



The **COMPACT Local Government Collaboration Model** is a catalytic tool developed to foster meaningful collaboration amongst and within the three key municipal stakeholders: the administration, councillors, and the local community (which includes various subgroups like civil society, businesses, and citizens).

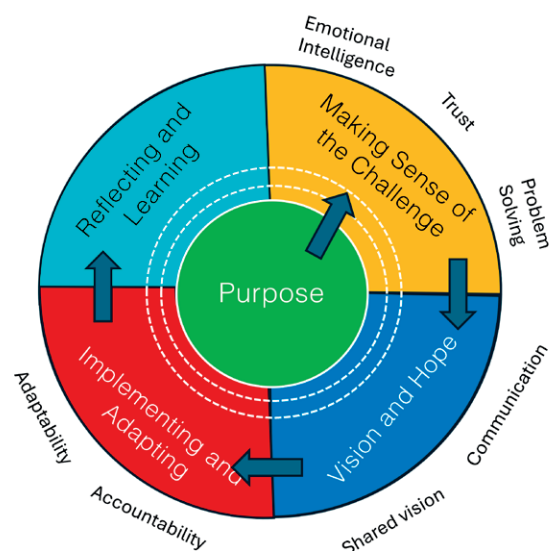
The model focuses on the “how” of collaboration and was developed as a response to the recommendations of the COMPACT action research conducted in 12 partner municipalities.

Collaboration can be defined as **the pooling of different stakeholders and their skills, knowledge and resources** to achieve innovative responses and solutions in response to a common challenge that none can address on their own.

The Five Elements/Steps of Collaboration

The tool offers an alternative to traditional problem-solving by fostering constructive engagement. The model involves five steps:

- 1. Purpose:** The core of the model is understanding the importance of achieving a common goal and identifying the purpose of the collaborative effort.
- 2. Making Sense of the Challenge:** Developing a shared understanding of the challenge, developing a systemic view, and unpacking and prioritising its key elements so we can better understand and navigate its complexity.
- 3. Vision and Hope:** Exploring creative responses to the challenge (enhancing awareness of self, others and systemic dynamics), synthesising insights into a compelling proposition, and establishing a shared agenda for collective action.
- 4. Implementing and Adapting:** Co-creating adaptive leadership principles through real-life scenarios, clarified roles and responsibilities, and finding ways to understand and work with resistance.



- 5. Reflection and Learning:** Synthesising key insights, reflecting across individual, organisational, and systemic levels, confirming ongoing resources, and updating the shared agenda for continued action.

Collaboration workshops encourage community participation by creating a tool for both the community and municipality to address complex problems. They provide perspectives for different stakeholders to learn about how each challenge affects the other, and to co-create solutions to longstanding issues. Key skills and competencies are developed in the process.

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Piloting Workshops in Blue Crane Route and Newcastle Local Municipalities

The COMPACT Local Government Collaboration Model has been piloted in two partner municipalities: Newcastle Local Municipality in KZN and Blue Crane Route Local Municipality in the Eastern Cape. Piloting workshops facilitated by Distillery were held over two days in each of the municipalities. The workshops equipped participants to address a real municipal challenge through a more collaborative, action-oriented approach:

- I Blue Crane Route LM Pilot Workshop** (*Pearston, 22-23 April 2025*): The focus was on the long-standing water crisis in Pearston. An immersion visit to equipped and unequipped boreholes was held to shift understandings of the problem from theoretical to experiential.
- I Newcastle LM Pilot Workshop** (*Madadeni, 29-30 May 2025*): The focus was on the regulation of tuckshops and the role of the municipality in supporting local economic development (LED).

The pilot workshops involved groups of mixed stakeholders discussing and working together around:

- I Identifying and categorising key challenges** and developing a **problem statement** to consolidate the main issues impeding service delivery.
- I Reflecting** on the challenge individually and collectively to **develop inspiration** for the way forward. Mapping the system and providing a forward-looking perspective by creating **vision statements** for the future.
- I Exploring implementation aspects**, establishing a **unified agenda** and identifying **immediate next steps** to address the challenge. Participants also formulated a **set of principles** to guide their collaborative efforts.
- I Identifying priority areas** to streamline efforts in addressing the challenge and **identifying additional stakeholders** who could help expedite solutions.
- I Reflecting** on what had been learned through the collaborative experience to inform how to move forward.

The pilot workshops served as an opportunity to test the collaboration tool and to design facilitation materials. The outcomes of the workshops were used to further refine the model as a fit-for-purpose tool.

Collaboration Model Train-The-Trainer Workshop

A Collaboration Model Train-the-Trainer Workshop was held from 5-7 August 2025 in Gauteng. The aim of the workshop was to learn more about how to introduce collaboration in municipalities and to refine the facilitation guide and materials. The workshop was attended by representatives from Newcastle and Blue Crane Route municipalities, SALGA, PARI and other organisations.

Distillery took participants through five modules related to the steps of the model and surfaced tips and tricks around facilitating workshops at the local government level. Participants left the workshop feeling inspired and motivated to share their learnings with others and to promote collaboration around key issues facing municipalities.



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Co-funded by
the European Union