AGA KHAN FOUNDATION

COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION WITH DISPERSED TEAMS

Facilitator Guide

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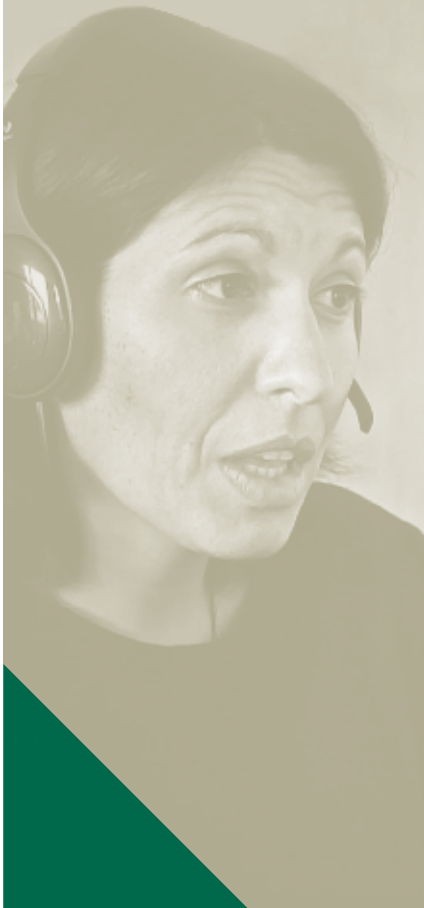
Facilitator Guide

OVERVIEW

Upon completion of the AKF video-based Communicating and Collaborating with Dispersed Teams course, course takers participate in a one-day face-to-face workshop to further develop their communication and collaboration skills. This one-day in-person session is intended to be highly interactive and create opportunities for participants to engage in hands-on work with various communication and collaboration tools. This document is a step-by-step guide for facilitators of this face-to-face training.

SAMPLE AGENDA

The agenda for the face-to-face workshop will look something like this:

TIME		TOPIC
DAY 1		
9:00	9:45	Welcome, introductions and expectations
9:45	10:15	Our teams our challenges
10:15	10:30	BREAK
10:30	11:00	Developing team expectations
11:00	11:45	Using video conferencing
11:45	12:00	Transferring files
12:00	13:00	BREAK
13:00	13:45	Collaborating on documents
13:45	14:30	Surveying teams
14:30	14:45	BREAK
14:45	15:30	Scheduling a meeting
15:30	16:00	Planning a meeting
16:00	16:45	Closing and training evaluation

TOPIC: WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

Format	Large group discussion
Duration	45 minutes
Materials	• Agenda (see above), one copy per participant • Flipchart labelled "Expectations" • Post-it notes, approximately 2 to 3 per participant • Pens • Notepad, one per small group

- Begin by welcoming participants to the Communicating and Collaborating with Dispersed Teams face-to-face workshop and introduce yourself.

- Walk participants through the Agenda for the one-day training, emphasising that this workshop will provide ample opportunities for hands-on practice.

- Use the "10 Things" exercise as the Introductions / Ice Breaker. Divide the participants into groups of 4 to 5 by counting off. By counting off you will likely create groups of participants who do not already know one another well, forcing the participants to engage new colleagues.

- In their small groups, participants should learn each other's names. They should also identify 10 things that every member of the small group has in common. None of the 10 things can be work-related (unless participants work in different organisations). By having the participants explore non-work-related commonalities participants gain a new understanding of their colleagues. Instruct one participant from each group to take notes of the 10 common things.

- After approximately 15 minutes, ask everyone to join the larger group. Ask the notetakers to share the 10 common things from their group. As the notetaker reads from their list, the other members from the group should stand so that all participants can affiliate the list with that group.

- Following the "10 Things" introductions, transition to workshop expectations. Ask participants to quietly reflect on the video lessons and the agenda. They should use this space and the post-it notes to write down expectations that they have of the training. Ask participants to post their expectations on the flipchart labelled "Expectations."

- Review the expectations aloud. If there are any outside the scope of the training, acknowledge this but be sure to work one-on-one with the participant who had the expectation to identify other opportunities to fulfil it.

TOPIC: OUR TEAMS OUR CHALLENGES

Format	Small group activity
Duration	30 minutes
Materials	• Colour note cards, approximately 10 per small group • Markers • Tape • A4 paper

- Form small groups of 3 to 4 participants.

- In their small groups, participants should highlight the type of dispersed team they are part of. For example, participants should answer questions such as: Do all your team members work for the same organisation, but are located in different organisational offices? Do all team members work for the same organisation, but some members work remotely? Do all team members work for the same organisation, but travel frequently for work? Or, do team members work for different organisations but collaborate on a special project? The small groups should highlight attributes of their dispersed teams as well, such as how many members work in a different or the same location; how frequently team members come together in person; and any other pertinent information participants want to share.

- Distribute colour note cards and markers to the small groups as they engage in the discussion above. They should then begin to transition to note in brief statements (3-5 words) key challenges their dispersed teams face. The participants work together in small groups to help inquire, listen, and note challenges.

- After approximately 15 minutes, participants should bring their note cards to a blank wall and stick them up.

- You should begin to categorise the note cards into similar challenges. If possible, you should work with participants to give the categories names (such as technology; funds; team bonding; etc.). You can use the A4 paper to note the category name.

- Ask the large group to review the note cards and categories. They should reflect on whether the cards and categories accurately reflect the challenges of their teams and if any key challenges are missing. If so, they should add these into the appropriate category. You can quickly review the categories and its contents.

- The purpose of this exercise is to help participants identify challenges that they will need to address in the following session on team expectations. The exercise also informs you about the specific challenges the group of participants encounters. You can use this information throughout the day, specifically highlighting how various tools can help address the challenges.

TOPIC: DEVELOPING TEAM EXPECTATIONS

Format	Individual work
Duration	30 minutes
Materials	• Laptop, 1 per participant • Note cards in categories from previous exercise

- Participants should return to their seats and have their laptops available. During this session, they will work individually to begin to draft team expectations. The expectations should address how their dispersed team is expected to communicate and collaborate.

- The participants can use the challenges identified in the previous session to create expectations but should be sure to develop expectations that address the availability of staff, the frequency of communication, the formality of communication and the modes or technologies their team will use to communicate and collaborate.

- We recommend that they develop the expectations in *Microsoft Word* and use headings for the various types of expectations. For example, they may use the headings: Availability, Frequency, Formality, and Technology. Then under each heading they may draft one or more expectations. For example, "We will be available between 10am and 12pm East Africa time for synchronous communication," or "We will use Skype for our bi-weekly team meetings," or "We will hold one-on-one meetings between the staff and the supervisor weekly for 30 minutes."

- Participants should be encouraged to develop expectations that they feel best fit their team and their type of work. Participants should be reminded that these are not final expectations but a work in progress and that throughout the workshop we will reflect on the drafts and make edits to them. You should circulate the room making yourself available to answer questions and offer support.

- After about 25 minutes, ask the participants to complete their tasks or come to a stopping point. Ask for examples of expectations that participants developed, and after a participant shares ask the group if anyone had the same or very similar expectation by a show of hands. Continue this for three to four examples. Conclude the session by saying that we will use these documents to continue to try out various tools that were introduced in the video portion of the course.

TOPIC: USING VIDEO CONFERENCING

Format	Plenary demonstration and small groups
Duration	45 minutes
Materials	• Two to three rooms in the same facility near to the primary training room • Two to three laptops each with Skype and Google Hangouts downloaded • Directions, 1 per participant (see Annex) • File labelled for screenshare and sharing • List of participant names, emails and Skype addresses

- Ahead of this session, ensure that you have additional rooms in your training facility available. These should be near your primary training

room. In each room, have a laptop setup and each laptop should have *Skype* and *Google Hangouts* installed and ready to use. Additionally, the laptops should also have the files for sharing and screenshare readily available. Finally, for this session it may also be helpful to have prepared a list of all participant names, their emails and *Skype* usernames.

- Ask for a show of hands of participants who have used and are comfortable with *Skype*. Use the same question for *Google Hangouts*. If you find one application is already widely used, you may consider not integrating it into this session. Instead spend time on applications participants are less familiar with (i.e. *BlueJeans, WhatsApp, FaceTime, HouseParty, Adobe Connect, Zoom,* etc.).

- Depending on the answers to the use and familiarity with the two applications, you may need to demonstrate one or more applications. The demonstrations should be quick, simply showing how to join a call, start a call, and send a file. The demonstrations should take 10 minutes or less.

- Divide participants into two or three groups (depending on the availability of rooms and laptops for the session). Inform groups that in each room they will find instructions for their task. Direct groups to their room.

- Participants work in groups to complete their exercises. During the last exercise, debrief with participants asking questions such as: Which technology did you prefer and why? Which technology do you think you prefer to use for work purposes and why? What features did you like about the various technologies? Is there a technology you would not use for work? If so which and why?

- Ask the participants to reconvene in the primary training room.

- The purpose of this exercise is to demonstrate technologies and then allow participants to use the same technologies. The trainer should use their discretion to choose alternative technologies when necessary.

TOPIC: TRANSFERRING FILES

Format	Individual work
Duration	15 minutes
Materials	• Laptops, 1 per participant • Team Expectations document, 1 per participant

- Participants should have the "Team Expectations" document that they prepared in a previous session ready to use on their laptops. Each participant should open the *WeTransfer* website (www.wetransfer.com).

- Using the *WeTransfer* service, the participants should send their "Team Expectations" document to the participant seated to their right.[1]

- Each participant should send, but also receive a document.

- Debrief by asking participants for a show of hands whether this is the first time they have used *WeTransfer*. Explain that *WeTransfer* is a great tool for sharing files with colleagues, especially when the file is large and cannot be sent via email. For example, normally you would not send a 1 page document like your Expectations via *WeTransfer;* however, it was a good opportunity to learn how to use the tool Ask participants questions like: What did you think of *WeTransfer*? Would you consider using it in your team? Why or why not? What technology are your teams using now to transfer large documents electronically? How does *WeTransfer* compare?

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1. Alternatively, you can arrange pairs.

TOPIC: COLLABORATING ON DOCUMENTS

Format	Pair work
Duration	45 minutes
Materials	• Laptops, 1 per participant • Team Expectations document, 1 per participant

- Place participants in pairs. In pairs, the participants will explore *Google Docs* and work together to review and revise each other's "Team Expectations" document.

- Each participant should open *Google Docs*. They should then upload their "Team Expectations" document. Next, the participants should share their "Team Expectations" document with their partner using *Google Docs* share function.

- Participants should review and edit their partner's document using the "Suggestion" edit function. After completing their review and edit, the partner should return the document to their colleague through the "Share" function. Participants can use their partner's feedback in their review and revision of their expectations. This can be completed after the workshop.

- As pairs work, you should circulate the room helping where needed. After pairs have completed the assignment, reconvene in a plenary for a debrief. You may ask questions like: What did you like about *Google Docs*? How do you think you can incorporate this application into your team's collaboration efforts?

TOPIC: SURVEYING TEAMS

Format	Pair work
Duration	30 minutes
Materials	• Laptops, one per pair • Email list of participants

- Use the same pairs as in the previous session. Pairs should explore *Google Forms* together. Pairs should create a form for an upcoming work-related event (i.e. meeting, party, dinner, etc.) or to collect contact information. Pairs can use the templates or may choose to create their own form.

- After creating their form, the pairs should send the form to at least one other participant in the workshop.

- Debrief by asking participants questions such as: How would you incorporate *Google Forms* into your work? If your team already uses *Google Forms,* can you share your experience?

TOPIC: SCHEDULING A MEETING

Format	Plenary demonstration
Duration	30 minutes
Materials	• Laptop for trainer and one per participant • Projector • List of participants' emails

- In plenary, demonstrate how to use *Doodle* to schedule a meeting by creating a *Doodle Poll*. Send the poll to participants and ask that they respond. Together, review the responses.

- Debrief by asking questions like: Has anyone used *Doodle* before and if so, can you share your experience? How does *Doodle* compare to the process you currently use to schedule a meeting? What features do you like about *Doodle*? Who thinks that they will incorporate *Doodle* into their toolkit?

- If time permits, allow participants to create their own *Doodle Poll.*

TOPIC: PLANNING A MEETING

Format	Individual work
Duration	30 minutes
Materials	• A4 paper, two sheets per participant • Flipchart papers labelled "Virtual Meeting", approximately 5 to 7 • Tape • Markers • Pens

- Create a "Virtual Meeting" flipchart papers ahead of the session. The flipchart should be populated with these questions. **Purpose:** Why are we having the meeting? **Goal:** What do we hope to achieve through this meeting? **Topics:** What should we discuss to achieve our goal? Do we need in-depth or quick introductions? **Priority:** Which topics are most important to address? **Time:** How much time is required to address each topic? How much time should we reserve for questions and answers? **Facilitator:** Who should facilitate the various discussions? Do the facilitators have access to reliable technology for communication? **Location:** What is the location and what technology should we use to host the meeting? **Notes:** Who is responsible for taking and distributing notes? **Preparation:** Are there materials participants should review ahead of the meeting or bring to the meeting? **Attendees:** Who must attend this meeting?

- In this session, participants will work individually to plan their next virtual team meeting. They should use the flipcharts labelled "Virtual Meeting" to help brainstorm the content for their agenda. They will use the A4 paper to sketch a draft agenda.

- Reserve approximately 10 minutes for a debrief. Ask if a participant or two would like to share their agenda. Allow the other participants to listen, but also to ask questions and offer constructive suggestions. Close the session with a few debrief questions such as: Which questions did you find easiest and hardest to answer and why? Do your teams always use an agenda? Why do you think having an agenda will be helpful?

TOPIC: TRAINING EVALUATION & CLOSING

Format	Group sharing & individual work
Duration	45 minutes
Materials	• Flipchart papers 1 labelled "What I got from today" • Markers • Tape • A4 paper, 1 per participant • Pens • Evaluations (1 printed per participant) • Envelope labelled "Evaluations"

- Ahead of the session prepare a flipchart paper labelled "What I got from today". Create a quadrant on the flipchart. Label each box with one of these terms: KNOW, CHALLENGE, CHANGE, FEEL.

- Hang the flipchart paper on a wall. Ask participants to recreate the quadrant on their pieces of A4 paper, leaving space to fill in each quadrant. Explain that you will ask a question, and that individually the participants should reflect and answer the question in the corresponding quadrant.

- Ask participants these questions: What did we do or try today that confirmed something you already knew? What challenged you today? What is one way you plan to change your work based on this course, the videos and the face-to-face workshop? How do you feel about what you learned today?

- Together as a plenary, ask if participants would like to share their answers. They can share all, part or none. Encourage participants who have a common answer to share the similarity.

- Share a few closing words to acknowledge the participation and hard work of participants and emphasise that communicating and collaborating as a dispersed team is extremely important and made easier with the tips and tools shared in the video lessons and workshop.

- Ask participants to complete the evaluation before departing. They should leave the completed evaluation in the envelope labelled "Evaluations".

Annex
USING VIDEO CONFERENCING DIRECTIONS

Each group will use each application. However, each group will initiate a video call using only one application. Please ensure your group is ready to participate in all three video calls.

Group 1 *Skype*

- Open the *Skype* application on the laptop using one group member's *Skype* ID[2].
- Initiate a *Skype* video call with Groups 2 and 3. Use the ID of one participant in each group to initiate the video call.
- Lead the participants through a round of introductions, asking for the name and favourite animal of each participant.
- Share a document with the participants through file share. Ask participants to open the document and confirm that they received it.
- Open the document for screenshare, now begin sharing your screen.
- End the call.

Group 2 *Google Hangouts*

- Open the *Google Hangouts* application on the laptop.
- Start a video call.
- Invite participants from Groups 1 and 3 to the video call.
- Lead participants through a round of introductions, asking for the name of the tallest person in each group.
- Start a chat, while the video call is still taking place.
- Open the document for screenshare, now begin sharing your screen. Ensure that all participants can see the document.

You should end the session with a debrief about using the technology.

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2. You will need to adapt these directions. The final version of the directions will likely need a list of participant *Skype* IDs, email addresses, details of a file for sharing and another for screenshare (i.e. location and name). If more than 2 groups are formed, you will need to add additional detail or repeat the steps.

Special considerations

Each group should be aware of the issues below during this session.

- Camera angle and lighting
- Frame
- Placement of window on screen
- Background
- Seeing participant's faces
- Volume
- Using mute/unmute
- Delays
- Enunciation (no gum or food)
- Background noise
- Interruptions