	منظمة الأغذية والزراعة للأمم المتحدة	联合国粮食及农业组织	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture	Продовольственная и сельскохозяйственная организация Объединенных	Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Agricultura y la Alimentación

COMMISSION FOR CONTROLLING THE DESERT LOCUST IN SOUTHWEST ASIA

Twenty-seventh Session

Islamabad, 25-27 January 2011

TRAINING

1. Introduction

Training is the basic ingredient of sustaining an effective national locust survey and control programme. In the absence of regular training, national staff forget the technical skills that are required to perform effective survey, control and reporting in the field, they tend to become complacent, forgetful and uninterested in their work. Therefore, it is critical to organize and conduct training workshops on a regular basis in each Member Country. In the past, it has been demonstrated that FAO does not have the resources to do this sufficiently and effectively in each country. The Organization lacks sufficient technical staff at Headquarters, contracting external consultants is expensive and they often do not meet expected standards, and training cannot be carried out in the local languages of the recipient country.

In order to address these shortcomings, FAO no longer organizes national training courses on Desert Locust survey and control; instead, it conducts Master Trainer (Train-the-Trainer) workshops to teach nationally designated Master Trainers how to train national locust staff in their own country. One to two week long Master Trainer workshops are held about once in every five to eight years and provide training on the basics of Desert Locust survey, control and reporting and in teaching skills. Usually two nationally designated Master Trainers attend from each participating country. The first Master Trainer workshop was held in Oman in 2002, followed by a second one recently held in Ramsar, I.R. Iran in May 2010.

In order to choose the most appropriate individuals for the Master Trainer workshop held in I.R. Iran in May 2010, FAO requested countries to nominate up to four persons from which FAO selected the two best qualified ones that met the ideal profile for the workshop. Six individuals from SWAC participated in the workshop. Only one person participated from India as the nominations were not appropriate and deadlines were not respected. Nobody came from Afghanistan due to visa delays. Alternative arrangements were made to send two Master Trainers from I.R. Iran to Kabul to train 6-8 nationally designated Master Trainers for five days in November 2010. Unfortunately, this had to be postponed and, so far, a new date has not been set. Two persons participated from Pakistan, one was the Locust Director and the other was 55 years old. As host country, two additional Iranians participated in lieu of the missing participants from India and Afghanistan.

The Desert Locust Information Service (DLIS) at FAO Headquarters organizes specialized workshops, in particular a workshop specifically for National Desert Locust Information

Officers on RAMSES, eLocust2, remote sensing and other new and emerging technologies. The inter-regional workshop is co-financed by the FAO Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Central Region (CRC) and SWAC. It is held every year in Cairo in the spring, most recently in May 2009 and April 2010. At least one information officer from the three front-line countries in the SWAC region participated in both years.

DLIS also trains a National Desert Locust Information Officer for 11 months in Rome on data management, analysis, forecasting and reporting, remote sensing, and GIS. The trainee must be an active Desert Locust Information Officer from one of the locust-affected countries. The selection is made on a rotational basis between the three regions. The last trainee from the SWAC region was Pramod Gour (India) in 2007.

Longer-term training is usually not financed by the Commission's Trust Fund because of a shortage of sufficient funds. Nevertheless, there are exceptions made in unusual circumstances. For example, one candidate from Afghanistan was to be trained at the MSc level in entomology with emphasis on locust management, preferably at an appropriate university in India, as a means of strengthening national capacity in the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock.

Individuals from SWAC Member Countries who participated in FAO workshops since the last 26th session are indicated in Figure 1.

Figure 1. SWAC participants in FAO workshops in 2009 and 2010

SWAC/CRC Desert Locust Masters inter-regional workshop (Ramsar, I.R. Iran 8-13 May 2010)		
Anil Sharma	India	LWO, Jodhpur
Akram Asadi	I.R. Iran	PPO, Tehran
Ali Babali Fashki	I.R. Iran	PPO, Tehran
Mahmoud Chalaki	I.R. Iran	PPO, Tehran
Mohamed Ahmadi Far	I.R. Iran	PPO, Sari (Mazandaran)
Azam Khan	Pakistan	DPP, Karachi
Safadr Ali	Pakistan	DPP, Karachi
SWAC/CRC Desert Locust Information Officer inter-regional workshop (Cairo, 18-19 April 2010)		
Pramod Gour	India	LWO, Jodhpur
Mehdi Ghaemian	I.R. Iran	PPO, Tehran
Ghulam Qadir Lund Baloch	Pakistan	DPP, Karachi
Shahbaz	Pakistan	DPP, Karachi
SWAC/CRC Desert Locust Information Officer inter-regional workshop (Cairo, 18-19 April 2009)		
Pramod Gour	India	LWO, Jodhpur
Mehdi Ghaemian	I.R. Iran	PPO, Tehran
Mahmoud Chalaki	I.R. Iran	PPO, Tehran
Ghulam Qadir Lund Baloch	Pakistan	DPP, Karachi

2. Shortcomings and weaknesses

There are two weaknesses to the Master Trainer approach. First, the success of each workshop depends entirely on the quality and suitability of the Master Trainer designated by each Government. Ideally, a Master Trainer should have some field experience in Desert Locust survey, control and reporting, be young and energetic, be able to communicate and

teach others and have the time to organize and conduct training courses. Unfortunately, some individuals who have been designated as National Master Trainers are near retirement age, they are senior managers who do not have time to conduct courses, they may be excellent locust experts but they have no communication skills or ability to teach.

Second, it is imperative that every Government empowers its Master Trainers, giving them the mandate and responsibility to train national staff and to provide sufficient financial support to organize courses on a regular basis. In some countries, training is absent from the budget of the national locust programme. Master Trainers have been designated and attend the FAO workshop but they are not given the responsibility to conduct training courses or there are no funds for such activities after returning to their country, or after a few years, they retire.

Master Trainer trainees who attend the FAO workshop are requested to keep FAO informed on all training courses that they organize and conduct. Ideally, the Master Trainer should organize national training courses every three months and no more than about 16 people should attend. In those countries with a large number of locust staff, additional Master Trainers and courses may be required. Unfortunately, FAO receives little feedback and it appears that an insufficient number of courses are conducted in countries.

As a consequence of these shortcomings, newly appointed national staff are not adequately trained and experienced staff do not receive refresher training. This has a negative impact on the quality and effectiveness of Desert Locust survey, control and reporting that, in turn, affects the early warning system and the preventive control strategy adopted by all locust-affected countries.

3. Improving training

Regarding training issues, the 26th Session recommended that:

(a) In order to strengthen national capacity in training, each country should identify two individuals within their organization who are energetic, possess a good command of the English language and have the capacity to teach others. These individuals should be designated as Master Trainers and given the responsibility for training national staff in locust survey, reporting and control.
(b) The delegate from Afghanistan should identify at least one candidate to undertake MSc studies in entomology with emphasis on locust management, preferably to be carried out at an appropriate university in India.
(c) FAO, in collaboration with the Locust Warning Organization (India) and the FAO Representation, should identify an appropriate university in India for MSc training in entomology with emphasis on locust management for one person from Afghanistan.
(d) The delegate from Afghanistan should arrange for the translation of the *FAO Desert Locust Master Trainer Manual* and *Standard Operating Procedures* into Pashto/Dari and distribute a sufficient number of copies within the country.
(e) Field training should be provided, preferably when locusts are present, to at least one Afghanistan plant protection expert in each of the 11 provinces on Desert Locust and Moroccan Locust survey, reporting and control. Suitable experts could conduct this training in I.R. Iran.
(f) The delegates from India and Pakistan should seek clarification and continue any progress made on the translation of the *FAO Desert Locust Master Trainer Manual* (DLMTM) and the *Standard Operating Procedures* (SOP) into Hindi (for India) and Urdu (for Pakistan), and distribute a sufficient number of copies within their respective country.

(g) FAO should identify an appropriate university in India for MSc training in entomology with emphasis on locust management for one person from Afghanistan.
(h) FAO should distribute the DLMTM kit that is being assembled with the assistance of the Secretary of the Central Region Commission in Cairo to Afghanistan (1), India (2), I.R. Iran (2) and Pakistan (2).
(i) FAO should organize two workshops: (1) an inter-regional workshop for Locust Directors and Information Officers from India, I.R. Iran and Pakistan in follow-up to a similar workshop that was held in Cairo in April 2008 and (2) a two-week Master Trainers' workshop, preferably in Chabahar (I.R. Iran), for two designated Master Trainers each from Afghanistan, India, I.R. Iran and Pakistan, with technical support provided by the Secretary of the FAO Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Central Region (CRC).

The 27th Session should review progress made on the above recommendations.

Each Member Country is requested to report on training activities that have occurred in their country since the last session. In turn, the Session should review these activities and determine if they were sufficient or not. If the latter, the Session should identify where and how improvements can be made, including new mechanisms and strategies to be established and adopted, in order to maintain an effective national training programme that provides a sufficient amount of high quality training to field staff on a regular basis.