

Harmonised Manual for Community Dialogue in Madagascar

Ministerial Partners, UNICEF
Madagascar and the constellation

2015



On our way to autonomous Malagasy communities!

Support Manual for the implementation of
the harmonised approach to community
dialogue in Madagascar.



The Constellation
connecting local responses around the world





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General Introduction

For several years now, the government of **Madagascar** and its civil society partners have been working towards **achieving children's rights to survival, development, protection, and education**. However, increased access to social services for parents and children does not always lead to better children's rights indicators due to various factors, among which **sociocultural factors**. To act on those factors, UNICEF supports its partners to apply a "**communication for development**" (C4D) strategy so as to favour the adoption of essential family practices and reduce vaccination resistance rates of communities to Polio.

In this context, community dialogue has been developed by each sector for several years, aiming to stimulate community development and behavioural change around **health, nutrition, water sanitation and hygiene, education and child protection**.

However, the implementation of these dialogues has revealed a few difficulties, among others as relates to

evaluating and documenting community progress, and the **harmonisation of the community dialogue approaches** implemented on Malagasy soil.

In that context, UNICEF Madagascar called on the **Constellation** and on its international experience in the field of social mobilisation and community dialogue, to **collaborate** with its partners, local government representatives and Malagasy communities in order to stimulate **local response**, not only by facilitating community dialogue, but mostly by **tapping into community competences**, thereby ensuring that **decisions be made, carried out in action and followed through by the communities themselves**, and encouraging **sustainable change** for and by the community.

A mission was thus conducted from 28th September until 9th December 2015, focusing on **harmonisation and capacity building for community dialogue** in Madagascar.

Together, we discovered what was being done on the ground through field visits (in Atsimo Andrefana et Anosy from September 30th to October 12th), we met to exchange regarding our **passion and challenges concerning community dialogue** and to exchange **best practices** (Learning Festival, October 19th and 20th), we agreed to a **common understanding of what community dialogue would look like if it were to match our collective**

aspirations, and we **dreamed together about our aspirations for Malagasy communities**, and about the ways in which community dialogue could be a **tool** to help us achieve that dream (Hamonisation workshop October 21st and 22nd).

This new collective understanding of the 'ideal' community dialogue pushed us to ask the following question: **is that really what we have been doing until now?** How could our practice edge closer to our ideal for community dialogue, this "*space of exchange between members of a community concerning their **realities** in order to stimulate **engagement** and **joint action** to reach behavioural change for common well-being*"?

This manual seeks to answer that question. Its ambition is to serve as a reminder of why all sectors use community dialogue, and looks to give all actors (from fieldwork to coordination and decision-making levels) access to a **harmonised, rigorous and concrete approach built from collective intelligence**, that may be applied by all sectors in **synergy**.

What ten years of experience the world over has taught us about community work?

Every community has the capacity to respond to its life challenges, to visualise its future, to act and to adapt.

As facilitators of local response, and through community dialogue, our role is to **reveal and stimulate** every community member's capacity to be an actor of their own lives, of their own development.





Glossary

AC: Agent Communautaire (“community agent”, Health sector in Madagascar).

ACC: Assistant Coach Communautaire (“community coach assistant”, WASH sector in Madagascar).

ACN: Agent Communautaire de Nutrition (“community nutrition agent” in Madagascar).

ADMINISTRATIVE BLOCK: Part of a neighbourhood grouping several streets for closer administration of the population.

ICE BREAKER: Fun animation used during a community activity, the goal being to stimulate people’s attention.

CLCP: Community Life Competence Process (generic process used by Constellation communities in developing and connecting their local responses).

CLTS: Social mobilisation approach used by the WASH sector, stands for “community-led total sanitation”.

CONSTELLATION: NGO working around the world to stimulate and connect local community responses.

CSB: Centre de Santé de Base- main health centre in Madagascar.

LEARNING FESTIVAL: Term used by the Constellation to describe a festive event organised to connect individuals and communities so that they may share their experiences and learning.

MCRI: Ministry of Communication and Relations with the Institutions.

MJS: Ministry of Youth, Leisure and Sports

ODF: Open Defecation Free, label received by communities who have successfully undergone the CLTS process and eliminated open defecation.

KNOWLEDGE ASSET: a knowledge asset usually emerges following a Learning Festival. It is composed of a set of common principles derived from lessons learned from the communities’ stories of change, and which reveal the *best practices* that emerged from the active process (experience of implementing the “small doable actions”). Each principle is illustrated by specific experiences. And, in turn, each of these

experiences is supported by the individuals who told the story, and for whom we have contact details.

POLIO : Poliomyelitis..

AER : a tool designed by the Constellation for communities to extract lessons learned after every activity, and continuously feed their learning process. Questions asked: What went well and why? What could we do even better next time? What are the lessons learned?

THE DREAM: This is a step in the CLC process. It is the moment where a community visualises the ideal they want to reach. It is a source of energy and motivation which has the potential to sustain the community's drive towards life competence.

SALT: Acronym that summarises the way of working of facilitators (S : support and stimulate, A : appreciate, authenticity, L : listen, learn and link, T : transfer, transform, team, and trust).

SFCG: Search For Common Ground (international NGO specialised in conflict transformation, and a partner of UNICEF in Madagascar).

Community to community Transfer: As communities act, learn, adapt and grow, we have found that they are very likely,

when given the opportunity, to share their experience and transfer it to other communities facing similar challenges. In this manner, best practices are spontaneously transferred from one community to another who may or may not have started the process. The Constellation's experience shows that the SALT approach is transferred quite rapidly, which is why it is sometimes referred to as a "positive epidemic".

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund.

WASH: Acronym used to speak of the sector that works in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene.



Acknowledgements

We cannot write this harmonised manual for community dialogue in Madagascar without thanking the human beings and institutions without whom this work would not have emerged.

Thus, we would first like to pay tribute, respectively, to the directions of the Ministries and central sectors (MJS, MCRI, MEN, MSP, MEAH, MPPSPF, ONN), the regional entities (Anosy, Atsimo Andrefana and Analanjirofo), as well as UNICEF Madagascar and Constellation for having had the common vision which brought about this mission and the birth of this guide. The vision? The dream of a Malagasy community united and competent for life, supported by a well-functioning, harmonised approach to community dialogue, which is such a rooted instrument in local culture. A dream of communities strong enough to face the multiple challenges of child survival and protection, education, health, environmental management, the challenge of having partners who support women before, during and after birth, as well of course as the collective accountability for the achievement of international satisfaction regarding the full immunisation of children, specifically with respect to poliomyelitis.

We also wish to thank each of the participants who attended the sharing and harmonisation workshops which took place between October 19th and 22nd 2015: without your enthusiasm, your authenticity, your willpower and your hard work, we could not have learned about all the good practices already happening in Madagascar, and it would have been impossible to imagine such a harmonised tool that everyone can use and value in their own field! Misaotra!

Finally, we would like to give our warm-hearted thanks to a few special individuals, our colleagues on the ground and friends since the beginning of this adventure, respectively members of the Ministry of Communication and Relations with the Institutions, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and UNICEF Madagascar: Sammy, Jean-Modeste, Santatra, Fara, Hoby, Luthécia and Vanou. Our growing complicity and your unwavering professionalism helped to make this mission a rigorous gem, and our friendship was born under the sign of the humanity that unites us all. A special thank you also to Dennis Larsen, who dared to dream, and put in place all necessary actions to materialise this dream into reality.

Enjoy the read!

A photograph showing a group of children and an adult. In the foreground, a young girl with curly hair holds a wooden log. Behind her, another girl looks directly at the camera. To the right, a baby is being held. An adult in a white lace top is partially visible. The scene is outdoors with bright sunlight.

*Community
dialogue:
What for?*

Our **dream*** for Malagasy communities-

*A vision of **solidarity**, of sharing, of autonomy, of development,*

*healthy communities that **gather their strengths***

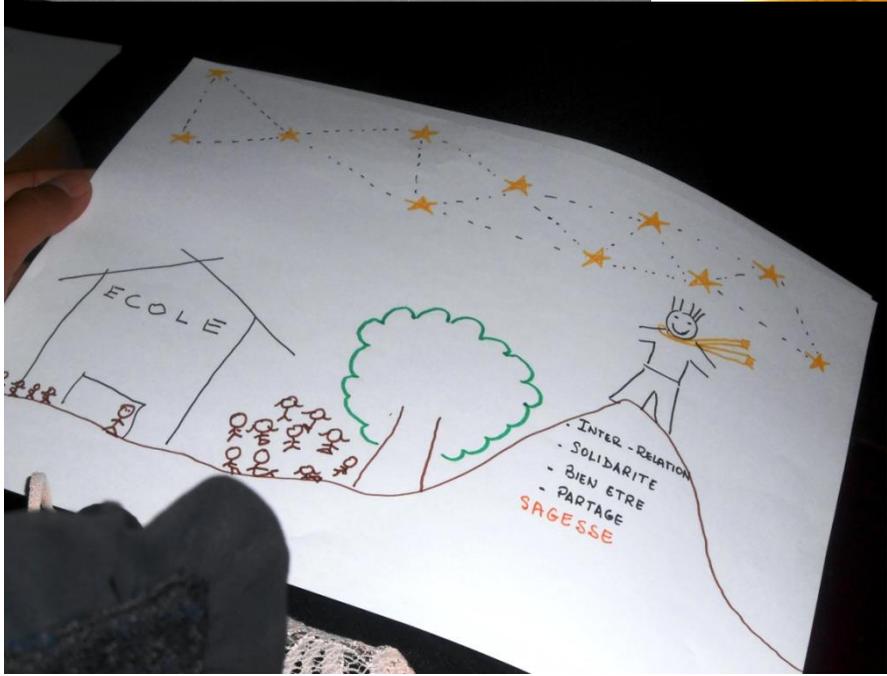
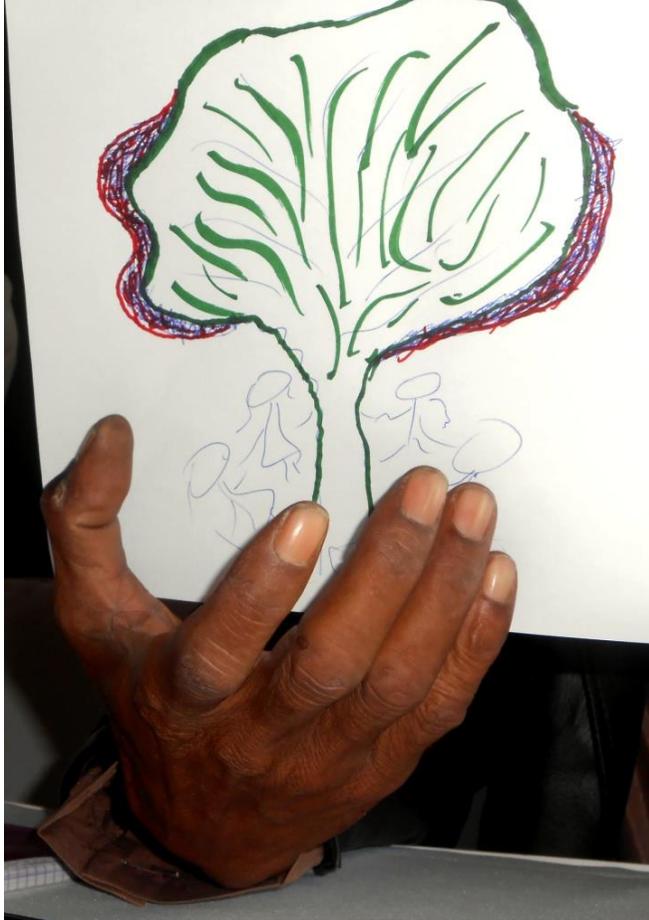
together to walk towards common well-

***being**, who welcome every **challenge** life places*

*before them and take their **responsibilities** to face*

it.

*This dream came into being during the Harmonisation Workshop that took place in Antananarivo on 21st and 22nd October 2015, with the different national and regional actors (Atsimo Andrefana, Anosy et Analanjirofo) of community dialogue.



DiaWhat ?

*Common definition of
community dialogue.*



Harmonised Definition

*Based on exchanges during the Sharing and
Harmonisation Workshops in Antananarivo
October 19th-22nd 2015*

*“space of exchange between members of a community
concerning their **realities** in order to stimulate
engagement and joint action to reach
behavioural change for common well-being”*

*Participants of the Harmonisation Workshop identified community
dialogue as a **process** that could be used to move closer to their
dream for happy, healthy Malagasy communities, autonomous in
facing their life challenges.*

Observation:

We're not quite there yet.

In October 2015, a mixed team (MCRI – MJS – UNICEF Madagascar – Constellation) conducted a field mission in the South to meet the different sectors and **observe their community agents in action** as they conducted community dialogue sessions on the ground.

We appreciated:

- The **exemplary and selfless commitment** of many community agents, who serve as essential **resource persons** in their community, and are **very much appreciated** in their role.
- The fact that different community-level actors **exchange** information and practices, and sometimes even collaborate (Health sector ACs collaborating with WASH ACCs, SFCG's consultant mobilisers supporting ACs, etc.)

We noticed:

- That most discussions considered to be “community dialogues” were in fact closer to “educational talks”, with an **aim to raise awareness** on particular topics rather than community dialogues aiming at **a community that exchanges freely and where everyone participates in co-creating a better common future.**

You reported this also and thus confirmed our thoughts during the **individual self-assessment** during the workshops in Antananarivo (October 19-22):

- *“I realise now that what I had been doing before was closer to **awareness-raising** activities (delivering messages) than to actual community dialogue.”*
- *“My guess is that from the beginning we've been doing **focus groups** and not community dialogue.”*
- *“Some elements of our definition (eg. **Decision-making by the community itself**) have not yet been integrated into my practice of community dialogue.”*
- *“The **results** of the community dialogues I have conducted do not yet achieve behavioural change, nor do they lead to a better future perspective.”*

***If** we are **convinced** of the importance of community dialogue and **committed** to turning it into a healthy and autonomous toddler, **then** let us walk together, discover and implement a **harmonised approach to community dialogue** for the entire country!*



*Community
dialogue and other
mobilisation
approaches.*



A. Community Dialogue

Above all else, dialogue is a **human attitude**, one where we **acknowledge** others and hold them in **positive regard**, as equals, and in this perspective we are able to **counsel one another** to look for appropriate solutions regarding one or several subjects related to collective interest.

From this point of view, dialogue is an **exchange framework between equals** that allows for everyone to contribute their input, in an atmosphere of trust and tolerance even when differing viewpoints emerge.

Thus, faced with the necessity of **building a life together as a community** whilst developing our capacity to **respond collectively to the multiple challenges** we are faced with in daily life, community dialogue remains a very efficient means.

It is efficient in that it **sparks a shift of awareness as people realise that they are capable of being actors of their own lives individually and as part of a community, and act on that new perception.** Collectively and on a small scale, this ensures active and self-determined commitment of all community members to any development initiative in their fokontany/village/hamlet/administrative block/street; moving towards **ownership** and **sustainability** of community-based actions.

In order to achieve this, it is preferable that the dialogue be conducted by **community facilitators of the same community**, trained in moderating conversation and stimulating everybody to speak through **open and appreciative questions**, and to avoid guiding exchanges based on preconceived notions.

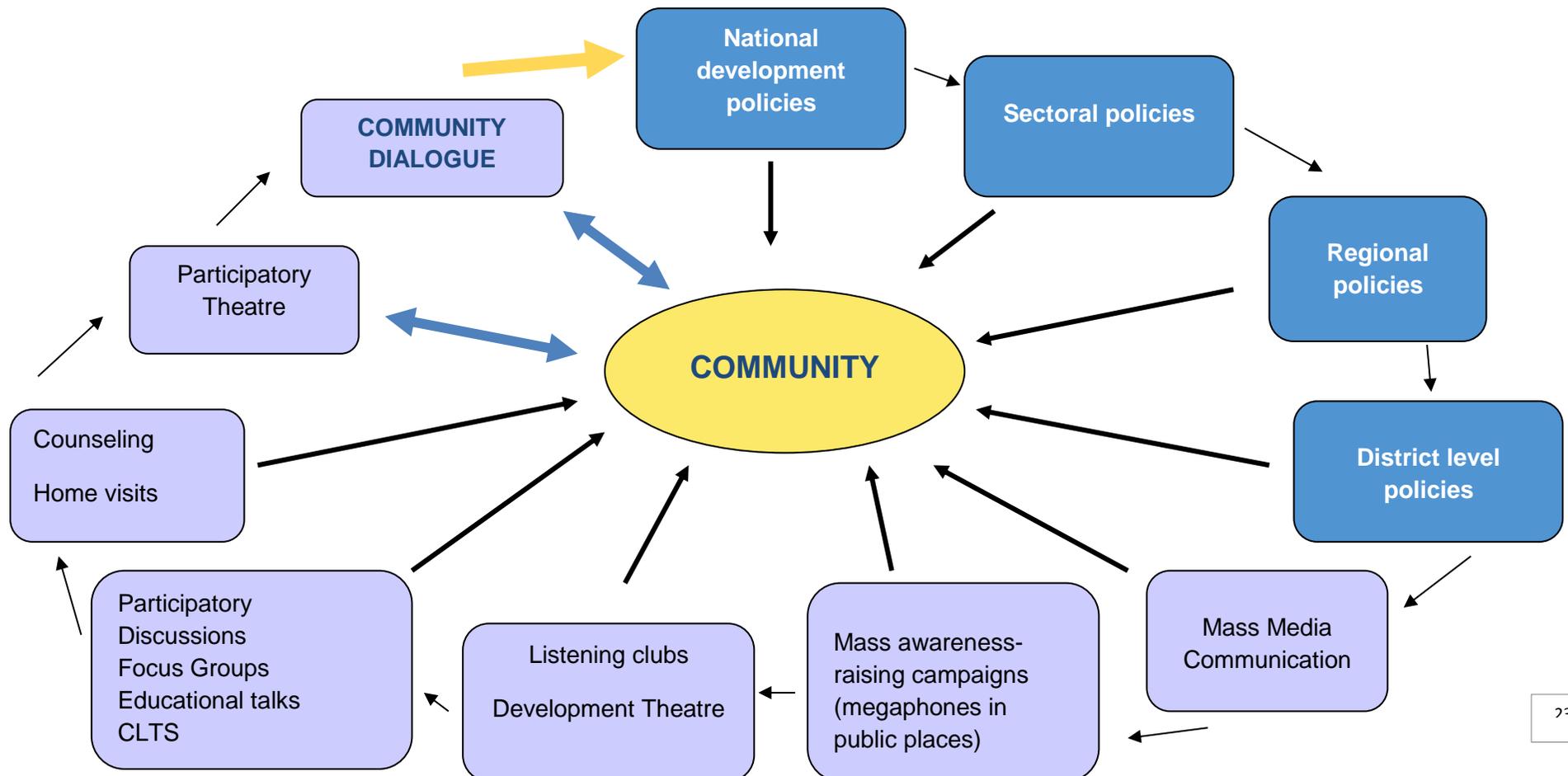
This practice could be viewed both as a **step**, and a **community approach** process in and of itself, aimed at reaching a point of **complete autonomy** of the community in **envisioning its own change and progress.**



Community mobilisation is carried out through **different strategies**, techniques or interpersonal communication methods that all work interactively with **international, national, regional and sectoral development policies**. Community dialogue is but a link in that chain, but it is **the closest link to grassroots**, meaning it is also most capable- if and when it works well- to provide all links of the chain with invaluable information on the realities the country's communities are faced with.

Below is a very schematic representation of the different links of the chain, all working to **feed national policies with information gathered as close as possible to Malagasy communities**, through community dialogue.

This diagram shows the inter-related nature of these different approaches, and the different relations each method develops with the community.



B. Other community mobilisation approaches

Below, a few **interpersonal communication** techniques we witnessed in Madagascar:

1. Advocacy

A **series of actions** conducted with decision-makers and leaders, aimed at convincing them to find and/or implement solutions to a given problem.

2. Face to face counseling, also “Home visits”

A mechanism through which a person helps another person in finding a solution to their problem through a **face-to-face meeting**, at the person’s home in the case of home visits.

3. Educational talks

Talking together, conversing, and dialoguing.

Usually, we talk among neighbours, colleagues, friends, or with the family. This technique is used by a facilitator to guide conversation within a community on a given **topic**, whilst **hoping that the information imparted will positively influence behaviour**.

4. Focus group, group interview or guided discussion group

Group interviews are discussions with a **small number of participants** (6-12 people). Such discussions are directed by a facilitator to **guide people towards specific actions to be undertaken** in order to search for solutions to an important subject (eg. Cholera, polio, etc.).

5. Using visual aids (visual support)

Movies, posters of **image-boxes** are visual aids (duplicated in video or printed on paper) used by a facilitator to focus the group’s attention on specific aspects of a message. Thereafter, a sort of **question-and-answer** conversation is organised in order to work towards a **common understanding** of the message.

6. Development theatre and listening clubs

These techniques allow people to **stage** facts/stories stemming from a targeted community’s own experience and in a context specific to their daily life, with the aim to capitalise learning and encourage **behavioural change**.

7. Participatory theatre

Participatory theatre allows a community to suggest, in the safe space of theatrical illusion, concrete solutions to the problems staged (and which mirror those they face in real life).

This technique therefore demonstrates **genuine implication** of the community in the search for solutions to challenges they recognise as their own through identifying with the story's characters.

8. Participatory peer discussions (Youth Sector)

Among peers, youths exchange on subjects that concern



them, with the aim to tap into everyone's knowledge and experience of the topic and, **together, to find adequate solutions.** How it unfolds: two youths (a boy

and a girl) lead the discussion, stimulating the other youngsters to share and work towards solutions, together.

9. Community-led total sanitation (CLTS – WASH Sector)

We speak here of community-led total sanitation. Rather than focusing solely on building latrines, this method seeks to **eliminate open defecation.** Communities are stimulated to

analyse their own defecation habits and the dangers linked to them (the strategy of disgust/shame), and to **use their own, local resources** to build latrines, therefore eliminating the open defecation practice (communities thus receive the title ODF- “open defecation free”).

This method **uses community dialogue, but as one step of a process that has a predetermined end point** (i.e. building latrines). Dialogue is used to exchange on questions linked to sanitation, to help related problems bubble to the surface, and to make sure communities suggest by themselves the building of latrines as a solution. Dialogue is also used afterwards to help with collective decision-making and follow-up on community progress.

Different yet complementary approaches

Every aforementioned technique can include community dialogue in some shape or size, be it loose conversation or debate, but such discussions are always **pre-established** by the facilitator. They are necessary as far as **capacity-building** of community members goes, through the information passed down or lessons learned.

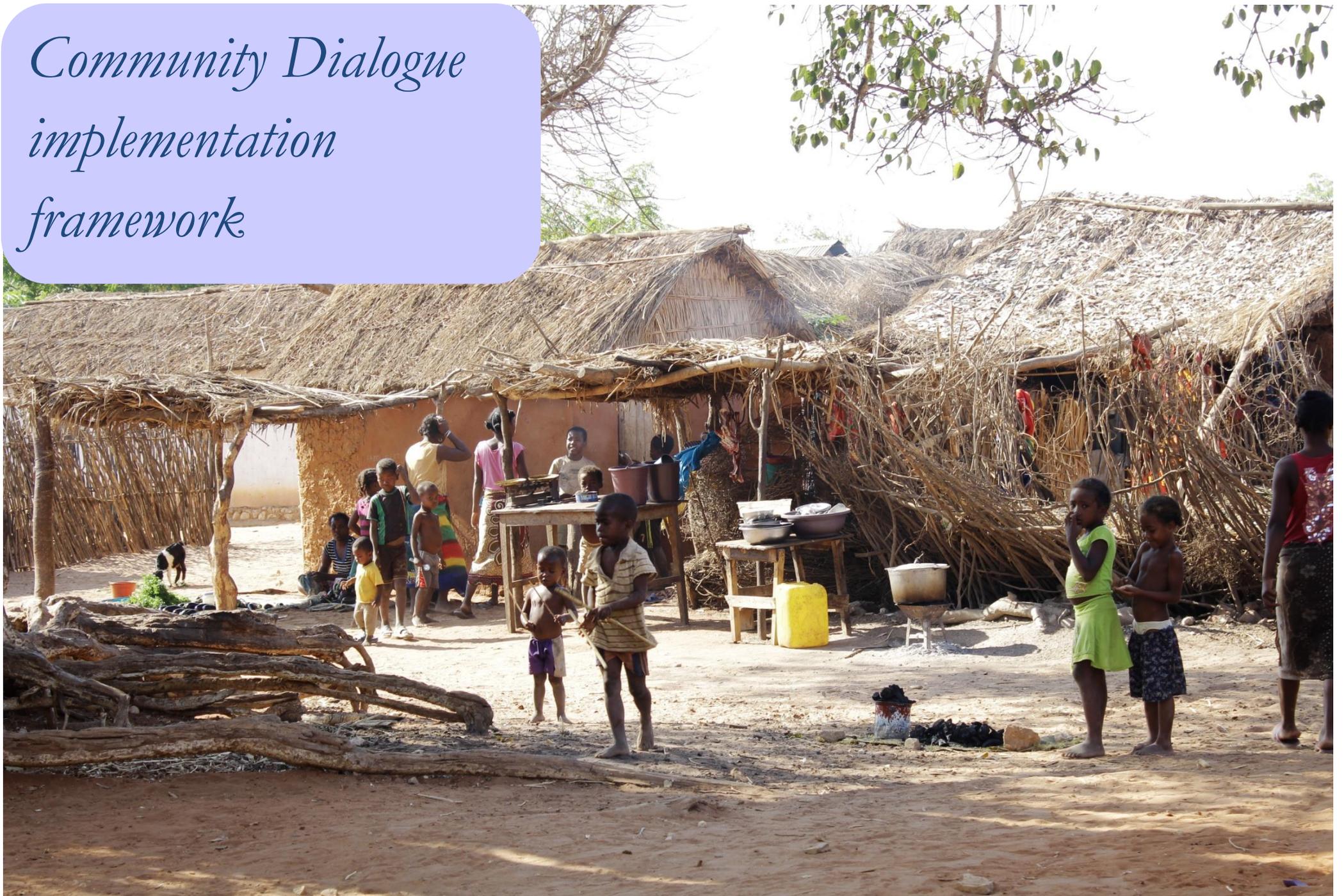
However, they are part of “**interventionist**” community approaches. It is therefore difficult to imagine them as a way to bring a community to **autonomy and ownership of its vision for change and progress.** That being said, they certainly have a part to play, and must continue to function

simultaneously and in synergy with techniques specifically related to the SALT approach.

The SALT approach, which includes community dialogue as one of its steps, thus comes to **support** the interpersonal communication strategies/techniques/methods already in place so as to **make community action even more effective** and ensure best practices are transferred from one community to surrounding ones so that the “community life competence” epidemic may spread continuously.



*Community Dialogue
implementation
framework*



A. Level of implementation

SALTy community dialogue should be implemented both very **close to the people** (to ensure effective commitment of the entire community), but should also be **differentiated- as far as possible- from the intervention level of the awareness-raising approaches it seeks to support.**

In **rural areas**, the **village** is the ideal operational level. It has been decided that each village should count **two facilitators** in its midst, and that each coach (cfr. “facilitator profile” in B.) shall accompany 10 facilitation teams, and thus 10 villages. As each village is made up of several hamlets, it is essential that community dialogue also take place at the **hamlet** level, and the village-level facilitators should be mindful of the “natural leaders” they notice and believe would be able to take over facilitation thereafter.

In **urban and peri-urban areas**, the equivalent of the village is the **neighbourhood** (or in case the neighbourhood is too large, the **administrative block**).

Facilitators are encouraged to **use all existing consultation frameworks** (tradition leaders’ meetings at the hamlet/village/fokontany level etc.) to **share the information** that emerges from the different hamlets they are in charge of.

The **coaches’** responsibility will be to **transfer this information to the higher decisional levels** (fokontany chief, mayor, district manager, prefect, regional manager, etc.).

This way of working offers several advantages: **simplified data collection and verification as well as easier indicator monitoring**, a strong probability of linking the community to surrounding resources, stronger implication of the intermediate level, a clearer and well-defined intervention zone for local facilitators, etc.

The idea is to ensure effective coverage of all the villages in a fokontany, with a beneficial ‘demonstration effect’ in the hamlets as a result of emulation.

For optimal implementation framework: use existing structures.

E.g. Consultation frameworks as they relate to healthcare and territorial political structures, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

	Healthcare structure	Territorial structure		Frameworks/meetings Information channel
1	National Ministry/General Secretary	Ministers/General Secretaries		National Government Council and/or Joint Meeting
2	The Ministry's provincial department : provincial inspection (region): Minister and cabinet – Medical inspector – Supervisor – ECDPS	Governor and Mayor of the city		Provincial Government Council and/or Joint Meeting
3	Health District: Senior District Physician – Supervisors – ECDS	District Commissioner		District Government Council
4	Health Zone: Head Physician of the Zone – Supervisors – ECZS	Territory Administrator		Management Committee (CODESA)
5	Health Area/Health Centre – Head nurse, staff and CODESA – Village/neighbourhood/avenue/road – Community animation Unit and “relais communautaires” (community facilitators, community agents in Madagascar- 15 households for one RC)	Traditional chieftom leader	Neighbourhood/Area leader	CAC (Community Animation Unit)

1. **National Ministry/General Secretary of Health.**
2. **Provincial Health Division (DPS):** Provincial Medical Inspector (MIP) and supervising staff (in charge of several districts in the province).
3. **Health District (DS):** District Team (senior district physician and supervising staff). In charge of several health zones in the district.
4. **Health Zone:** Central Zone Office (BCZ) and Zone Team (ECZ: head physician and supervisors), General Reference Hospital (HGR: head physician and staff). In charge of several health areas within the zone.
5. **Health Area** (operational level of health zone activities): head nurse (IT) and health centre staff working the community facilitators (RC), who are part of the community and each take charge of 15 households.

The basic consultation framework for RECOs is the **Community Animation Unit (CAC)** which other actors of the village/street/avenue take part in. Delegates of different CAC come together on a **monthly basis** through the health committee gathered around the IT (head nurse¹) and the staff of the Health Centre. These meetings are also attended by local leaders and other local actors in order to take stock of the activities conducted during the month (including community dialogue). Such meetings are an opportunity **to collect data**

and information, which will later be presented during the **monitoring meetings** at the health zone level (present: all head nurses and CODESA chairs as well as opinion leaders). The health zone level then **channels that information up** to the district level, and then from district to province, and finally national level.

¹ Equivalent of the « chef CSB » in Madagascar.

B. Profile and selection procedure for coaches and facilitators.

1. Facilitator's profile

The facilitator is a community agent (across all sectors) and a volunteered selected according to the following criteria:

- Previously **involved in community development**, with significant experience in group animation
- Available **two half-days a week** to accompany the implementation of the CLC process (this time is split between collective community dialogue and other moments leading up to it where smaller groups meet and share, as well as monitoring and reporting work)
- **Respected and valued** within his/her community
- **Verified skills in reading and writing in his/her own tongue** (French is a considerable asset but not compulsory)

- Ideally, **he/she comes from the community where he/she will be made to work**, if not they have lived there for at least two consecutive years once they take office.

Eventually, facilitators won't have to be community agents, but could be selected by other facilitators for being an **active and respected community member** and encouraged to receive training and gain experience through mentorship (cf. chapter on training hereafter).

2. Coach's profile

The coach's profile is different from that of the facilitator. Whereas the facilitator works on a volunteer basis, ideally the coach is a **paid officer hired by one of the sectors**. This means that coaches **dedicate their time to accompany and support facilitation teams**.

- Coaches may come from a different community
- They demonstrate significant experience and know-how in both coaching and group management
- They are also capable of **ensuring monitoring and reporting** of village-level activities, and of

engaging with different levels to **ensure that information is channeled from the bottom up**.

- They must also, more than anything else, be capable of **transferring their know-how** to the team members they are accompanying in the field.

NB: This role already exists in some sectors in Madagascar, even if coaches are not always paid. This role is similar for instance to the one played by the **ACC** (communal coach assistant) of the WASH sector, or among the NGOs this would be the role of the “**consultant mobiliser**” at SFCG. In some sectors, such as that of nutrition for instance, outside NGO employees are brought in to strengthen the ACs in reporting, and also as animators to organise participatory community evaluation (held twice a year).

3. Selection procedure

3.1. For the facilitator

Potential facilitators are first identified after the coaches visit and meet several community agents in a given village/neighbourhood/block/etc. and identify a first round of potential candidates.

There follows a step of making a detailed and motivated list of pre-selected candidates (**canvassing review**) which will then be presented before local leaders and submitted to their appreciation.

Candidates will then be **brought before the community** gathered in an assembly or called by the local political and administrative authority for validation by the community, following which they will be **officially appointed and presented with the values and responsibilities linked to their task**.

3.2. For the coach

Ideally, the coaches are **professionals**, hired for their skills as coaches and **team managers**.

C. The facilitator and coach's Mission, Mandate and Objectives.

Facilitator

1. The facilitator's **mission** is to **accompany and connect** active communities so that they may share and learn from their own local responses.

2. The facilitator's **mandate** is **unlimited**, unless his/her behaviour should decisively and repeatedly go against the appreciative mindset of SALT, the law or the common good.

3. Objectives

The main objective of facilitation is to **stimulate local strengths** which are often latent within communities in order to strengthen the development of local responses using the potential and resources present locally.

The specific objectives include:

- **Planning** a full process of community dialogue with the community
- Stimulating interest for dialogue by **building an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect** beneficial for community members themselves to serenely consider the challenges they face and find solutions
- Accompanying the community as they produce a **self-determined vision for progress**
- Supporting the community as they conduct a **self-assessment** of their skills as a community to face their challenges, as they **determine priorities, plan actions** and decide on **community indicators** to monitor progress.



- Stimulate the implementation of "**small doable actions**" and **participatory monitoring** of community indicators.
- **Accompany** the second self-assessment and stimulate sharing of good practices born from experience.
- **Encourage progressive ownership of the process**, the continuous sharing of experiences and information through traditional consultation frameworks (meetings: fokontany / town / hamlet / district / block / street health center, chiefdom, district, territory, etc.) and the sustainability of accomplishments.
- Facilitate the spread of the "Community Life Competence Process" through **transfer** to surrounding communities.
- Ensure **awareness of local rules of decorum**.
- Organise **data collection**, assume **periodic reporting** of activities and information sharing at the village level and with the coach.

Coach

1. Mission

La mission du coach est de **soutenir** et d'**accompagner** les équipes dans leur travail de **facilitation** auprès des communautés. Le coach n'intervient pas dans les dialogues

eux-mêmes, mais son rôle est d'accompagner et de coacher les équipes.

The mission of the coach is to **support** and **accompany** the teams in their facilitation work with communities. The coach is not involved in the dialogues themselves, but his/her role is to accompany and coach the teams.

2. Mandate

The coaches' mandates are determined by the **contractual conditions agreed to with the sector that hired them** (permanent or fixed-term contract as deemed appropriate by the sector and according to available means).

3. Objectives

The coaches' main objective is to **support facilitation teams in the field both in terms of strengthening their facilitation skills and ensuring that information emerging from the field reaches the different consultation levels**, and assist facilitators in the **documentation of participatory monitoring** and measuring the progress of communities.

D. Training and incentive for facilitators.

Facilitators' training

The facilitators receive basic training in the shape of a theoretical and practical initiation which lasts for a minimum of 6 days. This is a training in the **SALT approach** (philosophy, facilitation skills, training in participatory monitoring as well as in each step of implementation), strengthened by a **thematic part** that aims to deepen the facilitators' understanding of the **12 Essential Family Practices** (regardless of the sector they initially belong to). Facilitators will have the opportunity, if they believe it necessary following a discussion with their coach, to receive a second capacity-building training on a yearly basis.

The facilitators' training is **continuous**, they mostly learn through being actively engaged with their community on the ground, and from the **support of their coach**.

In addition to this "official" training, facilitators are encouraged to be constantly on the look-out for "**natural leaders**" in the community where they work, and involve them in facilitating to gradually **transfer** their knowledge of facilitation. Thus, these individuals **become resource persons** for the community, and will ultimately also benefit from training and become facilitators in turn.

NB: This is a mechanism similar to that of the Child Protection sector, whereby community agents are asked to look for and actively engage what they call "**primary / secondary / tertiary allies**", or to the sector of Nutrition that encourages ACNs to transfer their knowledge to "**dynamic mothers**" who will one day become ACNs in turn.

Incentive for facilitators

The primary motivation of facilitators, what truly drives them, is of a moral nature, because of the trust or value they enjoy vis-à-vis the community. This is related to the fact that they were chosen by the community and officially appointed by the local political and administrative authority (head of fokontany / town, neighborhood / block / group / sector / street ...).

The opportunity of **continuous capacity-building** and their **noble mission** (vocation for development, social welfare, etc.) are part of what motivates facilitators to act.

In addition, being a volunteer, the facilitator also has privileged **access to health care provision** and **participation in all other development activities for which he is bound to become a resource person** (training, distribution of mosquito nets, immunisation campaigns, recruitment as a service provider for development projects, etc.).

Coaches: training and incentive

As mentioned above, coaches are **employees** hired by the sector they will be working with. They are selected based on their expertise and prior training (**coaching / team management**). Once recruited, they receive additional **training** as community agents (SALT and themes related to essential family practices), and **must first practice as facilitators for a minimum of six months** before starting their coaching duty. Once a coach, they may benefit from **regular capacity building opportunities** (in coaching, and monitoring and evaluation techniques) to fine-tune their role as coach of facilitation teams.

Implementing training

The implementation model is one of “cascading training”, with district and regional levels combined into one.

- Initial training of a **pool of trainers at central level**, whose role will then be to train “relay trainers” (regional level) and local trainers (district level).
- The role of “**relay trainers**” will be to ensure that activities are implemented, and that the **information is channeled through** to the regional and central levels (reporting).
- **Local trainers** at the district level will be responsible for **training facilitators and coaches** (at municipal level, then fokontany and finally villages).

As mentioned above, it is the coach, in dialogue with the facilitator, who will ensure **formative accompaniment** on the ground and jointly assess the necessity of holding a yearly **capacity building training session** (both coaches and facilitators).



*IV. Steps of the
community dialogue
process*

A. Facilitation

The facilitator's posture: a change in perspective

It sometimes feels like our world today is governed by a limiting belief that reduces us all, somehow, to being **spectators** of our lives- especially when the latter does not please us.

This belief? **Surely someone knows better than me what I should do!**

In this light, dealing with the challenges that life never ceases to present us with is somehow reduced to looking to one person to hold all the knowledge and the key to our future: **the expert.**

What our experience in community development has shown us is that this one-way relationship of handing our fate over to a person who “knows better” **disempowers people.** However, if a different kind of relationship can be built, one weaved in **equality and appreciation of what is there**, where everyone can **recognise their own strengths and limitations** and those of others, then a new-found energy is liberated for **action and sharing.**

Such relationships are typically the types of bonds a “SALT” facilitator seeks to weave with and between people.

From expert	... to facilitateur
We trust our expertise	We trust in people's strengths
We respond to people's needs	We reveal strengths
People have problems. We bring solutions	Together , we can find solutions
We confine ourselves to our role as an expert	We link people with one another
We instruct and advise!	We share and learn together

What do you see?



Facilitators will look at what is (the glass is half full) and at **how to fill the rest of the glass based on what is already there.**

NB: This does not mean that experts have no part to play, quite the opposite. Their knowledge is part of the resources the community can count on to move towards their goals.

The SALT approach: A way of thinking

The approach we call SALT is founded on the facilitator's posture described above.

It is different from **interventionist approaches** whereby decision-makers and service providers think about the communities' problems and tell them what to do in order to solve them. In such approaches, communities are asked to **follow guidelines that were thought up without them**.

We are human. We all have concerns and hopes. We can all learn, grow and change.

Progress happens when people own their challenge. Communities have the capacity to respond when they own the issue they struggle with. That capacity remains to be **revealed and nurtured**. That is the purpose of SALT.

Facilitators stimulate communities by **looking for people's strengths** and by seeking to **learn from their experiences**. Their challenge is their own. It is not ours.

When a community owns the issue, the community will find ways to solve it. We will encourage them and support them as they do this.

The basic concepts of the SALT approach

S : support and stimulate

A : appreciate, authenticity

L : listen, learn and link

T : transfer, transform, team, and trust.

STIMULATE and SUPPORT

Often, community members are not aware of their own strengths. Facilitators **appreciate and reveal those** strengths. They encourage and stimulate communities. Support does not mean bringing equipment, information or techniques, but rather encouraging communities to **take ownership and responsibility**. Specific themes and concerns emerge during dialogue thanks to the framework set by facilitators, who should be able to stimulate community members to reflect on the link between their individual concerns and the **major challenges facing the entire community**.

Rather than positioning themselves as experts, facilitators **listen** to the community and encourage members to **question** themselves and **find their own solutions to their challenges**.

The facilitation team is a community in and of itself, too. Members give each other help and support, they become aware of their own strengths- both individual collective.

APPRECIATE

The first attitude is to **appreciate who the community is, what they are going through and what they have been doing**. A facilitator's first contact with a community is always about appreciating and revealing their strengths rather than listing their challenges.

This participatory approach helps the community realise **what is working well**, become aware of their **potential**. This is an essential step before people can project themselves in a common vision and begin to apprehend the challenges on the way to achieving that vision.

AUTHENTICITY

Facilitators position themselves as learners, and in order to genuinely listen to the community and learn from them, they cannot hide behind the mask of a status of function: they are **simply human**. This is the condition to **true authenticity**, and it means that facilitators must also be ready to show their own **vulnerabilities** in front of the community.

LISTEN, LEARN, LINK,

The facilitation team goes into communities to **listen, learn, understand and appreciate** the strengths they demonstrates to overcome its challenges.

Facilitators help **link the different groups in a community**, and the **different communities with one another**. The SALT team accompanies communities as they **take stock of available or potential resources** (information, services etc.) within the community and helps them link up with resources that may be available elsewhere, and with other communities who may inspire them with their stories of change.



TRANSFORM – TRANSFER - TEAM

Everyone (individual or community) involved in this approach will discover that they must first apply it to themselves in order to develop their competences based on experience. Developing our “life competence” leads to **personal and community transformation**. Community members transfer their knowledge to one another and to the facilitators who can then apply it in their own context, and vice-versa. This transfer also occurs between communities who **connect and inspire one another to change**.

Facilitators stimulate, support and connect communities in order to help spread local response and ownership.

Facilitation work is always done in teams of minimum two people.



The CLCP cycle: A way of working

There are 7 steps in the cycle.
 When accompanying a community, the cycle spreads roughly over **10 months'** time, step by step.
 Once the last step has been completed, the cycle can start anew.

First 4 weeks:

Step 1: Who are we? First meeting(s) with the community. We get to know one another. We introduce ourselves as humans, and reveal each other's' strengths.

Step 2: Where do we want to be? The community formulates its dream. Through which practices? We specify our way of acting once we will have reached our dream (to inform the stepping stones we must cross before reaching it).

Step 3: Where are we now? We take stock of our current level for each of the practices we have identified based on our strengths and achievements right now. We conduct a self-assessment and prioritise our practices. **Now is also the time to identify obstacles to change. Traditional leaders are important to include in the process at this stage to question the norm and help lift some of the obstacles which may be sociocultural.**

Step 4: What are we going to do? How will we move closer to our dream? We formulate our action plan for the next three to six months.

Over the next 3 months:

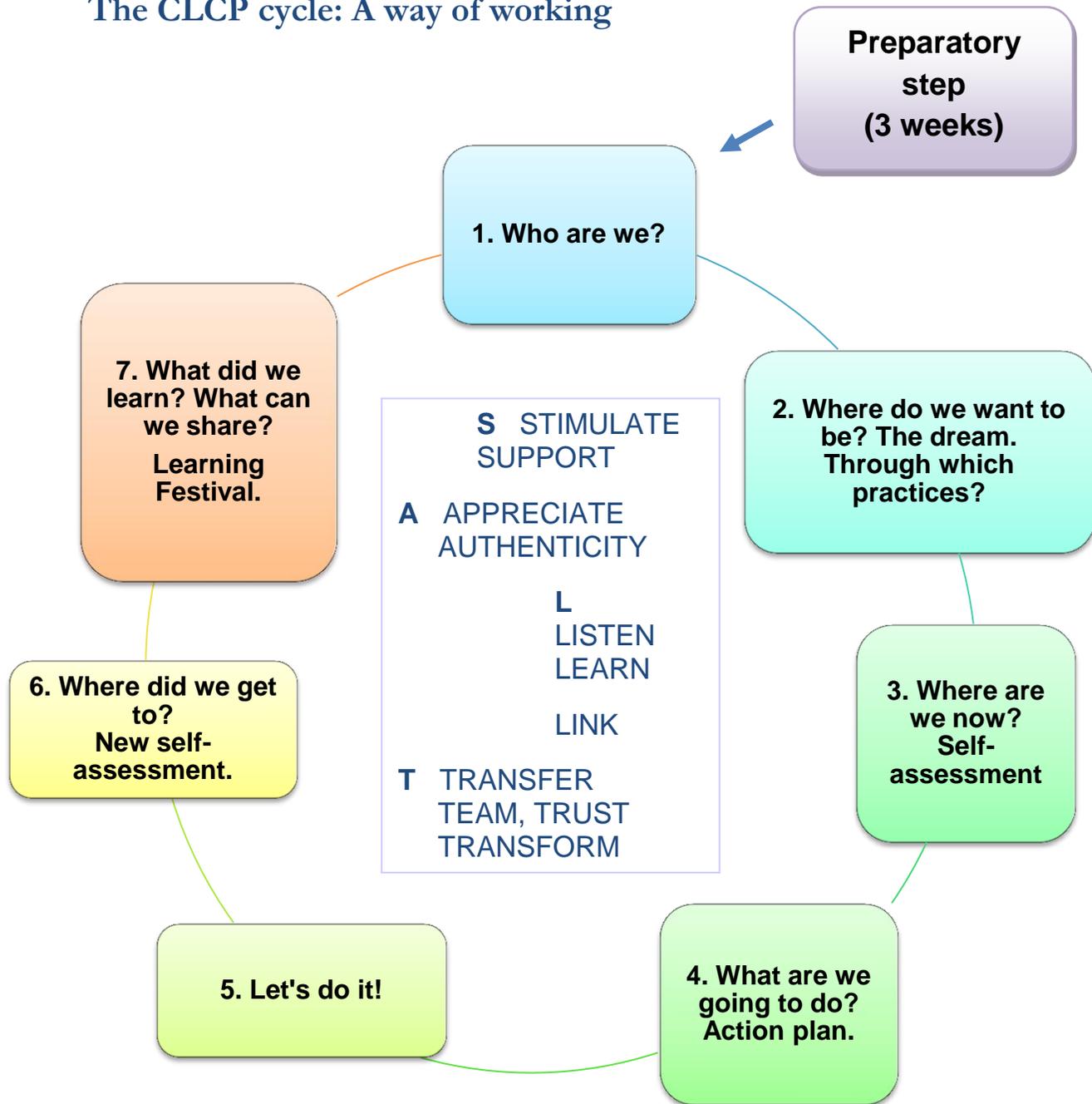
Step 5: Let's do it! We get to work and establish **collective monitoring of actions**, indicators and sources of verification which we ourselves (the community) have decided on.

Step 6: Where did we get to? New self-assessment.

A moment to take stock of progress within the community itself before reaching out to others to share through a Learning Festival or deciding to start the cycle anew (after 3 months of collective action).

6 months after the action plan:

Step 7: What did we learn? What can we share? How can we **capitalise** our experiences so that other communities facing similar challenges may benefit from our learning Learning Festival.



Concepts and key principles of the SALT approach

Concept 1: Community Life Competence

Every community has the capacities, the strengths and much of the resources to face their life challenges. This is “life competence”. In this approach, the term “community” indicates **any group of individuals** (professional, religious, school group, neighbourhood, youth group, women, etc.) **who share a similar reality, have a shared vision and/or share a geographical location.** The facilitation team is in itself a community, too.

Concept 2: Ownership

Here is the starting point for our work with communities: **communities change themselves. We do not change communities.** Communities can and do respond to the challenges that they face when they take ownership of those challenges. The change that we own is **sustainable change. Communities own their challenges and find their own solutions.** Facilitators encourage communities to act based on their strengths rather than their shortcomings. They help them develop their full potential and harness their strengths for action. Communities are encouraged to **regularly take stock of their own progress** and to reflect on **lessons learned from experience**, so that these lessons may inform the next action plan and inspire other communities.

Concept 4: Learning from experience

In order to support the implementation of the approach, we use several tools of **knowledge management**.

Among these tools one could name:

- The **After Experience Reflection** (AER) for communities to extract lessons learned after every activity, and continuously feed their learning process. Questions asked: **What went well and why? What could we do even better next time? What are the lessons learned?**
- The **self-assessment framework** developed by communities themselves to **assess their level of achievement in view of each of the priority practices** at any given time, and help plan small doable actions.
- The **Learning Festivals** to **share experiences, and document and distill knowledge** through an interactive conference.
- **Knowledge Assets** are built from the stories told during Learning Festivals, and their goal is to **organise the collective wisdom** derived from experience. Thus, lessons learned from stories of change are grouped in **common principles** for action, which are linked to several stories, and to the people behind those stories.

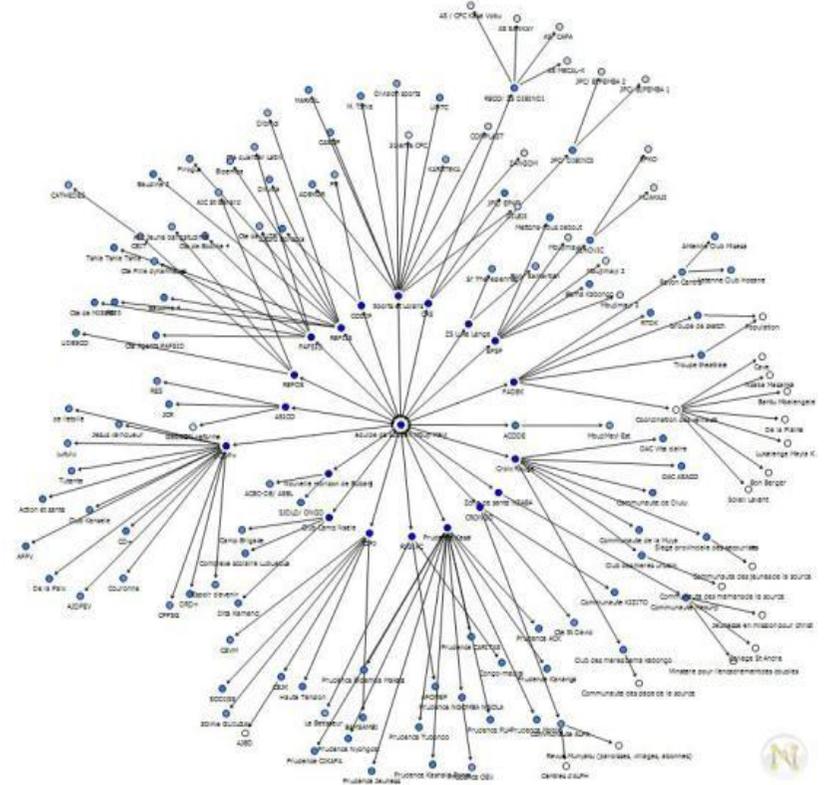
Concept 5: The dream

The dream is an essential step of the process. Its purpose is to surface community members' aspirations and gather everybody's strengths, skills and talents around a common vision. The dream is a source of energy and motivation for the community, a destination to bear in mind when faced with moments of discouragement.

Concept 6: Community-to-community transfer

As communities act, learn, adapt and grow, we have found that they are very likely, when given the opportunity, to share their experience and transfer it to other communities facing similar challenges. In this manner, best practices are spontaneously transferred from one community to another who may or may not have started the process.

The Constellation's experience shows that the SALT approach is transferred quite rapidly, which is why it is sometimes referred to as a "positive epidemic".



E.g. Third level "horizontal transfer" between communities of Mbuji-Mayi – DRC.





B. Implementation steps

Preparatory step before implementation

Within the framework of an approach leading to ownership, a preparatory step remains essential before starting the implementation of community dialogue.

It is thus best to start field activities through **information and advocacy** with **political and administrative authorities, traditional leaders** as well as visits to the **local representatives of the sector-** and to do this at every level. The goal of such a preparatory phase is to get a clear picture of the different stakeholders in the area, and **to strengthen the capacity of local facilitators and coaches.** It is essential to also visit and mobilise **civil society organisations** (NGOs, local non-profits, churches, media, schools, etc.) around the initiative, in order to fully involve all the key players.

Another key moment in this preparatory stage is **working on the list of participants** who will be invited to take part in the first community dialogue session (Who are we ?). It is vital that this list be **representative of the whole community** (the young, the elderly, men, women, children, leaders, professionals, workers, etc.) and also **sensitive to the theme** that is to be discussed if there is one (eg. If we talk about education, we must ensure that teachers are there, children, parents, administration etc.).

Depending on the context, it may be necessary to conduct several meetings in smaller groups (women's group leaders, youth groups, religious leaders, etc.) before the first community dialogue as such, to set the stage and to increase our chances of having a group representative of the whole show up for the "Who are we?" community dialogue. Home visits may also be necessary at this stage.

This stage typically lasts about three weeks.



Summary of the different moments of the preparatory phase, and of the roles and responsibilities of the key actors

STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	LEVEL
Courtesy call to the mayor	Coach	MUNICIPALITY
Identifying the Fokontany where community dialogue will take place	Coach and mayor with head of social services (depending on the sector)	
Identifying opinion leaders at the Fokontany level	Coach and mayor, Fokontany chiefs and the facilitation team concerned	
Preparatory meetings with Fokontany chiefs and opinion leaders (traditional leaders, religious leaders, doctors, teachers, women leaders, elders, etc.)	Coach, mayor, facilitation team	
Home visits or visits to smaller groups (where applicable, according to local context) : men, women, youth, religious leaders, etc.	Facilitation team, coach, Fokontany chief	FOKONTANY
Identifying the profile of participants for the community dialogue process and putting together a list of names	Facilitation team, coach, Fokontany chief	VILLAGE
Inviting participants to join	Facilitation team, Fokontany chief	

Step 1 : Who are we?

Initiating community dialogue.

This step can easily be done over the course of a half-day (from one to 3 hours).

This is a **first community dialogue session**, and its goal is for community members and facilitators to **meet**, discover the **strengths**/talents/skills present in the group, to get a feel for the collective identity of the group (what bonds people together), and to also realise the **realities** experienced by people locally.

As facilitators, we are **simply present as human beings**. We come to **learn** from the community members just as they hope to learn from us! We **share about our own lives**, too, and do not shy away from showing our vulnerabilities.

Our questions show the community that we are **genuinely interested** in who they are, what they are doing, and the realities they experience.

The **ingredients** of a successful dialogue are the following:

- **The way the space is arranged**: We arrange the space to enable the conditions for a **true dialogue**

between equals. The ideal formation is a **circle**, with everybody sitting on the floor or on chairs, and no table to separate participants.

- **Clothing**: We are **dressed casually in a way that is adapted to the community**, no suits or tee-shirts showing off our organisation's logo.
- We **introduce ourselves as human beings**: the facilitation team do individual presentation and do not mention their functions or professions, preferring to talk about their passions, their family situations, etc. Facilitators explain that they are there to **learn from the community**, its realities and aspirations. The team encourages each participant to introduce themselves in the same way².
- **We listen deeply**, and practice empathy with the community, while remaining aware of our own sensibilities.
- We **ask questions that are human rather than material, appreciative rather than journalistic**. This usually allows for deeper conversation and opening new doorways for reflection and growth.
- **We do not discuss problems but rather choose to speak of people's realities and**

² There are many creative ways to go about doing this introduction, refer to Appendix 1 pour more ideas.

preoccupations, as problems come from outside, whereas preoccupations rather come from **within** (and so we are more likely to feel empowered to do something about them).

- It is important to be **facilitating in a team**, to have more than one pair of eyes, so to speak.
- Maintaining **positive body language** and being able to **answer questions calmly and carefully** in any situation.
- **A good facilitator does not try to prevent or avoid difficult or troubling situations.** If individuals show resistance and dissent, the facilitator **listens deeply** and tries to understand where the resistance is coming from. **Humour** is a valuable ally- the more people feel at ease and relaxed enough to laugh; the easier it is to get over differences.
- Sometimes, a community might be divided by **conflict of interest or hierarchy**. How does one react to such situations? By seeking to give each person a chance to introduce themselves and making sure talking time is distributed evenly. **Gaining people's trust through appreciative**

questions, games³, and by splitting people up into smaller groups for more intimacy.

- In communities where hierarchy is really strong, facilitators must **avoid allowing the leader/chief to express his opinions in the beginning**, or else this might prevent others from expressing anything that may go against what was spoken by the chief.



³ *Ibidem.*



Step 2: Where do we want to be?

The common dream.

The full scope of this step (dream + practices) may take up to a full day (2 half days).

What is a dream?

The dream is the community's vision of the ideal they want to reach. It is a **source of energy and motivation** which has the potential to sustain the community's drive towards life competence.

During this step, the community describes a world where it deals with its challenges as part of its day-to-day activity. It is not a world where everything is perfect, but one where the community is competent to deal with all aspects of its challenges.

Why build a dream?

So that the community may **define a common vision for themselves on which to base any strategy for action** in order to progress.

How to build a dream (process)?

The community is made up of individual members who each hold strengths and aspirations- thus **each person's contribution** to the dream-building process is essential.

There are several different ways of going about dream-building, and each facilitator's creativity is welcome to express itself here. One thing to bear in mind is that participants **should project themselves into a distant future, one that is a dozen years away or more**, in order for those things that may constitute obstacles to the dream not to hinder the process (experience shows that the ideal time frame is **15 to 20 years** into the future).

The general path of the process goes as follows :

1. The individual dream:

- What is each participant's dream? *Everyone reflects on their **personal ideal**.*
- What is each participant's dream for the collective well-being of the community? *Participants reflect on their **community ideal**.*
- If we are working on a specific theme:
 - What is each participant's dream concerning (health, education, child protection, etc.)?
- *If the community feels comfortable drawing : **Each person draws their vision of their ideal community** (what matters is expressing the dream, no artistic skills required). What drawing allows is to **free the participants' creativity** by calling on their left brain.*

2. The dream in small groups :

- Depending on the number of participants, the group is divided into **small groups** of 8-12 people
- Each person brings their **individual dream** to the group. One by one, each participant explains their dream to the rest of the group based on their drawing if that was the chosen method.
- All the dreams are **brought together**, through resonance, into a single representation of the group's dream [again, through a drawing if possible].

3. The community dream:

- Each group selects one person to **present the group's dream** [drawing] to the rest of the participants. All participants **listen and appreciate**, and get a chance to ask clarifying questions.
- A plenary discussion is held whereby **points of resonance and dissonance** between the different groups are explored collectively. Together, **we build a collective community dream** which reflects the dreams of the individuals in each group.
- Facilitators make sure all participants are **satisfied of the result**, and additional suggestions/ideas may be added (strive for maximum inclusion).
- Facilitators **congratulate** each group and participants as a whole for this beautiful effort to bring their individual aspirations together.

Practical advice on facilitating the dream

- Only one person speaks at a time, the others listen deeply and appreciate what they are hearing (a **“talking piece”** may be introduced in the smaller groups to ensure this).
- **Clarifying questions** may be asked by other participants.
- Facilitators should constantly remind participants that every person is important and that **every dream is valuable**.
- We all have the right to dream; therefore there is no such thing as an “unreasonable” dream. Therefore there should be **no comments, mockery or discussion on the way in which a dream is expressed**.
- No dream should be rejected, and we should find a way to include even the seemingly dissonant ones. This is particularly important to **stimulate ownership by individuals of group dreams first, and of the collective community dream eventually**. This will encourage individuals to commit themselves fully to making this dream come true.
- In case of hold-ups, facilitators use the **“miracle question”**: what if a miracle happened tonight, how could things turn out in the morning? This helps people momentarily put aside obstacles to change and the idea of something being “impossible”.

The dream in words: practices to help us identify the stepping stones towards the dream

Once the community has formulated its dream as a drawing, they are ready to start **formulating what is happening in the dream using words**- we call these sentences “practices”. Realising what people are doing in the dream to make this ideal possible will give the community something against which to assess its current situation, and therefore come to terms with the actions that they will need to undertake to move closer to the dream.

It is important that the community understands the difference between a practice and an activity: **a practice describes one aspect of the dream**. It is a way of acting. The dream is described by a set of practices. An activity is carried out in order to move closer to the practice, and thus move closer to the dream.

The practice is expressed as "**we (we = community) + active verb + complement**"

Let's give an example:

PRACTICE: We constantly nurture relationships between people.

ACTIVITY: We organise neighbourhood gatherings each month.

Facilitators help consolidate the common dream by **grouping ideas together**, and ensure that each group of ideas it is reflected in the practices chosen by the community. They follow the rhythm of the community.

The facilitators' vocabulary must always be adapted to the context of the community and they should use positive language and appraisal. It is essential to ensure common understanding of the words used (such as practice for instance), and for participants to find a word in their own language. Even though a formulation for a practice may automatically spring to the mind of the facilitators, they should hold off and **allow community members to express themselves and explore different formulations**. They should only contribute their own formulation if the group seems stuck or if an important element has been left out. They can then suggest, “another community once decided on a similar practice which went something like ... Is that close to what you were thinking?”

There is a set of generic practices which can be a source of inspiration for facilitators:

- *We recognise that the challenge is our own*

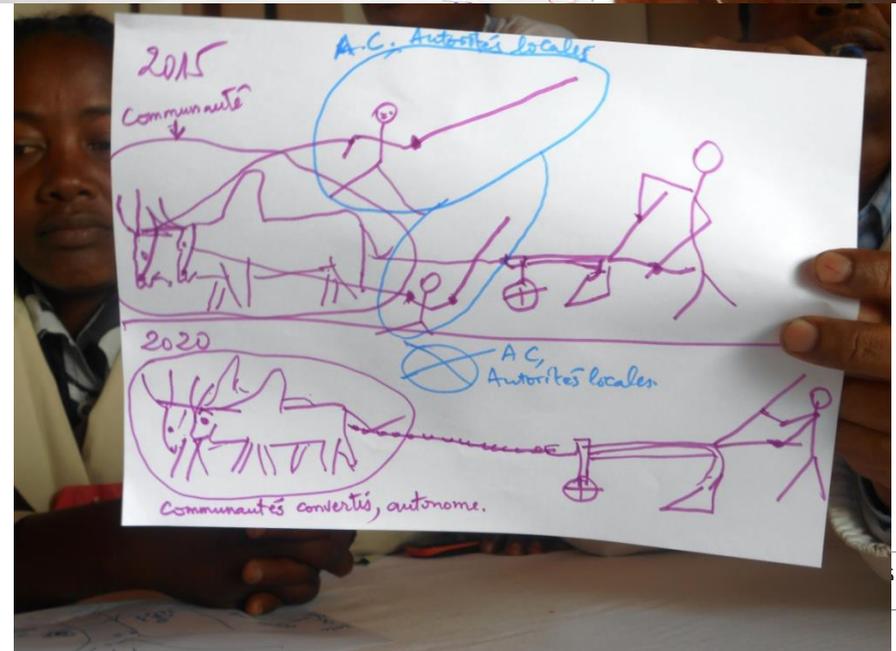
- *We involve all stakeholders affected by the challenge*
- *We take effective action related to the issue*
- *We regularly take stock and adapt our actions*
- *We organise ourselves for maximum efficiency*
- *We facilitate exchanges within our community and with other communities*
- *We mobilise all necessary resources for the realisation of our dream, starting with our own.*

Documenting the dream is important to refer to this **unifying vision** at every step of the process, to **celebrate progress**, and for the community to **share** its dream, **change it** at any time if it deems it appropriate, and **inspire** other communities. It is right and important that **the dream should evolve over time**. It should be revisited regularly.





Participants in the Tananarivo dream-building session draw their individual dreams, October 2015.



Step 3: Where are we now?

The self-assessment

This step can easily be facilitated in one half-day session.

1. What is the self-assessment?

The community strives to determine its current level of competence with respect to its challenge. Community members hold a discussion for all practices they previously formulated, and decide, based on what is being done now, **where they stand for each practice** (on a scale of 1 to 5), **and where they would like to stand in roughly 3 months' time**. Once they know where they are and where they are headed, they can begin to plan “**small doable actions**” to carry out over the next 3 months or so by mobilising their own resources first.

2. Why the self-assessment?

The self-assessment **helps the community get a good understanding of its current position with respect to its challenge**. Once we understand where we are now and where we want to be, we can think about the action that we can take that will move us in the right direction.

The self-assessment serves as a kind of looking-glass for the community, whereby they can **genuinely explore their**

current level and identify the priority practices that will help them move closer to their dream.

3. How to proceed with self-assessment⁴ ?

- The community recalls its **dream** and re-reads the 10 **practices** formulated beforehand. Collectively, community members decide on **their current level of competence** for each practice. Level 1 is the lowest level, and level 5 is the top level (see scale on page 60).
- Out of the 10 practices, the community decides on **3 priority practices**, and then determines the **projected level** they wish to attain in 3 months' time.
- Facilitators take good care to **illustrate the 5 levels** using a simple example (such as washing hands or exercising).
- Ask participants to give their own estimation (based on experience) of **the community's level for each practice** (experience has shown that it is easier for participants to position themselves if you start by confronting them with the “dream” level 5- they will then be more inclined to do a realistic appraisal of their competence).

⁴ Go to Appendix 1 for different ways of facilitating this step.

- Conduct a **group discussion** for each practice with free expression, and not a discussion for each level.
- **Do not resort to a vote to validate levels**, but let the discussions drag on if it needs to (the more engagement at this stage, the more commitment later!).
- Ask people to **justify levels by using concrete examples**, and regularly remind them of the definition of each level if need be.
- Be wary of the possibility of a **group leader trying to impose his/her level and/or priority**.
- Remind participants that the goal is to then move towards doable actions, and that therefore the appraisal of the current level should be realistic- we are not trying to get the highest possible “grades” here. Rather, it is an opportunity to look into the mirror at ourselves, see where we are at and decide where we want to move from here on out.
- Split participants into smaller groups if necessary (youth, young girls, men, women, etc.). In this case, allow for enough time for plenary discussion.
- Invite participants to give their opinion on the level of the **community as a whole**.
- Make sure everyone has a **chance to speak**.
- There will be **dissent**- don't panic, this is perfectly normal and expected at this stage.
- Always remind participants to base their arguments on experiences and facts. This is an exercise in **consensus-building**, so not votes!
- Be **very thorough when picking the level for each practice**; don't hesitate to remind participants of the definition for each level.

2. When choosing priority practices

- **Allow for plenty of time**- the richer the discussion, the richer participants' understanding of the term “competence”.
- Each practice has an impact on the others: encourage the community to pick the ones that will have the **greatest impact on their overall competence** with regard to their challenge.

Practical advice :

1. During the discussion on levels

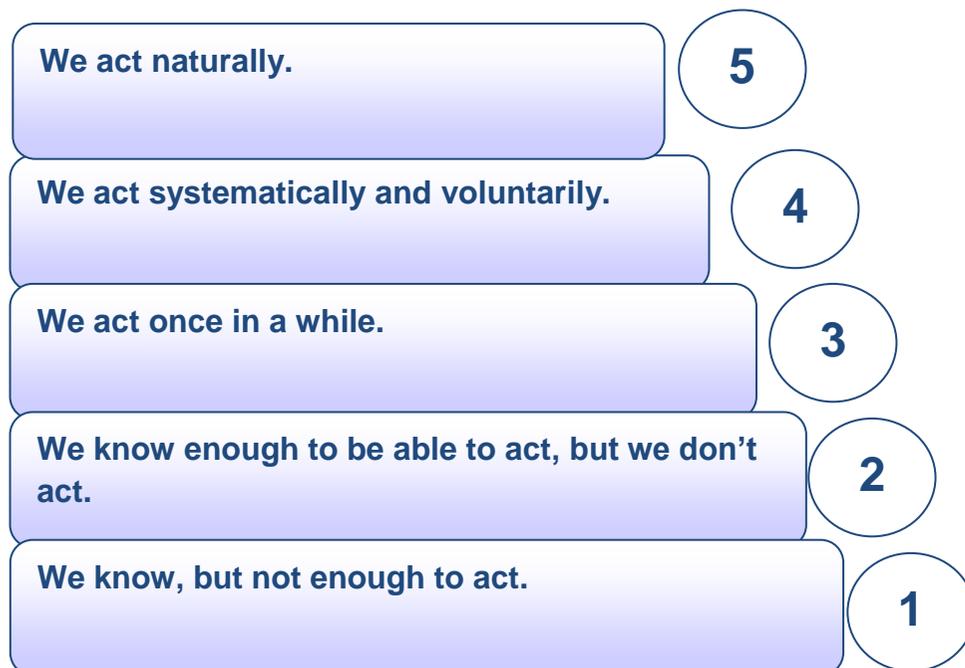
- Make sure there is a **common understanding of the concept of “community”** (eg. our village, hospital staff, family, parish, NGO, etc.).



Search for Common Ground community agents in Saint-Augustin, Southern Madagascar



5 levels against which to measure our community competence:



Example of a self-assessment framework:

Levels/ Practices	1	2	3	4	5
<i>We recognise that the challenge is our own</i>		X			
<i>We involve all stakeholders affected by the challenge</i>			X		
<i>We take effective action related to the issue</i>		X			
<i>We regularly take stock and adapt our actions</i>				X	
<i>We organise ourselves for maximum efficiency</i>		X			

Between the self-assessment and the action plan: identifying obstacles to change!

This is a transitional stage between the self-assessment and the action plan. We have developed a common vision for our village / hamlet, and we now know where we stand today in relation to this ideal vision.

Why is it that we have not yet reached our dream?

This question can be asked towards the end of the self-assessment session, or else the facilitation team may decide to organise a **specific community dialogue** to address this issue in more depth.

This is an opportunity to **talk openly about everything that can impede change** in our community: poverty, traditional customs, conflict, taboos, etc.

This stage particularly shows the importance of the **advocacy** done during the preparatory step before the community dialogue began, especially with those traditionally looked up to as **standard-guarantors** (traditional/spiritual leaders etc.). Indeed, they have an important part to play at this stage, for instance if it surfaces that some local traditions (eg. isolating young 12

year-old girls from the family home for fear of incest) have been identified by the community as an obstacle to, say, the community's common aspiration to offer its children safety, health and education.

In this case, said **traditional leaders will be invited to discuss with community members**, assuring them of the importance of questioning certain customs in view of **improving the quality of life** of the villagers and their children.



Step 4 – What are we going to do?

The action plan

This step can easily be performed in a half day.

Why do we need an action plan?

When we formulate an action plan, it is much more likely that we will act to implement it. The purpose of an action plan is setting, and implementing, activities that will help us reach our target level for each priority practice.

How to plan?

Community members agree on:

1. The priority practices they want to focus on (2 or 3 at a time).
2. The actions they want to take to achieve the desired levels (2 or 3 per priority practice).
3. A schedule with deadlines by which to reach target level for each practice (short and medium term, 3 to 6 months).
4. Indicators (1 or 2) to measure progress, which will tell them whether or not they have reached each target level.

For each priority practice, indicate the following in the action plan:

- The **priority practice** identified during the self-assessment, current level and projected level, and the action or activities that the community proposes to set up (what?)
- The **strategy** that the community will use (how?)
- The **person responsible** for each activity (who?)
- The **people concerned/impacted** by the activity (with whom?)
- The **location** of the activity (where?)
- The **deadline and/or frequency** of the activity (when?)
- Optional: Quantitative and qualitative **indicators** to assess the activity.



- Optional: **Sources of verification** such as activity reports, records, attendance lists, survey forms, testimonials, etc.

Action Plan

Priority practice :	
Current level :	Target level in 3/6 months:
What actions ?	
How? Strategies	
Who? Responsible person/people	
With whom? People concerned/impacted	
Where? Location	
When? Deadlines Frequency	
Indicators	
Sources of verification	

1. When planning

- **Spend more time planning progress** than assessing current levels.
- In their first self-assessment, communities tend to indicate levels that are much higher than what is realistic. **Confront them with the facts.**
- Do not try to meet community needs yourself, but rather **help the community tap into surrounding resources** (This is the "L" in SALT!).
- Encourage the selection of practices that have a **multiplier, snowball effect**, those that will bring about **rapid and visible change**, and activities for which **the community has experience**: it's much more motivating! Encourage **small doable actions** which do not require big structural changes.

2. When planning

- **Spend more time planning progress** than assessing current levels.
- In their first self-assessment, communities tend to indicate levels that are much higher than what is realistic. **Confront them with the facts.**
- Do not try to meet community needs yourself, but rather **help the community tap into surrounding resources** (This is the "L" in SALT!).
- Encourage the selection of practices that have a **multiplier, snowball effect**, those that will bring about

rapid and visible change, and activities for which **the community has experience**: it's much more motivating!

Encourage **small doable actions** which do not require big structural changes.

Monitoring community action: Measuring progress

Our principles

- Every community has what it takes to **measure its own progress**.
- The heart of what we do is about **ownership**, for a community to own its life challenges and its progress.
- Each person measures the indicators of the activities they are **responsible** for.

On the importance of measuring progress

- Progress measurement is first and foremost an internal requirement to check whether we- the community- are moving the right direction and at the right pace towards the vision we set ourselves.
- It is an essential part of any learning cycle.

What is a progress indicator?

It is a **verifiable** element that helps check whether the implementation of an action plan is on track. The indicator can be qualitative or quantitative.

What is an indicator?

The indicator allows the community to measure progress and an **outside observer to double check on this development**.

For each activity, the community can choose an indicator that will help check where they are with respect to reaching the target level in their action plan.

What is a good indicator?

A good indicator is:

- **Relevant**: it actually measures to what extent the activity is bringing us closer to the target level
- **Clear**: it must be defined in local language and understood by all
- **Verifiable** by the community: checking the indicator should be doable by the community itself at low cost.

The facilitators can always help community members find appropriate indicators if that proves difficult.

What is the value of an indicator?

The indicator can be measured quantitatively or qualitatively. It is preferable that the community chooses **a mix of quantitative and qualitative indicators** to measure change.

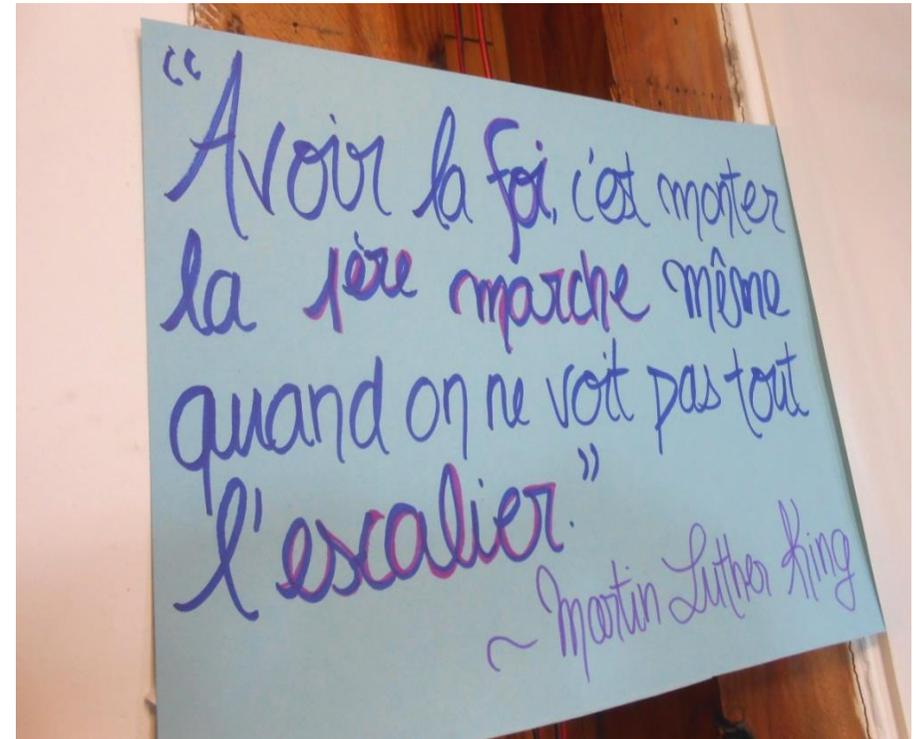
Examples:

Quantitative indicator: number of meetings held / number of meetings planned, % of people present, etc.

Qualitative indicator: the party was held, the shed was built, etc.

Step 5 : Let's do it! Action !

The community acts by itself, facilitators accompany its action and regularly follow up on progress made, particularly during consultation meetings. Such meetings allow for sharing, participatory monitoring of activities and constant adaptation.



"Faith is taking the first step even if you don't see the whole staircase." Martin Luther King



Step 6: Where did we get to? Are we making progress?

New self-assessment

This step should not take more than a half day.



We have reached the deadline set in our action plan. It is time to take stock.

Have we moved closer to our dream? Have we achieved our goals?

We evaluate our actions. We go through a new self-assessment of our practices and in particular those on which we have

worked.

We are then ready to tackle a new cycle:

- either starting all over with the first step ("Who are we?") if our community has changed (new members, departures, etc.)
- or with the dream stage (stage 2), if we realise we would

like to strengthen/deepen/modify our dream
— directly through to a new action plan (step 4)
— or, perhaps we feel ready to share our experiences with others (step 7)



Step 7:
What did we learn? What can we share and how?

Learning Festival and Knowledge Assets

This is a milestone to celebrate, share and learn. It should preferably last for a minimum of two days (ideally three days).

Constellation uses a range of knowledge management tools in its work to ensure that individuals, communities and organisations **learn from their experiences** and that what is learned is shared as widely as possible.

There is a wealth of knowledge based on a large number of **individual experiences**.

A Knowledge Asset is composed of a set of common principles derived from lessons learned from our stories of change, and which reveal the **best practices** that emerged from the active process (experience of implementing the "small doable actions"). Each principle is illustrated by specific experiences. And, in turn, each of these experiences is supported by the individuals who told the story, and for whom we have contact details.

The verification sources could include illustrative documents, panels, articles, audio or video clips, etc.

During a Knowledge Festival, communities can **exchange experiences** and document them in the shape of "Knowledge Assets". It is also possible to **organise "Peer Assists" between communities**. The idea is to connect different communities, based on the assumption that the strengths of the ones can also benefit others. Take a community that is very strong in a given practice, for instance. This community can share its experience with another community which is still at level 1 for a similar practice. This could be a great **opportunity to learn**.

A Learning Festival is an activity that can generate Knowledge Assets. Participants may be organisations, grassroots communities, the staff of the health zones, etc.

The following is the methodology for the organisation of a Learning Festival.
NB. The most important thing about a Learning Festival is to **base it on sharing experiences, NOT opinions**.

Methodology of a Learning Festival

1. Learning to tell stories

It is important to learn how best to share our experience. If we can tell our story in a way that is compelling, others can learn from us and we can make the most out of our exchanges.

There are different ways of learning how to fine-tune our stories:

- **Stories carousel:** Participants are put into groups of 3-4. Each person has **3 minutes** to tell a **story of change**. Facilitators make a sign when the 3 minutes are over. Once everyone has told their story, participants leave their group and start a new group of 3-4 people. Everyone now only has 2 minutes to tell the same story all over again. Repeat this a third time. Participants will have told their story three times, in 3 minutes the first time, **then in 2 minutes twice**. After the exercise, gather the participants together and brainstorm about **what makes a story good**.
- **Stories in teams:** Participants are divided into small groups and each person shares a story of change in which they were involved and that they are proud of.

The team members **help the person improve his/her story** by asking for more details on parts of the story, clarifying the facts, etc.

2. Establishing groups

Facilitators provide a **set of themes** (process steps, self-assessment practices, or other) that will interest participants. They display the themes on the wall and **participants register in groups where they feel they have something to share**. Facilitators retain the most requested topics.

The groups will consist of approximately **8 people**. Before splitting into groups, facilitators show an example of a **knowledge asset** to illustrate the end result.

3. Defining a common vision for the practice or theme

The first step is to **define an ideal situation for the practice/theme**. This is important to ensure that we are talking about the same thing and that the experiences we share enable progress toward the dream.

Participants briefly share what the ideal situation would be for the theme. Facilitators note key ideas. After about 30 minutes, the facilitator provides a formulation of this

ideal in **1-3 sentences that capture the group's ideas**. The group may suggest adding or changing things until a consensus is reached.

4. Peer discussion to share experiences

Each person in the group shares his/her experience in connection with the theme. What they share is based on experience and not on opinions. The previously-defined “**ideal**” **situation** may be used as an entry point into the discussion- the experience we share should show a way to move closer to this ideal. Ask participants to **focus on the common principles** rather than on the differences.

The facilitator asks questions to identify the **most important lesson** we can learn from this experience. If the shared experience is too conceptual, the facilitator asks the person to give a **concrete example**. Interesting experiences are often experiences that speak of change. Through their questions, facilitators should always try to **stimulate discussion around the trigger for this change**.

The facilitator notes key words linked to the experience. They also note the **main lesson** derived from the story. The lesson learned is formulated as an **"if ... then ..." statement**.

5. Identify common principles

Once everyone has shared his experience, the group identifies **common principles**. Formulate common principles using "if ... then ..." statements.

Every story should produce a principle (lesson learned). Review the principles as if you were someone outside the discussion and see if they are understandable.

Building a Knowledge Asset (best practices)

Theme/practice:	Common dream:		
Principles	Illustrations	Contact details (of storyteller)	Video

6. Capture individual stories

Once the common principles have been identified with stories connected to each principle, participants capture their experience on paper or video (depending on material available and personal preference).

Every story should have an attractive title and a length of approximately 200 words. The video lasts about 2 minutes, maximum 3. If the person takes more time, start again so as to reduce the length of the video.

*Common principles lead to the dream

** Illustrations/stories lead to principles





C. Monitoring and measuring progress

1. Formative accompaniment for facilitators.

The facilitation teams working on the ground will be continuously **accompanied, supported and strengthened by coaches** working alongside them.

In addition, they will also need to **feel continuous support from actors of the intermediate (district and regional) and central levels.**

In order to appreciate the work being done in the field, gradually strengthen the teams' facilitation skills through mentorship as well as gather necessary information from the field, it is essential to work towards a **clear schedule in terms of formative accompaniment for facilitators.** This schedule should be written up so as to avoid potential overlap with important activities and events occurring during the year throughout the country (eg. immunisation campaigns, etc.)

Such accompaniment is very different from traditional supervision, and that should be made clear to facilitators, coaches and officers of intermediate and central levels, as **maintaining an atmosphere of solidarity and volunteerism within the teams is of the utmost importance.** What this is is an appreciation of the volunteers' work, and support meant to serve as **capacity-building.** It has nothing to do with hierarchical relationships between superiors and their subordinates, and such an interpretation could lead to frustration on the part of the volunteers and the fear of receiving administrative functions if their work was found wanting.

2. Joint monitoring and evaluation between different coordination levels

Both **consultation frameworks** between actors of **coordination** at different levels and **community consultation frameworks** should be **functional and in regular interaction.**

A **unified schedule** should be set up when work is organised in order to anticipate potentially disturbing events for the community (flood, epidemic, pandemic, drought, social conflict, etc.)

Such a schedule could enable monitoring and evaluation activities to take place in the best possible conditions, in

a way that they do not overlap with other activities in the field and are led jointly by the different actors concerned (actors of the State, bilateral and multilateral partners and civil society organisations).

In this light, monitoring and evaluation will be an **effective way to check on the efficiency** of activities, to double-check **information** at different levels of coordination, ensure **data collection** and facilitate the adoption of **emergency measures** when and if needed.

3. Capacity-building

Should this national monitoring mechanism work well, it should facilitate a clear overview of field activities through a SWOT analysis (**strengths-weaknesses-opportunities-threats**), allowing for regular checks on necessities with respect to **capacity-building in terms of human, material and financial resources**.

Several tools remain to be developed or harmonised with existing tools in order to proceed to **capacity-building**, if necessary, **at every operational level** starting from the base through to each consultation framework and different levels of coordination, monitoring, etc.





Conclusion

We are both at the beginning and at the end of a beautiful journey...

In the traditions of the Mossi people of Burkina Faso, there is an interesting way of representing death: it is a birth in the world "upside-down gaze" (the world below, that of the ancestors).

This manual, for us, it is both the end of a long collective process of meetings, appreciation, and dreams of co-creation, but also the birth of a community dialogue approach that followed a harmonised approach with stakeholders.

This bourgeoning tool will require a lot of care and attention before it can become a healthy and confident child, and an adult who ultimately transforms his or her own world, and eventually THE world.

We all know this: social change is a long process.

In the Constellation, our assumption is that we human beings act in a sustainable manner for our own development if and only if we consider our challenges as belonging to us fully, if we own them and therefore take our full responsibilities in relation to them.

Our experience after more than ten years is that from the moment this manual will start to be implemented in any given community, it will take two years of active commitment on the

part of all stakeholders involved (communities, facilitators, coaches and coordinators, but also political and administrative authorities, religious and traditional leaders at different levels) to achieve real ownership and sustainability of actions that can bring lasting social change to the community. The positive effects of SALT are visible much faster (both individually and collectively): enthusiasm, improving self-esteem, desire to act, action, learning from experience, desire to share, sharing, desire to inspire others, transfer, ... May we remember to celebrate progress at every milestone, to keep nourishing the desire to move gradually towards our common dream: Malagasy communities that are healthy and autonomous in all their challenges in life! Sounds like something Blaise Sedoh likes to say, let us "we should always work towards our own disappearance"...

It is this journey we (Constellation) pledge to be by your side from near and far every step of the way to keep nourishing the soil, watering, and supporting you in nurturing this seed which we all hope will one day become a strong and beautiful tree, watered with the water of community dialogue!

SALTily yours,

Blaise, Cécilia, Laurie and Jean Baby.

The Constellation : want to find out more?

Visit our website:
www.communitylifecompetence.org
Sign up to our online community of practice
www.aidscompetence.ning.com



Misaotra !

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APPENDIX 1 : The facilitator's toolbox



Technique for splitting participants into smaller groups: participants count off, each saying one number depending on where they are sitting (eg : first one = 1, his neighbor = 2, next person = 3 and then we start again).

Then, all of the number ones group together, the twos together, and the threes form a third sub-group. Alternative would be that the first 1-2-3 trio is a subgroup, and so on.

Technique to make sure everybody has their turn to speak and be listened to: in the group, circulate a “talking piece”, and only the person holding it may speak, the others listen deeply. Usually it is best to make it travel clockwise, and only the facilitator may intervene at any time and ask for the talking piece (to help reframe something, or deal with a conflict, etc.).

Different ways of facilitating the dream:

- The **dream as a drawing**: this is the method which was presented in this Manual; it is Constellation’s most used.
- **Dreaming through “human sculptures”**: this exercise works best in smaller groups (15 people maximum). Rather than going for individual dream-drawings that are then shared in groups, this exercise starts off with one person feeling inspired, someone who has a clear vision of their dream for the community. This person will be the "sculptor", and the others agree to become his/her "clay"; giving their permission for the sculptor to “carve” them. The idea is to create an image with the bodies of the participants, one which represents our vision for our community in 15-30 years’ time.

In silence, the sculptor shows each clay-person how she/he would like them to stand/sit/lay/etc. (either through mirroring, or physically by placing different body parts in the right position).

Once the sculptor is happy with the result, they “let go of their creation” and offer it up to the other participants to hear their interpretation of it. The facilitator asks the observers what they see (each person can leave the image in turns to get an overall view of it), and what inspiration they gather from it for their dream community.

The facilitator can also come and tap on the shoulder of one "statue" or another and ask them how they feel, what they think they represent, etc.

Thus a dream idea emerges gradually. To one side, a facilitator is taking down keywords, and perhaps also taking pictures of the image created by the sculptor. The sculptor says nothing. At the end of the first round of comments, the sculptor is prompted to decide whether she/he wants to change his/her work it appears that the message was not clear enough.

New round of observations.

The facilitator then asks the community if this dream is somewhere in their dreams too? If someone is burning with a different proposal, then they can step in as a new sculptor and

propose an alternate image. The same process is used to generate the observations of the group.

This technique often brings out surprising things from the community- unsuspected power struggles, hidden intolerance, or on the contrary a very strong solidarity. It can also arouse strong emotions, and so facilitators must be prepared to face such situations! It is important to document the image by taking photos, as this photo will also be used in reporting, and the group can look back on it regularly and take stock.

- **The free creative dream:** Here we use the same principle as for the dream drawing. First everyone has some time for an individual reflection, then sharing is done in small groups (helped by a “talking piece” where necessary).

For the presentation of the dreams of each group in plenary, the facilitator gives the instruction that they are "free to be as creative as they want to be" in the manner in which they choose to present their dream.

This opens the door to all sorts of little improvisations, songs, dances, rhythmic movements etc.

A dialogue is initiated at the end of the presentations around the central question: what did you notice that was common to all these dreams? What can we take away as a common vision? How would that look? Anyone care to represent this common vision in a drawing/small play, song, etc.?

Again, here we must ensure that we capture the common dream in whatever shape or form (video, photo, drawing, text, etc.).

Different ways of doing self-assessment:

- **Individual self-assessment:** this is the self-assessment as it was done during the harmonisation workshop in Tana in October. Before anything else, the facilitator explains the five levels of self-assessment using a simple example (ie. washing hands, brushing teeth, exercising etc.). Then, we go back to the basis for our reflection (which could be our common definition of community dialogue as was the case here, or one of the practices we developed from our dream). The facilitator asks everyone to take a moment to reflect on his/her own level in relation to their own personal practice. One way to make sure their answer comes out spontaneously is to make them move around the space freely, then stop them, ask them to close their eyes... and count to three. On three, everyone should raise their right hand with the appropriate number of fingers representing the level they think they are at (on a scale of 1 to 5). The facilitator will walk in space and ask people here and there to express the "why" of their position. Another

facilitator captures the participants' responses by jotting them down and/or recording them.

- **Collective self-assessment of 10 practices:**

The group has chosen ten practices for their dream. The facilitator writes each practice on a separate A4 sheet that is stuck to the wall in a vertical column on the left. Along the wall, placed on a horizontal line, are 5 A4 sheets with each a figure which corresponds to the different levels.

For each practice, the facilitator will take the sheet with the corresponding practice and slide along different levels, asking each time: Is this the correct level? The participants shout "yes!" or "not at all!" and the facilitator asks them to justify by sharing facts/experiences which back up this level. This is done for each practice and the facilitator takes note of the level selected for each practice.

- **"Traditional" self-assessment:** participatory discussion for each practice, participants collectively decide the current level following discussions moderated by facilitators. This is what was described in this Manual.

Ice breakers

- **The Great Wind Blows!**

Participants are sitting on their chairs in a circle formation

A facilitator standing in the middle explains the game: the goal is to move and have fun while also getting to know one another.

The rules are as follows: each time the facilitator says a sentence, all the people who recognise themselves in the sentence (ie. Who would have answered yes if the statement were asked in the shape of a question) need to get up and hurry across the space to find a new chair to sit on.

E.g. Of sentences if this ice-breaker is used just before the dream phase: "The Great Wind Blows for all those who once dreamed they had magical powers!", "all those who had dreams when they were kids", "those who have made their childhood dreams come true", "those who agree that there is no innovation without imagination" etc.

The game gets harder and harder as it goes, because, once they have asked all the questions they wanted to ask, facilitators subtly begin removing chairs... thus one person is left standing each time! It is this person's turn to find a sentence and say "the Great Wind Blows for those who..."

- **"Sticky" game:** participants are in twos, facing one another with two skewers sticks held by the tip of the index fingers. The goal is to make harmonious arm and body movements without dropping the sticks
- Participants find a way to **sort themselves out by size**, month of birth, hair size, shoe size, hand size, eye color.

- **Get in shape!** Three small jumps forward, backward and sideways. Repeat 3x.
Run very quickly with small steps on the spot.
- Everyone says **three important numbers** that bear significance to them and explain why (birthday, anniversary, number of children, date of a change, age, symbolic figure ...)
- **Stand with arms extended.** Everyone twists their left arm backwards as far as possible. Arms back along the body, and close your eyes. Imagine that our arm reaches 50 cm further. Open your eyes and repeat the exercise. Our arm extends much further! Conclusion: we can all do much better than what we think we are capable of! “Once you believe it, then you will see it!”
- **Silent pause** : short meditation exercise. We close our eyes for one minute of silence, afterwards each person says one word that comes up for them when thinking of the workshop/day/week (whatever is appropriate for the situation).
- **Equilateral triangles:** all participants are standing in a large space. They are allowed to move. Each person secretly chooses 2 other participants, and tries to form an equilateral triangle with them (together they are the three corners of the triangle). After a good deal of moving around, the group stabilizes itself. We then ask one person to elave the group: observe how the system works to find balance again. Observation: the natural balancing mechanism of systems, changing one element means inducing change in the entire system- it

is important for us to be able to get through moments of instability or discomfort.

- **The quality game:** Everyone thinks of two qualities that describe their state of mind this morning and lays them down in each of their open palms. A volunteer gets up stretches one hand out and says the quality that sits there. Everyone whose hand held a similar quality gets up, and their hand is stacked on top of the volunteer’s. The same is done with the volunteer’s second hand. If after that not everybody has gotten up, another volunteer shares their hands’ qualities, and so on until all of our hands are linked.
- **The tick-tock game:** In a circle, the leader passes a stick to their neighbour, saying “this is a tick”. The neighbour gives the stick back and says “a what?” And the leader says “a tock”. The second person then passes it on to a third person, saying “this is a tick”. The third person gives the stick back, saying a whatN The second person gives the stick back to the initial leader and says “a what”? And the leader gives the stick back to the second person saying “a tock”. The second person gives the stick to the third person saying “a tock”, but the third person gives the stick to a fourth person saying “this is a tick”. The neighbour asks “a what?”, and so and so forth. Once the game has been going for a few minutes, the facilitator can decide to make things more complicate dby adding a second stick going in the opposite direction, starting with the same leader as initially. The situation gets extremely complicated, and just as fun!

- **The castaway:** Divide participants into small groups (4-7 people). You are going to be cast away on an island, and you can only bring 5 objects with you, which would you bring? Each team must decide on the objects, knowing that it is a total of 5 objects per team, and not per person. After about 10 minutes of deliberation, the larger group is reunited and the facilitator asks each team to present and defend their choice of objects. This activity is a way to discover people's values and problem-solving strategies while encouraging team work.
- **“Never have I ever”:** Participants are sitting in a circle, and each receives some “initial capital” (in the shape of fruits, candy, nuts, etc.). Each participant has a round of saying “Never have I ever...” and sharing something they have never done. All those who have done what this person has never done give them one piece of candy/a fruit etc. A fun way to learn interesting things about others.
- **What we've got in common:** Divide participants into teams of 4-6 people, and give each team 5 minutes to come up with a list of things that all of the group members have in common. Ask them to avoid obvious things such as “we are all in this room right now”. After 5 minutes, teams share the common things they came up with, and specifically what was interesting about the exercise/their findings..
- **Storytelling:** Participants are standing in a circle. The goal of the game is to create a story with each participant's contribution.
Each person says a sentence that:
 - builds on what was said previously, makes sense and brings something fun to the story
 - is built in a single sentence
 - is grammatically correct
 The game continues until each person has given their contribution, or until the facilitator thinks the story is straying.
- **Ball Games**
 1. Pass a ball around as fast as possible between participants without it ever falling to the ground
 2. Ask each player to say a word (the first word that comes to mind) as they pass the ball around. Word choice usually tells you something about the person or situation.
 3. Pick a theme and pass the ball round. When a person catches the ball, they make a statement that is linked to the chosen theme, and then pass the ball to someone else. Keep going until everyone has spoken.
 4. Pass the ball around. Each person who receives the ball should say what they will take away from this SALT visit/series of workshops/etc.
 5. To uncover people's capacity for improvisation and speaking without prior warning.
Participants pass the ball around, each receiver saying a simple descriptive statement such as “the blue lake”, “the little girl”, “the big bad wolf”, etc. The facilitator stresses that there is no such thing as a wrong answer.

Keep going until everyone appears to be at ease with it. Then add the following rule: the statement you speak must come and complete the statement that was said before yours (eg. “the lake is blue - and the water is cold”).

- ***Your favourite animal***

1. Ask participants to think, silently, about their favourite animal.
2. Then, ask them to sort themselves out from the tallest to the shortest animal, without speaking. Group members are only allowed to make gestures or sounds to imitate their animal.
4. Once the group is sorted out, ask each person to say out loud which animal they represented.

- ***Animal sounds:*** useful for making smaller groups.

1. Write animal names on an index card. Prepare at least two cards for each animal, or more if you want to create more sub-groups (one card per sub-group).
2. Hand out one card per participant and tell them that at least one other person has received the same card.
3. Ask each person to start making the sound their animal makes. Participants are all making animal sounds.
4. Now, each participant needs to listen to the others' sounds and try to find the person who has the same animal as them.

- **If I were...:**

Go around the table: each participant introduces themselves through one of their heroes (historical figure, fictional hero, animal, etc.) and explains the qualities that they admire in their hero and the extent to which such qualities could be useful to them in their personal and/or professional life. E.g. “My hero is Leonardo Da Vinci, who found innovative ideas through observing his surroundings. This quality is very useful to me when I’m looking for new ideas, I like to observe nature and I get ideas through analogy.”

- **Scale of values**

Draw an imaginary line on the floor, and explain that one end of the line represents the figure 10 and the other represents figure 1. Then, ask the following question: “With respect to our current project, how would you position your implication on a scale of 1 to 10?” Participants place themselves on the line according to their implication. The facilitator can then question a few “outliers” (people who are standing on their own somewhere) and a couple of “mainstream” participants to find out why they are standing where they are standing.

- **Come rain, come shine!**

Participants are standing in a circle, the facilitator is in the centre of the circle. The facilitator explains that

whenever he/she is in front of someone, that person must make the same gesture as him/her.

1. The facilitator rubs his hands together, and as he/she runs to every person around the circle, the sound of rubbing hands sounds like the wind, the facilitator says “to you hear the great wind blowing?”
2. The facilitator now snaps his/her fingers (both hands, one after the other, fast). Same process, “can you hear the rain patting the roof?”
3. The facilitator now slaps his/her thighs, one after the other in quick succession. Same process, “the rain is pouring down heavily now, do you hear it?”
4. The facilitator now jumps, both feet hitting the ground at the same time, repeatedly. “What is that? Can you hear thunder? This is turning into a serious storm !”
5. Then, little by little, the facilitator reverses the process: thunder becomes heavy rain (thigh slaps), then gentle rain (finger snaps), wind (hands rubbing), and then, finally, clear blue skies and warm sunshine (silence). Aaaaah!

- A game to get a discussion going around shared responsibility, the roles of leader/follower, team work, etc. : **“Colombian hypnosis”**

Participants are broken off into pairs, and each pair decides who is B and who A. For the first round, B will be the leader, and A will follow.

Instructions: the follower must keep their nose +/- 15 cm from the leader’s hand at all times! The leader is responsible for making sure no harm comes to the follower, as other people will be moving around the space, too.

Pairs start to move around in the space, with A following B. After about 3 minutes, the roles are reversed: A becomes the leader, and B follows.

3 minutes later, the facilitator gives the following instruction: “now, both A and B will be leader and follower all at once. The idea is to try and find some kind of a ‘dance’ between the two of you, with no imposition from either party and without speaking. Try it out!”

This exercise demands a good dose of “letting go”, as well as the ability to trust one another, to listen deeply (with our whole body)- all essential parts of team work.

Interesting to start a discussion on the topic of “leading and being led”. Some examples of questions the facilitator could ask afterwards:

- Did it feel more comfortable leading or being led? Why?
- Did you feel something that surprised you during the exercise? When and what was it?
- How was it finding a “common dance” with your partner without speaking?

- Can parallels be drawn between this exercise and real life? Leadership? Community work?

- Is building a consensus easy? What are the ingredients to help us reach an understanding?

- ***Games to address differences and create the conditions for a genuinely human exchange***

1. ***Halves:***

The participants and the facilitator are sitting in a circle on the floor. The facilitator begins by asking everyone to imagine they've got a line going down from the top of their head all the way down to the bottom of their body, separating them in two halves.

Participants get in pairs with their circle neighbour. The facilitator asks the pairs to look at one another and **find physical similarities** between one half of their own body and the half of their neighbour's body that is closest to it (eg. my right half and your left half). After a couple of minutes, we go around the circle once and each pair shares one physical resemblance.

Same exercise, but this time the resemblance is not physical, we talk to the person and try to find **something we have in common with them**, for instance something we have both done, or something we both love.

Sharing circle: was this exercise easy or difficult? What are the similarities that we found? Were we surprised?

2. ***Only me:***

Each person first takes some time to think about something they think they have done that **they think no-one else in the room has even done**.

In turns, each participant comes to the centre of the circle and says their "only me" item out loud ("I think I'm the only one who has ever ...").

If someone else has done the same thing, they shout "**Me too!**" and either (depending on the level of comfort of the group, customs and religious rules, etc.) just gets on the lap of the person in the middle, or simply comes to stand next to them. There may be several "bingos".

- ***Examples of exercises to introduce ourselves as human beings:***

— In plenary, each person **chooses an animal** to describe themselves, explaining their choice.

— **Postcards** are laid out on the floor or on a table. In pairs, everyone chooses a postcard that speaks to them, and that inspires them to talk about themselves. One person speaks, the other listens attentively, and then the roles are reversed.

After this phase, the facilitator instructs the group to reflect individually on the strengths they have detected in the person while listening to them.

Everyone takes a couple of minutes to reflect and jot a few words on paper if necessary. They then go back to their partner and tell them the strengths they have chosen. The partner can say whether they feel comfortable or not with those words being shared in plenary (some words may be changed)

At the end, in plenary, each person introduces the person they listened to by **describing the strengths they appreciated in the other.**

Discussion: How did we feel during exercise? What have we learned about ourselves, about each other?

— In pairs, each tells the other something about their life (or their life story) that they feel grateful for (or that they are proud of).

— In triads. In turn, each person answers the following question: “What are the challenges I face in my daily life and how, in facing them, do I activate my strengths as a human being?” Once the first person is done telling the story, another person in the group is appointed to reflect what they heard and share their own experience with respect to what was said. Another person is appointed “the observer”, all they do is witness the exchange.

— In pairs, we answer the question: What makes us human?

We discover alternately

* The strengths that make us human

** How we wish to be treated as humans.



"Sculpted dream" of the Constellation's Share team.

At a Learning Festival in Brussels with Belcompetence, we introduce ourselves by throwing a scarf around.



A large, abstract yellow brushstroke graphic that serves as a background for the title text. The strokes are thick and layered, creating a textured, sunburst-like effect.

APENDIX 2 :
Implementation
tools

The Facilitator's Self-Assessment Framework

Level/practice	I have some notions of this, but not enough to act.	I know how to do this, but I don't do it.	I do it every once in a while or have some experience of it	I regularly work in this way, I do it systematically and voluntarily.	I think about this and apply this naturally, it has become a part of who I am and what I do.
	1	2	3	4	5
I trust in local response and on people's capacity to respond to their own challenges. I appreciate people at fair value and I learn from them.					
I creatively use several methods and tools to support people and groups. I use my listening skills and my stimulating and strategic questions to accompany people in their reflection.					
I am transparent about my thoughts and adapt to local situations and each group's own dynamic.					
I create an atmosphere which is conducive to good communication, conflict transformation, decision-making and celebrating success.					
I follow-up on the implementation of people's decisions (i.e. action plans) and ensure monitoring is done and progress measured.					
I encourage other team members to take part and I share my own skills generously.					
I know how to illustrate the concept of SALT and to set up a learning experience that uses the SALT principles.					
I know how to facilitate the full community life competence process (who are we, dream, self-assessment, planning, action and follow-up, sharing of experiences, etc.).					
I know how to develop a knowledge asset and organise a learning festival.					

Monitoring sheet for communities used by local facilitators

Zone:		Time period : November 2015 to April 2016							
N°	Community	CLC Process						Learning Festival ⁵	Observations
		Dream	Self-Assessment	Small doable actions Time frame	Implementa tion of action plan	Measuring progress ⁶	New Self- Assessment		
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
10									

⁵ Opportunity for communities who have applied CLCP to meet and exchange experiences, learn from their experience, and document and distill knowledge gathered from their shared experience (lessons learned grouped into principles for action that are assembled into a knowledge asset, all connected to individual stories)

⁶ Evaluation of community indicators and progress made on action plan 3 months after the start of implementation.

