

A Methodology for Assessing Gender-based Barriers to a Successful Business

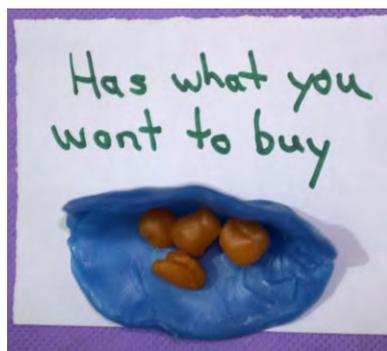
Purpose

Identify barriers to business development and assess differences experienced by women and men.

Description

The methodology involves a sequence of 3 tools -- the *Tree of Means and Ends*, *Rating* and the *Carrousel*. It was developed by Daniel Buckles of SAS² Dialogue, drawing on tools in the Handbook for Participatory Action Research, Planning and Evaluation (Jacques Chevalier and Daniel Buckles, 2015, www.sas2.net).

Step 1



Invite participants to form pairs to develop and perform shorts skits based on a scenario: *“visiting a market together with a view to spotting the successful vendors there.”* After pairs have briefly discussed the scenario amongst themselves, each pair performs their skit while others listen for the signs or indicators of a successful vendor. Ask participants to write key words for these signs on cards, or create small objects to represent them. Stop once a good list of signs or indicators has been developed. Review the cards/objects and place them together in a space (on a table or floor) representing the ideal scenario for a successful business person.

Step 2

Invite participants to imagine themselves as the successful business person represented by the collection of signs or indicators created in step 1. Then ask, *“what would result from this ideal scenario? What would it allow you to do or have?”* Invite someone to stand next to the ideal scenario and respond to the question by completing the phrase: *“My name is [name]. I have a successful [type of] business. Because my business is successful, I can [statement of what it means you can do or have].”* Create a card for this result and cards for 3 or 4 other results offered by other members of the group. Place these above the ideal scenario as the first-level ends achieved as a result of being a successful business person.

Step 3

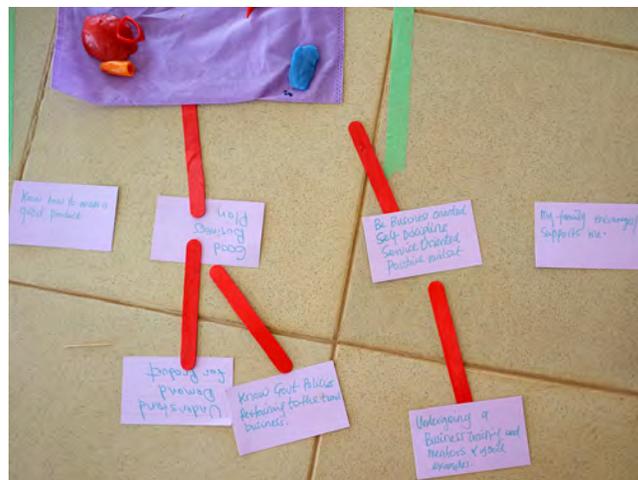
For each first-level end, ask “What is the result or “fruit” of having accomplished this [first-level end].” Write each end on its own card, and organize the new cards in layered rows or as smaller branches and fruit associated with first-level ends. If a new card does not flow directly from a first-level end but rather stands on its own, make a new branch. Continue the exercise, connecting the ends as needed to complete a tree-like canopy of

branches and fruit. Review the result and discuss the extent to which it captures what participants think is their overall vision of a successful business.



Step 4

Go through the same process (Steps 2 to 3) to determine the means needed to achieve the vision. Ask participants, ***“What do we need to do or obtain to become a successful business person.”*** Include all necessary means but leave out any that people think will have undesirable effects. Place these below the tree trunk and arrange them as main and secondary roots to show their interrelationship. Discuss the means and select 5 to 6 that participants feel are important and need further discussion. Make a copy of the selected cards for the next step.



Step 5



Form separate groups for women and men, and give each group a set of the same priority means and a rating scale comprised of three concentric circles. Assign a rating of “very difficult to acquire” to the inner circle, “moderately difficult” to the middle circle and “a little difficult” to the outer circle. As a group, rate each means in terms of how difficult it is to acquire, and place the means-card in the appropriate circle. Alternatively, use a gray-scale for each level of difficulty or assign a value of 1 to 3 where 3 is the most difficult. Take detailed notes on the reasons given for each rating and participant explanations of the overall result.

Step 6

Bring the results from the two groups together and compare to see where the gender differences are strongest, focusing on the means most difficult for women to achieve versus the means most difficult for men to achieve. Remind participants that the goal is not to convince one group or the other that their ratings are correct, but rather to discuss the differences and understand the reasons behind the rating. Take detailed notes on the explanations provided.



Step 7

As a single group, discuss steps individuals and the YouLead project can take to deliberately reduce the degree of difficulty faced for each means. Focus on the means most difficult to achieve, alternating as needed between the means women find most difficult and those the men find most difficult. Formulate any decisions or recommendations from the group as potential lines of action, making sure to note the actions people can act on independently (without outside help) and those that call for

support by YouLead. Time permitting, use the full version of the tool *Carrousel*, to fully develop the actions and first steps.

Observations on the process

The methodology is adapted for small group work among participants with low to moderate literacy skills. It can be completed in about 3 hours, depending on how much detail is needed in step 7 (development of lines of action). When working with larger groups, limit the time and number of examples provided in steps 1 and 2 to just enough for people to imagine the ideal scenario. Then move into small mixed groups (men and women) to develop a list of priority means needed to achieve the ideal scenario, followed by the rating exercise by separate groups of men and women (using a common list of means). The plenary can focus on the means most difficult to achieve for women and for men, and related lines of action.

Plan for careful note taking focused on the explanations people provide for ratings, the reasons for different ratings by men and women, and the proposed lines of action.
