

# Facilitators training workshop

## What is the purpose?

A set of guidelines for training facilitators in community conversations. It introduces the concept of community conversations, and then reviews small group facilitation techniques, and provides opportunity for facilitators to practice facilitating community conversation. This tool was originally developed in Lao and can be modified, as appropriate, for any context.

## objectives

- To understand the principles of community conversations
- To be familiar with the tools they will be using for community conversations
- To be able to facilitate discussions around child well-being during community conversations

### who facilitates

The development facilitator co-leads with a starter group member. If there is a co-lead there needs to be an intentional process of preparation with the co-facilitator. If you are co-leading, be clear about who is leading which part of the exercise

### time span

approximately 6.5 to 8 hours

### who participates

Facilitators chosen to conduct the community conversations

### materials

- copies of *What is a community conversation?* (see Community Conversation Facilitation Guidance, pages 9-10)
- copies of the *Good Facilitation Checklist*, see page 4
- tools chosen by starter group
  - questions
  - methods
  - support materials
- flipchart paper
- markers
- notebook paper
- pencils

## process

### Facilitators training workshop

session #	time	name of exercise	description of exercise
1	2 hours	<b>What are community conversations?</b>	A session to help participants to understand the principles of community conversations
2	1 hour	<b>What is small group facilitation?</b>	A session to help participants develop skills using small group facilitation techniques
3	4 hours	<b>Let's practice facilitating community conversations</b>	A session to help participants develop skills to facilitate community conversations

## session #1 What are community conversations?

### objectives

- To understand the principles of community conversations
- To be familiar with the tools they will be using for community conversations
- To understand how to guide discussions around child well-being

### time span

approximately 2 hours

### materials

- copies of *What are Community Conversations*
- copies of the *Good Facilitation Checklist*
- tools chosen by starter group
  - questions
  - methods
  - support materials
- flipchart paper
- markers
- notebook paper
- pencils

## Recommended Process

### Welcome and introductions

#### 1 - Welcome the participants

Thank them for joining in this training about how to become good group facilitators. Thank them for joining in the effort to help their community.

#### 2 - Introduce the facilitation team

Introduce yourself and describe where you come from, your position, and what you do. Introduce the rest of the facilitation team.

#### 3 - Ask the participants to introduce themselves

Ask everyone to introduce themselves. Ask them to share their name and a brief description of what they do.

### Explain the purpose of this training

#### 4 - Explain the purpose of this training:

*“The purpose of this training is for you to become an excellent facilitator of community conversations. After you take this training, you will facilitate community conversations in your community. This will help you guide people to share their opinions and experiences about children. This information will help guide further discussions and influence future plans to improve child well-being.”*

#### 5 - Explain to the participants that the three objectives of this entire workshop are:

- Become familiar with the principles for community conversations and the tools we will be using.
- Learn how we can be good facilitators.
- Practice being group facilitators.

### Energise the group

#### 6 - Energise the group by singing one or two of your favourite songs or through a popular local warm-up activity. Everyone joins. Enjoy!

### Describe and demonstrate the community conversations

#### 7 - Tell the participants:

*“Community conversations are the way we have chosen to listen to community members about child well-being.”*

#### 8 - Describe community conversations

Share the handout, *What is a community conversation?*, and provide a brief overview of community conversations.

#### 9 - Tell the participants that there are four steps in community conversations:

- One**, describing the purpose of community conversations to a small group.
- Two**, introducing the tools (chosen by the starter group) to the small group.
- Three**, facilitating group discussion about child well-being in the community.
- Four**, gathering the notes from the community conversations and sharing them with the starter group.

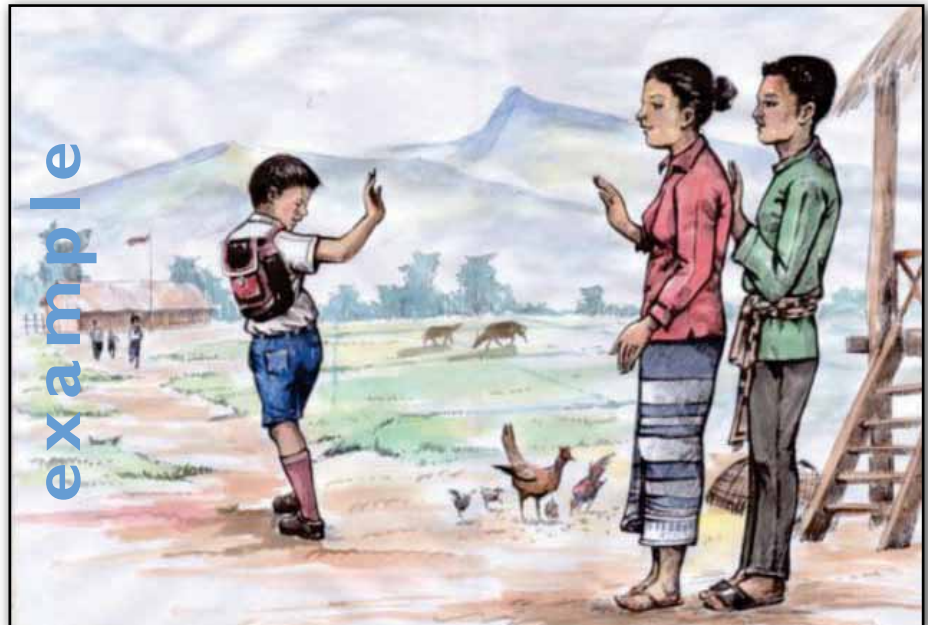
What are community  
conversations?  
notes

10 - Show participants the tools that the starter group has chosen. Tell them:

*“The starter group has chosen tools that will help guide these community conversations, stimulate discussions, and help guide our planning about how to improve the lives of their children.”*

Describe how the tool works:

*“This is a **flipchart picture**. It helps to stimulate discussion in the community conversations. On the front of each flipchart page is a picture of a scene related to child well-being.”*



example

*“On the back of each picture is a set of questions related to the picture.”*

*“During the discussions, you will show the pictures to the participants and ask them the questions on the back.”*

*“The pictures help the participants think about their answers.”*

*“Notetakers write answers that the participants give during the discussion session.”*

example

In our community, which groups of children attend school regularly?

Which groups of children do not attend school regularly?

Why don't they go to school?

## What are community conversations? notes

### 11 - Share techniques for a good facilitator.

Ask one or two group members to share examples from their own experience for each technique.

#### **A good facilitator:**

- Gives every participant an opportunity to speak.
- Guides who speaks and when they speak. Sometimes outspoken participants should be held back so that quiet participants can be encouraged to speak.
- Only asks questions; does not answer them.
- Shows the flipchart pictures to help stimulate ideas for their answers.
- Asks a question in a different way if participants don't understand.
- Elaborates on a question if participants don't explain their answers clearly.
- Asks participants to give explanations and examples for their answers.
- Makes sure the notetaker is taking accurate and complete notes.

### 12 - Share things to think about to prepare for community conversations.

Note: The facilitator may want to prepare a flipchart with this information or provide handouts.

#### **Community Conversations**

##### **Bring these materials:**

- Notetaking paper
- Pencils
- Flipchart paper
- Masking tape
- Supporting materials

##### **Prepare the space and the people:**

- Invite the people in your group to attend.
- Choose a place where your group can sit comfortably without being disturbed.
- Ask people to sit in a circle in a way that they are casual and comfortable.

##### **Explain the purpose:**

Explain the purpose of the community conversations to the group and the tools you will be using. Make sure everyone is clear about why they are gathered and how the community conversations will work.

##### **Conduct the community conversations using the tools.**

session #2 What is small group facilitation?

**objectives**

To develop skills using small-group facilitation techniques

**time span**

approximately 1 hour

**materials**

- flipchart paper
- markers
- notebook paper
- pencils

**Recommended Process**

1 - Show **picture 1** (included as a handout at the end of this guide) and compare two styles of facilitation. Ask participants:

*“Compare these two pictures. One facilitator is doing a bad job and one is doing a good job.”*

*“What are they doing badly? Why?”*

*“What are they doing well? Why?”*



After they have compared the pictures and answered the questions, tell them:

*“Look at how in the example of good facilitation, the facilitator is:*

- *sitting at the same level as the participants*
- *treating them as equals and looking into their eyes when they speak*
- *encouraging everyone to participate in the discussion*
- *welcoming everyone’s ideas and opinions equally.”*

*“Look at how in the example of bad facilitation:*

- *the facilitator is giving answers*
- *the facilitator is speaking too much*
- *the facilitator is standing looking over the participants heads*
- *the participants are sitting in rows*
- *the participants look bored and angry*
- *the participants are not talking*
- *only the facilitator is talking.”*

## What is small group facilitation? notes

2 - Show **picture 2** (included as a handout at the end of this guide) and compare two types of dynamics. Ask participants:

*“Compare these two speakers. They are both participants in a group.”*

*“What do you see about the way they are talking?”*

*“How should participants behave in the discussion?”*



After they have compared the pictures and answered the questions, tell them:

- *“No participants should dominate the discussion. The facilitator should try to give equal time to all of the participants.”*
- *“The facilitator’s most critical job is to guide who speaks and when they speak.”*
- *“The facilitator must make sure that each participant has a turn to speak. This means that sometimes an outspoken participant should be held back so that quiet participants can be encouraged to join in.”*
- *“The facilitator should urge the participants to respect the view of everyone, even if they disagree. No participant should criticize the opinions of others.”*
- *“If a group decision is being made, then it should be a consensus.”*



## What is small group facilitation? notes

3 - Show **picture 3** (included as a handout at the end of this guide) of the notetaker's role. Tell participants:

*"There are three roles in a small discussion group:*

- 1) Facilitator*
- 2) Participants (group members)*
- 3) Notetaker*



- *"The facilitator does not have time to take notes because facilitating the discussion takes all of his or her time."*
  - *"The notetaker only take notes. This task takes all of his or her time."*
  - *"The notetaker must be able to read and write quickly."*
  - *"The facilitator regularly checks with the notetaker to make sure that all of the key discussion points are being noted.."*
  - *"At the end of the session, the facilitator checks the notes and fills in any important missing information."*
- 4 - Ask participants if they have any questions about the points covered so far.
- 5 - Tell the participants that when they facilitate the group, they will use the tools chosen for these community conversations.
- 6 - Tell the participants that they will practice being a facilitator. During the practice sessions, each participant should practice and demonstrate the 'good facilitator techniques.'
- 7 - Review the good facilitator checklist on page 4. Tell the participants that it is very important they understand all of these techniques so ask questions. Discuss these techniques further as necessary.

## session #3 Let's practice facilitating community conversations

### objectives

To develop skills facilitating community conversations

### time span

approximately 4 hours

### materials

- notebook paper
- pencil

## Recommended Process

### Prepare for facilitation role play

1 - Tell the participants:

*"We have introduced the tools to be used for community conversations."*

*"Now, all of you will get a chance to practice facilitating community conversations."*

2 - Make sure all of the participants have a copy of the handout, *Good Facilitator Techniques Checklist*

### Role play facilitation and feedback with volunteer facilitators

3 - Ask for a volunteer to be the first to practice being a facilitator. Tell participants that they will each have a chance to practice facilitation.

**NOTE:** If the participants have shown that they do not understand the good facilitator techniques, it may be necessary to demonstrate a facilitation discussion before the participants begin their practice sessions.

4 - Ask another volunteer to play the role of notetaker. Give this person pencil and paper to use for notetaking.

5 - Give the participant who has volunteered to be the facilitator the tools and materials chosen for the community conversations.

6 - Ask the volunteer facilitator to convene the rest of the group as if they were starting a community conversation with them. They should introduce the purpose and tools they will be using.

- Give the volunteer facilitator ten minutes to get the group started and to ask a few questions.
- Assist the volunteer facilitator as necessary.

7 - After ten minutes, stop the discussion and tell the group:

*"Check the Good Facilitator Techniques checklist."*

*"What techniques from the list were used by this facilitator? What techniques were not used?"*

*"Based on this list, give your feedback about what the facilitator did well and how he or she can improve."*

8 - Tell all of the participants to give feedback to the notetaker about what he or she did well and how to improve.

9 - If there is time, give the same volunteer facilitator about five or ten more minutes practice time to correct his or her mistakes based on feedback.

**NOTE:** If there are more than eight participants in your training, split them into two groups to do the role play practice session.

10 - Tell participants that they will each have a chance to practice facilitation.

11 - Ask for new volunteers for facilitator and notetaker to do the next practice session.

- Give the volunteer facilitator about ten minutes to practice their approach to community conversations.
- After ten minutes, ask other participants to give feedback to the facilitator based on the *Good Facilitator Techniques checklist*.
- Give the same facilitator five to ten more minutes of practice with the whole group to make improvements based on feedback received.



Let's practice  
facilitating community  
conversations  
notes

12 - Repeat the same sequence for both the facilitator and the notetaker role with other volunteer participants. Each time a different volunteer practices, the other participants give feedback to the facilitator based on the *Good Facilitator Techniques checklist*.

**NOTE:** Remember the following during this activity:

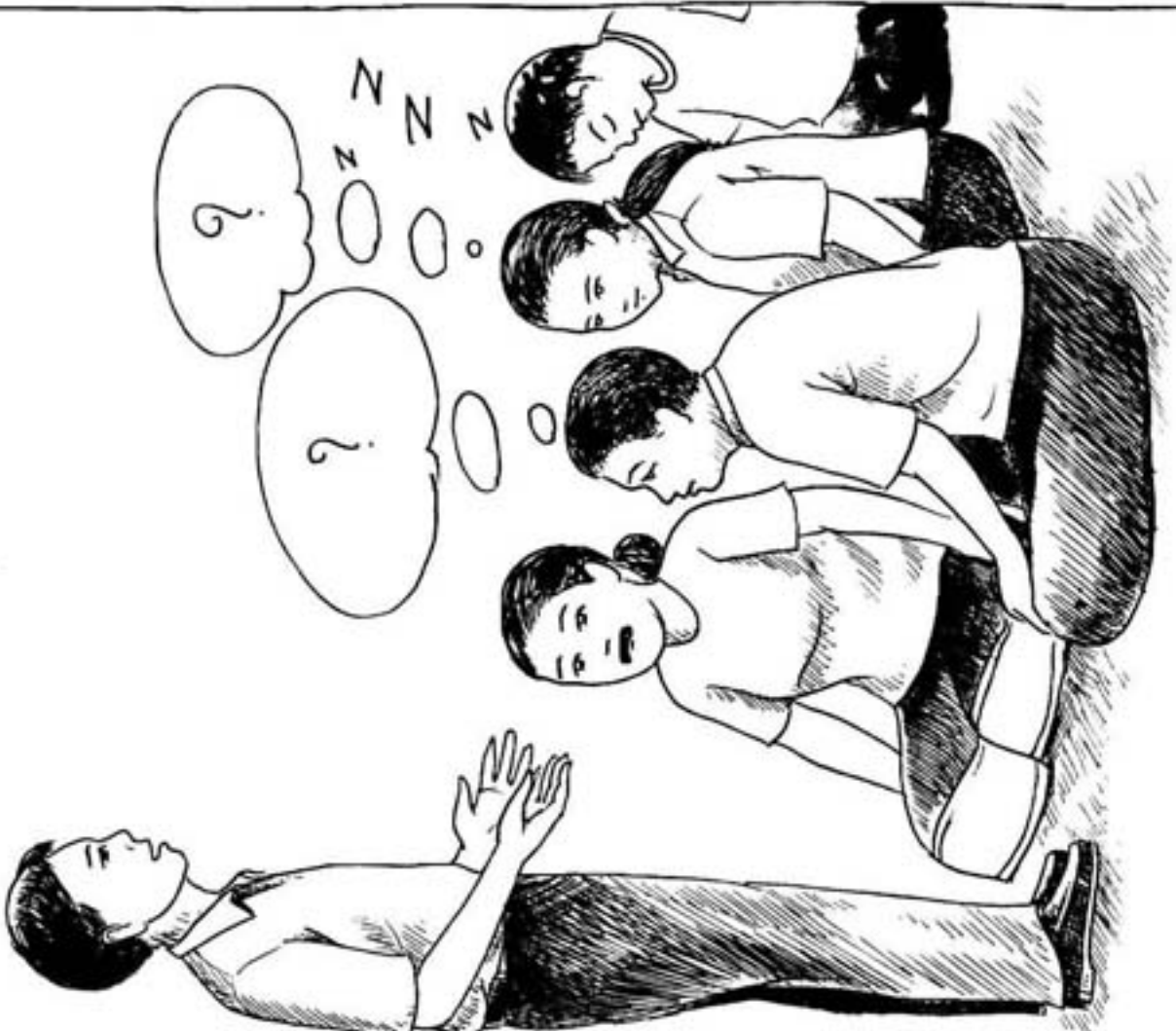
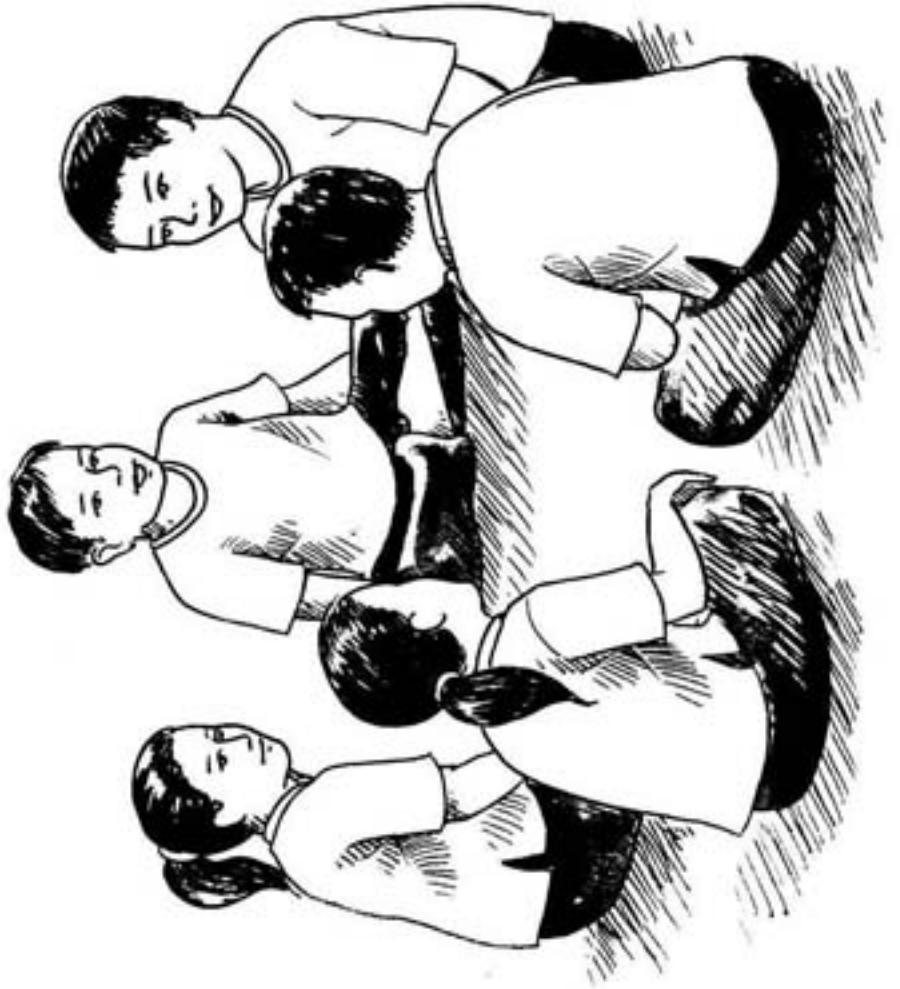
- Make sure that each facilitator has a minimum of about 20 minutes practice time.
- Each facilitator should also receive feedback from other participants based on the *Good Facilitator Techniques checklist*.
- Make sure all facilitators have opportunities to correct their mistakes based on that feedback.
- Continue to move around the area to listen to all of the facilitators and coach them as necessary. However, do not interfere too much with their practice time.

13 - After completing the facilitation role play and feedback activities, have a follow-up discussion with the entire group. Tell them to ask questions about anything that was done.

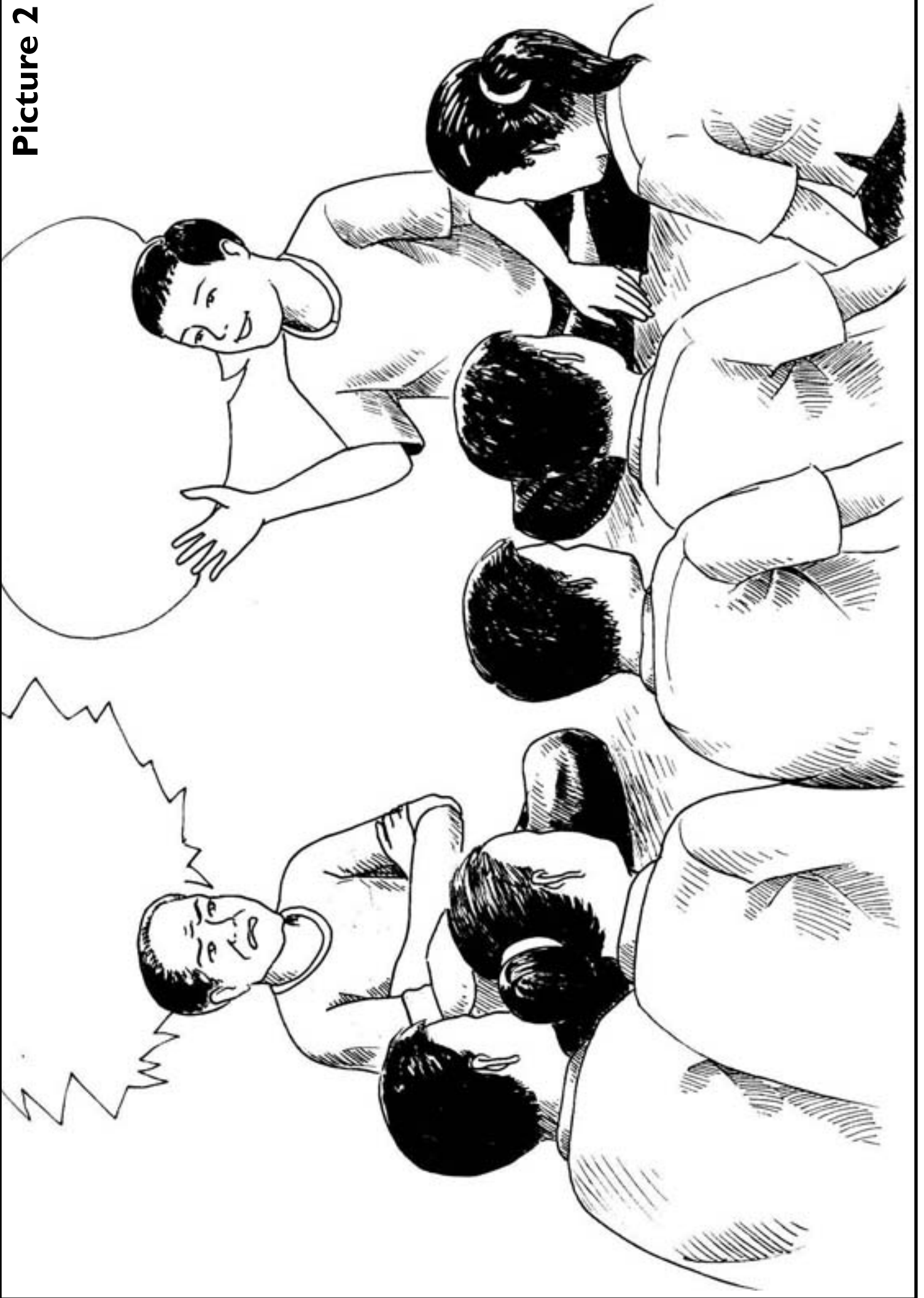
**Conclusion**

14 - Thank the participants for their involvement in the community conversations!

Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3

