

Session 3: Change Management Simulation – Designing an Intervention (13:45–15:15)

Objective

Allow participants to integrate and apply all the concepts and tools from the training in a realistic group exercise. This simulation challenges them to collaboratively design a change management plan for a given agroforestry scenario, reinforcing learning by doing. It simulates the complex reality of extension work: balancing technical steps, stakeholder dynamics, communication strategies, and unforeseen challenges. By working in teams, participants also practice teamwork and pooling their diverse ideas (just as a real “guiding coalition” would). The exercise boosts confidence as they realize they can systematically approach a change process from start (unfreezing/urgency) to finish (anchoring and evaluation). It also surfaces any remaining questions or areas of difficulty, which can be addressed in the debrief. Ultimately, this session should cement the training content in participants’ minds through practical application, leaving them ready to translate the experience to their own projects.



Activity – “Plan the Change” Simulation (60 min):

Setup

Divide participants into small teams of approximately 5 (mixing backgrounds/regions if possible for rich perspectives). Present a detailed scenario that all groups will work on *or* allow each group to choose a scenario (if they have very relevant ones from their Day 1 homework, they might prefer to do that). To ensure comparability, a single scenario might be easier for debrief, but engagement is highest when they feel ownership. A compromise: provide 2-3 scenario options and let each group pick one.

Example Scenarios

1. “*Silvopasture Adoption in Dairy Cooperative*” – A cooperative of dairy farmers has been struggling with heat stress on cattle and pasture degradation. The advisor(s) want to introduce silvopasture (planting trees in pastures for shade and fodder). Some younger farmers are interested, older ones are sceptical. The cooperative board is cautious about investing cooperative funds for this. How to achieve widespread adoption in 3 years?
2. “*Hedgerow Revival in Grain Farming Region*” – An area largely removed hedges decades ago. Now soil erosion and biodiversity loss are issues. The extension team aims to convince farmers to replant hedgerows on field boundaries. There is government incentive money, but farmers remember hedges as extra work and loss of land. One local environmental NGO is very pro-hedges, but farmers find them pushy. Design a change strategy to get at least 50% of farmers to plant hedgerows.
3. “*Introducing Agroforestry into an Extension Service*” (an internal change) – Suppose the participants themselves are part of an extension department that has never covered agroforestry. They need to get their colleagues and bosses to incorporate agroforestry extension into their program and budget. Many colleagues are unfamiliar with it and prefer sticking to traditional advice topics. How to lead this change within the organization so that agroforestry becomes a standard part of extension offerings?

(Choose scenarios relevant to participants’ actual work for realism. If all are external advisors, scenario 3 might be less relevant; it is more for organizational change. The first two are community-level changes.)

Task

Each group will create a **mini change management plan** for their scenario. They should address the following (write these on a flipchart for reference):



- 1. Vision & Goals:** Define the specific change you want (for example: “30 farmers adopt silvopasture on 10% of their land within 3 years”) and a compelling vision statement or slogan for the effort (something that would inspire stakeholders – e.g., “Cool Cows, Rich Pastures Initiative 2025”).
- 2. Key Stakeholders & Coalition:** Identify who needs to be involved to make this change successful. Who are the champions you will recruit in your guiding coalition (e.g., an influential farmer, vet, co-op leader, youth rep)? Any external partners? Make a note of major groups affected and how you’ll engage them (farmers, local authorities, etc.).
- 3. Unfreezing/Urgency:** What will you do to “unfreeze” and create urgency or interest? Any baseline assessment or demonstration of problem? (e.g., gather data on milk yield drop from heat, or bring in an expert talk, or organize a visit to a farm already doing it). How will you convince people change is needed *now*?
- 4. Communication & Participation:** Outline your communication plan – how will you spread the vision and keep people engaged? Consider channels (meetings, WhatsApp, local radio, demonstration plot field days, pamphlets, etc.) and key messages. How will you involve stakeholders in planning (to ensure it is participatory, not one-way)?
- 5. Quick Wins:** Identify one or two short-term wins you will aim for in the first year and how you will achieve them. (e.g., “Establish one model silvopasture farm and showcase improved cow health by end of Year 1,” or “Get 5 km of hedgerows planted by next spring and show reduced soil runoff in those fields.”) Think of how to celebrate these wins.
- 6. Dealing with Resistance:** Predict at least two likely resistance points (specific examples). For each, note a strategy to handle it. (for example: if older farmers are resistant – pair them with young farmers in a “buddy” program to transfer some enthusiasm, or have a respected local endorse the project. If workload is a concern – maybe offer labour support for initial planting via volunteer groups.)
- 7. Resources & Supports:** List existing resources you’ll leverage (link to resource mapping – for example: a grant from government, a local tree nursery, training materials from FAO, community traditions, etc.) and note if any major gap needs addressing (like “need funding for waterers – will apply to X fund”).
- 8. Anchoring the Change:** How will you make sure this change sticks long-term? Think of final steps: integration into local institutions/policies, creating local expertise, forming a committee to continue overseeing the practice, including the new practice in co-op rules or school curriculum, etc.

Each group can use flipchart paper to outline or draw their plan. They have roughly 30 minutes to discuss and prepare. Encourage them to be concrete and draw from the entire toolbox: maybe one will use an appreciative question to set vision, another will sketch a stakeholder map, another will timeline Kotter steps. Mention that creativity is welcome – they can present as a story, a diagram, or just bullet points.

Group Presentations

Allocate approximately 5 minutes per group to present their plan (depending on number of groups, adjust time – possibly only 3-4 min each if many groups). Encourage visual aids if they have (point to their flipchart). After each, allow 2 minutes of Q&A or feedback from the audience and trainer. As a trainer, look to reinforce key points:

- Did they identify a clear urgent reason and vision? If not, ask “*What’s the core message to convince people this matters?*” and help them refine.
- Are stakeholders well considered? If they missed someone important (for example: forgot local government in hedgerow plan when policies might matter), gently prompt them.
- Highlight any especially good idea the group had as a model for others (“*Group B’s idea of a ‘friendly competition’ between villages for most trees planted is a great way to create excitement!*”).



- If a plan element seems weak, ask others for suggestions: “*Group A wasn’t sure how to get elders involved – anyone have an idea?*” This brings collective wisdom.

Keep the atmosphere positive and peer-learning oriented, not critical. The aim is to learn from each other and realize there are many ways to approach a scenario.

Debrief Discussion (15 min)

After presentations, facilitate a discussion:

- “*What was challenging about this exercise?*” (Possible answers: balancing idealism vs. realism, agreeing within group, addressing many unknowns.)
- “*What new insight did you gain while doing it?*” (They might say they appreciated the Kotter framework as a guide, or realized how important stakeholder mapping is, etc.)
- Emphasize how they effectively used the training content: “*I noticed every group anticipated resistance and had a plan – that’s excellent, because initially many of us tend to ignore resistance. Now you’re all thinking ahead!*” or “*Each plan had a coalition of different actors – this shows we understand we can’t do it alone.*”
- If any component was consistently missing or weak across plans, discuss it. For example, if few mentioned anchoring, ask how to ensure continuity, adding tips if necessary.
- Also note differences: one group might have focused more on creative engagement (vision rallies, etc.), another on technical training; point out both are needed and one can incorporate multiple approaches.

Conclude the simulation by congratulating them: “*Look at what you’ve done – in a short time, you sketched out complex change strategies. This is exactly what you can take back to your work. You might spend weeks or months refining such plans in reality, but the process is the same. Now you have a framework to start with instead of a blank page.*”

Tip for Success: “*Plan with people, not for people.*” – One observation to drive home: the groups that really considered stakeholder input (even in this simulation) likely had stronger plans. In real life, **co-creating the plan with those affected is key**. Use tools like community workshops, participatory mapping, or even involve local sceptics in planning (as we learned). A plan done *with* the community will have far fewer hurdles in execution than one imposed on the community.