

Facilitating Agroforestry Networks

- **Description:**

A practical 2-day training module that equips advisors with the skills to facilitate groups, manage dynamics, and support collaboration in agroforestry networks.

- **What you will gain:**

Strong facilitation and group management skills

Tools to engage stakeholders and ensure inclusive participation

Techniques to manage conflict and guide group processes

Confidence to support multi-actor collaboration and innovation

- **Includes:**

Facilitation tools, meeting techniques & planning methods

Real-world scenarios and interactive exercises

Strategies for building and sustaining networks

- **For:**

Agroforestry extension advisors, facilitators, and professionals supporting stakeholder groups

Introduction

Agroforestry – the integration of woody perennials with crops and/or livestock – can thrive with collaboration. Success often requires farmers, researchers, cooperatives, and policymakers to work together in networks, sharing knowledge and co-creating solutions. However, managing discussions in a diverse stakeholder group is challenging. Without skilled facilitation, meetings can stall due to misunderstandings or power imbalances, and innovative ideas may never take root. Effective facilitation makes group processes **easier** (from the Latin “*facilis*”), enabling stakeholders to communicate, learn, and innovate together. Research shows that practitioners are far more likely to adopt new agroforestry practices when they are actively engaged in the learning process. This participatory approach leverages the collective knowledge of the group and fosters a culture of innovation and trust.



FIGURE 1. Agrisilvicultural system with corn, poplar and wheat in Pisa, Italy. Source: Couso-Viana, A.



Extension advisors are uniquely positioned to serve as neutral facilitators or “innovation brokers” in these processes. By guiding discussions, mediating conflicts, and ensuring all voices are heard, advisors can help stakeholder groups to transform disparate perspectives into collaborative actions. In Europe, multi-actor initiatives (from EIP-AGRI Operational Groups, Focus groups to EU Horizon projects) emphasize co-learning and network building. For instance, the AFINET or AF4EU project connected agroforestry practitioners across countries to share knowledge and influence policy, showing advisors that they are part of a larger movement and can leverage agroforestry wider networks.

This 2-day training module is designed to equip agroforestry advisors with practical facilitation skills to support stakeholder groups and innovation networks. Through interactive learning and real-world case examples, participants will learn how to manage group dynamics, build consensus, resolve conflicts, and foster long-term collaboration. By the end of the training, advisors will be able to confidently lead multi-stakeholder discussions that drive agroforestry innovation forward. We blend fundamental concepts with hands-on tools (like icebreakers, brainstorming techniques, and conflict resolution methods) so that learning is immediately applicable.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this 2-day training, participants will be able to:

- **Define the facilitator’s role** in agroforestry contexts and distinguish it from traditional teaching or advisory roles (guiding a process rather than dictating content).
- **Apply core facilitation principles** – active listening, neutrality, empathy, and inclusive engagement – to create a safe environment for discussion.
- **Understand group development stages** (e.g. Tuckman’s forming–storming–norming–performing model) and adapt their facilitation approach to the group’s needs at each stage.
- **Use participatory tools and techniques** for stakeholder engagement, including effective questioning, small-group breakouts, brainstorming methods (“*round-robin*”, sticky notes, etc.), and decision-making aids (multi-voting, prioritization grids).
- **Establish group norms and a clear vision** with stakeholders to set a collaborative tone, and leverage these norms to handle conflicts or challenges constructively.
- **Manage conflicts and difficult dynamics** by mediating disagreements, addressing power imbalances, and refocusing groups on shared goals and solutions.
- **Facilitate collaboration in agroforestry networks**, connecting diverse stakeholders (farmers, cooperatives, researchers, policymakers) and fostering trust and long-term knowledge exchange.
- **Plan and lead effective group sessions** – from preparatory planning (objectives, agenda) to execution (energizers, discussions, wrap-up) – and evaluate their facilitation practice for continuous improvement.

Training Structure Overview

This module is structured as a two-day workshop (approximately 6–7 hours per day, including breaks) that balances short presentations with participatory activities, role-plays, and group exercises. Day 1 focuses on foundational skills in facilitation and group management, ensuring advisors to understand key principles and group dynamics. Day 2 builds on these skills to tackle more advanced topics such as conflict resolution and the facilitation of multi-stakeholder networks. Participants will engage in simulations and planning exercises to apply techniques in realistic agroforestry scenarios.



Each session outlined below includes the session's objectives, content, suggested facilitation methods, and timing. Trainer tips are provided throughout for guidance on what to emphasize or common pitfalls to avoid. A toolkit of resources (e.g. sample ground rules, stakeholder mapping templates, and facilitation checklists) is referenced for use during training and in future real-world applications. The workshop is interactive and learner-centred – just as we expect advisors to facilitate farmer-centred learning, the training itself models participatory techniques.

Audience & Format

This training is designed for agroforestry extension advisors to facilitate group learning or multi-actor meetings. It assumes a basic familiarity with agroforestry concepts but does not require prior formal training in facilitation. The format is an in-person workshop with 10–25 participants, though it can be adapted for online or hybrid delivery. The room should be arranged flexibly (e.g. semi-circle or groups) to encourage interaction. Flipcharts, markers, post-it notes, and an LCD projector are the main materials needed. A co-facilitator or assistant is useful for helping with breakout groups and time management, especially for the interactive exercises.

Day 1: Foundations of Facilitation in Agroforestry

Day 1 introduces the fundamental concepts and tools of group facilitation, framed in an agroforestry context. Participants start by understanding what effective facilitation entails and why it is crucial for agroforestry innovation. We then delve into group dynamics and how a facilitator can guide a group from initial formation to productive collaboration. By the end of Day 1, participants will have practiced core techniques (like active listening and inclusive discussions) and will have drafted basic elements of a facilitation plan (e.g. group ground rules and meeting agendas). They should feel prepared to handle the beginnings of a stakeholder group or meeting, setting it up for success before tackling more complex challenges on Day 2.

Schedule at a Glance (Day 1)

09:00–09:30	Welcome & Introductions
09:30–10:45	Session 1: Understanding the Facilitator’s Role in Agroforestry
10:45–11:00	Break
11:00–12:30	Session 2: Group Dynamics and Inclusive Participation
12:30–13:30	Lunch
13:30–15:00	Session 3: Facilitation Tools and Meeting Techniques
15:00–15:15	Break
15:15–16:30	Session 4: Establishing Group Norms & Planning for Action
16:30	Day 1 Wrap-Up & Reflection Assignment

(Note: Timing can be adjusted based on participant number and interaction level. Each session includes interactive components as detailed below.)

Welcome & Introductions (09:00–09:30)

Begin the training with a warm welcome and a brief overview of the module’s purpose. Introduce yourself (the trainer/facilitator and the co-facilitator/assistant) and have participants introduce themselves. Since this is a module **about facilitation**, model good facilitation from the start: set a positive, inclusive tone and get everyone engaged early. A quick icebreaker can help participants feel comfortable:

Icebreaker – “Agroforestry Network Map”: Provide a flipchart or big paper on the wall. In pairs, have participants chat for 5 minutes about their agroforestry experience (if any) and one challenge they have faced when working with groups. Then, each pair introduces each other to the whole group and adds a sticky note on the “network map” indicating their location or institution. This activity not only breaks the ice but also visually demonstrates the diverse network in the room (different regions, roles, backgrounds), reinforcing the idea that we all bring valuable perspectives.

After introductions, review the agenda for the two days. Emphasize that the workshop will be interactive. Establish some quick “housekeeping” details (break times, restroom locations, rules like phones on silent). Importantly, **frame the learning environment:** encourage questions and stress that this is a safe space to share experiences. You might say, “As a facilitator, I believe every question or perspective offers a learning opportunity. Let’s all practice the inclusive mindset we’ll be discussing – that means listening to each other and respecting different viewpoints.” By 09:30, participants should feel welcomed, know the game plan, and sense that this will be a participatory, hands-on training.



FIGURE 2. Co-creation activity during AF4EU workshop.

Session 1: Understanding the Facilitator's Role in Agroforestry (09:30–10:45)

Objective

Introduce what facilitation means in an agroforestry context and clarify the role of an extension advisor as a facilitator. By the end of this session, participants should understand how facilitation differs from lecturing or directing, and why a facilitator's neutrality and process guidance are key to group success. They will also learn core principles of good facilitation (such as active listening and empathy) through discussion and a brief practice exercise.

Content Overview

Begin with a short presentation (15 minutes) or interactive talk defining facilitation. Highlight that *"to facilitate" means to make something easier – in our case, to ease the process by which a group communicates and makes decisions.* Contrast **facilitation vs. teaching/advisory** styles: whereas a traditional extension agent might deliver technical information top-down, a facilitator guides the group's own discussion and learning. Create a simple comparison on a flipchart: for example-

Facilitator – asks guiding questions, listens, synthesizes;

Teacher/Expert – provides answers, talks more, directs the conversation.

Many advisors slip into "teacher" mode by habit, so it's important to raise awareness of this difference.

Next, discuss **why facilitation matters specifically in agroforestry**: agroforestry projects often involve knowledge exchange among stakeholders (farmers learning from each other's experiences, scientists learning from farmers' insights, etc.). Effective facilitation ensures that local knowledge and scientific knowledge meet in the middle. It also helps manage the **complexity** of agroforestry discussions – there may be ecological, economic, and social considerations all being debated at once under a holistic perspective, and multiple stakeholder interests at play.

Without a facilitator, stronger voices might dominate or the conversation might go off-track, resulting in frustration or biased outcomes. By acting as a neutral guide, a facilitator can keep the group focused on shared goals (like developing a viable agroforestry plan) and prevent any single agenda from taking over. If available, share a quick anecdote or hypothetical: *"Imagine a meeting where a new silvopasture plan is being discussed. The farmer is worried about short-term income, the researcher talks about biodiversity, and the co-op manager is focussed on market value. A facilitator helps weave these threads together so that by the end, the group has a balanced plan that everyone supports."*

Key Facilitation Principles

After establishing the "what" and "why," introduce a set of core principles or values that guide effective facilitation. Solicit participants' ideas first – ask, *"What qualities make for a good facilitator, especially when working with diverse groups?"* Write their ideas on a flipchart. Likely responses include listening, patience, neutrality, humour, knowledge of the topic, etc. Compare with a prepared list and fill in any they missed:

- **Active Listening:** Unarguably the most important skill. It means giving full attention to speakers, observing not



FIGURE 3. Key facilitation principles.

just words but tone and body language, and confirming understanding. Demonstrate techniques like paraphrasing and summarizing group input (“So, I’m hearing that finding a market for tree products is a big concern for several of you...”). Active listening by the facilitator validates participants’ contributions and builds trust.

- **Neutrality and Objectivity:** The facilitator should be viewed as an unbiased guide. Emphasize not taking sides on content decisions (e.g., whether a certain species is better for agrisilviculture) but focusing on the process – making sure the **group** examines pros/cons and reaches its own conclusion. If the facilitator has an opinion, they should park it aside while facilitating. This neutral stance helps diverse stakeholders (like farmers and researchers) feel their views are equally respected.
- **Empathy and Respect:** A good facilitator shows understanding of each participant’s perspective and creates an atmosphere of mutual respect. Simple behaviours like thanking people for their input, acknowledging feelings (“I sense that this is frustrating for some of you”), and ensuring no one is ridiculed for their ideas go a long way. This principle is critical when working with communities – farmers and scientists might have different lingo and education levels, but in a well-facilitated session, all inputs are valued equally.
- **Inclusiveness:** “Every voice matter” is the mantra. We aim to engage **all** participants, including those who may be quieter or hesitant. Explain that diverse agroforestry stakeholder groups often include power imbalances (e.g., a government official and a smallholder farmer in the same meeting). An inclusive facilitator actively encourages input from less-heard members and designs processes that prevent the usual suspects from monopolizing. We will cover specific techniques for inclusive participation in the next session.
- **Preparation and Structure:** Even though facilitation might seem like “just a discussion,” planning is essential. Having clear objectives, an agenda, and appropriate facilitation methods chosen ahead of time provides the backbone for a good session. Emphasize that *flexibility* is also key – a facilitator should adapt to the group’s needs in the moment – but without a plan, sessions can meander. Thus, good facilitators are both well prepared and adaptable.

As you present these principles, try to engage the participants. For instance, after explaining active listening, do a quick *pair exercise*: have one partner speak for one minute about a recent farm decision while the other practices active listening and then paraphrases what they heard.

Debrief: ask how the speakers felt when they were truly listened to. This drives home the impact of listening. Similarly, you can role-play a bad vs. good facilitator briefly (e.g., act out interrupting or pushing your own opinion vs. being neutral and encouraging) and ask the group which they prefer in a meeting. Keep the tone light and emphasize learning by example.



Activity – Role-Play “Facilitator vs. Expert” (20 min)

To solidify the understanding of the facilitator’s role, split participants into small groups of 3–4. Each group receives a short scenario description: *An extension meeting where farmers are learning about a new agroforestry practice (say, intercropping fruit trees in an arable land). One person in the group plays an “expert advisor” who knows a lot about the practice, another plays a “facilitator,” and the others are farmers. Give them 5 minutes to role-play the meeting in their groups. The “expert” should try to teach or give advice; the “facilitator” should try to involve the farmers by asking questions and pulling out their ideas. Afterward, debrief together: What differences did they observe between the expert-driven approach and the facilitated approach? Which approach generated more engagement or better ideas from farmers? This activity often gets a few laughs (if the “expert” exaggerates being know-it-all), but it makes the contrast clear and memorable.*



Methods Used: Presentation with flipchart visuals; group brainstorm (qualities of a good facilitator); paired listening drill; small-group role-play with scenario. These methods demonstrate an interactive style, setting an example for participants. Encourage questions throughout – for instance, someone might ask, “*What if people expect me as an advisor to give answers?*” Use that to discuss balancing technical input with facilitation (one can briefly switch hats but ideally make technical info available without dominating the group’s problem solving).

Wrap up Session 1 by revisiting the initial question: *What is the facilitator’s role?* Now the group should have a clearer answer. Emphasize that a facilitator is a **process guide** who **empowers the group** to achieve its goals. They create the conditions for collaborative learning and problem solving, which is especially vital in agroforestry where no single person has all the answers.

Tip for Success: When discussing facilitation principles, share a personal story if you have one – e.g., “*When I first led a farmer group, I made the mistake of talking too much. I noticed people stopped sharing their ideas. I learned that stepping back and listening brought out great insights from the group.*” Real examples make the concepts tangible and show that it is acceptable to learn by trial and error. Also consider handing out a one-page summary of “Facilitation Do’s and Don’ts” as a take-home from this session (could be part of the toolkit).

Session 2: Group Dynamics and Inclusive Participation (11:00–12:30)

Objective

Explore how groups develop over time and identify strategies to facilitate effectively at each stage of group development. Participants will learn to recognize common group dynamics (from initial politeness to potential conflict) and practice techniques to ensure balanced participation and engagement of all members. By the end of this session, advisors should be able to diagnose what their group may need (e.g. team building vs. conflict mediation) and apply appropriate facilitation interventions to keep the group progressing toward collaboration.

Begin by acknowledging that bringing a group of stakeholders together is not a one-time event but a **process**. Groups evolve as people get to know each other and tackle challenges. Introduce **Tuckman's stages of group development** as a useful framework: *Forming*, *Storming*, *Norming*, *Performing*. Explain each stage in simple terms, contextualized to an agroforestry stakeholder group:

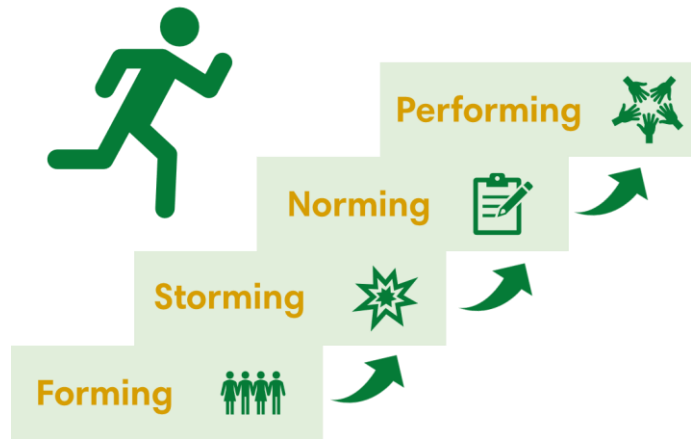


FIGURE 4. Tuckman's stages of group development

- Forming:** The group is just coming together. Members are polite, on their best behaviour, and somewhat anxious or unsure about others. They are figuring out the group's purpose and their own roles. In an agroforestry network's first meeting, for example, a farmer might be thinking "*What is expected of me here? Do these researchers understand my issues?*" The facilitator's job at this stage is to provide structure and clarity: clarify the group's goals or mission, outline how the meetings will run, and create a welcoming atmosphere. It is also a time to help the group begin bonding – light icebreakers or a round of sharing expectations can be very useful. Essentially, the facilitator should **set the stage** for open communication.
- Storming:** After initial niceties, differences in opinion start to emerge. This is a **normal and necessary** stage where conflict may arise as members assert differing perspectives or compete for leadership. In our context, perhaps a researcher's suggestion to use a certain tree species may be met with scepticism by farmers, or two farmers might strongly disagree on an approach. Tensions or clique formation can happen. The facilitator's role in storming is crucial: *remain calm and impartial* and help the group navigate conflict constructively. This can involve reminding everyone of common goals, enforcing ground rules about respectful dialogue, and using conflict resolution techniques (more on those in Day 2) to mediate disputes. It is important to not panic as a facilitator during storming – anticipate it and see it as a sign that the group is honest and engaged. With good facilitation, storming issues can be resolved and lead to deeper trust.
- Norming:** If conflicts are addressed, then the group begins finding its rhythm. Norms (implicit or explicit rules of behaviour) and trust develop. Members start to appreciate each other's strengths and work more cohesively. In an agroforestry group, this might mean farmers and scientists have figured out how to communicate effectively, or members have agreed on how decisions will be made. The facilitator should reinforce positive dynamics now: for example, highlight any agreements reached, praise collaborative behaviour, and perhaps formalize some **group norms** if not done already. This is a good stage to establish or revisit **ground rules** or a group charter. Encourage the group to take ownership of these norms ("let's all ensure we keep to what we agreed"). The facilitator can start stepping back a little more as the group manages itself but should still be attentive to any relapses into conflict or disengagement.

- Performing:** In this stage, the group is functioning at a high level – working towards its objectives effectively and with mutual support. Not all groups reach performing in a short project, but if it's an ongoing network, you'll see members initiating ideas, helping each other, and making significant progress (e.g., jointly developing a new agroforestry practice or influencing policy together). The facilitator at this point becomes more of a **coach and cheerleader**: you ensure the momentum continues, bring in resources or expertise as needed, and celebrate the group's achievements (like successful on-farm trials or a well-received field day). It is also a time to encourage the group to document and share their successes, possibly motivating other groups or forming wider networks.

After explaining these stages, invite reflection: ask if anyone has seen these patterns in groups, they have been part of (doesn't have to be agroforestry – could be a cooperative board, a community committee, a sports club, etc.). Many will recognize the *storming* stage especially ("Oh yes, I was in a group where people argued initially but later it got better"). Emphasize that **as facilitators, understanding group dynamics helps us provide the right support at the right time**. For example, in a new group (Forming), the facilitator might need to be more directive in setting agendas, whereas in Norming/Performing, the facilitator can be more hands-off or focus on coaching individuals. Recognizing the stage helps tailor our approach.

Establishing Group Norms

One practical tool to guide group dynamics is setting **ground rules or group norms** early on. Ideally during Forming (or at the transition to Norming), a facilitator helps the group agree on basic norms for how they will work together. This can be done in the first meeting by brainstorming acceptable behaviours and creating a poster of norms. Common examples include- "*Start meetings on time*", "*One person speaks at a time*", "*Critique ideas, not people*", "*Confidentiality – what's shared in the group stays in the group (when personal)*," etc.

These norms create a reference point that the group (and facilitator) can fall back on whenever behaviour issues or conflicts emerge. For instance, if side conversations are disrupting the meeting, the facilitator can remind everyone of the agreed norm "no side conversations." Norms thus **promote positive behaviour and provide a basis for conflict resolution** when needed. They also help new members understand the group's culture quickly. Introduce the idea of a **group mission statement** as well – a short statement of the group's shared purpose (e.g., "*To collaboratively develop sustainable agroforestry practices that enhance livelihoods and ecosystem health in our community*"). Having a clear mission and norms gives the group a sense of identity and cohesion.

If time permits, do a quick **exercise** here: ask participants to draft 3– 5 sample ground rules they would use for an agroforestry stakeholder group. They can do this individually or in pairs for 5 minutes, then share. Write the suggestions on flipchart. Likely to appear are things like respect, listening, time management, equal participation. Affirm good ideas and mention any important ones they missed. Encourage them to keep this list as they might refine and use it in a later activity (creating a facilitation plan on Day 2).

Ensuring Inclusive Participation

Now shift focus to specific techniques to involve all group members in discussions. It is common that in any group, some people tend to dominate while others hold back. As facilitation advisors, one of our tasks is to **level the playing field** so that diverse knowledge (farmers' experiential knowledge, researchers' scientific knowledge, etc.) gets shared. Brainstorm with the class: "*What can we do if we notice only a few voices are carrying the conversation in a meeting?*" After some responses, present a toolkit of tactics:

- **Use Small Groups:** Breaking into pairs or triads for a short discussion can activate quieter participants who might not speak up in front of the whole group. For example, in a meeting of 20 people, instead of a full-group discussion on “what agroforestry practices should we prioritize,” first have people discuss in small groups of three. Then each group can report one idea. This way, more people get a chance to talk in the safety of a small subset, and you will likely hear from individuals who would not raise their hand in a big group.

- **Round-Robin Sharing:** When appropriate, go around the circle and give each person a brief chance to speak. Make it a structured round to answer a specific question (e.g., “In one sentence, what is your biggest concern about agroforestry adoption?”). This ensures everyone’s voice is heard, at least briefly. Be cautious to keep it concise and optional (allow a pass if someone really does not want to speak).



FIGURE 5. Methods to ensure inclusive participation

- **Directed Questions to Quiet Members:** Gently invite input from those who have not spoken: “*I’d love to hear from someone who manages a small farm – Jenna, would you share how this looks from your perspective?*”. Use a friendly tone, not putting them on the spot as a test, but showing that their perspective is valued. Often, a quiet member is relieved and pleased to be asked and will contribute important points once prompted.
- **Anonymous or Written Input:** If the topic is sensitive or the power dynamics are strong (e.g., farmers might not want to contradict a government official openly), use methods like sticky notes or cards. Ask a question and have everyone write an answer or idea. Then collect and read them anonymously. This equalizes input and can surface honest opinions that otherwise stay hidden.
- **Explicitly Address the Imbalance:** The facilitator can, in a respectful way, name what they observe and encourage self-correction by the group. For example, “*I notice we’ve heard mostly from the official/ public representatives so far. It’d be great to also hear what some of the farmers here think about this issue.*” Often, participants will appreciate this intervention. You can also invite the group’s suggestions: “*How can we make sure everyone who wants to contribute gets a chance?*” – This raises collective awareness about inclusion.
- **Use a Talking Object or Timer:** In a smaller workshop setting, a talking stick (only the person holding it speaks) can enforce one-at-a-time sharing. Or set rules like “*no one speaks twice until everyone has spoken once.*” In more formal meetings, this might be too gimmicky, but in training groups it can be effective for practicing equal participation.

As you list these techniques, tie them to agroforestry context when possible. E.g., “*During a field visit planning discussion, you might break into farmers and researchers separately for 10 minutes to list what they each want from the visit, then bring them together to compare notes.*” Mention that the **physical setup** can affect participation: a circle or semi-circle is better than a lecture style for interaction; sometimes rearranging seating during breaks can break up cliques.

Activity – Diagnosing Group Dynamics (30 min)

For practice, divide participants into groups of approximately 5 persons and give each group a short scenario describing an agroforestry stakeholder meeting at a certain stage with certain challenges. For example:

- **Scenario A:** A new agroforestry innovation group (first meeting, people do not know each other, little discussion happening).
- **Scenario B:** A regional network meeting where a heated debate has broken out between two factions about an agroforestry policy recommendation (clear conflict visible).
- **Scenario C:** A community agroforestry group that is been meeting for a year, things are going well but a few members always seem disengaged and rarely contribute.

Ask each group to identify:

(1) What group stage does this scenario represent (Forming, Storming, Norming, or Performing)?

(2) What should the facilitator do in this situation to guide the group?

They should list specific actions or techniques from the ones discussed (or new ideas). After 10 minutes, have each group report back. Facilitate a brief discussion, correcting or adding to their suggestions.

For Scenario A (Forming), likely answers: do introductions, clarify objectives, maybe do an expectation check, break the ice.

For B (Storming/conflict): enforce ground rules, find common ground, maybe break the tension with a break or a structured process, allow each side to voice concerns fully while moderating, etc.

For C (Norming but with quiet members): try tactics to engage everyone (direct questions, small groups, or ask the group if they are satisfied with participation).

Affirm good answers and reinforce the key point: **different stages and dynamics call for different facilitation strategies.**

Methods Used: Interactive presentation with Q&A, brainstorming, scenario-based group exercise. Ensure you are also demonstrating inclusion: during the discussions, be mindful to hear from different participants, not always the ones who raise hand first. Model some of the techniques (like explicitly asking a quieter participant for their view during the debrief).

Conclude Session 2 by summarizing: Effective facilitation requires *reading the room* – knowing your group’s stage and dynamics – and having a toolbox of methods to engage everyone. Emphasize that conflict in groups is not a sign of failure but a natural phase that, if well managed, can lead to stronger collaboration. By establishing clear norms and fostering trust, facilitators can help groups move through storming into productive teamwork. Participants should now feel more confident that they can “diagnose and respond” to what their group needs over time. Transition to lunch by inviting any quick questions or reflections. Perhaps pose a thought question for lunch: *“Think of an example from your work where a group’s stage or dynamics affected the outcome – what could have been done to improve it?”* This primes them for the afternoon where we will get more into tools and planning.

Tip for Success: Pay attention to the dynamics in the training group itself. This session’s topic allows a meta-discussion: if you notice, for example, that a few participants are always the ones answering questions, you can gently point that out as an illustration and then apply one of the inclusion techniques on the spot. *“We’ve heard a lot from the advisors from region X; I’d love to hear someone from region Y share their experience too.”* This shows facilitation in action and helps the participants experience its effect from the learner’s side.

Session 3: Facilitation Tools and Meeting Techniques (13:30–15:00)

Objective

Introduce practical tools and techniques that facilitators can use to design and run effective meetings or workshops with stakeholder groups. Participants will learn how to plan a facilitated session (with clear objectives and an agenda) and will practice several facilitation methods such as icebreakers, brainstorming exercises, and group decision-making processes. By the end of this session, advisors should be equipped with a “toolbox” of activities and techniques to keep discussions engaging and productive, from start (warm-ups) to finish (action planning).

Start by emphasizing that **good facilitation is part art, part science** – the art is in reading people and guiding flow, which we have discussed previously; the science (or craft) is in using tested methods and tools that help groups think and work together. This session focuses on the latter.



FIGURE 6. Facilitation arises when art meets science. Agrisilvicultural plot is a picture from French AF4EU workshops conducted by VDT (right) and “Escardadoras” oil on canvas by Laureano Buñol (c.1891)

Planning a Facilitation Session

Walk through the key steps an advisor should take when planning any group meeting or workshop:

- **Set Clear Objectives:** Before gathering stakeholders, be perfectly clear on *what the meeting is meant to achieve*. Is it to identify farmers’ needs for an agroforestry project? To decide on an action plan? To simply share experiences? Defining objectives helps in choosing the right process. Share an example: *“By the end of this meeting, the group will have selected two priority agroforestry practices to trial next year.”* If objectives are unclear or too ambitious, the meeting can wander. A facilitator should work with the organizers or group leaders to nail this down beforehand.
- **Design the Agenda:** An agenda is the roadmap for the meeting. Show a sample agenda outline on a slide or flipchart including elements like: **Welcome/Intro, Icebreaker, Discussion Topic 1, Break, Activity/Topic 2, Wrap-up & Next Steps** with time allocations. Discuss the importance of sequencing: e.g., start with an easy or energizing activity (not a heavy conflictual topic first thing), place breaks strategically, and allocate more time than needed. It can be more facilitator hands-off, focus on coaching individuals or topics likely to generate lengthy discussion. Also, if decision making is needed, ensure to build in a process for that (like discussion followed by a decision method). Encourage participants to always **plan for a wrap-up** that summarizes decisions and assigns any follow-up tasks (so many meetings end without clarity on what was decided or who will do what).

- **Choose Facilitation Methods:** Based on the objectives and the participant mix, decide which techniques will best elicit input and achieve outcomes. For instance, if the goal is brainstorming new ideas, methods like **mind mapping** or **card-storming** (writing ideas on cards) might be useful. If the goal is prioritization, perhaps use a **multi-voting** technique or a **matrix ranking**. We will cover some of these specific tools next. The key is that facilitators have a repertoire to choose from. If possible, reference a **facilitation guide** or **checklist** in the toolkit that participants can use when planning (like a template that asks: What is the objective? Best method? Materials needed? etc.).
- **Logistics and Materials:** Remind that part of planning is ensuring the physical setup and materials support the methods. For example, if you plan a breakout discussion, is there space for groups to spread out? If doing a sticky-note exercise, have lots of post-its and markers ready. It seems basic, but good facilitators think through these details (like arranging for translation if needed, printing handouts, etc.). A well-prepared room (with say, thematic posters or a map for agroforestry) can also stimulate discussion.

After covering planning, shift to demonstrating some **specific facilitation techniques**. It is time to get hands-on and maybe a bit playful, as this keeps energy up after lunch. Here are some techniques to cover, with brief demos or participatory examples for each:

- **Icebreakers & Energizers:** Share a couple of quick activities to use at the start of meetings or when energy dips. For example, *“Two Truths and a Lie (agroforestry edition)”* – each person states three things about their experience (one is false) and others guess the lie. Or a simple physical energizer: *“Tree, Fruit, Storm”* – a fun rock-paper-scissors style game where people pair up and do gestures (tree beats storm, storm beats fruit, fruit beats tree). It sounds silly but getting people to laugh or move can build rapport, which pays off in better cooperation. Emphasize choosing an icebreaker appropriate to the audience’s comfort level and culture. The toolkit handout can include a list of 5–10 icebreaker ideas.
- **Brainstorming Methods:** When a group needs to generate ideas (say, identifying challenges farmers face, or solutions to a problem or challenge), traditional open discussion may be dominated by a few thinkers. Introduce structured brainstorming:
 - *Round-Robin Brainstorm:* Go around the table and each person offers one idea in turn, until people run out of new ideas. This ensures balanced input and can produce a lot of ideas quickly.
 - *Sticky Note (Card) Brainstorm:* Give everyone a pad of sticky notes and a marker. Pose a question (e.g., “What potential agroforestry practices could we try in this region?”). Each person, in silence, writes as many ideas as possible – one idea per note – in 5 minutes. Then the facilitator collects or has them stick notes on a wall. Group similar ideas together (with the group’s help). This method is great for visualizing the breadth of ideas and grouping themes. It also allows introverts to contribute equally.
 - *Mind Mapping:* On a flipchart or big paper, write the central question or topic in the middle (e.g., “Barriers to agroforestry adoption”) and as people shout out ideas, jot them around, drawing lines to connect related ideas. This free-form map can spur creativity, though it works best with a facilitator who can write quickly and organize on the fly. Consider having a volunteer scribe so you can focus on prompting ideas.
- **Prioritization and Decision Tools:** After brainstorming, groups often need to narrow down options or to decide. Introduce tools such as:
 - *Multi-voting/Dot Voting:* Each participant gets a set number of votes (dots or checkmarks) which they can distribute among the options (e.g., after brainstorming 10 ideas, give everyone 3 sticker dots to place on the ideas they think are most important). The ideas with the most votes rise to the top. This is a quick way to gauge the group’s preferences.

- *Matrix Ranking:* For more complex decisions, create a grid with options vs. criteria. For example, if choosing an agroforestry practice to promote, criteria might be cost, environmental benefit, farmer acceptability. Score each option against each criterion (possibly using group discussion or even scoring in subgroups). This analytical approach can help in transparent decision-making, though it is more time-consuming.
- *Consensus Building Techniques:* Explain that sometimes the goal is not just majority rule but general agreement. Techniques like **Facilitated Discussion to Consensus** (keep discussing and modifying options until no one strongly objects) or **Gradients of Agreement** (where participants indicate their level of support on a scale, aiming for a level everyone can live with) can be used. Consensus is powerful but requires skill to avoid endless debate; it is often helped by breaking issues into smaller chunks or finding hybrid solutions that incorporate multiple viewpoints.

While explaining these, pick one method to practice quickly. For instance, do a dot voting with the class on a light question: “What’s the best energizer to wake up after lunch?” Give them each two dot stickers (or simply raise hands) to vote among a few options listed. Show how to tally and interpret results. Or practice a mini sticky-note brainstorm: “List one challenge you have when facilitating groups” – have them write and post, then cluster the notes. The goal is not the content they generate now but the experience of the method.

Facilitating Discussions

Address techniques for guiding open discussions, since a lot of a facilitator’s time is spent simply steering conversation. Mention using a “**parking lot**” flipchart for off-topic ideas that are important but not immediately relevant – this honours contributions without derailing the meeting. Discuss how to **handle dominant speakers** (politely thank them and invite others, or tactfully interrupt and redirect, as discussed in Session 2). **Draw connections** among points (“Building on what Maria said, does anyone have an example of that on their farm?”) to create a coherent flow. These are softer skills but important tools too.



Activity – Facilitator’s Toolkit in Action (30 min):

Now, have participants get active with the tools. Split into small groups (4–5 people each). Assign each group one facilitation technique to demonstrate to the rest (if possible, one group does an icebreaker, one does a brainstorming method, one does a decision tool, etc.). Give them 5–10 minutes to prepare a quick demonstration as if the rest of the class were their stakeholder group. For example, Group A might lead the class in a quick energizer; Group B might pose a question and do a mini sticky-note exercise with everyone; Group C might simulate a dot vote on a sample issue.

After each demo, debrief briefly: ask the group how they felt using the technique and ask observers what they noticed. This peer teaching not only reinforces the techniques but also boosts confidence as they see that they *can* lead these activities. As a trainer, be ready to assist groups in planning their demo (give them any materials they need, and suggestions if they are stuck). Keep time tight so each demonstration is just a few minutes. The aim is a lively, learning-by-doing segment.

Methods Used: Discussion with visual aids (for planning steps and tools), demonstration and class participation in techniques, small-group practice and presentation. Ensure a balance of explanation and activity; avoid lecturing too long about each tool without letting them experience it. The post-lunch timing is ideal for interactive exercises to avoid the afternoon slump.

Conclude Session 3 by highlighting that a good facilitator is never short on methods to engage people – with preparation and creativity, meetings can be both fun and fruitful. Encourage participants to personalize their toolkit: “*Not every technique fits every person or situation. Find the ones you’re comfortable with and have a few*”



alternatives if one isn't working. The more you practice these, the more fluidly you can incorporate them." Let them know that in the next session, we will apply these ideas to setting norms and planning for real action in groups, rounding out the Day 1 learning.

Tip for Success: Always have a couple of backup energizers up your sleeve in case the group's energy wanes. Also, gauge the group's interest – if they are really engaged in trying out brainstorming, you might expand that part. Conversely, if they seem overwhelmed by too many techniques at once, focus on a few key ones and remind them that more are in the toolkit document for later reference. Please an emphasis on quality over quantity.

Session 4: Establishing Group Norms & Planning for Action (15:15–16:30)

Objective

Synthesize Day 1 learnings by focusing on two practical outputs:

1. Developing a set of group norms/ground rules and a shared vision for a stakeholder group, and
2. Creating a basic action plan or next steps for the group.

Participants will practice formulating these with an example scenario and understand how a facilitator guides a group through these foundational steps. By the end of this session, participants will have a draft “group charter” (mission statement and norms) for an example network, and they will know how to wrap up a meeting in a way that drives action and accountability.

This session title partly overlaps with what we discussed in Session 2 regarding norms, but here we turn it into a concrete exercise and also integrate forward planning. Adjust emphasis to avoid too much repetition; focus on application now.

Crafting a Group Vision and Norms

Explain that at an early stage in a stakeholder network or innovation group, it’s very valuable to collectively define “*why we are here*” and “*how we will work together*.” A facilitator often leads a session to develop a **group vision or mission statement** and to set the **ground rules** we talked about. This establishes a common purpose and culture from the outset. Review in one slide or flipchart: A mission statement should be concise and inclusive of all stakeholders’ interests (e.g., “*Our mission is to learn together and promote agroforestry practices that benefit both farmers and the environment in X region*”). Ground rules should be brainstormed and agreed by the members (not imposed by the facilitator, though the facilitator can suggest and guide the discussion).

Move quickly into an **exercise** to practice this:

- Form new small groups of about 5 persons. Give each group a scenario of an agroforestry stakeholder network just being formed. For example: “*You are facilitating the first meeting of the ‘Local Woodland Pasture Network’, which includes 10 silvopasture farmers, 2 researchers, and a local agriculture officer. The goal is broadly to share knowledge and improve practices.*” Each group’s task is to draft a mission statement and 5 key group norms that they would propose to that network. They have approximately 15 minutes. They should role-play if they wish (some members acting as farmers/researchers voicing what they want in the mission or norms, with one acting as facilitator to moderate). Circulate among groups to assist, reminding them to think of diverse stakeholder priorities when crafting the mission (e.g., farmers might emphasize income, researchers’ knowledge, officers’ policy alignment – a good mission finds common ground). For norms, ensure they recall examples from earlier.
- After time, have each group share their proposed mission and norms. Discuss briefly: Are they clear and motivating? Do the norms cover key behaviours (respect, participation, etc.)? Encourage peer feedback. This not only reinforces the concept but also results in some example charters that they can reference. Perhaps even vote on which mission statement is most inspiring as a fun element.

Point out how the facilitator’s role in reality would be to guide the group to these outputs. In practice, you might write ideas on flipchart, facilitate consensus on wording, and then ensure everyone feels ownership of the final version. These become part of the group’s “constitution,” which the facilitator can use in future meetings to keep things on track.

Moving from Discussion to Action – Meeting Wrap-Up

The second part of this session addresses how a facilitator concludes a meeting to ensure outcomes are acted upon. It is one thing to have a good discussion: it's another to translate it into real-world impact. Advisors as facilitators should help groups create actionable next steps. Cover the basics of a strong wrap-up:

- **Summarize Key Decisions/Outcomes:** Always allocate a few minutes to recap what was accomplished. The facilitator can do this or ask someone from the group to summarize. e.g., *“Today we identified our top 3 priorities: A, B, C, and agreed to test agrisilviculture practice X on two farms.”* Summaries solidify the collective memory and ensure everyone leaves with the same understanding (prevents the *“I thought we decided X”* confusion later).
- **Assign Responsibilities:** If any actions were agreed upon, clarify **who** will do **what** and **by when**. This might involve delegating tasks or forming subgroups. For example, *“Ali and Jean will coordinate the seedling purchase by next month, the researchers will design the trial protocol, and Farmer Y will host the first field demo in September.”* Write this down on a visible medium as it is being decided. In formal groups, this goes into meeting minutes, but even in informal ones, the facilitator should note it and perhaps send a follow-up email or message summarizing actions.
- **Set the Next Meeting/Follow-up:** Do not let the momentum drop – try to schedule the next meeting date or at least establish a communication plan (maybe a WhatsApp group or email list) before closing. This is especially important for ongoing networks. If scheduling now is not possible, the facilitator should take responsibility to follow up with a scheduling poll soon after.
- **Closing Round or Reflections:** If time allows, a quick go-around for final thoughts or appreciations can end on a positive, inclusive note. For instance, ask each participant to share one thing they found valuable about the meeting. This can reinforce commitment and give the facilitator feedback. Or simply thank everyone and highlight a positive observation (*“I really appreciated how openly everyone shared today – it shows the trust building in this group.”*).
- **Evaluation:** In a training context, you might evaluate the session; in a stakeholder meeting, you might not formally evaluate every time, but occasionally asking for feedback on the process can be good (for example, a quick plus/delta: one thing they liked, one thing to improve). For the training's sake, mention that an effective facilitator is always learning and could solicit feedback from the group about the meeting's facilitation.



Activity – Action Planning Role-Play (15 min)

To practice the transition to action, pick one of the small groups that presented their mission/norms (or use a volunteer group) and have them simulate the **end of a meeting** for their scenario. One person acts as the facilitator and quickly goes through the steps: summarizing what that imaginary meeting achieved (they can make it up), assigning a couple of tasks, and closing with a thank-you or a quote. It should be brief. Then debrief with everyone: Did the “facilitator” hit the key points (summary, responsibilities, next meeting)? How did it feel to have that clarity at the end? The idea is to reinforce that participants should always aim to provide that clarity when they facilitate real groups.

At the end of Session 4, tie everything from Day 1 together: we started with the role and mindset of a facilitator, looked at guiding group process and dynamics, learned concrete techniques, and now saw how to formalize group agreements and follow-through. Day 1 has given them a strong foundation.



Wrap-Up & Day 1 Reflection Assignment (16:30):

Thank participants for their active involvement throughout the day. Encourage them to reflect on what they learned. A simple assignment for overnight could be:

“Think about a group you currently work with (or will work with soon). Jot down what stage you believe they are at (Forming, Storming, etc.), and list two facilitation techniques or approaches you want to try with them.”

They don't need to turn this assignment in; it's to prepare their mindset for Day 2.

Day 2: Advanced Facilitation & Network Collaboration

Day 2 builds on the basics to tackle more complex aspects of facilitation in agroforestry settings. The focus shifts to handling conflicts and challenging situations, and to facilitating collaboration at broader scales (multi-stakeholder partnerships and innovation networks). Participants will engage in role-plays to practice conflict resolution skills and will develop strategies for networking beyond a single group – connecting local groups into wider communities of practice. By the end of Day 2, advisors should feel confident not only in leading a single meeting, but in **shepherding an ongoing process** of stakeholder collaboration, even when faced with obstacles. They will also formulate concrete plans to apply these advanced skills in their work context.

Schedule at a Glance (Day 2)

09:00–09:15	Recap of Day 1 & Warm-Up
09:15–11:00	Session 5: Managing Conflict and Difficult Situations
11:00–11:15	Break
11:15–12:45	Session 6: Facilitating Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration
12:45–13:45	Lunch
13:45–15:15	Session 7: Supporting Agroforestry Innovation Networks
15:15–15:30	Break
15:30–16:30	Session 8: Synthesis, Action Planning & Close

Recap of Day 1 & Warm-Up (09:00–09:15)

Welcome everyone back and do a quick recap of key points from Day 1. A fun way is to play a short quiz or trivia game: prepare five questions like “*What’s one method to encourage quiet participants to speak?*”, “*Name one of Tuckman’s group stages*”, “*Why are ground rules useful?*” Use a show of hands or small prizes for answers to make it engaging and entertaining. Alternatively, ask each person to share one takeaway from yesterday.

Address any questions that may have come up overnight. If participants did the reflection assignment, invite one or two to share their scenario and ideas—they might say, e.g., “I realized my community group is in Storming stage and I should help them establish norms to get to Norming.” Compliment such insights. This helps transition to new content by reinforcing the foundation.

Then do a quick energizer to set an active tone. Perhaps “*Facilitation Charades*”: write a few key terms from Day 1 (like “Active Listening,” “Brainstorm,” “Conflict,” “Icebreaker”) on slips of paper. Have a volunteer pick one and act it out or draw it on a flipchart for others to guess. Keep it light and no more than 5 minutes. This revisits concepts in a playful way.

Explain that Day 2 will delve into more challenging yet rewarding aspects: dealing with conflicts (which every facilitator faces sooner or later) and expanding collaboration beyond a single group into networks.

Session 5: Managing Conflict and Difficult Situations (09:15–11:00)

Objective

To equip participants with strategies to handle conflicts and other difficult dynamics in stakeholder meetings. They will learn how to anticipate sources of conflict, apply techniques for de-escalation and mediation, and practice a structured approach to resolving disputes while maintaining a neutral stance. By the end, advisors should feel more confident in turning tense situations into opportunities for learning and consensus-building, rather than fearing conflict.

Start by normalizing conflict: in any group working on complex issues like land use or resource allocation, disagreements will happen. Especially in agroforestry networks, conflicts might arise from differences in values (e.g., conservation vs. production), personal dynamics, or external pressures (policy changes, market stress). Emphasize that conflict **is not a sign of failure**, but rather something to be managed constructively. A skilled facilitator does not necessarily prevent all conflict (that could even suppress important discussions) but keeps it productive and respectful.

Common Sources of Conflict in Agroforestry Groups

Briefly list some typical scenarios participants might encounter:

- Competing priorities (e.g., a farmer in the group wants quick economic returns, while an environmental Non Governmental Organisation (NGO) member pushes for long-term ecological gains).
- Miscommunication or misunderstandings, possibly exacerbated by jargon or different knowledge levels.
- Personality clashes or historical mistrust (maybe two stakeholders had a prior disagreement outside the group).
- Unequal power dynamics (a situation where a powerful stakeholder might be dismissive of others' input, causing resentment).
- External conflicts spilling in (for instance, a policy debate on land rights that polarizes the group).

Ask if anyone has witnessed any of these in their experience. Acknowledge a couple of stories if shared.

Conflict Resolution Techniques

Present a step-by-step approach that facilitators can use when conflict arises:

1. **Stay Neutral and Composed:** The facilitator's demeanour sets the tone. Even if accusations or emotional comments fly, maintain a calm, neutral presence. Avoid taking sides or showing frustration. Sometimes just your calmness helps defuse tension.
2. **Ensure All Sides Are Heard:** Often conflict escalates when people feel unheard. Use active listening: allow each party to explain their viewpoint without interruption and paraphrase their points to show understanding. For example, *"So, I hear you saying that you're concerned the proposed tree planting will reduce your grazing land. Is that correct?"* Do the same for the other side. This alone can cool emotions, as people feel their concern is acknowledged.
3. **Find Common Ground:** After hearing both sides, identify any shared interests or goals. *"Both of you want the project to succeed in the long run, correct?"* or *"We all care about making this farming system more sustainable, right?"* Highlighting common ground reminds everyone that they are ultimately on the same team, even if they differ on approach.

4. **Reiterate Group Norms (Respect):** If the conflict is getting heated or personal, remind the group of the ground rule about respectful communication. Do this gently: *“Let’s remember, we agreed to listen without interrupting. Let’s give each other that respect.”* If someone is out of line (insults, etc.), you may need to intervene directly: *“I understand you’re upset, but that comment was personal. Let’s keep our comments focused on the issue.”* Enforcing civility is part of the facilitator’s job.
5. **Use a Structured Process if Needed:** In more complex conflicts, a structured mediation or dialogue process helps. One approach: **problem-solving dialogue** – clearly define the issue, then have the group (or the conflicting parties) brainstorm solutions together. Another is a simple **conflict resolution flowchart** guiding to either compromise, consensus, or agreeing to disagree (such a flowchart could be provided in the toolkit for reference). You might break the group into smaller pieces to discuss solutions if the large group setting is too charged. For example, put the conflicting parties each with a few neutral group members in two subgroups to generate suggestions, then reconvene.
6. **Focus on Interests, Not Positions:** This is a classic negotiation principle. Help people move from fixed positions (*“I want X”*) to underlying interests (*“I need my cattle to have enough pasture”*). Once interests are clear, the group can explore alternative solutions that satisfy those interests. As facilitator, ask probing questions like *“What is most important to you about that outcome?”* to get to the root needs. Then reframe the conflict as a mutual problem: *“It seems we need to find a way to give the cattle enough pasture **and** ensure tree planting can happen. What ideas do we have to achieve both?”* Now it is the group versus the problem, not person vs. person.
7. **Generate and Evaluate Options:** Encourage brainstorming of multiple solutions. Perhaps the group can adjust the plan (e.g., plant trees in alleys wide enough to still graze, or phase planting). Write down proposals. Then guide a discussion or use a decision tool (like multi-voting if appropriate) to move toward an option that most can accept. Sometimes the resolution is a compromise, other times a creative win-win emerges.
8. **Confirm the Resolution and Next Steps:** Once an agreement is reached, articulate it clearly and ensure all parties acknowledge it. *“Okay, so we agree to reduce the tree density in the grazing area and seek an alternative site for the remaining trees. The cooperative will also look into fodder bank options to support grazing during tree establishment – correct?”*

Get nods or verbal confirmation. Thank them for working through the conflict, reinforcing that through dialogue they found a solution. If no full resolution is possible in the meeting, at least summarize what was discussed and propose a way forward (e.g., schedule a dedicated conflict resolution meeting or bring in an external mediator if needed).

Role-Play Activity – Mediating a Conflict (40 min)

Now the group will practice handling conflict. Use a realistic scenario to make it concrete. For example–

The stakeholder group is discussing how to allocate a new grant funding for an agroforestry initiative. One farmer (Alice) strongly feels it should go toward buying fencing to protect trees from livestock, as she had losses to free-roaming cattle. Another farmer (Johan) is upset at this idea, arguing that money should go to buying better tree seedlings, and fencing will prevent common grazing rights, which he values. The discussion in the group becomes tense.

Ask for 3 volunteers: one as facilitator, and the two as the conflicting farmers (coach the “actors” quickly on their positions and let them ad lib specifics). The rest of participants will be observers (and can play the role of other group members if needed). Have the volunteer facilitator attempt to manage the conflict for about 5-7 minutes. If the facilitator reaches an impasse, you can freeze the role-play and ask the group for ideas, then continue.



After the role-play, debrief thoroughly: What did the facilitator do well? What could have been done differently? Observers can share what they felt during the process. Possibly run a second round with a different volunteer facilitator to try another approach or to conclude the scenario with a resolution. This exercise lets participants test their conflict resolution skills in a safe setting and learn from each other. It often brings out the stress a facilitator can feel, so reinforce positive efforts and remind that preparation (like having ground rules or anticipating such conflicts) makes it easier in real life.

Dealing with Other Challenges:

Briefly discuss a few additional tough situations and tips:

- **Dominant Participants or Side Conversations:** These were touched on Day 1. Reiterate how to respectfully regain control (direct questions to others, break into small groups, physically position yourself near the talkative person which can subtly inhibit them, etc.).
- **Lack of Participation or Apathy:** Sometimes you face silence or reluctance (maybe the group is meeting due to a mandate, not intrinsic motivation). Suggest strategies: acknowledge the situation (“I sense people are quiet – is there an underlying concern?”), use more engaging methods (like a game or a controversial statement to spark debate), or check if the objectives align with their interests. One might need to circle back to “what do you want to get out of this group?” to energize them.
- **Emotional Reactions:** In discussions about livelihoods, people can get emotional (anger, frustration, even tears if someone feels overwhelmed). Encourage empathy: let the person express themselves, thank them for sharing, and perhaps take a short break if needed. Ensure the person feels supported (maybe a quick private check-in during a break). Emotional moments are okay; they often reveal deeply held values – which are important data for the group.
- **Hijacking Agenda:** If a participant derails the meeting to push their own topic, the facilitator should gently park that topic. *“That’s an important issue, but let’s note it and come back later if time allows – we need to finish our current agenda point first.”* Keep a visible “Parking Lot” list. This shows you are not dismissing them but keeping the meeting on track. Follow up on parked items either at end or afterwards.
- **Language or Cultural Barriers:** In diverse stakeholder groups, not everyone may be equally fluent in the meeting’s language. Suggest strategies like providing materials in advance, speaking slowly and avoiding jargon, or buddying people up for translation help if needed. Also be aware of cultural norms about communication (some cultures are more confrontational, others more deferential; adjust your facilitation style to encourage input accordingly).

Throughout this session, reinforce that **self-awareness and self-control** are the facilitator’s allies in conflict. If you feel yourself becoming stressed, take a deep breath or suggest a short break. It is acceptable to call a pause: *“Let’s take 5 minutes, everyone. We’ll return with fresh minds.”* Sometimes that break diffuses tension.

Methods Used: Role-play with group observation, interactive mini lecture on steps, group discussion. The role-play is key for experiential learning here. Make sure to maintain a supportive environment – intervene if the role-play conflict gets too heated or if the volunteer facilitator is floundering badly, by pausing and discussing tactics with the group (this models that even in real situations, one might ask a co-facilitator or take a time-out to think).

Wrap up Session 5 by reassuring participants that they now have a framework to approach conflict. They practiced it and hopefully realized that while conflict situations are challenging, having a neutral facilitator greatly helps transform them into progress. Encourage them to not shy away from tough topics in their groups—often those are exactly the issues that need addressing for the group to move forward. After a short break, expand out to talk about facilitating broader collaboration across multiple stakeholders and sustaining networks.



Tip for Success: Emphasize your own learning curve with conflict if applicable. For example- *“The first time I had to mediate a heated argument in a meeting, I was quite nervous. But I found that by staying calm and letting each person talk it out, they eventually found a solution. Now I see conflict as something I can help navigate, rather than something to fear.”*

Session 6: Facilitating Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration (11:15–12:45)

Objective:

Focus on the facilitator's role in bridging diverse stakeholder groups and sectors for collaborative agroforestry initiatives. Participants will learn strategies for building trust among different stakeholder types, techniques for effective communication across knowledge cultures (farmers, scientists, policymakers), and how to guide a multi-stakeholder group towards shared understanding and joint action. By the end of this session, advisors should be equipped to initiate or support collaborations that go beyond individual farms – such as innovation platforms, public-private partnerships, or community projects – and ensure these collaborations are inclusive and goal-oriented.

Set the stage by acknowledging that agroforestry, to scale up, often requires collaboration not just within a homogenous group (like just farmers) but **across sectors**. For example, a successful agroforestry program might involve farmers, a local agricultural cooperative, a forestry department, an academic researcher, an NGO, and also a local business (like a tree nursery or a buyer of agroforestry products). Each comes with different perspectives and terminologies. The facilitator acts as a “*bridge*” or “*translator*” among these worlds.

Building Trust and Shared Understanding:

Trust is the currency of collaboration. Discuss ways to build trust among stakeholders:

- **Transparency:** Encourage open sharing of objectives and concerns early on. For instance, have each stakeholder articulate what they hope to gain from the collaboration and any potential worries. Seeing this openly can prevent suspicion (like a farmer thinking “*what’s the researcher’s agenda?*”). As facilitator, summarize these interests to ensure everyone hears and acknowledges them.
- **Equal Footing:** Structure interactions so that no one stakeholder category dominates. This might mean deliberately alternating who speaks, or mixing people in breakout teams so that, say, a farmer, a researcher, and a policymaker must work together on a task (instead of all farmers clumping together). It could also involve physical meeting location choices – meeting sometimes on farms (so researchers/policymakers step into farmers’ environment) and sometimes in offices or neutral venues. Symbolic gestures like using first names (not titles) and informal dress code can flatten hierarchies if appropriate.
- **Language Levelling:** Encourage use of plain language. As facilitator, when technical terms arise, do quick checking (“*Does everyone know what ‘allometric equation’ means? If not, let’s explain – it’s basically a way to estimate tree biomass.*”). Likewise, make sure local terms or acronyms get explained to outsiders. Act as an interpreter both ways (scientist to farmer and farmer to scientist). Over time, this cross-learning builds mutual respect.
- **Find Quick Wins:** Early in a collaboration, identify a small success that stakeholders can achieve together. Maybe an easy pilot project or a joint field visit that everyone finds valuable. Achieving something jointly, even modest, increases trust and shows the value of collaboration. It generates positive momentum (“*hey, we did this together!*”). A facilitator might propose such a quick-win project to the group to get the ball rolling.
- **Formalizing Commitment:** With multi-stakeholder groups, sometimes having a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or charter helps solidify trust. It is essentially a written statement of what was verbally agreed – roles, contributions, and shared goals. Mention that the facilitator might draft this or help the group draft it for review, ensuring all parties feel ownership. The process of creating a collaborative agreement can surface and resolve misalignments early.



Stakeholder Mapping and Roles

Introduce the idea of stakeholder mapping as a tool to manage multi-stakeholder processes. Show a simple matrix or map dividing stakeholders by category (farmers, researchers, government, private sector, etc.) or by influence/interest. Explain how an advisor can use a map to ensure all relevant players are involved and to tailor engagement strategies. For example, if policy makers are high influence but low current interest, maybe the group needs a strategy to involve them (invite them to field days to spark interest). The facilitator might lead the core group in a mapping exercise at the outset of a project, which clarifies who to communicate with and how. Reference that **FAO Stakeholder Analysis Guidelines** are available for those who want a deep dive into this tool (see toolkit references).

Discuss assigning or rotating roles in multi-stakeholder initiatives: For instance, sometimes a small steering committee is formed from different stakeholder reps to guide the larger group's work – the facilitator might coordinate with them. Each meeting could have a different stakeholder co-host it to share ownership. The key is inclusion in leadership and decision-making.

Example – Regional Agroforestry Platform: Share a case or fictitious example to illustrate multi-stakeholder facilitation:

“In Region X, an Agroforestry Platform was formed with 20 members: farmers, extension advisors, forest service, a university researcher, and an agri-business rep. In early meetings, farmers were quiet while the officials dominated with policy talk. The facilitator noticed this and introduced a rule that for each topic, they have to hear a farmer perspective first, then others. They also organized field trips where researchers and officials visited farms, which helped the latter appreciate farmers' knowledge. Over a year, the platform built enough trust to launch a joint project – establishing a community tree nursery where the agri-business provided seedlings, farmers provided labour, and the forest service expedited permits. The facilitator's guidance in communication and keeping everyone focused on the shared mission (“more trees on farms, benefiting all”) was cited by members as a key success factor.”

This narrative (whether real or composite) gives life to the concepts. If you have a real case (like in AFINET, AF4EU or another project) and can cite it, do so: e.g., mention *“European projects like AFINET have successfully connected diverse agroforestry stakeholders across countries to share knowledge; the principles are similar at local level.”*

Bridging Knowledge Gaps

Another challenge: stakeholders bring different types of knowledge (local experiential vs. scientific data). A facilitator in an innovation network can use techniques to **integrate knowledge**. One such method: **Knowledge Fairs** or **Exchange Visits** – encourage stakeholders to present to each other in their environment (farmers host a demonstration for researchers, and vice versa researchers share trial results in an accessible way). Use a **two-way translation document**: have farmers list key questions they want research to answer, and researchers list what they think farmers should know, then swap and discuss. Emphasize empathy: researchers might not realize a farmer's day-to-day constraints, while farmers might not know a researcher's funding/policy constraints. A facilitator can illuminate these contexts, so each side is more understanding rather than dismissive.

Joint Problem-Solving Techniques

Introduce any special techniques for multi-stakeholder problem solving: for example, **World Café** or **Open Space Technology** events where a broad range of people circulate through discussions, which can be great for big diverse groups to identify solutions collaboratively. Use **scenario planning** exercises where different stakeholders

role-play future scenarios (useful for policy-related discussions). Though these might be beyond the daily toolkit, mention them as options (and include references in toolkit materials if available).



Activity – Collaborative Action Planning (30 min):

To practice multi-stakeholder facilitation planning, divide participants into two groups (or more if many people, but two is fine for depth). Give each group a scenario: *They must plan a one-day workshop that brings together different stakeholders to advance an agroforestry initiative.* For instance, Group 1 gets “*Planning a Regional Agroforestry Innovation Day with farmers, extension advisors, researchers, policymakers to draft an action plan for agroforestry promotion.*” Group 2 gets “*Facilitating a partnership meeting among a farmer cooperative, a timber company, and a conservation NGO to start a silvo-pasture project.*”

Each group appoints a lead facilitator (or works collectively) to outline how they would run that workshop: what activities, in what sequence, to achieve collaboration. Specifically, ask them to address: how will they ensure each type of stakeholder contributes, how will they handle any likely conflicts of interest, and what outcomes they aim for. After 15–20 minutes, have them present their workshop design. Provide feedback and encourage peer input: Are the methods proposed likely to engage everyone? Did they foresee potential stakeholder clashes or power issues and plan accordingly? This exercise forces them to think of real-world application at a larger collaboration level. It’s basically a micro-design session where they apply principles of multi-stakeholder facilitation.

Methods Used: Scenario analysis, group planning exercise, case example discussion. Keep it interactive by inviting their thoughts and experiences throughout. Possibly someone in the room has done multi-actor projects; let them chime in with insight or have a short Q&A if interest arises (“*What if the government representatives never show up to meetings?*” is a pragmatic question, answer with strategies like go to them, or secure an official mandate, etc.).

Conclude Session 6 by emphasizing that agroforestry needs these multi-actor collaborations to reach its full potential, and advisors with facilitation skills are crucial to make them work. Participants should now have a sense of how to initiate and guide such collaborations, turning a group of diverse stakeholders into a **team** working towards a common agroforestry goal. Revisit this in the next session and talk about broader networks and sustaining innovation communities.

Tip for Success: Remind participants that facilitating multi-stakeholder groups can be more time-intensive – relationships need nurturing. Patience is key. Suggest creating informal networking opportunities alongside formal meetings (like tea breaks, lunch seating mixes, WhatsApp groups for casual exchange) – often trust builds in those side interactions which a facilitator can encourage by simply bringing people together in a relaxed way.

Acknowledge power differences openly when appropriate. For example, “*We recognize that the policy makers ultimately control funding, but this platform is for open dialogue where every participant’s knowledge is valued. Let’s keep it that way so the policy decisions will be better informed by practice.*” Sometimes naming the elephant in the room (power, history, etc.) respectfully can diffuse its negative impact.

Session 7: Supporting Agroforestry Innovation Networks (13:45–15:15)

Objective

Expand the perspective to longer-term support of agroforestry networks and communities of practice. Participants will learn how to foster continuous knowledge sharing, maintain engagement over time, and spread innovation beyond an initial group (scaling out through networks). They will explore tools for networking (both in-person and digital) and consider how to measure and sustain the impact of the networks they facilitate. By the end, advisors should understand their role not just as meeting facilitators, but as ongoing network coordinators or “innovation brokers” who nurture connections and drive collective innovation in agroforestry.

Begin by defining “innovation network” in this context: a network is a net of individuals or groups who exchange knowledge and collaborate on a shared interest (here, agroforestry). Unlike a single project with a fixed timeline, a network is more open-ended. Examples: the participants of this training could form a network; or multiple farmer field schools in agroforestry across a country form a network to exchange results; or European agroforestry associations form a network. Facilitators (or “network coordinators”) help to keep these networks alive and vibrant.

Key Considerations for Sustaining Networks:

- Regular Communication:** Networks die out if people do not regularly interact. Discuss channels: periodic meetings (quarterly or annual gatherings), field visits exchanges, email newsletters, WhatsApp or Telegram groups, online forums or social media. Advisors can take initiative in setting up and moderating these channels. For instance, an advisor might send a monthly email update to all network members highlighting one group’s work, upcoming funding opportunities, etc. Encourage participants to leverage simple tools (a WhatsApp group is often easiest for farmer networks; an email list or Facebook group might involve more diverse stakeholders including those less technologically adept).
- Shared Learning Events:** Encourage networks to have events like annual symposiums, farmer innovation fairs, cross-visits to demonstration sites, etc. These events reinvigorate interest and bring new knowledge. The facilitator often helps organize and ensures these events are participatory (not just lecture-style – include roundtables, open discussions, poster sessions for farmers to showcase, etc.). If possible, mention a real example: *“The Hungarian Agroforestry Network holds a yearly field day rotating among farms – this has been key to keeping members engaged and recruiting new ones.”* If you are in Hungary, make sure this true before you say it!
- Diversifying Leadership:** One person cannot carry a network forever. Encourage building a **leadership group or rotating facilitation** within the network. This could mean after establishing trust, the advisor intentionally empowers others (perhaps training some members in facilitation skills too, a cascade effect). For example, have different members host meetings or lead sub-committees (like a research subgroup, policy advocacy subgroup). This not only shares the load but also deepens member commitment.
- Showcasing Successes:** Celebrate and broadcast the network’s successes. People stay engaged when they see impact. If a member farm achieved great results or a joint project got funded, share that success widely (local media, network newsletter, etc.). The facilitator can help package success stories. Perhaps mention creating a **network toolkit or manual** if the network’s work can be replicated (like how one project compiled a “how-to” guide for others, as noted in the Project Management Module). Agroforestry networks in Europe like AF4EU and AFINET produced materials that others could use to start their own groups. Such outputs also lend credibility and attract new partners.
- New Member Integration:** Over time, new stakeholders will join the network while others may leave. Discuss having an onboarding process – e.g., a brief orientation or a “mentor” system where an existing member pairs

with a newcomer to introduce them to the group's norms and history. This links back to having that group charter/mission available so recent members align quickly. A facilitator might manage a contact list or membership registry to keep track.

- **Resource Mobilisation:** Networks might need resources (funding, knowledge, tools) to sustain activities. Advisors can guide the network to funding opportunities (like grants for network activities, or crowd-sourcing within the group for minor expenses). They can also link the network to external experts or research outputs. For instance, connecting an agroforestry network with a forestry research institute to provide occasional expert advice. Essentially, the facilitator acts as a connector between the network and the outside world of resources.
- **Monitoring Impact:** Though not formal like an M&E plan, it is good for a network to reflect on what it has achieved and what challenges remain. A facilitator can initiate an annual survey or reflection meeting: *“What have members applied or changed because of this network?” “What topics do we need more knowledge on?”* This keeps the network purposeful and can justify its existence to funders or the members themselves. If they see tangible benefits (like adoption of new practices, improved yields, policy influence), they will stay engaged.

Digital Tools for Networking:

Introduce a few digital tools that can support networks, especially relevant if members are geographically spread:

- *Messaging Apps (WhatsApp/Telegram):* For quick updates and peer support (e.g., a farmer shares a photo of a pest asking for advice and gets quick responses).
- *Email Groups or Forums:* e.g., Google Groups or an online forum for more in-depth discussions or sharing documents.
- *Zoom or Webinars:* Virtual meetups to supplement physical meetings, allowing experts or members from afar to join periodically.
- *Knowledge Repositories:* If the network generates knowledge (reports, manuals, videos), consider a shared Google Drive or a simple website/wiki where these can be accessed.

Advisors might need to take the lead in setting up these tools and teaching members how to use them (especially older farmers might need guidance to use WhatsApp or Zoom effectively). Including these in the facilitator's skill set extends their reach. A prime example of the this is the AF4EU MOOC or the AFINET-AF4EU alive handbook.

Scaling Out Innovation

Emphasize that strong local networks can connect into wider networks (scaling horizontally). For example, each local agroforestry group in different regions might send a representative to a national network meeting – cross-pollinating ideas. Facilitators at local level can coordinate with each other via a meta-network. Mention that European networks like AF4EU/AFINET function exactly like this: regional groups feeding into an EU-level network. For advisors, being aware of higher-level networks (national agroforestry associations, European Agroforestry Federation) can provide channels for their local stakeholders to get broader exposure and support. So part of supporting networks is linking them to other networks – creating a lattice of innovation.



Activity – Network Sustainability Planning (30 min)

Have participants develop a sustainability plan for an agroforestry network. Split into small groups (4–5). Pose this task- *“Imagine you helped establish a new agroforestry innovation network last year. It showed initial success but you worry about keeping people engaged over the next couple of years. Outline a plan with at least 3 strategies to maintain and grow the network's momentum.”*



Encourage them to use ideas from above (events, comms, leadership rotation, etc.) and also think of potential pitfalls (what if a key champion retires? what if funding ends? how to keep it going?). After 15 minutes, each group presents their top strategies. Synthesize these on a flipchart as a master list of best practices for sustaining networks. Make sure “regular communication”, “periodic meetings”, “show successes”, etc., appear and are understood. If some creative ideas come up (like creating a network logo/identity merchandise to build pride or having network awards for best innovator of the year), highlight those too. The point is participants leave with a concrete sense of how to nurture a network long-term, not just facilitate one meeting.

Personal Action Planning

Before closing the session, pivot to each participant thinking about **how they will apply all this back home**. This will segue to the final session. Ask them to individually write down one specific thing they will do in the next month to practice their facilitation/network support skills (perhaps facilitate a meeting differently, start a WhatsApp group for their stakeholders, draft ground rules for an existing group, etc.). This primes their mind for the final wrap-up where they will refine these intentions.

Methods Used: Group brainstorming, discussion, mini lecture with examples, and personal reflection. Ensure energy stays up in the afternoon by keeping the discussion open and perhaps showing a short inspiring video or photo montage of a successful agroforestry network (if any available; if not, vivid storytelling can be sufficient).

Close Session 7 by reinforcing that creating and supporting networks is a journey – it requires passion and persistence, but the payoff is an empowered community driving agroforestry innovation from the ground up. As facilitators, their legacy can be these thriving communities that continue to make progress long after a project formally ends.

Trainer Tip for Success: If you have participants from different regions or localities, encourage them to network among themselves too. Day 2 afternoon is a good time to say, *“Look around – you are all now part of a facilitator network. Exchange contact info, you can support each other after this training.”* Maybe allocate a corner with a pin board for business cards or a contact list sign-up. This demonstrates the very principle being taught. Also mention any existing communities of practice, e.g., an online group of agroforestry facilitators, if it exists, or offer to connect them via email after training.

Session 8: Synthesis, Action Planning & Close (15:30–16:30)

Objective

Consolidate the two-day training insights and guide participants in translating them into action in their own work. Participants will review key takeaways, share their personal facilitation action plans, and address any remaining questions or concerns. The session ends with evaluation of the training and a celebratory closure, reinforcing participants' confidence as facilitation champions.

Review Key Learnings

Begin off the final hour with a quick recap game or presentation by participants. One engaging method: *"Facilitation Bingo"* – prepare bingo cards with key terms (active listening, Tuckman, ground rules, conflict resolution, stakeholder mapping, etc.). Draw definitions or examples from a hat and read them; participants mark the corresponding concept. It can be a fun refresher of jargon and ideas from across sessions. Alternatively, do a collaborative mind map: start with *"Effective Facilitation"* in the centre and ask participants to call out what branches/topics we covered (projecting it if possible). Ensure the main topics (role of facilitator, principles, group dynamics, inclusion techniques, planning tools, conflict management, multi-stakeholder, networks) all surface and are briefly discussed one last time. This solidifies the framework in their minds.

Personal Action Plans

Ask a few volunteers to share the action step they wrote in Session 7. Provide feedback or suggestions if applicable. Encourage everyone to refine their plan: *"Take 2 minutes to add one more detail – perhaps a timeline or whom you need to involve to make it happen."* For example, one might say *"I will facilitate a meeting of our local agroforestry working group next month using a round-robin discussion and establishing ground rules at the start."* Another might plan *"I'll set up a WhatsApp group for my farmers by the end of this week to share agroforestry tips."*

Encourage realistic, short-term actions as well as longer-term goals (*"Over the next year, form or grow a regional network"*). If a certification of completion or follow-up is part of the, mention any criteria needed (like attending all sessions, demonstrating skills in exercises – presumably all have done that). Perhaps present the certificates at this point or mention they will be emailed, etc.

Address Outstanding Questions

Open the floor for any final questions or scenarios participants want to discuss. Sometimes people have *"what if"* queries that did not fit earlier: *"What if I'm asked to facilitate but I'm also a stakeholder with opinions – how to balance that?"* or *"How can I convince my institution to let me spend time on facilitation?"* Provide your insights or let peers answer if they have ideas (often someone else may have faced similar issues). This reinforces the peer network. If time is short, you can collect questions on cards earlier and address a few common ones now.

Evaluation

It is important to gather feedback on the training itself. Distribute a quick evaluation form or do a rapid feedback exercise. One quick method: a flipchart with two columns – *"What went well"* and *"Even better if."* Participants sticky note or verbally give one of each. Make the feedback experience fun: each person in a circle says one word



or phrase about the training (e.g., “Practical”, “Energetic”, “Too fast in parts”, “Inspiring”). This gives a pulse. If formal evaluation is needed, collect forms quietly while moving on to closing.

Toolkit and Resources Reminder

Before closing, draw attention to the toolkit and reference materials provided. Quickly list them (perhaps they can be printed or in a digital packet). Emphasize useful ones like: *facilitation checklists, sample ground rules, conflict resolution flowchart, stakeholder analysis template, etc.*, that they can refer to. Mention any further reading or community links, for example the AF4EU website, to encourage continuing learning. Other examples include: “*We’ve included a link to Teagasc’s Facilitation Skills Manual which focuses on group facilitation techniques in adult learning and extension settings– it contains a wealth of participatory methods to supplement what we practiced.*” Encourage them to explore all of these resources and share with colleagues.



Closing Activity

End on an uplifting note. One idea: “*Facilitator’s Pledge.*” As a group, create a short pledge or motto about how they will facilitate moving forward. You can seed it: “*We, the facilitators, will [ensure every voice is heard], [turn trees into thriving communities]...*” something symbolic. Or do a round where each completes the sentence “*As a facilitator, I commit to ...*” with one commitment (like listening more, being patient, etc.). Applaud each other for the commitments. Alternatively, a more low-key commitment could be a simple group photo with everyone holding a sign of their key word from the training (like “Inclusivity” or “Collaboration”) as a nice closing ritual (and a memory to share in the network).

Finally, it is important to thank everyone genuinely for their participation, insights, and energy. Acknowledge how much was covered in two days – it was intense – and that their engagement made it successful. Encourage them to keep supporting each other and to reach out if they need help implementing these ideas (*the trainer’s contact can be offered if appropriate*). End with a motivational thought: “*Great facilitators don’t just conduct meetings – they cultivate communities. I’m excited to see how you will help grow agroforestry communities that thrive. Together, you have the tools to turn stakeholder groups into true innovation networks, driving positive change for farms and forests.*”

Perhaps close with a relevant quote, e.g., “*If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.*” – and note that their role is to help people go together, further. My personal favourite is “*a society grows great when old men plant trees in whose shade they shall never sit.*”



Facilitation Toolkits, Further Resources and References

To continue building facilitation skills and to support the networks you work with, the following resources are recommended:

Agroforestry Networking Platforms:

Look up if there is a national or regional agroforestry network or community of practice you can join. For example, the Agroforestry Business Model Innovation Network ([AF4EU](#)), Agroforestry Innovation Network ([AFINET](#)) or any local Agroforestry Operational Groups (AIGs) established by projects, which have documents translated in all languages. These platforms often have newsletters, events, and forums where you can continue to share experiences with fellow facilitators and practitioners.

Teagasc's Facilitation Skills Manual:

A manual focusing on group facilitation techniques in adult learning and extension settings. Offers tips on active listening, asking effective questions, and handling group energy. <https://teagasc.ie/publications/the-discussion-group-facilitators-handbook-php/>

IFAD Community Engagement Toolkit:

A comprehensive toolkit by the International Fund for Agricultural Development on participatory community development, filled with practical methods for engaging rural groups. It covers everything from running effective meetings to inclusive decision-making in community projects (much of which applies to agroforestry networks). <https://www.ifad.org/targetingtoolkit/>

FAO Stakeholder Analysis Guidelines (PDF):

A guide from the Food and Agriculture Organization on how to identify and analyse stakeholders. This is useful for planning multi-stakeholder initiatives – it provides templates for mapping stakeholders' interests and influence, which can inform your facilitation strategy to involve the right people. <https://www.fao.org/in-action/food-for-cities-programme/toolkit/define-the-crfs/stakeholder-mapping-analysis/fr/>

Participatory Decision-Making Techniques:

A resource (e.g., *Sam Kaner's Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making*) which details consensus-building tools and how to lead groups to sustainable agreements. It is a deeper dive into methods like multi-voting, dotmocracy, and consensus workshops, complementing what was practiced in Session 3.

Digital Tools for Collaboration:

Many free or low-cost tools can aid your facilitation:

- WhatsApp/Telegram groups for farmer communities (easy sharing of photos and tips).
- Trello : <https://trello.com/> or Google Workspace <https://workspace.google.com/> for managing group tasks and documents in a project.
- Zoom, Teams, etc.. for virtual meetings if stakeholders are far apart.
- KoboToolbox <https://www.kobotoolbox.org/> or Google Forms for gathering feedback or ideas from network members between meetings.
- These tools can complement in-person facilitation by keeping people connected and organized between sessions. (Explore guides on using these for community facilitation – e.g., “Mobile Messaging for Extension Guide”).

By leveraging these resources and tools, you can continually improve your facilitation practice. Remember that effective facilitation is a journey of learning – each meeting you lead will teach you something new. Stay curious,



stay empathetic, and keep experimenting with participatory approaches. In doing so, you will not only strengthen your stakeholder groups and networks but also contribute to the broader movement making agroforestry a cornerstone of sustainable land use.

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OUTCOMES OF THE COURSE MODULE

- Strong facilitation and group management skills
- Tools to engage stakeholders and ensure inclusive participation
- Techniques to manage conflict and guide group processes
- Confidence to support multi-actor collaboration and innovation

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