

Q&A

Online sharing session: **INNOVATION**

14 April 2022

GALS and Youth – Experience in Uganda

1) What are the lessons of youth about the peer-to-peer learning using social media?

The use of social media was only limited to WhatsApp. This allowed youth to manage the content and the group relations. They could determine whom to allow in and establish norms of sharing content to reduce misinformation and mis-use.

The use of WhatsApp strengthened social relationships among young people and particularly between those who didn't have a smart phone and those who had it to share their GALS knowledge and experiences, such as successes and challenges and how they managed to overcome challenges.

2) When developing the happy family tree (or gender balance tree) with the youth, whom did they in most cases indicate as their partners? What were the most common challenges that emerged?

Most youth were married and so they indicated their partners.

Those unmarried were living with their parents and identified themselves as children in the family. They enumerated their role and contribution in the family.

One of the most common challenges faced was unmarried youth influencing their parents on how to access family sources of income to meet their needs. This was especially true for girls within the Muslim community.

3) Does GALS also target the youths who are not part of any other pre-existing youth groups? If yes, what are successes or challenges in that set-up?

Yes, GALS does have various ways of reaching and working with youth for example through targeting households rather than groups or through other community structures like churches, schools.

In general, the success observed when GALS reaches young people is that they adopt the methodology very quickly and that it helps them create income generating activities also at group level. However if pre-existing groups are not used to implement GALS, it might be a bit more challenging for them to develop a group vision and plan. Furthermore, there might be limited room for M&E from the youth champions leading to quality issues on GALS tools application.

4) I liked the idea of using existing platforms of youths. Did you also engage with youth living with disabilities, any challenges?

Some youths were able to reach other youths living with disabilities using peer to peer sharing. In some cases, there was a communication challenge although the use of drawings was very useful to allow communication and transfer the methodology. Another challenge met was the limited association of youths with disabilities with other youths which challenged strengthening of the knowledge and experience as well as peer sharing.

5) How can the lessons of the pilot help project and programmes to engage youth in a more meaningful and deliberate ways? Especially young women who are normally left out.

- There can be a deliberate effort to reach youth depending on the purpose of your intervention (youth as a target group).
- In GALS there are many ways to reach them. However, in the pilot the strategy was to reach youth who were already organized in groups and this is also recommended as a strategy.
- Others can be deliberately reached through the peer sharing. Youth can be asked and challenged to identify such youth who are in their families or communities. It depends on the purpose of your intervention.
- You can use role model approach to enable young people getting closer to the successful ones and being trained in GALS.
- You need to adjust facilitation to youth (see point below and [GALS and youth guide](#)).

6) What are the major differences between introducing GALS to youth and introducing GALS to adults?

Introducing GALS to youth requires special arrangements to keep them motivated, such as:

- Paying more attention to making learning fun by enhancing the use of dance and drama and songs;
- Reducing time of training;
- Having youth training youth;
- Using examples of youth who have succeeded;
- Integrating GALS into livelihood projects that will make them focus on income generating activities (this is attractive for youth);
- Using technology for peer sharing.

Adults are more patient and focus more on their lives and households. They can take on more hours of learning but it has to be more focused on their livelihood.

FALS in VSLAs – Experience in Nigeria

7) What is a VSLA?

Village Savings and Loan Association.

8) What is the difference between FALS and GALS?

FALS and GALS are very similar in terms of facilitation principles and tools. The main difference is that FALS is more focused on visual and participatory financial planning and management skills, to apply/or use loans for the intended purpose. It also helps community members to make informed decision and timely repayment of loan with diagrams detailing financial commitment in figures unlike GALS.

9) When you applied FALS, did you use the same GALS steps or did you use additional steps or tools?

FALS tools are a build-up from GALS which originated from Participatory Action Learning System (PALS) by Linda Mayoux. So, the steps and principles are the same. Besides, the vision journey, the Happy Family Tree (with little addition compared to the usual tree), the Financial Empowerment Map and the Business Challenge Action Tree that look similar to GALS, there is another tool that applies to just FALS. This is the Financial Management Calendar which follows different steps as it focuses more on providing the participants with the financial knowledge and, analytical skills needed to apply/or use loans for the intended purpose.

10) Is there a template or manual on FALS Financial Management Calendar? Can we get a copy?

Yes. There are some toolkits developed such as the FALS in VSLAs guide where the Financial Management Calendar can be found: <https://empoweratscale.org/resource-centre/fals-in-vslas-guide/>

And then Linda Mayoux et.al. (2018) Tool 5 Financial Management Calendar

https://gamechangenetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/FALS5_FMCMobile.pdf

11) During gender trainings on access to finance we often face challenges. Even on the need of “separate Pass-books” for wives we face controversies. Did you face similar challenges? How did you manage?

There were challenges around trust within the VSLA groups, particularly for record keeping. Using the FALS tools significantly improved trust also among spouses as it better helps VSLA members to engage their household in financial planning, record keeping and, in the management of their finances.

The Vision Journey and Happy Family Tree plays a key role in this. But also the Financial Management Calendar which further strengthens intra-household relations and joint financial decisions among spouses. They came up with local way of writing figures and using the Financial Management Calendar.

Climate Change & GALS – Experience in Zimbabwe

12) About the champion upscaling process: did you use the 1-5-3-3 exponential system?

We used the 1-3-2-1 exponential system in theory. However, all figures recorded were of farmers reached directly through Training by the project or Gender Champions/Facilitators trained by the project.

13) What is the purpose of the Dream Tree?

The Dream Tree (see [presentation](#)) looks at the broader vision beyond empowering yourself and your household. Its wanting to achieve the greater good. The message is that you cannot be an empowered individual or household that succeeds if the society is failing and the we have all a corporate responsibility to attend to larger social issues like climate change, deforestation, soil erosion, gender based violence, child marriages, teen pregnancies etc. It's about getting a social consciousness beyond the household and community for the greater good of humanity and it helps identify which items require involvement of others beyond the community.

14) Did you start with a soulmate visioning process - either recap of household/community vision or visions of healthy environment? That is the normal principle of GALS to start with positive and not challenges.

Under the Livelihood Food Security Programme (LFSP), we started with the individual visioning and Vision Road Journey which transitioned into a shared household Vision Road Journey. Our emphasis was on improving household efficiency through having shared visions.

Under the Climate Adaption for Rural Livelihoods (CARL) project we started with the vision of a healthy environment which then fed into the household vision. The idea was empowerment at the household or community level based on things they could do by themselves and if they could not, they could go and seek help elsewhere. The focus was not on the challenges but on the possibilities of achieving your dreams despite the challenges.

General questions

15) It was mentioned that increasing financial literacy for women had a positive impact on access to decision making at household level. I wonder, would it also have a positive effect in decision-making also related to plant genetic resource management? Crop management, food production, seed systems?

Yes, absolutely. Financial literacy for women has a positive impact both on household and on group decision making, as it gives them sufficient self-confidence to participate in all household and group planning and make their contribution.

16) What would be the period to move from being a catalyst to a champion? What are the determinants to reduce or increase this period?

There is no specific timeline to become a champion or to catalyze change. All community members are invited during and after the first training to start taking actions planned to change their life and share the methodology with others. Although they are all encouraged to take immediate action not all of them will. Some will take immediate action; others will delay and others will not take any action or will drop the process. Frequent monitoring at the beginning of the process with the purpose of supporting and motivating community members can have a positive effect on the rising of champions and can also reduce the amount of community members that drop the process.

17) What is the methodological approach of GALS?

GALS is a participatory empowerment methodology aimed at economic, social, and political transformation. GALS uses a set of visual tools and principles related to gender, participation and leadership for individuals, households and groups to plan their lives and business and to identify and negotiate their needs and interest for improved and equitable livelihoods and development.

18) How is the methodology being spread, in light of sustainability and without funding?

Replication is mainly done through peer to peer sharing by the champions (community members) and through that, GALS is scaled up even with minimal resources.