



Community Conversations for Social Transformation: A Resource Guide for Country Offices



Version 1, May 2021

**Community Conversations for Social Transformation:
A Resource Guide for Country Offices**

"There is no power for change greater than a community
discovering what it cares about." –

Margaret J. Wheatley

This resource guide has been made possible by the support of **Irish Aid** and the generous support of the Irish people through donations to GOAL.



[Cover photograph: A Community Conversation session held in Uganda, 2018. Photograph by Sam Okidi Aqago.](#)

Established in 1977 GOAL is an international humanitarian and development agency, committed to working with communities to achieve sustainable and innovative early response in crises, and lasting solutions to poverty and vulnerability. GOAL has worked in over 60 countries and responded to almost every major humanitarian disaster and are currently operational in 13 countries globally. GOAL's purpose is to save lives and empower communities to develop resilience and greater control over their lives and livelihoods. GOAL aims to increase the resilient wellbeing of the world's poorest people and focuses on those who are excluded or marginalised, particularly those who are vulnerable due to socio-economic status, gender or age. Intervention focus areas include: food and livelihood security; health and nutrition; water and sanitation; and humanitarian assistance, resilience and social behaviour change.

Resource Guide Published in 2021 by:

GOAL GLOBAL
Carnegie House
Library Road
Dun Laoghaire
Co. Dublin
A96 CW7
Ireland

Author

Geraldine McCrossan and Grace Duffy

Statement on Acknowledgement

The present document aims to provide public access to the Community Conversation Resource Guide for other organisations who wish to implement the CC approach as part of social change. We ask that GOAL be explicitly and visibly credited in any use of the material or the approach.

This is a working document. Any comments or correction to this version may be sent to: gmccrossan@goal.ie or gduffy@goal.ie

Acknowledgements

The Community Conversation for Social Transformation Resource Guide was developed to assist GOAL to implement an evidenced-based approach to community empowerment for social transformation. GOAL's CC approach builds on the lessons and evidence gathered from implementing pilot programmes in Uganda and other agencies' implementation of the CC process in the last twenty years. GOAL's approach is adapted from [UNDP's Community Capacity Enhancement Approach](#) 1999 with the additions of participatory learning in action tools from [Oxfam's Gender Action Learning System](#) (GALS).

Contents

Abbreviations & Acronyms 5

Figures 5

About this Resource Guide 6

 Who is this Resource Guide for 6

 How should this Resource Guide be used? 6

Introduction 6

 The History 7

 Concepts of the Community Conversations Process 7

 Change and Transformation..... 7

 Social Cohesion..... 7

 Reflection and Resonance..... 8

 Power 8

Community Change Process 9

Community Conversation Process 9

 Objectives of Community Conversation Process 9

 Expected Outcomes..... 10

 The Six Phases 11

 Phase 1: Building Trust and Relationships 11

 Phase 2: Identifying Community Concerns 11

 Phase 3: Exploring Concerns 11

 Phase 4: Decision Making and Commitment to Action 12

 Phase 5: Actions 12

 Phase 6: Reflection and Review 12

 Implementation of the CC process..... 13

 Review and Monitoring of CC Process..... 15

 Monitoring..... 16

 Evaluation..... 16

 Materials Needed for the Sessions 16

 Training of Community Facilitators 18

 Objectives of the Training Workshop for Community Facilitators..... 18

 Expectations of the Training Workshop for Community Facilitators 18

 Agenda Presentation..... 19

 Introductions (Acknowledgement Tool) 20

 Rules and Regulation (Minister of Justice Tool)..... 21

 Documentation (Daily Journal Tool) 22

 Skills of a Community Facilitator 23

 Skill 1: Participatory Facilitation 24

 Skill 2: Stories through Role-Plays and Short Story Creation..... 25

 Skill 3: Building Trust 27

 Skill 4: Strategic Questioning..... 28

 Skill 5: Active Listening..... 30

 Skill 6: Curiously Engaged..... 32

Community Conversations Session Tools 33

 Reflection..... 33

| | |
|--|----------|
| Resonance | 34 |
| PLA Tools for the Community Sensitisation | 35 |
| Change Happens Over Time (Historical Timeline) | 35 |
| Power Walk Tool | 36 |
| Venn Diagram..... | 37 |
| PLA Tools for Community Reality and Change Sessions | 38 |
| Stock-Taking Tool | 38 |
| Socio-Cultural Dynamics and Poverty | 39 |
| Community Net Tool..... | 40 |
| Gender Dynamics (Gender Box) | 42 |
| Values & Behaviours (Integral Framework / Four-Quadrant Framework) | 43 |
| Power Relations | 45 |
| Change and Language | 46 |
| Change and Perception | 47 |
| Transect Walk and Mapping Tool | 49 |
| Story-Telling..... | 50 |
| Cassava Tool | 53 |
| Vision Board | 55 |
| Tools for Documentation | 56 |
| Community and Facilitator’s Walls | 56 |
| Annexes | i |
| Annex 1: Monitoring Forms | i |
| Community Conversation Session Summary | i |
| Quarterly Summary | ii |
| Annex 2: Review and Refresher Self-Assessment Tools | iv |
| 1. Self-Assessment on Skills Development | iv |
| 2. Self-Assessment on Competence on PLA Tools | v |
| Annex 3: Pre Test and Post Test..... | vii |
| Annex 4: Evaluation of the Community Facilitators Training..... | ix |
| Annex 5: Guide to Recording the CC Session by the Community Facilitators | xi |
| Annex 6: Strategic Questioning..... | xii |
| Annex 7: Community Aptitude Assessment | xiv |

Abbreviations & Acronyms

| | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|
| CC | Community Conversations |
| CO | Country Office |
| PLA | Participatory Learning and Action |

Figures

- Figure 1: The Four Types of Power
- Figure 2: The Six Key Phases of the Community Conversation Process
- Figure 3: Sample of a Daily Journal Tool
- Figure 4: Example of a Venn Diagram
- Figure 5: The Integral Framework
- Figure 6: Sample Drawing of the Cassava Tool for Exploring Concerns
- Figure 7: The Four Columns of the Community Wall
- Figure 8: The Four Columns of the Facilitator's Wall

About this Resource Guide

Who is this Resource Guide for

This Resource Guide was developed to support GOAL Country Office management to operationalise GOAL's Community Conversation (CC) for Social Transformation approach. The CC approach for social transformation is GOAL's community engagement approach that recognises that communities have an inherent ability that, when harnessed, they can transform their social and gender norms for greater resilience and well-being. This resource guide was developed based on GOAL's learning from CC pilots in Uganda and learning from other agencies' implementation and has been adapted so that GOAL's CC programmes will focus on increasing the aptitude of individuals and communities to:

1. Build social cohesion in diverse and dynamic communities.
2. Increase the social and economic inclusion of youth and adolescents.
3. Improve equality in household decision making and communication between women and men.

How should this Resource Guide be used?

The resource is intended as a guide for senior management and implementing teams within GOAL's Country Offices (COs). Elements of the guide may be adapted according to country situation, in-country laws, perceptions and local capacities, and the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic. GOAL will continuously review, adapt and update this guide based on learning from programme implementation.

Introduction

Community Conversations (CC) is a simple and non-linear process that empowers people to analyse and transform their community. It is a facilitated community discussion that utilises participatory facilitation and *Participatory Learning and Action (PLA)*¹ tools over 24 sessions that builds trust and strengthens relationships within families and communities. The CC conversation provides a space where everyone can discuss and reflect on concerns that affect their daily lives. Using the PLA tools communities and individuals can safely identify and discuss sensitive issues that are embedded within their social norms and values and are challenged to generate collective solutions to the issues identified, facilitating change that comes from within the community and is owned by the community.

The process allows a detailed exploration of community's concerns. People can discuss and examine in an in-depth way the connections between values and behaviours at an individual, relational and societal level. Once people can visualise a different future for themselves, their families, and communities, they have an increased capacity to make dynamic decisions that can transform their

¹ Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) is an umbrella term for a wide range of similar approaches and methodologies, including Participatory Rural Appraisal, Rapid Rural Appraisal, Participatory Learning Methods, Participatory Action Research, and many others. The common theme to all these approaches is the full participation of people in the processes of learning about their needs and opportunities, and in the action required to address them.

lived reality. Throughout the process, reflection (both introspective and collective) allows individuals and communities to see their role in the change process.

The History

In the late 1990s, UNDP developed the Community Capacity Enhancement model to promote the prevention of HIV and AIDS. Community Conversations was an aspect of this model that allowed communities to identify and find their own solutions to preventing HIV and AIDS.

Many governments and agencies across Africa adopted the approach to address the underlying fear, stigma and harmful and traditional practices that assisted in fuelling the HIV pandemic. Subsequently, the CC process has been used to address a wide range of issues that require a change in social norms and values at community level. In Kenya and Sierra Leone Concern Worldwide² use CC to address educational issues; Save the Children³ use CC in Kenya to address issues affecting adolescent girls; and the Nelson Mandela Foundation⁴ uses CC to address issues on xenophobia and strengthen social cohesion. A study conducted by the Centre for the Health Economics University of Oxford showed that CC contributed to changing values and behaviours regarding household decision making and men's responsibility on sexual abuse.⁵

In 2016 GOAL adopted the process to work with conflict-affected communities in northern Uganda to address the root causes of poor household food security resulting in reducing the abuse of alcohol in their community and increasing women's role in household decision making. This had a direct consequence on increasing the community's social cohesion, with a control study showing that in CC villages 76% of the community felt that they knew their problems and how to solve them compared to 4% in the control villages.

Concepts of the Community Conversations Process

Change and Transformation

The concept of *Change and Transformation* in CC is grounded in the belief that people's social norms change constantly and can transform. Changes are not always obvious, and transformation can happen over time, without being noticed. The CC process allows people to believe that they can make significant changes in their socio-cultural norms and have better lives. It teaches that what might be seen as impossible can be very possible, and that positive changes can be made at an individual, relational and societal level.

Social Cohesion

Our values, attitudes and behaviours are influenced by our desire to belong in society at several levels:

- As an individual (individual)
- In relationships (relational)
- Within our community (societal)

² Concern Worldwide, *Success stories from the Concern and Irish Aid partnership* [\[link\]](#)

³ Save the Children (2017) *Using the Community Conversation Approach to Tackle Gender Inequalities: Learning brief* [\[link\]](#)

⁴ Nelson Mandela Foundation, *Community Conversations: Social Cohesion* [\[link\]](#)

⁵ de Cao et al. (2017) *Community conversations as a strategy to change harmful traditional practices against women*, Applied Economics Letters, 24:2, 72-74 [\[link\]](#)

The concept of social cohesion is broad and relates to the internal social and cultural coherence of society. One dimension of social cohesion is the belonging and trust that people feel, the norms and values that govern interactions among people, and countering inequalities and social exclusion. The other dimension relates to the trust between societies and the institutions in which they are embedded. Social cohesion is often referred to as the glue that holds societies together.

Reflection and Resonance

Self-reflection and communal reflection on values and behaviours are important aspects of the process. Participants are encouraged to look within themselves for answers and examine their values and behaviours related to their families and others.

As part of the process, Community Conversations participants are encouraged to share with the wider community what is discussed, learned and planned. The expectation is that this sharing will cause a “ripple effect”. Messages will reach and resound with a wider audience to promote change outwards from the Community Conversations to broader society.

Power

In order to address or change strong cultural behaviours and attitudes that cause and maintain poverty, the CC process depends on individuals, families and communities strengthening four interconnected types of power:

Resource Power: Access to and influence over household and community resources.

Knowledge Power: The understanding of how to use **family and community resources** to increase their value.

Positional Power: The ability to negotiate rights and entitlements and fulfil responsibility and obligations to overcome poverty.

Personal Power: A sense of self-esteem and self-worth. A personal realisation and motivation to claim resource knowledge and positional power to cope with challenges.



Figure 1: The Four Types of Power⁶

People have varying degrees of power. PLA aims to strengthen all types of power and to make full use of the power found within people to empower people, families and communities to address social norms and behaviours that cause and maintain poverty.

⁶ Community Transformation 2000 Ed. Anna Hope.

Community Change Process

Community change occurs through individuals and communities having the space to explore and change their values, attitudes and practices to create an inclusive community. The CC process allows people to believe that significant changes can be made to socio-cultural norms and people can transform their lives for the better. However, processes are complex, and a supportive facilitation process is key to bringing about the change. Transformation is deeper and more sustainable than change. For transformation to happen there are several steps. In a simplified sense, **individuals firstly need to change their perspective** (point of view) and then **influence others to change their perspectives, who in turn influence others**. Gradually the change fans outwards to the wider community and the social cohesion of the society begins to change, leading to transformation over time.

What is an inclusive community?

A community where each and every person:

- Respects each other
- Trusts each other
- Listens to each other
- Learns from each other
- Empowers each other
- Values the contribution of everyone in the community

Community Conversation Process

The CC process is a simple, non-linear process that promotes transformation within a community. The process brings a whole community together to examine and transform their community for the benefit of everyone in the community. It starts with the community examining the reality of their lives, their opportunities and the difficulties they face. Everyone is respected and valued within the process, whatever their age, gender or background. Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) is the underlying methodology used in the process. People actively learn through utilising participatory problem-solving activities. They experience a new way of doing things and begin to see how it feels to be *in someone else's shoes* (by understanding another person's perspective). Using PLA tools, individuals within the community increase their participation in changing issues/concerns that affect their lives. Community members become central figures in community change; the people driving the transformation.

PLA in a Nutshell:

A way to help people to participate together in learning, and then act on that learning

Objectives of Community Conversation Process

The Community Conversation Process objectives are:

- To increase the self-efficacy of individuals to embed the values of equity, equality, inclusion and respect for human dignity as a strength of their community.
- To provide each person in the community the opportunity to participate in discussions on their social and gender norms, and the power relations within their families and communities, and how these positively or negatively affects their interactions with others.

Expected Outcomes

The process provides individuals, families and communities the opportunity to adopt empowering attitudes and behaviours so that:

- Everyone in the community reflects in their interactions with others the values of equity, equality, inclusion and respect.
- People have the aptitude to take action to change social and gender norms that negatively affect their families and community.
- Communities have the self-efficacy to acknowledged and address their weaknesses.

The Six Phases

There are six key phases in this process.

Phase 1: Building Trust and Relationships

Building a relationship of mutual trust and respect between everyone in the community is the foundation of this process.

The issues or 'concerns' that people will talk about in the CC process are sensitive and often not previously spoken about, so a space must be created that allows them to feel safe and free to talk. Therefore, the **Community Facilitators are chosen from the community** as they have a deep appreciation of the community's social and gender norms and values. It is from this understanding that the Community Facilitators provide a platform for people to identify and discuss their concerns, and reflect together to generate solutions to those concerns.



Figure 2: The Six Key Phases of the Community Conversation Process

Phase 2: Identifying Community Concerns

People have many issues that they really care about and that affect people deeply, triggered by their own perception of the problem. Communities have the capacity to identify their own concerns and solutions and this process, using participatory facilitation, empowers them to do that. If the supporting agency (any outsiders) imposes their views onto the community, this may not result in identifying the real concerns of the people. Consequently, any solution that evolves from such an imposition may not work.

Phase 3: Exploring Concerns

Identified concerns are put through a rigorous exploration process using community-sensitive language and techniques (such as story-telling and mapping), guided by strategic questioning and listening.

- The process allows the community to explore the concerns in detail, "like peeling an onion" to gain an understanding of the underlying factors causing each identified concern.
- Using community-sensitive language and skills (such as story-telling and mapping) and guided by strategic questioning and active listening each layer of a concern is explored to see how they are related to the values and behaviours of people at individual, relational and societal level.
- As exploration continues people will begin to see the social and gender norms that strengthen their community and those that weaken their community.

- The exploration allows people to visualise a community that has the values of equity, equality, inclusion and respect for all.

Phase 4: Decision Making and Commitment to Action

- Once people are in a place where they can visualise a different future for their families and communities, they have an increased capacity to make dynamic decisions that can transform their communities.
- As each concern is explored, **decisions are reached** on what the community should do and **action plans are easily developed**. The decisions are focused on what changes should be implemented and sustained to create a more inclusive community. Decisions must come from the community. (Community Facilitators must ensure that at this point they do not steer the community towards decisions that suit the supporting agency)
- Actions on decisions must involve as many community members as possible so that the community assumes ownership of the process and this will ensure long-lasting changes are implemented.
- The community can recognise how and who can support them in this change and have the confidence to request for that assistance.

Phase 5: Actions

- Decisions and action plans are reached throughout the process and Community Facilitators should encourage the communities to act on what has been agreed as swiftly as possible.
- Once people start to act and see actual changes in people's values and behaviours they will be motivated to continue the exploration of concerns and changes in the community.

Phase 6: Reflection and Review

- Review happens at each session and is a facilitated reflection and review, not an evaluation, based on the respect for the capacity of communities to identify their own changes and indicators of change.
- It involves an analysis of individual perspectives and monitoring of the change in values, attitudes and behaviours as they take place. The tools, such as the community and facilitator's walls, mapping and the cassava tool are the visual documentation of discussions and social changes that have occurred.
- While Reflection is a phase of the process, it is also a practice linking all phases of the process. Each community session starts with reflection, both introspective and collective, allowing individuals and communities to see their role in the change. It captures the community values, attitudes and behaviours throughout the process and is one of the cornerstones of the process.
- An important part of this phase is Resonance, a skill that expands on the ability of the community to transfer and share lessons with their friends and neighbours but also other communities in their districts and beyond.

Implementation of the CC process

- **Community Sensitisation:** An introduction session of the CC process to the community to demonstrate the concept to the community. It is led by facilitators trained at the CC training of trainers and has three main objectives:
 1. Identify the overall question - as with all conversations a question would be required to be answered. For example, *How does family relationships exclude adolescents from decision making?* or *What is happening within our community that the majority of under-five children die before two years of age?*
 2. Request the community to choose three people who would be willing to be trained in the CC skills and tools and facilitate the CC process. Agree with the community the criteria for how to choose their Community Facilitators.
 3. Request the community to consider a location within the community where the CC sessions can be held.

These next two phases are the main conversation session, taking people through the steps of the CC process on each major concern.

- **Community Reality:** This comprises the first six Community Conversation sessions and focuses on identifying and documenting the community concerns around **the question** being discussed.
- **Community Change:** This comprises the remainder of the CC sessions where concerns are explored and community decisions taken for change.

Each Community Conversation has 24 CC sessions over a period of 12 to 18 months. The Community Conversation will pose a question that is discussed and analysed over the 24 CC sessions. As the sessions start to dig deep into root causes, it may appear that it is digressing away from the main question. The facilitators should allow this to happen as it should be remembered that issues are often interconnected. For example, talking about food security can lead communities to talk about alcohol abuse and household decision making, not just about the crops they should grow.

Sessions take place in each community **every 15 days**, at a time of the community's choosing. Sessions are facilitated by three Community Facilitators: one facilitates the conversation and two write down what is said within the session⁷. **No remuneration** is provided to Community Facilitators except for transport costs for attending the training and review meeting. It is key that this is adhered to allowing the Community Facilitators the freedom to facilitate the CC process so that the community find their own solutions.

Everyone in the community is invited to attend the CC session so the sessions can be large or quite small. Experience would show that initially there will be a high attendance which tapers off in the middle of the process and then, as change starts to happen, attendance increases again. As group work is used to hear the voices of the community, Community Facilitators should not worry about there being too many people at the session, but it is recommended that there should be no more than 110 people. This high number can happen in urban areas and it is advised if it does happen that the community is enrolled to start a new conversation. As resonance is a key principle of the

⁷ There are recording skills that are taught to the facilitators and is a cornerstone of ensuring that it is the community's perspective that is recorded, and not the facilitators interpretation of what is said.

approach, even if there are only 5 people the session continues and, as noted, the numbers will increase when the community sees value in the process.

Session One (1 hour)

1. Introduction of members. At every session all new people are asked to introduce themselves, saying their names and what was that made them decide to come. The facilitator always thanks them for coming to the session. (10 mins)
2. Explain to the community the CC process, what will happen, when it will take place, etc.
3. Now divide the community into groups and ask them to discuss:
 - What are the strengths of their community?
 - What do they like about their community?
4. Discuss the feedback in plenary.
5. Now demonstrate the community wall by adding the notes from the feedback session on the strengths and what people like about their community. Explain that this how the community will be able to keep a record for what is happening and see their changes.
6. Ask the community to consider where they would like to display the community wall so that it can be seen by everyone – maybe the community centre, church, school, in the market place, etc.
7. Now ask them what rules they would like for each session (use the [Minister of Justice](#) tool to guide you).
8. Now explain what Resonance is and ask them to share with their family and friends what was discussed, and for them to invite their family and friends to the next session.

From Session 2 onwards

Each following Community Conversation session is structured the same and should not last any longer than **2 hours**.

1. Introduction of members. At every session all new people are asked to introduce themselves, saying their names and what was that made them decide to come. The facilitator always thanks them for coming to the session. (10 mins)
2. Mapping where the community is at in the CC process – facilitators summarise for the community from the community wall, and ask the community about the sharing they did with their family and friends since the last session. (10 mins)
3. Facilitators now facilitate a CC tool that is appropriate for what is being discussed⁸ and ask a strategic question that will be discussed in the groups. At this stage there are no open discussions, which is important for timekeeping purposes. (20 mins)
4. Divide the participants into groups to discuss the question posed. (20 mins)

⁸ The tool is decided during the review that the CF do after each CC session.

5. Each group reports back their discussion, and a plenary is facilitated. (45 mins)
6. Facilitators now invite the participants to share what was discussed at the session with their friends and families and encourage the participants to invite new people to the next meeting. (15 mins)
7. Close the meeting.

Review and Monitoring of CC Process

This takes places after each session. A trained supervisor should support the Community Facilitators by attending the first six sessions and initially support them in the following review of the session:

1. The facilitators review the recording notes and add the main points to the community and facilitator's walls.
2. The facilitators then prepare for the next session:
 - a. Reviewing where the process is at in identifying and exploring concerns
 - b. Prepare a visual summary of the major concerns being identified. (Here you can start using the root tool, drawing each concern in the middle. This can then be updated every week – with the tools used and the decisions made)
 - c. Deciding what strategic question will be asked that moves the change process forward
 - d. Deciding the PLA tool that will be used.
 - e. Agreeing how they will practice the PLA tool before the next session.
3. Complete the monitoring form and submit to supervisor.

After every sixth session

It is recommended that after every six sessions a **one-day review/refresher meeting** is held for the Community Facilitators to discuss i) the progress, ii) the challenges that they are having, and iii) review the PLA tools they are using and pick at least one or two PLA tools to practice in the refresher session. The Community Facilitators should bring to this session a summary of the community and facilitator's walls (pictures of the wall are useful here) and their record books of the sessions. Two tools to support the review can be found [here](#).

After the 24th Session

A celebration session is held with the community where they discuss and review their progress using the community wall and the Most Significant Change stories. The format of this should be left to the community themselves to decide and they should be encouraged to invite other communities and other stakeholders.

Monitoring

Process indicators are gathered through the session monitoring forms and the quarterly data summary ([Annex 1](#)) and inputted into a monitoring database.

Change in values, attitudes and behaviours are often difficult to measure but the CC does gather change through the [community and facilitator's walls](#). This is difficult to enter in a database so often a simple aptitude (capacity) assessment sheet is developed where the supervisor with the community can assess their own changes. This assessment sheet can be developed after the 6th session where the community has already acknowledged the various issues they have around social and gender norms. An example of an aptitude assessment sheet can be found [here](#).

Evaluation

There are several methodologies that can be used to assess the changes that took place:

1. [Outcome Harvesting](#): is a methodology that looks back at change. It is particularly suited to CC as Outcome Harvesting both identifies the intended and unintended outcomes of the process. It is a simple process for CC in that the community and facilitator's walls and the root tool provide an accurate documentation of the changes that occurred which are reviewed in an Outcome Harvesting workshop at the end of the 24 sessions.
2. [Most Significant Change Stories](#): These are documentation of the change seen from an individual or household perspective. They can be captured at the very end of the process or individuals/households can be tracked throughout the process.
3. A baseline and end-line [Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices](#) survey pertaining to the main concern that is being discussed can be conducted. The questions must be specific around the perspectives, practices or behaviours, and social and gender norms only. This methodology is not as well suited to CC as it does not capture any changes outside of these indicators. However, it is often used, given donor and organisational demands for quantitative baseline and end-lines studies.

Materials Needed for the Sessions

The Community Facilitators are provided with the necessary materials:

- To record the sessions, a hardback A4 book of 200 pages is recommended (4 per community).
- Flipchart paper and marker pens are provided to create the community and facilitator's walls.
- As PLA tools are used, local materials are used during the session to demonstrate the tool, such as stones, drawing circles with sticks, etc. This means that the participants can see how to recreate the tool when they are sharing with their friends and family after each session. One of the recorders can draw the finished tools in their books that are created by the community.

Community Sensitisation Guide

This is a 2-hour session in each community, facilitated by the trainers who participated in the Training of Trainers.

The **objectives** of Community Sensitisation are to:

1. Introduce the community to the CC process
2. Explore the social norms and values that the communities have on social cohesion, change, power and inclusion.
3. Given those social norms and values, explore what would be an overall concern that the community would like to change, e.g. *What is happening that our children are dying before five years of age?* or *What is happening that families do not have sufficient foods resources?* or *What is happening that our woman are dying in childbirth?* or *What is happening that our teenagers are not valued?* (It is important that the GOAL staff do not impose a question on the community around the indicator they are trying to achieve)

The Sensitisation Session is conducted using the **following guide**:

1. Introduction and explain the reason for your visit (10 mins)
2. Provide a simple explanation of the CC process and say that today you want to demonstrate what would happen in a CC session (10 mins)
3. Facilitate one of the three tools and end with a strategic question to the community (20 mins) (see [link for the tool section](#))
4. Now divide the community into groups to discuss the strategic question posed (20 mins)
5. Now ask groups for their feedback and facilitate a plenary (20 mins)
6. Now discuss if they would be happy to have this process, and from the discussion what do they think their main concern is regarding their everyday lives. At this stage, document several concerns that they might have - see objectives above and decide if there is consensus on an overall concern. (Be sure that you are not discussing "wish lists")
7. Now ask them to discuss over the next week which three people from their community would be willing to be trained as a Community Facilitator. The only guideline being that they do need to be able to read and write, not be a community worker for government, or a leader. At the end of the CC process the Community Facilitator will obtain a certificate for being trained in participatory facilitation. Give them the dates of the training for the Community Facilitators and the date when they need to communicate the names to you.
8. Close the meeting.

Outcomes of the Meeting

1. The community agrees to the CC session.
2. They are clear on how to select the Community Facilitators and when the training is.
3. At this stage there is no time or day agreed on when the CC would occur. Once the Community Facilitators are trained the time is agreed between them and the community. Often these sessions can occur at weekends or in the evenings.

Training of Community Facilitators

The success of the CC process depends on the skill of the Community Facilitators being able to facilitate the process in a participatory and learning way. The training workshop is designed to allow the Community Facilitators the space to learn participatory facilitation skills and participatory learning tools. The workshop is conducted over five to six days by two facilitators who have been trained in participatory facilitation.

General Rules of a Participatory Facilitated Workshop

- The trainer should be respected, responsible and dynamic (someone the participants can trust)
- The trainer should always demonstrate the skills of participatory facilitation to encourage openness, trust and courage for the participants to engage.
- The workshop should give Community Facilitators as much practise as possible of participatory facilitation skills and the tools.

Objectives of the Training Workshop for Community Facilitators

The objectives of the training workshop for Community Facilitators is to provide the space for the Community Facilitators to learn:

- The skills of Participatory Facilitation
- How to facilitate using the PLA tools
- How to conduct a CC session
- How to monitor the process

Expectations of the Training Workshop for Community Facilitators

The trainer should:

- Create a participatory way for the participants to express their expectations of the workshop within the above objectives, e.g. break into groups and discuss, then direct each group to come forward and write/represent their expectations on a piece of flip chart paper (or orally if more appropriate).
- Facilitate a discussion on the expectations to clarify each one and what it will take for each expectation to be met. (Emphasise that meeting the expectations is as much the responsibility of the participants as it is the trainers).

Skills Building of the Community Facilitators

The initial training workshop is the **first step** in building the aptitude and the skills of the Community Facilitators. At the refresher and review meeting further development of skills are conducted using [these two self-assessment forms found here](#). At the end of the 24 sessions the supervisors should support an assessment of the Community Facilitator using the self-assessment form and provide the Community Facilitators with a certificate confirming that they are trained in participatory facilitation.

Agenda Presentation

Explain that there is an agenda outline of the main areas to be covered in the workshop to provide the flexibility to continue the training from where it was left off the day before. The trainers need to decide how fast or slow the workshop can go depending on the learning capacity of the Community Facilitators.

A [pre-test and post-test](#) are administrated as per GOAL's guidelines for all trainings. An [evaluation](#) of the workshop is conducted on the last day of the training.

Proposed daily Outline for 6 hours of learning (excludes breaks)

- Recap of the previous day (30 mins)
- Reflection (10 mins)
- Explain an aspect/principle of the CC process (60 mins - 1 hr)
- PLA skills and/or Tools of the day (explained and practiced) (250 mins - 4hrs)

Introductions (Acknowledgement Tool)

Intentions

- Participants begin to build strong relationships
- Each participant feels valued for their contributions and respected for who they are in the community
- A safe space is created where everyone feels free to share sensitive issues

Introductions are important to allow everyone in the community to begin building trust and relationships of mutual respect. In the training the Community Facilitators see the importance of listening and acknowledging contributions of everyone in the workshop. This skill needs to be carried through to the CC process as a part of the relationship building.

Steps in the Tool

The trainer requests that **the participants find a partner**. The partner should be a person they do not know.

Using the questions below, **everyone begins a conversation with their partner**.

- Name (that they would like people to call them by)?
- Community of origin?
- Favourite hobbies?
- Strengths/what they most like about themselves?
- What do you feel you can contribute to the workshop/training?

After sharing, **each person presents her/his partner** using the information collected during the conversation.

The trainer now merges the participants into groups with at least five people in each group and these groups now form a 'community' for the remainder of the workshop.

Each group:

- Firstly gives their 'community' a name
- Then discuss the following two questions (drawing⁹ their answers on a flipchart)
- What are the strengths of your 'community' (the things you like about your new 'community')?
- What are the important challenges facing your new 'community' during the workshop?

In plenary, facilitate **a feedback session** emphasising how each person's strength and contribution will enhance the workshop and how important all of the participants are to the workshop. Be sure to display all the drawings.

⁹ It is important that drawing is used as much as possible to represent the outcomes of discussion as drawing is used to visualise much of the outcomes of the CC session.

Rules and Regulation (Minister of Justice Tool)

Intentions

- Participants formulate rules and agreements about attitudes and behaviours that will guide their interaction during the workshop
- Participants understand they are responsible for the success of the workshop, and accountable to the rules they have set

Every community has its own rules and regulations that guide it. The CC process also needs rules and regulations. These should be established by the participants themselves, which will increase their accountability. (Also used in CC sessions)

Steps in the Tool

In plenary, discuss the importance of mutual respect, and agree acceptable behaviours during the workshop.

Explain the possibility of showing the ground rules in picture form when facilitating in the communities. For example, if you need to show 'No Smoking in the meeting room!', you could put an 'X' over a picture of a cigarette.

Divide the participants into groups of 4 to 5 people and give each group pieces of paper and markers for drawing.

Each group presents their agreed upon rule-picture in the plenary session and explains its meaning.

Check whether other groups have similar drawings, and decide with participants which one best expresses the desired rule.

Reach consensus on each proposed rule and paste the pictures on the wall.

Now in plenary decide which 'community' will be a Ministry of Justice for each day of the workshop, so that they as a 'community' then take responsibility for the rules.

TIP: The trainer needs to ensure that it is just not one person being the rule keeper in each group. Being responsible is an important part of demonstrating that you can be trusted and for participatory facilitation this is an important part of the training.

Documentation (Daily Journal Tool)

Intentions

- Participants gain an understanding of the importance of documentation as part of community capacity strengthening.
- Participants develop a working definition of documentation and discuss and agree what forms of documentation will be used throughout the workshop and the Community Conversation Process
- Community Facilitators learn how to document people perspectives (exact words)

In CC, it is necessary that the community process is documented as it happens and that documentation is an accurate reflection of what has happened. After each session, the Community Facilitators write on a wall the perspectives shared by the community in response to the concern being addressed.

It is important to **use the exact words people use** to encourage ownership of the process and outcomes. If a community uses its own means of documenting the sessions, this will further strengthen ownership. Documentation provides the basis for effective reviews and mapping of the way forward in the decision making phase.

Community Facilitators are also involved in the learning process. Community Facilitators should be encouraged to document their change alongside that of the community on the facilitator’s wall.

When people record an event or meeting, they usually record their own interpretation of the discussions. So, throughout this training of facilitators, the participants need to practise recording what is actually said. This practise allows them to represent the views and vision of the community on the community wall, not their own facilitator’s interpretation.

Step in the Tool

In plenary facilitate a discussion of the following questions:

- **What is documentation** and what is the value of documentation?
- **What should be documented** in the workshop and during the CC process?

Now explain the process of how the CC is documented by two facilitators (see guide [here](#)).

What are other useful tools in the documentation process (for example, facilitators notes, journals, mapping, historical timelines, and stories)?

Now present a sample of a daily journal tool for recording the workshop and request each participant to develop their own daily journal tool where they can capture the perspectives of others.

TIP: The trainer needs to ensure that each participant is keeping a daily journal and is capturing the tools used, what was actually said and their own thoughts on the tools. This is then used for the recap every day of the workshop and supports the Community Facilitators to record what people actually say figure 3 below for an example of a daily journal).

| Day | Skill & Tools | My perspective | What others said about the skill and tools (their perspective) | My learning |
|-------|---|--|--|---|
| Day 1 | Acknowledgement tool Skill – Trust Minister of Justice Tool | Did not know that introduction where important to build relationships. I can show that I am trustworthy by keeping my word on the rules | 'Hearing the strengths of the community made me see that there is lot I do not know about people I know" "Trust is demonstrated not something you have" | How important it is to understand that everyone sees thing differently. |

Figure 3: Sample of a Daily Journal Tool

Skills of a Community Facilitator

Participatory facilitation and participatory learning in action (PLA) tools are used to coordinate, guide, and mobilise participation in the CC change process. The Community Facilitators uses five skills to facilitate a range of PLA tools over the 24 sessions. *PLA is a family of approaches, and tools, attitudes, and behaviours to enable and empower people to present, share, analyse and enhance their knowledge of life and conditions, and to plan, act, monitor, evaluate, reflect and scale up community action.*

Skill 1: Participatory Facilitation

Intentions

- Participants develop an understanding of participatory facilitation
- Participants practise and become more competent in participatory facilitation

Participatory Facilitation: a process whereby everyone is enabled to contribute, participate and use their creative resources. Everyone is acknowledged, valued and heard.

Participatory facilitation is a skill that can be learned. It supports the change process by honouring everyone’s contributions, recognising

each individual’s creative resources and creating a supportive learning environment. A skilled participatory facilitator will engage participants in an educational process by incorporating participants’ needs and questions, reflection and analysis, and their strategies for change. When a process is truly participatory it can also bring personal transformation for those who facilitate.

Steps in Facilitating the Skill

In plenary discuss the following:

- What is facilitation?
- What is good facilitation and what is bad facilitation?

Now ask:

- What is participatory facilitation?
- What skills does a participatory facilitator have?
(**Note:** be sure the following are mentioned - is trustworthy, can ask strategic questions, can actively listen, is curiously engaged in everyone in the community, can tell stories through role-plays and story-telling)

Now explain that participatory facilitation is the essential skills of the Community Facilitator:

| To coordinate the process by: | To guide the process by: | To mobilise participation by: |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that the activities / tools are clear, understood and accepted by everyone • Choosing a systematic procedure by which to carry out the activity • Explaining the activity clearly • Supporting the group during implementation of the activity • Raising important questions • Encouraging the group • Respecting what can and cannot be done | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring clear understanding and reaching consensus about the process • Creating space to express feelings and perceptions without judgement • Allowing time for discussing ideas, making objective evaluations and making decisions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging total participation and expression of all points of view and mutual learning • Asking all participants/groups for contributions • Demonstrating the behaviour expected from the group • Respecting and protecting the feelings of group members • Discouraging ridicule, blame and exclusion |

Skill 2: Stories through Role-Plays and Short Story Creation

Intentions

- Participants explore the importance of role-plays and stories
- Participants develop role-plays and stories

These are two of the most important skills/tools of the CC process and are regularly utilised to support the facilitator and community to stay focused and to explore issues deeply.

It gives people space:

- To freely express what they think or feel about a situation or problem without making it personal
- To relate the situation to their own lives
- To see and feel life from another person's point of view
- To imagine how the future could be different and what impact that different future could have on their lives

Role-plays and stories should be about real situations and real people, allowing people to understand their values, attitudes and behaviours.

Steps in the Facilitating the Skills

In plenary, facilitate a session on creating role-plays and stories using the guidance below:

- They should not be completely scripted so that the community can create their own role-play.
- They have a point to make about a specific situation and always have a strategic point
- A role-play should have no more than 5-7 characters.
- Short Story creation tells a scenario and ends with a strategic question.
- People should volunteer for roles. Different people should be encouraged to take lead roles.
- Role-plays are kept short, usually 7-10 minutes.
- Stories and role-plays have natural pauses and these should be utilised by the Community Facilitators to ask **strategic questions** to move the conversation forward.
- They should provide questions for the observers to provoke their thinking and support any further discussions. For example:
 - What happened?
 - Why did it happen?
 - What did the characters feel?

- How did others react?
- How does it relate to your own feelings on _____(*insert the appropriate item here depending on the theme/issue being addressed*)?
- When the role-play/story is complete, give the people who played the characters in the story and role-play an opportunity to say how they felt playing the character and/or the situation.

Skill 3: Building Trust

Intentions

- Participants understand the importance of being someone the community can trust
- Participants understand the attributes of someone who is trustworthy
- Participants begin to practise taking on the attributes

A facilitator needs to be somebody who is trusted and can extend trust to others. Each facilitator must lead by example, by listening to the community and understanding the context from which the community speaks. They must practise what they preach at all times. The trainer and facilitators need to lead by example, consistently demonstrating that they are trustworthy. Participants should be encouraged to start demonstrating these attributes in the workshop.

Steps in Facilitating the Skill

In plenary or in groups discuss:

- What is trust?
- What are the attributes of someone who is trustworthy?

Ensure that a list is generated of the attributes.

Then, using role-plays, direct participants to demonstrate the following:

- A facilitator who is not trustworthy facilitating a CC session
- A facilitator who is trustworthy facilitating a CC session

Facilitate a feedback session, emphasising the importance (to the CC process) of being a facilitator who is trustworthy and how they need to demonstrate this through their everyday interactions with their families and their community (behaviour).

Skill 4: Strategic Questioning

Intentions

- Participants become competent in constructing strategic questions
- Participants appreciate the relevance of strategic questioning in stimulating the community to think deeply about issues and motivates them into action

Strategic questions are those that move a conversation towards change by allowing people to explore other points of view. It provides the space for our thoughts to move towards new possibilities and elicits creativity to find solutions to challenges. Strategic questioning is a principal skill used throughout the facilitated change process.

Steps in Facilitating the Skill

List the following **characteristics of strategic questioning** on a flipchart.

Strategic questions should:

- Create energy so that the conversation moves forward.
- Provide an opening for many answers or options to appear.
- Dig deep enough so that creative solutions to the challenges appear.
- Avoid 'why' questions that are loaded with value judgements. This tends to make people feel defensive.
- Express confidence in the ability of the listener to have solutions.
- Challenge values and assumptions around sensitive issues.
- Use open questions and avoid 'Yes/No' answer questions.
- Enables facilitators to let go of the sense that they already know the answer to a problem and let the answer to emerge through the discussion.

Take participants through the following scenario:

The chief of a village decided to do something about how decision making related to family resources caused families to stay in poverty. The chief wanted to know how social roles influenced family relationships and vice versa in the community and how this was related to poverty in the community. The chief decided to speak with his community about the situation and to encourage a spirit of solidarity between families and people. The chief called the village elders and asked for their help in creating strategic questions that could help the community reflect on and discuss the issue of family relationships and poverty.

In their "communities" ask the participants to assume that they are the elders of the village requested to help the village chief.

They should formulate one strategic question for each of the following issues:

- General *concerns* on the issue of family relationships and poverty.
- Family *concerns* about resources and poverty.

- Factors fuelling the increase in community poverty.
- Community attitudes and interactions with poor people.
- Possible decisions and actions that the community could take.

Facilitate a feedback session on the strategic questions formulated by the groups. Support participants to strengthen their strategic question skills by asking the following about each question:

1. Does the question bring the issues to the surface?
2. Would that strategic question deepen the understanding of community concerns?
3. Does the question generate conversations about sensitive issues without making participants feel defensive?

The trainer should provide opportunities for the participants to practise strategic questioning throughout the workshop. Encourage participants to practise strategic questioning with their friends and family so as to develop confidence in using the skill (see [here](#) for more guidance on Strategic Questioning).

TIP: The next strategic question can always be found in what the person speaking is saying, so stop thinking of what you need to say and listen.

Skill 5: Active Listening

Intentions

- Participants develop their active listening capacity
- Participants listen and accept perspectives that are different from their own

Active listening is a communication skill in which the listener follows closely what is being said and gives feedback to the speaker using verbal and non-verbal expressions. In active listening, the speaker realises that she/he is being listened to. Often people listen selectively to what they agree with or are comfortable with. However, in active listening, the listener has to

keep an open mind and recall what is being said, irrespective of whether she/he agrees or not.

Unlike selective or discriminatory listening, active listening strengthens the capacity of individuals to:

- Open up new ideas and can activate the knowledge and resources of each individual
- It favours sharing, the acceptance of new and diverse perspectives and mutual learning
- Limit exclusion
- Encourage discussion and generates new alternatives

Elements of active listening include:

- Maintaining eye contact and following the speaker with your eyes (where culturally appropriate)
- Not showing signs of disagreement or being frustrated with the speaker's opinion
- Observing and acknowledging non-verbal expressions
- Paraphrasing to confirm that you have understood what has been said

Steps in Facilitating the Skill

- Write five 'controversial issues' on the flipchart. (Examples might include: *Single women are less respected* or *Women should be the decision maker* or *Men have no reason to hit their wives*.)
- Request each participant to reflect silently on the above statements and then to write down their responses and perspectives of each statement.
- Once each participant has written down their own perspectives,
- Divide the participants into groups of five or six people.
- One by one they should share their perspectives with the other group members.
- As each participant is sharing their perspectives, ask the other group members to just listen and remember what they heard from others.

- After the participants have shared their perspectives, ask group members to say what they remember. Participants should pay attention to whether people retain only what they agree with, or if they also remember what they do not agree with.
- The group is encouraged to reach common perspectives and consensus, if possible, or to recognise that diversity is a reality within their group.
- Ask the groups to discuss how to show respect for and consider everyone's perspective during conversations.
- Ask each group to identify three key elements of active listening and respect for diverse perspectives.

Facilitate a feedback session emphasising the key elements of active listening. Clarify that active listening includes not interrupting the person who is sharing her/his perspective and ensuring that each viewpoint is respected and considered as part of the group's reality, even if everybody does not agree with it.

Skill 6: Curiously Engaged

Intentions

- Participants develop skills in showing genuine interest in other people
- Participants develop the skill of eliciting interest from the other person, just by listening

When a person is 'curiously engaged' in someone else's life, listening is an easy activity. When someone is 'curiously engaged', the person speaking will feel acknowledged, valued and respected. As with active listening, it allows trust to develop between the community members and Community Facilitators.

Steps in Facilitating the Skill

Ask the participants to find a partner

One partner should be *A* and the other *B*

Ask **A** to go first and to tell **B** about her/his journey to the workshop.

B should just listen without asking any questions. In fact, **B** should show complete disinterest – maybe use your phone – get up from chair – move away – **A** must keep talking if they can.

Then **A** should again tell **B** about their journey, but this time **B** should ask strategic questions that show she/he is really interested in the journey and moves the conversation forward. For example

- What colour was the bus/car?
- What did you see on the journey?
- Who did you travel with? Etc.

The two participants should switch roles and repeat the exercise.

In plenary, facilitate a feedback session with a focus on the difference in 'being interested^{ed}' and 'being interest^{ing}'.

Discuss the importance of the facilitator, remembering that she/he must always be interested in listening to other people.

Being **Curiously Engaged** allows you to **Actively Listen** for the **Strategic Question** that will forward the discussion.

TIP: Be Curiously Engaged – you know will know exactly how to always move a conversation forward.

Community Conversations Session Tools

The following TWO tools are used at every session: Reflection and Resonance.

Reflection

Intentions

- Participants understand the difference between reflection and event recapping
- Participants understand the power of reflection in changing social norms
- Participants identify the use of reflection as a tool in the process of self and communal change
- Participants understand the power of sharing with people to contribute to individual and societal change

Reflection is not the same as recapping, sharing experiences or describing an event.

- It is a process of each person thinking about their values and if their behaviours reflect their values.
- A process of reflection creates space for identification of these values and helps in planning the desirable actions for change at individual, family and community level.

Steps in the Tool

- Present a summary of what reflection is.
- Ensure the seating arrangement is non-threatening, calm and comfortable.
- Ask each person to sit with their hands placed on their knees and close their eyes and requests the community to silently reflect on the following question - the facilitator poses the question that they prepared.
- After 3-4 minutes of silence and reflection ask if anyone would like to share (the sharing is optional and even silence is respected as a form of sharing).
- After someone shares, the facilitators simply say "thank you" (**do not** make any comment or let anyone else make a comment).

Here are examples of the type of reflection questions – they contain values and behaviours:

- How does my behaviour demonstrate that I value my family?
- How does my behaviour show that I value youth in our community?

As the reflection is done at each session, the reflection question is phrased around what was being discussion presently.

Resonance

Intentions

- Participants understand the difference between reflection and event recapping
- Participants understand the power of reflection in changing social norms
- Participants identify the use of reflection as a tool in the process of self and communal change
- Participants understand the power of sharing with people to contribute to individual and societal change

Another type of reflection is 'resonance', which is sharing with others and discussing what you understand about social norms, values and behaviours. In the CC process, participants are requested to share their understandings from the sessions with their family and friends. They are also requested to listen to what their family and friends have to say and discuss. This sharing can cause a "ripple effect" with messages spreading out to a wider audience and promoting change throughout society.

Steps in the Tool

- In every session, just before the facilitators close the session: Using the notes above explain what resonance is for CC
- Now request each community member to go and share what they have discussed with their family and friends and what changes they think they will make to their own behaviours.
- Once they have shared – they should request the person to come back to the next session with them to hear for themselves.

PLA Tools for the Community Sensitisation

Intentions of the Three Tools

- Participants understand the importance of everyone in the community
- Communities visualise how often many people are excluded from meaningfully taking part in community life
- Communities visualise how exclusion limits their ability to improve their lives
- Communities understand how exclusion can destroy the strength of the community and prevents the community from fully developing

Materials

Local materials can be used to draw the tools in the ground and local materials such as small stones and sticks can be used to represent what the community discuss.

In advance of the Power Walk, you need to prepare a set of statements based on power, for example:

- "I have access to money all the time"
- "I know that I can afford food for my family everyday"
- "I know that my children will have an education"

Three tools have been chosen from the suite of CC PLA tools for the community sensitisation (**Note:** all of these tools can also be used during the CC sessions).

Change Happens Over Time (Historical Timeline)

Societies transform over time, often through many subtle changes that can go unacknowledged by the community. When these changes are explored and acknowledged, individuals and communities can better understand the process of change within their community.

Steps in the Tool

In plenary:

- Discuss with the community what changes have taken place in the community over the last 20 years with respect to the increase in the value of education?
- Now draw a graph timeline of the changes that took place so that the changes can be seen over time (such as when the primary school opened in the village; the first person who went secondary school or college; when girls started going to school; the increase in numbers going to primary school; etc.).
- Now break the community into groups and ask them to discuss:
 - What impact did the increase in people being educated have on the life of people in the community?
 - Was everyone affected equally? Were /are there people excluded from education and how does that affect their families and their livelihoods?
 - What changes could the community make so that everyone is included?
- Bring the community back to plenary and ask them to feedback on what they discussed.

Power Walk Tool

When people can visually see how people have different access to opportunities within their community it can trigger a different perspective on those who are marginalised and vulnerable in the community. It is important that people in the community do not take on their own role, e.g. the chief taking on the role of the chief or the single woman with a disability acting that character. Acting someone of a different status (walking in someone else's shoes) triggers the different perspective.

Steps in the Tool

- Discuss with the community who are people in their community, such as the farmer with one acre, farmer with many acres, the chief, the traditional birth attendant, the blind man with five children, single person headed households, etc.
- Now Choose the **characters** for the power walk and ask for ten volunteers and whisper to each one which character they are play in the power walk. (**Note:** do not ask someone who is a chief to play the role of the chief, etc.).
- Now the volunteers stand in a straight line, and the facilitators explain to volunteers that they should take a step forward if they identify with any of the **statements** that will be read aloud.
- Read out the list of statements one by one to the volunteers, with volunteers **taking a step** forward if they agree with a statement for their character they are playing.
- With volunteers still standing in their final step positions, the facilitator asks the rest of the community some **questions**, including:
 - Who were the people who did not take a step?
 - Who are the people who took the most steps?
 - For the people who did not take a step or only a few steps, how are you feeling?
 - What are the community's attitudes and responses to the needs of some of the characters who took few steps?
 - Are these groups of people found in your community?
 - What does this tell us?

Venn Diagram

This tool allows people to see how different people within the community participate, who has the most influence on the community, how the community responds to issues, what would stop people participating in community events or community decision making such as their gender, age, financial status, levels of education, and so on. The Venn Diagram also supports communities to see how different people/groups interact or not within the community.

Steps in the Tool

- The community sits in a circle.
- Draw a large circle in the middle of the group. Explain that the centre of the circle is where the people with the most influence in the community sit.

Now discuss:

- Ask the community who the people/groups are in their community.
- Now take some stones and ask the community where they would place them in the circle that you drew on the ground to show that person’s or group’s influence on community?
- Once all the people/groups have been placed, ask the community:
 - What do they see?
 - What does it mean for the community in terms of joint decision making, exclusions, etc.?

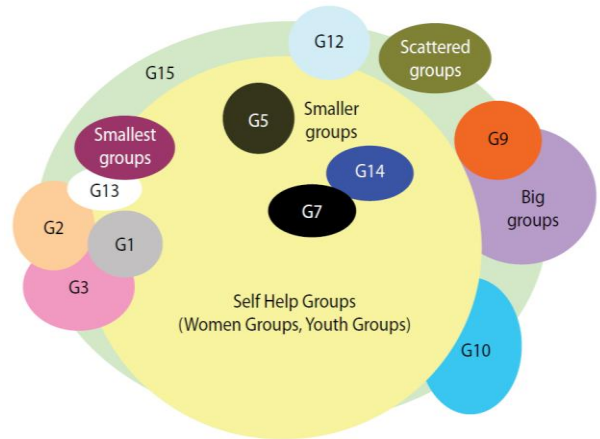


Figure 4: Example of a Venn Diagram

PLA Tools for Community Reality and Change Sessions

Stock-Taking Tool

Intentions

- Participants reflect on how they are interacting with other, what their attitudes are to everyone in the community and how they behave within their families
- Participants identify how they work together within their families and community (strengths and weaknesses)

Everyone in the community has a different view and interpretation of how people should behave in society. They have a different understanding of how interactions are affected by social and gender norms, and the effect that this has on family and community poverty. This understanding influences people's (individuals and families) attitudes and behaviours towards others. It is important that people examine those attitudes and behaviours, look at what works and what does not work within the community. This is called 'stock-taking'.

Steps in the Tool

The facilitator explains the importance of examining the present situation, and people's attitudes and behaviours towards family and community relationships.

Divide the participants into groups and ask them to discuss the following strategic questions:

- How do social and gender norms influence family and community interactions?
- What works well within family and community interactions (what have you done well and why)?
- What does not work (what has not been done well and why)?
- What does the community currently do to combat poverty?

After each group has discussed, put 2-3 groups together (so you have 3 groups) and ask them to present to each other.

After they have presented to each other, they should prepare a short 7 minute role-play that shows what they discussed (with no more than 6 characters).

Facilitate a plenary session on what people observed.

Socio-Cultural Dynamics and Poverty

Intentions

- Identifying the socio-cultural situation related to how social roles influence family relationships and vice-versa
- Individual, relational, and social factors that promote intergenerational poverty within families

Poverty is intricately woven into the fabric of society. Poverty is often intergenerational and dictates how people live and relate to one another as individuals, as well as the way we relate within our families and in communities. It 'rides on the back' of our socio-cultural practices, relationships, values, beliefs, norms, and gender and power relations. In order to enable sustainable social change, to decrease poverty and lessen its impact on individuals and

communities, it is essential to address **how social roles influence family relationships**. Certain issues exacerbate the cycle of poverty within families and communities and other issues will mitigate poverty within families and communities. It is important that individuals start to examine the socio-cultural beliefs and practices that cause and maintain poverty. It is also important to examine how families respond to poverty and how social roles influence family relationships.

Steps in the Tool

With the whole community, discuss what we mean by 'social', 'culture' and 'dynamic'. Agree a common understanding of the 3-4 main socio-cultural norms, beliefs and practices on gender and inclusion. (Examples of these are such things as *The subordinate status of women, The myth that teenagers are uncontrollable, The isolation of people who are poor and with disabilities, Our families are very large, Men not supporting their wife and children*).

Now the facilitator narrates the following story including the 3-4 socio-cultural, beliefs and practices that the community identified during the discussion and others if you are aware of issues that are sensitive and the community failed to state them.

A wise African person was asked to reflect on the underlying causes of poverty in her community. She went to all the communities in the country and listened to what people had to say. Finally she identified the following factors:

Here, the facilitator states the three to four key socio-cultural norms, beliefs and practices on gender and inclusion that the community discussed above.

Now divide the community into groups and ask them to discuss the following:

- Why do you think the wise person identified these factors as underlying causes?
- Are you in agreement with each of these factors?
- What other factors would you add?

Facilitate a feedback session on the conclusion of the group discussions, emphasising the socio-cultural points regarding family social roles and their contribution to family and community poverty.

Community Net Tool

Intentions

- Identify the social cohesion concerns in their communities
- Explore how to strengthen the capacity of communities by ensure that equality, inclusion and respect are community values

Social cohesion refers to the internal social and cultural coherence of society. It is formed by the community’s norms and values and the institutions in which the norms are embedded. Social cohesion is the glue that holds individuals, communities and societies together. Central to this is the belief that community norms, values and practices shape group and individual behaviours. The linkages and relationships within a community are critical determinants of social cohesion.

Linkages and connections that can strengthen the community change process include:

- Respect, trust and networks that span socio-economic differences and differences of gender, race, class and other factors
- People’s awareness of themselves as part of cultures and collectives
- The dense and synergistic patterns of relationships that knit people together in societies

Steps in the Tool

In plenary, discuss:

- What is social cohesion?
- What is its importance within the community?
- Who are the different people within the community who influence social cohesion?

Now demonstrate the Community Net Tool by firstly identifying participants who will represent various *community members* and *people who influence the community*. For example:

Community members: men, women, health workers, chiefs, youth, girls, boys, teachers, religious people, persons with disabilities, very poor people

People who influence the community: NGOs, District Administration

Ask people who have been identified to stand in a circle. Request the other community members to place themselves behind the person that they identify with most (men, women, youth, etc.). The people behind should place their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them.

Take the rope and give one end to the person at the front representing the **women** of the community, then pass the rope across to another person and then back to another person with the last person to get the end of the rope being the person representing the **men** of the community.

The facilitator should then ask the community the following questions about those who are holding the rope:

- What is each person’s contribution to the community?

- What is the importance of each contribution?

Now ask different groups to let go of the rope. When the person at the front lets go of the rope everyone behind should let go of the shoulders in front of them. The youth, women and men groups should be the last three groups holding the rope. Then the youth should let go of the rope, followed by the men and then women groups.

PLEASE NOTE: As each group lets go of the rope, the facilitator should support the community to look deeply at the impact of people in the community.

Use the following questions as a guide:

- What is the impact of this group not being included in the community? (For example, how does it change the community when this person is no longer included?)
- Who is isolated in the community?

Now ask people to go back into their groups to discuss the following questions:

- What did they think of when people let go of the rope? What does it mean for the community when there are just a few people holding the community together?
- How could we strengthen our community to make sure that everyone is included and has equal access to the community's resources?

Facilitate a feedback session on the above questions, taking note of the concerns and any changes that are proposed.

Gender Dynamics (Gender Box)

Intentions

- Participants explore what the role of men and women is in the community as defined by social and gender norms
- Participants identify what happens when those norms are not followed

This activity provides a non-threatening way to identify these roles and behaviours, particularly as they relate to vulnerability, power and inequality. Participants can also begin to explore which expectations and behaviours need to change and how they might go about effecting that change.

Steps in the Tool

In plenary draw two boxes on a flipchart paper, label one 'typical woman' and the other 'typical man'.

Now ask what the qualities, roles and behaviours are of each one, writing the key points inside the boxes.

Now ask the participants to discuss in groups:

- How do these roles affect the communication between woman and men, the health, access to education, and livelihoods of different households?
- Where do the expectations come from that keeps women and men within these boxes?
- What happens if a woman or man behaves differently than these norms dictate?
- What would be the advantage to the community if people came out of their gender boxes?

Facilitate a feedback session emphasising the pressures that keep people in their gender boxes, how it affects households, and what the advantages are to the community of people coming out of their gender boxes.

Values & Behaviours (Integral Framework / Four-Quadrant Framework)

Intentions

- Identify and explore family relationships and social roles in relation to their individual or collective origins
- Explores how causes and actions are linked, using the four quadrants
- Analyse the interactions among the various quadrants to create a deeper understanding of the link between individual and collective values and behaviours

The four-quadrant framework, adapted from the work of Ken Wilber, is an analytical tool that can be used to explore the relationship between intentions and values on the one hand, and actions on the other hand. It does so at both the individual and collective levels. It is possible to gain a more profound understanding of the underlying causes of poverty by identifying, analysing and reviewing the origins of actions. By placing attitudes and behaviours of family relationships within their respective quadrants, we can reflect on how holistic our response to poverty has been. This framework supports a deeper understanding of the interrelationship between intentions, values and actions.

Steps in the Tool

Explain the objectives and main idea of the integral framework (See notes below).

In their 'communities' ask the participants to reflect on:

- The influence of social roles on family relationships, household decision making and communications, and how this influences household poverty
- What values and attitudes are held by family members (individually and collectively)?
- Ask them to plot the various factors linking family relationships and social roles in the integral framework

As they present in plenary, emphasise the difference between people's individual internal values and their actual behaviour, where appropriate. Ask strategic questions related to the placements within the quadrants and probe the linkages between each.

Now ask each 'community' to discuss what changes would be required in each quadrant so that the values reflect the behaviours and ask them to mark those in a different colour.

Now discuss how this would be facilitated during the CC, making sure that the Community Facilitators know the importance of this tool in the change process.

The Integral Framework Notes

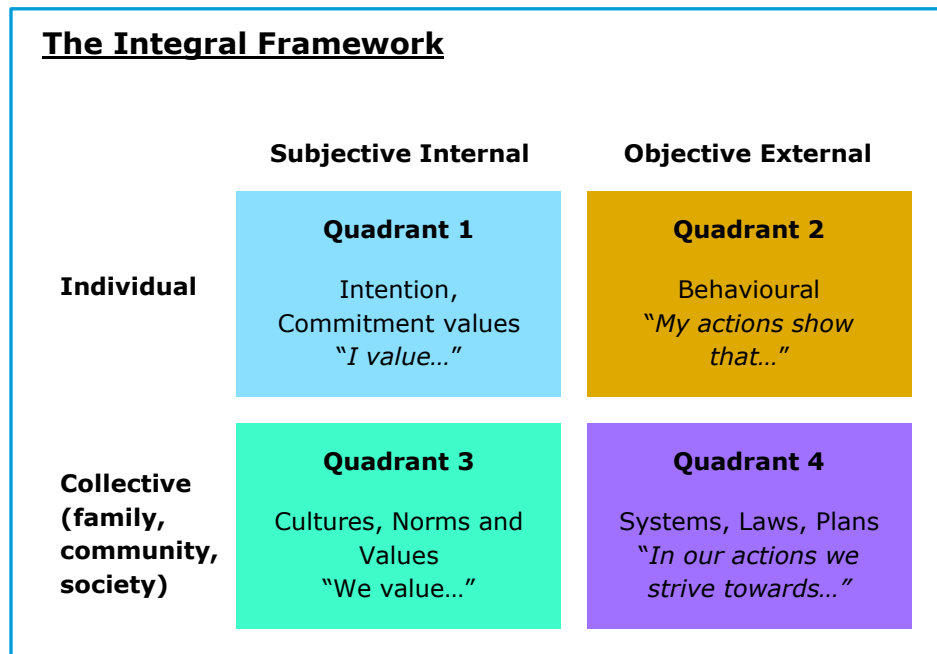


Figure 5: The Integral Framework

Quadrant 1 (Individual Values and Identity) is the individual/internal aspect of change. This is related to the interior reality of an individual's values and identity. This quadrant explores what is important to people and who they believe they are.

Quadrant 2 (Behaviour) is the individual/external aspect of change. This refers to people's actual behaviours and actions that can be seen externally. Often, people's behaviours can differ from their internal beliefs (as captured in Quadrant 1). People can often behave in ways that reflect collective values of society, rather than their own individual values.

Quadrant 3 (Culture) is the collective/internal aspect of change. This is the domain of culture. It is the interior, often hidden, territory of our shared assumptions and images that direct what happens when we come together. This is the domain of myth, story, unwritten rules and beliefs.

Quadrant 4 (Systems and Institutions) is the collective/external aspects of change. It is the quadrant of systems and institutions and their accompanying policies and procedures. These can be government, religious, organisations or civil society structures. This quadrant reminds people that systems affect behaviour and culture. They can often promote or hinder community change.

Each of these quadrants is closely related. Change within one quadrant is inextricably linked with the other quadrants. Each quadrant is powerful. Ignoring one aspect within a change process can lead to inappropriate or short-term results.

Power Relations

Intentions

- Develop an understanding of unequal power relations and the verbal and non-verbal expression of dominance or submission experienced by the community
- Identify the impact and consequences of power within individual relations

Action or inaction is influenced by power dynamics in our everyday environment. Power relations exist between a trainer and participants, between Community Facilitators and the community, between men and women, and within families and communities. Power relations affect the way we interact and respond within a community. Understanding power relations will enable us to proactively recognise and minimise the negative impact of power imbalances on our facilitation.

Steps in the Tool

In plenary make a brief presentation on different types of power that play out in individual relationships ([read more here on different types of power](#)).

Now explore the types of power that influence social norms and social roles, ensuring that the four aspects of power are discussed.

Within their 'communities' ask the participants to find a partner: one is **A** and one **B**. They sit facing one another.

Each pair chooses an issue to discuss. Person **A** is to act 'dominant' and dominate the conversation between the pair. Participant **B** will act 'submissive'.

Ask **A**, the dominant individual, to start talking while they are both seated on their chairs.

After a few minutes **request B to sit on the floor** while their partner continues to talk.

Then request **B** to go back to her/his chair.

Now request **B** to sit on the chair and **A** to sit on the floor while **A** continues to talk.

Then request that they change the situation, with **B** (still on the chair) to begin speaking as the dominant partner.

Ask participants now to share in their 'communities' their feelings, reflections and ideas on this experience of being both dominant and submissive within the role-play.

In plenary, facilitate feedback on the session, emphasising how power relationships can potentially hinder the change process for all in CC, and the importance of not letting 'leaders' dominate the process.

Change and Language

Intentions

- Understand the need to use language that respects the dignity and rights everyone with the community
- Understanding how words can create inclusion, reduce stigma and discrimination and contributes to social change

Language and words can influence behaviour and attitudes. Word choice is powerful and can bring people together or can be divisive; it can reinforce hierarchy or consolidate alliances; it can discourage or encourage; it can convince people or leave people indifferent. During the CC process, facilitators should choose words carefully avoiding derogatory language, or words loaded with discriminatory judgements. Language used should be inclusive and non-judgemental and should encourage reflection and mutual learning.

Steps in the Tool

Make a brief presentation on the importance of language in successful facilitation.

Present a list of ten words that describe people or groups that you have previously generated (see notes provided for examples).

In plenary, ask participants to identify the local language for the list of ten words.

Identify other words in the local language that are used in their community to describe the people who are 'different'.

Discuss whether the words are neutral or contain value judgements.

Now ask what words people should use instead.

Emphasise the importance of the Community Facilitators using inclusive language throughout the process setting the example for the community.

When the list is complete display it on the community wall.

As the CC process continues you can add other related words to the list as they arise.

Examples of types of people in the community:

- People in need of support
- Programme participants
- Single women
- Single men
- Couple without children
- Children born to a single parent
- Pregnant adolescents
- People living with HIV
- People with disabilities
- Those who cannot read or write

Change and Perception

Intentions

- Identify the power of descriptions that isolate and exclude people
- Identify how those descriptions can change to impact equity, inclusion and respect

Our descriptions of people often reflect how we exercise power. It can also influence how other people perceive the people we describe. We often describe people in a judgemental way, even when we think we are being objective. This type of description is an exercise of power over another person. It influences how a person is perceived and how the person perceives

her/himself. Community Facilitators should be sensitive in their descriptions. They should coach community members to use empowering descriptions.

Steps in the Tool

Distribute the exercise below: the two lists created by Health Professionals about a patient, Walmartu. Explain the exercise and go through the lists.

Request participants in their 'community' to reflect on the list and discuss their perception using these two questions as a guide:

- What are the differences in the way Walmartu is described in List One and List Two?
- What are the implications of the descriptions for Walmartu?

In plenary, facilitate a feedback session emphasising how language can change the perception of people towards other people.

Stress to the Community Facilitators the importance of the ensuring that within the CC sessions participants or the facilitators do not use inappropriate language to describe people.

Perception Exercise (to be distributed to participants)

These are two sets of notes by health professionals about the young girl Walmartu¹⁰ following a pre-natal consultation.

List One

- Single mother
- Low-income
- One-room house
- First child: weight at birth below average
- Afraid of giving birth
- Lazy; no job
- Illiterate: cannot read or write

List Two

- Loss of appetite due to stress linked to loneliness.
- She enjoys a vegetable traditional soup.
- She would like to be able to include milk and meat in her diet but finds these expensive.
- She is worried about her meagre income.
- She is worried about looking after her first born girl who was born without complications but with a below average weight.

¹⁰ Local Name in the Sierra Leone context

Ensure that the following is clear for the participants:

List one describes Walmart only in terms of her challenges. Walmart, the human being, is not reflected, visible, or appreciated. There is no reference to any of her strengths and it contains judgements on Walmart's unemployed status as 'lazy'. From this list, no one can understand how Walmart perceives herself. The list only reinforces and acknowledges the professional and her/his role.

This second list is based on the same observations, but Walmart is described in a completely different manner. In this list, we appreciate Walmart as a human being, an individual in her own right – with her individual capacity, her social relations and her own interests. The list identifies entry points and a specific role for any external person willing to assist.

Transect Walk and Mapping Tool

Intentions

- Build a better understanding of how the community is seen and experience differently
- 'Mapping' is a visualisation of the experiences, strengths, resources and concerns of the community

The 'Transect Walk and Mapping Tool' is a tool that allows community members to explore or rediscover familiar surroundings. This activity allows people to focus attention on community realities that are usually overlooked or taken for granted, leading them on a process of self-reflection and collective exploration of how the community is experienced differently.

Steps in the Tool

In plenary discuss:

- What are the different types of resources within a community?

Now introduce the transect walk and discuss that the focus of the transect walk will be to look for community resources and, as we walk, each person should visualise how easy or difficult it is to access those resources.

Inform participants that the walk should be done by looking at and observing the community environment, they must walk **in silence** and **they can write and take notes of what they see.**

Following the 'Transect Walk', in groups they should map their findings. Each person should have an input into the map as each person's perspective is very important in visualising people's experience of the community.

Facilitate a feedback session on their maps, emphasising that community has many resources that can be used to change their communities.

Story-Telling

Intentions

- Participants use stories as a tool to create safe expression of individual and collective beliefs and values on family resource dynamics and social roles
- Participants learn how to create a story beginning to be used in the CC sessions
- To explore values and attitudes influencing individual and collective behaviours towards poverty

Story-telling provides the opportunity for the community to immerse themselves in a concern without it being about them or their family. A rich, in-depth understanding of a concern can evolve that invokes personal feelings and emotions and enhances people's understanding of how social and gender norms influence their behaviours. This introspection is the most powerful and transformational element of the story-telling methodology.

Steps in the Tool

Present the objectives of the story-telling tool to the participants.

Objectives of the story:

- To help people think through the way their behaviour and values, and those of their families and neighbours, affect people's lives and to reflect on and to discuss these things with others
- To raise sufficient interest in the community that they want to know what happens afterwards. It should be believable, something that could happen in their own community involving people that they can relate to

Invite the other participants to sit in a semicircle or circle.

Present the beginning of a story that you have prepared based on an identified *concern* that requires further exploration. (see notes below on creating the beginning of a story)

Invite participants to continue the story by acting as characters using personal pronouns. For example, if you are playing main character you would say "I feel very sad", "I am confused" .

Let the story continue for at 30 minutes without interrupting.

Now facilitate a feedback session from the community on what they heard, agreed with or disagreed.

The following is facilitated in the Community Facilitators training only:

Before demonstrating the tool to the CF pick three participants and explain to them that a story will be created and that they must record what is said by the characters in the story (recording as in CC).

Review and analyse the records of the story that was just created and make a summary of the community perspectives, ensuring it represents the words that people actually said rather than an interpretation.

Facilitate a discussion on the community perspectives collected and explore with the group what tool or strategic question could be used to move the story forward (30 mins).

Now in plenary, present and discuss the creation of stories and 'story beginnings' (1 hour).

Now participants break into groups of ten people and create a story, ensuring that there are two recorders in each group taking note of what is said in the story (1.5 hours).

In plenary, facilitate a feedback session emphasising the objectives of story-telling, the creation of story beginnings and telling the story.

NOTES ON CREATING A 'STORY BEGINNING'¹¹***Developing the Story***

Identify the *concern* you want to discuss. Focused on a single *concern* based on the current discussion in the CC so that the words and story rings true for the participants.

Start by creating story line and then write just the beginning of the story, remembering that:

- The language must be the words and phrasing of the local spoken language and it should be spoken in the way a story is told by that community.
- It should generate interest and even suspense from the group to motivate participants to get involved in continuing the story.
- The names should be names familiar to the community. Each detail must be accurate: age of the characters and the likely number of children, their occupations, the social relations and location of family members.
- The story beginning should be rich, with a lot of depth. That is, it should include emotions, feelings, ideas, values, attitudes, as well as facts. But at the same time, it should be simple. Things can be hinted at, contained in the wording rather than spelled out. No extraneous, non-essential facts should be included.
- After the story beginning is narrated, participants take on characters in the story, stating who they are as they enter for example "I am [name] and sister to the main character and this is my advice".

¹¹ Adapted from Elizabeth Reid

The ending of the 'story beginning' needs to be carefully crafted. It should place the main character on the threshold of an action or a decision.

Example of the beginning of a story

E.g. [Insert name here] has just been told by her father that she will have leave school to marry. [Insert name here] knows that she can contribute to her family's income if she can finish her schooling and become employed. She knows that if she wants to continue her education she will have to disobey her father and mother and leave home. She wonders if her aunt could help her persuade her parents but if she speaks with her aunt then her parents may find out what she is planning.

[Insert name here] is confused and knows she needs to make a decision.

She thinks: What is happening to me?

What about my life?

What will I do about my education?

What will I do about my parents?

Deciding where to **end the story** and discuss is a key skill for the CC facilitator. The ending should be a point of forward motion, a point where actions or decisions are required. If it is too soon, there may be too many possible story lines. If it is too late, too many options may have been pre-empted and the creativity of the group stifled.

You must help the group to reflect on and discuss what may become of the community as well as the characters in the story by asking strategic questions. The length of the story is not important. What is important is the reflection and discussion.

The story is recorded so that the community perspectives are captured precisely.

Cassava Tool

Intentions

- Participants understand the importance of exploring concerns to identify underlying issues before making decisions or taking action
- Participants understand that specific tools are required for specific concerns
- Participants understand how to use the Cassava Tool to explore concerns until the right change takes place

Issues are often identified at a surface level when discussing community *concerns*, and people may not be in the habit of exploring the root causes of particular *concerns*. People tend to dismiss *concerns* as being 'just the way things are', or 'it is our culture', or 'we have always done things this way'. Communities rarely dig deeper to see why they have certain values, or why they behave the way they do. Supporting the community to explore the concerns for the underlying factors can often open up a different view of a given *concern* and show different actions that the community can take.

Steps in the Tool

In plenary, discuss:

- What happens when people dig cassava?
- How do they know where to start digging?
- What kind of tools do they use? What happens if they do not dig all the way to the bottom of the cassava?

During this discussion, draw a cassava (or similar root vegetable) on a sheet of paper showing how far a root can extend below the ground. Explain that this is similar to our community concerns – we sometimes can only see what is on the surface.

Explain that the process of digging for a cassava can help us understand the process of exploring *concerns* within a community.

Now using the notes from the community wall, draw and explain how a concern has been explored so far in the process, show some conclusions to which people came, what tool was being used when that happened,

For example, building relationships and identifying concerns help us understand where to start digging using tools like mapping, and the community net. The different skills/tools we are learning as Community Facilitators for example, help us dig. We have to keep digging using tools like story-telling to fully understand a problem, or else our decisions will not really help us to achieve our future.

Explain that each concern will be mapped out like this so that the community can see that they need to explore more and when they have reached a decision that helps their community.

In the training workshop make sure that the Community Facilitators practice this tool in group work.

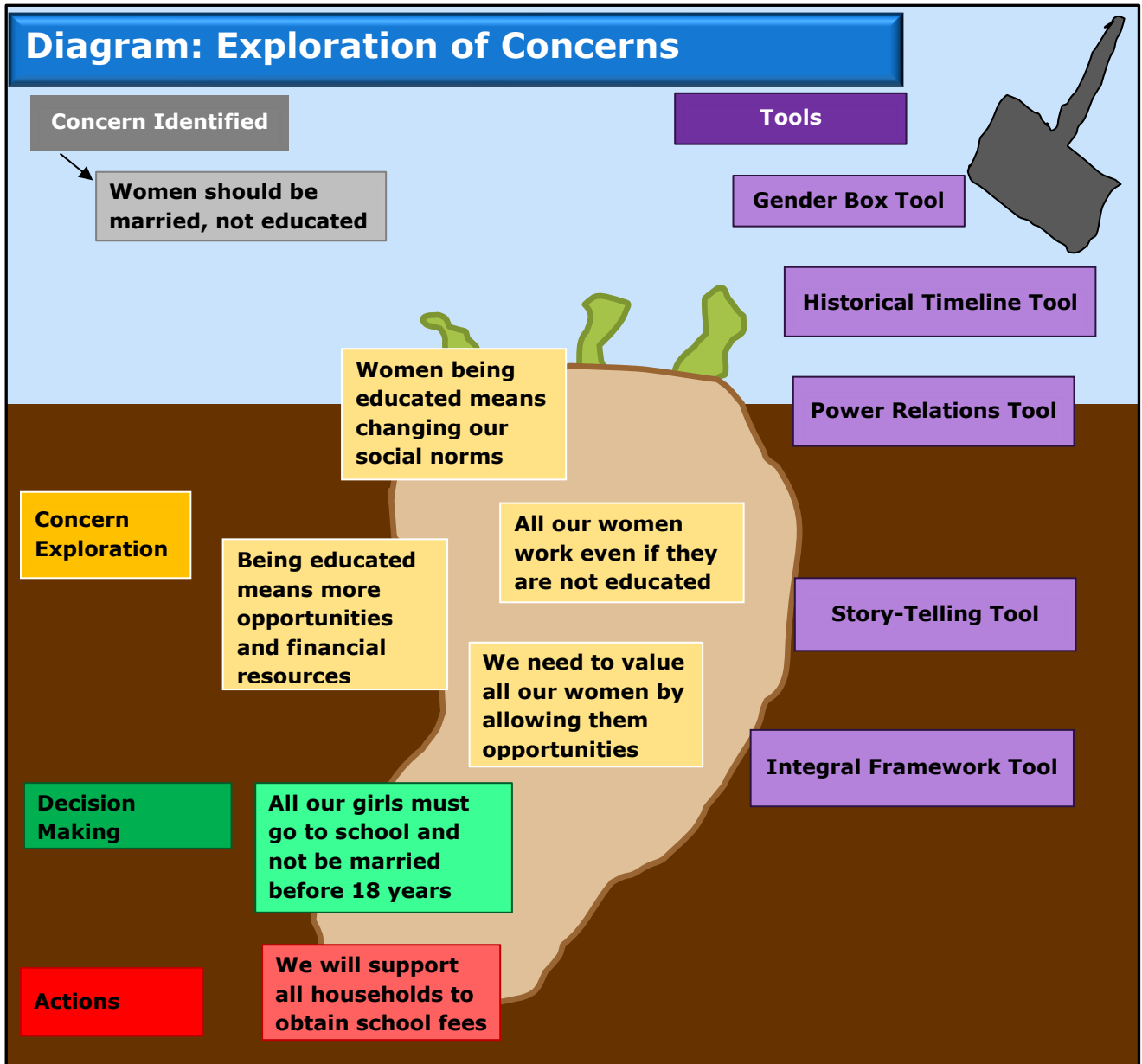


Figure 6: Sample Drawing of the Cassava Tool for Exploring Concerns

Vision Board

Intentions

- To give participants the chance to describe the future they want for their community.
- To inspire and motivate participants to believe in possibilities that have so far been 'unthinkable' or 'unachievable'.
- To enable participants to make plans and take action to achieve their vision

When we plan for change, we will often plan from our present reality, thinking about our immediate future based on our experiences from the past. However, when we create a vision for the future, not wholly based on present reality or past experiences, a space opens that allows a person to see different actions and possibilities. Planning for (or from) the vision can motivate individuals and communities to take action to achieve that vision.

Steps in the Tool

Imagine your community 20 years from now. The national television agency (or the local radio station) has prepared a programme on the outstanding achievements your community has made in embedding the values of equity, equality, inclusion and respect for human dignity as a strength of your community. The television/radio programme was prepared based on interviews with community members, local authorities, traditional leaders, and health institutions working in the district. Imagine what the programme would report about your community's achievements in the areas of equity, equality, inclusion and respect for human dignity.

Now ask participants to discuss in groups how those changes happened:

- What major changes has your community made in the last 20 years to embed the values of equity, equality, inclusion and respect for human dignity as a strength of their community?
- What has been the most outstanding contribution of women and girls as leaders in the community movement against poverty?
- How have men and boys supported women and girls in their role as leaders?
- How have community leaders supported the community movement?
- What action did you take to make a particular change happen?
- What action plan did you follow in the first year to make the change happen?
- How did you make your decision popular?
- How did you sustain the changes made in the long run?

In case of time constraints, the questions can be split in two and answered by participants during two subsequent meetings. Stress that in CC sessions the exercise should be conducted with communities who are at the stage of decision making.

Tools for Documentation

To support the community to be part of the review of the process and continually be able to see the progress that they are making towards change, all the documentation produced such as the drawings of strengths and contributions, story recordings, historical timelines, maps, etc., are displayed. The community and facilitator walls are the two documentation tools that pull all the review and reflections together and is presented for analysed at the beginning of every session and remains on display throughout the CC process.

Community and Facilitator’s Walls

Intentions

- Participants learn how to document social change in the CC process through the construction of a community wall and a facilitator’s wall
- Participants learn that as a Community Facilitator their own perspectives are important in the process
- Participants develop competencies in introspection and analysis

Recording people’s perspectives is crucial to the success of the CC process. People have different visions of life, different ways of seeing and talking about the world and different concerns and interests. These are influenced by who a person is in society, their culture, gender, religion, age, etc. This perspective directly influences people’s actions and reactions to any situation or circumstance in life. The CC process allows for the diversity of perspectives, rich or poor, young or old, male or female, within the community and not just the voices of the dominant few that are normally heard. The

community wall and the facilitator’s wall are the two main documentation tools that allow these voices to be documented and acknowledged.

Steps in the Tool

The trainer makes a presentation on the importance of documenting for analysing social change.

Divide participants into groups to discuss the following questions:

- What do we mean by community and Community Facilitator’s perspectives?
- Why is it important that those perspectives are documented?
- How would documenting the perspectives support social change in the community?

Facilitate a feedback discussion with emphasis on the importance of understanding and accurately reporting community perspectives.

In plenary, use the notes taken by the two recorders on the previous story-telling exercise to facilitate a discussion on how to create a community wall and a facilitator’s wall.

Now participants go back into their story-telling groups and create community and facilitator’s walls using their recorder’s notes from each group.

Facilitate a feedback session highlighting the importance of ensuring that the community wall is displayed for all people to see during the CC process.

On the **community wall** there should be four columns:

| Community Perspective | Burning Issues | Non-Burning Issues | False Beliefs & Myths |
|-----------------------|----------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| | | | |

Figure 7: The Four Columns of the Community Wall

Community Perspective: These are the perspectives expressed by community members, in their own words, as they participate in the unfolding of the process. The community perspective column allows everyone to see that they have been heard and their views considered and this keeps them engaged in the CC process. It is important the community finds a way to keep this documentation between sessions and that the trainers also have a copy of the information.

When choosing what to put on the community wall you should ensure that:

- There is a diversity of perspectives
- The perspective is written as it was said, not the way you have interpreted it
- The perspective is recorded on the community wall in no particular order, so that no perspective is seen to have more importance than the other

Burning Issues: These are issues that, when raised, generate the interest of community members. The community members may all want to contribute their perspective to the discussion and there may be excitement or anger depending on if there is agreement or disagreement in the room. It may be better dealt with at another session if it is moving the conversation away from the main issue of that day’s conversation. It may also need additional planning from the Community Facilitators to ensure it is facilitated in a constructive manner. When dealing with burning issues, ensure that people are not reacting towards the individual who has said something but are rather discussing the issue. Ensure that the issue is relevant to the overall intentions of the community session where it is dealt with.

Each appropriate ‘burning issue’ identified must be recorded without a reference to a specific person. It should be worded in a way that does not cause mistrust or contain value judgements.

Non-Burning Issues: These are issues that do not generate any interest from the community perspective, but the Community Facilitator deems it necessary to discuss. They will be issues that the community may find too sensitive or taboo and will not discuss without encouragement.

False Beliefs and Myths: These are statements made by the community that the Community Facilitators know to be myths or false. Issues or statements put in this column need discussion and follow-up. The Community Facilitator will need to plan carefully how to support the community to be better informed while at all times remaining respectful of the community’s perspectives.

Everything the Community Facilitators say must be well-formulated and accurate. The team should not say or repeat false beliefs and myths as this may further spread the false ideas among the community members. It is important to fully identify and analyse the false beliefs and myths related to family relationships, social norms and poverty in the Training of Community Facilitators workshops.

The **facilitator’s wall** also has four columns:

| Community Facilitator’s Perspectives | Implications for the Community | Implications for the Facilitator | Refinement of the Methodology |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | | | |

Figure 8: The Four Columns of the Facilitator’s Wall

Community Facilitators Perspectives: This is where the views and the observations of the Community Facilitators are recorded.

It is important that agreements and disagreements with the Community Facilitator’s views are noted. When recording Community Facilitators’ perspectives, choose those that best contribute to supporting the community’s awareness of how they interact with one another, to stimulate reflection and discussion and to identify ways of changing. Use the following questions to guide the complete the facilitator’s wall:

- What are the Community dynamics and the way in which community members interact with each other?
- Participation within the group: Who speaks? Who does not speak? Is there active community participation?
- Is the community introspective or indifferent?
- Is there a difference in participation based on gender? Are there marked differences between the perspectives of men and women? Do women assert themselves? Are women silent or silenced during the discussion?
- Will it be possible or impossible to reach consensus within a group on the issue under discussion?
- How difficult or easy was it to facilitate a discussion on this issue? Was it easy to encourage the community to speak openly on this issue or event?
- What is the range of perspectives (differences or similarities) within the group?

Implications for the Community: This column detail the solutions developed in the session. As previously emphasised, solutions must come from within each individual, each family and each community to ensure success of the CC process. The analysis of the sessions must stimulate community reflection on the implications for the whole community and for the facilitators. Here the implications must be documented and clearly and carefully considered. For example, if a community is reflecting on the high level of adolescent pregnancies and agree that it should not continue, rather than writing *"This community must not allow adolescent pregnancy"*, this column should focus on the decisions and actions that are going to be taken.

Implications for Facilitators: When the implications for the community have been formulated, the Community Facilitators must ask if there is an action they can take or an appropriate external support that could be followed up. In order to catalyse and support change, the environment must be favourable. For example if, following a session, people decide to talk to Chieftdom or village leaders on changing a law or policy, then the community must have skills to be able advocate for the change. This implies that the organisation working with the community and institutions outside the community should be engaged to support. An example could include the organisation supporting a training on advocacy for the community.

Certain community decisions may have implications for local organisations and services. An appropriate way of handling this is to ask the village or local authorities and those concerned to adopt the decisions or ensure follow up. The implications of decisions must be discussed, and the action to be taken must be as specific as possible.

Refinement of the Methodology: Throughout the process the Community Facilitators must guide the conversation in the appropriate direction. After the analysis of each session the Community Facilitators should discuss with each other, *"what are the appropriate tools and/or strategic question to move the conversation forward in the next session?"* This column is also used to record the community and Community Facilitator's discussion on refining the methodology so as to improve upon the process. For example:

- Do community members have an opportunity to express their opinions on how the session was facilitated by the Community Facilitators?
- Were the stories/role plays realistic and did it relate to the experiences of the community?
- How could the emotions, feelings and different perspectives raised during the conversation be better managed?
- What has been accomplished since the beginning of the CC process?

Allowing the community to reflect upon and suggest improvements to the facilitation process is an important evaluation tool. Often it is the Community Facilitators who are authorised to evaluate the processes and the tools used. With this methodology, the community, alongside the Community Facilitators, is in a position to explore the best ways to catalyse change and to fully use the Community Conversation process.

Annexes

Annex 1: Monitoring Forms

Community Conversation Session Summary

Completed and signed by the 3 facilitators after each session and submitted by to (*countries to complete*)

| | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| Name of community: | Date of the Session: | No. of the CC Session: | Duration of the Session: Start - Finish - |
| Numbers of participants Total: Women: Men: Youth (age range for 'youth' is country specific) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls: • Boys: | | | |
| PLA Tool Used: | | | |
| Strategic Question posed for this session and why it was chosen: | | | |
| Summary of the Community Wall | | | |
| Community Perspectives: | New Burning Issues from this session: | Non-Burning Issues: | False Beliefs and Myths Addressed: |
| Summary of the Facilitators Wall | | | |
| Community Facilitators' Perspectives: | Implication for the Community: | Implication for the Facilitator's: | Refinement of the Methodology: |
| Any change in social and gender norms and values noted: | | | |

| |
|---|
| |
| Names and signatures of the 3 facilitators: 1. 2. 3. |

Quarterly Summary

Completed by the supervisor at the Refresher Meetings which are conducted after CC session 6, 12 and 18.

Completed by the CC supervisor using the:

1. Session Monitoring Forms
2. Community Record Books

| Name of community: | Name of the 3 facilitators: | Name and Signature of the Supervisor |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Update on the major concerns identified (Summary of the Community Wall): | | |
| PLA tools used in the last six sessions (add the ## of the session depending on when the review is taking place) | Session ... | |
| | Session ... | |
| | Session ... | |
| | Session ... | |
| | Session ... | |
| | Session ... | |
| The Six Strategic questions that were posed in the last six sessions (add the ## depending on when the review is taking place) | Session ... | |
| | Session ... | |
| | Session ... | |
| | Session ... | |
| | Session ... | |
| | Session ... | |

| | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <p>Supervisors Review each community record book and note the quality of the recorded notes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Very Satisfactory (100% of the words of the community) 2. Satisfied (over 60% of the content is in the communities' actual words) 3. Not Satisfied (over 30% of the content is in the communities' actual words) 4. Unsatisfactory (only the facilitators words included) | | | |
| <p>Supervisors Review the Community Wall. Using the summary sheets of each session and the community records books provide comments on each section of the wall indicating where and how it can be improved. (The Community Wall is not brought to the Review session – it belongs to the community)</p> | | | |
| Community Perspectives: | Burning Issues: | Non-Burning Issues: | False Beliefs & Myths: |
| <p>Supervisors Review the Facilitators Wall and provide guidance on where it can be improved for each section. Using the summary sheets of each session and the community records books provide comments on each section of the wall. The Facilitators Wall can be brought to the review meeting but supervisors should appreciate that may be quite large and if on flip chart paper may be damaged)</p> | | | |
| Community Facilitators' Perspectives: | Implications for the Community: | Implications for the facilitator: | Refinement of the Methodology: |

Annex 2: Review and Refresher Self-Assessment Tools

1. Self-Assessment on Skills Development

Below is a table which will assist you in assessing yourself.

- Next to each skill, indicate where you think you are regarding your development of that particular skill by placing an 'x' in the appropriate box.
- For example, if you feel your active listening is very well developed, put an 'x' in the 'active listening' row below the 'very well developed' column.
- Provide a comment in the comments block reflecting on the factors that facilitated or hindered your development of that skill.

| Name of the Facilitator: | | Date of the Assessment: | | Name of the Community: | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|--|
| Skills | Not Well Developed | Well Developed | Very well Developed | Comments | |
| Strategic Questioning | | | | | |
| Active Listening | | | | | |
| Curiously Engaged | | | | | |
| Role Play | | | | | |
| Short Story creation | | | | | |
| Building Trust | | | | | |
| Documentation | | | | | |
| Facilitating Plenary | | | | | |
| Arranging groups | | | | | |

2. Self-Assessment on Competence on PLA Tools

Below is a table, which will assist you in assessing yourself.

- Next to each skill, indicate where you think you are regarding your development of that particular PLA tool by placing an 'x' in the appropriate box.
- For example, if you feel your ability facilitate the Reflection tool is very well developed, put an 'x' in the 'Reflection row below the 'very well developed' column.
- Provide a comment in the comments block reflecting on the factors that facilitated or hindered your development of that PLA tools.

| Name of the Facilitator: _____ | | | | |
|--|-----------------|-------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Date of the Assessment: _____ | | | | |
| Name of the Community: _____ | | | | |
| Tools | Not used | Used | Level of confidence in using the tool | Give reasons for lack of use |
| Reflection | | | | |
| Resonance | | | | |
| Historical Timeline | | | | |
| Power Walk | | | | |
| Venn Diagram | | | | |
| Stock-Taking | | | | |
| Socio-Cultural Dynamics & Poverty | | | | |
| Community Net | | | | |
| Gender Box | | | | |
| Integral Framework | | | | |
| Power Relations | | | | |
| Change and Language | | | | |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Change and Perception | | | | |
| Transect Walk Mapping Tool | | | | |
| Story-Telling | | | | |
| Cassava Tool | | | | |
| Vision Board | | | | |
| Community Wall | | | | |
| Facilitators' Wall | | | | |

Annex 3: Pre Test and Post Test

Pre and Post Tests for the Community Facilitators Training

Please tick one answer per question (Question 1 to 10)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Female Male

Pre Test Post Test

1. What do you think Community Conversations is?

- a) A session that allows communities to come together to discuss issues that concern them
- b) A series of sessions that allows community leaders to come together to explore and find solutions for issues that affect the communities
- c) A process that allows GOAL to provide vital information that encourages communities to change certain behaviours
- d) A process that allows the whole community to explore their daily concerns and issues and find solutions that improve their daily lives

2. What is Participatory Learning and Action?

- a) It is a set of tools that allows the facilitator/leaders to provide the community certain information
- b) It a set of tools that allows community members to participate more in the change
- c) It is a reciprocal learning process between equals that makes the community owners of the change process
- d) It a process that allows others to supervise the communities to change behaviour

3. Social Norms and Culture in a community only change when:

- a) There is a major disaster such as a famine or drought
- b) Social Norms and Culture are always changing and often go unnoticed by the community
- c) There is an agency who supports the community to change
- d) Social Norms and Culture never change

4. The two essential attributes of a participatory facilitators are someone who is:

- a) On time and prepared
- b) Trustworthy and respectful
- c) Is knowledgeable and has an informed opinion on the subject
- d) Can maintain eye contact and is well dressed

5. "Social Cohesion" is the cement which links individuals within their community:

- True False

6. When practising the technique of "strategic questions," we must often use the word "why?":

- True False

7. When practising the technique of "active listening," you must be ready to answer when the other person stops talking:

- True False

8. Those who want to behave in a way that reinforces and values the potential of everyone must be always conscious of their use of language:

- True False

9. Story-telling methodology is a way of understanding social interactions, together with their influence and impact:

- True False

10. Documenting what is said by the community is that not important as it is more important that the facilitator can interpret what is said:

- True False

11. Tell us what you think of Community Engagement:

Answers for the pre and post test (1 point for each):

- | | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|------------|
| Q1: D | Q2: C | Q3: B | Q4: B | Q5: True |
| Q6: False | Q7: False | Q8: True | Q9: True | Q10: False |

Annex 4: Evaluation of the Community Facilitators Training

Evaluation of the Community Facilitators Training

Date: _____

Thank you for attending this training. Your input is appreciated and will help to improve future training sessions. Your responses will be *completely confidential*.

1. Please indicate below your rating of each listed item:

| Item | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
|--------------------------|-----------|------|------|------|
| Presentations | | | | |
| Practical sessions | | | | |
| Overall training program | | | | |

Additional comments:

2. Please rate the usefulness of the following Sessions.

| Session (below add the various sessions from your agenda, e.g. 1 Introduction Session) | Very Useful | Useful | Somewhat Useful | Not Useful |
|--|-------------|--------|-----------------|------------|
| 1. Introduction Session | | | | |
| 2. | | | | |
| 3. | | | | |
| 4. | | | | |
| 5. | | | | |
| 6. | | | | |
| 7. | | | | |
| 8. | | | | |
| 9. | | | | |
| 10. | | | | |

3. Please indicate on a 1–5 scale your opinion of the following course components:

5: Strongly Agree 4: Agree 3: No Opinion 2: Disagree 1: Strongly Disagree

| Course Components | Rating (1-5) |
|--|--------------|
| 1. The pre-test questionnaire helped me to study more effectively | |
| 2. The trainer communicated clearly and effectively | |
| 3. The information presented in the training was new to me | |
| 4. The trainers were knowledgeable on the topics presented | |
| 5. The trainers were interested in the subjects they taught | |
| 6. The training content (or the content of the sessions) had sufficient theoretical knowledge | |
| 7. The trainers asked questions and involved me in the sessions | |
| 8. I am confident I understand the concept of CC | |
| 9. I am confident that I understand the principles of participatory facilitation | |
| 10. I am confident I understand the tools and skills for facilitating CC | |
| 11. I am confident I understand what I need to prepare for starting the CC process in my community | |

4. What topics, if any, should be added to improve the training? Why?

5. What topics, if any, should be deleted to improve the training? Why

6. The course length was (check one):

- Too long
 Too short
 Just right

7. Any other comments?

Annex 5: Guide to Recording the CC Session by the Community Facilitators

Guide to Recording the CC Session by the Community Facilitators

What: When a participant says something it is recorded in the CC A4 hardback book. Their exact words are written down.

Why: Recording what people say versus the Community Facilitators' interpretation is important as a person's interpretation is influenced by a person's own thinking. So if we write down the actual words that a participant says it can then be reviewed by all three Community Facilitators and interpreted by reviewing the notes of the whole session.

How it is done: **First recorder** writes down what the **first** community person says, then what the **third** person says, then what the **fifth** person says.

Second recorder writes down what the **second** community person said, then what the **fourth** person said, and then the **sixth** person.

Tips:

- No need to write what the facilitator said
- No need to write names – just numbers. However it is important that gender is noted.
- No need to write everything; see examples below

Example One – This is the actual words but leaving out some non-vital words

| | |
|--|------------------------|
| <p>First Recorder -</p> <p>1st person - Woman - my daughter should go to school so she has a better future</p> <p>2nd person Man - She is more value if she is married</p> <p>3rd person Man - She should be married she will bring you lots of cows</p> <p>4th person - Woman - It is always been that if the girl marries She will bring cows to the family so we will have more money</p> <p>5th person Man - if she is educated she can get a good job</p> <p>6th person -Man -if she leaves the community she will forget us, your grandchildren will not know you.</p> | <p>Second Recorder</p> |
|--|------------------------|

Example Two - What was actually said was this -marked in yellow what was left out

1st Woman said -**No you are not right** I want my daughter to go to school because if she does she will have a better future

2nd person Man - **No I will not allow it** - She is more value if she is married

3rd Man - **You are right** - she should be married as she will bring you lots of cows for your family

4th person - Woman - **You are right** It is always been that if the girl marries she will bring cows and we will have more money.

5th -Man - **all of you are wrong** - is she is educated she can get a good job

6th person -Man - if she leaves the community she will forget us and your grandchildren will not know you.

Annex 6: Strategic Questioning

Strategic Questioning Guide

Strategic questions are those that move a conversation towards change by allowing people to explore other points of view. It provides the space for our thoughts to move towards new possibilities and elicits creativity to find solutions to challenges. Strategic questioning is a principal skill used throughout any facilitated change process. It is particularly essential in the identification and exploration of individual and community concerns and challenges.

The table below provide some guidance on the type of questions that can be used:¹²

| Type of Question | Rationale | Key Words | Examples |
|------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Focus questions | Understanding the challenges/issues | What, who, concern, affected you | What are you most concerned about? What do you think about...? How has this affected you? Who else is involved? |
| Observation questions | Understanding what is really happening | See, hear, know, find | What do you see? What do you hear? What do you notice about this? What do you know for sure and what are you uncertain about? Which sources do you trust and why? |
| Analysis questions | How the person sees the situation (their perspective) | Think, mean, anticipate, analyse | What do you think about...? What does this mean to you? What do you think is motivating that person? What do you see as the relationship between ... and ...? |
| Feeling questions | What effect has the situation on people | Feel, suffer, needs, sad, angry, frustrated | How do you feel about this situation? How has the situation affected you — emotionally, physically? |
| Visioning questions | Understand what people really want | Hope, wish, like, better, justice | How would you like it to be? What about this situation do you care so much about? What is the best outcome you could imagine? |
| Change questions | Understand how people see how it could be changed for the better | How to change, make a difference, what's worked | How could the situation be changed? What would it take to move the current situation towards the ideal? Who could make a difference? |

¹² Peavey, F. *Strategic Questioning Manual* [[link](#)]

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| | | | What changes have you heard about? How did they come about? |
| The alternatives | Examining the possible options for achieving the vision as well as how change could happen | Options, any other ways | What are all the ways you could accomplish these changes? What is your wildest idea? Have other possibilities occurred to you? |
| The impact | Exploring the personal, environmental, social or political consequences of each alternative | Effects of, likely to happen, impact, outcomes | What would be the likely effect of ...? How would ... affect others? How would you feel doing...? What are some other possible outcomes? |
| The obstacles | Identifying likely challenges/barriers (within and beyond the person) and how these could be overcome | Getting in the way, preventing, holding you back | What holds you back from doing...? What prevents you from getting involved? What barriers might prevent...? Who is likely to object if...? |
| Personal inventory & support questions | Concerned with identifying one's interest, potential contribution, particular skills, assets, resources and the support needed for action | Your part, role, skills, assets, influence, help, support, back up | What would it take for you to ...? What do you like to do that might be useful to ...? What aspects interest you most? What support do you need to work for this change? |
| Personal action questions | Getting down to specifics; actual planning | What exactly, when, who, how, first step | What is your first step Who do you need to talk to? How can you involve others? |

Annex 7: Community Aptitude Assessment

A simple Community Aptitude (capacity) assessment sheet example (focus of the CC was HIV prevention)

| | 1 BASIC | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 HIGH |
|---|---|---|--|--|--|
| Acknowledge and Recognise | We know the basic facts about HIV/AIDS, how it spreads and its effects. | We recognise that HIV/AIDS is more than a health problem alone. | We recognise that HIV/AIDS is affecting us as a group /community and we discuss it amongst ourselves. Some of us get tested. | We acknowledge openly our concerns and challenges of HIV/AIDS. We seek others for mutual support and learning. | We go for testing consciously. We recognise our own strength to deal with the challenges and anticipate a better future. |
| Inclusion | We don't involve those affected by the problem. | We co-operate with some people who are useful to resolve common issues. | We in our separate groups meet to resolve common issues (e.g. PLWA, youth, women). | Separate groups share common goals and define each member's contribution. | Because we work together on HIV/AIDS we can address and resolve other challenges facing us. |
| Care and prevention | We rely externally provided messages about care and prevention. | We look after those unable to care for themselves (sick, orphans, elderly). We discuss the need to change behaviours. | We take action because we need to and we have a process to care for others long term. | As a community we initiate care and prevention activities, and work in partnership with external services. | Through care we see changes in behaviour which improve the quality of life for all. |
| Access to Treatment | Other than existing medicines, treatment is not available to us. | Some of us get access to treatment. | We can get treatment for infections but not ARVs. | We know how and where to access ARVs. | ARV drugs are available to all who need them, are successful and effectively used. |
| Identify and address vulnerability | We are aware of the general factors of vulnerability and the risks affecting us. | We have identified our areas of vulnerability and risk (e.g. using mapping as a tool) | We have a clear approach to address vulnerability and risk, and we have assessed the impact of the approach. | We implement our approach using accessible resources and capacities. | We are addressing vulnerability in other aspects of the life of our group. |
| Learning and transfer | We learn from our actions. | We share learning from our successes but not our mistakes. We adopt good practice from outside. | We are willing to try out and adapt what works elsewhere. We share willingly with those who ask. | We learn, share and apply what we learn regularly, and seek people with relevant experience to help us. | We continuously learn how we can respond better to HIV/AIDS and share with those we think will benefit. |
| Measuring change | We are changing because we believe it is the right thing to do but do not measure the impact. | We begin consciously to self measure. | We occasionally measure our own group's change and set targets for improvement. | We measure our change continuously and can demonstrate measurable improvement. | We invite others ideas about how to measure change and share learning and results. |
| Adapting our Response | We see no need to adapt, because we are doing something useful. | We are changing our response as a result of external influences and groups. | We are aware of the change around us and we take the decision to adapt because we need to. | We recognise that we continually need to adapt. | We see implications for the future and adapt to meet them. |
| Ways of working | We wait for others to tell us what to do and provide the resources to do so. | We work as individuals, attempting to control the situation, even when we feel helpless. | We work as teams to solve problems as we recognise them. If someone needs help we share what we can. | We find our own solutions and access help from others where we can. | We believe in our own and others capacity to succeed. We share ways of working that help others succeed. |
| Mobilising resources | We know what we want to achieve but don't have the means to do it. | We can demonstrate some progress by our own resources. | We have prepared project proposals and identified sources of support. | We access resources to address the problems of our community, because others want to support us. | We use our own resources, access other resources to achieve more and have planned for the future. |