



Recognizing land rights and enhancing capacities of smallholder farmers in Pangantucan, Bukidnon, Philippines

LEARNING MATERIAL

How to facilitate meetings & discussions

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Introduction

Meetings provide a space where people come together for a common purpose – whether to make decisions, explore a shared problem, or provide mutual support.

However, most of us have experienced meetings that are less than ideal! They drag on and on, with tempers running high, people talking over each other and no decisions being made. Or maybe one person dominates the meeting, leaving everyone else to wonder why they even turned up.

Facilitation is about taking responsibility for making meetings as easy and effective as possible. This guide explores the concept of facilitation and how it can help in creating positive and successful meetings.

The Role of a Facilitator is to ensure that the meeting runs smoothly from start, to finish. A good facilitator should:

- Help the group decide on a realistic agenda and timeframe for the meeting.
- Keep the meeting focused on one item at a time until the issue is resolved.
- Regulate the flow of discussion, e.g., drawing out quiet people, or those with the most relevant experience.
- Clarify and summarize points.
- Make sure the group comes to decisions; divide work clearly among members.
- Help the group address conflict when it arises.
- Introduce facilitation tools, if appropriate. e.g., brainstorming to help people come up with creative ideas, small group discussions to increase participation.
- Make sure everyone participates and no one dominates.
- Keep the meeting to time.
- Ensure that a written record is made of any action points and decisions agreed upon at the meeting.

A facilitator needs to be aware of both the content of the meeting (*what* people are talking about) and the process (*how* the conversations are happening). This awareness helps a facilitator to move the discussion forward.

However, a good meeting does not only get work done; another important function of meetings is maintaining the group by involving, supporting, and empowering the participants. This can help build a sense of community and connection to fellow group members, resulting in a strong group with high levels of enthusiasm for achieving your shared aims. Groups usually get more things done in the long run when they pay attention to people, relationships, and group dynamics as well.

PART I

Steps for Facilitators

A. Preparing for a successful meeting

It is crucial to prepare for meetings, and here are the steps to follow:

1. Formulate a clear and realistic agenda

Prepare a proposed agenda in advance, and ask for feedback at the start of the meeting. It is important that everyone gets a chance to have an input and that the agenda is agreed upon by everyone.

A good agenda should include: (a) the purpose of the meeting; (b) the topics to be discussed; (c) the expected outcomes of the meeting; and, (d) the timetable appropriate for the agenda items.

- **Purpose:** Note what the purpose of the discussion is. Is it for sharing information? To brainstorm for new ideas? To plan for courses of action? To analyze and solve a problem? Or is it to make a decision?
- **Topics:** Identify the topics to be discussed. Choose those topics that impact upon everyone attending the meeting. You may also try to get input from those attending the meeting about the topics that need to be discussed. Also, if you have several topics on your agenda, think about how much time you will need to discuss each topic.

- **Expected outcomes:** Identify your expected outcomes, or what you hope the meeting to achieve, based on the purpose of the meeting.
- **Timetable:** If the meeting is only an hour-long, there should only be an hour's worth of items on the agenda! Estimate the time needed for each item. If you have more agenda items than fit into the available time, have a think about priorities for this meeting – what could be tackled another time or in separate working groups?

2. Think about how you might facilitate the discussions on the agenda.

- **Work out what order to tackle agenda items in.** Often, it is best to deal with difficult items after the group has warmed up but before people get tired. By alternating short and long items, you can give the group a sense of progress. A common way of starting a meeting is to recap recent events or the last meeting.
- **How should the meeting start?** Will you have introductions, a check-in, or warm-up activity?
- **How will the meeting end?** Can you think of a closing activity? Could you plan for an evaluation of the meeting near the end so you can learn for next time?
- **Plan in breaks,** especially for meetings longer than 1 ½ hours.
- **Have a back-up plan:** Ask yourself what you can cut from the agenda, or trim down if anything runs over your proposed time. Have some suggestions up your sleeve.
- **Write up the proposed agenda** where everyone will be able to see it (on a white-board or flipchart, for example) or make copies to give to everyone.

Simple meeting agenda

Registration at 8:00 am

Start at 8:30 am

- Introductions by participants (10 minutes)
- Review of the agenda (5 minutes)
- Review of the last minutes and action points (10 minutes)
- Report back from the working committees: finance, membership (20 minutes)
- Upcoming meeting with the LGU – agree which issues to raise/questions to ask (30 minutes)

Break (15 mins)

- Discussion of the reforestation project sites (40 minutes)
- Organizing of the different work teams (20 minutes)
- Any other business (15 minutes)
- Summary of discussions and closing (15 minutes)

End 11:30 am

- ## 3. Decide on who should attend the meeting.
- Do we prefer a small group or a large one? If there are too few or too many people in attendance you run the risk of an unproductive meeting. You will want to invite only people who will help you reach the goal of the meeting. Ask the following:

- Who are the key decision-makers on the issue?
- Who is most knowledgeable about the information being discussed?
- Who has a vested interest in the topics?
- Who will have to implement any decisions that are made?
- Do we need to invite experts or resource persons, especially where a decision needs to be made?

Find a time when most people are available. Think about their patterns of daily activity, such as work in the fields, parenting, or preparing meals.

Find a venue that is big enough to accommodate everyone comfortably.

Ask about and plan for any specific requirements for people attending the meeting. This is not just about physical access requirements such as lighting, seating, moving around, but also facilitation techniques that will make the meeting more accessible to them. Prepare your facilitation accordingly: even small changes in styles of facilitation and careful choice of exercises can make the difference between people finding it hard to participate and everyone being able to take a full and active part in meetings. The most important step is to ask people about their access requirements in advance of the meeting and their specific suggestions for how to enable their full participation.

- ## 4. Invite the people.
- When inviting people to a meeting, you should provide a brief introduction to the meeting – mentioning its purpose, agenda, and the people who have been invited. It should also include the date, time, and place.

Send a reminder about the meeting as it approaches. People are busy, and without reminders, it is possible that they will forget about an upcoming meeting. Try to send out reminders to those who will be attending two days before the meeting is scheduled to take place.

5. Prepare yourself.

- **Remind yourself of key information about the group.** What decision-making process does the group use (e.g. consensus or voting)? What's on the agenda and why? What access requirements will you need to bear in mind throughout? Are you aware of particular dynamics or issues that will impact on how people participate? (For example, items on the agenda may be very straightforward, but if the group is in a state of crisis for other reasons, then tensions may still run high.)
- **Take time to study the agenda.** Do you have sufficient knowledge or familiarity with the topics to be discussed? If not, are there invited people who might be able to share information about the topic?

Do you need to read about the topic, to be able to steer the discussions better?

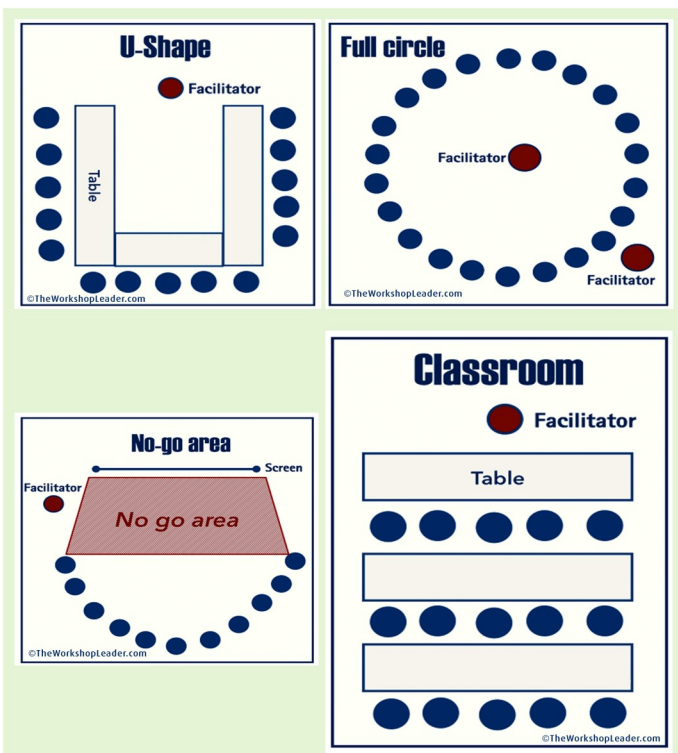
- **Also, take time to prepare for the day of the meeting.** Will you have the necessary physical and mental energy to facilitate effectively? Are there personal issues or needs that might distract you from doing your work? Is there anything that can help you focus more on the group (e.g., taking a short break after every hour)?

Setting the stage for the meeting

6. **Plan the location and physical arrangements.** You will need to consider if the meeting is going to be face-to-face, a virtual meeting through screens, or a combination of the two. Depending on the meeting format, make sure that all the furniture and hardware are in place, including chairs, tables, sound systems and projector screens. Make sure that the venue gives participants the ability to see and hear each other.

There are several possible ways to set up furniture for a face-to-face meeting.

- A round table or U-shaped set-up will help for discussion-oriented meetings because they allow everyone to see each other.
- A setting with chairs in rows is good for establishing a speaker as the main focus. This set-up works well when the main purpose is conveying information rather than seeking discussion.
- A classroom set-up has tables in front of the rows of chairs to allow attendees to take notes while the speaker remains the focus of the meeting.



7. **Provide supplies for those attending the meeting.** A fully-prepared facilitator will provide attendees with pens, notepads, workbooks, handouts, and other tools needed for the meeting. Also, consider if you will need to provide any log-in information ahead of time for virtual meetings. There should be a board set up to enable people and presenters to take notes for everyone to view, perhaps a flip chart or whiteboard. This keeps the meeting flowing more smoothly, allowing participants to have their questions answered at specified times during the meeting.

How can a facilitator be more effective and a meeting more efficient if the meeting is online:

- consider attention span of participants
- open video when speaking to retain engagement
- asking more questions or checking in more often to ensure everyone is following the discussion
- record the online meeting (subject to approval of participants)

Depending on the length of the meeting, think about providing your participants with beverages (coffee), snacks, water, and/or candy.

Starting the Discussion

8. **Arrive early to the meeting.** Examine the seating arrangements; check if the microphone and projector are working properly. As the facilitator, you should be there to greet everyone who arrives at the meeting. This will create a warm environment at the meeting while also showing that you are serious and ready to discuss.
9. **Start the meeting by making the objectives clear.** While everyone in the meeting will have received the agenda, start by re-introducing the purpose of the meeting. This will ensure that all participants will begin on the same page. It will also help to set the tone for the meeting and put people on the right track immediately.
 - You may begin with a prayer.
 - You can also make housekeeping announcements at the start of the meeting, including information about break times and restroom locations.
10. **Ask everyone to introduce themselves.** At the start of the meeting, make sure that everyone is comfortable. If there are newcomers, or people generally do not know each other, a good way to start is by letting everyone introduce themselves.
11. **Establish some ground rules.** Before launching into the discussion, make sure everyone knows the rules of conduct. Explain the time frame, subject, aims of meeting, the process for making decisions, and the responsibilities of the facilitator. Rules could include show one another mutual respect, staying on topic,

attacking the problem rather than the person, and not interrupting others while they are speaking. Since everyone has an equal right to speak, participants should be aware of the time and make their points succinctly, so that everyone has the chance to share. Encourage people to consider their comments seriously, and to avoid becoming defensive if someone disagrees.

- 12. Explain the proposed agenda,** then ask for comments and make the necessary changes. If someone puts an item on the agenda, ask them to briefly cover important background information and what they want done.

Ensure that roles such as secretary (to take down the minutes) and timekeeper are covered, if needed.

Make sure that everyone can see the agenda. Printed copies may be distributed, or else the agenda can be displayed on a large sheet of paper. You can cross off points from the agenda once they are dealt with as a visual reminder that the meeting is getting things done.

During the Meeting

- 13. Go through the agenda item by item.** Keep the group focused on one item at a time until you have reached a decision (or made a conscious choice to deal with the matter another time). If new items come up in the discussion make sure they get noted down to be dealt with later.

To conclude the discussion of each topic or item, it is helpful if the facilitator provides a review of what was said and the conclusions that were reached. This will signal the closure of one topic, and a move to the next item on the agenda.

- 14. Introduce the next item on the agenda.** When introducing a topic, discuss why the topic is important, and what you aim to achieve – i.e. Is the item merely for information? Or does the item need a decision? You may then start by asking a participant to provide some background information on the topic.

To start the discussions, it is useful to ask open-ended questions. You do not want to ask questions with a simple "yes" or "no" answer – especially not at the start. Rather, your questions should encourage people to share meaningful thoughts and ideas. For example, "Why do you think this problem is happening? What are ways we can reduce the problem?" These questions are complicated and have many potential answers.

- 15. Push towards new ideas when necessary.** You can help move the discussion forward by introducing new ideas. If one party hits on an important point, you can interject to try to pick apart that idea more.

Make sure the discussion does not stay too long on one topic. So if you are lingering on one talking point, see what new ideas are being generated. When you hear a new potential idea, you can encourage the group to discuss this. For example, during a discussion about a reforestation project, one participant might suggest asking the school to set up a tree nursery. You might say, "I think this is a good point. Can we discuss this idea?"

- 16. Ask participants follow-up questions.** At first, people may give surface-level answers to questions. If this is a problem, encourage people to open up more. After someone shares, ask a follow-up question to encourage them to pick apart their opinion.

Follow up questions should usually be general. For example, you can say something like, "Really? What makes you think that?" You can also ask, "How do you feel about that fact?"

- 17. Encourage everyone to participate.** Meetings and group discussions work well if everyone shares. Some participants may be hesitant to open up, so work on creating an environment where everyone feels comfortable sharing.

If you have a very big group, breaking up into small groups for a moment can encourage more participation. You can tell the group to discuss the issue with others at the same table for 10 minutes. Then, you can re-assemble and ask everyone to share the discussions they had.

- 18. Move the discussion forward as needed.** Usually, you will have some kind of agenda for a discussion. You want participants to reach some kind of conclusion, agreement, or insight. As the discussion continues, work to move it towards a conclusion.

- Keep asking questions throughout the discussion. For example, "Do you think this proposal address the issue? Or do you have other suggestions?"
- Push participants for clarification. Getting more insight out of an opinion can help introduce new ideas, leading to new insight for the discussion. For example, "I understand you feel that banning animal grazing on the hillside will reduce soil erosion, but can you tell me more about why you think this is so?"
- Although the facilitator may have extensive knowledge on the topic, the goal of the facilitator is to help the group move forward. Focus your role on raising the right questions, not on giving the right answers. If you ask a question and nobody answers, avoid answering your own question. Embrace the pause or silence in the room; this is not a problem and should be part of any discussion.

- 19. Guide the meeting by having all attendees speak.** Everyone has a different method for guiding a meeting and keeping speakers on topic. One method is to make

sure that conversation and discussion are not dominated by one or two people. Keep on the lookout for anyone who may want to make a point and give them the opportunity to speak by asking them their thoughts. For example, you might ask, "Aling Rosa, do you have any thoughts about the proposal?" Sometimes you may ask more vocal people to hold back from speaking in order to open up space for others to have their say. You might say, "Let us give this chance to hear from the others who might have a different view about the proposal." If possible, avoid putting people on the spot by saying things like, "Aling Rosa, you have been really quiet the whole time." Instead, make invitations for volunteers and let people engage when they are ready to speak out.

- 20. Stick to the topic.** The facilitator's job is to keep all attendees or speakers on-topic. Allowing off-target tangents will throw your schedule off and may mean that the meeting will not reach its intended outcome. If you sense discussion moving off-topic, redirect the conversation by asking questions that directly relate to the topic.

If the dialogue has begun to drift, you could say: "But how does this affect the issue we are discussing today?" Or, "These are all very interesting points. We should discuss these at a later date but, for now, let us focus on the issue at hand."

You may also want to flag the ideas that were brought up and address them in a later meeting or another way. Thus, you can properly honor those tangential ideas and not offend any of the attendees.

Have a plan for difficult situations and defuse them. In almost every discussion, disagreements are inevitable. Expect disagreements and welcome them – to have an authentic conversation. However, conflicts can arise if disagreements are not handled respectfully. If you sense to participants are on the verge of getting into a heated debate, bring in another person that you know will speak on the issue. For example, you might say, "Let us ask Mang Ambo what he feels about the issue." Essentially, you will want to defuse a debate by bringing in more dialogue. In the event of a conflict, you can also listen to both sides and identify common ground to bring the opposing parties together.

In the event of a difficult situation, you could also say: "It is clear that you are both coming from different sides. However, you obviously agree on the importance of this issue so let us try to focus our energy on finding a mutually beneficial result."

Another approach is to call for a short 15-minute break to defuse the tension and to discuss privately with the contending parties.

- 21. Answer and redirect questions.** As the facilitator, you can take questions from attendees so long as you are in a position to respond accurately. If not, you should refer the question to someone at the meeting who is in a better position to respond accurately.

In the event you do not know the answer to a question, you may say: "That is an excellent question. However, I think Mang Ambo is better informed on this topic." Then ask, "Mang Ambo, what are your thoughts on this topic?"

- 22. Know when to wrap-up the discussion of each topic.** If you think that the group is arriving at a conclusion or has reached a consensus, then note this down. You can make a quick summary of the discussion and say, "We seem to be agreed on proposals 1 and 2, but have raised concerns about proposal 3. Shall we explore proposal 3 more before we conclude our discussion on this topic?"

- 23. Make sure that decisions on action points include what, how, who, when, and where.** Ensure any action points are noted down along with who will do them and any deadline. Encourage everyone to feel able to volunteer for tasks and roles. If the same people take on all the work, it can lead to tension and informal hierarchies within the group. It can help if the more experienced members of the group offer to share skills and experience.

Ending the Meeting

- 24. Summarize and simplify findings.** Take notes during the meeting and ensure that you are writing down all the key ideas and opinions. At the conclusion of a discussion on a certain topic, it is helpful if the facilitator provides a review of what was said and the conclusions that were reached. Highlight whatever resolutions were made to the issues addressed.

After giving your summary, it is also useful to ask, "Did I leave out or forget anything, in my summary? Are there any additions that any of you would like to make?"

- 25. Get feedback from participants and ask how the meeting.** Getting feedback will help you improve your meetings. Spend a few minutes at the end of every meeting and ask the group what went well and what needs to be improved. You may think about asking the following: Did we cover the agenda? Did we allocate enough time to each topic? Was there enough time for discussion? How could the room set-up be improved?

- 26. Make sure the meeting finishes on time.** Or if the meeting extends beyond schedule, get everyone's agreement to continue. You might say, "I know we are going past our schedule, but can we agree to spend another 15 minutes to conclude this meeting?"

- 27. **Ensure someone has taken on writing up and circulating the minutes or notes** in the next few days.
- 28. **Provide some satisfying closure to the meeting.** Sum up, remind people of what they are committed to doing before the next meeting, and remember to thank everyone for turning up and contributing. You may also ask an esteemed member of the community to share a prayer or some reflections. Sometimes, it can be nice to follow the meeting with an informal social activity like sharing a meal or some snacks.

PART 2

Troubleshooting: how to deal with specific problems that may arise during meetings

Meetings do not always go the way you expect!

Develop your ability to spot problems and try to work out why they are happening.

For example, if you observe that people seem bored and disengaged, this might mean that you need to wrap up this topic quickly. You may also ask the group what is going on: "I have noticed a lot of people have not said anything about this agenda item. Should we move to the next item on the agenda?"

Getting constant feedback during meetings will help to assess problems that may arise during meetings. You could be proactive about asking for more input. For example, "A couple of people have said they need more information about the topic before discussing solutions. Does anyone have anything different that would help them?"

Listed below are some common problems that may arise during meetings, with a few suggestions for how to address them.

Participants who talk too much

Sometimes, one person who is very assertive tends to dominate the conversation. Even if this person is making good points, it is important not to let a single person dominate.

- Try asking the talkative person to act as an observer for a few minutes. For example, "Mang Tunying, you seem to have strong opinions. Why don't you just observe for a few minutes? Take notes on the discussion, and let us see how the discussion shapes your opinions."
- You can also try to use the dominant person's input to steer the conversation in a new direction. For example, "Mang Tunying has brought up several issues. Let us talk for a bit about these issues and why people feel strongly

about them."

- Or you can ask directly for other views. "Mang Tunying has explained his views very well... Let us open up the discussion for others who may wish to share their views."

Conflict between two people

If you are dealing with a sensitive subject, people may get angry. If a conversation starts to become confrontational or tense, find ways to break up the tension.

- Ask people arguing to back up their opinions using outside authority. This will cause the discussion to become more objective and less personal.
- Ask people to be aware of differences in values. Say something like, "I feel like the two of you have different values. Can we talk about that?"
- You can also list both sides of the argument on the board. Encourage participants to continue to debate the point, but in a respectful manner. Say something like, "I think we should talk about this, as we all feel strongly, but let us take turns examining each other's points."

Furthermore, it is always important for facilitators to immediately challenge insults and discriminatory remarks. The facilitator has the responsibility to ensure sure that the meeting is a safe space. If one participant says or does things that are offensive or hurtful, it is important that these are not tolerated – even if the comment is not directed to any specific person in the room. For instance, someone might make side remarks against gays, ethnic or religious groups. At the same time, people may offend others without meaning to. As a facilitator, it is important to show respect for everyone concerned.

A guideline is to address someone's behavior or the words they said, without passing judgment on them as a person. You might say, for example, "Let us avoid remarks that might be offensive, and let us get back to the topic. Or else, "Sorry, you did not let Mang Ambo finish making his point... Mang Ambo, can you kindly continue on with what you were saying?"

Meetings going on too long

Sometimes, meetings can drag on, beyond the point where most people are able to concentrate. You might observe that fewer and fewer people are participating as the meeting goes on. Or some people start to slip out before the meeting has finished.

Prioritize which topics really need to be discussed by the whole group. For example, could some decisions be taken by a working group or even an individual?

Think carefully about which elements of a topic are really urgent to discuss. For example, if you are talking about a fund-raising project that is four months away, you could agree a date, and assign people to discuss the details.

Time pressure

Time constraints on a meeting can lead to stress, and make it harder to really listen to each other and explore different options.

Prioritization is key – making sure that the issues which come to the whole group meetings really are important ones for everyone to discuss. Some groups vary their decision-making method depending on how important the issue is. For example, they might delegate small decisions to individuals, vote on medium-important items, and take the time to reach full consensus on anything that will have a major impact.

Preparation also helps. If you need to put together a proposal, you might hold a “workshop” where people can explore different approaches before a small group goes away to draft the proposal.

Be realistic about how much can be covered in one meeting. A topic could initially go on the agenda for discussion and sharing initial reactions. A small group could then use this as a basis for a proposal which they take back to the next meeting.

Lack of focus

Many informal groups hold meetings that are very unstructured – they jump from topic to topic and mix up “business talk” with a friendly chat. For some people, this makes it hard to concentrate. But for others, it is a more “natural” and relaxed way of having a conversation. Limiting the focus to one topic at a time has its benefits. For example, it can make it easier to explore an issue in-depth, really hear everyone's perspectives, and reach clear decisions.

If the same points keep being discussed, help people avoid repeating themselves by summarizing the discussion and asking only for comments in areas that have not been mentioned. Ask them, “Are there any other arguments against or in favor of the proposal that has not been mentioned yet?”

If new topics come up, decide how best to deal with them. Is it an urgent issue that needs to be resolved immediately? Or simply a new agenda item to be dealt with later (e.g., at the end of the current meeting, or in the next one).

Take breaks when needed, and do not try to cover too many agenda items in one meeting. When people are tired, it is much harder to be self-aware about which contributions are relevant. Do not drink alcohol during meetings as people can lose focus during a meeting. Some groups agree to save drinking until after the meeting. Separate the “socials” from the serious discussions.

Different levels of power and participation

Ideally, everyone should have a fair say in decisions that affect them. However, there are differences in power which means that, in reality, certain individuals and perspectives get heard more than others. This may be shown by the confidence of certain people to voice opinions, or to insist on their views by citing their superior age, authority, or knowledge. For example, local government officials, outside “experts” or project consultants attending a community consultation. It is important to be aware that it is also about how different people and perspectives are *received* by others.

As a facilitator, you can take some steps towards addressing

the differences in power dynamics by using exercises that help equalize participation. These may include, for example, reflection time in small groups, or giving time for everyone to speak in a circle. Your job does not end here, however! Notice differences in who contributes, and what response different people get. Make extra space for messages that are not getting through and be assertive if necessary to help people listen.

Pay special attention at the moments when you actually agree a way forward. In informal groups, the views of confident people may be carried forward as decisions, simply because no one opposes them. If a local official makes a proposal and there are no disagreements, this does not mean that the group has reached a decision or a consensus. Take the time to check everyone's views, and once you have an agreement, double-check that the minutes also reflect what everyone thinks they have agreed to!

The group cannot reach an agreement

A strong decision that everyone can support only comes only after bringing differences out into the open. Encourage everyone to present their viewpoints, especially when they may be conflicting. This requires broad discussion and enough time.

Listen carefully for agreements and concerns and the underlying issues. What is at the root of people's worries? This helps with drawing up a proposal that takes them into account.

Test for agreement periodically. This helps to clarify disagreements. Be as specific as you can in order to identify sticking points. Make it easy for people to say if they do not agree, e.g. “I'm hearing a lot of support for the idea of... Have I got that right? Does anyone not agree?”. You could also ask for help at this stage, for example: “Can anyone summarize what things they think we agree on?”

When no agreement can be reached, try the following:

- Ask those disagreeing for alternative proposals.
- Propose a break, silent thinking time, or postponing the decision to give people time to cool down and reflect. If the decision is postponed it is often a good idea to engage conflicting parties in conflict resolution before the issue is brought up again.
- Agree a process for taking a decision that all parties can sign up to.

Do not mistake silence for consent – encourage a response from every participant. The group should be conscious of making a contract with each other. If an agreement is reached too easily then test to make sure that members really are fully supportive of the decision and do agree on essential points.

ENDNOTE: Learning to facilitate

Finally, facilitation is not an exclusive task to be done by experts! It is a skill that can be learned by reflecting on your own experience of meetings and observing other facilitators. Learn from mistakes, from bad meetings as well as good ones. If the role of facilitator is rotated amongst group members, several people can develop these skills. It is well worth running some training, aside from normal meeting times, to practice facilitation skills. These skills are not only useful in group meetings but also in informal settings, at work, and at home.

Observe. You can learn a lot by reflecting on what happens in different meetings. You will get the most accurate information on this if you evaluate together regularly. Noticing people's behavior also gives you some clues. When do people look animated and engaged? When do lots of people participate, and when do you hear the same voices a lot? If a lot of comments are not related to the agenda item, why might that be?

Practice. Reflection should give you a great starting point for understanding how facilitation can help your meetings. It is also important to just try things out! Start by facilitating smaller meetings with less challenging topics. Be ready to ask for feedback about different people's experiences. □

Selected references:

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Concerns over food insecurity in developing countries are reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture by 2030. Given that land plays an important role in the livelihoods of most people in developing countries, food security and poverty reduction cannot be achieved unless issues of access to land, security of tenure, and the capacity to use land productively and in a sustainable manner are addressed.

Thus, the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) is implementing "Secure Access to Land and Resources (SALaR)" through the support of Germany's Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), with the overall goal of improving land and natural resources tenure security of rural smallholder farmers in Uganda, the Philippines, and Laos.

In the Philippines, while a number of land laws are being implemented, several gaps need to be addressed to improve the situation of their intended beneficiaries. Hence, *Recognizing land rights and enhancing capacities of Smallholder Farmers in Pangantucan, Bukidnon, Philippines* aims to contribute to the goal of SALaR. This project is implemented by the Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC) in partnership with Xavier Science Foundation, Inc. (XSF), with technical and financial support from Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) and Germany's Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).



The Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC) is a regional coalition of national and regional CSOs in Asia actively engaged in promoting food sovereignty, land rights and agrarian reform, sustainable agriculture, participatory governance, and rural development.



The Xavier Science Foundation, Inc. (XSF) is a legal, non-stock, non-profit, non-government organization advocating programs and projects that will alleviate poverty and promote social empowerment. XSF serves as a conduit of funds to support development projects, innovative programs, fora, and dialogues.



The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN Habitat) is working towards a better urban future. Its mission is to promote socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements development and the achievement of adequate shelter for all.



The Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) is an alliance of global, regional, and national partners contributing to poverty alleviation through land reform, improved land management, and security of tenure particularly through the development and dissemination of pro-poor and gender sensitive tools.



The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) is the primary State development body in Germany. BMZ's governing principle is the protection of human rights, which includes the right to live in peace and freedom, and to help address the poverty issues in the world.

For more information about this project:

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