

Annex 1 - FACILITATOR SKILLS SHEET

The following document outlines additional techniques and group process considerations for effective facilitation and training.

1. Effective facilitation skills are grounded in effective active listening skills, the ability to ask questions, to summarise, empathise, interpret and suggest. And also, crucially, to reflect what one hears from a participant, which may be contradictions, or aspects of a person’s narrative they may not see.
2. Generating the kind of change involved in implementing the CPMS involves recognizing the complexities involved in people considering novel ways of looking at children and the protection of children in their communities. In training staff in the CPMS it is imperative that the facilitator accepts and conveys that there are no clear-cut, right answers; there is no easy or correct approach to meeting these Standards. Child Protection work is messy, and participants in training often need help accepting this; living with the messiness; coping with the tension of working in the unknown in terms of how using the CPMS will actually manifest in programs. The facilitator needs to accept this first, in order to help participants accept this. Human change processes are at work and human change processes are messy.
3. Trust is essential in any group and mistrust can derail a learning process very quickly. Long-term conflict breaks down societal trust and in humanitarian action this can be an implicit barrier to effective training among group members who have shared histories unbeknownst to a trainer or facilitator.
4. Make the implicit explicit. When a belief or value or rule is implied, it has power. Once it has been made explicit and can be discussed openly, the power dissipates and it can instead be used as an opportunity for learning. For example, if the implied rule in a culture is that only the men in a co-ed group should be speaking, the rule has the power to influence behaviour so long as it is kept silent. If a facilitator asks about it and can generate discussion, even if there is initial tension, it can create opportunities for the women in the room to begin to use their voices.
5. Participants move between invisibility and exposure in any group. Trust is essential, as are norms, to participants feeling safe enough to share a thought or opinion. Some participants are more comfortable with sharing than others. It is vital that all have the opportunity and that may mean gently pushing people to take the risk to speak as well as gently helping someone speak less.
6. Call participants on their behaviour. Group Norms are established by a group to have a set of norms to guide their behaviour. It is normal in any group process for these rules to be challenged and for the unwanted behaviours to arise. The facilitator’s role in this case is to hold participants accountable to the norms they created: ‘Is that an example of judgment?’ a facilitator might ask. ‘Did we agree not to judge?’ ‘How does it feel to be judged in this moment?’ The content must be balanced with process and the facilitator must be the one to hold a group to their norms and model those norms and hold people accountable. This builds trust among participants, creates safe space and maximizes the potential for good work during a training session.