



Participatory
Action
Learning for
Sustainability



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TOOL 1
VISIONING

Toolkit for
GYEM Ethiopia



Introduction



Improving horticulture production is a means to an end - happy farmers (women and youth as well as men), happy families and happy community. But improving production, and translating improved production into this bigger vision of personal, family and community progress and happiness requires more than just learning about a few new crop varieties and how to reduce pests.

It means:

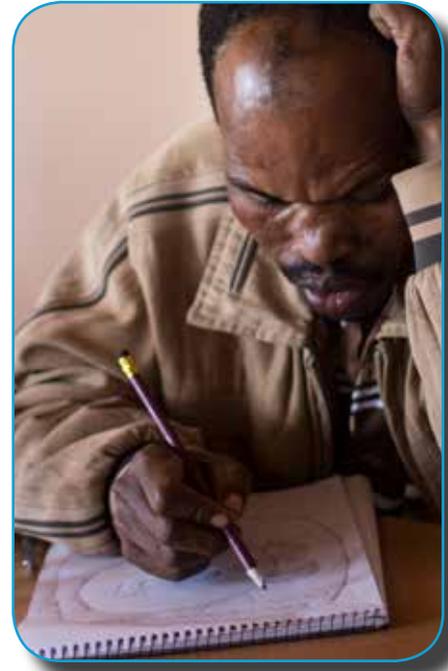
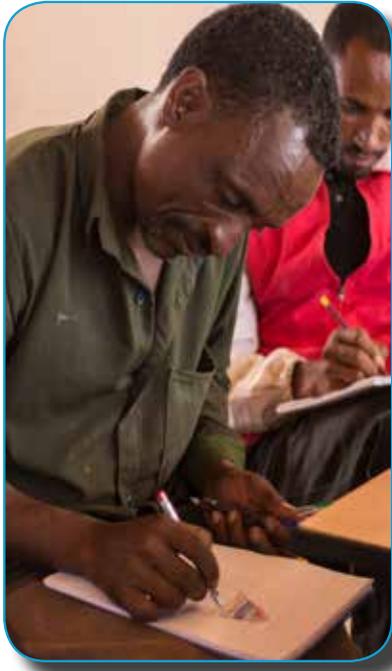
learning how to plan, save and reinvest.

working together with family members on an equitable basis - where all those working hard (women and youth as well as men) also see the fruits in terms of ownership of property, use of income and participation in decision-making.

working in harmony with the natural environment.

Horticulture cooperatives and other service providers can help farmers to achieve their visions. But developing a clear shared vision between farmers and cooperatives of where horticulture fits in the overall vision of happiness and wellbeing is therefore crucial - particularly when times get tough. Otherwise the perception (and maybe also reality?) will remain that participation in cooperatives is not worth the effort and cost. Side-selling to middlemen will be necessary to meet immediate expenses and get credit. So cooperatives will not have secure quality supply to develop their market. Cooperative management becomes to difficult and good managers leave.

This first Session therefore focuses on the question: When you think of yourself happy, what does your life look like? What do 'happy crops' look like? What do happy families look like? What do happy communities look like? What are farmers doing? What are cooperatives doing?



Aims

The soulmate visioning described here should be used when there are champions from another local process to help.

Large versions of drawings of tools like Happy Family Tree and Multilane Highway from the earlier champions should be put on the wall so that people can see the types of drawings that are possible.

But do not put the Visions or first Vision Journeys because people will copy. And make sure there are diagrams with gender and generational relations

If this is the first Catalyst workshop there will not be enough time for this full exercise. It is generally substituted by a simple Pairwise Discussion as outlined in 'Fun With a Serious Purpose'

Visioning is done with both farmers and cooperative staff to reach a common understanding. It is the basis for individual planning on a Vision Journey in Tool 2, and cooperative strategic planning as part of leadership and organisational development training.

This first introductory session aims to be fun and inspire farmers with a vision of their family and community as a result of improving production. It promotes sharing of ideas about different crop varieties between women, youth and men. It starts to raise gender and generational issues in 'happy family' including land ownership and control of money as well as division of labour.

In addition it includes participant introductions and helps farmers to get to know each other better - even if they are already neighbours. It develops confidence in drawing and participatory skills that will be built on in following sessions.

But things must be light and fun - so people really want to share what they are learning and want to come to the next training session to learn how they can plan to work towards this vision.



For individual farmers and staff

- introduce and reinforce a faith in the possibility of change and clarify the role of improved horticulture production in their vision for themselves, their families, the family farm and their community
- introduce basic drawing as a fun and useful activity to bring people together and get more information on a page
- develop confidence of everyone and participatory discussion and listening skills or people normally dominant
- introduce gender and generational issues through discussing ownership of assets in visions eg houses and cars, and contribution of women, youth and men to achieving these.

For organisations

- increases understanding of people's wider visions and how these relate to cooperative horticulture production targets.
- clarifies current baseline situation and how people themselves can plan to achieve them.
- increases understanding of opportunities and challenges and possible roles for the organisation.
- increases understanding of the similarities and differences between women, youth and men from different backgrounds and as individual people.
- improves participatory skills of staff and communication with women and men farmers with whom they work.

Steps: Pairwise and Pyramid Introductions

NOTES

This simple Pairwise introduction can be used if this is the first Catalyst Workshop and there are no existing champions to help.

Particularly if people have to commute a long way and/or there are many logistical issues and/or all local facilitators are new then it is likely there will not be enough time for the full Soulmate Visioning.

VERY IMPORTANT
The Notebooks should not be given out until the start of the visioning below.

For full discussion see 'Fun with a Serious Purpose'.

1: Listening Introductions

As soon as each person arrives the facilitator asks them to sit with someone they do not know well - this is the opportunity for them to get to know new people better, even if they already know people by sight. Though they should not be forced to sit with someone they do not want to.

They should introduce themselves and say a little bit about their background - family etc. Then discuss:

- what they have been told about the training
- their expectations.

They should be told:

- this is a listening and memory exercise - they should not write.
- at the end people will introduce their new friend, not themselves.

As soon as everyone has arrived the facilitator starts the session by briefly explaining the pairwise process for everyone, and that people will introduce their friend and not themselves.

Participants are then given a bit more time to enable everyone to get at least one or two points from a neighbour. If some pairs have finished, they can join some new people.

2: Feedback (optional)

A number of flipcharts are put at the front of the room ready for the expectations.

Establish which language EVERYONE will be comfortable in. Do not assume at the beginning of a workshop everyone will be comfortable in a national language - particularly women. If so, everyone should speak local language and some gives translation.

Feedback should start from the back if people are in rows. Then go round systematically.

Each person introduces their partner. GENTLY encourage everyone to talk audibly and to address all the participants, not only the facilitator.

Expectations are written (unless drawing skills are developed already) on a flipchart either by the participants who is not talking, or by a helper who can write. This should not be the facilitator.

If expectations are the same as others, then just add a tick. Do not write twice. AND ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO BE SPECIFIC - what exactly do they want to learn - not just 'new things'.

After the first couple the facilitator explains briefly about the importance of respect and applause, and asks for suggestions on a form of applause for each pair. APPLAUSE CONVENTION SHOULD BE BRIEF BUT ENERGETIC.

3 Visioning

If there is time for a Soulmate Visioning, then the introductions are not fed back immediately. They become part of the group discussions in the Soulmate Group feedback in consolidated form by each group.

If time is short or numbers of participants very large, then the pairs can combine into groups of 4-10 people and given an extra 15 minutes to discuss. Then the whole groups stands to present - short introduction and consolidated expectations. In this case there needs to be careful observation and reinforcement of the participatory process in each group.

As soon as all feedback is complete, then the facilitator starts an individual vision drawing exercise.

The Notebooks and pens are handed out and participants are asked to open these at the first page. Participants then draw their own vision as in Step 1 of the Soulmate Visioning

Steps: Soulmate Visioning

NOTES

Make sure you have familiarised yourself with 'Fun with A Serious Purpose' GYEM Facilitation Guide. Particularly sections on:

Drawing

Applause

Participatory listening

Interactive facilitation

For specific preparation for this exercise see Tool Facilitation Guide below first.

1 Individual Drawing (15 minutes)

Participants are asked first to close their eyes, and think of what they think 'a happy life' would look like.

- What would they have? What does the farm look like?
- What would they grow? What does 'Happy Veg' look like?
- What does a Happy Family look like? Who is there? Who is doing what? Who owns what? Who gets the money? Who decides what?
- What does the community environment look like?

The notebooks and pens are handed out. The facilitator explains the importance of keeping different parts of the notebook separate: front for individual plans, back will be the pictorial steps they will share, Middle is for notes so they can revise these and/or tear out pages later.

The facilitator has put a flipchart at the front of the hall and asks someone to come up and draw a large red circle. Participants are told this represents the big sun vision. They are then asked how they could make this appear more shining, and someone else comes up and draws the lines for the rays of the sun. They should not forget the applause.

On the first page of their Notebook participants draw the images they see - this will be their then starting vision for the following sessions. Though it may well change as they share with others and in future as they progress and they can add things later.



2 Finding soulmates (15-20 minutes)

When participants think they have finished, they stand up and mingle with each other, sharing their vision drawings.

As they mingle they decide which participants they think have vision drawings most similar to their own and form a group with them.

Normally this produces 3-5 groups of different views, with any 'special people' who do not feel they can join the other groups then forming one group together.



Steps: Soulmate Visioning continued

The facilitator does not intervene in the discussion, but just ensures that there are people on the drawing and asks people to think about issues of ownership of assets and indicate this on the drawings.

As they go around the facilitator also observes which drawings seem strongest from the point of view of gender fairness.

3 Collective drawing (4-5 groups 15 minutes)

Each group does a collective drawing on a large flipchart, bringing together all the elements from the different drawings.

This collective drawing should be a participatory process - it is not a task given to the most 'artistic' participant. It is part of the development of participation skills and the participatory process is as important as the beautiful product. Everyone comes up systematically in turn, takes the marker from the previous person, contributes a drawing from their vision, then hands the pen to the next person. As people sit down they should be applauded.

Everyone draws, no one draws for anyone else and no one stands in front for long. All participants should make sure everyone can see and hear the whole discussion and is not left out at the back - or just sits back doing nothing.

They also list on a separate sheet the expectations from their pairwise discussion.

Each group appoints a presenter - preferably the person who has spoken least so everyone has a chance to develop their confidence at speaking.

4 Plenary sharing (10-25 minutes, 2-5 minutes per group)

Presentations start with the drawing the facilitator considers to be the least complete in terms of the happy family vision (but do not say this is the reason for selection!). The vision the facilitator thinks is the most comprehensive, particularly on family and community vision should come last as a 'grand finale'.

The groups come up in turn to present each other and their vision drawing and their estimate of the proportion of farmers they think has achieved what already. When the presenter has finished other group members are invited to add.

Other participants listen and think or note things they think are different from their own drawing/ questions they have.

They also present their list of expectations - but only adding new things, not repeating what has already been said.

As each group finishes they hand the pen to the next group and are applauded as they sit down. The facilitator sits at the back or side and does not touch the marker.



Facilitation overview

Participant preparation

- Come on time
- Bring Notebook diaries and coloured pens unless these are provided by the project

Facilitator preparation

- Familiarise yourself with the instructions, including the description on encouraging drawing and GALS Facilitation Guide.
- Make sure the seating arrangements will enable individual reflection, space in the middle of the room for mingling and flipcharts for 4-5 group discussions.

Materials/ prepared inputs

- One notebook diary or A4 sheet of plain paper with coloured pens per participant.
- 1 flipchart with coloured markers for each group ie x 4-5.

Timing 3 hours with healthbreak

- Arrival and welcoming vision song sung by earlier champions or on laptop speakers playing as people arrive. If people lack confidence to draw - see suggestions in Facilitation Guide.
- As people arrive they sit in pairs (See Step 1 of Pairwise Introductions).
- The formal start of the workshop should be at most 5-10 minutes time after planned start. The facilitator explains that the introductions of participants and expectations from their discussion in pairs is integrated into the next activity (5 minutes). They also introduce some sort of noise that will signal that everyone should be quiet immediately - that will only be done at important points and is the only 'norm setting' done in this training. Usually people behave like respectful adults without being told.
- Interactive explanation of the Vision and the underlying Visioning narrative (see above), the soulmate activity and reasons for drawing. (10 minutes)
- Individual drawing (15 minutes)
- Mingling and sharing drawings (30 minutes)
- Group discussion and collective drawing (20 minutes)
- Plenary feedback (20-25 minutes 5 minutes per drawing)
- Facilitator wrap up and explanation of homework next session (10 minutes).

Outputs

- Flipchart of participant expectations for future reference and evaluation
- Individual visions in notebook diaries
- Soulmate group visions
- song
- Drawing and participatory skills and networking
- Understanding of the likely similarities and differences between participants, and between women and men and whether or not there is a need for norm setting at this stage.

Homework for participants

- Take forward the vision drawing to the next exercise and/or share with people at home

Homework for facilitator

- Photograph the flipcharts with brief notes
- Consider implications of observations on participants and process for the following activities.

Facilitation issues to consider for future

Aims for facilitator

This is first session a key learning and observation session for the facilitator to:

- understand participant expectations - which of can be fulfilled through planned schedule, which can be fulfilled by some adjustments or additions, and which are the subject of another training.
- to assess the specificities of the particular participant mix and context eg how easily women and men interact, older and younger people, what are likely sensitive issues etc in order to manage group dynamics and assess pacing of the sessions. It does not start with separating women, youth and men but leaves open to observation whether and in what ways they may have different perspectives.
- to get people talking and energised so that they are open to some of the new thinking in the following sessions.

Issues to observe to guide future facilitation

Look at the aims of the session and tick those you think have been achieved.

- How much consensus is there between the visions? What are the main differences? Between women and men? Between women? Between men? Between people from different backgrounds? Do you think it is necessary to question any gender differences in visions? If so how?
- Has the discussion process been equitable and participatory? Did women and men mix happily together, or separate out into single-sex groups? Have women participated equally in the group discussions? Have men felt they could express themselves freely? Have groups been dominated by a few individuals? If not, what are the implications for the following sessions?
- Are any people still having difficulty drawing? They may need some encouragement. Are any people drawing for others? This should be strongly discouraged - or people will never learn.
- Are there any gender/youth issues which you feel are likely to be very important? Changes which everyone would seem to support? Issues which are very important, but likely to be sensitive? How would you tackle these without causing undue conflict and losing people along the way?
- Did you have any difficulties as facilitator? How do you think those could be addressed in the following sessions? Will you need to make any changes to seating arrangements and logistics to increase participation in following sessions?
- There should ideally be a song (as well as participatory pairwise or pyramid recap) at the start of every session - what are your conclusions on the best ways and timing to start working on the songs?

Facilitation General Dos and Don'ts

*Remember
the aims at
this stage are:*

*the
understanding
and discussion,
not just the final
drawing.*

*ownership,
openness and
fun, not 'political
correctness'
or accuracy of
information*

*getting a sense
of what happens
'naturally'
coming from
participants so
you understand
how to strategise
change from the
back in later
stages.*

DO

Be sure to change the **seating arrangements** if necessary to encourage discussion and participation. Seating should not be like school, but chairs in groups with passages between.

Make sure everyone:

- is drawing for themselves
- has put their individual symbol and group symbol on the outside of the diary
- has put the date on their vision
- is drawing in their diaries the right way up
- is now comfortable holding a pen.

Make sure **everyone is engaged all the time**. If some people are having difficulty, put those people together to support each other. Do not put advanced people with those having difficulty, or the advanced people will get bored and those struggling will sit back and not develop confidence.

You can support and reinforce anything which you think is particularly **positive in support of women's rights and gender justice** eg visions where women have ownership of assets, where men are helping with children etc. You can question (politely, strategically and without accusation) anything which is obviously against the GALS principles. And things which support assumptions eg that men are heads of household or women are weak etc.

Observe the **participatory process** throughout and (politely) introduce and continually reinforce principles of inclusion, equity and respect right from the start. If the participatory process has been very bad and some participants are very disruptive, then some discussion on norm-setting may be needed for the next session. But ask participants themselves to comment and make suggestions.

DON'T

- Don't try to teach or preach - you will just lose people from the start.
- NO ONE SHOULD EVER DRAW FOR SOMEONE ELSE or they will never learn anything. This is important for later.
- NO ONE IN GALS SHOULD EVER BE LEFT SITTING WITH NOTHING TO DO. They should be further developing their own drawings and/or discussing and helping others
- Don't make norm setting appear 'teacherish' - farmers are adults and should self-enforce norms themselves leaving you to continue to facilitate from the back as a friend? Particularly on gender issues.