NT Branch AES

April 2012 – Lunchtime Skills Development Session

Ten Seeds Technique – Practical Workshop

What should the AES do to provide support and regular professional development opportunities for people working in or interested in evaluation in the Northern Territory?

Workshop Theme

Using the 10 seed technique to reach consensus around short term priority setting for the NT branch of the Australasian Evaluation Society and demonstrate how this process can be used in a planning situation.

Brainstorm Results

- Balance the needs of funder and the project beneficiaries
- Culturally relevant process
- Consolidate the learning + practice + communicate good practice
- Help evaluators to support the community to frame their knowledge
- Share experiences & lessons learned
- Talking / sharing ideas & methodologies
- Influencing government and building capacity for commissioning evaluations
- Increase knowledge of government M&E systems by....
- Contribute to Indigenous Special Interest Group Blog
- Link with other organisations like Health Promotion Association / Dept of Families M&E units etc to share events
- Emergency help for evaluators!
- Annual ball or social event
- Professional development for each other
- Promote culturally appropriate methods by hosting sharing forums & doing joint workshops with Indigenous evaluators (Mawul Rom)
- Training and informing us of Indigenous techniques (ARDS, Batchelor, MSHR, Aust Centre for Indigenous knowledge, Nynti one)
- Planning to host National AES conference
- Peer support
- Run M&E training for non-members
- Start a dialogue with ethics committees so they can accommodate evaluations
- Draw on visiting specialists to provide PD or invite people
- Apply for grants / resources together for example for a database of evaluations
- Mentoring & buddying
- Document stuff for sharing
Grouping Results

- Processes for sharing – knowledge & practice
- Sourcing / creating practical resources
  - Database
  - Guidelines
  - Grants
- Documenting
- Linking and networking
- Improving practice internally
- Socialising / Networking
- Helping hand
- Legitimising Indigenous Practices
- Fun
- Learning participatory techniques
- Ethics – working with ethics committees
- Influencing change (external)
- Influencing government – improving capacity and good practice
- Increasing use of culturally relevant methods.

Making Choices

4 seeds:
- Increasing use of culturally relevant methods.
- Fun
- Helping hand
- Influencing government – improving capacity and good practice
- Improving practice internally
- Legitimising Indigenous Practices
- Ethics – working with ethics committees

3 Seeds:
- Learning participatory techniques
- Influencing change (external)

2 seeds:
- Documenting
- Sourcing / creating practical resources
  - Database
  - Guidelines
  - Grants
- Processes for sharing – knowledge & practice

1 seed:
- Linking and networking
- Socialising / Networking
Reflections on process

- Does this process allow all voices to be heard?
- Is there enough time to allow for consensus?
- Distribution of seeds – consider different options to represent the 10 seeds.
- Consider the process of gaining consensus in comparison with the outcome of the seed distribution
- Consider the use of the technique for both planning and as an evaluation tool
- Consider what triangulation methods are available and other techniques for supporting the process
- High level of facilitation skills required. Facilitator may need to ‘facilitate out’ dominant personalities.
- Very important to give good consideration to forming the right question and allowing adequate time.
- Consider the issues if applying in an Indigenous context – power as a group vs individual voices may be difficult to differentiate using this technique
- Who is in the group? This question would determine applicability of this tool.
- Finite system – merits in this technique for refining a system
- Benefits in the movement and interactivity of this visual tool
- Engaging and participatory – the movement is great for interaction and keeping participants interested
- Group encountered difficulty with distribution of seeds
- It was noted that there were not many outliers in the final grouping – possibly because these represented an edited version of the brainstorming results.

Key references

Australasian Evaluation Society Website www.aes.an.au
AES Indigenous Special Interest Group Blog http://indigenoussig.wordpress.com/
Resource Centres for Participatory Learning and Action http://www.rcpla.org
The Centre for Sustainable Development http://www.csd-i.org/ten-seed-technique-field-note
http://www.csd-i.org/lesson-plan-ten-seed

Dr John Donnelly
http://www.aes.asn.au/awards
http://au.linkedin.com/pub/john-donnelly/34/b7/566
Maximising participation in international community-level project evaluation: a strength-based approach - John Donnelly