

Section 2: Note to Users

Effective training of facilitators is best done by or with people who have first-hand experience in using community-led approaches.

This section makes extensive use of participatory role-plays, with group reflection on the process and how to improve the facilitator's skills.

A useful approach, however, is to intermix these activities with the reflective activities promoted in Section 1. For example, if a person who is learning how to facilitate a community-led process shows during a role-play a need for additional practice regarding empathy or asking probing questions, one could have the participant complete that evening the relevant tools on empathy (FAC 4) and asking probing questions (FAC 6).

TRN 5. Dos and Don'ts of a Community-led Approach

In helping to prepare facilitators for their work, it can be useful to think in practical terms about things that facilitators should do (Dos), and things facilitators should not do (Don'ts). By collectively discussing these, the facilitators and others can sharpen their understanding of community-led approaches.

A fun way of developing Dos and Don'ts is to divide into small groups during the training workshop and invite participants to generate a list of “Dos and Don'ts.” This could be followed by a plenary sharing of what each group produced, noting similarities and differences in their lists and discussing further the differences.

It can also be useful to display the lists and ask participants to “vote” for their five top Dos and their five top Don'ts. This could be done by displaying the lists on the floor or on the wall and giving each participant five green stars and five red stars, which they would place beside their preferred Dos and Don'ts, respectively. This approach, coupled with group discussion and correction of any misunderstandings, makes it possible for the workshop to produce its own list of Dos and Don'ts.

Below is an integrated list that reflects group work and learning in countries such as Sierra Leone, Kenya, and Uganda.

Dos	Don'ts
• Listen with empathy and respect, backgrounding one's own views.	• Take a judgmental approach that makes people feel blamed and disrespected.
• Put the power and decision-making responsibility in the hands of the community.	• Tell communities what to do or share only limited power with the community.
• Enable high levels of community ownership and responsibility-taking.	• Focus mainly on NGO projects, activities and accountability, which generates low levels of community ownership and sustainability.
• Analyze and manage the power relations within communities.	• Romanticize communities as places where all community members are equal.

Dos	Don'ts
• Enable an inclusive process of community dialogue and action.	• Work mainly through the chief or the local power elite.
• Reach out to and talk with marginalized people, including people with disabilities.	• Talk and work mainly with the people who are easiest to reach or to interact with.
• Learn about the communities through an open, non-judgmental process using local language and terms.	• Assess as a child protection expert who uses international terms such as “child protection,” “child rights,” “child labor,” “sexual exploitation,” or “female genital mutilation.”
• Understand the values that underlie local practices, including harmful practices that contradict the CRC.	• Condemn harmful practices without helping to develop alternatives that respect positive local values.
• Learn about local ideas about “who is a child” without judging or correcting those views.	• Assume or teach that a child is a person under 18 years of age.
• Help communities reflect on what are the main harms to children aside from poverty and health issues.	• Tell communities as an “expert” what the main child protection issues are in the community.
• Enable communities to decide which harm(s) to children they want to address and how to address it.	• Take an expert-driven approach that tells communities which harms to children are most severe and how to address those harms.
• Ask questions that make people think.	• Tell people answers (“sensitizing” them) or impose solutions.
• Help communities to build supportive connections with formal stakeholders such as district-level social welfare or child protection workers.	• Regard communities as islands or set them apart from formal aspects of the wider child protection system.

Dos	Don'ts
• Enable slow processes of dialogue, reflection, and group decision-making.	• Follow a fixed time-table that reflects the demands of the NGO and the donor.
• Use a facilitation process that helps communities to make their own decisions.	• Use didactic approaches or “facipulation” processes that lead communities to do what the NGO wants them to do or impose outsider approaches.
• Identify and build upon local strengths and resources such as women’s groups, community groups, natural helpers, local practices, etc.	• Create parallel systems that are not sustainable.
• Help communities to develop their own processes of monitoring and responding to harms to children.	• Impose outside structures such as Child Welfare Committees.
• Approach social change by working with insiders who guide the process.	• Impose change through the use of didactic approaches.
• Help to create spaces for community reflection and taking stock of their process and action.	• Emphasize external monitoring of the community-led intervention.
• Enable community evaluation of their process and action.	• Rely on external evaluation alone.
• Work with sustainability and long-term change in mind.	• Assume that sustainable outcomes or processes will grow out of a successful project.