

2021/01

Q&A GALS WORKSHOP

15th and 17th December 2020

PREPARED BY:

Empower@Scale project

Hivos
people unlimited



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

01

ARE THERE GALS MANUALS?

Yes. Some manual can be found on the following links:

<https://empoweratscale.org/resource-category/hhm-gals/>

<https://www.oxfamnovib.nl/weman>

02

IF A PARTICIPANT IS UNABLE TO DRAW THE GRAPHICS AND IS UNABLE TO INTERPRET HIS OR HER, WHAT ASSISTANCE CAN BE RENDERED?

Different approaches can be used. Keep always in mind that the only way for one to know how to swim is to actually swim. Taking this into consideration, the following are some approaches to assist participants who say are unable to draw:

- First, it would be important to make the participants understand why they are drawing. This understanding will guide their engagement throughout the process.
- Second, you can encourage this participant to use symbols she/he is familiarized with (symbols are context-dependent). They ought to be encouraged to innovate around this. So, if they have drawn what they can't interpret, they could be asked to instead identify another symbol they can interpret for the same thing and draw this instead.
- Third, encourage participants to draw what they can understand and has meaning for themselves.

03

SOME PARTICIPANTS SHARED THAT THE GALS PROCESS CONSUMES SO MUCH OF THEIR TIME. IS THERE ANYTHING WE COULD DO ABOUT THIS?

Our experience has shown the same. What was done was to enable the community to use already existing activities like Village Loan and Credit Association, Farmer field schools among others. In that sense, they will use their their daily activities to mainstream GALS and use the champions to scale up the GALS into their respective communities. Champions can be motivated by being provided with identification like T-shirts, name tags, Jackets, recognition letter, certificates, practices of GALS tools to change life of households among others.

04

HOW DO YOU USE GALS IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS WITHOUT ALTERING THE PRINCIPLES?

This discussion is key for scaling up. The answer depends on your role (facilitator, project manager project designer, etc.).

- Firstly, start with an adaptation phase. The GALS Catalyst phase was designed as a 6-month process to adapt GALS to a specific local/project context.
- Each of the principles can be used in any context. Finding out how to do it requires to – from the beginning – invite a big majority of people who really need the methodology. Usually these are people living in the more poor and vulnerable situations. This sounds simple but it often requires a lot of negotiation with colleagues, project managers and local leaders.
- To navigate in different contexts requires creativity and good observation skills. Make sure the adaptation process is backed up by an experienced GALS facilitator who fully embraces the principles.
- Rely on participatory introduction of the tools: do not give a template and stand in front to teach. Stand in the back and facilitate participants to discover the tool and draw it the way it is useful for them.
- Local ownership is of course key. When choices need to be made due to lack of time, focus on the tools, exercises and facilitation techniques that participants can replicate by themselves.

05

CAN YOUTH BE CLASSIFIED AS VULNERABLE AND IN DIFFICULT SITUATION? CAN MEN BE CLASSIFIED AS VULNERABLE TOO?

Yes. Youth can be classified as vulnerable when, for example, they do not have employable skills; are not organized; and lack feasible plans. This is very much dependent on the context. Men can also be classified as vulnerable when they live in poor and marginalized conditions.

In that sense, GALS helps everybody: men, women and youth and children to work together both at household and community levels to make a happy life and family that they recognize the opportunities and strengths from each other.

06

WHAT SHOULD BE AVOID TO MAKE GALS SEEN AS A WOMEN'S METHODOLOGY?

This is a very important discussion. It is often a constraint for organizations who normally only target women, or when participants got to know "gender" as "women". The following suggestions can help avoiding this situation:

- Preparations: invite both women and men to the sessions.
- Create a facilitator team that does not have a "gender = women" bias. Preferably have a woman and a man in the facilitator team.
- Be very mindful not to treat women as victims and men as problems. Make sure to identify not only woman as champions of change, but also men as champions and role models.
- Be mindful about content. Do not necessarily use the word gender, but talk about the issues (division of labour, access to and control of assets, freedom from violence, etc). Also, use words like "family", "social relations".
- If needed adapt the names of the tools (identity diamond instead of gender justice diamond, happy family tree instead of gender balance tree etc.). If the name GALS is difficult, phrase as PALS.
- Always make a very clear link between the need to change gender ("social") relations in order to improve livelihoods.

07

HOW CAN WE IMPROVE THE LEVEL OF MOTIVATION? IN SOME CONTEXTS, PEOPLE ARE NOT READY TO PURCHASE NOTEBOOKS AND PENCILS AND ALWAYS FOCUS THEIR ATTENTION ON HARDWARE SUPPORT RATHER THAN PRACTICE GALS AND IMPROVE THEIR KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICES.

This may be a sign that more effort is needed to create community ownership. Participants perhaps still see GALS as an activity of the project instead of an activity for themselves to improve their livelihoods, family welfare and personal development. It can also be a sign that there are issues with targeting. Make sure to first invite people who are most in need of the methodology. People who live in vulnerable / poor situations and who can demonstrate change. That inspires their peers much more than project staff trying to convince them.

08

IF WE ARE NEW IN IMPLEMENTING GALS, WHO COULD BE OUR CHAMPIONS? CAN IT BE SOMEONE FROM THE COMMUNITY THAT WE CONSIDER A CHANGE AGENT?

Champions will emerge as you implement and they can be members of the community and even staff., although usually in GALS the word “champion” is used for community members. It is the role of facilitators to make sure that people living in vulnerable and marginalized situations are strengthened in a role as key change agents rather than beneficiaries of aid.

You will see people who are passionate and beginning to apply the methodology in their lives. Those are your champions. It is important to take into account that champions are often not the people who are dominant and vocal at the beginning of the process, but people who are first shy and silent and later demonstrate the most compelling changes.

09

HOW IS THE SUCCESS OF GALS EVALUATED?

- The Success of GALS is evaluated by the visible changes that are noted and registered by the target community. Since GALS addresses their own identified issues, they are best placed to evaluate and demonstrate how these changes have made a difference or not.
- The success of the methodology can also be evaluated by looking at how far the individual champions have implemented their community outreach maps. During the GALS training, each champion identifies various groups within their reach influence including the local church, local cooperative and other community groups and structures. These are persons and groups that each champion plans to reach.
- The success of the methodology can also be evaluated by use of the Most Significant Change (MSC) Methodology. This tool has been used by many organizations including Hivos and Oxfam Novib. It measures Qualitative changes that happen within the community

10

WHAT ROLE CAN TECHNOLOGY (E.G. SMS, REMINDERS, HOTLINE, VIDEOS ON TABLETS OR PHONES FOR FACILITATORS, WHATSAPP GROUPS) PLAY IN STRENGTHENING GALS IN COMMUNITIES?

The answer to this question is of course linked to the context. The answer included is based on the assumption that community members have access to technology. Digital tools offer a good opportunity especially when working with young people, who tend to feel attracted to technology and social media channels. The following are some ideas of tools that have been used already in projects using the GALS methodology:

- **WhatsApp:** WhatsApp groups can be used to help members of different communities to stay connected (strengthening network). These groups can also be used by community members to share achievements and information about new initiatives (in or outside the project). Furthermore, they can be used by organizations for monitoring and for information purposes (for example, they have been used to share information about workshops or Covid-19 measures) as well as to motivate community members.
- **Facebook:** Facebook can be used to advertise GALS and to increase outreach at community level.
- **Videos:** Video tutorials can be used as refresher trainings and uploaded on YouTube or Websites. Videos can also be used to share testimonies and these can be uploaded to YouTube channels, shared by WhatsApp or used as videos during GALS workshops
- **Phone calls:** Phone calls can be used for monitoring purposes. For example, to collect stories of change.

11

IS THERE A SET OF INDICATORS THAT WE WANT TO MEASURE IN ALL GALS PROGRAMMES, OR PROGRAMMES CAN HAVE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT INDICATORS MEASURED DEPENDING ON COMMUNITIES' CHOICES?

It is important to check local indicators to make sure that these are shaped to better reflect contextual issues and that they are meaningful to community members. It is not only the project monitoring progresses but also community members monitoring themselves. GALS has tools (diamonds) that help identifying these local indicators. However, there are indicators that we see coming back in any projects. For example: access to and decision-making power over productive resources, control over use of income, property rights, time for work and leisure, redistribution of domestic work, reduction of domestic violence etc.

12

WHAT TYPE OF ACTIVITIES CAN WE DO AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL IN ORDER TO MAKE GALS MORE EFFECTIVE?

There are several activities that can be done for this purpose. There is no “one size fits all” here. It depends on what activities the farmers or communities are engaged in and their vision for transformation.

The following are some ideas from Nigeria:

- Continuous stakeholder sensitization at community level.
- Continuous advocacy training and Workshop at community level (couples’ participation be encouraged).
- Organize exchange visit or exposure visits to other learning centers and groups.
- Training on income generating activities (IGAs).
- GALS forum meetings.

Some experiences from Kenya are the following:

- Integration of GALS in other interventions, for example, farmer trainings.
- Additionally, we identified what activities bring together community members and spotted entry points like the “VIKOBAS” Village Savings and Loans.
- For the young people, we identified enterprises that interest them for example in Tanzania was establishment of coffee nurseries as a business; where the young people came together after receiving training on GALS and established coffee nurseries. Their groups have structures- chairpersons, treasurers and secretaries respectively. They meet often to take care of the nurseries as they review progress in using the GALS methodology.

13

HOW CAN WE IMPLEMENT GALS TRAININGS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?

This can be done through strict adherence to COVID- 19 protocols as prescribe by government or constituted authority of that country. Use of face masks, hand sanitizer, maintaining social distance, open space etc.

14

HOW TO INCENTIVIZE CHAMPIONS FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO SHARE THE TOOLS WITH OTHERS AND COMPENSATE THEIR INVESTMENT OF TIME? IT IS HELPING THEM TO LEARN AND CHANGE THEIR LIFE INDEED. HOWEVER, COSTS ARE INVOLVED IN OTHER MANY PROJECTS.

There are two different scenarios that need to be evaluated:

- The first one is when champions do it also in their personal interest to achieve their own vision. Their motivation is not on money but to achieve their own vision. In this case, they don't receive a monetary compensation.
- The second one is when projects are rolled out to other communities and you ask for support from champions (and they need to travel and use their time). In that case, there should be a contribution beyond transport costs, accommodation, etc. We need to be very responsible with this. Champions cannot be used as cheap labor. We need to take responsibility. If they are sharing in their own social network, they have a benefit directly. But when they train people in different places, they really need to be rewarded as trainers.

The questions and answers included in this document come from the GALS workshop for IFAD projects that took place on the 15th and 17th of December 2020 via Zoom.