

Facilitator guide

MODULE 7: PARTICIPATORY PLANNING

Purpose: Participants are able to effectively facilitate participatory planning processes, which allow for the input and ownership of all actors involved and maximise their chances of success.

Learning objectives:

On completing this module participants should be...

- Able to outline a simple but effective methodology for participatory planning
- Aware of various adaptations and when and how they may be used

Materials:

- ❖ Flipchart
- ❖ Plenty of marker pens
- ❖ Blank A5 post-its (or A5 cards if you are using a ‘sticky wall’) in 3 colours
- ❖ Sets of coloured dot stickers in 2 colours
- ❖ [7.1 Action Record Charts](#) (see session plan below)

Note:

- Sessions on Interest Forums and Market Opportunity Groups can be found in *Module 8: Facilitating Change*

Session title	Time
Participatory Planning Demonstration	165 mins
Demonstration Digestion	45 mins
Total	3 hrs 30 mins

Session title: Participatory Planning demonstration
Time: 2 hours 50 mins
<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Blank A5 post-its (or A5 cards if you are using a ‘sticky wall’) in 3 colours: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 5 x yellow and 5 x red per group of 3 participants, plus at least 30 spares ▪ 30 x blue (total) ▪ an additional 60 x yellow <p><i>NB: colours can be substituted for what is readily available, as long as there are 3 distinct colours</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Sets of coloured dot stickers – at least 5 red dots per person and 3 per person of any other colour (if you cannot obtain these, marker pens can be used instead) ❖ Action Record Charts drawn out on flipchart x 7 (copy from 7.1 Participatory Planning - Action Record chart) ❖ A topic which should be selected in advance <i>[see note 1]</i> ❖ An image of the 10 steps of the PMSD Roadmap (printed or on slide) ❖ A large area of floor space on which to group cards
<p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ For participants to experience a participatory planning process firsthand
<p>Context – 5 mins:</p> <p><i>[refer back to the 10 steps – on Powerpoint or on the wall]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have now reached step 7 – Participatory Planning. Before reaching this step you will have already held at least one workshop (although it is likely to be more) with a cross-section of market actors to help them map their market system and build a vision for how they would like the market system to be in the future. They will have started to build relationships and build trust and have a better understanding of the system as a whole. • There may have been some changes to the make-up of the market actor group if you have already held a series of workshops, but for this module you are looking for a fairly stable group who are committed to taking the process forward. • The next stage is to move from analysis to action. The purpose of this step is to facilitate the market actors to design their own action plan with the potential to move them from where they are now to the desired state. As you would expect in PMSD, this is done in a truly participatory manner, in order to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create the best possible action plan – no one knows their market system better than the market actors themselves 2. Ensure ownership of the action plan – so it is not reliant on the facilitator 3. Capture the specific interests and talents of those involved – by allowing

them to determine which actions should be prioritised

- The participatory planning process we suggest you use is simple and flexible. It can be used with any group to plan almost anything. Therefore, you will first experience the process yourselves in relation to a totally unrelated topic. After you have experienced the process you can then digest and discuss the different elements and how the same process can be applied in a PMSD setting.

Process:

Setting the scene - 20 mins

- We're going to use the example of *[Share the topic you have selected]* to experience the participatory planning process.
- First, we need to quickly outline a vision for our chosen topic, and assess the current situation in relation to this. Normally the visioning would be a much longer process, which would have already been completed in previous steps.

Ask:

- What is our vision? *[Whole group brainstorm – write it up on the flipchart as you go. Encourage some specificity but remember it doesn't need to be perfect]*
- What is the current situation in relation to this? *[Encourage people to focus on the facts and stick to what is relevant]*

Part 1 – individual work - 10 mins

- From your perspective what are the **blockages** and **opportunities** to fulfilling the vision? Come up with 3 of each individually and record them on a piece of paper either in words or pictures

Part 2 – working in groups to identify key issues - 15 mins

- *[Get participants into mixed groups of three people and give each group 5 yellow A5 cards/post-its and 5 red ones – red for blockages and yellow for opportunities]*
- In your groups, share what you came up with and select the 5 most important blockages and 5 most important opportunities. You will have 10 minutes to do this.
 - Don't try and group things together; each card should outline one distinct idea. There will be a chance to add things you think have been missed at a later stage. Write each of your blockages and opportunities on a separate piece of card. They should be simple and specific and written clearly in large letters.

Part 3 – grouping cards around themes - 30 mins

[Do this section on the floor - this encourages participation, and minimises dominance by more powerful group members]

- Everyone put all your cards on the floor – spread them out in the space

- Have a look around at the different cards. Can you see any themes? Are any of these issues related? Either because they sound very similar, or because they appear to be two different perspectives on the same issue, blockage or opportunity?
- As you start to see connections between cards, find out from others if they also think there is a connection, then start clustering them together. You do not need to get agreement from everyone, and people may work on numerous clusters simultaneously *[move around and encourage discussion between participants. If there are 'bystanders' engage them in a discussion about some of the cards that have not yet been moved]*
- If you think something is missing, or would like to add to or develop an idea, feel free to write an additional card and add it. Likewise, if you think that one card fits in two different clusters, feel free to write a duplicate. *[Ensure that people know that they can write cards individually even if they are working in a group]*
- *[As clusters emerge, encourage groups to give them titles. You or a volunteer can write these on blue cards and put them in the middle of the cluster]*

Part 4 – identifying root causes and narrowing down – 20 mins

- *[With the help of participants – transfer each clusters with its title to a flipchart on the wall]*
- Now, let us look at the different clusters and see if we can understand them better. Focus on the 'blockage' cards in each cluster for now as we want to identify the root cause of each of these issues. We will draw on the opportunity cards later to give us some clues as to overcome the blockages, but first we shall try to identify their root cause
- *[Use the 'why why why' method to analyse the root cause of the blockage. Start by asking 'Why is this blockage here?' Get a few answers from participants until a consensus starts to emerge. You can then encourage a deeper analysis by asking 'Why is this the case?'. Once again, allow some agreement to emerge before following up with a final 'Why?' question. [See example in note 2]. This may not be an easy process and will require some careful facilitation. If two or more actors are in conflict over the cause of an issue there are two things you can do: ask "why?" again and see if there is some consensus; or ask the view of another person present who is not directly involved in this issue]*
- *[When participants have identified the root of the issue, they may want to give the cluster a new title]*
- Now that we are clearer regarding what each of these clusters are about, it is time to focus in on the ones we are going to start working on.
- Given that we cannot do everything, we will need to narrow our focus to the most important clusters.
- At this stage, are there any clusters which we should discount completely, because acting on them would either be too **difficult**, too **risky** or too **expensive**? *[Allow a moment for reflection. If anyone suggests a cluster, then*

give them the opportunity to explain why. Then find out if everyone agrees – if they do then you can move that cluster to one side. If there is disagreement, don't push for consensus, just ask people to take that information into account when voting]

- So what we have in front of us are a selection of blockages and opportunities which you have collectively identified. Today we want to focus on those areas that you want to take action on **first**; other areas may be looked at further down the line when these are underway.
- Each of you will have 3 votes which you can distribute as you wish. Have a look at the clusters now, and identify which you think will be easy, cheap and low risk to take action on, and where a significant positive difference can be made.
- Put your stickers on the title card of the clusters you have chosen.
- *[Give each participant 3 stickers to vote with. When everyone has placed their votes, point out the clusters with the most votes (see note 3)]*
- These are the areas that we will be taking forward today and for the first phase of the participatory planning process!

Part 5 – strategy planning - 45 mins

- *[With the help of participants, move each cluster to a different part of the room]*
- Do any of these proposals require the input and participation of a particular person in this room? *[If so find out if they are willing to be involved in that group, while emphasising that at this stage they are not committing to any particular course of action.*
- The rest of you, have a look around the room and identify which of these clusters you would like to work on, both today and going forward (as this is a training exercise you might not actually work on these areas after today)
- Go and stand next to your desired cluster
- *[Assess the balance of the groups. If any of the clusters don't have any members, check back to see whether people are willing to put that strategy on hold for now or if people are willing to move from other groups. Likewise if some groups are much bigger than others, check whether people would like to move to balance them out. Remind the participants that there will be plenty of opportunities to contribute to other clusters and to follow up their progress (eg. future mapping workshops and interest forum meetings)]*
- *[When the reshuffling process has been completed, ask the groups to sit (or stand) together near their cluster. Hand out 2 blue cards and 8 yellow cards to each group]*
- Your task now is to create a strategy for your cluster.
 - You should first define the outcome that you are trying to achieve and the date by which you would like to see it in place. Now represent it on a blue card visually, using pictures and symbols, and stick it on the wall.

- *[Give them 5 minutes to do this and then ask each group to share theirs.]*
 - Now write a 'baseline' card (also on blue), describing the current situation in comparison with your desired outcome – this should be factual and relevant including existing practices, capacity, resources, and constraints *[e.g. if your desired outcome was 'all staff regularly share failures and what they have learned from them', then your baseline might be something like 'failure is seen as career-limiting and only shared when people are unable to conceal it; external factors are blamed rather than lessons learned]*
 - Amongst your group, come up with actions (normally between 5 and 8) that would need to be carried out in order to move from the baseline to the outcome
 - Put each action on a 'what, when' card as shown – the 'what' describes the action, and the 'when' is the date by which it should be carried out. *Tip:* it may be easier to work out dates by working backwards from the outcome date after all of the 'what' sections have been completed and put in order.
- | |
|-------|
| What: |
| When: |
- Bearing in mind that it is important that we are not pursuing strategies that are too high risk, too expensive or too difficult, at least in this first phase of working together, you will now get the chance to assess each others suggested actions.
 - Take a 'gallery walk' around the room with a set of red stickers and stick one on any actions that you would like to flag up for discussion. You do not have to explain your reasons – this is an anonymous exercise.
 - *[Give people about 10 mins. When everyone has been around the room go to the cards with the greatest number of red dots in turn, read out the corresponding action, and facilitate a discussion as to whether it is too difficult, risky or expensive to be considered. If so, encourage participants to suggest an alternative action, or discuss whether this limits the potential for this particular blockage to be addressed or opportunity to be realised.]*
- Part 6 – personal accountability – 25 mins**
- The final stage of this exercise is to decide who will be responsible for what
 - *[Hand out the action record charts]*
 - Stick each of your action cards in the boxes down the left-hand column, in order of date
 - If any actions can be carried out by a member of the group, please put their name in the 'I' column. For any actions which cannot be carried out by a member of the group, but that the group can mobilise another individual or group of people to carry out, enter the details in the 'I mobilise' column. If you can't fill either of those columns, leave them blank for now.

- *[Give them 15 minutes to do this in their groups]*
- Now is your opportunity to draw on the rest of the group. For any of the actions that don't currently have a name attached to them, you can send out an 'SOS' and see if someone from another group can help you
- *[Go round each cluster group in turn and find out where they have blanks. See if another member of the group can either take on the action or can mobilise others. As a very last resort, the facilitator's name can go by those actions that cannot be carried out by any member of the group in a new column (see [7.1: Action Record Chart](#) for details). However, it is important that you emphasise your role as a mobiliser, not as a 'doer'. Continue until all the actions have names by them]*

Notes:

1 [Materials pg2] Topic: Choose a topic which will engage the whole group but still allow them to view the process in an objective way. For example:

- 'How can this organisation become better at learning?' or
- 'Organising the next office party / away-day'

Example of vision and current situation for the first topic

- Vision: An "...organisation where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning to see the whole together." (Peter Senge)
- Current situation: 'Some learning mechanisms in place (e.g. weekly team meetings) and occasional collaboration across teams (e.g. team x and team y working together on a project), but most of the time people working individually or in silos. Evaluation processes used to keep donors happy not as opportunity to learn how to do things better. New ideas tend to be dismissed and people continue to do what is familiar to them.'

2 [Part 4 pg4] A market-based example of the 'why, why, why?' process - If the blockage is low prices for meat, the answer to the 1st 'why?' question might be 'poor quality meat', the answer to the 2nd 'why?' might be 'poor animal health', and the answer to the final 'why is that?' might be 'limited access to veterinary services'

3 [Part 4 pg5] The number of clusters chosen will have some relationship to the size of the group and the number of people who are really committed to and engaged with the process. You will probably want about 5 people per cluster – therefore if you have a group of 30 you will aim for about 6 clusters.

Session title: Demonstration reflection
Time: 45-60 mins
Materials: ❖ Flipchart and pens
Objective: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Participants can explain the design and reasoning behind the participatory planning process ➤ Participants can adapt and apply the participatory planning process
Context: Now that you have experienced the participatory planning process first-hand, you will have an opportunity to reflect on the different elements of the process and why it is designed the way it is. You will also enhance your capacity to apply the process by considering different adaptations and where they might be used.
Process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>[get participants into either 3 or 6 groups [see note 1], who will each work on a section from the exercise they have just participated in]</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group 1 to work on 'individual work' - Group 2 to work on 'working in groups to identify key issues' - Group 3 to work on 'grouping cards around themes' - Group 4 to work on 'identifying root causes and narrowing down' - Group 5 to work on 'strategy planning' - Group 6 to work on 'personal accountability' • Discuss the following questions and take notes on a flipchart - <i>25 mins [add 15 minutes to the time if only 3 groups as they will have more to cover]</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What were the different approaches and tools used in this section and why? (Bearing in mind this is designed for a group of market actors). Examples of approaches and tools include individual reflection, writing on cards and small group discussions. 2. What adaptations could be considered and for what purpose? For example, adaptations for illiterate participants, or high-conflict groups • <i>[get reports back from each group and probe/add to what they've said. See note 2 for examples to further probe participants or add to what they have said] – 20 mins</i>
Notes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1: Three groups if there are 15 or fewer participants and six groups if there are 16 or more. If you have three groups then each group will have to work on two sections 2: The notes below can be used to further probe participants or add to what they

have said. They may also come up with further examples. If participants are struggling to understand the exercise, you can also use one of the examples below to illustrate what you are asking for.

Group 1 – individual work

1) What were the different elements and tools used in this section and why?

- a) Addressing the issues from a personal perspective - participants may not yet be ready to understand systemic issues.
- b) Individual reflection – to enable everyone to have time to think before being swayed by the ideas of others.
- c) Offering options to write or draw – to take account of different levels of literacy.

2) What adaptations could be considered and for what purpose?

- a) If people are struggling to come up with blockages and opportunities (or don't understand what the terms mean) you could share examples from other market systems to stimulate their thinking
- b) You could get people to have a short brainstorm where they are sitting with 1 or two other people before they do their individual work. This can be useful for marginalised or shy actors.

Group 2 – working in groups to identify key issues

3) What were the different elements and tools used in this section and why?

- a) Working in mixed groups – to get a sense of which issues are cross-cutting
- b) Narrowing down the number of issues identified in the previous section – to focus on what's most important and start to build consensus

4) What adaptations could be considered and for what purpose?

- a) Working in 'single-function' groups (e.g. producers grouped together) in order to build confidence and identify cross-cutting issues for that function
- b) Remove group work completely - have individuals write directly on cards and put them into the mix so that their ideas do not get lost

Group 3 – grouping cards around themes

5) What were the different elements and tools used in this section and why?

- a) Clustering the cards – is an effective and easy way to build consensus around the key issues, focus is naturally drawn towards those areas which are of interest to most people
- b) Allowing participants to group cards and doing many clusters simultaneously – speeds up the process and makes it more democratic. If the facilitator leads the clustering then it will be the most vocal person who influences. Even very quiet people will be happy to move cards around
- c) Getting people on the floor – puts everyone on the same level, literally, and

much harder for someone to dominate if they are on hands and knees!

- d) Giving people the chance to write more cards – ideas may progress and develop. Is another way of balancing power

6) *What adaptations could be considered and for what purpose?*

- a) You could use other methods of coming up with the titles, such as giving all the groups 1 minute to come up with a title then taking a vote on which one is the best. This could allow for more participation and higher energy levels but would also take more time.
- b) Could be done before a break so that some participants can continue to sort cards if there are lots of them
- c) Pair up any physically disabled people with a ‘buddy’ who can write cards for them and move cards in the clustering stage
- d) Conduct across a large table rather than on the floor if there are any cultural/physical reasons to avoid this method

Group 4 – identifying root causes and narrowing down

1) *What were the different elements and tools used in this section and why?*

- a) Moving cards on to the wall – enables participants to see all the groups simultaneously
- b) ‘Why, why, why’ – encourages participants to identify the root cause, or systemic blockage, rather than just see how it impacts on them as an individual or blame others for it
- c) Voting for the most doable – to focus market actors on achievable strategies and possible ‘quick wins’ to build trust and confidence in the early stages

2) *What adaptations could be considered and for what purpose?*

- a) During the clustering process, blockages and opportunities may well get mixed together anyway in which case there is no need to differentiate between them
- b) A more detailed scoring exercise for the clusters (eg. scoring clusters between 0 and 5 for difficulty, risk and cost) instead of the simple voting exercise

Group 5 – strategy planning

1) *What were the different elements and tools used in this section and why?*

- a) Self-selection for groups – to ensure that we effectively harness individual’s interest and passion
- b) Asking for each group to come up with several actions – encourages them to break down the strategy into small and concrete steps
- c) ‘Flagging up’ activities that may be very costly, risky or difficult – to encourage realistic strategies that can be implemented

2) *What adaptations could be considered and for what purpose?*

- a) If you know that an actor can lead a cluster and s/he is not saying it in public, use a break or a meeting after the workshop to discuss this possibility in private
- b) Depending on time available, you may want to have each group report back their strategy before going on to Part 6; there is potential for some interesting and challenging conversations around whether the proposed set of actions is likely to achieve the outcome
- c) You could have groups present back their strategies rather than the gallery walk

Group 6 – personal accountability

3) *What were the different elements and tools used in this section and why?*

- a) Putting a name by every action – increases accountability and thus the likelihood of it happening
- b) Not including a column for ‘facilitator’ in the action record chart, encouraging actors to take responsibility for leading the change, while involvement of the facilitator is a last resort
- c) Using the action record chart – a simple visual tool to plan and monitor

4) *What adaptations could be considered and for what purpose?*

- a) Putting more than one name down, if the burden is too big for one person, however you should be aware that this will decrease the sense of ownership and accountability
- b) You could leave out the ‘facilitator’ column altogether for this session to emphasise the market actors’ ownership of the process, then add it in later review workshops to take on those actions that have not been able to be carried out by members of the group

**Top
Facilitation
Tip!**

Keeping Timings on your side:

An important element of facilitation is planning effectively so that you make maximum use of people's time without overloading them.

- For any given activity there will be a **range** of potential timings you could use. For example, individual reflection on a particular question could range from 1 minute to 15 minutes, depending on whether it is a familiar subject and you are looking for a quick brainstorm or it is a new area and/or you are looking for their considered view. A group activity where you are asking them to match a set of statements to a set of categories could range from 10 minutes to an hour depending on the complexity of the exercise and whether the purpose is to generate discussion or to become really familiar with the material.
- **Pace** should be appropriate for the group and the purpose. Sometimes it is essential to slow the pace and allow for deep reflection and discussion, at other times you may want to keep the pace up to keep people engaged and make significant progress. Generally you will want to vary the pace throughout a given workshop or training session.
- With **experience** you will start to learn how long specific activities need. As you go through a training or workshop, *note down the actual time used* for an exercise and adjust future sessions accordingly. You will learn more generally about how long things take and be able to estimate more accurately how much time new activities will need when you invent them. However, every group is different. Therefore...
 - a. **Use your intuition** to tap into the energy of the group. You can usually sense whether groups are still fully engaged in productive and animated discussion and may therefore need more time, or have got maximum benefit from the group work and have moved into 'chat'.
 - b. Being **clear about your objectives** will help you to assess how flexible or rigid to be in your timings. Don't miss out on opportunities for important insights or discussion because you are afraid to go off schedule, but on the other hand you must remember that additional time spent one thing will have to be recovered from elsewhere, and you may be aware of how essential a later exercise is in getting the group to where they need to be.