


# SPILLING THE BEANS:


## A GAME EXPLORING RESILIENCE IN THE REAL WORLD

### WHY PLAY THIS GAME?

One way to describe resilience, is one's ability to adapt and bounce back when things don't go as planned. This simple yet challenging exercise will help both players and observers think strategically and develop a resilience mindset towards planning. The game is aimed at examining resilience and highlighting ways of interpreting the concept. It could, however, be adapted to stimulate discussion around other issues and topics.

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 **Time:** This game should take 15-20 minutes, depending on the level of engagement by participants. It is possible that players may want to engage in long discussions. It is at the discretion of the facilitator as to how long they let the discussions go on for, yet noting that it is important to make everyone feel like their perspective is valuable.

 **Number of players:** This game is designed for 8 players, with all other participants observing the proceedings (Note: The number of observers to be around 25).

 **Your kit should contain the following materials:**

- Large bowl
- Two smaller bowls
- 1 pack of beans / 1 pack of brown lentils / 1 pack of barley
- 8 x marked cups
- 8 x dessert spoons
- 8 x forks
- 1 small table

**Each cup should be marked on the outside with a target audience and a line should be drawn inside the cup:**

Target group	Level of line inside the cup
City Council	Near the top
Neighbouring City Council	Near the bottom
Water Board	Near the top (same as City Council)
National Government	Near the bottom (same as Neighbouring City Council)
Community member	Near the bottom (lower than Neighbouring City Council but higher than National Government)
Farmer	Near the bottom (lower than Neighbouring City Council but higher than community member)
Private sector/Industry	Middle of the cup
River/Dam	Near the bottom (higher than Neighbouring City Council)

# THE GAME

The game consists of three rounds. Each round requires the facilitator to describe a scenario to the players, provided in the guidelines below, and with subsequent actions required by the game participants. At the end of each round the facilitator will be required to collect the tools and set up for a new round. Instructions for how to do this are in these guidelines.

## ROUND ONE



### Facilitation process:

#### 1. Set the scene by telling them about the beans in the bowl

*For example: "The bowl of beans in front of you represents the sole water supply (i.e. the dam). Each bean represents a water droplet".*

#### 2. Set the scene by allocating target groups and selecting 8 active players

*For example: As you give out each cup you brief that participant on the target group: "You represent a community member. A community member needs water to meet their domestic needs each day".*

*Note: Non-active players should form a circle around the active players in order to observe the activities.*

#### 3. Set the scene by telling the active players about the 'setting' of the game and their role in it.

*For example: "As a group you make up a system. Each of you has different water needs represented by the varying water level marks in your cups. It is an average rainfall year and you need to meet your water needs. Fill your cup with beans from the bowl using the abstraction method you have been provided with."*

#### 4. Give them a time allocation

*Note: 45 seconds is optimal*

#### 5. Begin the first round

*Note: Observe how the round plays out and manage the time.*

#### 6. Reflection

*Ask a few observers to make quick comments on what they observed during the first round. Provide some overarching comments.*

### Materials & set up:

- For this round pour all the beans/lentils/barley into one large bowl;
- Place the bowl in the centre of the players;
- Place the forks in the bowl;
- Provide each player with a different cup coinciding with a target group.



## ROUND TWO



### Facilitation process:

#### 1. Set the scene by telling them the scenario for the second round

*For example: "Using what you learnt in Round One, make some changes. A different method of abstraction has been given in order to help meet water demands. The objective is the same i.e. to make sure you meet your water needs".*

#### 2. Give them a time allocation

*Note: Keeping the time the same is optimal.*

#### 3. Begin the second round

*Note: Observe how the round plays out and manage the time.*

#### 4. Give them a time allocation

*Note: 45 seconds is optimal.*

#### 5. Begin the second round

*Note: Observe how the round plays out and manage the time.*

#### 6. Reflection

*Ask a few observers to make quick comments on what they observed. In particular focus should be made to changing the abstraction method – from forks to spoons and how this is linked to improving the resilience of a system. Provide some overarching comments.*

### Materials & set up:

- All active players keep their cups
- Pour all the beans/lentils/barley back into the large bowl
- Place the bowl in the centre of the players
- Place the forks in the bowl
- Place the spoons on the table near the bowl

## ROUND THREE



### Facilitation process:

#### 1. Set the scene by telling them the scenario for the third round

*For example: "Using what you learnt in Round One, make some changes. A different method of abstraction has been given in order to help meet water demands. The objective is the same i.e. to make sure you meet your water needs".*

#### 2. Give them a time allocation

*Note: Keeping the time the same is optimal.*

#### 3. Begin the third round

*Note: Observe how the round plays out and manage the time.*

#### 4. Give them a time allocation

*Note: 45 seconds is optimal*

#### 5. Begin the third round

*Note: Observe how the round plays out and manage the time.*

#### 6. Reflection

### Materials & Set Up:

- All active players keep their cups
- Pour all the beans/lentils/barley into the two smaller bowls (splitting equal amounts)
- Place the bowls at either end of the table
- Place the forks in the bowls (splitting equally between the bowls)
- Place the spoons on the table near the bowls (splitting equally between the bowls)



#### VARIATIONS OF THE GAME CAN OCCUR:

- Time changed between rounds;
- Cup sizes changed per round;
- Each cup can have a low water and high water mark, with the low mark representing essential services (i.e. drinking for a community member) and the high mark representing non-essential services (i.e. watering a garden for a community member);
- The number of beans can be changed between rounds – to represent low rainfall years;
- Lentils/barely can be mixed into the beans at certain rounds – to represent pollution of the water supply;
- Prompting questions can be asked at each round i.e. “how resilient do you think the system was?”.

***NOTE: This game is best played after discussion on what it takes to be a good climate leader (i.e. co-ordination, communication etc.) as these points feed into the game, with both improved leadership qualities and strengthened adaptation allowing for improved resilience.***

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