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**Group Facilitation Skills for Participatory Decision-
Making:
Report of a Follow-up Outcome Evaluation**

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March 2010

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The ILAC initiative fosters learning from experience and use of the lessons learned to improve the design and implementation of agricultural research and development programs. The mission of the ILAC Initiative is to develop, field test and introduce methods and tools that promote organizational learning and institutional change in CGIAR centres and their partners, to expand the contributions of agricultural research to achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ARI	Agricultural Research Institute
AWARD	African Women in Agricultural Research and Development
CAS-IP	Central Advisory Service for Intellectual Property
CAPRI	Systemwide Program on Collective Action and Property Rights
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CIAT	International Center for Tropical Agriculture
CIFOR	Center for International Forestry Research
CIMMYT	International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center
CIP	International Potato Center
CPWF	Challenge Program on Water and Food
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CTA	Technical Center for Agricultural and Rural Co-operation ACP-EU
DGIS	Netherlands Directorate-General of Development Cooperation
G&D	Gender and Diversity Program
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (German Technical Cooperation)
ICARDA	International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas
ICRAF	World Center for Agroforestry
ICRISAT	International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics
ICT-KM	Information and Communications Technology and Knowledge Management Program
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IITA	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
ILAC	Institutional Learning and Change Initiative
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
IRRI	International Rice Research Institute
IWMI	International Water Management Institute
NARS	National Agricultural Research System
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program

Summary

There is a growing need for facilitation skills throughout the international agricultural research-for-development community. This is because agricultural research and development organizations increasingly work collaboratively with diverse partners, and managing diverse and often geographically disbursed teams with members from different cultures and backgrounds represents a challenge – one that requires facilitation skills for research managers and team leaders. To assist research-for-development organizations respond to this challenge, since 2005, the Institutional Learning and Change (ILAC) Initiative has sponsored a training course on “Group Facilitation Skills for Participatory Decision Making”. The objective of the course has been to strengthen the capacity of researchers and managers in the CGIAR and partner organizations to effectively facilitate group decision making processes.

The course is designed to build skills and knowledge in four areas:

- Facilitating effective meetings
- Managing conflict and disagreement
- Building consensus
- Facilitating virtual teams

A total of 139 people attended seven courses from 2005 - 2009. End-of-training assessments have consistently rated the course content and delivery very positively. In November 2009, when a mid-term review of ILAC was underway, interest arose in following up with former trainees to explore the results of their participation in the course.

This working paper reports on an evaluation designed to assess the usefulness of the skills gained during the training course, if the skills learned have been applied and, if so, how the new facilitation tools and techniques have changed meeting processes. The evaluation also identified obstacles to the use of new skills faced by participants, additional follow-on activities that have been conducted by participants, and other related skills that are needed to complement what was learned in the ILAC facilitation course.

Participants of all seven training courses carried out from 2005 to 2009 were surveyed using a web-based survey tool. Archival records and documents were reviewed, and follow-up interviews were conducted with participants, to gather more in-depth understanding, particularly about follow-on activities.

The survey results can be summarized as follows:

- Most participants have discussed the training with colleagues and recommended it to others; some have conducted seminars for their colleagues based on the training.
- Most participants have applied the skills acquired in the training, by facilitating regular work meetings; many have also facilitated large events.
- Motivated by the training, some participants have hired professional facilitators for events and some have organized follow-up training and activities with the ILAC trainers, at their own expense.
- Participants reported that they have improved meeting processes by preparing more realistic agendas, using more creative facilitation approaches, stimulating participation and reaching clearer agreements.
- About one-quarter of the respondents reported having faced obstacles in applying their skills, mostly related to reluctance among senior managers to change meeting styles

and approaches. Several people reported difficulties in balancing the facilitation of meeting processes with their interest in being actively involved in discussions.

- A few trainees took the initiative to follow up directly with the training provider, Community At Work, to organize their own training or other activities related to participatory decision making. This led to training or support to an additional 110 people beyond those trained by ILAC, thus raising to 249 people the total number of individuals to have participated in the course.
- Most respondents would be interested in participating in an advanced facilitation course if one were available.
- Respondents identified complementary skill-development needs, mainly in the areas of communication (presentation, public speaking, and scientific writing), negotiation, conflict resolution, and facilitation tools.

1. Introduction

The ability to facilitate participatory decision-making processes is a strategic skill for professionals in agricultural research for development, who need to manage or participate effectively in teams and partnerships. Responding to this need, ILAC developed a training program for scientists and managers, in collaboration with *Community At Work*, a consulting company specialising in developing organizational capacity for participatory decision-making. The training course on “Group Facilitation Skills for Participatory Decision-Making” in agricultural research was first held in 2005, and at least one course has been held every year since. During this time, 139 people have attended the course.

As part of a mid-term review of the ILAC Initiative (Kommerell, 2010¹) a follow-up study was conducted to assess the outcomes from the facilitation training. This report presents background information on the training, describes the training methods employed, characterizes the individuals trained, assesses the training outcomes and identifies possible areas for future training.

2. Background

The ILAC Initiative is a CGIAR inter-centre initiative founded in 2003 and hosted by Bioversity International. It is currently funded by the Netherlands Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) but has also received funding from the Rockefeller Foundation and German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) in addition to several smaller donors. The purpose of the ILAC Initiative is to strengthen the capacity of collaborative programs to promote pro-poor agricultural innovation and to ensure that research and development activities are managed more effectively to contribute to poverty reduction. The specific focus of ILAC is on those collaborative arrangements that target and actively engage poor farmers and other poor people.

ILAC’s current five-year phase (2007-2011), which is supported by a \$3.5 million grant from the Dutch government, has four areas of work:

1. Identify, support and draw lessons from promising collaborative agricultural innovation programs
2. Develop the capacity of collaborative programs

¹ Kommerell, V. (2010) *External Mid-Term Review of the Institutional Learning and Change Initiative (ILAC) of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)*. Rome, Institutional Learning and Change Initiative.

3. Foster visionary leadership and organizations that are more supportive of agricultural innovation for poverty reduction
4. Facilitate knowledge sharing within the emerging community of rural innovation professionals

The idea for training in facilitation emerged in the early stages of ILAC. In 2004, proposals were sought for a training provider. Contacts in the Evaluation Unit at the International Development Research Center in Canada, highly recommended Community At Work based on training conducted there. Contact was made in 2004 and an agreement made to conduct the first training in 2005. The facilitation training is a part of ILAC's capacity building effort. Other capacity building activities include direct technical assistance in participatory and learning oriented evaluation and planning. Several other training courses have been carried out as pilots, but to date most capacity building activity and most of the capacity building budget is directed towards the facilitation training.

The training courses were led by Dr. Sam Kaner or Dr. Sarah Fisk from Community At Work - a consulting firm / think tank focused on helping organizations address complex problems that can only be solved through group processes. Community at Work conducts applied research on the dynamics of group decision-making and develops and applies models and methods to support groups to "make their best decisions." In addition to IDRC, Community At Work works with many private sector and public sector organizations. More information can be found at the web site: <http://www.communityatwork.com>.

The training course was designed to build essential knowledge, attitudes and skills for participatory decision making among project managers and team leaders dealing with participatory processes, which involve people from diverse backgrounds, disciplines, nationalities and cultures. The workshop aimed to strengthen capacity to facilitate meetings, teams and group decision-making processes. The course employs a hands-on, practical approach that enables participants to immediately apply what they have learned to their day-to-day work. The following topics are covered:

- What is facilitation and why is it important
- Facilitating meetings and teams
- Managing conflicts and disagreements
- Building consensus for decision-making

The first two workshops were three-days in length, but after reflecting on the course content, a fourth day was added to include more information and practice on building sustainable agreements and reaching closure. The fourth day also provided the opportunity for site-based application, practice, and refinement of skills learned earlier in the course.

The four-day workshop was structured as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Training workshop overview

Day	Topic	Content
1	Facilitator Fundamentals	facilitative listening, suspending judgment, and facilitation “stand-up skills” such as chart writing
2	Group Dynamics	process management, difficult dynamics and building consensus
3	Leading Effective Meetings	setting realistic agendas, playing the role of chair and facilitator, and how to clarify and summarize outcomes of discussions
4	Sustainable Agreements	building consensus among group members, reaching closure on discussion, and conflict resolution

The workshop was conducted in an interactive learning environment where brief explanations were followed by practical, participatory exercises designed to contribute to sharing participants’ experiences and gaining practical skills. This learner-centric approach involved active practice followed by review, reflection, and the refinement of the skills acquired. Active communication, individual practice and personalized attention from the trainers were assured by limiting participation to no more than twenty in each course.

Each trainee was provided with a copy of the book *The Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making*, co-authored by trainers Sam Kaner and Sarah Fisk with Lenny Lind, Catherine Toldi, and Duane Berger. The book provides the tools to put democratic values into practice in groups and organizations by introducing grounding principles, fundamentals of facilitation, building sustainable agreements and reaching closure.

3. Evaluation Methods

The purposes of the evaluation were to assess the usefulness of the skills gained during the training course, who has been applying those skills and what has changed in meeting processes by introducing facilitation tools/techniques. Key questions included:

- To what extent were the skills learned in the training being applied?
- If the skills were being applied, did this result in improved participatory processes and better decision-making?
- Did trainees’ regard for the course change over time and if so, why?
- Did other benefits occur besides use of the skills learned, such as increased use of professional facilitators or other changes?
- To what extent are trainees still actively engaged in participatory projects?

A mixed-method approach was used to enable triangulation of information from different sources to draw conclusions. The methods included document and archival record review and a follow-up survey of former trainees. The list of documents reviewed is in Annex 1 of this report.

A web-based survey provider, *Survey Monkey*², was used to administer the follow-up survey. Participants were asked to respond to seven questions, of which four were choice questions (yes/no or Likert scale questions) and three open ended questions requiring a written narrative response. The survey is included in Annex 2 of this report.

² www.surveymonkey.com

All former trainees were invited to respond to the survey, which was available online for a period of four weeks in November 2009. Three reminders were sent within this period. Sixty-two of the 139 participants completed the survey, a 44% response rate. In order to increase understanding of follow-on activities organized by participants after the course, independent of ILAC, individual interviews were conducted with Community At Work and with some course participants.

4. Findings

4.1. Profile of the workshop participants

Each course had a limit of 20 participants. The number was capped by the trainers in order to assure the quality of the training, by enabling personalized interaction between trainer and participants and opportunities to practice and take part in role plays. All courses were filled to capacity, except for one that had a last-minute drop out. Of the 139 people trained, one-third were female and two-thirds male. Most were Project Managers and Research Scientists from African countries. Participants represented 31 different organizations. The CGIAR was well represented, with 14 centres having participated (all centres except for the Africa Rice Center WARDA) and five Inter-Centre Initiatives, including:

- Challenge Program on Water and Food (CPWF)
- Gender and Diversity Program (G&D)
- Central Advisory Service on Intellectual Property Rights (CAS-IP)
- Collective Action and Property Rights Initiative (CAPRI)
- Information, Communication Technology-Knowledge Management (ICT-KM)

An effort was made in later courses to include members of partner organizations, and in total twelve non-CGIAR organizations were represented. Among the partner organizations were Visayas State University, Lusotho District Council, Kenya Dairy Board, and African Crop Science Society. Over the five year period the course was run, 89% of the participants were from CGIAR and 11% from other partner organizations.

As shown in Figure 1 below, most participants came from CIMMYT, Bioversity, ILRI, IRRI and ICRAF. These centers also hosted the training so were in the position to benefit from more spaces and the fact that the course was run on their own premises and thus physically more available to their staff. Hosting is discussed in Section 4.2 on overall investment in the course.

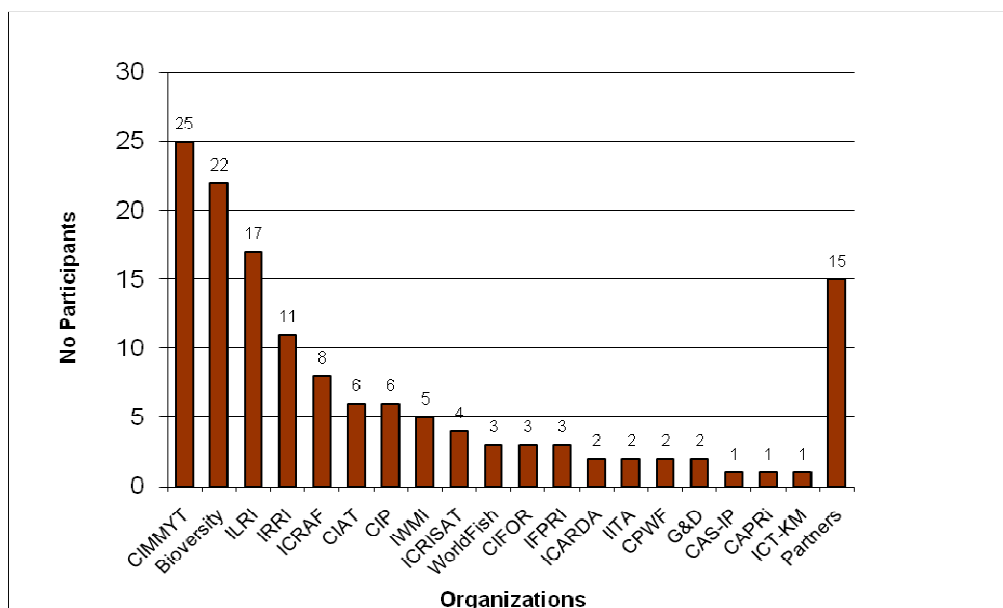


Figure 1: Organizations represented in the training workshops, 2005-2009

The majority of participants were of African origin (44 people) and working in African countries (51 people) as illustrated in the following table³.

Table 2. Region of origin and work of participants⁴

Region	Origin	Work
Africa	44	51
Europe	35	17
Asia	19	34
North America	14	5
Latin America	8	17
Oceania	5	1
Total	125	125

The course targeted professionals with responsibility for coordinating participatory projects, networks or meetings. The participant selection process evolved over time. In later years a more detailed assessment was made of the extent to which participants had responsibility for managing participatory work. In addition, centers, especially hosting centers were largely given the responsibility for selecting their own participants based on broad guidance from ILAC (for example the target group was identified in the course brochure). Former trainees were also notified of upcoming courses and encouraged to help stimulate the interest of the persons most likely to benefit from the course.

The follow-up survey asked participants if they are currently involved in collaborative work. Ninety three percent responded that they are involved in some sort of partnership (with NARS, ARI, NGOs, CSOs or others). Thus the course appears to have been well targeted.

A complete list of facilitation course alumni, along with group photos from each course can be found at <http://www.cgiar-ilac.org/content/facilitation-training-workshop>

³ Grouped according to the United Nations classification <http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/maplib/worldregions.htm>.

⁴ Only 125 out of 139 workshop participants informed their nationalities.

4.2. Cost of the course

The costs of the course were shared between ILAC, the hosting organization, and the organizations that sent trainees. ILAC pays for the trainers' fees, the training materials and the trainers travel. The following table summarizes the investments made in the course since 2005. The trainer's costs for the first workshop, in February 2005 were shared with the Knowledge Sharing Project of the CGIAR (ICT-KM Program) and CTA cost shared on the 2009 course. The total costs for trainers and materials have remained relatively stable but travel costs are highly variable depending upon airfares and distance travelled. The total investment made by ILAC over the period of the review was about \$160,000.

Table 3. Expenditures and cost sharing (US\$)

Date	Trainer fee	Travel costs	Partner contribution
Feb-05	5,389	2,260	ICT-KM 9,611
Nov-05	15,000	4,061	
Jul-06	22,313	5,110	
Sep-06	22,313	3,439	
Nov-07	22,500	5,732	
Apr-08	23,500	8,654	
May-09	16,287	4,977	CTA 6,213

Participant travel and time were paid by their own organizations. These costs are highly variable depending upon distance travelled and specific departure and arrival points. Efforts were made to minimize travel costs by holding courses on different regional locations. Two courses were held in Europe, three in Africa, one in Asia, one in Latin America.

Each course was hosted by a CGIAR center as shown in Table 4 below. The hosting organization provided the training room and associated local logistical support required by the participants and trainers during the course such as supplies, visa support, meeting rooms, meals and coffee breaks. Often, accommodations are provided at low cost in CGIAR dormitories or housing. The total cost of hosting the training course is estimated to be around \$2,000 per event, not including the travel costs of the host organization's participants.

Table 4. Host organizations

Date	Hosting Organization	Location
February 2005	Bioversity International	Rome, Italy
November 2005	Bioversity International	Rome, Italy
July 2006	International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI)	Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
September 2006	International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT)	El Batan, Mexico
November 2007	International Rice Research Institute (IRRI)	Los Baños, Philippines
April 2008	International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT)	Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
May 2009	World Agroforestry Center (ICRAF)	Nairobi, Kenya

4.3. End-of-course evaluations

Each course was fully evaluated through an on line survey conducted several weeks after the end of the course. The reports of each evaluation are available on the ILAC web site: <http://www.cgiar-ilac.org/content/evaluations>.

The evaluations did not use exactly the same questions but assessed reactions to training delivery, learning and objective achievement. In order to compare evaluations across the different courses, an average score was calculated for all questions related to each of the three variables (delivery, learning objectives and achievement) and then those scores were averaged in order to generate an overall average for the variable.

Figure 2 below shows the average score for each variable for the seven evaluations. Scoring was done on a four point scale of strongly disagree, disagree, agree and strongly agree with “strongly agree” being the highest rating.

As shown below, the overall reaction to the workshop was very positive in all seven end-of-course evaluations. Most respondents strongly agreed (score greater than 3) that objectives were met, the training was effectively delivered and much was learned.

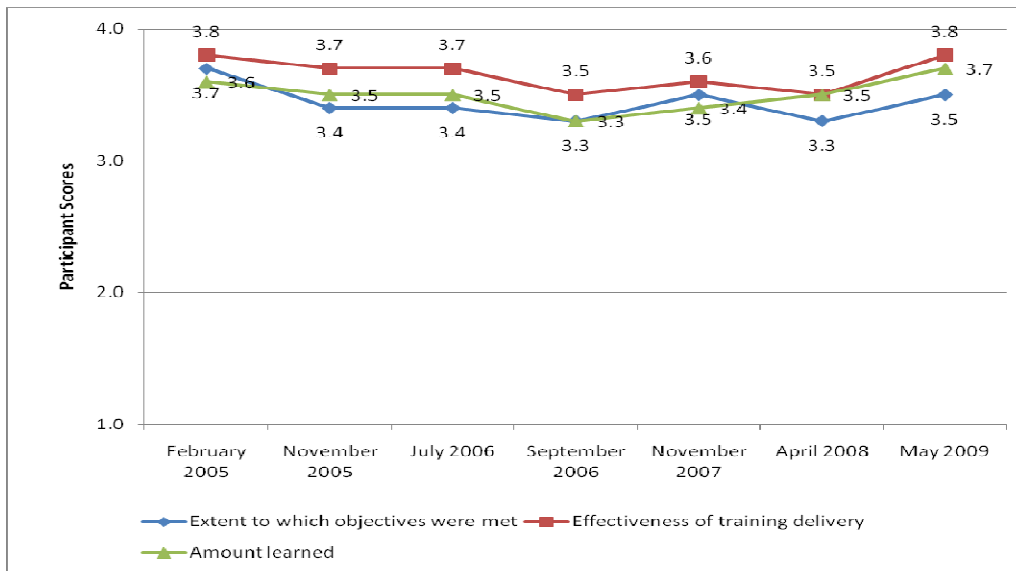


Figure 2: Average course ratings (1 = strongly disagree; 4 = strongly agree)

Most course participants rated most of the topics addressed in the course as “useful” or “very useful.” Those that received a score of “very useful” by the majority of respondents are shown in the following table.

Table 5. Course topics rated “very useful”

	Feb 05	Nov 05	July 06	Sept 06	Nov 07	Apr 08	May 09
Participatory values	X	X	X		X		X
Dynamics of group decision making	X	X	X		X	X	X
Facilitative listening skills	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Chart writing	X			X	X		
Realistic agendas	X		X	X	X	X	X
Polling	X	X	X				X
Reaching closure	X		X		X		X

At the end of the workshop, participants were asked to make closing statements on the training. Most stated that they were very satisfied with the skills they learned and hoped to share them with others. One of the comments – *“It was the best workshop I’ve ever attended”* – reflects how much of an impact this workshop had on participants. Other comments from participants are shown below.

“This was exactly the type of training I was looking for to enhance my capacity as a leader.”

“I was just amazed how many managers must be using ineffective tools to communicate or to facilitate communication in their day to day work - and just how sub-optimal these are.”

“I was a little reluctant about taking the course because I wasn't sure how useful it was going to be. After taking the course I was very happy that I decided to take the time to take the course.”

“I’ve learned a lot that I can directly apply in my professional and personal life.”

4.4. Outcomes: application of skills

Respondents to the follow-up outcome survey were asked to what extent they were practicing the facilitation skills they learned, either by facilitating regular work meetings, or large events, using flipcharts as a tool to help in decision making or helping others to facilitate their own meetings. As shown below in Table 6, most have used the skills learned in various ways. Nearly 90% reported having facilitated regular work meetings and writing charts of meetings. Over half reported having facilitated large workshop events or being called to facilitate other meetings outside their own group.

Table 6. Application of facilitation skills learned

Answer Options	Yes, I have done this	No, I have not done this	Response Count
Facilitated regular work meetings	55 (87%)	8 (13%)	63
Wrote charts of meetings	41 (70%)	17 (30%)	58
Facilitated a large workshop event	38 (61%)	24 (39%)	62
Have been called to facilitate other meetings	33 (54%)	28 (46%)	61
Hired a professional facilitator	16 (29%)	39 (71%)	55

Some comments related to this question follow:

“The facilitation course has been pivotal in my professional development. I’ve taken many steps since then, but still appreciate the value and importance of this course taken years ago. Many thanks!”

“Have been thinking of taking the facilitation certificate for the international association of facilitators.”

“I tried to mobilize others to attend the training but could not succeed as parastatal organizations have rather 'more urgent' engagements.”

“Adapted chart writing and other tools for use directly in participatory meetings with farmers.”

4.5. Outcomes: improvement in meeting processes

Participants were asked to rate the extent to which meetings have improved due to the introduction of facilitation techniques (Figure 3). The findings indicated that better

agreements are made (96% strongly agree/agree), meetings are more productive (96% strongly agree/agree), meetings produce more creative solutions (94% strongly agree/agree), agendas are more realistic (93% strongly agree/agree), and there is more participation (92% strongly agree/agree). Respondents also indicated that the use of flipcharts for capturing ideas is very positive (96% strongly agree/agree).

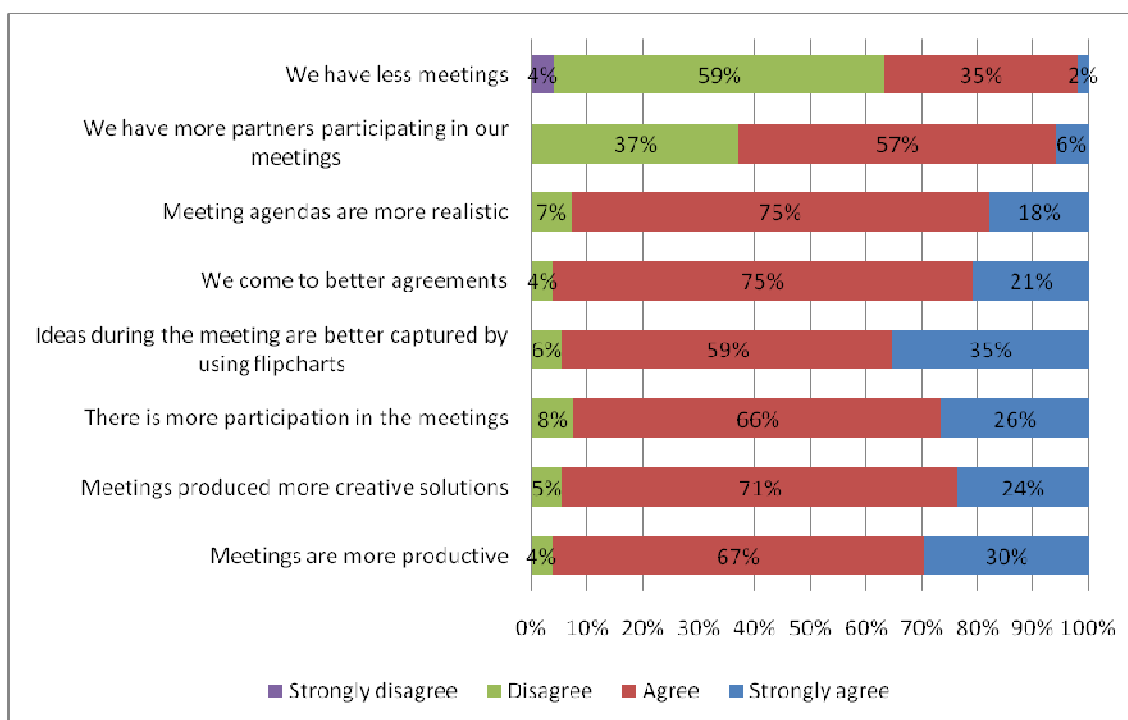


Figure 3: Participants' views on meeting processes in their organizations

4.6. Obstacles

Thirteen respondents reported obstacles to implementing the new skills gained. Of those reporting obstacles, several reported resistance from more senior staff. Others reported difficulties in balancing their roles as process facilitator with their roles as content expert and thus had difficulties not becoming engaged in content discussions.

“I’m often involved in substantive issues of the meeting, and so it’s difficult to focus on process management”

“I still find it difficult as facilitator not to express my views”

“Conflicts between partners and project coordinators (people in charge)”

“Unrealistic agendas (too many objectives)”

5. Extending the Training to Others

In addition to implementing the skills learned in the training, other follow-on activities were carried out that extended the benefits of the training to others (Table 7). Most respondents did relatively simple things like discuss the course with or recommend it to others. Over half however actually carried out training for others to build the skills of their colleagues. A few course participants arranged for Community At Work to conduct similar training in their own organization.

Table 7. Follow-on activities

Answer Options	Yes, I have already done this	No, I have not done this	Response Count
Discussed the training with other colleagues	61	3	64
Recommended to others that they attend the workshop	54	6	60
Trained others in some of the skills you learned	35	25	60
Conducted a seminar on the training	13	43	56
Organized with Sam Kaner to conduct a similar training course for your colleagues	4	50	54

Since the delivery of the first training workshop in 2005, former trainees and their organizations have engaged with Community At Work to deliver training courses on facilitating participatory decision-making or facilitate meetings (Table 8). These activities exposed over 100 additional people to new ideas and skills for better management of participatory processes. This extension of the training through others has nearly doubled the number of people affected, from 139 trained directly by ILAC to 249 in total.

Table 8. Follow-up skills building with Community At Work

Date	Type of intervention	Trainees
July 2005	Bioversity International sponsored a training course for Bioversity Managers in Rome	20
September 2005	UNEP funded Crop Wild Relative project of Bioversity International, sponsored a training course for its project partners in Rome	20
September 2007	ILRI sponsored a 3-day training course for ILRI managers in Nairobi	20
2008	ILRI scientist sponsored a training course to the members of his research team in Addis Ababa	20
2008	ILRI contracted for a one day consultation to develop an approach for applying the learning to the actual work being done in the field, between extension workers, farmers, district officials and researchers	10
October 2009	Gender and Diversity Program-AWARD sponsored a 4-day training for AWARD trainers and other G&D staff	20

Some participants reported the course having had major impacts on the direction of their careers. Some have redirected their career to include more assignments related to facilitation. Some have become professional facilitators, and others undertook facilitation as an important component of their work. One former trainee took a sabbatical for one-on-one mentoring at Community At Work offices in San Francisco and eventually became a professional facilitator of organizational development and change programs in Africa.

The training course also raised awareness among senior management on the importance of having meetings facilitated by professional facilitators. Bioversity International for example, uses the skills of several trained in-house staff or consultants to facilitate internal and external meetings. For example, Bioversity's Director General engaged a former trainee to provide ongoing facilitation services for the Priority and Strategy Committee, a senior management committee. This experience is described in ILAC Brief No 19 (*Participatory decision-making: The core of multi-stakeholder collaboration* by Sam Kaner, Jamie Watts and Emile Frison) (http://www.cgiar-ilac.org/files/publications/briefs/ILAC_Brief19_Participatory_decision.pdf).

In 2008, the Gender and Diversity Program developed a concept for a program that became known as AWARD (African Women in Agriculture Research and Development). In the proposal Community At Work was included as a partner and funding was requested a multi-year facilitation training program. The proposal was approved but with a 25% reduction from amount requested. Thus, the multi-year facilitation program was eliminated from the design but AWARD staff participated in an ILAC sponsored course in 2008 and then followed up with Community At Work directly afterwards to sponsor their own course.

6. General Comments

Thirty respondents made general comments on the facilitation training. Most of these were positive and related to the usefulness and relevance of the course. There were also a few criticisms and suggestions, mainly related to methodology and approaches. Some representative comments follow:

Positive comments:

“It made me conscious of many attitudes in my day-to-day work”

“It increased my confidence at seminars as participant, facilitator and self expression of views without being intimidated.”

“I acquired very practical skills.”

“Conducted in a very professional manner”

“Helped me deepen my knowledge and to get some new methods/ tools”

Negative comments:

“Presenters were not very open to divergent views and experiences”

“I found it difficult to really benefit from the course because it was very dry and lacked humour”

“Since the training program and methodology is not given soft copy it is hard to give similar training to others”

Suggestions:

“Every person (as many people as possible) should get similar trainings.”

“This training should be extended to National Institutions.”

“Seek ways of supporting less privileged scientists to participate in this training”

“I think I would have benefited a lot more from the training if I had applied it almost immediately to a real situation; I would suggest that for future trainings, participants are encouraged to come with specific workshops in mind that they will facilitate in the near future.”

“ILAC should carry out a rigorous evaluation of impacts of its facilitation training.”

“Should be held 3 times a year.”

“Should be advertised more broadly in the CG.”

7. Priorities for Future Training

In the end-of-course evaluation surveys, 98% of the respondents recommended that ILAC sponsor future training in facilitation. In the follow-on outcome survey 80% of the

respondents indicated that they would be interested in attending an advanced facilitation course.

Respondents were asked what complementary skills should be addressed in future training courses (Table 9). Many reported interest in training in communications skills, such as communicating research results, public speaking, and writing. There was also strong interest in negotiation and conflict resolution and in a range of facilitation tools.

Table 9. Priorities for future training

Area of interest	Specific topic	Frequency
Communication	<i>Communicating scientific information to farmers and other less educated groups</i> <i>Public speaking</i> <i>Presentation Skills and communication</i> <i>Scientific report/paper writing</i>	12
Negotiation and conflict resolution	<i>Negotiation skills: how to reach compromise between conflicting views/arguments</i> <i>Conflict resolution</i>	10
Facilitation tools	<i>Facilitation skills to our partners</i> <i>Virtual facilitation</i> <i>Using flipcharts</i> <i>Facilitation skills in strategic planning</i> <i>Skills on the use of participatory tools for grass roots level partners</i>	9
Impact assessment	<i>Impact assessment techniques</i> <i>There are a number of soft skills need to effectively implement an impact oriented research for development</i>	4
Workshop/meeting planning	<i>Complete planning of a workshop as opposed to a meeting</i>	3
Partnership	<i>Partnership management</i> <i>Partnership development</i> <i>Partnership identification and management</i>	3
Resource mobilization	<i>Resource mobilization skills</i>	2
Group dynamics	<i>Group dynamics in depth</i>	2
Leadership and management	<i>Leadership course</i>	2
Knowledge sharing	<i>Knowledge sharing tools like peer assists, bus stops, cafés</i> <i>Online social media course</i>	2
Project management	<i>Project management discipline</i> <i>Creative team management for innovation</i>	2
Training needs assessment	<i>Training Needs Assessment techniques</i>	1

Annex 1. Documents and Records Reviewed

Documents reviewed as part of this evaluation included the following:

- Individual workshop application forms
- Workshop evaluation reports from 2005 to 2009
- Financial reports from 2005 to 2009
- Letter of Agreements with Community At Work from 2005 to 2009
- Workshop material (Kaner, S., Lind, L., Toldi, C., Fisk, S., and Berger, D. (2007). *Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making*. 2nd ed. Minneapolis, MN: New Society Publishers)
- Information contained on the website of the training provider Community At Work (<http://www.communityatwork.com/>)
- Training course brochure
- ILAC Brief 19 (Kaner, S., Watts, J., and Frison, E. (2008). *Participatory decision-making: The core of multi-stakeholder collaboration*. Rome: Institutional Learning and Change (ILAC) Initiative)
- Annual donor reports of ILAC from 2005 to 2009
- Correspondence between trainees and ILAC
- Correspondence between Community At Work and ILAC

Annex 2. Outcome Survey

Evaluation of 7 Facilitation Trainings		
Follow Up Actions		
<p>1. Are you currently involved in a project or programme, which collaborates with partners (NARS, ARI, NGOs, CSOs or similar)?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="radio"/> No</p>		
<p>2. Please indicate what activities you have done after the training workshop.</p>		
	Yes, I have already done this	No, I have not done this
Trained others in some of the skills you learned	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Facilitated regular work meetings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Facilitated a large workshop event	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wrote charts of meetings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conducted a seminar on the training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Discussed the training with other colleagues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Organized with Sam Kener to conduct a similar training course for your colleagues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hired a professional facilitator	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have been called to facilitate other meetings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recommended to others that they attend the workshop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	
Programme or organization change		
<p>Capture perceptions (from those who attended the course and have been applying the skills) on the changes occurred due to the introduction of facilitation techniques.</p>		

Evaluation of 7 Facilitation Trainings

3. For each of the following statements, please tick the response that best describes your views.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
We have more partners participating in our meetings (in terms of number and diversity of professionals involved in the project)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ideas during the meeting are better captured by using flipcharts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Meetings produced more creative solutions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We have less meetings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is more participation in the meetings (pro and contra points of views)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Meeting agendas are more realistic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We come to better agreements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Meetings are more productive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

4. If you had difficulty in applying what you learned in the training, please tell us what obstacles you faced.

Future courses

Assess what future courses ILAC should be promoting

5. Would you be interested in participating in an advanced facilitation course?

Yes

No

Evaluation of 7 Facilitation Trainings

6. What complementary skills development activities would you recommend that ILAC sponsors in the future?

7. Thank you for taking the time to complete the questionnaire. Before you go, please use this space to make any other comments you wish about the training.