creating curricula, and stimulating interest in building a pool of African facilitators

trained to solve Africa's development challenges. TWAS Young Affiliates specifically suggested creating a facilitators' network within TWAS to house a class of facilitation experts. While identifying this cohort of facilitator experts is key, participants also highlighted the need for information and communication technology tools to enable regular communication among network members.

GKI Closing Remarks

Through Facilitator Training, GKI seeks to cultivate leaders who are equipped to solve problems of consequence to global development now and in the future. To meet the global need for such leaders, GKI aims to expand the offerings of Facilitator Training to meet the diverse needs of international development leaders, beginning with those of the exceptional June 2014 trainees. At GKI, we believe that a well-trained Collaborative Innovator can be a powerful instrument of change, fostering transformation among leading thinkers and resolving the most challenging issues of our time. This Facilitator Training marked the beginning of an important journey that GKI is committed to pursuing through which we aim to equip leaders in science and technology with those invaluable skills that underpin Collaborative Innovation.

We would like to express our gratitude to the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology for hosting this event and to our exceptional trainees for fully embracing the process and committing to building on the skills taught during this training. As well, we wish to acknowledge the generous support of the Carnegie Corporation of New York for sponsoring this undertaking.

To move forward with these plans, or to offer ideas or pose questions, please contact:

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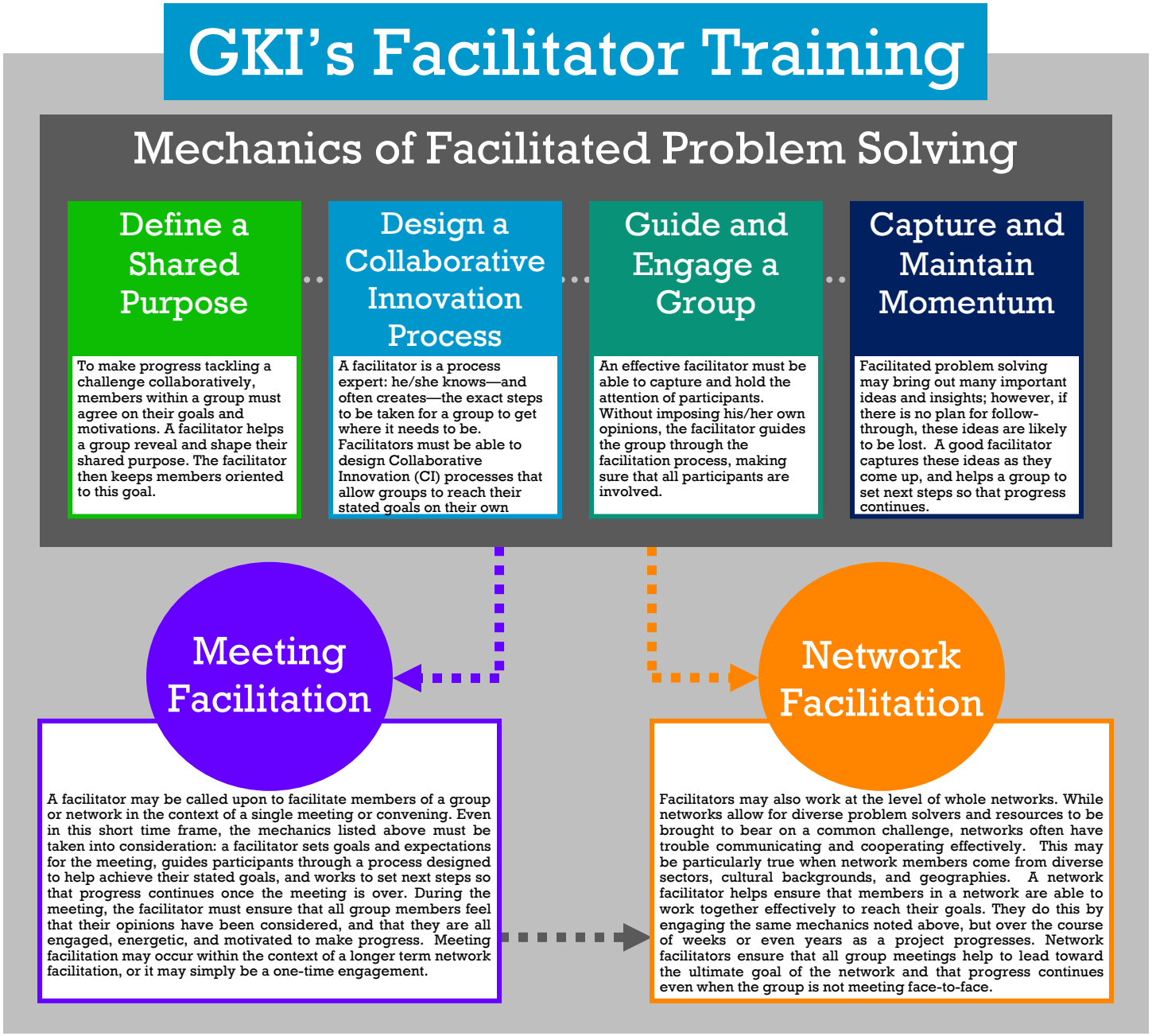
Annex 1: Facilitator Training Cornerstones



Annex 2: Next Steps to Foster Facilitation Capacity

Participant Action Plans

By creating action plans, each participant identified three key action items to which they would commit as a result of the Facilitator Training. These action items demonstrate how trainees foresee maintaining and applying their newly acquired skills for the benefit of networks in Africa and globally. Below, we have provided a list of the next steps that each participant will engage in throughout the next few months.

Participant 1:

1. Build a team of facilitators within the Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) within 6 months
2. Create a network of facilitators within KEMRI
3. Develop the necessary ICT infrastructure to support facilitators within KEMRI

Participant 2:

1. Conduct a survey to gauge the need of facilitation services in Rwanda
2. Profile facilitation capacity within Stewards Management Lab (SM Lab)
3. Master the challenge mapping tool

Participant 3:

1. Become the best in challenge mapping
2. Facilitate meetings in the STI sector in Uganda
3. Develop public speaking skills

Participant 4:

1. Facilitate alignment of IT with the business strategy at the Uganda National Council on Science and Technology (UNCST)
2. Develop an IT strategy for UNCST
3. Join networks or consortiums that promote ICT for business

Participant 5:

1. Improve facilitation skills
2. Become an expert in human resources management
3. Motivate team members

Participant 6:

1. Increase the public's engagement in STI matters
2. Create a tool for monitoring interest in science among school students in Uganda within 1.5 months
3. Build personal capacity to facilitate meetings with my team

Participant 7:

1. Put facilitation skills to immediate use
2. Deploy challenge mapping to understand partnerships in the RUFORUM context
3. Develop the RUFORUM partnership strategy

Participant 8:

1. Use current knowledge to reinforce strategies of facilitation within meetings (within 1 month)
2. Seek out those who are involved in facilitation at the University of Cape Town and collaborate with them (medium-term)
3. Develop competence in facilitation (ongoing-long term)

Participant 9:

1. Facilitate an inaugural workshop of the Pan-African Climate Geo-engineering group (in 1 month, August 2014)
2. Develop a collaborative network and platform for TWAS Young Affiliates (Mid-term; 6 months)
3. Train young professionals on facilitation

Participant 10:

1. Understand and grasp the use of DUO (Daily UNESCO Operations)
2. Coordinate the various pending collaborations at TWAS
3. Increase public speaking experience

Annex 3: Participants Contact Information

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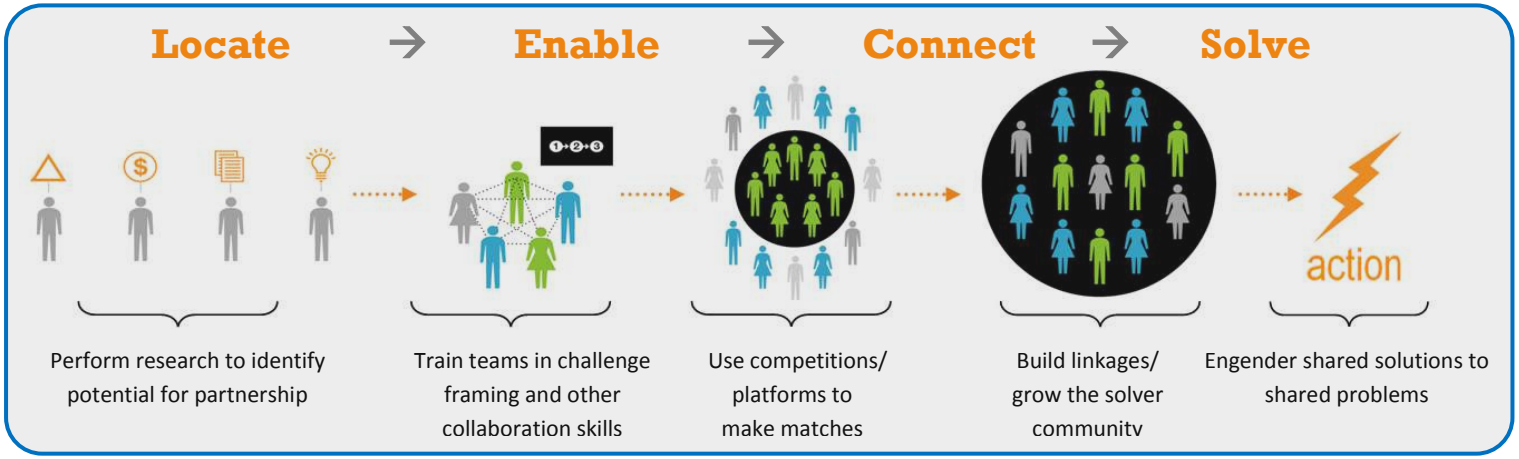
Annex 4: Background on GKI

Our Start: The Global Knowledge Initiative (GKI) originated from the 2008 Higher Education Summit for Global Development convened by the US Secretaries of State and Education and the Administrator of the US Agency for International Development. Attended by more than 200 university presidents, heads of technology firms, and philanthropists, the Summit called for a "clearinghouse for resources & information to help build knowledge partnerships that can tackle development challenges." Five years later, we've trained hundreds of innovators globally, delivered solutions to challenges in agriculture, water, and climate, and built processes and tools that equip our partners to build networks that solve problems.

Our Process: We address challenges pertinent to science, technology, and innovation (STI) and development by helping solvers 1) **Locate** and access critical resources—technical, human, institutional, knowledge-based—required for collaborative problem solving; 2) **Enable** partners to collaborate effectively through trainings and competitions; and 3) **Connect** seekers together with the global network of problem solvers to bring solutions to scale. Named "one of the world's top 100 innovators for the next century" by the Rockefeller Foundation (2013), this approach delivers solutions to some of the world's toughest challenges.



Our Approach

We work with a continuum of partners. GKI takes an innovation systems approach. We engage a diverse array of actors—universities, private firms, governments, and professional societies—as a means to empower the people within institutions to spur systemic change.

We clarify the context for collaboration. For universities, firms, and organizations seeking to explore new partnerships in new geographies, our research and analysis equips them with an understanding of the context, community, needs, and opportunities for collaborative activity.

We frame and map the challenge space. Complex and multi-disciplinary challenges must be unpacked and framed correctly to enable action by diverse problem solvers. GKI facilitates challenge framing and mapping to promote clear communication and foster collaboration.

We cultivate talent. GKI connects problem solving and capacity building by facilitating and training on key skills for "collaborative innovation."