

1. Facilitation Tools



1.1 Facilitating Adult Learning

SEASON	All; to be used in each session to refresh facilitation skills
OBJECTIVE	To build practical skills and help FFBS facilitators feel informed and confident about their role and ability to facilitate a participatory learning session
MATERIALS NEEDED	Petrol Pump Education Handout

Background

This session allows participants to identify the key skills of a facilitator and to distinguish between a top-down teacher/trainer and a facilitator of a participatory adult-learning process.

Handouts:

Picture 1- Petrol pump education

Steps to follow for the activity

► STEP 1. What we learn informally - buzz groups (5 minutes)

In this session we are going to do various activities to look at the ways adults learn. Some of things we learn as adults, we learn without going school, college, or a training course. Some of you probably learnt as child, some as an adult.

(Give some examples, such as sewing/building/riding a bike, raising children and chickens/ making, mending and repairing/ organizing weddings and parties/ any income-generating activities).

BUZZ: Ask each person to turn to a partner, and come up with 5-10 things they learned outside of school, as an adult. They only need a few minutes. In plenary, ask participants to call out some of the skills they have learned.



► **STEP 2. What helps and hinders adult learning?**

• Write the following task on the flip chart:

- How did you learn as an adult?
- What helped you to learn?
- What hindered your learning?

Ask 3-5 people to share the stories of some of the things they learned as adults (from **Step 1**). Use the three questions to guide the discussion.

On flip-chart, collect a list of the factors that *helped you learn* (such as watching someone else) or *factors that hindered* (fearing that people would laugh at you).

► **STEP 3. Provide input on how adults learn best.**

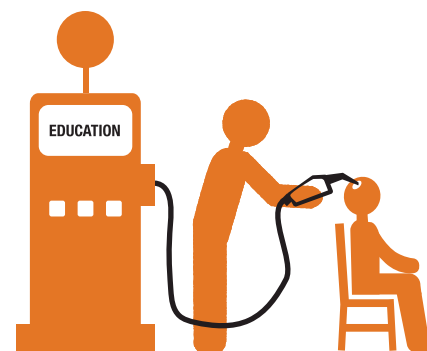
ADULTS LEARN BEST WHEN...	
When they have chosen to learn something voluntarily	People have a right to know what is being taught, and how, and to have their motivation appreciated and increased.
From their peers, in sharing experience	Adults have a wide experience and have learnt a lot from life. We should encourage the sharing of experience. Let them sit in a circle so they can see each other's faces.
When they are involved and actively participating	Minimize the use of lecturing and presentations by the facilitator and, wherever possible, get learners to do things that will lead them to the learning goals.
When the training is relevant to their real lives/jobs	It's vital for people to know <i>why</i> they're learning something. The context of the training must be close to people's lives and jobs, and must be clear how it can be applied practically.
When their dignity is respected	Adults have a strong sense of personal dignity, and must never be humiliated or laughed at in front of others.

- Lead a discussion: What do these ideas teach us about our work in the community - what we should do and not do as facilitators?

► **STEP 4. The petrol pump model**

Distribute or project the picture of the “petrol pump” model of education.

- What is happening in the picture? What type of learning is it?
- How does the teacher view the pupil?
- Is it an effective learning method? Why or why not?
- Have you experienced this type of learning before?



Tip-sheet: Differences between a facilitator and a top-down trainer

Point out: In the “petrol pump” model, the student is viewed as an empty head, and the trainer’s job is to fill it up with knowledge. An educator or trainer is seen as an expert who brings extensive knowledge of the subject to participants, and gives information in a top-down manner.

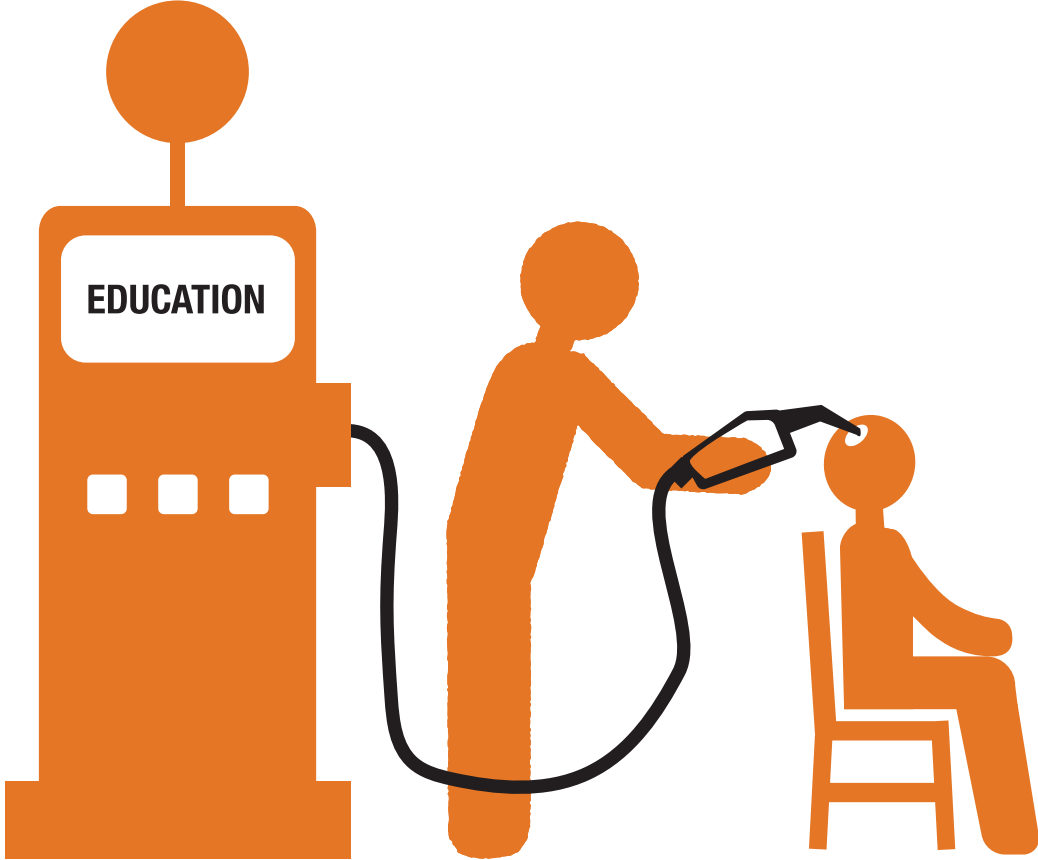
Facilitators, in contrast, engage in participatory learning approaches, in which the facilitator and participants are learning from each other and sharing ideas together. Facilitators recognize that participants come to the room with their own valuable knowledge and experience, and help manage group discussions around the session’s learning objectives.

Refer to the tip-sheet below, as a reminder of some of the key differences between a trainer and a facilitator. Have participants read in pairs or small groups. Participants can add to the list.

TOP-DOWN TRAINER	FACILITATOR
Has the answers, gives knowledge to the students or trainees	Values the experience and knowledge of the participants; Poses problems and sets up a process in which the participants search for answers
Is the expert, knows best	Helps people to become responsible for their own learning; demonstrates ideas
Presents new information from the front of the group	Uses practical, participatory methods, e.g. group discussion and activities in which all members of the group participate
Information flows in just one direction, from teacher to students	Information flows in many different directions between the facilitator and individual group members – a genuine exchange of ideas
Brings extensive knowledge of the subject	Draws out and builds on the knowledge of the group, and knows where to find further information on the subject
Is concerned with students understanding the right answer	Is concerned with the discussion; encourages and values different views
Has a formal relationship with the students, based on their status as a teacher	Is considered as an equal, and has relationships based on trust, respect and a desire to serve
Directs the learning	Allows learning to be self-directed



Handout: Petrol Pump Education



1.2 Qualities and Tools of a Good Facilitator

SEASON	Pre-season; to be used in each session to refresh facilitation skills
OBJECTIVE	To build practical skills and help FFBS facilitators feel informed and confident about their role and ability to facilitate a participatory learning session
MATERIALS NEEDED	Handouts: Moderator-led discussion; Managing Group dynamics; Common concerns for new facilitators A balloon, volleyball, or inflatable beach-ball. If you don't have a ball, you can construct one with crumpled-up paper and masking tape.

Background

In this session, participants will be able to clarify the roles, skills, and techniques of a good participatory facilitator. They discuss some of the challenges of facilitating group discussions and how to manage difficult scenarios. They also discuss some of the various participatory tools that can be used to guide an effective learning session.

Steps to follow for the activity

► STEP 1. Role-play: Good and bad facilitator qualities

Show participants the Petrol Pump picture from last session. Ask if people have experienced a training session similar to that in the picture.

1. Ask for volunteers to do a quick **role-play** of a **bad** facilitator
Discuss: What qualities did you notice in the facilitator? What did he/she do poorly?
2. Ask for volunteers to do a **role-play** of a **good** facilitator
Discuss: What qualities did you observe in the facilitator? What did she/he do well?

Capture the qualities of a good and bad facilitator on a flip-chart. Discuss the qualities, referring to the box below, as needed.

A good facilitator....

Encourages everyone to participate. It is one of your main jobs to get all participants to both speak and listen throughout the session. Learn to identify when people want to speak, but may be too shy to say something unless called upon, and encourage everyone to share their experiences.

Promotes active listening for all participants. Both you and the group of participants should practice active listening at all times. A good listener:



- Shows sincere interest
- Gives their full attention
- Maintains eye contact (where appropriate)
- Avoids interruptions
- Repeats back what they think has been said (paraphrase)
- Respects moments of silence
- Is honest if they don't have the answer or don't know what to say
- Indicates that they are paying attention through words and body language

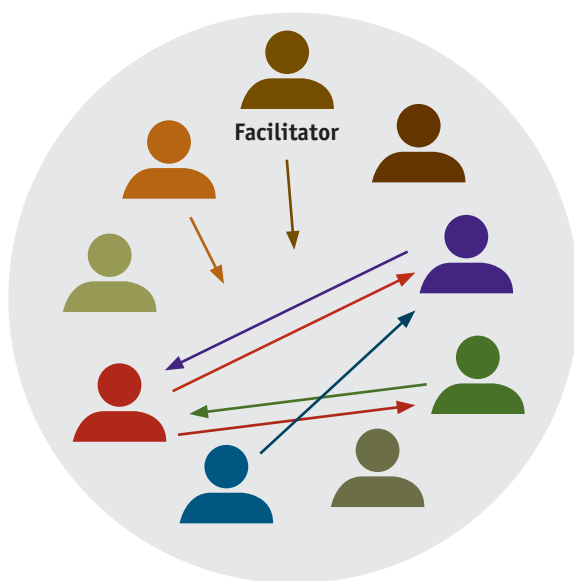
Sticks to the objectives of the session. Groups have a tendency to wander from the original objectives, sometimes without knowing it. When you hear the discussion wandering off, bring it to the group's attention. You can say, "That's an interesting issue, but perhaps we should get back to the original discussion."

Is flexible with the group. Sometimes important issues will arise and take much more time than you planned. You may run over time or have to alter your agenda to discuss them; check with your group to see what would be appropriate. Be prepared to recommend an alternate activity and drop some agenda items, if necessary.

Hands over the "stick". When your group participants look to you as an expert, it can be more comfortable to lecture about your ideas than encourage dialogue, which is less effective than helping them to learn for themselves. When you can "hand over the stick" —do less talking than the participants— participants learn from each other and by themselves. They are more likely to remember and apply the lessons in their own lives.

► STEP 2. Moderating an interactive group discussion

Hand out the picture below (Handout 1A.2) and have a quick discussion:



Moderator dominated Discussion



Interactive Group Discussion



1. Describe what is happening in the pictures: What is the role of the facilitator in each?
2. Which is the better situation for a learning session? Why?
3. What are some of the advantages and challenges in each scenario?
4. What do you observe about the participants?
5. As a facilitator, how might you encourage equal participation of all?

Quick action: Have the group form a close circle. Blow up a balloon or a ball and explain to the participants that the objective of the game is to keep the balloon in the air for as long as possible without dropping or breaking it. Start the action and set the timer, until the balloon is dropped. (Repeat 2-3 times if need be.)

Discuss: How is the game related to facilitating a participatory discussion?

Key points: A well-facilitated group discussion is like a game of playing with a balloon or beach-ball, in which everyone is trying to keep the ball or balloon up in the air. The facilitator's job is not to hand the balloon to each person, but to start the game, explain the objectives, and help make sure that the ball/balloon stays in the air and that no one is hurt or aggressive.

The facilitator launches questions or activities, and then the participants themselves take the conversation from there. For this game to work, no single participant should dominate the balloon/conversation; all have to be participating actively—exchanging ideas among themselves.

► STEP 3. Dealing with difficult participants

Ask: Who has facilitated a focus group discussion before? What are some of the challenges and difficult scenarios you've encountered with facilitating?

Collect a list of some of the challenging situations and personalities, such as:

- Participants start to leave
- One person dominates
- Participants argue
- People are going off topic
- Language barriers, group doesn't understand

Discuss: How might you handle some of these situations? What can a good facilitator do to manage a group well?

ROLE-PLAY: SABOTAGE!

Ask one volunteer to *facilitate* a discussion on any topic; ask for others to play the group members.

Secretly (without the volunteer's knowledge) ask for several participants to play these "saboteur" roles:

- The quiet participant
- The dominant participant
- The self-appointed expert
- The rambling participant
- The deferent participants (who agree with whatever the dominator says)



Discuss:

- What was the role of each participant? Have you encountered such types before?
- How did it feel to manage this group? (to the facilitator)
- What did the facilitator do well to handle the participants?
- What other strategies could a facilitator try?

(Refer to the handout “Managing Group Dynamics” for further guidance on how to handle difficult situations)

► STEP 4. Beyond brainstorming: Tools for facilitating adult learning sessions

Explain: Adults can learn even when you are not lecturing or giving information. Facilitated group discussions are one common tool for participatory workshops—but it’s not the only one. There are many ways to keep a workshop lively and to facilitate discussion and learning. Here are some common tools that you can use in designing a workshop.

Ask: What are some of the different exercises you’ve used in participatory training sessions? Collect a list, suggesting some of these below, if need be.

Participatory tools:

- Demonstrating a technique
- Plenary discussion
- Creating a group statue
- Drawing a picture
- Reading a case study
- Doing a role-play
- Playing a game
- Brainstorm— Quickly surfacing ideas from the group
- “Buzz” group – Turning to your neighbor for a quick discussion

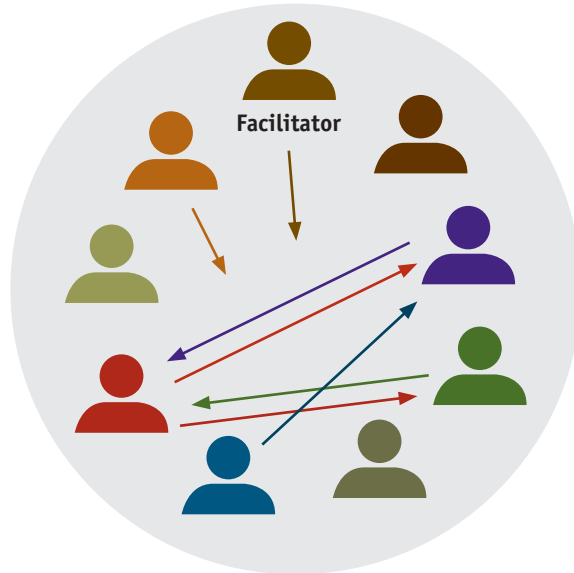
Discuss each tool:

- What are each of these tools good for?
- When are they most useful?
- When might they be less appropriate?
- Which are most challenging to you – why?

Key points: Using a combination of methods keeps the session interesting helps you manage time and make sure that all participants have a forum in which they feel comfortable participating. It’s best to alternate plenary, full-group exercises with more intimate small-group or buzz-group activities, so that participants can dig deeper into concepts and learn effectively from each other.



Handout: Moderator-led vs. interactive group discussions



(Discussion 1.)



(Discussion 2.)



Handout: Managing Group Dynamics – Common Participant Personalities¹

One of the most challenging tasks of the facilitator is to manage different personalities of participants in the group, to ensure that everyone is given a chance to contribute to the discussion. Most group discussions will have at least one quiet participant, one dominant participant, a rambling participant, and a self-appointed expert. Some strategies for managing these common personalities are below.

1. Quiet Participants: Some participants will remain silent during the discussion or provide only short responses to the discussion issues. Quiet participants can be easily overlooked by a moderator; however, their opinions are equally important. It may take some effort for a moderator to draw out the views of quiet participants.

Strategy: Use gentle probing, open body language and eye contact to welcome their contributions. A moderator may also encourage a quiet participant by reinforcing the value of their views by saying, for example, 'Miriam, we also value your views: do you have an opinion about this issue?'

2. Dominant Participants: Dominant group members monopolize the discussion by being the first to respond to issues or by taking more time than others to contribute their views. The challenge for a moderator is to allow the dominant person to make their point, but not to allow them dominate the discussion and restrain the contribution of others.

Strategy: An effective strategy to manage a dominant participant is for the moderator to use body language to signal reduced interest once they have made their point, by reducing eye contact or turning a shoulder towards them. If these strategies fail then a moderator can give verbal cues to redirect the discussion to allow others to contribute to the discussion. For example, 'Thank you for your opinion, John.' (Then turn to the rest of the group). 'Does anyone else have a different opinion?'

3. Self-Appointed Expert Participants: Some participants may state that they are *experts* on the discussion topic, proclaim more knowledge than others on the issues and offer their opinions as facts. Although these participants are seldom true experts, they can quickly create a hierarchy within the group and intimate other members making them feel that their contributions are less valued.

Strategy: The moderator should disempower the self-appointed expert by stressing that everyone in the group is an expert and that this is why they have been invited to participate.

4. Rambling Participants: Often feel comfortable in the group environment and will monopolize the discussion time by giving overly long accounts of their experiences, which are often of marginal relevancy.

Strategy: The Moderator should manage a rambling participant by avoiding eye contact, redirecting the discussion, or by interrupting them to enable others to also contribute to allow everyone in the discussion to contribute.

The 'Deference' Effect: This occurs when participants say what they think a moderator wants to hear rather than voicing their own opinion about an issue. If participants all tend to agree on an issue or the discussion lacks diversity of opinions, or only expresses positive views, it is possible that participants are being influenced by the deference effect.

Strategy: Some strategies for avoiding this are for the moderator to stress that individual opinions are valued, to encourage both positive and negative views, and for the moderator to refrain from sharing their own viewpoint so that participants are not aware of the moderator's stance on the issues.

¹ Reproduced from OMNI's Toolkit for Conducting Focus Group Discussions, available at <http://www2.omni.org/docs/FocusGroupToolkit.pdf>.



Handout: Common Concerns for New Facilitators

Here are some common frustrations that facilitators may face, and some suggested responses. Use these as a starting point for discussing your own challenges and solutions.

CHALLENGES	SUGGESTIONS
I am giving people very good information but they are not doing what I tell them to do! Why is that?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remember, your role is not to give people orders but to help them make good decisions Ask people what is preventing them from taking action and help them identify ways to address those issues Use more participatory methods instead of lecturing Get community leaders involved
How will people know what to do if I do not tell them?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People are much more likely to change their behavior if it is their own choice. A facilitator's job is NOT to tell people what to do You do have an important role to play in helping guide people in the right direction, giving them accurate information, and helping them to see an issue from a different angle Very often, members in the group will already have solutions. Encourage participants to support and encourage each other
Sometimes I am the one doing all the talking. How can I get other people to talk as well?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try participatory activities, where you don't do all the talking (brainstorm, role-play, values-clarification) Ask open-ended questions Break a large group into smaller groups, and let discussion happen among the smaller groups
How do I know if people are practicing what they say they are? What if they are only saying what I want to hear?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Probe for specific examples, challenges, and successes Share your own experiences to create an atmosphere of honesty and trust; talk about a behavior change that you are trying to make, including your struggles with it Reassure people that behavior change takes time and encourage small actions Ask other group members to share their successes and concerns
What if I hear about something negative or harmful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not put individuals on the spot; if participants are not comfortable discussing an issue in group, try to pull aside a smaller group to understand the situation Inform your team members and manager
What if I don't know the answer to a question?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be honest; tell people you don't know but you will find out Refer people to another source of information
Sometimes, people disrupt the meetings because they don't agree with what I'm saying. What can I do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite the person(s) to speak with you after the meeting Offer to organize a separate meeting to discuss individual concerns If one person or small group dominates, think about sub-dividing your group (men/women, small groups, or even pairs) Use a "talking stick," so that only the person holding the stick can speak their mind; pass the stick around the group



1.3 Unpacking the Exercises

SEASON	Pre-season; to be used in each session to refresh facilitation skills
OBJECTIVE	To build practical skills and help FFBS facilitators feel informed and confident about their role and ability to facilitate a participatory learning session
MATERIALS NEEDED	Warm-Up Tools

Background

How to Facilitate the Tools in this Guide – Unpacking an Exercise

Each of the dialogues and tools in this toolkit are designed around a participatory process, based on an understanding of adult learning principles. In this session, the participants will learn the different stages of “unpacking” a game or exercise to learn from it. We talk about how to prepare for a smooth learning session.

Steps to follow for the activity

► STEP 1. Preparing to facilitate

A big part of facilitating a session is being prepared for it. Ask participants to brainstorm some of the key preparations they need to make in order to ensure an effective learning session. Cover some of these key points.

Preparations:

- **Prepare the space:** Make sure the sitting/standing arrangement is comfortable for all to participate, especially if you will be dividing participants into groups. Also ensure that you have all materials that you will need during the session.
- **Understand the session:** Read the guidelines all the way through. Be sure you can answer, in your own words, “What is the objective of the session?”, “What are the key messages or skills that participants should take away from the session?”
- **Prepare your questions:** You should also think of some key questions that you will use to start off the dialogue. Consider probing questions that you can use to start, and for the reflection, generalization, and application stages.
- **Do introductions:** At each meeting with a group, introduce yourself and allow all participants to introduce themselves. If you’ve met with the group before, ask them to briefly summarize the lessons that they learned last time, and how they’ve tried to apply it in their daily life.
- **Explain the objectives and timeframe:** Before each session, always give the participants an idea of what the topic of the session is, and be clear about how long it will take.

► STEP 2. The stages of unpacking an exercise

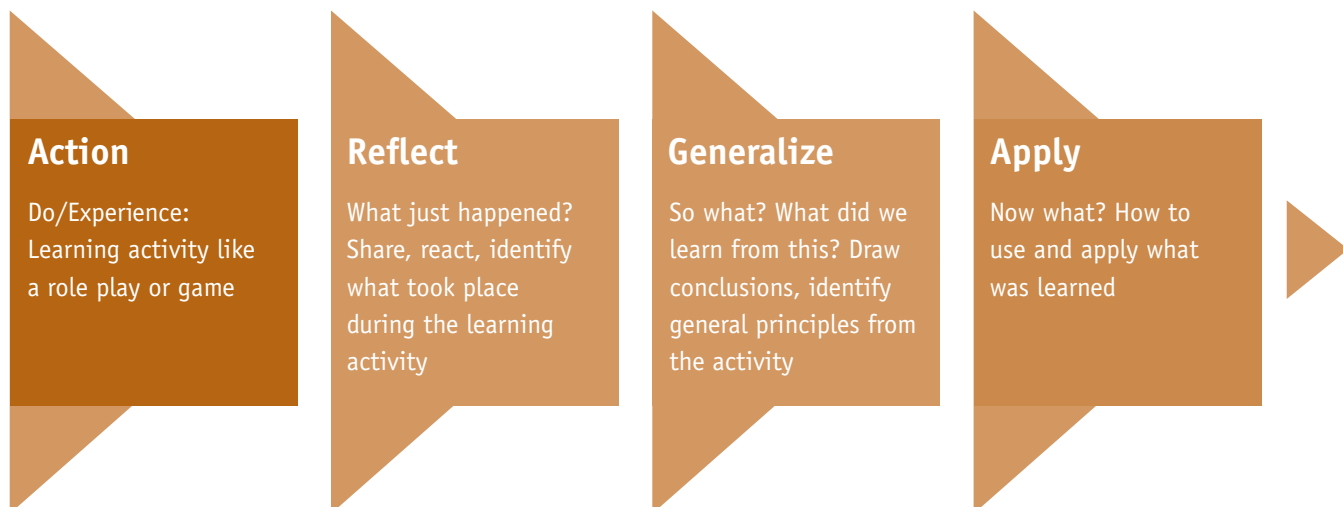
Read through the information in this chapter. Present the “Action ► Reflect ► Generalize ► Apply” diagram (see following page) on a flip-chart. Explain what each step of the process means to the participants..

In the last session, we discussed some tools (brainstorms, games, discussions) that can be used as learning tools. Even simple activities can lead to rich and important discussions. The key role of the facilitator is to help participants “unpack” the activity –or find the meaning and relevance of the activity to their own lives.



Each of the tools in this toolkit start with an action or activity, and the facilitator’s role is to help participants “unpack” the lessons through dialogue and discussion. The process of unpacking usually follows three basic questions:

- **What just happened? (What?) = action and experience**
- **What does it mean? (So what?) = reflection and generalization**
- **What will we do about it? (Now what?) = planning and application**



This process always applies—whether you are leading a hands-on planting session, a cooking demonstration, a market visit, or facilitating a gender dialogue. The process of facilitating successful adult learning has been broken down into several key steps. Following these steps will help you prepare for and successfully facilitate a session.

The steps for unpacking an exercise are:

1. Start the action: In this step, you will put the learning process in motion for the group participants. This action could be a role-play, a planting demonstration, a visit to a market, or a group drawing; the action will be whatever activity is listed in the session’s tool(s). You should give clear instructions (including the timeframe), then step back and let participants do the action.

2. Reflect on the action (What happened?): Many of the key learning lessons will come from what happened in the activity. After the initial action, bring the group back together. Using language specific to your actions, ask participants to recollect the activity using the questions:

- What did we just do?
- What did you see?
- What did others see?
- What did you feel when we _____ ?

Remember that there are as many perspectives as there are people in the group— it’s important to hear as many perspectives as possible. Continue to draw observations from different people in the group, even if it means asking the same question many times. Be sure to take note of the feelings and observations, so that you can refer back to them later in the discussion.



3. Generalize the lessons (What does it mean?): After reflection, help participants draw conclusions and identify general principles of the activity. They should apply what they have seen or done in the action to their own life and the life in their community. Ask:

- Does this happen in real life?
- How does this activity relate to your own life?
- What scenario is more common in this community?
- How do you usually respond when this situation is happening?
- Does everyone respond the same way?
- Why do you think people respond/act/do things this way?

4. Apply the lessons (What will we do about it?): In this final stage, you should help participants problem-solve to find realistic and simple starting points to change the behaviors, address problems, and try new practices that were discussed in the generalization stage.

Probe the group to develop very specific, small actions rather than vague, sweeping promises. For example, rather than “From now on, my husband and I will share all work equally,” probe for, “This week, I will ask my spouse to fetch water in the morning, so that I have more time and energy for weeding.” This can be done with the following questions:

- What should be done about _____?
- What will *you* do about _____?
- What support would you need to _____?

If a problem seems beyond the group’s control, identify what support they would need or what key players would need to be involved to start making a change or addressing a problem. Identify areas where Pathways could provide support.

Summarize and Conclude: Before the group leaves, summarize the main messages and themes from the day’s session. Refer back to the learning tool’s table to see if you’ve met the learning objectives. Also summarize any specific actions participants have committed to, and give information about the next follow-up meeting, if applicable.

► STEP 3. Identifying the stages of the unpacking process

Divide group into pairs or small groups. Have each select and read through one of the warm-up exercises in this chapter for example, River Code, Trust Walk, Telephone Game, Race for the Resources. (Beginning on page 26)

In pairs/groups, discuss the objectives, materials needed, and how the exercise works.

In pairs/groups, identify the different steps of the learning process, as they are described in the tool guide:

1. **Action** – What happened?
2. **Reflection** – What does it mean? (So what?)
3. **Generalization** – How does this activity relate to real life?
4. **Application** – What will we do about it? (Now what?)

Discuss. Coming back into plenary, discuss the way each pair identified the stages of unpacking the exercise. Are they similar? Different? Make sure everyone understands what the four steps of the exercise are.



► **STEP 4. Facilitation practice.** Using the chosen warm-up exercise, have each small group/pair play the facilitator, leading the rest of the group through one of the warm-up exercises.

As a group, discuss how the exercise went. Ask the facilitator:

- How did it feel to facilitate the exercise?
- What felt easy? Challenging?
- Did anything about the facilitation process surprise you?
- Is there anything you feel you would like more practice with?

Ask the participants:

- How did it feel to be a participant in this exercise?
- What did the facilitator do well?
- What could be improved?

Discuss the “unpacking” stages:

What was the **action**? How did it go? Was the facilitator well prepared?

What questions did the facilitator ask to get participants to **reflect (what?)**

What questions did the facilitator ask to get participants to **generalize (how this applies to their lives)?**

What questions did the facilitator ask to get participants to **apply the lessons (now what?)**

Repeat with a new facilitator and different roles, ensuring all participants have a chance to practice.



1.4 Giving and Receiving Feedback

SEASON	All; to be used for each session
OBJECTIVE	To build practical skills and help FFBS facilitators feel confident about their role and ability to facilitate.
MATERIALS NEEDED	Agriculture Case Study (4.1-4.6 from Gender module); Facilitator Feedback form

Background

Facilitation is a skill that requires practice and constructive feedback from mentors and peers. In this session, participants practice facilitating a session, self-evaluating their progress, and giving and receiving useful feedback.

Steps to follow for the activity

► STEP 1. Discussion on feedback and self-evaluation:

Ask: What does “giving feedback” mean to you? What does “self-evaluation” mean?

Why are each important?

Is it easier to give feedback or to receive feedback from others?

What are the challenges and advantages with self-evaluation?

What are the skills needed for giving honest, helpful feedback to your peers?

► STEP 2. Explaining the facilitator feedback form

Explain: Evaluation and reflection are critical in building your skills and for improving the tools and learning experience. As you gain experience in facilitation, you should take time to evaluate yourself as well as have others evaluate you periodically.

Self-evaluation: As soon as possible after the session, use the FFBS feedback form to self-evaluate and reflect on what just happened. The self-evaluation form helps you reflect on the *process* of the dialogue (how you followed the steps outlined above), as well as the *skills* you displayed in facilitating (the good facilitation tips).

Peer and mentoring feedback: The feedback form can also be used for your colleagues or supervisors to provide you constructive feedback on what went well and what areas might be improved.

Group feedback: You may also want to give participants a chance to evaluate you. This will enable you to understand how your perceptions of your facilitation match participants’ experiences. Give participants time at the end of the session to fill out their own evaluation form and reflect on things you did well and things they feel could be improved upon.

Go through the feedback form and clarify any questions. Notice that the checklist includes the stages of “unpacking” the exercise. It also covers good preparation steps and the skills of a good facilitator.



► STEP 3. Facilitation Practice: Agriculture Case Study

Divide into several groups. Assign each group one of the scenarios from the “Agriculture Case Study” group in the Gender Chapter of this tool-guide. (Other exercises may be used, as well.) Explain that each group will facilitate one of the exercises to the rest of the group.

If you have a large enough group, assign **3-4 designated evaluators**, who will use the Facilitator Feedback Form to give constructive feedback to the facilitators.

Allow all teams 20-minutes to read and prepare their exercise. Then start the facilitation practice.

► STEP 4. Feedback and discussion

After the exercise, allow “evaluators” 5 minutes to fill out their feedback forms, then have the evaluators verbally give feedback to the facilitating group. Ask the evaluators to explain everyone to explain any “partly cloudy” or “stormy” ratings they give.

Give feedback on the stages of the exercise:

- What was the **action**? How did it go? Was the group well prepared?
- What questions did the facilitator/s ask to get participants to **reflect (what?)**
- What questions did the facilitator/s ask to get participants to **generalize (how this applies to their life)?**
- What questions did the facilitator/s ask to get participants to **apply the lessons (now what?)**

As a group, discuss how it felt to reflect and give feedback. Ask:

- How does it feel to give and receive feedback?
- What are the best ways to constructively give feedback?

Continue the practice until each group has had a chance to facilitate and practice giving feedback. As a final reflection, discuss how the team will continue creating opportunities for practice and evaluation:

- What is your team’s strategy for observing and giving feedback?
- How will you include mentoring and supportive supervision in your FFBS approach?

Note that basic data on each gender dialogue should be collected each session, to track information about what topics have been addressed and to which groups. This is a good opportunity for facilitators to reflect on how sessions went and what concerns participants have.

A suggested Gender Dialogue Monitoring tool is included in Chapter 6, session 6.2.



Handout: FFBS Facilitation Feedback Form


Facilitator Name: _____

Date: _____





































Name of tool used: _____

1. Assess your performance as a facilitator for this session in the following areas using the following scale (circle one picture for each question):

 Sunny: "I did this without any challenges or problems"

 Partly Cloudy: "I did this, or I am improving, but there are still some challenges that I am able to improve next time"

 Stormy: "I did not do this/I need additional help or support on this facilitation practice."

	SUNNY	PARTLY CLOUDY	STORMY	COMMENTS (IF "PARTLY CLOUDY" OR "STORMY," EXPLAIN):
Preparation: I read the instructions carefully and prepared questions for reflection and generalization before the session				
Preparation: I prepared an appropriate space for this session and had all necessary materials available for use				
Introduction: I started with a review of the previous session and actions the group members have taken (if applicable)				
Action: I explained the purpose of the exercise and gave clear instructions to participants				
Reflection: I asked multiple participants to recollect the activity (What did we just do? What did you see? How did you feel?)				
Generalization: I asked questions that helped participants draw conclusions and identify general principles of the activity (How does this apply to daily life? What do you think about it?)				
Application: I asked participants to develop specific follow-up actions for their households/communities (What next? What now?)				
Summarization: I effectively paraphrased the participants' discussion and summarized key action points for the group				
Participation: I did more listening and asking than teaching (ideas came from participants)				
Participation: I effectively encouraged all participants to actively engage and participate in discussion				
Management: I reached the objectives of the session (the participants identified and discussed the key messages)				
Management: I effectively managed conflict and debate that arose during this session				

2. What will you do differently next time to improve your session facilitation?





Warm-up Tools



1W.1 River Code

SEASON	Pre-Sowing
OBJECTIVE	To inform the community that the role of the “facilitator” is to empower the community and assist in guiding them to where they would like to go
TIMEFRAME	1 – 2 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Two pieces of rope or sticks 3 stones, pieces of paper or circles drawn in the ground
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for forming circles, both standing and sitting

Background

The role of a good facilitator in a program is to serve as an initial guide that will help empower a group in order for the group to transition into guiding themselves in the future. Understanding the concept of this role is key for successful Pathways participation.

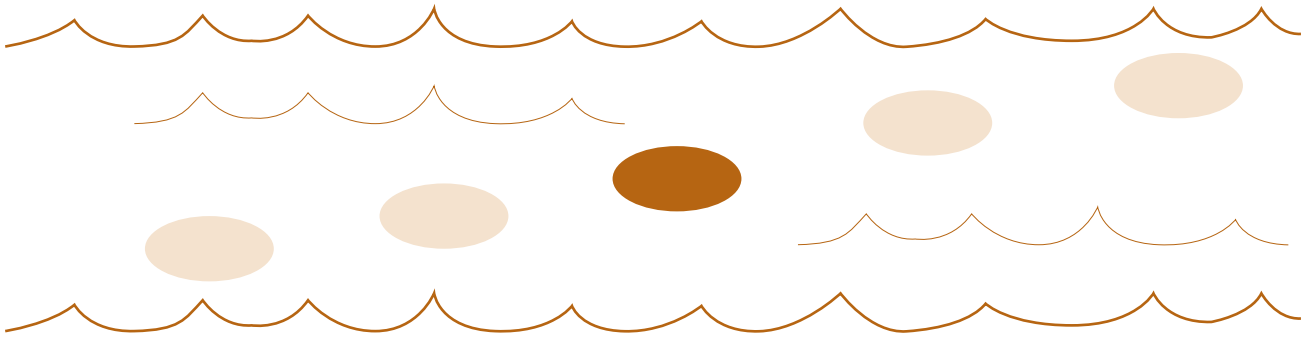
The purpose of this exercise is to highlight the idea of community empowerment and to clarify that the facilitator will help the community develop new options, rather than act as a supplier of goods and services. This approach also helps show the value of participatory approaches and to start a process of considering where we are today, where we would like to be, and how we might get to our goal. This idea of comparing where we are today to where we want to go is a theme that will be revisited in many of the exercises, and will be used by the group to develop more systematic plans.

Steps to follow for the activity

- ▶ **STEP 1.** Before the session, take 3 participants aside and give them instructions for a three-act “role play”. One will play the facilitator, one will be the assisted person to cross the river, and one will be the guided person. Their roles are listed in steps 2-7.
- ▶ **STEP 2.** Lay 2 pieces of rope or branches to represent the banks of a river, put some paper, stones or draw large circles on the ground to represent stepping stones, by which to cross the river (see figure below).



Where we want to get



Where we are now

- ▶ **STEP 3.** Ask the actors to do the play in mime for the rest of the group. Tell the audience that the rope or sticks are the riverbanks and that the 2 people are trying to cross the river. Tell them that the actors want to find something better on the other side of the river.
- ▶ **STEP 4.** In the first act, 2 people attempt to cross the river. One person, representing a service provider, tries to carry the other person across the river on his / her back. They really struggle. The one carrying the person gets too tired to continue and leaves the person being carried stranded in the middle of the river and returns back to the original side of the river. The person being carried receives no more help.
- ▶ **STEP 5.** In the second act, the river crossing task is repeated with the same person, representing the service provider, leading another person. In this second act, the leading person does not carry the other but holds their hand and shows him/her, very clearly, where the next stone is positioned. The 2 people take some time to cross the river but by showing the second person where the next stone is located the 2 people manage to cross. Upon reaching the other side of the river they celebrate.
- ▶ **STEP 6.** The person who showed the way then waves goodbye and leaves the play. The person who was shown the way returns back to the original side of the river.
- ▶ **STEP 7.** In the third act, the person who was successfully shown how to cross the river takes one of the members of the audience and shows them again how to cross the river. Not holding their hand but by leading them to the edge and then showing them where to step. The role play ends when the 2 people have crossed for the last time.
- ▶ **STEP 8.** Reassemble the entire group
- ▶ **STEP 9.** Lead a discussion with the following questions:
 - What did you see during this exercise? What were the problems?
 - Why do these problems happen? How has this happened in your life or community?
 - How can we do things differently to make sure people succeed on their own?



Possible points for the discussion:

The key element to the story is that the river is the challenge.

- In the Pathways context, this is the work that has to be done to improve the social, health, nutritional and gender statuses.
- The first side of the riverbank is where we are now, today.
- The other side of the river is where we would like to be.
- The members must cross the river in order to achieve their goal.

The play involves 3 characters, 2 are farmers and one person is the facilitator.

In the first case the facilitator brings everything to the farmer.

- In reality, this represents a service provider supplying the community with free seeds, tools, fertilizer, credit, transport and traders.
- However, after a time the service provider gets too tired to continue.
- When this happens the farmer is left stranded because s/he did not know how to get to other side, s/he was being carried and when support was withdrawn s/he was unable to continue the same pathway.

In the second instance the service provider empowers the farmer by guiding them through the river and very clearly shows the stepping stones that the farmer needs to use, to get to the other side.

- This time the farmer is slower to cross but gets there by working with the service provider.
- At this point the service provider leaves. However, the farmer has learnt how to cross the river s/he can now return to where s/he was and most importantly, help others to cross the river.

After the play, lead a discussion about:

- What the play represented
- Who did what
- How this relates to our ideas on enterprise skills, learning and community empowerment

Emphasize the merits of learning by doing compared with other types of solutions that can lead to dependency.



1W.2 Race for the Resources

SEASON	All
OBJECTIVE	To illustrate the meanings of equity and equality; to practice identifying gender discrimination and identifying core issues being addressed through Pathways
TIMEFRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	Blindfold/scarf, rope or material for tying hands & feet, 1 bag of candy; Flipchart
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for participants to move

Background

In most communities, not everyone has the same or equal access to different resources. This can make it more difficult for those with limited access to do things like farm or have a business. Women in particular are often the ones that have limited or no access to many of the resources needed in agriculture and business. This exercise will help demonstrate how limited access can make tasks more difficult.

Steps to follow for the activity

- ▶ **STEP 1.** “Impair” most of the participants by blindfolding them, tying their hands or feet, or giving them a heavy bag to carry. At least one participant should remain unimpaired.
- ▶ **STEP 2.** Establish a starting line and have participants stand behind it. Lay out the “resources” (for example, candy) a moderate distance away from the starting line. Tell participants that when you tell them to start, they may race to the resources and may collect as many as they can. There are no other rules.
- ▶ **STEP 3.** Tell the participants to “go” or “start.” Allow them to race and collect all of the “resource” until it is gone.
- ▶ **STEP 4. Reassemble the entire group.** Lead a discussion, asking participants:
 - What did we do? Were the rules the same for everyone?
 - Was the game fair? Was the outcome equal for everyone?
 - How would we change the rules to make it more fair?

Ask the participants how this activity reflects gender equality in their communities.

- What are some of the impediments that women carry in agriculture and business? (Collect ideas – discrimination in land access, money, tools)
- Some of the impediments are invisible. Think of some of the gender ideas that we referred to this morning. How can these ideas/beliefs be impediments to women’s success?



Output: List some of the discriminations that women face throughout the production cycle. How do these negatively affect food security? Other outcomes?

Input: Draw a women's empowerment framework on the flipchart.

- List under each point of the triangle the **changes** that we want to see in each domain
- Identify the core themes of Pathways dialogues
- Point out that through dialogues on these different topics, we'll try to change the rules of the game

Ask: How have we been addressing these issues to date? What has worked well? What has been hard?

Summarize. In Pathways, we are working at empowerment from these three dimensions and trying to create opportunities to encourage behavior change, help people see clearly what the impediments are and how they hamper both women and men.



1W.3 Trust Walk

SEASON	Sowing/Weeding
OBJECTIVE	To demonstrate and experience the value of working together and taking responsibility for each other; to discuss how men and women can best work together in group sessions
TIMEFRAME	20 Minutes
MATERIALS NEEDED	Blindfold
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space- if possible, take it outside! Mixed sex groups may not be comfortable stepping up and guiding a member of their opposite sex

Background

While the concepts that are used to define and build trust may be acknowledged, trust needs to be demonstrated and experienced by all members of the group in order to realize the positive impact trust has on group dynamics and progress towards shared goals. By trusting other group members with the straightforward task of walking in a line, group members will learn to trust each other with simple tasks before sharing more sensitive information and responsibilities.

Steps to follow for the activity

- ▶ **STEP 1.** Ask all participants to stand up in two lines, facing each other. Invite a volunteer to come forward and walk slowly in a straight line across the meeting space. Put the blindfold on him/her and spin him/her around several times. Ask her/him to walk across the space again, in a straight line. Request that the rest of the group keep completely silent, giving no encouragement or guidance at all. They should also not touch him/her.
- ▶ **STEP 2.** When the blindfolded person reaches the other side, take off the blindfold and ask her/him to compare how close s/he is to where s/he intended to be. Ask:
 - How did it feel to walk blindly?
- ▶ **STEP 3.** Replace the blindfold and repeat the exercise. This time, encourage the other participants to give her/him verbal encouragement and guidance. They still should not touch the volunteer. At the end, ask the volunteer again to compare where s/he wanted to go with where s/he reached.
- ▶ **STEP 4.** Replace the blindfold and repeat the process. Ask participants to use both their voices and their hands to guide the blindfolded person. Repeat the process with other volunteers.
- ▶ **STEP 5.** Discuss what happened, using the following questions:
 - How did it feel to walk the floor blindfolded, without assistance?
 - How did it feel to be supported and guided by others?
 - In what way did the blindfold help with listening?



- How does this exercise show the importance of trust and mutual support in life? Can you give an example from your own life or community?
- What are some ways you can better trust and support your family and community members?

► **STEP 6.** Conclude by pointing out the importance of trust, mutual support and cooperation in everyday life, within groups and within the household.



1W.4 Pass the Message

OBJECTIVE	To illustrate the importance of active listening and how information can get distorted
USED TO	This is a quick warm-up to emphasize active listening and communication skills. It can be used to talk about gossip and misinformation, or the importance of accurate record-keeping within a group. It can be used as a warm-up before an exercise with a lot of listening.
TIMEFRAME	15 minutes
MATERIALS NEEDED	None
IDEAL WORKSPACE	Enough space for a group to form a complete circle

Objectives

This warm-up can be used to discuss gossip and misinformation, the importance of record-keeping, or it can be used as a warm-up before an exercise with a lot of listening.

Note: If the message is too long, the exercise will be too difficult. Choose a phrase that contains several ideas, but shorten if the example given is too long.

Steps to follow for the activity

- ▶ **STEP 1.** Have participants sit or stand in a circle.
- ▶ **STEP 2.** Explain that you will whisper a message to the person next to you; that person will pass it to the following person—and all around the circle. Each person must pass on what he or she heard, even if it makes no sense. You can only hear the message once!
- ▶ **STEP 3.** Lean over and whisper a long message that gives three or four pieces of information, such as:

“The Pathways project helps women farmers to produce for the market. Groups are learning sustainable agriculture techniques, nutrition lessons, and market information. In this way, people can eat more nutritious foods, generate more income, and improve the health of the soil for future generations.”

- ▶ **STEP 4.** Let the message go around the circle and expect confusion as participants fail to make sense of what they hear. Ask the last person to say aloud what he or she heard.

- What was the last message?
- What was the original message? What happened to the message along the way?
- Why did it get shorter/change along the way?
- Was the final message accurate?
- What were the challenges to passing the message accurately?



▶ **STEP 5.** Review the activity: Point out that messages and information become distorted as they are passed on. It takes active listening to pass information accurately.

▶ **STEP 6.** Key points:

- Sometimes we are distracted or in a rush or if the information seems too complicated, we don't listen carefully
- Communication is a two-way process; it's important to be able to ask questions as well as listen to others
- When we give information to others, we never know how they are going to interpret it. If we want to communicate well, we have to check back with our listeners and see that we are understanding the same way.
- Word-of-mouth can create misinformation or lead to disagreement within a group. Keeping accurate written records helps a group make better decisions and minimize misunderstanding.



1W.5 How Many Eyes? Valuing other Viewpoints

OBJECTIVE	To practice viewing from another person’s standpoint before making a judgment. This warm-up can be used at the beginning of a dialogue or debate, to remind participants of the importance of respecting others’ views and seeing from others’ perspectives.
TIMEFRAME	1 hour
MATERIALS NEEDED	None

Steps to follow for the activity

- ▶ **STEP 1.** Form a circle and have one participant stand in the middle, facing the same way through all the questions and answers that are going to follow.
- ▶ **STEP 2.** Explain to the participants that you are going to ask some questions. Ask everyone at all times to answer according to what they can *actually see* (and *NOT* what they know is there).
- ▶ **STEP 3.** Describe what you see.
 - Ask someone standing *in front of* the person in the middle, “How many eyes has s/he got?”
 - Ask someone standing *behind* the person, “How many eyes has s/he got?”
 - Ask the people standing *directly to either side* of the person “How many eyes has s/he got?”

Continue asking different people about the arms, nose, eyebrows, bracelets, feet, etc.

- ▶ **STEP 4.** Briefly discuss the different answers: Who was right?
All the answers are ‘right’! Point out that depending on where we stand, we see different things.
 - Ask the participants: How can we get a full picture?

Answers may be: comparing our information, asking everyone, asking the person to turn around.

- Ask one participant to walk all the way around the person in the middle describing him or her.

- ▶ **STEP 5.** Discuss:
 - How does our point of view (perspective) on a situation affect our understanding of it?
 - How does this exercise relate to our everyday experiences?
 - What can we learn from this exercise?
- ▶ **STEP 6.** Summarize the key points:
 - In any situation, different people view things differently.
 - Our point of view is shaped by our upbringing, life experiences, our previous knowledge.
 - We often make assumptions about what we think we see and about how things are, but these are not a complete picture.
 - When we put ourselves in others’ places (and see their point of view), we can have a better understanding of a situation or problem, which helps us make better decisions.

