

Innovation platforms for agricultural development case studies: The CIALCA case study of stakeholder engagement in Central Africa – Teaching notes

International Livestock Research Institute

December 2016



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PROGRAM ON
Integrated Systems
for the Humid
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All the activities below have been designed in a way that offers maximum insight with minimum reading on behalf of participants. The texts used in the PowerPoint slide deck are kept to the minimum with key phrases, short cues and anchor sentences. However, the facilitator/tutor needs to keep in mind that they should offer extra commentary at the same time keeping it short in order to draw participants' attention to the key aspects of the workshop. To present the full picture of the case study the facilitator needs to be familiar with the content of the Facilitator's digest as most of the PowerPoint slides and activities in this plan will require additional commentary.

The slides are animated to boost the class dynamics, create the participants' interest, and allow enough time to offer commentary before moving onto the next slide. Also, the animations are designed in a way to prevent delivering too much information at any one time.

Activity 1: Introduction (Ice Breaker)

Time

7-10 mins

Aim & rationale

The main point of this activity is to set the scene, introduce the participants in a meaningful way into the topic of the whole workshop and offer them an opportunity to meet, socialize and network with other participants. This will help to introduce a more relaxed atmosphere.

Procedure

1. Before starting the workshop make sure you have your **PowerPoint Presentation** ready and displaying the workshop **Title (Slide - 1)**. Although you will not focus on this Slide, it will be shown in the background creating a meaningful input. The title of the workshop includes the word '**innovation**' which will be used in this activity and serve as a link between the workshop content and the subject of the participants' discussion in this activity.
2. Greet all the participants, introduce yourself and encourage them to find comfortable seating.
3. Explain that you will begin by giving everyone a chance for a little introductory chat to make the meeting more relaxed and meaningful. Tell your audience to look around to see who is seated next to them, in front of them and behind.
4. Then say that since probably everyone has some experience in the agriculture sector, such workshops are perfect opportunities to share good practices, exchange opinions and find inspirations.
5. Explain to your audience that you want them to introduce themselves to **at least three** people of their choosing (sitting around or nearby them) and tell them about their own or their company's experience with innovation in agriculture. Ask the participants to approach the people they do not know.
6. Ask the participants to stand up and allow 5-7 minutes for mingling and chatting. Then ask your participants to go back to their seats.
7. Finally, ask them to briefly report what they have learned about others to the person sitting **next to** them. Depending on the seating arrangements this might also be discussed in small groups.

Tips:

- If you notice someone who cannot find a partner to talk to or they are too shy or seem intimidated, try to pair/group them yourselves gently encouraging them to participate in the activity.
- If all the participants more or less know each other, then it's best they talk to those who they know the least.
- If the whole group comes from the same company and know their own background, then instead of presenting the innovation they introduced they may discuss its relevance and success factors and try to evaluate it briefly.
- If someone has mobility problems make sure they remain comfortable and invite others to approach them to discuss the content of the activity. Make sure that such participants do not feel excluded and can be fully engaged in the activity.

Activity 2: Innovation Platforms and their main roles

Time

10-15 mins

Aim & rationale

The aim here is to use the participants' knowledge and experience to introduce and reaffirm the concept of an Innovation Platform. Using their experience will help them feel more confident about themselves and the subject, and will also make the activity interactive from the very beginning. It will also help to avoid presenting too much theory and instead will focus on the key concept of the IP approach in a form of key phrases. Thanks to the interaction and using the participants' and teacher's insight, the concept of an IP will be better understood, reaffirmed and clarified. This should help especially those participants who were not secure from the very beginning about the concept. Even if some participants have little experience with IP, the way the activity is designed will allow them to rely on their own reasoning and logical thinking and they will still be able to participate in the planned discussions meaningfully.

Facilitator's digest content reference

To comment and extend the content covered by this activity see the section: **The main role of IPs.**

Procedure

1. Create a link between the previous activity and this one by saying that it's great that they shared their experience with innovation as the whole workshop focuses on one form of innovation in agriculture, which is an IP - an innovation platform.
2. Ask the audience to raise their hands to answer the following questions:

Who has been engaged in an Innovation Platform in some way?

How many people are thinking about joining an Innovation Platform?

Note: the assumption is that most of the participants will be somehow engaged in an IP or at least aware of the approach, and there is no need to introduce the concept in detail. The show of hands will give you a rough idea of your audience's experience and knowledge of the topic, but will also serve as an engagement factor. There is no need at this stage to take it further.

Part 1

3. Present **Slide 2** with a visual representation of Stakeholders. You will present each stakeholder one by one by pressing the button on your keyboard (the slide is animated). Once the first picture and its caption appear, ask the group how they think this stakeholder may be beneficial to an IP, what their function may be and what kind of valuable assets they may possess. Discuss it briefly and move onto the next stakeholder by activating the animation. Follow the above procedure until you will have all the stakeholders discussed.
4. Present **Slide 3** summarizing the main functions of Stakeholders (one by one)

Part 2

5. Now ask your participants to form pairs or groups of 3-4 (depending on the size of the group and the seating arrangement). Explain that you would like them to discuss the main functions of the Innovation Platform approach relying on their experience and knowledge.

6. Now present **Slide 4** and display one by one the keywords and phrases related to the main functions of an IP. These will serve as hints so invite your participants to a discussion in their pairs or groups.
7. During their discussion walk around the room to monitor them, listen to what they have to say, make sure everyone has a person to talk to, offer support as/when needed.
8. Be engaged and not detached. Allow enough time for the discussion but keep it short.
9. Present **Slide 5** with the first key phrase that the participants discussed and elicit some ideas regarding their understanding of this particular function and any possible examples from the audience. It is important to focus on one keyword at one time and have it discussed thoroughly. Offer clarification if needed.
10. Using the procedure from the point 9 above present one by one **Slides 6 to 8** and discuss the remaining keywords.
11. Present **Slides 9 to 11** with a summary of the main role of an IP. Ask the group if they agree with them and if they wish to add anything.

Activity 3: Benefits of an IP approach

Time

5-10 mins

Aim & rationale

To continue the discussion initiated in the previous activity but with the main focus on illustrating the benefits of an IP approach. Again, by engaging the participants in a discussion the activity becomes more meaningful and effective. The visual aids are designed to introduce additional attractive stimulation to the discussion and to offer meaningful hints so that it is actually possible for the participants themselves to arrive at certain conclusions relying on their existing knowledge and experience. This way of engaging participants reduces immensely the need of the teacher to present the theory and content themselves, which would not be as effective and meaningful as it is now. Relying on participants and guiding them gently towards desirable conclusions and solutions by offering meaningful learning props helps them take ownership of their learning and boosts their confidence. The role of the teacher then is to guide the group, elicit the content, extend it when necessary and summarize so that the key concepts are covered in full.

Facilitator's digest content reference

To comment and extend the content covered by this activity see the sections: **The main role of IPs, The impact of IPs.**

Procedure

1. It is likely that at the end of the previous activity, when summarizing the role of IPs, the participants might have already come up with some benefits of the IP approach. If this is the case, you will be able to link their findings with the current activity by saying, for example, that indeed the IP approach has many benefits and you are going to focus on them in detail now. If none of the participants mentioned benefits at the end of the previous activity, then simply continue by saying that you are going to focus on benefits of the IP approach.
2. Present the content of **Slide 12** (one by one) - a collection of pictures and short keywords. Explain that these pictures represent some of the benefits of the IP approach but don't discuss them at this stage.
3. Ask the participants to use the visual and verbal clues to come up with potential benefits of the IP approach. They should work in pairs or small groups to do so.
4. Allow enough time for the discussion. Then present **Slides 13 to 15** summarizing the benefits of the IP approach. If you need to expand/discuss the content of each slide, refer to the Facilitator's digest for details (section: The main role of IPs).
5. Explain that now you are going to present a case study of an IP which achieved a great success and benefited immensely from the IP approach.

Activity 4: Introducing CIALCA and presenting the challenges of the region

Time

15-20 mins

Aim & rationale

The main aim of this activity is to introduce CIALCA in a meaningful and engaging way and to present the main challenges of the region that CIALCA operated within including the coffee-banana intercropping situation.

In the second part of this activity you are going to rely on the participants' experience and understanding of the subject. By doing so they will get involved in the context making it more personal and meaningful for them. This, in turn, will help to increase the participants' engagement and motivation. The process of sharing ideas might additionally boost their confidence and facilitate knowledge and experience exchange.

This activity is planned to initiate the process which will continue throughout the whole workshop until it resolves with meaningful conclusions that will be offered both by the tutor and the participants themselves. The process will be facilitated by carefully planned activities and the role of the tutor is to guide the participants towards the most desirable outcomes leaving enough space for their personal opinions.

Facilitator's digest content reference

To comment and extend the content covered by this activity see section: **2. Case study: The story of CIALCA stakeholder engagement.**

Procedure

Part 1

1. Present the series of **Slides 15-27** briefly introducing CIALCA and the region together with its main challenges. Offer adequate commentary to the slides from the Facilitator's digest but keep it short and simple as the whole case will be presented in more detail later. At this point, no interaction on behalf of the participants is needed. The aim is just to set the scene, introduce the case and present the main challenges of the region.

Part 2

2. After presenting the third challenge - Intercropping often considered a crime - keep the **Slide 27** visible for a while and explain that this is one of the challenges you will focus on in more detail now. Then move on to the **Slide 28** with a quotation from one of the farmers at the stakeholder meeting and representing the situation of many farmers from the region. Ask your participants if they ever experienced similar challenges, or if they know people who have, and then encourage them to work in pairs/small groups to talk about this particular situation, share their experience and opinions on the problem.
3. Offer enough time for sharing ideas. Then elicit some ideas from the audience to summarize the discussion. If you notice that the discussion is vibrant and the problem is particularly interesting to the audience, take the discussion further and ask if they are aware of any effective or successful solutions that helped to solve the problem or improve the situation. Do not yet arrive at any specific conclusions and do not explain at this stage how CIALCA approached the problem.

4. Present **Slides 29-33** with more information about the coffee-banana intercropping issue and the farmers' situation in the region. You will need to offer some commentary from the Facilitator's digest to accompany the slides. The slides are animated to boost the dynamics, to create interest and to allow you enough time to present the content before you move on to the next slide. Also, the animation is designed in a way to prevent delivering too much information at once.
5. Present **Slide 34** with the following question: **'Have you recently come across a situation where an existing policy seriously limits local farmers? What kind of policy is it? Do you see any way to change the situation?'** Ask the participants to work in pairs or small groups to share their experience and exchange opinions. Then elicit some examples from each group asking them to briefly comment on the current situation.

Note: at this point, referring to the participants' personal experiences will help them identify with the problem of the coffee farmers presented in this activity. Also, by discussing potential solutions to their own challenges you encourage creativity in relation to the participants' areas of expertise and offer possibilities to get inspired with others' ideas.

6. Show **Slide 35** and explain that the challenges that you have just presented and discussed together with the participants required CIALCA to involve multiple stakeholders. Briefly discuss the content.
7. Present **Slides 36-37** introducing the innovation platforms that emerged as a result of CIALCA's involvement. You may also give an example of Banana Xantomonas Wilt intervention as an additional illustration of involving multiple stakeholders (see the Facilitator's Digest for details).
8. Say that the next part of the workshop will focus on the methods CIALCA used to engage their stakeholders.

Activity 5: Involving stakeholders - modifying approaches to meet different institutional collaborative arrangements

Time

10-15 mins

Aim & rationale

To draw your participants' attention to the need of adopting various methods of engaging stakeholders depending on the local circumstances. You are going to engage the participants in reflecting back on their own experience with engaging stakeholders to make the activity more meaningful and to prepare grounds and reference points for further discussions. The mingling nature of this activity will facilitate networking and exchange of good practices and will encourage reflection on possible improvements of the already existing solutions.

Facilitator's digest content reference

To comment and extend the content covered by this activity see section: **5.1 Modifying approaches to meet different institutional collaborative arrangements.**

Procedure

1. Show **Slide 38** and explain that the different nature of the challenges and the vast area that CIALCA was working on required them to come up with innovative methods of engaging multi stakeholders in the process.
2. Present **Slide 39** with the following question: **'What is your experience with engaging stakeholders? Which methods worked best for your organization?'**
3. Ask the participants to stand up*, walk around the room, mingle with other participants and ask the question you just presented to at least 2 people.
4. Allow enough time for discussion, then ask the participants to go back to their seats and elicit a few ideas from the audience.
5. Explain that you are going to make a brief summary of each country's/region's challenges, and explain how CIALCA decided to engage stakeholders in the process. Then present **Slides 40-47** backing them up with the content from the Facilitator's digest.
6. Finally present **Slide 48** with the summary and offer commentary from the Facilitator's digest
7. To summarize the activity and allow the participants to relate the CIALCA's findings to their own experience, show **Slide 49** with the following question: **'What is your or your organization's experience with engaging NGOs or/and governmental organizations in relation to your country's specific challenges?'** Ask your participants to discuss the question in pairs or small groups. Then elicit some examples from each group asking them to briefly comment on the current situation.

*see **the Tips section on Page 2** on how to engage participants with limited mobility

Activity 6: Involving stakeholders - the importance of scientific evidence to build partnerships

Aim & rationale

To explore benefits of using scientific research results to engage stakeholders and to present CIALCA's research activities and their results.

This 3-part activity also prepares the audience for the final presentation of CIALCA's research results impact on the local situation and stakeholders' engagement. Beginning the activity with a meaningful discussion will encourage the participants to refer to their experience and help them formulate their opinions by analysing their own and other people's arguments.

Part 3 of the activity, due to its mobile character, helps to boost the workshop dynamics, stimulate the participants to teamwork, relate to other teams' point of views and examples, and network and socialize in a relaxed atmosphere. This part is also particularly important as it refers to real life challenges that the audience may have to face every day too. It is crucial to allow enough time for discussion, opinion exchange and brainstorming. What you are trying to achieve here is not just to present the case of CIALCA and prove the effectiveness of their approach, but do it in a way that the whole experience becomes truly meaningful for the participants. Therefore, you are going to link the activity with their own everyday challenges and situations to help them understand that what is covered during this session can easily be transferred onto their reality. Achieving this is very important for the success of the entire workshop. Participating actively in this activity should help the participants feel that they can become part of this success and can make or contribute to the real change in their local area.

Part 1

Facilitator's digest content reference

To comment and extend the content covered by this activity see section: **3.2 The importance of scientific evidence to build partnerships, 3.2.1 Crop selection and research, 3.2.2 Understanding and exploiting diversity at the farm level - the trials.**

Time

10-15 mins

Procedure

1. Present **Slide 50** introducing the strategy that CIALCA adopted to engage stakeholders. Do not offer commentary at this stage.
2. Present **Slide 51** with the following question: '**How presenting scientific evidence of research might help engage various stakeholders?**'
3. Ask the audience to work in pairs or small groups to discuss the question. Then elicit some ideas from the audience and have a short discussion if you see the audience is engaged.
4. Explain that you are going to present in more detail what kind of research CIALCA focused on and what results they obtained. Say that at the end of this session you will also reveal how scientific evidence helped CIALCA engage stakeholders. Present the sets of **Slides** as outlined below offering a short commentary and if the audience decides to exchange comments, welcome their input but keep it to the minimum in order not to interrupt the flow of the presentation too much.
 - **Slides 52-53** - crop selection
 - **Slides 54-56** - research focus & results part

5. Before moving onto the next set of slides ask the participants **which of the results presented they would like to see for their organization/region, and why**. The participants should work in small groups or pairs to discuss it. Keep the **Slide 56** displayed for reference. Elicit a few ideas from the audience before you move onto the next set.
6. Present the next set of **Slides** and proceed as in point 4 above.
 - **Slides 57-65** -research, trials and results part 2
7. Discuss the slides, offer commentary, answer questions from the audience if required.

Part 2

Time

15 mins

Procedure

8. Before you begin the second part of the activity divide your audience into three or four groups. Ideally, each group would have no more than 3-4 participants. Give each group a sheet of cardboard or paper, some felt-pens, and cello tape or blue/white tack.
9. Present **Slide 66** with the following question: **'Which farming approaches that proved to be particularly effective would you recommend to be scientifically researched?'**. Explain that this question refers to effective farming practices which are not necessarily accepted by law or local policies, and by proving their effectiveness scientifically it might help to convince policy makers or other higher level stakeholders to officially approve them.
10. Ask your participants to discuss the question in their small groups or pairs referring to their own experience, identify one example of such practices and clearly write their ideas on the paper sheets they received. Once they are ready ask them to stick their sheets onto the wall in a visible place using the cello tape or the blue/white tack. Ideally, you would indicate the place on the wall to attach their cardboard to. Make sure the sheets are displayed in three/four different corners/areas of the room to facilitate the participants' movement during the next stage of the activity. You don't want too many people to crowd around one place of the room.
11. Once all the sheets are visibly displayed on the walls ask each group to stand in front of their own sheet. Explain that on your signal each group should move towards the next sheet clockwise and stop there.
12. Once they stop they will see the other group's sheet with their findings. They should read and discuss each suggestion and decide to what extent they agree that this particular farming approach or practice should be officially approved. Allow enough time for discussion and then give the audience the same signal as before to move on clockwise towards the next sheet.
13. Follow the same procedure until all the groups will have discussed all the displayed sheets and have returned to their own sheets.
14. Then encourage the groups to go back to their seats and ask for their feedback. At this point, the discussion might still continue as the participants might have interesting observations to share. Ask if they have any recommendations or suggestions, and which farming approaches or practices they found particularly important and worth researching and why. This stage is vital as it relates to the real life challenges of the participants' regions and therefore the discussion might help to bring about some inspiring ideas, provoke thoughts and eventually lead to action in the future.

Part 3

Facilitator's digest content reference

To comment and extend the content covered by this activity see section: **3.2.3 Impact of research results presentation - Intercropping coffee with bananas.**

Time

15 mins

Procedure

1. Present **Slides 67-69** with an overview of the intercropping problem in Rwanda.
2. Then present the following sets of slides taking a pause between each set to offer a commentary and respond to the audience if they have any questions or comments. Each set represents an individual stage of CIALCA's achievements and requires a thorough presentation of the outcome. Although these outcomes are outlined in the Slides, the tutor needs to make sure he/she compliments it with a closing commentary.

Slide set 70-77: Presentation of the results and the opinion from the Ministry of Agriculture

Slide set 78-79: Stakeholders' reaction and their urge to introduce relevant policy changes

Slide set 80-84: Reaction of the Ministry - introducing policies

Activity 7: Involving stakeholders - capacity building

Time

15-20 mins

Aim & rationale

To present how coming together of different stakeholders might foster learning and exchange of good practices using CIALCA's examples and experience.

As before, at the beginning of the activity you will set the scene and introduce the content by engaging the audience in the discussion which provokes them to reflect on their own experience and use their knowledge of the field. The predictions and suggestions coming from the audience might help them better understand the nature of CIALCA's challenges. It will also offer an opportunity for everyone to verify or confirm their predictions in the end, leave space for contrasting their practice with other people's experience and with CIALCA's approaches and modify and improve their own approaches in the future.

Facilitator's Digest Content Reference

To comment and extend the content covered by this activity see section: **3.3 Capacity building.**

Procedure

1. Present **Slide 85** with the following question: '**How coming together of different stakeholders might foster learning and exchange of good practice?**' and ask the participants to briefly discuss this question in their pairs or groups. Elicits some ideas at the end of the discussion.
2. Explain that you are going to talk about CIALCA's achievements when it comes to capacity building and learning exchange. Present **Slides 86-92** and offer commentary. Ask the audience if they have any questions or comments regarding the content and allow for a short panel discussion if needed.
3. Then present **Slides 93-97** showing technologies that CIALCA adopted from other farmers in the East African highlands.
4. Present **Slide 98** with the following question: '**Think of a situation when you or your organization adopted practices or technologies from others. What was it and what was the result?**'. Explain that you want your participants to mingle around the room and share their experience with at least 2 other people. They should not be the same people they worked with during the previous activities. Allow enough time and mingle around the room yourself too to monitor the activity.
5. At the end of the discussion ask the participants to go back to their seats and elicit a few ideas from the audience. Ask if anyone has an interesting story to share, got inspired by other participants' stories etc.
6. Finally, present **Slides 99-102** summarizing the methods of stakeholders engagement presented so far that CIALCA adopted during the project run.
7. Present **Slide 103** with the following question: '**Which method do you find the most effective and worth implementing in your organization?**'. Ask the participants to discuss the question in pairs or small groups. They should refer now to the methods CIALCA used during their work. Elicit a few ideas from the audience and summarize the discussion.

Activity 8: Impact of innovations

Time

10-15 mins

Aim & rationale

Present the impact of the project. At this stage, there is no need to engage the audience into any interaction. The point is to focus their attention on the achievements, summarize the content already covered by means of a compact visual presentation. Recapping will help the knowledge and understanding of the workshop content to settle.

Facilitator's digest content reference

To comment and extend the content covered by this activity see section: **4. Impact of Innovations.**

Procedure

1. Explain that you are going to present the overall impact of the project and the results of CIALCA's involvement. Offer additional commentary from the Facilitator's digest.
2. Present Slides **104-117**. Make sure you do not rush through the slides, do not present the whole sequence at once, instead focus on each slide separately. Welcome questions and pause whenever the participants are willing to comment or ask questions.

Activity 9: Success factors

Time

15-20 mins

Aim & rationale

To present the success factors behind CIALCA's activity.

Instead of giving all the factors to the participants at once, this activity is going to encourage them to process the information they received during the workshop step by step, analyse the case study in a holistic way, and decide which aspects of CIALCA's work and methods helped the most to achieve the overall success. This approach will help the participants focus on the most effective methods of work and as a result will help to convince them to the benefits of the Innovation Platform approach. Also, analysing the case as a whole helps to see the bigger picture and understand why certain decisions were made and how they influenced the final result.

Facilitator's digest content reference

To comment and extend the content covered by this activity see section: **5. Success factors.**

Procedure

1. Explain that you are going to summarize CIALCA's contributing success factors and that you would like your audience to contribute since by that time they will have known CIALCA's story quite well. Ask your audience to give you one most important success factor behind the project. Elicit some ideas from the audience but do not offer any commentary at this stage. Also, try to keep the ideas exchange short, as your participants will be given more time at a later stage of the activity to become active.
2. Present **Slide 118** with the first factor and ask your audience to work in pairs or small groups to decide why this factor was important and how it contributed to CIALCA's success. Allow some time for ideas exchange and ask a few groups to share their arguments.
3. Then present **Slide 119** with a commentary to the first success factor you just showed
4. Follow the same procedure as above for Slides **120-134**. It is important to work on one slide at a time and allow the pairs or groups to discuss each factor separately.

Activity 10: Areas for improvement

Time

10 mins

Aim & rationale

To encourage the participants to use their professional knowledge and experience and process the information they gathered during this workshop to suggest areas of improvement for CIALCA.

The group work used for this activity will help the participants organize their ideas, inspire each other, exchange experience and use it to come up with innovative solutions.

Facilitator's digest content reference

To comment and extend the content covered by this activity see section: **6. Areas for improvement.**

Procedure

1. Present **Slide 135** with the following questions: '**Basing on what you have learnt today, how would you improve CIALCA's activities to benefit even more?**'
2. Ask the audience to work in pairs or small groups to suggest some areas for development or ways to improve the process. Elicit a few ideas from the audience.
3. Then present **Slides 136-138** and explain that the following areas have been identified for development.
4. Ask the audience if they have any more suggestions or questions at this stage.

Activity 11: Implications for other IPs and development partners

Time

10 mins

Aim & rationale

As this is the final activity it is important to create a link between what has been covered during the workshop and the audience's personal experience and situations as only then the participants will find the workshop developmental. You are doing it by helping the participants identify the potential implications of the CIALCA IP case for their own situation depending on the sector they represent. By personalizing the activity you are making it more meaningful and related to the participants' everyday reality. You are also creating space for them to become confident that the IP approach has positive impact not only on the community, but also they themselves can personally benefit from adopting such approach.

Procedure

1. Present **Slide 139** with the following questions:
How can you use CIALCA's experience to benefit your organization?
2. Explain that you would like each participant to reflect on this question for a while and then find three other people in the room to ask the same question and share their observations with. They should also mention what kind of institution they represent: *business entity, development partner, public institution, etc.*
3. This is a mingling activity so the participants should walk around the room to find other people to talk to, and they should not be the same ones they were working with during the previous activities.
4. When the mingling is over elicit a few ideas from the audience and have a final summarizing discussion. It is important at this stage to allow the participants to relate to their own situations and personalize the case. Verbalizing and sharing their hopes and findings with others will make the whole experience more tangible and might help the participants crystallize their intentions and plans related to their own enterprises and development.
5. Thank your audience for participation, and if you decide that at this stage you would like to answer some further questions, you may do so now.

Tips

- If you notice some people cannot find partners to talk to or they are still being shy, try to pair them yourselves gently encouraging them to participate.