Actor-Based Change Framework Facilitator's Checklist

Intro

The Actor-Based Change Framework (ABC) is a participatory approach that was developed and published in 2018.[1] It is an invaluable aid to developing a meaningful, evidence- and PEA-informed Useful Theory of Change.[2]

ABC weaves together systems-thinking, complexity science, and behaviour change theory to help you map out the informal systems that give rise to the problem that your programme is aiming to address. While often a Cold Hose over programme plans, ABC ensures that you have actively understood the terrain within which your programme will operate and therefore accurately plot your hypothesis for change. It then becomes a powerful monitoring and evaluation tool that aids swift programme adaptation.

ABC is best learned in a workshop, and as such this form can be used to identify your team's need to inform design of it. bear in mind the more options you opt into, the longer the session will need to be. There is a separate section for your team to understand what to provide the trainer with ahead of time.

Learning goals:

1. Participants will be able to produce an ABC map;
2. Participants will be able to use the ABC map to identify levers and blockers in the system;
3. Participants will be able to use the ABC map to build a Useful Theory of Change;
4. Participants will understand the symbiotic relationship between ABC maps and UToCs and how to adapt them over time;
5. Participants will be able to facilitate an ABC session [optional add-in as a Trainer of Trainers workshop].

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[1] Koleros, A., *The Actor-Based Change Framework: A Pragmatic Approach to Developing Programme Theory for Interventions in Complex Systems*, American Journal of Evaluation, 2018
[2] Mayne, J., *Useful Theories of Change*, Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation, 2015

Workshop Design Checklist

This checklist helps facilitators ensure they have everything they need prior to delivering ABC. This is a useful guide while getting used to developing ABC frameworks. These aren't in any specific order, but a general gradation of what tends to be helpful.

Action	Rationale and tips	Done
Understand trainee needs	Understanding your trainees needs first is crucial. Make sure that ABC is what they really need! It may be that they in fact need a different technique, or may not have enough information to hand to be able to complete ABC.	☐
Send needs checklist	This checklist helps you structure the workshop to their level and needs.	☐
Tweak slides	Adjust the base slides to cater to components requested, as well as specific audience.	☐
Assign date and medium	Set the date and medium. If doing remotely, use the custom-built remote ABC tools.	
Identify programmes to use	Work with the participant lead to identify a programme(s) to use as a focal point of the workshop.	☐
Set agenda for workshop	Set the agenda according to the checklist. Allow more time than you think you need – no one is ever mad if you let them go early.	☐
Set pre-work (PCC or elevator pitch)	Pre-work is always helpful. Decide whether PCC or the elevator pitch exercise is more helpful. PCC helps you shorten the workshop by getting the participants to do the first stage without you. This is a risk if they are less familiar with PDIA approaches or formulating a good problem statement. Problem formulation is also a helpful stage for bonding a disparate group who don't work together in a unified manner much (e.g. frontline services, police, judiciary in a room). Elevator pitch is helpful when you have more time and need a steer on how the participants may see a problem, but adds more time onto the workshop.	☐
Read background documents	Background is important, but not too much! Ensure to read enough to get an idea of the programme but not too much. The participants are the experts in the room. Too much background prevents you from being a neutral Socrates stirring them to ideas. Too little prevents you from being able to ask helpful questions. Keep the balance.	☐
Create information pack	Create an information pack for the participants according to their needs. At base include your slides and any ABC guidance such as the 2018 paper, as well as the 2015 John Mayne and Susan Michie papers. If doing ToT include the Being Socrates guidance and anything relevant to your training.	☐
Assign groups	Set people to groups, ideally no more than 2 groups of 7-9 unless you have a lot of experienced facilitators. Keep your groups uneven as generally this helps if there are disagreements.	☐