It Takes a Village — Open Source Software Sustainability

Activity 21: Context Mapping for Future Community Engagement

Goals

1. Consider larger landscape for community engagement
2. Anticipate future community engagement needs

### Prerequisites

None

Who Should Participate?

Program leadership (strategic thinkers), Program management (tactical thinkers), Program staff (operational expertise)

Length

90 minutes

Activity Instructions

1. Start with a virtual or physical whiteboard with four quadrants labeled *Social*, *Technological*, *Economics*, and *What Else?* If your group has more than 6-8 participants, you may break into smaller groups through Step 3.

   a. Social factors: these are values and cultural ideals and how they affect the value and necessity of a product or service.

   b. Technological factors: these include changes in technology, technology advancements, technology lifecycles, and how those factors can positively or negatively impact a product or service in the marketplace.

   c. Economics: elements such as budgets, priorities, opportunities, and how they can positively or negatively impact a program's resource sustainability.

   d. What Else: trends that don't fit the above categories.

2. For each element in the map, brainstorm a list of key trends or events within the elements and note what evidence supports these trends.

   a. Social examples: focus on open access

   b. Technology examples: increased efforts in system integrations

   c. Economic examples: reduced travel budgets

3. If you broke into smaller groups, come back together and report back to the group on those trends that were the most interesting, the most meaningful, those that sparked the most discussion, etc.

4. As a group, discuss the following questions. The table below can be filled in to help organize the map. Sample trends and action items are provided in the table.

   a. What are the core trends in each quadrant?

   b. Will the trend have a positive or negative effect on our program?

   c. What are action steps we could take to mitigate or take advantage of the trend?

   d. What is the priority of each action step?
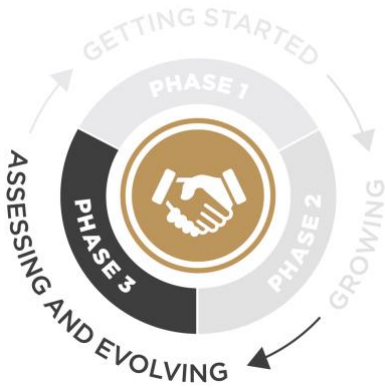
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Phase III: Assessing and Evolving Community Engagement

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Sample Context Map Action Plan (examples in *blue italics*)

Quadrant	Trend	Positive | Negative | N/A	Action Steps	Priority (1-10) 1 is highest
Social	*Funder focus on open access*	*Positive*	*Highlight this aspect of our work in funding requests*	*5*
Economic	*Reduced travel budgets*	*Negative*	*Increase online or asynchronous activities*	*3*
…				

Next Steps

Consider how you want to use this information in future efforts and in Community Engagement Activity 22*: Review and Expand Infrastructure.*