Collaboration for Community Resilience - COVID 19

Connection with Community

At meeting nine, a small group of participants focused on **looking forward** and determining what the group want the future to look like in terms of **Connection and Collaboration** and how we can act together to make it happen. The group kept in mind what they would **restore** – what did we stop that we need to do again; **retain** – what have we started the we need to do more of; **refrain** – what did we stop the needs to stay stopped, **reimagine** - what could the future look like to be even better.
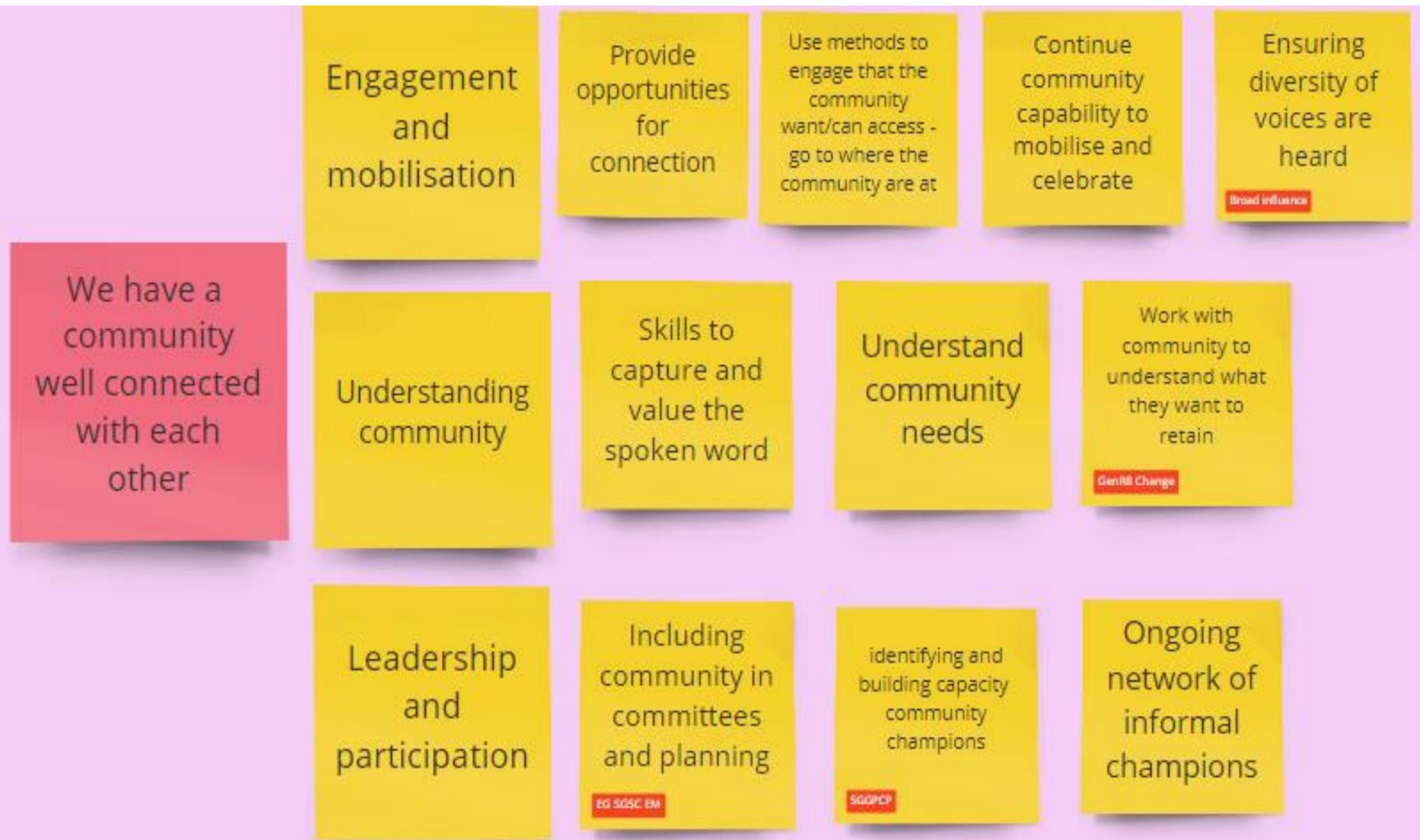
Two main themes emerged: **Connection with community** and **Collaboration between agencies**. The group felt that this would result in having a better prepared community who would have the capability and capacity to respond to future outbreaks or stressors resulting a more resilient community.

We recognised that there is a strong connection between community connection and resilience and looking forward we would like to see **a community that is well connected to each other.**

In order to achieve this the group felt that we need to **provide opportunities for connection** but in doing so we need to **understand the best ways to connect with community and use the methods that suit.** This reflects Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approaches that promote meeting the community where they are at. It was important that we **support the community to celebrate success to promote more action** and continue to enhance the **capacity and support the capability of the community to mobilise.**

The group felt we need to develop our skills to **understand community needs** including **developing skills to capture the spoken word** as there is a heavy reliance on written submissions, surveys and consultations. Community have mobilised action during the pandemic and it is important to **work with community to understand what they want the future to look like**.

Community empowerment, leadership and participation were identified as important components of a connected community. We identified that community should be valued as an equal partner. We can do this by **ensuing community voices are heard** by having **participation on committees**, **identifying and building capacity of champions** (ensuring diversity and sustainability) and **providing ongoing opportunities for champions** to connect.

Collaboration between Organisations

We have strong partnerships between orgs to do collaborative work

Proving the value

Communicate Promote benefits of staying connected - proving the value

Understanding enablers and barriers of collaboration during COVID 19

Partnership skills

Develop the practice of good partnering - building partnership skills

Netty WDHS

Understanding skill sets and expertise among agencies

Collaboration is a key performance indicator

Communication and connection

Open Communication continues

Offering multiple options to connect in: Eg zoom and f2f options

LLEN

Regular opportunities for diverse connections (formal and informal)

The second focus was on Collaboration between Organisations recognising that during the Coronavirus Pandemic cross sector agencies have come together to learn from each other, share and plan to promote shared understanding and collaboration.

We want **to have strong partnerships between organisations that supports collaborative work.**

It was important to the group that we **prove the value of partnerships** as we have seen through COVID 19. We can do this by **capturing and promoting the benefits of partnerships** (as well as community connection). It was important to the group to take the time to **understand the enablers and barriers of collaboration during the Pandemic** in order to strengthen partnerships.
We recognize that we need to **build on the practice of partnership and develop good partnership skills.** It was noted that partnerships require nurturing and retention of partners is often difficult when there is limited capacity, for example. Throughout the Pandemic we recognised that we have had more opportunities to connect (possibly due to virtual participation) and this has enabled the development of new relationships. Moving forward the group would like to implement **regular opportunities for connection (both formal and informal).** We have also noted that across the partnerships there are **a diverse range of skill sets and expertise** and it would enhance community resilience to understand and utilise this capacity. In terms of policy development, valuing **collaboration by identifying it as a performance indicator** recognising collaboration as a necessary part of our work and needs to be retained to enhance community resilience in the future.
Ensuring that that **open communication continues** post COVID 19 was seen as an enabler of strong partnerships. This would include offering a **range of platforms for communication** building on the mix of face to face and virtual options.