

GALS Coffee Livelihood Tool 1: Soul-mate Visioning

Written by Linda Mayoux as part of Hivos, GALS@Scale project, September 2014. All resources and further details are available on www.galsatscale.net.

The soul-mate visioning tool is a participatory visioning tool either for the GALS Catalyst process as a whole, or for the coffee livelihood tools as a stand-alone process. It should be the very first exercise that people start with as they arrive, with very little or no introduction. It serves as both a participant introduction and a preparatory for an organisational overview that can focus on the issues arising. It is the preparation for the final concluding and main monitoring Tool 6: Organisational Vision Journey. If time permits then the soul-mate visioning can be done after a pairwise/pyramid process for participant expectations (see GALS@Scale Facilitation Notes) or it can incorporate this into the process.



Left:

Coffee farmers from Raa and Vuchama cooperatives, Kilimanjaro, Tanzania drawing their individual visions at their first workshop.

Right: Board members from Vuasu cooperative draw their ideas for the cooperative vision.

Why use this tool?

Many workshops start with people introducing themselves around a table. But this takes quite some time. People rarely remember other peoples' names and the information is very superficial. Sometimes people arrive late with good reason, so it is important to have something for everyone who arrives early to do - or they also will come late next time. Particularly in large workshops where there is little time, by the time introductions are over it is already time for tea break and everyone is already tired and a bit bored.

The soul-mate visioning tool establishes a collective consensus on vision and direction for the whole process of engagement between farmers and buyers. But a consensus vision within which everyone has a voice that is heard and reflected. It is a very energizing activity that immediately establishes participant (rather than facilitator) responsibility

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and ownership of the workshop process. It establishes coffee production within a broader gender and sustainability vision at individual, household and organizational levels. This means that people are better aware of why they should put more effort into coffee production. It enables coffee companies and service organisations to understand and appreciate these wider motivations and establish themselves in peoples' minds as institutions that care for people as part of a win-win partnership.

When used as an introduction to GALS for (all-male) Board in Vuas Cooperative, Kilimanjaro, Tanzania, it was the basis for establishing gender equality on the board and cooperative membership as an important vision going forward to increase coffee production. This was done without the facilitators having to really mention gender concepts at all, just building up on what was being said by the Board members themselves. This vision was subsequently followed up by a Vision Journey plan (Tool 6) to achieve that gender vision. This is now being implemented and tracked.

What do you gain by using it

This first introductory session aims to be fun and inspire people. It helps people get to know each other, gain confidence in drawing. They begin to see change in gender relations as something which will benefit everyone. But things must be light and fun.

Aims for participants

- help everyone introduce themselves to everyone else in a meaningful way people will remember, and help develop friendships and networks between like-minded people. This includes mixing between women and men from different backgrounds, and between company managers and staff and farmers
- introduce and reinforce a faith in the possibility of change and clarify people's life vision for livelihoods, families and personal development
- introduce basic drawing as a fun and useful activity to bring people together
- introduce participatory discussion skills
- introduce gender issues through discussing ownership of assets in visions eg houses and cars, and contribution of women and men to achieving these and starts to show gender inequalities as senseless constraints on peoples' empowerment to achieve their full potential in life.

Aims for organisations

- increase understanding of, and respect for, people's own visions and how they relate to those of the company/organisation
- increase understanding of the similarities and differences in visions between women and men from different backgrounds
- improve participatory skills of staff and communication with women and men in the communities where they work
- get final consensus with participants on what the workshop will achieve.

Aims for the facilitator

- understand participant expectations and clarify which of these can be fulfilled through the planned design of the workshop, which can be fulfilled by some adjustments or additions to the planned schedule, and which are the subject of another workshop or training altogether - but can maybe be suggested as follow-up.
- assess the specificities of the particular participant mix and context eg how easily do women and men interact, or older and younger people, what are likely sensitive issues etc in order to manage group dynamics and assess pacing of the sessions.

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- get people talking and energised so that they are open to some of the new things in the following sessions.

Who applies the tool and for whom?

This tool can be used, adapted or introduced in many different ways. Including, or any in-between variant of:

- *individuals on their own* The individual visions from Step 1 are normally put on the first page of participants' notebooks as the motivating starting point for any other diagrams they draw. They are then shared with their households and groups. If participants are already experienced in the GALS catalyst tools, they will have a vision they drew at the start of the process. In that case the activity here will serve as a reflection on how their vision has now changed, as the basis for their next year's plan. Once learned, the basic visioning becomes part of the peer sharing process.
- *companies or other organisations* can use the soulmate visioning to develop a strategic vision with management and staff. This will establish coffee within a broader sustainability framework, and also introduce and clarify some of the gender issues.
- *large multi-stakeholder workshops* with professional facilitation can use the tool as a start for a bringing together all the stakeholders.

Note: As with all GALS tool facilitators are referred to the generic GALS facilitation guidelines that can be found on the GALS@Scale website at www.galsatscale.net/facilitation. Particularly in large multi stakeholder workshops it requires experienced facilitation with one or preferably two lead facilitators, and some champions who can lead the groups. It is also good to arrange for photo and/or video documentation.

How does it work?

It is good if there can be a sound system in the room with one of the GALS Vision songs (available from the GALS@Scale website) playing as come into the room. As people start to arrive, the facilitator asks them to sit with someone they do not know well - this is the opportunity for them to get to know new people better, even if they already know people by sight. People should be encouraged to mix women with men, company managers and farmers etc. Though they should not be forced to sit with someone they do not want to. They should be asked to introduce themselves, discuss what they have heard about GALS, their expectations from the workshop, and what they are hoping to do in coffee and also for their families.

As soon as everyone has arrived the facilitator starts the session by formally explaining the visioning process – that in GALS this is done before anything else so that the formal organizational introduction can really focus on what people want to hear, and instead of just going round the table so that people can really get to know each other.

Step 1 Individual Drawing (15 minutes)

Participants are asked first to close their eyes, and think of how things might be in a happy future for themselves, their families and/or cooperative. Depending on the purpose of the particular workshop, the focus can be on the individual (it is good for company managers to know how their visions differ from those of farmers) or a successful cooperative or company (again it is useful for managers and staff to understand how their organisational visions relate to the visions the farmers have of what the aim of engagement is). On the first page of their GALS notebook participants draw the images they see – not just houses/buildings or coffee production, but also families (women, children, men) and communities. This will be their starting vision for the future. Though then starting vision may well change as they share with others and in future as they progress.

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Step 2 Finding soulmates (15-30 minutes depending on numbers of people)

Participants then mingle with each other, shaking hands (or locally suitable greeting), introducing themselves saying name and organisation and sharing their vision drawings. It is VERY important here to keep people moving – they should not just sit with their friends or they will miss an opportunity to find ‘the soul-mate of their life’ who may be the person they least expect on the other side of the room. Everyone must see everyone else’s drawings.

As people mingle they decide which participants they think have vision drawings most similar to their own and form a group with them. Normally this produces 3-5 groups of different views, with any ‘special people’ who do not feel they can join the other groups then forming one group together. It is explained that these special people are very important as they often have very creative and important ideas to contribute. No one should be a sheep following the crowd. From a facilitation perspective, it is very important for any dissenting voices to have a place to go and feel they are listened to.

Step 3 Collective drawing (4-5 groups 20 minutes)

Each group does a collective drawing on a large flipchart, bringing together all the elements from the different individual drawings. They should put a group identifier, and numbers of women and men involved at the top. On a separate flipchart they also list the expectations.

It should be explained that for this part it is not only the drawing output that is important, but the participatory process. Everyone must have done some drawing, not a task given to the most ‘artistic’ participant and everyone else sitting back. It will be the person who talks least who will have to present to the plenary.

Step 4 Plenary sharing (30-45 minutes, 5-10 minutes per group)

Each group appoints two presenters – those who talked least in Step 3. One briefly introduces their group participants, then presents the collective drawing. The other presenter lists the elements of gender justice on a flipchart (1 column for each group) and presents the flipchart with expectations.

Each vision drawing and list of expectations is posted next to the others on the wall for future reference.

Step 5 Plenary discussion

People are asked if they have questions for clarification after each presentation and to reflect on:

- How similar are the drawings? Are there differences between women and men?
- Or more individual differences as people?

After all the presentations, the facilitator should ask for comments on these questions. After some volunteers have responded, the facilitator should ask people at the back or anyone who has not spoken if they have any points to make. Then does a very brief wrap-up (maximum 5 minutes) to lead into the formal welcome and introductions from the host organisation and facilitator/s.

The formal welcome and introductions should respond very directly to the previous discussion – What have they learned already? Why is the organisation interested in gender/GALS process?

The facilitator briefly introduces themselves and responds to the expectations - how will the workshop take things forward? What will not be covered and will need to be another workshop? And explains the schedule and notebook diaries.

NOTE: if senior managers and/or local government and/or other powerful people wish to make a presentation, they should be made very welcome, but asked to participate first or at least listen first to the plenary sharing and discussion and then respond to that eg before or after lunch. Otherwise they can come on the final day.

1.3 Organisational Visioning: Towards Consensus

If the visioning is being done for an organisation as part of strategic planning, then a further step can be added to identify where there is consensus that can be a basis for moving forward on eg a more formal vision logo and vision statement, and where are the areas of difference or potential conflict that will need to be addressed later.

Step 6 Difference groups (15 minutes)

Participants are then asked to go and stand by the drawing that they think is most different from their own. This will lead to the formation of 'difference' groups of people who are likely to have some ideas in common, although the main things that unites them is a disagreement with the drawing where they are.

Step 7 Clarifying areas of consensus (20 minutes)

In their groups participants are first asked to draw individually on new pieces of paper 3 things they agree with in the drawing and 3 things they disagree with.

Starting from the back people come forward one by one and present one most important thing with which they agree and put their card on one flipchart as the basis for the consensus drawing. They ask for people who agree with them to put their hands up, gather in those cards from those people, put the clearest drawing on the top of the other ones and put the appropriate number on the top card.

This process continues until all the cards are in. Then the cards are placed with the elements with the most votes in the middle, those with the least votes on the outside.

Step 8 Clarifying areas of difference (10 minutes)

Participants then do a similar process for the differences.

Step 9 Collective consensus drawing (15 minutes)

Based on the flipchart with consensus participants then come up in turn and contribute their ideas to a common drawing of their collective vision. Each group does a collective drawing on a large flipchart, bringing together all the consensus elements from the different drawings. Something that the whole group will agree represents their view.

As before, this collective drawing should be a participatory process, with everyone having held the pen and done some drawing, not a task given to the most 'artistic' participant. The people who have spoken least will present.

Step 10 Plenary sharing (10-25 minutes, 2-5 minutes per group)

Each group appoints four presenters. One shares the collective drawing and the other lists the elements of consensus on a large common comparative flipchart (1 column for each group). Then two new people do the same for the differences.

Each vision drawing is posted next to the others on the wall for future reference.

Step 11 Plenary discussion

Again this should focus on the following questions:

- How similar are the consensus drawings now? Are there differences between women and men? Or more individual differences as people?
- Do they form the basis for an organisational logo or vision statement? Who will volunteer as part of a working group to develop a logo and short vision statement to present at the end of the workshop?