

A-Fem Hui Feedback April 2010

Workshops, Groups, Content, Activities :

What worked:

- Small groups were good.

Caucusing

- Having a 'theme' rather than lots of short unrelated workshops
- Having one workshop in the mornings of Sat, Sun.

Time for each workshop was good and allowed you to be involved.

- Writing stuff up from de-col workshop and having time to read it was valuable.

Good that De-Col and Anti-Racism workshops were prioritized and given lots of time.

- Numbering off groups instead of working with friends meant you get to know others and their politics.

Feeling uncomfortable

Awesome facilitators

The acoustic night and party

Gender inclusion policy empowering, important, positive

What didn't work:

- No physical activities, there's a buildup of energy from workshops
- Rounds in big groups were uncomfortable and hard
- Conflicting workshops was hard when you want to do them all.
- Pakeha unsure of expressing needs/guilt around people of colour

Want a space to continue these discussion after hui.

- Film was canceled and people not notified

Suggestions:

- fun, physical workshops (yoga, dance workshops)
- have workshops outside

have exercise breaks in the workshops themselves

Have organized games, ice-breakers on the first night

- Have more processing time/break time between/after workshops

Have more skillsharing and workshops that are creative not intellectual (like plant workshop and life drawing)

- Have an introduction to Anarcha-feminism, anarcha-feminist ideas

Have workshops that run concurrently at two levels of understanding: basic & developed

- Rounds: using popcorn rounds, find other ways to share talking space, enable it to be ok to pass during rounds, 'peer share'- talking to the person beside you and possibly doing a round for those pairs

- Not have more than 2 coinciding workshops.

Have different time frames for different workshops depending on

content.

Have more feedback from discussion of small groups

- Ageism and classism not mentioned- would be good to include

Schedule in time to talk about important issues that won't clash with the workshops

- Work to find a space for Pakeha to express needs, guilt etc. Keep reminding about the possibility of caucusing and how to do it. Have the pakeha caucus earlier in the weekend.

- Someone to take notes in workshops for mothers who cant attend

Some themes suggested for next year hui: Anti-speciesism, feminism 101& Aotearoa history with active workshops on: mental illness and activism 101, food& bodies, spirituality & activism, survivor support.

Safety issues

What worked:

- Most workshops felt safe

Helpful ground rules

Great safer spaces policy

Visible policy on creating a safe space

What didn't work:

- Fire safety

Safety people were too few, not present in all workshops and not clearly identified

Safe space policy discussion was on too late and was unresolved

Unclear if safer spaces policy was something we agreed to before we came, or was up for negotiation

Suggestions:

- Have at least one safety person in each workshop

- Have a safety team/crew to coordinate safety people beforehand so they are prepared (know what the workshop content is, are prepared emotionally etc) and there's no pressure for others to volunteer at beginning of workshops

- Have safety people easily identified

Safety people not to be assigned to other tasks

- Have a workshop about the meaning and use of the words unsafe and uncomfortable

Make a set safer spaces policy.

Clarify steps that will be taken by the organizing group if a situation occurs.

- Have a non-violent communication workshop

Food and food issues:

What worked:

- Eating area separated from meeting area
- Good snacks provided
Rice milk provided
Good effort to provide for allergies
Food policy
Food was amazing

What didn't work:

- Felt uncomfortable around the possibility of meat being eaten in communal space
- Didn't feel like it was possible to talk about food and bodies because of the emphasis on veganism and the way the issue of food politics was talked about.
Not enough people volunteered for kitchen roster.
Having a meat kitchen in kids area.
No protein for the first couple of days

Suggestions:

- Have all food vegan.
 - Food policy needs to be discussed and made clear.
 - Make space to talk about food&body politics, keeping in mind we won't agree on this.
- Make effort to have all food gluten free
Have more gluten free options at breakfast
Make more of an effort to keep spaces/other food (such as spreads)/utensils free of gluten
Get all food shopping done before beginning of hui
- Have a few people in charge of coordinating food (plan meals, shopping, quantity, can explain how to help in kitchen, know what the menu is)
- Have more snack food throughout the whole day
- Check dumpstered food for quality, especially if people don't know its dumpstered

The space itself, logistics, other organisational issues

What worked:

- Fundraising
 - Location: Wellington was sweet, awesome setting- removed from other places, all ours.
- Facilities: separate kitchen and meeting/workshop areas, hangout kitchen space as safe chill-out space,
Sleeping arrangements, having noisy and quiet cabins
- Having the schedule up
- Having cancellations notified
Good timekeeping

Having a notice board to communicate via and check
Having stalls
Affordable
Easter weekend suited
Comfortable seats
Taking shoes off inside

What didn't work

- Childcare: people not knowing what they could do to help and not asking.
- Getting kicked out of kitchen chill-out area

Suggestions:

- Bigger print in reader
- Have better accessibility for people with mobility impairments
- Create a childcare space in main lounge (as well) so mums can feel included
- Explain the format of the hui and basic principles: how workshops work (big/small groups discussions, role of facilitators, hand signals, consensus making etc), how volunteering for tasks/responsibilities works (ie childcaring/kitchen duties)
- Make sure phones are on silent

Organizing group:

- Only 4 main people organizing hui. Need more of us to help. Maybe sharing responsibility between different centres/cities.

Clarify steps that will be taken by the organizing group if a safety issue situation occurs.

Other

- Not contacting Tangata Whenua
- Comments that assume people's identities are based on what's "cool"/tokenizing people

We need to create adequate time

- Coolness- how to be inclusive sincerely