

Case Study 2: 2016 Community X Annual Independence Anniversary Celebration

Part 1.

Community X like many other refugee communities, was experiencing serious internal conflicts for about four years. As a result of the disagreement, the community got divided along tribal and religious lines. In 2016, some elders of the community accepted the request to host a national gathering of their community members for an annual independence anniversary.

Questions:

1. How can the community host a national gathering with a serious internal conflict?
2. Where to start?
3. What are your thoughts on the social capital of this community?
4. How do you think the story will end?

Part 2.

The elders knew that they couldn't organise the national gathering by themselves because of the division and most especially, those of the elders who initiated the idea to host the gathering were from one side of the conflict groups. They needed someone from the community who could bring all the conflicting groups together irrespective of their differences. For, without collaboration it would be impossible to organise a successful national gathering for Community X.

Questions:

1. How can they choose someone that everyone will agree on?
2. What factors could influence their decision to choose a unifier?
3. Do you think this community has assets to enable it to organise the gathering?
4. What do they need to mobilise those assets?

Part 3.

A few weeks later, a meeting was called to choose a leader. Even though many community members did not attend the meeting, the elders ended up choosing a community member from the opposite side of the community divide. The person chosen was a social worker, community imam, and from a minority tribe that was at odds with other members of the community. By the time a leader was chosen, Community X had about three more months to bring the community together, raise the necessary resources, and do everything possible to host the annual gathering.

Questions:

1. What assets does the community need to organise the gathering?
2. What does the leader need to help him identify and mobilise the assets?
3. How would the leader build trust and connections?

Part 4.

In the end, the annual independence celebration was successfully held. About ten thousand community members attended from Australia wide for over 3 days period. The community raised more than twenty-five thousand dollars with only three thousand dollars donation from local service providers.

Questions:

1. How did the community raise the necessary resources for the event despite the conflicts?
2. What assets made this possible?
3. What would have happened if the leader was unable to build social capital?