

# Sustainable & Inclusive Landscape Governance

A Toolkit for Dialogue Facilitators







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**Sustainable & Inclusive Landscape Governance:  
A Toolkit for Dialogue Facilitators**

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# FOREWORD

Landscape approaches have gained momentum because of their premise to achieve conservation and development simultaneously within landscapes. Over the past twenty years they have evolved from focusing on the ecological integrity of landscapes, to focusing on the well-being of those living within landscapes. Most recently, they have become a vehicle for private companies and investors to combine their business interests with those interests of the landscape and its inhabitants, aiming for more sustainability and social inclusion.

One of the key elements of landscape approaches is landscape governance. Landscape governance highlights the importance of having transparent processes of dialogue and decision making among a landscape's stakeholders, while embedding this dialogue in policy processes across the policy ladder. As such, landscape governance is promoted as a means to tackle the incompatibilities between stakeholder needs and interests, without compromising on the needs of those right holders directly depending on landscape resources to secure their livelihoods.

However, despite the popularity of landscape governance as a concept, the difficulties of shaping its practice are largely ignored. There are hardly any materials available that guide practitioners in the design and facilitation of landscape governance dialogue. This is why the work of the Forest Foundation Philippines is groundbreaking. It not only conceptualizes landscape governance dialogue, but it also shows how landscape governance dialogue is built in practice, through adequate design and effective facilitation on the ground.

The **Sustainable and Inclusive Landscape Governance Dialogue Toolkit** is therefore the first of its kind. The philosophy behind is that good landscape governance dialogue comprises

the facilitation of dialogue between people. But it also comprises the creation of the institutional space which is needed for people to engage. It finally comprises the design of larger processes of dialogue, to embed dialogue in policy processes at various levels of spatial decision making.

The **Toolkit** tells the story of a series of dialogues that took place in the Philippines from 2018 to 2020. The series were innovative and daring, as they represent a process of complementary dialogue within landscapes, between landscapes, and between landscapes and higher levels of policy making. It has led to better understanding between landscape actors, and practical landscape propositions to be taken forward. It has also led to better understanding between local, regional and national levels of spatial decision, to align stakeholder interests between these levels. All in all, it represents a vivid example of horizontal and vertical policy consultation, and deserves ample attention within the Philippines and beyond.

The **Toolkit** is born out of practice, and filled with practical tools and instruments to make dialogue happen where it is needed. Its appearance is highly interactive, and accessible to all who may wish to use it. I can wholeheartedly recommend it to individuals, men and women, old and young, communities, citizen groups, non-governmental organisations, (local) governments, and private companies who are willing to build relations. Relations with stakeholders, between stakeholders within a landscape, and between landscapes and higher levels where policies are designed and implemented. Dialogue is the beginning of change, and herewith the beginning of more sustainable and inclusive landscapes, in the Philippines and beyond.

**Cora van Oosten**

*Senior Advisor Natural Resources Management  
Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation  
Wageningen University and Research*

# TOOLKIT OVERVIEW

## WHAT IS THIS TOOLKIT FOR?



One of the challenging aspects of a dialogue is facilitating people from different backgrounds, sectors, and advocacies as we come together for a common purpose. As active participants of the Sustainable and Inclusive Landscape Governance (SILG) dialogues from 2018 to 2020, we have a wealth of knowledge and experience in designing, facilitating, and continuing landscape governance dialogues. This toolkit aims to build on our good work by offering different perspectives, scenarios, tips, and tricks gathered from facilitators like us so we can continue the dialogues, and follow up on the suggestions that were put forward over the past three years.

This toolkit also offers ways to understand ourselves better as facilitators, so we can come up with new strategies for designing and facilitating landscape dialogues.



# WHO IS THIS TOOLKIT FOR?

This toolkit is intended for Civil Society Organization (CSO) representatives who want to continue designing and facilitating landscape governance dialogues. This toolkit can support us in our roles as facilitators and changemakers, weaving a web of needs, aspirations, good practices, and issues together so that we can facilitate changes in our landscapes.



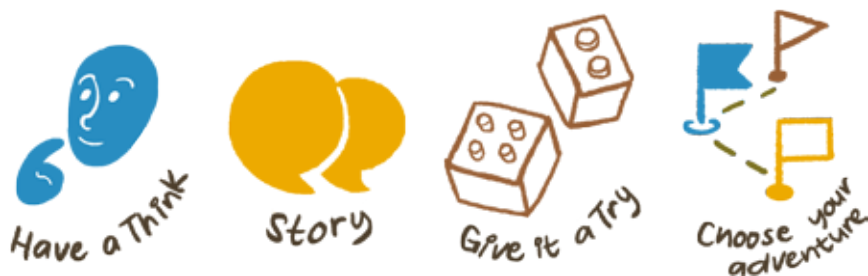
# HOW CAN WE USE THIS TOOLKIT?

This toolkit is modular in nature, but the modules are designed in such a way that you can take what you think you need at the time. Think of it as choosing your own adventure; we need certain cards in different situations, and we have the ability to ideate which strategy can fit best. As we embark on this journey, it is also important to acknowledge that we all come from different backgrounds and bring with us different motivations, experiences, and wisdom.

**As part of our adventure, we need to first level off certain expectations. In this light, we invite you to go through the Introduction to ensure that we are aligned with the language and expectations of a dialogue.**



Go through some reflection exercises (**Have a Think**) to help you understand your facilitator self better. From these exercises, you will be able to choose your own adventure for the rest of the toolkit based on which areas of dialogue facilitation you want to explore and grow in: facilitating people, facilitating spaces, or facilitating processes—or all!



## WHAT INSPIRED THIS TOOLKIT?

This toolkit was co-designed by Forest Foundation Philippines and Habi Education Lab, with inspiration from stories, provocations, lived experiences, and good practices of Forest Foundation Philippines' partner CSOs.

We conducted interviews with our partners from the Forest Foundation Philippines and dialogue facilitators to gather insights and perspectives on what kind of toolkit would be useful to experienced facilitators. We used our lens on Learning Experience Design to weave together different perspectives and our own experiences in facilitating groups of people from different backgrounds, sectors, and advocacies who come together for a common purpose.

This toolkit is also a work in progress. We hope to enrich the methods, and stories as we continue to design, and facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogues.

# INTRODUCTION

## WHAT IS A DIALOGUE?

A multi-stakeholder landscape dialogue is among the tools that we can use to foster sustainable and inclusive landscape governance. **Dialogues are active processes of getting to know other stakeholders and sectors in the landscape, and of seeing and understanding our landscapes—the issues that people face, the futures that they envision, and the ideas that they think can contribute to help the landscape.**

Dialogues are process-based approaches to build connections, share perspectives, and co-create ideas, concepts, and solutions.

Dialogues can be iterative in a sense that it has to be **regular and continuing**, improving each time we hold them. This does not mean that dialogues discuss themes in repetition; for dialogues to be powered to action, it is important to ensure that dialogues are always relevant and progressing.

Dialogues are not debates, nor heated discussions. Dialogues are also not just transactional, or a linear exchange of ideas, and information.



A meeting is not a dialogue pero it can be part of a dialogue. Meetings are more rigid, bound by certain procedures and rules. Dialogues [tend to be more] open-ended discussions, not bound by organizational rules or norms of engagement.

*Roger Garinga, IDEAS, Palawan*



# WHY DO WE USE DIALOGUES?



For the past three years, we have used dialogues to bring people together and find common ground that we can all start with. Different stakeholders interpret landscapes through different lenses and values, and dialogues are opportunities for us to make those values known so that we can make decisions in a more democratic and inclusive way. These are also opportunities for us to ask questions, imagine the possibilities, and engage with people that we might not always be in touch with.

As facilitators, we can design dialogues to become spaces where we communicate not just to be understood, but also to understand others. We can go beyond merely giving inputs and sharing what we know, to working together to make meaning, question deeply-seated assumptions, and challenge our own ideas by listening to others.



Dialogues can be a powerful way to be familiar with the way landscapes change over time and to influence these changes. As people engage in conversations and share their aspirations, the hope is that these can be translated into concrete recommendations that can improve how local policies are being crafted and implemented.

# WHAT MAKES A GOOD DIALOGUE?

In our years of designing and facilitating dialogues, we've learned that a good dialogue can be described as:



**A good dialogue is relevant.** If we intend to influence change through the dialogues, we must design relevant dialogues. It is our responsibility as organizers and facilitators to identify relevant themes to be discussed, and relevant stakeholders who can contribute and benefit from participating in the dialogues. In the case of the 2018-2020 dialogues, the facilitators identified these by starting with landscape governance assessments.

We are **also responsible** for designing activities that can facilitate exchanges, and deepen conversations on the themes we have identified.



**A good dialogue is creative.** As facilitators, we are called to try out new ways of thinking, and to explore out-of-the-box ways of working that bring us closer to the purpose of our dialogues. Creative dialogues inspire interaction and motivate participants to actively engage in the conversation. We can express our creativity, as well as bring it out in our participants by providing discussion tools, visual aids, or other materials that can help participants better connect to the topics at hand.



Hindi lang 'yan program; [dialogues] tackle life issues of communities, children, youth, and parents.

*Easter Canoy, Kitanglad Integrated NGOs, Bukidnon*





**A good dialogue is flexible and inclusive.** Good dialogues are not just static programs; we need not always stick to the planned agenda if we sense that the discussion is no longer productive. As facilitators, we are called to put the participants

first by understanding their unique needs and ensuring that the design of the dialogue is able to meet them. This does not just happen before the dialogue starts; we should be sensitive throughout the entire dialogue. As we continue to facilitate and participate in dialogues, we constantly develop our ability to pick up cues and observe changes in individual and group dynamics. These give us an idea of when we must redesign the program in order to achieve more effective engagement.



**A good dialogue is humane.**

A dialogue involves multiple stakeholders that may not see eye to eye on certain issues about the

landscape. Even facilitators might hold certain biases that are not easy to let go of. As facilitators, we are called to be kind, compassionate, and fair to everyone, and to inspire the same qualities in our participants. A good dialogue invites everyone to see each other as social beings, connected by our participation in the shared landscape.

As we go through the modules, we'll talk more deeply about how we might ensure that these qualities are present in the dialogues that we design and facilitate.



I think a good dialogue is one that engages on a personal or intellectual level. It is a two-way dialogue that respects various points of view and many ways of looking at an issue.

When I am part of a dialogue, I feel energized by the interest shown by participants in the topic, by their passion to share their stories and experiences, and by their excitement in arriving at a new insight or by being validated by other insights.

*Ryan Fuentes, Development  
Alternatives Incorporated, Palawan*



# WHO ARE INVOLVED IN A DIALOGUE?

Dialogues have organizers, facilitators, and participants. In rare cases, dialogues also have observers who want to become more familiar with the process before eventually participating themselves. Participants are at the heart of dialogues because they drive the whole process of identifying issues and finding resolutions. Among the participants who usually attend our dialogues are



There are, however, groups that we often miss out on engaging during dialogues. These include National Government Agencies (NGAs), private sector, and a greater part of our LGUs. In the modules, we will talk more deeply about the participants: who they are, why they are often overlooked, the strengths and insights they bring to the dialogue, and how we might include and better engage them.





# WHAT IS MY ROLE?

Facilitators are a vital part of dialogues. It is important to remember that there is no one perfect way to facilitate; we learn along the way and build our own personal facilitation styles as we encounter different circumstances. Over the years, these are what we learned about what a facilitator's role is:

**A facilitator proactively guides participants through prompts that steer the dialogue to meaningful directions.** As the facilitator, we are expected to:

- Help keep discussions going by providing prompts and questions;
- Steer conversations to meaningful points;
- Guide participants in coming up with ideas, priorities and solutions.

We use proactive approaches to inspire participants to engage and share their experiences. This also requires a certain level of sensitivity; we need to know when to continue with a topic, or when to reframe discussions to accommodate more fruitful sessions.

**A facilitator gets to know the participants and connects with them.** It is important that we know where participants are from, what sector they represent, what their backgrounds are, and what they might expect from participating in the dialogues. Sometimes we make the mistake of assuming that everyone invited to an event has the same understanding of, or affinity for the topic. In reality, however, some participants join out of curiosity or are volunteered by their organizations. No matter what the circumstances are, knowing the basic profile and demography of our participants will help us better connect with them. When we know who are part of the group we're facilitating, we are better able to notice when some sectors are silent, or if certain groups are unable to take off with the discussions.

### **A facilitator puts**

**participants first.** When we design workshops and events, we often have a clear program in mind. We know when things should be done and what activities should be accomplished. But during the actual events, we may encounter moments when the participants are either not ready or not inspired enough to do the planned activities. Putting the participants first means noticing cues and observing individual and group dynamics, and understanding when we must be flexible enough to redesign the program.



Participants are likely to attend another dialogue if they feel hopeful about the outcomes of the initial dialogue, or *napag-usapan 'yung concerns nila.*

*Olivia Melendrez, Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP), Sierra Madre*



It's important to remember, however, that we do not redesign our program to change the major objectives; we redesign the program to provide opportunities for participants to better understand the topic and engage in the sessions more effectively.

**A facilitator knows the dialogue theme or topic well.** It will be difficult to facilitate a dynamic dialogue if we do not know much about the topic. As participants start to share their insights, we might be easily overwhelmed with the information they share, and the emotions that build up around the discussions. When we know the topic well, we are better equipped to navigate the discussions at hand. We are able to keep everyone on track and mediate between discussions that need new information.

In some cases, we might be expected to share our expert opinion on the topic. It will be helpful if we know current updates on the topic, the latest trends, the most pressing issues, as well as some good practices that are being done in the landscape. Our knowledge of, and familiarity with these helps us better guide discussions, and sense when conversations are getting muddled.

**A facilitator is an active listener.** We can do as much preparation as we can before the dialogues but still be impeded by an eagerness to respond. At the heart of our purpose as facilitators is the desire to listen and facilitate understanding between different stakeholders. When we actively listen to every participant, we can sense and identify cues and signals that might not be easy to spot. It is our responsibility to take these signals and use them to drive productive conversations.

**A facilitator creatively engages the participants.** Knowing our participants, and topics can help us think of creative ways to engage people. We can think of our sessions as the participants' time to get away from their day-to-day work, and opportunities to spark creative thinking. Remember that our participants have likely engaged in other dialogues and discussions before, so finding ways to reimagine their experience will be helpful in keeping them interested and enthusiastic about the dialogue. We must also remember that the participants we engage with might have years of experience in the themes we are discussing. How might we create new ways of eliciting and capturing their ideas so that they still choose to engage in the dialogues?



**Landscape-wide, halos one year umaabot [ang research]! Marami ang community level ang documentation. Dialogue is also an opportunity to present results of studies na nagawa in the aid of a certain decision.**

*Olivia Melendrez, Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP), Sierra Madre*



While we might be aware of what we should strive for as facilitators, it's not uncommon for us to have picked up some habits that might not be conducive to productive and fruitful dialogues. Here are some practices that we should aim to avoid:

**A facilitator does not monopolize discussions.** Our roles as facilitators differ from a lecturer, a discussant, or a plenary presenter. While we may take some time to present certain concepts, we must remember that our purpose is to guide discussions among participants. We do not do most of the talking; we ask questions and design opportunities for the participants to share their thoughts and insights on the topics at hand. As facilitators, we are called to listen.

**A facilitator does not let his or her own biases get the best of the dialogue.** As we work closely with communities in the landscape, we empathize with them and understand more deeply the issues that they face. While this can be helpful to us as facilitators, we must be mindful not to let bias muddle the dialogues. We should know how to open ourselves and to facilitate openness among the participants. It is our responsibility to support our participants as they unlearn biases and unfounded assumptions about the landscape.



## HAVE A THINK

At this point, we invite you to take a moment to think about your facilitator self and your views on dialogues. You can get a sheet of paper to write your thoughts down, or discuss these with your fellow facilitators.

### AS A FACILITATOR

1. Which of the facilitator roles do you do well already?
2. Which ones would you like to explore further?
3. How much do you know about landscape governance? Which topics are you comfortable discussing?
4. How would you like to grow your knowledge on landscape governance?

### ON DIALOGUES

1. What types of talk happen in your family, workplace, or your community?
2. Which of these types of talk appear to have features of dialogues?
3. What do you value in a dialogue?
4. What benefits have you observed dialogues to bring?

# HOW CAN WE GET STARTED?

In designing workshops and events, it's common to start by asking ourselves what we want to do. This is not wrong, but framing our dialogues in this way may cause us to focus on just carrying out certain activities. Instead, we should ask ourselves,

“What change do we or the people in the landscape want to see?”

In the case of SILG, we learned the answers to these questions by conducting Landscape Governance Assessments (LGA). The LGA is a multi-stakeholder, and multi-sectoral process designed to elicit the participants' perceptions, knowledge, experiences, and quantitative ratings on landscape governance, particularly in terms of four major performance criteria:



Inclusive  
Decision Making



Culture  
of Collaboration



Coordination across  
landscape actors



Sustainable landscape  
thinking & action

The LGA results helped us understand the current dynamics, policies, and gaps in the landscape. Based on the results, we were able to identify specific changes that people in the landscape deemed necessary to have.

The limitation of the assessment, however, lies in the sets of participants who were present during the assessment. The results of any LGA will greatly vary depending on the mix of participants, so it is important to be mindful of representation in an assessment.

LGA results are not a complete description of a landscape; it is merely a fraction of the bigger setting, and there might be aspects that the LGA may not have covered. Any gaps can be addressed or continued through the dialogues.

For a more detailed description of LGA and step-by-step process, you can check **Assessing Landscape Governance: A Participatory Approach** (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gkCusS7ysKXzy5PZ-rw72WygGs8yJlGv/view>), a user-friendly manual by Tropenbos International and Ecoagriculture Partners. This manual can be downloaded online.

# FREQUENTLY USED TERMS

## Landscape

Landscapes are geographical areas where “various stakeholders and their interests are connected through ecological and socio-economic relationships.”<sup>1</sup>

## Landscape Governance

Different stakeholders in the landscape have interests that can connect and conflict, often at the same time. Landscape Governance brings these interests together for balanced decision-making, in hopes of achieving the sustainable management of resources.<sup>2</sup> According to Tropenbos International, landscape governance can also be seen as “the set of rules and decision-making processes of public, private, and civic sector [stakeholders]...that affect actions in the landscape.”<sup>1</sup>

## Policies

A policy is a set of principles that are used to guide present and future decision-making.<sup>3</sup> They differ from laws in that while laws compel or prohibit behaviors, policies only aim to guide actions towards a desired outcome.

## Lobbying

Lobbying is any attempt by individuals or groups to influence decision-making on a government level.<sup>4</sup>

## Advocacy

Advocacy means taking action to create change. These actions can take many forms like researching new solutions or creating coalitions. Landscape governance dialogue is one way to advocate for sustainable management of resources.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Assessing Landscape Governance: A Participatory Approach, Tropenbos International

<sup>2</sup>Landscape governance: beyond natural boundaries to embrace complexities, <http://blog.worldagroforestry.org/index.php/2014/11/03/landscape-governance-beyond-natural-boundaries-to-embrace-complexities/>

<sup>3</sup>Policy, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/policy>

<sup>4</sup>Lobbying, Britannica <https://www.britannica.com/topic/lobbying>

<sup>5</sup>Explainer: What is advocacy? <https://theirworld.org/explainers/what-is-advocacy#section-1>





A photograph of a man with dark hair, wearing a black shirt with a colorful geometric patterned scarf, sitting at a table. He is looking towards the left of the frame with a thoughtful expression, resting his chin on his hand. In the background, there is a large silver pot on a stove and a white wall. The overall scene suggests a meeting or a workshop setting.

# FACILITATING PEOPLE

Participants are at the heart of dialogues. In this section, we will talk about two groups of participants—the ones who usually join us, and the ones we usually miss. We'll also reflect on the different ways that we can manage the different dynamics, as well as any conflict that we might encounter during the dialogues.



# WHO ARE OUR PARTICIPANTS, AND WHAT DO THEY BRING?

## Civil Society Organizations (CSO)



**Who they are:** CSOs are “non-state, not-for-profit, voluntary entities formed by people in the social sphere that represent a wide range of interests and ties.”<sup>6</sup> In the case of SILG, the landscape


governance dialogues have mostly involved environmental protection CSOs, with strong leanings on policy advocacy work.

**What they bring:** CSOs work closely with communities and as they participate in the dialogues, they become good representatives of communities who are not able to join the discussions. They can provide rich, lived experiences, information, and insights on community work. CSOs also have a strong background in policy lobby and advocacy. This means they provide good insights and suggestions on the identified landscape governance issues, specifically on improving policy processes, improving inclusivity, and increasing accountability.

**Tip:** The CSO world is quite small and members often already know each other. We can think of CSOs as like a big family united by a good cause. We can use the dialogue opportunities to rethink our ways of doing in the CSO community. The dialogue process can help us see issues from a different light, and see ways to reframe our work. This reframing is in itself already a step towards possibly engaging more stakeholders in the process.

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<sup>6</sup>UN Guiding Principles Reporting Framework, <https://www.ungpreporting.org/glossary/civil-society-organizations-csos/>



'Pag pinag-uusapan natin ang landscape, madaling isipin ang biophysical aspect, the ecosystems, the forests, the grasslands, the coastal and marine areas. But people are part of the landscape. Kasama tayo du'n sa landscape.

*Heidi D. Mendoza,  
Forest Foundation Philippines*



## Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities



**Who they are:** According to the World Bank, “Indigenous Peoples (IP) are distinct social and cultural groups that share collective ancestral ties to the lands and natural resources where they live, occupy or from which they have been displaced.”<sup>7</sup> More often than not, IPs are dependent on the landscape that shapes their culture and identity.

**What they bring:** Landscape governance dialogues tend to be more interesting and meaningful with the participation of IP and local communities. They provide rich accounts of how policies are usually implemented, and provide intimate understanding of, and experiences with ecosystems. These accounts are critical in understanding the landscapes better, and seeing how we are yet to harness socio-ecological approaches in policies. Aside from these, IPs provide a unique perspective on honing governance systems and sustaining cultures and traditions over generations. They paint a different face of the landscape; most of the features they provide are those that we lack, or those that we sometimes fail to acknowledge and understand.


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<sup>7</sup>The World Bank, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/indigenouspeoples>

Local communities also provide rich accounts on their day-to-day challenges, and their visions for the future. Engaging them in the conversations help the dialogues to be more grounded, and have a better resonance with how they see their landscapes change over time.

It is important to remember that most of the dialogue topics, and recommendations usually focus on supporting IP and local communities. Support can come in the form of increasing capacities and access to external support, and project implementation. When we ensure that IP and local community representatives are present in the dialogues, they have the space to articulate their aspirations, and recommendations.

**Tip:** Strive to ensure that IPs are given the space they need to exercise their rights when it comes to participating in dialogues. There are instances where IPs cannot participate in a discussion without performing sacred rituals first, which might be misinterpreted as non-participation. As much as possible, remove barriers that may prevent them from representing themselves, their families and community.



We have workshops na kasama ang academe, tribes, and the government [of] Mt. Kitanglad. Informal at may nuances ang dialogue. I'm an anthropologist, but I'm not taking advantage of that position in mediation. I cannot just bank on experience [because] Migaonons in Bukidnon are different in Misamis. May cultural nuances... May way sila to welcome the chieftains from ritual to ritual such as the Coin spirit ritual. It feels the sincerity with the spirit of the mediator... Sa dialogue may mga bagay na hindi nakikita.

*Easter Canoy, Kitanglad Integrated NGOs, Bukidnon*



## Local Government Units (LGU)



**Who they are:** The Philippines is divided into local units of different sizes for purposes of administrative control and decentralization. LGUs enjoy autonomy in local affairs, and their actions tend to affect ordinary people more directly than the actions of national government.

**What they bring:** LGUs provide concrete issues and good practices on landscape governance. Both help in framing the discussions and providing participants from other sectors a more concrete understanding of the dynamics in the area, and the actual needs that have to be addressed. The LGUs will always be important participants in landscape governance dialogues, especially if the dialogues are designed to call specific actors to action, adopt recommendations, and provide suggestions on improving local policies.

The LGUs are also the units mandated to implement local development plans. It is critical that they are able to contribute to the discussions, especially on creating opportunities for IP, local communities, and CSOs to participate in planning, and decision-making processes.

**Tip:** Engaging LGUs doesn't end with asking them to share their experiences in the landscape; we can maximize their participation through conversations on how the team or network can support the LGUs in specific themes, and vice versa. Strive to build lasting relationships with LGUs. We're not just after influencing their processes; we also want to form responsive and active partnerships for the landscape.

# State University and Colleges (SUC)



**Who they are:** According to Republic Act No. 10931, SUCs are public higher education institutions that are established by national laws, and financed by the national government.<sup>8</sup> Representatives from SUCs can include administrators, faculty members, researchers, and students.

**What they bring:** SUCs have a critical role in the landscapes, especially for providing science-based policy recommendations, and taking on research needs in the landscape. In the dialogue setting, SUC representatives usually share recent trends on specific landscape topics, new technologies being developed and used to address environmental issues, and their plans moving forward in improving their research and development trajectories in the landscape.

**Tip:** We can maximize the engagement of SUCs in dialogues by influencing them to strengthen or craft a research agenda for the landscape that takes into consideration the issues being discussed, and how science and technology can help in addressing these. This way, we ensure that SUCs are empowered in the landscapes, and that CSOs and other stakeholders who need science-based information and recommendations have a partner who can help them.

We are bringing the theory that we are sharing in the classroom towards the community, into actual practice. [Through landscape dialogues], we are bringing the university closer to the people.

*Prof. Edgar Castañares, Mindanao State University - Naawan, Misamis Oriental*



<sup>8</sup>Republic Act No. 10931,

<https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/downloads/2017/08aug/20170803-RA-10931-RRD.pdf>





## Youth

**Who they are:** Youth include people whose ages range from 15 to 30 years old, and may be represented by individuals or organizations.<sup>9</sup>

**What they bring:** Youths provide a horizon of where they see the landscapes going in the near future. They also provide new perspectives on issues that we have yet to address. Including the youth in the dialogues is critical in ensuring that visions take into account generational dreams and aspirations.

**Tip:** For the past years, we were able to engage youth in the dialogues but we have yet to maximize their interest, passions, and strengths. The challenge now is to help youth find their concrete role in the dialogues, and agreed actions. Some of them are still studying, or are bound by certain limitations but this should not hinder us from engaging them and empowering them with opportunities to take space in the dialogues.



Mahirap kasi 'yung lonely voice ka in the darkness... It really helps to know that you're not alone in what you're doing.

*Jose Andres Ignacio,  
Environmental Science for Social Change, Bukidnon*



<sup>9</sup>Republic Act No. 8044, <https://nyc.gov.ph/republic-act-8044/>

# WHO ELSE DO WE NEED TO ENGAGE WITH?

For various reasons, there are times when we are unable to engage with organizations and groups who are valuable to the dialogue. We must find ways to better understand where they are coming from and how we can create good, strong, and meaningful partnerships with them.

## Local Government Units (LGU)



**What is the challenge:** We mentioned LGUs earlier as usual participants in the dialogue but there are also instances when it is difficult to engage with them. This can happen when the LGU is unaware of who we are as a group, what we want them to do, and what we expect of them.

**What is the opportunity:** We must be aware of the roles and responsibilities of the LGU we want to engage. At the same time, we should be aware of what we really need. In this way, we'll be able to open conversations with LGUs that can lead to forming solutions that can be co-implemented by present participants.

It's a reality that partnership-building takes time. As of now, we should recognize the good relations that we've started to build with each other. And those that we still miss at the table, those are opportunities

*Heidi D. Mendoza, Forest Foundation Philippines*



## National Government Agencies (NGA)



**Who are they:** A National Government

Agency is a unit of the National Government, that is part of the entire machinery of the central government.<sup>10</sup> Compared to LGUs, they focus on issues at the macro level and they may not be concerned with the details and nuances of a dialogue. However, it is still important to get them involved because they are still part of the larger system, and their decisions may have a significant impact on the progress of a dialogue.

**What is the challenge:** Encouraging engagement and commitment from NGAs can be quite difficult, especially if we do not have concrete recommendations that we want them to take on. It is also a challenge to see how landscape-level policies can find resonance in national frameworks, and policies.

**What is the opportunity:** Dialogues can provide us with these rich, landscape-responsive recommendations that NGAs need to make changes on a national level. NGAs will benefit from a proactive, and mutual partnership that both helps them, and provides them with opportunities to do better in the landscape. As facilitators of change, we can support participants in articulating these recommendations and their visions for collaboration.

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<sup>10</sup>Executive Order No. 292 [Introductory Provisions] <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1987/07/25/executive-order-no-292-introductory-provisions/>

## Private Sector



**Who are they:** According to Investopedia, the private sector “encompasses all for-profit businesses that are not owned or operated by the government.”<sup>11</sup>

**What is the challenge:** While most of the landscape dialogue discussions identify the private sector as important partners or agents of change, it has been quite challenging to engage them. Some of the identified reasons include lack of familiarity of both parties to each other’s causes; differences in operational or work languages; and lack of initial connections or encounters that can spark interest for dialogues.

**What is the opportunity:** One of the ways that we can engage the private sector in dialogues is to be able to articulate exactly why and what roles they can fill in our processes. Once we understand this, we can reach out to them and share how they can contribute to lasting and positive change in the landscape.

**Remember:** It can be easy to fall into the trap of approaching agencies with blame. Conversations can be difficult to start if we see NGAs or the private sector as antagonists. As facilitators, we must create opportunities to have safe and constructive conversations with these agencies so that we can open windows for co-creation and co-ownership of solutions to problems faced in our shared landscapes.

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<sup>11</sup>Executive Order No. 292 [Introductory Provisions] <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1987/07/25/executive-order-no-292-introductory-provisions/>



Sa bawat dayalogo, natutunan ko na mahalaga ang presensya ng bawat sektor na may-taya sa mga isyu at usapin. Binigyan ko ng pansin ang mga palitan ng masalimuot subalit masustansyang mga opinyon ng mga kadalogo, lalo na sa hanay ng mga katutubo sa napapanahong usapin ng Kaliwa Dam. Masusing tinalakay dito ang Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) na tila hindi katanggap-tanggap ang mga resulta ng pag-aaral lalo na sa mga katutubo.

Sa pamamagitan ng mga dayalogo ay napagtanto ko ang kabukasan ng kaisipan ng mga katutubo sa mga usaping ito na may epekto hindi lamang sa kanilang kabuhayan, lalo na sa kanilang lupang ancestral. Nararamdam ko ang kanilang pagnanais na isulong ang kanilang karapatan at responsibilidad bilang katutubo at malakasit para sa susunod na henerasyon.

Sa pamamagitan ng pagsangguni sa sambayanan, ang mga dayalogo na pinangunahan ng Forest Foundation Philippines ay tumutugon sa pangangailang tipunin ang mga sektor na may-taya sa Sierra Madre upang makabuo ng mga kaisipan na magiging daan sa pagpapalano at tuluyang maging isang mahalagang desisyon para sa kapakanan ng lahat, lalo na para sa Sierra Madre.

*Reynaldo Avila, Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Officer of LGU Infanta, Quezon, Sierra Madre*





## HAVE A THINK

Try to recall your own experiences in working and interacting with these different dialogue participants.

1. Describe your ideal participant.
2. Who among these participant groups usually brings out the ideal participant persona for you?
3. Who among these participant groups tend to be more challenging to facilitate than others?
4. How do you facilitate very diverse groups of participants?
5. How have you tried to engage participants we usually miss in dialogues?



# HOW CAN WE BUILD TRUST AND ESTABLISH RAPPORT WITH OUR PARTICIPANTS?

Through the years, we have learned many lessons from facing challenges in facilitating people from previous dialogues. As facilitators, we are invited to create the conditions that enable participants to effectively engage with each other in ways that acknowledge our shared humanity and stake in the landscape. According to research, there are three criteria that need to be met in order for participants to feel genuinely involved in the dialogue. These three criteria form the basis of mutual trust between the parties.

## The Trinity of Participation<sup>12</sup>

Criteria	How can we achieve this?
<b>Admission</b> Feeling invited and understanding the purpose and mandate of the process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask the participants to introduce themselves at the start of the session, and to share why they are there. Acknowledge all purposes as valid, even if they're not sure yet.</li><li>• Have name tags available for everyone; this simple act allows everyone to call each other by their name.</li><li>• Communicate the purpose and goals of the dialogue.</li><li>• Use language that communicates the collective ("We" instead of "you"; "Ours" instead of "yours.")</li></ul>

<sup>12</sup>The trinity of participation, [https://www.slu.se/globalassets/ew/org/centrb/cnv/publikationer/dialog\\_eng\\_webb.pdf](https://www.slu.se/globalassets/ew/org/centrb/cnv/publikationer/dialog_eng_webb.pdf)

Criteria	How can we achieve this?
<p><b>Respect</b></p> <p>Equal and suitable opportunities to share their perspectives, wishes, and experiences</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasize that while we may have different goals and interests, we are united by our role as stakeholders in the landscape</li> <li>• If IP are in attendance, find ways to include their rituals during the dialogue</li> <li>• Stress the value of diverse perspectives; while everyone's perspective might be different, putting these views together is how we get a more holistic view of the landscape</li> <li>• Be mindful of when one person or group might be monopolizing the dialogue</li> </ul>
<p><b>Influence</b></p> <p>The opportunity to influence within the dialogue framework. People need to feel like they made significant contributions that make their participation worthwhile</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return to the dialogue's goals periodically to communicate progress and give participants a sense of accomplishment</li> <li>• Model a culture of gratitude; thank participants for their contributions regardless of its impact on the dialogue.</li> </ul>



# HOW CAN WE MANAGE CONFLICT?



May mga conflict talaga kaya kailangan mag-usap [ang parties] para i-resolve [ang mga issue]. Mahirap i-manage minsan. Dialogue should happen before mag-intensify 'yung conflict.

*Grace Secson, Environmental Legal Assistance Center, Palawan*



One of the most challenging parts of designing and facilitating dialogues is the fact that it is a multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral initiative. Diverse participants mean diverse perspectives on what is valid and important; it's not unusual for these perspectives to be in contrast with each other.

As facilitators, it is our task to create a safe, and constructive space among the stakeholders in the group so that we can continue to build meaningful agreements and partnerships. Here are some ways that we can avoid, and manage conflict when it arises during a dialogue:

## Before a Dialogue



**Take the time to get to know who you are designing the dialogues for.** Get to know your participants both in a general, and specific sense. In a general sense, know which sectors your participants are from. In a more specific sense, try

to anticipate what conflicts might arise between them given the objectives of the dialogue.

**Set expectations.** The manner in which we invite participants, and the messaging that we use in our invitations sets the tone for our interactions in the dialogue. It is at this point that we can prepare the participants so they can participate and contribute more effectively. Communicate the roles that we envision for them, or the actions that they might have to do. For example, if decisions will be made, the invitee should know if they are needed to provide guidance or specific commitments.

**Collectively establish norms for communication.** As facilitators, we can set norms for communicating, but in our experience, these norms aren't always followed, especially when the discussions get heated. For norms to be effective, participants should be invested in reinforcing these amongst themselves. One of the ways that we can get this investment is by establishing these norms in a participatory way. Check out the This Guy, That Guy activity to learn a quick and productive way to set these norms together!

## During a Dialogue



**Try Nonviolent Communication.** At the core of Nonviolent Communication is the belief that all human beings have the capacity for compassion and empathy. Having a framework for expressing ourselves can help manage conflicts that might arise from misunderstanding each others' intentions.

- Observations. Make neutral statements of what you actually see or here without subjective fillers (ex: "I see..." or "I hear...")
- Feelings. Express pure emotions rather than what you think or perceive someone is doing to you. Avoid blame by focusing on emotions or body sensations. (ex: "I am feeling...")
- Needs and Values. Needs and values are things that motivate and sustain us. (ex: "I need..." or "It's important to me...")
- Requests. Requests can come in the form of asking for clarity (ex: "What are you hearing me say?" or "How do you feel about what I just said?") and/or actions that can meet the needs articulated (Ex: "Can you..." or "Would you...")

Example: "I am hearing words delivered aggressively and it makes me feel anxious. I need to know that we are committed to reaching an understanding. Can we park this conversation for now and revisit it later in the day?"

**Take a breather.** Even experienced facilitators might be tempted to power through a dialogue when tensions are high, especially when we need to stick to the schedule. We must hone our ability to sense when continuing with a certain point is no longer productive. We can manage the tension by taking a break and restrategizing ways forward. This does not mean that we are abandoning the conflict; only that we are giving people the space to let cooler heads prevail and seeking alternative ways to meet our objective.

## After a Dialogue



**Check in on one another.** Before ending the dialogue, get a sense of the room by asking them how they're feeling. If participants feel like there were unresolved conflicts or issues, acknowledge these and find a way to resolve them in the next dialogue.

**Follow through.** Make sure that compromises or agreements that were made during the dialogue are put into action. Following through builds trust; it is a sign that in spite of the conflicts, everyone honors the hard work that the participants put into accomplishing the goals of the dialogue.

**Provide updates.** Open communication is one way to ensure that all participants are considered valuable to the process. After following through, let the participants know what has transpired after the dialogue. What has been happening in the back end? Is the host organization helping them move towards their objectives? What are the developments in terms of policies and future projects?



## CHOOSE AN ADVENTURE

In this section, we learned about **Facilitating People**—who our participants are, how we can engage them better, and how we can navigate potential conflict.



Go to the **Give It a Try** Activity Kit to try out activities related to Facilitating People.

- This Guy, That Guy
- 5 Whys
- Animal Energy
- Empathy Map
- Superhero Introductions

If you want to learn more about how we can design and facilitate the spaces that our dialogues take place in, skip to the **Facilitating Spaces** section (Page 40).

If you want to learn more about techniques we can use to design smooth and fruitful dialogues, skip to the **Facilitating Processes** section (Page 52).

If you want to learn more about ways forward after a dialogue, skip to the **Moving Forward** section (Page 62).



# FACILITATING SPACES

We tend to respond better when we feel safe and comfortable in the spaces that we are in. While we may have a lot of experience facilitating face-to-face dialogues, the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need for us to find ways to facilitate virtual dialogues that allow all participants to engage effectively. In this section, we'll talk about the spaces that dialogues can take place in, as well as ideas for creating creative, flexible, inclusive, and humane physical and virtual spaces.



# HOW CAN WE DESIGN AND FACILITATE PHYSICAL AND VIRTUAL SPACES?

## Physical Spaces



Selecting venues for dialogues depend on the kinds of interactions we want to inspire. At the same time, the selection process can also be limited by the availability of funds. However, dialogues need not be expensive; we can hold dialogues in simple spaces and still spark connections among participants. Here are some tips that we can keep in mind when designing and facilitating face-to-face spaces:

**Take note of health regulations in the area.** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, face-to-face dialogues needed to be put on hold in favor of online dialogues. As the situation improves, different areas in the Philippines have different regulations that need to be followed for social gatherings. As much as possible, avoid enclosed spaces in favor of areas where air can circulate. Remind everyone to wear their masks and face shields, and bring extras for those who might need it. Ensuring that the space can accommodate physical distancing, hand washing, and basic health protocols is also important.



**Create neutral spaces.** Spaces create different meanings for different people. Provide IPs with a space where they can hold power and perform their rituals. Some IPs may not be able to participate in the dialogues unless they are able to perform these rituals. Not being able to do so can make them feel powerless and voiceless. At the same time, we should aim to provide representatives from the government with a space to detach themselves from their day-to-day tasks so they can see issues with fresh eyes.

**Decentralize your space.** As the facilitators, we are not the sole source of knowledge. There won't be a need for the group to be facing a "front" like you would in a traditional classroom setting. Decentralizing the space sends a message of shared responsibility and equal contributions.

**Keep the intention in mind.** Changing up the layout of the space can change the mood and energy that it invokes. If we want to have collaborative exercises, how might we set up the space so that they have room to comfortably collaborate? If we want to have intimate discussions, how might we set up the space to invite open communication among the participants?

**Involve the participants in designing the space.** While it is good to have the space set up prior to the session, we can also ask participants if we can adjust the space in such a way that would help them engage in the dialogue better. Something as simple as checking whether the room temperature is comfortable, too cold or too warm can do wonders for participant engagement.

**Provide equal spaces for all stakeholders.** Make sure that participants are not literally positioned at a place of lesser power. Some groups may opt to stay at the back of the room because they feel that their input is not important. Invite them to move forward and remind the room that everyone will have the chance to speak up and contribute.

**Encourage movement where appropriate.** Participants from the same organization or sector will tend to flock together. Participants who stay too long together and share their views with the same group throughout the dialogue may have barriers to creative decision-making due to groupthink. Encouraging movement and allowing participants to explore other areas in the dialogue space will invite them to interact with different personas and perspectives.

## Virtual Spaces



As it might take a while for the situation in the country to normalize, we might consider finding ways to conduct dialogues through digital or virtual means. It can be easy to assume that our participants have the same amount of access that we do to virtual spaces. But as facilitators, one way that we can be inclusive is by taking extra steps to accommodate those that might have a difficult time participating. Here are some tips that we can keep in mind when designing and facilitating online spaces:


**Consider diverse physical environments.** What might our participants' spaces look like? Are they in a house or do they need to stay outside to find a stable connection? When we communicate with each other from a distance, we must accept that we have very little control over our participants' physical environments. This means that we might need to establish norms that will help us minimize distractions, such as turning off the microphones when not in use.

**Mind the time.** When we have face-to-face dialogues, we are able to have whole day sessions, or sessions that span multiple days in succession. We don't have that kind of energy for online dialogues. One of the things we can do to be mindful of our participants' digital wellbeing is to have shorter virtual dialogue sessions. In our experience, three hours maximum and integrating health breaks into our design are good practices.

**Consider access to technology.** What is the connectivity situation in our participants' areas? In some cases, we might need to provide support in terms of load for data and connectivity. We might also need to schedule tech support sessions ahead of the dialogue for installing and setting up of applications and devices.

**Provide multiple means of engagement.** Participation can be a challenge when we facilitate virtual dialogues. While we may find the perfect applications, our participants might not always be able to use them. Include low-tech alternatives like writing down their answers on pieces of paper, or engaging in the chat instead of using external tools or turning on their microphones. Having a co-facilitator or a "chat master" who can engage with the participants through the chat is another way to ensure that the participants are still "heard" even though they may not be able to participate out loud. As the main facilitator, you can read some of the chat entries out loud to acknowledge their contribution.

**Make space for fun and delight.** Open the meeting room at least ten minutes ahead of the scheduled start time. In our experience, participants who arrive early use this time to engage their fellow participants in light conversation that might be essential to building trust and rapport. We can also play music in the background to put participants at ease and create a welcoming atmosphere.



At least hindi lang kami na-confine in the 4 corners of the classroom, but as much as possible, we'll be doing some community work. Masaya kami through community organizing, yung pakikisalamuha namin sa mga tao as well as dito rin sa landscape, we are able to meet different people, different organizations and agencies na magiging mga collaborators din namin in the future with our gradual exposure to community undertakings.

*Prof. Edgar Castañares, Mindanao State University - Naawan, Misamis Oriental*



# HOW CAN WE CREATE A SAFE SPACE FOR EXCHANGING IDEAS?



## HAVE A THINK

1. What does it mean to feel safe?
2. What does safety mean in the context of a dialogue?

We can define safety in several ways. According to Amy Edmonson, psychological safety is “a belief that one will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns, or mistakes.”<sup>13</sup> In the context of spaces, safety can also be defined as places where marginalized groups can be themselves, free of judgment or discrimination, or any physical or emotional harm.<sup>14</sup> As facilitators, we need to be able to create these spaces so that our dialogues can be productive and purposeful, rooted in a shared understanding of the landscape. Here are some tips for establishing a safe space for all participants inspired by Kate Sassoon<sup>15</sup>:

**Focus on ideas, not personalities.** Dialogues can be intimate and personal. Sometimes that’s a good thing, but sometimes it can get heated. Neutralize the space by establishing norms early on and reinforcing them throughout the dialogue. Another way is to challenge the ideas that are being voiced instead of targeting the people voicing them out.

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<sup>13</sup>What is psychological safety and why is it the key to great teamwork?

<https://www.impraise.com/blog/what-is-psychological-safety-and-why-is-it-the-key-to-great-teamwork>


<sup>14</sup>Meaning of safe space in English, [https://www.lexico.com/definition/safe\\_space](https://www.lexico.com/definition/safe_space)

<sup>15</sup>Safe Space, <http://www.sassycooperates.org/sassy pontificates/2016/1/23/safe-space>

**Check your assumptions.** It can be easy to assume the worst of some stakeholders, but it's important for facilitators to remain neutral and to believe in everyone's best intentions. Treat everybody as an individual, not just as representatives of a group. At the same time, encourage participants to take ownership of their perspectives. While everyone is an expert of their own lived experience, alternative perspectives help us have a more holistic view of the landscape.

**Model curiosity.** As facilitators, we have the agency to frame and reframe conversations in the dialogue as opportunities to learn from each other instead of finding who is at fault for issues in the landscape. Model curiosity by asking participants to elaborate on why they might feel a certain way.

**Respect the right to be human.** Not everyone is going to come into a dialogue being the best versions of themselves right away. Honor the diversity in the room. Respect the right to have a bad day. Practice giving and receiving forgiveness.



We really need to be flexible... Ang dami-daming issues at walang set way to address those issues, to address those problems. The quality of flexibility is necessary for this work. And yung flexibility rin to discuss with different sorts of people... Ang gusto pang mapalakas pa ng dialogue ay iba't ibang tao ang makausap natin. At the different people we talk to, iba't iba rin 'yung ways natin of talking to them.

*Jose Andres Ignacio,  
Environmental Science for Social Change, Bukidnon*





## HAVE A THINK

Where do you usually hold dialogues? Sketch 2 versions of this space: physical and virtual. Use your sketches to scan the spaces as you reflect on the following:

### ON PHYSICAL SPACES

1. How might you set up the furniture and equipment to achieve different purposes? I.e. if you want to encourage collaborative work, if you want them to see one another at all times, if you want to be part of the group as you facilitate, etc.
2. Which part of the space gives you a good vantage point and allows you to see participants and make participants feel seen?
3. What feelings does the physical space evoke? Does it feel comfortable, warm, intimidating, formal, casual, etc.?

### ON VIRTUAL SPACES

1. Where should you set up? What background and framing might work?
2. What tools do you need around you to facilitate?
3. What might their own spaces at home look like?
4. What might happen if I require videos and microphones to be on?
5. What online platforms are you accustomed to? Are the participants accustomed to?



## CHOOSE AN ADVENTURE

In this section, we learned about **Facilitating Spaces**—where dialogues can take place and how we can make them inclusive and humane.



Go to the **Give It a Try** Activity Kit to try out activities related to Facilitating Spaces.

- Space Scan
- Fishbowl Discussion
- Digital Room
- Check in
- Gallery Walk
- Social Mapping

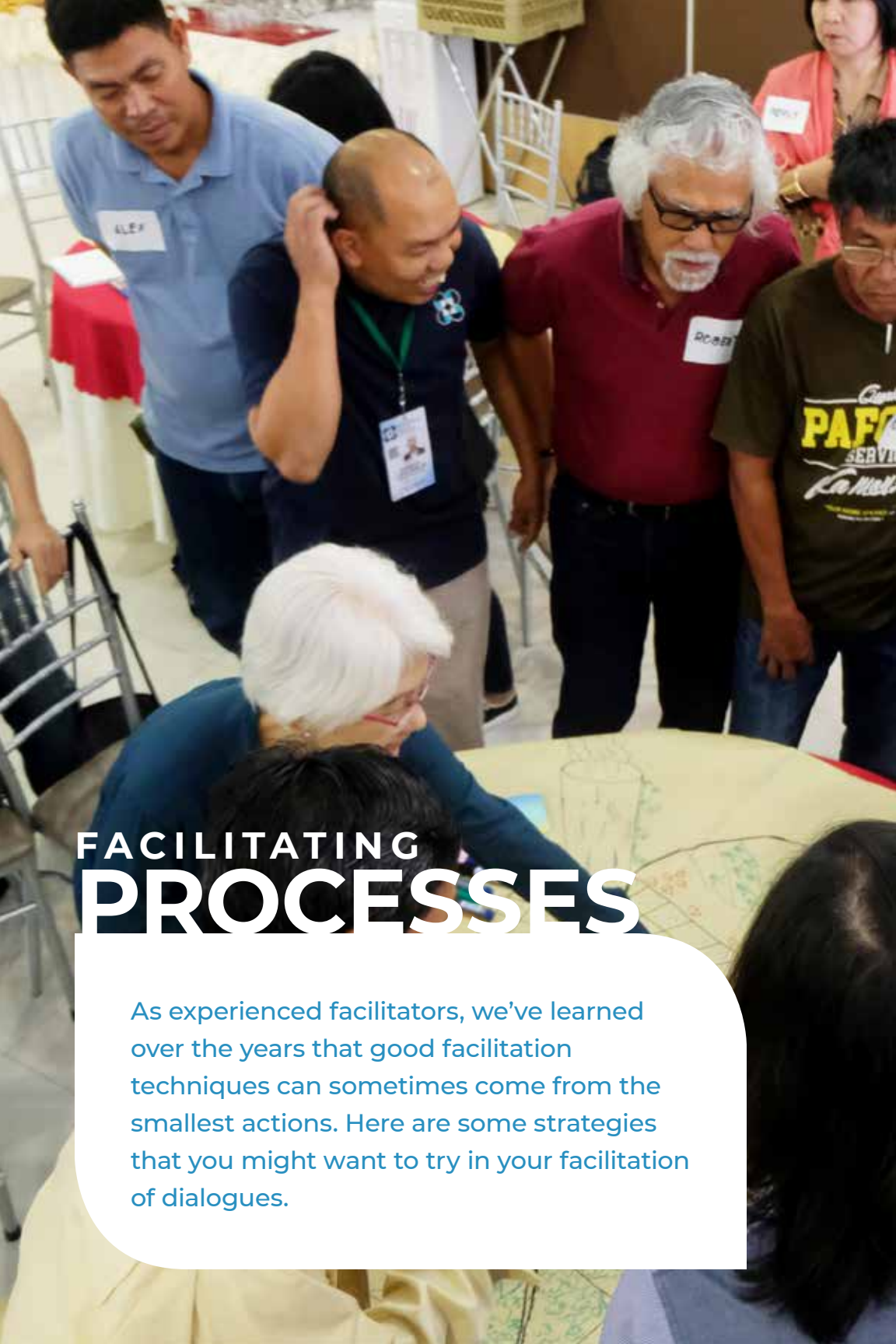
If you want to learn more about who participates in a dialogue and how we can engage them, go back to the **Facilitating People** section (Page 20).

If you want to learn more about strategies we can use to design smooth and fruitful dialogues, skip to the **Facilitating Processes** section (Page 52).

If you want to learn more about ways forward after a dialogue, skip to the **Moving Forward** section (Page 62).







# FACILITATING PROCESSES

As experienced facilitators, we've learned over the years that good facilitation techniques can sometimes come from the smallest actions. Here are some strategies that you might want to try in your facilitation of dialogues.



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# WHAT ARE STRATEGIES IN FACILITATING DIALOGUE PROCESSES?



**Establish a routine.** If you have more than one session with the same group of participants, it helps to stick to established routines and patterns. A routine might look like this:

- Check-in (see [Facilitating People](#));
- Space scan (see [Facilitating Spaces](#));
- Rundown of dialogue objectives and housekeeping reminders;
- Dialogue Proper;
- Recap of dialogue highlights;
- Reminders for the next session;
- Check-out.

These events might seem repetitive and mundane but familiar events actually help you as a facilitator relay a clear dialogue design to participants. New and innovative activities might be exciting but predictability can lend a sense of comfort to the dialogue; when participants are in their comfort zone, they feel safe to share stories that can be valuable to the dialogue process.



**Identify the central themes of your dialogues.** Identifying the central themes of your dialogue can be challenging, especially if you are working on a complex issue that might require background knowledge. As facilitators,

it's our responsibility to keep everyone on course. If we are tackling a big issue, we can break it down into sub-sessions or sub-topics. In this way, we keep conversations more manageable and support participants as we work our way towards a larger conversation.

This is where our knowledge, experience, and insights as facilitators kick in; knowing about the issue will help us craft specific sessions that lead to the bigger picture.

It will also help if the dialogue leaves key messages, or prompt questions that participants can take with them. This can serve as their personal assignments to think of, and provide an answer to during the next dialogue session. It creates a sense of continuity, and a sustained learning.



**Give people time to listen and think.** Silence during a dialogue can be intimidating but one of the ways that we can arrive at a high-quality dialogue is by giving people to space to listen and think. In this context, silence can be valuable. Mary Budd Rowe, a proponent of dialogic teaching, observed that in the context of the classroom, having think time:

- Helps increase the number of volunteered and appropriate answers;
- Brings detailed explanations from both active learners and those that tend to be more quiet
- Reduces responses of “I don’t know,” and
- Helps increase the number of questions asked by learners.<sup>16</sup>

We may not be in a classroom but allowing participants to take the time to listen and think makes room for more thoughtful responses. This also gives all participants to engage regardless of how quickly they think or how eloquently they articulate their thoughts.

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<sup>16</sup>Why Dialogue?, [https://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/82735\\_Chapter\\_1\\_\\_\\_CL\\_Dialogue.pdf](https://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/82735_Chapter_1___CL_Dialogue.pdf)



## **Anticipate and map the experience out.**

Facilitating processes is largely about facilitating how participants (people) interact with each other, learn together, and co-create solutions.

Facilitating processes is also about using the space (both physical and digital, the resources and environment) as a platform to help participants better participate. Before the actual dialogue, we should make it a practice to go through the dialogue experience in the shoes of our different participants. Here are some questions we can ask ourselves:

### For Online Dialogues

- How might they feel when you ask them to be in the call at 7:00 AM only to start the session at 7:30?
- How might it affect their engagement if the facilitators and all the participants have their cameras off throughout the session? What if we required all the cameras to be turned on?
- How might the participants feel if we had an online dialogue that lasted three hours with no health breaks?

### For Face-to-Face Dialogues

- How might they feel when you ask them to be in the session at 7:00 AM only to start the session at 7:30?
- What does a participant seated at the back of the room by the doorway see when we flash the slide presentation in front?
- How does it feel to do sketching exercises on an armchair instead of a full table?
- How might some participants feel if we speak in certain languages or dialects?

**Empathy** plays an important role in anticipating the dialogue experience. When we are able to put ourselves in the shoes of our participants, we are more aware of how we can achieve our intended outcomes. This is how we can better prepare and make the necessary adjustments, keeping in mind our participants' participation capacity and the different scenarios that we might encounter in the actual dialogue.



### **Weave together different processes.**

Dialogues can be long and tedious. As facilitators, we are invited to design moments where the participants are able to see the value of coming together to find and solve problems, and see opportunities in the landscape. When we help participants make sense of long conversations or trigger the fruition of seeds planted even before the dialogue, these moments can make a lasting impact on our participants that can move them to act. Here are two ways that we can do this:

- Piece together different outputs, prompts, and discussions as you move along. When we use these as springboards or reference for the next parts of the dialogue, we are able to emphasize the value of producing high-quality outputs. Even output that has been used by a different group can be helpful in making them feel and appreciate the community efforts that have been poured into the dialogue.
- Highlight smaller questions whose answers help answer the main question. Mapping out the questions this way, and bringing them back at the end of each session helps participants understand why it was necessary for them to engage in certain activities, or why a difficult conversation had to happen. Making the intention of the design visible is another way to help the participants feel assured that their engagement and questions are valuable.
- Highlight the dialogue process. A dialogue is not a single event or an output; it is a process that we actively seek to engage in. It is a process by which we open ourselves to others, and in doing so, we should accept possibilities of change. When we frame, and emphasize it this way, we usher the participants into an experience that seeks value, promotes engagement, and at the same time prepares them to commit in a possibly long-term process of participation, and learning.



Why does the process take so long? It takes so long because iba-iba tayo. We come from different sectors. We come from different upbringings. We come from different disciplines. We may all work on conservation, yes, but puwedeng iba-iba pa rin 'yung pinanggagalingan natin, and that's where the process becomes a bit tedious.

*Heidi D. Mendoza, Forest Foundation Philippines*







## HAVE A THINK

Whenever we do dialogues, facilitating processes gets easier when we remind ourselves that we are dealing with people and we are bound by space. At this point, try to recall some of your experiences both as a participant and as a facilitator.

### AS A PARTICIPANT

1. What kind of experiences are within your comfort zone? What kind of experiences stretch you and challenge you?
2. What experiences help bring out your best participant self?
3. What kind of facilitator resonated with you? What about their facilitation style did you like?

### AS A FACILITATOR

1. How do you wish for participants to describe you? What kind of relationship do you want to build with participants?
2. How do you want your participants to feel before, during and after the dialogue?
3. What occurrences and participant behaviors energize you during a dialogue? Drain you during a dialogue?
4. What are your go-to processes in dialogues that have worked for you before? What are some processes that did not seem to work, but you are willing to try again?



## CHOOSE AN ADVENTURE

In this section, we learned about **Facilitating Processes**—strategies that we can use to design smooth and fruitful dialogues.



Go to the **Give It a Try** Activity Kit to try out activities related to Facilitating Processes.

- Energy Graph
- Roses, Thorns, and Buds
- Traffic Signals
- 6 Thinking Hats
- Use Cases
- Bukas, Daloy, Sarado
- Futures Thinking

If you want to learn more about who participates in a dialogue and how we can engage them, go back to the **Facilitating People** section (Page 20).

If you want to learn more about how we can design and facilitate the spaces that our dialogues take place in, go back to the **Facilitating Spaces** section (Page 40).

If you want to learn more about ways forward after a dialogue, skip to the **Moving Forward** section (Page 62).





**MOVING  
FORWARD**



ALBERT

# HOW CAN WE DOCUMENT DIALOGUES?

Good documentation is key to ensuring follow-up action from the dialogues. We might assume that people can easily remember their contributions or agreed action points, but the reality is that as participants return to their usual day-to-day activities, it can be difficult to recall what has been talked about.

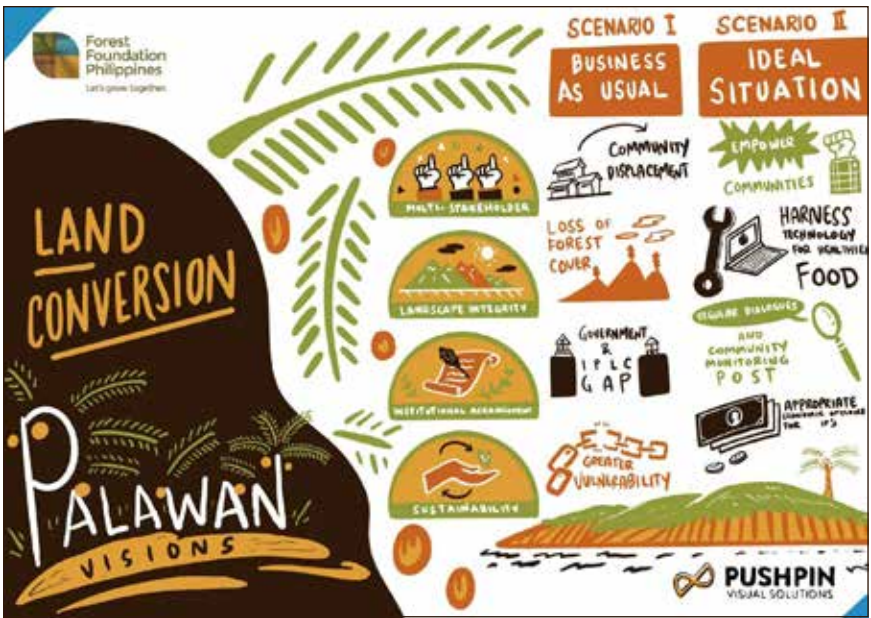
At the same time, participants might want to share the dialogue content with other colleagues in order to create buy-in for the ideas brought up during the dialogues. What might the participants use to convey the major points of the dialogue?

Prompt, and organized documentation summaries can help them revisit the dialogues, and reconnect with the moments that inspired them to act. There are many ways that we can approach documentation. In the SILG dialogues, we mostly used visual documentation with crisp dialogue summaries.



Visual documentation can be done during the actual dialogue, or a day after the dialogue. The goal is to capture the highlights, and salient points of the discussions in a visual document that can help participants better recall and also to provide them with reliable references they

can use. The dialogues are lengthy, and if we are to write them in detail, or in usual report writing format, we might lose people along the way. We use crisp summaries that only highlight major points, and provide ways forward for participants.



More than the documentation being aesthetically good, it is also important that we share the documentation as quickly as possible. We have to maximize the momentum and traction that the dialogue brought about in the individual. Even good visuals or stories can lose its urgency when we fail to share the information at the time it is needed.



## HAVE A THINK

Recall your past dialogue facilitation experiences and how you approached dialogue documentation.

1. Why do you value dialogue documentation?
2. What documentation styles did your dialogue participants receive well?
3. What documentation styles helped you as a facilitator in synthesizing a session? In designing several sessions for a dialogue?
4. What are your principles for a well-documented dialogue?

If you will be given a chance to document a dialogue series:

1. What factors will you consider in choosing a documentation approach?
2. How do you think that the conversations can be captured in a manner that can spark recall, and action?
3. How will you communicate the documentation to the participants?





# WHAT ARE OUTCOMES AND HOW CAN WE HARVEST THEM?

## What are outcomes?

Our work does not stop after the dialogue is conducted; it continues to spheres of asking whether or not actual change transpires from the event. **Outcomes are observable, significant changes in a social actor's behavior, actions, practices, activities, and relationships, that can be attributed to our activities and interventions.** In a general sense, outcomes refer to the changes in our participants' ways of doing after participating in dialogues.



## Why do we harvest outcomes?

Outcome Harvesting is a way to monitor and evaluate the results of our work during the dialogues. It provides a way for us to identify which results we have contributed to, to celebrate our successes, reflect on the challenges, and find ways to improve our strategies so that we can achieve our goals.

## How can we harvest outcomes?

Below is a 6-step process from the **Outcomes Harvesting Manual**:<sup>17</sup>

1. **Design the outcome harvesting strategy.** This stage requires the outcome harvester to identify who to engage, when, where, and how. The outcome harvester must also identify sources of information they can use to track the changes.
2. **Gather and draft outcome descriptions.** This is where the outcome harvester drafts the outcome description (usually in this format: Who changed what?).
3. **Verify.** To ensure that the outcomes are factual, and valid, the outcome harvester might need to verify it with other sources, or crosscheck with the other outcomes to see completeness, correctness, and completeness.

<sup>17</sup>Outcome Harvesting Manual, Green Livelihoods Alliance

4. **Substantiate outcome descriptions.** The outcome harvester then engages with external stakeholders to provide feedback on the listed outcomes. This is to ensure, and increase the credibility, and accuracy of the outcomes.
5. **Analyze and interpret.** After the outcomes have been substantiated, the outcome harvester then puts all the outcomes together to see possible patterns, and process these thematically.
6. **Support use of findings.** This step entails the outcome harvester to review the outcomes, and interpreting how these can be used to further improve the next dialogues, or next programs.

To learn more about harvesting outcomes, you may refer to the **Outcomes Harvesting Manual** (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1938XmMQhcGSAyPUy5aIXQgqxiim3svLV/view>) written by the Green Livelihoods Alliance.



When I got into the SILG circle, sabi ko, “Hmm, ano ba ’tong sinasalihan ko?” Sabi ko, “Let’s give it a try, see what’s happening.” It looked interesting at the onset. As it turned out and as it progressed, I saw that it has great potential and it really gives everyone a chance to come together... Mahirap kasi ’yung lonely voice ka in the darkness. As I’ve always said, it really helps to know that you’re not alone in what you’re doing. **If it’s going to work, it’s going to work because we made it work.**

*Jose Andres Ignacio,  
Environmental Science for Social Change, Bukidnon*



# ARE YOU READY FOR YOUR NEXT DIALOGUE?



Each dialogue is unique, and there is no single clear-cut way to facilitate one. All we have are practices that can ensure creative, inclusive, flexible, and humane dialogues. We hope that this toolkit helped you gain confidence in tackling ambiguous and fluid situations, where there are no black and white answers. Oftentimes, we will be swimming in shades of grey, and that is okay. A good dialogue provides a space to work towards a common understanding that, although we do not have the perfect solution to a problem, we are, at least, on the same page.

At the same time, we hope that you feel affirmed seeing your own practices in the pages of this toolkit. As we continue to facilitate dialogues, meet new people, and learn more about the nuances of landscape governance, we may come up with new ways to approach them. We created this toolkit based on the nuggets of wisdom that we picked up along the way, and we encourage you to continue listening, observing, and adapting to constantly changing **people, spaces, and processes**. We left blank pages at the end of this toolkit as a space for your own ideas. What do you think? How might we make dialogues better?









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