

Facilitator Guidance for Online Engagement



Prepare Well

- Set up and test equipment and presentations
- Choose best view based on platform used, e.g. Gallery view or Speaker view
- Take a moment to ground yourself: facilitating or presenting virtually can be anxiety provoking



Plan Learning Time

- Limit sessions to less than 90 minutes and distribute handouts after
- Try to break conversations into 15-25 minute segments
- Try not to go 15 minutes without asking a question to check in



Flow is Important

- Plan an opening (intro), middle (content), and closure (conclusion, questions, next steps) to facilitate flow of the session
- Break content down into manageable parts that are easy to follow
- Decide whether a co-facilitator is required and agree on co-facilitation strategy



Diversify Instruction

- If possible, provide alternative ways to engage with material in case of technological challenges, e.g. readings, text, recordings
- Offer case studies and open ended activities such as recorded role play or practice on specific tools



Facilitator Energy

- Greet and welcome new participants to the online session. If not possible while speaking, delegate someone in the group to do so, perhaps via the text pane
- Speak slowly but with varied tone in your voice, use humor where possible



Connecting Use the Chat Pane

- Allow questions and quick points to be posted to the chat pane
- Set intervals to reflect on posts on the chat pane or delegate someone in the meeting to keep tabs on the content and to summarize points and questions



Engage

- Verbally welcome and engage meeting participants by name
- Use reflection to connect participants, For example, "Lerato, I see that Zama's organization also offers screening and testing for HIV amongst youth, do you have any thoughts around the strategies she has just mentioned?"



Establish Norms

- Set group norms
- Agree on expected practices during the call, e.g. use of video, using mute
- Be understanding: Not everyone has the same attention span, level of connectivity, or access to private space. Everyone should feel seen and belong