

Step 3

Listening and learning through consultations



Exercises for facilitators preparing to conduct Community Consultations

Dialogue teams can use the following exercises to help facilitators prepare to conduct Community Consultations.

1. How to facilitate Community Consultations

Aim: This exercise will help facilitators think through and understand how they need to facilitate Community Consultations so that participants open up, share their beliefs and values and feel respected.

What you need to do:

- Discuss the following questions together as a Dialogue team:
 - How can facilitators ensure that community members feel comfortable and safe so that they openly share their views?
 - How can facilitators make sure that all the questions on the discussion guide are asked without reading them word for word from the guide in front of the group?
 - How can facilitators make sure that many different people share their points of view?
 - How can facilitators deal with a person who is always talking and not giving others the chance to say what they think?
 - How can facilitators end a Community Consultation in a kind and respectful manner?
- For every question, let the facilitators come up with their own ideas first. Praise them for every good idea and then help them to think of important points that they have not come up with.
- Summarise and note on a flip chart (only the bold sections of) the following recommendations for facilitating Community Consultations:

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- **Welcome** the community members warmly.
- **Explain why** you have invited them and how you will use what you learn from them.
- Ask questions using **your own words**: follow the flow of points in the discussion guide, but don't read the questions out word-for-word.
- **Appreciate** each point of view.
- **Do not judge** or interrupt: show respect.
- Explore **different views**: When one person has given his/her view, say "This is one important perspective, thank you for sharing it. Some people in the community may see this differently. Would somebody like to express a different point of view?"
- **Encourage** shy and quiet participants to also give their views.
- At the end, **thank everyone** and tell them that you have learned a lot from them.

2. Role-play: Practicing Community Consultations

Aim: In this exercise facilitators can rehearse the facilitation of Community Consultations in practice, in the local language. Also, they learn how to manage persons talking too much and eliciting contributions from those who are very quiet.

What you need to do:

- **Set the scene:** Agree on the generation and sex of the community members who you will facilitate in your first role play of a community consultation.
- **Select role players:** Find two volunteers who will role-play the facilitators; find another volunteer who will observe how the facilitators put into practice what they learnt in the previous exercise. All others will role-play community members taking part in the Community Consultation. One of the coordinators (of the same sex as the chosen group) or the Dialogue expert leads this exercise, following these steps:

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- **Brief the ‘community members’:** Take the ‘community members’ to the side of the room. Find a volunteer who agrees to act in an obnoxious and overbearing way during the role-play (e.g. talking too much, being very opinionated, and not letting others express their views). Then find two other volunteers from the group who agree to be extremely quiet, shy, and hesitant to make eye contact.
- **Brief the ‘observer’:** Explain to the observer that he or she should monitor closely whether the two facilitators are following the guidelines for Community Consultation meetings noted on the flip chart in the previous exercise.
- **Brief the ‘facilitators’:** Explain to the two facilitators that their role-play should be in the local language and that they should use the questions from the discussion guide which the Dialogue team has discussed and finalised.
- **Give last instructions to everyone and let them start:** Remind everyone that they should do the role-play in local language. The role-play should begin with the community members entering the room and the facilitators welcoming them. Explain that you will at some point interrupt the role-play by clapping your hands. Start the role-play.
- **Interrupt and let the different players give feedback:** After several minutes, clap your hands to stop the role-play. First, ask the facilitators how they think it has gone so far, what went well, what went wrong? Then ask the observers to give feedback, reminding them to provide their feedback constructively. Summarize the feedback and add your own.
- **Continue the role play:** Let the same facilitators continue and interrupt and get feedback in the same way.
- **Repeat the exercise:** Do the exercise once more, this time with a group of the other sex and generation and with different volunteers playing the roles of facilitators, observer and difficult and very quiet community members.