RESEARCH PROGRAM ON
CGIAR | Livestock

More meat, milk and eggs by and for the poor

Master training course on community conversation approach in animal health management

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CGIAR is a global partnership that unites organizations engaged in research for a food-secure future. The CGIAR Research Program on Livestock provides research-based solutions to help smallholder farmers, pastoralists and agro-pastoralists transition to sustainable, resilient livelihoods and to productive enterprises that will help feed future generations. It aims to increase the productivity and profitability of livestock agri-food systems in sustainable ways, making meat, milk and eggs more available and affordable across the developing world. The Program brings together five core partners: the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) with a mandate on livestock; the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), which works on forages; the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), which works on small ruminants and dryland systems; the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) with expertise particularly in animal health and genetics and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) which connects research into development and innovation and scaling processes.

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Contents

Tables

Figures

Background and context

Animal diseases constrain livestock productivity, human well-being and poverty alleviation in Ethiopia. To design and implement gender-responsive animal health interventions, the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) and its research partners conducted participatory epidemiology and gender analyses to better understand and prioritize livestock disease constraints, how these affect different households, and men and women's knowledge about disease transmission and control measures (Wieland et al. 2016). Findings from this study showed knowledge gaps among community members about animal disease transmission and gender issues in livestock management. ILRI and the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) research teams, in collaboration with local research and development partners, tested a gender transformative community-based collaborative learning and action approach called 'community conversation' to engage a cross-section of community members and local partners in active dialogues and joint actions about gender issues in livestock production and zoonotic disease risks (Mulema et al. 2020).

Working with and through research and development partners has been a core design principle and objective of the community conversation approach. Local partners have been engaged in the design, facilitation, documentation and monitoring of community conversations (Lemma et al. 2019). In the process, a series of facilitation team alignment meetings, after-event reflection sessions and rollout coaching support activities have created local capacity to support implementation and monitoring of community conversation interventions. Integrating the community conversation approach into the extension system requires capacity development support in terms of targeted training and coaching of development partners in the methodology.

This master training course is designed to train key animal health extension partners in the community conversation methodology and the development of gender-responsive learning modules. It is expected that the training course will develop the capacity of extension partners to integrate the community conversation approach in the extension system. The training course material can also be a useful tool for development organizations wanting to apply community conversations as a participatory practice method.

Description of the training course

Working with communities to stimulate and sustain changes from within is often complex and challenging. It requires a mix of technical and soft skills that puts gender, intersectionality and context into consideration. This training course offers practical skills training in the application of community conversations as a participatory, inclusive and collaborative learning and action methodology. The training course material integrates and synthesizes experiences and lessons learned in the implementation of community conversations in five CGIAR Research Program on Livestock (Livestock CRP) sites in Ethiopia from 2018 to 2021.

Training course participants will engage in experiential and problem-based learning activities to develop attitudes and skills for appropriate application of participatory learning processes. They will learn how to design and facilitate inclusive community engagement processes that bring about attitudinal and behaviour change. They will also learn about the methodological framework and principles for the application of community conversations in different contexts. The training course will make participants better individuals by increasing their reflective, engagement and generative learning experience and skills, making them successful in their personal and professional life.

Training course goal

The training course aims to equip key animal health extension partners with the knowledge and skills required in the application of the community conversation approach and the development of interactive learning materials that integrate gender.

Training course objectives and outcomes

By the end of the training course, participants will be able to:

- Explain why and when to use community conversations.

- Discuss multiple applications and benefits of community conversations.

- Formulate learning objectives and outcomes for community conversations.

- Outline learning activities and methods in community conversations.

- Discuss differences and complementarities among facilitated group events.

- Discuss adult learning principles and implications for community conversations.

- Apply interactive methods in delivering community conversations.

- Collect gender/sex-disaggregated data (including other social identifiers that intersect with gender).

- Properly monitor and document community conversation processes and outcomes.

- Discuss context-specific outreach strategies for community conversations.

- Design and develop interactive community conversation learning materials.

Training content

- Reflections on learning styles and culture

- Basic principles of participatory processes

- What and why community conversations

- Differences and complementarities among facilitated group events

- Community conversation framework

- Adult learning principles

- Step-by-step process of community conversations

- Documentation, monitoring and outreach strategies

- Development of community conversation learning materials

Training approach and methodology

Training methods

Conceptual, practical and assessment phases of the learning process are integrated throughout the training course. The training adopts participatory, problem-based reflective and collaborative learning methods.

Learning is enhanced when participants define their learning goals and expected utility of the new knowledge. Before the training course, participants will define their learning goals and how they will apply the knowledge from the training course in their workplace. They will be sent tasks guiding them to define their learning objectives before the training course. During the training time, this personal learning goal will be compared with the training course objectives. It is expected that participants will be motivated and responsible for their own learning when they know what they are expected to do and what standards they are expected to achieve.

Active learning methods are used throughout the training course. Self-learning management tools such as keeping daily learning and reflection logs ensure that participants work consistently and actively throughout the training course. During the training, reflection activities allow participants to pause and reflect from time to time on what they have learned, relate it to their experience and think how they can apply it in their workplace.

Training materials

- Flip charts

- Flip chart boards

- Marker pens

- Small cards

- Role-play scripts

- Handouts

- PowerPoint slides

Learning monitoring and measurement methods

Pre- and post-training self-assessments will be used to compare and measure learning progress. In addition, daily recaps and participatory learning monitoring activities, such as mood meter, feedback board and feedback teams, will be used to monitor the learning process and gather feedback from participants.

Quick check-in reflection questions:

- What are your 2–3 key learning points so far?

- How could you apply this learning in your work?

- What questions do you still have?

Daily mood meter (with keyword remarks) on a flip chart (one or two points):

- How is the pace of the session so far? Too fast, too slow, just right?

- What did you like best about the morning (or afternoon) session?

- How can the facilitators make the remainder of the session most effective for you?

- How satisfied are you today? Unhappy face, neutral face, happy face

Each session includes roundup self-assessment exercises to allow participants to reflect on and make sense of the learning activities or deepen their learning experience. Individual reflection and journaling is a key tool for a deeper level of learning and insight making. This also helps participants develop a culture of reflective thinking, learning and practice, which is a required skill for the facilitation of community conversations.

At the end of the training course, a training survey will be conducted to gather participant feedback on the course material and delivery process. This will help inform follow-up refresher training and coaching activities.

Training follow-up strategies

At the end of the training process, participants will be encouraged to develop action plans to apply the learning. The action plans will form the basis for providing coaching support and monitoring training outcomes.

Training duration

The training course has both theoretical and practical sessions. A complete grasp of the training content will take four days of training time.

Session 1. Reflections on learning orientations and culture

The session aims to explore perceptions and behaviours of participants towards action learning processes. By so doing, it aims to create a shared conceptual background and encourage self-critical awareness on learning styles and culture as the basis for experiential and reflective discussions on the community conversation process.

Learning objectives

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Explain what learning means and how it happens.

- Identify their own learning styles and learning culture.

- Explore and question their own attitudes and behaviour towards learning processes.

- Appreciate that much learning happens in social and reflective processes.

Content

- Conceptualizing learning, learning styles and learning processes

- Self-reflections and questioning attitudes and behaviours towards learning

- Adult learning principles

Methods and materials

- Brainstorming

- Buzz sessions

- Reflective journaling

- Storytelling

Duration: 3 hours

Learning activities

Activity 1. Introductions and expectations

Use appropriate exercises to introduce participants and identify their expectations for the training course.

What happens at the start can set the tone for the rest of the training process.

Participant introductions

- Go around and meet a participant whom you do not know.

- Introduce yourself. Share your work situation as a community organizer. What has been your most exciting experience with group facilitation?

- In plenary session, share what you have learned with your partner.

Learning expectations and intention to apply lessons

- Individually, write down two to three learning expectations and one intention to apply the lessons.

- In small groups, share your learning expectations and intention to apply the lessons.

- Agree on two to three learning expectations and intentions to apply the lessons as a group.

- In the plenary session, share your group learning expectations and intentions to apply the lessons.

Write down expectations (learning objectives) and intention to apply the lessons (training utility) on a flip chart and keep it in the training room throughout the training workshop.

Go through participants' learning expectations (objectives) against the training course objectives to manage expectations.

Learning responsibility

Ask participants to name what they will do to meet their learning expectations (objectives).

Agree on ground rules and display them throughout the training period.

Encourage participants to keep **learning logs** and **daily reflections** to stimulate a deeper level of learning and insight-making. Throughout the training process, encourage participants to journal daily reflections of their learning experience (key learning points) and ideas about how they will apply the learning.

Reflection questions:

- What did I learn today?

- How will I use the lessons in my workplace?

- What do I still need to know more about?

Display daily agenda/activities including recap/reflections and energizers on a flip chart.

Activity 2. Exploration of action learning theories to develop a mindset for community conversation process

This activity forms conceptual foundations and self-checking of learning attitudes and behaviours required for the facilitation of community conversations. By so doing, the activity challenges participants and creates motivation for reflective learning. As a ground setting activity, participants are challenged to explore their learning styles and culture to examine their readiness as facilitators of community learning and action processes.

In small groups, ask participants to brainstorm on the following questions:

- What is learning? Why and how do we learn?

- What is knowledge? How is knowledge created and shared?

In plenary, ask groups to share their responses. Highlight key points from the brainstorming discussion. Mention that we learn from **reflections on experiences** or observing others' behaviour, attitudes and outcomes of those behaviours. From observing others, one forms an idea of how new behaviours are performed, and on later occasions, this information serves as a guide for reflection and action.

Engage participants in an interactive discussion to create conceptual understanding on action learning strategies, which are termed differently as 'experiential learning', 'problem-based learning', or 'reflective learning'. Encourage participants to reflect on their experiences and share stories that exemplify situations for applications of action learning theories or strategies.

Discussion questions:

- How do we learn from our experience or action?

- How do we apply the action learning cycle in our experiential learning?

- What is a learning orientation or style?

Activity 3. Exploring learning styles or orientations and what this means in group learning processes

In this activity, participants reflect on their learning styles and culture, and what this means for facilitating group learning processes.

Handout descriptions of learning styles and ask participants to identify their primary learning styles.

Ask them to reflect on and explain what this means for group learning processes. Capture the responses and highlight key points.

Activity 4. Exploring how adults learn and what this means for facilitating group learning processes

On a flip chart, draw a circle and write 'adult learning principles' inside it. Then, ask participants to brainstorm on what comes to their mind when they think of how adults learn.

Write down the responses and highlight key points. Ask participants to give examples or share stories how adults learn from their experiences.

Highlight adult learning principles and what these mean in working with men and women community groups.

Activity 5. Recap main learning points

Ask participants to reflect on their key knowledge and insights into action learning processes. Summarize the session and communicate key learning points.

Key learning points:

- Learning is about thinking, feeling and action.

- Change happens through a process of experience, reflection and dialogue.

- Knowledge is continually modified and re-created based on previous and ongoing experiences.

- Action (or experience-based) learning is the process of consciously learning from our experience and working with questions to improve future practice.

- Experiential learning happens when we reflect on (digest, synthesize) experiences and relate them to general patterns and gain new perspectives or insights into a new behaviour.

- When we learn, change happens.

Check your understanding

Pause and reflect on your new insights into or perspectives about concepts and principles of action learning.

- What lessons did you learn that you can apply in your personal and work life?

- How do you view your role and capability as a participatory group learning facilitator?

Reflect and journal your key insights and use them to rethink your attitudes and behaviours towards action learning and reflective practice.

Session notes

Learning is the process of acquiring information, understanding it and putting it into practice. We are constantly gathering information from our surroundings through our senses and store the information in our memory. When we receive new information, we compare it with what we already have in our memories and connect and categorize it with the other information we have already acquired. By so doing, we build up and enrich our personal experiences. Every time we have to decide, we refer back to these experiences, which allow us to quickly react and undertake different activities. This allows us to learn, react quickly and improve how we perform our skills.

Experiential learning is the process whereby knowledge and skills are created through the transformation of experiences (Moore, Boyd and Dooley 2010). The experiential learning theory presents a cyclical learning model, consisting of four learning stages: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation (Kolb 1984). The learning cycle shows how experience is translated through reflection into concepts, which, in turn, are used as a guide for active experimentation and the choice of new experiences.

Reflection is a means of learning by critically reviewing experiences to get new insights and perspectives and to act. It involves the self and is triggered by questioning of actions, values and beliefs (Clarke 2004).

Learning orientations or styles

Reflectors: learn through assimilation. They take time to reflect on what happens in their actions and enjoy asking questions. They enjoy discussing experiences and consider a wide range of views.

Theorists: learn through abstraction. They draw out the generalizations, the principles and arrive at theories that they use for their future thinking and action.

Pragmatists: They are interested in application, so want to test if an idea or a theory will work. They listen to experts and enjoy getting (or thinking up) practical hints and steps to move forward.

Activists: They learn through activity. They simply get on and do it and learn what they can from doing, rather than consciously stopping to understand what is happening.

Adult learning principles

The adult learner is in charge of their own learning. The training facilitator cannot impose or insert learning, but instead must serve as a leader, guide and catalyst.

- Adults are motivated to learn as they develop needs and interests that learning will satisfy. The needs and interests of adult learners are the appropriate starting points for organizing adult learning activities and are the crucial guideposts for delivering training.

- Adult learning orientation is either life-centred or work-centred. The appropriate frameworks for organizing adult learning are life-related and/or work-related situations.

- Experience is the richest resource for adult learning. The core methodology for adult learning programs involves active participation in a planned series of experiences, the analysis of those experiences, and their application to work and life situations.

- Adults have a deep need to be self-directing. The role of the training facilitator is to engage in a process of inquiry, analysis, and decision-making with adult learners, rather than to transmit knowledge to them and then evaluate their conformity to it.

- Individual differences among adult learners increase with age and experience. The adult learning programs must make optimum provision for differences in style, time, place and pace of learning.

Session 2. Basic principles of participatory approaches and processes

This session aims to create conceptual tools which are basic to the application of participatory learning processes. Participants will have common ground about concepts and forms of participation and understandings of community, household, gender, diversity and inclusion to form positive attitudes and behaviour for exploring diverse perspectives in participatory learning processes.

Learning objectives

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Explain what participation means to different people.

- Explain the importance of participation.

- Identify typologies of participation.

- Identify key principles of applying participatory methods and tools.

- Explain the interfaces among gender, diversity and participation.

- Explain attitudes and behaviours for participatory processes

Content

- Participation as a process

- Participation typologies

- Principles of participatory processes

- Concepts of community, household, gender, diversity and inclusion

- Attitudes and behaviours for participatory processes

Methods and materials

- Brainstorming

- Buzz sessions

- Small group work

- Role-play

- Card writing

Duration: 3 hours

Learning activities

Activity 1. Brainstorming concepts and rationale of participation

Create learning motivation by giving an exploratory challenge. Create a story or scenario of participation challenge.

Role-play where three development agents (DAs) discuss community participation challenges including gender-based challenges.

Reflections on the role-play. Ask participants to share what they think is happening in the role-play, why it is happening, and what they can do to address gender and non-engagement challenges.

Encourage participants to seek solutions to community engagement challenges. Invite them to share their experiences and describe the importance of participation in development processes.

In small groups of 3–4 people, ask participants to discuss what the term 'participation' means to different people.

Distribute small cards and ask them to write one idea and three lines of writing per each card. Collect the cards and group them under similar concepts and give headings for each group of cards.

Highlight main points from the group results. Encourage discussion about what participation can do. What is participation for? What are the arguments for participation?

Then, ask participants to share their experiences or stories with participatory approaches or methods.

Brainstorm to unpack understandings of 'community' and 'household' in participatory processes. Discuss concepts and interfaces of gender, diversity, inclusion and participation (Cornwall 2003) and the importance of disaggregating 'household' and 'community' as units of analysis, planning and action. Also discuss the power dynamics and self-exclusion problems in participatory processes.

Discuss the unitary and collective household models and the implications for addressing intra-household gender relations. Mention that the unitary household model views a household as a single economic unit that works as a group for its own good and all its members contribute in an altruistic manner towards the benefit and functioning of the entire household. The collective household model views a household as consisting of different members who go through an intra-household bargaining process in the allocation of resources and decision-making.

Activity 2. Exploring typologies of participation

Encourage discussion around factors that affect the extent or degree to which participation can exist in any one context for men and women (using an intersectional approach).

Probe into traditions, including cultural rules and norms of social behaviour, political environment, local power structures, and previous contact and interaction with development organizations.

Discussion questions:

- Does participation describe the same phenomena everywhere?

- What is your own knowledge and experience with participation?

Individually, write down three qualities or levels of participation you can think of from your own work experience on small cards. One quality or level of participation on each card.

Collect the cards and invite two participants to sort out the cards into different modes of participation with the help of the whole group. Then, ask participants to find appropriate labels for the cluster of cards.

Handout the typology of participation (Table 1) and ask participants to compare it to their results.

Ask participants where they place their engagement with different community groups along the typology of participation and explain why.

Further engage participants to map the participation of women and men along the typologies of participation and explain why.

Ask them also which level of participation they would aspire to reach, and which level they consider as being most conducive for participatory, collaborative learning and action. What is realistic in the given context of their work? What participation typology would they aspire to apply to engage different social groups (including women and men) to bring about positive changes?

Summarize the discussion and communicate key learning points. Mention that, with increasing levels of participation, more space is given to people in decision-making and that local people are the main actors and implementers of their own development.

Activity 3. Principles of participatory learning processes

In plenary, facilitate interactive discussion about the principles of participatory learning processes.

Ask participants what characteristics they would consider in describing participatory processes.

Discuss the following principles:

- Iterative process

- Multiple perspectives

- Flexibility

- Process orientation

- Visual sharing

- Group learning

- Self-critical awareness

Then, facilitate interactive discussions about attitudes and behaviours for participatory learning processes. Probe into learning/open-minded attitudes, being self-critical and reflective, flexibility, positive working style, adaptability, and embracing mistakes.

Activity 4. Summarize the session

Ask participants to reflect on their learning experience and share key insights into participation. Mention that participation puts local people in the centre and promotes collaborative learning and action.

Participatory processes encourage exploration of multiple, diverse perspectives and lead to dialogues about changes in existing conditions. This contributes to changes in the perceptions of people and their readiness and ability to contemplate action. The process of joint analysis and dialogue helps define desired changes and motivate people to implement them.

Check your understanding

Critically think about your view of participation and your ability to facilitate inclusive participatory learning processes. Rethink and question your attitudes and behaviour for inclusive participatory processes.

Do you think participation is possible in your work context and for which social groups, and why or why not?

What do you need to do or change (in terms of attitudes and behaviour) to achieve inclusive and empowering forms of participation?

Session notes

Participating means being part of, taking part in, experiencing the process, owning the information and only then taking decisions to change reality. Participation empowers women and men, giving them voice, choice, agency and empowerment.

Table 1. Typology of participation

Passive Participation	People participate by being told what is going to happen or has already happened. It is a unilateral announcement by an administration or project management without any listening to people's responses.
Participation in information giving	The information being shared belongs only to external professionals. People participate by answering questions posed by extractive researchers using questionnaire surveys or such similar approaches. People do not have the opportunity to influence proceedings, as the findings of the research are neither shared nor checked for accuracy.
Participation by consultation	People participate by being consulted, and external agents listen to views. These external agents define both problems and solutions and may modify these in the light of people's responses. Such a consultative process does not concede any share in decision-making, and professionals are under no obligation to take on board people's views.
Participation for material benefits	People participate by providing resources such as labour, in return for food, cash or other material incentives. Much on-farm research falls in this category, as farmers provide the fields but are not involved in experimentation or the process of learning. It is very common to see this called participation, yet people have no stake in prolonging activities when incentives end.
Functional participation	People participate by forming groups to meet predetermined objectives related to the project, which can involve the development or promotion of externally initiated social organization. Such involvement tends not to be at early stages of project cycles or planning, but rather after major decisions have already been made. These institutions tend to be dependent on external initiators and facilitators but may become self-dependent.
Interactive participation	People participate in joint analysis and learning, which leads to action plans and the formation of new local institutions or the strengthening of existing ones. It tends to involve interdisciplinary methodologies that seek multiple objectives and make use of systematic and structured learning processes. These groups take control/ownership over local decisions, and so people have a stake in maintaining structures or practices.
Self-mobilization and action	People participate by taking initiatives, independent of external institutions, to change systems. Such self-initiated mobilization and collective action may or may not challenge existing inequitable distributions of wealth and power.

Source: Pretty et al. 1995.

Session 3. Framework of the community conversation approach

In the previous sessions, we have discussed about basic concepts and principles of action learning and participation to form the conceptual basis for the understanding and application of community conversations as a participatory learning process. In this session, we will discuss what and why of community conversation, so that you will plan and implement effective community conversations in different contexts.

Learning objectives

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Explain what community conversation is and its assumptions or objectives.

- Discuss basic principles, processes and outcomes of community conversations.

- Visualize big picture or building blocks of the community conversation process.

- Identify appropriate contexts for the application of community conversations.

Content

- What community conversation is, why it is important, and its assumptions

- Learning phases and activities in community conversations

- Behaviour change through community conversations

- Principles of the community conversation process

- Multiple applications of community conversations

Methods and materials

- Brainstorming

- Interactive discussion through visualization

- Small group discussions

Duration: 4 hours

Learning activities

Activity 1. Exploring concept and rationale of community conversation

Brainstorm what 'conversation' means to participants. Is it the same as 'debate'? What are the differences between 'conversation' and 'debate'? Probe into goal, nature, process, type of communication, and assumption of participants.

Explain that 'debate' aims to win in a combative way, while 'conversation' aims to create a shared understanding through collaborative exploration, analysis and learning. Participants in a debate believe that they have the correct answers and argue to defend them by listening to find flaws and counterarguments to attack or win their opponents, while participants in a conversation know that they only have parts of the answers and want to explore the other parts to create a shared understanding by attentively listening to the views and perspectives of others to understand and collectively find solutions.

Ask participants to explain contexts or situations where they hold 'conversations' and 'debates' in their personal and work life.

For example, to address a family issue or a team challenge, do you hold a conversation or debate? Why?

Then, on a flip chart, draw a circle and write 'community conversation' inside it. Ask participants to think of words or phrases that describe community conversation.

Distribute small cards and ask them to write down their responses visibly – one idea per card and maximum three lines of writing.

Collect and organize the cards into categories of descriptions and give headings to the cluster of cards.

Highlight key points from the group results. Then, ask participants to write individually a working definition for community conversation.

Ask them to work in pairs or trios to compare their definitions and come up with a coined definition of community conversation.

Invite pairs to share their definitions. Note down key elements of the definitions.

Then, in plenary, facilitate interactive discussion about the why (objectives and rationale) of community conversations. In what context or for what purpose could community conversations be used? What are the basic assumptions or arguments for community conversations?

Probe into participation, empowerment, inclusiveness, exploration of multiple ideas and perspectives, community visioning and action as cornerstones of community conversation practice.

Make the point that community conversations are most appropriate when the objective is to explore multiple perspectives, change attitudes and practices by addressing underlying sociocultural and institutional barriers to development, and facilitate joint analysis, community visioning and actions.

Also mention that community conversations are based on the recognition that women and men community members have the knowledge, motivation and capability to bring about positive development outcomes.

Activity 2. Exploring basic principles of community conversation practice

Key questions: What characterizes community conversations? What are the unique features of community conversations?

In plenary, facilitate interactive discussion around defining characteristics or features of community conversations. Ask participants to give examples or share their experiences.

Write down discussion results and highlight key points.

Cover the following points in the discussion:

- Socially transformative, change-oriented community engagement process

- Inclusiveness, equitable and effective participation

- Iterative, people-centred approach

- Building on local experiences and knowledge

- Problem-based and experiential learning, exploration of multiple perspectives

- Joint analysis, collaborative learning, visioning and action

- Community-influencing and social learning process

- Community oriented, beyond individual learning and action

- A sustainable long-term perspective

- Complementary applications of active learning methods in sequential combinations

- Mobilization of ideas, skills, experiences, knowledge and passion of community members and local service provides for joint analysis, ownership and responsible actions.

Activity 3. Differences and complementarities among community conversations and other group learning methods

The activity aims to make participants appreciate the plurality of complementary participatory approaches and methods to facilitate learning among community groups. The choice of approaches or methods depends on contexts and purpose (expected outcomes) of group learning events, while they share common principles and methods and are used in combination or sequentially.

In small groups, ask participants to discuss differences and complementarities among community conversations, focus group discussions, community meetings, multi-stakeholder platforms, conventional training, and field days considering context, objective, nature and process of interaction, depth of learning and analysis, learning methods, and outcomes.

In plenary, ask small groups to share their results and reflections from the exercise.

Mention that the choice of methods and the sequence or combination of methods depend on the context and purpose (outcomes) of the group event in question; size of group; purpose of the group event (influencing, informing, empowerment, analysis, action); way of communication; and level of analysis.

Key learning points:

- No single approach is efficient, and a combination of approaches and methods should be used sequentially.

- Group discussions, as joint analysis and learning methods, can be used to identify issues and understand the community before a community conversation or during the community conversation at the exploration and action planning stage.

- Community conversations can provide feedback for multi-stakeholder platforms to act on or address concerns beyond community actions.

- Community meetings can be used to scale community conversations and influence wider community members by having a few participants share their experiences and stories to motivate and influence others in the community.

- Field days can be organized with selected community conversation participants to demonstrate changes due to the conversations and influence other community members.

- The choice of a particular approach and method depends on the purpose and expected outcomes, and the decision is how best to achieve this through a combination of different group learning approaches.

Activity 4. Building blocks of community conversation process

In plenary, make an interactive presentation about the four phases of the community conversation process (design, delivery, action and scaling) that happen before, during and after each community conversation (Figure 1). Each phase involves a set of activities, methods and learning outcomes.

In discussing community conversation phases, invite participants to give examples and share their experiences. The aim is to have participants create a big picture of the community conversation process (methodological framework) which they will look at step-by-step in a later session.

Figure 1. Community conversation cycle.

Source: authors' analysis.

In small groups, ask participants to provide descriptions and identify sets of activities, methods and outcomes for each phase.

Have groups document and share their results using flip chart papers.

Ask small groups to display their flip charts and invite the whole group to tour the displays, attending short presentations by small groups and giving feedback.

In plenary, ask participants to reflect on their learning experiences.

Mention that articulating the purpose and planning the learning process in detail help achieve a logical progression of learning.

Activity 5. Multiple applications of community conversations

In plenary, brainstorm how and in what context participants think community conversations can be used. Encourage participants to share their experiences or intensions to apply community conversations.

Show Figure 2 and discuss that community conversations have multiple benefits and can be applied in different contexts based on specific objectives and outcomes.

Figure 2. Multiple applications of community conversations.

MULTIPLE APPLICATIONS OF COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Research method	Training method	Planning method	Intervention method	Partnership method
• Participatory action research • Testing and developing technologies with farmer groups • Problem-solving research	• Participatory, experiential, problem-based learning • Accessible and action-oriented • Collaborative leaning and action	• Joint analysis and planning • Community ownership, inclusiveness • Community-driven actions	• Community ownership • Collaborative learning and action • Responsible and accountable actions • Joint monitoring and evaluation	• Demand capacity, informed and empowered community • Response capacity, engaging and inclusive service providers

Source: authors' analysis.

Mention that clearly articulating the purpose or expected outcomes of each learning phase of the community conversation approach and specifying the learning activities and methods for each phase is important to achieve desired objectives in a gender and socially inclusive way.

Activity 6. Reflections and recap of main learning points

Ask participants to reflect on their learning experiences and share key learnings and insights from the session.

On a flip chart, write the statement 'A key insight I have on community conversations is …' and have a round of reflections, asking participants to complete the statement.

Document participants' reflections on a flip chart and highlight main points. Mention that community conversations create space for mutual learning, reflection, planning and action among community members and service providers.

Check your understanding

1. What are the rationale, objectives and principles of community conversations?

2. How do you describe the differences and complementarities in community conversations, conventional training, community meetings, group discussions, or multi-stakeholder platforms?

3.   What are your key learnings and insights into community conversations?

4.   How do you think you would apply the principles of community conversations in your personal and work life?

Session notes

Community conversations are a facilitated discussion and social learning process which enable men and women community members and local service providers to identify and explore issues and collectively or individually take actions. It is a participatory and inclusive engagement process that gives community members informal space to listen to each other attentively and speak out about what they think is best about an issue at hand.

The community conversation process creates an informal interactive space for community members to share their experiences, explore their perceptions and practices, and learn from one another with mutual respect and trust. This leads to community-wide practice change because it brings together a wide variety of community members and encourages them to think, discuss and explore their perspectives and practices around an issue in question.

Community conversations create forums that enable community members to discuss issues in informal social environments, thereby opening spaces for new ways of thinking and questioning (Campbell et al. 2013).

Community conversations are based on the recognition that people have the knowledge, motivation and capability that can bring about positive development outcomes individually and collectively. This interactive group process can lead to the evolution of collective ideas and a critical consciousness, which can contribute to changes in restrictive gender norms (De Cao et al. 2017) and livestock management practices.

Community conversations:

•   Allow for a variety of ideas to be expressed and discussed.

•   Make community members feel included and empowered in the process of problem analysis and community action and solutions about the problem at hand.

•   Facilitate collaborative learning and sharing among community members and local service providers leading to joint analysis, actions and ownership to address community issues.

•   Provide a learning environment centred around people's own experiences to facilitate experiential learning and understanding through feedback and new knowledge supplementation, leading to changes in awareness, perspectives and practices.

•   Facilitate wider community outreach through social networks and peer influence.

•   Give community members a voice and have local service providers listen to community concerns.

•   Inform local planning processes and interventions through feedback about community concerns and actions.

•   Engage community members in discussions among themselves to listen to and learn from one another leading to new understanding and insights and community actions to address community issues.

•   Generate new connections and partnerships for behavioural change within communities.

Why community conversations: rationale and objectives

Changing the knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) of community members in livestock health management is complex and challenging. Their actions are influenced by several factors. Limited awareness and knowledge of community members about animal disease causes, and disease transmission and control measures can influence their livestock health management practices.

Knowledge and attitude gaps of community members can partly be addressed by introducing factual information and knowledge through training or other learning mechanisms. But to change their perceptions and practices, community members need more than technical knowledge and information. Addressing underlying sociocultural values, norms and perceptions of community members regarding animal health management requires inclusive and participatory processes and contextualizing and communicating messages that suit local thinking and perspectives.

Information provided in conventional formats does little to influence attitudes, knowledge and practices. When men and women community members understand the need for learning and consider and discuss solutions, they proactively think through the implementation of solutions and identify the changes that they are likely to make.

Not surprisingly, change happens when community members recognize and own the problem, analyse the underlying constraining issues, identify practical solutions, and commit to their implementations. New learning and insights into an issue in question happen through dialogic and self-reflective practice, resulting in attitudinal change and motivation to act. Participatory community engagement processes such as community conversations facilitate changes in attitudes and practices of community members. As such, community conversations are useful for understanding the social and cultural context in which community members operate. This, in turn, is vital for service providers to see how technical solutions would fit within the cultural practices and local realities of communities.

Community conversations facilitate collaborative learning and joint action among community members and local service providers. Engaging community members and service providers in mutual learning and co-creation of knowledge promotes understanding of other's perspectives and reduces social distance. Action points from community conversations can inform (feedback into) local-level planning processes and interventions. Local research and development partners can use findings and actions from community conversations as the basis for providing continual coaching, mentoring support, and facilitating multi-stakeholder engagements to address issues beyond communities.

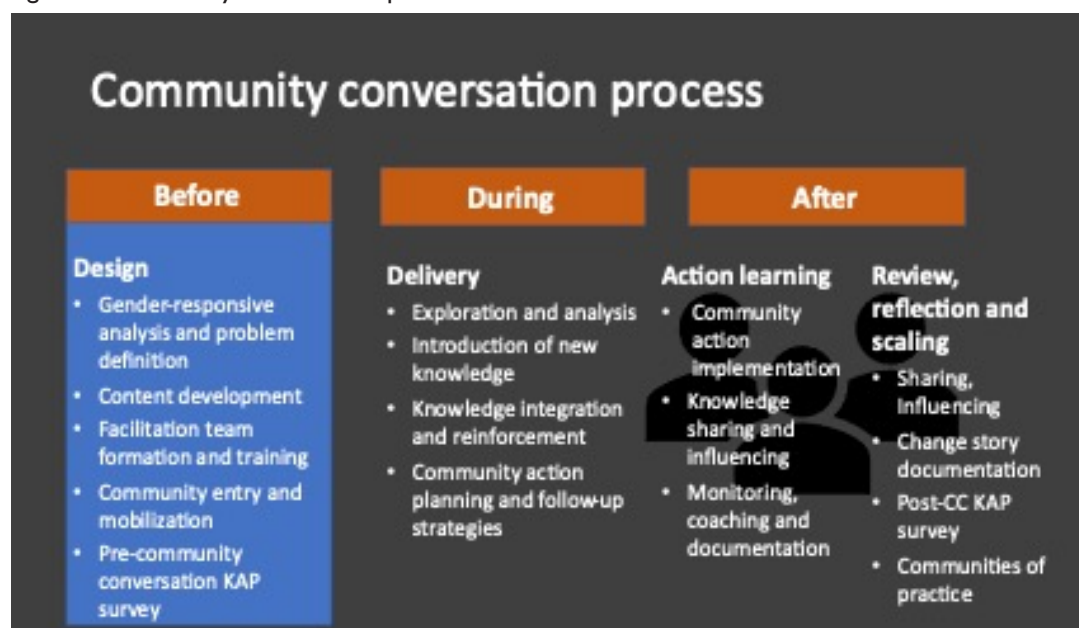Building blocks of community conversation methodology

The community conversation process has four different, iterative phases (design, delivery, action and scaling) that happen in distinct time periods (before, during and after) community conversations[1], each of which requires a different form of facilitation. Each phase involves a set of activities, methods and outcomes aligned to a period (Figure 3). For example, during a community conversation, the delivery phase involves four learning activities delivered using different methods: (1) exploration and analysis of existing knowledge, attitudes and practices; (2) introduction of new knowledge to address knowledge gaps and/or supplement existing knowledge and practices; (3) learning integration and reinforcement through communicating key action messages; and (4) community action planning and follow-up strategies. Community facilitators use a mix of different active learning methods to facilitate learning in these learning activities and achieve desired learning outcomes (see Table 3, Session 4).

Starting from and engaging community members to explore and question their own knowledge, attitudes and practices about animal health management issues allows community members to be aware of (recognize or appreciate) the problem and make them think about it (contemplate, see the need for analysis and seek solutions). The expected outcome of this learning activity is awareness creation and sensitization of community members about the issue in question and generation of need and motivation to learn and engage in the discussions about animal disease transmission and control measures.

Once community members recognize and identify their knowledge, attitude and practice gaps and are motivated to learn, then new knowledge is introduced and reinforced. This learning activity is key to develop the knowledge and skills of community members. The expected outcome of this learning activity is that community members express interest/intention for action and are motivated and confident to prevent and control animal disease transmission.

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1. For additional information, see Lemma et al. 2020.

Figure 3. Community conversation process.

Source: authors' analysis.

The third learning activity is learning integration and reinforcement. In this learning activity, community facilitators summarize the main learning points, check for understanding, and reinforce learning by communicating key action messages. The expected outcome of this learning activity is motivation, confidence, and preparation of community members to take, or experiment with, small actions.

The final learning activity is community action planning and follow-up strategies. In this learning activity, community facilitators encourage community members to identify and commit to community actions to prevent and control animal disease transmission by articulating the benefits of the actions and telling/sharing motivational action-benefit stories. In addition, local partners agree on follow-up strategies and express commitment for supporting and monitoring implementation of the community actions. The expected outcome of this learning activity is community action plans, motivation/commitment of community members to apply the learning, and responsible follow-up strategies by local service providers.

Multiple applications of community conversations

Community conversations have multiple applications and benefits in different contexts (see Figure 2) depending on the intended purpose and outcomes.

- Community conversations make learning stimulative, engaging and empowering for community members and local partners.

- Community conversations transform intra-household gender relations and empower women in male-headed households.

- Community conversations strengthen facilitation, learning and partnering capacity of local research and development partners.

- Working with, and through, partners helps localize and co-develop learning materials appropriate to local contexts and communicate messages that suit local thinking and perspectives.

- Community conversations facilitate collaborative analysis, learning and joint action among community members and local service providers.

- Engaging community members and service providers in mutual learning and co-creation of knowledge promotes understanding of one another's perspectives and increases intimacy and interactions by developing rapport and reducing social distance.

- As a gender transformative approach, community conversations help partners achieve both gender equality and sectoral development outcomes.

- Couples (husband and wife) participation in community conversations improves intra-household interactions, sharing of information, collective household decision-making and action, and family harmony. It increases access to knowledge and information by women in male-headed households and enhances their ability to share knowledge and information within the household and beyond. For example, a number of men community members reported that they were taking on domestic tasks, thereby enabling the participation of their wives in community meetings.

- Community conversations are powerful tools to engage community members in collaborative learning, reflection and problem solving, and facilitate outreach to the wider community through social learning and peer influence.

- Community conversations are also an effective way to feedback community voices into local planning and intervention processes.

Differences and complementarities among facilitated group events

There are different complementary approaches and methods to facilitate learning and sharing among community groups (Table 2). The choice of approach or method depends on context and purpose (outcomes) of the group learning event.

Table 2. Comparison of different group learning events

Group events	Objectives, nature, process	Methods	Outcomes
Community conversations	• Solution-oriented exploration and understanding of underlying sociocultural values and norms shaping human behaviour • Attitudinal and behavioural changes beyond the individual • Harnessing local knowledge and capability • Collaborative analysis, action and learning	• Experiential and reflective dialogues using visuals, storytelling, role-plays and panel discussions	• Community awareness and empowerment • Community-based actions • Community groups own the problem and are drivers of their own changes • Community influencing through informal knowledge sharing • Collaborative learning and sharing among community groups and local partners
Focus group discussions	• Extractive (research focus) • Group understanding and analysis (practice focus)	• Topic guide/checklists of discussion issues • Semi-structured interviews	• Information gathering • Analysis and understanding of community issues
Community meetings	• Consultation, informing and feedback • Mobilization • Getting community buy-in	• Presentations • Feedback	• Informing/communicating messages • Action points
Multi-stakeholder platforms	• Facilitating information sharing and linkages among multiple actors • Identifying and analysing constraints/opportunities and taking actions by different actors	• Presentations • Facilitated discussions	• Institutional actions (policy, business opportunities, supply and regulation)
Conventional training	• Imparting factual/technical knowledge and information • Knowledge and skills development at the individual level	• Presentations • Small group work • Demonstrations • Practical sessions	• Individual knowledge and skills gain/enhancement • Performance improvement through knowledge application
Field days	• Motivation • Influencing and spontaneous dissemination	• Method and results demonstrations • Communication materials	• Adoption of new technologies/practices

Session 4. Unpacking the community conversation process

In the previous session, we have seen the framework of the community conversation methodology and its four iterative learning phases aligned to distinct time periods (before, during and after community conversation). In this session, we will unpack the framework and discuss the step-by-step process of community conversations implementation. Each phase of the community conversation process involves a set of learning activities, methods and outcomes.

Learning objectives

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Plan pre-training, during and post-training details of the community conversation process.
- Formulate and ask different types of questions in discussions.
- Apply active listening in group discussions.
- Manage complex community conversation process.

Content

- Clear articulation of community conversation implementation process
- Active learning methods
- Competencies of community conversation facilitators
- Managing group dynamics
- Format of community conversations

Methods and materials

- Brainstorming
- Small group discussions
- Role-playing
- Reflective debriefing discussions
- Interactive presentations

Duration: 5 hours

Learning activities

The learning activities involve context-specific tasks that will be carried out before, during and after community conversations. Table 3 presents the overall process of community conversation implementation.

Activity 1. Before community conversations

Show Figure 4 below and facilitate discussion on what participants think are the activities involved *before* the delivery of community conversations.

Figure 4. Before community conversations.

Source: authors' analysis.

The key tasks before community conversations are:

Situation analysis and problem definition

- Gender-responsive context analysis

- Identification of knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) gaps

- Prioritization of discussion issues and content

- Development of a stakeholder mapping, analysis and engagement mechanism

Developing learning activities and content

- Defining of goals, objectives and steps leading to clear outcomes

- Development of interactive learning modules and process-based facilitation guide

- Development of learning measurement tools, such as pre- and post-KAP surveys

Selection of community conversation facilitators

- Working with, and through, local partners and community organizations

- Development of a gender-responsive selection criteria

- Clarification of expectations and roles

Selection of community members

- Participatory development of selection criteria

- Ensure inclusiveness/gender representation

- Give voice to the voiceless

- Aim for diverse perspectives

- Empower community members to participate

- Strive for a diversity of opinions and perspectives to achieve a richer discussion.

- Invite couples, women in male-headed households, and women household heads

- Invite community leaders, religious leaders, women's groups leaders, cooperative leaders, informal groups leaders and relevant local partners such as officials/experts from women's affairs office, government communication office, agriculture and livestock development office, and community development agents

- Involve community members who have a vision for their community and who can actively participate and contribute to the conversations

- Ensure that community members realize their voice is essential. Consider delivering invitation messages using local channels through which women are reached

Activity 2. During community conversations

Go through Figure 5 below and discuss context-specific activities, methods and outcomes *during* the delivery of community conversations.

Phase 2 of the community conversation process is implemented *during* the delivery of community conversations.

In plenary, ask participants what activities, methods and outcomes are involved *during* the delivery of community conversations.

Figure 5. During community conversations.

	Before community conversation	Phase 1: Conceptualization and planning
	During community conversation	Phase 2: Delivery and action planning
	After community conversation	Phase 3: Action plan implementation and influencing Phase 4: Review, reflection and wider sharing

Source: authors' analysis.

Expand the discussion to include team building and ask participants what it means and how it can be achieved.

Facilitate interactive discussion covering the following topics, asking participants to give examples and share their experiences.

Training of community conversation facilitators

- Facilitation team alignment on the methodology, process, expected outcomes and follow-up strategies
- Role definitions and sharing among facilitation team members

Community entry and mobilization

- Relationship and trust-building
- Pre-testing and localization/contextualization of discussion issues/points
- Pre-conversations KAP baseline survey

Competencies of community facilitators

- Relation- and trust-building
- Process facilitation and reflection – track participation within the group, ensure that everyone has expressed their views, and that nobody feels left out, know composition and dynamics of the group
- Strategic questioning, ask probing or follow-up questions to generate conversations, solicit information, deepen reflections and understanding
- Managing conflict, different types of groups with different dynamics
- Understanding body languages
- Active listening
- Paraphrasing and summarizing
- Storytelling
- Reflective process-documentation

Format of community conversations

Depending on local context and the topics to be discussed, community conversations can take different formats and use different methods to engage community members.

Some guidelines independent of content are:

- Three to four facilitators per conversation session with one acting as a lead facilitator and the others as small group facilitators and process note takers.
- Two to three hours per session.
- Four to five rounds of conversations per community around an issue depending on the intensity of the problem.
- Fortnight to a month time interval between conversation sessions.
- A recommended site for community conversation is a community centre where there is a wide space for breakout sessions, if necessary, and that is accessible to participants.

- Interactive sitting arrangements where facilitators sit at the same level with community members.

- About 40 to 50 community members per conversation session ensuring women's representation.

- About 10 to 15 community members per small group in discussions.

- Facilitators/process note takers for each small group discussion.

- The sitting arrangement should encourage face-to-face contact and should be favourable for women.

Opening, managing expectations and creating a safe discussion space

- Context setting

- Clarifying expectations

- Creating motivation

- Setting basic ground rules

- Giving positive feedback

- Expressing affection for the group

- Expressing empathy when feelings are shared

- Managing group dynamics

Mix of active learning methods – sequences of learning activities, asking the right questions

A variety of participatory and active learning methods and tools drawn from different sources are used to facilitate community conversations.

Some of the methods that are used in community conversations include storytelling, visuals, role-plays, strategic questioning, panel discussions, community theatre and participatory videos.

Depending on local context, women-only groups, men-only groups or mixed groups can be used in community conversations to explore gendered perceptions and attitudes and also to stimulate active learning by women members in less threatening environment (Lemma, Tigabie and Mekonnen 2021).

Storytelling. Stories help relate conversation issues to the experiences of community groups in ways that they can identify with and appeal to their feelings. Experiences and values of community groups around an issue can be shared as a story to form a common ground and provide a positive and reflective tone to begin community conversations.

Stories can be gathered or created around issue themes. Aspirations, experiences and concerns of community groups around the issue can be presented as a story, which can be used to prompt conversations and explore emerging themes and messages.

People feel comfortable telling stories of their experiences, perceptions and challenges, and they become open to others' views, values, experiences and perspectives when they do so. This can help them engage in meaningful discussions to identify and explore their aspirations and concerns and generate solutions together.

Probing questions. Asking insight-provoking questions stimulates exchange of experiences, in-depth description of a problem or situation and elaboration of solutions. Questions help community groups reflect on their experiences and imagine and envision possibilities for change.

Role-plays. Role playing takes place between two or more people who act out roles to explore a scenario or problem situation. It helps get a sense of what other people are likely to think and feel in the particular situation and engages them in reflective discussions exploring their views, attitudes and perceptions.

Panel discussions. A panel of community groups and service providers can be used to stimulate discussion and reflection around issues in question. Facilitators identify key discussion points to engage panelists in discussions and reflections followed by questions and feedback from other community groups.

Visuals. Picture-supported communication techniques such as posters, drawings or photos can be used to prompt community conversations and stimulate reflections and sharing of stories and experiences. Pictures increase attention and memory, help people speak and interact actively, and facilitate open sharing of experiences and stories.

Pictures are particularly useful to engage with illiterate community groups. Reflections and stories can be told around pictures so that community members question their own values and perceptions about the issues under discussion.

Community theatres. Theatrical performances made by, with, and for a community aimed at addressing local issues is engaging and can easily catch the attention of community members. Performances can be produced entirely by community members or with the assistance of professional theatre artists. Community theatre can help in developing the social capital of community members and addressing community concerns such as gender and animal health challenges. It can be used to stimulate discussions and reflections on issues and help community members uncover and question their own values, perceptions and practices.

Participatory videos. Videos made by community groups that feature innovation processes and community engagements are great ways of bringing people together to explore issues, voice concerns and tell stories of experiences and challenges. Community videos can reduce social distance between community members and outsiders. Watching videos of people in similar contexts can be motivating because community members identify with fellow community members and can be influenced by their actions and experiences.

Figure 6 shows learning activities, methods and outcomes during the delivery of community conversations. The facilitation of learning activities during community conversations involves 1) exploration of existing knowledge, attitudes and practices to facilitate joint analysis and collective learning and to identify and prioritize key knowledge, attitude and practice gaps; 2) introduction of new knowledge to address knowledge gaps or supplement existing knowledge; 3) integration and reinforcement of learning through communication of action messages; and 4) action planning to apply new learning.

Figure 6. Delivery of community conversations.

DELIVERY OF COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Learning activities	Methods	Outcomes
Exploration and analysis	Strategic questioning, challenge scenarios	KAP gaps identified
Introduction of new knowledge	Interactive, picture supported presentations	KAP gaps addressed, new knowledge created
Learning integration and reinforcement	Key learning points and action messages	Confidence, action motivation
Action planning and follow-up strategies	Action planning format, goal setting questions	Reflections and commitments

Source: authors' analysis.

Role play on community conversation facilitation

Invite small groups of volunteers to create scenarios of good and poor community conversation facilitation situations.

In one group, a few participants sit in a conventional training style, and the facilitator stands in front of them directing or instructing people, who are also disinterested or disengaged.

In the other group, a few participants and the facilitator sit in a circle, and the facilitator actively listens to people, who are also actively engaged in the discussion.

Act out the role plays and engage the whole group in reflections and feedback.

Reflection questions:

- Which role play shows how we normally work in and relate to community members?

- What is happening in the role plays?

- How would you describe the relationships among people in the role plays?

- What feelings do you think people have in the role plays?

- What word or phrase would you use to describe what is happening in the role plays?

Ask participants what they learned from the role play activity, and what it means to facilitating community conversations in real-life situations.

Expand the discussion to include qualities and competencies of good community conversation facilitators.

An effective community conversation facilitator:

- Builds relationships of trust and respect

- Explores ideas with people

- Encourages people to consider different perspectives/viewpoints

- Remains neutral about the topic under discussion

- Outlines a story which community members can relate to

- Helps community members make their own decisions and plans

- Helps community members reflect on and review their agreements and action points

- Summarizes key issues identified and agreements reached.

In your facilitation, use:

- Open-ended questions to stimulate diverse perspectives

- Give community members time to think of and provide ideas

- Eye contact and names to encourage people to contribute

- Listen carefully to understand, rephrase and lead the discussion

- Encourage to promote more responses

- Rephrase to clarify understanding and show appreciation

- Redirect to get others involved

- Probe to get out more information and views

- Observe to check on who is not participating

- Actively listen with the eyes as well as the ears and check out body language cues

- Summarize to help community members understand and reach an agreement.

Paraphrasing and summarizing techniques:

- Restate the ideas presented using descriptive language.

- Summarize if the speaker used a lot of sentences to describe their idea.

- Start with a framing comment such as 'If I understand you correctly.' or 'It sounds like what you're saying is…' or 'This is what I'm hearing you say…'

- Always ask for and get acknowledgment from the speaker that the paraphrasing is correct. This can be a verbal check in, 'Does that sound like what you were saying?' or a non-verbal cue.

- If an 'okay' was not received, ask for clarification until you understand and repeat the idea correctly. One way to do this is to 'draw out' the speaker by prompting them with open- ended questions for examples and/or further reasoning. 'Can you give me an example of…' 'Please say more about that…' 'I want to make sure I understand…'

- When paraphrasing and/or summarizing multiple ideas that were raised, check back to make sure that no contributions are missed. Use questions such as 'Did I capture all of the themes?' 'Were those all of the ideas on the table at this point?'

Some guidelines for the facilitation of community conversations

- Respect local norms and understand cultural influences.

- Pay attention to non-verbal communication signals.

- Make sure that each community member is heard.

- Paraphrase and summarize to structure and keep the discussion in focus.

- Deep dive and explore multiple perspectives and views of men and women community members using probing questions.

- Make sure that community members listen to and respect one another during discussion.

- Ensure open, active and transparent participation of everyone in the discussion.

- Make sure that there is shared ownership of the decision-making process and outcomes.

Practicing facilitation of community conversations

This practical activity is designed to engage participants in reflective discussions drawing on their experiences and linking learning content to local conditions. Small group work activities help participants integrate and internalize key concepts and facilitate cross-learning and sense making in a way to encourage them to apply the training in their work.

The activity aims to encourage participants to work together and mock up the facilitation of community conversations. It seeks to help participants develop skills to facilitate community conversations using small group facilitation techniques.

Participants will work in small groups. They will be given tasks to prepare and practice community conversation facilitation as a team with other participants acting as future community members.

Role play

Context

Gender division of labour in livestock management exposes women and men to different levels of zoonotic disease risks. Women are more exposed to zoonotic disease risks due to their gender roles and limited access to information about zoonotic diseases. When they are sick, women do not receive the same level of care as male household members. Addressing this issue requires engagement with community members to transform gender relations and reduce zoonotic disease risks.

You are asked to facilitate community conversations on this issue involving men and women community members. The method you are going to use to prompt/introduce the conversation is a role play followed by provocative/ reflective questioning, interactive discussion and storytelling.

Objectives

- In a small group, participants act out a situation for the purpose of further discussion, analysis and reflection.

- They discuss and identify factors that may expose men and women livestock owners to zoonotic diseases.

- They develop role play scripts and practice role play acting to introduce the issue and further facilitate discussion, reflection and analysis through storytelling or provocative questioning.

- They develop reflective and probing questions around gender roles, cultural beliefs and practices, and risks of zoonotic diseases.

- They practice facilitating group events using role play and reflective discussions.

- Other participants act as future community members, a few of them are distracting.

Instructions

- In your small group, analyse the context/scenario and identify discussion issues/questions to practice facilitating and documenting conversations.

- Develop a process agenda for facilitating and documenting conversations with other participants acting as future community members.

- Share and rotate roles as moderator/facilitator, actors, audience and note takers.

- Based on the discussion issues/questions you have identified, develop role play scripts.

- In your group, practice the role-play and facilitate reflective discussions.

- Upon completion of the practice session, reflect as a group on your experience.

- There must be active participation by all the members of the group.

Panel discussion

Context

The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) considers animals to be in good welfare if they are healthy, comfortable, well nourished, safe, able to express innate behaviour and if they are not suffering. Many factors constrain the ability of community groups to improve the welfare of their animals. Socio-economic, cultural and

environmental conditions, such as attitudes towards animals, knowledge and skills about giving care for animals, and environmental resources, determine the welfare status of farm animals. Addressing these issues requires engaging community groups in active dialogues to explore their views about animal welfare, discuss their animal welfare needs and find solutions together to improve the welfare of their animals.

You are asked to facilitate community conversations on this issue involving men and women community members. The method you will use to prompt/introduce the conversation is a panel discussion followed by feedback and questions from other participants who act as future community members.

Objectives

- To show different points of view and get participants thinking in a new direction about animal welfare.

- To facilitate interactive discussion and exploration of issues prompted by a panel discussion and further engagement and reflection from participants through questions, reflections and sharing of experiences.

Instructions

- In your small group, practice a panel discussion around animal welfare issues.

- Prepare a few discussion questions.

- Share and rotate roles as moderator/facilitator, panelists, audience and note takers.

- The moderator introduces the discussion issue with a short story to set and maintain the tone for the panel discussion.

- The moderator introduces the conversation with a panel discussion and further facilitates discussion by inviting the audience to ask questions and share experiences.

- Upon completion of the practice session, reflect as a group on your experience.

- There should be active participation by all the members of the group.

Picture-supported communication

Context

Antimicrobial drugs play a critical role in the treatment of diseases; their use is essential to protect animal health. In Ethiopia, the use of veterinary drugs in food-producing animals has increased with improved access to veterinary drugs. The use of drugs in livestock is not commonly supervised by a trained veterinarian. In addition, knowledge on how these drugs work and how they should be used to achieve the intended impact is often not passed on to men and women livestock keepers. Incorrect use of antimicrobials and other veterinary drugs, access to falsified or counterfeit veterinary drugs and non-compliance with withdrawal periods contribute to antimicrobial resistance and may also result in residues in animal-food items, of which the real risks for public health are poorly understood.

You are asked to facilitate community conversations on this issue involving men and women community members. The method you will use to prompt/introduce the conversation is visuals (pictures or posters) followed by interactive discussion, sharing of experiences and storytelling from other participants who act as future community members.

Objectives

- To smoothly open up the conversation and get participants talking and engaging in conversations.

- To create a context for the conversation and engage participants in reflections and sharing of experience through storytelling and provocative questioning.

Instructions

- In your small group, practice how to prompt/introduce a conversation topic and get participants easily engaged in conversations about antimicrobial use and resistance issues.

- Identify a discussion topic and plan how you will use visuals/illustrations such as pictures or posters to get participants easily talking and stimulate interactive discussion through sharing experiences and telling stories.

- Share and rotate roles as facilitator/moderator, community members and note takers.

- Upon completion of the practice session, reflect as a group on your experience.

- There should be active participation by all the members of the group.

Plenary reflections and debriefing. Ask small groups to reflect on their learning experiences. Encourage feedback and comments from other participants.

Activity 1 ends with reflections and commitments of local service providers and by elders' prayers.

Activity 3. After community conversations

Go through Figure 7 below and discuss activities and outcomes *after* the delivery of community conversations.

Phases 3 and 4 of the community conversation process are implemented after the delivery of community conversations.

In plenary, ask participants what activities, methods and outcomes are involved after the delivery of community conversations.

Figure 7. After community conversations.

Before community conversation	Phase 1: Conceptualization and planning
During community conversation	Phase 2: Delivery and action planning
After community conversation	Phase 3: Action plan implementation and influencing Phase 4: Review, reflection and wider sharing

Source: authors' analysis.

Facilitate interactive discussion covering the following topics, asking participants to give examples and share their experiences.

After-event reflections

Reflection is an interpretive and insight-making process. A deeper level of learning lies in personal reflection and insight development. An after-event reflection and insight-making session facilitates on-the-spot analysis and interpretation of community conversations results. Such a social learning process is also a rewarding experience for the team. It includes the following elements.

- On-the-spot analysis, interpretation and validation of results

- Capturing emerging themes

- Team learning and improvisation

- Reflective process documentation

Team reflection questions:

- What key issues were discussed?

- What themes have emerged from the community conversation?

- What went really well?

- What were the challenges encountered?

- Did we deal with these in the best way possible? If not, what could have been done differently?

- Were community members equally engaged (men and women)? What were the issues raised by women and men community members?

- What do we need to change for the next community conversation session?

- How do we consider the level of learning in the community?

- How can we follow-up on this session?

Monitoring, documentation and dissemination strategies2

- Action and learning groups

- Communities of practice

- Coaching and monitoring

- Integration of community actions in interventions of local service providers

- Commitment cards – actions and commitments in writing as a way to check progress.

Activity 4. Facilitating behaviour change through community conversations

In plenary, brainstorm what 'behaviour' and 'behaviour change' mean to participants.

Encourage further discussion on what they think behaviour change involves and how it is made possible.

Distribute small cards and ask participants to write what behaviour change involves or how behaviour change happens.

Collect the cards and invite two participants to cluster them in similar content with the help of the whole group. Ask participants to identify labels or headings for each cluster of cards.

Hand out Figure 8 below and ask participants to compare their group results with it.

Then, discuss how behaviour change is facilitated through community conversations, asking for examples from participants.

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2. For more information see Lemma et al. 2018.

Figure 8. Behaviour change through community conversations.

Behaviour change stage	Characteristics	Learning activities
Unaware	• Denial • Ignorance of problem	• Exploration, analysis and critical reflection • Re-thinking, questioning perceptions
Aware	• Mixed feelings, contradictions	• Identify and analyse barriers and benefits, introduce new knowledge
Motivated to change	• Conviction, change desire, preparation	• Action messages, informationon correct use,reinforcement, action plan
Practicing	• Action plan implementation	• Coaching, problem-solving support, encouragement
Influencing	• Celebrate success, influence others, advocate change	• Promotion, knowledge sharing, demonstration, change storytelling, scaling

Source: authors' analysis.

Activity 5. Reflection and recapping

Ask participants to reflect on their key learning points and insights into the facilitation of community conversations.

Write on a flip chart paper 'A new insight I have on facilitation of community conversations is …' and have a round of reflections encouraging participants to share their key learnings, insights and feelings.

Summarize main learning points.

• Issues: What key learning points were discussed?

• Ideas: What creative thinking occurred?

• Insights: What did you learn?

• Intentions: How will you apply the new knowledge and skills?

Mention that community conversations facilitate behaviour change through dialogue, and reflective and action learning that is deeper than merely an increase in understanding or awareness.

Check your understanding

1. How would you engage community members in community conversations if no one reacts to the questions you are asking?

2. How would you manage groups with different dynamics, such as groups with unequal participation, groups in conflict, polite or politically correct groups, disengaged groups or groups with imbalance of power?

3. What are your key learnings, reflections and new insights from the practical session on facilitation of community conversations?

Session notes

Table 3 presents an overview of the overall community conversation process from the design to the scaling stages.

Table 3. Overview of the community conversation process

Activity	Objectives	Methods/tools	Outputs
Assessment, analysis, and issue identification	Define and analyse problem situation Identify discussion issues and content	Focus group discussions Key informant interviews Transect walks	Problem situation defined and analysed Key KAP community gaps identified
Facilitation team alignment on methodology, facilitation principles and process, discussion issues and role sharing	Develop content to address KAP gaps of community members Team learning and sharing on the methodology, delivery and documentation process	Team learning and reflection questions	Clear understanding of the methodology and outcomes created by the facilitating organization and partner staff
Community entry and mobilization	Get the buy-in and support of community leaders and local service providers Achieve community representation and inclusiveness based on agreed criteria	Representation and participation criteria Review and approval of participation list	Representation and participation of men and women community members and relevant partners ensured
Pre-community conversation KAP survey	Establish KAP baseline Familiarize with thinking and reasoning frame of community members	Individual interviews using semi-structured questionnaires	KAP baseline of community members created Facilitation team get familiarized with community perspectives and better articulate discussion issues
Opening: welcome, team introduction and elders' blessings	Create warm learning environment Build rapport, trust and intimacy	Use of context setting posters Informal storytelling Use of opinion leaders	An informal, inviting and non-threatening discussion environment created
Setting context and clarifying expectations	Create motivation and need for learning and participation Intention for knowledge application	Storytelling Role definition Goal setting Ground rules	Motivation, creating the need for engagement and learning Creating informal environment for active discussion
Exploration	Build on existing knowledge and make the learning relevant, meaningful and problem-based Identify KAP gaps Stimulate thinking and motivation for experiential learning, meaningful engagement and sense-making	Challenge: in the form of a question, a thought-provoking story or picture, an example, brainstorming, role playing, panel discussion, followed by debriefing, questioning and dialogue. Discussion: probe for deeper level of thinking, feeling and responding; allow community members to respond and discuss using interactive discussion strategies. Focus and narrow: move the group to focus on the topic Exemplify: clarify with examples, added information, storytelling Synthesize: summarize and highlight most relevant responses; clarify important points	Key KAP gaps identified Motivation for learning and change created

Activity	Objectives	Methods/tools	Outputs
Introducing new knowledge	Address KAP gaps or supplement existing knowledge and practices	Pictorial presentation Interactive discussion Demonstration Checking understanding and sense-making	New perspectives created and knowledge improved
Learning integration and reinforcement	Communicate key messages and reinforce learning	Recapping, summary presentation, reflections Check for understanding and reinforce key action messages	Key messages communicated and learning reinforced Motivation for action created
Community action planning	Exploration of ways forward Identify intention to apply new knowledge Identify change/monitoring indicators	Community action plan template	Community actions agreed Motivation and commitment for action created
Reflections and follow-up strategies	Reflections on experiences, observations and insights Action and learning groups Partner commitment, follow-up and monitoring strategies	Reflection questions Follow-up strategies	Institutional ownership and commitment for supporting community actions created
Closing: elders' blessings/ community prayers	Smooth session ending Bring closure to the dialogue experience	Blessings and messages by elders	Smooth and culturally-appropriate ending of discussion session
After-event team reflections and learning	On-the-spot analysis and capturing of emerging themes, lessons and observations Generative and experiential team learning and replanning	Reflection questions: What went well? What did not go well? What is new and surprising? What key lessons emerged? What came out of the discussion? Any unique observations? Key KAP gaps? Key learning points and actions? How to use the approach?	Reflective and generative team analysis, learning and sharing; capturing emerging themes, new insights and lessons
Community action plan implementation	Knowledge application, action learning Follow-up, monitoring and coaching Wider community influencing through information sharing and demonstration effects of participating community members	Coaching support Creating spaces for information sharing Peer learning among community members	Influencing through social learning Practice change
Review, sharing, documentation and scaling	Reflect and capture experiences and changes Outcome story documentation Promotion, influencing and scaling Celebration and closing of community conversation interventions	Panel discussions Change storytelling Field days, demonstrations	Motivation and influencing Documentation of outcome case stories
Post-community conversation KAP survey	Measure KAP changes	Individual interviews using semi-structured questionnaires	KAP changes measured and compared

Source: authors' analysis.

Facilitating behaviour change through community conversations

As an inclusive and participatory learning approach, a community conversation is an action-oriented behaviour change modification method (see Figure 8). The 'during' and 'after' phases of the community conversation process (see Figure 2) align with the stages of behaviour change involving iterative learning loops, as described below.

Unaware

Initially, community members exhibit ignorance of a problem situation. They portray an ideal picture and deny the existence of the problem. For example, they claim that both men and women equally share domestic roles, or they give better care for their animals. This demonstrates the unawareness stage of behaviour change. In this stage, community conversation learning activities involve deeper and critical dialogues among community members to explore and critically examine or question existing perceptions and practices using active learning methods. This critical analysis, rethinking and self-reflection then leads to new perspectives or insights into the problem situation.

Aware

The awareness stage of behaviour change is a turning point, where community members acknowledge/recognize the problem situation and become open to explore and analyse barriers to change. At this stage, community conversation learning activities involve analysis of key knowledge, attitude and practice gaps and introduce new knowledge to address these gaps or supplement exiting knowledge and practices. At this stage, community members may be ambivalent or may have conflicted emotions or feelings, as the new information challenges their existing perceptions. In this stage, it is important to assist community members to have confidence and confirm readiness and ability to change by examining the pros and cons of behaviour change. For example, in one site, a male community member initially resisted to take on domestic roles, arguing that it is culturally a woman's domain, but later, through questioning of this perception, he acknowledges that he was wrong and now intends to change his behaviour. For this person to affirm and have confidence to change, it is important to provide convincing or persuasive information by sharing facts, testimonies and clarifying the benefits of change.

Motivated to change

This is the readiness and preparation stage of behaviour change. At this stage, community conversation learning activities involve checking for understanding, clarifying doubts, knowledge reinforcement through communicating action messages, identifying community actions, and encouragement for actions by demonstrating benefits of actions. Community members make sense of what is learned and give a frame to the formulation of realistic actions.

Practicing change

This is the action or practicing stage of behaviour change, which aligns with the action learning phase of the community conversation process. The learning activities involved in this phase include implementation of community actions, monitoring and problem-solving support.

Influencing

The final stage of behaviour change is reward, celebration and retention of change, which aligns with the review, reflection and scaling phase of the community conversation process. In this phase, the learning activities include influencing and scaling through wider sharing of change stories and demonstration of new behaviours. Sustainability of new behaviour or change is assured through establishment of communities of practice, capacity development of service providers and integration of the community conversation approach into the extension system.

Community conversations facilitate integrated livestock management interventions at the delivery level by fostering joint analysis, action and learning among community members and local partners. The influence of community conversations is leveraged through informal and planned dissemination interventions in an iterative way (Figure 9).

Information from community conversation events is shared widely through networks of community members and demonstration effects. Community members use informal spaces and networks (such as home visits, social gatherings and local savings groups) to share information from their conversations with household members, neighbours and other community members. These information sharing networks are regarded as webs of conversations that connect ideas and people, forming a larger framework of meaning and ideas, which further inform the cultural and social structure of the networks (Kotzé et al. 2013).

Figure 9. Community conversation scaling strategies.

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS OUTREACH STRATEGIES

Spontaneous dissemination	Communities of practice	Strategic multi-stakeholder platforms
• In-household rollout • Influencing through information sharing and demonstration effect • Different spaces and networks for community dissemination, i.e., local groups, opinion leaders, social gatherings, peer influence, relatives	• Mandated institutions taking up coaching and monitoring role on community actions • Core frontline partners integrating approach into extension system through, e.g., DA training, farmer development groups, adult education programs, planning processes • Coordination of integrated implementation and reporting	• Actors beyond frontline implementing partners • Input and service supply issues • Policy, coordination and regulatory functions • Enabling environment for demand-driven service provision

Source: authors' analysis.

Community influencing is supported by integrated actions of core implementing partners. Community voices and actions from community conversations feed into and are taken up by frontline delivery partners through providing coaching and monitoring support for community members in the implementation of their action plans. Through the coordination of a lead partner (e.g. livestock development office), core delivery partners work as a community of practice to act and learn together in supporting implementation and scaling of community conversation interventions.

However, addressing some of the issues raised during community conversations can be beyond the capacity of community members and frontline partners, requiring other forms of interventions, such as multi-stakeholder platforms, to address strategic or institutional issues. Informal community disseminations and institutional scaling through communities of practice and multi-stakeholder platforms are complementary outreach strategies that increase the influence of community conversations.

Competencies of community conversation facilitators

Community conversation facilitators need skills in asking questions, active listening, giving and receiving feedback and self-reflection. Asking appropriate insight-provoking questions stimulates exchange of experiences, description of a problem situation and elaboration of solutions. Questions help community members reflect on their experiences and envision possibilities for change.

Active listening is paying attention and searching for meaning. There are several techniques that can help us listen more actively, such as reflection, allowing silence, summarizing, paraphrasing and suspending judgment (Holloway and Smith 2006). Community conversation facilitators should be aware of non-verbal cues, such as nodding, smiling and maintaining eye contact, and reflect on and draw out the implicit meanings, feelings, and non-verbal messages that people are expressing (without necessarily being aware of it) in coaching and mentoring conversations (Hoffmann 2002). These may add meaning to what is being said.

Reflective practice is the process by which community conversation facilitators stop from time to time and think about and reflect on their experiences, create new thinking and insights, and take actions. Critical analysis and reflection refocuses thinking on existing knowledge and helps generate new knowledge and ideas.

Reflective writing requires individuals to go deeper and analyse the rationale and consequences of their actions and to learn from the experience (McKinney and Sen 2012). One way of capturing this learning is to use a reflection journal or diary (Clarke 2004). This method is helpful because it not only records events and reactions to them, but also helps provide a different perspective or clarity to any initial thoughts.

Session 5. Monitoring and documentation of community conversations

In the previous session, we have seen a step-by-step implementation of community conversations and discussed tasks that are carried out before, during and after community conversations. In this session, we will learn about monitoring and documentation as an integral component of the community conversation process, so that you will adopt effective strategies to track and document activities (processes) and results (outcomes) in community conversations implementation, to improvise and learn from your experiences.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Explain what process monitoring means and its importance in community conversations.

- Identify context-specific monitoring and follow-up strategies on community conversations.

- Describe what process documentation is and its importance in community conversations.

- Identity what process documentation involves in community conversations.

- Collect sex/gender disaggregated data and analyse it using an intersectional lens.

- Document outcomes and most significant change stories of community conversations.

- Explain what a reflective report means and what it contains in community conversations.

Content

- Process documentation

- Process note-taking strategies

- Reflective report writing

- Outcome story writing

- After-event reflections

Methods and materials

- Brainstorming

- Interactive discussions

- Small groups

- Reflective journaling

Duration: 2 hours

Learning activities

Activity 1. Concept and importance of process and outcome documentation in community conversations

On a flip chart paper, write 'documentation' and ask participants to brainstorm ideas that describe it.

Expand the discussion by exploring what participants understand by 'process documentation' and what they think is its importance in community conversations.

Write down discussion results and highlight main points.

Facilitate interactive discussion covering the what, why and how of process note-taking, reflective report writing and after-event reflections in community conversations, asking participants to give examples and share their experiences.

Summarize main learning points.

Mention that many valuable lessons from community conversations can be lost because they may not be properly documented (and not gender disaggregated), shared and used. Proper documentation, sharing and learning in community conversations require defining action-research and the learning agenda.

Activity 2. Process and outcome monitoring in community conversations

In small groups, ask participants to work on the following questions:

- What is monitoring and why it is important?

- What is process monitoring and what does it involve?

- What is outcome monitoring and what does this involve?

In plenary, ask groups to share their results. Highlight the main points.

- Monitoring is a regular collection of information to measure the progress of activities based on established indicators and make corrections as work progresses.

- Monitoring provides continuous information on whether progress is being made toward achieving the intended results through record-keeping and regular reporting systems and allows fine tuning of an intervention as it proceeds.

- Process monitoring shows progress (tasks, activities, processes methods) towards intended results. It answers the questions 'What has been done so far? Where, when and how has it been done?'

- Outcome monitoring provides information about progress and results for systematic and collective learning, reflection and corrective action.

- Gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation of community conversations helps to ensure that the interventions are designed to be gender-responsive and capable of measuring progress and achievements toward addressing gender inequities within a given context.

Activity 3. Roundup

Ask participants to have a moment of reflection and journal their key learning points and insights.

Summarize key learning points:

• Documentation seeks to share valuable knowledge to help people avoid pitfalls and utilize the most effective strategies and lessons.

• Good documentation is accessible, relevant and utilized in planning.

• Process documentation and monitoring help systematically document community conversation processes, challenges and lessons for continuous learning, reflection and improvement and show evidence-based impacts.

• It is important to properly document and keep record of all meetings and contacts with community members and partners and after-event reflection team meetings.

• Any meeting that takes place in preparation should be well documented and reflected upon.

• Good documentation integrates a gender and intersectional lens and brings context into perspective.

Self-assessment questions

1. Explain how process and outcome monitoring and documentation are important for continuous learning, reflection and improvement.

2. Describe what characterizes reflective reports and how they are useful in community conversations.

3. Explain the importance of reflective learning and documentation in community conversations.

Session notes

Process documentation is an ongoing activity of community conversations to capture the process, results and experiences of discussions. It is a systematic and rigorous process of recording activities, processes and their results and sharing of useful information.

Community conversations require rich documentation that includes description of context, processes, emerging themes, reactions, agreements, and decisions of community members and local partners.

In a rich description, the sentiments, tone, actions and the significance of interactions among community members and service providers are captured and reflected upon.

Documenting informative, useful community conversation reports takes a good reflection practice to synthesize and document observations, findings, insights, challenges, lessons and actions. Well-written reports covering activities and a critical reflection on the process and outcomes help reflect on and learn from experiences and continuously improve community conversation practices.

Reflection is a process of looking within us and critically questioning and listening to answers from within (introspection). It is a process of getting in touch with one's own feelings and values, making new insights.

Key to writing a good report is an effective process documentation and regular reflection on community conversation experiences. Writing a good community conversation report starts from documenting and reflecting on daily activities and experiences. What goes into a community conversation report is a critical reflection and synthesis of what you did, how you did it, what you achieved, what challenges you faced, how you solved the challenges, what you learned from the process, and how you are going to use the lessons.

Community conversations report template

Introduction

- Context, background, problem situation

- Objectives

- Group composition and dynamics

- Date and venue

- Duration

Methodological approach and process

- Facilitation team building/alignment process.

- Steps, activities and methods of the conversation process.

- Representation and presence/interactivity of men and women community members.

- Observations on reactions/body language of men and women community members.

- How men and women community members reacted to discussion issues (divergence, convergence and turning points).

- Context descriptions – agro-ecology, social and cultural structure, community characteristics.

- Difficulties/challenges.

- Success factors – opportunities, community strengths, local partners.

Summary of main points, agreements and actions

- Key issues discussed – burning issues and misconceptions

- Key themes that emerge from conversations

- What women and men community members say and how they say it

- Areas of tension and emotions during community conversations

- Quotes from views of men and women community members

- Key learning points, messages and reflections

- Decisions and action points that evolve from conversations

- Perceived benefits of participation and intention for change

- Follow-up and monitoring strategies

Observations, reflections and lessons learned

- Overall reflection and insights on the process

- Observations on place, time and logistics

- Feedback and comments from community members and partners.

- Meeting notes with partners

- Experience analysis and lessons learned

Process note-taking techniques

- Capture the process, key issues discussed, insights made, agreements, action points and quotes from community conversations without your judgment.

- Do not try to put down everything. Summarize key words/phrases.

- Listen for statements that might be useful quotes later and write those down as best as you can including the gender/representation of the speaker.

- Listen for why women and men community members are saying what they say. Think about what is going on beneath the surface. Body language can give important clues.

- Note what women and men community members say and how they say it. Watch for areas of tension and strong emotion.

- Listen when the facilitator(s) takes a moment to summarize the discussion.

- Look for turning points in the discussion, where community members were able to break through disagreements, find compromises and/or reach a new level (agreements and decisions).

- Compare what women and men community members say at the beginning of the discussion with where they have arrived at the end.

- Actively take notes during opening and closing sessions when local partners make reflections and remarks.

- After the discussion, interact with women and men community members and try to capture their impressions and feelings about the discussions.

- Review the notes with the facilitator(s) immediately and organize the notes into a report as soon as possible after the conversation.

Community conversation outcome documentation checklist

Use Table 4 to guide the documentation of community conversation outcomes.

Table 4. Outcome documentation checklist

Domain	Topics and probes
Background information	Name Age Gender Education level Family size Location Agro-ecology: altitude, climate, soil, rainfall, vegetation, etc. Land size Major crops and livestock types Membership and leadership of community members Distance from town Access to infrastructure and services
Problem situation	Describe the situation before community conversations regarding the issue at hand Probes: What was the problem? Who is affected by the problem and how?
Response/ learning recall	What was discussed during the community conversations? What have you learned from the community conversations?

Domain	Topics and probes
Community influence through knowledge sharing and demonstration effect	Participant: Tell us your information sharing experience Household members Neighbours Friends Any other person Where and how did the knowledge sharing happen? How did people react to the information shared? Probes If you have not shared information with any person, what was the problem? What will you do next? What support would you need to do it? From whom? Household members: Tell me what was shared and discussed in your household. What has your partner, father, mother or both shared with you and discussed about in the household? How did you find the information? Did you agree with what was discussed/shared? Who else has shared information from the community conversation with you? How did that happen? How did you find household information sharing? Did you feel empowered? Was it useful? How is it useful?
Knowledge application – attitudinal and behaviour change	In your household, what has changed due to community conversations regarding animal health management and measures to reduce infections? If no knowledge application, find out why. Identify constraints to knowledge application/behaviour change What benefits do you get from your participation in community conversations? Enabling and/or constraining factors for knowledge application Probe for stories/examples/lessons learned
Evidence – qualitative or quantitative information to demonstrate change	Prescriptions Records/history of vaccinated or treated animals Consultations with animal health practitioners Adoption of improved livestock husbandry practices and infection control measures Opinions/views of households and local partners/health practitioners Use of community conversation module by local partners/service providers
Sustainability – potential for scaling and policy influence	Access to advisory and coaching support from animal health practitioners Demonstration effects on other community members Learning/educational opportunities facilitated by service providers

Monitoring describes a continuous process of gathering information to reflect and assess progress with regard to objectives of a community conversation process.

This includes:

- Process documentation or reporting on each process event – inclusivity, representativeness, purpose or drive, method of organization, degree of engagement and interactivity.

- Reflections and commitments of community members and local service providers on each session.

- Strengths and challenges of the conversation process.

- Community action plans and follow-up strategies.

- Assessments drawn from interviews of community members in informal spaces or home visits.

- Pre- and post-community conversation KAP survey results.

Through an effective monitoring process, we can determine the accuracy of community conversation implementation:

- Whether we are achieving what we intend to achieve.

- How we intend to achieve it.

- Whether we are using the method(s) we planned to use or not and why.

- Why we are achieving intended or unintended results or why not.

- The obstacles/gaps in the implementation of community conversations.

- The extent to which activities are achieved, and whether data collection is running smoothly and correctly.

Checklist for process and outcome monitoring

- Location, venue and sitting arrangements

- Group composition and dynamics

- Time management

- Motivation and setting context for engagement

- Interactivity and degree of discussion richness

- Facilitation quality

- Use of illustrations, stories and examples

- Paraphrasing and summarizing

- Organization and flow of discussion

- Group management and control of the discussion

- After-event reflection and insight-making meetings

Outcome indicators/parameters

- Social capital: trust, relationships, new partnerships and collaborations.

- Intellectual/human capital: mutual understanding, shared problem frames, agreed community actions, joint learning extends into the wider community, women's empowerment and input into decisions.

- Political capital: ability to work together for agreed ends and partnering capacity, implementation of agreements and joint actions, changes in perceptions, knowledge and practices and ability to influence.

- Sustainability: community ownership, monitoring and coaching support by local partners, uptake of approach by local service providers, and well-functioning communities of practice or multi-stakeholder platforms.

Session 6. Design and development of gender-responsive learning materials

In the previous sessions, we have learned about the conceptual foundations of action learning and participatory processes, the rationale and objectives of community conversations, the methodological framework and step-by-step process of community conversation implementation, process and outcome documentation, and monitoring and evaluation of community conversations. In this session, you will learn about the principles and process of developing interactive and experiential learning materials, so that you will design and develop community conversation learning materials that integrate gender, intersectionality and context.

Learning objectives

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Identify steps and principles in the design and development of learning materials.

- Formulate clear and measurable learning objectives and outcomes.

- Design and sequence interactive learning activities and methods.

- Design and apply simple learning monitoring and measurement methods and tools.

- Take a gender and intersectional approach in designing learning materials.

Content

- Learning materials design principles and steps

- Formulating learning goals, objectives and outcomes

- Sequencing and progression of learning activities

- Learning monitoring and measurement methods and tools

Methods and materials

- Brainstorming

- Small group work

- Interactive discussion

- Card writing

Duration: 3 hours

Learning activities

Activity 1. Brainstorming

In plenary, facilitate brainstorming discussion on the following questions?

• What is a learning material?

• What differentiates a learning material from other extension materials?

• What can be considered as learning materials?

• What are gender-responsive learning materials?

Summarize main points and provide descriptions of a gender-responsive learning material.

Activity 2. Design principles and structure of learning materials

Ask participants to give examples of what they think are good training materials and what qualities distinguish these materials.

Summarize the main points and mention attributes of good learning materials, referring to different learning styles.

Ask participants to share experiences of developing training materials.

Find out the observations or lessons that participants could extend from the methodological framework and step-by-step implementation of community conversations to the design and development of learning materials.

Small group work:

• If you were given a task to design and develop a learning material, how would you go about it? What structure will you outline and use to guide the material development process?

• How would you make the learning material gender-responsive? What key questions would you ask to ensure that the learning material is gender-responsive?

Activity 3. Writing learning goals, objectives and outcomes

In plenary, find out what participants understand by learning goals, objectives and outcomes, asking them to give examples.

Brainstorm characteristics of good learning objectives.

Check for understanding by asking participants to comment on example learning objectives.

Small group work:

Read the following context, and develop learning goals, objectives, methods and learning activities.

Sheep and goats make important contributions to smallholder farmers' livelihoods, particularly for women livestock keepers. Due to their lower production and management requirements and their higher productivity and marketability, small ruminants increase women's livestock ownership and income from livestock sales. However, these animals are susceptible to parasitic diseases, among other diseases, which lead to economic losses for smallholder

farmers. Parasitic nematodes (gut roundworms) and trematodes (liver fluke) of small ruminants and other livestock, have major economic impacts in the highlands of Ethiopia. Developing the knowledge of community members about infection routes and seasonality of important gastrointestinal parasites is crucial to enable smallholder farmers to take effective prevention and control measures, thereby reducing production and economic losses.

In plenary, ask one or two groups to share their results, and facilitate feedback.

Highlight features of good learning objectives. Mention that good learning objectives need to be SMART (specific, measurable, actionable, realistic and time-bound). Use action verbs that demonstrate achievement of the learning and formulate objectives that cover cognitive, affective and psycho-motor domains.

Activity 4. Reflection and recapping

Ask participants to reflect on and share their key learning points and insights. First, ask them to have a moment of reflection, and then, in plenary, ask them to share their reflections.

On a flip chart paper, write 'What is clear for me about the design and development of gender-responsive learning materials is …' and have a round of reflections.

Test your knowledge

1.   Pause and reflect upon key lessons and insights you have gained from the session.

2.   Assess your capability to develop gender-responsive, interactive community conversation learning materials.

Session notes

A learning material is any educational material developed based on instructional design principles to facilitate training and self-learning functions. It is distinguished from other extension materials in that it aims to facilitate knowledge and skills development for capacitating and motivating people to act.

Learning materials can include a range of resources such as training curriculum, self-study materials, trainer/facilitator resources, multimedia materials (e.g. animated/short video clips, podcasts, digital stories, etc.), manipulative aids and training kits to mention a few. They are learning resources meant to guide learners during the process of learning, be it self-learning or formal training. Training can be good for something, but a lot of personal development is happening through reading self-study materials.

Learning materials can be presented in different forms to meet the needs of different target groups and can also be designed to suit different delivery modes, such as face-to-face learning, online learning, offline learning or blended learning modalities.

Design principles of learning materials

•   Participatory, interactive and problem-based learning.

•   Customized – realistic and practical content and learning activities.

•   Experiential, discovery-based and reflective learning.

•   Challenging content but appropriate for the level of the target group.

•   A learner-centred approach.

•   A clear structure and sequence of learning activities and assessments

Attributes of good learning materials

- Have a consistent and user-friendly tone

- Are concise, clear, directive, factual and evidence-based – avoid jargon

- Promote effective strategies for learning and assessment

- Are easy for the learner to navigate through

- Present a visually attractive design

- Avoid gender biases and stereotypes

- Provide activities and learning strategies designed to motivate learners

- Use content and language appropriate for the level of the target group

- Provide self-assessment questions/tasks

- Provide a variety of active learning methods

- Provide adequate user guides

Guide questions for developing learning materials

Ask yourself the following questions to structure and develop user-friendly and flexible learning materials:

- What is the need for the learning material? What knowledge and skills gaps is the learning material aiming to address?

- Who are the intended users of the learning material and what characterizes these users?

- What are the learning needs and objectives of the intended learners? What performance standards are set for their roles? What do they presently do in their roles?

- What are the expected learning outcomes of the learning process?

- What essential content (knowledge, skills and attitudes) must go into the learning material?

- How long will it take to use the learning material?

- What types of learning modes will be used?

- How flexible is the learning material to accommodate the varying abilities and backgrounds of learners?

- What flexible and active learning methods will be used?

- What learning activities and assessment tasks will be designed to motivate learners?

- How will the learning achievement be measured? What assessment questions/tasks/activities for the user will be included? What evidence is needed to show learning achievement?

- What practical examples, explanations and illustrations can be provided to aid understanding of the learning material?

- How will the leaning activities be structured and sequenced?

- What methods and tools will be used to monitor the learning process and evaluate the learning material?

- What time out/reflection activities will be designed to make users stop and reflect on what they are learning and relate it to their practice or experience?

- What learning transfer strategies will be used, and how will learning transfer be monitored and evaluated?

- What recommended further reading materials can be included?

Engendering learning materials

Use the following checklist to design and develop gender-responsive learning materials (Wong and Frei 2015).

Design

- Is the promotion of gender equality integrated into the course description, objectives and learning outcomes?

- Is there a section that builds gender awareness, particularly in relation to the course subject matter?

- Are gender considerations raised at appropriate points throughout the learning units?

Content

- Are gender concepts and a gender perspective integrated into the content and exercises?

- Does the content reflect an inclusive and participatory approach?

- Does the content promote equal participation of men and women?

- Do the stories, case studies and examples include men/boys and women/girls as active participants in roughly equal numbers?

- Are women included as role models, leaders and historical figures in learning materials?

Learning activities

- Do learning activities help to develop competencies and awareness of gender issues related to the subject matter?

Representation, language, images and learning resources

- Is there equal and positive representation of females and males in images?

- Is gender-responsive language being used?

- Do learning resources (including charts, visuals and text) avoid demonstrating gender bias and using gender stereotypes?

Delivery

- Are the means of delivery of the course/learning program equally accessible to female and male learners? Are measures being taken to address any difference in access, interests, needs and capacities?

- Is the mode of delivery flexible or adaptable so that it can equally reach male and female learners, particularly those who might be prevented in participating due to work or household responsibilities?

- Does the course consider the different learning needs of learners?

Assessment

- Are feedback and solutions being provided where appropriate and equally for both female and male learners in order to help them both achieve learning outcomes?

- Do assessment tools offer a variety of ways to assess and evaluate learner progress so there is equality of opportunity and outcome?

- Do the assessment tools provide some degree of flexibility in terms of timing and duration so as to allow for sufficient time for completion and for taking gender roles into account?

Learner support services

- Are adequate support or additional resources being provided to female and male learners to facilitate continuation and success?

- Do instructors and learner support staff understand gender bias and how this can affect how and to what extent learning takes place as well as how learners are assessed? Are instructors and learner support staff provided with any training, tips and/or guidance regarding the different needs and experiences of male and female learners and other gender issues?

Evaluation

- Are learning outcomes monitored and measured, and are there any differences in outcomes on the basis of gender?

- Does the course meet the different learning needs of both male and female learners and enhance their livelihood options?

- Is baseline sex-disaggregated data being collected to be able to monitor learner progress in terms of needs, enrollment, completion and outcomes?

- Is information gathered through assessment and evaluation being used to improve the next course offering?

Writing learning goals, objectives and outcomes

A training goal is a statement that describes in broad terms what the learners will gain from a training activity. A training objective is a statement in specific and measurable terms that describes what the learners will know or be able to do as a result of engaging in a learning activity.

Formulate training objectives (expected level of learning) based on the learning needs and work context of trainees in terms of tasks that they would perform in the work environment. Use action verbs. Each learning objective should be specific (should state exactly what the trainees will perform at the end of the training), measurable (learning gain should be reflected in the actions of participants after the training) and achievable (learning outcomes are practical targets, realistically possible within the timescale and scope of the training event) to allow systematic follow-up and monitoring and evaluation of training events.

Training outputs are knowledge and skills gains as well as products of training activities, such as training reports, follow-up action plans, training materials, etc. Training outcomes refer to the application of knowledge and skills gained from training in the work environment – desired end/effect of learning experience.

State learning outcomes (desired level of performance improvement) in terms of changes as the result of the application of training knowledge and skills. What will participants be able to perform as a result of the training? What will get improved as the result of application of the learning? It is vitally important to get the expected learning outcomes right! They should not be composed quickly or lightly but should be reworded and reformulated several times during the planning of a training event, until they have become a clear and unambiguous way of describing exactly what trainees can realistically be expected to achieve during and after the training event.

Community conversation design process

Use Table 5 to guide the design and development of a community conversation learning module.

Table 5. Process outline for community conversation module development

Process outline	Description
Identify topic	Define technical area(s); propose working title
Description of the problem situation	Assessment of gaps in knowledge, attitudes and practices of farmers/pastoralists What is the problem? What needs to change? What do we hope to change/achieve? What knowledge, attitude and practice gaps do farmers/pastoralists have in the technical area(s) identified? What should change in knowledge, attitude and practices of farmers/pastoralists to achieve the desired change/situation?
Define learning objectives and outcomes	What is the overall purpose of the community conversation event? What do we want out of the process? By the end of the community conversation What should farmers/pastoralists know and be able to do to improve the problem situation/achieve the desired change/situation? What attitudinal change should farmers make to improve the problem situation? What should local service providers know and be able to do to facilitate change?
Identify issues and content	Outline thematic discussion issues Identify content and discussion points for each issue Outline probing/provocative questions Unpack issues: manifestations, causes, consequences, solutions/actions and enabling factors/commitment to actions (influencers, opinion leaders, discussion circles, information dissemination)
Identify key messages	What are the key messages that we want to bring across through community conversations? Define what must be communicated in each discussion issue What is critically important (clear, concise and consistent messages) for community members and local service providers to know and be able to do to change the problem situation? Messages that state explicitly the actions that farmers should take and the benefits of the recommended behaviour that they will value
Learning materials and facilitation guide	What illustrations (audiovisual aids) will be needed to support messaging? What cases, stories or examples would be needed to stimulate engagement, learning and reflection? What facilitation process agenda and core reading notes need to be developed?
Application, sustainability and sharing	How would you plan to follow-up on community conversation events? How would you plan to complement community conversations with other project activities/knowledge and development interventions? How would you know if community conversation events have contributed to changes in farmer/pastoralist practices? How would you document and share outcomes of community conversation interventions?

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Annex. Program of training activity

Day 1.   Basics of action learning theories and participatory processes

Time	Activity
8:30–9:00am	Registration
9:00–10:00am	Introductions, expectations, pre-training assessment, training objectives and program Self-learning management tools, feedback teams
10:00–10:30am	Health break
10:30–11:30am	Theoretical roots of community conversations
11:30–12:30pm	Individual learning styles and culture Adult learning principles
12:30–1:30pm	Lunch break
1:30–2:00pm	Recapping of main learning points
2:00–3:00pm	Concepts and rational of participation
3:00–3:30pm	Health break
3:30–4:30pm	Typologies of participation
4:00–4:30pm	Principles of participatory learning processes
4:30–4:45pm	Recapping of key learning points and insights Mood Meter/daily monitoring

Day 2.   Methodological framework of community conversations

Time	Activity
9:00–9:30am	Recap of Day 1 activities and learning agenda for Day 2
9:30–10:30am	Concepts and rationale of community conversations
10:30–11:00am	Health break
11:00–12:00am	Principles of community conversation practice
12:00–1:00pm	Lunch break
1:00–2:30pm	Complementary applications of methods in community conversations
2:30–3:00pm	Health break
3:00–3:30pm	Community conversation cycle
3:30–4:30pm	Multiple applications and benefits of community conversations
4:30–4:45pm	Reflections and recap of main learning points and insights Mood meter

Day 3.   Step-by-step process of community conversations implementation

Time	Activity
9:00–9:30am	Recap of Day 2 activities and learning agenda for Day 3
9:30–10:30am	Before community conversations
10:30–11:00am	Health break
11:00–12:30	During community conversations
12:30–1:30pm	Lunch break
1:30–2:30pm	Practicing facilitation of community conversations
2:30–3:00pm	After community conversations
3:00–3:30pm	Health break
3:30–4:30pm	Behaviour change through community conversations
4:30–4:45pm	Reflections and recap of main learning points Mood meter

Day 4. Monitoring and documentation of community conversations

Development of gender-responsive community conversation learning materials

Time	Activity
9:00–9:30am	Recap of Day 3 activities and agenda for Day 4
9:30–10:00am	Concept and role of process documentation in community conversations
10:00–10:30am	Health break
10:30–11:30am	Process and outcome monitoring in community conversations Recapping of main learning points
11:30–12:00am	Conception of gender-responsive learning materials
12:00–1:00pm	Lunch break
1:00–2:30pm	Design principles and structure of learning materials
2:30–3:30pm	Formulating learning goals, objectives and outcomes
3:30–4:00pm	Health break
4:00–4:45pm	Recap/reflections of main learning points and insights Training transfer action plans Post-training assessment, training survey and closing

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