

# How to do

## Household methodologies

Gender, targeting and social inclusion



**How To Do Notes** are prepared by the IFAD **Policy and Technical Advisory Division** and provide practical suggestions and guidelines to country programme managers, project design teams and implementing partners to help them design and implement programmes and projects.

They present technical and practical aspects of specific approaches, methodologies, models and project components that have been tested and can be recommended for implementation and scaling up. The notes include best practices and case studies that can be used as models in their particular thematic areas.

**How To Do Notes** provide particular tools based on best practices collected at the field level. They guide teams on how to implement specific recommendations of IFAD's operational policies, standard project requirements and financing tools.

The **How To Do Notes** are "living" documents and will be updated periodically based on new experiences and feedback. If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact the originator.

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## Abbreviations and acronyms

CSO	civil society organization
GALS	Gender Action Learning System
HHM	household methodologies
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
NGO	non-governmental organization
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

## Introduction

IFAD is one of the leading development agencies innovating with household methodologies (HHMs) to enable more poor households to be reached and to improve intra-household gender relations. The purpose of such methodologies is to empower members of households to realize their development potential and create stronger, more resilient and sustainable smallholder farming and rural livelihood systems.

The HHMs toolkit focuses on household methodologies: what they are and how they work. The toolkit has three parts.

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <b>Teaser</b>         | provides an overview of HHMs – what they are and how they work – and demonstrates their relevance in different types of development interventions.   |
| <b>How To Do Note</b> | provides a step-by-step guide on how to implement HHMs. It describes activities at the household level, different approaches for implementing HHMs, service providers and the facilitator system, and the role of the community and the wider environment. The main points to consider when incorporating HHMs in project design and implementation are noted. |
| <b>Case studies</b>   | illustrate the kinds of interventions (by IFAD and other development agencies) that have used HHMs effectively, highlighting the way each methodology has worked in a particular context. Links are provided to resources and online materials.  |

## Main features of household methodologies

There are several types of HHMs, which vary greatly in terms of type, cost and duration of the intervention required to support their implementation. Nevertheless, they share three main areas of engagement: the community and the wider environment, the service provider and the facilitator system, and the household (Figure 1).

The four steps in the HHM process of household visioning, planning, action and review are described in the section **Household methodologies at the household level**. There are two principal approaches to delivering HHMs: through group-based implementation or through individual household mentoring by trained mentors. The approach used has implications for the service providers and the facilitator system.

Although the focus of HHMs is to stimulate change at the household level, it is also necessary to engage at the community level and beyond. The final section of this note discusses HHMs in the context of project design and implementation.

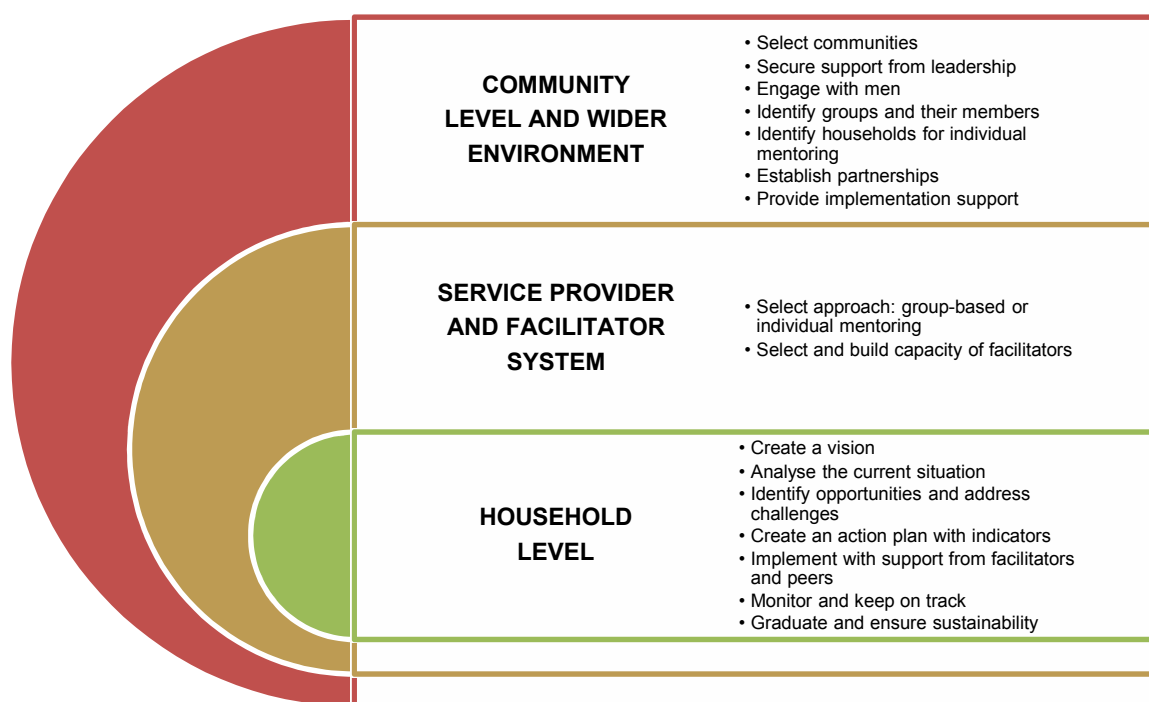


Figure 1: Key elements of household methodologies

## Principles of household methodologies

The various methodologies share four basic principles:

- **Focus on people.** Household strategies are designed by and for household members who define whom they want to be and what they want to do. They define and implement their own strategies for developing and improving their livelihoods, based on their goals, strengths, opportunities and assets.
- **Empowerment.** The cornerstone of the HHM empowerment process is strengthening the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes. This can be achieved by building on a mutual understanding of different roles and responsibilities.
- **Self-generated solutions.** Willingness to change is generated by household members themselves (women and men of all ages) by placing them in the driver's seat of the development process. They take responsibility for the changes they want to see and work closely with one another, friends and the community to make them happen.
- **Equal opportunities.** Women and men, as well as youth, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, have an equal voice in setting the household vision and equal access to development opportunities, productive assets, decision-making and benefits. Some HHMs explicitly address gender relations with a "gender justice" lens, making the promotion of gender equality an essential goal of any type of intervention. In others, gender inequalities emerge as a factor limiting the achievement of household goals and the ability of households to better use the productive resources available to them, and participants commit to addressing gender issues as their own choice.

## Household methodologies at the household level

This section sets out the basic steps in the HHM process at the household level.

All household members (women and men, youth, the elderly and children) should be involved in the HHMs process to ensure that the collective vision reflects their different interests and priorities, and identifies their roles in implementing the action plan.

The visioning and planning activities need to be adapted to different household structures (polygamous, single-parent, nuclear family, child-headed) and pay attention to potential sources of conflict and inequalities. The household structure has implications for the ability to develop social and marketing networks, to have access to and control over productive resources – such as land and equipment – and to acquire different types of knowledge. If adults are illiterate, older children may take on the responsibility of keeping records.

The four steps in Figure 2 broadly hold true for the different types of HHMs. Although the sequence may vary, it is helpful to see the vision as the mechanism for providing the inspiration, and the situational analysis as the key to unlocking household potential. The methodology can be adapted based on the needs of a project, the household composition and the socio-cultural context.

### Household structures

Household structures vary widely. Some follow the nuclear model, with a mother, a father and children, while others are headed by a single adult. Child-headed households are common in some areas, largely as a result of AIDS-related deaths. Polygamy, and the less common polyandry, can result in a number of autonomous or semi-autonomous households.

The extended family, in many contexts, exerts a significant influence over household dynamics, including issues of property inheritance. It can be the source of conflict and of many of the inequalities experienced at the household level.



**Figure 2: Steps in the household methodology process at the household level**

The four steps are described below, with a series of leading questions to guide the activities at each stage.

## Step 1: Creating a household vision

### Step 1.1: Create a vision

**Question 1: Where would our household like to be in two to five years' time?** What would we like to have, do and pursue?

This exercise provides a platform for people to use their imagination in considering a better life than the one they live at present and to identify the changes that they need to undergo in order to get to their desired life (Figure 3). Household members need to understand one another's different aspirations, negotiate for common goals, respect their differences and identify how each household member will contribute to the overall vision.



Figure 3: Household vision (Mayoux, L)

Visions should be attainable for a given household and have a realistic time frame. They typically include asset ownership and indicators reflecting the quality of life and well-being, such as education, family size, the degree of drudgery and health. Visions may be written or drawn on flipchart paper or in a notebook. Pictorial visioning is a more inclusive process, especially for less literate people, and ensures that ideas are kept simple and concrete.

#### Tools for visioning

- Gender Action Learning System (GALS) vision journey
- Family life model
- Household mentoring



## Step 1.2: Analyse the current household situation

**Question 2: *Where are we now?*** What is the household's current situation with respect to the objectives identified in the vision, the asset base, sharing of workloads and income, power relations, livelihood strategies, food security, nutrition and general well-being?

**Question 3: *Why are we here?*** This analysis is crucial since it enables household members to examine why and how the household has arrived at its current situation. It can give them a sense of success in their life and a base to build upon for moving forward. It can also help them to understand why they might be stuck in certain conditions. In analysing the current situation, attention needs to be paid to identifying gender-based inequalities and their impacts, and the capacity of households to adapt.

### Tools for situational analysis

- Gender analysis of workloads: seasonal calendar, daily activities, gender division of labour and use of tools and equipment
- Gender analysis of access to and control over resources and benefits/ expenditure
- Power relations and decision-making processes
- Food security and nutrition: access to and consumption of food
- Climate change: resilience, risk assessment and mitigation measures

## Step 2: Preparing an action plan

### Step 2.1: Identify the opportunities and address challenges

**Question 4: *What opportunities are available that may help to achieve the household vision?*** How can they be accessed?

**Question 5: *What are the challenges, risks and assumptions that may hinder the achievement of the vision?*** How likely are they to happen? How can they be minimized?

Opportunities can be external – available in the community, supported by service providers or the private sector – or internal, directly under the control of household members and, therefore, accessed relatively easily. Similarly, challenges can be external or internal; the latter are often the most difficult to address.

**Examples of opportunities and challenges**

	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Internal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Knowledge and skills of household members</li> <li>▪ Savings</li> <li>▪ Income-generating activity</li> <li>▪ Household assets (land, livestock, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Time spent fetching water or fuelwood</li> <li>▪ General disagreement among household members</li> <li>▪ Mismanagement of household income</li> <li>▪ Apathy by some household members</li> </ul>
<b>External</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adult literacy classes</li> <li>▪ Health services</li> <li>▪ Natural resources</li> <li>▪ Market opportunities</li> <li>▪ New infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Accessible and affordable financial services</li> <li>▪ Supportive laws and policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Soil erosion, erratic weather events</li> <li>▪ Outbreak of pests and diseases</li> <li>▪ Conflicts</li> <li>▪ Lack of political goodwill</li> </ul>

**Step 2.2: Prepare an action plan for the first year**

**Question 6: What would our household like to achieve in the coming year, as the first step towards our vision?** What livelihoods or enterprises should we develop? Where are the quick wins to boost self-confidence? At this point, it is necessary to identify concrete and time-bound steps to achieve a target for the first year, as progress towards the overall vision. The steps and actions should be based on a realistic appraisal of opportunities – including project-related activities – and challenges.

**Question 7: What additional skills and resources do members of our household need to successfully take these steps?** Identify additional skills and resources that may be needed (e.g. financial, business management, technical, additional land, social capital) and how they may be sourced.

**Tools for moving from livelihoods analysis to action**

- Market mapping
- Enterprise gross margin analysis
- Pairwise ranking

### Step 3: Implementing the action plan and monitoring progress

#### Step 3.1: Implement the action plan

Household members collaborate and work towards the target for the year with their different and complementary roles and responsibilities clearly identified. Roles may vary over time and among households. Initial progress can be boosted by making the most of existing household assets, by focusing on near-nil investments (low-cost, no-cost) and quick wins, and by involving households in project-supported activities. Often, the presence of a common vision motivates households but progress may be dampened if the benefits from economic development and behaviour change take time to materialize. In this case, facilitator and peer support can be crucial in maintaining household morale. Poorer and more vulnerable households may require additional support to achieve their action plan.

#### Step 3.2: Monitor implementation progress and keep on track

**Question 8: Is our household progressing satisfactorily towards our vision and following our action plan? Are we achieving our targets?** Has anything taken us off track? How are things changing within the household, including access to resources, use of benefits and division of labour? Are all household members satisfied with the progress? Do we need to revise the actions and targets?

Monitoring progress towards the vision is necessary to maintain momentum among household members and to keep activities on track. Special attention needs to be paid to ensuring that gender-related changes remain on the agenda, particularly with regard to decision-making processes in the household, workload distribution and using or sharing the benefits generated by livelihood activities. Household members need to hold regular meetings to review and reflect on progress. Openness is critical to understanding and analysing why things have gone well or poorly so that the household can keep improving. Meetings may also be held with other households undergoing the same process, together with facilitators and peer supporters. This helps households to learn from one another and boosts each other's morale.

An effective, rigorous – but not onerous – monitoring and reporting system enables households, the community and the implementing or funding agencies to identify the changes that are being experienced and the pace of those changes. The reporting may be based on indicators that households have identified, which provide useful insights into “what matters” at the household level. Other indicators may be based on data gathered during household profiling and the situational analysis. Externally generated indicators may also be necessary to meet corporate reporting requirements, often placing greater emphasis on quantitative aspects of change. The link between internal and external indicators is crucial to ensure that the project monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system captures relevant changes.

#### Step 3.3: Update the vision and action plan

**Question 9: Do the vision or the targets need to be revised? Are there new opportunities to take advantage of or new challenges to overcome? Are there any skills that we need to develop further as a household?**

The visioning and household action planning activities are iterative. Once specific targets have been reached, a new action plan is developed and can incorporate any new opportunities and challenges that have arisen. If there are persistent challenges, further analysis may be required in order to identify better strategies. It may also be necessary to revise the vision if changes in circumstances, including household composition, make the original goals unattainable or unrealistic.

## Step 4: Graduating and sustaining the use of HHMs

### Step 4.1: Graduate

It typically takes between one and three years for a household to move significantly towards realizing its initial vision. Repeating the initial household situational analysis of gender roles and relations, nutrition and livelihood vulnerability can give people a sense of their achievement and help households recognize when they are ready to graduate.

It is possible to consider household graduation when the following have been achieved:

- household members have the self-confidence, skills and motivation to continue the process of vision setting, planning, implementation and review with minimal external support
- household dynamics have progressed with regard to gender and inclusion through an intense period of transformation
- the household is integrated into mainstream development activities and group membership, where relevant.

However, graduation does not mean that households abandon the visioning, action planning and other HHM processes but rather understand that the methodology has become embedded within the household planning cycle.

#### Tools for graduation

- GALS achievement journey
- Gender situational analysis

### Step 4.2: Sustain the use of HHMs

Continued motivation to engage in the transformation process and sustain the impacts comes from the internal drive of household members, supported by peers and facilitators. If the HHMs have been implemented through groups, continued support is provided through group members. In the case of individual mentoring, sustainability is enhanced when those households form clusters or join ongoing groups, with occasional visits from their mentors.

### Step 4.3: Scaling up

Households that have experienced the benefits of HHMs are an important resource in the scaling-up agenda. Many household members share the methodologies with others and become peer trainers. They can also participate in HHM awareness-raising and advocacy events.

Once a critical mass of households begins to achieve their goals or visions, positive changes are often triggered in the wider community. When other households or group members witness the benefits experienced by participating households, they also aspire to reap such benefits. And as participating households negotiate with organizations to meet their individual goals, these organizations are spurred to adopt gender-equitable approaches.

When HHMs have been implemented through mainstream services, such as agricultural extension or community development, they can be fully integrated into these services and be scaled up at regional and national levels.

### **Scaling up – examples of success**

The success of individual household mentoring under the District Livelihoods Support Programme as a mechanism for social inclusion has been widely recognized in Uganda. The Ministry of Local Government is planning to introduce household mentoring in district services and the government urged IFAD to give greater priority to this approach in the country portfolio. The recent Country Strategic Opportunities Paper (2013) includes the scaling up of HHMs across IFAD-supported programmes as one of its strategic objectives.

In Malawi, household mentoring has already been replicated by the African Development Bank and there is a commitment to mainstream the methodology in the curriculum for training community development workers.

IFAD staff participation in south-south learning events has resulted in the spontaneous adoption of the GALS methodology in ongoing IFAD-supported projects in Sierra Leone and in the design of new projects in Ghana, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Mozambique.

## **Implementing household methodologies through groups**

HHMs may be implemented through a wide variety of groups. The group acts as the entry point for reaching individual households with the visioning and action planning tools. Group members learn the basic skills in visioning and planning and then replicate the process at home, with the support of the group facilitator and peers, if necessary. Peer sharing triggers a multiplier effect among a wider audience and creates a supportive environment for behaviour change.

The group-based approach can also be used to develop a group vision and action plan; this can advance the interests of the group as a whole and also help members realize their individual household visions. Embedding HHMs in existing local groups can make the process more sustainable and provides an opportunity to deliver HHMs at scale.

### Group-based methodologies in practice

The most complete group-based HHM is **GALS**, which was piloted in western Uganda by Oxfam Novib in 2009, cofinanced with a small IFAD grant. Two years later, Oxfam Novib took it to scale through civil society organizations (CSOs) in Nigeria, Rwanda and Uganda, with cofinancing from a large IFAD grant. A critical mass of expertise and interest in GALS has been built up among staff from CSOs, IFAD-supported projects and implementing partners through a range of south-south and triangular cooperation events. GALS has been included in an ongoing IFAD-supported project in Sierra Leone and in the design of new projects in Ghana, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Mozambique.

GALS makes extensive use of visual tools that can be adapted to local contexts. The methodology has a strong gender-justice focus and activities are supported by peer learning structures. In Uganda, GALS has focused on producers' organizations and value chain development. In Nigeria, GALS has been integrated into financial services, group strengthening and business development activities under the IFAD-funded Rural Finance Institution-Building Programme. In Sierra Leone, GALS has been included in the IFAD-funded Rehabilitation and Community-Based Poverty Reduction Project, which focuses on farmers' associations producing rice in inland valley swamps. In Rwanda, GALS has been used in the Kirehe Community-Based Watershed Management Project for supporting value chain development.

The **Transformative Household Methodology** was originally developed in Ethiopia by staff of Sida's Amhara Rural Development Programme. The participatory tools (gender analysis of livelihoods and well-being) have been adapted by Send a Cow Ethiopia for use at the household level. It has also been continued in another Sida-funded programme, the HARVEST Gender Responsive Livelihood Diversifications for Vulnerable People in Ethiopia.

The United States Agency for International Development's Community Connector Project in Uganda uses the **Family Life Model** to stimulate households and communities to meet their aspirations in the context of food and nutrition security and socio-economic well-being.

### Service providers and facilitators

Suitable service providers for this approach include government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), CSOs and others who may already be associated with providing technical support and capacity-building to a specific group. They are responsible for selecting and training the facilitators who, in turn, train group members. Group facilitators usually develop a network of community-based peer facilitators who are selected from among the group members. The peer facilitators support fellow group members and train others.

### Conducting HHMs at the group level

The main features of this approach are as follows:

- With the guidance of a group facilitator, group members learn how to create a vision and prepare an action plan (steps 1 and 2 in the section **Household methodologies at the household level**).
- Wherever possible, it is better to train couples to ensure that the methodology is fully understood by both husband and wife/co-wives. This promotes cooperation and avoids mistrust or misinterpretation.
- Once group members (including their spouses) have mastered the first steps, they then replicate the visioning exercise and action planning at home. (This process is more manageable when each step is divided into discrete activities and the replication from the group to the household proceeds one activity at a time).

- A network of peer facilitators is developed from the group to support and encourage individual members or couples in implementing their plan – especially if they are facing challenging behavioural issues (step 3).
- Households monitor their own progress (step 3).
- Households share their progress and challenges in group meetings, which becomes a learning, sharing and monitoring platform (step 3).
- The group facilitator can help households recognize when they are ready to graduate from requiring external support for implementing HHMs (step 4).
- The peer facilitators – and the group as a whole – need to engage in awareness-raising and advocacy in order to reach new households.

#### **Types of groups suitable for HHMs**

- Cooperatives, producer organizations, income-generating groups
- Village savings and lending associations
- Natural resource management groups, water users' associations
- Community groups, community listeners' clubs, community conversation groups
- Youth groups
- Adult literacy classes
- Farmer field schools, common interest groups

#### **Developing a group vision and action plan**

The visioning and action planning tools can also be used for group development and business planning. The preparation of a group vision not only advances the interests of the group but also helps individual members move towards achieving their vision. Indeed, households may require changes at the group level in order to move forward on their own activities – for example, by establishing links with financial services, marketing associations or farmer field schools.

Using HHM tools at the group level can also provide the impetus to make groups more inclusive and improve their capacity to strengthen the livelihoods of their members. They can also be used as a basis for discussions with stakeholders in value chains or for negotiating better terms with service providers.

Points to remember when using HHM tools at the group level include the following:

- The collective group vision and activities should be prepared in a participatory manner to ensure that they reflect the needs and priorities of members who traditionally have less voice. This helps the group to avoid having a vision that captures the needs and priorities of the elite members only.
- Group visions may also be created by using inputs from individual members' household visions and action plans.
- Group action plans should identify and address any gender-based constraints which may hamper the achievement of their wider goals and their ability to access group services.
- Gender-equitable representation in group leadership structures should be promoted and supported by training women in public speaking and effectiveness in public office. Unequal power relations between women and men may result in failures that can affect the whole group and the wider community.

**Review of strengths and challenges of delivering HHMs through groups**

Strengths	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Easy entry point into the community. Working with an existing group ensures broad acceptance of the methodology and supports change.</li> <li>▪ Many households go through almost similar experiences of transformation at the same time, so it is easy for group members to support and encourage one another. This builds up a critical mass to address negative cultural norms at the community level.</li> <li>▪ The presence of community-based peer facilitators makes the process more sustainable and reduces reliance on external support.</li> <li>▪ The peer facilitator system can help scale up HHMs in their own community and elsewhere.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It is difficult to reach more vulnerable households, which typically do not belong to groups.</li> <li>▪ There may be a loss in the rigor of the methodology between the facilitator, peer facilitator and individual households. This may make the process less inclusive at the household level. For example, the vision may represent the aspirations of a few more dominant household members, excluding the voiceless members.</li> <li>▪ A group may have inertia, which prevents or inhibits the process of transformative behaviour change among members.</li> </ul>

## Implementing household methodologies through individual household mentoring

Individual household mentoring is a powerful vehicle to foster social inclusion by reaching out to poorer households which are beyond the reach of the mainstream project activities. Some of these households do not belong to farmers’ groups or participate in community meetings and, thus, their views are not reflected in planning activities. As a result of low levels of production, they do not benefit from agribusiness development initiatives or improved market access and they have no means to save or borrow. However, through individual household mentoring, it is possible to support these households to develop a vision and identify their own pathways out of poverty. The process starts with small achievable steps and progresses to linking these households with other development interventions.

### Individual household mentoring in practice

The individual household mentoring approach originated in the **Agricultural Support Programme** in Zambia funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). The approach has been adapted by IFAD-supported projects in Malawi and Uganda. In Zambia, the integrated household extension approach was used to promote food security through gender mainstreaming in entrepreneurship and agricultural development interventions.

In Malawi, with the support of the **Irrigation, Rural Livelihoods and Agricultural Development Project**, mentoring has been promoted by the Department of Agriculture Extension Services, under the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development, for addressing gender inequality, HIV and AIDS issues at the household level. Frontline extension staff are trained to take on the role of mentor.

In Uganda, the **District Livelihoods Support Programme** has used mentoring as a mechanism for social inclusion. District community development workers have trained and backstopped mentors selected from local communities, who then work with individual households.



## Service providers and facilitators

Suitable service providers for this approach include government (in particular, community development or agricultural extension), NGOs and CSOs which are engaged in community and social development initiatives. They are responsible for selecting and training the mentor facilitators who, in turn, mentor individual households. The mentors are usually selected from or located in the community. Female mentors may be required to work specifically with female-headed households, as it improves the freedom of expression.

## Conducting HHMs with individual households

The main features of this approach are as follows:

- The selection of the mentors – following clear criteria – is usually undertaken by the service provider together with the community in order to ensure their acceptability. Existing commitments and workload should be taken into account to ensure that they will not be overburdened by the mentoring. It is also important to ensure that there is a right balance between the number of households and mentors.
- The identification of households that could benefit from individual household mentoring is usually undertaken by the service provider in collaboration with community leaders and other community groups, using set selection criteria. The requirement is that the process be as transparent as possible to avoid stigmatizing some households in certain settings. Data on household types, poverty ranking and specific issues in the community can provide information to ensure a balanced selection process so that different types of households are included (for example, female-headed, child-headed, male-headed).
- During individual household visits, the mentor guides household members to use the visioning and analysis tools to identify their needs and priorities, and their achievements and sources of vulnerability (step 1). It is important that the needs and priorities of males and females in the household are taken into consideration in the household visioning so that they own the vision.
- When preparing the action plan (step 2), household members are encouraged to identify quick wins and near-nil investments. Household resources are mobilized to meet priority needs, such as strengthening food and nutrition security and improving household sanitation. Short-term achievements can motivate household members to undertake more challenging activities towards generating income (step 3).
- Households also access ongoing development activities which they did not benefit from before, such as literacy classes or health services.

### Selection criteria for households eligible for individual mentoring

- Willingness and capacity to respond to the mentoring process
- Few household assets
- Many dependants, including caring for orphans, the chronically ill, persons with disabilities and/or the elderly
- Headed by women or children
- Limited or no income-generating activities
- Access to land and/or other natural resources that are not being used productively
- Poor nutrition and shelter, malnourished children, and socially isolated from community and development activities
- Women and children are the main sources of family labour
- School dropouts (before completing primary school)

- Mentored households are encouraged to form clusters, if appropriate, and as part of their longer-term graduation process, to associate with existing farmers' groups, producers' associations and cooperatives (step 4).
- It must be emphasized from the outset that mentoring is about developing self-reliance rather than dependency and that the support is time-bound. This will ensure that the more vulnerable households do not become dependent on the mentors.

**Review of strengths and challenges of individual household mentoring**

Strengths	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The individual approach is ideal for engaging with vulnerable and excluded households.</li> <li>▪ Working with individual households creates a safe space to discuss difficult and sensitive issues and behaviours arising in a household.</li> <li>▪ Guidance and support are available through the mentor to tailor the approach to the specific needs of a household.</li> <li>▪ Households build up their confidence that they have capacity to improve their livelihoods.</li> <li>▪ Mentors gain status in the community.</li> <li>▪ Disadvantaged individuals are given priority in development initiatives.</li> </ul>	<p>From a mentored household's perspective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It may be difficult to step outside cultural norms (including gender-determined roles and responsibilities) that perpetuate inequalities, when only a few households are changing their behaviour.</li> <li>▪ Neighbours may be jealous if they see mentored households progressing and think they are benefitting from financial assistance.</li> <li>▪ The poorest households and those with members suffering from chronic illness may expect far more support, including emotional support, than is possible under the mentoring system.</li> </ul> <p>From a mentor's perspective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Households become dependent on their mentor and are reluctant to graduate.</li> <li>▪ It is difficult for the mentor to let go and move on to new households, which results in an unsustainable workload or a limited ability to scale up.</li> <li>▪ Mentors may suffer from volunteer fatigue, sometimes as a result of the high expectations of the households.</li> </ul>

## Household methodology service providers and facilitators

### Service providers

Service providers oversee the facilitator system, which is responsible for rolling out HHMs at group and household levels. They are involved with the selection and, if necessary, capacity-building of facilitators. The latter includes the training of trainers and the direct training of facilitators. Service providers give ongoing support to facilitators while they implement HHMs with groups and households.

Service providers should be selected on the basis of their commitment to and experience with pro-poor development initiatives, gender equality, transparency of decision-making and financial accountability. Their selection should take place early in the design process to enable them to contribute to the detailed design and implementation arrangements and to ensure appropriate budget allocation. The service providers may participate in the selection of communities where HHMs will be implemented and in the discussions with community leaders.

### HHM facilitators

Facilitators are key actors in the HHM process. They work in direct contact with households – individually or in groups – to support them throughout the change process, from defining household visions, through implementation and monitoring, to graduation.

Broadly speaking, there are three types of HHM facilitators, depending on the approach used for implementing HHM:

- **group facilitator**, who is the initial contact for group-based approaches
- **community-based peer facilitator**, who is a volunteer who emerges from the group as someone with the motivation and skills to support fellow group members in their change process and to share the process with new households
- **mentor facilitator**, who is selected and trained to undertake individual household mentoring.

### Skills and competences

Some of the key skills and competences that facilitators should already possess or be willing to develop include the following:

- the ability to work equitably with both male and female household members (including youth and people with disabilities) in a participatory and inclusive manner. In some contexts, both male and female facilitators are required to work with the men and the women in the household.
- empathy with the people they work with, and their hopes and challenges
- the recognition of each individual's strengths, right to be heard and the ability to grow and change, and the ability to encourage every person's full expression of ideas from their own perspective
- commitment to supporting an individual's change process
- willingness to learn, challenge and change their own mindset (regarding stereotypes and concepts) and behaviours, including attitudes towards gender inequality
- a positive and enquiring mind to ask appropriate questions to household members, especially to "tease out" gender relations, and to identify and propose appropriate ways forward
- good communication skills, including the ability to listen, build rapport, show respect for different opinions and address sensitive issues constructively
- ability to instil a sense of reality in action planning, in order to encourage people that change is possible, while managing their expectations
- ability to network and provide linkages to other services, such as health
- technical competence in thematic areas (for example, finance, natural resource management) when implementing HHMs in specific groups
- ability to set clear personal boundaries and provide feedback that focuses on observations rather than judgments.

### Capacity-building of facilitators

Facilitators should be adequately trained and supported to understand HHMs, the different tools and resources, and the gender issues to look out for at the household level. Before acting as a facilitator, facilitators must use the HHM tools in their own households in order to understand – and benefit from – the process so that they guide households and others based on their personal experience.

The following is required in order to develop the capacity of facilitators:

- Ample time should be given to training facilitators, including practical training in the field.
- During the first six months, facilitators should receive regular technical support from their service provider to ensure that they are on track.
- Regular (for example, biannual) review meetings should take place to provide an opportunity for facilitators to share their experiences. These meetings can be linked with refresher training and new approaches to address persistent challenges.
- A code of conduct for facilitators and participating households must be put in place. This sets out the nature of their relationship, promotes transparency and prevents misunderstandings and false expectations.

Field visits to see HHMs in action can play a vital role in developing a critical mass of expertise in field staff, mentors and supporting organizations. First-hand experience with and information from household members is essential in order to witness the empowerment of individuals, their new-found confidence and ability to express themselves, and their willingness to share their own stories regarding their transformative experiences.

### Frequency of meetings

The length and frequency of a facilitator's support cycle varies according to the type of HHM used. Under individual household mentoring, the mentors usually visit households once every two to four weeks, over an extended period of time (up to three years). The frequency of these visits may be reduced over time as the households become accustomed to the methodology and take on more responsibility. Group meetings are typically held either weekly, bimonthly or monthly. In addition to the records that the household keeps, mentors should keep a diary or notebook to record their observations and the advice given.

### Motivation and incentives

Incentives may be necessary to ensure that facilitators remain motivated and avoid volunteer fatigue, so that their services are sustainable. The incentive options may be grouped into four, as follows.

### Facilitator incentives

**Financial remuneration:** Facilitators may be paid through community contributions for providing a service. The rate of payment is based on the earnings facilitators have foregone during the time they spent on HHMs. If beneficiaries pay directly, it creates a pay-for-service culture and ensures that households value the service they receive. This payment could be introduced when households have progressed through the initial phase of HHM and appreciate the benefits or when the successful linkage to a project's technical components (for example, value chains, rural finance, agricultural extension) starts to pay off. Alternatively, payments may only be made when a facilitator works away from her/his home, to cover out-of-pocket expenses (honoraria) associated with travel and lodging.

**Equipment, tools and resources:** Examples include smartphones to access market, agronomic and weather information; tablets to connect with other facilitators through Skype (and other social networks) and to foster peer learning and information exchange; and bicycles to reach households or groups.

**Non-financial incentives:** These are in the form of uniforms, T-shirts, caps and bags; certificates of merit and recognition; exposure/ learning visits; and community recognition.

**Personal development:** Examples include developing skills in order to progress to higher levels of HHM engagement (for example, advocacy or policy engagement); social recognition as a trainer and leader; the ability to travel to other communities to train facilitators or facilitate group meetings; and linkages with appropriate institutions for further development.

### Challenges of the facilitator system

Some of the challenges of the system are as follows.

- Facilitators have inadequate skills, information or passion to provide effective support.
- Volunteer fatigue may set in if facilitators perform multiple tasks in the community that result in heavy workloads and conflicting schedules.
- The weaker or more vulnerable households may become dependent on facilitators.
- The community and the wider environment may not be supportive of – and may even be hostile to – the transformative process triggered by HHMs.
- Some facilitators may find it difficult to get households and groups to deal with difficult issues – i.e. moving from a blame focus, through dialogue, to solutions.
- Facilitators may misappropriate resources intended for participating households or may take credit for “helping” households to access these inputs, thereby making the households beholden to them.
- The higher status of facilitators may put a distance between themselves, households and groups.
- Facilitators may find it challenging to change from a top-down approach to a more participatory style, including having the flexibility to deal with changing priorities.
- In some instances, facilitators may find it difficult to get households and groups to take action in developing commitment and accountability measures.

## The community and the wider environment

Engagement at the community level is essential to secure the backing of local leadership, to create an environment supportive of positive behaviour change and opportunities for improved livelihoods and to expand learning and enrichment opportunities for all. Development of appropriate national partnerships is also critical.

### Initiatives at the community level

There are a number of innovative ways of engaging men in discussions about gender issues and behaviour change, including the **Men's Travelling Conference** in Kenya and the **Men's Campfire Conference** in Zambia. Specific measures to engage the **chiefs and traditional leaders** as powerful agents of change in the development of rural areas have been used in Zambia.

### Role of the community

The many roles of the community in supporting HHMs are as follows.

- **Supportive environment for change** at the household level, specifically:
  - Behaviour change: being receptive to (and not ridiculing) household members stepping outside traditional gender roles and norms for their benefit (for example, men taking on tasks traditionally performed by women or women having a greater say in the use of household income or assets)
  - Livelihoods improvement: respecting the economic advancement of households, including asset accumulation, and providing security and protection from theft.
- **Source of economic opportunities to fulfil household and group visions:** income generation, employment, land and other natural resources, labour, markets, technologies, information.
- **Access to complementary services:** for example, adult literacy classes, health services.
- **Operational:** an entry point for identifying groups and households for individual mentoring and for establishing a plan for implementation and rollout of HHMs.
- **Forum for sharing knowledge and experiences:** to inform the community about the process and the results and to encourage other households to join the HHM process.

### Selecting communities for implementing HHMs

Factors that influence the selection of communities for implementing HHMs include:

- potential linkages with other project activities
- ongoing activities of the service provider
- receptiveness of the community to change
- opportunity to build on existing networks and groups
- accessibility and proximity to other communities, which will influence the potential for experience sharing and scaling up
- or the opposite: rural isolation, lack of development activities and service providers.

If implementing the HHM is a new initiative, it is recommended to start with a pilot of a manageable size and complexity. Once the methodology has been adapted to and proven in the local context and preliminary results are available, the geographical scope of the project may be expanded.

### Securing support from community leadership

Traditional leaders (chiefs, village headmen and religious leaders), political leaders, local government officials and opinion leaders all play a vital role in community life. It is important to explain the HHM to them, the way it operates, the types of changes that may be expected and the benefits that will arise. Gaining their support will ensure smooth implementation. Traditional leaders are also important sources of information on local norms, constraints and opportunities. Conversely, they may disrupt the process if they feel their authority is being challenged or they disagree with the objectives of the methodology.

Where they still play a considerable role, traditional leaders are historically responsible for ensuring the well-being of the residents of their communities and are conferred as the legitimate political and symbolical power to activate important networks and customary mechanisms of reciprocal support and mutual solidarity among households.

The forum for engaging leaders can include key informant meetings and small group discussions. Topics for discussion can include local livelihood systems, wealth or well-being ranking, market opportunities, typical areas of gender inequality (workloads, access to and control over resources and benefits), gender-based violence and the potential impact of improved gender relations on the community's development potential.

#### Reasons to involve the chief and other traditional leaders in HHMs

- Live close to the people in rural areas
- Custodians of tradition and culture
- Major influence on socialization process that shapes gender ideology of rural communities
- Control over common assets such as land, rivers and lakes that can be used for development
- Have acted as decision-makers of governance structures for decades
- Can be perpetrators of negative/positive practices
- Command respect from many citizens
- Rule for life in most countries
- Can ensure sustainability of new practices over time

Source: Mfumbeni Development Association, Eastern Province, Zambia

### Engaging with men

Men are essential partners in addressing gender-based inequalities and they can also be strong gender advocates. In some instances, they too suffer from inequality and violence.

Men often have to undergo a great change in their mindset and behaviour in order to free themselves and their households from cultural norms and stereotypes that perpetuate gender inequalities. Therefore, it is essential that they understand that HHMs are not about empowering women and disempowering men. Rather, they are about enabling households to address gender inequalities to the benefit of all and the achievement of the household vision. Additionally, rates of gender-based violence in households and communities resulting from disputes over ownership and access to and control over resources can fall considerably.

At the community level, men participating in HHM activities can find it helpful to form groups to support each other through the behaviour change process. Once confident in their new roles and lifestyle, these groups provide a good basis for advocacy and outreach.

### **Tips for engaging with men**

- Appreciate their point of view, be sensitive, understand and promote.
- Respect, value, give recognition
- Communicate proactively, question
- Engage men in dialogue with women
- Develop simple messages that speak to men's emotional language
- Motivate and encourage men who are already engaged
- Network and create linkages
- Help men to heal (where they are victims), console, give ideas
- Mobilize, involve, assign, give responsibility, share roles
- Empower, build capacity and encourage constituency development

Source: Men for Gender Equality Now (MEGEN), an advocacy campaign to reduce gender based-violence, Kenya

### **Raising awareness in the community**

Awareness about the HHMs should be raised through community meetings, ensuring the inclusion of women, youth and representatives from different sectors of the community. Popular information-sharing methods during awareness meetings include role plays performed by members of households participating in HHM activities and focus group discussions. The objective of using these methods is to ensure support for HHMs as a mechanism for positive change and to raise awareness about the negative impact of inequitable gender relations on household well-being and development outcomes.

### **Forming partnerships at the national level**

The ministries responsible for gender equality and social inclusion are important national partners, although in many contexts they lack technical and financial resources and they may often have much less influence than other government agencies. Creating stronger alliances between ministries, other government and civil society organizations and farmers' organizations, and building their capacity can help scale up the use of HHMs through harmonized and favourable policies and strategies.



## Integrating household methodologies in project design and implementation

HHMs can be integrated into a range of development interventions and implemented in different cultural and social contexts. This section identifies the main considerations when incorporating HHMs in IFAD-funded operations. Ideally, the methodologies should be integrated into project design but it is also possible to include them within ongoing project activities.

### Design phase

#### Purpose of and modality for incorporating HHMs in projects

- HHMs may be integrated into specific technical interventions in order to contribute to better achievements and ensure the attainment of gender and social inclusion objectives.
- HHMs may be included in their own right to boost gender equality and women's empowerment, and to improve and deepen targeting and outreach to some of the most vulnerable households, regardless of the technical focus of a project.

#### Implementation approaches

- Approach 1: This is a group-based approach in which the group acts as the entry point for reaching individuals with the HHM tools. The groups include producers' organizations, self-help groups and affinity groups. The group may also use the visioning and planning tools to achieve their own goals.
- Approach 2: This involves individual household mentoring by trained mentors, in which the focus is specifically on vulnerable and poorer households. These households are often excluded from mainstream development initiatives, including group membership, by themselves or by facilitators.

#### Linkages with project components

Establish clear links between HHMs and a project's technical components (value chains, rural finance, agricultural extension, etc.), including the targeting and gender strategies.

### Implementation modalities

#### Staff member in the project management unit

A suitable person is required to facilitate the implementation of HHMs in a project. This can be the gender, community development or rural organizations officer. This person will have overall responsibility for the implementation of HHM activities in the project. It is likely that the person will also be responsible for implementing the project's targeting and gender strategies. Specific responsibilities would include the following:

- liaising with the service providers
- contributing to community selection and initial discussions at community level
- participating in knowledge-sharing and learning events
- organizing awareness-raising events for project management unit staff and other stakeholders to ensure an understanding of HHMs, gender and participatory processes

- working with project component heads to strengthen linkages between HHMs and other project activities
- working with the M&E officer to report on progress and undertake periodic impact assessments
- participating in advocacy and policy engagement on HHMs as a tool for sustainable development
- linking with other HHM practitioners and organizations for ongoing knowledge and learning exchange
- periodically revisiting and updating the project implementation manual based on implementation experiences with HHMs.

### Service providers with responsibility for HHM facilitation

The responsibilities of the service providers include the following:

- selecting facilitators
- conducting training of trainers
- organizing training of facilitators
- contributing to community selection and initial discussions at community level
- backstopping facilitators during HHM implementation
- organizing knowledge-sharing and learning events
- liaising with staff in the project management unit on progress.

### Budget requirements for HHM implementation

As with many activities associated with strengthening human capital, the budget costs associated with implementing HHMs will be relatively modest in comparison with other project components. Nevertheless, it is essential that sufficient funds be allocated to support the indicative list of activities noted below:

- training of trainers (for facilitators)
- training of facilitators
- conducting review meetings and periodic refresher training for facilitators
- mobilizing communities and local leadership (pilot and rolling out)
- covering miscellaneous costs of HHMs at group and household levels
- local and national exchange visits for facilitators, project management and technical staff, participating households and community leaders
- covering miscellaneous costs for facilitators and mentors
- impact assessment studies
- outreach events for advocacy and policy engagement, including with project component heads, local administration and national development partners
- participating in regional and international knowledge events.

### Documentation on HHMs

If HHMs are identified as an integral part of project design, it is important that they be included in key project documentation, as indicated below:

- the project design report (including the rationale for HHMs, a description of activities, linkages with other components, implementation arrangements and the budget)
- the project implementation manual
- the annual work plan and budget
- M&E system and reports.

### Conclusions

HHMs are proving to be effective for stimulating positive behaviour change and transforming the lives of rural women and men. Greater gender equality, in all its dimensions, is essential to achieve more resilient and sustainable smallholder farming and other rural livelihood systems.

HHMs represent a good return on investment because, by securing this change at the heart of daily living – the household – they deepen the impact and enhance the sustainability of conventional development initiatives. They are also very adaptable and can be mainstreamed into a range of development interventions and implemented in different cultural and social contexts. Further details about specific methodologies and implementation arrangements are presented in the case studies.



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