FOOD FOR THOUGHT

A Pause and Reflect Toolkit for Emergency Food Security Programs

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START

NOTE TO IMPLEMENTERS

All Implementing Partners in the humanitarian and development sector today strive to be learning organizations. This requires commitment to professional development, as well as program and institutional learning.

Learning should be embedded in program standards across the program lifecycle, including, at a minimum:

DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A LEARNING PLAN that outlines the specific collaboration, learning and adaptation activities throughout the program lifecycle.

FOSTER ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES by regularly using a wide range of program data in meetings.

PLAN AND CONDUCT INTERNAL PERFORMANCE REVIEWS (not just external evaluations) to reflect as a team on the program's progress and document lessons learned when the programs are near completion.

This Food for Thought (FFT) toolkit builds on the USAID CLA Framework and the resources in the **USAID CLA Lab**, and it specifically targets emergency food security program (EFSP) teams. It provides detailed resources, guidance, templates and advice on how to strengthen CLA skills and practices within emergency food security, as well as other programs. The FFT approach particularly focuses on the pause and reflect mechanism, because many programs transition from one phase to another without systematically integrating the learning acquired. The 'pause' creates the necessary space for learning to take place and to be documented and internalized — not only by the emergency program teams, but also by the organization.

This toolkit, therefore, is an important contribution to promoting culture change across agencies implementing emergency food security programs. It is, however, just one approach to learning and adaptation and should not take the place of good, systematic monitoring, timely learning, and evidence-based decision-making. Leaders should remember some learning is better than none, even if the investment required for this workshop's level of reflection is not always possible.

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NAVIGATION MENU

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"Reflection is thinking for an extended period by linking recent experiences to earlier ones in order to promote a more complex and interrelated mental schema or patterns. The thinking involves looking for commonalities, differences, and interrelations beyond their superficial elements."

- DON CLARK

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OVERVIEW & TOOLKIT STRUCTURE

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OVERVIEW

This overview serves as a dashboard to address the key questions and answers related to the content, the exercises and the resources in this toolkit. This dashboard is a useful tool for obtaining insights around **WHAT**, **WHY**, and **HOW**.

WHY IS THE TITLE OF THIS TOOLKIT "FOOD FOR THOUGHT"?

The title "Food for Thought" (FFT) reflects the toolkit's intention to promote use of data and evidence generated by emergency food security programs (FOOD) for intentionally planned and resourced program reflection and learning (THOUGHT).

WHAT IS "FOOD FOR THOUGHT"?

The "FFT" Toolkit builds on USAID's current **CLA framework** and offers a step by step process and essential guidance, resources, templates and advice on how to organize and implement an effective one-day, annual or end of program (for programs less than 12 months) pause and reflect sessions for emergency food security programs. Through curated and carefully planned sessions, the toolkit reinforces the use of data and evidence collected during the implementation of the emergency food security program/s to reflect on its performance and progress and to make necessary adaptations for improvement so that programs can more effectively meet communities' pressing needs.

HOW IS THE FFT WORKSHOP CONDUCTED?

The FFT Workshop can be conducted in in-person, hybrid or virtual modes. The toolkit is designed for face-to-face pause and reflect sessions, with advice on how it can be adapted for virtual and remote management settings. Workshop Agenda Templates offer options on how to adjust the Workshop for a full day, two half days and 5 days of 2-hour sessions.

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WHY DOES THE FFT TOOLKIT FOCUS ON EMERGENCY FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMS?

Emergency programs inherently face the challenge of operating under the pressure of urgency and uncertainty. Though timelines are compressed, in protracted crises these programs can continue for years where new programs are often an extension of existing initiatives without significant changes or learning-based adaptations.[1]

Emergency food security activities are an important part of most emergency responses. They can be implemented as stand-alone, targeted, one-year interventions, or integrated in multi-sector emergency response programs. Often those programs receive follow-on funding and evolve into large-scale programs.

The following toolkit applies a food security lens, but since food security programs are increasingly integrated with water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), shelter, and other sectors, the examples, tools and resources in this toolkit, with adaptation, are also applicable to other sector-specific, multisector and integrated emergency programs.

WHAT IS PAUSE AND REFLECT?

Collaborating, Learning and Adapting (CLA) was coined by USAID to describe a set of practices designed to help improve development effectiveness. Within the **USAID CLA Framework**, pause and reflect is considered "central to collaborating, learning and adapting (CLA) as well as to improving programming and development outcomes."

Further, it cuts across key CLA considerations, such as "approaching collaboration and coordination strategically; valuing and using all forms of knowledge in the development of strategies, projects, and activities; and enabling partners and local and regional actors to play a central role in USAID's efforts to be a learning organization" (ADS 201.3.7.2, p. 117). USAID's ADS Chapter 201 defines pause and reflect as "a component of learning and adaptive management, the act of taking time to think critically about ongoing activities and processes and plan for the best way forward" (143).

CONTINUE

1 Obrecht, A. with Bourne, S. (2018) Making humanitarian response more flexible. ALNAP Background Paper. London: ALNAP/ODI. **https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/ALNAP%20paper%20making%20humanitarian%20response%20more%20flexible.pdf**

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WHY DOES THE TOOLKIT FOCUS ON PAUSE AND REFLECT?

Many emergency programs are implemented in a very fast-paced environment, in the face of scarce resources and facing internal and external pressures to perform and deliver. This reality means it is challenging to find the time to organize the program data and bring the team together to collectively pause and reflect on the learning acquired during implementation.

While recognizing the importance of pause and reflect, many emergency program practitioners struggle to stop, think, re-evaluate, learn, change and integrate the learning. Not only because it is hard to find time, but also because practical hands-on resources guiding emergency practitioners to plan such learning events are scarce and not adapted to emergency contexts.

The FFT toolkit aims to fill that gap and provide emergency programs with necessary resources to plan and implement effective pause and reflect sessions. It acknowledges that in an emergency setting a pause and reflect session will be successful if the team members are able to bring a learning mindset and disconnect from daily work and responsibilities, and offers guidance and advice on how to achieve that.

HOW CAN PAUSE AND REFLECT HELP STRENGTHEN EMERGENCY FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMS AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS?

Among many positive outcomes, pause and reflect sessions like this FFT workshop provide an opportunity to take time for thoughtful, collective review of progress and reflection on the performance, and to identify, document and apply lessons learned. It also creates a learning environment where emergency food security programs may more effectively integrate a holistic view and a stronger understanding of the changing context and needs in program interventions. And lastly, this will lead to wider organizational and sectoral learning, allowing feedback to flow within the various sections of implementing partners to strengthen systems, identify effective practices, and leverage learning across multiple programs and partners as well.

This toolkit and workshop are one approach to pause and reflect, but there are many ways to integrate pause and reflect principles and practices in emergency food security programs. See the section on **Additional Resources** for more ideas.

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WHO ARE THE INTENDED USERS AND WHAT ARE THE USES OF THE FFT TOOLKIT?

Primary Users. The intended primary users of the toolkit are Program Managers, MEL and CLA leads in emergency programs, with a focus on promoting program learning, as well as the identified FFT Workshop facilitator.

Secondary Users. The secondary users of this toolkit are emergency program team members and the participants of the pause and reflect sessions.

All potential users are encouraged to review, adapt and use the various tools, templates, guidance and the resources to initiate learning exercises within their programs.

It should be noted that workshops of this kind are most appropriate for programs of at least 9-12 months in duration. Some emergency programs will be of shorter duration and while learning is still critical in such a context, this type of in-depth approach will likely not be feasible.

HOW ARE THE USAID CLA FRAMEWORK AND THE CORE HUMANITARIAN STANDARDS APPLIED IN THIS TOOLKIT?

The FFT toolkit focuses on key components of program performance and the **Core Humanitarian Standard** as the core content for pausing and reflecting. It also incorporates USAID's **Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting (CLA)** framework, tools, guidance and learning to enable reflection on how we do our work, as well as what we do, particularly in the fast-paced emergency program context and considering the unique needs of the emergency program teams.

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TOOLKIT STRUCTURE

STRUCTURE

The FFT toolkit is structured around three sections:

SECTION 2

PAUSE AND REFLECT GUIDE

FFT 'pause and reflect' guide, which offers critical guidance around:

- How to plan this pause and reflect session with various emergency program team members and partners
- How to select areas of focus for learning and set an agenda
- How to set the scene and create a learning environment through pre-pause and reflect engagement, and consolidating the program's data sources
- How to apply practical exercises from the provided pool relevant to this workshop sample
- How to effectively integrate the program's various data sources into pause and reflect and performance review-related discussions
- How to prepare the facilitator/s for the discussions, and
- How to document and integrate learning into the program and/or organizational learning initiatives.

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SECTION 3

PRACTICAL TOOLS

Practical tools offer the program managers and identified facilitators specific tools and templates to be used in the workshop including:

- Guidance in identifying the right learning questions to meet the needs of the team
- Templates to use in planning for the workshop
- Exercises to use during facilitation and tips on how to structure the content of the discussion
- Powerpoint slides to accompany the workshop and guide participants through each step
- Tools to guide implementation of an FFT workshop from planning to follow through, and
- How to document the findings, recommendations, discussions using the templates and tools.

SECTION 4

FACILITATORS' NOTES

Facilitators' notes are designed specifically for session facilitators to guide them through:

- Additional references
- Preparation
- Do's and don't's of facilitating particular sessions
- Sharing learning from prior experience or the piloting of the toolkit.

CONTINUE

USING THE TOOLKIT

This toolkit is designed as an interactive PDF, and gives the users the feel of a web-based resource bank. This allows the users to easily access the relevant sections with a click, rather than having to scroll through a long document. Internet connection is **NOT** required to use the toolkit with its navigation capacity, however, the users with low internet bandwidth may need to download all the reference sheets, templates, guidance notes and tools prior, since those are hosted on the website.

SYMBOLS are used across the toolkit.

To plan and implement this workshop the program managers and their identified facilitators should become familiar with the content, the exercises and resources in this toolkit.

The resources within each of the sections mentioned above are grouped around three phases of use:

- **PREPARATION AND PLANNING** for the FFT Workshop
- **IMPLEMENTATION** of the FFT Workshop
- **FOLLOW-THROUGH** on the learnings and action points identified during the FFT Workshop

SECTION ENDS

CONTINUE TO NEXT SECTION

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PAUSE AND REFLECT GUIDE

BEHAVIOR CHANGE

Before describing the steps of planning a pause and reflect event like the FFT Workshop, it is important to recognize that planning for and participating in these types of events is new to many teams and staff members and that this is not intended to be a one-off activity. By periodically pausing and reflecting we are building a culture of data-driven decision making and learning and it will take time and effort to create this mindset. Be patient, open and consistent in carrying out these activities and change will gradually take place.

Conducting a successful pause and reflect session requires thoughtful planning and preparation, solid implementation and a plan for follow-up. This FFT toolkit provides ample resources to program managers and their identified facilitators to focus on a set of clear priorities, prepare program team members to pause and reflect, and sustain engagement and buy-in throughout the process. A successful session may also encourage replication and adaptation in various forms by participants.

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

1. **To identify key learning from the program and create an action plan based on it to help adapt and improve future programming.**
2. **To use key CLA concepts to improve program performance.**
3. **To increase capacity of all program staff to work with various data sources in understanding program performance and promoting adaptive management.**

A workshop like this will usually be initiated by the Program Manager with the MEL Lead/Manager/Director's support. The following sections detail how to move forward. Use the **FFT Planning Template** found in Section 3: Practical Tools, to document the decisions as you go and create a plan for your session.

FFT PLANNING TEMPLATE

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PLANNING AND PREPARATION

II DECIDE WHEN TO PAUSE AND REFLECT

A pause and reflect session like this FFT workshop may be conducted during periodic emergency review meetings, mid-term and/or at the end of the emergency cycle or a response.

- The periodic and mid-term reflections may be lighter touch, and include elements of the FFT Workshop most relevant to the reflection needed at that point in time. These sessions will allow the teams to integrate the acquired learning directly into the program and course-correct on a timely basis while the program is still being implemented.

- The FFT Workshop implemented toward the end of a program will generate learning that can be integrated in follow-on phases of an emergency response and promote organizational learning.

In many contexts, emergency programs stretch over many years due to sustained emergencies. Holding a pause and reflection session like this at the end of an emergency program/cycle is a unique opportunity to adjust and improve the program between cycles and funding phases to ensure its effectiveness. Depending on the duration, complexity and the context of the emergency programs, the timing of when a pause and reflect session is needed may vary.

TIP

As a rule of thumb, we recommend that for multi-year emergency programs, a pause and reflect session like this workshop should be conducted on an annual basis, with other lighter-touch pause and reflect sessions conducted more frequently. Single-year programs (9-12 months) should aim to conduct a workshop near the end of the program (but again, can conduct less intensive sessions more frequently). Programs less than 9 months should still conduct some time of pause and reflect, such as an After Action Review, before program closure.

For example, if the program's duration is 12 months, the best time to conduct an annual pause and reflect session will be in months 9 and 10. This will ensure that team members have not transferred to other programs yet, and there is time to integrate learning from the current program to other upcoming proposals or follow-ons the team might be working on, since proposals are normally submitted around the 10-month mark to sustain funding.

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Additionally, this allows timely organizational learning should adaptations and improvements be necessary in the wider organization's systems, structures and processes, in order to make the follow-on interventions and other (emergency) programs more effective.

This workshop was designed as a one-day event. However, if this is the first time for a team to implement this type of activity, it may require 1-2 days. Setting the stage, fostering open and nonjudgmental reflection, helping team members learn to think analytically and make deeper connections can all take time. Furthermore, some of the higher-level activities in this workshop may only need to be done once. For future pause and reflect sessions like this, however, once the precedent has been established and participants are familiar with the tasks and expectations, it should not require more than one day.

FFT PLANNING TEMPLATE

Please also see the Additional Resources section for more ideas for conducting Pause and Reflect sessions of all types and timing.

DECIDE HOW TO PAUSE AND REFLECT

The FFT Workshop can be conducted in-person, virtually, or in a hybrid format (see table 2.1). The FFT toolkit is designed ideally for an in-person, one-day workshop lasting approximately seven to eight hours (see the agenda in Section 2 for an overview of this sample session). It is worth noting that if a one day in-person meeting is not an option, or not the most suitable wait of conducting a reflection, the workshop can also be held virtually, or in a hybrid combination of virtual and in-person (see table 2.1).

TIP

How long does it take? If a program or team is implementing this workshop for the first time, it may realistically take more than one day to complete, as participants may not be as comfortable or familiar with many of the processes. Setting the stage, building trust, promoting analytical thinking and connections, can take time for those not familiar with the practices. Further, some of the proposed activities only need to be done once. Future iterations can more easily be done in a day.

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The toolkit also offers modifications in the timing, such as breaking content into two half-days, or 5 days of 2-3 hour virtual workshops. See **Workshop Agenda Templates** for more details.

In-person, one-off events are the most preferred mechanism for pause and reflect sessions, since they allow the team members to detach from daily work, come together physically as a team and engage intentionally in a learning environment, without distraction or interruption. This toolkit, however, has taken into consideration that many emergency programs often operate in limited and remote access environments, and may not be able to bring all program team members physically together, due to security, resources, pandemic and other reasons. The exercises of this toolkit are packaged in a way that would allow the facilitators to construct and facilitate pause and reflect workshops in different modes, if the facilitators have experience in facilitating hybrid and virtual meetings. Where possible, the facilitator's guidance notes provide additional insights for virtual facilitators but this is not the focus of the toolkit. Other resources providing advice and guidance on effective hybrid and virtual pause and reflect sessions should be used alongside this toolkit for more effective implementation.

TABLE 2.1 | WORKSHOP FORMATS

In-person sessions	All team members are meeting in the same physical location/space.	1 full day (approximately 7-8 hours), with preparation work leading up to the session (noting that first-time implementation of this may take 1-2 days) 2 half days (4-5 hours each day) 5 days (2-3 hours each day)
Hybrid sessions	Part of the team may be virtual and others in-person, or various teams are meeting in person in various locations and connecting virtually as a whole group. This type of session may require multiple facilitations; the nature and type of instruction may vary between concurrent physical and virtual groups to asynchronous discussions; and facilitation may be divided among virtual and in-person facilitators.	Since virtual sessions are difficult to manage for a full day, this should model the 2 half-day or 5 partial-day outlines above Additional time may be required to ensure effective coordination among all facilitators.
Virtual sessions	All team members are joining virtually, from various locations.	3-hour meetings over 3 days

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Decide where to pause and reflect. Once the timing and format for the event have been decided, be sure to identify and book a venue. Consider that the venue will require staples like good internet, audio/visual equipment and sound system, printing and copying facilities, and food and drink service. Also keep in mind that workshops like this can be enhanced by having and using plenty of floor and wall space, for moving around, for posting materials, for engaging in activities and exercises, and for enabling analysis and the drawing of connections, mentally and physically.

II IDENTIFY A FACILITATOR

Identifying the right facilitator/s for the FFT Workshop is important as much of the success of the session depends on the skills, attitude and tone that the facilitator sets throughout the process. Facilitators may be internal or external, but should not be a member of the emergency program team.

A skilled facilitator plays the critical role of shaping the priorities and the agenda of the workshop, driving the conversation, drawing out key lessons and keeping the group focused on their objectives. Facilitators can also help to mitigate any tensions or issues within the group and can expedite a more efficient process. In the case that a facilitator from inside your organization is not possible, an external consultant will find this toolkit helpful to ensure clarity of expectations between themselves and the program leadership requesting the workshop. The facilitator should already have a strong understanding of the program and the CLA framework and experience in emergency food security programs. This toolkit provides many useful links to strengthen their knowledge in areas where they may have gaps.

A facilitator **Scope of Work** is provided and helps to lay out the expected deliverables and tasks, as well as competencies of a facilitator. This can help identify the right individual/s and facilitate division of labor if more than one facilitator is needed.

SOW

FACILITATOR SCOPE OF WORK

TIP

Ideally, the Facilitator will speak the language of workshop participants. Translations add time to the duration and can create barriers to open communication. It is preferred that discussions are held in the local language. If a foreigner will be in the session, or if participants speak different languages, it is best to procure translation and interpretation services, so factor in the time and cost as well.

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DEFINE THE LEARNING QUESTIONS

FFT Planning Meeting. Identifying the learning questions and priorities is key to making the most of the valuable and limited time the participants have together. By being clear on what the learning priorities are, we will ask the right learning questions and ensure that the most relevant data is available to guide the discussions. The FFT Planning Meeting will be an opportunity to discuss and identify these questions and plan other important details for the workshop.

The Facilitator will conduct this FFT Planning Meeting with the Program Manager, MEL Lead/Manager/Director, Operations Manager, and HAT Manager (if applicable). Expect to spend about one hour on this session prior to the workshop, plus additional time for data preparation time by the program team.

The **Learning Question Matrix** provides a set of learning questions related to Program Performance components (including time, budget, scope, quality, accountability and others), matrixed with columns based on the BHA Technical Sectors the program worked in. **The FFT Planning Team will select two to four (2-4) questions to be discussed in depth at the FFT workshop (Right Questions). Note that selecting questions most critical to understanding the program's performance and the performance of future programs will contribute to the workshop's success.** They should choose from the list of key Program Performance components, but can ask the question either at the program level (e.g., reviewing results for the entire program), or about a specific Technical Sector. If they have other questions that don't fit this model but they think are worth exploring at the FFT workshop, they can suggest them as well. (See also a document called Learning Question - Brief for a simplified overview of the core performance components and learning questions.)

TIP

Learning Questions: The number of Learning Questions to be selected can be based on the size of participants expected at the workshop. Plan a separate Learning Question for each small group of about 5-7 people to work on, so if the group size is 20 (not including facilitators), select three questions, if it is 25, select four, etc. Consider the issues known to the Planning Team, but also consider those less known and frequently overlooked, like local capacity and sustainability, or humanitarian coordination, which may offer unexpected insights.

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The suggested Learning Questions are also mapped to a range of data sources that the teams may need to consult, including planning documents like proposed budgets or assessments, as well as sources from program implementation, like BVAs, IPTT, market monitoring, PDMs, etc. This Source Data will be prepared in advance and used during the FFT Workshop to help small groups explore the Learning Questions in depth.

During the Planning Meeting, leaders will identify the data sources that will inform the discussions **(Right Data)** based on what is recommended in the Matrix, and will also identify the appropriate participants for the workshop **(Right People)**.

FOLLOWING ARE THE KEY STEPS INVOLVED KEY STEPS INVOLVED IN THE FFT PLANNING MEETING

BEFORE

1. MEL Lead/Manager/Director updates the **Learning Question Matrix** with the appropriate Technical Sectors for the program being reviewed and sends to each of the FFP Planning Team members.

2. Program Manager schedules the Planning Meeting, requests participants to think in advance about the areas they think most important for learning - those things that will reflect challenges and opportunities for improvement, as well as strengths and successes. They may be asked to bring recent program documentation (work plans, budgets, reports, IPTTs) to help inform the Planning Meeting.

3. Planning Team Members should ensure that key program documentation (work plans, budgets, reports, IPTTs) are up-to-date and available for the meeting.

DURING

4. **Right Questions: Selecting the Learning Questions.**

   The Planning Team should be prepared to discuss what issues are most relevant and important to be discussed and learned from at the workshop. They will use the Learning Question Matrix to prompt thinking about possible issues to discuss, and what they would look like in depth.

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DURING (CONTINUED)

Remember that the objective is to learn and document lessons and make recommendations moving forward, so questions should help identify both strengths and opportunities. They can use available program documentation (work plans, budgets, reports, IPTTs, etc.) to identify areas of note, or to highlight issues ripe for deeper reflection. *They should select up to four questions total.*

5 **Right People: Identification of Program Participants.**

Based on the Learning Questions identified, the Planning Team will nominate which individuals should be invited to the FFT Workshop, including representatives from program staff, local partners or stakeholders, and/or regional representatives as relevant. *Note that partners can bring a unique perspective to discussions and can enrich our learning with their lessons and feedback, so their participation in these sessions is strongly encouraged*. Once identified, the Planning Team should assign participants into small working groups based on the **Learning Question Matrix**, each reflecting a cross-sectional mix of program, operations, M&E, GESI, CARM, and partners.

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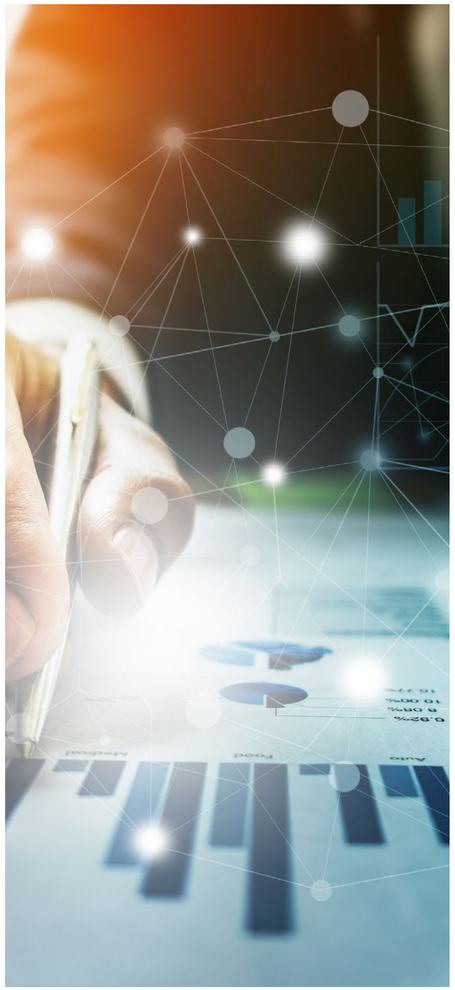
DURING (CONTINUED)

6 **Right Data: Planning for Data Sources.**

Based on the Learning Questions selected and recommended source data (and other data identified as relevant by this group), the Planning Team will assign team members with identifying and updating the data sources and making them presentable for the workshop itself (**see Data Planning Details**). The data presentation should include not just most recent updates, but historical trends, limitations, or other relevant aspects of the data. Two resources exist to support the development of Data Sources for the workshop, including **Data Presentation Suggestions**, which provides more detail on the sources and types of information that might be drawn from them, and the Data Sources tab in the **Learning Question Matrix**.



BEHAVIOR CHANGE

Source Data. The sources of data suggested in the Learning Question Matrix include M&E data, project plans, BVAs, work plans, PDMs, CARM, gender and age disaggregations, HAT analyses, market assessments, cluster updates and data, context monitoring, partner feedback, and more. Data and evidence of these types is often siloed by department or by technical sector, or limited to management, when a shared understanding and analysis of information could be helpful to the team as a whole. When considering different types of 'pause and reflect' sessions, always consider what data and evidence are available and the broader questions they may answer if unpacked collectively. And make sure preparing 'data' for these meetings is not just the responsibility of the MEL team - engage all staff in some type of data preparation to increase ownership and awareness of what information is out there and how to use it.

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AFTER

6 The Facilitator will update the FFT Planning Template with details determined at the Planning Meeting.

7 The Program Manager will contact the team members assigned to prepare data sources for the FFT Workshop.

UPDATING RELEVANT DATA SOURCES

Before the pause and reflect session, program teams should update all relevant data sources that will be used for the pause and reflect. For example, market assessments, which are required for any program distributing cash or goods should be updated to accurately reflect current market dynamics. Local food security analyses are also useful, as are more macro level projections developed by the Integrated Phase Classification (IPC), the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET), or the Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS). The same is true for protection risk assessments, conflict analysis, etc. Up to date information about the context is important to inform learning and make relevant recommendations for future program iterations. Analyzing PDMs, cluster data or smaller scale market monitoring allows teams to update existing assessments with more current information.

TOOLS AND A FACILITATION GUIDE FOR THIS MEETING ARE PROVIDED IN SECTIONS 3 AND 4, AND LINKED BELOW.

SECTION 3

- FFT PLANNING TEMPLATE
- LEARNING QUESTION MATRIX
- LEARNING QUESTIONS - BRIEF
- DATA PLANNING DETAILS
- DATA PRESENTATION SUGGESTIONS

SECTION 4

- FFT PLANNING MEETING - FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

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SEND OUT INVITATIONS

Once the event details have been determined, planning and logistics should begin, with invitations to participants the first priority. The Facilitator should work with the Program Manager to create a listserv, in order to initiate communication and reserve the time of the participants for the FFT Workshop. Ideally, the workshop date is agreed upon and is scheduled as part of the emergency program work plan at the very start of the program, and locked into all anticipated participant calendars. If this has not been planned already, early communication and reservation of peoples' time is critical for a successful session.

In coordination with the program management team and partners, set the date 4-5 weeks in advance, or earlier, if travel, translation or other logistical considerations should be taken into account. The Program Manager will send out the invitations and information. The Facilitator can help track responses to ensure that appropriate levels of attendance are secured and necessary plans are made.

CONTINUE

TIP

Messaging purpose. Setting aside a full day to pause and reflect may not be a common practice for many teams, therefore reminders and announcements about the upcoming workshop and why it is important may need to be channeled through the program management team and the partners.

BEHAVIOR CHANGE

Messaging Expectations. The Program Manager should use the weeks before the Workshop to reinforce why it is important, and to set expectations for participants. Since some staff may not yet know about their contracts and whether there will be continued funding, it should be clear that participation in the FFT Workshop is determined based on the learning objectives and is not connected to contracts or performance. Emphasize that all staff are working for the sector and the communities and it is important that we learn collectively so that no matter who stays and who goes, the learning can feed into the program (like true humanitarians), and that wherever staff go, they can carry the learning and the experience with them.

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Once the date, venue and participants are determined, the FFT Planning Template should be completed, checklist monitored, and the Facilitator should send a calendar invitation and request attendance. A sample Invitation Message is provided in Section 2 (see link below), as well as a template for tracking invitations and other planning logistics. These can be adapted and modified as appropriate, but provide an easy template for getting things started.

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PRACTICAL TOOLS

- FFT PLANNING TEMPLATE
- SAMPLE FFT INVITATION MESSAGE
- FFP INVITATION TRACKER

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DEVELOP THE FFT WORKSHOP AGENDA

With all details like participation, venue, dates, timing, type of session and learning questions determined, the Facilitator can now work on developing the formal agenda, putting together the materials and printouts required and making any other detailed arrangements needed. A sample agenda for this proposed workshop is provided in Section 2 (**Workshop Agenda Templates**) with the recommended format, and variations for the three different modes of the event (in-person, hybrid, fully virtual session). A detailed Facilitator's Guide based on this agenda can also be found in Section 3. Adaptations to this plan can certainly be made and while most of the tools and templates in this Toolkit are specific to this proposed agenda, many other ideas and resources for conducting a pause and reflect session are available in the **Additional Resources** section of this document, and in other team repositories.

SECTION ENDS

CONTINUE TO NEXT SECTION

TIP

Agenda Options. Remember that this workshop model is intensive and in its first implementation for a team, may take more than one day to be successful. When conducting it in the future, a day or less should be sufficient and specific activities from the agenda may be replicated more frequently moving forward. And as noted earlier, adaptations to the format can be made to make it virtual (or hybrid between in-person and virtual), or split the activities up across multiple days. If adaptations like this make it more likely to undertake the FFT Workshop, they are encouraged!

SECTION 3 PRACTICAL TOOLS

WORKSHOP AGENDA TEMPLATES

SECTION 4 DETAILED FACILITATION NOTES

FFT WORKSHOP - FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

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IMPLEMENTATION: FACILITATING THE WORKSHOP

WORKSHOP AGENDA

This model FFT workshop is designed to be flexible to your team's availability. In person it can take a full day, including breaks and lunch, 2 half days or 2-3 hour morning meetings over a 3-day period.

Likewise, virtual and hybrid versions of the agenda are available if necessary and while not recommended, can still be a suitable alternative when bringing staff together in one location is not practicable **(see Workshop Agenda Templates)**. The sessions, in whichever format works best, are designed around small group work that leads to plenary sessions where learning is consolidated and recommendations refined. In addition to introductions, icebreakers, debriefs and discussions, there

are six concise and interlinked sessions. The small group work applies the SOAR methodology - using available data and evidence to answer the selected Learning Questions about program performance and framing those findings as Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations and Results. The **FFT Workshop - Detailed Agenda** presents the sessions as described below with a complete schedule for the day.

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WORKSHOP AGENDA SESSIONS

Session 1: Introductory Exercises. The day will start out with an interactive exercise in which team members construct a Project Timeline highlighting both internal and external events of significance that have occurred within the program's tenure. This will be followed by a brief CLA self-assessment.

Session 2: SOAR Part 1 - Strengths and Opportunities. In small groups, workshop participants discuss their assigned Learning Question using available source data, and identify Strengths and Opportunities based on the discussion, filling in Flip Chart templates. Each Strength and Opportunity will also be linked to the relevant data point from this source data. This activity is followed by a Gallery Walk where workshop participants are able to review other groups' flip charts and offer additional insights, and attach stickers to items that link them to CLA practices.

Session 3: CLA Reflection. In Plenary, the facilitator helps highlight the CLA stickers and discuss what they indicate. The CLA self-assessment results are shown for comparison and more discussion highlighting that the workshop is not just about what teams do programmatically, but also how they do it.

Session 4: SOAR Part 2 - Aspirations and Results. Workshop participants continue working in small groups to identify their Aspirations - what or how they want this program to be moving forward; their vision of the program they want to be a part of and what it can accomplish. Connected to those Aspirations they will identify Results - what tangible change they think this aspiration represents or contributes to.

Session 5: Collective Picture. New groups now take items from the flipcharts and organize them by SOAR headings - all of the strengths, opportunities, aspirations and results grouped together. They look for the connections across these categories and create Lessons Learned based on what they find and what they think needs to happen.

Session 6: Action Planning. Groups take these Lessons Learned and create Action Items from them to enter into an online Action Plan template. Once entered, they are presented in plenary one by one as the Program Manager questions and critiques them, helping to refine the overall plan. Original groups reassemble to examine their original Aspirations and Results and suggest actions that are still missing.

Session 7: Wrap-up. The day is summarized, next steps made clear, and an evaluation will take place. Finally, to close, workshop participants will write one key takeaway from the day that they found helpful or meaningful and share it with the group, while also posting on a Flip Chart.

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The workshop will result in a team-wide Action Plan, with items listed and prioritized, potential results of their implementation identified, assignment of responsibilities, and a tentative schedule for their activation (see the Follow-up Section below).

SECTION 3 PRACTICAL TOOLS

- DETAILED WORKSHOP AGENDA
- CLA TEMPERATURE CHECK
- PROGRAM TIMELINE EXERCISE
- SOAR TEMPLATE
- SOAR DISCUSSION GUIDES
- ACTION PLAN

SECTION 4 FACILITATION NOTES

- FFT WORKSHOP - FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

THE DAY OF

The planning team should have acquired the key or made arrangements to access the training venue at least a day before. The day of the event, they should follow all required security protocols, and arrive at least one hour early to ensure the room is arranged appropriately (or the online platforms are functional), and the room is clearly and visibly marked for visitors. Everyone should be made to feel welcome, an open and accepting atmosphere established, and clear rules of participation established (e.g., use of cell phones and laptops limited to emergencies or only when requested). Make sure to use all the available space for activities, icebreakers, small group work, and moving around in general.

> **The Program Manager should introduce the session, making clear what they hope to accomplish, and what they expect participants to get from it. They should also mention why pausing and reflecting is important for the program and the team, and how this helps to capture learning and adapt while listening to all voices.**

Program Manager may also want to acknowledge (this should also have been addressed in early messaging) uncertainty around individual jobs and contracts, but can point out that the learning is important regardless, is part of our collective commitment to the sector and to the communities, and the experience of this workshop is something every participant will take with them in whatever they do. Note gratitude for their hard work, and their openness during this event and willingness to learn and improve.

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As a reminder, the Learning Objectives are as much about the process and experience as about the learning, since that will itself lead to more learning in the future.

The objectives are as follows:

1. To identify key learning from [program name] and create an action plan based on it to help improve future programming.
2. To use key CLA concepts to improve program performance.
3. To increase capacity of all program staff to work with various data sources in understanding program performance and quality and promoting adaptive management.

Any outside partners or stakeholders should be welcomed and introduced, and an agreement established that true learning can only occur through honest, transparent, and constructive engagement with the evidence. Everyone should feel safe in expressing their own experience and opinions without fear of criticism or retaliation. The facilitator should make sure to gauge the temperature from time to time, monitor engagement and participation from all workshop participants, and use energizers where needed. Simple stretches, moving around the room, yoga breaths, and other opportunities for a physical and mental break are useful to refresh and re-engage.

TIP

Facilitating candid conversations with COIN. In many cases it can be difficult to encourage staff to speak candidly and respectfully about the challenges they face, and issues related to partners, or certain teams.

Try applying the COIN model to help.

When someone wants to address a challenge that they faced and we want to extract the learning, they should explain 1) the **CONTEXT** in which it happened (be brief and specific - when and where), 2) their own **OBSERVATIONS** of the actions and behaviors this person witnessed (stick to the facts), 3) the **IMPACT** of that action on them or the team/program (why it matters), and 4) **NEXT** identify the changes or steps needed to fix the situation. Consider the local culture and whether people are likely to not speak forthrightly and may need encouragement (and structure like the COIN), and when there is a tendency to point fingers, name and blame others (COIN can help, but try to keep away from targeting individuals). Also be sure to consider power dynamics within small groups, and across the workshop in general. Some staff may be reluctant to speak in front of superiors or those in a position of authority.

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The facilitator and workshop organizers should make sure there are flip charts prepared for the exercises themselves, but also for 'parking lot' items like :

- Missing data/evidence (where small group work didn't have sufficient information to answer their learning questions - what would they have liked to have?)
- What Would Participants Say? Make sure we consistently ask ourselves if we have data about project participant voice, and if not, what do we think they would say?
- Questions we should have asked but didn't (learning questions and conversations often lead to other questions we find even more interesting and pertinent - if there isn't time to explore them but they feel important, note them here)
- Recommendations for Next Time (can be included in the Evaluation too, but if suggestions come up during the workshop itself, they can be documented in real time)
- Kudos (encourage people to share positive feedback with one another and recognize good performance and participation in creative ways)
- Others that seem useful to your team.

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- WORKSHOP EVALUATION

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FOLLOW-THROUGH ON THE LEARNING

Following completion of the FFT Workshop, a few steps still need to be taken.

ACTION PLAN

The Program Manager can work with the Facilitator to refine and finalize the Action Plan, add required details and timeline, and add them to the team's work plan, if appropriate. In particular, where Action Items are designed to facilitate upcoming funding requests, they will need to be activated quickly. The Action Plan template can be completed as is, or adapted as needed. Additional columns for updates can be added as well, monitoring both completion of activities, and the results achieved.

SECTION 3 PRACTICAL TOOLS

ACTION PLAN

WORKSHOP EVALUATION

Results from the FFT Workshop Evaluation should also be analyzed and shared with the wider group. Dissemination options include a brief report and/or a dashboard shared through email or Sharepoint highlighting key findings from the evaluation survey. The evaluation results should highlight what worked well and what the next steps are, and encourage other iterations of Pause and Reflect sessions by the program, or by smaller teams and departments. See the **Additional Resources** section for more information and guidance.

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WORKSHOP EVALUATION

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LEARNING BRIEF

Following the workshop, the Program Manager and/or Facilitator (or other assigned team member) should compile the results of the SOAR exercises and other documentation from the workshop into a Learning Brief to be reviewed by the participants and partners before being finalized. This document, or some version of it, may be shared with country leadership, donors, cluster meetings, country or regional offices, HQ, or other appropriate venues, depending on the sensitivity of the findings. It should further be stored in an accessible location for future reference to improve similar program models.

Consider knowledge management tools like Sharepoint or Google and other platforms your organization may be using to foster engagement and learning. Once Learning Briefs like this are produced and disseminated, they should be housed in a centralized repository that everyone knows how to access and use. They can provide an ongoing narrative of learning and adaptation over the life of the program. This could also be where shared management tools like work plans, IPTTs, Change or Pivot Logs, and this workshop's Action Plan are kept in order to keep everyone informed and operating in the same direction. Program Managers should be responsible for sharing such documentation, but can work with their MEL Manager/Director/Lead and possibly their country or regional representatives to understand common practice and appropriate platforms used locally and to be consistent in this practice.

BEHAVIOR CHANGE

Program Managers should ensure that there is a shared access site of some kind so all team members are able to see results like these. Seeing learning and results from past events and what has changed as a result may encourage replication and foster new ideas as well, therefore it is important that the results of the pause and reflection sessions are integrated into the agencies' overall knowledge management systems and practices in some way.

SECTION 3
PRACTICAL TOOLS

FFT LEARNING BRIEF

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OTHER NEXT STEPS - IMPORTANT TIPS[2]

One Learning Objective from this workshop was to equip participants with tools and experience using CLA components - in particular the Pause and Reflect session - to improve program performance. How can your program learn more regularly during implementation? What other programs could benefit from a pause and reflect session?

This toolkit and the agenda are just one example of how a session/workshop like this can be planned and managed, but there are many different ways to accomplish our learning objectives. Below are reminders from the USAID Learn site (https://usaidlearninglab.org/cla-toolkit) about Pause and Reflect sessions. (More resources can be found in the **Additional Resources** section below.)

- **There is no one way to pause and reflect!** Many different activities can be considered pause and reflect activities. A pause and reflect session can be an in-person after action review meeting, or facilitated as a Google Doc staff journal that is open for input on a quarterly basis. The important thing is the intention of the activity as a thinking and learning opportunity.
- **Set a purpose.** Determining an agreed-upon purpose with participants is a useful first step when undertaking a pause and reflect session. This common understanding sets the tone for the session, helps to focus and encourages participant investment in the discussion and outcomes.
- **Be inclusive.** The most successful pause and reflect sessions seriously consider how to involve participants in a way that meets their needs and diverse learning styles, while holding a safe space for sharing different perspectives.

TIP

Follow-Through Messaging.

As important to workshop success as pre-workshop messaging is ensuring that there is communication about what happened at the workshop and what the next steps are. All of the points in this section (action planning, Learning Brief, knowledge management, workshop results, etc.) should be shared and followed up on to ensure that the purpose of all this is truly about *using the learning to improve*.

CONTINUE

2 https://usaidlearninglab.org/qrg/pause-and-reflect#:~:text=Important%20Tips,input%20on%20a%20quarterly%20basis.

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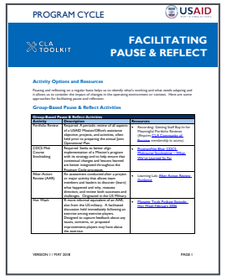
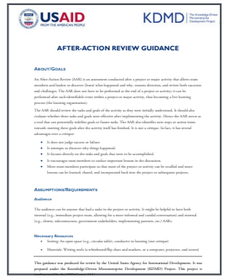
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

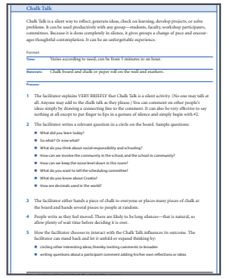
Following is a selection of links to USAID and other external resources that offer tips, guidance, specific tools, and facilitation support for Pause and Reflect sessions of all shapes and sizes.



FACILITATING PAUSE AND REFLECT SESSIONS (USAID)



FACILITATING AFTER ACTION REVIEWS

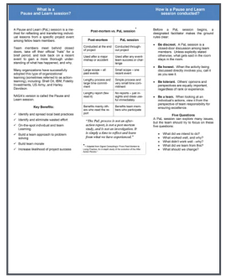


CHALK TALK EXERCISE

INTRODUCING APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

USAID: WALKING THE TALK ON PAUSE AND REFLECT

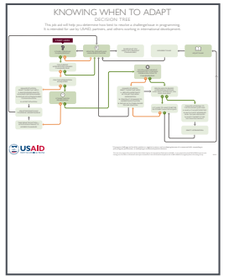
DESIGNING AND FACILITATING PAUSE AND REFLECT SESSIONS



PAUSE AND LEARN SESSIONS AT NASA

PAUSE AND REFLECT WORKSHOP GUIDE (HEADLIGHT CONSULTING)

And since the purpose of this work is better Adaptive Management, below are some resources on Adaptive Management as well.



KNOWING WHEN TO ADAPT DECISION TREE

MAKING ADAPTIVE RIGOR WORK

GUIDE TO HIRING ADAPTIVE STAFF

THE ROAD TO ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT (BEAM EXCHANGE)

SECTION ENDS

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

A Pause and Reflect Toolkit for Emergency Food Security Programs

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PREPARE

Begin the planning: FFT PLANNING TEMPLATE

Choose a facilitator: SOW — FACILITATOR SCOPE OF WORK

Identify learning priorities: LEARNING QUESTION MATRIX; LEARNING QUESTIONS - BRIEF

Develop the Agenda: WORKSHOP AGENDA TEMPLATES

Prepare Data Sources: DATA PLANNING DETAILS; DATA PRESENTATION SUGGESTIONS

Invite Attendees: SAMPLE FFT INVITATION MESSAGE; FFP INVITATION TRACKER

IMPLEMENT

At the Workshop: DETAILED WORKSHOP AGENDA

At the Workshop: CLA TEMPERATURE CHECK

At the Workshop: PROGRAM TIMELINE EXERCISE

At the Workshop: SOAR — SOAR TEMPLATE

At the Workshop: SOAR — SOAR DISCUSSION GUIDES

At the Workshop: LESSONS LEARNED TEMPLATE

At the Workshop: WORKSHOP EVALUATION

FOLLOW-THROUGH

Action Planning: ACTION PLAN

Documenting the Learning: FFT LEARNING BRIEF

PRACTICAL TOOLS

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PREPARE

CLICK TO
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CONTINUE

PRACTICAL TOOLS

PREPARE | IMPLEMENT | FOLLOW-THROUGH

FFT PLANNING TEMPLATE

OVERVIEW	
Program Name	
Program Manager	
MEL Manager/Director	
Donor	
Country	
EVENT PLANNING	
Type of Session format (8 hours total time suggested, but first time conducting may require 10-12 hours)	• in-person • hybrid (some in-person and some virtual) • fully virtual
Days Allocated	• 1 - 1.5 days dedicated (8-12 hours) • 2-3 half days (4 hours per day) • 5 partial days (2-3 hours per day)
Facilitator	
Notetaker/Timekeeper	
Number of Participants	
Event Venue (live) or Platform (virtual)	
Proposed Date/s	
FFT PLANNING MEETING	
Attendees (please describe)	
Date	
Key Learning Priorities Identified (note that number of question becomes group number below)	1.
	2.
	3.
	4.
	5.

(CONTINUE)

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ALL TOOLS & LINKS

PREPARE — FFT Planning Template

PREPARE — Facilitator SOW

PREPARE — Learning Questions - Brief

PREPARE — Data Planning Details

PREPARE — Data Presentation Suggestions

PREPARE — Sample FFT Invitation

PREPARE — Workshop Agenda Templates

IMPLEMENT

FOLLOW-THROUGH

4 FACILITATORS' GUIDES

PREPARE

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PRACTICAL TOOLS

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SOW

FACILITATOR SCOPE OF WORK

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In this section provide background information of the program, the purpose of the pause and reflection session, partners and parties involved.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The list of responsibilities below are illustrative and should be adapted to the specific needs of the program. **FFT Workshop facilitator is responsible for the following tasks:**

- Work with the program's management to clarify and focus the purpose and the deliverables of the pause and reflection session
- Conduct planning meeting with the key program leaders to outline clear focus for the session, specific clear objectives and learning priorities, and learning questions
- Develop a clear workplan leading up to the pause and reflection session
- Work in collaboration with the program team and partners to consolidate program data relevant to the objectives and needs of the pause and reflection sessions
- Adapt FFT materials for the program specifics (e.g., technical sectors, participants, learning questions)
- Ensure appropriate partner engagement as per prior agreed upon terms throughout the process
- Ensure various products developed during preparation state are appropriately communicated to all relevant stakeholders
- Draft FFT Workshop agenda, gather feedback from program teams and identified partners, finalize and help Program Manager communicate the agenda
- Work with the program team to ensure appropriate logistical support is secured, including materials, resources, venue, translation, transportation, note takers, etc.
- Develop session content, organize facilitation tools, templates
- Create space where all data, resources, knowledge and discussions will be stored, share with appropriate personnel to allow easy access to the required resources. Use the space to coordinate transfer of data, reports, and tools, following the relevant data protection and security policy
- Coach, support, and build capacity of co-facilitators
- Work with the translators in advance to ensure technical terminology is correctly translated and used during the sessions
- Facilitate FFT workshop
- Conduct an evaluation of the workshop/session
- Finalize notes and document all action points agreed upon
- Document the outcomes, learning and recommendations emerging form the pause and reflection
- Prepare an action/improvement plan working closely with the program team and partners
- Prepare and finalize additional deliverables agreed upon with the program team

(CONTINUE)

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PREPARE Learning Questions - Brief

PREPARE Data Planning Details

PREPARE Data Presentation Suggestions

PREPARE Sample FFT Invitation

PREPARE Workshop Agenda Templates

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PREPARE

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DOWNLOAD

PRACTICAL TOOLS

PREPARE | IMPLEMENT | FOLLOW-THROUGH

LEARNING QUESTIONS - BRIEF

An overall summary of learning and probing questions related to Program Performance considerations is provided below. A comprehensive Learning Question Guide which is matrixed with columns for common BHA Technical Sectors, is linked separately below.

The purpose of these questions is to dig deep into aspects of program performance (time, budget, results, quality, accountability, coordination, and local capacity), across these various technical components. Program leaders should be able to use their own knowledge and program documents and data to identify the areas ripe for reflection, based on their Strengths (or successes) or their Opportunities. Select 3-6 questions (depending on the size of the workshop).

	PROGRAM PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY KEY COMPONENTS	Right Questions - Key questions What questions help determine performance and overall quality of our work? What evidence can help answer these questions?
1	A ON TIME	**ASK:** How well do we adhere to schedule and deliverables? Was the response timely for project participants, considering the local context? What did partners and communities think? **PROBE:** Was work plan managed and accessible; what were successes and challenges, how did they affect program results; when did we know about them and what was done; how well was schedule data used to inform adaptive management; was timing and response appropriate from the perspective of partners and participants?
2	ON BUDGET	**ASK:** How well did we meet the program's financial commitments and obligations? What did partners and communities think? **PROBE:** Was budget based on current understanding of context; what were successes and challenges, how did they affect program results; when did we know about them and what was done; how well was budget data used to inform adaptive management; was budget adequate and proportionate for the activities implemented; was budget adequate from the perspective of partners and participants?

(CONTINUE)

CONTINUE

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DATA PLANNING DETAILS

From the selected Learning Questions, identify which data sources will be most useful for the workshop, mark them as 'Required' and assign them to a team member for assembling. If possible, suggest a presentation method, or content focus for the data (e.g., just demographics in the baseline, select indicator results, particular PDM questions, etc.).

REQUIRED	DATA SOURCE	ASSIGNED TO	SUGGESTED PRESENTATION METHODS OR CONTENT[1]
	Agricultural Season Calendar		
	Baselines/ assessments		
	Budgets		
	CARM Results		
	Change logs/Issues log		
	Cluster data and reports		
	Conflict and/ or Security Assessments; Crisis Analytics if available		
	Coordination meeting minutes and attendance		
	Exit Strategies/ Handover Records		
	GEDSI reports		
	Gender/Protection Assessment		

(CONTINUE)

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DATA PRESENTATION SUGGESTIONS

RIGHT DATA SOURCES	RIGHT DATA RELEVANT DATA POINTS	RIGHT DATA PRESENTATION
What information do we need to make the decision or answer the question?	What i nformation from this source do we need to understand key trends/findings?	How can we present this data to help us understand key trends/findings?
Baseline	Baselines are likely to include contextual information that can inform programming such as targeting strategies, geographic locations for programming, and developing a clearer picture of food insecurity through an examination of market dynamics (prices, item availability, market actors, and supply chains), food consumption practices, nutritional assessments, and mitigation techniques.	Baseline information about consumption and spending habits when paired with expenditure data and market prices from regular market monitoring can provide a picture of how the program is impacting market dynamics by identifying changes in supply and demand trends. Highlight key information in the baseline report and graphs that display market trends and behavior in order to compare to PDM and market monitoring results
CARM Assessment Results	Key findings include: trusted feedback pathways, frequency of types of feedback (e.g. use of assistance, targeting feedback, obstacles to assistance, etc.) by sex, age, and geography (as possible)	Table or column chart with options to filter/disagregate by sex, age, and geography.
CARM Feedback Metrics	Frequency to types of feedback categories (e.g. use of assistance, targeting feedback, obstacles to assistance, requests for inclusion into program, etc.)	Table or bar chart with associated filters, consider line chart if representing trends in those responses over time (eg. if the program wishes to compare responses before or after a shock). Highlight % of issues resolved, how resolved, nature of issues, etc.
Communications deliverables (blog posts, visuals, posters, etc.)	Organize communication deliverables by target group	Highlight key sections in the narrative so groups can easily find the key information

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SAMPLE FFT INVITATION

PRINTABLE LETTERHEAD AVAILABLE ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

You're invited.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Dear _____,

I am pleased to invite you to attend a one-day pause and reflection workshop being held in Goma on January 22, 2022. This workshop is entitled EFSP: Food for Thought, and is designed to allow team members to come together to discuss our work in terms of performance and quality, and to identify opportunities for improvement.

I know it is difficult to make the space for these types of events, working as hard as you do. But it is important to take time once in a while to 'pause and reflect' on what this work means, and how we get better, especially as we look ahead to future funding and new program cycles.

Below are some details about the session. Please respond to this email as soon as you are able to confirm your attendance and begin making travel arrangements, if necessary.

Date: January 22, 2022
Time: 8:30 am - 4:00 pm
Place: Juneau Palace, Goma City Center

Lunch and tea breaks will be provided.

Since an important part of this session is using data and evidence to discuss performance and quality, you may be asked to help prepare some data such as BVAs, survey results, CARM data, monitoring updates, work plans, or gender analysis. The planning team will contact you to let you know what is required and to support you in doing so.

Please come prepared to dedicate your time and attention to this session.

I look forward to seeing you there!

Sincerely,

Program Manager

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WORKSHOP AGENDA TEMPLATES

The FFT Workshop is designed to be flexible for your team's availability. It can be conducted in a full-day in person, 2 half day sessions, or 2-hour sessions over 5 days. It is possible to host a remote workshop, though the preparation will be more time consuming.

IN-PERSON AGENDA: 1 FULL DAY

	SESSION	TIME	OBJECTIVE
	Welcome and Icebreaker	30 min	Set tone and establish expectations for the day.
1	Introductory Exercises	60 min	Get a temperature check on how people think the program is doing for each of the 6 CLA components identified, and collectively recognize the internal and external factors and forces that have influenced the program's.
2	SOAR Part 1 - Strengths and Opportunities	90 min	Identify strengths and opportunities from a review of your program/ sector's performance and quality, using and highlighting evidence.
	Tea/Coffee	15 min	
	Gallery Walk	45 min	Strengths and Opportunities are further refined through Q&A and added insights from other group members.
3	CLA Reflection	15 min	Apply CLA concepts to program performance and see connections between *what we do* and *how we do it*.
	Lunch Break	45 min	
	Plenary Energizer	15 min	Welcome back with an Energizer and finish CLA Reflection in plenary.
4	SOAR Part 2 - Aspirations and Results	45 min	Participants identify, discuss and prioritize their Aspirations for the program's future, and the tangible Results that their achievement will lead to.
5	Collective Picture	60 min	Consolidate what participants have learned so far by drawing connections across groups and clarifying Lessons Learned.
	Tea/Coffee	10 min	
6	Action Planning	80 min	Begin to identify clear next steps for an Action Plan for achieving Aspirations.
7	Wrap-up	30 min	Summarize the day, explain next steps, and share key takeaways with one another.

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DETAILED WORKSHOP AGENDA

TIME	TOPIC	OBJECTIVE AND DESCRIPTION
8:30 - 8:50	WELCOME / INTRO	**OBJECTIVE:** Set tone and establish expectations for the day.
		Share objectives of the meeting, review the agenda, set rules, explain purpose and hopes, listen to each other.
		Simple Icebreaker activity, then break into assigned groups (see flipcharts).
8:50 - 9:30	SESSION 1. INTRODUCTORY EXERCISES	**OBJECTIVE 1:** Collectively recognize the internal and external factors and forces that have influenced the program's performance over time.
		OBJECTIVE 2: Get a temperature check on how people think the program is doing for each of the 8 CLA components identified.
		The day will start out with an interactive exercise in which team members construct a Project Timeline highlighting both internal and external events of significance that have occurred within the program's tenure. This will be followed by a brief, online CLA self-assessment.
9:30 - 11:00	SESSION 1: SOAR SMALL GROUP EXERCISE PART 1	**OBJECTIVE:** Identify strengths and opportunities from a review of your program/sector's performance and quality, using and highlighting evidence.
		In small groups, workshop participants discuss their assigned Learning Question using available source data, and identify Strengths and Opportunities based on them, filling in Flip Chart templates. Each Strength and Opportunity will also be linked to the relevant data point from this source data. What highlights about program performance does the evidence demonstrate? This activity is followed by a Gallery Walk where workshop participants are able to review other groups' flip charts and offer additional insights and questions.
11:00 11:15		COFFEE/TEA BREAK
11:15 - 12:00	GALLERY WALK	**OBJECTIVE:** Strengths and Opportunities are further refined through Q&A and added insights from other group members.
		Workshop participants are able to review other groups' flip charts and offer additional insights and questions.

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IMPLEMENT — SOAR Discussion Guides

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CLA TEMPERATURE CHECK

Using a very brief CLA temperature check, the group reviews the following six CLA categories and determines the strength of each capacity on a red-amber-green scale as outlined below. The USAID Cards provide more detail on each component, the ideal, desired state of practice, and the levels of maturity within a program or organization. For the sake of simplicity, these have been converted into a simple traffic rating system, based on whether the desired practice is usually or consistently done, rarely or sometimes done, or almost never done. Based on discussion, the Facilitator places an X in the box for each component. Process can also be performed using a Mentimeter online quiz (mentimeter.com), or by using a flip chart on the wall for participants to place stickers or checkmarks.

		RED (almost never)	AMBER (sometimes)	GREEN (almost always)
1	Collaboration: Are we strategically engaging other teams/offices and/or individuals regarding planning and implementation? Have we identified and engaged meaningfully with key stakeholders?			
2	Learning: Do we use our Theories of Change and seek to fill gaps in its evidence base? How well do we use M&E data for learning and improvement?			
3	Adapting: Do we use pause and reflect sessions regularly and do we use the learning and evidence for decision-making and critical adaptations to our work?			
4	Culture: Are we comfortable as a team sharing ideas and hearing alternatives? Do we share information and develop trusting relationships and networks? Are staff motivated to learn, reflect, and commit to continuous improvement?			
5	Processes: Do we have systems of knowledge management and institutional learning? Is decision-making distributed and transparent? Are stakeholders involved in decision-making?			
6	Resources: Do we commit resources to intentional learning and improvement? Are roles and responsibilities for CLA clear and prioritized?			

GREEN - Usually or Consistently doing: Area functioning properly. This is going well and is progressing as planned, and according to the designated time, budget, and scope.

AMBER - Rarely, Inconsistently, or Only Sometimes doing: Area needs attention. There may exist potential issues and that project needs assistance in the future. This is an area of concern and requires attention by the team and management.

RED - Almost Never doing: Area of concern. Problems are arising in this area and the project team needs to resolve them in order to deliver the project successfully.

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PROGRAM TIMELINE EXERCISE

LEARNING OBJECTIVE
Review key program achievements

TIME
30 minutes

FACILITATOR MATERIALS
- Masking tape
- Post-it notes or half sheets of A4 paper (3 different colors if possible)
- 3 different colored markers for every three participants
- Prepared half sheets for 1) Agreement Signed, 2) Agreement end date, 3) Other major administrative milestones.
- Prepare a timeline on a large blank wall. Start by putting a long piece of masking tape horizontally across the wall at shoulder level. Then, write years on the tape starting with the year the program started to the present year. Write each year about a foot away from the last year.

STEPS

1. Explain that participants will work in four groups to develop a calendar timeline for their program, recognizing that each person may be from a different team or department. This activity is a way to practice reviewing key achievements and constraints throughout the life of the program, look for themes, and set the team up to better review lessons learned.

2. Have participants count off by four (4) to create four groups. Give each group a different color of paper or post-it or marker to distinguish that group's work.
Explain that the group will brainstorm from one of the following groups and write ideas on post-its or A4 half sheets of the appropriate color, and add it to the timeline on the wall under the appropriate year or period (use quarters for one-year programs). One event or thought per post-it/ paper, write clear and large. (15 min.)

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SOAR

SOAR DISCUSSION GUIDES

(sample based on specific question below - guides for actual session to be developed after planning session)

FFT WORKSHOP
SOAR ANALYSIS - SMALL GROUP WORK
(sample discussion guide)
Program Performance Component ON TIME
Question Focus: ☐ Whole of Program ☐ Technical Sector
Agriculture_____

ASK: How well do we adhere to schedule and deliverables? Was the response timely for project participants and aligned with local needs, events, and seasons?

PART 1 - STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Step 1 (40 minutes):
Review questions below and available data sources to discuss responses to some or all of the following questions. Skip any you think are not helpful or relevant. Add more thoughtful analysis as appropriate. Rely on both the documented evidence (look for data, but also compare the program implementation data with the original plans and documents), and discussion with your group members about their experience or understanding. If you feel information is missing, ask the Facilitator, there may be something else available to answer your questions. Or ask an expert from another group if you need verification of something that is not well documented, but someone may have firsthand knowledge of. If questions are still unanswered, have Facilitator make note of them.

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SOAR TEMPLATE

FLIP CHART TEMPLATE

FOOD FOR THOUGHT SOAR TEMPLATE

Strengths Opportunities Aspirations Results

Group Members:	Learning Question:

STRENGTHS (success-what went well)	KEY FINDINGS (from the data)

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WORKSHOP EVALUATION

[SITE], [DATE]

Overall, how would you rate this event? (place X in the appropriate box)

1 (very poor)	2 (poor)	3 (average)	4 (good)	5 (very good)

To what extent did this workshop accomplish its Objectives?

Objective	Not at all	Somewhat	Quite a bit
To identify key learning from [program name] and create an action plan based on it to help improve future programming.			
To use key CLA concepts to improve program performance.			
To increase capacity of all program staff to work with various data sources in understanding program performance and quality and promoting adaptive management.			

Please rate the workshop activities in terms of their contribution to workshop objectives and your learning?

Activity	1 (very poor)	2 (poor)	3 (average)	4 (good)	5 (very good)
Session 1. Project Timeline and CLA Assessment					
Session 2. Learning Questions – SOAR Part 1					
Session 3. CLA Reflection					

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WORKSHOP EVALUATION

[SITE], [DATE]

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To what extent did this workshop accomplish its Objectives?

Objective	Not at all	Somewhat	Quite a bit
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Session 3. CLA Reflection					

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ACTION PLAN

#	Action Item	Person/ Team Responsible	Due Date	Resources Required	Impact	Effort
					High Med-High Medium Med-Low Low	High Med-High Medium Med-Low Low

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FFT LEARNING BRIEF

[NAME OF PROGRAM]

[Country] [Donor]
[Dates of Learning Review]
[Description of Learning Review process]

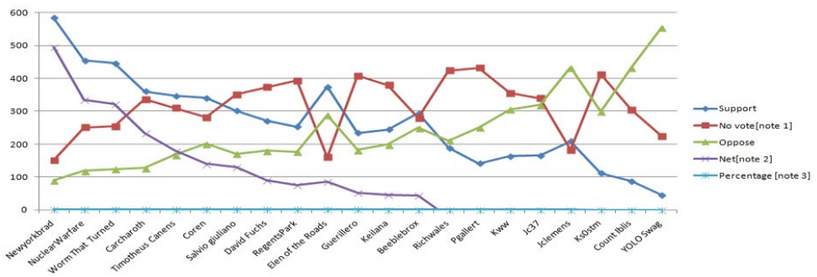
Describe the event, the participants, the length of time, and any key tools or processes used.

Brief Description of Program

Infographics/Data Cited

Share a few key data points for the program at large - total participants, distributions, significant changes or other items.

Use Space for Additional Data or graphs



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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

A Pause and Reflect Toolkit for Emergency Food Security Programs

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Planning the FFT Workshop:

FFT PLANNING MEETING - FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

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Setting up for the FFT Workshop:

SETTING UP FOR THE WORKSHOP

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Presenting the FFT Workshop:

PPT

EFSP FFT WORKSHOP SLIDE DECK

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FFT PLANNING MEETING FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

- The Planning Team consists of the Facilitator, Program Manager, MEL Manager/Director/ Lead, Operations Manager, and (if appropriate) HAT Manager.
- Expect to spend approximately 1 hour for this meeting..
- Complete the FFTPlanning Template based on the results of this meeting

Before this meeting

- MEL Manager updates the Learning Question Matrix with the appropriate Technical Sectors for the program being reviewed and considers any sector-specific adaptations and questions that may be appropriate.
- Program Manager schedules the Planning Meeting, requesting that participants think in advance about the areas they think most important for learning.
- Program Manager should ensure that program documents (BVAs, IPTT, PDMs, reports, etc.) are up-to-date and available for all Planning Team members.

During this meeting - 3 Key Steps

1) Right questions: Choose priority learning questions
2) Right data: Make a plan to prepare data sources for reflection
3) Right people: Assign participants to the right small groups

STEP 1. RIGHT QUESTIONS

Choose 2-4 priority learning questions. One of the key goals of this meeting is to determine the specific learning questions to be explored in the FFT workshop. To help teams identify these questions, the Learning Question Matrix has been developed. This tool provides seven performance components (time, scope, budget, accountability, sustainability, gender and protection mainstreaming, and humanitarian coordination). Each component is represented by one or two overarching questions, and linked to a set of deeper probing questions to more fully explore what it means to be 'on time' or 'on scope' or 'accountable' (see the Learning Questions - Brief for an overview). There is also a set of columns matrixed with these components that represent the BHA technical sectors. Any of these seven performance

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SETTING UP FOR THE WORKSHOP

FACILITATOR'S WORKSHOP GUIDE

Room Set Up:

- Post-its, markers, sharpies and masking tape
- Set up the room with enough "Crescent Round" style tables for each small group (e.g., 4), with 5-7 chairs at each table. Make sure you have a table for each learning area.
- Set up an additional table and chairs for the facilitator's materials and any people assisting in facilitation.

Materials needed:

- Projector and screen
- Colored sticky notes or half sheets of paper for notes
- Flip chart pages on walls (Use a slide deck if virtual)
  - Workshop Agenda
  - Workshop Learning Objectives (see below)
  - Small groups assignments by component (can list separately and post at each table)
  - Outstanding questions - As the workshop proceeds there will be more questions arise than there is time to explore; make sure to capture these questions for continued reflection and identify a follow up time they will be addressed
  - Parking Lot (and other extra flip charts as needed)
  - Ground Rules for workshop

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IMPLEMENT SOAR Discussion: *Facilitator's Guide*
IMPLEMENT EFSP FFT Workshop Slide Deck

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FFT WORKSHOP FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

The FFT Workshop is designed to be flexible for your team's availability. It can be conducted in a full-day in person, 2 half-day sessions, or 2-3 hour sessions over 5 days. It is possible to host a remote workshop, though the preparation will be more time consuming.

Also note that the one-day agenda is very full. For teams that have never done a reflection like this, some of the activities may take longer than this agenda suggests, and the first time implementation of the full workshop may take closer to one and a half days. Future iterations will have fewer activities, and people will be more familiar with the expectations and practiced in the kind of analytical and critical thinking that is required.

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IMPLEMENT FFT Workshop: *Facilitator's Guide*

IMPLEMENT SOAR Discussion: *Facilitator's Guide*

IMPLEMENT EFSP FFT Workshop Slide Deck

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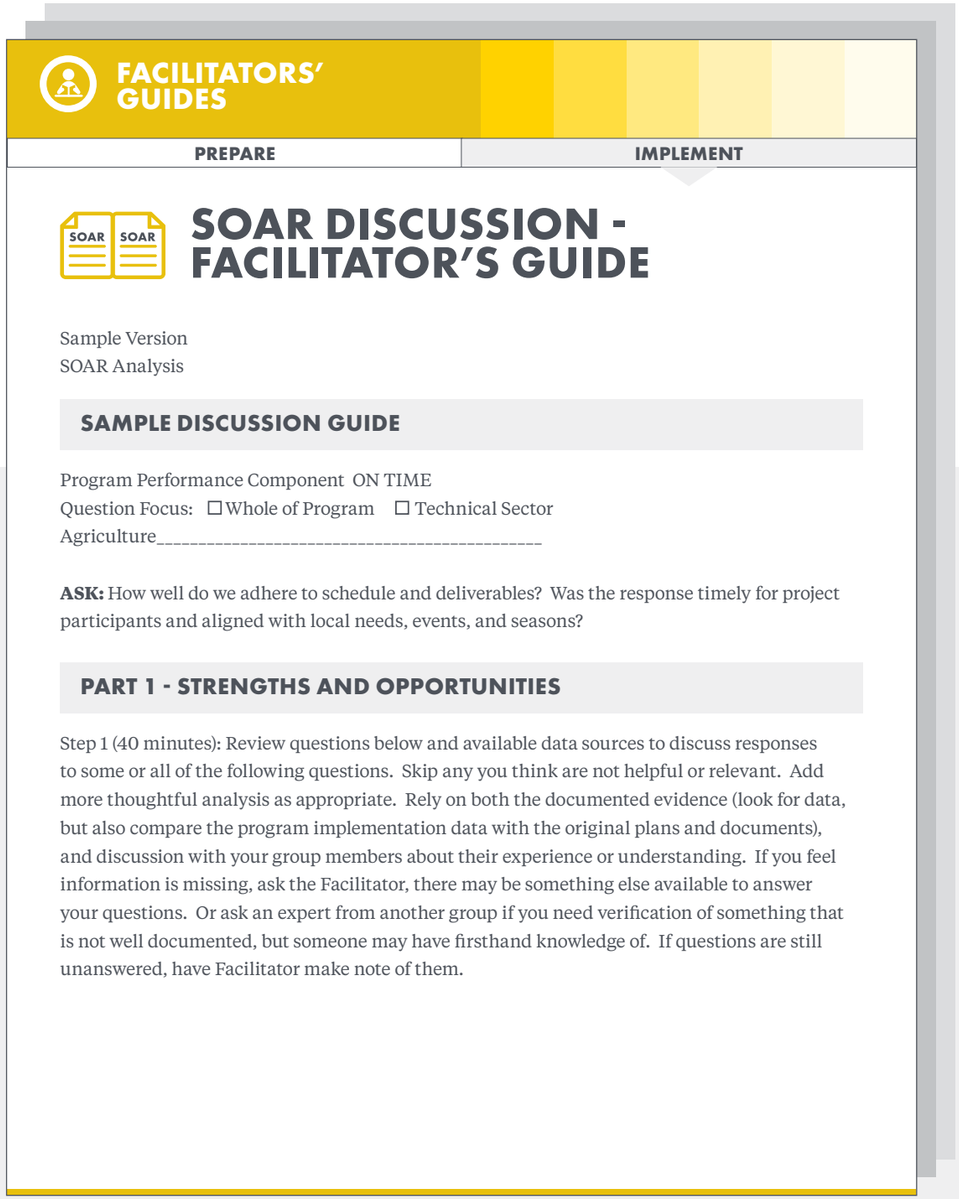

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SOAR DISCUSSION - FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

Sample Version
SOAR Analysis

SAMPLE DISCUSSION GUIDE

Program Performance Component ON TIME
Question Focus: ☐ Whole of Program ☐ Technical Sector
Agriculture_____

ASK: How well do we adhere to schedule and deliverables? Was the response timely for project participants and aligned with local needs, events, and seasons?

PART 1 - STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Step 1 (40 minutes): Review questions below and available data sources to discuss responses to some or all of the following questions. Skip any you think are not helpful or relevant. Add more thoughtful analysis as appropriate. Rely on both the documented evidence (look for data, but also compare the program implementation data with the original plans and documents), and discussion with your group members about their experience or understanding. If you feel information is missing, ask the Facilitator, there may be something else available to answer your questions. Or ask an expert from another group if you need verification of something that is not well documented, but someone may have firsthand knowledge of. If questions are still unanswered, have Facilitator make note of them.

1 OVERVIEW AND TOOLKIT STRUCTURE
2 PAUSE AND REFLECT GUIDE
3 PRACTICAL TOOLS
4 FACILITATORS' GUIDES
ALL TOOLS & LINKS
PREPARE
IMPLEMENT Setting Up for the Workshop
IMPLEMENT FFT Workshop: *Facilitator's Guide*
IMPLEMENT SOAR Discussion: *Facilitator's Guide*
IMPLEMENT EFSP FFT Workshop Slide Deck

IMPLEMENT

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