

Activity 0.06 Active Citizens Learning Journey – The River (The Arts)

Module: Introduction Module

Duration: 90 Minutes

Social Development Themes: Arts

Summary:

Once the group has been introduced to the learning journey and the river metaphor, this approach could help them to start thinking of creative ways of exploring what the programme means to them and alternative ways of presenting their thoughts and ideas back to the group.

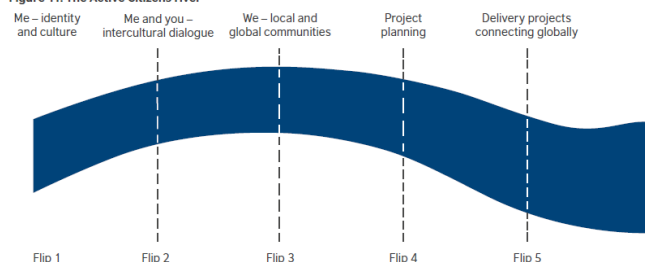
Learning Outcomes:

Understand Active Citizens

Preparations and Materials:

1. Flip chart river: place five separate flip charts horizontally in a row (see the following diagram).
2. Now draw the outline of a river across all five flip charts.
3. In the top corner of each flip chart write the module heading. So, on flip 1 write, 'Me – Identity and Culture', on flip 2 write 'Me and You – Dialogue', on flip 3 'We – Active Citizenship', flip 4 'Project Planning' and flip 5 'Delivering Community Project'.
4. Paper boats: fold paper into a triangle and fold a rectangle at the bottom so they can stand up. Place boats on river.
5. Art materials – magazines, newspapers, glue, stickers, paint, paintbrushes.

Figure 11: The Active Citizens river



Approach:

Place flipcharts on the wall that represent each module of the learning journey (and each stage of the river), then place resources/art materials in the middle of the room. This could include glue, paint, newspaper, magazines, as well as items you might have gathered from outside, such as leaves and sticks.

Give the participants 15 minutes to individually use the materials creatively to add to what's written on the flipcharts. They will visually represent what each module means to them and how they can collectively contribute to the overall vision.

At the end of the 15 minutes, the group will have four collages – one on each wall.

Tell the group they have a challenge: 10 minutes to create a group image of a canoe, using their bodies. Everyone should be included in the group image.

There are only two rules: the canoe needs to be able to move; and there should be some kind of song/rhythm that accompanies the movement of the canoe, as it navigates its way down the river. Remind the group that one of the key challenges is that they will need to work together in a calm and inclusive way, in order to complete this task.

Once the canoe has been built and the song is ready, the whole group is going to move as one, imagining that they are 'sailing' down the river, stopping at each collage on the way. At each one, participants should pretend to dock on the riverbank, get out of the canoe and spend a few minutes at each module.

After they have looked at the collage and discussed it, they should get back in the canoe and move down the river until they reach the end of their trip.

Debrief:

This is a group activity that introduces creativity and movement. It's important that facilitators encourage the group to be creative and remind them that this exercise, like all in the toolkit, isn't about getting things right or wrong; it's about using the resources available to add some depth to the exploration of the AC learning journey.

Facilitators could ask the group:

- Was it different using art materials to explore the modules rather than just words on post-it notes?
- How easy was it to make the canoe together as a group? Did it tell us anything about the challenges and opportunities of working together as groups in this community? Did it tell us anything about leadership, communication, teamwork? What might we need to do differently over the course of the training when we're working together as a group?

Facilitators could introduce the idea of making images using their bodies, by splitting the group into smaller groups and giving them all a minute to create a different image – car, taxi, plane, tuk tuk etc. This gives them an opportunity to 'make' something in small groups before attempting the whole 'group boat'.