

Brief Report of “Training of Trainers”
Training Workshop on Rapid Environmental Impact Assessment
29th July to 2nd August 2005, Nelspruit, RSA

Background:

Training of Trainers (ToT) is conducted as a part of the Rapid Environmental Impact Assessment (REA) Training, to enable the participants to prepare and deliver quality presentations with confidence on REA concepts and tools, which they have learned in the earlier part of this training, in conjunction with the REA documents that they have been provided.

Upon discussion with Charles Kelly, I facilitated this ToT process.

It included, as per the design, an interactive facilitation process, involving not more than 3 presentations from the Resource Persons, followed by facilitation of first, the individual presentations & later, groupwork by the participants.

A brief report of the two-day deliberations is presented herewith.

Target Group:

The **REA TOT** participants came from different countries in Southern African region, viz; South Africa, Malawi, Lesotho, Zambia, and as far as Congo, Kenya and Sudan. They mostly represented Non Government Organisations working in the region, particularly in the development sector. There also was an academician from South Africa.

Participants from OFDA as well as Government of South Africa, left after the initial REA training while two other participants from South Africa decided to stay away from the ToT for the reasons like non-proficiency with English Language & skills.

Finally, there were 18 participants for the ToT workshop.

The Proceedings

Day 1 (1st August 2005)

On day 1 of the ToT workshop, the facilitators¹ conducted the sessions on **Adult Learning**, followed by **Presentation Skills**. The Adult Learning session emphasized on explaining adult learning principles to the participants, (*how adults learn*) besides identifying a variety of learning styles. It also helped participants in identifying various training methodologies that are best suited for adult learning. The session on Presentation Skills reviewed the effective techniques for making presentations and briefly described the good practices while using audio-visual aids during presentation. It introduced peer feedback as an important tool for understanding and improvising upon the methodology.

Following these presentations, in the post-lunch session, each of the participants were asked to prepare and deliver one “Seven-minute” presentation on one of the topics from REA course completed earlier. (Practicum No.1)

The objective of the session was to relearn and practice the presentation skills, demonstrate familiarity with REA concepts and deliver presentations in the allotted time

¹ Adult Learning by Prasad Sevekari & Presentation Skills by Charles Kelly.

with appropriate preparations. It also included innovative learning from peers by observing their presentation styles and listening to feedback. Following topics were delivered by the participants

Time	Name	Topic Title / Theme
1300-1310	Dane	11 Step Process
1310-1320	Jaby	CLA
1320-1330	Des	Unmet Basic Needs
1330-1340	Kiragu	Context Statement
1340-1350	Thomas	C & A
1350-1400	Mary	Environmental Threats
1400-1410	S.Munthali	Factors Influencing Environmental Impacts
1410-1420	COsmas	Green Procurement
1420-1430	Collen	Negative Environmental Consequences
1430-1440	Mukis	Principles of adult Learning
1440-1450	James	REA Process:Action
1450-1500	Khansi	Rapid Assessment in Disasters
1500-1510	Malefa	Environmental Threats
1510-1520	Mohammed	Community Information Collection Guide
1520-1530	Samy	Green Procurement
1530-1540	Baka	CLA
1540-1550	Papiso	Unmet Basic Needs
1550-1600	Molapo	REA Steps

The facilitators later gave a feedback to participants and explained about the possible improvements in making effective presentations.

Further as a part of Practicum No.2, participants were asked to prepare overnight in groups for leading a 30 minute facilitation session, preferably on REA related topics. The aim was to enable participants to practice designing and facilitating an interactive learning exercise and discussions session.

Following topics were given to the participants' groups

1. Sphere Indicators & its significance in REA
2. Drought in Southern Africa: Problems, Policies, Practices.
3. Advocating REA
4. Combating HIV AIDS

Day 2 (2nd August 2005)

The day began with a session on '**Facilitation Skills**' by Prasad Sevekari. The objective of this session was to identify principles and techniques for effective (training) facilitation. It emphasized on proper preparation and contextualized the process of questioning participants with their response to the participant's queries.

This session was followed by a 45 minutes presentation on Sphere Standards by Dane Fredenburg², a participant from CRS, Kenya. This was scheduled to precede the group presentation on Sphere.

Most of the participants were unaware of the Sphere Standards and indicators. This session helped the participants in appreciating the need for uniformity, transparency and accountability in humanitarian response. Later they were also able to place environment (REA) as a cross-cutting issue among the Sphere Standards.

Thereupon the participants' groups facilitated the sessions on topics aforementioned.

They were provided with a peer feedback as well as the expert feedback from the facilitator who explained to participants the need to identify their strengths and weaknesses. The facilitation session helped the participants in not only understanding the importance of preparation, visual presentation but also underlined the need for effective co-ordination between the co-facilitators.

Later Kelly took the questions on the REA process and its application issues and also explained the contents of the CD which was to be given to the participants and the REA e-learning process.

The session was followed by a lessons learned exercise wherein the participants came up with nearly 16 issues that they felt, they learnt during the process of the REA & ToT workshop. This included issues like the significance of the 11 step REA process, contextualizing the disasters to the adult learning principles and relevance of feedback.

A ToT evaluation ended the workshop.

² Dane Fredenburg, Dy. Director of Emergencies, CRS, is himself a Sphere Trainer.

ToT Evaluation

Out of the 18 participants that attended the ToT, 16 completed and returned the evaluation forms. The results are as follows;

1. 62.5 % participants (10 out of 16) reported that they found the presentations on
 - a) Adult Learning & Learning Styles
 - b) Effective Presentations
 - c) Effective Facilitation & Discussion Stylesto be very useful while 37.5% rated these as useful.
2. 56% of the participants (9 out of 16) felt that the Day 1 practicum on 'Making presentations & receiving feedback' was very useful while the remaining 50% thought it to be useful.
3. 81 % participants (13 out of 16) remarked that the Day 2 practicum on " Facilitating interactive exercise" was very useful in giving them an idea on improving their skills in designing and facilitating an interactive learning exercise or discussion.
4. **Overall 75% of the participants (12 out of 16) rated the Training of Trainers course as excellent.**
5. **81% of the participants rated that the Trainer for the "Training of Trainers course" was excellent.**
6. As for the issues that the participants liked the most , there were varied responses, ranging from;
 - a) The practical relevance and participatory nature of the course
 - b) Interactive sessions that led to sharing of experience
 - c) Overall Group discussion and free flow of information
 - d) Significance of issues like SCOPES, while making a presentation.
7. Related to further improvements in the course some participants felt that more time could be provided for the ToT while others thought that more theory on Training of Trainers could have been included.
8. While making general comments, most of the participants suggested that the scheduling of the course, which included the weekend, hampered the interest in participation. They felt that the period could have been from Monday to Friday.

One of the participants noted that a hands-on session on powerpoint presentation could have helped. The trainers' experience and knowledge was considered as a big bonus for the participants, by one of the participants!

To sum it up, one participant mentioned that '*it has been a wonderful learning experience. Time and days spent will always be remembered!*'

Recommendations

REA

1. More REA training courses should be conducted in immediate future in the African continent, given the capacity building needs in the context of natural disasters in Southern Africa and the conflicts in West & North.
2. **Repackaging the course** by conducting the all presentations on Module 1 (5 steps/tasks) in sequence and then allowing time for the Simulation which cumulates the 5 tasks of Organisation Level Assessment could perhaps help in not breaking the momentum of either the groupwork or Facilitators' presentations. The simulation could be an overnight exercise, during the plenary of which the findings could be shared. As it is, the participants could always call on the facilitators, in case of difficulties & need for clarifications. This would help in saving some collective time, aswell.
3. **Conducting a pre-qualifying assessment of the participants**, to bring somewhat uniformity in target group so as to ascertain the mode & pace for delivery of the training. It need not be a test, but based on experience and qualifications and language skills, we could select the participants.

ToT

4. More time could be devoted towards accommodating theory of "Training of Trainers" by making the ToT a **full two-day course** rather than a day & half duration course.
5. Session on **Training Needs Assessment** on the initial day of ToT could help participants in deciding the methodology of identifying the REA specific needs amongst different stakeholders target groups.
6. Session on **Active Listening** would reiterate the importance of interpersonal communication within training & help the participants understand the significance of listening (to others) for becoming a better trainer/facilitator

Logistics

7. In retrospection, I feel that the training material production should be the responsibility of the local agency that is hosting/holding the training. It would also give an opportunity to the agency to understand the type of material to be disseminated, beforehand. This time lot of money & efforts were spent on getting the material transported from India to South Africa though monetarily there was a little difference in the cost of production.

Followup; seeing the REA tribe grow...

8. Despite the fact that we conduct a ToT we cannot say that all those who participated would be able to train their compatriots, colleagues for the lack of adequate skills to transfer the learnings, a drive or initiative to conduct training sessions etc. We could therefore select a few outstanding participants from each training (eg., James Kalikwembe, from this course) & focus on them for their continued involvement in REA process, eg., participation in assessments, opportunity to speak about the REA at various fora and involvement in training. A refresher training of trainers could also be conducted for such select group to update them about the advances in the field & upgrade their skills.