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Annex 3. LEARNING & WORKSHOPING

1. LEARNING

Learning is not usually an outcome of formal teaching. Instead it comes from a process of self development and through experience.

1.1 How we learn

- 1% through taste
- 2% through touch
- 3% through smell
- 11% through hearing
- 83% through sight

1.2 What we remember

- 10% of what we read
- 20% of what we hear
- 30% of what we see
- 50% of what we see and hear
- 80% of what we say
- 90% of what we say and do

1.3 Adult learning

- Adults are voluntary learners. They perform best when they have decided to attend the training for a particular reason. They have a right to know why a topic or session is important to them.
- Adults have usually come with an intention to learn. If this motivation is not supported, however, they will switch off or stop coming.
- Adults have experience and can help each other to learn.
- Adults learn best in an atmosphere of active involvement and participation.
- Adults learn best when it is clear that the context of the training is close to their own tasks or jobs. Adults are best taught with a real-world approach.

1.4 Being a learner

People learn best if they:-

- are able to involve themselves fully, openly and without bias in new experiences: **concrete experience.**
- reflect and observe these experiences from many perspectives: **reflective observation.**
- create concepts that integrate their observations into logically sound theories: **abstract conceptualisation.**
- use these theories to make decisions and solve problems. **active experimentation.**

All learning is best done through active involvement.

1.5 Adult learning problems

Adults have a problem with learning. As we grow older our short term memory faculty becomes less efficient and more easily disturbed. Any method that relies too much on short term memory, such as lectures or demonstrations, is unlikely to be successful.

- Without reinforcement many people forget vital parts of what they have learned after about 6 months.
- A well designed learning program continues to build on skills and knowledge learnt earlier. Without reinforcement the skills will fade.

1.6 To encourage learning in adult trainees

- Ensure that they feel necessary, involved or important. This gives them the motivation which is necessary for learning to take place.
- Communicate clearly what the training program will entail. They must be convinced that it will be relevant, and that specific skills learnt will fulfil needs.
- Ensure that there are plenty of practical exercises. As they are 'doing', self confidence increases and they able to adapt what they are learning to their own circumstances.
- Respect and encourage individuality since people learn at different rates and have different styles.
- Continue to relate new material to information and skills which they already know.

1.7 The motivation to learn

There are many reasons why participants may not be motivated:

- They have been instructed to attend against their personal wishes
- they do not know why they are attending
- they are aware of work mounting up in their normal place of work, so their minds are elsewhere
- your teaching style is not sufficiently participatory to involve their knowledge, skills and insights
- they have been taught all this before, so they feel they already know it
- they harbour misconceptions about you or your organisation

2. THE TRAINER/ FACILITATOR

2.1 What makes a good trainer

- a warm personality, with an ability to show approval and acceptance of trainees
- social skill, with an ability to bring the group together and control it without damaging it
- a manner of teaching which generates and uses the ideas and skills of the participants
- organising ability, so that resources are booked and logistical arrangements smoothly handled
- skill in noticing and resolving participants problems
- enthusiasm for the subject and capacity to put it across in an interesting way
- flexibility in responding to participants' changing needs
- knowledge of the subject matter

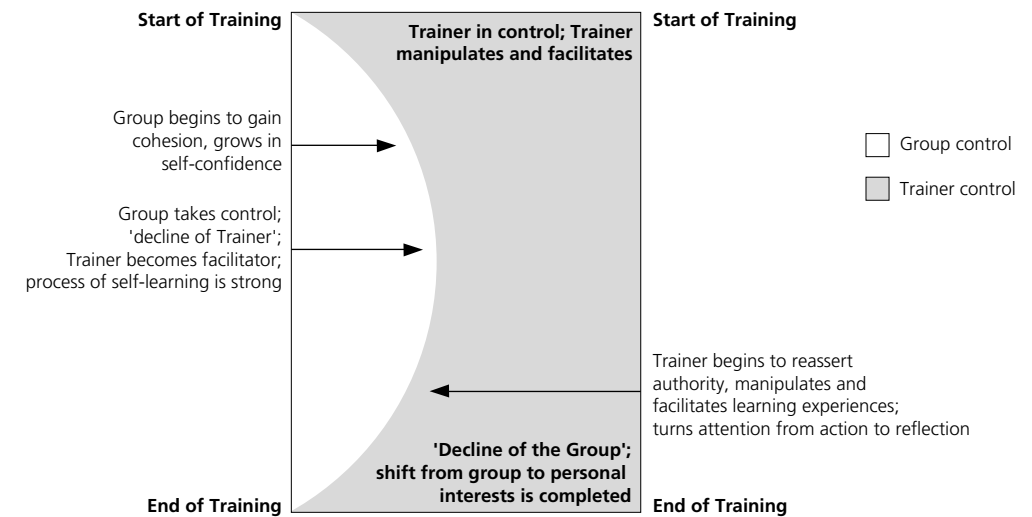
2.2 From manipulation to facilitation

There is a big difference between manipulation and facilitation. Manipulation is trainer centred. You are in charge and everyone knows it. You yourself rarely learn.

Facilitation is learner-centred. You are helping others to learn, and you will be learning too.

Ideally a training session should be a balance between trainer guidance and trainee participation. At the beginning and end of each workshop session the facilitator/trainer should usually be in control in order to first explain what is to be done and then to summarise the main outcomes and the end. The period in the middle should be participatory and learner centred.

Stages of Control in the Training Process



2.3 The importance of feedback

A good trainer/facilitator will always give constructive feedback to the trainees/workshop participants.

If people have gone to the trouble of attending a meeting and contributing they should be acknowledged and rewarded for their effort.

Similarly, if people have failed to understand the objectives or the content of the discussion the facilitator should correct or redirect the participants as soon as possible.

Failure to do so, could lead to the reinforcement of incorrect assumptions and information among the participants.

- In correcting or redirecting the attention of participants, the facilitator should always avoid direct criticism of the person or group.
- It may be necessary to conduct follow-up discussions if the issues cannot be resolved

3. WORKSHOP PREPARATION

The following section discusses the role of the trainer/facilitator and some ways to plan for your workshop.

3.1 Basic preparations

You need to be clear about your position and responsibilities early on in your preparations to prevent any inappropriate interpretation of your role as a trainer/facilitator.

Before you begin you must be clear about the objectives of your assignment:

- Why are you training/facilitating
- Who is your target group
- What is the primary content you are hoping to communicate

3.2 Workshop purpose

A workshop may have a number of different purposes, such as:-

- To change behaviour
- To persuade people
- To inform
- To stimulate thought
- To entertain
- To motivate for action

The purpose will shape the way you conduct the workshop and what information you present.

3.3 Responsibilities of the facilitator

- It is important to define your role as a trainer/facilitator. Unless the group understands your role, they will probably view you as an authority and will not see that they have to take responsibility for their own learning process. Keep reflecting back to the group their need to take responsibility for learning.
- Remember you cannot expect to meet your own needs or push your own agenda while working as a facilitator. Do not be tempted by the power delegated to you.
- Being a facilitator does not mean that you are qualified to meet individual or group needs.
- It is essential that the group understands what you are doing with them: what your objectives are, how you expect to meet their needs, what you can or cannot give them, and how your going to do it. It is the group's right to hold you accountable for what you do with them.

3.4 Training objectives

It is important to set objectives for the training or workshop activity so that facilitators and the participants do not lose sight of what they are doing and where they aim to end up.

In setting objectives it is useful to establish general and specific objectives.

- **General objectives** usually describe the outcome you expect after training is completed e.g. to improve the quality of project monitoring reports being prepared by field staff. Such objectives are difficult to evaluate however, particularly during the workshop or training activity (as the results will not be seen until later).
- It is therefore useful to have a set of more **specific objectives** related to what participants are expected to learn during the training. What specific new skills do you hope participants will have? Examples might include such things as "Trainees will be able to complete the required monthly monitoring format", "Participants will be able to design and conduct a farmer survey on technology adoption rates" or "Trainees will be able to prepare quarterly work programs and budgets". These types of objectives can be assessed more easily by both participants and outsiders.

3.5 Knowing the participants

No assignment should proceed until you are clear about who you will be training/ talking to.

Try to find out:

- How many people will be present?
- Why they are attending; is it their own choice or have they been told to come?
- What are their hopes and expectations?
- What are their fears and concerns?
- What range of experience, age, gender and status is likely to be represented?

- Do they have any biases towards or against you or your organisation?
- Is there any major conflict among the group which is likely to disrupt proceedings?
- What prior knowledge might they have about the subject matter being presented?

These questions will help you determine the sort of program you will prepare and the training materials and teaching aids you will select.

3.6 Timing and duration

When planning a workshop or training session, make sure you consider the following points:-

- what are the overall time constraints? Who has set these?
- select appropriate start and finish times for each day's work through consultation with colleagues, counterparts or participants
- make allowance for the fact that you may have to start later than you originally planned. If you are prepared for this eventuality you will be more relaxed when the workshop does kick off. (Particularly in village settings, workshops may start some hours later than originally scheduled due to communication and transport difficulties)
- keep verbal presentations or lecture style sessions to no more than 30 minutes at any one time - then incorporate an activity which requires active participation
- be flexible with the duration of individual sessions depending on the response of participants, while remembering that overall time constraints still apply.
- if participants are restless or sleepy - change the pace with an energising activity

3.7 Training venue, furniture and equipment

The choice of venue can influence the success or otherwise of the workshop. You may have little choice in the matter, but it remains important that you try and visit the venue at least one day prior to the workshop commencing, or if this is not possible, make sure you allow at least an hour or two for setting up the venue on the day the training starts.

Key considerations include:-

- light, ventilation and acoustics
- space for group work
- availability of chairs and tables
- wall space for displays
- availability of white or black boards
- availability of photocopying facilities on site or nearby
- proximity to potential distractions (e.g. phone, offices, busy roads, pubs)
- access for participants (e.g. is it difficult to get to?)
- toilet facilities for men and women

The nature of the workshop and the available budget will strongly influence what is both desirable and feasible.

3.8 Seating arrangements

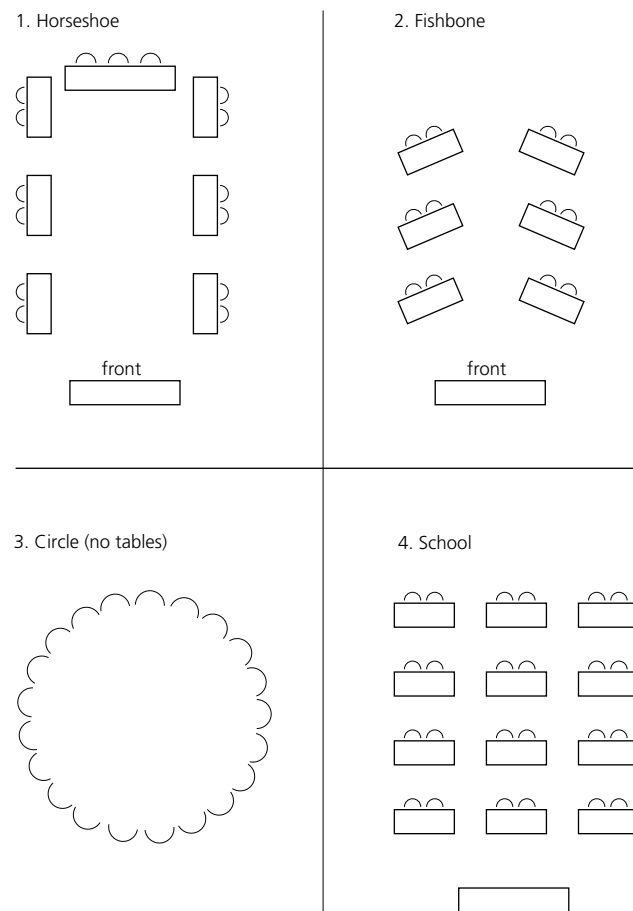
Seating arrangements will influence the way in which participants and the trainer/facilitators interact. There are a number of possible options. Selecting the most appropriate options will depend on:-

- the training methods you plan to use (particularly the amount of group work)
- the size and layout of the venue

- the number of participants
- the background and expectations of the participants

Try to avoid the traditional schoolroom approach (lines of chairs and desks all facing the front) unless the workshop is to be almost exclusively lecture based.

Some of the main options are shown in the figure below.



3.9 Detailed session plans

Each main workshop session should be planned in some detail. A session planning format is a useful tool for ensuring that this task is undertaken systematically. An example is shown below:-

Session 1.4	Stakeholder analysis
Responsibility	J.Hampshire
Time/Duration	9.40 - 10.30 50 minutes
Purpose	To identify the main groups with rights over, or interests in, the use of the land covered by the Mount Pierre pastoral lease
Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Want to clarify who is involved. This is an important starting point in understanding the issues and then developing a plan to deal with them • Two main groups of interests - Aboriginal and 'outsider' • Who are the main families with rights over the land covered by the Mount Pierre lease, including the Mimbi caves are? • How many people in each family (roughly?) • Who are the main outside interests? e.g. government or business • What are their main stakeholders? What do they want? • Which of these outside groups are the main players? e.g. causing most 'humbug' • Once the profile is developed and recorded, emphasise the importance of developing an understanding of the other interest groups so that one can negotiate from a well-informed position
Method	<p>Lead into next session - lets now look specifically at the interests/objectives of the workshop participants (the TOs).</p> <p>Brief verbal presentation to explain purpose of session and how it will be run. Then ask participants the relevant questions about stakeholders. Record ideas on white board or cards</p> <p>Sort and comment on ideas. Encourage reflection and new ideas from participants. Re-read what has been recorded a number of times to ensure people are reminded of what has been said (particularly for those who don't read).</p>
Materials & Handouts	White board and/or cards, pens & blutack

3.10 Training materials

The type of training materials you will require will depend on the nature of the workshop and the participants attending. Some general tips are given below for workshops delivered to participants who can read and write:-

- have all written and visual materials prepared well in advance - including copies that you are going to hand out. Assume that the photocopier will play its usual tricks!
- if you are using overhead transparencies, make paper copies for each participant so that they can use these as a reference and make additional notes directly on to these sheets
- make sure that the text in transparencies is produced in a large enough font so that all participants can easily read them
- find out well in advance whether or not you can purchase the required materials locally. If there is any doubt, take adequate supplies with you
- provide each participant with paper and pen and a folder for keeping all handouts
- if you are recording participant responses to questions/issues raised during the workshop - record these on butchers paper or cards rather than on a white/black board. Then they won't get erased once the board is full
- spend time organising and laying out any handouts before the workshop starts so that you can access them quickly as you need them
- don't provide too much reading material during workshop sessions. This can overload the participants and distract them from engaging in more participatory activities

If you are conducting a workshop in a village setting with participants who do not necessarily read and write, material requirements will tend to differ considerably from those required for classroom based workshops.

Acknowledgment

Part of the text in Annex 3 has been drawn from *Participatory Learning and Action - A Trainers Guide* (Pretty et al) published by the International Institute for Environment and Development, London, 1995.

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