



IDENTIFY PATTERNS

Making sense of your research is accomplished by seeing the patterns, themes, and larger relationships between the information. This process can be messy and difficult at times, but ultimately very rewarding. Seeing the patterns and connections between the data will lead you quickly toward real-world solutions. There are several steps listed here to take you through the process for you use selectively based on the subject matter.

- » Extract Key Insights
- » Find Themes
- » Create Frameworks

Facilitator Notes

 **Time:**
45-60 mins.

 **Difficulty:**
★★★★☆

Step 1. Ask the team to go to the wall with all the stories and choose 5 key post-its (stories, quotes, observations) that are most surprising, interesting, or provocative.

Step 2. Group these into related thoughts.

Step 3. Write a succinct Insight statement on a new post-it for each grouping that summarizes the big takeaway.

Step 4. Post these Insight post-its where all can see.

METHOD: EXTRACT KEY INSIGHTS

Uncovering insights is about bringing visibility and clarity to previously hidden meaning.

WHAT IS AN INSIGHT?

- » Insights are revelations – the unexpected things that make you sit up and pay attention.
- » Insights extrapolate individual stories into overarching truths.
- » Insights allow us to see our design challenge in a new light.

For example, a combination of an observation and quote from an interview yielded the following sample insight:

Observation: Farmers rely on farming information from their friends and neighbors, though they know this knowledge is limited.

Quote: “If the Privatized Extension Agent lived outside my area, I would want to visit his farm so I could see his production.”

Insight: Trust-building and knowledge sharing happens through ‘seeing is believing.’



TIP
#1

Select key information

Look across the information in the stories. Edit out the details that are not important - this is the time to let go of some of the detail. Choose the information that you find surprising, interesting, or worth pursuing.



TIP
#2

Aggregate big thoughts

Are some of the thoughts linked? If so, aggregate them. Take several related pieces of information and re-write them as one big Insight.



TIP
#3

Work at the same level

Check that the insights sit at the same level — that they are all big thoughts. If you find you have some lower level insights, consider whether they might be reframed at a higher level. If they need to be dropped a level, they may be best talked about as customer needs that inform and support the Insight.

A group of men are gathered around a wall covered in colorful sticky notes (yellow, blue, and orange) in a meeting room. One man in a white t-shirt is in the foreground, looking towards the wall. Other men are visible behind him, also looking at the notes. The room has a white wall and a window in the background.

STEP
3

CASE STUDY

FINDING INSIGHTS FOR EFFECTIVE MARKETING TO FARMERS

In Ethiopia, the IDE team looked over the information from the Story Sharing exercise and extracted over 20 key insights. About half of these came directly from the post-its that were written in Story Sharing, and the other half were written based on the information the team heard during Story Sharing.

Some of the insights the team identified were:

- » School is a key channel for distributing information
- » There is a strong need for an alternative to borrowing oxen
- » Buying on credit is the default
- » Mass media sells water pumps

Facilitator Notes

 **Time:**
30-60 mins.

 **Difficulty:**
☆☆☆☆☆

Step 1. Have the team go to the wall or board where they have placed their key story and insight post-its and select the 5 most interesting quotes, observations and/or insights.

Step 2. On a new board, sort these into themes.

Step 3. Check to make sure the themes are at the same level. If a theme is too specific, prompt the team to find the bigger idea. If a theme is too broad or has too many different ideas under it, ask them to break it down into several buckets.

Step 4. When finished sorting, give each theme a title on a new post-it. Make sure there is enough space between or below the different theme categories to facilitate the next step of opportunity identification.



METHOD: FIND THEMES

Finding themes is about exploring the commonalities, differences, and relationships between the information.

Some ways to do this include:

Look for categories and buckets

Sort your findings into categories or buckets. Which ideas are related? Cluster together the findings that belong together into themes.

Consider the relationship between categories

Look for patterns and tensions in the way your themes relate to each other. Are they on the same level? Or are they talking about different kinds of things?

Group and re-group

Slice and dice the data in different ways to find meaning. Try moving the post-its around to form new groups.

Get input from the team

Explain the early buckets and themes to a broader group. Learn from their input and try alternative groupings.

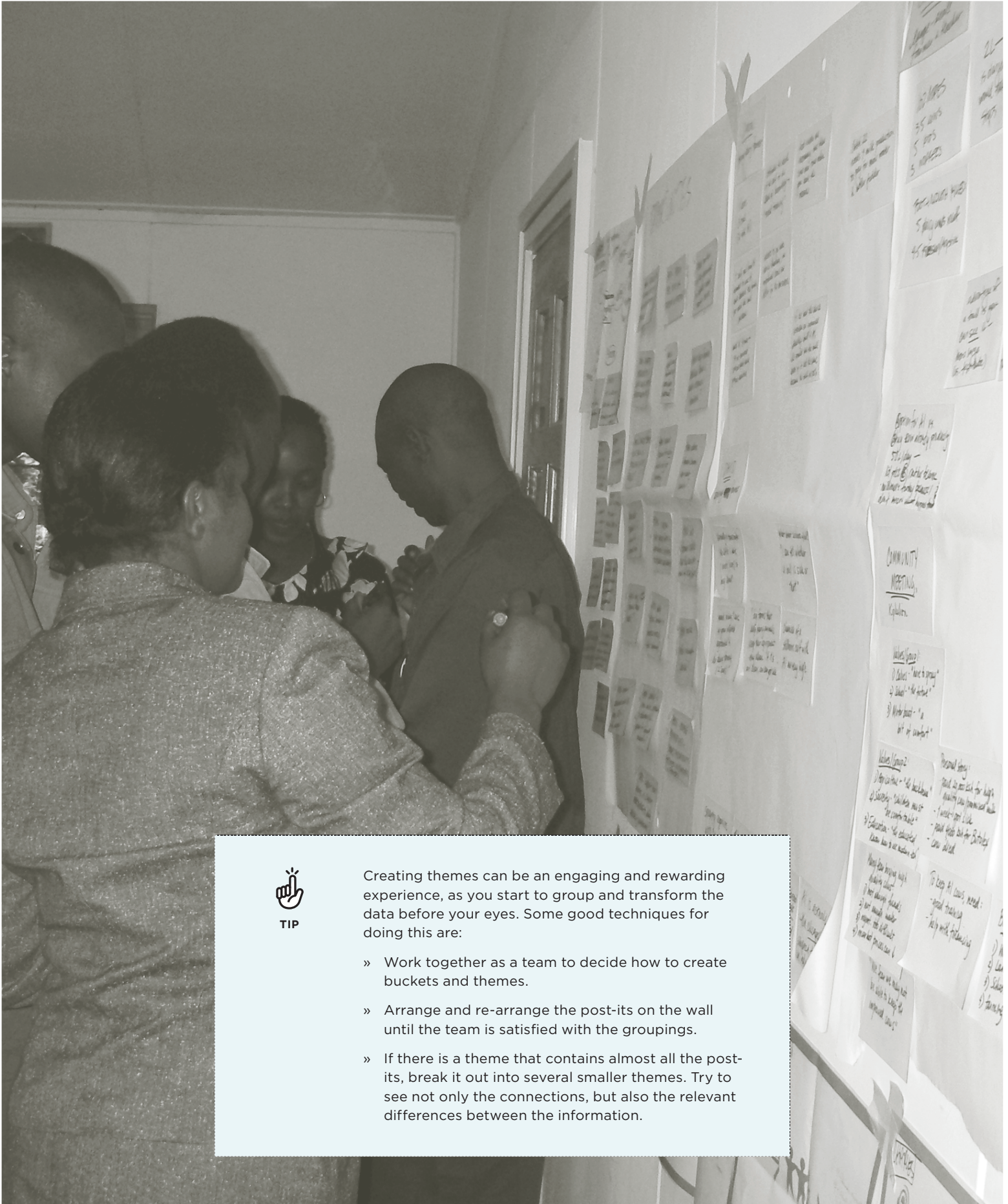


TRY

Try the P.O.I.N.T. technique

Translate the Problems and Needs identified in storytelling into Insights (see previous Method) and Themes.

P = Problems
O = Obstacles
I = Insights
N = Needs
T = Themes



TIP

Creating themes can be an engaging and rewarding experience, as you start to group and transform the data before your eyes. Some good techniques for doing this are:

- » Work together as a team to decide how to create buckets and themes.
- » Arrange and re-arrange the post-its on the wall until the team is satisfied with the groupings.
- » If there is a theme that contains almost all the post-its, break it out into several smaller themes. Try to see not only the connections, but also the relevant differences between the information.

Facilitator Notes

Time:
1-2 Hours

Difficulty:
★★★★★

Not all design challenges will yield or require frameworks. If the team does not feel that this step is required for your challenge, skip it.

Step 1. Listen for moments in story sharing when the topic fits into a larger system or is linked to another piece of information.

Step 2. When team members start to suggest larger systemic structures or relationships between things, ask them if they can draw what they are saying. Consider the example framework types described here.

Step 3. Allow some time for your team to play with re-drawing their framework several times until they feel it represents what they want to say in a robust way.

STEP
3**METHOD:
CREATE FRAMEWORKS**

Frameworks allow you to begin putting the specific information from stories into a larger system context.

What is a framework?

A framework is a visual representation of a system. It shows the different elements or actors at play and highlights the relationships between them.

Using your framework

A good framework will help you see the issues and relationships in a clearer and more holistic way. Discuss what the framework implies for constituents, for other actors in the community, and for your organization. Use the framework to develop or build upon key insights. Capture those insights and add them to your growing list.

**GENDER**

In many cases, it will make sense to create two different frameworks: one from the perspective of women in the community and one from the male perspective. To understand whether you need to dedicate attention to the different needs of women and men, ask yourself these questions:

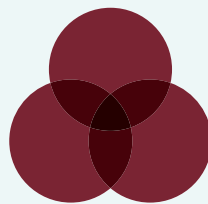
- » How do women's stories differ from those of men?
- » Is gender itself a theme?
- » Do women's stories tell a different story about household activities, income opportunities and barriers, and market relations than the stories obtained from men?

If you answered yes to these questions, think about creating two different frameworks that will yield different sets of opportunity areas for women and men.

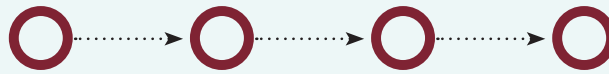


TIP

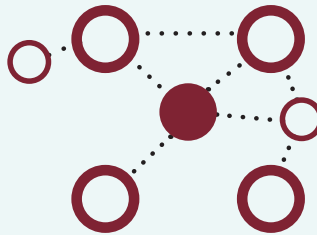
If you are having trouble visualizing your own frameworks, here are some common types of frameworks that recur again and again.



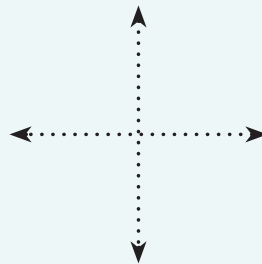
Venn Diagram



Process Map



Relational Map



Two-by-Two Matrix

Facilitator Notes

 **Time:**
40 mins.-2 Hours

☆ **Difficulty:**
★★★★☆

Step 1: Prepare your team to begin defining opportunity areas by telling them that this is where they will start to shift from analysis of information to creating new ideas.

Step 2: Distribute post-it notes and markers to everyone in the team. Ask the team to start their opportunities with the words “How Might We...?”

Step 3: Spend at least 15 minutes on each theme generating Opportunity Statements for that theme. Place the post-its next to the theme area.

Step 4: If the team gets stuck, read the insights from each theme area as a way to jolt the creativity of the team. For example, for each insight posted, ask the team to come up with at least one “How Might We...” statement.



CREATE OPPORTUNITY AREAS

Once you have pulled out the themes and patterns from what you heard, you can start creating opportunity areas. The process of translating insights into opportunities is about moving from the current state to envisioning future possibilities. Opportunities are the springboard for ideas and solutions.

WHAT IS AN OPPORTUNITY AREA?

- » An opportunity area is a stepping stone to idea generation.
- » An opportunity is a rearticulation of problems or needs in a generative, future facing way.
- » An opportunity area is not a solution. Rather, it suggests more than one solution. It allows the team to create many solutions.

FRAMING OPPORTUNITY AREAS

Opportunities start with the phrase “HOW MIGHT WE...?” to suggest a mindset of possibility.



**TIP
#1**

Start each statement with “HOW MIGHT WE...?” and abbreviate on post-its to “HMW.”



**TIP
#2**

Use different color post-its for your opportunity statements than you used for insights. This will help to visually separate insights from opportunities for the next step.

MARKET
INFO

Try to research all
products in market

HMW provide
real-time
market information?

AG
KNOW-HOW

GOOD
FARMING
PRACTICES CAN
TRIPLE YIELD?

HMW... LEVERAGE
LOCAL MODEL
FARMERS AS A
SOURCE OF AG KNOW-HOW?



WATCH
OUT

Watch out for opportunity areas that are already solutions. A key part of creating innovative solutions is preventing yourself and your team from jumping to conclusions.



TIP
#3

Go for quantity, not quality at this point.



TIP
#4

When narrowing down the opportunity statements to 3-5 HMW statements to use in brainstorming, select some that are intentionally outside of your current projects or capabilities. At this point, filter based on Desirability to customers, not Feasibility to the organization.



TRY

If your opportunity sounds like a specific solution, back it up by asking yourself, "Why would we want to offer this solution?" or "What user needs are answered by this solution?" Here is an example:

Insight

Trust building and knowledge sharing happens through 'seeing is believing.'

Solution

A training course offered by community members to teach their friends and neighbors about a technology or behavior that has worked for them. This is a solution.

Ask yourself: What needs are answered by this solution?

Answer: The need to expand the knowledge of community members through local information aggregators.

Opportunity

How might we better educate and inform local knowledge aggregators? or How might we support new technology experimentation by local knowledge aggregators?

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MARKET
CREATIO

POST-PROCESS
INCREASES
OF CROPS PRAT

HMW use
existing enterprises
to deliver info?

HMW introduce
farmers to
new crops?

HMW give
farmer neutral
info about insecticide

HMW... LINK
FARMERS WITH
BEST PRACTICES
(FROM INSTITUTIONS,
OTHER COMMUNITIES, COURSES)

HMW package
info to make
it sale-able?

pay for
or New Techno

KNOWLEDGE
VALUED MORE
TOP