



**TOOL 1**

# **SOULMATE VISIONING**

**Steps and Workshop Facilitation**

**P**articipatory  
**A**ction  
**L**earning for  
**S**ustainability

Toolkit for  
GYEM Ethiopia

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## Introductory narrative

*Improving horticulture production is a means to an end - happy farmers (women and youth as well as men), happy families and happy community. Horticulture cooperatives and other service providers can help farmers to achieve their visions.*

*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 also requires:*

- learning how to plan, save and reinvest and be as self-reliant as possible instead of waiting for external assistance and depending on debt. And so that external assistance and loans can be most profitably used where they are really needed.*
- 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.*

*Increasing self-reliance will strengthen cooperatives and their ability to give sustainable and meaningful support. Farmers will be able to share their visions and develop collective visions together with cooperatives. This will clarify farmers' real needs for services and how services can be more empowering. Side-selling to middlemen will be no longer necessary to meet immediate expenses and get credit and cooperatives will have secure quality supply to develop their market. Cooperative management will become more manageable so cooperatives can attract good managers and staff to stay for job satisfaction, not just the money.*

*This first Session focuses on visioning: "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 activity described here is intended as Session 1 of a 5 day Catalyst workshop (See GYEM PALS Overview).**

*A recorded song from an earlier process can be played as people enter.*

*Flipcharts of tools like Happy Family Tree and Change Leadership Map from earlier champions - with gender, green fruits and tracking - can 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 or people will copy.*

*If this is the first Catalyst workshop there will not be enough time for the full exercise. Use only steps 1-3.*

*The same tool can be used with staff and cooperatives for personal and organisational visioning.*

Visioning is the basis for individual planning on a Vision Journey in Tool 2.

This first introductory session aims to be fun and inspire farmers with a vision of their lives, 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 can be extended to include discussion of what 'happy crops look like' as introduction to more technical training.

It starts to raise gender and generational issues in relation to the vision including land ownership, decision-making, control of money and 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 that 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.



### Aims 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 'to the point' presentation skills.
- develop participatory listening skills of people who are normally dominant.
- start to think about gender and generational issues in visions eg who will own houses - how can women be secure? do women want to own and drive cars?

### Aims for organisations

- increase understanding of farmers' wider visions and how these relate to cooperative and project horticulture production targets.
- increases understanding of the similarities and differences between women, youth and men from different backgrounds and as individual people.
- starts to identify gender and generational dimensions of visions that can be built on as the basis for change.
- improves participatory skills of staff and ability to communicate on an equal and open basis with women and men farmers with whom they work.

## Steps: Pairwise and Pyramid Introductions

### NOTES

**Language:** *Never assume everyone will be comfortable in a national language - particularly women. If not, use local language so that everyone can say what they really think. Translate for the facilitators.*

**Applause:** *After the first pair the facilitator explains the importance of respect and confidence-building, and asks for suggestions on a form of applause to be used after each participant contribution. APPLAUSE SHOULD BE BRIEF BUT ENERGETIC.*

**Norm setting:** *this is done as need arises - treat people like adults. Just set an agreed signal for silence eg 3 loud taps on a microphone/table or bell.*

**Notebook Diaries:** *Notebooks should not be given out until the individual visioning.*

## 1: Listening : Pairwise 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.

## 2a: Pairwise Feedback of Expectations

If there is a whole morning for the first introductory session:

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

People come up to the front with their new friend - starting with people sitting at the back, then moving systematically forward.

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 participant who is not talking, or by a helper who can write - not the facilitator.

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

After the first pair the facilitator establishes the convention for applause. The applause is then repeated after each presentation. The second or third time the facilitator should not lead, but should wait and expect the participants to start the applause. That is part of development of participant ownership of the process.

## 2b Pyramid Feedback of Expectations

*If time for the introductions is short (less than an hour) or numbers of participants very large (over 30):*

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.

## 2c Pyramid Feedback of Expectations

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

## 3 Wrap Up

The facilitator compares expectations to planned content of the training - which expectations can be met and which are for a different training.

As soon as all feedback is complete, then the facilitator starts an individual vision drawing exercise using the Visioning Step 1.

## Steps: Soulmate Visioning

### NOTES

*Make sure you have familiarised yourself with the GYEM PALS Overview Part 2 on facilitation. Particularly sections on:*

- Drawing
- Applause
- Participatory listening
- Interactive facilitation
- Seating arrangements

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

**Coloured pens and markers** *Colour-coding is important for PALS. Make sure red, green, blue and black are all available. Green must be clearly different, and is sometimes difficult to get - plan in advance.*

*But people sketch first in pencil.*

## 1 Individual Drawing

(15 minutes)

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

- Who is around you? What are you doing? What do you have?
- What does your happy family look like? Who is there? What would they have?
- What does the farm look like? What crops would you grow? What do 'Happy Crops' look like?
- Who is doing what? Who owns what? Who gets the money? Who decides what?
- What does your community and environment look like?

The facilitator has put a flipchart at the front of the hall and asks someone to come up and draw a large red circle - first they should show with their hand, ask other participants if that is right and then draw. To fill the whole sheet.

Participants are told this represents the big sun vision. They are then asked how they could make this appear more shining. Someone else comes up, indicates with their hand, asks participants their opinion, then draws the lines for the rays of the sun. Participants should not forget the applause.

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 part is for notes so they can revise these and/or tear out pages later.

On the first page of their Notebook participants draw the large sun symbol in red to fill the whole page. Inside this they draw images they see - this will be their starting vision for the following sessions. Though it may well change as they share with others and as they progress. They can add more 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, forming one bigger group together.

*The facilitator does not intervene in the discussion at this stage. They just ensure that the drawings have people on them - not just houses etc.*

*If participants are quite advanced, then they can be asked to mark by each symbol how many of them already have the things in their vision - women and men separately.*

## Steps: Soulmate Visioning continued

### NOTES

*As the facilitator goes around they observe which group drawings seem strongest from the point of view of gender fairness. Those will be presented last to end on a strong note. The weakest drawings are presented first. In that plenary presentation and discussion is inclusive and cumulative without too much facilitator intervention.*

*Questions on gender issues like ownership of assets, driving cars etc can be asked at the group and/or plenary stages - as gentle questions to promote discussion, not preaching things that have to be put.*

### 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 - not a task given to the most 'artistic' participant. It is part of the development of participatory skills. The participatory process is more important than a 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. 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.

As each person sits down they should be applauded.

When everyone has drawn all their symbols, the group appoints a presenter - preferably the person who has spoken least so everyone has a chance to develop confidence at speaking.

### 4 Plenary sharing

(25+ minutes, 5+ minutes per group)

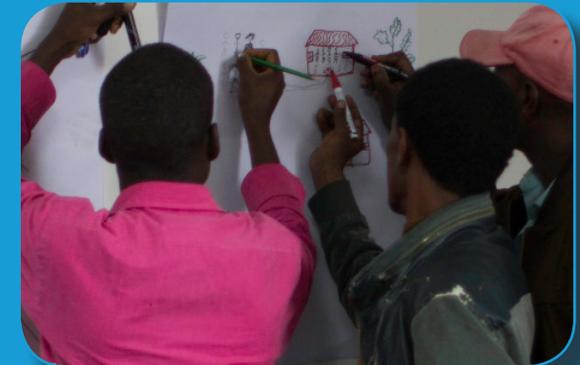
Presentations start with the drawing the facilitator considers to be the least complete in terms of the happy family vision (but do not say this is the reason for selection!). The vision the facilitator thinks is the most comprehensive, particularly on family and community vision should come last as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

The groups come up in turn to present each other, their collective vision drawing and estimate of how many women and men already have it. 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 can add new things to their individual visions - particularly on gender and family relationships.

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

*Morning of first day of the 5 day catalyst workshop.*

*When used for peer sharing, the champion:*

- explains the purpose of the tool
- asks the person learning to:
- think about their own happy life
- draw the big sun circle and rays on the first page of the notebook
- put symbols in the circle for their vision
- finally they can compare and share visions

*The person should have bought a notebook together with pencil or pens. Or - just for Vision and Vision Journey - the champion gives them one sheet from their own notebook and lends a pencil.*

<b>Participant preparation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Come on or before time</li> <li>• Bring Notebook Diaries and coloured pens unless these are provided by the project</li> </ul>
<b>Facilitator preparation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiarise yourself with the instructions, including Facilitation Section of PALS in GYEM Overview.</li> <li>• Make sure the seating arrangements will enable individual reflection, space in the middle of the room for mingling and flipcharts for 5-6 group discussions.</li> <li>• Put flipcharts of tools and song words on the wall and play recording from any previous process to create 'ambiance'.</li> </ul>
<b>Materials/ prepared inputs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual activity: one Notebook Diary or A4 sheet of plain paper with pencil and 4 coloured pens (1 black, 1 blue, 1 green and 1 red) per participant. With rubbers and pencil sharpeners to share in the group.</li> <li>• Group activity: 1 flipchart and 4 coloured markers (1 black, 1 blue, 1 green and 1 red) x eg 5-6 groups depending on number of participants.</li> </ul>
<b>Timing 3 hours with healthbreak</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrival and welcoming vision song sung by earlier champions or on laptop speakers playing as people arrive.</li> <li>• As people arrive they sit in pairs (See Step 1 of Pairwise Introductions).</li> <li>• 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 a signal to mean that everyone should be quiet immediately (eg three taps on a microphone, or bell) - 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.</li> <li>• Interactive explanation of the Vision and the underlying Visioning narrative (see above), the soulmate activity and reasons for drawing (10 minutes)</li> <li>• Individual drawing (15 minutes)</li> <li>• Mingling and sharing drawings (30 minutes)</li> <li>• Group discussion and collective drawing (20 minutes)</li> <li>• Plenary feedback (20-25 minutes 5 minutes per drawing)</li> <li>• Facilitator wrap up, clarification on sharing (see note on right) and explanation of homework for next session (10 mins).</li> </ul>
<b>Outputs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flipchart of participant expectations. Clarification for participants on planned content of this training, how this relates to expectations and what will not be covered. The list will form the basis for evaluation at the end'</li> <li>• Individual visions in notebook diaries</li> <li>• Soulmate group visions, possibly quantified for women and men.</li> <li>• Participants familiar with a Vision Song (if there has been a song played from a previous process)</li> <li>• Drawing and participatory skills, and participant networking</li> <li>• 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, and for what.</li> </ul>
<b>Homework for participants</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add any further elements to the vision drawing ready for the next exercise</li> <li>• Make sure they are clear on the steps and share with people at home.</li> <li>• Think of a personal symbol, and draw this together with your village/group on the front of your Notebook.</li> </ul>
<b>Homework for facilitator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Photograph the flipcharts with brief notes</li> <li>• Consider implications of observations about the participants and the participatory process for the following activities.</li> </ul>

## Facilitation issues to consider for future

### Aims for facilitator

The session does not start with separating women, youth and men but leaves open to observation whether and in what ways they may have different perspectives. It is a key learning and observation session for the facilitator to:

- understand participant expectations - which of these can be fulfilled through the planned schedule, which can be fulfilled by some small adjustments or additions, and which are the subject of another training.
- get a sense of what happens 'naturally' coming from participants, So you can 'facipulate' (facilitate and manipulate) change from the back in later stages.
- to assess the specificities of the particular participant mix and context: eg how easily women and men interact, or older and younger people, what are likely sensitive issues etc in order to manage group dynamics and assess pacing of future sessions.
- to get everyone talking, energised and confident so that they are open to some of the new thinking in the following sessions, and are able to express different ideas
- to get everyone participating and also listening to others.

### 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? If not, what are the implications for the following sessions?
- Have groups been dominated by a few individuals? If not, what are the implications for the following sessions?
- Will you need to make any changes to seating arrangements and logistics to increase participation in following sessions? Through making sure there are corridors between seats for people to easily come to the front?
- 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 who cannot will never learn and those helping will not advance themselves. Everyone should learn as much as possible, then they share later back home.
- 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, eg in relation to women's rights in CEDAW and/or project gender and rights indicators? How would you strategise/facipulate to tackle these without causing undue conflict and losing people along the way?
- Did you have any difficulties as facilitator? Did the silence signal work?
- How do you think those could be addressed in the 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 among participants, not just the final drawing.*
- *ownership, openness, confidence and fun, not 'political correctness' or accuracy of information.*
- *getting a sense of what happens 'naturally' coming from participants, So you can 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 PALS 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 difficult 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 - there is always a tendency for people to help others who they think are having difficulty, and for those with difficulty to want help. But if that happens people with difficulties will start to sit back and not learn. Those who learn faster will get bored. This principle is very important to establish from the beginning.
- NO ONE IN PALS 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 the facilitator to continue to give friendly support from the back?