Grassroots Economists

Field Guide v0.1 *(draft)*

Grassroots Economics

Foreword

The spirit of community is not just an abstract concept; it is a living, breathing entity woven into the fabric of our societies. Our strength emanates from this collective identity, a shared heritage that has been passed down through the generations. This heritage has inculcated in us the principles of mutual aid - the bedrock of communal support systems. These practices are not novel; they are ancient and indigenous to our cultures, forming the core of our relationships with one another.

The advent of technologies such as distributed ledger systems has revolutionized these ancestral practices, providing a contemporary avenue to uphold these time-honored traditions. These technologies make our agreements transparent, accountable, and interoperable, presenting a significant leap in the evolution of communal financial systems. They serve as instruments linking our proud past to a promising and inclusive future.

The beauty of our community lies in the unwavering support we extend to each other. However, the capitalist financial system often acts as a chasm that widens the gap between us, hindering our ability to work together and support each other. In this backdrop, the importance of instruments like Community Asset Vouchers (CAVs) and their usage as media of trust building and reciprocity within Economic Commons cannot be overstated.

The experience we've gleaned from introducing CAVs in Kenya has been transformative. We've seen how these instruments resonate with life-affirming practices that are prevalent across the globe. Moreover, we have witnessed their versatility and adaptability, fitting seamlessly into a wide range of situations - from refugee camps, farming communities, to urban settlements, wifi mesh networks and groups of social enterprises.

As the founder of Grassroots Economics Foundation, my hope for this Field Guide is to share our insights and learnings to inspire others. I envision a future where Community Asset Vouchers are not only prolifically created and seamlessly integrated into financial ecosystems, but are also mutually recognized and embraced across borders, thereby playing a pivotal role in enabling individuals and communities, both local and globally interconnected, to effectively coordinate resources for wellbeing. This guide is our humble contribution towards that future.

Will Ruddick, Founder of Grassroots Economics Foundation

About the guide

Why was it created (purpose)

This guide was created to enable communities and supporting activists, community mobilizers and humanitarian and developmental aid organizations to implement Economic Commons and Community Inclusion Currency (CIC) programs either independently, or as part of other programs. Since 2010, Grassroots Economics Foundation has piloted and tested resource coordination (economic) practices across Kenya. This guide is a work in progress and includes some of the best practices in what we call Economic Commons that we’ve used and observed over time.

Throughout the guide, we will provide tools and practices to understand how common agreements and instruments work to build cooperation, coordinate resources, support communities, promote inclusion, and act as a medium of exchange.

Who should use it (intended audience)

This Field Guide on Economic Commons and their instruments - especially Community Asset Vouchers (CAVs) as part of Community Inclusion Currency (CIC) program implementation is designed to support a wide range of organizations and individuals who are committed to fostering economic resilience, community development, and social cohesion. This guide will be particularly useful for the following:

1. Community Groups: Grassroots organizations, local associations, and self-help groups that aim to empower communities by building social capital, fostering local economic growth, and promoting self-sufficiency can use this guide to establish and manage their own CAVs.
2. Faith-Based Organizations: Churches, mosques, synagogues, and other religious institutions involved in community outreach, social services, and poverty reduction initiatives can adopt CAVs as a tool for promoting solidarity and economic support among their members and the wider community.
3. Cooperatives: Agricultural, financial, and service-based cooperatives can benefit from implementing CAVs as a complementary currency to facilitate transactions, build trust, and support local economic development.
4. Activists Focused on Community Mobilization: Individuals and groups advocating for social justice, economic equality, and sustainable development can use this guide to learn about CAVs as a tool for creating inclusive economies and fostering community-driven change.
5. Humanitarian and Development Organizations: Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international aid agencies, and other institutions working in the areas of poverty alleviation, economic development, and post-disaster or crisis recovery can benefit from this guide to incorporate CAVs into their existing programs or launch new initiatives.

How to use it (structure of the guide)

This guide has been designed to guide you from zero knowledge of CIC programs, CAVs or Economic Commons, to the basic skills to deliver the program. We do this in the following structure:

Part1. Understanding Economic Commons
This chapter will provide you with all the theoretical knowledge and understanding of Economic Commons that Community Asset Vouchers as well as Community Inclusion Currency programs are rooted in. It gives you a foundation as an implementing organization and field guide/facilitator to deliver the program with confidence and a clear understanding of its different concepts. This chapter includes theory on Economic Commons. Consider this chapter a bank of theory modules that is linked directly to the Implementation.

Part 2. Implementing Economic Commons
This chapter details Theory of Change, tips, methods and approaches to actually implementing an Economic Commons as part of a Community Inclusion Currency program. This includes the workshop sequencing, and relates directly to the theory in the way that it is structured. This chapter is designed for simplicity, so that once a facilitator has the foundational knowledge from Part 1, they are able to solely refer to Part 2 for delivery. We highly recommend that time is spent really engaging with Part 1 before Part 2, so that the definitions and concepts come easily.

Contributions

The key editing organizations behind this Field Guide are:

Grassroots Economics Foundation (GrE) seeks to empower marginalized communities and focuses on community prosperity through economic empowerment with a dedication to helping communities realize and share their collective abundance. GrE does this through the development of indigenous and community-based Economic Commons where people, social enterprises, and communities can develop resilient markets and social health. GrE envisions an interconnected world of cosmo-local economic ecosystems harvesting community prosperity, peace, and regeneration.

To achieve this, Grassroots Economics started the first pilot using paper Community Asset Vouchers in 2010 and began developing the digital Sarafu.Network of vouchers in 2015. As of April 2023, we have helped over 70 communities across Kenya, South Africa and Cameroon in issuing their own Community Asset Vouchers and have seen over a million person-to-person interactions on Sarafu Network.

Grassroots Economics has been an innovative leader in co-designing Economic Commons for poverty alleviation by providing technical, legal, and educational expertise for creating stable resource coordination. Much of this field guide has originated from the work of Grassroots Economics field work - but we stand on the shoulders of giants.

Uganda Rural Development and Training Program: URDT was founded to offer a development programme that is a merger of truly functional education and training with rural development interventions, with the intent of empowering marginalized people living in rural communities.

The mission of URDT is:

- To facilitate integrated, self-generating development of the rural communities and economies, using an approach that combines rural development projects with consciousness-raising, training, education and information sharing, so that the new awakening is buttressed by skills and knowledge and remains resident with the people as they organically change the quality of their lives.
- To enable the people of Uganda in general, and in the Bunyoro Region in particular, to recognize and embody common vision and values and work together to create for themselves peace, prosperity, health, freedom, and happiness as they discover that they are key to their own development.
- To enable people to tap their innate powers and wisdom to create an environment that fosters personal and communal growth.
- To enable people to recognize and use the inter-relationship between development concerns in health, nutrition, sanitation, water management, rural technologies, sustainable income generation, governance, and environment so that they have a holistic approach to their development.

URDT has been pioneering the Visionary Process and Multigenerational approach for more than 30 years which is a key part of developing community planning and a key element of an Economic Commons.

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Part 1. Understanding Economic Commons

The extractive forces of capitalism ignore local production, favor monopoly, and render communities poor and fragile. By reclaiming domain space, i.e. the commons, we envision communities rebuilding indigenous systems and alternatives to monetary imperialism that correct for the malignant features of modern capitalism. We recognize that this “new music” will be composed of a symphony of instruments, and our role is to build the best violin - a system of agreement and exchange that contributes to a full asset and full cost accounting for commons. We recognize that other instruments are needed, and are committed to collaborations with others to build out such an integrated system. Our focus here is on the Economic Commons and system of agreement and exchange, which fundamentally concerns accountability, the platform of exchange, and the medium of exchange that provides access to and coordination of local resources.

Definitions

Economics can be defined as the study of resource coordination for the purpose of promoting overall well-being. In this context, the focus of economics extends beyond the traditional notions of scarce resources and unlimited wants and needs. It emphasizes the efficient and equitable allocation and utilization of resources to enhance the welfare and quality of life for individuals, communities, and societies as a whole.

The word "economics" comes from the Greek "oikonomia," where "oikos" means household and "nomos" means management. So, at its core, economics is the "management of the household."

"Oikos" was not just limited to the four walls of a home. Think of it as the grander household—the community, the environment, the spiritual and emotional spaces we inhabit. It's the soil we till, the air we breathe, the bonds we forge, and the dreams we share. It's about stewarding all types of resources—social, human, spiritual, physical, natural, political, economic—so that everyone gets a seat at the table and a slice of the pie.

Now, let's journey to another word, "Kaya," which in some African traditions refers to a sacred space that includes not just the home but also sacred forests and the larger society. It's a holistic view, a circle of life that respects both the seen and the unseen, the material and the immaterial. Just like "oikos," "Kaya" is a term that captures the essence of interconnectedness, of being part of something greater than oneself.

So, whether it's "oikos" or "Kaya," the message is the same: We're all in this together, bound by a shared responsibility to manage our collective resources wisely, equitably, and with love. It's about recognizing that our individual well-being is deeply tied to the well-being of others and the planet. It's about mutual aid, about giving and receiving in a dance that enriches us all.

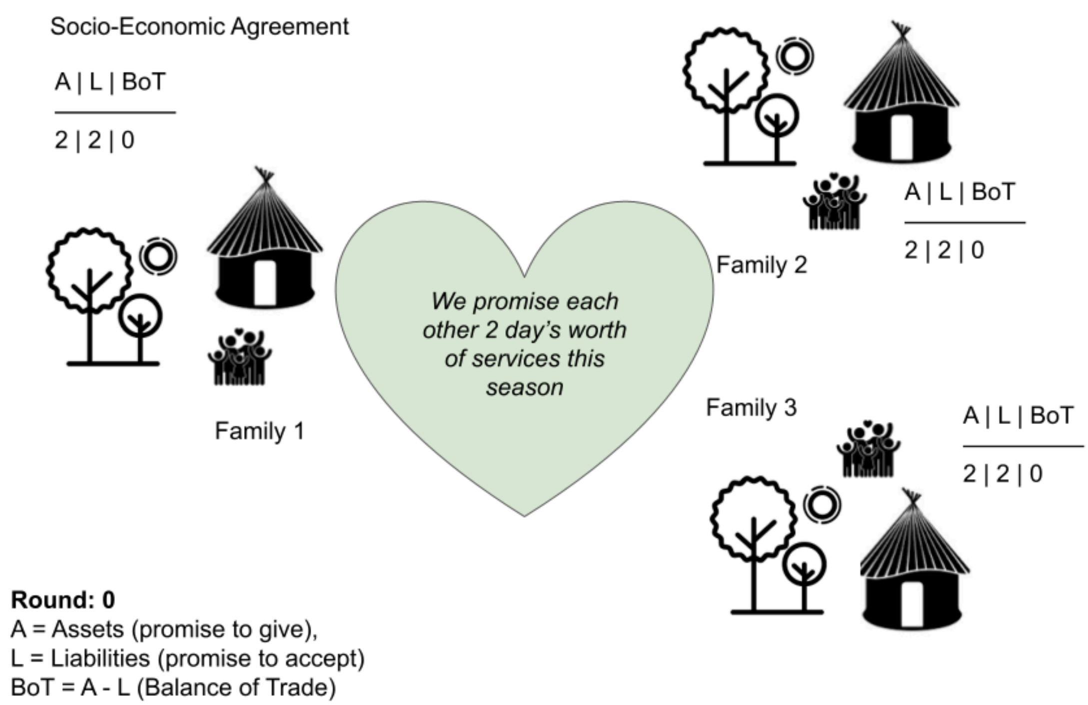
Circular Economics refers to an economic model that aims to minimize waste, maximize resource efficiency, and promote sustainability. It emphasizes the concept of a circular flow of resources, where materials and products are reused, recycled, or repurposed to create a closed-loop system. Circular economics seeks to reduce the reliance on finite resources, minimize environmental impact, and foster long-term economic resilience by prioritizing the regeneration and reutilization of resources throughout their life cycle.

Grassroots Economics refers to economic activities, initiatives, or systems that emerge from and are driven by local communities, in other words, at the grassroots level. It involves bottom-up approaches to economic development, where community members actively participate in decision-making processes and take ownership of economic activities that address their specific needs and aspirations. Grassroots economics empowers communities to shape their economic destiny, fostering self-reliance, social cohesion, and sustainable development tailored to their unique circumstances.

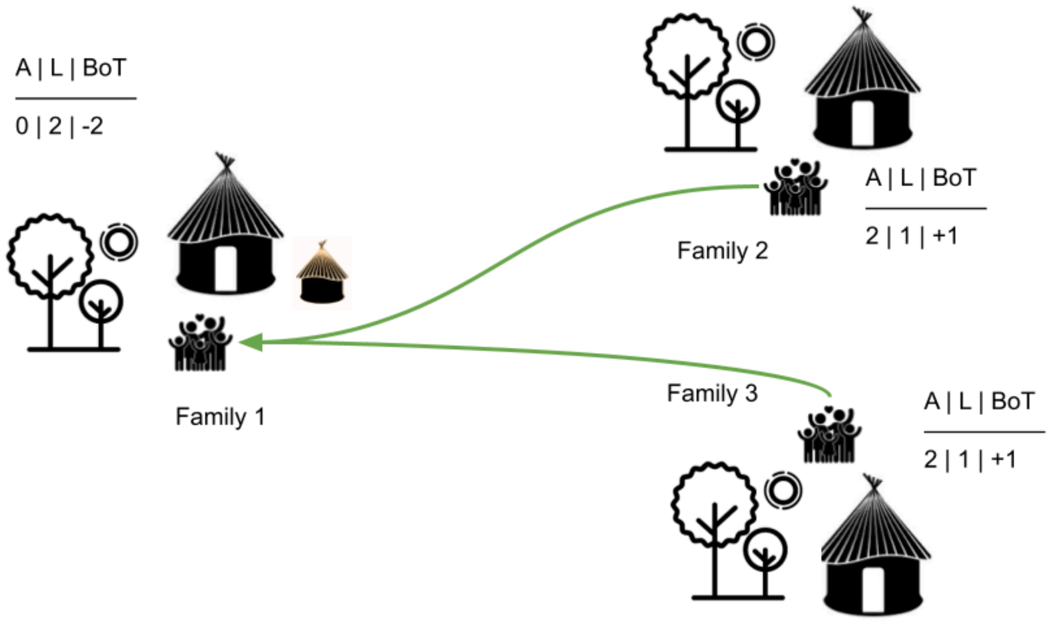
The Credit Theory of Money posits that money is essentially a system of credit and debt relationships, rather than a tangible commodity. Under this theory, money is a social construct based on trust and the promise of future repayment. The credit theory of money highlights the importance of trust and reciprocity in community-based currencies and mutual aid systems.

Rotating Labor Associations (ROLAs): ROLAs are the key inspiration for Economic Commons. Throughout history, various cultures have relied on rotating labor practices to pool resources and complete shared tasks. Examples include barn raising in North America, Minga in South America, and Gotong Royong in Southeast Asia. In Kenya there are over 42 different names for these traditional practices for each language in the country (Mweria - for Mijikenda, Chikola for the Kichonyi, Nyluoro for Dholuo). These practices foster social cohesion, promote reciprocity, and build strong communities. The earliest group pronouns for humans appear to be the names for groups practicing mutual-aid. I.e. a 'Group' of humans among the Giriama clans would have been called a Mweria of Giriama people. Promoting reciprocity and keeping track of credit and debt in ROLAs was sometimes done with collective memory and sometimes used systems like talleys and shells. Put simply, if everyone in my village comes to help me with my farm, I am obligated to go and help them. In many cases I can transfer my obligation to a friend or family member in the case where I am not available.

Below are some diagrams that describe a ROLA. Where three families make a commitment to each other and take turn drawing from a common pool of their trust.

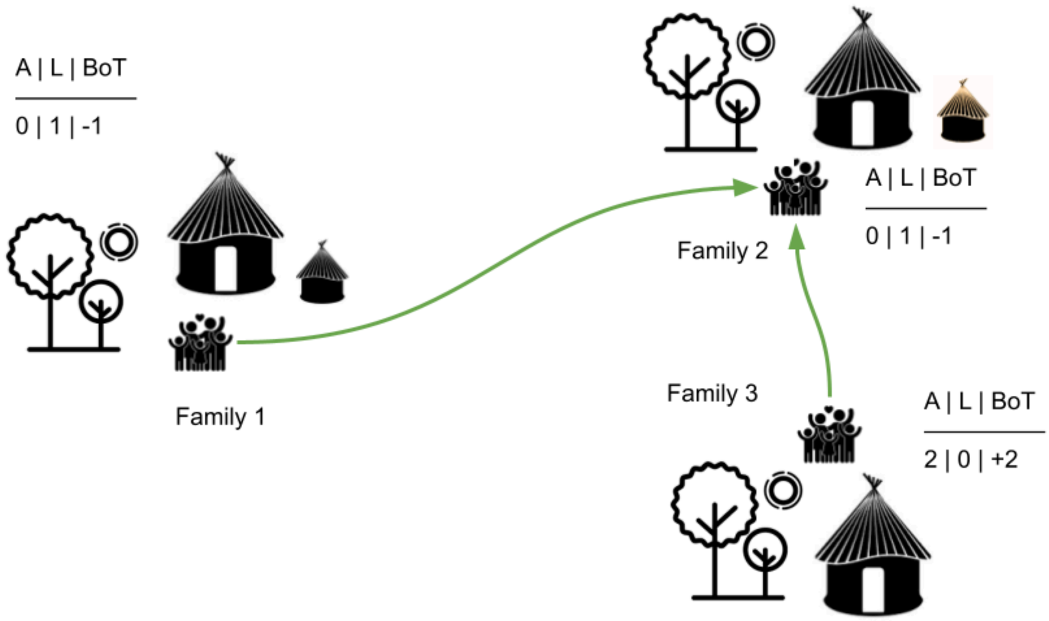


Note that as each family makes a promise to offer their services they also have a liability or obligation to repay any debts they incur by using the promises of others. They must reach a balance of trade again and return to where they started with no debt in order to start another round of mutual aid.



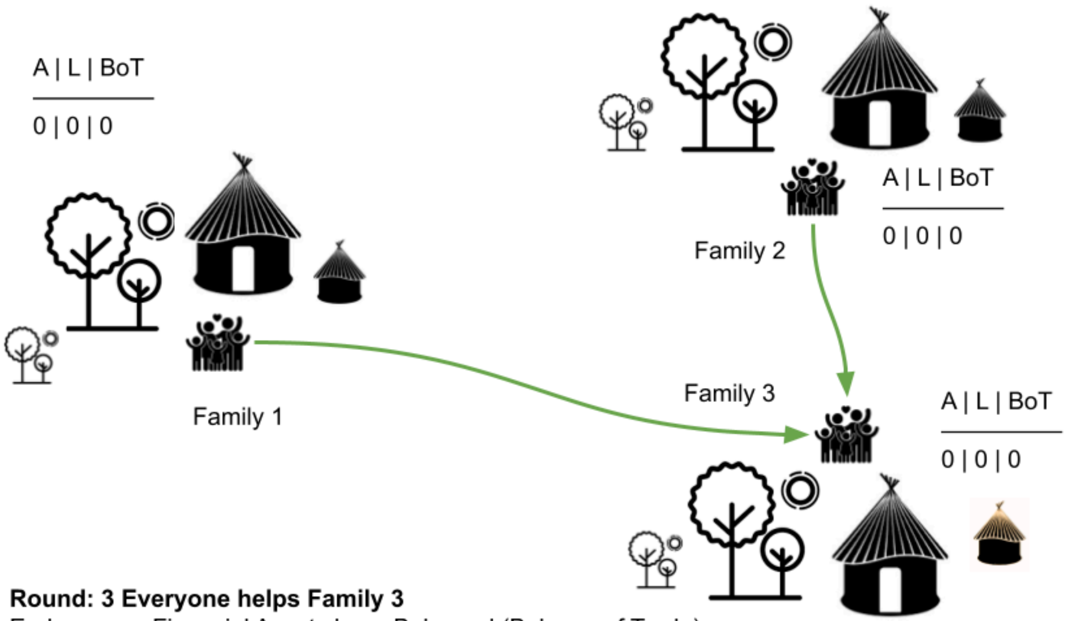
Round: 1 Everyone helps Family 1

After round 1. the 1st family has used their assets (the promises of the others) and called a Mweria. That family has gotten help on their new grainary and is now in debt to the community. The other families have come to help and have reduced their liabilities so are in a positive credit.



Round: 2 Everyone helps Family 2

After Round 2. The 2nd family has used their assets (the promises of the others) and called a Mweria. That family has gotten help on their new grainary and is now in debt to the community. Family 3 no longer has any obligations and has a lot of credit while family 1. Still has a debt to repay.

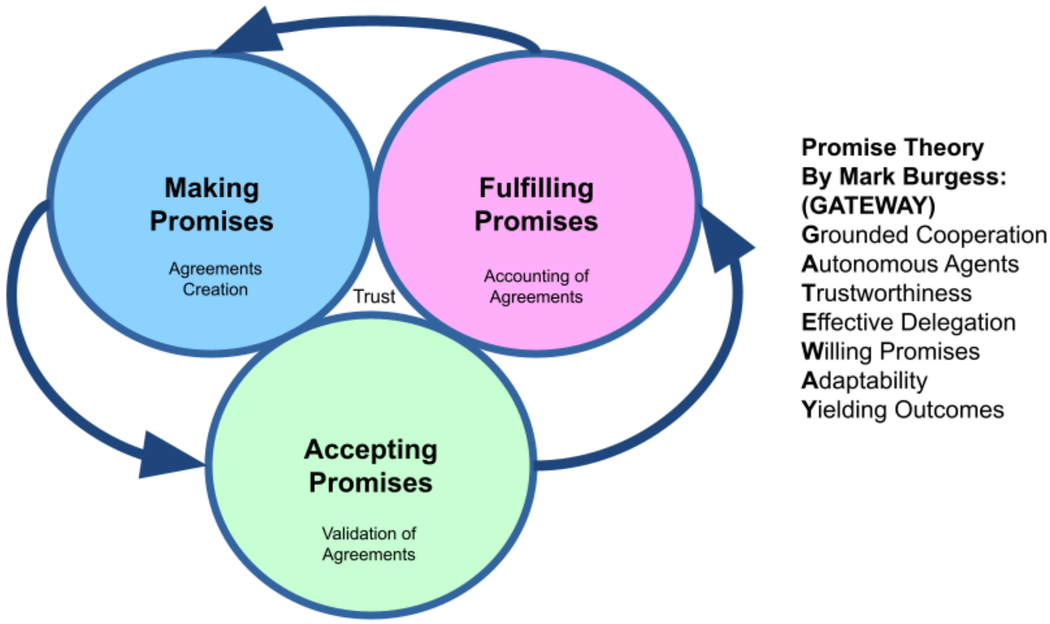


Round: 3 Everyone helps Family 3
Endogenous Financial Assets have Balanced (Balance of Trade)
Other Assets Increased: Physical (Huts, Farms, Graineries) Social Capital (Trust), Human (skills)

After Round 3. All the families have used their assets (the promises of the others) and called a Mwerias. They no longer have any debt or credit and can restart a new Mweria.

Historically there were many kinds of overlapping and continuous ROLAs for emergency aid, seasonal work, cooking, weddings, funerals, infrastructure, farming and many more we have lost memory of.

Promise Theory: The GATEWAY to Growing Social Capital



In the tapestry of community, each thread is a promise. When woven together, these promises create a fabric of trust and social capital, much like the Mwerias in the Rotating Labor Associations (ROLAs). Promise Theory (developed by Mark Burgess) serves as a modern lens to understand this ancient wisdom, offering a structured way to grow social capital through the creation, acceptance, and fulfillment of promises. Let's break it down using the acronym GATEWAY.

G - Grounded Cooperation

In a ROLA, families come together, each contributing their unique skills and resources. Similarly, Promise Theory advocates for grounded cooperation. Agents—whether they're individuals, communities, or even software components—cooperate by aligning their promises with each other. This forms a network of promises, a web of mutual aid that makes the system robust and effective.

A - Autonomous Agents

Each family in a ROLA operates based on its own needs, yet contributes to the collective good. Promise Theory recognizes this autonomy. Each agent operates independently, making decisions based on local knowledge and state. Autonomy doesn't mean isolation; it means empowered participation.

T - Trustworthiness

Trust is the soil where promises grow. In a ROLA, if a family consistently shows up to help others, they earn trust. Promise Theory echoes this. Trust is built through the consistent fulfillment of promises, creating a track record of reliability that becomes the community's social capital.

E - Effective Delegation
Sometimes, you can't fulfill a promise on your own. In a ROLA, you might send a family member in your place. Promise Theory calls this effective delegation. Promises can be transferred from one agent to another, allowing for the distribution of responsibilities and the management of complex tasks without breaking the chain of trust.

W - Willing Promises
In a ROLA, families willingly commit to help each other. Promise Theory emphasizes this willingness. Agents make promises out of free will, indicating their genuine intent to fulfill specific obligations or maintain particular states. Willingness is the heartbeat of any promise, pumping life into the system.

A - Adaptability
Life is change. Seasons shift, and so do community needs. Both ROLAs and Promise Theory are adaptable frameworks. They can accommodate systems of any size and enable agents to adapt effectively to new situations, whether it's a change in weather or a change in technology.

Y - Yielding Outcomes
Finally, Promise Theory distinguishes between intentions and outcomes. A promise is a seed, but the fruit it bears can vary. In a ROLA, the outcome is a stronger, more resilient community. Promise Theory acknowledges that while intentions are crucial, it's the outcomes—how promises are actually fulfilled—that truly matter.

In essence, Promise Theory is a GATEWAY that leads us back to the heart of community and mutual aid. It's a modern tool that echoes ancient practices, a bridge between the wisdom of the past and the possibilities of the future. By understanding and applying these principles, we can enrich our social fabric, one promise at a time. Let's walk this path together, nurturing a world where everyone and everything thrives.

Vouchers

The credit and debt of people taking part in ROLAs resembles the movement and settlement of promises (vouchers) around a community. When an individual or group creates (issues) a Voucher they are making a promise, which is recorded in a physical or digital medium such as a ledger (**memory**). The medium records who is obligated to redeem the voucher as payment for services (**service**) and also who holds the voucher as well as the history of to whom the voucher was transferred to. The ledger can also hold other endorsements and certifications that build confidence (**valuation**).

Untransferable promises of service to individuals - like invoices - create a pattern where the issuer and acceptor are locked into an agreement with each other. With a tradeable or reassignable voucher, if the acceptor doesn't need the service at this moment and would rather transfer it to someone else then they are more free and the voucher can be redeemed by that other person or again transferred. Note that a relationship and agreement exists between the issuer and the holder, but the holder may choose to transfer their holding to someone else. This is also called a ***bearer instrument*** - in which the holder or bearer holds the right to transfer the voucher to another and redeem it with the issuer.

For example: If you give me a pair of shoes and I promise to give you 100 apples next month then I have an *obligation* to give you apples. If that agreement is transferable (in the form of a voucher) then you can assign it to someone else and I would have an obligation to give the apples to them when they present my vouchers back to me.

Reassignable / tradable agreements can flow among a community unlocking the potential for people to develop projects, infrastructure, regenerative agriculture and other complex human interactions. They are not 'money' or 'currency' in the traditional sense of the words, they are flowing agreements. A voucher can also be called a credit obligation - where the issuer is being given a credit by the acceptor and has an obligation to redeem it as payment.

- **Individually-Issued**: An individual person or business might issue a voucher redeemable for specific services they offer. In this case it is clear exactly who is obligated to redeem the voucher.

- **Mutually-Issued:** Vouchers can be issued collectively. An association of people under a common agreement as found in an Economic Commons can collectively issue a voucher.

Networks: Regardless of how they are issued, vouchers can be tradable for each other and people can issue and hold many vouchers. Such networks like **Sarafu.Network** in Kenya enable people to access a market of vouchers and develop projects where promises against many services will be needed. Groups of vouchers co-existing in an area provide a collective medium of exchange. Ultimately there is no need for centralized currencies or money - when such a network exists.

Connecting Vouchers: When someone accepts a voucher for a good or service or another voucher or fiat money - they are acting as a conduit or connector. They are saying this voucher (redeemable as payment for apples) is valuable and I will accept it in return for something else that is valuable to me, like an hour of my time.

Connecting Vouchers: When someone (or a contract - see CAV Pool) accepts a voucher for a good or service or another voucher or fiat money - they are acting as a conduit or connector. They are saying this voucher (redeemable as payment for apples) is valuable and I will accept it in return for something else that is valuable to me, like an hour of my time.

This connecting function between vouchers and other services is how a voucher can start to act like and be accepted as a medium of exchange. Generally this is limited based on the capacity of the issuer and supply of vouchers and the trust of people around them. A voucher like a telecom airtime credit can be accepted by many people because they all value its utility.

While holding two or more vouchers (See CAV Pool) someone can offer to be a conduit between those vouchers. This is generally called an exchange. You might be familiar with money changers standing on the street with pesos in one pocket and dollars in the other. When you give them dollars they give you back pesos and keep a small fee. This can also happen between two vouchers where a fee is charged for the exchange service. This fee can counteract demurrage or gradual expiration and act as a form of **savings**.

Vouchers as Savings Instruments: While it is rare to save using vouchers, a common case of someone needing to move their national currency can use them to purchase vouchers (sometimes at a discount).

Split Tally Sticks and Historic Mutual Credit Systems: Split tally sticks were an early form of mutual credit used in medieval Europe, where notched wooden sticks represented debt or credit between parties. Other historic mutual credit systems include the Local Exchange Trading System (LETS) and the WIR Bank in Switzerland. These systems rely on trust and reciprocity, allowing community members to exchange goods and services without the need for traditional currency.

Coupons: Coupons are vouchers that offer discounts, deals, or other incentives to consumers. They are often used as marketing tools by businesses to attract customers and stimulate sales. Examples include grocery store coupons, online discount codes, and gift cards. These coupons can be traded, shared, or gifted, serving as a form of alternative currency and promoting economic exchange.

IOUs (I Owe You): An IOU is an informal document that acknowledges a debt between two parties. While not legally binding, IOUs are based on trust and can be used to facilitate transactions between individuals or businesses in the absence of cash or other forms of payment. Examples include personal loans between friends or family members, small business credit arrangements, and informal bartering systems.

Airtime Credit: Airtime credit is a form of digital currency used by telecom providers that allows users to purchase prepaid minutes for mobile phone services. In some regions, airtime credit has evolved into a versatile and widely accepted form of payment. For example, in several African countries, people exchange airtime credit for goods and services, transfer it to others, and even use it to pay bills. This alternative currency demonstrates the adaptability and innovation of communities in creating new means of exchange.

Cryptocurrencies and Digital Currencies: Cryptocurrencies, such as Bitcoin and Ethereum, are a form of digital or virtual voucher that use cryptography for security and operate independently of central banks. Digital vouchers issued by central banks, such as China's Digital Currency Electronic Payment, are also emerging as new forms of exchange. These currencies offer potential advantages, including reduced transaction costs, increased financial inclusion, and enhanced security. However, they also raise concerns about privacy, regulation, and financial stability. A key question to ask any economic instrument is - what is the promise, commitment or guarantee of the issuer? Often with national or crypto currencies this question is very hard to answer.

The diverse range of modern-day vouchers, credit obligations, and alternative currencies demonstrates the evolving nature of financial systems and the ingenuity of communities in creating new means of exchange. By understanding these contemporary examples, we can inform the revitalization of financial solutions that promote economic resilience, social cohesion, and sustainable development.

Liquidity Pools

Imagine a village market where people bring baskets of apples and oranges. Now, think of a special table in the middle of this market. This table is our "liquidity pool," a community commons where people can easily swap apples for oranges and vice versa. (note that liquidity pools can be held in a decentralized ledgers)

The Basics: What's a Liquidity Pool?
A liquidity pool is like a community pot. People put in vouchers for apples and oranges, and anyone can come to swap one for the other. It's a simple way for folks to exchange what they have for what they need.

Fixed or Changing Rates: How Many Apples for an Orange?
Fixed Rates: Let's say the community agrees that one apple voucher is always equal to one orange voucher. That's a fixed rate. You always know what you're getting, and it keeps things simple and steady.

Dynamic Rates: In another scenario, maybe there are fewer oranges this season. Now, one orange voucher might be worth two apple vouchers. This rate can change based on how many apples and oranges are in the pool. It's like a seesaw that balances itself out.

Real-World Example: Your Fruit Vouchers
Imagine you have 10 apple vouchers but you want some oranges. You go to the community table (our liquidity pool) and swap your apple vouchers for orange vouchers. The rates could be fixed, like 1-to-1, or they could change based on how many apple and orange vouchers are in the pool.

This liquidity pool is a shared resource, a commons where everyone benefits. It's not just about apples and oranges; it's about trust and community. When you know you can swap easily, it builds trust. And just like a park or a communal garden, this pool is a place where everyone has a stake and everyone gains.

So, next time you hear about liquidity pools, think of that special table in the village market. This is similar to how families in a ROLA or Mweria can exchange commitments to goods and services with each other. It's more than a place to swap fruit; it's a cornerstone of community, a commons that helps us all live better, together.

Expiration and Demurrage

Imagine a pond where water sits too long and becomes stagnant. Now, think of demurrage as a gentle stream that refreshes that pond, keeping the water—and by extension, the community—alive and well.

What's Demurrage?

Demurrage is like an expiration date on vouchers or money. After a certain time, if you haven't used them, they lose a small bit. It's a way to encourage people to keep the flow of goods and services moving, rather than hoarding.

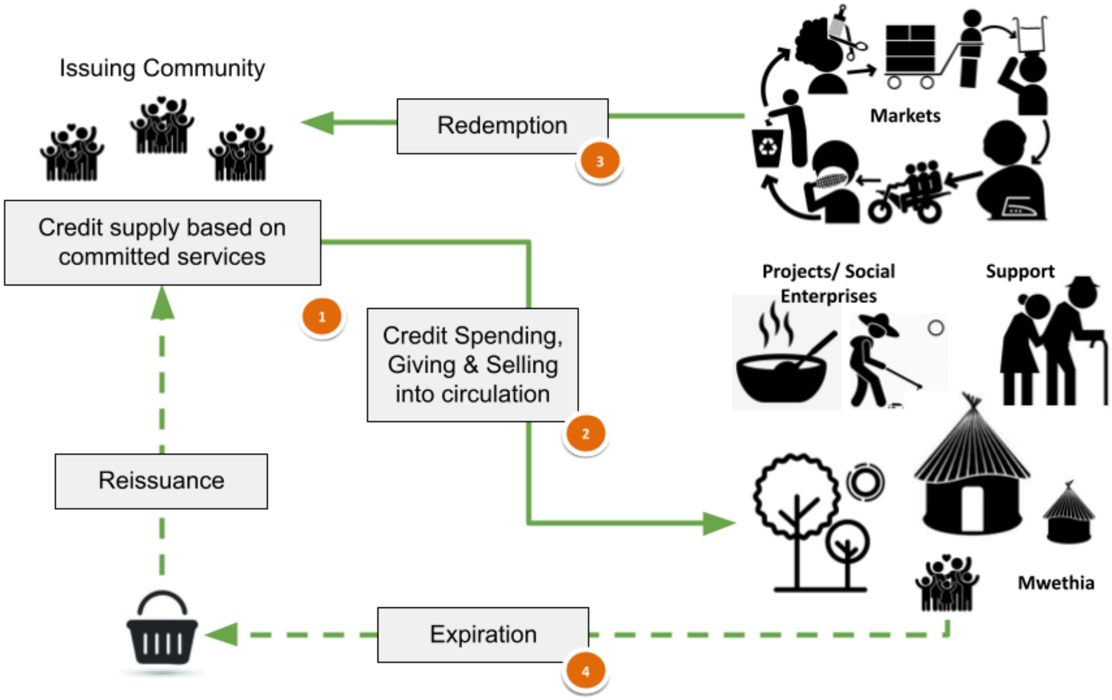
A Redistributive Holding Tax

When people lose vouchers through demurrage, where does that value go? It is up to the voucher creator but it can go back to the community! Think of it as a "holding tax" that gets redistributed. It's like taking a little water from the edge of the pond and pouring it back into the center, benefiting everyone.

The Beauty of Endings

Just like every story has an ending, every agreement or contract should have a way to conclude. Demurrage serves this purpose in the economic realm. It ensures that resources don't get stuck or hoarded but continue to circulate, enriching the community as a whole.

So, demurrage isn't just a financial tool; it's a philosophy that embraces the natural cycle of beginnings and endings. It's a reminder that in letting go, we make room for new growth, new opportunities, and a more vibrant community for us all.



In the above illustration we have a voucher issued by a community group which enters the community and eventually returns back to the issuing group for their goods or services. If people hold onto these vouchers for too long they can expire and later be re-issued by the group. This keeps the supply of credit stable and ensures that no one can hoard vouchers indefinitely.

Economic Commons

Economic Commons refers to a set of collective agreements among a group of individuals, organizations, or communities to manage and govern shared economic resources or systems. It involves establishing a set of rules, principles, and norms that guide the management, allocation, and distribution of resources for the benefit of all participants. An Economic Commons is a multilateral agreement as an Institution specifying the rights and obligations of Members holding Instruments in common.

Common Pool Resources and Pooling Commitments

Let's start with Elinor Ostrom's (a Nobel Prize-winning economist) groundbreaking work on common pool resources (CPRs). She showed us that communities can manage shared resources like forests, fisheries, and water systems without depleting them, as long as they follow certain principles. It's about trust, it's about rules that everyone agrees on, and it's about looking out for each other. It's the spirit of "we're in this together," and it's a beautiful thing.

Now, let's jump into the digital age with liquidity pools. These are pools of vouchers, often in decentralized finance (DeFi) systems, that facilitate trading by providing liquidity. Think of them as communal pots of assets that anyone can tap into. Just like CPRs, they're about pooling resources for mutual benefit. But instead of fish or timber, we're talking about vouchers as economic assets - hence we pull out the term Economic Commons.

So, how do these two worlds connect? Imagine a community that issues its own vouchers, maybe backed by local goods and services. These vouchers get pooled into a liquidity pool. Now, anyone in the community can deposit as well as trade these vouchers, providing a way to coordinate resources and services efficiently. It's like CPR but in digital form, a communal pot that everyone contributes to and benefits from.

And here's where it gets really exciting: What if these liquidity pools could be governed by the same kind of community rules and trust mechanisms that Ostrom found in successful CPRs? You'd have a system that marries ancient wisdom with modern tech, a system that's both rooted and revolutionary.

Managing Commons

Elinor Ostrom, identified eight key principles that govern the successful management of common-pool resources (CPRs) which can be found in indigenous communities worldwide. These principles can be applied to intangible commons and specifically Economic Commons and through CAVs and their usage as a way to manage and coordinate common resources. Below is the "TEAMWORK" acronym for Ostrom's Eight Principles for commons management as well as an explanation for of each principle as it relates to Economic Commons and CAVs:

T - Tailored Rules: Congruence between appropriation and provision rules and local conditions: Ensuring congruence between rules and local conditions by taking into account the specific context and needs of the community. The rules developed in an Economic Commons governing the issuance and use of CAVs should be tailored to the specific needs and circumstances of the community. This ensures that the currency aligns with local values, culture, and economic conditions, making it more likely to be adopted and utilized effectively.

E - Engaging Stakeholders: Collective-choice arrangements: Encouraging collective choice arrangements, where all resource users can participate in shaping the rules and regulations. Decisions related to the management and governance of CAVs should be made collectively by the community members themselves. This ensures that the currency is managed in a way that reflects the needs and interests of the people using it and promotes a sense of ownership and responsibility.

A - Accountable Monitoring: Implementing regular monitoring of resource usage and user behavior to ensure compliance and sustainability. Regular monitoring of the use and impact of CAVs is essential for ensuring their effectiveness and sustainability. This can involve tracking transactions, assessing the CAV's impact on local trade and economic development, and identifying potential issues or areas for improvement.

M - Meaningful Sanctions: Applying graduated sanctions for rule violations, proportionate to the severity of the infraction. To maintain trust and adherence to the agreed-upon rules, it's essential to have a system of graduated sanctions in place for those who violate the rules governing the use and management of CAVs. This could include warnings, fines, or temporary suspension from participating in the CIC system.

W - Well-Defined Boundaries: Establishing well-defined boundaries for the resource system and the community using it. For CAVs to function effectively, it's essential to establish clear boundaries around the community that will use the currency. This includes defining the group of participants and the geographical area within which the CAV can be exchanged.

O - Organizational Rights: Recognizing and respecting the community's rights to organize, create institutions, and govern the shared resource. For CAVs to be successful, the broader society and governmental institutions should recognize and respect the community's right to create and manage their own currency system. This provides legitimacy and support to the CIC initiative, allowing it to flourish.

R - Responsive Conflict Resolution: Providing accessible, low-cost, and efficient mechanisms for resolving disputes among resource users. Efficient and accessible conflict-resolution mechanisms should be in place to address disputes or disagreements related to the use and management of CAVs. These mechanisms can help maintain trust and cooperation among community members and ensure the smooth functioning of the CIC system.

K - Knowledge-Based Governance: Organizing management and governance in nested enterprises for larger or more complex resources, with smaller institutions embedded within larger ones. In cases where CAVs are part of a larger network or linked to other common-pool resources, it's important to establish a system of nested governance that coordinates decision-making and management across different levels. This ensures coherence and consistency across the entire network of CAVs and related commons.

The "TEAMWORK" acronym highlights the collaborative and participatory nature of Ostrom's principles for managing shared resources effectively and equitably.

By applying Ostrom's eight principles to the management of Economic Commons, communities can effectively hold and manage CAVs in common, fostering economic inclusion, resilience, and local trade while preserving and enhancing shared resources.

Six Integral Commons Assets

A healthy Economic Commons coordinates the flow of many types of resources. Commons must take into account more than just financial assets to ensure sustainability and well-being. It is important to consider multiple dimensions of human experience, including social, cultural, and environmental aspects. Integral Human Design proposes a framework consisting of 6 Assets to address these dimensions holistically:

	**Economic Assets:** The management of resources, financial systems, production, and distribution within the commons. This includes addressing issues like income distribution, wealth creation, employment opportunities, and economic resilience.

	**Social Capital/Assets:** The relationships, networks, trust, and reciprocity among members of the commons. Social capital is crucial for fostering cooperation, sharing knowledge, and building a sense of community. It can help create a supportive environment in which people are more likely to contribute to the commons. Note that the creation of commitment or promises, their acceptance and validation and their fulfillment - create a virtuous cycle that builds social capital (trust). When this cycle breaks it is a huge loss to a community and needs to be repaired.
	**Human/Spiritual Assets:** The combination of individual skills, knowledge, creativity, health, as well as their spiritual development, values, and beliefs. This asset focuses on personal growth, self-awareness, and the ethical and moral foundations that guide human behavior. Investing in human and spiritual capital can lead to increased productivity, innovation, well-being, and a deeper sense of meaning and purpose.
	**Political Assets**: The ability to influence decision-making processes, policies, and institutions that govern the commons. Political capital involves the engagement of individuals and groups in the political sphere, their capacity to voice their concerns, and the overall distribution of power within the commons. It helps to ensure that the interests and needs of all members are taken into account and that the commons is governed effectively and fairly.
	**Infrastructure Assets:** The physical infrastructure that supports the functioning of the commons, such as transportation, communication, energy, and water systems. These systems enable the movement of goods, services, and information, and are essential for the functioning of the commons.
	**Natural Assets:** The environmental assets, such as clean air, water, fertile soil, and biodiversity, that support human life and well-being. A healthy commons must protect and regenerate these resources to ensure their long-term availability for future generations.

By considering these six assets, the Integral Human Design emphasizes the need for a holistic approach to managing a healthy commons. This approach ensures that economic considerations are balanced with other important dimensions of human experience, fostering a more resilient and sustainable commons that benefits all its members. As part of any CIC program we use the six assets as a way of analyzing the wellbeing of a community, and in supporting the community to recognise those assets amongst themselves as a means of resource mapping. This gives us a foundation as a baseline to see how the program meaningfully impacts their overall wellbeing.

Economic Commons in Depth

An Economic Commons is an open association of individuals and organizations that collaborate to create and maintain instruments for inclusive well-being. Members of the commons adhere to a set of core principles, such as care for people, care for the environment, equity, reciprocity, non-dominance, and resilience. This association transcends jurisdiction and is tax transparent while operating within the boundaries of national law.

An Economic Commons is structured with three types of members: General Members, Core Service Providers, and Guardians. Each class has its own set of rights and obligations.

General Members: General Members are the users or participants of the Economic Commons. They are utilizing or creating instruments like Vouchers in order to contribute to the commons by sharing resources, knowledge, or skills that help strengthen the community. This could include an association of farmers as well as the farmers themselves.

Core Service Providers: Core Service Providers are individuals or organizations that provide essential services to the Economic Commons. Their primary responsibilities include: Delivering high-quality, reliable services that meet the essential needs of the commons, such as infrastructure, training, marketplaces, or governance tools.

Guardians: Guardians are entrusted with the responsibility of protecting and preserving the Economic Commons. Their primary responsibilities include overseeing the governance of the commons, ensuring that decision-making processes are transparent, inclusive, and fair and mitigating disputes that can’t be resolved by members.

In this way, by establishing an Economic Commons with clearly defined roles for General Members, Core Service Providers, and Guardians, the community group would be able to coordinate resources effectively and create a successful Voucher system aligned with their common vision.

The organization of the Economic Commons relies on mutual agreements between members, adherence to the core principles, and the ability to amend the agreement with majority consent. Members can terminate their membership by providing advance notice and fulfilling their obligations before the time of termination. The agreement is a mutual understanding between members toward achieving their common purpose and vision. Notices, including votes to change the agreement's content, are valid if delivered via the contact information for the Guardians. For more information and a template on an Economic Commons see the Appendix and also visit: https://docs.grassecon.org/commons/

A strong economic commons plays a crucial role in turning CAVs into common pools that foster trust, stability, and widespread acceptance of the voucher as a medium of exchange. Here are some reasons why a strong economic commons is essential for this transition:

1. Trust: A well-functioning economic commons establishes trust among its members. Trust is vital for people to accept vouchers as a currency, as they need to be confident that the vouchers will maintain their value and be widely accepted for transactions.

2. Stability: A strong economic commons ensures that the voucher maintains a stable value, making it a reliable store of value and unit of account. This stability is crucial for people to adopt the voucher as a currency because they want to be sure that the value of their holdings will not fluctuate wildly.

3. Wide Acceptance: For a voucher to become a currency, it must be widely accepted as a medium of exchange. A robust economic commons encourages members to use the voucher for transactions, fostering its acceptance across the community. This broad acceptance will make it easier for people to use the voucher for everyday transactions, thus increasing its utility as a currency.

4. Network Effects: As more people start using the CAVs within the economic commons, network effects come into play. The utility of the voucher increases with

the number of people using it, further encouraging its adoption - while still grounded in the obligations of its issuers.

5. Resilience: A strong economic commons is more resilient to external shocks and adverse events, such as financial crises or political instability. A resilient system can better protect the value of the voucher, making it a more attractive option as a currency.

6. Governance and Regulation: A well-governed economic commons can establish clear rules and regulations around the issuance, redemption, and circulation of vouchers. This framework can help maintain the integrity of the voucher system and ensure that it operates fairly and transparently, thereby increasing its credibility as a potential currency.

Part 2. Implementing Economic Commons

History: Community Inclusion Currency (CIC) became a project title when Grassroots Economics (GrE) began working with the Red Cross during 2020. In that partnership various program quality tools were created and are expanded on here. The term CIC is seen as an outcome of Community Asset Voucher (CAV) usage within and among Economic Commons - in that through CAV usage a **Community** can be defined, **Inclusion** can be found through CAV usage and finally, using CAVs as a medium of exchange or **Currency** for liquidity provision is possible - especially through pooling multiple CAVs to reduce risks.

Goal: The goal of a CIC program is to support networks of communities that have established prospering, local, commons-based economies led by their collective vision and catalyzed by the recognition of their value.

Objectives: The objectives of a CIC program is to Train and Equip communities with the knowledge, skills and tooling to foster economies of mutual aid.

Target Groups

Economically marginalized communities of service & product providers who have the capacity to provide value to their community, but are underutilized and under-resourced, lacking both financing and a medium of exchange. This can extend to any community looking to establish a commons-based local economy, or to groups that want to exchange internally as well as connect with other markets. The program is designed to be implemented with groups rather than individuals, in order to build on top of existing social cohesion.

It is important that the group is able to make clear service commitments to each other and clients. This can include community groups, community-based organizations, self-help groups, Chamas, Churches, or Village Savings and Loan Associations, or cooperatives. Group members should consist of people with local products (physical and/or digital goods and/or services) that can trade with each other and can commit to reciprocity by creating a Community Asset Voucher redeemable as payment for their own goods and services.

Program logic model

Since 2010 Grassroots Economics has been **discovering** traditions, activities and resources while **training** communities (as trainers of trainers) around developing their vision via mutual aid and **equipping** and **supporting** them with tooling that catalyzes resource cooperation and finally, **connecting** many communities together into regional networks. This process mirrors how we engage with communities and will be the structure of the following guide:

ENGAGEMENT: We have segmented the CIC program into 5 areas of engagement:

1. **DISCOVER**: understanding and engaging community groups and various methods for mutual aid
2. **TRAIN**: engaging community groups in capacity building around mutual aid behavior and community visioning
3. **EQUIP**: equipping community groups with legal and technical tooling to catalyze mutual aid behavior
4. **SUPPORT**: providing ongoing support to groups beyond the initial training and voucher issuance
5. **CONNECT**: connecting community groups to broader networks, markets and opportunities

ACTIVITIES: Across these areas of engagement, the foundation of CIC program delivery and responsibilities of **Grassroots Economists** can be understood as providing educational, legal and technical services to communities.

1. **Education/social services**: capacity building and education to support change in behavior toward more commons-based mutual aid and collective visioning
2. **Legal/agreements**: the agreements and facilitation of those agreements (such as audits) that underlie the obligations that groups and individuals are committing to around mutual aid and their collective vision. This is supported by OSTROM’s principles on commons management.
3. **Technical services/instruments**: the technology that supports the sharing of vouchers as mediums of exchange, based in Promise Theory.

QUALITY: We consider the above details the WHAT of the CIC Program, but central to the way that the program is developed and delivered is in the quality of the activities. Our program is grounded in being **community-led**, **contextually engaged**, **indigenously informed**, **accessible**, **simple** and rooted in **game-based learning.**

CHANGE MECHANISMS: Our activities aim to build **trust** in community products and services, foster **reciprocity**, enhance **connectedness**, and promote **collective action**. Through practical learning experiences, we empower individuals, increasing their sense of **responsibility** for **community well-being**.

OUTCOMES: The core outcomes we want to see in groups through the implementation of the CIC program are:

1. Awareness and recognition of their current reality (asset mapping) informed by their local goods and services and the health of their local commons defined by the 6 asset framework. Growing a sense of collective abundance.
2. Establishing a collective vision for what could be achieved, and what the group would like to work toward
3. Agreeing as a collective on how they want to engage in order to achieve that vision (action steps).
4. Utilizing the instruments (agreements, technical tools, vouchers) provided to them through this program to catalyze that engagement and work toward their vision
5. Establishing a self-sustaining Economic Commons with growing wellbeing in all asset classes.

IMPACT: A CIC program seeks to see the creation of networks of communities with prospering, local, commons-based economies that prioritize the collective well-being of all members. These communities are led by their collective vision and catalyzed by recognition of their local value. The well-being of the commons is integral and visible through human, social, natural, physical, financial, and spiritual assets. These communities serve as a model for a new economic system based on collaboration, mutual support, and recognition of the value of the commons. Through this, we hope to see increased peace, prosperity and trust - reducing poverty and equality and establishing self-sufficient communities with strong social ties.

In a nutshell: A **Grassroots Economist** (you) will approach a community group, help them develop a mapping of their assets, a clear vision and a plan and tools to get there. You will help the group members develop agreements and commitments. The culmination of these commitments toward goods and services will be the basis for Community Asset Vouchers - redeemable as payment for goods and services from members of the group. A CAV is similar to a business gift card or loyalty point - redeemable for that business's goods or services.

An Economic Commons is the set of rules designed to promote well being within a community by leveraging Community Asset Vouchers (CAVs) and other financial instruments. CAVs facilitate local trade, reduce dependency on national currencies, and enhance the resilience of communities during economic downturns or crises.

Local Empowerment: CAVs empower communities by fostering economic inclusion and giving members access to resources, knowledge, and opportunities that may not be available through conventional financial systems. This encourages local trade, reduces dependency on external aid, and supports community-based initiatives, creating a more resilient and sustainable local economy.

Resilience and Adaptability: CAVs contribute to the resilience of communities during economic downturns or crises by providing an alternative means of exchange that is less vulnerable to external shocks. This enables communities to continue trading and supporting each other, even when national currencies or financial systems falter.

Promoting Trust and Social Cohesion: CAV are based on trust and reciprocity, as members rely on each other to honor and accept vouchers in exchange for goods and services. This encourages cooperation, fosters social connections, and reinforces the shared values and principles that underpin the community.

Flexible and Adaptable Framework: CAVs offer a flexible and adaptable framework that can be tailored to the specific needs and contexts of different communities. This allows for the incorporation of various financial instruments, such as digital currencies, cryptocurrencies, or traditional vouchers, to suit the unique requirements of each community.

Community Inclusion Currency programs represent an approach to promoting economic resilience, social cohesion, and sustainable development by harnessing the power of vouchers and alternative financial instruments. By understanding the role of CAVs in local economies and their potential benefits, communities can develop more inclusive and equitable financial systems that support the well-being and prosperity of all members.

DISCOVER

Engaging communities

DISCOVER

Introduction

In this section the primary focus is to **understand and engage community groups** for the implementation of the Community Inclusion Currency program. In order for engagement to be successful, it is important that implementing organizations conduct sufficient **research** into the **local context**, **engage local ecosystem stakeholders**, **screen groups** for selection into the program and **tailor** the **program** to context.

Overview of activity modules

There are a variety of ways to conduct outreach, inquiry and engagement with a target group/area. We have compiled a series of recommended activities for general community outreach, as well as some best practices specifically for CIC program implementation. We trust that implem/enting organizations will deliver the program and engage the target groups with their own best practices in mind as well, ensuring that they achieve the necessary outcomes.

1. Understanding the local context and engaging relevant stakeholders
2. Screening and engaging appropriate community groups
3. Conducting baseline/wellbeing surveys

Outcomes

- Implementing organization has a clear understanding of the local context and stakeholders around the target community groups
- Implementing organization has a clear understanding of which groups would be appropriate for implementation of the program
- Target groups have a clear understanding of the commitment needed to participate in the program, and agree to do so
- There is local ecosystem support for the implementation of the program

- Baseline surveys have been conducted by the implementing organization to inform the monitoring and evaluation

Understanding the local context and engaging relevant stakeholders

Introduction

This training module is designed to assist teams in understanding the local context and engaging relevant stakeholders for the successful implementation of a Community Inclusion Currency (CIC) program. This process is critical to ensure that CAVs are tailored to the needs and characteristics of each community, and that all key stakeholders are involved in the process. The module includes a legal review and sensitization of local leaders, businesses, and government.

Case study

Preparation for a new location: To understand her roles and responsibilities, we will follow Nadzua, a trained Grassroots Economist, through the process of discovering, training, equipping, and supporting communities with their own flourishing grassroots economy.

Nadzua, a Grassroots Economist and a dedicated mother of four is preparing to support new groups in an area called Beya. Upon waking up, she attentively reviews her calendar, quickly realizing the significance of the day ahead. Today, her task is to meet with the leaders such as the District County Commissioner (DCC), Chief, Assistant Chief, and the elders.

Meeting with the District County Commissioner (DCC): Nadzua arrives at the DCC office armed with an official letter. She confidently introduces herself, highlighting her position within the organization and expresses her intent to introduce a Community Inclusion Currency program to the local area. She proceeds to enlighten the DCC on the program. Impressed, the DCC expresses satisfaction and stamps the letter as a sign of approval and directs Nadzua to the area Chief to further discuss her initiative.

Meeting with the local leaders: In the early hours of the morning, Nadzua pays a visit to the area Chief, with the signed letter from the DCC. She briefs the Chief on the motive behind the community-driven initiative. She does a brief training which takes at least 1 hour with the Chief. The purpose of this training is to equip the Chief with a comprehensive understanding of her intended project implementation in the area. With satisfaction, the Chief organizes a training session on a specific date with all the local leaders who will play a vital role in supporting the project's successful execution.

In advance of the training, Nadzua has arranged a meeting and diligently prepared her transportation and meals required for the day's activities. She is assembling all the materials she needs including paper, pencils, a lengthy string of yarn, a woven winnowing basket, and a handful of beans (to act as demonstration vouchers). With everything in order, she begins her journey.

Her destination is the village of Beya, the location of the Chief's camp she visited before. Upon arrival, she enters the office, where she encounters not only the elders, the assistant chief, the head chief, and other community group leaders that requested to start implementing a Community Inclusion Currency (CIC).
Nadzua gives a brief overview of what the organization does and some demo games to help them understand better. This takes about 2 hours.

The elders and community leaders present recommend other existing groups that Nadzua can work with in the implementation of a CIC program in the area.

Summary of specific activities/exercises

1. Conduct preliminary research on the community's socio-economic conditions, needs, and resources.
2. Identify and map key stakeholders, including community leaders, businesses, local organizations, and government representatives.
3. Assess existing traditional and national legal frameworks relevant to CAVs, and engage legal experts for guidance.
    a. Review national laws and regulations related to currency, financial transactions, and taxation.
    b. Assess local customary laws and norms related to community transactions, resources, and decision-making.

    c. Engage legal experts to identify potential legal challenges and develop strategies to mitigate risks.
    d. Develop a legal compliance plan, including actions to obtain necessary permits, licenses, or approvals.
    e. Communicate legal requirements to stakeholders, ensuring that all parties are aware of their responsibilities.
4. Develop a stakeholder engagement plan, detailing communication strategies, timelines, and objectives.
5. Conduct sensitization meetings with local leaders to introduce the concept of CAVs and to secure their support.
6. Organize workshops and presentations for businesses and government representatives to explain the benefits and functioning of CAVs.
7. Engage with local organizations and community groups to build awareness and buy-in for CIC implementation.
8. Conduct feedback sessions and incorporate stakeholders' input into the design and roll-out of CAVs.
9. Establish a monitoring and evaluation system to track stakeholder engagement and CIC progress.
10. Sensitization of Local Leaders, Businesses, and Government:
    a. Develop tailored materials and presentations that highlight the benefits and functioning of CAVs for each stakeholder group.
    b. Facilitate meetings, workshops, and focus group discussions to introduce CIC concepts, address concerns, and gather feedback.
    c. Identify and address potential misconceptions or barriers to the adoption of CAVs.
    d. Establish ongoing communication channels to ensure transparency and trust among stakeholders.
11. Create opportunities for stakeholder collaboration in the design, implementation, and evaluation of CAVs.

The successful completion of these activities will pave the way for a series of workshops designed to assist community groups in creating their own Community Asset Vouchers. By ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the local context and engaging all relevant stakeholders, CIC implementation will be more likely to achieve its intended goals and create lasting, positive impacts on the communities involved.

Screening and engaging appropriate community groups

Introduction

This training module is designed to assist teams in identifying, screening, and engaging appropriate community groups for the successful implementation of Community Inclusion Currency (CIC) program. Recognizing that some groups will take much longer than others to start a CAV, this module aims to ensure that the selected groups have the capacity and commitment necessary to create, manage, and sustain a CIC. The module includes a series of specific activities to facilitate the identification and engagement of suitable groups before conducting workshops for community groups creating their CAVs.

Specific activities/exercises

1. Develop a set of criteria to evaluate community groups' suitability for CIC implementation.
2. Create a database of potential community groups, including their profiles, objectives, and members.
3. Conduct a preliminary assessment of each group against the established criteria.
4. Select a shortlist of groups that meet the minimum requirements for CIC implementation.
5. Organize informational meetings with shortlisted groups to introduce the concept of CAVs and gauge their interest and commitment.
6. Conduct a more in-depth assessment of shortlisted groups' readiness, including their governance structures, financial management, and community engagement.
7. Engage shortlisted groups in a series of capacity-building sessions to address identified gaps and strengthen their readiness for CIC implementation.
8. Finalize the selection of community groups for CIC workshops based on their demonstrated capacity and commitment.
9. Establish a support system and communication channels to maintain engagement with selected groups throughout the CIC implementation process.

What to look for in a community group: When choosing groups to implement the program with, there are certain group characteristics and dynamics that we have highlighted as being a positive sign for successful implementation.

We have seen the most success with **rural agricultural communities** due to their social cohesion and local availability of goods and services, but generally, any groups that meet the following criteria are likely to see success with the CIC program:

1. Have been a group that is meeting or working together for more than a year;
2. Includes around 10-30 members;
3. Have an agreed-upon governance structure/rules and regulations - especially ways to handle debt;
4. Keep records of group activities, accounts and meetings;
5. Display good leadership and governance internally;
6. Basic phone literacy and numeracy - preferably access to a smart phone and internet;
7. A base level of social cohesion and trust in the group and its runnings;
8. Have some local goods or services that they offer individually and as a group;
9. Close geographic proximity to one another. In order to make gatherings and markets easy for everyone to attend.

Best Practices

1. **Respect for Community Autonomy:** Always remember that the Community Inclusion Currency (CIC) is the community's program. Facilitators should not impose decisions; instead, they should act as partners, providing guidance and support while the community makes its own decisions.
2. **Active Listening**: The voices of the community group must be heard. Encourage open dialogue, listen to their opinions, concerns, and ideas, and ensure these are incorporated into the design and implementation of the CIC.
3. **Cultural Sensitivity**: Understand and respect the community's culture, traditions, and social norms. This understanding should guide your interactions and the manner in which the CAV is designed and implemented.

4. **Transparency and Accountability**: Be open and honest about the objectives, benefits, and potential challenges of the CIC. Regularly share information about the progress and outcomes of the CIC implementation.
5. **Inclusive Participation**: Ensure that all members of the community group have the opportunity to participate in the CIC process. Pay special attention to including marginalized and vulnerable individuals who might otherwise be excluded.
6. **Capacity Building**: Equip the community group with the skills and knowledge they need to successfully manage and sustain the CIC. This can be achieved through workshops, training sessions, and continuous mentoring.
7. **Conflict Sensitivity**: Be aware of existing tensions or conflicts within the community, and ensure that the CAV does not exacerbate these. Where possible, use the CIC process to promote social cohesion and reconciliation.
8. **Do No Harm**: The primary principle of humanitarian action should guide all aspects of the CIC program. The well-being of the community should always be the foremost consideration, and all actions should avoid causing adverse effects.
9. **Sustainability and Exit Strategy**: From the outset, plan for the sustainability of the CAV beyond external support. Develop an exit strategy that ensures the community group can independently manage the CAV in the long term.
10. **Continuous Learning and Improvement**: Seek regular feedback from the community group and other stakeholders to improve the CIC process. Be flexible and adaptable, adjusting the approach based on the community's evolving needs and feedback.

Conducting baseline/wellbeing surveys

Introduction

It is important for any program to have a means of monitoring the progress, as well as getting a clear idea of the general well being of a community at the start to be able to tailor the program effectively. The Well-being Survey, based on the Integral Human Development (IHD) framework, is a crucial tool for evaluating the impact of Community Inclusion Currency (CIC) programs across multiple dimensions of life, such as physical, emotional, social, cultural, and spiritual well-being. Baseline and periodic surveys provide benchmarks for assessing program effectiveness, enabling practitioners to make necessary adjustments and optimize outcomes. By engaging with the community and gathering feedback, the well-being survey can be customized by the community to foster trust and support, ensuring that CIC programs meet their goals of promoting economic resilience, social cohesion, and sustainable development at the grassroots level.

Case study **Conduct a Well-Being Survey:** Nadzua understands the significance of monitoring progress to provide support for local groups and ensure they have a clear understanding of their advancement. This is achieved through conducting a Well-Being survey, followed by a discussion of the survey results based on the feedback received. Nadzua assembles and trains a few members of the group to conduct a comprehensive door-to-door survey in the newly established communities. To ensure a smooth process, she pairs each surveyor with a knowledgeable Village Elder who can provide support and explain the purpose of the survey to the residents. Furthermore, the Village Elder informs other local authorities about this activity. Nadzua collaborates closely with her team to diligently monitor the incoming surveys and promptly returns any that require further completion. **Survey Community Feedback:** After completing the survey, Nadzua compiles the results and prepares a short presentation to analyze each community asset. She receives feedback from the discussions that helps her to know which practices the community engage in, the assets they uphold, and the existing well-being and resources. This allows her to track the impact after the implementation of vouchers.

Specific activities/exercises

To conduct a well-being survey for a CIC program, the following specific activities and exercises can be employed:

1. Community Sensitization: Hold a community meeting or workshop to develop and introduce the survey and its objectives. Explain the importance of the well-being survey and the role of community participation in providing accurate and valuable data.
2. Training Local Surveyors: Train a group of local surveyors or community volunteers to administer the survey. This can help ensure cultural sensitivity, language proficiency, and better engagement with the community.

3. Paper or Digital Questionnaires: Depending on the available resources and preferences of the community, use either paper questionnaires or digital tools (such as tablets or smartphones with survey apps) to collect data.
4. Focus Group Discussions: Organize focus group discussions with different segments of the community, such as women, youth, elders, and marginalized groups, to gather qualitative insights that complement the survey data.
5. Door-to-door Surveys: Surveyors can visit households to administer the survey, ensuring that they reach a representative sample of the community.
6. Community Centers or Public Spaces: Set up survey stations in community centers or public spaces where people can complete the survey, either individually or with the assistance of a trained surveyor.
7. Mobile Survey Teams: Deploy mobile survey teams to reach remote or hard-to-access areas, ensuring that all community members have the opportunity to participate in the survey.
8. Incentivize Participation: Offer small incentives, such as snacks or CAVs, to encourage participation and show appreciation for the time and effort participants invest in completing the survey.
9. Data Collection and Management: Collect, organize, and securely store survey data for analysis, ensuring that all data is anonymized to protect participants' privacy.
10. Analysis and Reporting: Analyze the survey data to identify trends, patterns, and areas for improvement, and share the findings with the community and other stakeholders to inform decision-making and future program activities.

By employing these specific activities and exercises, the well-being survey can be conducted effectively, providing valuable insights into the impact of the CIC program on the community's well-being.

Best Practices

Here are five best practices for conducting an asset-based well-being survey for a CIC program:

1. **Engage with the Community**: Involve community members in the planning, design, and implementation of the survey. This will help ensure that the survey reflects the community's unique context and needs, fostering a sense of ownership and increasing participation.
2. **Train Local Surveyors**: Empower local surveyors or community volunteers to administer the survey. This enhances cultural sensitivity, language proficiency, and rapport with the community, leading to more accurate and insightful data.

3. **Use a Mixed-Methods Approach**: Combine quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, such as structured questionnaires, focus group discussions, and individual interviews. This provides a more comprehensive understanding of the community's well-being and enables the identification of assets and strengths.
4. **Ensure Inclusiveness and Representation**: Make efforts to include all segments of the community, including women, youth, elders, and marginalized groups, to capture diverse perspectives and ensure that the survey results accurately represent the community's well-being.
5. **Maintain Ethical Standards and Data Privacy**: Obtain informed consent from participants, ensure anonymity, and securely store data to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the community members. Communicate the purpose of the survey, how the data will be used, and the benefits of participating to build trust and transparency.

By following these best practices, an asset-based well-being survey for a CIC program can effectively identify the community's strengths, resources, and assets, enabling the development of interventions that build on these assets to improve well-being and support sustainable development

TRAIN

Introduction

In this section the primary focus is on engaging community groups in **capacity building** activities with the purpose of educating participants on their potential for establishing their own economic commons. Activities in this section focus predominantly on **education for behavior change**, in **understanding mechanisms for mutual aid** outside of the dominant economic system and **recognising their latent capacity** for that support rooted in the assets the group already have.

Group training: 3 workshops over 1 month.
The workshops are usually run weekly, meeting the existing behaviors of groups/chamas that meet once a week and scheduling the workshops for within that time.

Facilitation Space

- The facilitation space should be easily **accessible** and **convenient** for the workshop participants
- Choose a space that is **comfortable** and conducive to learning, with good **lighting** and ventilation.
- Ensure that the space is large enough to accommodate all participants both seated and standing and any equipment or supplies that you may need.
- Consider the seating arrangements and make sure that **everyone can see and hear each other easily**.
- Make sure that the space is **free from distractions** and disruptions, such as loud noises or interruptions.

Skills

Effective facilitation requires a combination of **interpersonal, organizational, and communication skills**.

- **Active listening** is a critical skill for a facilitator, as it helps you understand the needs and concerns of your participants.

- **Communication:** Facilitators should be able to **speak the local language** and be able to communicate respectfully and effectively with community members of **all ages**
- You should also be able to **manage group dynamics**, and create an inclusive and supportive environment where everyone feels comfortable participating.
- **Time management** is another important skill, as you need to ensure that you cover all the topics you have planned for within the allotted time frame.
- **Adaptability** and the ability to improvise in various situations

Strategies

Before starting: Continue to discover as much as you can about your participants. Facilitators should have a basic understanding of the major **financial issues** plaguing the community and the **economic activities** that take place in the area. Consider what the daily lives of your participants are like, what they **value** and care about, what might trouble them. In this process keep issues around **accessibility** in mind, which will help inform workshop specifics such as location, timing, modes of communication, etc.

During:

1. **Begin by setting clear objectives for the workshop, and communicate these to the participants at the outset.**
2. **Continually refer back to and orient to time, objectives, and/or activities.** In order to keep the workshops focussed and productive, remind participants of the workshop objectives and timeframes.
3. **Encourage participation by using open-ended questions** (questions that do not result in simplified yes or no responses) **and active listening techniques** (such as paraphrasing or summarizing and asking follow-up questions)**.**
4. **Use visual aids**, such as diagrams or charts, to help participants understand complex concepts and remain inclusive to different learning styles.
5. **Frequently ask for feedback, reflections and questions** to ensure that participants have understood certain concepts, are all on the same page and clarify if necessary.
6. **Be flexible and adaptable;** be prepared to adjust your plans if necessary based on the needs of the group.

After:

1. **Ask for feedback** and adjust your next facilitation in response to their feedback.
2. Draw a figure of a person with a head, heart and feet and ask (answers can be on sticky notes or out loud):
    a. **Head**: What did you think about the session?
    b. **Heart**: How do you feel about the session?
    c. **Feet**: What will you walk away with from the session?

Best Practices for explaining Economic Commons and CAVs:

1. **Simplify and demystify the concept**: Start by breaking down the concept of CAVs into simple commitments that are easy to understand. Use clear language and avoid jargon to ensure your group can grasp the idea without feeling overwhelmed.
2. **Use relatable examples**: Draw comparisons with familiar concepts and practices, such as traditional rotating labor systems or community barter systems, to help your group relate to CAVs. By illustrating how CAVs can function similarly to systems they already know, you can build a bridge between the familiar and the new.
3. **Emphasize the benefits**: Clearly outline the benefits of CAVs for individuals and communities, focusing on the potential for increased economic resilience, social cohesion, and resource-sharing. Use case studies and real-life examples to demonstrate the positive impact CAVs have had in other communities.
4. **Engage the group**: Encourage group participation by asking questions, soliciting feedback, or conducting group activities that help illustrate the concept of CAVs. This can help to create a more interactive and engaging learning environment.

5. **Address concerns and misconceptions**: Be prepared to address any concerns or misconceptions your group might have about CAVs. Offer clear explanations and evidence to counter common misconceptions, and be open to addressing questions and concerns.

6. **Utilize visual aids**: Use visual aids such as diagrams, slides, or videos to help explain complex concepts and processes related to CAVs. Visual representations can make abstract ideas more tangible and easier to comprehend.

7. **Share success stories**: Share success stories of communities that have implemented CAVs effectively, highlighting the positive outcomes and lessons

learned. This can inspire and motivate your group to consider adopting a CAV in their own community.

8. **Offer resources for further learning**: Provide your group with additional resources, such as articles, websites, or training materials, that they can explore to deepen their understanding of CAVs and alternative mediums of exchange.

9. **Foster a supportive environment**: Create a safe and supportive environment for learning and discussion, where people feel comfortable asking questions, sharing their thoughts, and expressing any concerns.

Follow up with ongoing support: Continue to support the community as they explore the possibility of implementing a CIC program, offering guidance, resources, and assistance as needed. This ongoing support can help ensure a successful transition to a CAV and foster long-term success.

Case study: Group Training: Nadzua contacts Upendo group leaders in advance of the training day, ensuring their availability and confirming the number of participants. She also informs them about the duration of the training, which is expected to last 3-4 hours, allowing them to mentally prepare. With that information, she prepares various items for the workshop, including refreshments, marker pens, manila papers, a winnowing basket, thread and beans.

Workshop 1: On the first training day, Nadzua travels to the location where the group meeting is held, often at a member's home. Depending on the agreed meeting time, the first workshop takes approximately four hours with a lunch or tea break. After the completion of the first workshop, the group collectively determines the date and time for the next workshop. With this in mind, Nadzua ensures her availability on the specified date and commits to punctuality.

WORKSHOP 1 - Introducing a group to CAVs

Materials

- White Board / Chalkboard / Flipchart
- Chalk / Markers

- Small White slips of paper
- Small Blue slips of paper (could be any color)
- Pen / Pencil for each participant
- Masking Tape (Or any tape to put something on the wall)and be prepared to adjust your plans if necessary based on the needs of the group.
- Winnowing or any woven basket
- Dried beans (at least 25 per participant) or something to represent vouchers
- Materials Needed: A long spool of rope, ribbon or clothesline
- Something to track time

Recommendations: Minimum 1 facilitator with experience training other groups and being part of a CIC. Having assistance or co-facilitators can help to hold different roles during exercises. Any mediators should also be trained and it is highly recommended to include local leaders and administration such as chief and sub-chiefs as they will be asked to validate community agreements.
Use local languages in the training, ensuring that at least one of the facilitators is fluent in the language spoken by the participants

Workshop 1 outcomes for community

- A basic understanding and recognition of their local economic commons, resources and network
- A basic understanding of how mutual aid can catalyze them in supporting one another more
- A basic understanding of the function of Community Asset Vouchers (CAVs)

Workshop 1 outcomes for facilitators

- An understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the community in relation to 6 asset classes - having paid attention to note where the gaps were
- Confirmation that the group have a basic understanding of mutual aid, local resources and network, and the basics of vouchers (CAVs)

Introductions & icebreaker

1. Introduce the implementing organization and facilitators

2. Discuss the purpose of the workshop, run through the agenda, manage participant expectations of the process and provide contact information to participants for follow-ups
3. Allow participants to introduce themselves, and mention what they do for a living and what matters most to them as an individual
    a. Ie. “My name is X, I make clothing and I care about my family”
4. Icebreaker/opening prayer/tradition applicable to that group

Introduction to mutual aid and CAVs

5. History of resource sharing/coordination, mutual aid, traditional practices and barter trade
6. Discussion around what alternative/historical trade mechanisms the participating group used/uses (Mwerias/rotating labor, mutual credit, merry-go-rounds etc)
7. Discussing examples of modern day vouchers (airtime, bus tickets, bonga points, mall points, etc)
8. Introducing the concept of CAVs, and the move from paper to digital vouchers (discussing the importance of digitisation for safety/transparency etc)
    a. Tying it all together, drawing the line from mutual aid to digital vouchers (from vouchers -> promises -> markets)

Knowing your community (Asset & Network Mapping)

Introduction

This module will focus on the activities that support a community to understand what they have to offer each other and how they can support each other with their goods, services and other assets. By the end of this module a facilitator should be able to:

- Guide a group through mapping their assets/goods/services
- Guide a group through noting what assets they have are endogenous or exogenous resources
- Guide a group through mapping the network of wants and needs in the group (who has something that others want)
- Guide a group to understand their group capacity to support each other with their goods and services

Theory/background

One of the core things we do in the program is support communities to recognise their collective abundance and capacity to support each other with their goods and services. We do this through mapping the assets and the networks within the groups.

6 asset framework for Integral Human Development
In order to have structure in how we identify assets within a group, we recommend using the 6 asset framework for Integral Human Development. In order to get a good picture of everything a community has beyond the commercial goods and services, the community can begin to understand how they can support each other with social services and other assets. This allows for facilitators to prompt for underlying value within the community that might not be currently economically recognised, and gives a sense of the general well being of the community in relation to these assets. The assets are as follows, and these questions can be used as prompts:

1. Natural: What natural resources does your community rely on for livelihood, such as land, water, and forests?
2. Human/spiritual: What skills and knowledge exist within your community, such as traditional practices, expertise in farming, or artisanal crafts?
3. Social: What social connections and relationships are present in your community, such as networks of family, friends, or community organizations?
4. Physical: What physical assets does your community possess, such as buildings, infrastructure, equipment, and financial resources?
5. Political/governance: How do you currently participate in decision-making processes, both within your community and in interactions with external stakeholders? What responsibilities exist here?
6. Economic/financial: What financial resources and economic opportunities are available within your community, such as savings, credit, markets, and employment options?

Mapping exogenous (outside) and endogenous (inside) assets helps communities identify and harness the strengths and resources available both within and outside the community. By understanding the local resources' value, communities can better leverage these assets for sustainable development, promoting self-sufficiency and economic resilience. This comprehensive mapping fosters a more inclusive approach to growth, where local resources and contributions are valued alongside external support.

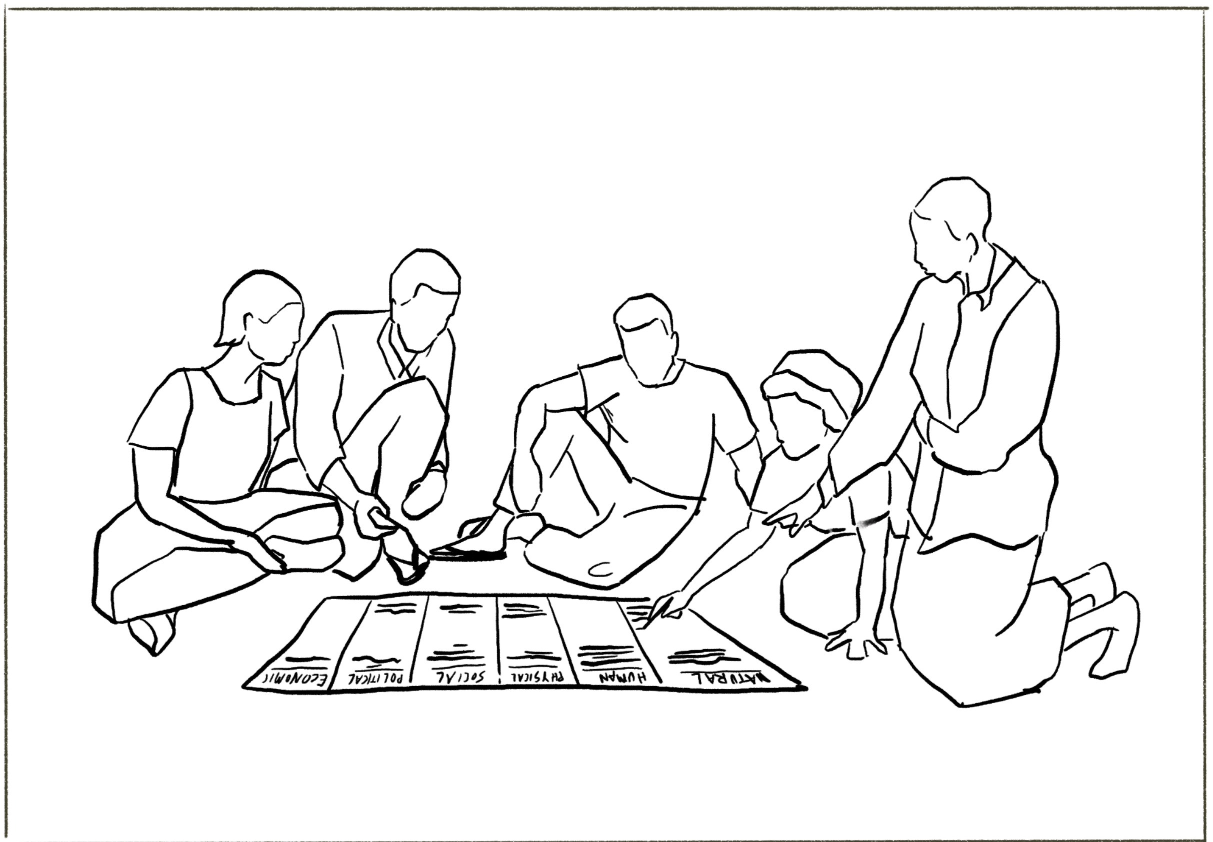
Network mapping

The purpose of this activity is to show the group how they can be supporting each other - highlighting the network of needs, wants, goods and services that create a social and economic fabric of mutual aid that could support them all.

Objective: To visually and experientially illustrate the interconnectedness and mutual support within the group, using goods and services they offer to each other.

Introducing the group to their collective capacity to support each other by having them weave a string between themselves - connecting individuals with offerings to others who want those offerings and mapping the support network of the group. This network resembles the threads of a basket – especially a winnowing basket. Each strand holding the basket together can be seen as a connection of service they hold among their community. When these strands of service are woven well with care the basket itself is useful and treated with care.

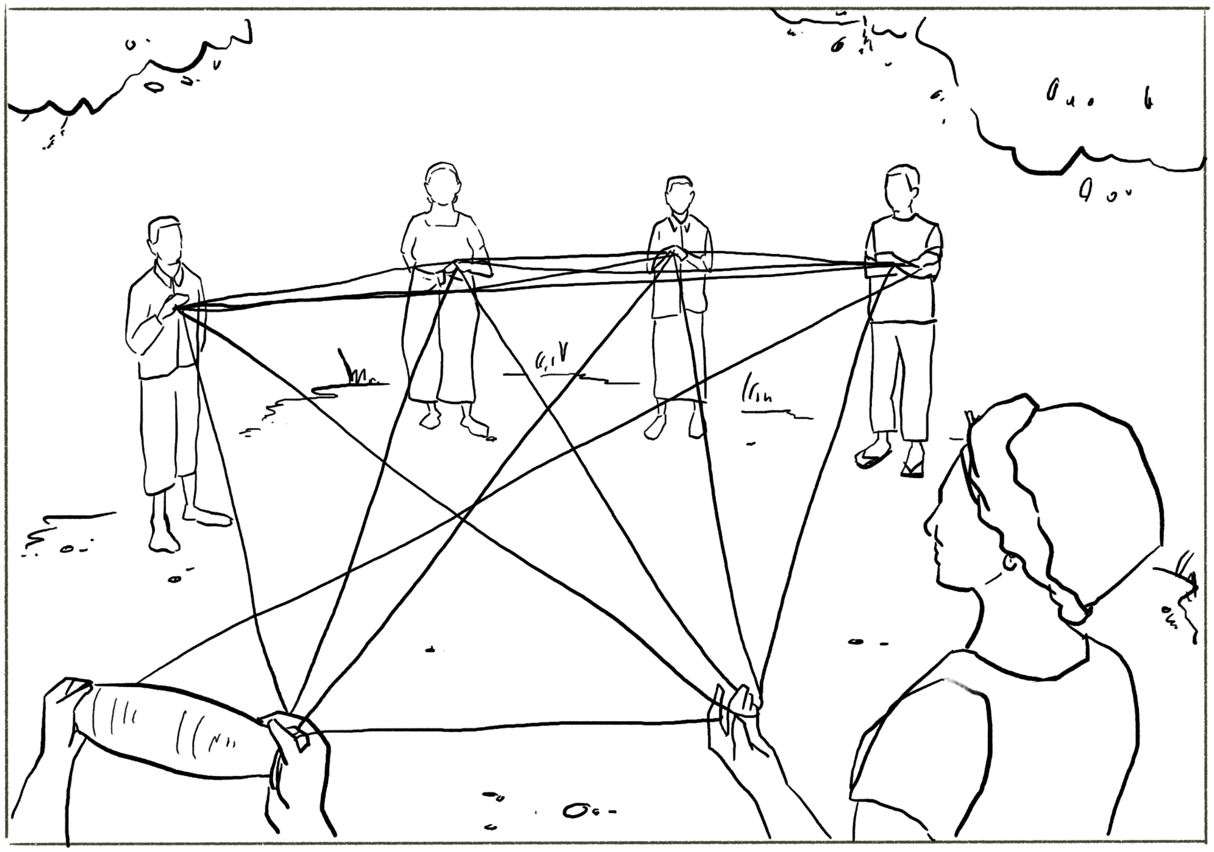
WORKSHOP 1 Specific activities/exercises



Exercise 1. Knowing your community (Asset & Network Mapping) [45 mins]:

1. On a big piece of paper create 6 columns for the 6 assets.
2. Go through each asset and name resources available to the community. Identify all the needs and subsequent goods and services people have in the community, have this also be informed by the 6 assets - prompting people to mention offerings that might not be commercially recognised but that add value to the community.
    a. Those resources that are in abundance for the community should be listed at the top of the column and those that are scarce should be toward the bottom.
3. Trace the sources of all of the goods and services. What does the community import? Note down the local (in the group) and foreign (outside the group) resources.

The resulting asset map will be the basis for developing a vision and action steps.



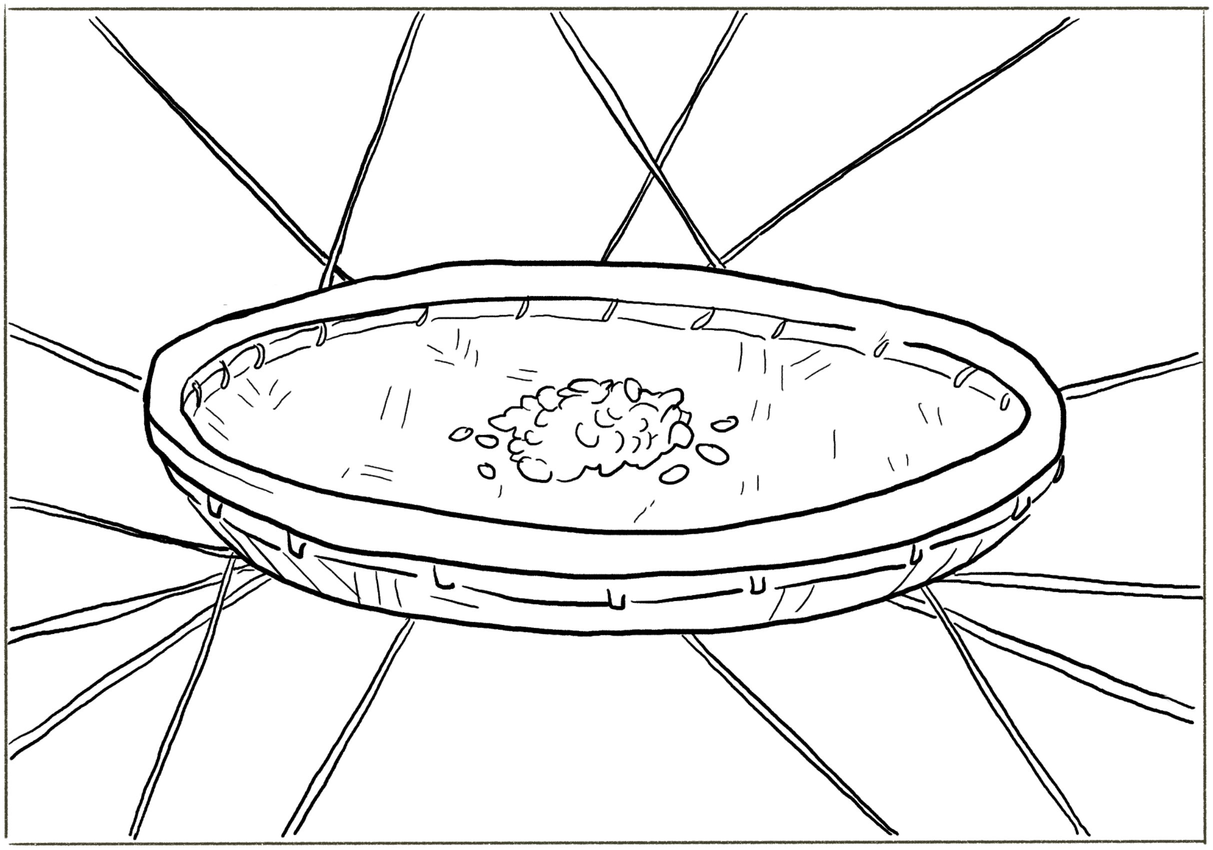
Exercise 2. Network mapping (20 minutes)

Weaving a network of Service

1. Circle Formation: Have the group stand in a circle after they have mapped out their assets.
2. Have the group hold hands in a circle and imagine the support that they can offer each other, particularly around the needs that were mentioned in the previous exercise.
3. Starting the Weave: The first person holds the end of the rope or spool and says out loud what goods or services they can offer to the group. This could be anything from childcare, hair braiding, farming, to other professional services or goods.
4. Building the Network: Someone in the group who needs that good or service raises their hand. The person offering the service throws them the spool, while still holding

onto the end of the rope. The person who receives the spool then repeats the process: they share a good or service they offer, and throw the spool to someone who needs it, while still holding their part of the rope.

5. Weaving the Web: This process continues until everyone has both offered and accepted a good or service, resulting in a web of rope woven between all group members. To strengthen the pattern, the group can do several rounds of this exercise.
6. Visualizing the Collective: On a tight web find a place where a basket can be balanced, have the group help keep the basket balanced.
7. The group then gently lays the woven pattern on the ground. In the middle, there should be the woven basket or winnowing basket. This serves as a metaphor for the community's collective strength and abundance of their own goods and services.
8. Introducing the Voucher: Introduce the concept of a voucher by placing beans in the basket. These beans represent Community Asset Vouchers - promises towards the goods and services that the basket represents. They exist as a way for the community to trade amongst themselves.



Best Practices

- Facilitate open communication and ensure that every group member has the opportunity to both offer and accept a good or service.
- Encourage respect for all goods and services offered, irrespective of their perceived value.
- Reinforce the understanding that the strength of their community and the value of their Community Inclusion Currency is dependent on the strength and interconnectedness of the relationships between group members.
- Emphasize the importance of trust and reciprocity in maintaining the strength of the 'basket' (the community).
- Ensure that the concept of the beans as a representation of promises towards goods and services is clearly understood.
- The outcome of this exercise is a visual and tangible representation of the community's interconnectedness, capacity, and potential for mutual support. It highlights the role and value of a Community Inclusion Currency in facilitating the fair and efficient sharing of valuable resources.

Understanding vouchers and how to use them

Introduction, key terms & key learnings/outcomes for this section

This module will focus on the vouchers that are the medium of exchange used by groups. By the end of this module a facilitator should be able to:

- Explain what a voucher is
- Explain what a voucher is not
- Explain the different use cases for vouchers, and the mechanisms for mutual aid that vouchers can facilitate
- Be able to run a group through the bean game that illustrates how vouchers work
- Discuss core concepts around maintenance of vouchers, expiration, demurrage, and dispute resolution

Introducing vouchers

In the Bean Game module, trainers will introduce participants to the concept of vouchers (CAVs) by simulating an economic system using beans as a medium of exchange. This hands-on activity aims to familiarize participants with the idea of using vouchers in place of national currency and demonstrate various ways to coordinate resources via vouchers for group well-being.

The core aspects of the module that trainers should cover include:

1. Objective: Explain that the Bean Game will help participants understand the basics of vouchers (CAVs) and explore alternative methods of resource coordination, such as rotating labor.
2. Bean Vouchers: Clarify that in the game, beans represent vouchers, with each bean worth a unit of account (like 10 Kenyan Shillings) that can be exchanged for goods and services.
3. Bartering System: Describe the process of trading beans for goods and services, simulating the exchange of vouchers within a community.
4. Market Use Case: Discuss how vouchers can be used in a market setting, allowing participants to trade goods and services using beans as a medium of exchange.
5. Trade Audit: Emphasize the importance of assessing trade balances and debits, and discuss ways to address challenges and imbalances in the system.

6. Merry-Go-Round Use Case: Explore how vouchers can be used in a merry-go-round setting, where participants contribute a standard amount and take turns receiving the collective pot.
7. Rotating Labor Use Case: Discuss how vouchers can facilitate rotating labor practices, with participants pooling their time and efforts to work on each other's chosen activities in exchange for vouchers.
8. Expiration or Demurrage Use Case: Demonstrate how vouchers can expire and be reissued by the community for different purposes. Understanding the need for healthy circulation and also how the expired and renewed vouchers can be used for community support.
9. Reflection and Discussion: Encourage participants to share their experiences, insights, and questions after participating in the game, fostering a deeper understanding of voucher systems and their potential benefits for the community

Exercise 3. Bean game

This exercise simulates a bartering system where beans are used as vouchers that represent a unit of account, such as an hour of labor. Participants trade these vouchers for slips of paper representing goods or services. After trading, participants count their remaining vouchers and the group discusses trade balances and trade debits. This game is used to help participants understand the concept of using vouchers in place of the national currency, and also introduces participants to other ways of coordinating their resources and vouchers toward group wellbeing.

STEP 1: Basic barter trade:

- Participants note down the goods and services they can sell to the group on slips of paper, including the cost and the item. 1 bean can be redeemed as payment for the 10 Kenyan Shillings of the member's products and exist as a kind of promissory note.
- Each member of the group is given 10 beans (or an amount that each can get evenly) that they are invited to use as if they were vouchers (could be used to buy things). Each bean is worth 1 unit of account and the group are invited to trade their beans for goods and services available in the group.
- MARKET USE CASE: the group are invited to trade as if they were at a market, bartering and trading vouchers for a set period of time.

STEP 2: Group Trade Audit:

- Participants count their remaining vouchers and the group discusses trade balances and trade debits.
- Participants with the most vouchers write their name and amount on the board.
- The group discusses what can be done to help those with trade debits or surpluses.
- Participants count what was purchased and discuss needs and challenges of the system.

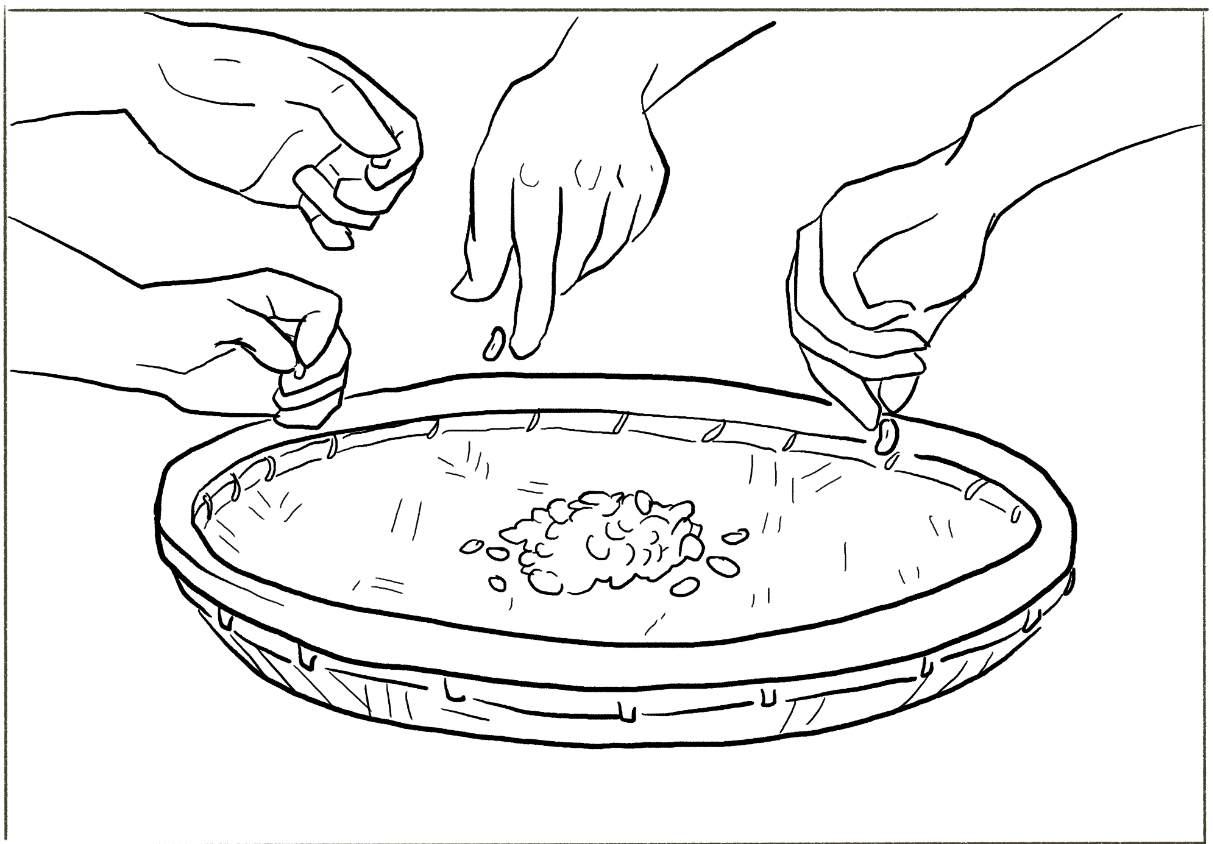
STEP 3: More ways of using vouchers

- MERRY-GO-ROUND USE CASE: The group is invited to trade as if it were a merry-go-round and prompted to discuss what a merry-go-round has looked like for them in the past. The group is recommended to agree on a standard/constant amount they would contribute each time they do a merry-go-round. For example, 1 full day of work/300ksh being put into the central pot or given to the person whose turn it is.

- A merry-go-round using mutually issued vouchers is a rotating savings and credit system within a group of businesses. In this system, each member contributes a predetermined amount of vouchers, which are redeemable for goods and services from other participating businesses. The vouchers are given to one member, who can then use them to purchase goods or services from the rest of the group or sell the vouchers to others.
- The process continues with the next member receiving vouchers from everyone in the group, and so on, until each member has had their turn. Once the cycle is complete, there is a period of credit clearing and sharing before the next cycle begins. This allows the group to settle any outstanding balances and redistribute resources as needed. The merry-go-round system using vouchers promotes trust, collaboration, and resource sharing among participating businesses, helping to strengthen local economies and community ties.

- ROTATING LABOR USE CASE: A traditional rotating labor group of neighbors is a mutual aid system where members take turns helping each other with farm work. The group is invited to trade as if it were a rotating labor group and prompted to discuss what such a group has looked like for them in the past. The practice is explained as a way to work toward their vision - pooling their time and efforts together to rotate their labor for each other. In this practice, the group contributes their vouchers to the next host with an agreed amount just like in the merry-go-round, and the host calls a Mweria and 'pays' the individuals back those vouchers for their goods or services on a particular day when they all get together to work on an activity of the host's choice. The vouchers in this case provide accountability and the ability for the host to use the vouchers differently if one particular person does not attend the Mweria day.
    - In a rotational labor association, the merry-go-round system above can also be used to facilitate labor sharing among members. Each member contributes a predetermined amount of vouchers to a central pot, and on their turn, they call a "Mweria" or work day, where the rest of the group

comes together to help with a group activity, such as repairing a roof or working on a farm. The host member can then pay back the other members in vouchers for their labor on that day. This not only creates a multiplier effect for the labor of the host member but also builds social cohesion among the group and strengthens the community's ability to meet collective needs. The vouchers in this case provide the ability for the host to use the vouchers differently if one particular person does not attend the "Mweria" day.



- Expiration or Demurrage use case: There is a situation where vouchers might be held too long. Since they represent promises against future production and that production will not last forever, it is important that the vouchers expire at some point and are not used as a long term savings mechanism. For this reason a community can choose to have an expiration date or a gradual rate.

When replaying the bean game as a market, stop people every minute and collect a 1 out of five of their vouchers that expire. These are placed back in the basket (community fund) and redistributed to the group at the end of the activity.

Discussion

- Open a discussion around the trades and collective goods and services, and follow that into talking about potential challenges (seasonality, trust, restocking, imported vs local goods)
- Briefly discuss settlement, voucher expiration, chama books and dispute resolution (this will be covered in the next workshop)
  - Chama book
  - Expiration
  - Dispute resolution
  - Restocking
- Trust: Do you trust that if you buy a voucher from someone (in cash or in-kind) that they will redeem it for full value in a timely fashion?
- Sanctions: What happens when someone sells their vouchers but then doesn't redeem them?
- Distance between users: Will it be possible for the group to meet weekly?
- People not knowing where to spend: How can the group make it clear to outsiders where their vouchers can be used? (like: holding events, and putting up signs)
- Holding too many vouchers: How can the group have regular sessions on settlement?
- People changing Voucher market pricing or redemption rates: If a voucher was created to be redeemable for 10 shillings worth of products from the issuing group and people in the group are changing those rates - what should be done?
- Seasonal products
- Voucher Supply: The supply of vouchers in this game was limited to only 10 vouchers per person (representing 10 hours of labor or some other unit of account): What are the advantages and disadvantages of this amount? We generally create vouchers worth one month of the group's capacity to redeem them.
- Redistribution of expired vouchers (demurrage): What should be done with the vouchers in the community fund?

EQUIP

Introduction

In this section the primary focus is on the **tooling used to equip the target groups** in reaching their vision and catalyzing their behavior change toward mutual aid, reciprocity and economic commons. This can primarily be understood as technical and legal services provided by the implementing organization or relevant partner service providers, focused on providing mechanisms for accountability and mediums of exchange. This can generally be considered the part of the program focused on **governance frameworks**, **agreements** and **technology**.

Overview of activity modules

1. Understanding the instruments, agreements and technology (theory/background)
2. Voucher creation, declarations and agreements
3. Digital training on how to use the Sarafu platform

Outcomes

Individuals and groups are equipped with the technical and legal tooling that catalyzes mutual aid behavior, providing them with improved accountability and a means of exchange.

- A clear understanding of the agreements the target group are committing to
- A clear understanding of the technology and how it works by the target group
- A clear understanding of the instruments that are used to support the behavior of mutual aid

Case study Workshop 2: On this day, Nadzua embarks on her motorbike ready for the day's workshop. She begins by recapping the previous workshop, engaging the participants in a discussion to gauge their level of understanding. This allows her to identify areas that require more emphasis and attention.

During workshop 2, Nadzua focuses on training the participants on activities related to workshop 2. This includes teaching them the Visionary Approach Technique, as well as introducing the process of voucher creation and declaration form completion. Members commit goods worth a number of vouchers that they are willing to accept in their business (1-month profit margin).

Additionally, Nadzua guides the attendees through the account creation and registration process, ensuring each individual has an account to which the vouchers will be deployed.

Following the successful completion of workshop 2 training, Nadzua and the group collectively decide on a date for the upcoming 3rd workshop.

In between Workshop 2 & 3: Nadzua collects the completed and signed voucher declaration forms from the group's secretary. She audits the committed products or services from each member. This is done by visiting their businesses and taking photos of what they have signed as their commitments. Once she verifies the information she sends photos of the voucher declaration form to the office for voucher creation of the Upendo group.

WORKSHOP 2: Introduction to visioning process

Establishing a collective vision and action plan for achieving it

Introduction, key terms & key learnings/outcomes for this section
This module will focus on supporting communities in establishing a collective vision that motivates coordination and empowered action. By the end of this module a facilitator should be able to:

- Guide a group to establish and document a vision for their community
- Guide a group to establish an action plan to achieve their vision/goal
- Understand the importance of establishing realistic goals and action plans that relate back to the current reality of the group

Theory/background

Collective vision and values

Creating a common vision is an essential step for any group endeavor, including the establishment of a Community Asset Voucher. A common vision serves as a collective agreement on the group's purpose and future direction. It encapsulates the aspirations of the group, setting the path for the journey ahead.

There are several reasons why a common vision is vital:

- Unified Direction: A common vision ensures that all group members are working towards the same goals. It provides a clear picture of what the group as a whole aims to achieve, preventing confusion and misalignment.
- Motivation and Engagement: A shared vision is a powerful motivator. It fosters a sense of shared purpose and commitment, which can boost group members' engagement and participation.
- Guidance for Decision Making: The vision serves as a compass for decision making. When faced with choices or challenges, the group can refer back to their vision to guide their actions and decisions.
- Conflict Resolution: Having a common vision can help resolve disagreements within the group. Disputes can often be solved by referring back to the shared vision and assessing which course of action best aligns with it.
- Measuring Progress: The vision provides a benchmark against which the group can measure its progress. It helps the group assess whether they're moving in the right direction and achieving their goals.

In the context of a CIC, a common vision might outline the kind of economic, social, and environmental changes the community hopes to achieve through the currency. This vision can then guide the design, implementation, and evolution of the CIC, ensuring it effectively serves the community's needs and aspirations.

Using SMART Goals to define the vision

Creating an action plan is a crucial step towards achieving a common vision. Using the SMART framework to develop action steps ensures that the plan is not only ambitious but also realistic and achievable. Here's why each component of SMART is important:

- Specific: Action steps need to be specific so that everyone knows exactly what needs to be done. Vague or generalized steps can lead to confusion, misinterpretation, or lack of direction.
- Measurable: If an action step is measurable, the group can track progress and determine when the step has been completed. This helps keep motivation high and allows for adjustments to be made if progress is slower than expected.
- Achievable: Action steps need to be achievable. Setting steps that are too ambitious or beyond the group's capacity can lead to frustration, demotivation, and failure. Achievable steps keep the group engaged and create a sense of progress and accomplishment. This ensures that the group doesn't overcommit and can manage its resources effectively to complete each step.
- Relevant: Action steps should be relevant to the vision of the group. Relevant: Does it relate with the bigger picture? If the goal doesn't align with the vision, it's like rowing a boat in circles. Keep it relevant, and the journey becomes a part of the destination.
- Time-Bound: Each action step should have a target date for completion. This creates a sense of urgency, aids in planning, and helps ensure that the group remains on track to achieve its vision.

By setting SMART action steps, the group can create a clear, structured, and realistic pathway towards its common vision. This not only increases the likelihood of achieving the vision but also enhances the group's cohesion and motivation by enabling them to see clear progress towards their shared goals.What are SMART goals?

Structural Tension Chart (current reality, vision and action plan)
Creating SMART action steps is a strategic approach to navigate the structural tension between your group's current reality and the shared vision. These steps provide a roadmap to bridge the gap and bring the shared vision to life. Here is how you can create these steps:

Identify Key Goals: Begin by identifying the key goals that need to be achieved to transition from your current reality to your shared vision. Consider all six assets (social, human/spiritual, political/governance, physical/infrastructure, natural, and financial) and how they contribute to the vision.

Brainstorm Action Steps: For each key goal, brainstorm potential action steps. Remember, these steps should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound (SMART).

Assign Responsibility: Each action step should have an individual or group assigned to it who will be accountable for seeing that step to fruition. This ensures clear responsibility and ownership.

Recognize Mini Visions: Each step in your action plan can be viewed as a smaller vision on the path to your shared vision. Recognizing these 'mini visions' can help maintain motivation and give a sense of progress along the way.

Use Coordinating Tools: Leverage tools and resources that can help coordinate and manage the tasks. A Community Inclusion Currency can be a powerful tool for this purpose. It can help the group be accountable for commitments and resources, ensuring fairness and fluidity in the distribution and exchange of resources.

Develop a Timeline: For each action step, set a realistic deadline. This keeps the group on track and ensures that progress is being made towards the vision. Note that it is rewarding and important to see visually this timeline stretching from the current reality toward the vision. Groups often create a visual representation of this with three manilla paper - one for the current reality (asset mapping), connected to the structural tension chart, which then connects to the vision (both descriptive and drawn).

Regular Review and Adjustments: Monitor the progress regularly and be open to making necessary adjustments. This flexibility allows the group to respond effectively to any challenges or changes that arise along the way.

Remember, while the structural tension between the current reality and the shared vision can feel challenging, it is also a driving force that propels the group towards its vision. With SMART action steps and a committed, accountable team, you can release this tension effectively, bringing your shared vision into existence.

Activities

1. What is a vision and why does it matter? Explain the value of setting a vision as a group.
    a. Creating a shared vision is a process that involves deep introspection, open communication, and collaborative decision-making. Here are some best practices and steps for a group to come up with a shared vision:
    b. Understanding the Importance of a Shared Vision: Begin by explaining the importance and purpose of a shared vision. Ensure that everyone understands that this vision will guide the group's decisions and actions.
    c. Asking "What could you create as a group in 1 year?", allowing for 1 minute solo contemplation, 2 minutes discussing in pairs, 4 minutes discussing in foursomes, 5 minutes discussing as a group
        i. Individual Reflection: Encourage each group member to spend some quiet time reflecting on their personal vision for the group. Ask them to close their eyes and really imagine what achieving the vision looks like. This should consider all six forms of assets - social, human/spiritual, political/governance, physical/infrastructure, natural, and financial.
        ii. Pair or Small Group Discussions: Once individuals have reflected on their own, ask them to pair up or form small groups. In these smaller settings, they can share their individual visions, drawing or using other creative means to express their ideas.
        iii. Combining Visions: After the pair or small group discussions, have these smaller groups come together to share their visions with the larger group. Encourage them to identify common themes, ideas, or goals that emerge from their discussions.
    d. Creating a Draft Vision: Based on the common elements identified, create a draft vision statement. This statement should be concise, clear, and inspiring, encapsulating the collective aspirations of the group.

e. Feedback and Revision: Share the draft vision with the entire group and solicit feedback. Be open to suggestions and ensure that everyone's voice is heard. Revise the vision based on the feedback received.
f. Finalizing the Vision: Once the group is satisfied with the revised vision statement, finalize it. This shared vision should be something that all group members feel connected to and motivated by.
g. Communicating the Vision: Ensure that the vision is communicated clearly and regularly to all group members. It should be a living document that guides the group's actions and decisions.
h. Remember, creating a shared vision is not a one-time activity but a continuous process that may require revisiting and revising as the group evolves and circumstances change. The important thing is that the vision remains a true reflection of the group's collective aspirations and provides a clear direction for their journey.

2. Explaining a SMART goal and prompting thought about a vision that is:
    a. Specific (What exactly are we trying to achieve?)
    b. Measurable (How will we know when we have achieved it?)
    c. Achievable (Is it genuinely possible, and within our capability, to achieve it?)
    d. Relevant (Is it relevant to the vision and the community?)
    e. Time-bound (When do you want to achieve it?)
3. Facilitated alignment, discussion and documentation of the draft group vision statement
4. Review: Current - Reality (Asset Mapping)Action plans
    a. Run through the vision statement
    b. Discuss the current reality, speaking about the 6 assets and where the community might be strong or weak. The facilitator should be able to draw from the first workshop and mention where they see gaps or strengths in the group. The focus is to create a clear picture with the community of what their current reality is, this could include drawing it out or writing it down. Below are some questions to ask when discussing the current reality:
        i. Natural: What natural resources does your community rely on for livelihood, such as land, water, and forests?
        ii. Human/spiritual: What skills and knowledge exist within your community, such as traditional practices, expertise in farming, or artisanal crafts?

iii. Social: What social connections and relationships are present in your community, such as networks of family, friends, or community organizations?
iv. Physical: What physical assets does your community possess, such as buildings, infrastructure, equipment, and financial resources?
v. Political/governance: How do you currently participate in decision-making processes, both within your community and in interactions with external stakeholders?
vi. Economic/financial: What financial resources and economic opportunities are available within your community, such as savings, credit, markets, and employment options?

c. Co-create an action plan with the group for how they will get from their current reality to their vision/SMART goal. We recommend using a Structural Tension Chart to draw up the action plan and including the following voucher creation steps as part of their action plan to keep the group motivated in the CIC training process. In working out the action plan, be sure to clarify who is responsible for what in that plan:
    i. Filling in the voucher declaration forms
    ii. Assigning a group champion
    iii. Auditing community capacity
    iv. Organizing voucher launch event/market
    v. Organizing market days and the market schedule for the year
    vi. Organizing the first Mweria/rotating labor day

WORKSHOP 2 - Vision, action plan, voucher declaration
3-4 hours

Materials:
White Board / Chalkboard / Flipchart
Chalk / Markers
Small White slips of paper
Small Blue slips of paper (could be any color)
Pen / Pencil for each participant
Masking Tape (Or any tape to put something on the wall)

Winnowing basket
Dried beans (at least 25 per participant) or something to represent a unit of account
Something to track time

Recommendations:
It is a good idea for the facilitator to have a good grasp on how to deliver a visioning exercise and a clear understanding of SMART goals and action plans so that the section dealing with that is one that the group really gets into - as that will influence their commitment to their goals and the use of the CAVs toward that goal

Workshop 2 outcomes for community

- A deeper understanding and ownership of the vision for their community, their current reality, and the action plan for taking themselves from where they are to where they want to be
- An understanding of how the vouchers can help them in their action plan, and a clear understanding of the different mechanisms and uses of the vouchers to use for different outcomes
- They have a Sarafu Account

Workshop 2 outcomes for facilitators

- Champion is identified
- Group understands how to complete the voucher declaration form
- There is more specificity in the action plan for the group vision
- Sarafu Accounts are created
- Voucher declaration forms are given to the champion, or another responsible member

WORKSHOP CONTENT

Introductions and icebreaker/prayer [15 mins]

Workshop 1 recap with Q&A

a. Briefly run through what was covered in the first workshop and allow for questions, ensure that the facilitators have engaged with the FAQ:
    i. Group vision
    ii. Mutual aid and Community Asset Vouchers

iii. Local economic commons/current reality (Resource/network mapping)
iv. Vouchers and their use cases (touching on other traditional practices such as Mweria, merry-go-round, etc)

Voucher understanding recap (bean game)

b. Redo the bean game, running through the following:
    i. Basic marketplace trade with vouchers
    ii. Using vouchers for rotating labor (ROLA/Mweria) or risk-pooling (merry-go-round/chama/tontine)
    iii. Demurrage
    iv. High/low balances and keeping track of those in the chama book
    v. The community/group account
c. Remind the group of how the vouchers can be used in different ways toward their goals. Rotating labor/Mweria could be used to help them build a farm, the vouchers that end up in the group account from demurrage could be used to fund a community project, there are so many uses for the vouchers - be sure to help recommend which ways the vouchers can help them in their action plan toward their SMART goals/vision.

Voucher creation and declaration form introduction

d. Introduce the concept of vouchers that are issued by the community and backed by the goods and services of that community
e. Discuss what community commitments would be - focusing on the capacity to deliver on the commitments of goods and services being very important, the participants will be audited to see if they can provide what they say they can - this determines the voucher supply of the full group
f. Introduce the voucher declaration forms and run the group through a case study/story of the completion of those forms, focusing on the following:
    i. A common vision
    ii. A common name (ie. MIYANI)
    iii. An agreed upon unit of account (~10ksh of product = 1 voucher)
    iv. Commitments - it is advised that the commitments equate to 1 month's future production of goods and services, or 1/12th of a year's production - and that ideally everyone commits the same amount so that the vouchers are evenly distributed when issued, e.g. everyone

commits 100 vouchers worth of their goods/services calculated in relation to what they agreed their unit of account to be

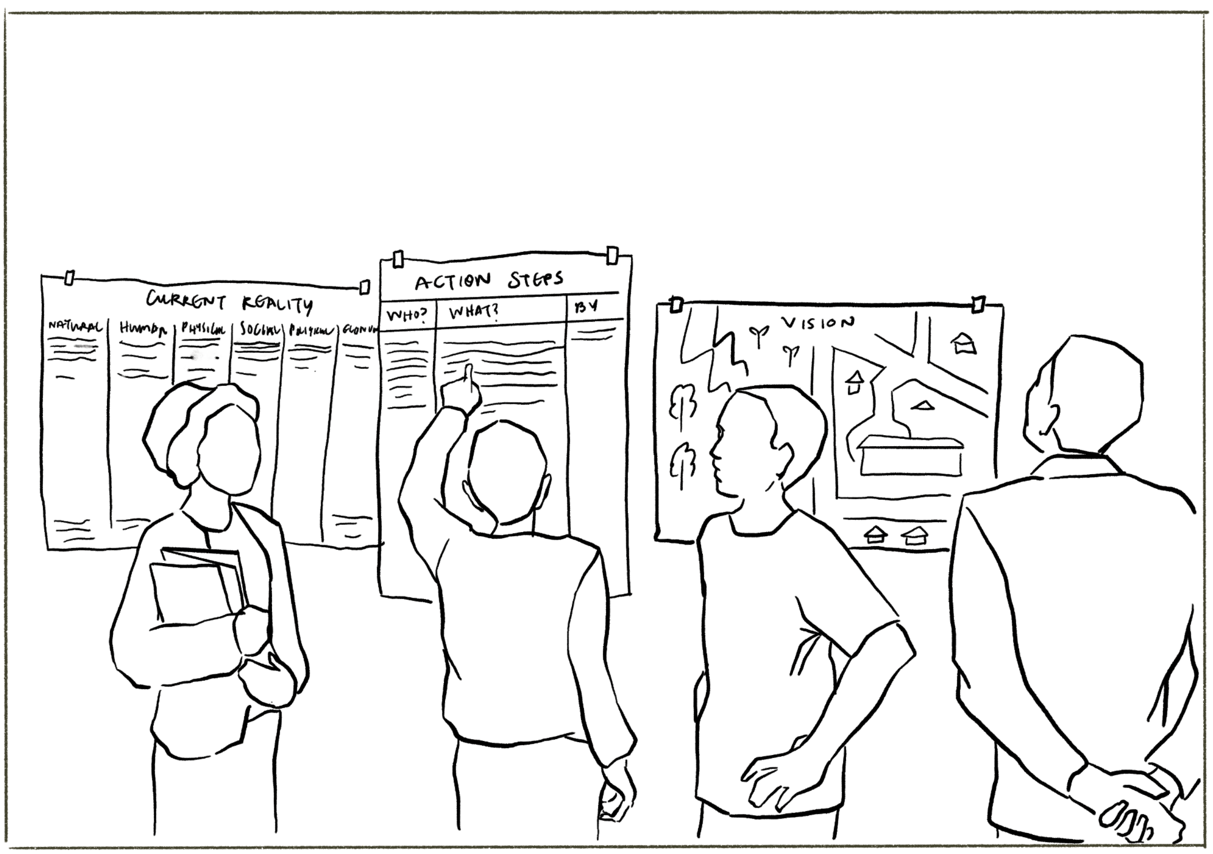
v. Filling out the Voucher Declaration form
vi. Community auditing that they can actually provide what they are committing (vouching, photographs by trusted members, etc)
vii. Sarafu Network account creation and registration (explaining the transparency and security of the digital platform)
viii. Voucher creation/issuance - allocating them to the members once issued
ix. Reminding the group of the benefits of the voucher system in motivating mutual aid and support within the community, and establishing a mechanism for issuing credit to others.
x. Community launch event, introducing the broader community to their offerings

Revisit group vision, current reality and action plan

g. Run through the vision statement and documentation that the group worked on in the first workshop
h. Discuss the current reality, speaking about the 6 assets and where the community might be strong or weak. The facilitator should be able to draw from the first workshop and mention where they see gaps or strengths in the group. The focus is to create a clear picture with the community of what their current reality is, this could include drawing it out or writing it down. Below are some questions to ask when discussing the current reality:
    i. Natural: What natural resources does your community rely on for livelihood, such as land, water, and forests?
    ii. Human/spiritual: What skills and knowledge exist within your community, such as traditional practices, expertise in farming, or artisanal crafts?
    iii. Social: What social connections and relationships are present in your community, such as networks of family, friends, or community organizations?
    iv. Physical: What physical assets does your community possess, such as buildings, infrastructure, equipment, and financial resources?
    v. Political/governance: How do you currently participate in decision-making processes, both within your community and in interactions with external stakeholders?

    vi. Economic/financial: What financial resources and economic opportunities are available within your community, such as savings, credit, markets, and employment options?

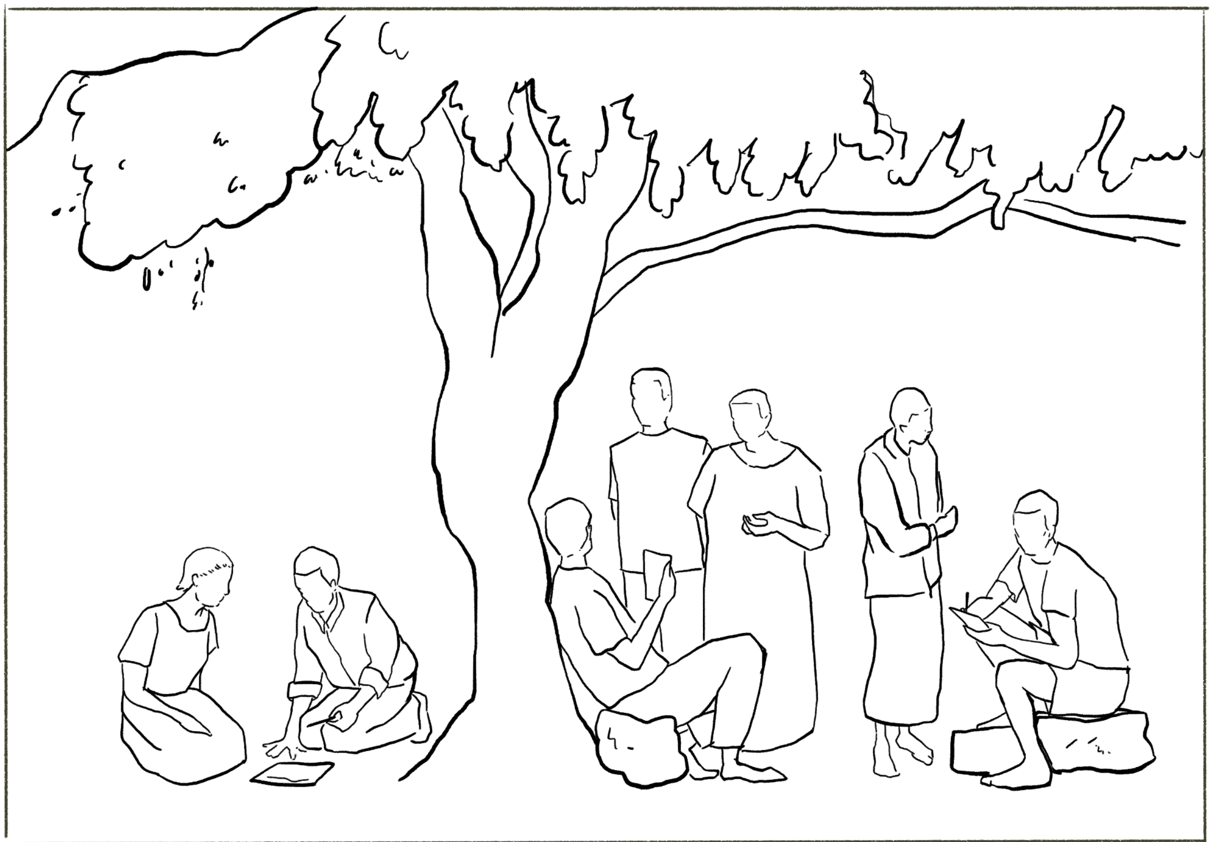
i. Co-create an action plan with the group for how they will get from their current reality to their vision/SMART goal. We recommend using a Structural Tension Chart to draw up the action plan and including the following voucher creation steps as part of their action plan to keep the group motivated in the CIC training process. In working out the action plan, be sure to clarify who is responsible for what in that plan:
    i. Filling in the voucher declaration forms
    ii. Assigning a group champion
    iii. Auditing community capacity
    iv. Organizing voucher launch event/market
    v. Organizing market days and the market schedule for the year
    vi. Organizing the first Mweria/rotating labor day



Introduction to visioning process [1hr]

b. What is a vision and why does it matter? Explain the value of setting a vision as a group.
c. Explaining a SMART goal and prompting thought about a vision that is:
    i. Specific (What exactly are we trying to achieve?)
    ii. Measurable (How will we know when we have achieved it?)
    iii. Achievable (Is it genuinely possible, and within our capability, to achieve it?)
    iv. Relevant (Is it relevant to the community?)
    v. Time-bound (When do you want to achieve it?)
    vi. 1-2-4-all visioning exercise (continuation of SMART goal-setting)
    vii. Asking "What could you create as a group in 2-3 years?", allowing for 1 minute solo contemplation, 2 minutes discussing in pairs, 4 minutes discussing in foursomes, 5 minutes discussing as a group

d. Facilitated alignment, discussion and documentation of the draft group vision statement



9. Recap & plan for the next workshop

a. Recap on the groups understanding of:
    i. Their local economic commons (collective network and resource availability)
    ii. How to use a voucher to trade for something in the group
    iii. Discuss the next visit, ideally within existing group meeting times
    iv. Q&A

Sarafu Network Account creation & registration

j. Show participants how to open an account on the Sarafu.Network, explaining that this account will be their wallet that they receive their vouchers to and that they will be able to use for trade once their vouchers have been issued

k. Run the participants through the agreements that they are signing in joining Sarafu Network and the broader Grassroots Economics Economic Commons
l. Have each member send 100 SRF to Grassroots Economics as payment for their vouchers being issued, they will have received that amount on registering their accounts

Recap and end workshop

m. Briefly review what was covered in the workshop
n. Leave voucher declaration forms with chosen CAV Champion who will ensure it is filled in and the members understand what they need to do fill in their commitments
o. Closing prayer/chosen tradition

Understanding the instruments, agreements and technology

This module will focus on the background of both the legal and technical side of Community Asset Vouchers. This module is entirely theory-based and is for the facilitator to understand the background and structure of CAVs. This module does not necessarily have an activities component but includes important information that a facilitator may need to draw on when asked questions. By the end of this module a facilitator should be able to:

- Understand the legal agreements used within the program that form the governance structure of the economic commons and voucher creation process
- Understand the instruments used in the program
- Understand how the technology being used supports the ecosystem of agreements and instruments

Key terms in this module

- Agreement
- Instruments
- Blockchain

Theory

Agreements

- **Grassroots Economics Commons Agreement:** The Grassroots Economics Commons Agreement is an example Economic Commons which establishes, aims, principals, technologies, instruments (vouchers) as well as roles and responsibilities of members.
- **Voucher Declaration:** An example of an individual or group that wants to create a Voucher within an Economic Commons

The creation of a clear agreement (Economic Commons) among the group defines the rules needed to govern and maintain instruments like vouchers. It is best to think of these agreements as a minimal viable system that can deal with problems and bring about well being for the group.

Instruments

Elements of a Voucher

Unit of Account: How is the voucher's value measured? We may also ask, what are the vouchers denominated in? An airline can issue "miles" and a cell phone company can issue airtime credit. Whether issued as reward credits to incentivize loyalty or as an affordable form of compensation, redeemable as payment for talking on the phone. The unit of account, whether miles or airtime (the service of enabling communication on their network). There is no one correct unit of account but certain properties of these units can make the voucher more or less easy to divide, combine and transfer. For ease of use alongside national currencies, communities often use the national currency as a unit of account. For instance: one Muu Voucher could be redeemable for 10 Kenyan Shillings worth of the group's products.

> Energy provision - such as kilowatt hours - is a wonderful and fundamental unit of account that can be easily and objectively measured. Similarly the provision of a tomato is in many ways also energy provision and is specific to the promise of a particular voucher issuer. Note that rather than having abstract units like time in general - we would specify the amount of energy or type of service delivered over that time period.

When working with a mutually-issued credit the association must choose an agreed upon unit of account. It is best if, whatever the unit (like apples), that some member of the association actually produces apples. Using a unit of account that is foreign to the community like US Dollars or Gold may create an external dependency that can be unhealthy and lead toward gamification or speculation on its value.

Valuation: How many vouchers does it take to redeem as payment for how many Units of Account? Example: One voucher is redeemable as payment for one apple, or one bus ticket is good for one ride on the bus. This basic valuation of the voucher is a legal peg to what it is redeemable as payment for.

National Currency Market Rate: There can be many markets for vouchers. The primary market is the products for which the voucher is redeemable as payment for and the clients or partners of those issuers who are using the vouchers. Another market is the market created by the trade of national currency. The market rate in national currency for the underlying service that the voucher is redeemable for may vary a lot. If one voucher is redeemable for 1 egg and the market price of an egg is 10 shillings and then doubles to 20 shillings, the 1 voucher is still redeemable for only one egg (as per the agreement). This is why many CAV issuers will use the national currency itself as the Unit of account - inorder to avoid exchange rates to that currency.

The issuer or anyone holding a voucher may decide to transfer it (give, sell or spend) the voucher (at discount or with a bonus) as a way to let their partners and clients in on economies of scale and build longer lasting agreements. For instance offering to a client the ability to buy 1100 vouchers for the market price of 1000 kenyan shillings giving a 10% bonus can help the issuer get the resources they need now, rather than selling one at a time.

Name: In a physical voucher there might be a design and writing on it to distinguish it. In the digital realm the name or symbol of a voucher might be the main way people distinguish it (along with a unique code or public address). Each voucher has a name and symbol to distinguish them. It’s important to think about the domain space in case there are duplicate names. There can be a seeds.bogota vs a seeds.kenya each with the same name and different domains.

Issuer: The issuer (such as a community and the clients or partners of those issuers payment. The issuer can be an association or an individual. Clearly identifying who the issuer is, their location and modes of delivery are important as the holder of the voucher holds an obligation to redeem them as payment. Note that the issuer is creating a legally binding contract.

Acceptor: Anyone can voluntarily accept vouchers as payment, but only the issuer is obligated to do so. The more people accepting the voucher as payment the easier it is to transfer or trade that voucher giving it more utility and liquidity. Note that while increased acceptance of a voucher as payment outside the issuers does increase its liquidity it doesn't increase its redemption value as a voucher. When a voucher starts to act as a medium of exchange due to broad acceptance we must remember that its value is still derived from the products it is redeemable for by the issuer. It is dangerous to assume that just because people accept a voucher (or any token or 'currency') that it is fundamentally valuable, as at anypoint a critical mass of people could stop accepting it and liability only holds with the issuer.

Many crypto currencies have no legal obligation for redemption policy in any way. While there is value in their circulation they themselves are not fundamentally valuable as they hold no agreement toward redemption. Building an economy using fiat instruments - without trust and service at their core is unstable and creates negative effects - where the economy is not bound by the world and people we live with.

Expiration: Agreements are living things in some way - as they are promises of living beings. The instruments of agreement like Vouchers also have an end. Things that don't die tend to be unhealthy for the promotion of life. We want to acknowledge that trust and all living systems have some kind of natural decay and when we are creating promises - they too should acknowledge this externality.

While it is common for vouchers or tickets to have strict expiration dates. A transferable voucher with a strict expiration becomes less and less attractive the closer it is to expiration and becomes akin to tossing a hot potato (no one wants to hold it the closer it gets to expiring). Instead a gradual expiration, often called demurrage, can be used. This can be done using a physical Stamp Script or a digital voucher in the CAV case.

Technology

Economic Commons standards on software include:

1. Open Source (CopyLeft) Software: Ensure that you trust the software being used and that even if it is open source now, that improvements and upgrades will remain open source. Note Grassroots Economics only develops software with a AGPL 3.0 license for this reason.
2. Distributed Ledger: We highly recommend developing your own ledger system where members of the community hold nodes that decentralize and secure the ledger. Note that Grassroots Economics is part of the CELO distributed ledger and offers assistance to groups that don't have a technical ledger setup.
3. Interfaces / Wallets: We've built custodial systems that enable users to assign guardians that can help them reset lost passwords.
4. Data Sharing: Given the consent of the community, anonymous transaction data can be recorded and displayed.

Voucher creation, declarations and agreements

This module will focus on the activities needed to support a community in creating the agreements and commitments necessary in order to issue their own vouchers. By the end of this module a facilitator should be able to:

- Guide a group through the voucher declaration forms
- Explain that groups have to have goods and services to back their vouchers

Key terms in this module

- Economic commons:

Theory/background

1. Agreeing into the economic commons (reference previous theory)
2. Voucher declaration form (case study)

In this exercise, the community will explore the levels of commitment of the participants in creating a group voucher. You will be asking people to really think about what they can commit and accept if the community were to adopt a voucher, so these commitments should be “real” in that the participants will be able to actually accept and spend these vouchers if the project goes forward. The participants should see themselves as the voucher issuing group who are responsible to redeem the vouchers and will be starting the circulation of their voucher in the greater community.

At this point, people may be experiencing some level of skepticism about whether this will work, and whether they may not be able to sell or trade their vouchers for good value and end up losing money or products while accepting the vouchers. This is normal. Allow them to express those concerns and then try the exercises. After the exercises, have an open discussion to have them discuss their concerns and see how they can support one another to address the issues that might come up.

Economic Commons:

A voucher is an instrument that does not work in isolation. Think of it like an instrument by itself with no symphony, sheet music, key it is playing in or melody or harmony. An Economic Commons is a minimal viable system in which an instrument can be created and maintained. Think of an Economic Commons agreement as a constitution for your group that helps set clear aims, principals and rules so that instruments (vouchers) are well maintained. The roles in an Economic Commons include voucher users, core service providers and guardians.

- Guardians help with dispute resolution and any changes to the Economic Commons agreement.
- Core Service Providers help with any needed tasks to maintain the Economic Commons and voucher usage.
- General members create and use instruments (vouchers) of the Economic Commons.

Voucher declaration

Once the group has developed their agreement on how to utilize their vouchers, they must clearly define their voucher. Specifying a name, symbol, expiration rate (demurrage) and supply. They must also seek attestation, audit or endorsement from people with authority.

Supply: Each member of the group is asked what product(s) they are willing to redeem vouchers for as payment. Generally, the group will create vouchers worth one month's capacity for redemption. For instance, if one of the members sells eggs, she may commit toward accepting one month's worth of vouchers for her eggs. This can be valued at $20 USD worth of eggs. If each voucher is valued at 10 cents of product then she would create and receive 200 vouchers.

Note that less is more. The voucher supply need not be massive, especially to start with. The frequency in which vouchers change hands is what builds assets, not the amount.

Balancing the Supply: It is preferable to start with the same amount of vouchers for each member. This makes settlement (coming back to balance) much easier. If there is a big difference in the commitment of different members, consider everyone getting the lowest amount or having a rule where the highest is no more than twice the lowest.

Note that the group should have regular meetings where they seek to come back to their initial balance. Those with high balances should find ways to spend or give them while those with low balances should be offering goods and services to those with more.

Specific activities/exercises

1. Reviewing the agreement (Economic Commons Agreement and Voucher Declaration Form)
2. Specifying their voucher
    a. Name, commitments etc
    b. Making a note of the auditing and what it is used for

Voucher creation and declaration form introduction

2. Introduce the concept of vouchers that are issued by the community and backed by the goods and services of that community
3. Discuss what community commitments would be - focusing on the capacity to deliver on the commitments of goods and services being very important, the participants will be audited to see if they can provide what they say they can - this determines the voucher supply of the full group
4. Introduce the voucher declaration forms and run the group through a case study/story of the completion of those forms, focusing on the following:

a. A common vision
b. A common name (ie. MIYANI)
c. An agreed upon unit of account (~10ksh of product = 1 voucher)
d. Commitments - it is advised that the commitments equate to 1 month's future production of goods and services, or 1/12th of a year's production - and that ideally everyone commits the same amount so that the vouchers are evenly distributed when issued, e.g. everyone commits 100 vouchers worth of their goods/services calculated in relation to what they agreed their unit of account to be
e. Filling out the Voucher Declaration form
f. Community auditing that they can actually provide what they are committing (vouching, photographs by trusted members, etc)
g. Sarafu Network account creation and registration (explaining the transparency and security of the digital platform)
h. Voucher creation/issuance - allocating them to the members once issued
i. Reminding the group of the benefits of the voucher system in motivating mutual aid and support within the community, and establishing a mechanism for issuing credit to others.
j. Community launch event, introducing the broader community to their offerings

Digital training on how to use the Sarafu.Network

Introduction, key terms & key learnings/outcomes for this section

This module provides a deeper understanding of the Sarafu Network platform that is currently used to issue, trade, and use Community Asset Vouchers. All fundamental details around the design of the technology can be found in module 1 of the EQUIP phase. This module seeks to only educate the facilitator on the use of the platform that users will use in engaging with CAVs. By the end of this module, a facilitator should be able to:

- Explain how users can set up their own CAV
- Explain how users will interact with their CAV
- Understand the rationale behind the choice of digital solutions for CAVs.
- Appreciate the benefits of copyLeft and open-source software, distributed ledgers, and customizable interfaces.
- Explain the https://Sarafu.Network and its applications.

Key terms in this module

- Economic Commons: Shared resources within a community that are jointly managed and utilized to benefit all members.
- Distributed Ledger: A decentralized database maintained by multiple participants, often used in blockchain.
- Open Source Software: Software with source code that anyone can inspect, modify, and enhance.
- Wallet: An interface to your blockchain account.

Specific activities/exercises

Creating an account: There are many ways to create a Celo blockchain account. In Kenya Sarafu Network offers a free account setup using a custodial wallet via USSD by dialing *384*96#. But many other EVM wallet apps or software could be used such as Valora, Metamask or Kolektivo.

You will have to record a password or private key for your wallet. This is your personal secret and should be recorded somewhere safe. Giving a copy to a trusted person is also recommended in case you lose it.

If users do not have a phone they can create a paper wallet at https://Sarafu.Network which will have their public address they can ask people to send vouchers to and it will also have a private key (QR code) that they can scan on https://Sarafu.Network inorder to access their account, make vouchers and exchange.

Sarafu Network Account creation & registration

5. Show participants how to open an account on the Sarafu.Network, explaining that this account will be their wallet that they receive their vouchers to and that they will be able to use for trade once their vouchers have been issued
6. Run the participants through the agreements that they are signing in joining Sarafu Network and the broader Grassroots Economics Economic Commons
7. Have each member send some vouchers to the trainer
8. Training around the digital aspects of using the vouchers: Wallet, sending and receiving vouchers, switching vouchers, community/group account, PIN resets, user profiles, etc.

The technology for CAVs as instruments of an Economic Commons agreement come from the standards developed in that agreement as well as the capabilities of the core service providers.

Note that before going digital Grassroots Economics would help communities print paper vouchers. Digital solutions were cheaper and offered a lot of advantages such as:
- Transparency: Allowing anyone to see the history and balances of voucher holders
- Accountability: That expiration as well as math could be done automatically without a middleman.

Standards on Economic Commons software include:

1. Open Source (CopyLeft) Software: Ensure that you trust the software being used and that even if it is open source now, that improvements and upgrades will remain open source. Note Grassroots Economics only develops software with a AGPL 3.0 license for this reason.
2. Distributed Ledger: We highly recommend developing your own ledger system where members of the community hold nodes that decentralize and secure the

ledger. Note that Sarafu.Network is part of the CELO distributed ledger and offers assistance to groups that don't have a technical ledger setup.

3. Interfaces / Wallets: We've built custodial systems that enable users to assign guardians that can help them reset lost passwords.
4. Data Sharing: Given the consent of the community, anonymous transaction data can be recorded and displayed.

Best Practices

- Encourage active participation and feedback during activities.
- Use real-world examples to illustrate complex concepts.
- Foster an environment that promotes curiosity and learning.

Resources

1. *Grassroots Economics Foundation: https://www.grassrootseconomics.org/*
2. *Celo: https://celo.org/*
3. *Sarafu Network:* https://Sarafu.Network
4. *Valora, Metamask, Kolectivo: Various wallets that allow interaction with the CELO blockchain.*

→ Interim Activities provided by the implementing organization & partners:

- Groups are supported in completing their voucher declaration forms
- Completed forms are returned to the group chair
- Groups are audited for their capacity to deliver on their voucher declarations commitments
- Voucher declaration forms are returned to the implementing organization/partners responsible for issuing of vouchers
- Vouchers are created and distributed to the issuing group

Case study

In between Workshop 2 & 3: Nadzua collects the completed and signed voucher declaration forms from the group's secretary. She audits the committed products or services from each member. This is done by visiting their businesses and taking photos of what they have signed as their commitments. Once she verifies the information she sends photos of the voucher declaration form to the office for voucher creation of the Upendo group.

Workshop 3: After the successful creation of the Group's vouchers, Nadzua visits the group and conducts a digital training session. During the session, she explains the process of switching between vouchers and guiding them through making their first trade to ensure that they become familiar with the menu.

Planning a launch event: After successfully completing the 3 workshops and receiving their vouchers, Nadzua pays a visit to the Upendo group. Together with the group members, they plan for the voucher launch. The purpose of the launch event is to...

It is an exciting moment for the group, she helps them plan around the launch date, find an appropriate venue, extend invitations to local leaders and organize songs for the event.

On the actual date of the Voucher launch, the Upendo group marches, sings and dances throughout the area spreading awareness about their Upendo vouchers. This captures the attention of people in the market who end up joining the group at the designated venue.

Upon arrival at the venue, local leaders and chama heads present speeches on the highlights and the positive impact of the vouchers on the local economy. The Upendo group members engage the audience with captivating dramas and songs that enlighten the audience on voucher usage. The group offers refreshments to the audience and simultaneously enroll them in the network.

Champions identification: During the workshops, Nadzua identifies a member who was quick to grasp the concept. This individual will take charge of retraining sessions, resetting PINs, assisting those who encounter difficulties while using their phones and promptly reporting any technical issues faced by the group members to Nadzua.

WORKSHOP 3 - digital training

2-3 hours

Recommendations:
If possible to train the champion on the digital skills prior to this workshop, they can assist in helping the other group members with their first trades

Workshop 3 outcomes for community

- A clear understanding of how to use the digital tools of Sarafu Network to access and use their vouchers
- A clear understanding of how to trade
- A deeper understanding and ownership of their vision, currently reality and action plan with clarity on who is responsible for what in that action plan
- An understanding of how the vouchers can help them in their action plan, and a clear understanding of the different mechanisms and uses of the vouchers to use for different outcomes
- How to run a Mweria
- How to run a merry-go-round
- Clarity on the next steps for the group in launching their voucher to the broader community

Workshop 3 outcomes for facilitators

- Digital skills transfer and knowledge that the champion is competent enough to support the group going forward
- Iterations on the vision, current reality and action plan and documentation of the progress of the group

WORKSHOP CONTENT

1. **Introduction/icebreaker & congratulations on their newly issued vouchers**
2. **Recap previous training**

3. **Training around the digital aspects of using the vouchers**
    a. Wallet, sending and receiving vouchers, switching vouchers, community/group account, PIN resets, user profiles, etc.
4. **Facilitating first trades in group**
    a. Being present with the group as they conduct their first trades, trading actual goods and services for vouchers. This is usually done as part of an initial market day, inviting the group members to bring their goods to the workshop to allow them to practice trading (and actually trade)!
5. **Providing 1-on-1 support to the group members as they start to use their vouchers**
    a. Involving the champion in this so they know what to do in the future to support their group around CAVs.
6. **Revisit group vision, reality and plan**
    a. Review the vision, current reality (in relation to 6 assets) and the action plan, noting what they have already achieved on that plan with their voucher issuance
    b. Note what the next steps are in their action plan:
        i. Voucher launch event, introducing the broader community to their group and voucher
        ii. Mweria/rotating labor day
        iii. Mobilizing the community
        iv. Monitoring their progress, etc.
7. **Preparation for their voucher launch event**
    a. Providing marketing material for the group to introduce their vouchers and market days to the broader community.
8. **Recap and end workshop**

Conclusion

Understanding the technology behind CAVs is crucial for their successful implementation. The choice of digital solutions, open-source software, and distributed ledgers enhances transparency, accountability, and inclusivity in local economic commons. The Sarafu

Network, developed by Grassroots Economics Foundation, serves as an effective model for harnessing these technologies for the benefit of communities.

SUPPORT

Ongoing group support

SUPPORT

Introduction

In this section the primary focus is on providing **support** to groups **beyond the initial training** and voucher issuance. This includes **technical and community user support**, and training local leaders to provide that support to their groups. This section also has a big focus on supporting the target groups with **additional capacity building** that will strengthen their local economic commons and capacity for mutual aid, this can also include **provisioning resources** toward particular goals or projects of the groups.

Overview of activity modules

1. Technical support
2. Community support
3. Monitoring and evaluation
4. Additional Capacity building and resource provisioning

Outcomes

- Target groups have a clear channel for user support
- Potential access to additional capacity-building activities and opportunities for learning
- Potential access to relevant resources

Case study: Follow up

Nadzua, supporting multiple groups, efficiently manages her responsibilities by creating a detailed timetable. This helps her to keep track of her groups and ensure that no group is left behind.

Follow-up visits are determined by the meeting dates of each group. Some groups have weekly meetings while others meet twice a month or monthly. Nadzua takes these meeting schedules into account when planning for her visits.

During her visits, Nadzua actively engages with the group members, assisting them in braiding the rope, participating in group activities such as ROLA/Mweria and helping them in resolving any issues that they may have as well as collecting any pending voucher declaration forms.

Nadzua must make sure all her groups are well managed and materials (placards, posters) are distributed and also ensure that all the group members are able to trade by attending their initial market days and traditional/rotational work parties each week. It takes her 2 weeks to handhold a group of young adults and about 3 months to handhold a group with elderly members. During the handholding period, and especially with a group of older people, she trains their children to help with trading after school.

She also allocates time to write her monthly report which includes success stories, testimonials and pictures she picked/ took during her field visits. The report is shared with the rest of the team.

POST-TRAINING SUPPORT

1 - 2 months

- Attending and helping launch event
- Attending some group market days and rotating labor days
- Business development counseling at individual level (or group meetings)
- Champion and Phone support
- Helping groups monitor and plan toward their goals (action steps)
- Working with and Identifying local champions and providing them with additional training to support their group on the use of the CAV technology
- Helping the chama express their Vision (& action steps) and invite support
- Capacity building in the form of training and resource provision (Mweria support)
- Organizing cross-site visits
- Group Business Training Workshop: Vision for own business of each member,
- Cost benefit analysis, Break even point, Stocking / Management of supply and supply chain, Marketing, Financial Management

- Longer term -
    - Organizing cross-site visits - these happen at end cycle events
    - End cycle celebrations (Jubilee) and connections to other groups

Jubilee Programme (end cycle events)

This will be done after every cycle of the Merry Go Round (Mweria)

Activities Prior: Planning/preparation for the day. It involves Identifying the Jubilee location, day and time and general preparations. Invite local gatekeepers and stakeholders and other community members. Depending on the rank of the administration representative invited to the Jubilee,a group should set aside Ksh.500 to Ksh. 2500 or equivalent vouchers for their facilitation.

Actual Sherehe Day;

Step 1: March, sing and dance around the community through to the market and back to the venue.

To show excitement and to celebrate the completion of the first cycle.

Create awareness.

Step 2: Speeches from the local leaders present, chama heads geared towards the benefits of Mweria.

Step 3: Entertainment (songs and dances).

Step 4: Sharing of success stories and testimonials from the chama members.

Voucher uses briefing from one of the chama heads.

Step 5: Voucher share outs from the group’s community fund account.

Step 6: Planning for the next cycle.

Step 7: Refreshments

Each group prepares porridge/tea to share as refreshment for the day.

Technical support

Core service providers need to ensure that the ledger (databse) remains accesible and secure. Also to ensure that people have access to wallets so that they can use their accounts and instruments. Finally maintaining standards on the protocols for the instruments being used so that people can trust them.

Monitoring and evaluation

Introduction
Monitoring of a CIC project should be a continuous process to provide information and learnings that will enable the project team to iterate, make improvements and course corrections during the implementation phase.

CIC Usage Monitoring
The primary objective of the monitoring process is to provide visibility on whether the CIC project is meeting the project objectives and whether there is implementation fidelity (i.e. implementation adheres to the project plans). Key questions that the project team can consider when setting up the monitoring framework should focus on understanding:

- Velocity of transactions. A high frequency of vouchers changing hands between users/vendors signifies increased trade and can potentially indicate an increase in local production.
- Volume of transactions per user and vendors. While high velocity of transactions is desirable, it is important that these transactions are spread across all CAV users and not just concentrated among a few. Therefore, monitoring average utilization will enable the project team to identify dormant users, and unpack whether there are any access or other barriers preventing use of CAVs.
- Transaction activity broken down by demographics. The project team should further unpack voucher use by demographic to see if there are any patterns on utilization, and especially if a particular demographic (gender, age etc.) is less likely to transact using CAV and therefore develop demographic-specific messaging/interventions to promote uptake.
- Transaction activity based on commodities. CAVs are intended to promote local production and disaggregating transactions based on the commodities will highlight whether they are primarily used for locally produced goods or goods imported from other markets.

Market monitoring
The primary goal of monitoring the market is to understand the impact of CAVs on prices and on availability of trace commodities (these can be defined based on goods commonly featured in the participants' minimum expenditure baskets). As such it is important for the project team to monitor price volatility that is caused by use of vouchers to ensure that the CAVs are not causing price distortions in the market. Inflation or other price distortions are of interest not only because of the effect on the ability of CAV users to access the goods and services that they require, but also due to the knock-on effect on non-users which may affect overall productivity in the community.

Additionally, the project should also monitor availability of commodities to understand any supply side constraints and whether the CAVs use is limited to a fraction of all trade so that liquidity and cash flow of traders is not distorted, allowing them to restock and continue availing their goods to the market.

Spending Journals
Spending journals for both CAV users and non-CAV users that detail both CAV usage and national currency usage are a wonderful way to understand the interplay between national currencies and CAVs. If combined with cash transfers the spending journals should show a spike in national currencies pending during a transfer then a subsequent drop when that money leaves the community - as opposed to CAV trade volumes which should rise over time and plateau once they fill the market gaps left by scarce national currency.
Baseline, Inline and Endline Surveys
Surveys (even by phone) can give an understanding of impacts that are not easily measured economically, such as changes to trust in the community.

Evaluation
The CIC project team should plan to conduct an impact evaluation during the life of the project, which should be factored in during the design phase. The objectives of the evaluation should be clear and should be based on consultations with stakeholders and be directly linked to wider policy questions. That is, the evaluation should be decision-focussed and will inform policy and strategic decisions by the implementing organisation, donors or the government.
Illustrative areas of interest for impact evaluations can include, the impact of CAVs on:

- Incomes of CAV users, including any differences by gender
- Trade volumes in the community

- Household and business debt
- Availability of goods and services

For objectivity, an impact evaluation should be conducted by external evaluators, with clearly defined terms of reference and who have a track record of evaluating cash and other in-kind transfer programs.

Additional capacity building & resource provisioning

Capacity Building: When identifying resources that people have to share – gaps in those resources compared to need often arise. Filling these gaps through training and asset development can help the community have a solid framework for voucher redemption. They can invest in developing more income generating activities within the community. For example, they could buy a maize mill, or provide business training to the group members in order to improve their ability to generate income with their latent capacity. This can increase the amount of CAVs that the community can redeem and hence issue.

Supporting groups may want to invest in equipment, value addition or cash injections to increase the assets that the community can use. This can bootstrap development - but can also create dependency.

Grassroots Economics will often use aid support to bring food to ROLAs or Mweria, or supply equipment like a maize mill.

CONNECT

Introduction

In this section the primary focus is on **connecting groups** that have been through CIC implementation and can now be connected to other **groups that have developed a CAV and to broader markets and opportunities**. This could be connecting them to other community or humanitarian programs, providing access to other opportunities for meeting their vision/goal as a group or merely platforming them on marketplaces for trade or investment by third parties.

Overview of activity modules

1. Sharing results and impacts from the groups
2. Platforming community groups on relevant marketplaces
3. Connecting communities to other groups (creating endogenous markets)
4. Directly connecting groups to partners and opportunities

Outcomes

- Access to broader markets and opportunities

Once a CAV has been established and there is evidence of usage, it is often desirable to trade CAVs among other groups, or sell CAVs as a form of production loan.

Case study - Connecting

Nazdua helps connect CIC groups together at events when they finish their cycles. This is done after every cycle of the Merry Go Round to celebrate the milestone achieved by offering mutual support and labor as well as strategizing for the upcoming cycle. She plans with the groups that have finished their cycles in inviting neighbouring groups, households, stakeholders, vendors and local gatekeepers to the celebration.

The groups help in identifying the venue, and prepare dances and songs which serve as both entertainment for the invited attendees and a means to educate them on the benefits of the vouchers and mutual support to the group.
The groups prepare speeches, dramas and success stories to be shared with the audience on the importance of vouchers and rotational labour and also share the vouchers in the community account which marks the end of the cycle.

Nadzua can also seek out additional individuals and organizations willing to support the activities of the group. To facilitate this process, she will prepare a comprehensive group description, accompanied by engaging photos and details of the activities, encouraging people to offer their support.

CONCLUSION

As we conclude this Community Inclusion Currency (CIC) Field Guide, we hope that it has provided a comprehensive overview of the necessary steps and considerations for initiating, implementing, and sustaining a successful CAV in your community. Throughout the guide, we have explored the importance of understanding the local context, engaging relevant stakeholders, screening and engaging appropriate community groups, conducting workshops, and offering long-term support.

We humbly acknowledge that this guide is, and will forever be, a work in progress. One size does not fit all, and we understand that each community has its unique circumstances, needs, and aspirations. As such, we actively encourage you to provide feedback on your experiences, lessons learned, and suggestions for improvement, so that we may continue to refine and enhance this guide for future use.

Your insights, ideas, and innovations are invaluable in our collective journey towards creating inclusive, resilient, and thriving communities through the use of Community Asset Vouchers. As you embark on this exciting and transformative path, remember that you are not alone. We stand with you, ready to learn from and support each other as we work together to build a better, more equitable world.

With this in mind, we empower you to take the knowledge, tools, and resources shared in this guide and make a meaningful difference in your community. Go out and create your Community Inclusion Currency, fostering economic and social empowerment for all. Together, let's shape a future where no one is left behind.

APPENDIX

Economic Commons Template (ECT) v1.3 (en)

Purpose of Economic Commons - Ways & Means

The Purpose of an Economic Commons is to enable resource cooperation for well-being. This is achieved through mutually accepted and defined Instruments sharing surplus value, cost and risk equitably between real people and associations subscriber Members as follows:

1. Producers and Users - creators of economic value and Instrument from shared use of Commons.
2. Steward - active providers of core Commons development and management services
3. Guardians - communication obligations and passive veto rights over Commons use.

Organising Principles

1. **Care for People** – collaboration and vision driven care for oneself and others' well-being and happiness
2. **Care for the Environment** - support environmental protection and regeneration, minimize use of finite resources for economic activity, ecosystem management approach to farming and business development.
3. **Fairness** - fair and secure access to Instruments, land, resources, knowledge & care for members from different backgrounds, age, gender and religion.

4. **Reciprocity** – mutual sharing of risk, cost and surplus
5. **Non-Dominance** - no person or association to have dominant rights over another person or association's resources eg. data, finances, intellect, materials and freedom.
6. **Resilience** - capacity to prepare for, address and adapt to economic, political, climate and other events in order to ensure sustainable community based systems/commons.

Note that principals should be specific with how these Values are incorporated into objective and measurable Principles and Good Practices.

Institutions and Instruments

Ledger

Ledgers are shared digital accounting databases which enumerate and qualify Instruments subject to mutual agreements or organizational rules.

1. **Instruments** - bilateral mutual agreements or contracts between Members.
2. **Registration** - publication of Instruments in machine-readable form executable on the Ledger.
3. **Management** - Core Service Providers manage Ledgers subject to Clearing Agreements
4. **Issuer:** Members individually or in association mutually agree in writing to meet obligations of registered Instruments.

Community Asset Voucher (CAV)

A Community Asset Voucher (CAV) is an instrument used within an Economic Commons to facilitate economic transactions and foster community development. CAV is designed to promote local trade, social cohesion, & sustainable practices. It can be considered both grassroots and circular in nature. As a grassroots instrument, CAV is often initiated and managed by local communities, enabling them to address their specific economic needs and priorities. It also embodies circular principles by incorporating mechanisms such as trade balance, expiration & re-issuance (demurrage), as well as drawing inspiration from indigenous practices of rotational mutual aid. CAVs encourage economic interactions that prioritize community well-being and the equitable distribution of resources while promoting sustainable and regenerative practices

CAV – a promise denominated in a Unit of Account issued to an acceptor (i.e as a gift, in exchange for money or in-kind) and representing an assignable credit obligation of the Issuer to the acceptor or assignee. CAVs have the following properties.:

1. Redemption: Vouchers presented in payment to the Issuer for goods and services supplied *must* be accepted in payment and are therefore redeemable.

2. Digital Representation: digital Vouchers are defined and registered securely and immutably by Members on a public Ledger.
3. Transparency: Instrument specifications are open to the general public while registered transactions are open to Members subject to the Clearing Agreement.
4. Divisibility: Vouchers may be divided by the Issuer to the degree of precision specified when published on the Ledger. So the holder of a single Voucher may assign a fraction to another Member as digitally specified by the Issuer.
5. Name and Symbol and Contract Address: Each Voucher must have a name and symbol specified by the Issuer, and a unique Contract Address (public key).
6. Contact Information: The Voucher must include contact information for the Holder to know how to redeem the Voucher as payment for the Issuer's products. The Issuer must keep this information accurate and up-to date.
7. Unit of Account: Standard unit of measure for value in exchange. Each Voucher issued by a Member should specify a Unit of Account.
    1. Example: 1000 Vouchers can be said to be redeemable by the Issuing Member for 1000 Kenyan Shillings worth of the Issuing Member’s products.
8. Expiration: Vouchers may have a specified expiration date or an expiration rate.
    1. Expiration Rate: For example, a Voucher with an expiration rate of 2% per month would result in a holder having 98 Vouchers at the end of the month, if the holder had 100 Vouchers at the beginning of the month.
    2. Expiration Date: For example a Voucher with an expiration date of one month would result in a holder having 0 usable Vouchers at the end of the month, if the holder had 100 Vouchers at the beginning of the month.
9. Sink Account and Issuance Period: Expired Vouchers will accrue in a specified Ledger account determined by the Issuer after a specified Issuance period. This means that the balance of Vouchers in the Sink Account will increase by the sum of expired Vouchers, after the Issuance Period.

10. Supply: The supply of Vouchers may be increased or destroyed by vote of the Issuers. The supply of Vouchers shall always be based on the Issuer's capacity to redeem them as payment for their products within the specified expiration.
11. Fungibility: Each Voucher is fungible with the vouchers issued under that same contract, meaning that it is interchangeable and mixable with them. An account holding multiple identical Vouchers would display the sum of their quantity as their Voucher Balance minus any expired Vouchers.
12. Bearer Instrument: The Voucher is a “digital bearer instrument”, meaning that anyone holding the access (private) key to the holder's Ledger account is considered the owner of the Voucher or Vouchers in that account. Note that Members may share keys or create accounts that require specific signing rules (like any 2 of 3 to sign).
13. Utility: The Voucher is not marketed or sold by Members as an investment product. It confers no additional rights or benefits beyond the redemption for the Issuer's products.
14. Liability: The Voucher is a credit obligation with joint and several liability of the Issuer. This means that the Issuers are collectively and individually responsible for fulfilling the obligation of the Voucher.
15. Finality: Once published and registered on the Ledger certain Immutable Information cannot change while Mutable Information can be changed by Voucher Contract Manager.
    1. Immutable Information includes:
        1. Name, Symbol
            1. Expiration dates and rates
            2. Re-issuance period
            3. Precision
            4. Contract Address* (public Key)
            5. Unit of Account*
            6. Description*
            7. Issuer Name*
            8. Namespace*= An domain for which to register the Voucher.
            9. Proofs* (media files, hashes or attachments)
            10. Version number*
            11. Image* (optional logo)
            12. Address of Mutable Information (derived)*
            13. Valid from* (date that the contract was published)
            14. Valid until* (date that the information is considered outdated)

2. Mutable Information* includes:
    1. Voucher Contract Manager (public key)
    2. Voucher supply (via minting or burning)
    3. Sink address
    4. Contact information*
    5. Name, phone number, email, location, country
    6. Signers (who attest to the certificate information being connected to the Voucher)
3. (*) Note that all the above information is data stored and registered on a Certificate which is published on the Ledger

16. Voucher Contract Management: The Voucher Contract (Smart contract) registered and published on the Ledger has a Manager that can edit the Mutable Information in the Voucher Contract. The default Manager is the Member that published the contract and who may transfer Management to any Account on the Ledger and also remove themselves as an Manager. Management can be transferred to a Smart Contract that enables different forms of voting etc.

CAV Pool

CAV Pool – a treasury object that can hold digital assets and enables exchange between them. The following are properties of Pools:

1. Qualification: Pools are collections of digital objects with various exchangeability to each other. I.e. CAVs can be made redeemable for the other CAVs within the pool. By adding CAVs to the pool one can automatically receive an equivalent amount of other CAVs available to the Pool contract.

2. Finality: Mutable Information published and registered on the Ledger may be amended by a Certificate Publisher but Immutable Information may not.
    a. Specification: (TBD)
        i. Acceptance: Which Vouchers are allowed in the pool
        ii. Caps: The maximum quantity of each voucher allowed in the pool
        iii. Price Index: Relative prices for the vouchers in the pool
        iv. Pool Fees: A fee can be placed on exchanges and the Manager can assign where these fees go.
3. Pool Management: The Manager of the Pool has permission to edit Mutable Information in the Pool. The default Manager is the Publishing Member who may

assign Management to another Member and also resign as a Manager. A Pool Manager can also be a group operating a multi-signature wallet.

Certificate

Certificate (Bilateral/Unilateral Instrument) – a data object qualified as acceptable by another Member. A Certificate is similar to a University Diploma in which the University makes an attestation (qualification) that a Student has passed their coursework. The following are properties of Certificates:

4. Qualification: Certificates qualify data such as Voucher usage or capacity to perform services. Vouchers as well as Members may be Certified by other Members, for various roles, services, accomplishments and so on. Certification qualifies Members or Instruments. Note in the Voucher Instrument example, Immutable and Mutable data are stored or referenced on a Certificate (denoted by (*))
5. No Obligation: on Issuers to accept their Certificates in exchange for goods & services.
6. Finality: Mutable Information published and registered on the Ledger may be amended by a Certificate Publisher but Immutable Information may not.
7. Certificate Management: the Manager of Certificate (Instrument) Publication and registration on the Ledger has permission to edit Mutable Information in the Certificate. The default Manager is the Publishing Member who may assign Management to another Member and also resign as a Manager.
8. Revocation or Expiration: a Certificate can expire and/or be revoked but the chain of attestation will be preserved on the Ledger.
9. Acceptance or Denial: the Member holding the Private Key to the public address of the Certificate can accept, deny and comment on the validity of the Certificate
10. Finality: Immutable Properties of the Certificate cannot be amended once published and registered on the Ledger,

Governance

Membership

A Member of an Economic Commons is an individual person, organization or an association of Members with a common purpose, who ratify and Implement an Economic Commons it or use implemented Economic Commons Instruments as per their local needs

There are three Member **Classes** defined below, with the following rights and obligations:

General Members

1. Right to utilize all Economic Commons-defined Instruments
2. Right to hold or delegate custodianship of Ledger Accounts and Instruments
3. Right to hold multiple Accounts and Instruments in the Ledger
4. Right to vote on the usage of their issued Instruments in a Community Fund
5. Right to view and inspect all Accounts and Instrument kept on the Ledger
6. Obligation to report Members that don't comply to this Agreement or local laws
7. Obligation to certify Core Service Providers
8. Obligation to register any Instrument or Instrument usage on the Ledger and keep any relevant information up to date.
9. Obligation to contribute in money or in-kind the agreed upon development and operating costs of the Core Services as defined in **Service Agreements** under this Economic Commons Agreement
10. Obligation to hold a means of secure identification (such as a private key) in order to interact with a Ledger
11. Obligation to demonstrate technical and management capabilities and capacity to meet Instrument and other appropriate standards.

Core Service Providers

Provide essential service for the Economic Commons.

1. Technical:

    1. Secure Member account and shared Instrument on registries (herein called the “Ledger”):
    2. Track and report all usage of all Member account and Instruments, securely and immutably
    3. Provide communications interfaces (such as software that allows interaction with the Ledger - herein called Wallets)
    4. Right to Publish Instruments on the Ledger on behalf of Members when given custodian shop of a Members private Key.
    5. Right to receive agreed development and operating costs and an agreed production share in respect of Core Services
    6. Right to use and migrate custodial Member Accounts and Instruments to an appropriate Ledger

7. Obligation to maintain an open source software code base under AGPL3.0 for any Core Services and Agreements
8. Obligation to operate the servers and various micro-service related to Core Services
9. Obligation to hold and secure granted Member data and intellectual property jointly in common
10. Obligation to provide Members access to their Ledger accounts and shared Instruments
11. Obligation to provide a means of a secure identification to Members in order to interact with a Ledger
12. Obligation to all Member accounts, data and shared Instruments are recorded in unique time order in the Ledger
13. Obligation to utilize Ledgers that are secure and resistant to security breaches and loss of data

2. Social:
    1. Support and sharing of knowledge regarding the Agreement's implementations, Instruments as well as Member rights and obligations
    2. Right to make available non-confidential Member and Instrument data to the general public
    3. Right to make available non-confidential Member and Instrument data to the general public
    4. Obligation to provide training and education
    5. Obligation to administer Member service agreements
    6. Obligation to ensure confidential data privacy and public information transparency
    7. Obligation to oversee quality standards
3. Legal:

    1. Right to assign an auditor to assess any Member Instruments
    2. Right to suspend services and remove Wallet access for Non-Performing Members
    3. Right to assign arbitrators for the mediation of disputes
    4. Obligation to provide Due Diligence, audits and arbitration of disputes for Members in relation to usage of Instruments and this Agreement.
    5. Obligation to ensure that Instruments are binding on Members when registered in the Ledger and inline with this Agreement

Guardians

1. Right to develop, design, raise resources and implement an Economic Commons
2. Right of final veto on behalf of Members generally in respect of amendments to an Economic Commons agreement incompatible with the Aim and Principles
3. Obligation to arbitrate in the management of Class Agreements and Admissions as described below
4. Obligation to arbitrate disputes of Members in relation to Aim and Principles
5. Obligations to call annual membership meetings, keep records, call meeting to make decisions that serve the aims and principles of the Economic Commons

Membership Agreements and Admissions

1. Members may participate in more than one Member Class. E.g. A Core Service Provider can also be a General Member and develop a Voucher redeemable for their services
2. Any person or organizations holding a Ledger-account or whom utilizes Instruments is considered a General Member
3. Mutual agreements between Members define standards, rights and obligations
4. **Non-Performance:** should a Member be unable or unwilling to uphold their obligations or honor stated commitments they should immediately Issue a Certificate to attest to the situation and report to any Instrument Publishers and Members holding their Instruments. Such a Member will be designated as Non-Performing subject to the following:
    1. any material shortfall in commitments or obligations by Members individually or collectively shall be made good following review and recommendations by the Service Provider and subject to the agreement of Members generally.
5. **Termination of Membership:** Member's may terminate Membership at any time upon 60 days advance written notice of termination and shall comply with the obligations in effect at the time of termination.
    1. A Non-Performing Member wishing to terminate membership must demonstrate their complete inability to perform obligations to an auditor assigned by the Service Provider.

Jurisdiction

1. An Economic Commons subject to this Agreement transcends jurisdiction and all national and religious law including tax law

2. Data may be mutually shared globally between Members independently of jurisdiction.
3. Members must satisfy themselves that economic activity undertaken pursuant to this agreement is lawful in their jurisdiction

Amendments

1. Amendments to this Agreement require a majority in number of Members.
2. Amendments in conflict with the Aim and Principles are subject to veto by a majority in number of Guardians.
3. All Members enter into this agreement in good faith and hold harmless Members of the Economic Commons.

Entirety & Notices

This agreement represents consent to the entirety of a mutual agreement between Members to the expressed common purpose and no other.

Any notice given by the Members shall be valid only if delivered via the contact information for the Guardians. Notices include any votes to change the content of this agreement.

Official Signatories

In WITNESS WHEREOF, the duly authorized Guardians of the Economic Commons sign this agreement on the dates indicated below, and agree to abide by the terms of this Agreement.

1. Member Class or Witness: (Guardian, General Member, Core Service Provider)
2. Full Name:
3. Contact Information or Service: (e.g. email or phone number)
4. Proof of Identity: (e.g. Passport number and country or other proof)
5. Date of Signing:
6. Place of Signing:
7. Signature or Hash: