Applying Social Analysis and Action (SAA) in rural communities in Ethiopia

Field guide for gender transformative community facilitation and learning

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RAISE-FS
Resilient Agriculture for Inclusive and Sustainable Ethiopian Food Systems



Applying Social Analysis and Action (SAA) in rural communities in Ethiopia

Field guide for gender transformative community facilitation and learning

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This facilitation package is part of the RAISE-FS programme in Ethiopia and is designed to enhance participatory dialogue within agricultural communities. Drawing from CARE's SAA methodology, it offers simple, interactive tools that use storytelling and local examples to foster critical reflection on gender norms and power dynamics. Facilitators, even without formal training, can lead meaningful discussions that inspire practical actions for equitable participation and lasting social change.

Keywords: Social Analysis and Action, gender, norms, power dynamics, participatory, Ethiopia

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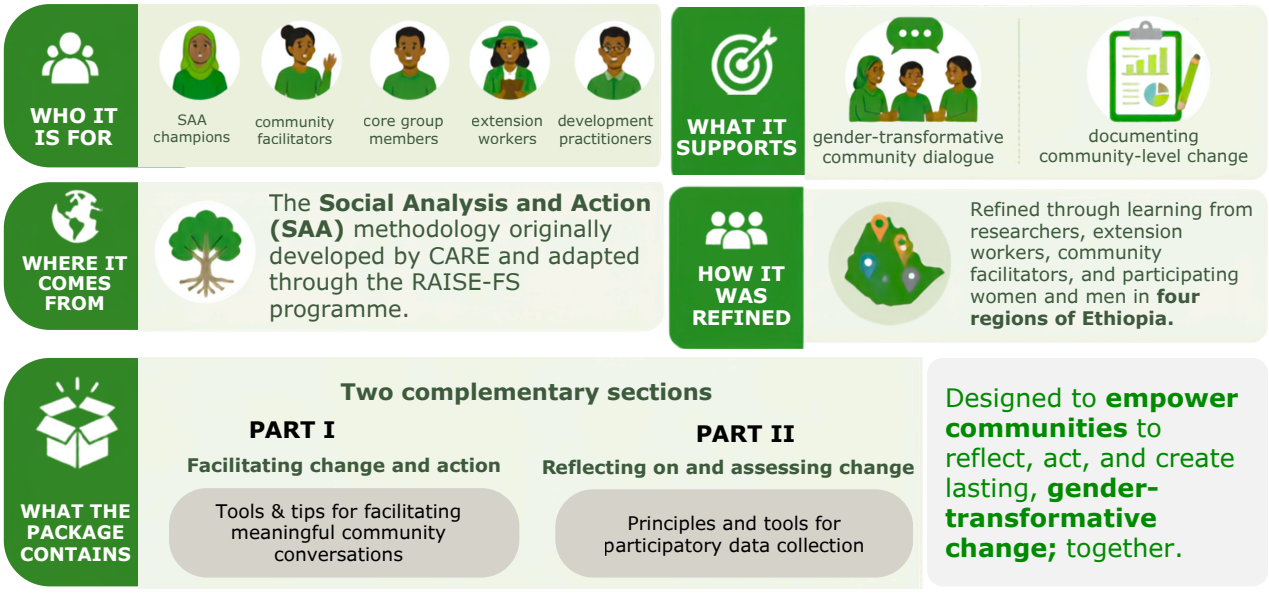
Introduction

This facilitation package has been developed to support Social Analysis and Action (SAA) champions, community facilitators, core group members, extension workers, and development practitioners in facilitating gender-transformative community dialogue and documenting community-level change. It forms part of the RAISE-FS programme's efforts to institutionalize gender-transformative approaches within agricultural research and community engagement processes in Ethiopia.

The package builds on the Social Analysis and Action (SAA) methodology originally developed by CARE and has been adapted and contextualized through the experience of the RAISE-FS programme. Following implementation in four regions of Ethiopia, the approach was continuously refined through learning from researchers, extension workers, community facilitators, and participating women and men. The tools presented in this guide therefore combine internationally recognized SAA principles with practical lessons and locally relevant examples from rural Ethiopian communities.

The package consists of two complementary sections. Part I provides practical guidance for facilitating participatory dialogue sessions that encourage women and men to critically examine gender norms, social inclusion, household relationships, and power dynamics affecting their daily lives and livelihoods. Through a series of interactive tools, participants are supported to question existing assumptions, reflect on their experiences, and identify practical actions that contribute to more equitable gender and social relations. Part II presents participatory and empowering tools for documenting and assessing community-level change. Developed and refined during the endline assessment of the RAISE-FS SAA pilot, these tools move beyond conventional extractive approaches to monitoring by actively engaging community members in generating, interpreting, and validating evidence. In doing so, they transform assessment into a process of reflection, dialogue, and collective learning while producing rich qualitative evidence to inform adaptive programming. The tools throughout the package are intentionally simple, participatory, and discussion-oriented. They are designed for facilitators who may not have formal training in gender or social sciences but are committed to creating inclusive spaces for dialogue, reflection, and learning. Rather than relying on lectures or technical presentations, the tools use storytelling, visual exercises, local materials, and collective discussion to encourage participants to learn from one another, explore different perspectives, and identify locally appropriate solutions.

By bringing together participatory facilitation and participatory assessment in a single resource, this package supports communities not only to stimulate gender-transformative change but also to reflect on, document, and learn from that change over time. In doing so, it aims to strengthen collective learning, community ownership, and evidence-informed action while contributing to more equitable gender relations, stronger households, and more inclusive and resilient rural communities.



Part I: Facilitating change and action

1. Overview of tools

Gender-transformative change begins when people have opportunities to reflect individually and collectively on the expectations, roles, relationships, and beliefs that shape their everyday lives. The five tools in Part I are designed to create these opportunities. They help community members examine existing gender norms and practices, question why they exist, consider how they affect women and men, and explore possibilities for more equitable relationships.

The tools are community change-catalyzing tools, rather than tools for measuring change. Their purpose is to stimulate reflection, dialogue, questioning, and action. They are participatory and can be adapted to the context and needs of each community.

The table below summarizes the main purpose of each tool and how it contributes to the reflection process:

Tool	Main purpose	What the tool helps participants explore
Gender Box	To identify and discuss expectations of women and men	What women and men are expected to do, how they are expected to behave, and what happens when they do not follow these expectations
Story of Alemitu	To explore gender relations and wellbeing through a relatable household story	Household workload, decision-making, relationships, wellbeing, and how gender expectations affect everyday family life
Pile Sorting	To examine how roles and decisions are shared	Who does different household tasks, who makes decisions, and how responsibilities and decision-making could be shared more equitably
Vote with Your Feet	To make different views visible and stimulate discussion to challenge social norms and beliefs	Participants' beliefs and experiences about gender roles and relationships, including areas of agreement and disagreement
"But Why?"	To explore the deeper causes and reasons behind unequal practices	The beliefs, expectations, social norms, power relations, and other factors that keep particular practices in place

How the tools work together

The tools are designed to create a progressive reflection process, moving from identifying gender expectations to examining how these expectations shape everyday life and then questioning the deeper reasons behind them.

- The **Gender Box** provides an entry point by helping participants identify the expectations placed on women and men and the pressures associated with following or challenging them.
- The **Story of Alemitu** brings these issues into a familiar household situation. Participants can discuss workload, decision-making, relationships, and wellbeing through the story before connecting the discussion to their own experiences.
- **Pile Sorting** moves the discussion towards everyday household practices, helping participants examine who does different types of work and who makes important decisions.
- **Vote with Your Feet** allows participants to express different views and hear perspectives that may differ from their own, creating opportunities to question commonly held beliefs.
- "**But Why?**" takes the discussion deeper by moving from what happens to why it happens. Participants explore the beliefs, expectations, and social factors that maintain unequal practices and consider where change may be possible.

The tools do not need to be treated as a rigid sequence. Facilitators can adapt the order, spend more time on issues that generate meaningful discussion, or return to an earlier tool when it helps deepen reflection. The aim is not simply to complete all five tools, but to use them to create meaningful conversations that encourage participants to question restrictive norms, listen to different perspectives, and identify changes they can make in their own households and community.

Every session ends with “take-home reflections”, and every next session starts with follow-up questions to trigger participants to take action. Based on experience in RAISE-FS, most participants experience an “aha moment” in one of the sessions during the trajectory in which they realize their intrinsic motivation or possibility to change. The facilitator anticipates this moment and uses the momentum to introduce a simple goal-setting and action planning poster (see Annex X), for all participants to take home as an aid to discuss and plan changes in their families.

The following sections provide guidance for facilitating each tool. The key facilitation and documentation tips at the end of the guide provide additional guidance for conducting and documenting the SAA process.

2. Discussing expectations of women and men

Every community has ideas about what women and men are expected to do, how they should behave, and what responsibilities they should have. These expectations are known as gender roles. Unlike biological differences between females and males, gender roles are learned from families, communities, schools, religious institutions, and the wider society. Because they are socially created, they often vary across cultures and can change over time.

Gender relations refer to the ways women and men interact with one another, share responsibilities, make decisions, and access opportunities and resources. These relationships influence many aspects of daily life, including education, agricultural productivity, household wellbeing, nutrition, income, health, and participation in community decision-making (FAO, 2011).

Some gender expectations help communities function well by encouraging cooperation and mutual support. However, other expectations can limit the choices and opportunities of women, men, girls, or boys. For example, women may carry a disproportionate share of unpaid care and household work, while men may experience pressure to always appear strong, avoid expressing emotions, or bear sole responsibility for providing household income. Such expectations can create stress, reduce wellbeing, and limit the contributions that both women and men can make to their families and communities (Connell, 2005; Barker et al., 2010). Many of these expectations may feel natural because people have seen and practiced them since childhood. A girl may be taught to cook, clean, care for younger children, and remain quiet. A boy may be taught to plough, earn income, make decisions, and avoid showing weakness. Over time, these lessons can make people believe that women and men are naturally supposed to behave in these ways.

However, many gender roles are not fixed by nature. They are learned through families, communities, schools, religious teachings, media, and everyday experiences. Different communities and generations may have different expectations for women and men, and these expectations can change over time. This means that communities can reflect on the roles and norms they have inherited and decide which ones support wellbeing and which ones need to change.

Changing gender relations does not mean blaming men, rejecting culture, or saying that women and men must become the same. It means creating more respectful, fair, and supportive relationships in which women and men can contribute, make decisions, care for their families, and benefit from development opportunities. Change can begin with small actions at household level, such as sharing a task, listening to one another, supporting girls' education, or making financial decisions together. It can also require wider support from families, community leaders, service providers, and institutions.

The purpose of this discussion is not about blaming individuals, traditions, or culture. Rather, it provides an opportunity for participants to reflect on existing gender expectations, discuss how they affect women, men, girls, and boys, and explore practical ways of building more equitable, respectful, and supportive relationships within families and communities.

Tool 1: Gender box

Purpose



To help participants reflect on community expectations placed on women and men, and how these expectations influence roles, behaviors, opportunities, and relationships.

Intended outcomes



Participants begin to:

- Recognize socially constructed gender expectations
- Reflect on pressures faced by both women and men
- Identify harmful norms and their consequences
- Explore possibilities for more balanced and supportive relationships

Time



60–90 minutes

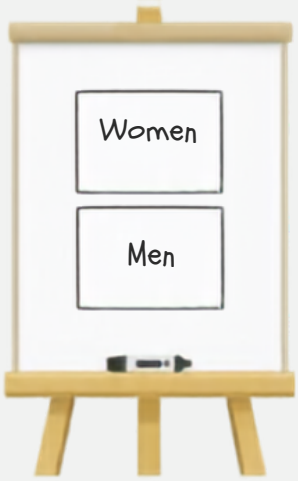
Materials needed



- Flip chart or ground space
- Markers, sticks, stones, or local materials
- Optional: cards or drawings

Facilitation process

1 Introduce the discussion



Draw two large boxes on the ground or on flipchart paper.
Label one: "Women"
Label the other: "Men"

Say:

"In every community, there are expectations about how a 'good woman' or a 'good man' should behave. Today, we will reflect on those expectations together."

Emphasize:

- There are no right or wrong answers
- Participants should describe what exists in the community
- The exercise is about reflection, not judgment

2 Inside the box — Expectations

Ask:

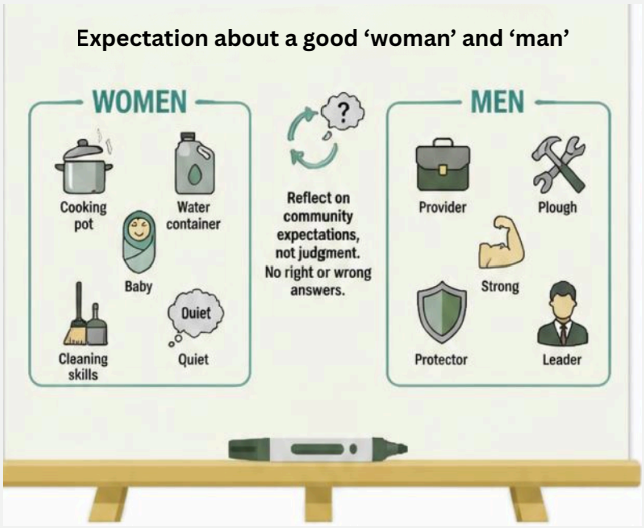
"What must a woman do to be considered a good woman in this community?"

As participants respond, write or draw symbols inside the women's box.

Then ask:

"What must a man do to be considered a good man in this community?"

Draw or write examples inside the men's box.



EXAMPLES

Examples:

- Cooking pot
- Baby
- Water container
- Quiet
- Cleaning skills

Examples:

- Money
- Ox plough
- Stick (authority)
- Market
- Alcohol

GUIDANCE

Allow discussion to flow naturally.

Do not immediately challenge responses.

3 Outside the box – consequences

Ask:

"What happens if a woman behaves differently from what is expected inside the box?"

Then ask:

"What happens if a man does something considered women's work?"

Outside the boxes, draw or write responses such as:



- Laughter
- Conflict
- Isolation
- Respect
- Shame
- Criticism
- Gossip

Allow participants to discuss real examples from the community.

4 Closing statement:

Close gently by asking:



Ask

"If we could remove one heavy stone from either box, what would change in our homes or communities?"

Tips

- Avoid blaming culture or religion directly
- Do not force participants to agree
- Allow silence and reflection
- Encourage both women and men to speak
- Be attentive to emotional reactions
- Use local examples and language

Reflection questions

- Who creates these expectations?
- Are these expectations changing?
- Which expectations are helpful?
- Which expectations are harmful?
- Who benefits from these expectations?
- Who carries the heaviest burden?
- What happens when people try to change these expectations?
- Which expectations feel like “heavy stones” people carry?

Encourage open conversation and ensure all voices heared!

Take-home reflection

Ask participants to try one small change before the next session.

Examples:

- Sharing one household task
- Encouraging girls to speak in meetings
- Appreciating a spouse’s contribution
- Discussing household decisions together

At the next session:

- What did you try?
- What was easy?
- What was difficult?
- What did you learn?

3. Prioritising household wellbeing

3.1 Understanding household wellbeing and social change

The wellbeing of a household is influenced not only by the resources it owns but also by the relationships among the people who live in it. Research has consistently shown that gender relations including how women and men share work, make decisions, control resources, and care for family members have important implications for agricultural productivity, household nutrition, health, and overall family wellbeing (FAO, 2023; World Bank, 2012).

In many rural households, women make substantial contributions to agricultural production while also carrying primary responsibility for preparing food, caring for children and other family members, collecting water and fuel, and managing many day-to-day household activities. Despite these contributions, women may have limited influence over how household income is spent or how productive resources are used. Such imbalances can affect not only women's wellbeing but also children's nutrition, health, education, and the resilience of the household as a whole (FAO, 2023; UNICEF, 2020).

Good nutrition is not determined by food production alone. It also depends on how food, income, time, care, and health services are distributed within the household. When women have limited decision-making power, heavy workloads, or little time for childcare and self-care, families may struggle to achieve good nutritional outcomes even when food is available (UNICEF, 2020). Conversely, evidence shows that when women and men communicate openly, make decisions together, and use household resources jointly, families are often better able to improve nutrition, health, and livelihoods (FAO, 2023).

These patterns are shaped by social norms and institutions that influence what women and men are expected to do. From childhood, people learn ideas about who should earn income, who should provide care, who should make decisions, and whose opinions carry greater weight. Because these expectations are learned through families, communities, and institutions, they often appear natural even though they differ across societies and can change over time.

Lasting change therefore involves both individual agency and supportive social environments. Individuals and couples can begin by reflecting on their own relationships, sharing responsibilities more fairly, and making decisions together. At the same time, families, communities, service providers, and local institutions all play an important role in creating an environment that supports and sustains these changes.
Alemitu’s story in this tool is intended to help participants explore these connections. Rather than focusing on individual blame, it encourages reflection on how gender roles, workload, decision-making, nutrition, and community expectations interact, and how small changes within households, together with wider community support, can contribute to healthier, more equitable, and more resilient families.

Tool 2: Story of Alemitu

"Alemitu's Journey"

Purpose

To stimulate discussion on gender roles, nutrition, shared decision-making, household wellbeing, and the challenges of change.

Intended outcomes

Participants reflect on:

- Power and decision-making in households
- Women's workload and wellbeing
- Nutrition and family welfare
- Community support for positive change

Time

60–90 minutes

Materials needed

- Flip chart paper or ground space
- Markers or local materials
- Colored symbols or cards if available

Facilitation process

1 Tell the story slowly

Alemitu and her husband Abebe grow vegetables in their home garden. Alemitu does most of the work planting, watering, weeding, and harvesting. When vegetables are sold, Abebe controls the money.

Sometimes he spends part of it drinking with friends in the city. Their children are underweight for lack of balanced diet. Drs told Alemitu that she has severe anemia. She worries about her children and her own health.



2 Ask participants

Ask: ***"What should Alemitu do?"***

Allow free responses.
As participants suggest actions

Possible responses:

- She speaks with her husband
- He becomes angry
- She seeks support
- The community discusses shared decisions
- They attend training
- They agree to use income for food etc



3 Closing statement: close the session with this statement

Change is not always easy or straight. But small steps can change the direction of a family's future.

Reflection questions

- What makes change difficult in this story?
- Who supports positive change?
- What risks does Alemitu face?
- How do unequal decisions affect nutrition?
- What role can men play?
- What role can the community play?

Take-home reflection

Couples:
Make one financial decision jointly this week



Individuals:
Speak with one trusted person about shared responsibility



At the next session: Discuss what happened

4. Addressing who does what and who decides

4.1 Understanding power relations in the household

Gender inequality is not only reflected in who performs different tasks or who participates in activities; it is also shaped by differences in access to resources, control over decisions, and the distribution of benefits within households and communities. Gender analysis frameworks distinguish between access and control: access refers to the ability to use or benefit from resources and opportunities, while control refers to the ability to make decisions about the use, allocation, and benefits derived from those resources. (Bari, 2005). In many contexts, women and marginalized groups may contribute significantly to household livelihoods and agricultural production but have less influence over decisions related to land, income, assets, technologies, mobility, or participation in public spaces. These differences are not simply the result of individual preferences but are shaped by social norms, gender roles, and power relations that define whose voices are valued and whose decisions are prioritized.

The intra-household power relations perspective recognizes the household as a social institution where cooperation and negotiation occur, but where members may have unequal bargaining power. Decisions within households are influenced by factors such as control over resources, social expectations, perceived roles, knowledge, confidence, and recognition. Transformative approaches therefore seek not only to increase women's participation but also to strengthen equitable relationships, shared decision-making, and recognition of the contributions of all household members.

Gender roles also influence how time and responsibilities are distributed. The triple burden framework highlights that women often carry three interconnected types of work: productive work (such as farming and income-generating activities), reproductive work (such as childcare, cooking, and household care), and community responsibilities (Zuo, Jiping. 2016). While women's participation in productive activities may increase, without changes in household roles and decision-making, this can unintentionally increase women's workload rather than empowerment.

Therefore, gender transformation requires moving beyond increasing participation alone. It requires examining who has access to opportunities, who controls resources and decisions, who carries different responsibilities, and how household and community relationships can become more equitable.

This tool supports participants to reflect on existing patterns of access, control, workload, and decision-making, identify inequalities, and explore practical pathways toward more balanced and empowering relationships.

Tool 3: Pile sorting

Purpose

To explore the distribution of household labor and decision-making power between women and men.

Intended outcomes

Participants reflect on:

- Unequal workloads
- Decision-making power
- Shared responsibility
- Effects on wellbeing and productivity

Time

75–90 minutes

Materials needed

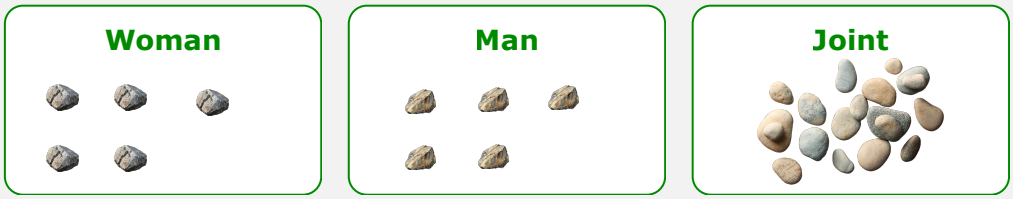
- Three containers or baskets
- Stones, beans, or seeds
- Flip chart (optional)

Facilitation process

A Workload distribution

Step 1

🪨 Place stones/grains into labelled containers



Step 2

Ask participants to list works that are commonly done in their household and write them down (draw them)

- Fetching water
- Ploughing
- Caring for sick children
- Collecting firewood
- Cooking
- Selling crops
- Attending meetings



Step 3

For each task ask:
"Who usually does this in our community?"

🪨 ➜ Place stones or grains into the Woman, Man, or Joint containers based on responses

Reflection questions

- Which side has the most piles?
- Is this balanced?
- What happens when one person carries too much?
- How does workload affect health and productivity?

Facilitation process

B Decision making

Step 1

Ask participants to list issues that require decisions in their household and write (draw them)
Example:

- Selling livestock
- Taking loans
- Schooling children
- Using income



Pile sorting in Tseada Emba woreda, Tigray Region



Pile sorting in Kersa woreda, Oromia Region

Step 2

Have participants place the stones (grains) representing the decision items inside the labelled containers.



Step 3

Invite participants to physically move some piles/ stones into the "Joint" container and discuss what real-life change would be required.



Step 4

Closing statement: close the session with this statement

"When work and decisions are shared more fairly, the whole household can become stronger. Small changes in how we share responsibilities and make decisions can improve well-being and cooperation."



Reflection questions

- Who makes these decisions?
- Is decision-making shared?
- What would happen if decisions became more joint?

Take-home reflection

Before the next session:

Share one household task or one decision more jointly



At the next session:

Discuss what changed



5. Challenging social norms and beliefs

5.1 Understanding social change and collective learning

Social transformation does not happen only through major interventions or formal decisions; it often emerges through gradual changes in how people think, interact, and act in their everyday lives. According to Anthony Giddens' theory of structuration, social structures and human actions are continuously shaped by each other. People are influenced by existing norms, beliefs, and institutions, but through their repeated choices and actions they also reproduce, negotiate, or transform those same structures. This means that small shifts in individual attitudes and everyday behaviours, when repeated and shared by many people over time, can contribute to broader social change.

Gender norms, for example, are maintained through repeated social practices who speaks, who decides, who performs certain tasks, and what behaviours are considered acceptable for women and men. Transforming these norms requires creating opportunities for people to question taken-for-granted assumptions, encounter alternative perspectives, and collectively reflect on possibilities for change.

The social learning perspective further highlights that people develop and revise their understanding through interaction with others. (Nabavi & Bijandi, 2012) Hearing different experiences and viewpoints can challenge assumptions that appear "normal" or universal. Safe spaces for dialogue allow individuals and groups to explore differences, negotiate meanings, and build shared understanding.

Similarly, the perspective of society as a complex adaptive system recognizes that communities are dynamic systems where relationships, behaviours, and beliefs continuously influence one another. Small changes in attitudes and interactions can create feedback loops that gradually reinforce new ways of thinking and behaving. When individuals begin to question existing norms and demonstrate alternative practices, these changes can influence others and contribute to wider transformation.

Therefore, participatory reflection methods that make diverse perspectives visible are important entry points for gender transformation. By physically positioning themselves, observing where others stand, and listening to different explanations, participants are encouraged to recognize that social norms are not fixed truths but shared beliefs that can be examined, negotiated, and changed.

This tool supports participants to identify differences in perceptions, challenge assumptions, understand the social factors shaping their views, and collectively explore pathways toward more equitable norms and practices.

Tool 4: Vote with your feet

Purpose



To encourage open discussion about social norms and beliefs through movement and dialogue.

Intended outcomes



Participants reflect on:

- Reflect critically on social norms
- Hear diverse perspectives
- Explore how norms affect families and development
- Practice respectful disagreement

Time



60–90 minutes

Materials needed



- Space with two corners labeled:
- Agree
- Disagree

Facilitation process

Explain to participants: "I will read a statement. Move to the corner that best reflects your opinion. There are no right or wrong answers."

1 Read each statement aloud. Ask participants to move to the Agree or Disagree corner

AGREE **DISAGREE**

- Only men should sell crops at the market.
- A husband should control all household income.
- Girls need less education than boys.
- Women should rest during pregnancy.
- Women should eat after everyone else.
- Men should not carry babies in public.
- Household chores should be shared.
- A man must make final decisions in the family.



2 Discussion Questions

- Why are you standing here?
- How does this belief affect your community?
- Does this belief help or harm development?
- Are these beliefs changing?

3 Closing statement: close the session with this statement

Different opinions exist in every community. Listening to one another helps communities grow.

Take-home reflection

Choose one belief you plan to challenge and share with your family (friends)
Take one small action reflecting that position.

Example:
If you disagreed that women should eat last, ensure equal food sharing at home.

6. Digging for root causes of inequality

6.1 Understanding persistence of unequal practices

Social norms and practices are not created or maintained in isolation. They are shaped by historical processes, power relations, institutions, and everyday interactions that influence what communities consider acceptable, expected, or possible. These influences operate across households, communities, organizations, and broader social systems, shaping both individual behavior and collective expectations. To transform unequal practices, it is therefore important to move beyond identifying what happens and explore why it continues to happen (Cislaghi & Heise, 2019).

Power perspectives in the social sciences emphasize that social arrangements and institutions are often shaped by unequal distributions of power and resources. As a result, certain norms and practices may persist because they reinforce existing privileges, authority, or control over decision-making. In gender relations, unequal expectations of women and men are often sustained through interconnected social norms, institutional practices, and power structures that influence access to opportunities, resources, and leadership (Connell, 2009).

The concept of path dependency further explains why social practices can be difficult to change. Once certain ways of thinking and behaving become established, they are reinforced through repeated practice, institutional arrangements, and collective expectations. Over time, these patterns can appear natural, traditional, or inevitable, even when they create unequal outcomes. The longer a practice has been embedded within social systems, the more effort and reflection may be required to imagine and establish alternatives.
However, social norms are not fixed. They are continuously produced and reproduced through human actions and interactions (CARE, 2017). Because individuals and groups contribute to maintaining social systems, they also have the capacity to question, negotiate, and transform them. Understanding the underlying causes of a practice including the beliefs, interests, power relations, and institutional factors that sustain it is therefore an essential step toward meaningful change.

The “But Why?” tool draws on this understanding by encouraging participants to move beyond surface-level explanations and examine the deeper drivers behind behaviours, norms, and inequalities. Through repeated questioning, participants explore the root causes of an issue, identify the structures and relationships that maintain it, and recognize opportunities for transformation.

This tool supports participants to critically analyze why certain practices persist, uncover underlying power dynamics and social expectations, and identify entry points for changing norms and creating more equitable relationships and systems.

Tool 5: But why?

Purpose

To help participants identify root causes behind harmful social norms and practices.

Intended Outcomes

Participants reflect on:

- Move beyond surface explanations
- Understand deeper drivers of inequality
- Reflect on power and tradition
- Identify possibilities for gradual change

Time

45–60 minutes

Materials needed

- Flip chart or ground space
- Markers or sticks



Facilitation process

1 Choose one norm raised during earlier discussions. And convert those to discussion statements

Choose one norm raised during earlier discussions. And convert those to discussion statements.

Example:

"*Women's participation is low in agricultural trainings*"

Ask:

"But why does this happen?" Write or draw responses.

Then ask:

But why?"

Below is an example of one "but why exercise for the above statement"

Problem: Women's participation is low in agricultural trainings

Possible reason	Ask: Why?	But why?	Deeper cause	Underlying driver
Heavy household workload	Women spend much of their time on domestic and care work.	Household work is mainly considered women's responsibility.	Communities expect women to prioritize domestic work.	Restrictive gender norms shape the division of labour.
They are not interested	They do not see the training as relevant to them.	Agricultural decisions are mainly made by men.	Women have limited decision-making power over farming.	Gender norms position men as the primary farmers.
They are not invited	Extension workers invite only the household head.	The household head is assumed to be male.	Men are viewed as the primary farmers.	Institutional practices reinforce gender stereotypes.
Husband does not allow attendance	He believes women should remain at home.	Men are expected to make household decisions.	Women have limited autonomy over mobility and participation.	Unequal gender norms and power relations.
Fear of conflict or violence	Attending without permission may create conflict.	Men control women's mobility.	Women have limited decision-making power and fear sanctions.	Unequal power relations and acceptance of gender-based control.



Reflection questions

- Who benefits from this norm?
- Who is harmed?
- What would happen if this norm changed?
- Which roots are hardest to change?
- What small changes are possible now?

2 Closing statement: close the session with this statement

If we want different fruits,
sometimes we must look at the roots.



Take-home reflection

- Discuss the norm with at least one family member
- Observe where the norm appears in daily life
- Reflect on whether you questioned or automatically followed it

At the next session:

Share observations and experiences

Part II: Reflecting on and assessing change

1. Approach and principles for participatory assessment of change

Assessing changes following an intervention is an essential part of monitoring, evaluation, and learning. It helps practitioners and communities understand whether intended changes have occurred, identify unexpected outcomes, generate evidence for accountability, and improve future programming. Development programmes commonly use methods such as household surveys, focus group discussions (FGDs), key informant interviews (KIIs), observations, and case studies to document these changes.

While these methods are valuable, they are often implemented as one-way processes in which project staff determine what information is collected, while community members primarily serve as respondents. As a result, data collection may become time-consuming, repetitive, and less engaging for participants, with limited opportunities for them to reflect on their experiences, interpret findings, or contribute to the learning process (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995).

A participatory approach to assessing change seeks to address these limitations by engaging community members as active partners in generating and interpreting evidence. Through dialogue and collective reflection, participants examine what has changed, why change has occurred, and what challenges remain to be addressed. In doing so, evidence is co-created rather than extracted, while the process itself promotes critical reflection, learning, and ownership of change (Chambers, 1994; Freire, 1970).



Cross-regional facilitators hold a preparatory discussion in Gumer woreda, Central Ethiopia, refining their approach before piloting the community reflection tool.

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InPACT: principles of reflective monitoring

Reflective monitoring views data collection as more than documenting results it is an opportunity for participants to reflect on their experiences, learn from one another, and identify actions to strengthen future change. Rather than asking only "What has changed?", reflective monitoring also explores "Why did it change?", "What enabled or hindered the change?", and "What should happen next?" This approach is particularly valuable for gender-transformative programmes, where changes in attitudes, social norms, and relationships are often gradual and cannot be fully understood through numbers alone (Patton, 2011).
The participatory monitoring tools in this guide are guided by five principles, remembered through InPACT. The acronym emphasizes that participatory assessment should contribute to continued learning and action, rather than simply extracting information from communities.

- **In**clusion: Women, men, youth, and other community members are encouraged to share their perspectives so that diverse experiences are represented.
- **Pa**rticipation: Community members actively generate and interpret evidence rather than simply responding to questions.
- **A**ction-oriented: Findings are used not only to document progress but also to identify practical actions for sustaining positive change and addressing remaining barriers.
- **C**ollective learning: Discussion and dialogue help participants learn from one another and build a shared understanding of change.
- **T**houghtful reflection: Participants critically examine what has changed, why it changed, what has not changed, and what can be learned from the experience.

Drawing on these principles, the RAISE-FS programme adopted a participatory approach to documenting community-level changes during the endline assessment of the Social Analysis and Action (SAA) pilot. Instead of relying solely on conventional interviews and discussions, the assessment used interactive reflection tools that encouraged participants to collectively analyze their experiences, validate findings, and identify lessons for the future. The data collection process itself became an opportunity for dialogue, learning, and continued empowerment.

The tools presented in this section are adapted from that endline experience and refined for broader use in gender-transformative programming. Although originally designed for an endline assessment, they can also be used during baseline, periodic reflection, midline, or endline to support continuous learning while generating credible evidence of community-level change.

2. Overview of tools

The tools in this section are designed to support participatory reflection on different dimensions of community-level change. Each tool has a distinct purpose and generates a different type of evidence, while together they provide complementary perspectives on the change process. The tools can be used together as part of a broader assessment or selected according to the specific learning and information needs of the community and programme.

The table below summarises the main reflection question addressed by each tool and the type of evidence it can generate. The tools should not be treated as isolated data collection exercises.

The table below summarises the primary purpose of each tool included in this guide:

Tool	Main reflection questions	Type of evidence it generates
Community Change Timeline	What was our change journey: when and how did change occur?	Change process and key milestones
Community Mapping	Where has change occurred and who has been affected?	Indication of the level of change at home, public spaces and institutions in the community
Basket Game	Before and after reflection: What has changed?	Changes in behaviour and indications of changes in social norms
Future vision and community commitment	What is our vision for further change in the future?	The practical commitments and overall potential to continue changing behaviour and social norms
Facilitator Reflection Interview	What enabled and constrained implementation?	Implementation learning and adaptive management
Documentation Template for Community core groups Change Journey Timeline	What role did core group members play in supporting and extending SAA??	Evidence on community leadership, gatekeeping and catalytic effects; observed changes and their enabling and constraining factors;
Household Change Story	How did change happen in a household?	Qualitative evidence and pathways of change

The sequence of the tools is deliberately designed as a logical flow from the perspective of the community participants, so that it may enhance the changes in gender relations and social norms:

- The community change timeline also serves as a moment for community participants to jointly remember the process they have gone through;
- The community mapping also provides a chance for women and men to reflect separately on “where change happened” and is likely to generate discussion between women and men about the differences between the “women’s map” and the “men’s map”. This aims to widen the minds of the participants beyond typical changes at home and increase the quality of the discussion in the basket game.
- The basket game gives the opportunity to participants and facilitators to dive deeper into the actual changes that happened in all those different places indicated on the maps.
- The purpose of the visioning exercise is mainly for the participants to have a way forward for gender relations and social norms in their community based on the reflections guided by the previous tools. For impact assessment or research, the outcomes of this tool give some information about the sustainability of the changes in gender relations and norms.
- The facilitator reflection interview and the household change stories serve a learning purpose to improve facilitation and serve to triangulate findings from the other tools.

Since the tools satisfy the information needs of both the participants and the researchers / evaluators, some of the data generated will be overlapping. This can cause a challenge for data analysis, that can be solved by smart coding and comparing data to identify contradictions and trends. The following chapters focus on how to facilitate the tools with community participants.

3. Reflecting on how changes happened

Tool 6: Interactive change journey timeline

Purpose

The Interactive Change Journey Timeline helps participants reflect on when and how significant changes occurred during their participation in Social Analysis and Action (SAA). It enables facilitators to identify key turning points, understand what influenced change, and document qualitative evidence of community-level outcomes.

What this tool helps document

This tool generates evidence on:

- Participants' perceived journey of change throughout the SAA process
- Key turning points that influenced change
- Changes in gender attitudes, behaviors, relationships and social norms
- Factors that enabled or hindered change
- Participants' reflections on the SAA process and its contribution to observed changes

Participants

8–20 community members who participated in the SAA process (women and men may participate together or separately depending on the context).

Time

Approximately 60 minutes

Materials needed

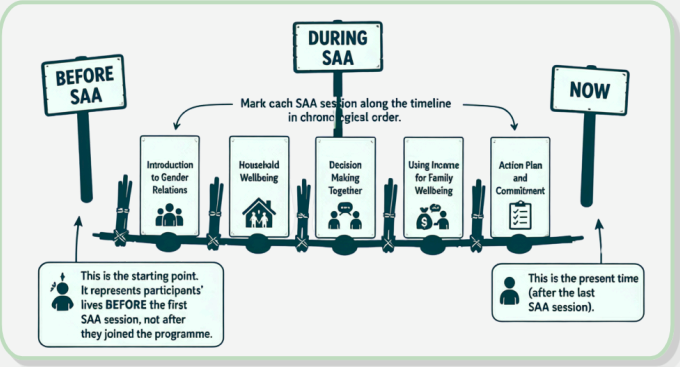
- Rope, string, chalk or sticks to create a timeline on the ground
- Stones, leaves, bundled sticks or cards to represent SAA sessions
- Sticky notes or small cards (optional)
- Marker pens, Flipchart for recording key discussion points

Facilitation process

1 Prepare the timeline

Using locally available materials, create a simple timeline on the ground with three reference points: Before SAA, During SAA, and Now. Mark each SAA session along the timeline in chronological order using bundled sticks, stones or cards. Where possible, label each session with its title or main topic.

Explain that the starting point represents participants' lives before the first SAA session, not after they joined the programme.





2 Identify turning points

Invite participants to think quietly about their personal journey throughout the SAA process.

Ask:
"During which SAA session or after which discussion did you first notice an important change in your thinking, behaviour or relationships?"

Invite participants to place a marker on the point in the timeline that represents their most significant turning point. Allow women and men to participate in sequence if this encourages more open participation.



Community Timeline tool, Central Ethiopia, Gumer woreda community discussion

3 Facilitate collective reflection

Invite volunteers to explain why they selected a particular point on the timeline. Rather than asking individuals directly, encourage voluntary sharing from participants who selected the same session or period.

Use probing questions such as:

1. What changed for you at that point?
2. What happened during that session that influenced your thinking?
3. How did this change affect household or community?
4. What helped you put this change into practice?
5. What challenges made change difficult?
6. Looking back, which change has been most meaningful to you?



Facilitation tips

Create a respectful space for everyone to speak and listen. Value all experiences and encourage open, honest dialogue.



TIPS FOR FACILITATORS

✓ Create a safe and respectful space for sharing.
✓ Listen actively without interrupting or judging.
✓ Allow different voices to be heard.
Thank participants for their insights.

4 Summarize and validate

Review the main patterns emerging from the discussion.

Together with participants, summarize:

- the sessions that generated the greatest change;
- the main changes participants experienced;
- factors that enabled change;
- barriers that still remain.

Confirm with participants that the summary accurately reflects their experiences before closing the session.

Tips

Good facilitation practices

- Encourage voluntary participation and avoid putting individuals on the spot.
- Pay attention to clusters of participants selecting the same SAA session, as these often indicate influential learning moments.
- Encourage discussion of both positive and difficult experiences.
- Allow sufficient time for quieter participants to contribute.
- Record illustrative quotations that capture participants' experiences in their own words.

Documentation template for community change journey timeline

General Information

Date _____ Region _____ Woreda _____ Kebele _____

Facilitator(s) _____ _____

Participants Male _____ Female _____

Guiding Question	Key Responses and Illustrative Quotations	Facilitator Observations
1. When did you first hear about SAA? What were your initial thoughts or expectations?		
2. Which SAA session or discussion marked the most important turning point in your journey? What changed for you?		
3. What factors helped you achieve these changes in gender and social norms?		
4. What challenges or barriers prevented or slowed change?		
5. Looking back, what has been the most significant change in your life or community as a result of participating in SAA? Why?		

4. Reflecting on where changes happened

Tool 7: Community change mapping

Purpose

The Community Change Mapping tool helps participants identify where SAA-related changes in gender roles, relationships, social norms, and inclusion have occurred across community spaces and institutions. Through visual mapping, participants assess progress, identify areas where change has stalled or reversed, and explore factors that enable or constrain sustainable change. The exercise generates community-validated evidence on the reach and sustainability of SAA outcomes.

What this tool helps document

This tool generates evidence on:

- Community spaces where gender and social changes have occurred
- Areas where harmful norms continue to persist
- Places where progress has weakened or reversed
- Factors enabling or hindering change across different settings
- Differences in perceptions between women and men

Participants

8–20 SAA participants. To encourage open discussion, conduct the mapping separately with women and men before bringing both groups together for joint reflection.

When to use

This tool is most appropriate for midline, endline, or periodic community reflection sessions after participants have experienced several SAA dialogues. It can also be used during community learning and adaptive planning meetings.

Materials needed

- Large flipchart paper or ground space
- Marker pens or chalk
- Colored stickers or markers (red, yellow and green)
- Tape (if using paper)
- Locally available materials (optional)

Time

Approximately 90-120 minutes

Facilitation process

1 Prepare the community map

Divide participants into separate groups of women and men.

Ask each group to draw a simple map of their community showing important places and institutions where people interact, such as homes, markets, schools, health posts, water points, religious institutions, farmer training centres, forests, roads, or other locally relevant locations.

Emphasize that artistic ability is not important. The map only needs to represent the community in a way that participants understand.

Community Mapping Activity



Each group draws a simple map of their community with important places.



2 Identify areas of change

Ask: ***"What changed?"***

Ask participants to reflect on how gender relations and social norms have changed in each location since participating in SAA.

Using colored stickers or markers, invite participants to classify each location as follows:

- 🟢 **Green**: noticeable positive change in gender and social relations.
- 🟡 **Yellow**: partial change, inconsistent progress, or change that has weakened over time.
- 🔴 **Red**: little or no visible change; harmful norms continue to persist.



Community Mapping exercise, Kersa woreda Oromia Region

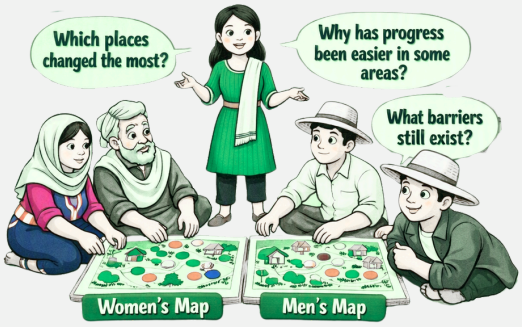
Begin the discussion with the red locations before moving to yellow and green. Starting with areas where change has not occurred encourages deeper reflection on remaining challenges rather than focusing only on successes.

3 Facilitate collective reflection

After participants complete their maps, bring the groups together and compare the results.

Facilitate discussion using questions such as:

- Which places have experienced the greatest positive change? Why?
- Which places continue to show little or no change?
- Why has progress been easier in some places than others?
- What helped positive changes occur?
- What barriers continue to prevent change?
- Have there been places where progress has weakened or reversed? What contributed to this?



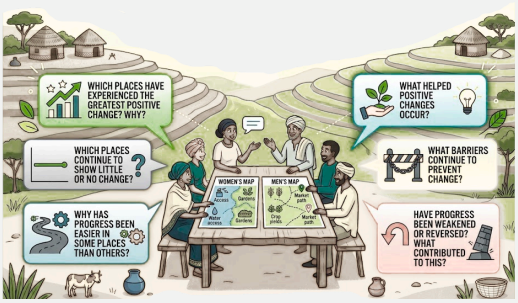
Encourage participants to discuss differences between the women's and men's maps and explore possible explanations.

4 Summarize and validate

Together with participants, summarize the key findings by identifying:

- locations showing the strongest positive change;
- locations where harmful norms remain unchanged;
- places where progress has weakened;
- the main factors enabling or constraining change.

Confirm that participants agree with the summary before concluding the exercise.



Facilitation tips

Good facilitation practices

- Emphasize that there are no right or wrong maps.
- Encourage participants to explain why they selected each colour rather than simply placing stickers.
- Explore differences between women's and men's perceptions without trying to reach immediate consensus.
- Pay particular attention to locations that receive mixed ratings, as these often reveal important differences in experience.
- Record illustrative quotations that explain why change has occurred—or not occurred—in each setting.

Documentation template for community change journey timeline

General Information

Date _____ Region _____ Woreda _____ Kebele _____

Facilitator(s) _____ _____

Participants Male _____ Female _____

Guiding Question	Map Results (Number of Green, Yellow and Red Ratings by Location)	Key Responses and Illustrative Quotations	Key Responses and Illustrative Quotations
1. Which places in the community have experienced the most significant positive changes following SAA?			
2. Which places continue to show little or no change? Why?			
3. What factors helped positive changes occur in these locations?			
4. What barriers continue to limit change, and where are they most evident?			
5. Have there been places where progress weakened or reversed? What contributed to this?			

5. Before and after reflection

Tool 8: Before and after reflection (Basket Game)

Purpose

The Basket Game is a participatory reflection tool that enables community members to anonymously assess changes they have experienced since participating in the Social Analysis and Action (SAA) process. Through simple voting and guided discussion, the tool captures both quantitative evidence (the extent of perceived change) and qualitative evidence (participants' explanations and examples), while encouraging collective reflection on progress and remaining challenges.

What this tool helps document

The tool documents community perceptions of change in:

- Household decision-making and gender relations
- Division of domestic work
- Women's participation and leadership
- Economic empowerment and farming decisions
- Food and nutrition practices
- Areas where little or no change has occurred

When to use

This tool is best suited for midline, endline or periodic reflection sessions where participants have completed several SAA sessions. It can also be adapted for community learning and reflection events.

Materials needed

- One non-transparent basket (or container)
- Three locally available grains or objects
- Flipchart showing what each grain represents
- Marker pens
- Documentation sheet

Grain	Meaning
Faba bean	Significant change
Maize	Some change
Chickpea	No change

Any three locally available objects may be used provided participants clearly understand what each represents.

Preparation

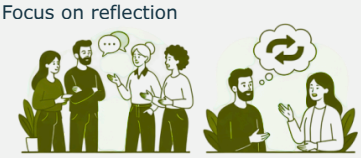
- Divide participants into separate women's and men's groups.
- Place one basket where participants can vote privately.
- Display the meaning of each grain.
- Give each participant one of each grain before every statement.

Facilitation process

1 Introduce the exercise

Explain that participants will reflect on changes they have experienced since participating in SAA. Clarify that they are reflecting on changes in their households and communities, not evaluating the project.

Focus on reflection



- Share experiences since starting SAA
- Reflect on personal and shared changes

Reflect on your world, not the project



- Changes in YOUR household and family life
- Positive changes in YOUR community

Remember You are NOT evaluating SAA. Focus on changes in your own environment.

2 Read the statement

Read one reflection statement aloud and allow participants time to think silently before voting.



3 Anonymous voting

Participants privately place the grain that best represents their experience into the basket.
After everyone has voted:

- empty the basket;
- sort and count the grains; and
- record the results.



Basket exercise, Tseadaemba woreda, Tigray Region

4 Step 4 Facilitate discussion

Invite participants to explain the voting results.

Use questions such as:

- Why did people vote this way?
- What changes have you observed?
- What contributed to these changes?
- What barriers still remain?

5 Repeat and summarize

Repeat the process for each statement. At the end, summarize:

- areas showing the greatest progress;
- areas where little change has occurred; and
- key factors that enabled or constrained change.



Facilitation tips

- Protect anonymity throughout the exercise.
- Encourage everyone to participate.
- Probe for examples rather than opinions.
- Record both positive and negative experiences.
- Note differences between women's and men's perspectives.
- Capture unexpected findings and disagreements.

Documentation Template

No.	Reflection Statement	Significant Change	Some Change	No Change	Community Responses (Examples, Quotes, Reasons)	Facilitator Observations
Household decision-making and gender relations						
1	Women's participation in household decision-making					
2	Men's involvement in domestic work (cooking, childcare, water collection, etc.)					
3	Open communication between spouses					
4	Joint decision-making before selling major household assets					
5	Women's overall workload					
6	Household conflict and gender-based violence					
Community Participation and Leadership						
7	Women's confidence to speak in public					
8	Women's freedom of movement and mobility					
9	Women's participation in community meetings					
10	Women's participation in community leadership roles					
11	Community acceptance of changing gender roles					
Economic empowerment and farming						
12	Women's participation in crop production decisions					
13	Women's control over agricultural income					
14	Business profitability and household savings					
15	Women's control over business income					
16	Joint ownership or use of bank accounts					
Food and nutrition						
17	Equitable household food distribution and reduction of food taboos					

6. Plan for the future

Tool 9: Future vision and community commitment

Purpose

This tool enables participants to reflect on the future they would like to create for their families and communities and to identify practical actions that can sustain positive changes in gender equality and social inclusion. It concludes the reflection process by transforming lessons learned into individual and collective commitments for continued action.

What this tool helps to document

The tool documents:

- Participants' vision for a more gender-equitable and socially inclusive community
- Individual and collective commitments to sustain positive change
- Perceived priorities for future action
- Support needed from community structures and partners

When to use

This tool is best suited for midline, endline or periodic reflection sessions where participants have completed several SAA sessions. It can also be adapted for community learning and reflection events.

Materials needed

- A symbolic "wish stick" (or another locally meaningful object)
- Flipchart paper
- Marker pens
- Masking tape
- Documentation sheet

Preparation

- Arrange participants in a small groups to encourage open discussion.
- Prepare the wish stick (or another symbolic object) that participants will pass while sharing.
- Set up a flipchart to publicly record commitments.
- Explain that the exercise is about looking ahead and identifying realistic actions that individuals and the community can take to sustain positive changes.

Facilitation process

1 Imagine the future

Invite participants to close their eyes for a moment and imagine their community five years from now.

Ask them to picture a community where women, men, girls, and boys enjoy equal opportunities, respect, and participation.



Community visioning exercise, Angot woreda, Amhara Region

2 Discuss the vision

In small groups, ask participants to discuss:

- What would this community look like?
- What would be different in families?
- What would be different in the wider community?

3 Share aspirations

Pass the **wish** stick around the circle.

Invite each participant to share one **change** they hope to see in their family or community.

4 Make commitments

Ask participants:

"What is one action you can personally take to help make this vision a reality?"
Record individual and group commitments on a flipchart.



5 Close the exercise

Review the commitments aloud and encourage participants to support one another in achieving them.

If appropriate, hand the commitment flipchart to community leaders or representatives as a shared record of the community's commitments.



Facilitation tips



- Create a positive and inspiring atmosphere.
- Encourage realistic and achievable commitments.
- Allow participants to pass if they prefer not to speak.
- Celebrate diverse ideas and avoid judging responses.
- Close with an encouraging message or, where culturally appropriate, invite respected community elders to offer words of encouragement or a blessing.

Documentation template

Guiding Question	Community Responses (Detailed Testimonies, Key Quotes)	Facilitator Observations
1. If you imagine your community five years from now, what would you like to see different regarding gender equality and social inclusion?		
2. What changes would you like to see within families?		
3. What actions can individuals and the community take to sustain these changes?		
4. What support is needed from community structures, government, or development partners?		
5. What commitments did participants make to help achieve this vision?		

Guidance for facilitating community dialogue, reflection and documenting change

A good facilitator does not need to have all the answers. The facilitator's role is to create a safe, respectful, and inclusive space where community members can reflect on their experiences, listen to different perspectives, question assumptions, and identify possibilities for change. These principles apply to both SAA dialogue sessions and sessions for reflecting on and documenting change.

Before the dialogue or reflection session

- **Be clear about the purpose:** Explain why the group is meeting and what participants can expect. SAA sessions are opportunities for reflection and learning, not lectures or tests. For change assessment, emphasize that both change and no change are important to understand.
- **Prepare materials and logistics in advance:** Ensure materials, venue, seating, timing, participant groups, translation, note-taking, and recording arrangements are organized before the session.
- **Be familiar with the SAA process and tools:** Facilitators should understand the purpose, process, key questions, and sequence of the SAA sessions and tools. For the final change assessment, facilitators should, as far as possible, have participated in or directly supported the SAA process themselves and be familiar with the approach and reflection tools.
- **Prepare for meaningful participation:** Consider who may speak easily and who may be less comfortable. Where appropriate, plan separate discussions for women and men or other groups before bringing participants together. Use simple, locally relevant examples and materials.

During the dialogue or reflection session

- **Create a safe and respectful space:** Encourage listening, respect different experiences and opinions, and avoid ridicule or judgement. Do not pressure anyone to disclose personal or sensitive information.
- **Obtain informed consent for documentation and sharing:** Before taking photographs, making audio/video recordings, collecting identifiable stories or quotations, or sharing experiences beyond the session, explain what will be documented, why, how it will be used, and who may see it. Obtain consent and respect anyone who does not wish to be recorded, photographed, identified, or quoted.
- **Listen more than you speak:** Use questions to stimulate reflection rather than providing answers. Give participants time to think and allow silence. The facilitator guides the process; participants provide much of the knowledge and interpretation.
- **Stay neutral and avoid leading questions:** Do not suggest that a particular response is expected. For example, ask "What, if anything, has changed in how household work is shared?" rather than "Have men started helping women with household work?"
- **Encourage different voices and respect disagreement:** Women and men, and younger and older participants, may experience change differently. Encourage quieter participants to contribute and explore differences rather than forcing agreement.
- **Use concrete, everyday examples:** Connect discussions to household responsibilities, farming, income, food, decision-making, relationships, and community participation. When participants describe change, probe: What happened? What was different before? What happens now? What helped? What made it difficult?
- **Avoid blame and recognize gradual change:** Help participants examine how expectations, relationships, practices, and social norms affect people's lives without blaming individuals or groups. Recognize small steps while exploring whether changes are deeper, sustained, or have been reversed.
- **End with one small action:** Before closing each session, encourage participants to agree on one practical action they can try before the next meeting. Small actions often lead to meaningful change over time.
- **Celebrate progress:** At the beginning of the next session, invite participants to share what they tried, what worked well, what was challenging, and what they learned. Recognizing small successes encourages continued reflection and action.

Assessing, and reflecting on change

- **Prioritize community information needs:** As a rule of thumb, prioritise the information needs of community participants alongside those of researchers or evaluators. Participatory assessment should be useful to the people taking part, not simply serve as a data collection exercise. When participants see value in the reflection process, the information generated is more likely to be meaningful and genuine.
- **Use mixed methods:** Use a combination of tools to explore different dimensions of change. No single tool can adequately capture what changed, where change occurred, how change happened, why it happened, and what remains difficult. Using complementary tools provides a more complete picture of the change process.
- **Walk the talk:** Facilitators and researchers using participatory tools should understand and, where possible, experience the reflective approach themselves. Those facilitating SAA-related assessment should be familiar with the SAA process and should be able to relate to the experience of questioning assumptions, reflecting on relationships, and considering possibilities for change.
- **Triangulate the findings:** Do not be concerned about some overlap between tools. Use overlapping findings to identify patterns, confirm emerging findings, and explore contradictions or differences between perspectives. Community reflection activities can be complemented, where appropriate, by facilitator reflections, core group interviews, and household change stories.
- **Focus not only on successes:** Document where change has been limited, stalled, reversed, or resisted, and explore why. Pay attention to barriers, social pressure, criticism, backlash, and unintended effects, as these provide important insights into how sustainable or fragile change may be.
- **Appreciate and celebrate small wins:** Participatory assessment should help participants recognize meaningful changes, including changes that may initially appear small. Where appropriate, create space for participants to acknowledge and celebrate progress while continuing to reflect critically on what remains to be changed.

Practical guidance for documentation

- **Capture the story behind the finding:** Record why participants reached a particular conclusion, concrete examples, significant experiences, differences between groups, and important quotations in their own words. Distinguish participants' accounts from facilitator interpretation.
- **Capture change over time:** Document what things were like before, what happened during the SAA process, what changed, and what is happening now. Explore both what changed and how and why it changed.
- **Validate findings:** Where possible, share emerging findings with participants and invite them to clarify, add information, or challenge interpretations.
- **Record information promptly and protect confidentiality:** Complete notes while discussions are fresh and protect identities and sensitive information unless explicit consent has been given for identification or sharing.

A Simple Reminder:

Use these questions to deepen reflection and documentation:

What changed? → How do you know? → Can you give an example? → What was different before? → What helped the change happen? → What made it difficult? → Is the change continuing?

Across both parts of this guide, remember that the quality of the process matters as much as the tool itself. Effective facilitation is based on listening, inclusion, respect, openness to different experiences, critical reflection, and collective learning. The facilitator is not there to convince people or produce a predetermined result, but to create opportunities for communities to think together, learn from their experiences, take practical action, and recognize and sustain meaningful change.

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Annex I Core Group Key Informant Interview (KII) guide

Documentation template for community change journey timeline

Interview question	Key Responses, Quotes and Examples	Interviewer Observations
1. Preparation and facilitation: How do you prepare for SAA sessions? What makes facilitation easier or more difficult?		
2. Facilitation experience: What has helped you successfully facilitate SAA? What challenges have you experienced?		
3. Community response: How have community members responded? What changes have you observed over time?		
4. Follow-up: How do you monitor changes after the sessions?		
5. Support needs: What additional support would improve your facilitation?		
6. Facilitator's guide: How useful is the guide? What improvements would you suggest?		
7. Documentation: How practical are the reporting tools and templates?		
8. SAA tools: Which tools worked best? Which need improvement?		
9. Scaling up: How can SAA reach more community members?		
10. Sustainability: What will help sustain SAA after the project ends?		

Annex II Community facilitator reflection interview

Household change story template

General Information

Date		Region		Woreda		Kebele	
Household members interviewed		Ages		Education level			
Interviewer							
Intervention(s) participated in							

Guiding questions

Guiding questions	Key responses, quotes and examples
1. Before SAA: What was life like before participating in SAA? (Probe: decision-making, household roles, mobility, access to resources, control over income and assets.)	
2. Changes: What has changed since participating in SAA? How did these changes happen?	
3. Enablers and barriers: What helped these changes? What made change difficult?	
4. Community response: How have neighbours or community members reacted to these changes?	
5. Catalytic effects: Has SAA helped you benefit more from other project activities (e.g., home gardening, business models, agricultural innovations)? If yes, how?	

Annex III Household change story interview

Documentation template for community core groups change journey timeline

General Information

Date		Region		Woreda		Kebele	
Household members interviewed		Ages		Education level			
Interviewer							
Intervention(s) participated in							

Guiding questions

1. Your Experience with SAA

- How has being part of the SAA process influenced you personally? (E.g., your thinking, your relationships at home, how you act in the community)
- What were the enabling and challenging parts of this journey?

2. Your Role as a Gatekeeper

- What role did you play in supporting or leading the SAA activities?
- Have you tried to influence people outside the regular SAA participants? (who and how?)
- What made it easier or harder for you to support the process?

3. Changes You Observed

- What changes have you seen in your community since the SAA started?
- (e.g., gender roles, individual changes, changes in gender relations, decision-making etc)
- What didn't work or didn't change as expected? And what was the reason?

4. Enablers and Barriers

- What helped change happen in your community?
- What held people back or made change difficult?

5. Looking Ahead

- What needs to happen to keep the momentum going?
- How can we expand this approach outside of SAA participants?
- Who do we need to bring on board, What kind of support would help you and others continue this work?



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Resilient Agriculture for Inclusive and Sustainable Ethiopian Food Systems (RAISE-FS) is a four-year program funded by the Dutch Embassy in Addis Ababa and hosted by Stichting Wageningen Research Ethiopia based in Addis Ababa, to bring about transformation in the Ethiopian food system. RAISE-FS will develop and implement a demand-driven and interdisciplinary approach to Research for Food System Transformation (R4FST) and as such contribute to the Government of Ethiopia's transformational agenda.