**Tactic: Madlibs Brainstorming**

*Provide structure to group ideation by guiding participants to clearly articulate a big idea, who it serves, the challenge it addresses, and what’s needed to move it forward.*

**When to Use It:**

Use when breakout groups are expected to generate actionable ideas but need **structure and focus** to avoid vague or meandering discussions. It can also provide clarity and momentum in plenary sharebacks post-breakout. This tool is especially helpful during the **idea development or synthesis phase** of a convening, when it’s time to translate big themes into clear, concise, and shareable proposals.

**How it Works:**

**Step 1 (5 minutes) | Introduce the Madlibs template and set expectations**

Explain that each group will complete a simple fill-in-the-blank worksheet to sharpen their “Big Idea” and make it actionable. Walk through each part of the Madlibs sentence so participants understand what’s being asked—and emphasize clarity over perfection.

**Step 2 (30 minutes) | Break into small groups and complete the template**

Groups collaborate to fill in the Madlibs worksheet, capturing: The core idea, the change it creates, who it serves, the challenge it addresses, what’s needed to move it forward. Encourage groups to designate a scribe and move quickly. Remind them this is a draft, not a final pitch.

**Step 3 (15–20 minutes) | Reconvene for plenary report-backs**

Each group shares their completed Madlib with the larger room. The facilitator can group similar ideas, highlight standout patterns, or prompt deeper questions—transforming the report-out into a moment of synthesis and shared direction.

**Helpful Tips:**

* **Share collaboratively.** Print the worksheet or drop it into a shared online doc.
* **Record group input.** Designate a group scribe to capture input.
* **Frame as beginning.** Reinforce that this is a starting point, not an endpoint.

