



PARTICIPATORY ACTION LEARNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY (PALS)

Field Activity Report Meki Batu



December 2017

Written by: Sarah De Smet and Leul H. ABDI with
SNV staff: Daniel Belema; Muluken Teshome; Meseret Worku

Consultant and facilitator: Linda Mayoux

Team Meeting

The team meeting started with a pairwise **feedback** on: what things colleagues like about the PALS processes (5-10) and what things that they feel are a challenge or things they need to have/know by the end of this week.

Daniel and Muluken fed back on their likes:

- They see positive change with the champions, most of the champions are using the tools appropriately and some are accepted socially again (for instance Adilo was not socially accepted in the community)
- The champions are able to live their life with a plan, they all have a vision and a plan on how to reach their vision
- On decision-making: they have the whole family participate in decision-making, for instance for renting out land, sell ox/cow
- The confidence to speak out in the cooperative for instance, is boosted
- The champions spend more time on their income-generating activities, before they were more addicted. The time for chewing chat has minimized and they have also more money because of it
- They are very familiar with all tools, especially the V, VJ, HFT and they are using the tools to make amendments on their changes. They also know the CLM and MLVC (but to a less extent?). Gemedo is drawing the multilane calendar for the coops

The likes of Leul and Meseret:

- The vision inspires, and it moves on to the VJ, HFT, CAT and MLVC
- The tools are comprehensive and they build up one to the other, there are interlinkages between them
- The facilitation from the back allows people themselves to discover their own potential and opportunities, it is empowering
- The whole methodology and tools are bringing change in the lives of the champions, it gives more meaning to their life (vision, plan ...), and it makes the family happier
- The inclusive nature of the methodology (regarding the level of literacy and gender)
- It offers a very simple definition of gender that can be understood by everybody
- The sharing at different levels: from family to neighbours to community
- The tools can be customized at individual and organisational level, for every individual and any group (children, VSLA ...)
- It serves to develop strategy and action plans
- The methodology allows to follow-up on the changes and track over time
- The tools allow to work in a community-led way that engages the 'top'

The challenges identified by Daniel and Muluken are:

- Based on the meeting last week they saw that 60-70 champions know the V and VJ and that both husband and wife participated; the methodology should encourage training of both husband and wife
- Regular equal follow-up of the champions is needed because they do not understand the tools equally. *Who should follow up and what kind of follow-up? We need to discuss this together with Shimelis*
- The champions do not follow-up the steps of achievements, they have not been marking their achievements in red
- Not all did achieve their plans, some have not started yet
- They did not all share within the HH (which we need to reinforce)
- They do not all train 5 new champions (sometimes 2-3)
- The champions expect the notebooks and pencils from the project
- The 1-5 trainings did not go according to the plan during the peak agricultural period
- Not all the tools were shared, it went up to HFT
- Some are not updating their changes; some of the visions are not feasible but they are learning
- They are not using the tools uniformly and it often stays at the level of the V, VJ and HFT
- The champions from one kebele are not frequently meeting to discuss their challenges and more

Meseret and Leul need **clarification** on:

- How can we improve the sense of ownership, and make the champions feel they do it for their own sake and not for the sake of the project?
- What is at project level the most effective monitoring mechanism to follow the changes (seem to be qualitative in nature) of the champions?
- Upscaling to other woredas: what is the minimum time required for overall upscaling?

The consultant addressed the questions and a discussion of the following points were initiated: The methodology initiates changes and the champions themselves are responsible for the changes. As a project we are too much focused on the results and not on the process. The most important thing is that they identify **what they want** rather than **knowing all the steps**. The staff should have **an adult-to-adult conversation rather than monitoring and tracking results**. The monitoring should empower the champions.

UPSCALING

It is suggested (depending on the feedback we will get from the Oromia champions) the same process as for Timret: two times 5 days, the first training being the champion catalyst and the second the livelihood. For the first training, the proposed schedule would be:

- Day 1: Soulmate visioning: for the trainer champions to get to know the new champions and break the ice – since we have not done this before, staff will facilitate this. Also the song? The champions should be sharing each night.
- Day 2: VJ
- Day 3: CLM
- Day 4: HFT
- Day 5: review of tools, finish in a nice way (+ song) and give volunteer certificates

The time of travelling away from home in other woredas needed to reflect what is possible for women, not the fact that men are generally freer and see themselves as less responsible for looking after children.

The next training is the livelihood one: CAT and MLVC. If we go too fast on livelihood, we lose on gender since men are quicker and more in control of production. Therefore we need to leave enough time in between, the ideal timing for the livelihood training would be 1 to 3 months later. In that way there will be some movement on gender.

The benefits for the trainers does not only lie in the incentive, but also in learning from other crops, getting access to new markets (for selling). The certificate is also an incentive: they get one after the first training. The project needs to pay properly as well and not exploit the champions when they go to other woredas. Whenever there is a possibility of a damage to reputation or sexual harassments, the project will step in and clarify the role of the women trainer champions.

The idea of mutually supportive teams of champions (according to their confidence level) needs to be put in the right context. We hope that through these days the relations and confidence are boosted and leads to a similar level of confidence among the trainer champions. Champions will develop a mutually supportive team rather than pairs – on the basis of diversity of skills and empathy with different groups in society rather than based on formal education and 'correctness of tools'. The aim is the change. The tools are a means.

In Oromia, the PALS Catalyst tools including Visioning, Vision Journey, Happy Family Tree and the Change Leadership Map (briefly) were given in February 2017 and later in March 2017, the Livelihood tools. The CAT has not been taught to the champions. We will include it in the following 3 days' workshop. At GYEM level we will do a recap with the staff. For the CATs done with the cooperatives in March 2017, we need to find out if the actions actually happened. The CAT is also a key tool for the 6 member groups (1+5) to find long-term solutions for common issues and to address accountability at coop level (for instance the water pump). It gives a more solid character to the group.

The **agenda** for the following days is:

- Monday: HFT quantification and gender indicators
- Tuesday: CAT
- Wednesday: CLM
- Thursday: sustainability plan with staff (there is no time to do the multilane). There is a big gap in the linkages between the FFS and VSLA, we need to pay attention to that. The blog we need to take up separately. Next to that the time of the staff should be used wisely; we can look for synergy when visiting FFS, VSLA and champions. If we

want an inclusive process, we need to make time. Over time there should be less extra time spent.

We also need to use the workshop to get a wider collective stock of the benefits of this methodology and reinforce that so that even without external support things can continue. We need to understand how the champions (and government) see this process beyond the project. That idea of self-reliance, sustainability is also to be replicated throughout the sharing and training of new people. The role of the staff is crucial and we need to get more feedback on the field visits, on the process (where did they sit, how many people were there, how did they support with the changes?).

Next to that we did not see many changes on the HFT at the roots and trunk in Timret. We need to enforce more about the fruits on all levels. We also need to quantify the savings and where those savings are put into. This quantification and achievements should serve to see the benefits afterwards. The CAT can pick up from the challenges that come out either from the HFT or any tool, it is an ongoing process.

To increase the sense of **ownership**, we went back to the question why there is not enough ownership and discussed in pairs.

The following were raised as possible causes for the lack of ownership:

- The champions have not seen the impact of the new tools; they also need to get used to a new way of seeing things
- This is an emergency area with lots of (unsustainable) support from government and NGO's
- Some do not see the potential power of the tool
- There is a general attitude that life is not in their control and thus they live accordingly to what God will provide, people are not convinced that you can make changes in your lives through making thorough decisions. There is a high level of dependence on God, but also the family and NGO's.

One of the challenges is that other parts of the project are bringing goods (water pump, inputs FFS ...) while PALS is about resilience, self-reliance and justice. When government people are greedy for DSA, the sense of justice might get lost if champions are not treated the same.

Linda explained that the aim of the methodology is that you have an action learning that leads to advocacy and bigger changes, to help people to build their capacity, and their level of control to a certain extent so that external assistance is well used. The tools in themselves will not solve all challenges, but are ways of getting started. Furthermore, part of the lack of ownership may be related to staff not being from the community and seeing the champions as poor and illiterate and lacking awareness. How big is the social distance and economic difference between staff and champions? If people are not doing something the project wants them to do, it is not necessarily because they are not aware, it can be a perfectly normal reaction from their perspective and experience to project demands that have not been properly discussed with them.

The process is partly owned by SNV and CR (we decide who is invited, how much DSA is paid ...) and broadly what is done.

To increase the sense of ownership we need to find out more about the reality of the champions' lives, trying to get a real context analysis and not just target checking if they have done the tools correctly. Some champions are better educated, do have more control and therefore might feel more ownership. But also other champions who are less literate could feel a lot of ownership with the right approach. **The way we treat them will affect their behaviour as well.** There needs to be a sense of respect, regardless their economic or social status, regardless their progress on the tools, changes or sharing. In the end all champions want respect (this also involves the respectful form of language and communication), to be listened to and not necessarily just money. In order to support the people better and make it inclusive, we also need to pay attention to people's starting point, appreciate their knowledge of their community and empathy with people and their achievements to cope with challenges and support them to address these and develop the skills they may not yet have.

On DSA, it is firstly staff that need to not believe in it. If somebody is too poor to afford coming to the training, there has to be a transparent supporting system.

To increase empathy from the project side active listening is important, putting aside one's own assumptions, and leave out judgements. Not putting demands on the table but use inspiration. The people need to be convinced that they will benefit, that through planning you actually get more control and can improve your life.

MONITORING

For the **monitoring**, we should call it an action learning system. What we need is a monitoring system that is encouraging for change. Monitoring as such might reduce the ownership. The champions need to meet more regularly, maybe in their 20 members groups (4*5 groups) and if they could meet for free, they can get more people. The focus should not be for our monitoring but for their learning based on which we extract (quantitative, like savings, and qualitative). See:

<http://www.galsatscale.net/Resources.html#toolkits>: EDIAIS.

What we also can do (instead of setting up or next to setting up a pictorial follow-up sheet for the champions) is having (every six months) a 2-day process with the champions to take things to the next level and monitor what happened and what will be the way forward. The HFT serves then as the main monitoring tool and is taken more into depth. It would be similar to the past two days in Timret but with time for real feedback and discussion and the way forward while feeding it back into organisational multilane and the process. The quantification needs to be done rigorously (black, green, red and blue fruits + gender disaggregation) and we need to be clear on the questions. This would allow to shift from monitoring on individual level to group level. And once groups are learning together, the step to advocacy is not so far.

Reporting is necessary to understand the process, to see the progress, reflect on why for some things are going well (what were their networks, what are the things have done or not done?) and for others not and how we can support or adapt our support. The questionnaire used in the interview is a basis for conversation. During this conversation encouragement, empathy and managing the monitoring expectations will increase the sense of ownership. There can be some clarification on steps, but done in an empathetic supportive way. It is important not to patronise people by assuming they cannot do something, assume they can do it if things are explained in the right way that gives them confidence.

If we look at the example of the interview of Daniel with Medina, we learnt that we need to make sure the timing of our visit is convenient, this is all part of showing respect. Medina didn't know Daniel was coming since he could not reach her through phone, he waited for her till she came back from the field. She was happy that Daniel visited her. She did not make amendments in her notebook and said that she will do it next time. She didn't teach others and didn't allocate time for sharing. We should understand the true reason why and that the teaching a group of 5 was misunderstood. It should have been based on the CLM. But if we are looking at them as not performing as per the plan, the resistance comes in. So if things don't work out as planned, we have to **ask how it might be more manageable**. We need to help the people who are benefitting, to get more visibility and appreciate what others are doing and find out without judgement how it can be more manageable to them.

Day I

Facilitators: Linda Mayoux; Meseret Worku; Shimelis Hailu; Daniel Belema; Sarah De Smet; Muluken Teshome and Leul Habte

Happy Family Tree and Vision Journey

- Samuel, one of the original champions, was early and came with one new champion
- By 9:20 5 original men champions had arrived, 5 new men champions, 3 women original champions and 1 women new champion had arrived
- By 9:40 8 original men champions had arrived, 7 new men champions, 4 women original champions and 2 women new champion had arrived
- By 10:00 8 original men champions had arrived, 8 new men champions (among which the husband of Zeineba), 6 women original champions and 4 women new champion had arrived

- By 11:00 we had the same number of men champions, 8 women original champions and 6 new women champions

To start off, we had four groups: the OWCs (Original Women Champions), the NWCs (New Women Champions), the OMCs (Original Men Champions) and the NMCs (New Men Champions). We paid attention to the seating and put women and men each at one side of the room. It is important there is enough space for everybody and to be gaps in seating for people to easily come up to the front to present their ideas. It was also important to identify a woman who can speak well Amharic and Oromiffa in order for her to translate for the women – we did not do it this day.

As people were arriving, they discussed in their groups the changes on the HFT with focus on the red and green fruits. Linda looked in some of the notebooks of the new champions to understand their trees. For the men original champions it was asked to quantify the savings as well in their discussion and for what they had used these savings. For the women group, one did not find her HFT anymore and said that the children had taken it. One new women champion did not have any changes indicated on her tree. The group was encouraged to discuss the past and future changes further and to teach to the new champions how they can elaborate the tree and indicate the changes. As new women came in, we started mixing the kebeles for the sharing and we asked them to form groups with an original and new champion to exchange on the HFT. On the men side, there were enough men from the start so we put them immediately in a group of original and new champions.

Afterwards it appeared that one women new champion came instead of her daughter, a new champion who just gave birth. She had the notebook of her daughter but did not seem to know anything on the methodology. We agreed that she can copy the steps of the HFT in the notebook of her daughter and we gave her a page to do her own HFT. This is unforeseen but an opportunity to widen the circle and include this person to become a champion, which we also explained to her. The assumption that she is here to get DSA was raised, but we cannot claim this is true and even if it is the case, the opportunity to reach more people is presented and should be explored.

The men original champions didn't have all the steps appropriately, the fruits for instance were not in the steps. The steps of the HFT were put on a flipchart one by one, facilitated by the champions themselves, and they copied it in to their notebook. We looked at how much they have saved and on what they spent it. This should go into the livelihood management calendar to that they get the idea of continuation. Not all changes were recorded (for instance on decision-making on oxen). Also the new champions put the steps at the back of their notebooks, after marking the changes in their own trees.

On the trees of the new women new champions we saw changes at the side of the husband, not always on their own side. The actual changes may happen on either side. It is the plan that is only on one's own side ie cannot tell one's spouse what to do. Have to think of the changes you yourself plan to do. But consequence of those actions may be change on the other side. Eg men give up khat and women have money from them to invest in business. Women stop coffee and gossiping means men discuss more with them. *One women had as a vision the current situation, we needed to see if that is systematically misunderstood.*

For drawing, some did not bring their own pens and pencils. The experience from Timret showed that handing the material out and asking to return in order to reach more people, does not necessarily work. Many pens, pencils and markers got feet the week before. Therefore we wanted to be firm on getting these materials back after handing them out (we gave everybody a red, green pen and a pencil). We explained that in order to reach more people, we need to be careful with the budget and that they ought to use their own material. Since not everybody had brought their pens and pencils, we would provide everybody with pens and pencils but we need them back at the end of the day. We also mentioned that we need to recalculate the DSA if we don't get the materials back in order to use the money from DSA to replace them. The way it was expressed by Meseret was a bit harsh and it offended most of the champions. To correct this and also to create ownership among the champions, Ismael (champion) explained again after which most seemed to accept this idea.

After the morning break we continued with the steps of the HFT (each group at their own pace) for the original champions. The new man champions put on the fruits on their trees and the new women champions continued drawing their HFT and put the activities in the right place on the tree.

Attention points for the steps of the HFT

- **In the vision of the HFT, the husband, wife and children are put.** This is to avoid that people draw husband and wife at the side of the trunk which takes a lot of space and thus reduces the space for drawing on decision-making and assets. Some champions were drawing the husband and wife very big. We asked them to change this immediately in the notebooks.
- In Timret there was confusion on **the branches** and therefore we developed another **symbolic system** that was used here as well:
 - the outside roots have still a dollar sign but also arrows pointing outwards the tree to indicate the money that goes out (for personal expenditure) – of there is a flow of personal money from the husband going out the tree, we should encourage to reflect on how to get the money on the side of the wife
 - the inside also have a dollar sign but with arrows that point to middle root: money that is invested in the household
 - the middle root has a double dollar sign (in opposite direction)
- In the roots, people were indicating reduction of inputs for instance. We need to make a distinction between reduction of time and of money – it is not always straightforward
- After step 4 (forces on the trunk), there is an assessment if how balanced the tree is. This then is fed back into the fruits that people want to achieve to make it more balanced. For the fruits, the red fruits can be on both sides of the tree, but the green ones go to their own side only (we cannot change the other)

After lunch 4 male champions (2 original and 2 new) did not show up. Of one we knew he had to go to court. From the other 3 (including Ismael and his friend, the husband of Zeneba), we heard nothing. It was explained to the staff that we need to find out the reason for being absent and for not informing us. We work based on trust and transparency. People might have good reasons not to attend, but at least we should know. And we must be consistent on payment for DSA in case there is no good reason for being absent.

When the original men champions were done with copying the steps of the HFT in their notebooks, we moved on to the steps of the VJ. What we noticed with the new champions is that the steps of the VJ were not always correct and they changed the position of the vision and vision journey or did not put milestones. Therefore we wanted to understand of the original champions had well understood the reason for every step in the VJ.

The steps of the VJ in the notebooks of the original men champions were more or less correct but the tracking was not on it. Six of the men shared with their wives, out of which 4 were trainees (and thus received a notebook from the project) and 2 did the tools on a piece of paper.

The new men champions started copying the steps of the HFT. We are very particular on the steps since they will go to other woredas, they need to have the steps correctly!

The original women original champions continued with copying the steps of the HFT and the new women champions continued working on their HFT. At the end of the afternoon every group seemed to become sleepy. When we wanted to do the vision journey song however, one of the new women champions was suddenly ill (attack of some sort) and had to go home after which the champions also went home as the mood was disturbed.

Day II

Change Leadership Map

- By 9:00 we had 12 people (11 came early): 6 original men champions, 6 new men champions and 2 women original champions. A bit later one original women and one new women champions came in. Ayalnesh (one of the original women champions) was ill.
- 9:15: 7 OMC, 8 NMC, 3 OWC, 1 NWC.

- 9:45: 6 OMC, 9 NMC, 4 OWC, 3 NWC
- 10:05: 6 OMC, 9 NMC, 5 OWC, 4 NWC
- At 10:30 the husband of Zeneba joined, and at 12:15 Ahmed joined, so this totalled 7 OMC and 10 NMC

We agreed that would we continue with the way forward on the HFT on Wednesday and reflect about the green fruits for the future.

This day we looked at the sharing with their families and in their communities. Linda explained that the stronger the sharing is, **the more they themselves will be able to grow** because they create strong networks within which visions and plans are shared. The champions were asked to show their CLM: everybody had it except two men new champions. There was however no quantification on it.

They were sitting in their kebele groups (there were 4 kebeles present, later on 5). In pairs (2 or 3 people) they discuss on the CLM and who they had been sharing with, who they had been training. For the champions who do not have the CLM, the others taught them. These pairs should not entail an original champion with one of his/her trainees, it were to be a trainee from another champion. They explained to each other the map, the relationships, the type and strength of relationships, the direction. The idea is that it should not take too much time/investment to share but that they identify the most strategic networks who will support the process, methodology and develop their own ideas about their vision and where many people will be reached. **People will get a lot of respect during sharing.** When they share with others, the idea that those people will be sharing with others needs to be planted. If champions were to do everything themselves, others will sit back and no change will occur. So it needs to be included where the 1st tier, 2nd tier will share. The more people involved, the easier it will become.

We tried to quantify as much as possible: how many households are there in the community, what about church, schools, football team and cooperatives? They had to clearly indicate and quantify on the CLM those different networks. This needed to be fed in into the plan for the kebele for which the champions reflected about the strategy to reach all men, women and children in the kebele and how can they can use this process to increase the membership of cooperatives and the membership of women of cooperatives for instance. Higher membership leads to higher revenues, which enhances the capacity of the cooperatives to serve its members.

Facilitation note: we treat people always as if they are telling the truth, our basic assumption is that they do. It doesn't mean that we will be naïve, but we often cannot know the full picture and also should not assume that we do. If we jump immediately to negative suspicions/assumptions/judgements, the champions will leave the process, one by one. **Empathy is the key.**

The process went well and till tea break everybody was working on their CLM and sharing their plans. We did not move on to the next step as long as people are active and exchanging useful ideas.





During this process, we were exploring what the possibility is for community visioning at kebele level with the government. If we want to inspire people to share, to buy own notebooks, sharing, this would be easier if it is in the context of a bigger vision as well at kebele level to unite people around something bigger. Feeding in the visions of people into the participatory planning process of government, can help civil society to work well. This leads then to a bigger vision where people from the government are recognized and people can really work together. At the same time we also looked at the cooperatives and how this methodology can make them stronger.

After the tea break the kebele groups were asked to make their kebele upscaling plan and discuss about all issues related to sharing like buying notebooks and more. Given the budget of the project and the outreach of 1000s we want to achieve, we explained it is not possible to buy any more notebooks for the kebeles here. That money needs to be used in other woredas (to be discussed this afternoon with the government people). It is ok to start taking one sheet from their book to share for the vision and vision journey. After that people will need to buy their own 10-15 birr exercise notebook at least. In the household they can share one notebook as long as each person draws his/her own VJ and HFT, they can also share the pens. Buying a notebook and some pens to share is not expensive compared to spending on chat, coffee, and clothes. The issue is more one of motivation and inspiration. Once people have the VJ and individual plan, it should be enough to motivate them to buy their own notebooks so that they can achieve that vision.

We explained that we also can have a discussion with the cooperative. The coops can decide (based on votes of the members) to use some of their training budget for flipcharts, markers, for notebooks for people who are really too poor, and for incentives for the trainer champions. The benefit for the coop will be that every member will have a vision of how to plan his/her production so that they don't have to sell anymore to the brokers and traders which will lead to a stable cooperative with a reliable supply of crops from its members. The members will also plan how to use money productively instead of unnecessary expenses. People will plan and become more productive, the membership of the cooperatives will grow as coops will be able to render better services and membership fees will increase for cooperatives. We also explained that a vision at kebele level will help the people to vision the ideal kebele to them and that if people see the community as a whole, it is a basis for collaboration, also with the government. This then will make the job of government more feasible and get the systems working.

With both the government and the coops, everybody is asking things rather than contributing, which is making it very difficult for leaders to do their jobs. Everybody needs to play their part so that everybody can do his/her job and everybody can become a leader. This sharing is developing people's own leadership skills through sharing.

We were drafting the kebele CLMs as well as input for the afternoon, when the government people would come to discuss the woreda upscaling. At that point we will do a song, dance, sharing, and discuss on curriculum and organization. The people who don't want to go to another woreda can work on other things this afternoon. Only the people who want to stay, it is voluntary. For the people who want to but don't feel equipped, we can see how we can support them.

The sharing is not only about the tools but also about how others can share further and enlarge the circle. So the different kebele groups were asked to make their plan and map with how many they had shared with, with how many they will share and how the chain will work. The idea of the chain is very important. Champions alone are not able to train everybody directly and next to that if they do, the trainees will just sit back and take, and it will not be sustainable. As champions they just give away a few sheets of paper. They have to choose carefully the starting point, the easy ones and from there on the chain starts. Once they have reached enough of the easy ones, the other ones will start to come and participate.

So on the map, the champions per kebele indicated

- In the middle they put a circle with the people present from the kebele are in. The ones who have been sharing with others and those shared have drawn are circled with a full line, the others who have been shared but not drawn with a dotted line.
- How many people they had reached – roughly and they avoid duplication on the kebele map. This is done in red. They ask all people in the group with how many people they have shared/will share and put the number next to the symbol of that group. When people were shared with and had drawn themselves, they put a full circle. When people were shared with but did not draw themselves, the circle was dotted.
- Once all the 'reds' have been counted, they indicate in green what other groups/institutions can be reached or more people from the same groups in green. They think of how many they can reach maximum in the kebele: through cooperatives, schools (school teachers to children, children to parents, parents to other parents), VSLAs, equb, idir, mosque/church (talk to the imam/preacher who can include it their speech or after). While doing the green fruits, they need to reflect on all the networking possibilities to cascade without too much effort, bearing in mind the persuasion of people to buy their own notebook
- At the same time they put a number with every group (can also be pictorial represented or an estimation with a question mark; these numbers are not gender-disaggregated
- This is done through self-facilitation: one person stands up and draws, another one follows for next drawing...
- At the same time they updated their notebooks
- Afterwards we took a photograph of the flipchart. The flipchart belongs to the kebele and the champions took it home. It is their plan on which they can work further.
- For the impact assessment, the blue will indicated where the champions have tried to share but without result.

One men new champion told he had bought a flipchart and put the CLM in his house, it made him reflect about it every time he saw it and visitors were asking explanations which made the sharing easier. He had also shared and discussed the tools with his wife. Another new man champion encouraged all to take it seriously and plan accurately. We also encouraged to clap more, to get the energy levels up.

We started at 12:15 with the plans, in the meantime the government had arrived. Sarah and Meseret had a short debrief with them. Ismael came back after lunch and explained he was not feeling well in the morning. GYEM staff replied we were worried because we could not reach him and that we are happy he is back.

After lunch there was a pairwise discussion since the best way for the government to see the methodology, is to learn it directly from the champions. There were 3 people from the union and 14 people from the government. Only one person of the government had seen the methodology before (during certification), for all the others it was new. Linda explained that some of the champions were the original ones; some had been trained by champions and some had only seen the tools yesterday. The pairwise discussion was done in 2 phases of about 20 minutes where the government people sat consecutively with one women champion and one men champion. The champions showed from the vision to whatever tool they had done.

At 15:00 the kebeles grouped again and the government people joined them (spread over the 5 groups). Every group presented their kebele CLM. While presenting in plenary for their group, the champions were encouraged to take turns so that it is not one person presenting. Overall it went very well and in the group were the union manager of Meki Batu was, there was a lot of discussion about why the sharing stopped at the first tier. We continued with the kebele group where the union was since the union people had to leave early. The union manager understood from the kebele group for Gemedu that they had actually put the trained ones in red, but the green ones they interpreted as the one of the trained (red) who would train in their turn (and they assumed a drop-out). So the idea of the spider map was not taken into account but they tried to assess realistically who would train others. It was explained that this number (or trained people after the first training), had to go into the red circle again (indicated in green) and then the next circle is the outreach they calculate with a certain factor: if x people are trainer, how many people will be trained by those x champions?

With the other kebele groups we asked the government for ideas on how they can support this upscaling process in their own woreda and discuss on the selection of groups (VSLA, FFS, coops ...) and champions, the issue of buying notebooks and so forth. The government was given DSA at break and they stayed afterwards. We did the song around 16:25 after which the champions left and the government and union stayed (it was explained that the champions can stay but since we learnt most of them wanted to leave, we gave them opportunity to leave, which all of them did; for the next day we agreed to meet at 8:30).

The government replied per group that:

- They are willing to support the process through inviting champions in their kebele meetings, involve them in the 1-5 groups
- They are very much impressed by the champions from the V to the MLVC and they like the tools very much; it does not only have to expand to other woredas but to the regional level as well;
- They need to expand with the existing government structures (cooperative ...) and make them aware through the gender expert, that every agency has, and they need to include it in their yearly plan. *We asked what that means concretely in terms of incentives for the champions for instance. Within their own kebele it is voluntary but outside there needs to be an incentive system. Certainly for women it is difficult to move so there needs to be a certain justification.*
- The tools are very important and they need to use every resource we have. As government there is not really budget but maybe they can work through the cooperatives who can allocate money. We explained that the project is limited in time and budget and that the sustainability should be integrated as soon as possible so that there exists a system that is self-reliant. Normally people will be ready to pay for a champion to train (through the coop or another group) and pay for the materials.
- One lady said she would tell in her office what she had experienced today. Linda added that the training on the tools for instance can be integrated in the existing trainings and departments. For the agriculture trainings for instance, many people are not always applying what they learn because there is no unity in the family. Through integrating it is not seen as an extra project and the costs are reduced. The champions they saw today can be invited for such trainings and their incentive can be financial but can also be access to another training or network; this has to be discussed with the champions themselves.

- One person said that champions need to train others for free since they received this training. *On this point we could not agree since the work of the champions (outside their own kebele) needs to be valued and new people receiving this training, need to show that they appreciate this training. We cannot expect champions who are busy framers to give away their time for free. The issues is how the existing trainings and structures can be optimally used to integrate this methodology.*
- That the project has to provide the incentive for the champions when they go to other woredas and they will accompany the champions who go and support them. *We asked what the added value of the government would be when they accompany the champions. The government has limited training and they are experts and not decision-makers. If the budget is provided for SNV then it is not difficult for the experts to support the champions. So if we fund the first seeds, then the government can support and organise logistics and so on, this is what we assume but we need to verify. But at one point SNV is not here anymore. After the first seed in this project, it should go over to another organisation. It can also be a private sector.*
- Yaddecha explained that he hopes that the champions can be used to train more people and the union will help since they have the mandate. They will use the tools for what they can. Actually the members have everything but they lack the skills to organise their live and this methodology will solve this issue. The union will allocate budget for it and use the methodology it appropriately.

SNV will put the resources online on a blog. The champions will go to other woredas in two times (explanation about the woreda upscaling process and way forward).

Day III

Challenge Action Tree (CAT) & Change Leadership Map -continuation

- One NMC had arrived by 8:30
- By 9:00 there were 5 OMC and 6 NMC, 1 OWC and 1 NWC
- By 9:15 there were 7 OMC and 9 NMC, 4 OWC and 2 NWC
- By 10:10 there were 8 OMC and 9 NMC, 8 OWC and 5 NWC

The two original men champions who were not present those 3 days, had not been active at all. It means we have 16 active original champions in total.

Muluken was very late, which was a problem for the facilitation since we were too few.

At the start people continued working on their individual and kebele CLM in order to:

- Get the idea of continuous sharing from 2nd to 3rd to ... tier
- Refine the drawings as some symbols were not clear and very similar

This took some time.

We found out that an original man champion stopped renting out his land, bought a new piece of land in town and increased his production. Other men new champions reflected that the situation at home had improved a lot through better communicating and mutual understanding.

We recorded the numbers of direct and indirect sharing (past and plan). They need to put the total on the map, it provoked a lot of discussion on the totals and way of sharing. In the group of Ismael it seemed the men were very dominant. Extra effort was needed to address the power relationships and dynamic in the group and get the men to listen more to the women. The totals were also done in a pictorial way and it would be followed up later on if the kebeles were using both numeric systems. In the upscaling also the 1-5 idea should not be pursued per se, the CLM shows the direction. The consultant suggested that the 1-5 idea should become 1-5-3-3-3... to emphasise the idea of the chain. And the first tier itself should be based on the CLM. This may include the groups of 5 – those do seem quite strong and good where they have been formed voluntarily as a good way for young men particularly to avoid peer pressure and find constructive ways to spend time with friends. But should be taken further to go deeper on things they want change.

CHALLENGE ACTION TREE

We took one man from each kebele group whose drawings were very good, to introduce them to the CAT, outside on the terrace. First they discussed about the possible issues like conflict at the household, lack of trust at the cooperative and chat consumption. Daniel, Linda and Leul facilitated the Challenge Action Tree (CAT) with those selected individuals from each kebele. Accordingly, there were five people in the group (three OMCs and two NMCs) the CAT was introduced as something that resembles the HFT. They were asked to think about an issue that they have not been able to solve using the HFT and one that they think is also a challenge to others in the community. Three challenges were proposed to be used in facilitating the CAT.

- **Addiction (Khat, Drinks):** Gemedo and Adillo proposed this as one challenge that still needs to be resolved and one that they think others in the community are also challenged with. Gemedo further explained that although he had indeed reduced drinking, sometimes he is carried away by peer pressure and he still wants to solve this. Adillo also confirmed that the addiction to khat is one of the most pervasive challenges in the community.
- **Challenges in Sharing:** A new male champion (Mohammed) from *Dodicha* (*The kebele from which Gutema and Bune came from and the one where we had two women champion drop outs*) proposed resistance from the community as one challenge that needs to be solved.
- **Lack of Trust between the Cooperative Leadership and Members of the cooperative:** Samuel and Mr Getu (a NMC) proposed the mistrust that exists between the leadership of the cooperative and its members as one challenge that needed to be solved. They said this negatively affects the performance of the cooperative.

The group was asked what the first step of the HFT is for which they replied 'trunk'. In CAT, the trunk represents the 'issue' to be solved. The nature of the vision to be drawn at the top of the trunk was explained. The vision should be something that is completely distinct from the challenge meaning the vision should not remind us of the challenge or the issue to be solved but rather be very positive and should concentrate on the bright sides. It should be about the benefits that would ensue after the issue is resolved (challenge solved) to keep a positive atmosphere.

The participants copied the trunk on to their notebooks and were asked to draw the visions for the problems they identified. The ones (Gemedo and Adilo) who have identified addiction as a problem drew pictures in the red vision circle that show happy people with savings. Those who identified mistrust between the management and members of the cooperative drew pictures that show both parties working together and collaborating for success. This took us until the morning tea break.

The second step of the CAT is the roots. The roots are the contributing causes for the issue (problem) that is to be tackled. It was explained that there is no specification to the number of roots of the CAT as there might be so many causes (direct and indirect) to a single problem. However, it is generally recommended not to have more than 6 roots at a time. This is for ease of follow up and for identifying the corresponding solutions easily. The participants were encouraged to brainstorm all the possible causes for the problem they identified and then to logically group the causes in to two or three so that they can be drawn as roots. For instance three roots were proposed by the consultant for the addiction and mistrust challenges. For the addiction the roots were either own (personal) drawn on the left outer root, family related (wives and children) drawn on the right outer root and causes that can actually be attributed to both drawn in the middle root. For those drawing a CAT for the lack of trust between the management and members of cooperatives the three roots would be one for the causes that are on the side of the members, one on the outer for the causes on the side of the management and one in the middle for the causes that both the management and members have contributed for.

Mohammed (one of the NMC) from *dodicha* was asked to choose if he would like to work on the 'sharing' problem or if he wished to join either of the 'addiction' or 'mistrust' groups. He chose to join Gemedo and Adilo and draw a CAT for addiction problems. The participants drew 3-4 causes under each root. The group who wanted to draw a CAT for the lack of trust between management and members of coops drew for instance drew on the side of the management prioritizing personal benefits at the cost of benefits for the cooperative and the lack of discussion habits even among the committee members of the management. Gemedo's group drew conflicts in the household as one contributing factor for addiction (particularly drinks), wives deciding things by themselves, and peer pressure as some of the contributing causes.

The third steps are the branches of the tree which represent solutions. For every cause identified, there must be one corresponding solution on the branches. The branches are drawn in parallel with the roots. The fourth step is the context that surrounds the issue (problem) while the fifth and the sixth steps are similar with HFT i.e. green fruits (actions) for each solution identified and ripened

red fruits for every action practiced. Time was not sufficient for the participants to draw everything so things were a bit rushed especially towards lunch time. Before we break for lunch an interactive facilitation of the steps of the CAT (progressive and separate from one another) was done with the champions. All the steps of the CAT were drawn on flipchart and on the notebooks so that they were ready to be shared with the rest of the men champions in the afternoon.

After lunch, the champions who participated in the CAT processes shared the tool with other men champions (original and new). We had five people who were involved in the morning CAT process and ten other men champions thus making a ratio of 1:2 i.e. 1 champion shares with other two champions. The champions were encouraged to sit with someone who is outside their kebele to foster cross learning. One of the challenges we faced was champions focusing on explaining the specific problem they drew rather than the steps and the nature of the tool. They were encouraged to make sure they share the steps and present the problem they drew CAT for as an example. Those who did not participate in the CAT in the morning copied the steps on to their notebooks while being shared.

For the ones who had done with their kebele CLMs, we asked them to think about their green fruits for the future on the HFT: 2 on the roots, 2 on the branches and 2 on the trunk. There was a difference in pace in the different groups and some champions seemed bored. Others were asked to continue in their vision journey.

What needs to be reinforced and followed-up in the kebeles is the idea of continuity of the tools, the vision journey, the participation of women and the number system (the women had forgotten about it).

In the afternoon, the men joined the other men champions who had been doing a new tool. They shared it to the men who were here in the morning for the kebele upscaling plan. The plan was that the women stayed in the current room and did their next VJ or MLVC and fed the fruits from their HFT in those plans. But in the end they did a HFT song because there was a lot of 'musical vibe' – see video - and we wanted to make use if this momentum. There prepared the song in three groups as the women did not want to stay in their kebele. Every group had part of the steps.

After tea break the women the intention was that the men would share the CAT with the women but there was not enough time. We ended with the HFT song of the women (DSA was given during the break). We ended at 16:20. We forgot to give their kebele maps with them. They have to go to the kebele as soon as possible. After everybody left, there was debriefing with the staff.

Day IV

Team Meeting

For each kebele, there has to be a target which needs to be continually updated. Before entering into discussion, Meseret and Shimelis and Muluken and Daniel, reflected pairwise on: what is going well when the go to the kebele and what are the challenges?

*This is part of the methodology: before going into discussion, there needs to be a pairwise exchange and/or an individual reflection.

Pretty soon there should be a community soulmate vision (gender disaggregated) and take the kebele plans and make them visible, in a place where there is no fee (church, mosque, school ...), local snacks or the possibility to go home for lunch. It is always good to have some idea for what be fun to do with the children – eg older children can be given things to draw what they want to be when they grow up. For younger children rattles can be made out of empty water bottles and rolled on the floor. But it is important that children are occupied and not disturbing their mothers, also that older children (usually girls) are able to do something constructive, not taken out of school and just sitting looking after younger siblings.

Feedback on what they see happening at the level of the champions - **likes**:

- Change
- Confidence
- Acceptance in community
- Inclusive: champions can train everybody with different background
- Labour division
- Start saving

- Use time effectively (in terms of work) -> we need to look more properly at the HFT since there is not so much about sharing household chores and things around assets (relate the changes to indicators)
- Proper use of money: it goes to saving and investments
- Expectation of per diem has diminished
- Planning on how to reach their vision
- Involvement of the government and the union
- Equality of decision-making between wife and husband (learnt from the discussion for the champions the past days)

We should also avoid preaching about hard working and using the money properly. We need to understand the complexity and try address the questions appropriately without thinking that we know it better. We also need to know our own issues and connect to the farmers to learn from them. It is not about reducing friends or networks, but about using those networks in a constructive way to that they are strengthened around new more productive visions and activities.

Challenges:

- It takes a long time to stop addiction, plans should be adjusted to be realistic and supportive
- The champions want follow-up: eg staff to visit them during their training meetings. Our role is to link more with gender mainstreaming in value chain, on domestic violence (if there are high reports on that). We progressive withdraw and just support demands that are coming up. And we oversee the processes to ensure that the inclusion is maintained and power relations do not emerge. The new champions also want to be sure that they are being taught by the original champions correctly (on the content). We need to challenge this idea also a bit since it is not about the perfect steps but also about the sharing and changes. Next to that it is also the dominance of some champions that plays a role in teaching others, it has to be on an equal basis. Our role is helping them to facilitate larger participatory meetings and set up activity based groups (sharing on an informal basis). We should be able to walk out of the room for 30 minutes while they continue sharing. Our role is documentation and feeding back challenges on value chain and things that are not resolved. The people themselves are in the driving seat.
- People were complaining that SNV was monitoring too much the past months. We should do it less regularly, also more in group and really supporting them in the development of their plans (not ticking off). We also look on how the savings will help them realizing their plans.
- The notebook have been an issue when upscaling: we need to be firm and support the champions on it. Normally no notebooks are given after the first set of champions in order to be able to upscale. For the next woreda, only for the first set of champions will get a notebook (a cheap, small one, without lines, 10-15 ETB) and we will discuss this issue from the start. The arguments for not handing out notebooks after the first batch of 20 champions is a mix of the following:
 - o The opportunity cost for the project is too high. If they do the mathematics of how much it would cost, they can understand that the project will not reach its goal of 1000's
 - o It jeopardizes the sustainability, how will it spread after the project?
 - o If people can spend money on chat or scarfs, why should they not be able to buy a notebook?
 - o The benefit of the training in itself. Once people have the plan, it is more likely they will buy their own notebook.
- Getting the green pens is a challenge: It is suggested that green fruits could be represented by very thick circle lines in pencil. Then marked red or blue if they have ripened or perished.
- Integrating the sharing during the peak agricultural season was difficult. People should be able at least to continue working on their plans. And the breaks should be clear: for instance one month. We cannot put people's livelihoods at risk. But you can always break up a maximum of time and continue after that.
- Updating on the plans is not really happening. We can integrate the updating at the beginning of a meeting for instance after which they share their progress in a pairwise. Experience shows that the people who were really successful in other places had been doing the tracking very systematically. We can integrate this systematically every two weeks (VSLA?). After the pairwise they feed back through pyramid sharing which we can then feedback in our reporting.

Challenges related to SNV:

- High expectation for support on credit/loans for inputs: can a MLVC (LMC) reduce the request for credit? The calendar can be used as a basis for their business plans for an MFI (link IFAD for a next project): this requires work with the MFI as with the farmers on the LMC with feeding in results from the CAT and HFT. One of the reasons why people are wasting money on exuberant interest rates is because they don't plan well. The champions have to make a new plan of the LMC.

Action plan:

- The champions can share the tools with the coop leaders first and get a buy in. This is an entry point to reach the others. The V, VJ and HFT should be part of good agriculture practice because they can plan for labour and for inputs and so on. The coops are dormant because the members are sleeping. If the members have their own plans, then they take over the management.
- **Upscaling:** we also need to look at the linkages of women to their natal family in other kebeles and woredas – they can go back to their kebele and they share with their family.
- **Follow-up.** We will do it per kebele. We need to think carefully about the facilitation process, and how many hours, linking to FFS, VSLA, and coops. The intention is also that the champions take over the facilitation themselves. Our role is to give them a space during the meetings in VSLA and FFS for instance so that they can speak out.
- The basis of the methodology is the sharing. In the kebele of Bilcha there are no real new 'trained' champions. Looking at it from the 1-5-3-3 perspective was not the intention and limits the power of the methodology. Next to that the sharing should be valued as well. Bilcha and Meles were being perceived by the VSLA as not competent to share, so people wouldn't listen. The role of the staff is to make sure that they are respected and to endorse them as champions. Bilcha is the box keeper now at the VSLA, so there has been improvement. As staff we reinforce the people who are serious, in this way we can change the attitude of the whole community to see those people differently.
- If we look at the VSLA (about 30 members, 1 per kebele, meeting every two weeks of 1 hour on saving and loans). We explore the possibility of continuing the meeting for 1-2 more hours where VSLA members can be trained by the champions (also original ones) and by anybody with whom the tools have been shared. There is no refreshment. Pencils can be handed out but need to be returned. They VSLA members start with vision on a piece of paper. The next time they have to bring their own piece of paper or notebook. The idea is that as soon as they do the vision, they share that immediately. At the end they can do a song. When other tools are introduced, we can do one step at the time, for instance the roots of the CAT. People go home and share and the next meeting they do the roots and so on.
- For the next step, at every kebele we have a big meeting, show the CLM, where the champions share and show the vision to attract others (link it to the soulmate visioning?). Things have become too serious about the tools, the tools are a means to an end. Not anybody has to have a perfect HFT or other tool. We need to get/trigger that feeling of enthusiasm, motivation, inspiration that things can be better. The government is not necessary for the process, however the need to support it. This can be done like we did before at the end of workshops where champions share. Let's think about the role the government plays best in this process, at no time they can dominate.
- A slight refresher and copying of all the steps of the tools should be done before the champions go to other woredas for upscaling. This should not be done by giving them a photocopy attention needs to be given to the gaps on the tools so that the starting point is consistent.

- [END] -