



September 2002

Technical Intervention Area Summary Notes: TIA-F

GUIDELINES FOR TRAINING OF TRAINERS

Introduction

Training is the process of acquiring the knowledge, skills, and attitude that are needed to fill the gap between what people want to do, and what they are able to do now. The purpose of 'cascade training' is to pass knowledge and skills to colleagues who work at different 'levels'. In order to teach a trainer how to train well, a 'learning by doing' approach is best. For example, participants in a workshop can learn skills in participatory monitoring and as soon as is practical can hold a similar training workshop for colleagues working at district/local level. Training is more effective if visuals are used to communicate and if participants actively participate in the workshop proceedings – or in the words of Confucius¹: *'I hear and I forget; I see and I remember; I do and I understand.'* The below offers a series of pointers and considerations that can be used in any training of trainers exercise.

1 Planning/preparation checklist for facilitators

- Think of the best trainer/facilitator you ever had; list qualities that made them great; then identify your weak points as facilitator and try to improve;
- Work as a training team, and assign roles based on strengths of individuals in the team (e.g. presenter, facilitator, listener, commentator, note-taker, gender balance);
- Arrange for an acceptable venue (light, electricity, nice table setting where people can see each other - with break-out rooms, refreshments, visual equipment);
- Make sure you have all the (visual) materials needed - paper, pens, flipcharts, tape, markers, etc.;
- Where appropriate invite particular project stakeholders to test the trainees during the training (e.g. invite children to be interviewed by the trainees during a training workshop, and/or visit target sites for training in a 'real life' situation);
- Are fieldwork dates convenient for the local community? (in terms of agricultural season and workload, festivals, or other factors that will occupy people's time). When is the most convenient time of the day for children, youth, women and men to be involved in training activities ?;

¹ Confucius was a Chinese philosopher.

- Is the community aware that you are coming and the purpose of your visit?;
- Ensure you understand and have internalized all tools before being a facilitator otherwise you can't talk with confidence;
- Prepare well and rehearse;

2 Good Techniques/Practices for Training

- Relax and energise participants. Facilitate name-learning;
- Familiarize participants with each other and with organizations represented;
- Ensure all participants understand the aims and objectives of the workshop;
- Always properly introduce the key aims of the training, and use an ice-breaker through which everybody is introduced, especially if you do not know participants well. Ice-breakers are very important to keep a group interested and working together effectively. They are useful for training workshops, and for the actual monitoring process that involves group discussions and exercises;
- Ensure all the activities planned for the workshop are acceptable to the participants;
- Agree upon a timetable;
- List expectations, and get a sense of the level of knowledge present among participants at the start of the training;
- Adapt the programme to address the felt needs and make modifications to content or structure as requested by the group;
- Agree to 'rules' of the workshop (e.g. mutual respect, one speaker at a time, no mobile phones, etc.);
- Emphasize 'learning by doing' as the approach that will be taken during training;
- Start every day with a recapitulation of the previous day. Then introduce the agenda for the day and seek inputs. For every training block (1.5 hours) explain what they will do, then do it, then summarize what was done including a list of key points (if possible summarized by participants);
- Use a variety of communication methods: show a wide range of visual aids (simple, easy to read in colour and size, key words not long stories), involve children, encourage plenary discussion, group work, individual work, role-playing, etc.
- Role-play a bad facilitator versus a good facilitator for contrast and clarity;
- Also remember to incorporate activities that: invigorate participants (who are sleepy or looking bored), calm participants (who are over-excited, particularly children), and that refresh participants (who have been working hard) in between training activities;
- Stick to time-frames where possible;
- Have a strong closing session where you review aims and expectations, summarize what was learnt, commit to action, and close with appreciation and congratulations;
- Always build in an evaluation of the training as improvements can always be made. Any simple evaluation is suggested to focus on the following questions:

- ✓ What did you like about the training?
- ✓ What did you not like about the training?
- ✓ What will you do as follow up to the training?
- ✓ What suggestions do you have to improve future training sessions?

3 Attitude/behaviour as facilitator

- Stay relaxed and calm;
- Be open and honest;
- Be a good listener; observe, record, observe, record...;
- Do not panic when the group is silent; wait patiently for them to think about what they want to say;
- Do not interrupt people;
- Do not make judgements of people's responses (for example, saying that 'this is good, and that is bad') or humiliate anyone;
- Do not let arguments dominate the discussion; encourage participants to re-focus on the main topic;
- Be aware of language barriers; let people talk in the language they are most comfortable in (and ask someone else to translate if necessary);
- Use visual aids and body language to help overcome language barriers;
- Have eye contact, stand up and move around, speak slowly, use your voice (intonation);
- Make it as interactive as possible - involve and engage participants. Ask questions and invite participants to tell their stories;
- Use humor if natural for you, and smile;
- Choose words, stories, numbers, and cases that capture interest (use real examples to illustrate your points);
- Address concerns, questions, issues as raised by participants, while sticking to the main messages you want to get across;

Reference(s)

For further reading, please be referred to ILO TICW-project's publication on Participatory Project Monitoring – in particular the Annex on Training of Trainers.