



# GALS CATALYST PHASE 1

**G**ENDER  
**A**CTION  
**L**EARNING  
**S**YSTEM

**Starting Out:  
Soulmate Visioning**

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March 2014





This first introductory session aims to be fun and inspire people. It helps people get to know each other, gain confidence in drawing and starts to show gender inequalities as senseless constraints on peoples' empowerment to achieve their full potential in life. They begin to see change in gender relations as something which will benefit everyone. But things must be light and fun.

### **Aims for participants**

- introduce and reinforce a faith in the possibility of change and clarify people's life vision for livelihoods, families and personal development;
- introduce basic drawing as a fun and useful activity to bring people together
- introduce participatory discussion skills
- introduce gender issues through discussing ownership of assets in visions eg houses and cars, and contribution of women and men to achieving these

### **Aims for organisations**

- increase understanding of and respect for people's own visions and how they relate to those of the organisation
- increase understanding of the similarities and differences in visions between women and men from different backgrounds
- improve participatory skills of staff and communication with women and men in the communities where they work.

### **Aims for the facilitator**

- to understand participant expectations and clarify which of these can be fulfilled through the planned design of the workshop, which can be fulfilled by some adjustments or additions to the planned schedule, and which are the subject of another workshop or training altogether - but can maybe be suggested as follow-up.
- to assess the specificities of the particular participant mix and context eg how easily do women and men interact, or older and younger people, what are likely sensitive issues etc in order to manage group dynamics and assess pacing of the sessions.
- to get people talking and energised so that they are open to some of the new things in the following sessions.



Participant preparation	Come on time Bring A4 diaries and coloured pens unless these are provided by the project
Facilitator preparation	Familiarise yourself with the instructions, including the description on encouraging drawing Make sure the seating arrangements will enable individual reflection, space for mingling and flipcharts for 4-5 group discussions.
Timing 3-4 hours  (based on 20-30 participants)	<p>Arrival and welcoming song</p> <p><b>Activity 1.1 Pairwise Discussion on expectations and feedback</b> 1 hour+</p> <p>Facilitator explanation of the pairwise discussion and agreeing on applause (5 minutes) Discussion in pairs (15 minutes) Participant feedback (20 minutes) Welcome from the organisation and logistics (10 minutes) Feedback on expectations, overview of the training schedule, explanation of the notebook diaries and any further remarks by the facilitator (15 minutes)</p> <p><b>Activity 1.2 Soulmate Visioning : Finding and sharing with soulmates</b> 1 hour 30 minutes</p> <p>Facilitator explanation of the activity and reasons for drawing (5 minutes) Individual drawing (15 minutes) Mingling and sharing drawings (15 minutes) Group discussion and collective drawing (15 minutes) Plenary feedback (20-25 minutes 5 minutes per drawing) Discussion and facilitator remarks (10 minutes)</p> <p><b>Activity 1.3 Organisational visioning: Identifying areas of consensus (optional)</b> 1 hour 30 minutes</p> <p>Facilitator explanation of activity next steps (5 minutes) Group discussion and collective drawing of new visions (20 minutes). Writing a new song, logo and short statement (20 minutes) Plenary feedback (20 minutes - 5 minutes per group x 4) Plenary discussion and final voting (15 minutes) Facilitator wrap up and explanation of next steps (10 minutes).</p>
Materials/inputs	<p>Activity 1.1: 3 flipcharts for the facilitator notes on feedback</p> <p>Activity 1.2 One A4 sheet of plain paper or notebook diary with coloured pens per participant. 1 flipcharts with coloured markers for each group ie x 4-5.</p> <p>Activity 1.3 3 flipcharts per group with coloured markers ie 3 x 4-5</p>
Outputs	<p>Individual visions Soulmate visions Consensus visions</p> <p>4x logos and song for the consensus as the basis for process branding Drawing and participatory skills and networking Understanding of the likely similarities and differences between participants, and between women and men and whether or not there is a need for norm setting at this stage.</p>
Homework for participants	Take forward the vision drawing to the next exercise and/or share with people at home
Homework for facilitator	<p>Photograph the flipcharts with brief notes</p> <p>Consider implications of observations on participants and process for the following activities.</p>



## Activity 1.1 Pairwise introduction: What are we expecting from the training?



### Explanatory narrative

#### *Distinctive way of introducing participants*

*Many workshops start with people introducing themselves around a table. But this takes quite some time. People rarely remember other peoples' names and the information is very superficial. Sometimes people arrive late with good reason, so it is important to have something for everyone who arrives early to do - or they also will come late next time.*

*GALS workshops always start with some sort of pairwise exercise to help participants get to know each other better and more quickly, and promote active participation from the beginning. These also prevent sessions from becoming too much like school where people sit passively.*

*The process in this first session is that people will exchange names and basic information on where they come from, family, economic activity. Then discuss why they think they are here - what were they told about the training, what are they expecting. Each person notes (in their heads so they listen) 2-3 expectations from their partner. They will feed back what their partner said, not their own views.*

*It is important that people learn to listen to each other and represent their views, not always just one's own. It is important in GALS to respect and applaud what other people say - even if you do not agree. Then work out a way of resolving differences. Applause is also a type of energiser to keep everyone motivated and awake.*

#### *Importance of the Notebook Diaries*

*At some point before or after the pairwise discussion the facilitator explains that in GALS everyone produces their own manuals, because GALS tools are adapted by individuals to their own needs. In addition, scarce funding is not wasted buying everyone a notebook. The aim is to reach thousands of people and if everyone was bought a notebook that would use up a lot of funds that could be used for something else. After the first set of champions everyone buys their own notebook and pens - if a person can afford a bottle of beer or a packet of cigarettes or a hairdo then they can also afford their own notebook and pens if they value the training.*

*The notebooks should be arranged as follows:*

*The main drawings from the session should be at the front starting with the vision and then the tools for each session.. DO NOT RESTART IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE MADE A MISTAKE. Make all your mistakes on one drawing. Otherwise the book will get quickly finished. Then when you have finished copy a good version on to the following pages. If you want to write notes, then keep these with your personal drawings after each session, maybe leaving some blank pages for future notes and thoughts.*

*You will put the key generic steps of each tool for use in training others at the back of the notebook. This separation of personal drawings from generic tools is extremely important for the peer sharing process later and the facilitator should periodically check how people are keeping their notebooks.*



### Aims for participants

- To help everyone introduce themselves to everyone else in a meaningful way people will remember and help develop friendships and networks between like-minded people. This includes mixing between women and men from different backgrounds.

### Aims for organisations and facilitators

- To get a clearer understanding of peoples' expectations and how the process has been explained to them and how they have understood this.
- To get final consensus with participants on what the workshop will achieve.

### Process

- As people arrive the facilitator asks them to sit with someone they do not know well - this is the opportunity for them to get to know new people better, even if they already know people by sight. Though they should not be forced to sit with someone they do not want to. They should be given the basic questions in the narrative above to focus their discussion.
- As soon as everyone has arrived the facilitator starts the session by formally explaining the pairwise process. Participants are then given a bit more time to enable everyone to get at least one or two points from a neighbour.
- Before the plenary feedback the facilitator explains about the importance of respect and applause, and asks for suggestions on a form of applause for each pair. APPLAUSE CONVENTION SHOULD BE BRIEF BUT ENERGETIC.
- Participants then discuss the points in the narrative above and feed back by introducing their neighbour and what their neighbour said. If time is short or numbers of participants very large, these discussions do not need to be fed back to plenary at this stage, but can become part of the group discussions in Activity 1.2 and fed back in consolidated form by each group.
- There is a short formal introduction and welcome from the hosts with a brief introduction to the process and why the organisation is interested in it.
- The facilitator briefly introduces themselves, responds to the expectations and explains the schedule and notebook diaries. They then hand out the diaries and pens if these were provided by the organisation.

**NOTE See generic facilitation notes at the end.**

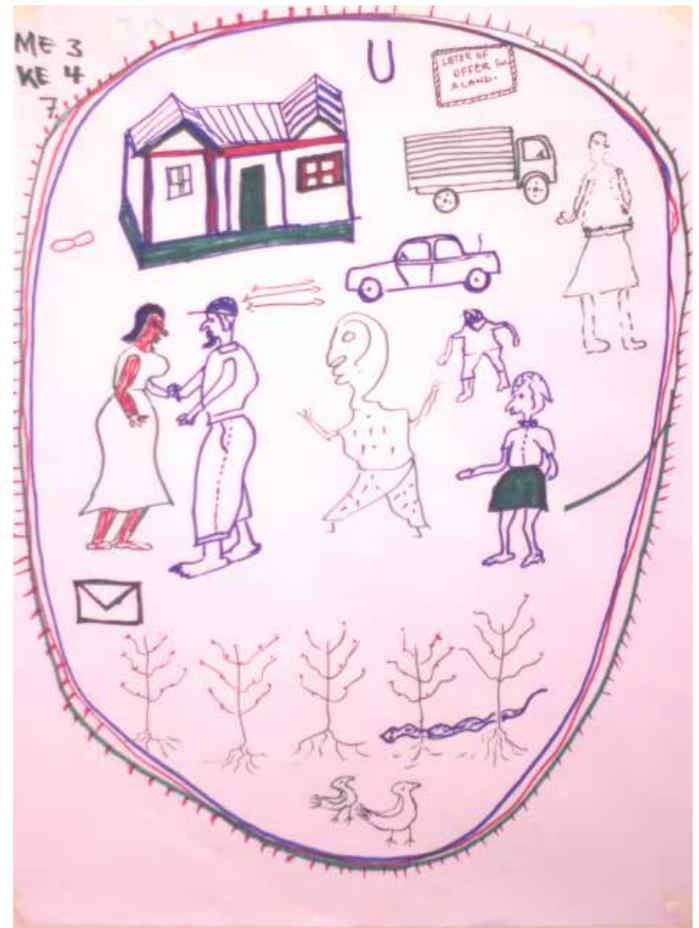
## Activity 1.2 Soulmate Visioning

*The GALS process starts with a participatory visioning to help participants get to know each other better and more quickly, and promote active participation from the beginning.*

*In this first soulmate visioning the topic is 'what do people see in their dream for a happy future' to begin to think about what they want in life as the basis for their first Vision Journey in the next stage.*

*And this introduces listening and participatory skills as well as drawing skills.*

*The same process can be done for organisational visioning but here the question is something like 'if you think about this organisation being successful in helping development, what do you think that development would look like?'*



### Aims for participants

- To clarify people's implicit visions of what constitutes a 'happy life' and start the workshop on a positive note.
- To help everyone introduce themselves to everyone else in a meaningful way people will remember and help develop friendships and networks between like-minded people. This includes mixing between women and men from different backgrounds.
- To identify similarities and differences in visions of women and men from different backgrounds and for people as individuals.
- To bring the differences into some sort of consensus, or agreement to respect differences.
- To introduce drawing as a fun activity.
- To develop participatory skills of listening, talking, sharing and presenting.

### Aims for organisations and facilitators

- To get a clearer understanding of where people want to get to, and their starting point
- To get a clearer idea of similarities and differences between women and men from different background and any likely points of conflict which will need to be taken into account
- To get a feel for the levels of participatory and drawing skills which people have and how they could be developed
- To establish participant ownership of the process from the start

## 1.2 Soulmate Visionning: individual to group

### Step 1 Individual Drawing (15 minutes)

Participants are asked first to close their eyes, and think of how things might be in a happy future. On the first page of their Diary participants draw the images they see - this will be their starting vision for the future. Though it may well change as they share with others and in future as they progress.



### Step 2 Finding soulmates (15-20 minutes)

Participants then mingle with each other, introducing themselves saying name and organisation and sharing their vision drawings.

As they mingle they decide which participants they think have vision drawings most similar to their own and form a group with them. Normally this produces 3-5 groups of different views, with any 'special people' who do not feel they can join the other groups then forming one group together.



### Step 3 Collective drawing (4-5 groups 15 minutes)

Each group does a collective drawing on a large flipchart, bringing together all the elements from the different drawings.

This collective drawing should be a participatory process, with everyone having held the pen and done some drawing, not a task given to the most 'artistic' participant.



### Step 4 Plenary sharing (10-25 minutes, 2-5 minutes per group)

Each group appoints two presenters. One shares their collective drawing and the other lists the elements of gender justice on a flipchart (1 column for each group).

Each vision drawing is posted next to the others on the wall for future reference.



### Step 5 Plenary discussion

How similar are the drawings? Are there differences between women and men?

Or more individual differences as people?



## 1.3 Organisational Visioning: Towards Consensus

If the visioning is being done for an organisation as part of strategic planning, then a further step can be added to identify where there is consensus that can be a basis for moving forward, and where are the areas of difference or potential conflict that will need to be addressed later.

NOTE: This part still needs to be piloted in this form and documented. Has been done in genfinance workshops and Indian NGOs.

### Step 6 Difference groups (15 minutes)

Participants are asked to go and stand by the drawing that they think is most different from their own. This will lead to the formation of 'difference' groups of people who are likely to have some ideas in common, although their main things that unite them is a disagreement with the drawing where they are.

### Step 7 Clarifying areas of consensus (20 minutes)

In their groups participants are first asked to draw individually on new pieces of paper 3 things they agree with in the drawing and 3 things they disagree with.

Starting from the back people come forward one by one and present one most important thing with which they agree and put their card on one flipchart as the basis for the consensus drawing. They ask for people who agree with them to put their hands up, gather in those cards from those people, put the clearest drawing on the top of the other ones and put the appropriate number on the top card.

This process continues until all the cards are in. Then the cards are placed with the elements with the most votes in the middle, those with the least votes on the outside.

### Step 8 Clarifying areas of difference (10 minutes)

Participants then do a similar process for the differences.

### Step 9 Collective consensus drawing (15 minutes)

Based on the flipchart with consensus participants then come up in turn and contribute their ideas to a common drawing of their collective vision. Each group does a collective drawing on a large flipchart, bringing together all the consensus elements from the different drawings. Something that the whole group will agree represents their view.

As before, this collective drawing should be a participatory process, with everyone having held the pen and done some drawing, not a task given to the most 'artistic' participant.

### Step 10 Plenary sharing (10-25 minutes, 2-5 minutes per group)

Each group appoints four presenters. One shares their collective drawing and the other lists the elements of consensus on a large common comparative flipchart (1 column for each group). Then two new people do the same thing for the differences.

Each vision drawing is posted next to the others on the wall for future reference.

### Step 5 Plenary discussion

How similar are the consensus drawings now? Are there differences between women and men? Or more individual differences as people?

Do they form the basis for an organisational logo or vision statement? Or will there have to be further work to bring things together?



## Starting Out on the Rocky Road: Some issues from experience

### Gender issues

The visions in the soulmate session are generally things like houses and livestock, or sending children to university. It is important not to impose anything at this stage but just inspire people to think of a better future and share their visions.

At the same time the facilitator should note and build on any gender issues which come up:

- any ambitious visions which women or men may have for livelihoods or their families which could be used as models to inspire others - bearing in mind some people are poorer than others.
- any potential contradictions between peoples' visions and their attitudes on gender eg whether men are assuming that their wives will do all the work to help them build a house without their names being on the ownership document.
- challenge any stereotypes from women as well as men and promote understanding of common human values.

### Drawing

Initially also people may not want to draw - both people who cannot read and write and people with high levels of formal education.

A key factor is whether the facilitators are themselves comfortable with drawing and convinced of its various advantages even for people who can write - that is absolutely essential for any GALS facilitator and may require practice. This is discussed in more detail in the discussion of facilitation skills in the GALS Overview Manual.

It is important to make the process fun, encourage people to have 'serious play' and explain that drawing is a fun means of expression which anyone can do - we are not wanting artistic drawings just symbols which others can understand. (See section on drawing in the General Facilitation Notes)

People who cannot read and write have generally been able to draw within about 10 minutes. They should be put in a group with other people who have difficulty drawing, assured that even very old 70 year old women who have never held a pen can quickly do very beautiful drawings. Then left to help and encourage each other.

**NO ONE SHOULD EVER DRAW FOR SOMEONE ELSE or they will never learn anything.**

If people have particular difficulties, then put these people together in a group where the facilitator can support them (See Overview Manual Facilitation Guide on Drawing) and they can support each other. If given space and a bit of time, encouraged and not patronised or laughed at, even very old women who never held a pen are drawing in about 15 minutes, and then become very comfortable and even expert after a few sessions.

People who do not want to draw because they think they are too educated should be told that drawing is a very different and important skill which scientific research has linked to increasing intelligence through developing different parts of the brain. It is very useful for effective and more engaging Powerpoint presentations 'a picture is worth a thousand words'. Most of all it gives a FEELING OF FREEDOM and greater clarity of expression - if you can't draw it, you don't know what you are trying to say. But it is a skill which is not always easy and improves with practise.



## Some general points on facilitation

**NOTEBOOKS should be given out AFTER THE PAIRWISE EXERCISE and explanation of their use by the facilitator. NOT BEFORE because otherwise people will start writing many things in the wrong place.**

Remember the aims at this stage are:

- the understanding and discussion, not just the final drawing.
- ownership, openness and fun, not 'political correctness' or accuracy of information
- getting a sense of what happens 'naturally' coming from participants so you understand how to strategise change from the back in later stages.

DO:

- Be sure to change the seating arrangements if necessary to encourage discussion and participation.

Make sure everyone:

- is drawing for themselves
- has put their individual symbol and group symbol on the outside of the diary
- has put the date on their vision
- is drawing in their diaries the right way up
- is now comfortable holding a pen.

This is important for later.

**NO ONE SHOULD EVER DRAW FOR SOMEONE ELSE or they will never learn anything.**

**NO ONE IN GALS SHOULD EVER BE LEFT SITTING WITH NOTHING TO DO. They should be further developing their own drawings and/or discussing and helping others.**

AND

- Don't try to teach or preach - you will just lose people from the start.
- Observe the participatory process throughout and (politely) introduce and continually reinforce principles of inclusion, equity and respect right from the start.
- If the participatory process has been very bad, then some discussion on norm-setting may be needed for the next session. But ask participants themselves to comment and make suggestions.

BUT

- You can support and reinforce anything which you think is particularly positive in support of women's rights and gender justice eg visions where women have ownership of assets, where men are helping with children etc.
- You can question (politely, strategically and without accusation) anything which is obviously against the GALS principles. And things which support assumptions eg that men are heads of household or women are weak etc.

AND CONSIDER

- how you can introduce any necessary norm setting without appearing 'teacherish' - so people self-enforce norms themselves leaving you to continue to facilitate from the back as a friend? Particularly on gender issues.
- Will you need to make any changes to seating arrangements and logistics to increase participation in following sessions?



## Facilitation Checklist

The outputs from this session are not quantified at this stage. But allow yourself some time to reflect and make quick notes on the following:

- Look at the aims of the session and tick those you think have been achieved.
- How much consensus is there between the visions? What are the main differences? Between women and men? Between women? Between men? Between people from different backgrounds? Do you think it is necessary to question any gender differences in visions? If so how?
- Has the discussion process been equitable and participatory? Did women and men mix happily together, or separate out into single-sex groups? Have women participated equally in the group discussions? Have men felt they could express themselves freely? Have groups been dominated by a few individuals? If not, what are the implications for the following sessions?
- Are any people still having difficulty drawing? They may need some encouragement. Are any people drawing for others? This should be strongly discouraged - or people will never learn.
- Are there any gender issues which you feel are likely to be very important? Changes which everyone would seem to support? Issues which are very important, but likely to be sensitive? How would you tackle these without causing undue conflict and losing people along the way?
- Did you have any difficulties as facilitator? How do you think those could be addressed in the following sessions? Including norm-setting and seating.
- There should be a song and participatory pairwise recap at the start of every session (ie if the 3-4 hours is split into 3 x 1 hour 30 minute sessions)

**IT MAY BE USEFUL TO RECORD BASIC BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR EACH PARTICIPANT AT SOME POINT ON THE REGISTER OF PARTICIPANTS USUALLY KEPT FOR ACCOUNTING PURPOSES. Alternatively this can be done at the end or during the CAL.**

