User-Centred Community Engagement

Decision-Making Session: Project Manager Guide

This guide is for the project manager who is responsible for running a Decision-Making Session with the UCCE project team.

🕐 Up to 3 hr

👥 Key project staff

In this guide you will find:

💡 Helpful tips or Examples

👥 Team members' roles

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What is a Decision-Making Session?

The Decision-Making Session is an important part of the User-Centred Community Engagement Methodology. It is designed to help field staff decide which of the ideas proposed in Co-Creation Sessions should be implemented. The session will also enable field staff to document their decision-making process in a way that will close the feedback loop with the affected community.

What do we want to achieve in this Decision-Making Session?

To explore ideas proposed by different community members and decide on the implementation plan.

Key questions for the session are:

- *Which ideas are a priority to the community?*
- *Which priority ideas are possible to implement in the current operational context and with the available resources?*
- *What other solutions are possible?*
- *How can we communicate our decisions back to the community?*

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Who facilitates the Decision-Making Session?

Project Manager is responsible for facilitating the Decision-Making Session.

Who takes part in the Decision-Making Session?

Technical staff who participated in the co-creation sessions and/or has the authority to decide what changes can be made

Other programme staff, if relevant

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What to prepare before the session?

- ❏   Blank Ideas Portfolio posters drawn on flip chart paper or a whiteboard/blackboard

- 💡   **The order of the posters is up to you. For example, you can create a poster for each specific area of the program.**

- ❏   Markers

- ❏   Sticky notes

- ❏   Ideas Lists from Co-Creation Sessions with children and adults

- ❏   Snacks and drinks

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How to facilitate the Decision-Making Session?

As a project manager, you already have plenty of experience making and managing programme design decisions. In the following pages you will find a suggested agenda and structure for facilitating a Decision-Making Session as part of the User-Centred Community Engagement approach.

While most activities in the session can be amended and run according to the common practice familiar to you and your team, we suggested that you incorporate **Ideas Portfolio** (**Dossier de Ideas** in the Spanish version**)** into your session.

This activity is designed to support and facilitate a structured decision-making process in situations where a team has to sort through a large number of ideas and prioritise them based on two factors: how important the ideas are to the community and how feasible they are to implement in the project context.

The visual nature of the Ideas Portfolio activity also supports a more collaborative and transparent decision-making process.

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Decision-Making Session Agenda:

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1	Greetings and session introduction	5 min
2	Ideas portfolio	60-120 min
3	Break	10 min
4	Planning for implementation	30 min
5	Session closing	5 min
		2-3 hours

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1. Greetings and session introduction

Purpose: To make sure that all participants understand what the Decision-Making Session is for and what they can expect from participating.

👥 Project Manager

1. Welcome staff to the session

2. Explain the aim of the session

3. Give a brief overview of the agenda

4. Ask if anyone has any immediate questions about the session

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2. Ideas portfolio

Purpose: To prioritise ideas from the Co-Creation Sessions based on popularity among community members and feasibility of implementation in the project context.

💡 **Tip:** See '*Activity: Ideas Portfolio*' annex at the end of this guide for visual instructions on how to run the Ideas Portfolio activity.

👥 Project Manager

1. Introduce the Ideas Portfolio poster to the team

2. Take one Ideas List and read out the first idea from the list.

3. Discuss with the team how easy or difficult this idea would be to implement. Consider materials, staff resources, time and financial resources required to implement the idea.

4. Considering both the number of votes the idea got from the community and how feasible it is to implement, write the idea and the number of votes it received on a sticky note and place it where it fits best on the Ideas Portfolio.

5. Continue the activity until all ideas from the Co-Creation Sessions are added to the Ideas Portfolio poster.

Materials:
- ❏ Ideas Lists from Co-Creation Sessions
- ❏ Ideas Portfolio posters
- ❏ Sticky notes
- ❏ Markers or pens

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Activity Tips

💡 **Similar ideas**

If two or more ideas from Co-Creation Sessions are the same or very similar, 'cluster them' - place them together on the Ideas Portfolio poster.

💡 **Brainstorming alternatives**

If you have several ideas that were very popular but that may be difficult to implement in the way proposed by the community, you can take some time with your team to brainstorm alternative solutions. Consider whether using different material, format, or other resources.

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3. Break

> **Purpose:** Staff get a short break.

Project Manager

1. Invite the staff to take a 10 minute break.

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4. Planning for implementation

Purpose: Team members decide on the next steps to implement selected ideas.

👥 Project Manager

1. Ask the team to look at the Ideas Portfolio poster and explain next steps:

   a. Ideas in *Section (1)* of the Ideas Portfolio are the most popular and most feasible to implement. They should be prioritised for implementation.

   b. Ideas in *Section (3)* of the Ideas Portfolio are less popular but also very feasible. They should be given second priority.

   c. For the remaining sections, prioritise ideas in *Section (2)* over those in *Section (4)*. Discuss with your team what you want to do with these ideas. See *Activity Tips* on p. 9 for suggestions on how to handle these ideas.

   💡 **Tip:** Prioritise ideas *within* each section by the number of votes the idea received from the community.

2. Discuss and agree on staff responsibilities for implementation of ideas with the team.

3. Discuss and agree on the implementation timeline with the team.

   💡 **Tip:** Consider whether you want to test several versions of one solution with the community before implementing it at scale. This can help you design the most suitable solution and further engage the community in the programme design process.
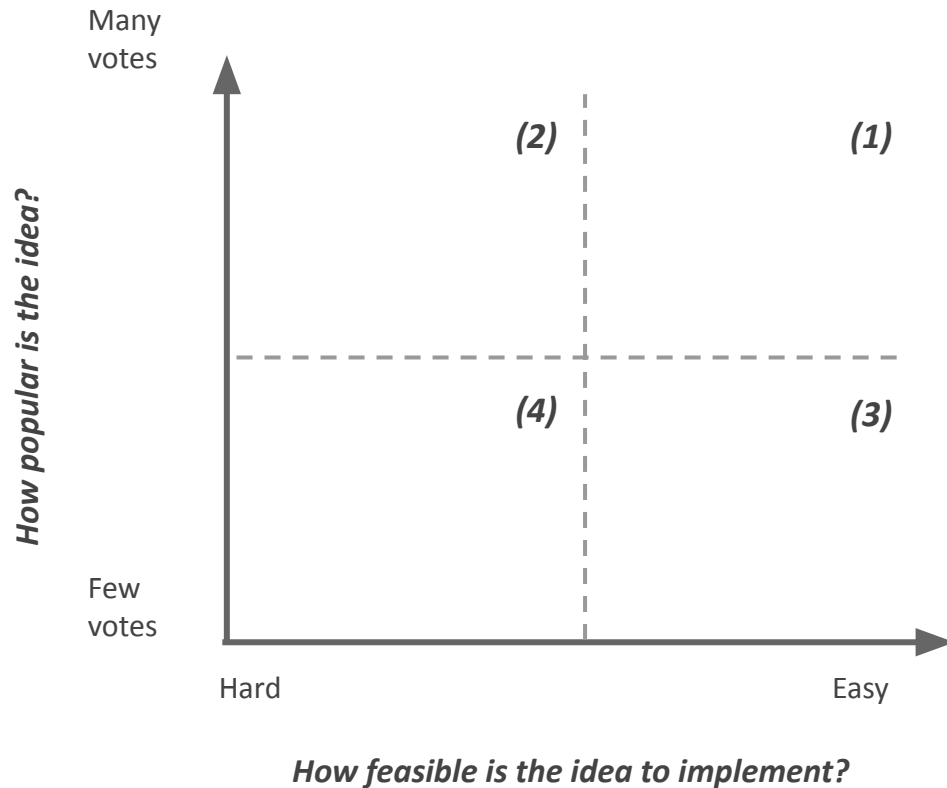
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5. Session closing

👥 Project Manager

1. Tell the group that this is the end of the session.

2. Remind the team of next phases of the UCCE approach: Ideas Implementation, followed by Interactive Digital Survey II and further alterations, if necessary.

3. Discuss with your team the best way to inform the community about how you used their ideas in your decision-making process. This is important to close the feedback loop.

4. Thank the staff for participating.

5. Take photographs of the Ideas Portfolio(s) to keep a digital record.

6. Collect the Ideas Portfolio(s) and store as necessary until the end of the project period.

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Annex 1: Ideas Portfolio Activity

Many
votes

(2)   *(1)*

How popular is the idea?

(4)   *(3)*

Few
votes

Hard   Easy

How feasible is the idea to implement?

Section of the Ideas Portfolio:

(1) - Ideas that are *the most popular and easy* to implement

(2) - Ideas that are the *most popular but difficult* to implement

(3) - Ideas that are *less popular but easy* to implement

(4) - Ideas that are *less popular and difficult* to implement

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