Minga
Toolkit
for artisan
communities in crisis

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This toolkit was made as result of the thesis project
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Supporting Colombian artisan communities

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Why Minga

MINGA is the result of a process in which a product service designer came together with the artisan world, to realize that the *focus design is providing to artisans should go beyond* the creation of new products.

It is interesting to see how the way designers look at the world can change according to the direction they give to their own discipline. When working as a product designer, my goal was mainly to help artisans to create new products, to co-create with them, so they could make more sales. However, by doing this with every artisan of the same town, the competition between them was getting worst, everyone wanted the best designs, and was afraid to be plagiarized by the others. It was not until I changed my perception, that I realized how as designers we can also help in different ways. At this point, and by talking with artisans from other regions of Colombia and Italy, I found some common features most artisans share, and I realized that there could be some tools that could be used by different communities around the world. From here, I got the inspiration to help artisan communities through MINGA.

What it is

MINGA *is a set of tools to be used by artisan communities.* It is focused on their main internal issues:
lack of identity
lack of defined purpose
lack of trust
lack of monitoring

There are a total of 13 tools divided into 4 phases: **Identity, Purpose, Trust and Rules**.

The toolkit was designed to be filled physically during 4 sessions together with the participants, however, remote options can be implemented as well. It better if each session is done on different days, so participants can have a fresh start each time.

It is advised to follow the whole process when is the first time of implementation in a community, however, it's also possible to repeat some phases, or the whole process, after some time, if any of the conditions change.

Objective of each phase

Each phase plays an important role inside of the toolkit's final objective, and each tool works in agreement with these roles.

The first phase, Identity, is about giving to the community an inner look, alook into their territory, understanding how all members are connected and who is the person, or the people, who are trying harder to make these connections real.

The second phase, Purpose, is about giving a direction and a purpose to the community, to understand where they are headed and what are the main goals and the benefits they get.

The third phase, Trust, looks for the creation of trust between members, through the definition of clear communication moments, of support networks, and the recognition of members' skills.

The fourth phase, Rules, guides members to the creation of rules that can benefit the whole community and that are created and chose by everyone in the community, creating a deeper sense of compromise and engagement.

For whom

MINGA is a set of tools to be used by *artisan communities in crisis*. When we use the word crisis, we refer to communities that might:

1. Not be aware of being a community
2. Not have clear how to make the community work together
3. Not have clear goals, or not have achieved the ones they had
4. Be unsure of how to keep the community working going
5. Be having many conflicts and differences

It does not mean that communities that are successfully working together should not use it, in fact it is perfect if communities want to be sure of their direction, as well as the decisions and agreements they have. The main difference is that while in the *first case communities would use it as a corrective plan, in the second case it would be useful more as a preventive plan.*

How to use the toolkit

As explained before, the toolkit is formed of four phases (Identity, Purpose, Trust and Rules), each one made of two, three or four tools.

The ideal is to develop the sessions in presence, with the support of a facilitator. First, because is easier to be focused and to make bonds physically present, and second because not all the communities have the possibility to easily work online (both for lack of resources as computers and internet, or because they don't have the required knowledge for doing it). Even though big groups (more than 10) could be divided when filling some of the templates, *when it comes to the main purpose, roles and rules, they have to be together*, so that they can all agree on them.

All the tools come in printed version or can be downloaded and printed by the users. The tools that might require the use of cards will include the cards into the template, so that they can be printed together and cut from it.

The order of the tools is important; therefore, each tool will graphically show its progression line inside of the whole process. The more precise the path is followed, the better the results will be.

How are tools done

Each tool is composed by an explanatory section and its corresponding template. The first section is addressed to the facilitator, and helps to understand better the aim of the tool and how to use it. This section contains the next information:

Why: Reasons why the tool is important in the process, and where the tool comes from

Inspiring questions: a list of questions that can help members to fill the template

Recommended time: Advised time to fill the template. Even though sometimes it might take longer, is recommended to follow the times, so members do not get tired during the sessions.

Needed: Materials needed from previous tools, or extra materials to fill the templates

What: Specific steps to follow for each tool

Output: What should be done and what tangibles should they have when the tool is finished.

The templates come with different activities to be filled alone or in group. Some of these activities are cards to fill, matrix, tables, maps...

Glossary

Toolkit:

As the word says a toolkit is a set of tools. Usually these tools have a clear objective of use, and you will know from the start what you can achieve with them. Even though tools are meant to be used directly by the person in need, some of them might require support from someone else.

Community manager:

This is the person who manages the community. However, this person might have different roles according to the type of community that is in charge of managing. In the case of artisan communities who use this toolkit, this person(s), will have the important role of making sure the decisions taken are carried on. In general, a community manager must make sure that the community respects the agreements made by all, that there is interaction between members, and that everyone is getting the benefits they expect. This person must have the skills to listen, to help and to interpret issues, to transform them into content and support for the community.

Waleker:

for the Wayuu community, in Colombia, Waleker means spider. According to their tradition, the spider was the one who taught women how to knit, a long time ago, and

for this reason they have big respect for it. Is for that reason that Waleker is the name given to the community weaver, the person who knits the network of members in the community. Given the important role of Waleker, this person could also be the community manager, however, this is something each community will have to decide together.

Purpose:

The purpose of a community is the main reason why it exists. It must have inside of it the benefits that members want to receive from the community, and the changes they want to generate (the goals). Having this clear is an important step for every community, in order to move to the right direction and understand what kind of people should join and what kind should not.

Roles:

When talking about roles we are talking about the position each participant has inside of the community, and what are the main activities to be done according to this position. Roles are important so that everyone knows their tasks and what is expected from them. Examples of roles could be: member in charge of communications, member in charge of sales, member in charge of getting resources, member in charge of workshops...

Facilitator:

The role of facilitator is extremely important for the right development of the toolkit, without it, tools might be used in the wrong way and results might be incomplete. The facilitator can be just one person, or more than one. This

person will have to be trained on the toolkit, so he/she will understand how the tools work and what should be the outcome of the process. It will be up to the community to decide if they prefer to have an external facilitator, or an internal one who, of course, should do some previous training. This decision will depend mostly on how used communities are to receive strangers and to trust them, but also on the social and environmental conditions, since some regions in Colombia are not easily reached by external people.

Resources:

When talking about resources we mean the supplies the community can access to. In this case, since we are talking about artisan communities, the resources will be mainly natural and regenerative ones, and focused on production.

However, there might be also different kind of resources that might be useful for the community, these could be spaces where they can have meetings (squares, parks, meeting rooms...), or services that could help them to work better together (newsletter, radio station, TV station...).

Guardian angel:

The guardian angel is the person who will take care of you. As explained in the respective tool, is the person you can ask any favor to, the one you will support you no matter what. Someone could be the guardian angel of many members, and you could be the guardian angel of your guardian angel, the important thing is that the guardian angel must be someone with the willingness to take care and support others.

Advices for the facilitator:

1. Make sure not to throw away any output, since they might be useful for the development of the next tools, or for some phases later.

2. The instructions are not mandatory but are highly recommended for the right development of the tools. However, each community can customize both the tools and the instructions in the way that works better for them.

3. Even though tools can be customized, is strongly recommended to follow the suggested order, since each step is important for the success of the next one.

4. It is also advised not to explain all the tools at the beginning of each session but explain them while they are being done. This is important so that participants are not biased thinking about next steps of the session but are focused one the tools they are filling.

5. Also for the reason explained before is important that the templates can be read and filled by the whole community, but that the booklet is kept by the facilitator, so that he/she is the only person who knows what will come next.

6. It is advised to do each phase in a one-day session, so that participants are fresh to start a new phase.

7. As soon as you get the names of the community weaver(s), require their help to organize the sessions and the members, it will be helpful both for your work and to reinforce the role that person will have.

8. Not everyone will have the knowledge or the will to write down their thoughts, so it is possible that there will be the need to write it down for them. This can be done with the support of younger participants, even the kids from the community would like to get involved in the process!

9. Also for the reason mentioned before, is important that no one stays out of the conversation. Make sure everyone gets to see what is being written on the tools (by writing them in bigger papers or boards), and that everyone has the opportunity to talk.

Phase 1

Identity

TIP
for the facilitator

The goal of this first phase is to *break the ice between the community members* and to show them how at the end, they all share stories and spaces. Giving members a reason to start chatting, and forcing them to tell positive stories about the others, creates a better environment, and increases trust.

By showing the positive connections between members they will understand *who is the trusted person in the community*. This person is what we call the Community Weaver, the one who is weaving the net of connections in the community. There might be many Community Weavers, there might be a few, it all depends on each specific context, but if you have a Weaver, save him or her, because their role will be crucial for your community in the future.

1.1
Look at our territory

Why: This tool took inspiration from three participatory methods from the MEAS project (www.meas.illinois.edu), called Social Map, Resource Map and Venn Diagram (Ferguson & Heinz, 2014). The tools are useful to boost conversation at the beginning of the sessions, but most important, to have a vision of the context from the point of view of the participants. Understanding the territory and how we are all related to it, is the first step to understand our community and ourselves. The objects we create as artisans come from these resources, from these people and from the previous history of this region and is for this reason that recognizing them should be a priority.

Inspiring questions:
- How well do we know this territory?
- How much can we tell about it?
- Where will be our community inside of this territory?
- How could we help it?

Time: 30 minutes

Needed:
☐ **Look at our territory** template
☐ **Places' cards** cut already
☐ Markers

Steps:

1. All the group must be organized around the template, and one person will hold the marker. This person will be in charge of drawing first, even though the task can be carried out by someone else later.

2. The first member will start drawing the map of the town, just how he/she remembers it. It does not matter if the map is not 100% realistic, but it matters that everyone understands what they are drawing. It is also important that the map is as big as the whole paper, since many places will be added in the next steps.

3. If someone else thinks there is something to fix, they can do it, however, as we mentioned before, fidelity at this step is not necessary.

4. When they all agree on this first shape of the map, they will take the cards of places and start placing them according to their location in the outlined map they just made.

5. During this step is not necessary to be highly precise but it is important that members think about all the spaces that are reference points for them in the territory.

6. Now, the group can identify the main resources they have in the region (wood, leather, lianas, wool, stone...) and check them from the list in the template, or adding the ones that are not listed.

7. When all the places are identified and the resources checked, members can have a reflection on what are the places that could be useful for community meetings (e.g. the main square, the town hall, the main park) or the institutions useful for community communications (e.g. the radio station, the newspaper), but also the resources they could use for their products, and that they should help preserving (e.g. wood, fique..).

Final output: Map of the territory with important spaces draw by the members of the community

Template:
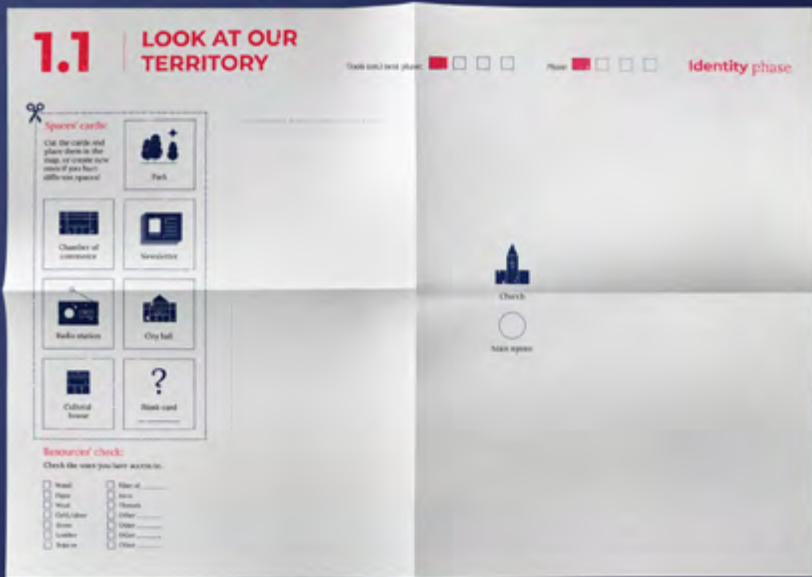
1.2

Tell a story about us

Why: It is common for people in small towns to know each other for a long time, and to have many shared stories with other inhabitants. Telling positive stories about others is usually easier than telling positive stories about ourselves, and it increases the empathy and trust between them. This tool aims to the increase of empathy and trust between members through short stories about each other.

Inspiring questions:
- Who from the community has helped me during moments of distress?
- Which nice action do I remember from someone that was unexpected at that time?
- Who has continuously supported me?

Time: 30 minutes

Needed:
- ☐ Map of the territory with most important places already identified
- ☐ **House cards** or post-its (one for each participant of the session)
- ☐ Markers

Steps: 1. This tool must be used after the "Look at our territory" tool has been fully done. It means when the group has the map of their territory done and the most important places identified.

2. Each participant must have a House card, and one by one, they will start placing their house in the map. It does not matter either if they are not completely precise on the position, but it is important that everybody participates. Even though in most cases artisans' house and their workshops are in the same place, when they are not, they can choose which one to show.

3. Every time someone adds a card to the map, they will have to tell a positive story related to someone in the community. It can be a close friend of them, or someone who helped them in one specific occasion. Is better if they try not to mention family, even if it is easier to have stories related with them.

   PS. *Check the possible starting sentences from the template to have more inspiration*

4. At the end of this step, all participants must have placed their houses and have identified that person who they share a positive story with.

Final output: Map(s) of the territory with participants' houses identified.

Template:

1.3 Waleker, the Community Weaver

Why: The tool was inspired by the Venn Diagram (Ferguson & Heinz, 2014) from the MEAS project we mentioned before, and the Network analysis. The goal of the latter one is to understand how individuals interact and create societies (Borgatti, Mehra, Brass & Labianca, 2009), and is useful in different fields, from urbanism to corporate profitability. The main input taken from the tool was the use of a graph to communicate how are the relations and interactions of individuals from the community. In this case, besides from having a visual image of how the community interacts, the tool is also useful to identify the member of the community who has more positive interactions, and on who members rely the most. When the facilitator of the session is not a community member, it can be harder for him/her to understand each member's skills. Following this process with all the members might be a good strategy to find the referent person who could have the main supportive role for the community.

Waleker, spider in Wayuu language (Artesanías de Colombia, n.d.) is that person who is open to help

others, to support even if he/she will not receive anything in exchange. In fact, is the person who weaves the net of the community. This person will have a supportive role for the facilitator during the session, providing further insights about the community and its context. Moreover, he/she will have a more important role after the sessions is over, when the community will have to keep the agreements and rules they decided together. Waleker, the community weaver could be person in charge to maintain the promises and to help the community to stay united, even after the workshops are over (Community manager's role).

Inspiring questions:
- Who is the person who got more positive stories from the group?
- What would the other members think about having this person as their support referent?
- How does this person feel about being the community weaver?

Time: 30 minutes

Needed:
- ☐ Previous map with members' houses identified
- ☐ Markers

Steps:

1. Taking the previous map with the houses already placed, each participant will start connecting their house with the house of the person they told their story about. They can all do it at the same time or taking turns to make it more organized.

2. When they all finish making the connections, they will go far and analyze together the map. *Is there someone who got more lines that the others? Is more than one person?*

3. This person(s) will have the role of Waleker, the Community Weaver, an important role inside of the community, and for this reason it will be important that they and the other participants agree on this person taking the role. If there are many people with positive connections, there can be more than one Community Weaver, the important thing is that they are the right ones for the role and they are willing to accept it.

Final output:

Map with members' connections
People with Waleker's role must have been defined.

Template:
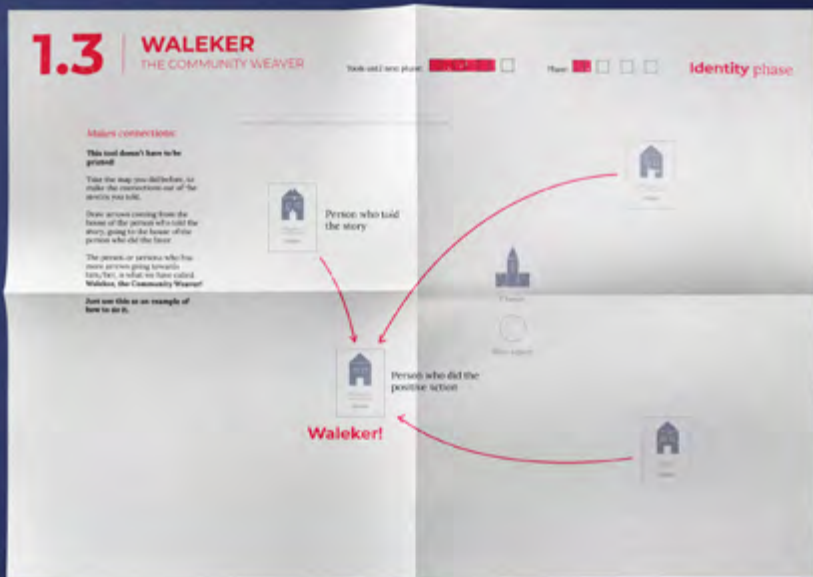
1.4

Our ID card

Why: After defining the most important aspects of the community, it is important to summarize all the just discovered information, so that anyone can have a fast check of the definition of the community and its main resources. It is also important for the community to have a final agreement on the choices they made with the previous tools.

Inspiring questions:
- What do we have in common and why are we together?
- What are the artisanal techniques we use?
- What are the main resources or spaces that we will have access to?

Time: 20 minutes

Needed:
- ☐ **ID card** template
- ☐ The output from the **Community Weaver** tool
- ☐ The output from the **Look at our territory** tool
- ☐ Markers

Steps: 1. All the community members must gather to fill the ID card, the facilitator will have the work of filling the information in the template.

2. The first question to answer is *What do you all have in common.* Try to understand what common features all members share. Is it working with the same material? Working in the same territory? Using the same technique? They can even share more than one feature, so try to summarize them all in one sentence (see the example).

3. Now fill the second quadrant of *What do your community members do.* In this step write down all the artisanal techniques your members know (e.g. weaving, sewing, carving, spinning…).

4. In the quadrant called *Who is/are your Waleker(s)* write down the names that came out from the previous step.

5. Finally, at the point of *Resources/spaces*, write down the spaces or resources you could have access to, from the list of spaces you discovered with the *Look at our territory* tool.

6. This template is the summary of your community's ID at this first point. You can keep it close, so that you always remember what you have in common, what you all do, who is your weaver, and the resources you have.

Final output: Filled **ID card** template

Template:
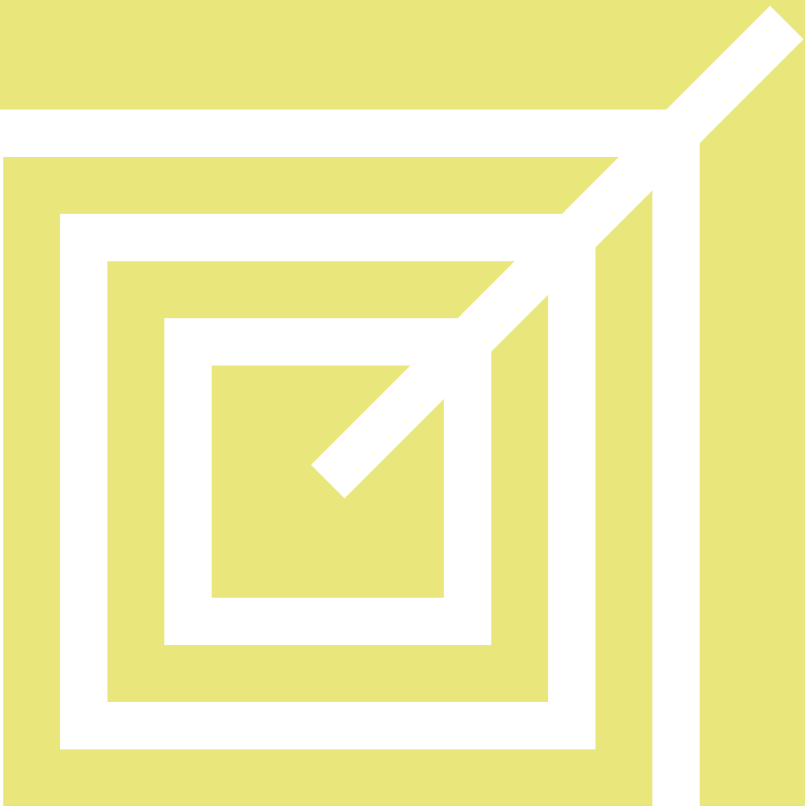
Phase 2

Purpose

TIP
for the facilitator

The purpose phase is important to have a diagnosis of the current situation of the community, to understand what is going okay and what is going wrong, but mostly, what are the members' expectations for the future. At this point of the session, members should feel more comfortable with talking, and sharing their ideas. This *feeling of comfort* is important because at this point members will need to share what worries them and what makes them proud about their community, but most important, they will need to imagine how they want their community to be, and creativity only unleashes in a secure and relaxed environment.

Make sure everyone gets to talk, that they have a comfortable place to seat and that they can see and hear each other while talking.

Taking breaks is important, be sure not make sessions too long, otherwise people will start losing motivation and will stop being proactive.

It is also important to remind that during this phase *problems could come out*, when talking about negative aspects, and some previous conflicts could arise. Explain to them in advance that this session might create tension between the group, and that they will have to be focused on the goal for doing this, which is the wellness of the community and the progress of the group.

2.1

Inside out

Why: The best diagnosis is the one done by the members inside of the community. External researchers could do a great analysis, but internal members are the only ones who know all the conflicts and assets of the community. Giving to the community the possibility to share their positive and negative thoughts about the group, will provide more insights about the current situation and will help participants to learn about problems they were not aware of.

Inspiring questions:
- What are the reasons why you decided to join the group and why you have stayed? What is the community offering to you?
- Are the positive aspects related to the way how members work, on your initiatives, on the people in the group?
- What do you think is missing in the community? Is it related with communication, trust, spaces, resources?

Time: 15 minutes to fill the cards
20 minutes to organize the cads into similar topics groups

Needed:
- ☐ **Aspects' cards** or post-its of three different colors. The cards can be printed from the template and copied, or can be made by the participants, the important thing is to have the distinction between: positive, negative, and blank cards.
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Free space for post-its: table/wall/big cardboard

Steps:
1. Every member gets a small pack of cards (positive, negative, and blank) and a marker

2. They will have 15 minutes to write on different cards, all the positive and negative aspects from the community that come to their minds (check the Inspiring Questions).

3. If there is some aspect that they are not sure in which category to place, place it on the blank card, later with the group, you can figure out where to place it.

4. There will be a specific table/wall/cardboard where each participant will go and stick all their contributions (positive, negative, and blank).

5. When everybody has sticked their post-its, the group will gather and read all the cards together.

6. First, they will have to define together where the blank cards could go if in positive or negative aspects...

7. Finally, they can organize together similar topics, and check if a same aspect was repeated. In case there are repetitions, leave just one card, but reflect on why it was repeated and how many times, there must be a reason behind the repetition.

Final output: Tables with positive and negative aspects from the community organized in groups

Template:

2.2
We imagine

Why: We imagine tool is a nice moment, is the step when everybody will be free to tell how they would like their community to be, what they would change about it, and what they imagine for their future. Transforming problems into actions and aspirations is not easy but it is an important step also for transforming the mindset of members from a negative one, into a proactive one.
Keep in mind that it is possible that goals will be high level at the beginning, but the work of the facilitator must be the one of breaking them down and asking people "what does that really mean? And how it would look like?". The objective is to break big goals into smaller and more precise ones.

Inspiring questions:
- What are the values of my community? What makes us different from all the others?
- What can we get as individuals and as a group from being together?
- How do I imagine our territory in the future? What is going to be the role of the community there?
- Are there other communities, of artisans or not, that inspire me to be like them? What is the best thing about them?

Time: 1 hour (depending on how many aspects were done before)

Needed:
- ☐ Positive and negative aspects (post-its) from **Inside out**
- ☐ Template to fill of **We imagine** tool
- ☐ Markers

Steps:
1. Take the positive and negative aspects that were made in the previous step:
   If there are repeated aspects, just use one of them
   If there are similar aspects, try merging them

2. Place the positive and negative aspects in the defined squares.

3. Now, starting with the positive aspects, transform them into benefits or values. Benefits are what holds a community together, even if they are individualistic, they push people to join the community. They must reflect all the positive aspects the community has and the benefit it delivers to its members.
   Benefits can be related to:
   The technique's expertise the community has
   The motivation why you are joining
   What each one of you are offering to the community

If there are positive aspects related to specific people, try to find the root behind it, and to relate it to the whole group, not just to one person. For example, the benefit is not that "Rosa is good at making containers", the benefit is that "the community has a good technique and products of quality". You can use the sentences in the Benefits' circle to create your own sentences or make your own!

4. Place all the benefits you got into the defined circle from the template

5. Now go with the negative aspects! Read out loud every card you placed in the negative aspects' square.

6. Start to transform the negative aspects into goals for the future, they must be completely transformed into positive actions. You can use the sentences in the Goals' circle as inspiration, try to think of ways in which those problems can be improved, and how you would like things to be in the future for your community. Focus especially on internal issues and how you would like your relations with others to be.

PS. You can see that the intersection between benefits and goals is the Purpose, it is just a hint of what will come in the next tool!

Final output: Filled template with Benefits and Goals of the community.

Template:
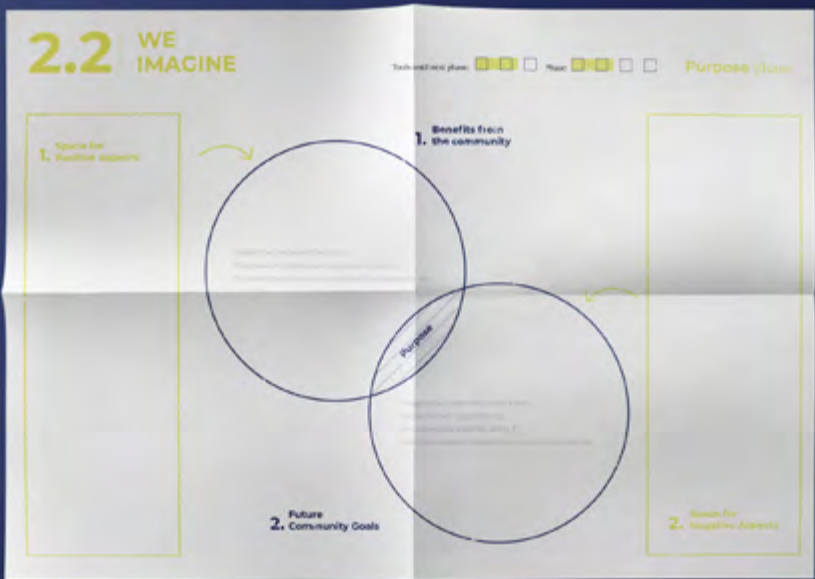
2.3

Setting the direction

Why: Defining the purpose of a community is a basic and important moment, that needs the agreement of all the participants to make sense. Why? Because the purpose will set the direction of the group, will guide it for the future actions and will set its success metrics.

Maybe you have already a purpose and want to keep it, maybe you have it, but you want to modify it, maybe you don't have it and have no idea how to create it. Nevertheless, is always recommendable to follow the whole process and remove all biases about previous purposes. It might be the case that at the end you realize the purpose is different to the one you have been addressing so far.

Inspiring questions:
- What does the community hope to achieve?
- How will the world be different by having this community?
- How will the world be worse if this community doesn't exist/ceases to exist?
- How will the lives of members change if they are part of the community?

Time: 45 minutes

Needed:
- ☐ **We imagine** template filled with Benefits and Goals for the community
- ☐ **Setting the direction** template
- ☐ Markers

Steps:

1. After having set the benefits and goals, it is time to think about the community's purpose.

2. Take all the goals from the previous step and organize them into the Direction Wheel.
Write on the yellow squares all the benefits and goals you got from the previous tool.
You will have to choose with your community minimum one and maximum three goals and benefits.

Choose **goals** that are:

- ☐ Feasible to reach for your community in short time (do not think about stuff the government should give you, or about having a lot of things if you do not have the resources).

- ☐ If are too difficult to fulfill for your community, think about splitting them into smaller goals that might be easier to achieve for you (ex. Having a website could be transformed into having an Instagram account)

- ☐ Make sure to have goals related to the behavior of your community, making sure everybody compromises to them (ex. Increasing trust between members, learn new skills and teach more to kids...)

Choose **benefits** that are:

☐ Beneficial not just for the individuals, but for everyone (the community and the territory)

☐ Related to younger generations, and that can involve them

☐ Not only related to money, but mostly to personal gains you can get from the community (becoming stronger, independent, learning, teaching...)

3. This is the moment when you can start writing your community purpose, based on these goals you just defined and the benefits you had defined before. Make sure your purpose is not focused on external goals, but that you also have important internal goals (these are the ones that create your community!) (Pfortmüller, 2017). Write it down as many times as possible, until you feel that all your goals and benefits are summarized into one sentence. Keep this purpose visible for the group every time you meet in the future, it is the reason why you are all working hard and the direction you should find when you are feeling lost.

Examples of purpose structures:
1. We artisans of (*where are you from*), come together to (*the benefits from being part of the community*), so that we can (*what are the future goals we want to achieve*)
2. We are a community that works with (*which is your material and technique*), and we join to (*what are the benefits we are getting*), so in the future we can (*what are the goals we want to achieve*)

Final output: Filled **Setting the direction** template
Community purpose defined

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Template:
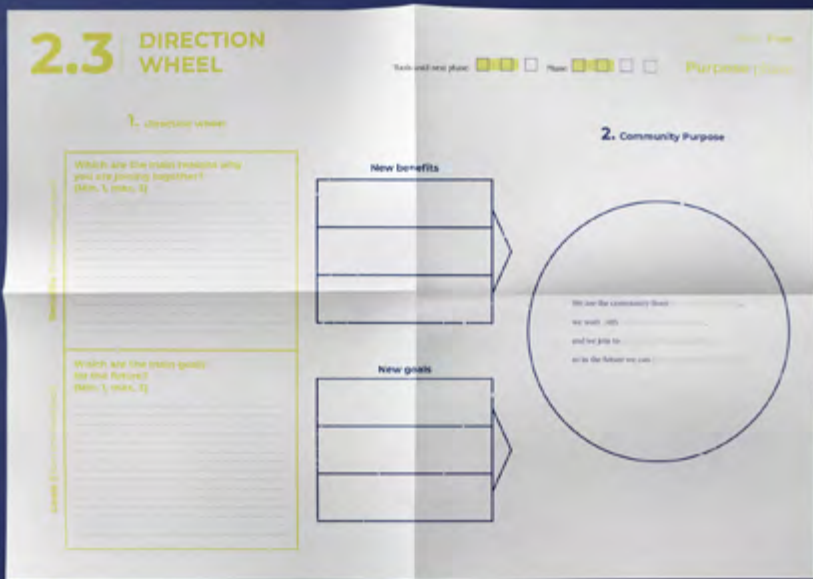
Phase 3
Trust

TIP
for the facilitator

"Communities are groups that optimize for trust" (Pfortmüller, 2017). One of the basic pillars for a healthy community is trust. Building trust is not something easy or fast to do, however, there are some actions that can help communities to improve their trust towards the community and its members. With the next tools in this phase, the group will go through four different categories of trust: 1. *Competency trust*, or how we make sure that each person has the right role according to their skills. 2. *Contractual trust*, or the compromise of each member to the role they have been assigned. 3.*Communication trust*, being sure that all the information is being communicated and that every member is aware of what is happening in the community. 4. *Caring* or being aware that the community cares for the members, and there will be someone who cares about you. (Hoelting, 2017)

The tools will help to develop each one of these categories inside of the community, however, there must be always the intention from members to do the session and to do it consciously. Arriving to agreements together and sticking to them through time is what will make a trustworthy community.

3.1
Skills sharing

Why: One of the main trust characteristics is the one of trusting in others' competences and skills (Hoelting, 2017). When you realize that you feel confident with the work someone else does, you will feel more relaxed when working together and assigning tasks. This is something difficult to do when working with someone for the very first time. Even though it should be easier after knowing someone for a long time, in many cases people have not tried to understand how the other members can be of support and what skills they have to offer. In many cases people are not even sure about their own skills, that's why giving them this opportunity to think about it, is a chance to get to know other members, but also to get to know themselves.

Inspiring questions:
- What is the topic I am passionate about? The thing I would not stop doing even if I had to.
- Is there something everybody keeps telling me I am good at?
- What is the talent I would like to learn from _____? Is it something someone could teach me or that could be useful for the community?

Time: 20 minutes (10 for everybody to write the skills and 10 to organize them into the table)

Needed:
- ☐ **Skills sharing** template
- ☐ **Skills' cards** or post-its of two colors
- ☐ Markers

Steps:

1. Each member will get as many cards or post-its as they need from each color.

2. On the **Skills to share cards**, they will write all the skills they have and are willing to share/teach with the community. The skills can be related to their artisan technique (e.g. good weaving, innovative stitches, excellent at dying), but also to their soft skills (e.g. communications skills, teambuilding skills, support and caring, problem solving).

3. On the **Skills to learn cards**, they will write all the skills they would like to learn from someone else or from the community. Again, these skills can be related to the business, but also to their personal growth.

4. When everyone has at least one skill to teach and one skill to learn, they will write them down on the template. It does not matter if there are more than one skill per person, it is even better, so the community has more skills to rely on.

5. At this point is also important the point of view from other members. Is there a skill I did not know I have, but the others recognize on me? Is there a skill someone has, but he/she did not mention?

6. When the whole template has been filled, it is important to recognize the next points:

    What skills to-be-taught match with the skills to-be-learned. Who will teach to whom?

    Who has a skill that many members would like to have? Is it something this person could teach? For example, how to improve the dying technique, how to make purses...

Final output: Template of **Skills sharing** filled out, and reflection on what people can teach and learn.

Template:

3.2

Let's agree

Why: After having understood each member's skills, is time to compromise on the community roles. When members feel confident about their capacity to do a specific work, they will do it with more confidence, and it will be harder that they fail doing it (Hoelting, 2017). For this reason, is not recommended to force someone to have a role they do not want to have, or they do not feel prepared to carry out. The roles can be directly related to the community's logistics, or just to the technique improvement and teaching. Even though suggestions from other members are well received, the person must have the comfort to say "no" to a certain role they do not like. As the tool says, is a moment of agreement, so the group must arrive to a common point, in which they all feel comfortable with.

Inspiring questions:
- How much involvement I would like to have with the community's logistics?
- What am I willing to give to the community (time, knowledge, work...)?
- Is there some hierarchy in the roles I would like to carry out?

Time: 45 minutes (depending on how many roles there are)

Needed: ☐ **Skills sharing** template filled out
☐ Markers

Steps: 1. Taking the **Skills sharing** template, add the Role and Role's description columns. You can print the **Let's agree** template and cut out the first two columns (Members and Skills to share), so you can just position this new template on top of the **Skills sharing** template, without having the need to write all the information again.

2. For each member, check the skills they are willing to share/teach and think about possible roles in the community. There can be as many roles as the community wants, keeping in mind the time and availability of the members.

Possible roles in order of importance could be:
    In charge of communications
    In charge of organizing meetings
    In charge of teaching to new generations (kids at schools, open courses...)
    In charge of workshops
    In charge of innovating techniques (the best weaver)
    In charge of finances
    In charge of finding selling opportunities

3. Think about all the possible roles your community might need and all the skills your members have and could be used.

4. Write down the role for each member, making sure they all understand what their role is, but must important, that they agree on performing it.

5. For each role add a short description of what it is. The *role description* must have:
    Duration of the role
    Intensity (how much time per week will this person provide to the tasks)
    Main tasks and goals of the role

Final output: **Let's agree** template filled out

Template:

3.3
Keeping in touch

Why: Having a solid communication between members can be the difference between a community that follows their goals, and one that just follows gossips. Telling the community about each news, each incident and each interesting topic will be important to make everybody feel part of the group. Not doing so, can lead to discussions, to fake news and constant gossip. It also makes people think there is some kind of hierarchy inside of the community, which gives priority to the access of information just to some members. In order to build trust, showing a horizontal organization is a must, no one is on top of anybody.

It is important to keep in mind that not everyone has access to online communication channels, and that offline channels must be implemented as well. According to the context, there can be different ways to reach the most difficult members (e.g. people who is not in the urban area, who do not have internet at home or electronic devices).

It is also important to think about times, not everyone is willing to receive a message at 10pm on a Sunday. Agreeing on times for sending communications makes it easier for the ones who are sending the messages and for the ones who

are receiving them. By organizing the tasks, is possible to send communications once or twice a week, during certain days and hours.

Inspiring questions:
- What are the best channels to reach everyone in the community?
- Which are going to be the channels used for ordinary communications and the ones used for emergencies?
- Who is going to be in charge of all the communications?

Time: 30 minutes

Needed:
- ☐ **Keeping in touch** template
- ☐ Markers

Steps:
1. From the **Let's agree** template find the member who has the role of communicator, or who can be more suitable for the task. Is this person willing to take the role of communicating the news to everybody?

2. Choose a supporter, someone who can help the communicator to achieve his/her tasks, maybe contacting through some channels, or sending messages to members difficult to reach.

3. Fill the space of *Online channels*, thinking about those channels that members check the most

(e.g. Whatsapp, Facebook, Instagram, Telegram…).
Choose one or two channels at most, so people
will know where to check for trustworthy
communications.

4. Fill the space of *Offline channels*, thinking about
   those channels that could support members
   who are not digitally connected. (e.g. radio, local
   newspaper, courier, notice board…). In this case is
   better to have many possibilities and to ask them
   which is the one that would work better for their
   situation. Is possible that communications will
   have to be sent through many channels in this
   case.

5. Finally, fill the space of *Official times*, thinking of
   how many times per week members will have to
   communicate and during which times they are
   free to receive and check communications.

6. It is also important to have an *Emergency contact*,
   who can also be the same with the role of
   communicator or can be someone else with the
   role of problem-solving.

7. Just as for the emergency contact, there must
   be also some *emergency channels*, both online
   and offline, which can be used in case of extreme
   situations. The group must decide together which
   are and which are not emergency situations,
   so that the emergency contact doesn't have an
   intense role every day.

Final output: **Keeping in touch** template filled out

Template:

3.4

Guardian Angel

Why: As explained before, one of the main pillars of a good relationship between a group of people is relying on their help and support. Knowing that there will be someone who cares when we are having a problem, and receiving this backing, is one of the best demonstrations of trust (Hoelting, 2017).

Of course, saying that trust can be built with a set of tools is impossible, but by promoting the voluntarily help between members, will encourage them to feel more comfortable of being part of the community. Just the fact of knowing that there is someone, just in case, will make you feel

Inspiring questions:
- Who is the person I am closer with?
- Who is the person I always ask for help?
- Who is the person who usually gives me the news about the community?
- Who I feel more confident to ask for help or to ask something?

Time: 15 minutes

Needed: ☐ **Guardian angel's** template
☐ Markers

Steps: 1. As we said at the beginning, the guardian angel is someone who will support a member of the community when the other person can't assist to one meeting, or when he/she missed some information, just to give an example.

2. Before choosing the Guardian angels is important that the community defines which are and which are not the tasks the guardian angel will have. For example, one task can be to explain topics from the community that other member did not understand, or to contact the others when the member has some issue. It is better if you define tasks or favors that are only related to the community, and not to personal life.

3. Next, think about what the guardian angel is not supposed to do, it is very important, so that boundaries are defined. For example, Guardian angels are not in the in the obligation to borrow money or are not going to work on the tasks the member has for his/her role.

4. After having a clear list of what to do and not to do, each member will choose someone who could be their Guardian angel or can also propose themselves as someone's Guardian angel.

5. As it is shown in the template, the role can be reciprocated, so that you are the Guardian angel of your Guardian angel, but this is not mandatory. In fact, the more mixed the members are, the better. In case the role is just one way, fill the arrow just in one direction, in case is both ways, fill it in both directions.

6. Make sure everyone has a Guardian angel before moving to the next phase.

Final output: List of guardian angels for each member and the DOs and NOTs of the role.

Template:

Phase 4
Rules

TIP
for the facilitator

As explained by Elinor Ostrom in her book The Commons, one of the basis of a strong community are rules. Respecting the rules makes the system work harmonically. However, having rules does not seem fair when they were designed by superiors, and this is one of the reasons why people just do not follow the rules. The best solution for people to follow the rules is to *co-design them and choose them together*, giving them the possibility to decide what is possible to do and not to do (Sloan, Ostrom, & Cox, 2013).

This phase can generate some tensions if some members are looking for rules that are not in agreement with what everyone else is looking for in the community. *Make sure to have with you the Community Purpose* during this phase, and that everyone has clear what they want to achieve with the community, so the rules go in the right direction.

Make sure to start this phase when people are not tired and have got *time to interiorize the results from the previous sessions.*

4.1 What is important for us

Why: This moment is important to make visible the opinion from every member in the community. During this step they should all have the opportunity to share their thoughts regarding what is important for them and what would make the community work better.
The facilitator must make sure to ask each person for an opinion about it, having everyone's thoughts is mandatory before moving on. It will not only generate trust, but also will increase the loyalty members will have for the rules.

Inspiring questions:
- Which are the things that worry you about the community?
- What rules do you think would help the community work better?
- Which are the rules you think could benefit yourself and the community?
- What boundaries should be set for members and external institutions?

Time: 30 minutes (15 to think about rules and 15 to organize them into the template)

Rules phase

Needed:
- ☐ **Rules' cards** or post-its
- ☐ **What is important** to us template
- ☐ Markers

Steps:

1. Each member will have a pack of **Rules' cards** or post-its.

2. On each card they will write down all the rules they can think about: for members, for the community, for external institutions, regarding communications, the roles, the meetings...

3. When they are all done, each one will have the chance to explain their rules and to place them in one of the sections of the template. The name of each section is not defined yet, since each community will have different rules according to their needs and context. However, make sure to cluster all the rules regarding similar topics in the same section and to give it a name at the end.

4. Place all the rules even if the other members do not agree with them, these are not the final rules yet!

5. When everyone has finished placing their rules, check if there are any repeated rules in each section and delete the repeated ones.

Final output: **What is important to us** template with the proposal of rules from all the members of the community.

Template:

4.1 WHAT IS IMPORTANT

Rules phase

Communications	Community meetings	Roles

4.2

Golden rules

Why: Even though everyone must have a word while making the rules, the final ones will require some characteristics in order to be followed by all members. The most important qualities rules should have are:

That are beneficial for the majority of members
That are easy to monitor

For example, a great rule that would benefit the community would be that all members give 30% of their income. However, there are two issues about this rule, the first one is that it could be detrimental for some of the members, and second one is that it would be quite difficult to monitor how much each member earns, making of it a stressful task, impossible to achieve. Keeping this in mind, rules will need a mix of individual and common benefit, and a mix of trust and ease to monitor.

Inspiring questions:
- Who might be affected and who might be favored by this rule?
- What action shall we take to monitor each rule? Is it feasible? Does it take too much effort?
- How could we simplify this rule or make it more beneficial for everybody?

Time: 45 minutes

Needed: ☐ **What is important to us** template filled already
☐ **Golden Rules** template
☐ Markers

Steps: 1. With the template already filled from the previous tool (**What is important to us**), take the last rules you defined together.

2. Try to place them in the matrix from the **Golden Rules**, deciding with the whole group which is the best place for each one of them, thinking well about who will benefit from the rule and how are you going to monitor it.

3. Make sure you place the rules in the right section, because the final rules will be the ones the whole community will have to respect.

4. When all the rules are placed, go and check the striped section, all the rules that are into this section will become the Golden Rules of the community! Make sure all the community agrees on that and that rules in that section make sense with your community purpose.
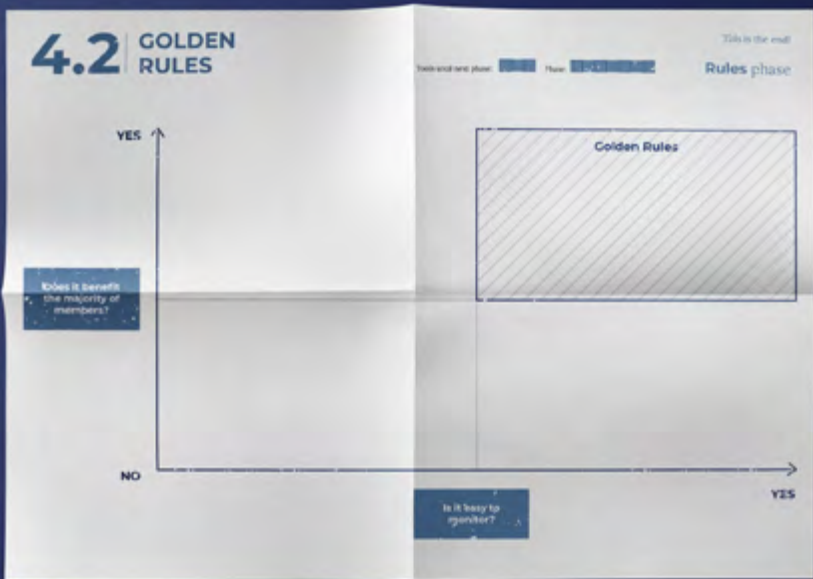
5. Of course, these rules are not engraved on stone, and can be modified when you think is the proper time, or if you think the rules are not working as they were supposed to. Both tools in this phase can be used as many times as needed, the only important thing is that the whole community must be present when using it.

Final output: Final **golden rules** of the community defined

Final objective
The community manager

Along with the whole process, one of the most important legacies from the toolkit is the *definition of the Community weaver and of the Community manager.* Even though they could be the same person, it is important that the Community manager has the characteristics we will mention later on. The *main job of this person will come after the process has ended, when there won't be any facilitator, and the community will have to follow the rules and the agreements they made during the sessions.* Even though this person's name is Community manager, their role is somehow different from the one of an online community manager.

We could define the *role of the community manager in general* lines as the one who:

1. Makes sure the rules of the community are followed by all members
2. Listens to members and organizes the group when there are conflicts or complaints
3. Provides good content for the community
4. Makes sure every member follows the tasks assigned to their role
5. Has a great knowledge of social media tools

Now, when translating these tasks to our offline community, *our community manager* should:

☐ Making sure everyone is following the Golden Rules they set together. Talking with the person who might have broken the rules and communicating to the community if the person continues to do it, so they can all agree on what to do about it.

☐ When there are conflicts, this person will be in charge of talking with the involved people and to try to solve the issues, while keeping a fair environment.

☐ Organizing meetings and workshops that could be interesting for the whole community, and that should be related with the skills members are interested in learning.

☐ Making sure every member works on the tasks that were assigned to their role and that they are aligned to the description of their role.

☐ Having knowledge of how to use social media, or having the possibility to contact someone who can help them in using them (family, friends).

Do you have in mind someone in your community who has these (or most of these) characteristics?

Next steps

Remember that you, as member of the community, can also monitor your Community Manager tasks.

It's advised to check all the roles every certain time, refresh them and discuss them.

Learn from your community and improve it. Learn from Minga and improve it as well. Hopefully it will become better everytime you use it!