

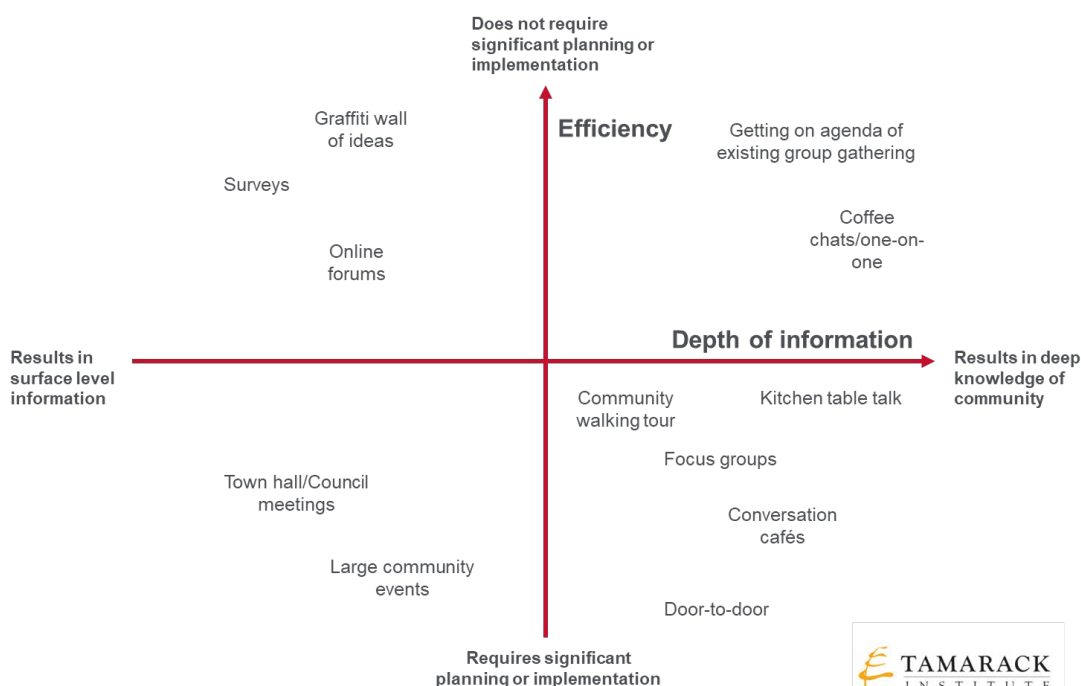
## Module 4:

# Community listening at a glance

## Community listening can take various forms

- **Small conversation:** Individual conversations with community members can provide deeper insights into their unique perspectives, hopes, experiences and needs (example: kitchen conversations).
- **Community forums and online platforms:** Online forums and platforms dedicated to specific communities or neighborhoods can serve as spaces for ongoing dialogue, discussion and collaboration among members (example: neighbourhood Facebook groups).
- **Facilitated small groups:** Small groups of community members are brought together to discuss specific topics or issues in more detail, providing insights and perspectives that may not emerge in larger settings.
- **Event-based activities:** These are events that are organized with a large number of people attending to get feedback or ideas. Examples include town halls, open space or conversation café, or even something casual like a lemonade stand.
- **Surveys and questionnaires:** These tools allow community members to share their opinions, preferences and concerns on various topics, providing data for analysis. Note: surveys are best done with one of the above forms to understand the responses.

## Common methods of community listening



## Here are some things you can do to demonstrate and model active listening:

- **Attentive silence:** Allowing the speaker to talk without interruptions.
- **Nonverbal cues:** Nodding, maintaining eye contact, and using gestures to show understanding and interest.
- **Reflective responses:** Paraphrasing or summarizing what the speaker said to demonstrate understanding.
- **Clarifying questions:** Asking open-ended questions to gain further insight or clarify points.

## Barriers to community listening

- Tension between taking time to listen, and the pressures to take action.
- Preconceived ideas: Making assumptions or judgments before fully understanding the speaker's perspective.
- Lack of proximity to people with diverse perspectives; lack of planning to reduce barriers to engagement (refer to Inclusive Engagement guide).
- It's important to understand cultural norms about dialogue and listening practices. In some cultures, it may be ok to ask direct questions but in others a different approach may be needed.