

RWEE Catalyst Tool 1: Soulmate Visioning

Day 1: Pairwise Introductions

Pairwise Introduction is a key GALS tool to start a workshop. Each participant chooses someone they do not know and are asked to exchange names, something about each other – family, group - and then what their expectations are of the workshop. Each participant then introduces their partner. From the beginning of the workshop this:

- raises energy levels so people are very awake at the start
- develops confidence, friendships, listening skills and representing a more collective voice from the beginning of the workshop
- gives the facilitator a chance to respond to expectations – what will and will not be covered, to clarify or adjust workshop content
- gives a good sense of the sorts of words and language people use and how they relate to each other to help the facilitator adjust their language and process.

A mode of applause and appreciation is also established at this point – short and energetic to be used for all participants as they present.

Some participants had just been invited and thought it would be interesting to come, but had no specific expectations. Other expectations expressed divided into three main categories:

- **Networking**
 - Want new information
 - Meet people in North
 - Share experiences and learn from others
- **Skills**
 - Learn vegetable production
 - Learn business skills
 - Learn sewing
 - Learn skills useful for life
- **Development**
 - How to resolve village problems and unemployment
 - How to work in a group, including mixed groups of men and women
 - How to reduce poverty and improve living standard
 - How to create jobs and involve young people in vegetable growing.
 - Two of the men had very big expectations – to learn how to develop Naryn and their cooperative.

It was explained that the training was about planning at individual and group levels, and how women and men can work together. They will certainly get to know each other well. It was not, however a technical training – that could be given in other workshops. What they will learn will help them plan how to use money they may get from improved businesses and work. Some of the tools can also be used for other things.

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At this point the Notebooks were handed out. People put on their name and a personal symbol on the cover. They were told that the front pages of the notebook will be for their diagrams. The back will be for their own manual (to be explained later), they can also put notes in the middle pages that they can tear out and arrange later if they wish.

Soulmate Visioning asks people to draw their visions on the first page of their notebook – putting on women and men as well as things or buildings. It was explained that GALS uses drawing, not because people cannot write but because drawing is an essential visual communication skill for everyone in the modern world. It improves intelligence, memory, clarity of thought, analytical and communication skills. Later some things will be written, but at the beginning it is good to have fun and experiment with drawing – as they said they wanted to learn new skills.

They then mingle and share with each other and form a 'soulmate group' with people with similar visions and draw a group vision bringing together all their ideas.

This exercise resulted in 5 visions, mixing between women and men and across age groups.

