



## BCDI CREATING CONSENSUS

### Step 1: Introduce and Clarify

- Explain the issue and why it needs to be discussed
- Agree on what needs to be decided and when
- Allow for time for questions and clarifications (See [BCDI Norms and Practices](#))

### Step 2: Open Discussion

- Explore ideas
  - Make sure the ideas are not just the first one's heard that have support OR ideas that are met with initial concerns are ignored
  - See [BCDI Discussion Facilitation Structures](#) and to share initial ideas
- Ensure all in the group have an opportunity to share the following before the discussion ends:
  - Hopes
  - Concerns
  - Needs

### Step 3: Form and Amend Proposal

- Summarize where the group is. Find a way to visually display this portion of the discussion, so everyone has shared understanding.
  - Outline common ground first
  - Outline unresolved concerns
- Build a proposal based on what is agreed upon
- Focus on solutions that address fundamental needs and key concerns

### Step 4: Test for Agreement

- Write the proposal for all to see and provide time to process
- Provide opportunity for everyone to Agree or Disagree (utilizing the below Seeds for Change Model). All are asked to explain reasoning in the following areas:
  - Agree/Agree with reservations
  - Standing Aside: "I might not agree, but I will not stop this from happening if it's what most in the group want."
  - Blocking: Express fundamental disagreement and will not allow for the proposal to move forward without changes or a full rethinking.
    - Those who block are responsible for helping to find other solutions
    - This can only be used if the claim is made that it goes against the core principles, values or mission of the group.

- If a block cannot be resolved, a vote by the rest of the group can override it with 75%-95% of the group in favor of the proposal

#### **Step 5: Implement the Decision and Accountability**

- Check that all have the same understanding of a decision
  - Provide concrete examples
- Make clear agreements when someone takes on a task
  - Decide together on deadlines and when and how to check-in with the entire group
  - Provide opportunities for feedback when individuals are putting in a lot of work on specific tasks, and/or be open and clear when you are disappointed, frustrated, or confused by what someone has done. This will limit misunderstandings in the long-run.

*\*This document was adapted from consensus tools provided by the organization [Seeds for Change](#).*