TRAINING SKILLS

This section is designed to help participants in their role as trainers by covering some of the skills required to ensure training is well planned and delivered, and that participants remain engaged and understand the materials presented to them.

Preparation for training

To ensure your training is relevant and appropriate, it is important to understand your participants' individual differences and needs in terms of gender, disability, ethnicity, age, and academic background as well as their current knowledge and experience of the topic being taught. This section will address skills that ensure effective delivery of the training such as presentation, facilitation and participatory methods.

You also need good:

- **knowledge** – of the topic you are going to train in
- **skills** to communicate the information effectively
- **attitude** to ensure that your training participants are receptive to the information and motivated to use it in a positive way.

Presenting

Presenting is a one-way process where participants are given information. Presentations can provide information, facts and figures, and correct misinformation. When we present facts, theories or frameworks, we assume people don't know the information or they need to be reminded. In this way we treat all participants in the same way even if some may know the information already.

Good practice in presenting includes:

- Being aware of your position in the room and varying it
- Varying the pace and tone of your speech
- Making the presentation more interactive and participatory by asking questions and encouraging contributions from participants.
- Following the notes in the Trainer's Manual
- Using PowerPoint slides as a prompt and to give key information
- Making sure the slide shown is in line with what you are saying.
- Not turning your back to the group when reading from a slide.
- Appropriate use of gestures
- Keeping presentations short
- Combining with other delivery approaches such as question and answer, discussions as well as case studies and any other relevant strategies
- Utilization of visual aids such as charts, real objects, models etc.

Facilitating

Facilitating means 'making things easier'. Facilitation involves the process of coaching where the facilitator reduces his/her role to that of a mentor and the participants take charge of their own learning. During facilitation, the facilitator offers scaffolding to the participants and gradually reduces the support to the point where the participants become independent learners. When we facilitate we make it easier for our participants to:

- see the connection between theoretical concepts and real-life challenges or tasks
- reflect on their own experience
- connect their experiences and views to new information.

Good practice in facilitating includes:

- Understanding the purpose of the activity and what you are facilitating.
- Giving participants time and space to think and or to do it for themselves.
- Avoiding providing answers when a participant asks a question but the group knows the answer. Refer the question to the group.
- Giving clear instructions to participants.
- Monitoring participants' learning to ensure they grasp the key points for the session.

Participatory training methods

Participants learn in different ways therefore it is beneficial to use a variety of training methods to keep the interest and engagement of the group. There are many different types of participatory training methods that can be employed in training, some of which are listed below.

Discussions

The learning through this method is derived primarily from the participants themselves rather than from the trainer. The discussion method is often used for:

- problem solving
- forming or changing attitudes
- stimulating constructive thinking.

Activities

Activities can involve participants undertaking an activity either individually or in a group. This allows experiential learning as the participant engages and can have insights based on the activity content. A structured experience provides the framework in which this process is facilitated. Small group activities not only involve all of the participants, but help quieter, more shy participants to engage.

Case studies

In a case study a situation or series of events is presented to participants to give an example to support a point being made in the training and/or for participants to analyse and comment on. The main uses of this method include:

- problem solving
- developing analytical skills
- developing decision-making skills
- changing attitudes
- Promoting teamwork.

For instance, case studies can be used to demonstrate success stories relating to inclusion of persons with disabilities.

Role plays

In this technique participants are provided with a situation which they are required to explore through acting out roles of those represented in the scenario. Role plays are best used for instilling empathy and creating awareness to attain attitude change. This could be used for example to demonstrate the contrast between someone having a positive or negative attitude towards someone with a disability arriving at the polling station to vote.

Brainstorming

This technique is used for finding solutions by means of stimulating ideas among participants. In brainstorming all ideas are encouraged and criticism is avoided. As the process continues ideas are sorted and assessed to move to the next stage of development or conclusion. For instance, brainstorming could be used within a government ministry to get ideas from different staff members on how more persons with disabilities could apply for jobs in government.

Field visit

A field visit can be a useful participatory training method, placing the participants in a dynamic environment. An opportunity is provided to participants to visit individuals, organisations, or work places to experience and analyse for themselves. For example, to promote mainstreaming disability, you could organize a visit to a fully accessible office where persons with disabilities are working as part of a team and 'reasonable accommodation' has ensured that the workplace meets their needs.

Energizers

Sometimes during the training, energy levels amongst participants can drop. Hot weather, stuffy air, a big lunch, low blood sugar levels, and tiredness from a long day's training can all cause energy and attention in the group to fall.

At this time, it is useful to make the group livelier by giving the participants a chance to move and interact. There are many ways this can be achieved: some as a natural part of the training, and others as separate activities designed specifically to rejuvenate them. Such activities are called 'energizers'.

Examples of energizers you can run as part of the training:

- Asking frequent questions to the whole group, picking a particular person, to answer.
- Ask participants to turn to face their neighbour to discuss the answer to a question, a topic, or a difference of opinion expressed (sometimes called 'buzz groups').
- Ask participants to move somewhere in the room to look at something (a poster or a demonstration for example).
- Moving the session to a different location for a change of scenery – such as outside in a garden or courtyard.

Example energizers you can run as separate activities:

- Stand and do some simple stretching exercises.
- Sing a song together.
- Invite a participant, or group of participants, to lead an energizer activity for a few minutes. Many have different and locally appropriate activities to share with the whole group.
- Have a three-minute stretch and comfort break.
- Ask participants to spell the name of one of the participants in the air with their nose or waist – this can be fun and you can choose a short name when you want to have a very short energiser!

Trainers should join in too. Remember to be sensitive to the inclusion of persons with disabilities and to any gender or cultural issues.

Group activities

Group work is an important part of training. It allows:

- trainers to find out how much is already known by the participants
- those with more experience and expertise to share with others in the room
- trainees to build confidence as they find out they already know a lot from their experience
- shy or more junior trainees to be more comfortable speaking out when working in a smaller group.

The size of the groups

- Think about time available: the more groups there are, the more time is needed for feedback. If you have less time, create larger groups (maximum 6 people).
- Sensitivity/privacy: put participants in pairs if discussing topics that are sensitive, or when people are shy or there are language barriers.
- Involvement: the smaller the group the more difficult it will be for any group member not to participate.
- The activity: if equipment or supplies are needed for the activity such as a laptop – this may dictate the number of groups you can have.

Who to group together

- Depending on the purpose of the activity you may want people with similar knowledge and skills grouped together or you may want more diversity.
- Grouping of participants who work together: depending on the activity, it may be more appropriate to group them together or apart.
- Mixing level of experience: this facilitates learning from each other. However, if you want people to have equal opportunity to express themselves consider grouping dominant participants together and shy ones together.
- Mixing the sexes: be aware of cultural, religious or social norms of working (especially regarding manual handling, privacy and decency).
- Ensure that all participants have the opportunity of working with each other; to maximize peer learning opportunities.

Methods to create groups

Make your group creation interesting. Here are some ideas to create groups:

- The fruit salad method: prepare three or four of the same fruit cards and two or three or four different kinds of fruits, depending on the number of participants. You can then assign 'all bananas' to work together, or have a fruit salad (one of each fruit) together.
- Matching puzzle pieces: cut photos/magazine pictures into pieces. People find their match.
- Organize by birthday month: line people up by month in which they were born and then form groups (first three together, next three etc.). Or line up by height, or by letter of the alphabet of first name.
- Self-select: instruct people to select one or two people they have not worked with yet but beware that self-organising with more than three people can take more time.
- Ask participants to work in pairs with the person to their right or left (swop for the next pairing).

Dealing with challenging participants

You may sometimes have someone in the training group who creates disharmony in some way. This can be for a variety of reasons. Some of these are listed below with some suggestions on how to deal with them.

The senior participant
- When there is a participant who is in a position of authority over others in the group, it can lead to participants being reluctant to speak, answer questions or disagree with them. During a break, talk to the participant about their role in the group. Ask the person to help you create a comfortable atmosphere by requesting that people speak freely.
- You can also ask the participant to sit at the back of the group, in order to be less dominant in the room.

The participant who talks too much – seems to know it all
- During a break, acknowledge their experience. Ask them to help you by giving others a chance to learn and respond to questions.
- Consider asking specific participants to answer questions rather than asking the whole group.
- Pair or group the dominant participant with the strongest participants during group activities, to provide an opportunity for shy or quiet participants to contribute to their group.

The quiet one who hardly talks
- Consider directly asking them questions in the session for which they are likely to know the answer.
- Use praise and recognition to encourage more participation.
- Use small groups (pairs, group of three) for group activities and discussions.

The participant who is constantly arguing or challenging
- This participant may raise objections or concepts that they do not believe are true in order to start an argument or test how strongly other members of the group feel about a topic or issue. Request that people only speak on their own behalf about what they believe or experience.
- After an objection is raised, ask the participant 'is this true for you?' If the person says no, but that it may be for others, ask other participants for their opinion.

The easily distracted participant who is always on the phone or missing
- Try to find out why: is there a problem away from the training that is worrying them?
- Is he/she bored because of the subject matter or training style?
- During a break, talk to the participant about how their behaviour is disrupting the training. Remind him/her of any house rules.

The participant who is always joking

- During a break, talk to the participant about how their behaviour is disrupting the training. Ask them to help you by keeping jokes for breaks or at appropriate times during group activities.

The negative, unenthusiastic participant

- They may comment that the approach taught as part of the training 'won't work where we live'. If a negative participant feels that approaches in the training will not work, give them an opportunity to explain why. Ask other participants if they agree. If other participants agree, help them problem-solve by asking: how can we make it work even in those situations?

Communication skills

When we communicate with our training participants we use a variety of different communication methods and it is important to use these well to get the maximum participation from the group members. We use verbal and non-verbal methods, and we ask and answer questions. Some of the considerations when using these methods are listed below.

Verbal and non-verbal communication skills

- Be aware of the speed, volume, rise and fall (intonation) of your voice when presenting.
- Avoid using socially inappropriate language, including slang and 'non-speak' ('er', 'um', 'like', 'you know').
- Be heard clearly by all participants – be aware of those with hearing impairments and ensure you allow sufficient time if they are working with a sign language interpreter.
- Be mindful of those with visual impairments and ensure that you use descriptive language when showing images or using illustrations. Take note that expressions such as, "as you can see" should be avoided.
- Take note of non-verbal reactions from your participants that indicate participants do, or do not, understand what you say and are engaged in the session. These may include, yawning, nodding a head, looking away, fidgeting, and reading news papers.
- Use terms that will be understood by all the participants.
- Use humour when appropriate: humour does not mean joking: humour is about lightness and not taking oneself and one's opinion too seriously.
- Use appropriate actions when communicating with participants with physical impairments, Some examples are given later in this chapter, such as allowing time for a person with hearing impairment to have the information signed to them.
- Position yourself and participants in the room:
  - when presenting, the trainer should stand in the front or side
  - participants should be able to see and hear the trainer
  - in semi-circles, no one is in the back row and all participants can see each other
  - standing behind participants is appropriate in certain circumstances, for instance when a participant is presenting and the trainer needs to read their PowerPoint slide
  - depending on the context, it may be appropriate for the trainer to sit at times. Sitting creates a more relaxed, friendly dynamic.
  - Maintain eye contact and be aware of your body language.

Asking questions

- Allow time for all participants to think about and respond to the question – don't always take an answer from the first respondent. Some participants may need some time to think, especially if the training is not being delivered in their first language.
- Don't jump to answer participants' questions. Help facilitate participants to think of the idea, concept or answer without telling them the answer when possible. Draw answers from the room.
- Rephrase questions when needed: if the response from participants is silence, confusion, or a wrong answer, the question may need to be rephrased.
- Use open questions to check understanding (for example, 'what are the five models of disability?')
- Avoid using closed questions (questions where the response is 'yes' or 'no')
- Acknowledge when correct answers are given.
- If an incorrect answer is given, first ask the same question to another participant or to the rest of the group. Only provide the correct answer if no one in the group is able to do so.
- If questions are repeatedly answered incorrectly, it is a sign that something is wrong. Possible problems include:
    - participants are not learning. You may need to rephrase your explanation or return to an earlier part that now appears poorly understood.
    - questions are inappropriate for their level of knowledge
    - questions are poorly phrased
    - questions use words participants don't understand.

Answering questions

- Sometimes participants ask a question without thinking it through for themselves. When this happens, challenge them to work out the answer themselves.
- Help participants find the answer using questioning. For example, 'What do you think?', 'What factors are important to consider when deciding…?' Draw out the correct ideas from participants, developing their reasoning and problem solving skills.
- If someone asks a question that you do not know the answer to, first ask if any participants or co-trainers can answer it.
- If no one can answer, offer to look it up and share it with the group before the end of the training.
- Never make up an answer if you do not know.
- If there is not enough time to answer a question at the time of asking, use the Car Park to make a note of it and address it later in the training programme.
- Avoid spending time on questions that fall outside the objectives for the session. Take the opportunity in a break to discuss the issue with the questioner.
- Listen: make sure you listen to the whole question before assuming you know what the question is. This means not interrupting or filling in the sentence.
- Be aware of the difference between 'right/wrong' questions and those that do not have a right or wrong answer.

Appropriateness for local context

- Be familiar with the local environment: understand the community's challenges and what they consider important.
- Incorporate positive reinforcements from appropriate local proverbs and sayings in your training.
- Follow local customs – e.g. in relation to opening ceremonies, closing speeches etc.
- Make references to local organizations and individuals to help participants understand concepts.
- Use appropriate and respectful language.
- Use local case studies to illustrate your training messages.
- Use local language to emphasise a point when you notice that some participants may learn better from it.

Training needs analysis

Identifying the training needs is the first step in the training cycle. It is also called a training needs analysis (TNA).

A training needs analysis is the process of defining:
- the purpose and scope of the training
- the target group and their existing knowledge and skills
- the learning objectives – the new knowledge and skills to be imparted
- the broad content of the training.

A training needs analysis is important because:
- it ensures the training is targeted to the needs of the participants
- it defines the training and keeps it on track during development and delivery
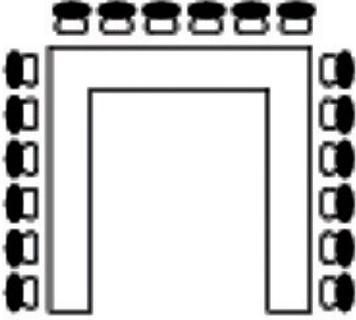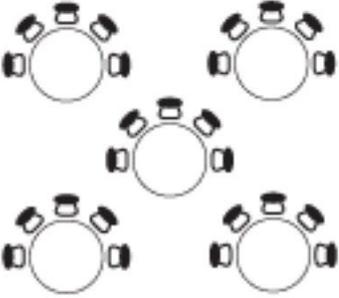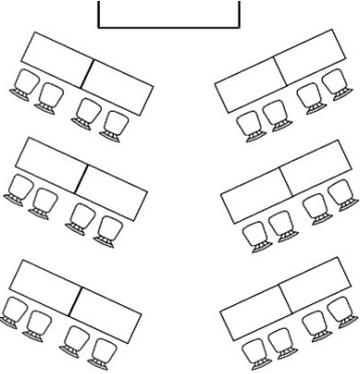- it results in more effective outcomes.

IDENTIFY TRAINING NEEDS

SET LEARNING OBJECTIVES

PLAN TRAINING

DELIVER TRAINING

EVALUATE TRAINING
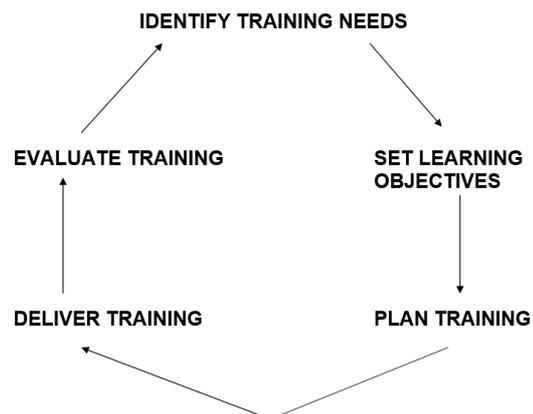
Layout options for the training room

The layout of the training room can affect how people learn, and their concentration levels, so it is worth considering at the planning stage. Remember to always consider the needs of persons with disabilities when considering the room layout. For example, allow enough space between tables for wheelchair users to pass easily and do not change the layout without ensuring you brief any participants who have visual impairments, so they can re-orient themselves to the space.

Also, allow for people with poor sight or hearing to sit near the front of the training room, whichever format is used. If a person with a hearing disability is working with a signer, make provision for them to be seated in a good position for their client to see them.

Here are three popular formats to consider:

	U-shape: Oblong tables in a U-shape with chairs around the outside of the 'U'. This is an ideal format as the trainer can be in the middle of the participants as well as move around. It is also easy to break into small groups from this format – as people can move into the middle of the U to be opposite group members.
	Cabaret: Circular tables with seats on one half, facing forward. This allows people to face the front when someone is presenting, and to use the full circular table for group activities.
	Herringbone: This format works well in spaces where the room shape is not suitable for a U-shape format. The angled tables make it easy for everyone to see the trainer and each other, and space between the tables allows for group work. All three of these formats also allow the participants to take notes.

Characteristics of adult learning

When training, it is important to consider the needs and characteristics of adult learners. There are also some common factors that relate to all adult learners. Adult learners are self-directed and responsible for their own learning. You can support them by encouraging their active participation.

Adult learners bring their own knowledge and experience to learning and should be encouraged to share their experience with others, and learn from others. They need learning to be relevant and practical, and they want to apply what they learn. Therefore, set clear learning objectives that have practical applications to their roles. The following are some considerations when training adults:

- Ask open-ended questions that cannot be answered with a simple yes or no. Open-ended questions require the participants to think more deeply about something, or explore their own experience.
- Ask rather than tell - Asking participants what they think the solution could be, rather than telling them. Helping them work it out for themselves.
- Don't take 'I don't know' for an answer – help participants consider what they do know about a subject, and support them to consider possible answers.
- Be patient - Developing problem-solving skills takes time.
- Encourage participants to be creative and to think laterally.
- Encourage participants to work together – teamwork and good communication help to solve problems.

We all use all our senses to help us learn – we use our eyes and ears, and we learn through our senses of smell, taste and touch. We learn by doing things, by experimenting, by reading, by listening and, often, by making mistakes. But we don't all like to learn in the same way – different people have difference preferences when it comes to learning. Participants might prefer to learn by:

- experiencing
- observing
- thinking or
- doing.

However, the best and most lasting learning takes place when we are exposed to all four of those learning styles. This is why a good training course involves a variety of training and learning methods such as presentations, pictures, films, discussions in small groups, practical sessions, demonstrations, role play, quizzes, and games.

Persons with disabilities as trainers and participants

Persons with disabilities should be included as trainers and participants not only in training related to disability issues but for any training. This is mainstreaming. The needs of persons with disabilities as trainers and participants should be considered. Below are some ideas and considerations to ensure that training is inclusive.

General considerations

- Provide disability awareness training to all staff to encourage them to run inclusive training.
- Include persons with disabilities in training of trainers programmes.
- Support trainers with provision of any equipment that can support their training delivery (such as voice recognition for trainers with visual impairments, splint or adaptation for a trainer with quadriplegia to operate the projector independently).

- Encourage persons with disabilities to provide testimonials and presentations particularly on topics where they have personal experience and insights.
- Always organize training in accessible venues.
- Ensure activities take into account any limitations that a person's impairment may present and make them inclusive.
- Ask potential participants ahead of the training if they have any specific needs.
- Don't assume any topic won't be relevant or interesting to persons with disabilities.
- Be aware of and try to remove any barriers to attendance of persons with disabilities such as transport issues.
- Encourage persons with disabilities to attend by targeting invitations to them.
- If the person has an assistant include them in arrangements e.g. catering
- Sensitize non-disabled participants regarding the needs of a person with a disability in the training such as in proper techniques of a being a sighted guide.
- Consider the seating plan of the training room taking into account the needs of persons with disabilities. For example someone who is hard of hearing to be seated at the front.
- Always talk to the person with a disability when you want to address them, not to their assistant.
- Check with participants with a disability during the training if there are any aspects of the training where you can provide further support.

Considerations for persons with visual impairments

- Read out PowerPoint slides and describe video images presented in the training.
- Ensure that persons who are blind have been oriented to the physical layout and other distinguishing features of the training areas.
- Ensure that the person who is blind has a guide to assist him/her with mobility.
- Speak to the person who is blind when you approach him or her.
- State clearly who you are, speak in a normal tone of voice.
- Provide written training materials in accessible formats like Braille
- When conversing in a group, remember to identify yourself and the person to whom you are speaking.
- Tell the person who is blind when you are leaving or entering the place/room.
- Do not attempt to lead the individual without first asking, allow the person to hold your arm and control her or his own movements.

Considerations for persons with low vision

- Ensure the participant is seated where they can see and hear you clearly.
- Use a large font size on slides to help them to be read.
- Provide written materials in large print.
- Avoid crowded pictures. Ensure pictures communicate one idea/concept at a time.
- Ensure proper lighting in the training areas.
- Have regular breaks to minimize fatigue in listening or using low vision devices.

Considerations for persons with hearing impairments

- Allow the participant to sit in a place where they can clearly see your whole body for effective body language interpretation.
- Include sub-titles on videos.
- Keep your face visible.

- Allow enough time for the participant to respond.
- When a participant is working with a sign-language interpreter make eye contact with the person with a hearing impairment, not the signer.
- Provide written training materials in advance if the client reads. Also provide materials to their sign-language interpreters for better understanding of the context.
- Use lots of visual aids including charts, diagrams and slides to explain material.
- Repeat comments of others who speak.
- Use total communication – combine body movements, voice, hand shapes, and lip reading to communicate

Considerations for persons with learning / intellectual difficulties

- Allow more time for a person to respond if speech is challenging for them.
- Use simple straightforward language and pace training appropriately for persons with intellectual impairments, repeating content if necessary.
- Provide short, clear instructions and speak clearly and normally.
- Use visuals to supplement words.
- Keep reading materials brief and simply written.
- Breakdown the learning or training content into small sections/steps.
- Outline the steps needed to complete a project or a task and help participants to plan when to do each step.
- Discuss a number of alternative approaches to a problem and review the pros and cons of each approach.
- Supplement written material with pictures and repetition over time when training or teaching a lesson.
- Be as clear and concrete as possible when communicating.
- Provide plenty of opportunities for practice.

Tips for training

Preparation	• Review the session plans fully before the start of the training to ensure you are familiar with, and confident of, the material. • Follow the directions in the 'preparation' section of the session plan to prepare anything needed for the session. • Use the general guidelines on facilities and equipment needed to ensure the training spaces(s) are prepared well. • Ensure you are catering for the needs of any trainers or participants with disabilities within the training.
Presenting clearly	• Ensure you speak clearly and calmly and check everyone can hear you. • Ask questions to check that your participants have understood material. • Make sure your writing on the flipchart and whiteboard can be read: write legibly and large enough to be read by everyone. • Consider the needs of persons with disabilities in all presentations – for example by reading all slides if the group includes persons with visual impairments. • Be aware of your position in the room.
Running group activities	• Circulate between groups during group work to check the group have understood the task and monitor their progress.
Keeping participants engaged	• Encourage participants to speak and discuss among themselves. • Use the variety of different training styles and methods given in the session plans. • Encourage participation by all. • Give positive feedback to participants and encourage questions. • Connect the learning with examples from the area where the training is conducted to make it relevant.
Managing time	• Be aware of the time allocated for each session and try to keep to time. • Monitor your progress against the timetable and adjust as necessary. If you are running late consider leaving out a question, section or activity to catch up with time.
Using 'energizers'	• Use short activities whenever the participants seem tired or unfocused to re-energize the group. Make these inclusive for the group.

Sources

Adapted from: WHO, 2017, *Wheelchair Service Training Package Training of Trainers, Core Training Skills* module,
https://www.unodc.org/pdf/india/publications/guide_for_Trainers/07_briefoverviewofparticipatorytrainingmethods.pdf