Before the event: Preparing and planning

Preparation for CommsLabs event includes structured planning through the Co-Design Session, Co-Design Agenda Workshop, and co-designed agenda and facilitation plans. Developed floor plans help organize agenda into a visual format, while comprehensive program design and development ensures smooth coordination. We have prepared templates you can download and use for each stage of the planning process.

CommsLabs Co-Design Session

- **Nomination Matrix**: for inviting and tracking participants to session. This worksheet is included in the overall CommsLabs workplan worksheet template
- **Official Invitation Letter:** a template letter for inviting participants to session. The letter can be adapted and expanded upon as needed for designated CommsLabs.
- **Co-Design Session Facilitation Plan**: the template outlines the structure for CommsLabs team to co-plan the detailed agenda, including goals, roles, prep, debrief, and materials.
- **Documentation (in-session)**: a template for capturing in-session notes and team debrief notes for the co-design sessions. The documentation notes will mirror the agenda for designated CL session.
- **Travel Information Survey**: we often use a google template to collect information around attendance and goals, and use Tutanota or Tresorit to collect travel information.

Distributed organic Co-Design Agenda Workshop

Two days of face-to-face or on-site engagement are not equivalent to the same numbers of hours in an online remote environment, because body language and fatigue interact, belong and are received differently. Additionally, all the informal conversation, time spent together at breakfast, lunches/dinners, breaks and other informal moments are irreplaceable and cannot be replicated as they are the ones through which group trust as well as assumptions “check-in” are defused and happening naturally.

Having this in mind and considering the centrality of the Co-design Agenda workshop as the “kernel”, core of the overall Caribbean CommsLab Event, the foundational moment of collective co-creation with the Activists Advisory Board and the local partner at the center, we need to be more creative and design from and for the multiple realities we all, the Coordination team: RAD, Astraea, Equality Fund and APC, Activists Advisory board and Local Partners live and experience.

The distributed organic agenda co-design workshop is centered on activists' ease to engage from the different places and spaces where they live and work, and then progressively consolidates needs/learnings in the online continuum, where we all live and thrive together.

Download Template for Co-Design Agenda Workshop

Co-Design Agenda & Facilitation Plans

A template that contains purpose and outcomes of the co-design sessions; participant prep and checklist items; detailed agenda and facilitation plans and more.

- Download Caribbean Template
- Download Central Asia and South Caucasus Template

Floor Plan

The floor plan allows representing day by day agenda in a visual format. Each day is further divided in slots of time making it possible to view agenda items in color coded manner instead of plain text document.

- Download Caribbean Template
- Download Central Asia and South Caucasus Template

Program Design & Development

- **Full Participant Program:** provides a base template for the CommsLabs program (e.g. goals, agenda, format, etc) to be shared with participants; to date, some CommsLabs teams have experimented with digital only full programs (resource saving and in the event agenda changes).
- **Program at a glance**: this document (a multi-tab workbook) provides CommsLabs design teams - especially the Coordination Team, Facilitators, Trainers, and point folks - with a single place to find up-to-date information about the CommsLabs program, team members (sometimes aka ‘pods’), contact info (note: final product can be in long-form program)

- **Session design templates:** these templates support trainers to design plenary sessions; note that while it may be convenient to have a standalone document for the plenary planning, it may/can be more convenient to use a single template for all the session types (workshops, labs, etc.)
  - Plenary Session design
  - Workshop session design
- **Full program samples:**
  - Colombia
  - Kenya
  - South Africa
  - Dominican Republic
- **Program-at-a-glance samples:**
  - Kenya
  - South Africa

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