



UNIT 3:

Empower households through participatory learning and action

Introduction

There are examples all over the world that show how participatory learning and action (PLA) methods are unlocking the potential of local people to find realistic solutions to their food insecurity problems. In South Africa PLA learning processes are increasingly used to enable people to break the stranglehold of poverty.

“Coming together, sharing together, working together, and succeeding together.”

In this unit the spotlight is on how you plan, organize, and facilitate PLA learning sessions with the households. So far you have learned about food security, the situation of poor and hungry people, and PLA methods and tools.

These are the building blocks that you will use to create practical learning sessions. PLA learning sessions are like seeds that need fertile soil to grow. The success of the learning sessions depends on good HFS teamwork, the participation and support of community organizations, and the full participation of the households. The food security Care Learning Group that you establish is central to the participatory learning and action process. Caregivers of households are invited to belong to the Care Learning Group and the support they receive through their interactions with other caregivers in their area is expected to sustain them long after the HFS Programme has ended.

Today you begin your facilitation journey. Be prepared to practice and work with your HFS team to create learning sessions that stimulate households to take an active part in finding livelihood and food security solutions that work for them.

Unit 3 Sections

- 3.1 Getting started with participatory learning and action in the community
- 3.2 How to establish a Care Learning Group
- 3.3 How to facilitate PLA learning sessions

Take Action



This section gives you detailed information about the portfolio activities that are linked to Module 2. They focus on the actions with households and are the main assessment activities.

Learning outcomes

The information in this table is like a good road map for your learning journey. It gives you a clear idea of what you are expected to **know** and **do** at the end of Unit 3. The workbook, portfolio and assignments are all **assessment** activities that are linked to the **learning**



outcomes. By completing these activities you can show what level of knowledge and skill you have achieved.

The time estimate for doing the activities helps you to manage your study time. Some of you will take longer while others may need less time. You can keep a check on how long the activities actually take by filling in the time you spent.

Learning outcomes	Assessment activities	Actual time spent
Workbook activities		
<p>1. Interpret the influence and impact of local forces and dynamics on the household's ability to achieve food security.</p> <p>Identify what is needed to build a supportive community environment.</p>	<p>3.1 Forces that influence food decisions in households <i>(30 minutes)</i></p> <p>3.2 My role as an HFS facilitator <i>(20 minutes)</i></p> <p>3.3 Actions to build a supportive environment for food security in a community <i>(20 minutes)</i></p> <p>3.4 Ethical considerations when working with households <i>(30 minutes)</i></p>	
<p>2. Describe the central role played by the Care Learning Group in the PLA learning and action process.</p> <p>Identify practical ways of establishing a Care Learning Group in an area.</p>	<p>3.5 How to establish a Care Learning Group <i>(20 minutes)</i></p>	
<p>3. Identify participative learning methods and tools suitable for use in learning processes with caregivers of households.</p> <p>Select and apply suitable learning methods and tools in planning a learning session.</p>	<p>3.6 Learning session goals and messages <i>(20 minutes)</i></p> <p>3.7 The practical challenges of facilitating gardening demonstrations <i>(40 minutes)</i></p> <p>3.8 Build on the experiences of the household <i>(25 minutes)</i></p> <p>3.9 Supportive relationships can support behaviour change <i>(25 minutes)</i></p> <p>3.11 Prepare a learning session plan <i>(50 minutes)</i></p> <p>3.12 Working as a team <i>(30 minutes)</i></p>	



4. Evidence of planning, facilitating and evaluating participative learning methods and tools in a practice learning session with fellow students.

Evidence of information collected during the introductory meeting and the first home visit with caregivers.

Portfolio Activity 2.3

Plan, facilitate and evaluate a learning session.
(2 hours 30 minutes)

Log

Reflect on the learning session.
(15 minutes)

Portfolio Activity 2.4

Organize an introductory meeting with households in the area.
(2 hours 30 minutes)

Log

Reflect on the introductory meeting with households.
(15 minutes)

Portfolio Activity 2.5


Conduct the first home visit with households.
(1 hour to prepare visits; 1 hour per household)

Log

Reflect on the first home visit with households.
(15 minutes)

Keywords

An important goal of this programmed is introduce you to the concepts and words in the food security field. To assist you we present a list of key words that are introduced in each unit. The meanings of these words appear in a glossary at the end of the module.

	
PLA learning process learning sessions care learning group scoping information gathering tasks reflective report facilitation tasks	mind mobilization group activities teamwork self reflection and renewal home visits monitoring tools



3.1 Getting started with participatory learning and action in the community

When you start a journey you usually have a good idea of your destination. You know where it is and what it looks like. You plan the most suitable way to get there. This may be on foot, by taxi, bus, train, or plane. Throughout your journey you keep an eye on the destination. You check that you're still on the road that will get you there. For you the journey is only over when you arrive at your end point. But your end point is again the beginning of another journey. In a similar way, starting your **facilitation journey** requires that you ask and find answers to questions such as:

- What am I trying to achieve?
- Who can help me achieve it?
- How can I achieve the goal?
- How do I know that I am working towards the goal?
- What happens to the households when the programme is over?

These questions are dealt with in the following sections:

- 3.1.1 What is purpose of the PLA learning process?
- 3.1.2 The role of the HFS facilitator in the community
- 3.1.3 Cultivate local awareness and support for households
- 3.1.4 Get households to become involved

3.1.1 What is the purpose of the PLA learning process?

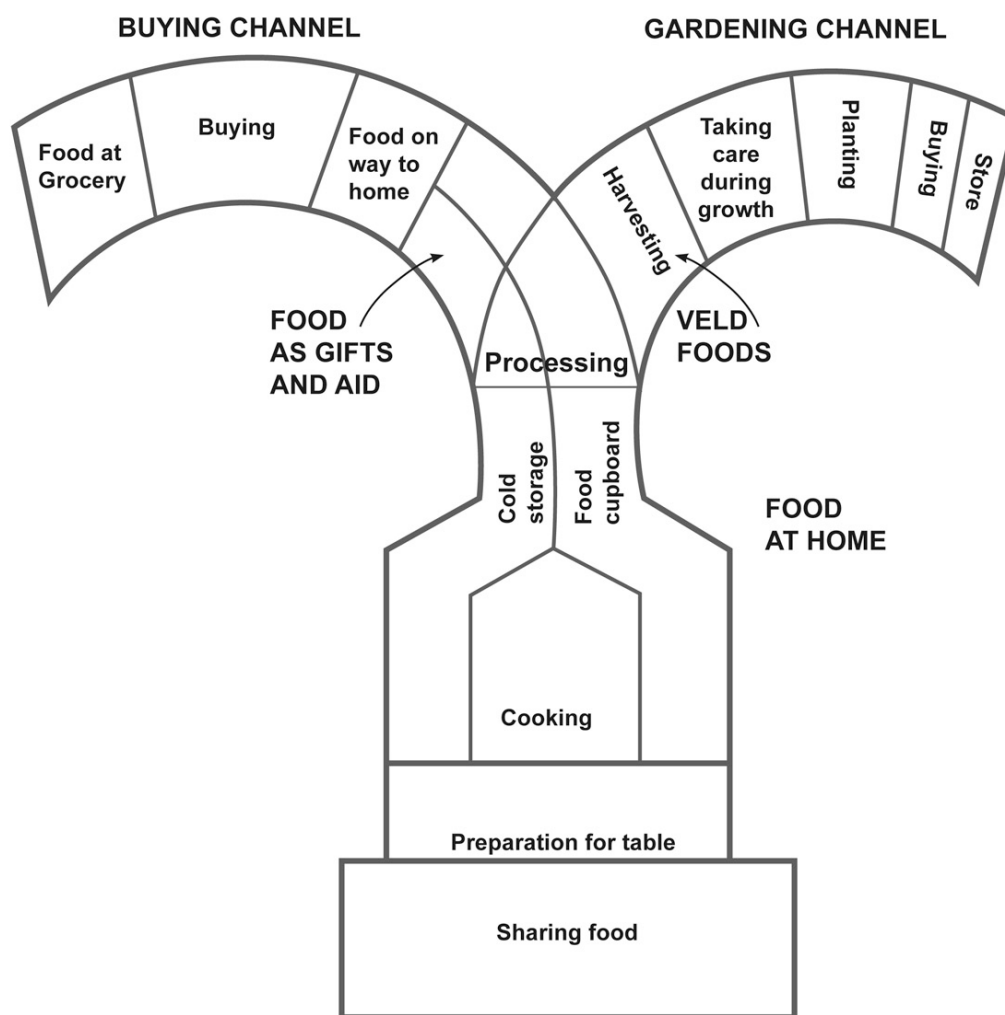
The PLA learning process is a set of methods and actions that should lead to improved food security decision-making, behaviour and practice. What exactly do we mean by improved food security decision-making?

The diagram encourages you to view food security at the household level through the lens of food security decision-making points. Here are some ideas to help you interpret the diagram in Figure 3.1.

- The households have two main ways or channels to get food: producing own food (gardening) and buying food.
- A number of key decisions are needed to harvest, process, and store, prepare, and serve food to household members. These decisions are like little 'gates'. Various forces impact on the 'gates' and influence the decisions the households have to make. The main forces that influence food decision-making are financial, social, cultural, environmental and personal. For example, a person may not have a food garden because the household lives in water stressed area (environmental). She has to buy food that is affordable because the family has a low income (financial). She buys white bread and mealier meal because it is cheap and the household members prefer this food (personal preference). She stores and prepares the food in the customary way (cultural).



- The 'gatekeepers' are usually those with the knowledge, skill, and cultural or indigenous knowledge about food. They are usually the caregivers and are referred to in the diagram as food providers.
- Positive decisions ensure a better flow of food through all the channels and lead to adequate, acceptable, and nutritious food for all in the household.
- Poor decisions result in inadequate, unacceptable and non-nutritious food for all in the household.
- The channels describe relevant content for learning activities and actions at the micro level.



CHANNELS THROUGH WHICH FOOD REACHES HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

Figure 3.1 The channels through which food reaches the household members
(Adapted from Lewin (1947) in Roberts, 2005)

Food security strategies aimed at the household should develop the household's ability to take care of themselves, make healthy choices, and take responsible decisions. Lewin maintains that change is achieved through using small groups and group interaction to gather information, consider options, and make plans for action. This is the PLA learning process. The small groups provide a comfortable environment to enable people to reflect on their



assets and food needs, to learn with each other, and to improve or make new decisions in their own local and cultural context. People can build on their indigenous knowledge and extend their knowledge by learning more improved or new practices.

To achieve changed food security behaviour and practice the household will need community support and services from the local environment.



Workbook Activity 3.1: Complete this activity in your workbook

Forces that Influence food decisions in households

Identify the forces that influence the household’s food decisions.

What to do

Reflect on the diagram and description and discuss the following questions in your group. Write the main points of your discussion in your workbook.

1. Think of a household you know and identify the person who makes food decisions at each of the ‘gates’. This person the ‘food provider’ or caregiver.
2. What kind of decisions does the food provider make? Write them in the table below.
3. What forces influence the food decisions you identified? Write them next to the food choices.

Food decisions	Forces that influence food decisions

4. How can you assist and support the food provider to make positive food security decisions?



Comments on Activity 3.1

The reflection on food decisions to obtain, store, and prepare food has alerted you to the main focus of your support and PLA learning activities: to enable people to change behaviours that prevent food security and lead to malnutrition and to adopt behaviours that lead to food security and health and well being.



As you discovered in the previous units, the PLA learning activities you facilitate with households requires their full participation and a supportive community environment. From day one you have to build good relationships with the households and key stakeholder organizations and government agencies that work in food security related initiatives and projects in the community. The more you can cooperate with people involved in existing food security related projects, the more you contribute to building supportive networks and the higher the chances are that the households will continue their food security efforts.

3.1.2 The role of the HFS facilitator in the community

In the previous units you learned what you are expected to do as an HFS facilitator. How would you explain your role to the households and organizations in the community?



Workbook Activity 3.2: Complete this activity in your workbook

My role as an HFS facilitator in the community

Describe your role to two different audiences: the household and a community organization.

What to do

Reflect on what you have learned so far about your role and respond to the questions that follow:

1. Identify your main tasks. Describe the tasks in your own words.
2. What is the best way of working in the community?
3. Write the explanation of your role in the table below. Think what would make sense to your audience and keep it short and to the point.

Explanation of the HFS facilitator role to the household	Explanation of the HFS facilitator role to a community organization



Comments on Activity 3.2

When you try to explain to others what you do you clarify it for yourself. Your idea about the HFS facilitator role at this point is still theoretical and tied to what you have learned in the modules and the discussions in your group. As you start working in the field and engage with households and individuals and organizations in the community and become grounded in reality your ideas about your role should develop and become clearer.



Compare your ideas with the visual presentation of the HFS facilitator role in the following set of diagrams.

DIAGRAM 1 – Community infrastructure and stakeholder groups

This picture shows groups of stakeholders commonly found in communities. There are various **levels** at which the HFS facilitator needs to engage, described here as: **Household** level (all persons that make up a basic socio-cultural and economic unit), **community** level (a community made up of households), **municipal** level (all communities fall within wards that make up a local municipal structure. A number of local municipalities are combined to form a district municipality), and **national** and **international** levels (politics, policies and strategies at country and global levels that affect people).



Figure 3.2 Community infrastructure and stakeholder groups in a community

DIAGRAM 2 – The HFS facilitator works with households in the community

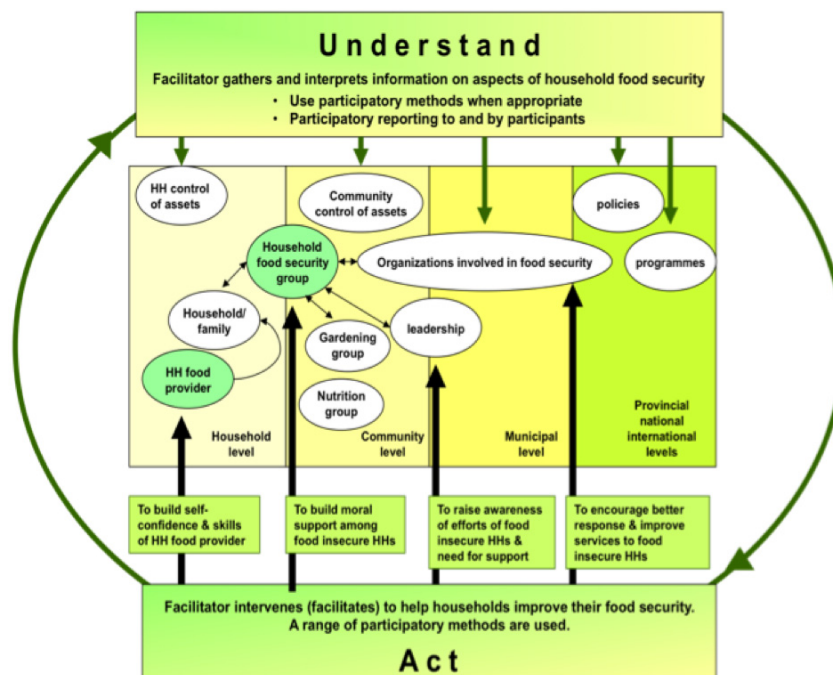


Figure 3.3 Overview of the tasks of the household food security facilitator



What differences do you notice between diagrams 1 and 2?

Read and interpret the diagram

- In diagram 2 above, these arrows \longleftrightarrow show improved and healed relationships: between the household caregiver and his/her family; between the care learning group and the leadership or other organizations, and groups that can encourage or assist the food insecure households' own efforts towards food security. Improved relationships provide a very important foundation for the household caregiver to move forward with confidence and for social well-being.
- The facilitator gathers and analyzes (interprets) information to **understand** the food security situation and factors affecting it. At the community level you try to get the big food security picture. Your initial analysis of the information you collect should enable you to see which organizations, projects, and services support or prevent the household from achieving food security. Through the interactions with the households and the community in the coming months you should be able to refine your understanding of the big issues.

You place yourself in the shoes of the household caregiver, and interpret which factors at the level of the household, community, through to national level are affecting this person's ability to feed her family.

- The facilitator assesses which factors s/he would be able to influence, and develops a suitable plan of **action** consisting of establishing the Care Learning Group, the facilitation of learning sessions, and support to households.
- The two arrows on either side of diagram linking **understand** to **act** shows that this is cycle. Throughout your interactions with the household you are involved in the Triple a Cycle: **look, think, act**. Hopefully your interactions in the community lead to increased understanding and more effective actions.
- The facilitator acts on the knowledge and relationships, which s/he has built up during information gathering and analysis. This enables you to facilitate change by interacting with the household caregiver, with local leadership, and with other organizations involved in food security matters in the area. To reach more households simultaneously and to build a permanent 'support group' among food insecure households in the neighborhood, you establish a **Care Learning Group** and help the group to develop its own vision, goals, and action plans.
- This is how the **learning and action cycle** works. Like life itself, household food security facilitation is an ongoing learning cycle for the facilitator and the households. The initial information gathered enables the facilitator to plan and start a process in the community. Then, as things develop, s/he learns more and more, and further builds relationships with various role players and households. This enables the facilitator to improve facilitation plans and actions – but always through participatory processes. Using participatory methods and tools enables caregivers who implement actions to be part of planning them. Our challenge is to facilitate in such a way that the household caregiver always takes the role of main actor/decision-maker.

As a facilitator, there are a number of steps you need to take to introduce a process in a community. The first is to know something about the area, the people living there, their traditions and practices, and the environmental or farming conditions in the area. If you



come from the area, this will be easy for you. If you do not, you will have to do some investigation and find sources of information that can tell you more about the area, its people and its resources.

3.1.3 Information gathering role

Before it is possible for you to intervene in a situation and work together around changing or improving it, it is important first to understand the situation. You started your information gathering role when you:

- took your first **walk through the community** to observe different conditions, people, problems and opportunities in the community that could be linked to the four dimensions of food security;
- gathered information about the different organizations: what services they offer, how they relate to each other, what cooperation and flow of information exists. The Venn diagram you prepared showed graphically the key stakeholders involved in food security;
- organized a meeting with selected stakeholder organizations and individuals in the community to share information. The interactions with the stakeholders increased your awareness of what the organizations are doing and how they might be able to support you and the households. In turn they were able to find out more about what kind of food security activities you are involved in.

Gathering and sharing information remains an integral and important part of your role. The table below gives a summary of the issues, key questions you will probe, and how you will collect, report and share the information in the coming months.

Issue	Description	Questions to be answered	Methods used to analyze and report
Development context	Economic, environmental, social and institutional patterns that support or constrain development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the important economic, institutional, social and environmental patterns in the community? • What is getting better? What is getting worse? • What are the supports and constraints for development? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of natural resources(Module 3) • Resource mapping (Module 2 and 3) • Transect Walks (Module 1 and 3) • Assets pentagon (Module 3)
Stakeholders	Priorities of different stakeholders. Plan development activities based on the priorities of women and men.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the development priorities of different stakeholders? • How do they intervene? • What are priorities for different groupings in the community? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venn diagram and institutional profiles of different organisations and who benefits in the community (Module 1) • SWOT Analysis (Module 1) • Preference ranking of development needs, priorities for action-related matters, e.g. food sources, household tasks (Module 2 and 3)



Issue	Description	Questions to be answered	Methods used to analyze and report
Household profile	Structure of the household, composition, age, gender of the household	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many household members, age, gender are in living in the household? The lifecycle stage of each household member? The geographic location of the members and residence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Venn diagram showing the household's important support in the community. (Module 2) Baseline information questionnaire and semi structured interviews with households showing composition. (Module 2)
Food consumption analysis	How households acquire food and feed themselves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the resources required and used the types of foods households secure and traditionally secured The activities in the food system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the status and level of food security? What food is available throughout the year? What is the dietary pattern of the households? What strategies do households have to cope with food insecure times? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food security profile using semi-structured interviews (Module 3, 4, 5 and 6) Diet diversity and frequency using semi-structured interviews (Module 4) Traditional dietary pattern(Module 4) Problem tree to establish the causes and effects of malnutrition. (Module 4) Food coping strategies using semi-structured interviews (Module 3 and 4) Seasonal calendar to establish seasonal food availability. (Module 3 and 4).
Livelihoods analysis	How individuals and households and groups of households make their living and their access to resources to do so. The activities people undertake to meet basic needs and to generate income. Gender and socio-economic group differences are shown with respect to labored decision-making patterns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do people make their living? Are there households who are able to meet their basic needs? How many households are unable to meet their basic needs? What are the patterns of use and control of resources? What are the risks for households and food insecurity? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five livelihood assets diagram. Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions (Module 3) Farming systems diagram to present food gardening activities with inputs and outputs (Module 3) Matrix ranking diagram for food sources, income and expenditure (Module 2 and 3)

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Table 3.1 Framework to guide the collection and analysis of information
(Adapted from Wilde, V. 2001)

The HFS facilitator collects and analyzes two main categories of information:

1. STAKEHOLDERS AND INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS

Stakeholder and institutional profiles help you to make sense of the nature of the institutions and organizations you identified in the Venn diagram in Module 1. By now you should have a contacts list showing the name and contact details of selected individuals, organizations and local government agencies, a description of the activities and initiatives they are involved in, and what kind of support they could offer the households.



The following organizations are often active in the broader food security environment, and some of them may also be active in your area:

Government departments	Programmes, projects, activities, possible support
Department of Social Development	grants, soup kitchens, community centres, pre-schools),
Department of Education	National School Feeding Programme, school gardens, local facilitators
Department of Agriculture	support for community gardens and dip tanks for cattle, food security projects, land care projects)
Local Municipality	provision of services such as water, in conjunction with the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry), electricity, roads, support for some projects in the community
Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)	projects such as nutrition education, gardening, HIV care, youth care
Community-Based Organisations	churches, drama groups, women's groups, water committees, burial societies,

Table 3.2 Stakeholder organizations active in a community

2. HOUSEHOLD PROFILES AND ANALYSIS

As a starting point you collect **baseline information** about the households to enable you to compile a **profile** of each household. You do this in Portfolio Activity 2.5. An analysis of the profiles enables you to identify the particular livelihood and food security strengths and needs and pinpoints possible areas for learning, capacity building, and support. You continue to collect stories, examples of good and poor practices, evidence of improved food decision-making and behaviours. These increase your understanding and lead to well-informed actions.

The facilitator gathers and analyses (interprets) new information all the time so that actions taken can become more and more effective. HFS facilitation requires a 'lifelong learning approach'. This applies to every household or community situation the facilitator works in, but also in the HFS facilitator's personal development.

3. REPORTING

Reporting and sharing information is an integral part of gathering and analyzing information.

Who reports?

The HFS facilitator and the Care Learning Group can share information to relevant leaders and stakeholders. Find out what the process is for information sharing and reporting in the community you are working in.

In participatory processes it is customary for the local people who participate in the process to report back on findings and actions at community meetings. You can provide the necessary support to the Care Learning Group who can report on behalf of the households.

As an HFS facilitator you are expected to compile various reports of findings related to



food security issues at the micro level with households and share them with relevant leaders and stakeholders.

What is reported?

The content of reporting should be action-oriented and explicit. The reports can present forward actions (action planning) and communicate what has happened (reflective report).

To who are reports presented?

The Care Learning Group presents reports to identified leaders of community structures on behalf of the households. The reports can also be shared with other care learning groups in the community and community organizations.

The HFS facilitator presents reports on findings, e.g. results of the ‘scoping’ at an initial meeting of stakeholders including leaders and relevant organizations. Information can be shared at appropriate intervals to build supportive networks.

The households are the primary beneficiaries of informal information reporting and sharing. From the first meeting with the households and throughout the process the HFS facilitator makes notes of what s/he observes and shares her/his insights with the households as part of an interactive dialogue. After each portfolio activity you are expected to record your reflections in your log. For each household visit you will make relevant notes.

3.1.4 The facilitation role

Here is a summary of the main processes the HFS facilitator has to facilitate:

Main processes	Key questions	Actions
Scope or analyze the food security situation in the community	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where do I get relevant information? 2. What participatory methods can I use with local leaders and people working in food security related projects and initiatives to think critically about food security issues in the community? 3. How reliable is the information I collected? 4. How do I structure the information? 5. How do I share the information? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background information gathering • Participatory information gathering and analysis • Meeting with relevant stakeholders to share information
Create an enabling environment (in the community, local and district municipalities)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. How can you involve local leaders and relevant organizations so that they are supportive and active in the food security processes of their community? 7. How can you strengthen your relationships with local leaders and organizations in the community to build a supportive environment in the community that makes is possible for households to take actions to improve their own food security? 	<p>Open the door</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get leaders’ support • Get buy-in from other organizations involved in food security in the area
Mobilize households and provide ongoing support	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. How do I create a shared vision of food security with the households? 9. How do I encourage the households to participate? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductory meeting Create a shared vision with households and motivate them to participate



	10. What support do households need? 11. How do I know that the households are engaging with their food security action plan?	Consent from households to participate • Practical household food security action plan with agreed goals, responsibilities, time frames and self-monitoring and reflection. • Regular household visits
Establish Care Learning Group	12. How do I establish a food security Care Learning Group? 13. What is the role of the group? 14. What support does the group need to remain active?	• Participation in four PLA learning sessions linked to Modules 3, 4, 5, and 6. Agree on suitable support at the learning sessions
Facilitate PLA learning sessions with the Care Learning Group	15. What are the needs of the participating household caregivers? 16. What methods and tools can I use to build their capacity?	• PLA learning session plans
Monitor self and renew actions	17. How do I know that the PLA learning activities and actions are helping the household caregivers? 18. What changes are needed?	• Evaluate and refine learning and action cycles

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Table 3.3 Summary of main facilitation processes

A skilled facilitator understands that every household is unique and that each caregiver needs to come up with his or her own strategy to solve the household's food security related problems. For instance, a deeply traumatized and fractured household would need a different approach to one where family relationships are healthy; a household with a natural spring would have water needs that are different to those households without easy access to water; a household consisting entirely of school going children would not use the same solution as one consisting of a pensioner with working age sons and daughters. Equally, every village is unique in terms of its natural resources, its leadership approach, history and politics, and relationships among community members.

The more you get to know the complexity of the situations you come across, the better able you are to provide support that is helpful. Be aware that there are factors beyond the control of the households that make it difficult for them to take actions to help themselves. In such instances enable the households to take actions to raise awareness of these problems with relevant organizations and leaders who can help.

Figure 3.4 below offers a visual presentation of the main facilitation processes.



Assess and analyze (Scoping)

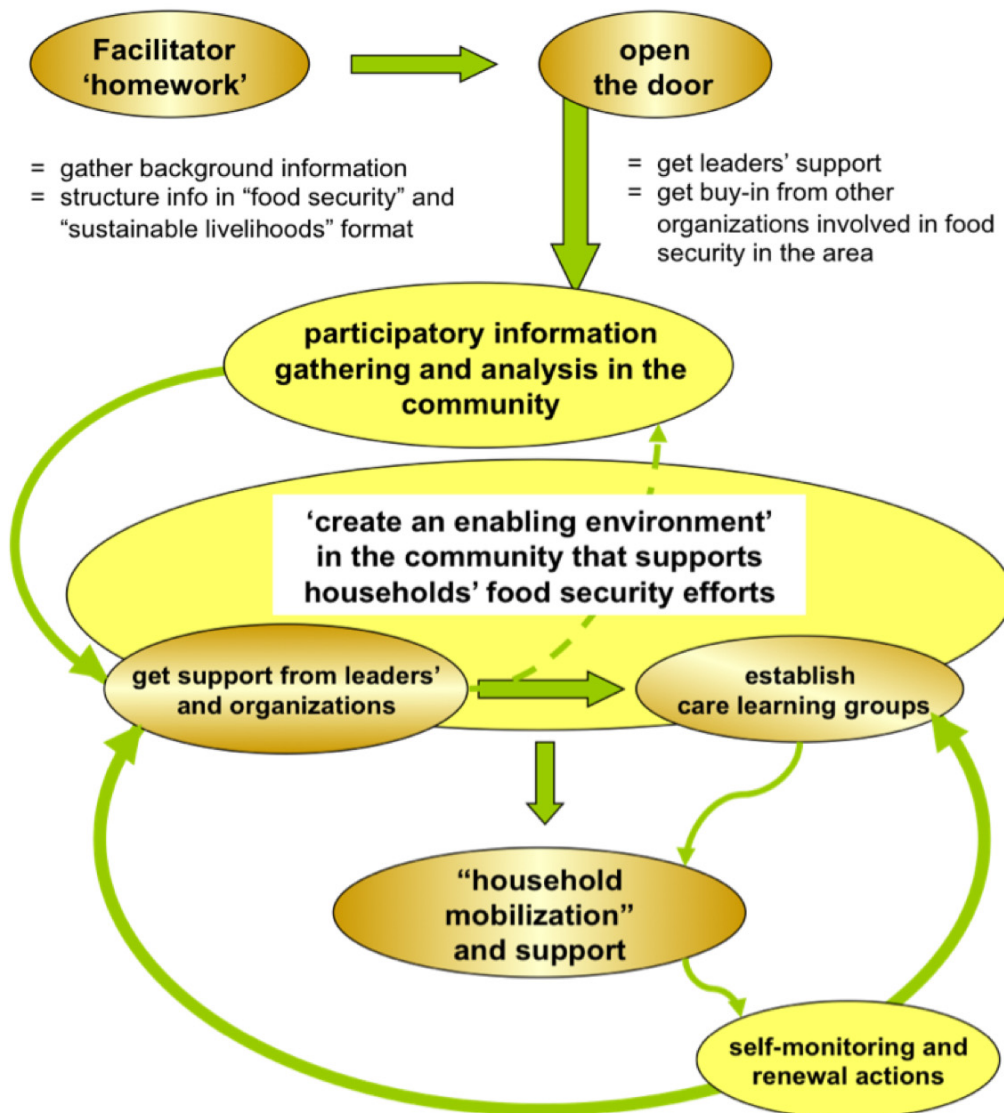


Figure 3.4 Overview of the main facilitation processes

3.1.5 Cultivate local awareness and support for households

A crucial step is to get local support for and understanding of the PLA learning process you plan to introduce. Here are the actions you can take to ensure there is widespread support for the food security activities with the households both during and after the HFS programme.



1. LINK UP WITH AN ORGANIZATION IN THE COMMUNITY

In Portfolio Activity 1.1 you held a consultative meeting with your chosen organization. For some of you this is the organization or local government project you are already working with. For others it is an organization you want to work with. With the help of this organization you can gain access to local leadership (including traditional and municipal structures) and organized groups or individuals that are involved in community development activities.

2. GET AGREEMENT FROM LOCAL LEADERS

You need the agreement of local leaders. If this is difficult in your area, due to conflicts or lack of organization for example, the very least you can do is to inform them of your intentions. Make sure you are aware of all the important people such as traditional leaders, leaders of other community groups, religious leaders of different faiths and political leaders. Get to know them and build up relationships with them. Share information with them about what you are doing and how things are progressing as this helps to create awareness and support.

3. INFORM PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY

Small communities are tight knit communities where people are aware of everything that goes on in their immediate environment. As in all communities there is a wide range of views and attitudes. You can help to create a positive attitude to the household food security activities by encouraging the Care Learning Group to keep the neighbours informed about what they are doing and to invite them to join in some of the activities. You will learn more about the Care Learning Group's role in another section.

Here is an example of how the actions of individuals involved in food security related activities could raise suspicion and negative responses from neighbours and people in the community.



Case study: Overcoming suspicion in the community

Group 1

When Eva Masha in Sekhukhune from Limpopo started to dig an excavation to build her own underground rainwater tank, people who walked past ridiculed her. They were asking cutting questions and thought she was doing a crazy thing. Many others commented that they would not have been able to continue as determinedly as she did to complete the excavation for her water tank. Today, thanks to her perseverance, many households in her community have rainwater tanks like hers.

Group 2

When five women in northern Limpopo started digging planting trenches in their backyards to establish their household food gardens, they were viewed with severe suspicion. Some villagers thought they were "digging graves to bury our children." To counteract these suspicions and inform the community what they were doing, they decided to take action. Once they had harvested their first huge spinach leaves, one of the women took a bunch of beautiful spinach to the local radio station where she was interviewed. In this way the whole area could hear about the group's efforts to grow their own vegetables.



Be aware of the tendency to belittle and put down poor people. Continually be on the lookout for opportunities to affirm the good work of participating households for their own benefit and to inform the larger community.



Workbook Activity 3.3: Complete this activity in your workbook

Actions to build a supportive environment for food security in a community

Reflect on progress to build a supportive environment for learning and actions to improve household food security in the community.

What to do

1. Reflect on the checklist of actions and identify what you have already done and what you still need to do. Tick ✓ only the actions that you have taken so far.

Checklist of actions	✓
1. Have you completed the initial analysis of food security issues in the community?	
2. Have you shared your findings and insights with local leaders and organizations and individuals who are interested or working with food security related projects?	
3. Do you have consent from local leaders for the food security work with selected households?	
4. Do you have a contacts list of individuals and organizations that could provide support to you and the households?	
5. Does the contacts list show enough detailed information about the services provided by the various individuals and organizations and the kind of support they can offer?	
6. Do you have a list of potential households for participating in the food security participatory learning and action process?	
7. Do you know how you will get consent from the households to participate in the learning activities?	
8. Do you have you any ideas how you will go about establishing a Care Learning Group?	
9. Do you have any ideas how you will inform the local people about the HFS programme?	

2. Discuss in your group difficulties you have with any of the actions in the checklist and find solutions that work for you.





Comments on Activity 3.3

A checklist is a simple tool that can be useful to plan and monitor actions to achieve a particular goal. By completing the Portfolio Activities in Modules 1 and 2 you are building a supportive environment so essential for the PLA learning process to take root and flourish. By sharing your successes and problems with your fellow students in a small group you are experiencing the power of support. This is what the Care Learning Group will do for the caregivers of households.

3.1.6 Get households to become involved

The organization you work or other stakeholders in the community can assist you with the selection of potential households. Invite caregivers of the households to a meeting to introduce the PLA process to them. Inform them about: What you want to achieve, how they can benefit, what is expected of them, what the demands are on their time, and what support they can expect. Make it easy for them to decide to get involved but remember the choice is theirs. You will plan and organize an introductory meeting with the households with members of the HFS team (fellow students and promoter) in Portfolio Activity 2.4.

Let's look at a few ethical considerations.



Workbook Activity 3.4: Complete this activity in your workbook

Ethical considerations when working with households

Identify appropriate responses to specific ethical issues when working with households.

What to do

Discuss some ethical issues that you may come across when working with households in the community. Write your group's responses in the table below.

Questions linked to ethical issues	Our response
1. Is it ethical to engage people in an analysis of their situation and help them plan for action, unless the resources are available to help them address their needs?	
2. May you raise expectations that cannot be met?	
3. Is it ethical to share information about the situation of individual households without their consent?	



4. Are you allowed to take photographs of the homestead or household activities without the consent of the household?	
5. How should you formalize your relationship with the caregiver of the household? Do they need to give consent? What form does it take?	
6. Add any other questions you think are relevant.	



Comments on Activity 3.4

From the start be aware of the responsibility that comes with the privilege of working with households and gaining their trust. Be respectful and show them in practical ways that they can trust you. Help them to keep their eyes on reality and do not make false promises or raise expectations that you know will be dashed.

The pilot project of the HFS Programme conducted in the Eastern Cape revealed that written consent is sometimes perceived negatively. People are cautious about signing their names, as they do not know what it is they are agreeing to. You may have to be satisfied with a verbal consent in some instances. In others you could start off with a verbal consent, which can later lead to a written consent. Whatever the situation, be careful that people understand why it is necessary to get their consent and what they are agreeing to.

3.2 How to establish a care learning group

Care learning groups are support groups that create a 'safe circle of friends' for participating households. This is one of the most important elements of the 'enabling environment' that a facilitator can help create for disempowered households.

It is possible for a small committed group in a community to bring about real changes for the better on their own. Gaining the support of local leaders and organizations in the community is very important as the group can continue to rely on their support especially when the programme has ended. Find out what local interest groups exist and what they do. The new Care Learning Group that you establish can cooperate with groups that work in food related areas, e.g. gardening or nutrition groups. The Care Learning Group should nurture harmonious relationships with other groups and organizations because a supportive network can be a powerful force for change.

3.2.1 What is the role of the Care Learning Group?

By creating a local food security Care Learning Group or support group, it is easy to mobilize (gather together to take an active part) households. It is also simple to coordinate relevant and helpful learning sessions and follow-up support. Above all the group can continue and provide sustainable support to the caregivers after the facilitator has completed his/her work in the area.



WHO ARE THE MEMBERS?

The caregivers of households become members of the Care Learning Group when they agree to participate in the PLA process. The caregivers are mainly women who live in the area and in most cases they know each another.

What are the responsibilities of the group?

The role of the Care Learning Group is to:

- provide a safe base of friendship for member households, to share experiences among themselves and to provide mutual moral support;
- reach out to more and more food insecure households to spread the message of hope and skills for food security;
- mobilize outside support for the group and/or specific member households as needed;
- prepare and present reports of actions taken by the group, successes achieved and problems identified, to appropriate leaders and stakeholders in the community;
- do regular internal review and re-planning to ensure that the group continues to provide relevant support.

3.2.2 The care learning group approach and method

The learning approach for household food security is called experiential or action learning. You learned about it in Units 1 and 2. It is a hands-on, interactive learning process where the participant caregivers take an active part during and after the learning sessions. The action learning cycle for farmer groups depicted in the diagram also applies to the food security Care Learning Group.

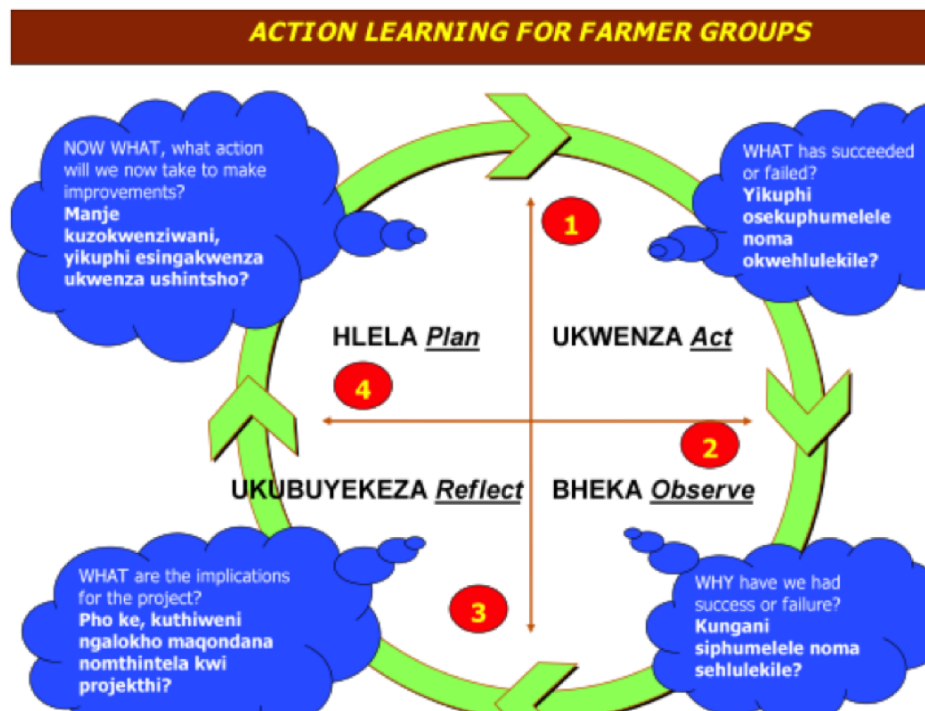


Figure 3.5 Action learning cycle for care learning groups



If you speak another language, translate the English in this diagram into your home language or the language spoken by your Care Learning Group.

Do you remember the Triple A Cycle of learning? You assess an action or situation (observe); think about and understand the action and situation (analyze); make a plan and act to improve things (action). The end of one learning cycle leads to the beginning of the next with the review and reflection on how well the action has worked (observe). Learning is an ongoing cycle of observing, reflecting and planning, acting, and reviewing. You will use this same approach to coordinate the Care Learning Group and the facilitation of PLA learning sessions.

This diagram shows how the different components of the cycle are linked.

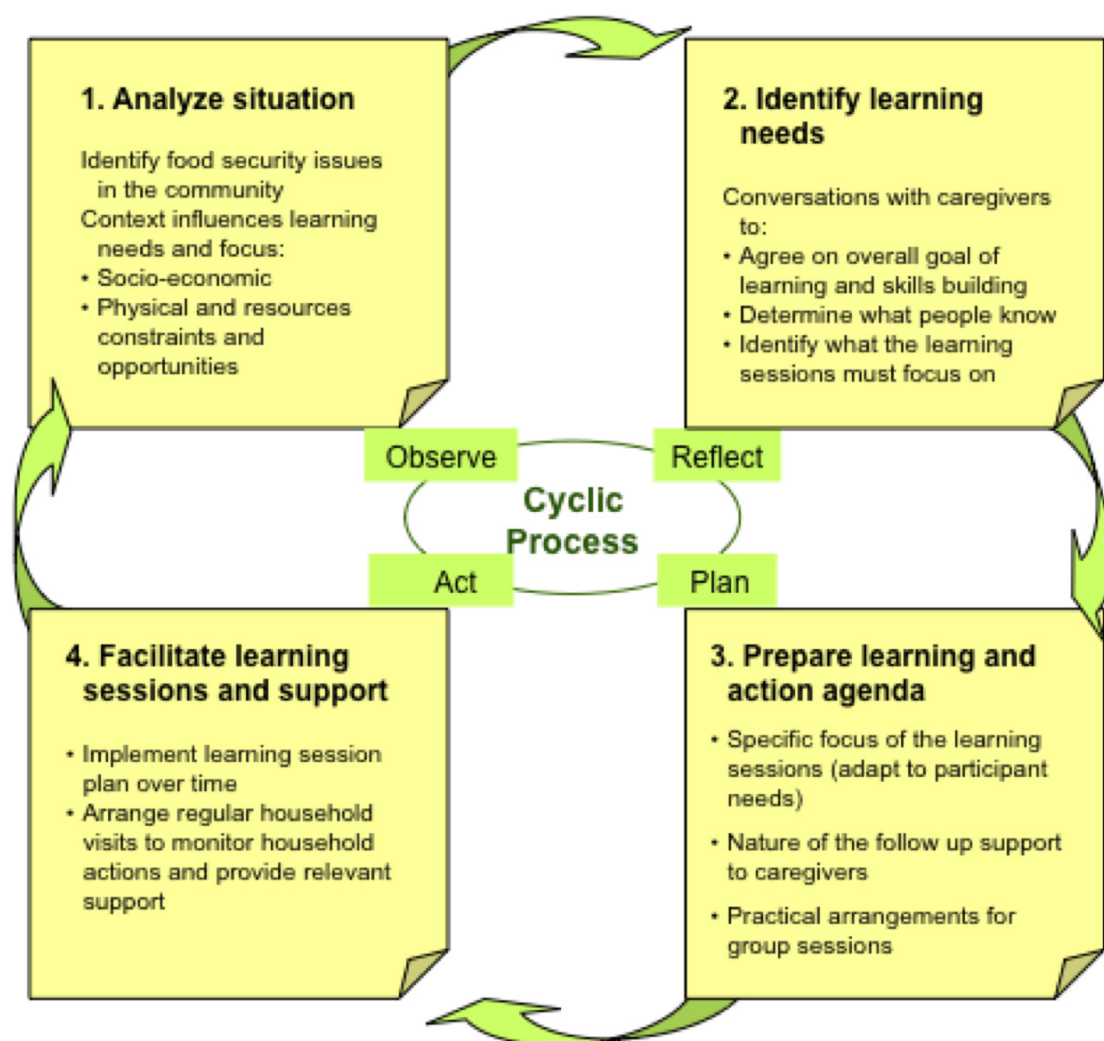


Figure 3.6 Cyclical processes for managing the Care group learning process

The cyclical process needs careful planning to keep people in the group interested and motivated to learn more and more.



Read and interpret the diagram

You start the process by **assessing and analyzing** the community context. You did this in Portfolio Activity 1.1. Getting to know the socio-economic and physical context and its influences on people in the community continues throughout your interactions with the households. You and the households will learn to understand this context more and more through actions and interactions with each other and with stakeholders. The contextual analysis provides a broad picture of the food security issues and needs in the community.

You **identify specific learning needs** with the prospective learners of the Care Learning Group who are the household caregivers. It is best to use participatory methods to help people to find out what they already know and what knowledge and skills they need and want to learn to become food secure.

Acknowledge good indigenous practices and establish how people can strengthen these and add new practices. Distinguish between resources that are needed (water and fencing) and learning (how to use available water better) to improve the situation.

Helping people to identify their learning needs is not only done at the beginning of the learning process but continues throughout. The learning needs of the caregivers inform the learning agenda and actions.

You prepare a **learning and action agenda** that guides the learning sessions you will facilitate as a member of the HFS team. This learning agenda is based on the portfolio activities in Modules 3, 4, 5, and 6. Use your insight into the learning needs of the caregivers to adapt the agenda to create learning activities that are relevant for them.

There is a strong link between what people learn during the learning sessions and their actions to implement what they are learning in their own environment. Learning is a continuous process from the learning session to actions in the household, and from household actions to learning sessions. At each learning session the caregivers share their experiences of success, failed attempts, and difficulties. After the learning session they go home and try again.

It is during the phase of **taking action in their own environment** that the caregivers need **encouragement** and **support**. Your facilitation role extends to several **home visits** where you affirm the caregiver and listen to stories of their successes, failed attempts, and difficulties to improve their food decision-making behaviours and practices.

3.2.3 The Care Group's outreach activities

Later on when the learning processes are running smoothly and the households' gardening is in full swing, you can help the Care Learning Group to:

- Plan their own outreach activities to assist and support other households in the area.
- Do regular self-monitoring and replanning. This reflection should lead to ongoing renewal and increase the chances of sustainability for the household gardens and the Care group.





Workbook Activity 3.5: Complete this activity in your workbook

How to establish a Care Learning Group

Identify practical ways in which you can establish a Care Learning Group.

What to do

1. Discuss in your group how you plan to establish the Care Learning Group in your area. Write your ideas in the form of a **plan of action** in your workbook.
2. Identify possible difficulties you may encounter in your efforts to establish the Care Learning Group. How will you overcome these difficulties?
3. What kind of support will you need? Who can provide you with support?



Comments on Activity 3.5

This is a practical group planning activity. Your goal is to establish a Care Learning Group with whom you will work throughout the programme. Good planning requires a clear understanding of:

- *the goal*
- *actions that are relevant for the context and achievable*
- *possible problems that might threaten your efforts*
- *support you need to achieve your goal.*

3.3 How to facilitate PLA learning sessions

In the Participatory Learning and Action process you are expected to facilitate a set of learning sessions with the Care Learning Group and provide follow up support to the caregivers of participating households.

WHAT ARE PLA LEARNING SESSIONS?

PLA learning sessions are opportunities for individuals to come together to learn and exchange ideas, but they take follow up actions in their own household and homestead yards. We prefer the term learning session to workshop as the focus is on learning and not on training. What is the difference? In workshops the trainer plays a directive role whereas in the PLA learning sessions the participants play an active role in their own and each other's learning and the facilitator creates an environment in which that is possible.



LEARNING SESSIONS: SIZE OF GROUP, PLACE AND TIME

There are two main reasons for facilitating learning sessions for a **group of participating caregivers**: first, learning in a group is very stimulating, supportive and enabling; second, the HFS facilitator does not have sufficient time to facilitate learning sessions with individual caregivers and household members. The optimum size of a group for a learning session is about 15 – 20 participants and there should not be less than 6 participants.

Each learning session is held at a selected venue agreed to by the group. This may be a member's homestead, a plot in communal land suitable for learning practical gardening skills, a school or church hall for sessions that do not require outside demonstrations.

Each learning session lasts about 3 – 5 hours. The length of a session depends on what you want to achieve and what is convenient for group members. For example the gardening activities take a lot of time because the participants have to practice what they observe during the demonstrations. You probably need 5 hours for designing and laying out the garden beds. It is possible to have two learning sessions of say 3 hours each for a theme. Get agreement from the group on the day and time for each session that suits everyone.

You can involve a member of the Care Learning Group to assist with the logistical arrangement of the venue and contacting caregivers to remind them of the date and time of the learning session.

WHAT RESOURCES ARE NECESSARY?

You will need a variety of materials for the different learning sessions. For example, you may need to prepare handouts showing examples of a resource map or transect diagram to enable the participants to get an idea of what such maps look like. In Modules 3 and 5 you will need seeds and seedlings, gardening tools, and materials.

Where possible assist the Care Learning Group to link up with local government agriculture projects and organizations in the area to obtain resources such as seeds, seedlings, gardening tools. If the resources are not obtainable through these channels, help the group to negotiate with commercial nurseries in the area to donate or provide the resources at low cost.

3.3.1 The 'big picture' – overview of learning sessions

An HFS team comprising of three or four students facilitates the learning sessions. More details about the facilitation team are given later on in this section. The learning sessions are closely linked to the portfolio activities and you are expected to facilitate at least 4 learning sessions, one for each of the remaining four modules. The outline of the learning sessions shows the big picture of the learning intervention, which aims to build the capacity of participating caregivers to make changes in their households that lead to improved livelihood and food security.



AGENDA OF LEARNING SESSIONS

The Portfolio Activities in Modules 3, 4, 5 and 6 have been designed to form the basis for the learning sessions. The table below gives an overview of the themes and topics in each of the modules.

Learning session	Topics for the agenda of learning sessions	Modules
1. Use of natural resources	1.1 Seasonal availability of natural resources 1.2 Identify natural resources available in the area 1.3 How are tasks divided in the household? (Responsibilities of women and men) 1.4 Best water, soil and plant practices (compost making activity)	Module 3
2. Nutrition and health	2.1 Clarification of terms: food security, food insecurity, malnutrition, hunger, vulnerability 2.2 Causes and effects of malnutrition 2.3 Diet diversity and food variety 2.4 Strategies for seasonal food availability 2.5 Household nutrition action plan	Module 4
3. Low input gardening	3.1 Grow seedlings 3.2 Draw a food garden map 3.3 Make a food garden action plan 3.4 Actions to improve or start a garden	Module 5
4. Managing food resources	4.1 Assess livelihood assets 4.2 Processing to extend shelf-life 4.3 Planning food resources 4.4 Forming savings groups	Module 6

.....
Table 3.4 Agenda for learning sessions showing themes and topics

The four themes are linked closely to household livelihoods and food security topics and issues that you will learn about in the modules. You are building your own knowledge and skills in these areas by engaging with the study guides, doing the workbook and portfolio activities, and by participating in the discussions at the HFS group sessions.

Your challenge is to adapt what you are learning to meet the needs of your Care Learning Group. You will encourage the participants to probe their own behaviours and practices relating to these four themes as illustrated in the following diagram.



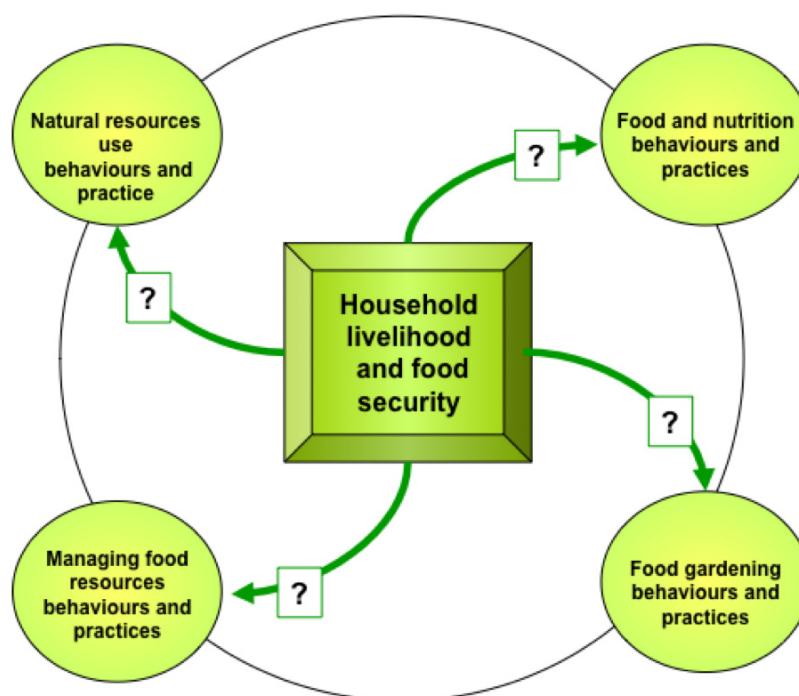


Figure 3.7 Themes explored during the learning sessions

OUTLINE OF LEARNING SESSIONS

The brief description or outline of the learning sessions gives you a good idea of what each of the sessions focuses on, what methods and tools are used, and what resources you need. This overall plan enables you to see the **big picture**, which is helpful when you plan individual learning sessions.

Learning sessions	Focus of learning sessions	Methods and tools	Resources needed
1. Use of natural resources	Critical reflection on the participants' current use of natural resources. The transect walk and resource map stimulates them to look with 'new eyes' at the natural resources available in their environment. They explore how they can increase access to resources by supporting women and men to carry out their livelihood and food security tasks A reflection on best water, soil and practices results in the practical activity of making compost.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seasonal calendar Transect walk and diagram Resource map Simple ranking Reflection and discussion Practical compost making demonstration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Example of transect walk diagram and resource map Large sheets of paper and koki pens Compost making materials Gardening tools
2. Nutrition and health	Discussions are held on food types and participants analyze the gaps in their nutrition. Diversity of food is	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Story telling Problem tree Group discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large diagram of problem tree Large sheets of



	introduced by looking at traditional foods and new and interesting crops that can be introduced. Each participant makes a list of new crops and foods they will introduce in their gardens to balance their nutrition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seasonal calendar • Nutrition action plan 	<p>paper and koki pens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pictures of food illustrating the main food groups • Examples of interesting vegetable crops for people to try
3. Low input gardening	<p>The design of gardens is covered in detail as well as elements in the gardening process and how they work together.</p> <p>Demonstrations on how to dig trench beds, mulch and plant seedlings are followed up by practice activities, which prepare the participants to improve an existing garden or start a new one from scratch at their homestead.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical demonstration of building trench beds, mulching and planting seedlings • Food garden map • Food garden action plan • SWOT analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variety of seeds and cuttings of vegetable plants • Materials for making trenches: some manure, mulch, etc. is brought in if it is in short supply. • Seeds and seedlings for planting • Gardening tools for digging trenches: picks and spades • Large sheets of paper and koki pens
4. Managing food resources	<p>The assets of households are carefully considered to increase the household food supply.</p> <p>Demonstrations on how to process and preserve food to extend shelf-life over seasons.</p> <p>Group formation to encourage savings and to manage savings clubs for support to increase food security and livelihood resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess livelihood assets with different tools • Processing to methods to extend shelf-life • Planning food resources • Forming savings groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large sheets with koki pens • Different equipment to demonstrate methods to process and store food • Household plan for food across seasons to take home • Demonstrate how to form a savings club, keep records and how to increase savings for providing in resources

This overall plan is not a rigid framework but a guide within which there is room for you to include topics and methods that have relevance for the Care Learning Group.

THE CARE LEARNING APPROACH

Learning groups come together and build social relationships and cohesiveness are build through the support they receive and are willing share stories and learn together.



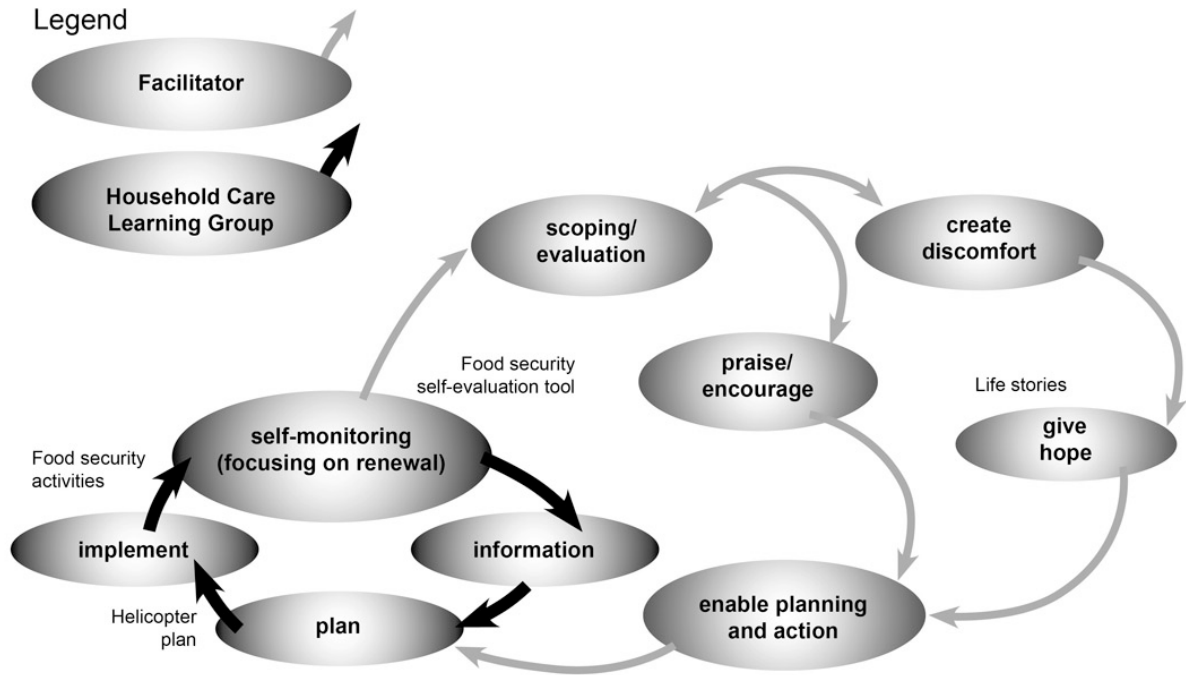


Figure 3.8 Establishment and tasks of a care learning group.

3.3.2 The ‘micro picture’ – a learning session

A learning session that offers the participants diverse opportunities to share and learn together with others requires careful planning. No single plan can fit every situation, but there are some basic ideas and principles that can help you plan and facilitate the learning session that is right for your group.

Let’s learn from what others have done. The examples highlight three different types of learning sessions:

- Facilitating PLA tools and discussion
- Demonstration of gardening activities
- Facilitating story telling and group discussion
- Facilitating mind mobilization

EXAMPLE 1:

Lesson session plan showing facilitation of PLA tools

This learning session plan shows the learning goals for each activity, a short learning message per activity, a brief description of the steps to follow, and an indication of how participation in the activities leads to self-reliance.



Learning goals and messages	Steps to learn new skills (What they will learn and how)	How does this strengthen self-reliance?
<p>1. Express own learning goal</p> <p><i>I want to learn to.....</i></p>	<p>Welcome the participants and ask them to introduce themselves and say why they have come.</p> <p>Give a short input on what will happen, how the participants will be involved, and what support they can expect.</p>	<p>People are given a voice when they introduce themselves and share their reasons for participating in the workshop.</p>
<p>2. Work together as a team and learn to collaborate</p> <p><i>An efficient and productive homestead garden starts with the households' vision of the 'four corners' of the yard.</i></p>	<p>Show a sample of a homestead yard plan as part of the introduction to the group yard mapping activity.</p> <p>The participants walk around the yard and draw a map of the yard on a large piece of paper.</p>	<p>Working as a member of a team to draw what they see on a large sheet of paper, encourages the participants to be more motivated to participate. By working together they build their confidence to try new things.</p>
<p>3. Analyze the present situation as a member of a group</p> <p><i>Water access and use, soil quality, and the choice of suitable plants affect the position of the food garden.</i></p>	<p>During a group discussion the participants consider the issues that affect the food garden. They identify the best position for the food garden.</p>	<p>Critical reflection is an important part of being an independent and self directed person.</p>
<p>4. Visualize the future as a member of a group</p> <p><i>A visual design or picture of the low input food garden creates hope and stimulates action.</i></p>	<p>Show a sample map of a homestead food garden as an introduction to the garden map-making activity.</p> <p>The group shares ideas on how a food garden would look that provides the household with nutritious food all year round.</p>	<p>Having a mental picture of a food garden that will provide the household with food all year round helps people to be hopeful.</p>
<p>5. Learn practical steps as a member of a group</p> <p><i>Digging trench beds, mulching and planting seeds are practical steps that build capacity and confidence.</i></p>	<p>Two small groups work together to draw the garden map of the selected homestead. One group marks out the food garden on the ground using sticks, stones, and any other objects they can find. The other group draws the garden map on a large sheet of paper.</p>	<p>People learn best by doing. Drawing the garden map in a small group helps each person to practice map-making in a safe environment. They learn from each other and this boosts their confidence.</p>
<p>6. Take action individually and apply what has been learned</p> <p><i>The homestead yard and garden maps are visual resources to guide activities at the homestead to improve or start a household food garden.</i></p>	<p>Each participant draws a draft map of their own homestead yard and their food garden map.</p>	<p>By creating their own yard and garden maps, the individuals can practice what they have learned and strengthen their ability.</p>



<p>7. Share own ideas</p> <p><i>Sharing the visual map of the homestead food garden is empowering.</i></p>	<p>Each participant presents her or his homestead garden map.</p>	<p>Sharing ideas with a supportive group of people is a powerful way for individuals to demonstrate their self worth.</p>
<p>8. Give feedback to assist others to improve</p> <p><i>Group support helps to refine the plan and builds confidence and a belief in own ability to make the plan a reality.</i></p>	<p>Facilitators and group members give constructive comments.</p>	<p>Individuals establish supportive ties with others who are in the same situation. The support received contributes to increased confidence and motivation to share and finalize the maps with other household members after the workshop.</p>

Table 3.5 Learning session plan – transect walk and resource mapping



Workbook Activity 3.6: Complete this activity in your workbook

Learning session goals and messages

Identify main learning goals and messages in an example learning session plan.

What to do

In your group examine the learning session plan in **Example 1: Lesson session plan showing facilitation of PLA tools** and answer these questions:

1. How is the confidence of the participants built up and self-reliance encouraged in the learning session?
2. What are the main learning goals?
3. What are the main learning messages?
4. What difficulties would you have to facilitate this type of learning session?
5. What kind of support would you need to facilitate this type of learning session? Who can provide this support?

Learning goal

Specific knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that a participant or learner needs and wants to learn.

Learning message

Content and skills-related messages linked to a particular topic or field, e.g. nutrition, food gardening, food security, etc.



Comments on Activity 3.6

The focus of this learning session is on the participants and throughout practical ways are planned to build their confidence and self-reliance to enable them to carry out the garden improving and garden making activities in their own homesteads with members of their household. The methods included are: the use of PLA tools, guided group interactions, and



supported practical activities. The sequence followed is: people work together in small groups; individuals work on their own; individuals share their ideas in the group; the group provides input and support.

The main learning goals are: to build the capacity of the caregivers in specific gardening skills; and build group support to enable them to take positive actions in their households. The learning messages are linked to the activities: the power of visualizing the future homestead garden, sharing the vision with others in the group and supportive feedback; factors influencing the position of the homestead garden, building capacity in some practical gardening skills.

EXAMPLE 2:

Demonstration of gardening activities

The examples are short reports of workshops (learning sessions) conducted in Potshini, Kwa-Zulu Natal. They give some insight into the challenges of facilitating practical gardening activities.

A: Seedling production


Workshop 2: Seedling production (14/07/2006)		
Content	Process comments	Notes
1. Discussion on soils using bottle tests 2. Discussion on ways to prevent frost damage; including aspect, slope of garden, use of low stone walls to trap heat... 3. Preparation of a trench bed 4. Preparation of a seedbed tilth on the trench 5. Planting of carrot and beetroot seed 6. Distribution of small amounts of carrot and beetroot seed among group members Good tilth is soil that has the proper structure and nutrients to grow healthy crops.	* The discussion on soils was a bit difficult; many group members are young people who have seemingly never thought about this – they could not distinguish between sand and clay or the different soils in the area * Trench and seedbed preparation went well * Interesting points were raised about frost control	 <p><i>Planting of beetroot seed in prepared seedbed</i></p> <p>Further training needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More on soils, types, characteristics, identification and management

Table 3.6 Learning session notes – seedling production

(Source: WRCR, Kruger, E. et al, 2010)





Figure 3.9 MaTshepo distributing seedlings during a mind mobilization workshop in Limpopo
(Add Source?)

B: Garden layout and design


Workshop 6: Garden layout and design (11/10/2006)		
Content	Process comments	Notes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Report back on experimentation 2. Group exercise in water flow in the household (with handouts of MaTshepo's system) 3. Measuring contours with A-frames and line levels 4. Exercise for making ditches for water harvesting in the garden 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The water flow exercise worked well as did using photos of MaTshepo's system; high school students had joined us for the day and added many insights * Trying to measure contours in the garden were very confusing for all – (we muddled the concepts of straight and level) and was abandoned * Getting people to dig ditches in the garden and the whole group to discuss, worked well 	 <p><i>One member digging while being instructed, corrected, and generally "made suggestions to" by the rest of the learning group (standing outside, as the garden is so small)</i></p> <p>Future learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need a different context and way to introduce contours and levels. - Also, digging ditches really needs to happen for each individual with advice and support... so home visits are essential.

Table 3.7 Learning session notes – garden layout and design
(Source: WRCR, Kruger, E. et al, 2010)



C: Pest and disease management


Workshop 5: Pest and disease management (28/09/2006)		
Content	Process comments	Notes
<p>1. Input on the use of fertilizers by Department of Agriculture extension officer</p> <p>2. Follow up on experimentation and progress</p> <p>3. Inputs (with handouts):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - natural predators and garden friends - windbreaks - different home remedies for common pests <p>4. Demonstration of chilli, garlic, soap mixtures for pest control.</p> <p>5. Demonstration of making fruit fly trap from 2l coke bottle and making up a fermented mixture with oranges and sugar.</p> <p>6. Supply of small amounts of the following to members: Napier fodder, rosemary and rose geranium cuttings, garlic cloves for planting, soap, chillies, oranges, bottles, toilet rolls for cutworm.</p>	<p>* The input by the extension officer was meant as a way to compare organic vs. inorganic gardening. His input however focused on the technicalities of fertilizing maize.</p> <p>* A picture with garden friends was provided and members were asked to identify and name all and then describe what they do – this was a good exercise and was remembered long after.</p> <p>* This workshop had a lot of different inputs, covered in a bit of a rush and it was suggested by co-facilitators that we “unbundled” it in future.</p>	 <p><i>Picture of predators and garden friends used in the exercise.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It was found that the cuttings provided did not survive; should rather provide plants in future - Napier has grown well in most gardens – but now must be propagated and planted as windbreaks - Fruit fly traps were forgotten by most by the time summer arrived; they should be discussed again in the right season - Future training needs: Still need to cover the aspect of diseases, have only dealt with pests

Table 3.8 Learning session notes – pest and disease management

(Source: WRCR, Kruger, E. et al, 2010)



Workbook Activity 3.7: Complete this activity in your workbook

The practical challenges of facilitating gardening demonstrations

Identify some challenges when facilitating gardening demonstrations.

What to do

In your group examine the three examples of gardening learning sessions and answer these questions:

1. Why was the discussion on soils in **Example A** so difficult?
2. What method worked particularly well in **Example B** to help people understand the flow of water?



3. In **Example B**, a comment was made about the need for home visits. Why do you think home visits are essential?
4. What was the biggest challenge in **Example C**?
5. An agriculture extension officer made an input about the technical aspects of fertilizing maize in the learning session described in **Example C**. How useful did the facilitators find this input for the participants?
6. What difficulties would you have to facilitate this type of learning session?
7. What kind of support would you need to facilitate this type of learning session? Who can provide this support?



Comments on Activity 3.7

Practical demonstrations are challenging and you have to prepare well for them. It is necessary for you have practical experience of each of the gardening activities. Organize with a local person who is knowledgeable in low input and organic gardening practices to provide training and hands-on learning.

The three examples highlight the following facilitation challenges:

- *Insufficient background knowledge, e.g. inadequate understanding of soils, made it difficult for people to participate in the discussion on soils;*
- *Difficulty of showing processes, e.g. water flow. Photos showing MaTshepo's water system helped the participants to have a clear picture of the household water flow.*
- *Time consuming nature of the activities. There is often very little time for each person to do the activities. It has implications for how much you can do during a learning session. Be careful of overloading the session with activities.*
- *When using external support people to facilitate activities, brief them well to ensure that they provide the right support.*
- *Need for follow up support during home visits to enable people to implement at home what they are learning in the learning sessions.*



EXAMPLE 3:

Story telling and group discussion

This is a summary of a set of learning activities, which Nokufika Mahamba and the HFS team of students facilitated with a household group in the Eastern Cape during the pilot phase of the HFS Programme. Find out how to link story telling with group discussions and how you can stimulate participation.

Purpose of learning session	Identify food insecurity issues by telling stories and identify causes and effects of household food insecurity and relevant livelihood issues.
Facilitator notes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is important that the households grasp the meaning of being food secure, food insecurity, food availability, food accessibility, food utilization, food stability and vulnerability. 2. Meet where you will have space on the ground or floor to draw and a wall to hang a flip chart paper.



	<p>3. Start with the experience of the participants and let them tell their stories. Encourage them to use their own words to describe the key food security concepts and let them discover that they already know these concepts experientially.</p>  <p>4. It is empowering for the household to participate in the analysis of their own food insecurity problems. They have to find the causes and effects of food insecurity that impact on their day-to-day lives.</p> <p>5. Involve the participants in building up the problem tree. You can draw the outline of the tree on a large piece of paper before the learning session. You need a lot of small pieces of paper or cards, koki markers and prestik.</p>
<p>Share stories of hunger and not having food Start-up activity</p>	<p>The participants tell stories of being hungry and not having food. The stories can be own life stories, stories people have heard, or cultural folk stories related to household food insecurity, hunger and poverty.</p>
<p>Identify food security related problems Group discussion</p>	<p>Assist the households to reflect on their stories and encourage them to draw out the issues and problems. Let them use their own words to describe food security concepts such as hunger, being food insecure, being food secure, food availability, food utilization, food stability and vulnerability. Link their words with each of the food security terms. In this way you build a bridge from their experience to widely used food security terms. This is empowering and helps local people to participate in the food security discussions with stakeholders in their community.</p>
<p>Causes and effects of food insecurity Problem Tree</p>	 <p>1. <i>Brainstorming</i> Use the questions what, why, now what, and so what to help the participants come up with causes and effects of hunger and food insecurity. The answers are written on small cards.</p> <p>2. <i>Sorting activity</i> The participants help to sort the cards into:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Causes (roots of the tree) • Effects (branches and leaves) • Main problem (tree trunk) <p>The cards are also sorted into household or micro level issues and community, provincial and national issues</p> <p>You can ask the participants which of the problems result in the biggest risks and makes the households most vulnerable.</p>



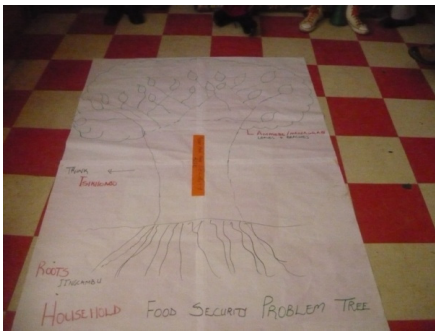
	 <p>The participants can rank the problems by placing a dot on the respective cards. The completed problem tree belongs to the household group.</p>
<p>Lessons learned</p> <p>Reflection</p>	<p>The participants share what they have learned. Discuss these questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you need to solve your hunger and food insecurity problems? • What can you do in your household to solve your hunger and food insecurity problems? • What can your community do to solve your hunger and food insecurity problems? <p>Help the participants to see that actions are needed at different levels that can help to alleviate poverty, hunger and food insecurity.</p>

Table 3.9 Learning session activities – story telling and problem tree



Workbook Activity 3.8: Complete this activity in your workbook

Build on the experiences of the household

Identify methods that were used in Example 3 to build on the experiences of the household.

What to do

In your group examine **Example 3: Storytelling and group discussion**, and answer these questions:

1. What are the benefits of using story telling to start off this learning session?
2. Which methods were used to build on the experience of the participants?
3. What have you learned from this learning session?
4. What difficulties would you have to facilitate this type of learning session?
5. What kind of support would you need to facilitate this type of learning session? Who can provide this support?





Comments on Activity 3.8

The experience of the household participants is of primary importance in any learning session. As a facilitator you have to use diverse ways to encourage and nudge people to share their experiences, to reflect on them, and to draw out new insights about their situation. Story telling and building a problem tree are two participatory methods that enable people to share and reflect on their own experiences. Story telling is the usual way that people communicate with each other. It helps to put people at ease and creates a common bond.

EXAMPLE 4:

Mind mobilization workshop

It can be very distressing for people to reflect on their own situation and share stories of hardship and hunger. MaTshepo recognized the importance of strengthening relationships in the group and creating an environment of mutual care between the participants. This example gives practical ideas of how to provide support in the learning session that can lead to behaviour change.

Who is involved in this step?	Step	What is done during this step?	How does this step help the food insecure individual towards self-reliance?
Facilitator, maximum 10 target household members	Introduction	Opening Prayer & Welcome, Housekeeping rules, Introductions & Expectations	Set the person at ease, create a comfortable environment.
Each participant	Self-reflection	Draw own “Present situation analysis”: Each participant reflects on her own situation, honestly and in detail. She captures this on flipchart in a detailed drawing of her household, who eats there and how they survive.	Reflecting on her situation, she confronts herself with the stark reality. In day-to-day life people get so used to their situation that they stop questioning whether this is what they want from life, and stop looking for alternatives.



Who is involved in this step?	Step	What is done during this step?	How does this step help the food insecure individual towards self-reliance?
Facilitator, participants	Admit problem to self and others	Plenary report-back and joint discussion on each participant's 'Present Situation Analysis'.	Healing cannot start until a person admits to herself that she has a problem. In presenting and discussing her 'Present day analysis' she admits to herself and others that she has a serious and overwhelming problem, which, for a long time, she has been unable to overcome. This is a very hard, cannot be forced, but a very important step.
Counselor/facilitator, individual participant	Extra support	Individual counseling (where necessary)	Most people find talking about their present situation painful and many break down and cry. Some individuals are traumatized and inconsolable. If there is only one facilitator, she may want to call for a break at this point and spend some time alone with the individual to support her through this very difficult experience. Ideally there should be a second counselor/facilitator available to work with the individual separately while the rest of the group continues.
Storyteller, participants	Receive hope	"MaTshepo's Story": Listen to the life-story of someone (MaTshepo or another) who was in the same position and succeeded in getting out	By hearing first-hand from someone who 'made it', she receives hope that there is a way out – a way that is difficult and which will require great personal sacrifice, but which is not impossible
	Decide to change	She decides that she wants to change	At this point people experience a mixture of fear and excitement. Once she has taken the decision to change, energy levels are usually high and she is eager to take practical action. This energy is next channeled into a visioning and planning exercise
Each participant	Vision and plan	Draw own 'Helicopter Plan' Also called the 'five year food security plan' – vision of what garden will look like in 5 years' time to provide all needs.	She develops a vision of how she wants to be, and draws up a doable plan of action of how she can get there. This becomes her 'roadmap' for the next five years. She takes this home and henceforth plans her daily activities towards achieving the Helicopter Plan in five years. This helps to keep her focused and motivated in periods of low morale, and also helps avoid that she becomes discouraged by trying to do too much in the beginning



Who is involved in this step?	Step	What is done during this step?	How does this step help the food insecure individual towards self-reliance?
Facilitator, participants	Take action; learn practical skills	Practical demonstration: deep trenching for intensive gardening	Adults learn best by doing. By practically measuring out a new trench bed, digging it, placing the organic stuffing, and planting some seedlings, she becomes less likely to put off starting her own when she gets back home. Preparing the demonstration bed with other participants binds the support group closer together and helps them remind each other how to do it once they get home.

Table 3.10 Mind mobilization workshop
 (Source: WRCR, Kruger, E. et al, 2010)



Figure 3.10 The original five year food security (helicopter) plan of MaTshepo Khumbane

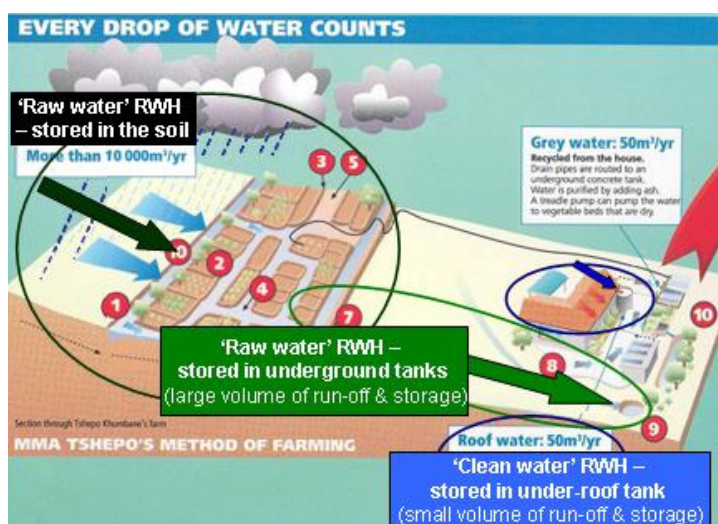


Figure 3.11 A diagram of MaTshepo Khumbane's household yard after five years
 (Diagram developed and supplied by "The Star" Newspaper)





Workbook Activity 3.9: Complete this activity in your workbook

Supportive relationships can support behaviour change

Identify methods to encourage the participants to embrace behaviours that can lead to food security.

What to do

In your group examine **Example 4: Mind mobilization workshop**, and answer these questions:

1. Why is it important for a person to admit they have a hunger and food insecurity problem?
2. How can you encourage mutual care between the participants?
3. What have you learned from the mind mobilization workshop?
4. What difficulties would you have to facilitate mind mobilization activities in a learning session?
5. What kind of support would you need to facilitate this type of learning session? Who can provide this support?



Comments on Activity 3.9

By creating an environment of mutual care in the learning sessions you are contributing to building a culture of mutual care and support. Strong and supportive relationships provide poor and hungry people with hope and energy to pursue the changes in food access and utilization behaviour that leads to food insecurity. Such behaviours help them to break free from the stranglehold of past food insecurity experiences. By sharing their stories of hunger and hardship, hearing how someone just like them managed to be 'get out' of the food insecurity cycle, preparing and sharing their vision and plan for the future, the participants are learning to take control of their own lives.

Changing food behaviour is not easy and you and fellow participants have to show patience and understanding. Be prepared to deal with tears and emotional stress. Learn to be empathetic but also understand your own limitations. If someone is severely traumatized you may have to ask for help from health care and social care workers in the area.

3.3.3 Facilitating group activities

The caregivers are involved in a range of group learning activities. The tips in the block below show how you can encourage and support enjoyable and productive learning in groups.



Tips for effective group facilitation in PLA exercises

- ✓ Keep your eyes and ears open. Listen to what participants have to say, even when you're not formally conducting an exercise. Pay attention to body language.
- ✓ Keep in mind the objectives of the activity. Ask probing questions during and after you have completed the activity. Remember that doing an exercise, such as a map, is only the first step. The discussion that follows is the key opportunity for learning.
- ✓ If participants offer ideas that are connected with PLA exercise's objectives, even if they are not planned or expected, follow them.
- ✓ Be careful that your body language does not reveal that you either approve or disapprove of what the participants are saying. Don't be judgmental. Never respond to a participant with astonishment, impatience, or criticism. Remember that there is no right or wrong answers, and a facilitator's role is not to correct what is being said.
- ✓ Show interest by using expressions like "I see," or "That's interesting."
- ✓ Be aware of people who dominate the process, as well as people who are not participating. Try to bring those who are quiet or shy into the process.
- ✓ While some people may be quiet because they are shy, others may be quiet because they are remembering a painful experience (such as violence in their past) and do not want to talk about it. If at any time you sense that someone is uncomfortable with the subject matter, make sure that they are not pressured by your team or other participants to talk about something they don't want to. Remind them that they can choose not to answer any question or not to participate in a particular activity.
- ✓ Try to get the opinions of all participants. Do not accept one person's opinion as the opinion of the whole group.
- ✓ Encourage participants to speak in whichever language they are most comfortable with, even if it means you need to get a translator.
- ✓ Because many issues you are discussing are sensitive, the respondents may often be silent. You may have to try different ways of introducing the same topic. Don't keep repeating the same question; be creative and ask in another way.
- ✓ Don't be afraid of silences. The person who was speaking may continue, or another person may decide to talk.
- ✓ Diplomatically discourage more than one person from talking at the same time.
- ✓ Listen to the discussion and make notes of non-verbal communication such as hesitations, laughter, and silences.
- ✓ When using a specific tool, don't limit yourself to the procedures of the tool; the procedures have been provided as a guide to help you. Remember that spontaneous discussion among the participants is good and should be encouraged because it can provide useful insight.
- ✓ Always keep in mind the overall purpose of the project and the broad themes and topics that you want to explore so that you can facilitate an appropriate discussion with the participants when you are doing the exercises.
- ✓ Be aware of the personal biases that you might bring to the discussion, and try not to let them limit the conversation.
- ✓ Remember that emotion, tension, and conflict are likely to arise in a group setting. This is normal and to be expected, so be ready to handle it appropriately. It is your role to help people find common ground when conflicts arise, and recognize when to agree to disagree. Try to avoid taking criticism or resistance personally.

Source: *Participatory Learning and Action (PLA)*



3.3.4 Fitting activities together in a learning session plan

The examples have shown different formats of learning session plans and common elements.

- A participatory learning and action approach
- The purpose of the learning session
- Specific learning goals
- Main learning messages
- A variety of activities that follow a specific sequence
- Descriptions and explanations of what happens in each activity with a focus on what the participants will be doing.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENT BETWEEN PURPOSE, LEARNING GOAL AND LEARNING MESSAGE?

Terms such as purpose, learning goal and learning message are often confusing. How can you tell the difference?

An example from a nutrition learning session shows how these terms differ.

Purpose	Learning goal	Learning message
Support the participants to understand why they need to eat a variety of foods from different food types for good nutrition and that a home food garden can improve food security and household nutrition.	Identify familiar foods from different food types. (know)	Our bodies need many different kinds of nutrients from a variety of foods for health and well-being.
The answer to the question: What do you want to achieve in this learning session?	The answer to the question: What will the participant know, do and value?	The answer to the question: What key points will the participant learn about content, concepts and processes?



Activity 3.10: Complete this activity in your study guide

Learning goals and messages

Distinguish between learning goals and learning messages.

What to do

Examine these sentences and decide which are learning goals or learning messages. Tick ✓ LG (learning goal) or LM (learning message) to show your choice.

1. Say how the different foods contribute to health and well-being. (LG) or (LM)



2. The way we grow, harvest and prepare food affects the nutrients that we get from the food we eat. (LG) or (LM)
3. Malnutrition results from not getting enough food or not getting the right type of nutrients from our food.(LG) or (LM)
4. Explore ways of dealing with malnutrition problems in the community. (LG) or (LM)
5. Malnutrition can be caused by many factors such poor access to income and ability to buy food, lack of education about nutrition and hygiene, and lack of clean water and poor sanitation. (LG) or (LM)
6. Identify which foods are missing from the household's diet today. (LG) or (LM)
7. Describe how a food garden can fill the gaps in the household diet in the future. (LG) or (LM)
8. Analyze the causes and effects of malnutrition in the household. (LG) or (LM)



Comments on Activity 3.10

The learning goals are (1), (4), (5) and (8). The other sentences are learning messages. Do you notice that the learning goals start with a doing word or verb? When you plan a learning session identify specific learning goals and describe them in simple and easy to understand language. Keep to 3-5 learning goals per session. The goals inform the kind of learning activities you facilitate. Get into the habit of writing down the main learning messages for the session. They are the main points of the content, concepts and processes that the participants are learning. No. 4 is an example of a problem-solving message: people are encouraged to look for practical strategies to overcome malnutrition in their community.



Workbook Activity 3.11: Complete this activity in your workbook

Prepare a learning session plan

Use a learning session outline to record information for a learning session plan.

What to do

This is a planning **practice** activity based on this information:

The learning session is for a group of your fellow students.
The focus of the learning session is on food sources and food availability. In Unit 2 you learned to use a simple ranking tool to identify food sources and a seasonal calendar to indicate periods of food insecurity.
Prepare a learning session plan in which you use both these tools.

These questions will guide your planning. Write the answers in the learning session planning template provided in your workbook.



1. What do you hope to achieve (purpose of the learning session)?
2. What are the main nutrition learning messages?
3. What do you expect the participants to know, do and value? (learning goals)
4. What resources do you need?
5. How will you help the participants to achieve the learning goals? (description of learning activities)
6. What sequence do the activities follow? (order of activities)



Comments on Activity 3.11

Planning a learning session is a problem solving activity in which you: identify your goal; consider what the participants need and what they already know and can do; and how you can help them to move from where they are presently to where they need and want to be. Determine how much time you have and how best to use the time to give people opportunities to share and practice. The plan is a guide and not an inflexible set of steps. The focus is always on what is right for the participants. As you progress you will learn what works and what not, and what you can realistically achieve.

3.3.5 Working together as an HFS facilitation team

The learning sessions with the caregivers of the Care Learning Group are facilitated by a team of students known as the HFS facilitation team or HFS team. Each team consists of at least 3 students who plan together and take on different roles during the learning session.

HFS TEAM ROLES

Working as a member of a team has benefits and challenges. The short description of the three main roles gives you an idea of what each person is expected to do. Each member of the team takes turns to be team leader, facilitator and note taker.

Role	Team leader	Facilitator	Note taker
Focus	Takes responsibility for the team's activities from start to finish.	Creates a safe, stimulating, and supportive learning environment for active participation.	Observes and makes notes of relevant information during the learning session.
Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represents the team in communications with the Care Learning Group and stakeholders in the community. • Stays in touch and cooperates closely with the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manages the learning process during the learning session. • Observes participation levels and makes sure that everyone shares experiences and ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps a record of attendance • Makes notes of main points during group discussions. • Observes social interactions and



	<p>Care Learning Group and relevant individuals and organizations in the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts as a facilitator during team planning. • Keeps an overview and coordinates all learning activities during the session. • Makes sure team members get the right support to perform their roles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is vigilant for signs of non-coping and provides adequate support. • Is able to change the focus of the discussion as necessary. • Deals swiftly with difficulties as they happen. • Makes sure that the learning goals are achieved. • Manages the activities within the allocated timeframe. • Identifies emerging training and learning needs. 	<p>processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps with time management. • Passes on observations of social interactions and learning processes to the facilitator. • Makes a record of materials from the group, e.g. action plans, resource maps.
Traits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well organized • Listens, observes, consults • Keeps a cool head if things go wrong • Is patient and supportive • Makes it easy for members to interact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is open and flexible • Encourages and motivates people • Communicates well • Observant and responsive • Encourages self-reliance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good observer • Able to write simple and informative notes • Good communicator who is able to present information clearly.

Table 3.11 HFS Team roles and tasks

WORKING ON TASKS TOGETHER

You will plan the learning sessions, share responsibility for organizing each one, and jointly facilitate the sessions. This summary highlights the steps that are part of the planning process.

1. Clarify the task

Planning the learning session includes: (1) preparing a learning session plan of activities, and (2) organizing the practical arrangements such as venue and getting the required resources, and (3) checking which caregivers will participate.

2. Prepare the learning session

Arrange a time to meet to prepare the learning session plan. Start off by getting clarity about the purpose of the learning session and what you hope to achieve. Brainstorm ideas and write them down on flipchart paper. Brainstorming allows you to think of the learning session in a free and creative way. Use a simple template to record your planning information. The learning session plan shows a set of activities in the order in which you will facilitate them with brief descriptions and guidelines.

3. Identify how much time is needed

You agree on the timeframe for each learning session with the Care Learning Group. Look carefully at each learning activity and estimate how long you think each one will take. Experience shows that things always take longer than you think. Be realistic about



the time allocation. As you progress you will get better at estimating time.

4. **Identify the materials and resources you need**

Prepare a learning materials box in which you place the usual materials such as flip chart paper, koki markers, prestik. Identify materials and resources that are specific to each learning session, such as sample plans, photos, seeds, seedlings, mulch and compost materials, gardening tools, etc.

5. **Decide who does what**

Discuss the different activities and get a clear picture of what is involved. Make sure that each person gets the chance to take on the role of leader, facilitator and note taker. The team leader checks that each person knows what to do.

6. **Carry out the tasks**

The plan guides what happens during the learning session. The team leader coordinates the activities during the session and keeps an eye on how well the caregivers are participating. S/he makes adjustments to the agenda in collaboration with the other members of the facilitation team.

7. **Reflect on the tasks**

Reflect briefly after each learning session and share experiences, observations and impressions. What worked well? What did not? What new learning needs have arisen? What follow up support to the households is necessary?

8. **Identify what you have learned**

Draw out important lessons you learned about the participants, the activities, the facilitation process, and your own facilitation performance.



Workbook Activity 3.12: Complete this activity in your workbook

Working as a team

Identify positive and negative experiences of teamwork.

What to do

In your group reflect on your own experiences of teamwork.

1. Share your stories of positive and negative experiences of working as a member of a team.
2. Write down what helps and hinders teamwork.
3. Convert your group's ideas into a set of simple teamwork tips.





Comments on Activity 3.12

Your own experiences of teamwork are powerful reminders of the benefits and challenges of working as a member of a team. Draw on these experiences and lessons when you plan and organize the learning sessions. Check your teamwork tips with the teamwork reflection questions.



Teams that get things done have clear and shared goals, good working relationships, have committed members who know what to do, are supportive of each other, and work together to achieve results. Get into the habit of reflecting regularly on how well you are working together as a team. The questions below can guide your reflection.

Team reflection	How successfully are we working together as a team?
Belief in teamwork approach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is the value of working together in a team effort shared by all? 2. Has each member made a personal commitment to cooperating? 3. Do you understand that it takes time to develop a spirit of cooperative teamwork?
Maintain the group effort	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Have you selected a team leader who inspires confidence? 5. Does the team have an open climate of trust and respect for all team members and their ideas? 6. Does each person feel her or his contribution is valued? 7. Is open and critical debate and discussion possible? 8. Are decisions for action agreed to by all members? 9. Do people affirm and support each other?
Get the task done	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Does everyone participate in planning? 11. Does the team take time to agree on goals and methods for achieving the goals? 12. Are responsibilities and tasks allocated equitably? 13. Does everyone know what to do and where to get support? 14. Are checks in place to help people monitor progress?



	15. Does everyone take part in reflection on actions to identify what lessons can be learned for the future?
Resolve conflicts	16. Are steps taken to resolve conflict as soon as they happen? 17. Are conflicts seen as opportunities for learning to work together?

Table 3.12 Teamwork questionnaire

3.3.6 Household monitoring and support

The caregivers are expected to take forward actions for change in food and livelihood behaviour and practices in the household. They need ongoing support as they pass through the different phases of the change cycle you learned about in Unit 2.

Phase	Characteristics	Support strategies
Before change	The person is not considering change. She or he may have tried to change but were unsuccessful. The person is used to the present behaviour and is comfortable.	Help the person to see and understand the implications of the present behaviours and practices. Enable them to see the benefits of changing.
Think change	The person is not sure about changing and weighs benefits versus costs or barriers (e.g., time, expense, bother, fear).	Identify barriers and mistaken beliefs. Address concern and identify support systems.
Prepare to change	The person is prepared to experiment with small changes.	Develop realistic and achievable goals and timeline for change. Provide positive reinforcement.
Act to change	The person takes action to change behaviour that leads to new and positive practices.	Provide positive reinforcement.
Maintain change and prevent relapse (going back)	The person tries to maintain the new behavior over the long term	Provide encouragement and support.

Table 3.13 Stages in the behaviour change cycle

(Adapted from: Zimmerman et al., 2000; Tabor and Lopez, 2004 in facilitating behaviour change)

It is vital that caregivers receive positive reinforcement and support after the learning session when they try to implement what they have learned. They can expect support from two main sources: the Care Learning Group and the HFS facilitator during home visits. Behaviour change is only initiated when action is taken and repeatedly taken. Knowledge on its own do not lead to behaviour change. Then change need further to be enhanced by relevant messages.



Support is closely linked to the caregivers' progress and needs at different points along the food security change journey. Progress and needs can be identified through regular monitoring and evaluation from three sources:

- The **caregiver** checks how she is progressing: What has she achieved? What is going well? What is not going well? What are the difficulties? What help and support does she need?
- The **Care Learning Group** carries out shared reflection on the progress of members, identifies success stories and difficulties, jointly look for solutions to problems, establishes where and what kind of support is needed.
- The **HFS facilitator** observes and checks for evidence of progress during home visits. Through semi-structured interviews the facilitator is able to get insight into the nature of the difficulties experienced and what support would be most useful.

SELF EVALUATION AND RENEWAL

Self-evaluation provides a good basis for re planning and adapting one's activities for improvement. It also helps to renew the vision and commitment to food security actions. This is true both at the individual household level, and for the Care Learning Group's own activities. The Self-Evaluation Tool below was adapted from one developed by MaTshepo to help households and groups to achieve this.

Areas of focus for a Household Food Security self-evaluation tool	Cross-cutting questions
<p>Questions to/by the Household:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Progress with my garden and food security? 2. Wellbeing of my family? (health, income) 3. Transformation of my family? (changes in social and food behaviour) 	<p>Explore the following questions in each of the 5 areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity: what creative ideas or approaches have you come up with? • Improvement: How has the environment improved? (own household, community) • Support: What support do you require, which you cannot manage yourself? • Future actions: What are your planned next steps?
<p>Questions to/by the Care learning group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Mobilization and outreach achievements of our Care learning group? 5. Support our group has successfully mobilized from our leadership, and from other organizations? 	

Table 3.14 Self-evaluation tool for household food security

Forward planning

The Self-Evaluation Tool above can be used as a basis for planning. The answers to the questions become goals for action.

Self-monitoring tools

A range of specific self monitoring tools were developed over the years by MaTshepo to help households to learn from their experiments, mistakes and successes. Self-monitoring tools provide the households with reliable evidence to answer the questions in the Self-Evaluation Tool during their occasional self-evaluation.

Calendar of activities

The Calendar of Activities tracks the daily activities of household's members, and is usually filled in by the children in the household. This activity creates a lot of fun, but also



tangible change. Everyone in the household becomes very aware of how they utilize their time and it quickly shows up where the load for food security and other household chores is unevenly distributed among household members.

Some women jokingly call this chart “The Manager”, because it hangs on the wall and ‘keeps an eye on everyone’!

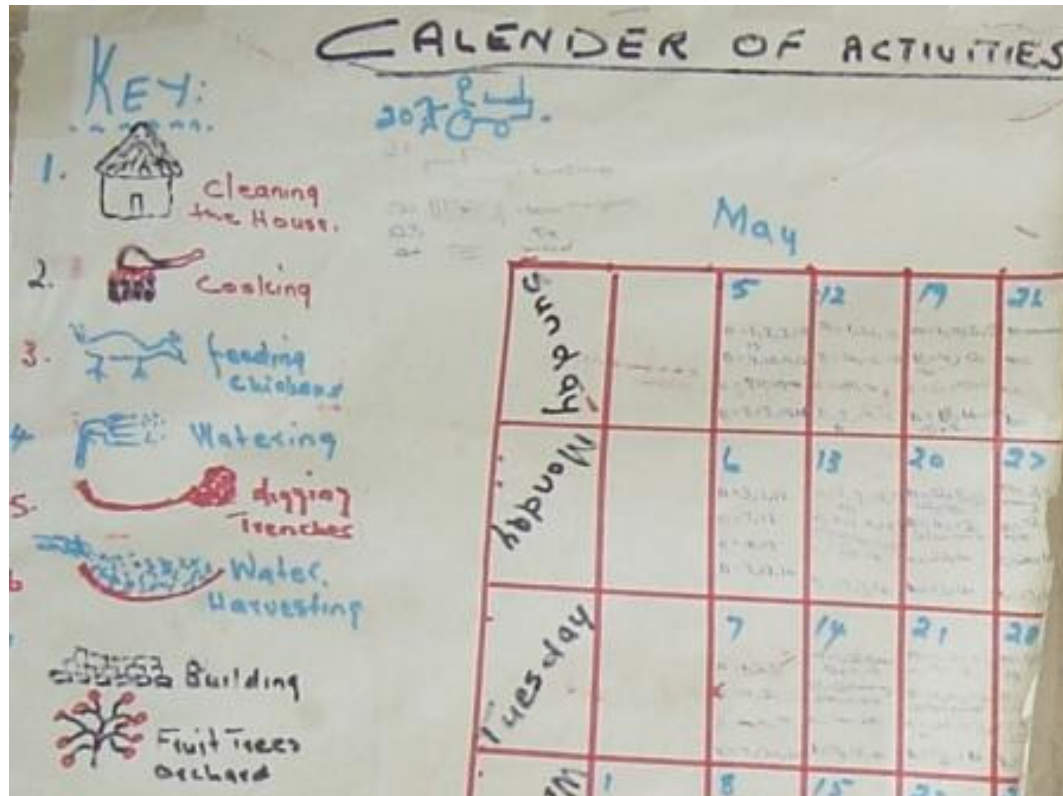


Figure 3.13 MaTshepo Khumbane's 'Calendar of Activities'

Here are more tools that can be used for monitoring and self-evaluation:

- Household action planning based on the **planting calendar**;
- Household diet diversity planning based on the **diet diversity plan**;
- Household food flow planning based on the **harvest calendar**;
- Household food storage plan for a year based on the **food storage plan**; and
- **Water and weather calendar** showing rainfall, dry times and temperature.

You will learn about these tools in Modules 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Can you see more clearly now that the learning sessions and follow-up monitoring and support to the households in their own context are integral parts of the PLA learning process?

At this point you have new insights on how to work together with others in the HFS facilitation team to plan, facilitate and evaluate learning sessions. It is time for you to learn by doing. In Portfolio Activity 2.3 you get the opportunity to practice planning and facilitating a learning session as a member of a small facilitation team. The participants in the learning session are the students who are members of your HFS Care learning group.





Portfolio Activity 2.3: Do this activity in your portfolio sheets

Plan, facilitate and evaluate a learning session

Topics for the learning session for each facilitation team are identified with your promoter. Meet with your facilitation team members and draw up a simple learning session plan. Make the necessary preparations and facilitate the learning session on the day and time agreed to with the promoter. Reflect on the learning session and identify what went well and where improvement is necessary.

The evidence for your portfolio consists of a learning session plan and written answers to questions on the Portfolio Activity 2.3 Evidence Sheet. (Find details about Portfolio Activity 2.3 in the **Take Action Section**)



Log

Reflect on the learning session

5. What went well?
6. What difficulties did you experience? Give reasons.
7. What have you learned about facilitating a learning session?

Complete the answers to these questions in your log section of the Portfolio 2.3 Evidence Sheet.



In the next four modules you are expected to work with the household caregivers. Who are they? How do you get them interested enough to participate? A method that worked well in the pilot phase of the HFS Programme is to invite potential caregivers to an introductory meeting.



Portfolio Activity 2.4: Do this activity in your portfolio sheets

Organize an introductory meeting with households in the area

You are expected to plan and organize the meeting with a group of fellow students and the promoter. The activities include:

- Detailed planning
- Inviting potential caregivers to attend
- Participating in the meeting
- Follow up actions.

The evidence for your portfolio consists of a meeting plan and written answers to questions on the Portfolio Activity 2.4 Evidence Sheet. (Find details about Portfolio Activity 2.4 in the **Take Action Section**)



Log

Reflect on the introductory meeting with households



1. How do you think the caregivers enjoyed participating in the meeting?
2. What did you learn about the caregivers who participated in the meeting?
3. What have you learned about organizing meetings with a group of local people in the community?

Complete the answers to these questions in your log section of the Portfolio 2.1 Evidence Sheet. It is necessary to meet with the caregivers who have shown an interest in participating in the PLA learning process soon after the meeting. The purpose of the first home visit is twofold: to affirm the caregiver's decision to participate and encourage her to give verbal or written consent; and to enable you to observe the caregiver in her own context and collect baseline information.





Portfolio Activity 2.5: Do this activity in your portfolio sheets

Conduct the first home visit with households and baseline information

The first home visit to caregivers who are interested in participating in the PLA learning process is a very important one. During this visit you get an opportunity to see the caregivers in their own environment. From the start you have to assure the caregivers that your role is to work with them to gather information that assists them to learn to become stronger to take actions to improve their present food security situation.

Your task is twofold:

- Encourage the caregivers to consent either verbally or written to participate in the learning process;
- Collect food security related baseline information about the household: household composition; homestead; food and nutrition behaviours and practices.

The evidence for your portfolio consists of a brief analysis of the baseline questionnaires you completed for each household and written answer to questions on the Portfolio Activity 2.5 Evidence Sheet. (Find details about Portfolio Activity 2.5 in the **Take Action Section**)



Log

Reflect on first home visit with households

1. What are some of the hopes and concerns of the household caregivers?
2. What are some of the challenges of conducting a home visit?
3. What can you improve your home visits in future?



Concluding Comments

The PLA learning process is a set of methods and actions that should lead to improved food security decision-making, behaviour and practice. A challenging aspect is ensuring that the PLA learning process will achieve this goal and result in sustainable food security actions long after the HFS programme has ended.

The HFS facilitator can build in sustainability by creating enabling and supportive environments at three levels: the household, the Care Learning Group, and the community. The Care Learning Group is central to the success of the Participatory Learning and Action process. The Group creates a 'safe circle of friends' for participating household caregivers and is the immediate and enabling environment for disempowered households.



By now you have a clearer idea of your facilitation and information gathering and reporting role. The team planning and facilitation of a practice learning session gave you practical insight into what happens during such a session and how to get people to participate. You learned how important follow up support is for caregivers to strengthen their resolve and their ability to bring about positive change.

At this point you have taken the first steps to build a working relationship with selected household caregivers. In the coming months you will use the PLA methods and tools to stimulate and encourage the caregivers to become their own change agents for food security. At the same time your knowledge of the household and community context will grow and you will strengthen your skills as a HFS facilitator.

