

REPORT

Alternatives to Violence Program (AVP)

Training of Facilitators 2021 in Huye

September 23 – 25, 2022, Emmaus Hostel

Since 2021, PIASS/ CRASPD has held AVP Basic and Advanced Workshops using funds from GIZ CPS or Japanese Mission Support. These workshops drew mostly PIASS students from the department of Peace and conflict studies, as well as some University of Rwanda students from the faculty of psychology. We planned another three days of AVP facilitator training (ToF) in September 2022, which took place at Emmaus Hostel with financial support from GIZ Civil Peace Service.

The participants were 9 female and 8 male students, 8 of them from Rwanda, 2 from Burundi, 2 from Nigeria, 2 from South Sudan, 1 from Malawi, 1 from Ghana, and 1 from DR Congo.



The team of trainers was composed of Gloire Sebuyange (Genius Gloire, DR Congo), Silas (Silowam Silas, AVP Rwanda, Bugesera), Serge Muvunyi (Smiling Serge, Rwanda), Leila (Lucky Leila, Burundi), and Anne Dietrich (Active Anne, IPA, CRASPD/PIASS).

We hope that by using ToFs, we can spread this approach. We are convinced that it can aid in the development of people's and groups' capacities to deal with conflict in a nonviolent and constructive manner, thereby contributing to the prevention, reduction, and abolition of violence in all its forms, as well as the development of mechanisms and institutions that foster these tendencies. ToFs are built around extensive facilitation practice for those who have completed AVP basic and advanced level workshops and want to become AVP Learning Facilitators, who can then join teams of experienced AVP facilitators for workshops in their communities. Up to now, 96 AVP learning facilitators from different countries were trained at PIASS.

SESSION I: COMMUNITY BUILDING

Welcome and Team Introduction

A team from Polyclinique La Medicale began the ToF by administering covid-19 rapid tests to all participants, facilitators, and support staff. Those who had passed the tests were invited to a baseline interview with one of the team members.

After all of these preliminary steps were completed for everyone present, one of the ToF Team's AVP-Facilitators warmly welcomed everyone, outlined the logistical details of the venue, and emphasized the importance of adhering to the covid-19 security rules. She then introduced the AVP-ToF Facilitators' Team members and presented the first day's agenda.

Opening Talk

Participants were reminded of the "Power continuum" of the AVP workshop series in an opening talk. It demonstrates how AVP workshop participants are continually empowered throughout the three levels of AVP workshops: The Facilitation Team sets the agenda in the AVP Basic Level Workshop based on the four 'pillars' of AVP - Affirmation, Communication, Cooperation/ Community Building, and Conflict Resolution with transforming power as the foundation, whereas in the AVP Advanced Level Workshop, the participants usually choose a focus topic to work on in a consensus decision making exercise, and the team prepares different experience sharing, group work, exercises, role plays, etc to work on this focus topic together. In the AVP Training of Facilitators, participants form practice teams who prepare the facilitation of different sessions of an AVP Basic Level Workshop together to learn facilitation skills at the same time.

This shows how the power of facilitators reduces while the power and shared responsibility of participants increase over the three levels.



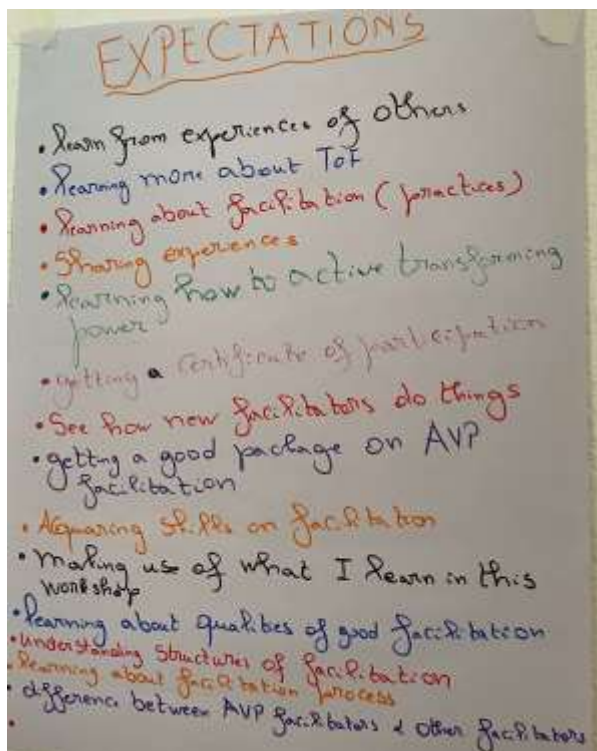
Community Agreements

Participants were divided into four groups of four people each, with one group of five people, and each group came up with ideas for what they thought they and others needed to make the training as enjoyable and educational for everyone as possible. One of the ToF-facilitators moderated the discussion on suggestions from participants based on their previous workshops and asked all participants if they would be willing to commit to the stated behavior and be able to follow it. When everyone demonstrated that they understood and wanted to follow the agreement, another facilitator wrote it on a flip chart for everyone to see and remember during the training. Some ideas that had not been mentioned but were important to them were then added to the impressive list (picture). It was noted that if a participant later had a suggestion for another agreement, he or she could request that it be added.

Gathering

The method of “gathering”, a kind of go-around, was re-introduced, reminding participants that they did different gatherings in their earlier AVP workshops: The purpose of a gathering is to ‘set the stage for a session and to ask for a brief experience or reflection from everyone in the room that can help to get familiar with each other and hear each other’s thoughts about the topic of the gathering. When introducing a gathering, it helps to say a clear sentence to complete (a ‘whip’), and to encourage

participants to pass the floor to the next person in the circle if they need more time to think and assure them that we will come back to them. It is also beneficial for a gathering if the facilitator leading it starts with her/himself, modeling how we would like participants to make a brief but concise statement. The facilitator of a gathering can either ask the participants to continue either right or left from her/ him.



In a gathering, everyone said their AVP name and why they chose it, one thing they are good at, and one thing they expected from the ToF workshop. One of the facilitators was writing the expectations of participants on a flip chart.



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SESSION II: FACILITATION IN THE ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE PROGRAM

Brainstorming on the qualities of a good facilitator

Participants were reminded of what it means to "brainstorm": A brainstorming session is where everyone can say whatever comes to mind about the topic, and everything is written down but not discussed - yet!

The facilitator leading the subsequent brainstorming session asked the participants to share what they would like to see and hear from a facilitator to help them learn and enjoy a workshop.

Second, they listed, and another facilitator noted down on a flipchart, what they consider to be the qualities of a "good" facilitator. They came up with a pretty good list.

A good facilitator is or has;

- Patient
- Good observer and active listener
- Good communicator (Speaks clearly and keeps eye contact)
- Punctual
- Cooperative
- Flexible
- Good skills of presentation
- Committed
- Engages participants in their facilitation
- Democratic (promotes consensus and not dictatorship)
- Role model
- Works in Team

At times, one of the ToF-trainers asked back what was exactly meant, e.g. by "a good observer" (here the participant responded that the facilitators need to be aware of what is going on in the room, and if they find that things are going on that are disturbing some participants attention s/he can do something about it).

The facilitator asked again the difference between a facilitator and a teacher, lecturer or an expert. On this question, most participants argued that a facilitator is a person who makes things easy, who let participants express themselves on a given topic, he or she learns together with the participants and does not impose them what to do, but welcomes consensus and values the decisions of participants. On the other hand, discussions went on that a lecturer, expert or a teacher presents materials to the audience and does not mind at all whether participants agree or not on what he or she



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presents. Others added that lecturers often give no room to participants to express themselves and often behave like bosses while facilitators behave like leaders.

According to your observations, is there any difference between an AVP facilitator and other facilitators? The facilitator asked.

On this question, responses were that for AVP facilitators; things are done voluntary, they give power to participants and also follow rules like participants, while other facilitators act more like bosses, they often have PowerPoint presentations and do not sit together with participants as it is done in AVP.

Workshop design

Participants were divided into three groups using a method explained by one of the ToF Facilitators in which everyone received a paper with a symbol for a specific way to greet others (no shaking hands, no hugging, etc, only no-touch ways of greeting and connecting, observing distance of at least 1 meter!) and were asked to find those who come from the same 'greeting culture' by walking around the room and greeting others in their own way.

They were asked in these groups to identify what an AVP facilitation team should consider when preparing for an AVP basic workshop, as well as what is required for the workshop to take place and become a good learning experience. "Which information do we require?" they were asked. and "how do we put together an AVP facilitators' team?" Last but not least, "how do we create an agenda?" Participants returned from group work with the following points:

G1. What do we need to know to design an AVP workshop?

On this question, participants from this group argued that to design an AVP workshop we need to;

- Know the availability of participants as well as facilitators
- Drafting the budget for what is needed to be done
- Preparing the location
- Ethical consideration (it is important to consider the values, and culture of the beneficiaries before implanting the workshop in a given community).
- Agenda (topics to be covered and the duration of the workshop).

G2. How to develop an Agenda?

- Coming together as a team
- Have a consensus on the materials and the content needed
- Allocating time to each session and sharing tasks

G3. How to get a team together?

Communication (knowing who do we need in the team? who is available to join the team? And how many people do we need in the team?)

After the groups sharing their results with each other, a Light and Lively, “Elephant? Palm Tree? Butterfly” brought some more movement and fun into the room before we embarked on our teambuilding session.

Teambuilding

One of the ToF Facilitators explained that "teambuilding" is an important part of the AVP program's facilitation practice. We usually put together teams of AVP Learning Facilitators with more experienced facilitators to build trust in the team, agree on joint practices and ways to communicate and do things in the team and during facilitation, and determine who will do what before, during, and after the sessions of a workshop day.

Bus Exercise

During the 'bus exercise,' participants were challenged to decide which parts of a bus they would like to be of a bus that one of the ToF facilitators drew on a flip chart, with many parts (e.g., steering wheel, passengers, luggage, etc.) saying that the bus on the picture is very imperfect, but that they, as a team, could make a perfect bus. The participants were then asked to form a bus with their bodies, with each of them choosing to be a different part of the bus.



After some time and participant communication about who would be what/who and where, what was missing, and how the bus could function properly, everyone was asked which element of the bus s/he was, and why s/he chose to be this part – and not another.

Many said that the part they chose seemed important to them for the bus to work, others said that they chose something that seemed easy for them to do, and still others said that they changed their minds after seeing that something was missing - for example, two people said that they saw that the bus only had two tires, but needed four to safely move forward - and that they could add the missing part. Finally, it was discovered that al



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To start and move the bus safely and successfully to its destination, all of the elements must be present and work together. Participants transferred insights from the bus exercise to teambuilding learning during the debriefing: In teams, each member has unique characteristics and strengths to offer, can ask others to compensate for his or her weaknesses, and must be aware of the team's potential weaknesses. Team members can help each other and work together to make their work more efficient and enjoyable for everyone. In summary, it is about developing a trusting, mutually supportive partnership and working together on an equitable basis to complement each other and learn from each other, participants, and the process. Furthermore, it was discovered that communicating effectively is always important when people work in a team because it helps to share information about one's strengths and weaknesses. Knowing this about oneself and other team members will help you decide who can do what in the workshop's preparation and facilitation. This makes it easier for team members to support or backup one another as needed.

Giving and receiving feedback in AVP

After a brief brainstorming session, the facilitator asked what participants' worries and concerns were about giving and receiving feedback. Many people are concerned that if they give critical feedback, their teammates will be hurt, and that if others give them feedback, it will be unpleasant and may lead to anger or frustration.

It was then demonstrated how to give and receive (constructive) feedback in AVP: Each facilitator begins by reviewing her/his own performance aloud, sitting in a circle with the other facilitators, beginning with a celebration of a specific behavior or action s/he did that s/he feels satisfied with/happy about, then saying one other action/statement that s/he could improve on the next time, and finally another that s/he can give herself appreciation for. During this phase of self-feedback, the other team members only listen. After s/he is done, all other team members give this facilitator feedback in the same way, speaking directly to her/him, beginning with appreciation/celebration for a concrete action/statement/behavior of the fellow facilitator, following up with what the feedback giver would like to see changed (as specific as possible and suggesting concretely how the speaker thinks it could be done if possible), and ending with another observation of something that s/he liked. The other team members follow suit, providing honest and appreciative feedback to this facilitator. This procedure is repeated until all of the facilitators have provided feedback.

The ToF team reminded participants that feedback in AVP is intended to improve facilitation skills, encourage team members to take risks, and support the ongoing joint learning process - which never ends in AVP. We encourage participants in the AVP ToF to provide constructive feedback to one another in their teams. This makes it simple and allows the person receiving feedback to improve and feel comfortable with feedback from co-facilitators. Participants also noted that it is beneficial to use a "I message" when providing feedback. It appears acceptable to the person receiving the feedback and allows you to express your feelings without using words that could harm the team member to whom you are speaking.

SESSION III: FACILITATION PRACTICE

Forming practice teams

Five teams for preparing and practicing facilitation were formed, and the topics for the session they prepared around the following four pillars of AVP and Transforming Power:

1. Opening of an AVP workshop and Affirmation
2. Communication in AVP
3. Community Building/ Cooperation, Transforming Power
4. Conflict Resolution, including facilitation of role plays
5. Transforming Power

The structure of the facilitation practice, as well as the duration, elements, and topics of the practice sessions, were introduced. As previously stated, each practice team was given 90 minutes to facilitate and 30 minutes to provide and receive constructive feedback on their facilitation.

The feedback would begin in a 'fishbowl' setting, with members of the practice team giving feedback to themselves and each other, followed by feedback from the other participants and trainers. The teams were then given until the following day to prepare. The first team was asked to include a welcome for the first day of the training and then assume that their audience (all others in the training, including the ToF Facilitators' Team) had never heard of AVP or had heard very little about it.

Team facilitation practice and feedback

On the second day, three facilitation teams practiced, and the other two followed on the third day. During their preparation, each team was accompanied by one trainer, who would accompany and guide them through the 90 minutes of practice time allotted to each team: The ToF facilitator assigned to the group would 'cut' and ask the practice team to move on to the next item on their agenda for the session and the next participant leading it, based on how the practice team had prepared.



Following each facilitation practice, the members of the practice team facilitating it provided feedback to one another in a 'fishbowl' format: they sat together in a smaller circle inside the larger circle of the plenary. Everyone else was paying attention to the feedback that the team members were giving each other. The participants and trainers provided feedback to the practice team.





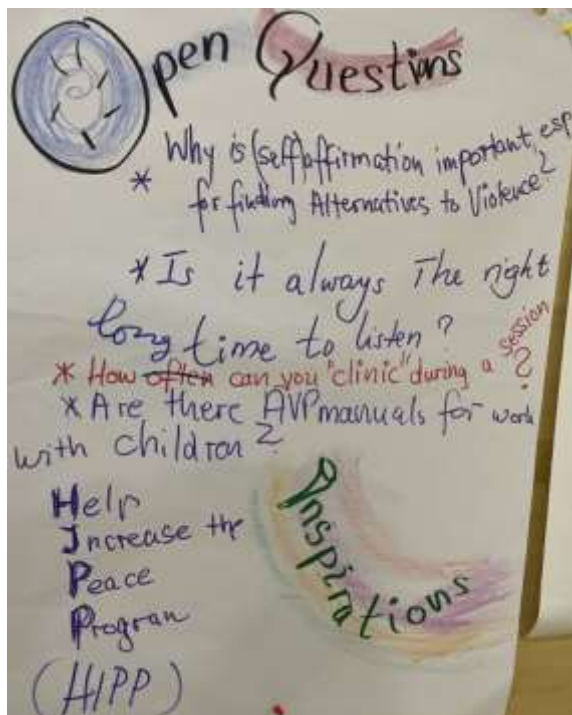
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Lessons Learnt from facilitation practice

In their practice groups, participants had time to remember and collect lessons they learnt during their facilitation practice and feedback sessions.

- ❖ Facilitating is not an easy job, it requires courage, preparation and practice.
- ❖ I have seen the importance of feedback because it gives us a room to improvement.
- ❖ It is better to give positive feedback
- ❖ Affirmation for self and for others is very important.
- ❖ I have learned the difference between agenda items.
- ❖ Appreciation
- ❖ Openness
- ❖ Confidence
- ❖ Patience
- ❖ Plan – facilitate – monitor and evaluate
- ❖ Be clear on topic/s for each session
- ❖ Mutual learning
- ❖ The power of volunteering
- ❖ Importance of team building and teamwork
- ❖ Collaboration
- ❖ Sharing responsibilities (ownership)
- ❖ Flexibility
- ❖ Learning is an unending process.
- ❖ Communication
- ❖ Preparation is key
- ❖ Share in the team which methods you will use, Have materials (incl. prepared charts) ready before time
- ❖ Time management
- ❖ Facilitation needs time
- ❖ Allocate enough time for every session
- ❖ The importance of using participatory approach
- ❖ Every movement a facilitator takes matters to participants, we need to make sure we are doing the right things during our facilitation.
- ❖ A facilitator should be specific and clear enough in giving instructions.
- ❖ A facilitator needs to be creative to make the session enjoyable.
- ❖ Sometimes it is better to improvise in case it would make the session better.



Open questions

When the facilitation practices were completed and the lessons learnt for all captured, questions from participants that were written on the 'open questions' poster were reviewed in plenary. For some, we found that they had been answered in the course of the ToF. For others, we saw if we could find the responses, drawing on the experiences in the facilitation practice.

Two examples of the questions asked were:

Q1. Why is self-affirmation important especially in finding alternatives to violence?

On this question, we reached an agreement that self-affirmation is important because it helps us find the good in us which eventually helps us find the good in others.

Some participants argued that it is quite difficult to love or appreciate others if we cannot love or appreciate ourselves. This should be done genuinely, and not in a form of boasting or showing up. Self-affirmation also increases our confidence.

Q1. Is there a right time to listen?

The response to this question was that it depends on the situation or one person to another. There are people who normally do not like talking when they are angry, which makes them difficult to listen to, while others can have enough courage to talk and open up regardless of their anger. This implies that it is better to listen to one's concerns whenever there is a chance to do so.

Q3. How often should facilitators have a clinic and how long should it talk during the session?

It was argued that clinic should be done whenever facilitators feel there is need to agree on something during the session, it usually done withing seconds, minutes and its duration often depends on the complexity of the topic they are discussing about.

Q4. Are they AVP manuals to work with children?

Yes, there is a program called HIPP, Help Increase the Peace that was created by AVP Australia and a manual containing exercises and other tools that are specifically made for working with kids.

Way forward

According to one member of the ToF Facilitators' Team, once someone has completed their Training of Facilitators, he or she is now a "AVP Learning Facilitator." In this capacity, someone may choose to organize an AVP Basic Level Workshop in her/his community, inviting a group of more experienced facilitators to co-facilitate the workshop. When asked to lead an AVP Basic Level Workshop in another community/organization/institution, he/she can join a team of more experienced facilitators.

The participants were also introduced to the system of learning facilitators – after becoming facilitators by completing the Training of Facilitators, they can start facilitating workshops with more experienced facilitators in order for them to gain experience and learn more about AVP, hone their facilitation skills, and finally become experienced facilitators, too.

An AVP Learning Facilitator can register on the AVP International Website (www.avp.international) to be visible to other AVP facilitators worldwide and to have access to materials and manuals in different languages, as well as regular information about events/ trainings/ online practice sessions/ gatherings. Even without being registered, the website shows a lot about what is going on in AVP internationally, in different countries and on the global level. Participants were also encouraged to reach out and network with AVP Facilitators when they go to a new place (for MA studies/ a job/ family etc) so that they could know what is happening in that place in terms of AVP and also get involved in it.

Affirmation posters

Participants were engaged in writing affirmation posters to each other, as is usual in AVP workshops. Every participant wrote at least one or two things they like or appreciate about the other person. Later, when handing out certificates, some lines from the affirmation posters were read aloud.



Evaluation

In the first step, we examined the expectations expressed by participants at the first training gathering to determine which ones had been met and which had not. Based on the reactions of the participants, it appears that they met the expectations stated at the start of the workshop.



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Evaluation forms were distributed to participants. The evaluation results are appended at the end of this report.

Graduation

Each participant received a certificate, an affirmation poster filled out by other participants in the training, and a sweet, and the person who handed over the certificate read out some of the comments and words of appreciation and affirmation before calling the graduate.



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EVALUATION

AVP Training of Facilitators

Organized by PIASS CRASPD & giz Civil Peace Service

September 23 - 25, 2022

Facilitation Team:

Leila Butoyi, Rwenyaguza R. Silas, Gloire Sebuyange, Muvunyi Serge, Anne Dietrich

Please, fill in this questionnaire (3 pages!) for us as facilitators team to get your feedback, by rating every unit and giving us your observations and opinions.

Your COMMENTS will be very welcome and helpful for us to improve our work. If the space is not sufficient for what you want to write, please, use the back side of the paper. Your ratings and comments will help us to make our facilitation of AVP Workshops more enjoyable and efficient.

Thank You!

Explanation of rating:

For the rating, please choose one of the five categories between the two extreme positions “not at all” and “totally”, and mark your choice with a cross (X).

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|--|
| | | | | | | |
| | Not satisfied at all/ do not agree to the statement at all | A bit satisfied / do agree a little bit | Do not know/ depends | Moderately satisfied | Totally Satisfied | |

“How satisfied are you, in general, with the facilitation and the methods the trainers used in the training (e.g. presentations/ exercises, team cooperation, time management, understandability...)?

| | | | | | | |
|------------|--|--|--|--|--|---------|
| not at all | | | | | | Totally |
|------------|--|--|--|--|--|---------|

Your comments (what can we make better?)

Totally satisfied: 13

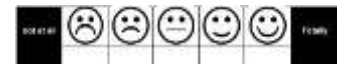
Moderately satisfied: 2

Moderately satisfied: 2

- Everything was good but it is like this ToF need more time, if these days can be increased it could be amazing.
- As this AVP took place at Emmaus hostel, I was not happy to see flies during lunch and break fasts, so, maybe next time you should choose a venue which is free from flies or other insects which can spread microbes.
- Courage first, I would like to recommend you to change this place next time because of flies on food,
- Next time it would be better for the facilitator to make it short not boring.
- I have enjoyed this workshop most because I found it interesting and I wish next time it can be hosted in a location where they have enough materials for hygiene.
- Share more practical examples, limit cutting participants short,
- Just maintain and also giving much time to participants and well sharing experiences to them.
- The ToF was interesting and I personally liked it. I do not know how to say it, but I was annoyed by the flies in this hotel, maybe it is not me alone.
- You should encourage participants to explain their topic more widely before going for other activities like role plays.
- It was really good; I liked the collaboration among you which I believe will help us as future facilitators.
- I am satisfied by the training; we are not perfect and there is always a room for improvement.
- Everything that was done there was perfect, the presentation was well explained, exercises were funny and interesting and time was very respected, however, measures were not respected, and the staff of restaurant sometimes did not provide what was needed on the table when it was lunch time or tea break.
- It was very good and I was totally satisfied.

Please, rate how much did you like the following presentations/ exercises/ – and write your comments (if you have – it will help us to improve next time!)

Opening: Welcome, Gathering, Opening Talk, Community Agreements, Agenda



Totally satisfied: 14

Moderately satisfied: 2

Moderately satisfied: 1

- It was nice
- Some was good and some was not
- It was really a good start; the facilitators were ready and flexible.
- I think the community agreement



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What are the characteristics of a ‘good’ facilitator? (Brainstorming)



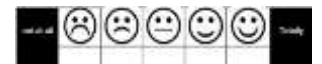
Totally satisfied: 14

Moderately satisfied: 3

Moderately satisfied:

- Lovely
- It was well and good explained
- I really like the way it was done with the drawing which I find mostly helpful to understand well the qualities of a good facilitator.

Workshop Design (group work, presentation)



Totally satisfied: 10

Moderately satisfied: 6

Moderately satisfied: 1

- Awesome
- Nice
- It was good but time was limited, if possible, you may increase time for groups to facilitate.
- Giving equal time groups instead of saying that one group has been caught up by time.
- It was good, however, tea time was short.

Teambuilding (Bus Exercise, Debriefing, Plenary Discussion)



Totally satisfied: 14

Moderately satisfied: 3

Moderately satisfied:



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- I appreciated how you let participants to engage in exercise.
- It was more creative and nicer
- Extremely satisfied
- Very good
- That made me happy to see how people knew that to give good respect, we should work together.

Giving and Receiving Feedback in AVP



Totally satisfied: 12

Moderately satisfied: 5

Moderately satisfied:

- I did not like the tautology
- It was good and I found it very helpful, however, It really takes a long time, if possible we can be having an L&L between sessions.
- Saying that silence is also feedback, next time I wish that it can be well explained to participants.
- It was good but it took much time.
- I learned a lot from this and it has changed the way I used to give feedback to people.

Facilitation Practice and Feedback



Totally satisfied: 11

Moderately satisfied: 5

Moderately satisfied: 1

- Was really educative
- Time was limited, otherwise it was perfect
- Need room for improvement
- I would like if possible, to have more practice

Affirmation





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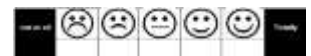
Totally satisfied: 13

Moderately satisfied: 4

Moderately satisfied:

- Lovely
- The person facilitating the session forgot to say it is only positive things that we need to write about others, I was not happy when I saw that someone wrote a negative thing about one of the participants.
- It was good but it was not easy for some of us to understand.

Open Questions



Totally satisfied: 12

Moderately satisfied: 3

Moderately satisfied: 2

- Well done
- Next time it would be better if you answer them immediately after the session not waiting the last day of the workshop.

Way Forward



Totally satisfied: 14

Moderately satisfied: 2

Moderately satisfied: 1

- I would request more clarification, even some documents of information
- I was expecting to hear you (facilitators) will help us to find a space where we can practice what we learnt here.
- Please help participants to register
- Good



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OTHER COMMENTS and QUESTIONS. Thank you for your time and effort to make our AVP ToF s better!!

- I want to say thank you to the Team of facilitators for the good work your people did during this AVP ToF, I am really grateful for what you do. Thank you and may God bless you all.
- I do appreciate all the good job that facilitators do for giving us this time to guide and facilitate us.
- My outmost gratitude to the team and all the participants who made this ToF memorable. I was happy to receive a material on transforming power and it contributed to my understanding of the concept. However, I feel that it might be more helpful to me and others if materials on the four pillars are shared with the participants so as to help the reflect and get a picture about the session they would be facilitating.
- I would like to take this opportunity and thank the facilitating group for the great work they did for us and I promise to apply what I have learned from them and from my fellow ToF participants of AVP. Much appreciation to all! What I can say now is “Namaste”
- Thanks for the invitation, as always, keep empowering. Greatful
- Can I start AVP in my country alone, is it possible?
- I would like if action is taken, it should be taken with consideration of other participants.
- I would like to appreciate the team for their cooperation, I really liked the fact that they were able to give the participants knowledge. Thank you to the Team