SANKOFA
Research & Consulting Plc.

Facilitation Skills Training Manual for

Protecting Lake Hawassa Project Partners

In Collaboration With

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

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Hawassa, Ethiopia

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Module 2: Facilitation Skills

Module Description

Natural Resource Management involves multiple stakeholders. This calls for the need to create a platform through which partners could interact. This in turn demands partners to have the skill and knowledge of facilitation by partners and actors involved in the NatuReS projects. Facilitation skill is the art of helping a group of diverse people identify common ground, build consensus, and come together to achieve their goals and objectives. Having a trusted facilitator is one of the keys to a successful partnership, and a facilitator's role often involves helping to bring different stakeholders to the table. This module is therefore intended to equip partners of the LHP with the facilitation skill in the context of the existing protecting Lake Hawassa Partnership. It is hoped that at the end of this training, trainees will be able to facilitate partnership meetings and discussions with all stakeholders for a balanced multi-stakeholder process and across sectors. Pluralism is an important aspect of the partnership in the NatuReS as it engages stakeholders who are impacted and are impacting by the existing natural resources. Thus, collaborations, meetings, workshops, conferences, and mass media talks are likely to raise conflicting issues that may benefit some at the expense of some others. Henceforth, partners need all the support available to them in order to deal with such topics, as it is not easy to have a meaningful partnership conversation on such sensitive and conflicting issues. This module is therefore intended to be used as a facilitation guide for an effective conflict resolution by the LHP partners.

Module Objectives

After the completion of this specific training module, trainees will be able to
- Understand the need for partnership facilitation in NatuReS
- Mimic the qualities of a good facilitator
- Differentiate between facilitation, leadership, and facilitation leadership;
- Understand and apply the principles of facilitation
- Gain insight and knowledge about facilitation skills for Partnership Management
- Develop facilitation skills required in conflict resolution

Session One: Introduction to Partnership Facilitation

Session Objectives

After the completion of this specific training sessions, participants will be able to

- Understand the concepts in partnership facilitation

- Appreciate the need for partnership facilitation in NatuReS

- Understand the roles of a facilitator in NatuReS activities

- Practice the roles of a facilitator in NatuReS

- Comprehend and appreciate the qualities of an effective facilitator

- Practice the principles for facilitation in NatuReS activities

Session Topics

**Session 1.1: Facilitation, Leadership, and Facilitation Leadership**

Session 1.2 : The Need for Facilitation in NatuReS

Session 1.3: Roles of a facilitator

Session 1.4: Qualities of a Good Facilitator

Supporting Materials

☞ **Training guide/manual**
☞ **Projector for Power point**
☞ **Discussion Agenda/notes**
☞ **Facilitation checklist**

Session Objectives, Key points, Delivery Methods, Time Allocation, and Trainer Role

◎ Session Objectives	🕐 Time allocated
After the completion of this specific training session participants will be able to After the completion of this specific training sessions, participants will be able to • Understand the concepts in partnership facilitation • Appreciate the need for partnership facilitation in NatuReS • Understand the roles of a facilitator in NatuReS activities • Practice the roles of a facilitator in NatuReS • Comprehend and appreciate the qualities of an effective facilitator • Practice the principles for facilitation in NatuReS activities	**4 hours**
📚 **Contents and Key Points**	**Methodologies**
☞ Definition of key concepts including facilitation, leadership, and facilitation leadership ☞ Why facilitation is required in NatuReS activities ☞ Roles of a facilitator ☞ Qualities of a facilitator	➢ Brainstorming ➢ Lecture

	➢ Group Discussions ➢ Presentation
Material/Aids	**Trainer Roles**
→ Training Guide → Flip Chart → Marker → Power point Slides → Projector	→ Write each key word and concepts on flip charts/power point → Brainstorm participants understanding of the key terms and concepts → Explain the key concepts and terms by supplementing on the prior knowledge of the participants → Arrange a session to allow participants practice facilitation → Engage participants through Q & **A** → Summarize the session

Session One: Introduction to Partnership Facilitation

1.1. Facilitation, Leadership, and Facilitation Leadership

Research and experience have shown that a facilitator plays a critical role in a partnership's success. It is important at the start of a partnership to set clear expectations for the facilitator's role. If some partners expect the facilitator to provide direction and answer questions, while others expect the facilitator to nurture the process and allow the partnership to explore content, there could be contention about the effectiveness of the facilitator.

Facilitation is a process of learning, sharing, and coming to decisions using methods that are participatory and affirming to experiences and knowledge that all bring into the room. It enables a learner-centered approach compared to the more conventional lecture method. Facilitation is learner-centered and it is always a two-way process as this is the only way to get maximum participation from everyone (Chanda , n.d.).

> The facilitator is a neutral person who does not offer personal opinions and does not get drawn into the discussions. Should the facilitator want to engage in the workshop process, this is possible if the facilitator "steps out of the role of the facilitator" to make a comment.

A facilitator is there to ensure that the discussion stays on topic and is progressing well. As a facilitator, one has to make sure that discussions are not off agenda and within the time limit. Budgeting the time fairly and allocating it to fairly is at the center of a facilitator role. S/he is there to ensure that everyone is able to engage in the workshop process, that all opinions are heard and respected, and that workshop participants are able to function as a group. This looks a simple task. Yet, it is quite difficult and complex in NatuReS activities where there are multiple participants from diverse walk of life and chances of domination is highly likely. Though a facilitator is expected to be neutral, it is quintessential to motivate the silent sections of the community so that to make their voices are heard.

Facilitation is not something that we do without any requirement. Rather, it requires attitudes of acceptance, understanding, trust, care and respect. Humor is also an asset. Good facilitation is critical for enabling participants to feel comfortable to speak on the issues of sharing power and

decision-making that are crucial to address in the areas of gender, access to water and poverty eradication. It is important for a facilitator to be aware of her/his personal prejudices and biases. These would include personal values, beliefs and attitudes about women and men, girls and boys, poor and rich, sexual orientation (gays and lesbians), different professions, different religions, as well as cultures other than your own. These will have an impact on how you facilitate a group and your use of language, jokes and examples. A facilitator will need to consciously and constantly examine her/his biases and how these affect her/his role as a facilitator. Before you facilitate, be clear about the goals of the group, the expectations of the facilitator, and the people you will be working with.

The distinction between a facilitator and a leader can be blurry. In its purest form, facilitation involves remaining completely impartial from the partnership process and decision-making. In this case, a facilitator's job is to help ensure that all partners have a voice and partnership activities move along smoothly, while allowing the group to take the lead in making decisions and dictating partner responsibilities. In this facilitation model, the facilitator and the leader are different people. The leader, if there is one, is a highly influential member of the partnership who helps to spearhead group efforts and guide decision-making using his/her knowledge and ability to provide direction. A blended model of facilitation occurs when the facilitator and leader roles are intertwined – in other words, when there is a facilitative leader. This type of facilitator has expertise in both the content and facilitation skills, as well as the added benefit of understanding dynamics between partners and partner organizations. A person acting as a facilitative leader must be careful to balance their personal input and biases with those of the other partners to ensure that they do not overly influence decisions and the direction of the partnership (Kaner, et al., 2007).

While facilitation skills can be learned, much of this learning is through observation, practice, experience, mistakes and good and bad meetings.

Therefore, in this training we will include some effective and popular methods that will assist participants to develop the required facilitation skills. The methods will largely rely on 1. Role Play 2. Group and General Discussions 3. Presentations, and 4. Small group activities/work.

1.2.   The need for Facilitation in the NatuReS

NatuReS engages multiple stakeholders and partners with diversified needs, aspirations, and expectations. These needs, aspirations, and expectations are likely to be conflicting to each other. Besides, NatuReS partners will deal with conflicts induced by natural resource use. Facilitation and collaboration are at the heart of conflict management. Thus, there is an extreme need for continuous debates, negotiations, meetings, dialogues, discussions, consultations, and resolutions. NatuReS partners engagement without a facilitator could never be effective. This calls the need for facilitation and facilitation skills.

1.3.   Roles of a Facilitator

In NatuReS programs there are several workshops, seminars, trainings, meetings, and discussions that are used as structured learning opportunities intended to help learners obtain new information or skills that they will apply immediately in their workplaces and communities. Such engagements may increase participants' knowledge about certain subject areas, provide them with an opportunity to reflect on and change their attitudes or strengthen their skills carrying out a specific procedure or activity. Effective trainings and other engagements allow participants to learn and practice applying new attitudes, knowledge and skills in an environment that is supportive and in a context that is relevant to the life experience of learners. In providing such important sessions, a facilitator is the key input with the following roles: Your role as a facilitator is to strike a balance—keeping the discussion focused and on track, ensuring that all learners have an opportunity to participate, and intervening when the discussion moves away from the learning objectives. By facilitating, rather than leading, the discussion, you encourage learners to view examination of their thoughts, opinions and experiences as an important part of the learning process. Besides; a training facilitator is expected to develop SMART action plan ahead of delivering trainings (Stephanie , 2018). In such cases, *before,* during and after a training course, trainers play a variety of roles:

- As a trainer, you will guide learners through practice and feedback towards competency, example developing effective Grant Proposal under Fundraising component of the PLH

- As a logistics manager, you will make sure that you are prepared and ready to conduct the course and that all necessary arrangements have been made (e.g., selecting and inviting learners; arranging lodging, per diem and transportation; preparing the classroom and copying materials; etc.
- As a data collector, you will make sure that the required data to collect is collected and summarized for the sponsoring group (www.managementhelp.org, 2023).

1.4. Qualities of a good facilitator

The most important characteristic of a good facilitator is the belief in the target group's capacity to improve their lives through skills development and involvement in gainful economic activities.

A good facilitator should also have:

- Well-developed communication and social skills
- Knowledge of the target group, their needs, expectations and potentials
- The ability to work with different groups of individuals who may at times have different beliefs, ideas and expectations
- The capacity to never lose sight of the main role of the facilitator which is to assist the target group to increase the quality of their lives
- Knowledge of strategies and ways to involve and activate the target group an understanding of the participating individuals' different ways of coping
- Skills in a variety of approaches to help attain the desired goal
- Ability to monitor, assess and summaries the outcomes and impact of motivational activities

Traits of a good facilitator

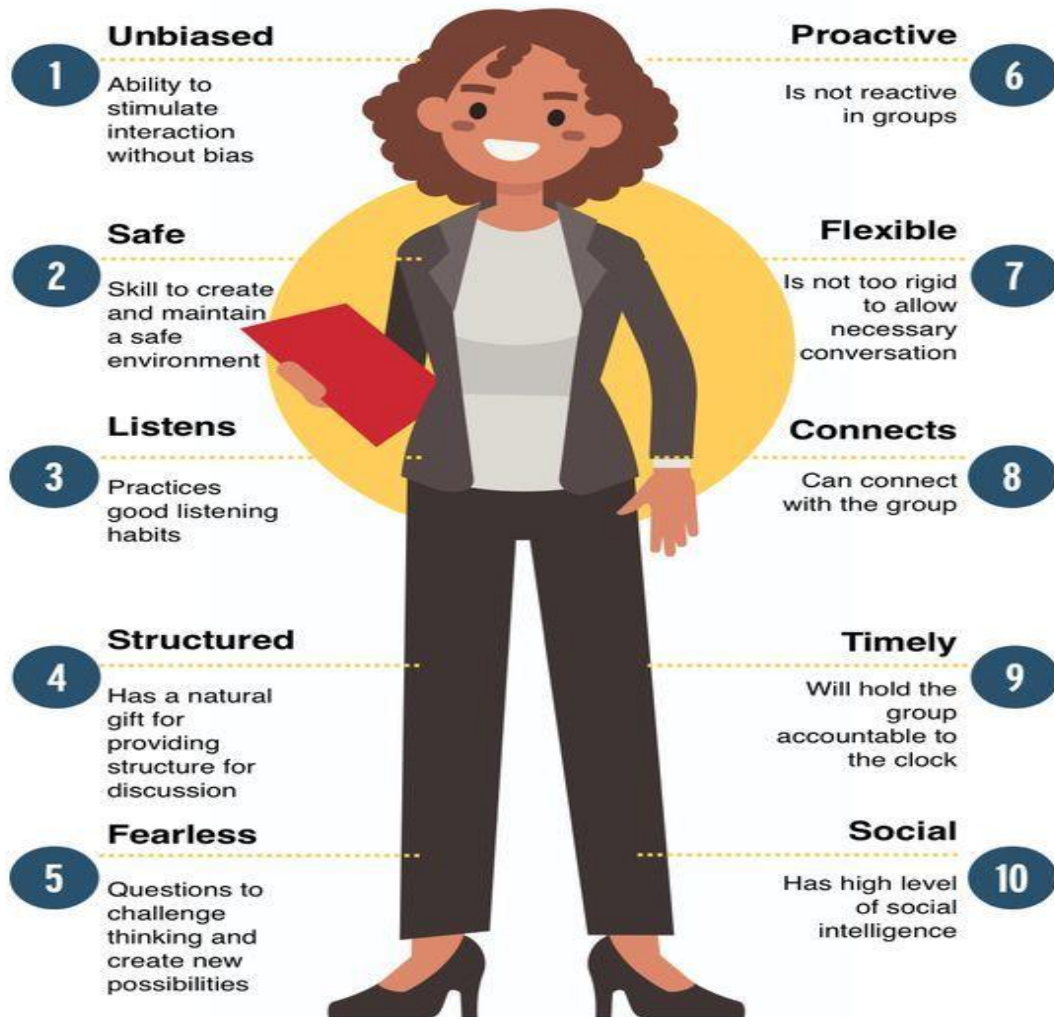| Traits	Explanation	Why it is important?
Sense of humor	- Brings humor in when climate gets tense - Does not take oneself too seriously	- Eases tension within the group - Helps to calm the group - Makes the facilitator more "human" to the group
Neutrality	Avoids providing answers for the group	Helps the group feel ownership in the process

	• Does not engage in discussions • Remains open minded and impartial	• Makes the group members the center of attention • Fosters a safe environment • Enhances the facilitator's credibility
Empathy Supportive	Ability to see a situation as others see it Treats everyone's opinion equally • Has a genuine desire to help people feel good about the contributions and achieve the desired result • Includes everyone in the discussion Conveys acceptance to others • Champions ideas from the group even though he/she does not personally agree	• Includes everyone in the discussion • Remains open minded • Helps foster a safe environment for the group
Integrity Trust	• Exhibits character and honesty • Is fair • Follows through with word and deed	• Sets an example of proper conduct for • the group • Prevents partiality • Enhances facilitator's credibility • Gains respect when group trusts the facilitator's judgment • Group has faith and confidence in the facilitator
Flexibility Analytical	• Ability to switch gears at the last moment • Assumes different group roles: leader, supporter, inquisitor, etc. • Thinks quickly and logically; has the ability to analyze comments, understand how they relate to the topic; and develop appropriate response • Recognizes undertones in the group and uses the positive ones to the group's advantage	• Keeps the group on track • Helps the group reach its goal • Permits the group to rely on the facilitator • for direction • Knows when to stop discussions, move on, etc. • Enhances the facilitator's credibility

Source: (Dannels, 2015)

Top 10
QUALITIES
OF A GREAT FACILITATOR

1 Unbiased
Ability to stimulate interaction without bias

2 Safe
Skill to create and maintain a safe environment

3 Listens
Practices good listening habits

4 Structured
Has a natural gift for providing structure for discussion

5 Fearless
Questions to challenge thinking and create new possibilities

6 Proactive
Is not reactive in groups

7 Flexible
Is not too rigid to allow necessary conversation

8 Connects
Can connect with the group

9 Timely
Will hold the group accountable to the clock

10 Social
Has high level of social intelligence

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1.5. Principles of Facilitation

Activities in the context of natural resource management are full of dilemmas. For instance, a resource dilemma is a situation in which maximizing individual profits contradicts the conservation of a resource. Facilitation in NatuReS activities is primarily intended to have the best partnership between plural stakeholders. Thus, decisions are to be made on numerous issues and these decisions require the highest facilitation skills and the need to stick to experience proven principles. Among several others, the following are few of the dilemmas that should be handled through the application of the various facilitation principles:

→ Individual and group benefits are in conflict (social dilemmas)

→ Social-ecological systems become caught in problem-causing and problem-enhancing feedbacks (SES traps).

→ Less current use for more future use

→ Enjoy the fruits of a natural resource base now than later.

→ A natural resource should be used by the current generation at the expense of the coming generations

→ Local Actions for global problems

→ Private benefit from public assets or public benefits from private assets

Let's think of the biggest dilemma that the PLH or other NatuReS activities are facing

> What would it be like to gather the members of partnership and "think together" about the problem in such a way that new ideas emerge? What would it be like to gain new insight from the partnership stakeholders' collective wisdom and have the dilemma you've been noodling on and wringing your hands over evolve into a vision, a path, and a first step by the end of the conversation?

This is the best of what teamwork/partnership has to offer.

And yet, we often take team meetings for granted. We assume we can just walk into a room, start up a meeting, and get to the desired outcome quickly and efficiently. We rarely give any thought to what actually makes meetings — and, more importantly, the conversations that happen *in* meetings — productive, meaningful and generative. But when leaders understand how to create the space for real, collaborative engagement, people do more than just show up for a meeting. They come ready to participate and contribute. Moreover, they buy into the outcomes

and decisions. They may not agree or love a meeting's outcome, but they can agree to live with and support it because they understand the process of how the decision was made. In short, the best way to cultivate the teamwork that you need in your business is to change the way you meet with your partnership/team. How you think is how you lead, and how you lead determines what your team can achieve. It starts with you, and it starts with the mindset and skills of facilitation. Here are five guiding principles to keep in mind when leading your next meeting to harness the power of collective thinking and collaboration:

Principle 1: Neutral Stand

Be intentional about the desired outcome and purpose of your meeting. Be clear about framing the topic (or dilemma) and guiding questions, and then be neutral about the content. This is about "leading from behind." As a facilitator, you own the *process* of the meeting while letting the team own the *content* of the conversation. This is how you let your team's imagination take over and get creative!

Principle 2: Stand in the Storm

Creating space for new insights from your team requires new thinking. Your job is to welcome this new thinking, even if it feels a bit stormy in the moment. Welcome different points of view and perspectives without taking sides and, if you're not already hearing it, find a way to welcome difference of opinion into the conversation. Learn to stay with conflict rather than deflecting, changing the subject, or moving on to something new. Teams don't naturally want to stay in conflict; they have patterns of avoiding it, often at all costs. But this is where the good stuff happens.

Principle 3: Honor Group Wisdom

Trust. Trust that the team has the wisdom and everything else it needs to solve its own problems creatively and innovatively. When you trust in your team's collective wisdom, there's a sense of inclusiveness, less need to control what people say, and less fear that someone will "derail" the

thinking. The diversity of perspectives represented by different voices on your team will enable the group to innovate and move forward.

Principle 4: Hold the group agenda

When facilitating meetings, be mindful of serving your team's emergent agenda. If you feel resistance from the team about a decision or strong reluctance to move forward to another agenda item, you might be encountering the team's "emergent agenda" — what's happening for the team in the moment. It might be a topic that's difficult to discuss but needs to be talked about in order for the team to move forward, or it might have more to do with the team's dynamic than it does the topic at hand. When the group's emergent agenda appears in your meeting, it's time to focus on what would serve the team in the long run, not what you want to accomplish in that moment. It's about continually asking, "How can I best serve the group?" and "What does this group *really* need right now?"

Principle 5: Be future Focused

To get the most out of your meetings, have a plan that includes questions designed to prompt the team to think about the future — to think beyond the current dilemma to imagine what's possible. After all, isn't this the ultimate promise of having a team in the first place?

Session Two: Procedures and Communication in Partnership Facilitation

Session Objectives

After the completion of this specific training sessions, participants will be able to

- Understand the facilitation procedures
- Comprehend the procedures to be followed before facilitation
- Comprehend the procedures to be followed during facilitation
- Comprehend the procedures to be followed after facilitation
- Identify the major elements of communication
- Identify the processes involved in communication
- Understand the barriers of communication in facilitation

Session Topics

Session 2.1: Procedures to be followed before Facilitation

Session 2.2 : Procedures During Facilitation

Session 2.3: Procedures after Facilitation

Session 2.4: Elements and Processes of Communication

Supporting Materials

☞ **Training guide/manual**
☞ **Projector for Power point**
☞ **Discussion Agenda/notes**

Session Objectives, Key points, Delivery Methods, Time Allocation, and Trainer Role

◎ **Session Objectives**	🕐 **Time allocated**
After the completion of this specific training session participants will be able to After the completion of this specific training sessions, participants will be able to • Understand the facilitation procedures • Comprehend the procedures to be followed before facilitation • Comprehend the procedures to be followed during facilitation • Comprehend the procedures to be followed after facilitation • Identify the major elements of communication • Identify the processes involved in communication • Understand the barriers of communication in facilitation	**4 hours**

Contents and Key Points	Methodologies
☞ Describe the procedures involved in facilitation → Before facilitation → During facilitation → After facilitation ☞ Define communication and its purpose in facilitation ☞ Elements pf communication ☞ Processes of communication ☞ Barriers to communication	➢ Brainstorming ➢ Lecture ➢ Group Discussions ➢ Presentation
Material/Aids	Trainer Roles
→ Training Guide → Flip Chart → Marker → Power point Slides → Projector	→ Write each key word and concepts on flip charts/power point → Brainstorm participants understanding of the key terms and concepts → Explain the key concepts and terms by supplementing on the prior knowledge of the participants → Allow participants to identify the major barriers to communication in relation to NatuReS activities. → Engage participants through Q & **A** → Summarize the session

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Session   Two:   Procedures   and   Communication   in   Partnership
Facilitation
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2.1. Procedures to be followed before facilitation
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Setting the scene

Anyone who attends meetings/trainings know that things can easily go off track or be stalled if there's the slightest confusion about the goal, how the discussion will be managed, or the empowerment level of the group. That's why facilitators always ensure that there's clarity regarding the scope of the conversation before they allow people to start discussing agenda items. They create this clarity by using a Start Sequence that has the following three components:

1) **The Purpose**—a statement that clearly describes the goal of the facilitated discussion. This is what will be discussed. This can take the form of a simple goal statement or it can be more detailed and include a description of the desired outcomes.

2) **The Process**—a statement of how the session will be conducted. This helps the participants understand how decisions will be made, the speaking order, and any structuring tools that will be used. The process description should also clarify whether members are making the final decision or are simply being asked for input about a decision to be made elsewhere.

3) **The Timeframe**—a statement of how long the entire discussion will take. In more complex conversations, timeframes should also be provided for segments within the overall discussion.

2.2. Procedures during Facilitation

Once a discussion is underway, it can easily get side-tracked or stuck, even when there's a clear start sequence in place. This can happen for any number of reasons, including that:

- The topic may be more complex than anticipated
- The conversation may have drifted onto another topic
- The process tool being used may not be the right one for the discussion
- The original timeframes may not have been realistic
- Individuals may be feeling tired or lose focus.

Sometimes there are obvious signs that these things have happened, but there are also lots of time when there are no outward signs that meeting effectiveness is declining. That's why it's vitally

important that facilitators periodically STOP the action and conduct what is known as a process check.

Learn to differentiate between simple and complex start sequences.

Process checking is a type of intervention designed to test effectiveness even when there are no outward signs of problems. As with all interventions, the sole purpose of process checking is to restore the effectiveness of the group.

A useful metaphor for process checking is a stop sign. That's because conducting a process check involves stopping the action to shift member focus to the process or how things are going

Source: (Office of Quality Management, 2009)

2.3. Procedures after Facilitation

Engagements in NatuReS is a continuous process that a facilitator has a role after meetings, conferences, negotiations, discussions, and dialogues. Continuous follow-up, communication, and assessment of results of discussions are important tasks. Preparing and sharing minutes of discussions along with agenda setting for the coming engagements are required after the first facilitation session. Among others, sharing minutes, reflecting important views on the minute, properly sharing and following decisions made, and recording decisions for future reference few principles to be followed after facilitation

2.4. Elements and Processes of Communication

Communicating and communication are complex interactions with a variety of definitions. In short communication is a process in which a person, through language, signs and symbols, conveys a message to another person. Thus, a good facilitator has to know the elements and processes involved in communication. In order to understand the communication process, it is important to examine the basic elements and their impact on the message. The sender, message, channel, receiver, noise/distortion and feedback and each will now be reviewed and discussed.

Sender: This is the source of communication. It is from the sender that communication starts and has an impact on the communication process.

What influences your effectiveness as a sender?

- Language and how you use it
- Credibility
- Knowledge of content, audience and context
- Experience, attitudes and values

Message: is the second element in the communication process and it is created by the source of communication. A message may be written (words, sentences, paragraphs, etc), Oral (voice, tone, pitch, pause/range, etc) or non – verbal (gesture such as body movements, facial expressions such as smile, face frown, eye contact, environment like office setup, etc)

Channel: is a medium through which a source delivers the message created to a receiver. Wise selection of a communication channel is quite important for an efficient and effective communication. The channel for communication could be

- A written or printed materials such as written reports, letters, pamphlets, leaflets, booklets, posters, articles, etc
- Speeches/verbal such as face to face meetings
- Phone conversations and video-conferencing
- Mass media such as radio and TV

Receiver: is the one for which a message is created for. Receiver may be an individual, a group, an organization, a community, etc. When receiver receives the message, communication has taken place. However, there are several characteristics of receivers that can impact the message and thus the communication process. Among others, the following are important receiver characteristics that may affect the communication process:

- Prior knowledge and experience
- Skills and abilities
- Attitudes
- Expectations
- Psychological and physiological situations

Feedback: This is a response that a receiver provides to the sender of the message. A receiver of any content is likely to respond in some way to the sender. This is a key component in communication as it allow the sender to evaluate the effectiveness, efficiency, and relevance of the message.

Barriers/Noise: Although communication process appears to be simple, there are certain barriers throughout the process. The barriers can have a negative impact on the process.

- ❖ Inappropriate medium or channel
- ❖ Incorrect grammar, inflammatory words, words that conflict with body language
- ❖ Technical jargon
- ❖ Noise: Can occur at any stage
    - o Interference from various sources – radio, chatter, anything that impacts attention

Session Three: Essential Skills for an Effective Facilitation

Session Objectives

After the completion of this specific training sessions, participants will be able to

- Understand the techniques for an effective facilitation
- Prepare a facilitation plan
- Develop the skills required for an effective facilitation
- Identify the need to use an internal or hired facilitator

Session Topics

Session 3.1: Techniques of Facilitation

Session 3.2 : Preparation skills and Facilitation Planning

Session 3.3: Neutral Stand and Unbiased Objectivity

Session 3.4: Proper Communication

Session 3.5. Psychological and Physiological Situation

Session 3.6. Using Sense Organs

Session 3.7. Equal Chance and Focus

Session 3.8. Using a Hired Facilitator

Support Materials

☞ **Training guide/manual**
☞ **Projector for Power point**
☞ **Discussion Agenda/notes**

Session Objectives, **Key points, Delivery Methods, Time Allocation, and Trainer Role**

◎ **Session Objectives**	🕐 **Time allocated**
After the completion of this specific training session participants will be able to After the completion of this specific training sessions, participants will be able to • Understand the techniques for an effective facilitation • Prepare a facilitation plan • Develop the skills required for an effective facilitation • Identify the need to use an internal or hired facilitator	**4 hours**
📚 **Contents and Key Points**	**Methodologies**
☞ Describe the facilitation techniques ☞ Facilitation plan and timeline ☞ Details of facilitation skills	➢ Brainstorming ➢ Lecture

Material/Aids	**Trainer Roles**
→ Training Guide → Flip Chart → Marker → Power point Slides → Projector	→ Write each key word and concepts on flip charts/power point → Brainstorm participants understanding of the key terms and concepts → Explain the key concepts and terms by supplementing on the prior knowledge of the participants → Allow participants to identify the major challenges in facilitating discussions/meeting among partners of NatuReS partners → Engage participants through Q & **A** → Summarize the session

(above the table, top-right cell:)
➢ Group Discussions
➢ Presentation

Session Three: Essential skills in effective facilitation

3.1. Techniques of Facilitation Skills

During training, a variety of learning activities are used to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes in the learners—and a variety of facilitation techniques are used when delivering a presentation or facilitating a learning activity. To be an effective facilitator, the trainer must be organized and prepared, practice good communication, and demonstrate awareness of both her/himself and others, as well as empathy for and responsiveness to learners and clients. She/he must also be skilled in and use variety of facilitation techniques.

General presentation skills can be used with all different types of presentations (e.g., illustrated lecture, discussion, case study, demonstration) to make a training session more effective. The

skilled facilitator/trainer uses the following techniques to involve learners, maintain interest and avoid a repetitive presentation style.

a. **Follow a plan,** which includes the session objectives, introduction, body, activity, audiovisual reminders, summary and evaluation. And prepare and use trainer's notes to enhance the execution of that plan.

b. **Communicate in a way that is easy to understand.** Many learners will be unfamiliar with the terms, jargon and acronyms of a new subject. The facilitator should use familiar words and expressions, explain new language and attempt to relate to the learners during the presentation.

c. **Maintain eye contact with learners.** Use eye contact to "read" faces. This is an excellent technique for establishing rapport and getting feedback on how well learners

d. **Project your voice** so that those in the back of the room can hear clearly. Vary volume, voice pitch, tone and inflection to maintain learners' attention. Avoid using a monotone voice, which is guaranteed to put learners to sleep! Avoid the use of slang or repetitive words, phrases or gestures that may become distracting with extended use.

e. **Display enthusiasm about the topic and its importance.** Smile, move with energy and interact with learners. The trainer's enthusiasm and excitement are contagious and directly affect the enthusiasm of the learners.

f. **Move around the room.** Moving around the room helps ensure that the trainer is close to each learner at some time during the session. Learners are encouraged to interact when the clinical trainer moves toward them and maintains eye contact. Use appropriate audiovisual aids during the presentation. Be sure to ask both simple and more challenging questions.

g. **Provide positive feedback** to learners during the presentation. *Examples*: "Very good point, "Thanks for sharing that story.

h. **Use learners' names as often as possible.** This will foster a positive learning climate and help keep the learners focused on the presenter. Examples: during questioning and when providing positive feedback and when referring to comments previously made by learners

i. **Provide smooth transitions between topics.** Within a given presentation, a number of separate yet related topics may be discussed. When shifts between topics are abrupt, learners may become confused and lose sight of how the different topics fit together into a bigger picture.

- **Be an effective role model.** The facilitator should be a positive role model in dress, appearance, enthusiasm for the training course, being on time and finishing at the scheduled time. **[Source:**

3.2. Preparation skills and Facilitation Planning

Trainers often do not allow themselves sufficient time to successfully complete all the planning and logistical steps required for a training event. Investing time and effort before a training event helps ensure that trainers and learners are able to focus on the training activities, rather than being distracted by disruptions and last-minute changes and additions to activities and materials.

Training coordination timeline

6-8 weeks before the event	**2 weeks before the event**
- Identify target audience - Conduct learner assessment, if possible - Develop detailed training objectives and - training curriculum - Adapt training materials so they are culturally - appropriate - Identify and reserve training site - Develop contracts and agreements with co-trainers and speakers - Choose vendor for printing or copying, if applicable - Make travel arrangements for trainers	- Check in with person handling registration re: number of learners, continued availability of the facility, any changes anticipated - Organize training packets with handouts, agenda, learner roster - Prepare and assemble audiovisuals (slides, overheads, videos, etc.)
4 weeks before the event	**1 week before the event**
- Develop and mail invitations to learners - Set up learner database for registrations, if applicable - Meet or confer with co-trainer(s) to coordinate - roles and responsibilities	- Confirm travel reservations, if any - Confirm audiovisual reservations - Prepare supplies and materials for training; place in boxes - Review and rehearse training curriculum
3 weeks before the event	
- Order or assemble training supplies - Reserve audiovisual equipment - Confirm site reservation	

• Develop pre- and post-test • Develop evaluation form	
Training event Arrive at least 60 minutes prior to scheduled start time Place welcome and directional signs in the Facility Set up room Set up and test audiovisual equipment, including microphone Check comfort of room (for example, adjust temperature) Prepare to register learners and distribute materials Conduct pre-tests, if applicable Conduct training Conduct post-test, if applicable, and evaluation	**Immediately after event** Debrief with co-trainer(s)
1 week after event Send thank-you letter to speakers and other key people Enter pre- and post-test data, registrations and evaluations into a database, if you have one Analyze evaluation data, complete report of training	**3-6 months after event** Track learners to see if they are using the skills they learned, or if they need technical assistance or further training

Source: (Zaremba, et al., 2021)

3.3. Neutral Stand and Unbiased Objectivity

Since facilitators always strive to be neutral to ensure that group members control outcomes, it's important to accurately record what people say without editing too much. If the facilitator changes too many words or add words that he or she personally prefers, group members will feel that the facilitator has taken control of the proceedings. The first rule of recording ideas is, therefore, to faithfully record what people are saying. Since people say much more than we can record in a few crisp statements, facilitators are always challenged to create a short; concise summary of the dialogue. This is tricky because it necessitates editing, which can lead to inadvertently changing the meaning of what is said. Skillful facilitators are good at editing so that the shortened statement still manages to be faithful to the original idea.

Responding to comments—Facilitators often lose neutrality by praising an idea put forward by a member. Be careful when acknowledging the efforts of any re s p o n d e n t s . Instead of praising

the content by saying, *"That was a good idea!"* switch to praising the process instead by saying something like, *"Thank you for offering that idea."* (FAO, 2005)

3.4. Proper Communication

Effective communication skills are critical in the facilitation process. How the facilitator communicates makes a difference in the depth, openness and quality of the discussion, efficiency of the meeting as well as the outcomes. Use the following skills and strategies to facilitate effective, productive meetings.

Active Listening	Be genuinely interested in group member's thoughts and observations. Listen intently as they explain or dialogue. Use eye contact to acknowledge you are listening and focused. Ask thoughtful follow-up questions.
Modeling	Practice behavior that you want reflected back to you. Demonstrate non-judgmental responses to ideas, comments or suggestions. Monitor you own nonverbal messages to assure that you are modeling what you intend!
Summarizing	Check your perceptions with the group. Pull together two related ideas stated in different ways by different individuals. For example: "I think Jim and Tina have the same general thoughts on why this is important information…." Summarizing can be used to 'close' a portion of the discussion that has run its course or is beginning to get off track.
Paraphrasing	Clarify group understanding of an individual's idea or remark. A method of restating in your own words what someone else has said. Done in a non-judgmental manner, to seek understanding and not to confront or challenge. Don't just 'parrot' what someone says or states. Instead put it in your own words for everyone to understand it in the same way.
Focused Attention and Pacing	Keep the group moving forward. Limit or reduce repetition. Ensure everyone's voice gets heard. Use summarizing and paraphrasing to speed up, slow down or return to an earlier topic if additional information comes to light. This is the facilitator's primary responsibility. Use a Parking Lot to keep track of off topic but important items to address at another time.

Waiting or Silence	Sometimes the hardest thing to do is nothing. Get comfortable with the '30 second rule' to allow people time to gather their thoughts (or sometimes courage!) before responding to questions posed by you or others.
Scanning/Observing	Nurture full participation from the group. Watch nonverbal cues in the form of body language, facial expressions and gestures. 'Read' into what you are seeing from one or more team members. It may mean you need to change the pace (faster or slower), move to a different topic, return to an earlier topic or use summarizing or paraphrasing to help identify what appears to be confusion, discontent, loss of attention, etc.
Equalizing Participation	Make sure everyone has an equal opportunity to participate. Encourage those who have been quiet, but do not call them out or put them on the spot, either. Ask specific questions of quieter members to get their voices into the room. Sometimes it's necessary to gently discourage someone who is 'over participating' by paraphrasing what they said and then asking others what they have to add to that comment. Phrase your questions in a way that sets the expectation that people will respond. For example, NOT: "Does anyone want to start?" INSTEAD: "Who will start us off?"

Source: (Frank & Smith, 1999)

3.5. Psychological and physiological situations

Civic engagements in NatuReS activities require participants' psychological and physiological readiness. Partners could not concentrate and actively engage while they are under psychological stress and physiological disturbances. It is very unfair to facilitate conferences, meetings, discussions, and negotiations under an alarming security situations when participants are likely to heavily occupied with security threats/problems. The same is true for a fasting members of the community. A facilitator has to balance both his/her task and the human/people situations. Overemphasizing his/her task alone would make him/her an autocrat who does not care for humans. Extreme orientation to people at the expense of the task will make a facilitator a laissez – faire facilitator.

3.7. Using your Sense Organs

Verbal Skills

1. ***Questioning: g***ood facilitators use questions to start, focus and deepen the learning of participants. Questions should not be closed but open-ended. They should include why, who, what, when, where and how – to bring out details. Right questions should be asked in the right way and at the right time. Usually, it employs *when and how to ask questions.*

   - *When - o*ne should know when to intervene during discussion and when to stay quiet. They should focus on mobilizing the knowledge/information of the participants and provide guidance when the talks are unclear or when the discussion starts to lose focus.
   - *How -* While asking questions one should speak in plain simple language and not use fancy words or jargon

2. *Probing -* Probing is asking follow-up questions to gain more understanding. Examples: Can you explain more? Could you put it another way? Can you tell me more about that? But why, how, who, when, where? Anything else? Probing can be used for different purposes such as: stimulate thinking, Clarify questions, inputs and/or opinions, Create dialogue, Solve problems, etc.

3. ***Paraphrasing:*** Listen carefully and check your understanding by paraphrasing what the participants have said. This clarifies the points and increases understanding. Ask yourself whether participants have asked the right questions. Too often, the correct answer is given - but the wrong question was asked by students/participants and communication fails.

Non Verbal Skills

1. Listening: Good Listening skills are:

- Empathy - listening for feeling
- Absorbing unpalatable messages
- Appreciation of the other person's point of view.
- Listening, not just hearing, this is called *active listening.*

To be able to listen carefully and creatively, to be able to pick out the positive aspects, problems, difficulties and tensions, is the most fundamental skill in effective communication. One needs to show interest in what people have to say, not argue, interrupt, pass judgment quickly or in advance, nor jump to conclusions

2. *Observation:* Observing is the ability to – see what is happening without judging understand non-verbal clues monitor group work objectively**.** It is important to notice group dynamics, including who is speaking and who is not, how various groups of people interact, e.g. women and men or different ethnic groups. This observation can be used to understand how and when different methods must be used to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate

3. Eye-contact: Always make direct eye contact with the people while talking and questioning them. This will show your interest and also help in getting their interest.

4. Smile: Smile with the people while talking to them. This will build rapport and trust.

5. Flexibility: One should respond to the needs of the participants and be willing to adapt or change methods, tools and questions in order to do so.

6. Be Well Organized: Good facilitators should be well organized. All necessary materials and logistics should be prepared beforehand so that the participants' time should not be wasted or lost. The facilitator should keep the overall objective in mind throughout the entire process.

7. Keeping notes: Always keep notes about what have been discussed and decisions (if any) have been made and why. A quick review before seeing participants/students again will help in recalling specific details. This is an important way to demonstrate your interest in your participants/students as individuals.

3.6. Equal Chance and Focus

It is important to **ensure encourage participation of everyone** – women, men, young, old, rich, poor, powerful and disadvantaged. Many times, the process gets dominated by a few individuals, (in community - usually the most powerful, most vocal, most wealthy - all of whom are usually men) and it is important to avoid this. Contributions from members of disadvantaged groups and the silent ones may need to especially seek. There are various methods – verbal as well as non-verbal - to encourage their participation (Elias, 2013).

3.8. Using Expert Facilitator

While you probably don't need an outside facilitator for all of your organization's meetings, there are usually a few very important times when an organization could use an outside facilitator, such as during a strategic planning process, board development process, annual workplan session, or

any other occasion where your organization needs to make a big decision, have a much-needed discussion, or build a stronger team (Trénel, 2009).

Improves the overall effectiveness of your meetings: A facilitator works with your organization's leadership to develop an effective meeting agenda beforehand, and then works hard during your meeting to ensure that the group achieves the goals set forth in that agenda.

Makes important decisions: A facilitator understands the process of decision-making, and helps move your group through that process in a structured way that engages everyone within your group

Makes your meetings more efficient: A facilitator helps a group stay focused and intervenes when a group veers off track

Helps you manage conflict: Conflict can either derail a group or can be harnessed to help creatively solve a group's problems. A trained facilitator understands the dynamics that are often at the heart of conflict and helps your group work through conflict productively.

Allows everyone to participate in the decision-making process: Facilitating a meeting is hard work, and if a member of your group is in charge of doing it, it can be very challenging to also participate fully in the meeting.

Helps everyone be heard: A facilitator listens attentively to every word that is spoken during a meeting, and reflects much of it back to the group. This way, individual speakers feel that they have been heard, and, in hearing their words again, there is a greater chance that the group will actually understand what was said.

Helps you solve problems: Skilled facilitators have a variety of tools at their disposal to help groups of all kinds to creatively understand and solve problems that involve group activities and discussions (Macartan , 2005).

3.7. Strategies for facilitating inclusive participation

To achieve inclusive and empowered participation at meetings, facilitators must look beyond simply encouraging the attendance of women or marginalized groups. Facilitators can help uplift marginalized voices, just as they can contribute to silencing them. It is the role of the facilitator to understand group dynamics as well as the way their own identity and facilitation approach contribute to shaping existing power structures; and to use this knowledge to create an equitable and inclusive meeting space. Inclusive facilitation is an art form that requires an open, patient, and

creative mindset. It also requires building a specific and rigorous skill set including, but not limited to, intimate knowledge of the local culture, clear (and culturally appropriate) communication practices, active listening, organizing, liaising, training, leadership and conflict resolution. It is advisable for facilitators to participate in training to strengthen their capacities to manage conflict, exclusionary norms, and recognize existing inequities, as well as their own social biases and position in relation to participants. This involves reflecting on how their own identity (gender, ethnicity or caste, age, social status) influences how they perceive, interact with, and are perceived by the world.

Creating inclusive spaces for discussion and reflection requires a facilitator who will put all participants at ease. In this regard, the facilitator's own social attributes (gender, age, etc.) can impact group dynamics and encourage or discourage the participation of different social groups. It is often recommended to match the gender (and other social attributes, when possible) of the facilitator with the gender of the targeted group, when possible, to create grounds on which participants can connect with the facilitator. This should involve putting women and members of historically sidelined groups in leadership roles. In mixed groups with more than one facilitator, facilitators should likewise reflect the diversity of the group (Zaremba, et al., 2021).

Some Practical Sessions

It is true that people can be made effective facilitators through training. Yet, facilitation skills are developed through experiential learning, frequent and continuous practices, and observations. Realizing this very fact, the following exercises could assist participants to develop effective facilitation skills.

Role Play 1: Instructions:

> ➢ **Select one workshop agenda from the following list using lottery method**
>> 1) **Implementing new progressive fish catch taxation on Lake Hawassa and Its Implications**

2) **Implementing Land Market Transaction Services in Sidama regional State: Challenges and Opportunities**

3) **Implementing Temporal Zero fishing activity on Lake Hawassa and Its Implications**

➢ **Please form three groups composed of five people.**

➢ **Assign one participant to be a facilitator while the remaining four will be discussants of a workshop agenda selected using the lottery method.**

Note to the trainer: Prepare a checklist to assess the performance/quality of each facilitator. Evaluate the facilitation skills of each facilitator based on the checklist. Among others, the checklist may include the following:

Facilitation skills	Do's	Don'ts
Setting a scene/agenda setting		
Interpersonal/communication skills		
Time keeping		
Objectivity/unbiasedness/neutrality		
Verbal skills/probing, questioning, summarizing, paraphrasing, speech		
Non-verbal skills/eye contact, body movement, smile, etc		
Listening/responding/observation skills		
Other skills		

➢ The trainer can also allow participants to rate the facilitation skill of each facilitator

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