FAO CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

LM 3 LEARNING MODULE 3

FAO GOOD LEARNING PRACTICES FOR EFFECTIVE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

NOTE TO THE READER

Thank you for taking the time to read this FAO Learning Module on Capacity Development. This module is the third in a series which will become available through the end of 2012.

All information regarding the Learning Modules will be published on the FAO Interdepartmental Working Group on Capacity Development Intranet website:

http://intranet.fao.org/fao_communications/idwgcd/

Thank you,
FAO Capacity Development Team
Knowledge and Capacity for Development (OEKC)

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ACRONYMS

AGA	Animal Production and Health Division
AGN	Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division
AGP	Plant Production and Protection Division
AGS	Rural Infrastructure and Agro-industries Division
ARD	Agriculture and Rural Development
CABI	CAB International
ESA	Agricultural Development Economics Division
EST	Trade and Markets Division
ESW	Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division
FFS	farmer field school
FIRO	Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources Use and Conservation Division
FOE	Forest Economics, Policy and Products Division
GiZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
IPPM	integrated production and pest management
LM	learning module
LMC	learning management cycle
LNA	learning needs analysis
NCU	national coordination unit
NRC	Climate, Energy and Tenure Division
OEK	Office of Knowledge Exchange, Research and Extension
PLP	personal learning path
TCFS	Technical Cooperation Department
TCI	Investment Centre Division
TCSP	Policy Assistance Support Service
TOT	training of trainers

FOREWORD

As Chair of the FAO Interdepartmental Working Group (IDWG) on Capacity Development, it is my pleasure to introduce this Learning Module entitled **FAO Good Learning Practices for Effective Capacity Development.**

This Module is the third title in a series that the IDWG, under the leadership of the FAO Knowledge and Capacity for Development Branch (OEKC), has produced. It reflects the multidisciplinary nature of Capacity Development, which cuts across the entirety of the Organization, and the importance that FAO management and staff have placed upon it.

The Corporate Strategy on Capacity Development, endorsed by the Director-General and the member countries, promotes a new mode of action that requires adaptation and change inside FAO. The need for change was reiterated by the **Evaluation of FAO's Activities on Capacity Development in Africa** and the FAO Management's response to it.

It is my view that this Module will be useful for FAO Officers and Collaborators involved with developing and/or delivering learning activities in member countries. This Module covers the following curriculum areas:

- Learning activities as modalities for Capacity Development
- Planning and coordinating learning activities
- The Learning Management Cycle
- Evaluation of learning activities
- Selected FAO good training practices
- 8 Toolboxes - on the CD-ROM inside the back-cover

The Capacity Development Learning Modules aim to keep FAO staff and consultants abreast of evolving Capacity Development practices in the international development community.

I hope you find this Module an effective contribution to your work.

MS. XIANGJUN YAO, DIRECTOR, OEK
CHAIR OF THE IDWG ON CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

This Module is the third in a series of four that address capacity development competencies in FAO. It is intended to enhance FAO's practices in designing, developing, delivering and evaluating its activities in support of learning in Member Countries, while ensuring that learning leads to sustainable capacity development.

LEARNING MODULES (LM) FOR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN FAO

LM 1:	Enhancing FAO's practices for supporting Capacity Development of Member Countries
LM 2:	FAO approaches to Capacity Development in programming: processes and tools
LM 3:	FAO Good Learning Practices for effective Capacity Development
LM 4:	Organization analysis and development

Who should read this Module?
This Module is intended for FAO technical officers and collaborators who are involved in conceptualizing, planning, managing and coordinating learning initiatives for stakeholders in Member Countries.

Learning objectives
By reading and practising the guidance of this Module, you will increase your ability to:

> plan, design and coordinate learning initiatives as appropriate responses to capacity needs, and as part of broader support to Member Countries; and
> evaluate the quality of learning initiatives and the results achieved, including any changes in learners' behaviour and practices.

Personal learning paths
What is your specific interest in reading this Module? Are you looking for advice on how to design a specific learning initiative or more general guidance on selecting the appropriate delivery mode? You can create a tailored reading path to meet your specific needs by developing your own personal learning path (PLP). Specific sections in the Module, reference sheets and tools can be combined to form a curriculum that covers only the topics in which you are interested.

The following chart will help you tailor your PLP. Please identify the topics in which you are most interested, and then refer to the 'core' and 'recommended' sections of the Module.

HOW TO USE THIS MODULE

This publication defines the seven Steps that make up the Learning Management Cycle. Each of these steps is achieved through Key Actions. Core Tools and Recommended Tools are provided for accomplishing the Key Actions.

> The seven Steps of the Learning Management Cycle are shown in Diagram 3.

> Each Step corresponds to a chapter in this document which contains essential concepts regarding planning, designing and coordinating learning initiatives in the broader context of FAO's capacity development work in Member Countries.

> Key Actions are indicated by a ■ and are clearly marked on the cover page of each Step and further described in the text. In each chapter you will find "FAO good practices" boxes that illustrate specific applications of the concepts in FAO projects and programmes, "Planning checklists" for coordinating and managing learning initiatives, and links to specific tools in the Toolbox section.

> Key Actions are accomplished by using Core Tools ■ and the Recommended Tools ■ which are listed on the cover page for each Chapter.

> Tools are found in Toolboxes 1 through 7 which correspond to each of the seven Steps. Toolboxes include: Guidance Sheets and Tools for greater reference and step-by-step guidance, and, Planning and Coordination Tools for managing and overseeing the quality of the learning activities. The Tools in Toolbox 8 are cross-cutting and should be applied to all Steps in the Learning Management Cycle.

> All Toolboxes are available only on the CD-ROM affixed to the inside back cover of this module.

NEEDS AND INTERESTS	CORE SECTIONS		RECOMMENDED SECTIONS
	MODULE	TOOLBOX	TOOLBOX
1. Find out how to ensure that the learning initiative addresses the broader organizational context	Chapter 1,	1a	
2. Get tips for ensuring that the 'right' participants attend the learning initiative	Chapters 1, 2	2a, 2b	
3. Determine how to identify appropriate national and local partners who can sustain the learning initiative, and work with them in a way that reinforces their ownership and the potential for scaling up	Chapter 1, 2, 3		
4. Find out the most cost-effective way to undertake a learning needs assessment of the target audience	Chapter 3	3a, 3b, 3f, 3g, 3h	3c, 3d, 3e
5. Understand which delivery mode is more suitable for the learning initiative, given the budget, objectives, time available and the audience	Chapter 4	4d, 4e	4f, 4g, 4h, 4i
6. Learn which techniques to use to encourage reflection and action after a workshop	Chapters 4, 5, 6	4a, 4j, 5g, 5h, 5i	
7. See which creative modalities, other than face-to-face workshops, have been used by FAO to support learning in Member Countries	Chapter 4, 5	4d, 4e, 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d	4f, 4g, 4h, 4i, 5k
8. Identify the appropriate method for following-up with participants once the activity is completed	Chapter 1, 4, 6	6a, 6b, 6c	
9. Find out practical ways to evaluate the results of the learning initiative	Chapter 4, 7	7c, 7d, 7e, 7h, 7i, 7k,7l	7f, 7g, 7j, 7m
10. Ensure effective coordination and quality in the overall design of the learning initiatives	Chapter 1-7	7n, 8a, 8b, 8c	8d

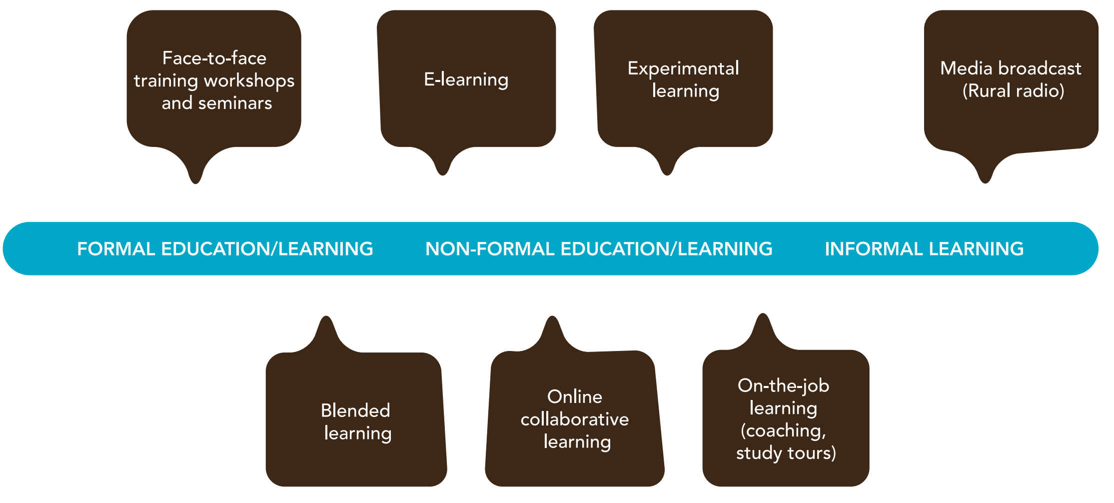
[Table 1] LM3 Personal Learning Paths

INTRODUCTION

FAO's activities in support of learning in Member Countries

FAO promotes learning for national stakeholders in Member Countries as part of its technical work in support of national capacity development. It supports a broad range of learning activities – from seminars for ministerial staff that last a few hours, to an experiential field school course for farmers that lasts a season, or curriculum reform in agricultural higher education.

FAO supports formal and informal initiatives which use a variety of methods in different technical sectors, as shown in the diagram below. The initiatives emphasize learning methodologies that stress learners' choice and ownership, learners' participation and appropriate approaches for adult education.



[Diagram 1] FAO's activities in support of learning in Member Countries

The need for improvement

Over the past two decades, the international community has evolved considerably in its understanding of the role of learning in developing sustainable capacity.[1] In the past, it was more common to view stand-alone training as sufficient to build capacity; however, recent evaluations in this area[2] have suggested that one-off interventions are rarely successful in developing sustainable organizational or institutional capacity.

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1 *See, in particular, the OECD-DAC paper Training and Beyond: Seeking Better Practice for Capacity Development, January 2010, by Jenny Pearson* *http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/35/53/44696077.pdf* *and the Berlin Statement on International Development Training* *http://siteresources.worldbank.org/WBI/Resources/BerlinStatementonInternationalDevelopmentTraining.pdf*

2 *Evaluation of FAO's Activities on Capacity Development in Africa (2010); Using Training to Build Capacity for Development, An evaluation of the WB's Project-based Training* *http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTTRABUICAPDEV/Resources/full_doc.pdf*

FAO, other UN agencies and development organizations have undertaken to embed all learning activities in broader capacity development interventions which address gaps for individuals and organizations, as well as factors in the enabling environment, in a well-sequenced, comprehensive manner. Annex 1, at the end of this Module, provides an overview of the current international consensus on the role of learning in capacity development.

What is a learning activity?

The Module uses the term "learning activity/initiative" to indicate any type of structured or semi-structured initiative or intervention with the primary aim of supporting improved work performance and behavioural change of individuals in FAO's Member Countries, in a way that enables them to better contribute to the development goals of their own organizations and countries.

Implicit in this notion is the understanding that for FAO's learning activities to support the development of sustainable capacities, learning must be integrated into a portfolio of interventions that address factors other than knowledge and skills (e.g. management, motivation, incentives or governance) which can support a gradual uptake of changes across the organizational dimension and the enabling environment.[3] Further, a number of different delivery methods should be used to have a better impact on participants.

The development of knowledge, skills and attitudes

Learning alone is rarely sufficient to address complex organizational problems or improve the overall capacities of stakeholders. However, it can support the development or further enhancement of knowledge, skills and attitudes that can empower individuals and increase their potential to achieve their own goals.

Knowledge is usually acquired quite directly, for example through presentations, readings, demonstrations, manuals, document reviews or exercises. However, participants will only retain that knowledge if it is reinforced through application. Developing new skills requires time to master the underlying knowledge and concepts and to extensively practice and experiment. Realizing a change in attitude may take longer, and the new attitude needs to be consistent with local culture and practice.

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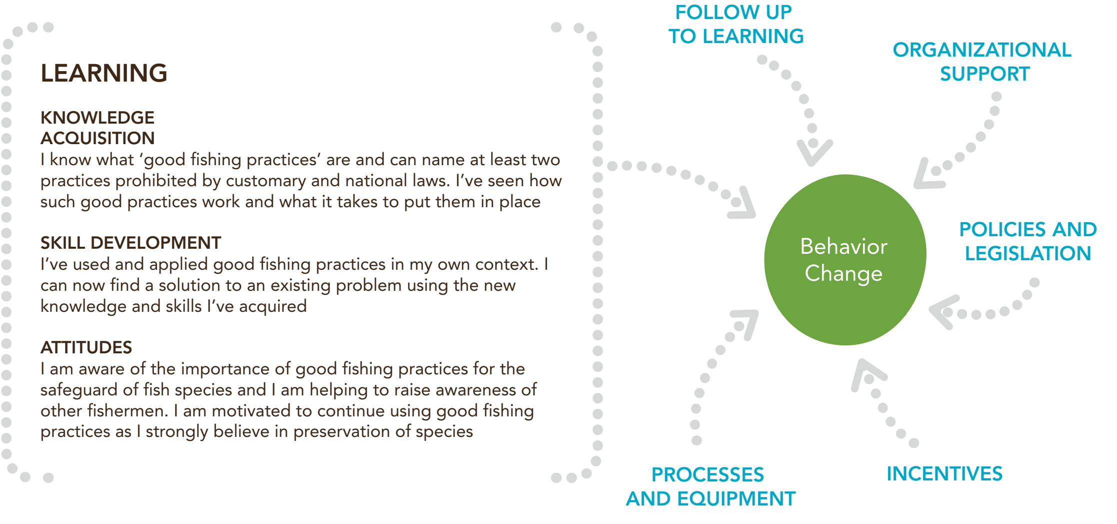
[3] *Capacity development involves three dimensions, all of which can be addressed by a combination of modalities: (1) an individual dimension: people's knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, which can be addressed by learning; (2) an organizational dimension: the overall functioning and performance of an organization, often noted in changes in organizational mandates, systems, processes or priorities; and (3) the enabling environment: the institutional set up of a country, its power and governance structure and the policy and legal frameworks. See Learning Module 1 – Enhancing FAO's practices for supporting capacity development of Member Countries.*

In sum, triggering and managing a behavioural change requires not only a well-designed learning initiative that address knowledge, skill and attitude development; it also requires:

> long-term commitment to the new concepts, principles and messages;
> ongoing support to help people internalize the values associated with the change; and
> changes in organizational processes and mandates, incentives, and policy/legislative frameworks (**see Diagram 2**).



[Diagram 2] Triggering and managing behavioural change

THE LEARNING MANAGEMENT CYCLE

Good learning practice is based on the learning management cycle (LMC) shown in **Diagram 3.** The diagram provides an overview of the process required to create effective learning situations (also called the instructional design process). While all of the steps in the process are important parts of learning management, their sequence may not be the same for every learning initiative. For example, sometimes it may be more useful to identify the target audience after assessing learning needs, or to undertake context analysis and learning needs assessment at the same time.

Your decisions throughout the cycle will be guided by the scope of the initiative being planned, together with the time and budget available. The LMC is intended to help you define the "best fit" for your learning initiative, while highlighting core aspects of the process that have to be considered irrespective of the scope, time or budget. Because learning initiatives are very often designed, developed and delivered by consultants or FAO external collaborators (i.e. NGOs or other partners), FAO staff must be well-equipped to coordinate and manage the initiatives.

Toolboxes 1 through 7 correspond to each of the seven steps in the Learning Management Cycle.

Toolbox 8 is cross-cutting and can be applied across the Learning Management Cycle as it addresses planning, management and coordination.

Diagram 3 shows the seven steps of the Learning Management Cycle and the page number referring to each step.

Sustainability is a crucial consideration in any learning initiative. In order for initiatives to be adopted and institutionalized in the local contexts, strategic decisions must be taken throughout the process – for example, national partners and institutions that can scale up the initiative must be identified and involved.

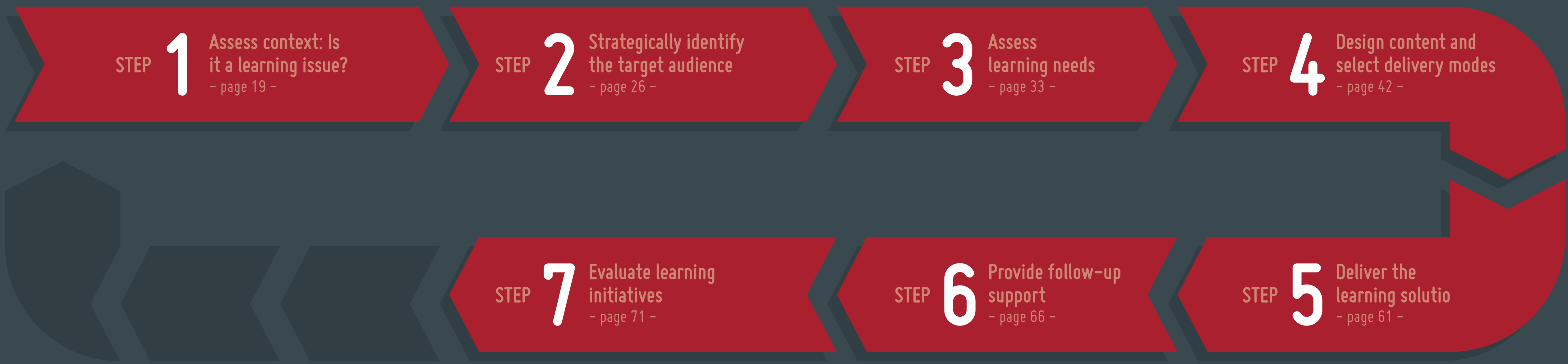
Also, gender and culture should be considered throughout the LMC, including, for example, when assigning activities, identifying participants or selecting facilitators. It is critical to recognize the culture of the local context; failing to do so can negatively affect the results of the initiative and, even worse, FAO's relationships with national and local counterparts. The chapters that follow focus on each of the steps in the LMC.

WHY OWNERSHIP IS CRITICAL

- Whether the learning initiative is targeted to local or national organizations, ministerial bodies, research institutes, individual farmers and producers or civil society, local and national ownership are essential. One of the clearest indicators of ownership is the quality of national partners' engagement throughout the learning process.
- The commitment of target groups is indispensable to being able to effectively analyse the context; without such commitment, learning needs assessment may not generate sufficiently in-depth information on needs and capacity constraints.
- A strong sense of ownership among stakeholders is needed to ensure that they will help identify appropriate participants for the initiatives and that participants are committed to learning.
- To encourage learners to use the new learning in the work setting, there must be support in the work environment.
- If target groups have a clear sense of the benefits that the learning initiatives can have for their organizations, they are likely to provide more useful input to improve the initiatives.

THE LEARNING MANAGEMENT CYCLE

Remember throughout the learning management cycle to:
Plan, Manage and **Coordinate**
See Toolbox 8



[Diagram 3] The Learning Management Cycle

STEP 1 ASSESS THE CONTEXT: IS IT A LEARNING ISSUE?

Key actions for this step:

- Analyze context: is it a learning issue?

  Tools 1a

- Identify complementary support

To design appropriate individual learning activities, it is necessary to assess the context faced by the group, rural association, community-based organization, network or ministry, including the organizational context in which individuals operate, as well as the broader enabling environment. This is important to verify whether FAO's support to learning is a truly appropriate solution to an identified issue.

This chapter will look at ways in which FAO and national or local counterparts can analyse the context before moving into the design of a training or other learning event.

WHAT IS MEANT BY "ORGANIZATION"? [4]

Organization refers to both formal and non-formal organizations relevant to the Agriculture and Rural Development sector, such as central and decentralized government agencies and ministries, social protection services, inspectorates, laboratories, national agricultural research systems, global and regional economic commissions, enterprises, cooperatives, chambers of agriculture, consumer groups, producer associations, community-based organizations, NGOs, and formal and non-formal education and training institutes .

1.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTEXT

Paying attention to context from the initial phases of the learning management cycle helps ensure that learning will be translated into practice. Very often, learning is not used by learners or, to quote a typical expression in vogue in the learning community, it is not "transferred" to the workplace. This can be attributed to several reasons:

> Sometimes the physical aspects of the work setting may not allow the use of the learning, such as when the proper equipment or resources are lacking. An example of this, faced by the IAEA-FAO Joint Division in Vienna, occurred when developing country scientists were trained in a developed country setting in advanced techniques for pesticide residue analysis, and then found it difficult to translate the learning to the reality of their laboratories at home.
> The social aspects of the work setting may be inadequate, such as when there is a lack of support from the community, managers, colleagues or organizational culture, or when there are gender-related problems (e.g. a female worker takes a leadership skills course but is unable to use her new skills once she is back in a male-dominated environment).
> Learners might be left alone after the learning initiative without follow-up, or they might find that policies and organizational structures in their work settings make it impossible to apply what they've learned.
> Learners may not have sufficient motivation or incentive to use the learning in their work, perhaps because it was not relevant to their work needs or because there is no reward for improved performance.

[4] *Learning Module 1 , p.28*

To illustrate the complexity of context, it is interesting to cite a case in crop protection in Uganda. Researchers and NGOs have been actively working against a particular banana disease for the past five years; however, even if farmers and local officials have seen extension materials (e.g. posters, leaflets), many do not know how to practically manage the disease. Many of those who do know how to manage it do not apply the recommended disease control measures – which would protect the whole community from infection – because the measures take extra time and require the farmers to visit their fields every day instead of once a week. In other cases, they have discovered that by planting alternatives to banana, they can make more money, although they may be reducing long-term soil fertility and potentially damaging the environment. Also, when farmers are old or affected by disease, they may not be able to do extra work unaided. Communities have responded by passing by-laws on the management of banana plantations. This example shows that understanding the whole context is essential to designing learning that can help the whole community protect their collective livelihood[5].

Where organizations are the main stakeholders, assessing the organizational context is important to gather a full picture of the situation. In some cases, such as when support to learning is clearly going to be a major component of a project, the organizational context assessment can be carried out in conjunction with a learning needs assessment.

A self-assessment may be conducted by the involved people, facilitated by FAO, or an assessment may be conducted through informal or formal participatory approaches as part of the situational analysis that precedes the design of a project. **Learning Module 4 of the Capacity Development series deals explicitly with organizational analysis and development.**

1.2 ANALYZE THE CONTEXT: IS IT A LEARNING ISSUE?

FAO's activities in support of learning are often assumed to be the most useful and practical measures to improve the capacities of national actors in Member Countries. Learning, however, is not always the only and most appropriate solution to a capacity issue.

Consider, for example, a situation in which there is a need to boost agricultural production and address declining soil fertility in a given African region, and yet a certain country is found to not be using sufficient quantities of mineral fertilizer. The question to ask is: Why is this the case? Is it a matter of not being able to afford or obtain fertilizer? Is it that fertilizer application is an investment with heightened risk in the case of drought? Is part of the problem that there is no tradition of fertilizer use and it is a matter of individual knowledge and skills, or are other contextual factors contributing to the situation? Some form of learning support may help encourage increased use of fertilizer, but some other interventions can address macro issues pertaining to the enabling environment (e.g. access to credit and financial incentives).

[5] *Source: Plant Production and Protection Division (AGP), FAO*

Table 2 presents the factors that may influence the context:

Check Tool 1a in Toolbox 1. It will help you determine whether learning can address the capacity issue you have identified.

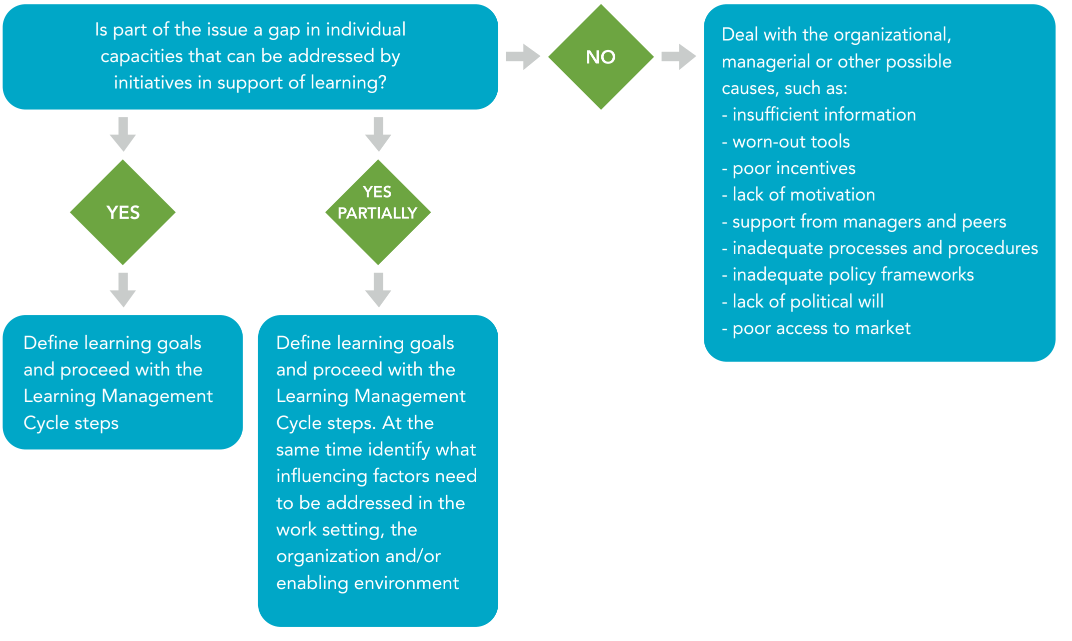
INFLUENCING FACTORS	RELATED QUESTIONS
Guidance	Does the person have sufficient and reliable information to carry out the job (e.g. expectations from the job and feedback on performance)?
Resources	Does the person have the financial resources and equipment to perform the work?
Incentives	Are the financial and non-financial incentives adequate to support work performance (e.g. career prospects, salary increases)?
Knowledge/skills	Does the person have appropriate knowledge and skills to carry out the tasks or are some gaps evident?
Motivation	Does the person have the appropriate motivation to carry out the job (e.g. interest in the job area)?
Organizational processes and support	Does the person have sufficient support from the community, from line managers, peers or colleagues? Are relevant organizational processes in place to facilitate individual work? (e.g. standard operating procedures)
Policy and macro-economic environment	Does the organization have the mandate and legitimacy to operate in the area? Do policies and/or macro-economic context support individual and organizational practice in the area?

[Table 2] Factors influencing individual and organizational performance[6]

There may be no clear cut answer to the question of whether something is a learning issue; in most cases, however, support to learning can only partially address capacity needs, as shown by the decision tree in **Diagram 4.** In addition, a simple tool is provided in Toolbox 1 to help determine whether a capacity issue can be addressed by learning.

6 *Adapted from: A practical guide to needs assessment, page 37*

What is the capacity issue?
Assess organizational context and enabling environment



[Diagram 4] Decision tree: Is it a learning issue?

1.3 IDENTIFY COMPLEMENTARY SUPPORT

Where learning support can only partially address an identified capacity issue, what other complementary measures could be planned? Some examples are:

- expert support to develop appropriate policies and legislation;
- advocacy activities with managers and senior members of organizations to ensure that they understand and support the implementation of learning in the organization;
- provision of equipment, technical support and other resources needed to implement learning or develop mechanisms to obtain necessary resources;
- organizational restructuring or revising operating processes and procedures;
- support for revising organizational priorities;
- support in creating networks or other structured forms of knowledge-sharing;
- facilitation of exchanges, such as South-South cooperation agreement.

BOX 1: FAO GOOD PRACTICES — EMBEDDING LEARNING IN BROADER SUPPORT STRATEGIES

Changed focus of agricultural extension requires a shift in mindsets. Agricultural extension has an important catalytic role in the development of the food crops sectors. So far, the focus has been to support small-scale farmers to increase production and productivity primarily through the transfer of technology from research to extension to farmers. Recently, however, greater focus has been put on improving access to food for rural households by encouraging farm enterprise diversification. This requires a "market approach" to extension and, hence, a change in mindsets.

Through the project "Strengthening the agricultural extension system through agro-enterprise development" in Sri Lanka, FAO undertook to develop extension workers' capacities in market-oriented production by engaging them in a Farm Management Training of Trainers. At the same time, the project sought to address the expected constraints arising from a context in which extension had traditionally been perceived as a means to support production and productivity. To this end, an awareness campaign was conducted to ensure that decision-makers at all levels understood and supported the changed focus of extension services and that the required organizational changes were made in the Government structures. (Source: Rural Infrastructure and Agro-industries Division (AGS), project TCP/SRL/3302 (D))

Improving agriculture statistics in Africa. The training/learning component of the global strategy to improve agriculture statistics in Africa includes developing the capacities of national and local training institute staff through training, twinning arrangements and mentoring support. At the same time, the strategy seeks to support an organizational reform of universities to become more dynamic actors rather than relying only on direct public funds as they had in the past. Obsolete university curricula and lack of motivation/incentives of university professors are among the major contextual constraints that the strategy ought to address. (Source: Statistics Division (ESS))

KEY LEARNING POINTS

- The learning activity must be an appropriate response to capacity needs. Not all capacity problems are related to individual capacity constraints and not all individual capacity constraints are best addressed through learning.
- An analysis of the context, including of the organizational context and the enabling environment, is fundamental to confirm that the situation or the issue at stake can be addressed by learning initiatives.
- Awareness of the context helps identify the need for complementary capacity development modalities (e.g. to address factors in the enabling environment) which cannot be addressed by learning.

PLANNING CHECKLIST

	DECISION TAKEN	DISCUSSION STILL REQUIRED	N/A
1. Have adequate resources been allocated for an organizational context assessment, and has such an assessment been built into the project planning?			
2. Has the assessment been planned with the maximum engagement and ownership of the concerned individuals?			
3. Is the planned context analysis likely to give a full picture of capacity assets and constraints to the achievement of defined goals?			
4. Based on data gathered in the context analysis, is a learning initiative appropriate to address the identified capacity issues?			
5. Does any type of support need to be planned to complement the learning initiative? What type of support?			
6. What synergies need to be created or other provisions made to ensure that such complementary support is provided?			

STEP 2 STRATEGICALLY IDENTIFY THE TARGET AUDIENCE

Key actions for this step:

- Strategies for identifying target audiences
- Work with counterparts in Member Countries

Tools 2a 2b

An important step in the LMC is to strategically identify the target audience. Whether the target groups are ministry officials, members of producers' associations or staff from national/regional organizations, it is always advisable to define participant groups early in the cycle and to develop some possible terms of reference on the expected target audience to ensure that the appropriate people attend. This chapter will provide guidance on how to identify participants in a learning initiative in the most strategic and collaborative way.

Identifying the audience at an early stage enables targeting the appropriate levels and categories of participants to ensure that organizational goals or other desired changes may be achieved. To maximize the impact of a learning initiative, participants must be "the right people, at the right time, and in the right combination"[7].

For example, in the case of the banana disease facing Uganda, a study tour was organized to a neighboring country where the disease had largely been brought under control. The tour involved visiting ministries, research stations, local authorities and farmer field school (FFS) groups working to control the disease. The question to be addressed was who should attend the study tour. While farmers would obviously benefit, it was decided that the local ministry of agriculture inspectors, local politicians, community leaders and NGOs were just as important to create a coalition for change at a larger scale[8].

2.1 STRATEGIES FOR IDENTIFYING TARGET AUDIENCES

Clearly, there is no one right way to identify the audience for a learning initiative. The appropriate strategy will depend on the overall learning objectives, the format to deliver learning and the broader context. It may be advisable to review the results of the context assessment and conduct a formal or informal stakeholders' analysis before choosing the right strategy.[9] The following pointers may be useful:

- Consider who should learn what to help bring about the improvements or the changes that the learning initiative aims to trigger (e.g. people who influence policy-making in a given area).
- Ask whether the target audience/target organizations are adequately linked to broader constituencies and whether they are in a position to extend or transfer their newly acquired learning and experience to members of those constituencies (e.g. extensionists, training institutes, community motivators).
- Consider whether the audience has the required institutional support to promote change in this area and, if not, whether such support can be strengthened as part of the initiative. For example, if there were individual champions who promoted change initiatives within single departments of a Ministry, but who did not have full support from the Minister's cabinet, they could be supported through high-level joint advocacy measures.

Below are some broad categories of selection strategies and an indication of where these have been used in FAO.

7 *Evaluation of Capacity Development Activities on Africa, paragraph 91*

8 *Source: AGP, FAO*

9 *Check the CD Learning Module 2, Tools 1, 2 and 7 for suggestions on conducting stakeholder analysis.*

TYPE	STRATEGY DESCRIPTION	APPROPRIATE USE OF STRATEGY
COMPETITIVE	Selection based on a competitive application process	Recruitment of new personnel to be trained for specific roles in the target organization. Selection may be phased, with performance in the first stage of the course determining continued participation. Appropriate to ensure uniform high quality of participants, particularly in initiatives to train the trainers. Example: train the trainers on Collaborative Conflict Management for Enhanced National Forest (Forest Economics, Policy and Products Division (FOEP))
TARGETED	Invitation of participants based on highly specific job profiles	Learning needed only for people fulfilling key functions within an organization, or people likely to act as agents of change within an organization. May be key decision-makers or people with specialized technical skills. Example: Policy Learning Programme, Policy and Programme Development Support Division (TCSP)
WIDESPREAD	Supporting learning of many people in an organization or across a sector, often with different job functions, levels of expertise	Supporting learning of a critical mass of people across the same sector so that everyone in the organization or sector supports and understands how to implement change. Appropriate to build support for change. Example: livestock sector training (FAO Somalia) or FFSs in integrated pest management (various countries in West Africa)

Adapted from "Using Training to Build Capacity for Development: An Evaluation of the World Bank's Project-based and WBI training http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTTRABUICAPDEV/Resources/full_doc.pdf

[Table 3] Participant selection strategies

Identifying participants for learning activities should be a collaborative effort between FAO and local stakeholders. FAO may not make the final decisions, but can provide guidance on profiles of people to include. Where participation is based on government nomination, external factors may influence the selection and may not be linked to the relevance of the participant's work to the goals of the initiatives. For example, where the initiative involves free trips or per diems, participant selection may be influenced by a desire to reward specific employees.

As a rule of thumb, always consider options for organizing learning activities that **minimize travel or other benefits and take place in or near the workplace**. Where international events are needed – for instance to share regional experiences – and participant selection is done by government nomination, it is critical to maximize dialogue with partner organizations to gain a good understanding and ownership of the initiative by the local population.

In certain cases, it may be possible to consider asking potential participants to pay a contribution towards the cost of the learning initiative. This might help ensure that participants are serious and committed to their learning.

2.2 WORK WITH COUNTERPARTS IN MEMBER COUNTRIES

Some tips for working with government partners to ensure good selection of participants include the following:

> Attention should be given to clearly defining the required skills, education, experience, job functions and gender of potential candidates in written course invitations or terms of reference. It is important to set criteria that do not discriminate unfairly on the grounds of sex, race or tribal origin. Detailed participant profiles make it easier for partner organizations/governments to select the appropriate people. Characteristics of suitable participants should be discussed with target organizations.

> It is important to keep higher-level people (e.g. senior management, team leaders, key community groups) well-informed and on board. As highlighted in the Evaluation of Capacity Development Activities in Africa,[10] there have been cases where an audience has been selected without involving the structure to which they belonged, and this seriously hampered the effectiveness of the learning and the ability/willingness of learners to transfer the new expertise to members of the organization or the wider group.

> Detailed admissions questionnaires will help identify potentially unsuitable candidates by asking possible participants to describe their work and the challenges they believe the course will help them address. This can also be done as part of a learning needs assessment.

> Especially for long and resource-intensive initiatives, it is advisable to undertake follow-up interviews by phone or Skype with identified candidates to help reconfirm the preliminary choice made on the basis of applications. This also serves as an opportunity to explain unclear aspects of the learning initiatives, such as the required time commitment.

Check Tool 2a in Toolbox 2. It can help you set the right expectations to select prospective participants. A suggested Participant Application Form (Tool 2b) is also provided.

> When participants are selected well in advance of the course, it may be possible to ask appointing officials for replacement options where advisable. In all cases, the selection process should be as transparent as possible to avoid raising false expectations or claimed injustices.

> With longer-term learning initiatives involving a series of courses, it may be possible to use a preliminary online course to screen potentially unsuitable candidates. Only those who complete and pass the first course would move on to the others.

[10] *Ref. Burkina Faso, Country Report*

BOX 2: FAO GOOD PRACTICES — IDENTIFYING THE TARGET AUDIENCE

Various FAO learning programmes approach participant selection differently:

1. **The Policy Learning Programme** has developed a questionnaire intended to gauge the background, actual work responsibilities and motivation of course applicants in relation to the course objectives.

2. The **Training of Trainers (TOT) for the Socio-economic and Gender Analysis (SEAGA) Programme** requires prospective participants to undertake some work in preparation for the workshop and provide some evidence that they have previous experience in training and facilitation. A Technical Note about the programme also specifies that participants are expected to prepare a follow-up training plan. Only those who meet these selection criteria at a satisfactory level are admitted to the course. Criteria to select participants are clearly indicated in the invitations.

3. For the **TOT Programme on Collaborative Conflict Management for Enhanced National Forest Programmes**, the selection process is quite elaborate and consists of three steps. First, a general announcement is shared with National Forest Programme (NFP) Focal Points to provide course information and guidelines to identify suitable candidates. In order to propose their own candidates, organizations commit to provide full institutional support to their nominees in using their learning, by training others. As a second step, interested candidates complete a questionnaire with information concerning their background and motivation. In the final step, potential candidates selected on the basis of the questionnaire undergo a phone/skype interview with a team comprising Facility Coaches located in the (sub) region, and FAO HQ. While this process is resource-intensive, it has ensured that the right people are selected in order to achieve more effective and sustainable impact.

Supplementing official appointments: Despite rigorous selection procedures, countries may "appoint" participants who do not have the profile desired by the course organizers. If the budget allows and if the countries approve, additional people could be invited to attend the course as "resource people" rather than participants.

An appropriate mix of participants: Mixing experienced participants with new, usually younger ones helps to ensure that the knowledge and skills are transmitted to a younger generation of local/national experts. This was the experience gained from a nine-week training in boat building in Bangladesh, sponsored by FAO, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and other partners (Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources Use and Conservation Division (FIRO)).

KEY LEARNING POINTS

- Participants must have the right profile and motivation to ensure the success of the learning initiative.
- Define an appropriate strategy to identify participants, based on the objectives and expected impact of the initiative. Terms of Reference for participants' expected profiles should be as detailed as possible.
- Ownership of the initiative and dialogue with partner organizations is of utmost importance. Where national organizations fully understand and believe in the value and aims of the learning initiative, they are more likely to identify appropriate participants.

PLANNING CHECKLIST

	DECISION TAKEN	DISCUSSION STILL REQUIRED	N/A
1. Has participant identification started with the appropriate people involved?			
2. What is the optimal strategy for participant selection given the focus of the initiative? Competitive? Targeted? Widespread?			
3. Have national and local partners been involved in setting the profile for participants and are respective roles and expectations in the selection process clear?			
4. Has an appropriate application form and/or an invitation been prepared and shared with relevant actors in Member Countries? Do such documents contain an appropriate description of the candidate's profile and requirements, including gender?			
5. Have pre-course work assignments been considered to screen the motivation of prospective participants as part of the selection process? If not, why not?			
6. Who will communicate with prospective participants, how (e.g. writing, orally) and when?			

STEP 3 ASSESS LEARNING NEEDS

Key actions for this step:

- Define the approach for a Learning Needs Assessment

  Tools 3a 3b 3c 3d 3e

- Undertake a Learning Needs Assessment

  Tools 3f 3g 3h

- Identify local resources to support sustainability

Once the decision has been made that learning support is an appropriate solution and those who need to be involved have been identified, the initiative should be designed on the basis of an in-depth understanding of participants' initial knowledge, skills, needs and characteristics.

This chapter will look at ways to conduct learning needs assessments. It will also introduce some discussion points on identifying and working with national partners.

3.1 DEFINE THE APPROACH FOR A LEARNING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

A learning needs assessment is required to ensure that the content of the learning initiative adequately targets identified individual and organizational needs and enhances the capacities of Member Countries to achieve their goals. In general, a good needs assessment answers the following questions:

> What broad objective(s) is the learning initiative intended to address? How do these objectives relate to participants' work functions?
> What skill and knowledge assets exist to help achieve organizational objectives? What skill and knowledge gaps exist and what learning is needed to address those gaps? This should be approached not only in terms of technical skill and knowledge gaps, but also soft/functional skills that can support the use of technical capacities (e.g. managerial or project management skills).
> What prior knowledge and experience do prospective participants have and how is this likely to affect learning content and delivery methods?
> What opportunities and obstacles exist regarding the use of learning in the work setting? How may the learning activity be adapted to maximize opportunities and address these obstacles?
> What sort of follow-up support is likely to be needed to support the implementation of learning?

3.2 UNDERTAKE A LEARNING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Good learning needs assessment is one of the most important determinants of the success of a learning activity, and yet is often one of the most poorly performed steps of the learning management cycle. Evaluations[11] commonly find that failure to effectively target learning content to participant and organizational needs is one of the primary reasons when learning does not lead to sustainable development of organizational capacity.

In the day-to-day reality of FAO's work, needs assessments are often a pro forma exercise: time constraints, financial constraints or assumptions based on the assertion that "we already know what needs to be addressed" are usually the main reasons for not conducting a formal needs assessment.

However, as with organizational context assessments, learning needs assessments can be scalable to the time frame, budget and size of the learning initiative.

[11] *Using Training to Build Capacity for Development: An Evaluation of the World Bank's Project-Based and WBI Training; Evaluation of FAO's Activities on Capacity Development in Africa* http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/capacity_building/PC104-5EvaluationCapacityDevelopmentAfricaK8635E.pdf

Want to know more about how to select the appropriate approach for a learning needs assessment? Toolbox 3 contains tools for:

> Managing focus groups (3c)
> Conducting one-on-one interviews (3d)
> Developing surveys (3e)

Where timeframes and budgets are very limited, learning needs assessments can be done through written questionnaires to prospective participants and their managers or community leaders as part of the application process; and/or targeted phone or face-to-face consultations with key members of the participants' workplaces.

Where timeframes and budget are more flexible, more in-depth methods – like focus groups, pre-tests of participants or online forums – may be useful ways to ensure that investments target actual needs and help build sustainable capacity to achieve goals.

Whatever desk reviews or expert consultations are conducted, a learning needs assessment must involve direct input from prospective participants. This is for two reasons:

> First, it is necessary to have an in-depth understanding of the objectives and existing capacities of prospective participants, their organizations and the context in which they operate, in order to ensure that the learning activity is adequately targeted to their needs and objectives. External experts, even when they work on an ongoing basis with target organizations, do not necessarily have an adequate understanding of specific organizational conditions and the context in which individuals work.
> Second, the process of conducting a learning needs assessment is important to build internal support for the goals of the learning activity within target organizations and to ensure greater client "ownership" of the capacity development process.

IDENTIFYING EXISTING CAPACITIES — THE 'PYGMALION' EFFECT

The "Pygmalion" effect is a concept in psychology that explains that people behave as they think others expect them to behave. The experiments that led to the identification of this effect have some very important lessons for conducting learning needs assessments. It suggests that people live up to their perceptions of our expectations of how they will perform. In other words, they respond to the level of confidence that interlocutors show in them.[12]

This means that the way FAO officers relate to, for example, indigenous peoples, local communities or small-scale farmers, and the level of confidence they express in their potential will affect the findings of the needs assessment. When the right approach and techniques are used (e.g. appreciative inquiry and non-directive communication style), people's existing assets, skills, past achievements and unexpressed potential are more likely to be uncovered. This represents the "capacity base" upon which the learning initiative should be built.[13]

[12] *Management and Leadership Learning Programme, UNHCR Global Learning Centre*

[13] *Based on lessons learned from support activities carried out by the National Forest Program Facility and the Growing Forest Partnerships project. Both initiatives have extensively supported work aimed at increasing Financing for Sustainable Small-scale Forestry (Forest Economics, Policy and Products Division - FOEP)*

BOX 3: FAO GOOD PRACTICES — LEARNING NEEDS ASSESSMENT WORKSHOPS

When sufficient time and resources are available, a needs assessment can be done through a learning needs assessment workshop, which is particularly effective to support the development of learning programmes and major curricula. In the workshop, the needs assessment is undertaken as a collaborative process involving all major stakeholders, including some prospective target-audience members, subject-matter experts from various sources (e.g. academia, national and international institutes), senior managers, donors and supporters of the planned initiative. The advantages of undertaking a capacity development needs assessment as a collaborative exercise is that it builds strong ownership, support and buy-in from stakeholders and creates strong links with institutions, which are usually very proactive in using and adapting the learning material, once produced, for their own needs.

Professional facilitators lead these workshops, with the support of instructional designers and learning specialists. Workshop participants provide their perspectives and expertise to identify:

- areas of competence required to support and meet organizational goals;
- the target audience for the learning intervention;
- their key areas of responsibilities and related tasks; and
- the knowledge and skills required to undertake those tasks.

The outputs of the workshops include an outline for the learning programme and an initial identification of potential participants and institutions that would most benefit from it. FAO has undertaken two capacity needs assessment workshops with the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) as a first step in setting up a learning programme to support the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Pillar III Framework for African Food Security. The resulting learning programme is targeted at CAADP country actors and focuses on the knowledge and skills in food security required to support the design and implementation of country agriculture and food security investment plans. (Technical Cooperation Department and Office of Knowledge Exchange, Research and Extension) (TCFS, OEK).

In addition, a workshop including national stakeholders in phytosanitary capacity worked through a formal guide or checklist, the Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation, which has been used to date in over 50 countries (AGP).

3.3 IDENTIFY LOCAL RESOURCES TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABILITY

FAO's objective is that any project or initiative in support of learning in Member Countries, once completed, be taken up and institutionalized in the local and national contexts. To this end, a strategy needs to be put in place to ensure that:

- the learning initiative addresses real and urgent problems which the local people strongly care about, and that it mainly relies upon local expertise (i.e. local trainers, coaches, experts or other resource people). Local people are more likely to understand the specific needs, context and culture of the learning event participants and are more likely to understand what material is relevant. Also, supporting the development of local experts' individual capacities contributes to strengthening national and local capacity as a whole;
- appropriate **institutional partners**[14] are identified and involved, which can, with the right support, continue and possibly scale up the initiative; and
- appropriate measures are taken to support longer-term sustainability of the initiative.

No matter how successful the learning initiative has been, it will have no long-term impact on national capacities if it is not anchored in a national system that can sustain it after donor support has ended.

Identifying partners

There are no general guidelines to help with identifying national partners in learning initiatives; what makes a partner "appropriate" depends on the local context, the type of initiative and the subject-matter area. However, these are some key considerations:[15]

- **Knowledge and expertise in the subject-matter area and familiarity with group moderation and facilitation:** What type of expertise do they have in the technical area? Are they familiar with participatory facilitation techniques and/or do they have strong potential to learn?
- **Motivation and incentive to operate:** What is their motivation to take on additional roles and responsibilities to sustain the initiative once FAO's funding is over? What is driving their engagement? Financial gains? Desire to promote change? Prospects for individual career shifts?
- **Ability to implement and deliver:** Are the infrastructure and processes in place to implement and deliver? If not, can these be supported with cost-effective efforts, given the goal?
- **Access to and credibility with a wide range of local and national stakeholders, including civil society and small rural organizations:** Is the partner a credible interlocutor for a wide variety of stakeholders? Does the partner speak the local language and does it have cultural understanding of the context?
- **Anchored in national structures:** What type of linkages into national structures and systems exist, and/or can such linkages be supported and developed?
- **Ability to relate, partner and mobilize resources:** What is the partner's potential ability and readiness to actively seek new partnerships and attract new funding to secure longer-term sustainability after FAO has exited from the programme?

14 *The Evaluation of Capacity Development Activities in Africa found that "back up support from either an extension service or implementing agency is often needed in order to ensure that capacities once developed are institutionalized. There is a need to ground the projects in the agencies that will be in a position to provide post-project support" (paragraph 94, main report).*

15 *Paragraph 97 of the main evaluation report states, "In quite a few cases, stakeholders criticized FAO for having followed a standardized approach to the selection of implementers and facilitators, thus not always making the best choice or creating the best fit with local needs". Some generic guidelines for engaging with national partners can be found on the LenCD website 'How to establish partnership for scale up', which refers to the example of an FAO Farmer Fields School.* http://www.lencd.org/group/learning-package/document/how-establish-partnerships-scale

Building sustainability

FAO has supported the integration of promising approaches into national systems; a number of examples are described in Box 4. The example of the farmer field schools in Mali suggests that the following factors may provide some inspiration for how a learning initiative can become self-sustaining after FAO's support ends:

> Build networks and partnerships at all levels.
> Work to establish institutional "buy in" with diverse government agencies and farmer organizations.
> Establish the quality of the learning initiative through attention to process as well as content.
> Maintain contact with networks of participants through follow-up activities.
> Employ human resources and lessons learned from "experienced" countries to initiate programmes in new countries.
> Build a platform for collaboration with new partners.

BOX 4: FAO GOOD PRACTICES — STRATEGIES IN SUPPORT OF SUSTAINABILITY

Involve government structures and the private sector. The project "Strengthening the agricultural extension system through agro-enterprise development" (see Box 1) adopted a two-fold approach to ensure sustainability. On the one hand, the project works through government institutional structures at central, district and local levels by establishing a core team of trainers drawn from different offices in different divisions of the Department of Agriculture, Department of Export Agriculture and extension training institutions. On the other hand, the project involves private-sector buyers in developing training curricula, delivering training and providing back-stop support. In a number of cases, the private sector implemented the training through their own extension service providers. This approach is expected to create linkages between producer organizations and private-sector buyers, which will lead to increased sustainability. (AGS)

Work through national education systems. The Global Plant Clinics initiative, sponsored by CAB international (CABI), offers expert diagnostic service for any plant and type of problem in various parts of Africa. It also trains "plant doctors" and scientists, supports plant health clinics – often held in local markets or other public places where farmers can bring affected plant parts for diagnosis – and links extension, research, regulation and input supply. In order to ensure that this approach makes a durable contribution to plant health services, one strategy envisions crediting the time spent working in plant clinics as a contribution towards degree qualification for general agronomy undergraduates. This strategy – which would require that university authorities support a change to the curriculum – would benefit the local community, which would continue to benefit from plant clinic services, while agronomy undergraduates would have unprecedented exposure to real farmers' needs. (AGP)

FAO GOOD PRACTICES — STRATEGIES IN SUPPORT OF SUSTAINABILITY

Support a national trainer/facilitator pool as part of existing structures. In Cambodia, a National Trainer Pool for Food Security and Nutrition was established in 2008 by the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development of the Council of Ministers (CARD), with the support of the FAO-Netherlands Partnership Programme (FNPP) on Food Security Poverty Reduction. Trainings can be requested by all government line ministries, development partners, NGOs, civil society and private-sector organizations that wish to locally organize a course on food security and nutrition either in the capital, provincial cities or at the village level. The initiative is now fully owned by the national authorities who, through CARD, select and nominate trainers, assist trainers in improving their capacities, manage trainings and advise client organizations, monitor the quality of the curricula developed, manage funds, etc. Through the food security website of the Government of Cambodia <http://www.foodsecurity.gov.kh>, CARD provides information to the public about the Pool and trainings on a regular basis.

Work at national and regional levels simultaneously. While national training institutions are the main target of the FAO's TOT programmes on Enhancing Stakeholder Participation in National Forest Programmes and Collaborative Conflict Management for Enhanced National Forest Programmes, FAO works simultaneously with regional institutions (e.g. Tropical Agricultural Center for Research and Education (CATIE) in Latin America; Regional Community Forestry Training Center for Asia and the Pacific (RECOFTC) in Asia; African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources Education (ANAFE) and African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) in Africa to strengthen their ability to support national training institutes. At the initial stage, FAO and the regional organizations train the participants from national institutions, then provide joint ongoing mentoring assistance to build a common approach. At later stages, FAO gradually withdraws and limits its role to backstopping when required, leaving the regional organization to provide the support. (Forest Economics, Policy and Products Division (FOEP).

Establish a national coordination unit. In Mali, the Integrated Production and Pest Management (IPPM) Programme derives a growing proportion of its financing – currently 30 percent – from new projects that arrived after the programme was in place. An effective FFS national administrative team attracts interest and support from other projects that can benefit from access to experienced farmer facilitators and active and receptive farmer groups. From this observation, a strategy emerged to develop an FFS "national coordination unit" (NCU) in each country that will act as a "service provider" to coordinate new projects with donors who wish to work at the community level, but who otherwise lack the access to networks or the means to administer highly decentralized activities. The NCU provides staff highly experienced in discovery-based training and FFS national programme execution. It offers to new partners a host of services, from curriculum development to monitoring and evaluation. Most importantly, it facilitates access to existing networks of trained facilitators and active farmers' groups already familiar with a farmer-based experimental approach to testing and adapting new ideas. In return, donors and potential partners would finance the bulk of the training for the targeted cropping system on which the partner focuses. In this way, everyone benefits: donors can dedicate more resources to the field and less to project administration; governments have better oversight and alignment of capacity development because new donors will not have to "reinvent the wheel"; district-level government and farmers' organizations will have more consistent access to resources for capacity development and communities will have a greater sense of consistent support and follow through from technical support services. (Source: The West African Regional Integrated Production and Pest Management Programme, a case study, AGP)

3.4 DEVELOPING A CONCEPT NOTE

It may be useful at this point to develop a concept note for your learning initiative to share with internal and external stakeholders in order to fundraise and build internal/external buy-in. A concept note is particularly useful for identifying possible synergies with other internal or external initiatives, so that necessary linkages can be built on time in the design phase.

A concept note should include a description of:

> the capacity issue and how the learning initiative will address it;
> broad learning goals;
> expected results and result indicators, and how the evaluation will be conducted;
> design, delivery mode and follow-up plan;
> relationship to other relevant learning initiatives, if any;

Check the Template for a Concept Note in the Planning and Coordinating Toolbox (Tool 8a)

> quality assurance mechanisms;
> required resources and funding sources;
> sustainability considerations; and
> timetables, delivery schedule and key milestones.

KEY LEARNING POINTS

- Learning needs assessments can be carried out effectively even when time and budget are limited. However, designing a learning initiative on the basis of what "is already known" through missions and reports, but which does not involve the direct input of the target audience, is NOT sufficient.
- For better sustainability, learning initiatives should: (1) address real and urgent problems which the local people strongly care about; (2) rely on local expertise to the maximum extent possible; and (3) be conducted with an appropriate level of involvement by national resource people and institutional partners who can support the integration of the initiative into national systems.

PLANNING CHECKLIST

	DECISION TAKEN	DISCUSSION STILL REQUIRED	N/A
1. Have adequate resources and time been allocated for the LNA?			
2. Does the LNA plan include direct consultation with target participants and their organizations?			
3. What resources (e.g. consultants, partners) are best placed to help carry out the LNA, and are these available locally?			
4. Has a core team of local trainers, facilitators or coaches been identified and are they familiarized with the goals of the learning initiative?			
4. Have appropriate institutional partners been identified? Have requirements for the development of partners' capacities been considered?			
5. What information should be included in the concept note, with whom should it be shared (internally and externally) and for what purpose (e.g. fundraising, collaboration, synergies)?			

STEP 4 DESIGN CONTENT AND SELECT DELIVERY MODES

Key actions for this step:

- **Define learning objectives**

  Tools 4a 4b 4c

- **Define delivery mode and learning method**

  Tools 4d 4e 4f 4g 4h 4i

- **Organize learning contents**

  Tools 4j 4l 4k

- **Define follow-up support**

  Tools 6a 6b 7b

- **Define logistics for delivering face-to-face learning**

  Tools 8d

Once you've analysed the context, defined the target audience and its related assets/needs, and considered options for making the initiative sustainable from the early planning stages, you can proceed with actually designing and developing the learning initiative.

Whether you are designing the learning initiative or supporting and coordinating others to do it, this chapter will help you understand how to select delivery modes, develop learning content and activities and prepare for the delivery. Where possible, seek the support of a professional Instructional Designer to ensure the quality and coherence of the initiative.

4.1 DEFINE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

To define learning objectives, it is useful to ask questions such as:

> What do you want your target audience to be able to remember, understand or do differently?
> What skills or competencies do you want them to learn, develop, expand or improve, to support them in their jobs?
> In what type of learning do you want them to engage (e.g. recalling definitions, applying abstract concepts to reality, applying procedures, solving problems or something else)?

Addressing these questions will help you design good learning objectives and also:

> develop well-structured content and ensure it is really targeted;
> guide the learner in the learning process and clarify expectations from the onset; and
> establish your evaluation framework.

To develop specific learning objectives that match real learners' needs, it is useful to undertake a task analysis. A task analysis is a detailed analysis of the actions and decisions that potential learners take to perform their usual job tasks; it includes identifying the knowledge and skills needed to support those actions and decisions. The results of the task analysis will help you identify, prioritize and organize the contents on the basis of what learners really need, rather than on the basis of what subject- matter experts believe is important. You can access a template for a task analysis from the Toolbox.

Check the example of a **Task Analysis** and the template in Toolbox 4 (**Tool 4c**).

Formulating learning objectives

Learning objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable and realistic. They should consider the time available and be congruent with the goals of the learners' organizations.

Learning objectives should not be used to describe the content to be covered, but to describe the intended results of the initiative. Well-formulated learning objectives focus on intended outcomes and reference the ways in which participants are expected to apply learning at work or in life.

Action verbs must be used when formulating objectives, because they imply an action that can be observed and assessed later on. Generic verbs such as 'learn', 'understand', 'be aware of', 'appreciate' or 'become familiar with' should be avoided, as they are difficult to observe.

Also, indicators of learning results and means of verification should be defined up front. This is important to focus learning content and to form the basis for evaluating results at the end of the learning initiative.

For example, the chart below shows bad and better ways to complete this objective statement: "At the end of this programme/this session/this unit, you will be able to...".

BAD FORMULATION	BETTER FORMULATION	HOW CAN YOU ASSESS LEARNING RESULTS?
..understand the concept of Right to Adequate Food	..define the concept of Right to Adequate Food	By asking learners to define the concept in their own words as applied in their context
..become familiar with the steps of impact assessment	..incorporate impact assessment into programme design	By asking learners to create action plans describing how they intend to go about incorporating impact assessment in their programmes
..learn how to design qualitative assessment	..outline some basic principles in designing a qualitative assessment	By asking learners to apply principles of good qualitative assessment to their own project.

Objectives can be clustered logically around areas, themes or levels, so that you define a sort of hierarchy among learning objectives. The areas, themes or levels will correspond to the main topics or sessions of your learning initiative.

Want to know more? **Tool 4b** contains tips for **formulating good learning objectives .**

Objectives should be set not only for courses, workshops or distant learning material; you should also set objectives with the participants when you are coaching or facilitating a job-shadowing activity, for example.

4.2 DEFINE DELIVERY MODE AND LEARNING METHOD

By the time you have completed the LNA and defined learning objectives, you will have an idea of the delivery mode which best suits your learning initiative.

FAO provides its learning support in Member Countries through a number of different delivery modes – classroom, on-the-job, self-study with distance-learning tools, online collaborative learning – or through a blend of approaches.

Classroom: via a trainer, instructor or facilitator

On-the-job: via a coach, advisor or facilitator in the work setting

Self-study: via self-paced or tutored e-learning, multimedia or printed modules

Online collaborative: via video/audio conference or synchronous web-based learning

Blended learning: via e-learning and classroom, or any combination of the above

In deciding which mode makes most sense for your learning activity, consider the following questions:

> What is the relative cost of each type of delivery mode?
> Is learning best delivered in one unit or spread out over time?
> Does the activity address a short-term or a long-term learning need?
> Do participants have access to needed computer and communications equipment?
> Will participants learn highly technical skills which don't require much interaction, or is discussion and knowledge exchange an important part of learning support?
> Are participants sufficiently self-motivated for distance or self-study modes of learning?
> Is it important that learners try out learned skills on-the-job and report back on progress as part of their learning?

- Is it important that participants learn new practices and skills while remaining in their local context (because the context will greatly affect the implementation of such practices)?
- Do target participants' time schedules and geographic locations enable online collaborative synchronous learning?
- How important is it that participants get exposed to practices used outside of their own country/region as part of their learning process?

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">CLASSROOM: IN-PERSON, REAL-TIME COURSES, WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS DELIVERED VIA AN INSTRUCTOR OR TRAINER</th></tr>
<tr><td>Strengths

> Easier to keep participants motivated and engaged
> Easier to facilitate discussion and peer-to-peer learning
> Relatively easy to integrate in a project cycle
> Relatively easy to report outputs
> Helps participants create networks and provides exposure that contributes to building their confidence and leadership</td><td>Challenges

> More costly and logistically difficult to gather participants in one location; high costs may cause courses to be shorter in duration than would be optimal to achieve training objectives
> Participants are taken out of the work environments where they will be using new skills, which can, at times, be difficult to adopt in their working environment, discouraging participants of less developed countries from implementing the new skills (see example below)
> Not appropriate for skills best learned gradually over time
> Wrong participants often attend</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">FAO example:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Pest risk analysis (PRA) training in the Caribbean: PRA is the process of evaluating biological or other scientific and economic evidence to determine whether a pest should be regulated and to determine the strength of any phytosanitary measures to be taken against it. Training was organized for the Caribbean Commission through collaboration with a United States university; however, when trainees returned to their organizations with requests for the equipment to do effective PRA, the requests were denied. This discouraged participants from adopting the methods in which they had been trained. (Source: AGP)</td></tr>
</table>

ON-THE-JOB LEARNING: MENTORING, COACHING, JOB SHADOWING OR STUDY TOURS DELIVERED VIA A COACH, MENTOR, FACILITATOR OR ADVISOR IN A WORK SETTING, EITHER FACE-TO-FACE OR ONLINE	
Strengths	**Challenges**
> Can be planned as formal ad hoc events or informally as part of ongoing technical work > Enables learners to practise skills as they are being learned in the setting where they will be used and to address implementation problems as they arise > Relatively lower cost than other modes > Learners can actively shape the situation to their needs and the coach/mentor or advisor can change methods, timing and informational priorities on the spot > Learning can be paced over a long period of time when necessary	> More difficult to report outputs > Difficult to separate from ongoing technical work > Success depends on individual skills and techniques of facilitator, coach, advisor or mentor > It is essential that the mentor/coach is very familiar with the work context of the learner
FAO example:	
Informal coaching of researchers/scientists in Uganda: As FAO was working with researchers and laboratories on projects to control the spread of banana wilt disease, researchers began taking on the farmers' perspective in research, understanding their valid observations about the disease and listening to their needs. The FFS provided a meeting place for this. As a result, the banana research teams are now extremely proactive in seeking out farmers who are fighting the disease and engaging with the community through radio phone, public meetings and visits with extension workers. (Source: AGP) **Study tour from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to Uganda:** Study tours were used to take representatives of local authorities, NGOs, community leaders and farmers from Goma in DRC to Uganda to learn how the Ugandans had managed to succeed in controlling banana wilt (see above). One individual had visited Uganda previously, but upon returning, he was unable to get his supervisors to adopt what he had seen. A small amount of additional resources was used to finance a group of 16 and a facilitator-translator to visit ministry, research and farm sites and discuss with Ugandan colleagues the challenges and issues they faced in controlling banana wilt. One participant (a priest) financed his own trip because he felt it was so important to learn about controlling the disease in the interests of his congregation. The visit has created a team spirit among those who travelled, and there seems to be some signs for cautious optimism about local efforts to reduce the impact of this disease. (Source: AGP)	

SELF-STUDY (ASYNCHRONOUS): SELF-PACED E-LEARNING,[16] OR SELF-STUDY THROUGH TELEVISION OR RADIO BROADCASTS, THROUGH THE INTERNET, CD-ROMS, TAPES, PRINTED MATERIALS OR OTHER MEDIA	
Strengths > Enables distribution of learning materials to learners who don't have access to computers or the Internet > Enables learners to work at their own pace and at convenient times, which is particularly useful when learners are in different time zones > Learning content can be adapted, to some extent, to the needs and circumstances of participants (e.g. through personal learning paths)	**Challenges** > Requires learners to have a high degree of self-motivation > Only allows one-way flow of information; no opportunity for peer learning, feedback, questions or discussion > In the case of e-learning, high start-up costs for course development, but then can be very cost-effective for training large numbers of participants
FAO example:	
Self-paced e-learning: A series of self-paced e-learning courses have been developed as part of the EC-FAO Programme on Linking Information and Decision-making to Improve Food Security. The courses are targeted to food security professionals working in FAO Member States and cover a wide range of food security subjects. At the end of 2011, over 67,000 users had registered for an online course or had ordered a CD. An evaluation undertaken in 2009 noted that 88 percent of users surveyed noted that they had gained new knowledge and skills from the courses which they were able to use in their work; 99 percent of respondents liked the learning style offered by self-paced e-learning; 87 percent recommended the courses to others; 77 percent noted that the courses improved the collection, management, analysis and/or dissemination of food security information to key stakeholders, which is one of the major objectives of the EC-FAO Programme. The survey also noted that more than 75 percent of users had ordered a CD version of the course, which demonstrated that bandwidth issues and access to the Internet must always be considered when developing e-learning. Features that users liked most were the use of practical examples, case studies, exercises and interactivity in the courses, as well as the fact that the courses can be done at the users' convenience and speed. (Source: Agricultural Development Economics Division and Office of Knowledge Exchange, Research and Extension - ESA/OEK)	

[16] *FAO has recently developed a methodological guide for e-learning to set the standards and provide guidelines to technical staff in developing their own e-learning resources: Ghirardini, B. E-learning methodologies: A guide for designing and developing e-learning courses, FAO, 2011.*

ONLINE COLLABORATIVE (SYNCHRONOUS): VIDEO OR AUDIO CONFERENCE, OR MODERATED, REAL-TIME WEB-BASED LEARNING IN WHICH PARTICIPANTS CAN INTERACT WITH A MODERATOR AND WITH EACH OTHER	
Strengths > Suitable when there are budget, time or geographical constraints > May be easier to attend for higher-ranking officials or others who cannot take time off from work duties to attend a face-to-face course	**Challenges** > Cost/logistical difficulty depends on availability of needed equipment and cost of communications > Online facilitation requires specific set of skills to keep participants motivated and engaged
FAO example:	
Virtual workshops: The Office on Knowledge Exchange, Research and Extension (OEK) offered a virtual workshop entitled "Introduction to Knowledge Sharing Networks and Communities" to FAO staff and partners. The workshop introduced participants to networks and communities and how they facilitate knowledge and information exchange. The workshop took place online using an e-learning space to which all participants had access. It was conducted with both asynchronous (not occurring at the same time) and synchronous (occurring at the same time) tools. The asynchronous tool, called Moodle, provided a space which contained all the learning materials and instructions. It was also a shared space where discussions took place and participants uploaded their assignments. Once a week, all participants connected with each other and with the facilitator using Skype and a telephone bridge line. (Source: Office of Knowledge Exchange, Research and Extension - Knowledge Management & Library Services (OEKM), http://www.fao.org/knowledge) **Video conferences on gender:** The Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division (ESW) has often resorted to video conferences for gender training in Member Countries. As with face-to-face meetings, ESW emailed needs assessment questionnaires to participants prior to the event, so as to focus discussions on a set of identified issues. Video conferences or virtual meetings, though, require skilled facilitation. A comparison between face-to-face and virtual facilitation tasks is included in the Toolbox (Tool 5k). (Source: ESW)	

[Table 4] Strengths, challenges and examples of learning delivery modes

Blending delivery modes

Using a blend of delivery methods can often mitigate the challenges of any single delivery mode and address learning objectives effectively. Blended learning can take many forms.

Want to know more about **on-the-job** learning solutions? Check **Guidance sheets 4e, 4f and 4g** for guidance on **coaching**, **mentoring** and **study tours**.

Blending online and face-to-face events: An online pre-class event can be used to bring learners with different levels of knowledge and skills to the same level before the face-to-face class begins. Another approach can be to start with a core classroom event, followed by online independent experiences which can include, for example, interaction with online resources or e-mentoring services for continuous reinforcement. This could include the development of communities of learners or further discussions on advanced topics of individual interest. Online events can also be used to introduce and conclude a blended learning programme. For example, they could be used to assess participants' knowledge prior to and after a course.[17]

Blending face-to-face with on-the-job events: On-the-job learning support, such as coaching, mentoring, job shadowing or study tours, can be used after face-to-face events to support learners in implementing what they learned in the classroom. Mentoring and coaching can be provided through individual one-on-one or small group face-to-face components. On-the-job support might be seen here as providing the "missing link" between skills that can be developed through training and implementation because it helps address "some of the primary blocks to change such as self-belief, action orientation and risk taking".[18] Coaching and mentoring is particularly useful when part of training-the-trainers programmes (see Box 5 below). In addition, study tours can be arranged to follow a more formal training course and enrich the learning process.

BOX 5: FAO GOOD PRACTICES — FLEXIBLE LEARNING FORMATS

E-learning + classroom training: A blended approach was used successfully in planning community-based adaptation (CBA) to climate change, targeted to rural agricultural extension workers. Bringing e-learning to rural communities might be challenging if it is not carefully integrated with other learning processes. In this case, e-learning came in after social mobilization and good practice identification had been started, and it was followed by field demonstrations in a clearly communicated and understood process. In this way, everyone was able to situate e-learning clearly with respect to their own situations and could clearly define next steps for putting learning into practice.

Typically, the format consisted of two to three days of training which included both e-learning and oral presentations of country-specific examples. The e-learning was undertaken through guided individual self-study sessions in "e-labs"; with large groups, e-learning would be projected on the main screen of the classroom and some devices were used to take advantage of the interactive elements of the tool (e.g. multi-coloured cards for exercises or an audio/video system to screen short videos in the e-learning tool). The number of participants varied from 15–30 (when using the e-lab) and from 10-–200 in the classroom).

The advantages of combining e-learning with face-to-face training (as compared with using e-learning or face-to-face alone) are:

> Face-to-face allows better tailoring and ad-hoc adjustment of training content to the specific context (e.g. pre-knowledge of participants, country context, direct response to participants' individual questions, embedding the content in the current status of related project activities);
> E-Learning allows participants to refer back to sessions of particular interest after the course;
> There is the possibility of copying the CD-ROM and disseminating it to others;
> The younger generation of extension workers are fascinated by e-learning as a new technology and are very eager to use it and improve their capabilities to use computers. The introduction of this new technology through face-to-face also includes older, often computer-illiterate extension workers on board who would have been excluded otherwise.

Source: Climate, Energy and Tenure Division (NRC)

[17] *Ghirardini, B. E-learning methodologies. A guide for designing and developing e-learning courses, FAO, 2011, p.19.*

[18] *Coaching federation research portal, http://coachfederation.org/articles/index.cfm?action=view&articleID=851&filename=133-dyadic-learning.pdf*

FAO GOOD PRACTICES – FLEXIBLE LEARNING FORMATS

Classroom training + mentoring: The training programme on Collaborative Conflict Management for enhanced national forest programmes has a well-developed component of mentoring which is carried out at specific stages of the learning process, i.e. when the learners are back in their respective countries and start using the skills they have learned by engaging in the organization, facilitation and management of a national level training. The aim of mentoring is to support them in the design and delivery of successful conflict management trainings. Mentoring activities include:

- Distance mentoring through e-mail and phone: This occurs while learners are involved with planning and preparing for their in-country training. This includes progress review according to an agreed action plan, revision and clarification of tasks, exploration of problems and review of key learning points.
- Direct mentoring as part of preparing the training: This takes place in person throughout the three days preceding the training. The objective is to support learners to relate their own session to the other sessions and the overall objectives of the training.
- Direct mentoring during the in-country training: The mentor is physically present during the training, providing psychological support, addressing challenging questions, filling gaps and contributing additional comments. At the end of each training day, this includes an hour of supported self-reflection on the content and the process of the day.
- Direct mentoring following the training: This consists of a private, one-on-one session with each mentee to look into the individual learning resulting from preparing and conducting the in-country training. This session is also used to pick up issues for future follow-up support and motivation for conducting future trainings.
- Final assessment. At the very end, the mentor reflects his/her observations and feedback about the learners' performance in a trainer assessment tool which goes to the programme coordinators. (Source: FOEP)

Study tours + coaching + in class training: In Togo, an incremental approach to learning for investment planning was adopted in the context of support for the implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), whereby learning needs were initially addressed in a crash face-to-face training course addressing basic competencies and knowledge on core themes such as Sector Wide Approaches, Medium Term Plan development and monitoring and evaluation. As participants proceeded in the development of the first agriculture investment plan, complementary on-the-job learning support was provided. Subsequently, study tours opportunities were arranged to complete and enrich the learning process, allowing Togolese representatives from government and producer organizations to learn from their peers in Mali about the process of introducing a sector wide approach. (Source: Investment Centre Division (TCI))

4.3 ORGANIZE LEARNING CONTENTS

How do you move from designing learning objectives to designing your initiative? There are several aspects that must be taken into account and it may be useful to approach this step by creating a design outline. In the design outline, you succinctly describe:

Check the **Design Outline** in Toolbox 4 (**Tool 4I**).

1. the broad goals of the initiative and the delivery mode that has been selected;
2. the specific learning objectives or 'clusters' of objectives;
3. the content you plan to include, expressed in terms of key topic headings;
4. the resources you already have, those that must be adapted and those that you must identify or create;
5. practical activities you plan to include; 6. follow-up measures; and
7. tests or exercises to assess learning and performance.

We will look at points 3 and 5 in the paragraphs that follow; points 6 and 7 are covered in chapters 6 and 7, respectively.

Determining the content

Identifying learning content implies taking decisions on what type and depth of content should be presented as well as on how it should be presented and sequenced.

Obviously, content design and development considerations will change depending on the delivery mode. You may have to prepare a lot of written material for a course or a workshop, but only draft a 'lesson plan' for yourself if you are preparing a job shadowing or a coaching session.

Table 5 presents various types of content.[19]

FACT	Unique, specific information that answers the questions: who? where? when?. They are shown, exhibited and indicated. Examples: data, lists, historical events
CONCEPT	A group of objects, entities or ideas that: are defined by a single word or term; share common characteristics; differ in unimportant characteristics; require a definition; and answer the question: "What is a …?". Example: the "advocacy" concept
PROCESS	A flow of events that describes how something functions. They are events that involve more than one actor. They can be divided into phases. Example: "the assessment process"
PRINCIPLE	Strategic guidelines which can guide decisions and complex tasks. Example: "guidelines for writing clearly and concisely"
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS	Verbal and non-verbal skills for interacting with other people. Example: content related to "negotiating" or "solving group conflict"
ATTITUDES	Predispositions to behaviour Example: content related to appreciating the "importance and urgency of adopting measures to limit the negative impacts of climate change"

[Table 5] Types of content

It is important to find the right balance between quantity and depth of content. Learning initiatives are not opportunities to showcase all the knowledge that is available in a given discipline! To have an impact, content must be essential to the learning objectives that have been identified and must be directly relevant to the organizational goals.

It may be useful to draw a distinction between content that is "nice to have" and content that is essential because it directly supports the work/tasks that participants must perform in their own settings to help achieve organizational goals.

'MUST-HAVE' CONTENT	'NICE-TO-HAVE' CONTENT
Relates directly to the work or the tasks that individuals must perform to achieve their own objectives towards organizational goals	Provides additional details that might be interesting, yet are not supportive in attaining the learning objectives

[Table 6] Table 6

[19] *Ghirardini, B. E-learning methodologies Guide, freely adapted by the author from Morrison G.R., Ross S.M., Kemp J.E., Designing Effective Instruction, Wiley & Sons, Inc., Third Edition 2001.*

Finding the right mix of technical and soft content

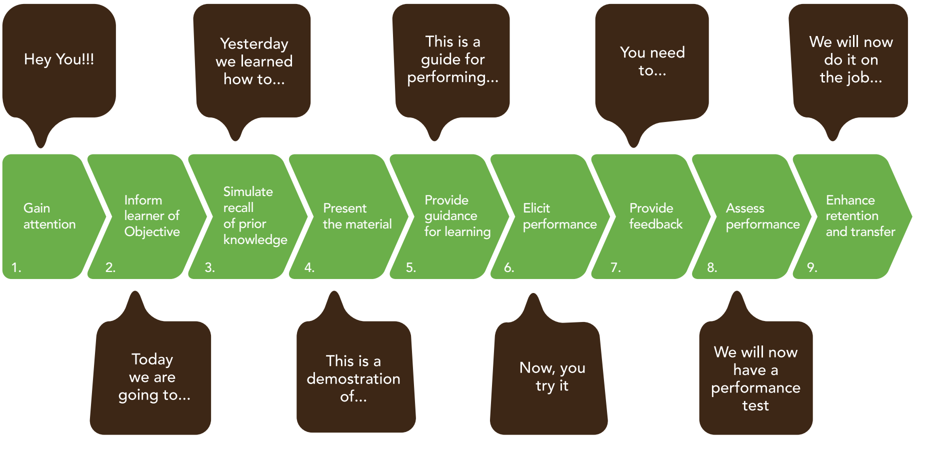
Most of FAO's learning initiatives aim to enhance knowledge, skills and attitudes of key actors in the areas of its specialization (e.g. food security, agriculture). To be sustainable, however, learning in technical areas has to be complemented by development of functional skills that allow a sustainable uptake of technical learning in Member Countries. For example, individual capacities in project management, partnering and networking, knowledge management, negotiation and advocacy and policy processes are often essential and should be strengthened alongside other more specific capacities.[20]

BOX 6: FAO GOOD PRACTICES — INTEGRATING FUNCTIONAL CAPACITIES/SOFT SKILLS WITH TECHNICAL TRAINING

The e-learning course, entitled "Communicating for Food Security" (part of the e-learning curriculum entitled "Food Security Information for Decision-making") targets mid-level managers, technical staff and field personnel who are involved in collecting, managing, analysing and reporting food security information. It provides concrete guidance on how to inform and influence policy-makers' decisions. It also covers 'soft skill areas' such as lobbying and advocacy techniques for changing a food security policy. Available on the FAO CD portal at: http://www.fao.org/capacitydevelopment/e-learning-services/en/

Structuring the learning initiative

Once you have defined the content, the learning initiative needs to be appropriately structured. The educational psychologist Robert M. Gagné suggests nine distinct "events" that make learning successful and can easily be adapted to all types of learning initiatives. These are illustrated in the arrow steps of the diagram below. Examples of how to address each "event" are provided in the Toolbox.



[Diagram 5] Gagné nine learning events

[20] *Reference to functional capacities illustrated in LM1, Section 3.2.*

Of the “events” shown in the diagram above, eliciting performance and reinforcing practise is of paramount importance. Research shows that learning composed entirely of frontal lectures and/or PowerPoint presentations (PPT) is unlikely to be effective in facilitating learning and use of learned skills, knowledge and attitudes after the course. Instead, participants should be given ample opportunity to practise learned skills in the course, discuss their own perspectives, set goals for using the learning and consider how learning relates to their specific workplace or country environments.

To this end, the following strategies should be considered to increase participation and reinforce learning:

> Case studies to practise technical skills enable learners to see how theoretical learning can be applied in real-life situations.
> Drawing up action plans enables participants to work through how they might apply learning in their own contexts.
> Guided discussions enable participants to learn through actively engaging with materials, and generally aid in absorption of knowledge.
> Class discussions based on participant presentations of case studies from their own contexts enable participants to learn from each other’s experience and trainers to gain a better understanding of participants’ needs and constraints.
> In-class project assignments enable participants to gain hands-on experience with learned materials and to receive feedback from trainers on their understanding of content.

BOX 7: FAO GOOD PRACTICES — STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING METHODS

Case studies: Case studies are student-centred activities based on topics that demonstrate theoretical concepts in an applied setting. Case studies are useful pedagogical tools that shift the emphasis from teacher-centred to more participatory and student-centred activities. As such, they are highly recommended to increase interactivity in workshops or other face-to-face settings. How to go about developing case studies?

Typically, development of case studies is outsourced to consultants prior to training workshops. In the EU-funded "All ACP Agricultural Commodities Project", an activity designed to better understand successful value chain development in the Pacific, the Trade and Markets Division (EST) piloted an alternative approach in which consultants were paired with ministry staff in Member Countries to work together on developing case studies. This approach combined methodological expertise and local experience and resulted in increased development of national capacities as part of the workshop preparation process. (Source: EST)

Simulations: Since the emergence of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI/H5N1) in Asia, FAO and its partners have developed national table-top simulation exercises (SE) to strengthen in-country capacities in emergency preparedness and response for the prevention and control of zoonotic diseases at the human-animal-environment interface. SE consists of two days of room-based events bringing together professionals from different sectors involved in addressing emerging outbreaks in human and animal populations (e.g. central, provincial and district levels from the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Health, veterinary and public health epidemiologists, laboratory diagnosticians, private service providers, communication experts, environment and wildlife services, civil defense, farmers' associations). The simulation is based on a scenario describing a fictive outbreak, from its suspicion to its control. Participants address questions covering the different activities which would be carried out in response to the different phases of the evolving disease situation.

In Mauritania, where the exercise was conducted in June 2010, a large map was placed in the middle of the room to enable better visualization of the outbreak areas and to illustrate the extent of the implemented measures. The elicited discussions around the map were generally perceived as very useful, because they triggered more lively exchanges and involvement among participants. On two occasions, mock press conferences were held to force participants, who played the role of the authorities, to respond to challenging questions posed by the organizers and fellow participants taking the roles of critical journalists.

Through the simulation exercise, the country's preparedness and capabilities to control the emergence of a zoonotic disease are assessed. The identified gaps are used to enhance the country's contingency plan and to develop a national action plan to improve the country's preparedness and response capacity to prevent and control zoonotic threats. A by-product is also that different participants establish channels among themselves to discover the strengths and weaknesses of the plan and the procedures in place to address a specific emergency situation. The approach also enhances communication, cooperation and collaboration among the different sectors that would be involved in case of an emergency situation. The project was developed jointly with the World Health Organization and funded by USAID. (Source: Animal Production and Health Division (AGAH))

Supporting ‘learning by doing’

Experiential learning, illustrated here through the well-known FFS approach, is a good example of a learning process that focuses on reinforcing learners’ practise via a ‘learning by doing’ approach. This approach also proves to contribute to changes in attitude.

The experiential learning cycle is especially useful for practical skill training because most of its techniques are designed to involve the learners in practising the skill. The experiential model helps people assume responsibility for their own learning because it asks them to reflect on their experience, draw conclusions and identify applications. Most importantly, learning occurs in the farmer’s own local environment where farmers jointly diagnose problems, arrive at possible solutions and commit themselves to take action – with extension staff playing the role of facilitator.

Started in the mid-1980s in integrated pest management on rice in Indonesia, the FFS concept is increasingly being used to guide FAO’s approach in support of learning across technical sectors. Examples of adaptations of the FFS concept are the Junior Farmer Field Schools (ESW), FFS for Sustainable Land Management (Land and Water Division (NRL)), Conservation Agriculture and Farmer Business Schools (AGS).

BOX 8: FAO GOOD PRACTICES — EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING: FARMER FIELD SCHOOLS AND FARM BUSINESS SCHOOLS

A Farmer Field School (FFS) consists of 25–30 farmers who meet once a week for an entire crop growing season. It is facilitated by extension workers or skilled farmers. Employing non-formal education methods, the field is used as the primary resource for discovery-based learning. The process is facilitative and respects the experience that farmers bring with them. Farmers work in small groups to ensure that everyone’s ideas are shared. The activities are designed to respond to the immediate needs of farmers and are geared towards encouraging creativity and independence. The FFS trainers play a crucial role in ensuring that the environment and all resources contribute to the farmers’ learning experiences. (Source: http://www.vegetableipmasia.org/Concepts/FarmerFieldSchools1.html

FAO has recently taken the FFS concept a stage further by developing the Farm Business School (FBS) concept for interested graduates of the FFS School or members of established farmers’ associations or groups. The approach uses some of the principles of the farmer field school – learning by doing and gradual skills development over time. The FBS training programme covers an entire farm business cycle from diagnosis and planning to implementation, evaluation and re-planning. (Source: AGS - The Farm Business School)

4.4 DEFINE FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT

The design phase does not stop with the actual development of content and choice of learning methods. It is important that you also consider which sort of follow-up is necessary and feasible to reinforce learning and support learners. What budget, time and resources can and should be made available to provide follow-up support?

You may want to check the following tools at this stage, which can help you plan and manage the initiative more effectively:

Designing an **evaluation plan** (Tool 7a) in Toolbox 7

Designing a **follow-up plan** (Tool 6a) in Toolbox 6

Checklist for quality assurance of learning initiative (Tool 8b) in the Planning and Coordinating Toolbox

Checklist for learning event preparation (Tool 8d) in the Planning and Coordinating Toolbox

It is also important to start defining at this stage how you will evaluate your programme or event. Whether it is e-learning or a workshop, a one-off event or a multi-year programme, an evaluation plan should be set to verify that:

> the process was effective, i.e. that the steps in the learning cycle management were up to standard. This can be assessed as the initiative is progressing, which would allow you to refine or change it to make it more effective and/or improve future learning activities; and

> the initiative is producing the expected results. This allows you to refine the design and delivery strategies or the content approach of the initiative or to plan more effectively for future follow-up support.

More in-depth discussion on follow-up and evaluation are provided in chapters 6 and 7.

4.5 DEFINE LOGISTICS FOR DELIVERING FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING

A checklist to guide you in preparing for face-to-face learning events is found in Tool 8d in Toolbox 8. This checklist, useful for trainers, facilitators, coordinators and managers of learning initiatives, should be used while planning and delivering an event.

ARE LOGISTICS BEING ADDRESSED?

At this stage, you should have a clear picture in your mind of how your learning initiative will look. There are also important logistical decisions that need to be taken, such as the following:

- Who will deliver the initiative? Have trainers, coaches or facilitators been identified?
- Have you ensured that trainers, coaches and/or facilitators have the appropriate competencies?
- Have trainers, facilitators or coaches been familiarized with the goals of the initiative and the learning content material?
- Do contracts or Letters of Agreement need to be stipulated? Who will do it?
- When will the initiative be piloted? Where?
- Are logistics for the event confirmed (e.g. venue, air tickets, accommodations)?
- Have all partners and relevant counterparts been informed?

KEY LEARNING POINTS

- To have an impact, the learning initiative's content must be essential to the learning objectives and must be directly relevant to the participants' work tasks and, where appropriate, to the organization's goals.
- Whatever delivery mode is selected, learning initiative participants should be given ample opportunity to practise learned skills, discuss their own perspectives, set goals to use learning and consider how learning relates to their workplace or country environments.
- During the design phase, it is important to define the type of follow-up that will be required to support learners, including the budget, time and resources required; likewise, an evaluation plan should be defined.

PLANNING CHECKLIST

	DECISION TAKEN	DISCUSSION STILL REQUIRED	N/A
1. Have S.M.A.R.T. learning objectives been defined?			
2. Has the optimal delivery mode been identified and have the learners' context and sustainability considerations been taken into account in the decision?			
3. Has the support of a professional Instructional Designer been considered in designing the initiative?			
4. Has a task analysis been carried out to help identify/prioritize content that is relevant to the needs of learners?			
5. Has a design outline been developed and consensus created around it?			
7. Has peer review and/or piloting of the initiative been arranged, and has integration of lessons learned been planned?			
8. Who will deliver the initiative, when and where? Have Letters of Agreement or contracts been stipulated and have all efforts been made to involve national/local resources?			
9. Has a follow-up plan been developed? What provisions can and should be made for follow-up support? Have adequate resources been allocated into current or future projects?			
10. What types of evaluation will be done to assess achievement of the objectives of the initiative? Have adequate resources been allocated?			

STEP 5 DELIVER THE LEARNING SOLUTION

Key actions for this step:

- Identify roles for delivering learning initiatives
- Ensure quality and coherence in delivering learning initiatives

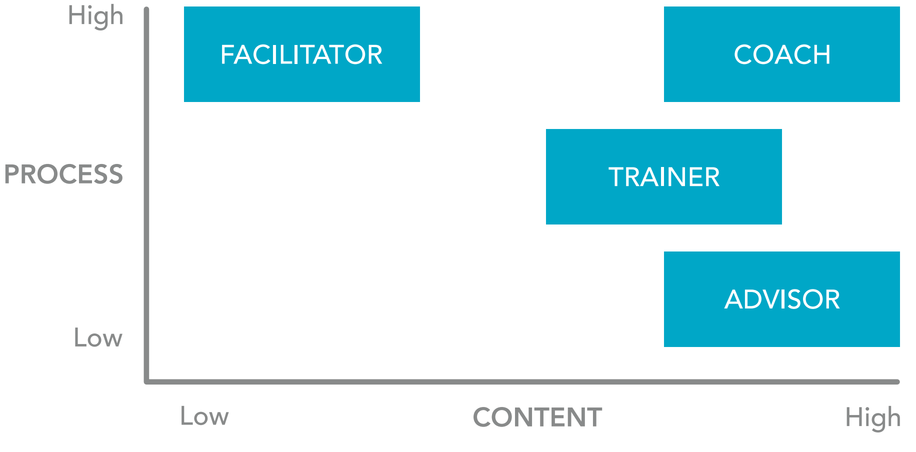
Tools 5a 5b 5c 5d 5g 5h 5i 5e 5f 5j 5k

This chapter will discuss the roles that FAO Technical Officers, partners and collaborators must play to create effective learning situations on the job, in a face-to-face context and in online collaborative learning environments.

5.1 IDENTIFY ROLES FOR DELIVERING LEARNING INITIATIVES

Both process-related and content-related knowledge and skills, including those listed in the table below, are essential to effectively deliver learning initiatives. FAO staff can play the role of facilitator, coach, trainer or advisor – each of which imply using different combinations of process-related and content-related competencies. **Diagram 5** and **Table 6** below describe each of these roles.

PROCESS-RELATED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS	CONTENT-RELATED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS
Knowledge of adult learning principles	Knowledge and expertise in subject matter
Effective communication, including inquiry and advocacy	Presenting technical content clearly, adapting to varying audience needs and learning styles
Facilitating group processes through participatory approaches	Facilitating learning needs analysis in technical areas
Cross-cultural awareness	Supporting uptake of technical knowledge and skills based on the local/organizational context



[Diagram 6] Facilitative roles

The facilitator is a neutral third party, acceptable to all participants in an initiative, who has little or no knowledge of the subject matter and who has no substantive decision-making authority. His/her role is to help a group increase its effectiveness by diagnosing and intervening in group processes and structure. FAO employs internal and external facilitators when delivering learning initiatives in its own areas of expertise. Because of their content-neutral stance, facilitators have to work always in collaboration with subject-matter experts.	**The advisor** is used for his/her expertise in a particular area. The advisor is a third-party expert whose purpose is to help the client make informed decisions. He/she does so by applying the area of expertise to the client's particular situation, recommending a course of action and, in some cases, implementing it for the client. An advisor has some process-related skills and, in the FAO context, is often the same person as the Technical Officer. He/she provides technical advice to partners and is often called in as a resource for on-the-job training as part of his/her regular work in Member Countries.
The coach usually works one-on-one with people, helping them improve their effectiveness, although coaching may also be done in small groups. The technical coach brings subject-area expertise in the coaching relationship, but the heart of the coaching role is helping individuals reflect on their behaviour, explore new possibilities and find solutions for themselves. A coach jointly designs the learning process with the client instead of assuming that he/she knows how the client can best learn. The role of Executive Coach is commonly found in the FAO context (for example in the Management and Leadership Programme for senior managers). The role of the Technical Coach is not (yet) established in supporting the learning of counterparts in Member Countries.	**The trainer** is an expert in a particular domain and has responsibility for teaching a particular topic. He/she usually has good facilitative skills and knowledge of participatory techniques, which are used to enhance participants' learning experience. In FAO, trainers are the most common role. They combine an adequate knowledge of process with content expertise. The role of trainer is associated almost exclusively with face-to-face workshops.

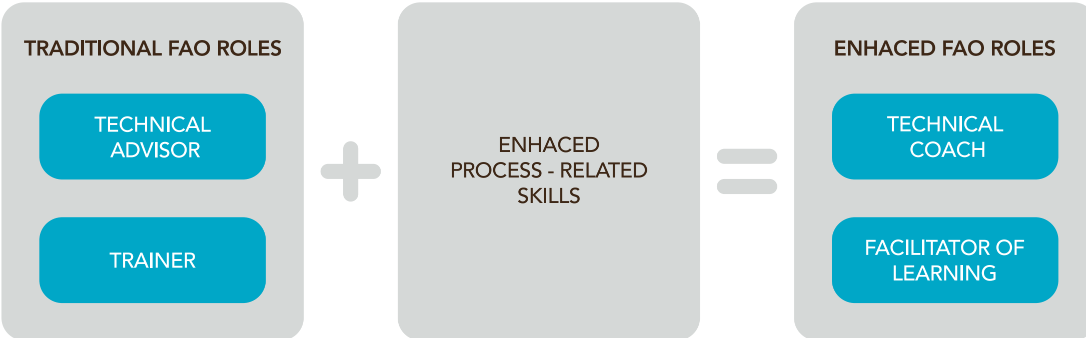
[Table 7] Roles in delivering learning initiatives[21]

Facilitators, technical coaches, trainers and advisors are very important roles in FAO's activities in support of learning in Member Countries. The distinctions among them, however, are only theoretical because these roles are often combined in the same individuals. The advisor and the coach, for example, may be the same person, where the advisor adopts appropriate coaching approaches and techniques. The trainer may play the role of the facilitator where he/she integrates facilitative skills and participatory approaches.

This manual advocates that process-related skills are critical for any FAO staff/collaborator who is involved in supporting learning of FAO's counterparts and stakeholders in Member Countries. In particular, strengthening process-related skills is important to allow a shift:

> from trainers to facilitators of learning: process and content experts who are able to facilitate any type of learning situation, whether in face-to-face, experiential or collaborative online situations;
> from technical advisors to technical coaches: content experts who play an increased coaching role so that regular advising tasks become genuine opportunities for learning and self-growth.

[21] *Freely adapted from 'The facilitator and other facilitative roles', R. Schwarz, in Organization Development, p. 409.*



BOX 9: FAO GOOD PRACTICES — FAO EXPERTS AS TECHNICAL COACHES.

In the project, «*Amélioration des capacités de formulation et d'analyse d'impact des politiques de développement agricole et rural sur la sécurité alimentaire et la pauvreté*» (Improvement of capacities to formulate and assess impact of agricultural development policies on food security and poverty) in Burkina Faso, FAO used multiple learning processes as part of a three-year broad capacity development effort that included technical support, on-the-job assistance and support in distance coaching and mentoring. The key success factor was involving participants in defining the learning content and creating their own learning plans based on their actual work needs; this increased their motivation and sense of ownership in the initiative. FAO experts and the few international consultants deployed to the project did not play the role of "experts" in the traditional sense of the term, i.e. those who have solutions on hand. They acted more as coaches and reference points for expertise, i.e. as people willing to share their technical skills and knowledge, merge them with other competencies from different sources and adapt them to the context to ensure their relevance and usefulness. This occurred in the framework of a partnership among different ministries (Environment, Agriculture, Economy and Finance), academic and civil society bodies, the National Statistical Office and selected development agencies. In this collaborative process, the actors sought solutions to rural development issues through appropriate policies, and analytical capacities were created within the national institutions. As a result of this process, the government decided to restructure the Ministry of Agriculture and created a unit for analysing, the impacts of socio-economic policy. In this way the institutional sustainability of the capacity development achievements was strengthened. (Source: Policy Assistance Support Service TCSP, ref. FNOP/INT/120/NOR)

Process-related skills can be learned and require that you practise a lot. While this Module is not intended to make you a facilitator, trainer or technical coach, it provides suggestions and tips to help you adopt appropriate approaches for delivering face-to-face workshops, coaching people on-the-job or facilitating online learning events. It also contains reference to the wealth of material that exists in the area.

Toolbox 5 contains a broad set of references and tools that can help you deliver effective learning situations.

5.2 ENSURE QUALITY AND COHERENCE IN DELIVERING LEARNING INITIATIVES

Toolbox 5 provides tools and guidance for delivering on-the-job and face-to-face learning initiatives; specifically, including tools on experiential learning, coaching, facilitating and delivering training.

KEY LEARNING POINTS

- Facilitators, technical coaches, trainers and advisors are very important roles in FAO's activities in support of learning in Member Countries. In particular, there is scope for establishing stronger roles for technical coaches, who can transform regular advising tasks into genuine learning opportunities.
- Strengthened process-related skills allow FAO staff to shift from being trainers to facilitators of learning, and from being technical advisors to technical coaches.

PLANNING CHECKLIST

PLANNING CHECKLIST	DECISION TAKEN	DISCUSSION STILL REQUIRED	N/A
1. When identifying or appointing the facilitator(s), have appropriate skills for facilitating on-the-job and experiential learning been considered?			
2. When identifying or appointing the facilitator(s), have appropriate skills for facilitating formal face-to-face learning initiatives been considered?			
3. When identifying or appointing the tutors/ facilitator(s), have appropriate skills for facilitating online collaborative learning been considered?			
4. Have gender and cultural aspects been considered in selecting the facilitating team and in organizing the initiative?			
5. Have all opportunities been sought to use local resources for the initiative?			

STEP 6 PROVIDE FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT

Key actions for this step:

- Arrange follow-up support

  Tools 6a 6b 6c

Follow-up support is needed to help participants translate learning into practice in their workplaces. Much research has indicated that participants are more likely to use what they've learned when they receive follow-up support. In addition, maintaining follow-up contact with participants enables organizers or coordinators to develop a much greater understanding of how useful the learning initiative has been and what obstacles participants have faced in trying to implement learning. This chapter will review some common forms of follow-up support and provide some hints on how to plan such support.

6.1 ARRANGE FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT

Among the most common forms of follow-up support are:

> on-the-job technical assistance;
> mentoring programmes which pair learners with more experienced counterparts in their organizations or in other organizations;
> Internet forums or list-serves linking participants and/ or providing them a forum to receive expert advice;
> participation in knowledge networks or communities of practice;
> refresher courses or online sessions;
> help-desks or established focal points within relevant organizations, for ongoing access to knowledge resources and advice; and
> provision of toolkits or Web-based materials.

Check **Tool 6b** in Toolbox 6 for a template of a **follow-up plan**. Some examples of common follow-up measures are provided in **Tool 6c**.

How much follow-up support is needed depends on a variety of factors, including the needs of learners and the objectives of the initiative. For instance, learners may have difficulty applying what they learned to practical situations, or they may need further information, resources or expertise in order to be able to use what they learned. Technical assistance may be particularly useful where learning needs to be adapted to be put into practice. For example, policy-makers who participated in a workshop on policy modalities may need some form of practical support to translate learned principles into policy mechanisms appropriate for their specific environments.

The extent of follow-up support also depends on resources available. Where resources do not exist for refresher courses or on-the-job technical assistance, other, less expensive follow-up support modalities may be used. Some less costly methods for providing follow-up support include:

> scheduled online support sessions where learners are given the chance to share experiences or ask questions to trainers or other experts online;
> appointing technical coaches or mentors from former course alumni or more senior members of participants' workplace organizations; and
> facilitating peer-to-peer dialogue and consultations through list serves or websites for initiative participants.

BOX 10: FAO GOOD PRACTICES – FOLLOW-UP

Alumni networks – In Mali and other project countries, alumni of an FFS meet as a group in one of their own fields on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, rotating each time to the field of a different group member. Here they discuss specific problems and advise each other on possible solutions. If solutions are not forthcoming, the facilitator has access to district and national level expertise; this encourages two-way flows of information between communities and technical support networks. The cost of these follow-up activities (only the facilitator's transportation cost) is only a fraction of that of an FFS. (Source: The West African Regional Integrated Production and Pest Management Programme, a case study, AGP.)

Q&A service and online resources – After the completion of a course, a question and answer service will be offered, together with access to additional online resources, to facilitate the transfer to the job. (Source: FAO-GiZ Blended Learning Programme for Country Teams and Food Security Thematic Working Group Members, part of a project on Developing the Capacities of Food Security Professionals to support the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Pillar III).

GiZ: GiZ invests heavily in thematic alumni networks, according approximately 10 percent of course budgets to alumni work. These networks provide ongoing peer-to-peer follow-up support and allow the exchange of information on specific topics or issues among and with participants, alumni and partner organizations. They are a way for GiZ to encourage the transfer of acquired skills from individual advanced training programmes (such as a study trip to Germany) into the work environment in a participant's home country, making knowledge obtained in courses sustainable and transferable. Networks initially have GiZ facilitators, but the expectation is that over time, network members will take over management of the networks, enlisting needed inputs and support from other alumni. GiZ 's experience has been that programme managers are best able to set up alumni networks, because they are motivated by personal contact. (Source: GiZ)

Developing a follow-up plan

The follow-up plan is an outline document which helps you to lay out the most appropriate follow-up measures for your learning initiative. Using this plan, you can figure out what kinds of measures you wish to use, the kinds of resources you will require and the best roll-out strategy for your plan. In short, the follow-up plan helps you establish a coherent strategy for a systematic and realistic approach to promote sustained engagement in the topics of your initiative.

How to build a plan

To maximize opportunities for follow-up, begin preparing the ground before the implementation of the learning initiative. Ideally, follow-up should be planned during the design phase of the initiative and included in your design outline. The plan can be further refined as the initiative is delivered and additional information is disclosed by participants. By the design stage, however, you should already have a clear picture of the type of support that might be required for participants to implement and use their learning. Make budget provisions for the follow-up in advance.

To build a plan, it is useful to first determine the opportunities in the work environment that can be used to apply or internalize the skills, knowledge or attitudes that participants will have acquired upon completion of the learning activity, as well as the challenges that may exist. To this end, you can use the information you've gathered throughout the previous steps of the learning management cycle, particularly when assessing the context and the learning needs, when relating to counterparts to identify participants and during the delivery phase. You can access a template follow-up plan in Toolbox 6.

KEY LEARNING POINTS

- Follow-up support should be an integral part of any learning initiative.
- Decisions on what type of follow-up support is required should be taken early in the learning management cycle, based on the objectives of the initiative, the resources available and participants' needs.

PLANNING CHECKLIST

PLANNING CHECKLIST	DECISION TAKEN	DISCUSSION STILL REQUIRED	N/A
1. Is the follow-up plan being used as a reference for deciding the types of follow-up measures to put in place? Are these measures cost-effective?			
2. Are follow-up measures included in the relevant work plans for the learning initiative and have resources and time been committed?			
3. If local partners take on the initiative and intend to upscale it in the future, what sort of support are they likely to need?			
4. Do national partners need institutional support to uptake changes brought about by the learning initiative in their own context?			
5. Have synergies been created with relevant actors within and outside FAO to ensure that the appropriate support is provided?			

STEP 7 EVALUATE LEARNING INITIATIVES

Key actions for this step:

- Customize approaches for results evaluation

  Tools 7a 7b

  LEVEL 1

  Tools 7c 7d 7e 7f 7g

  LEVEL 2

  Tools 7h 7i 7j

  LEVEL 3

  Tools 7k 7l 7m

- Customize instruments for process evaluation

  Tools 7n 8c 7o 7p

Evaluation of learning activities is an integral part of the learning management cycle. Evaluation of results also should be combined with assessing the quality of processes and gathering information on how factors in participants' work situations affect implementation of learning. This chapter will look at process and results evaluation and will review some common instruments to gather required information.

7.1 EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

Evaluations of learning initiatives may serve two objectives:

> to improve future learning activities and identify where supplementary support to learners is needed; and
> to ensure accountability to stakeholders and determine the extent to which the learning initiative has achieved its goals.

Different types of information may be gathered for the evaluation, depending on its purpose. For example, coordinators of learning initiatives often find that qualitative information (such as participants' descriptions of their experiences in trying to apply learning in the workplace) tell them far more about the use/transfer of learning than quantitative scores. However, quantitative ratings may be necessary for accountability purposes. Similarly, for learning purposes it may be more important to gather information about the quality of learning processes than about the exact nature of learning results. This is important to bear in mind because, where evaluation resources are scarce, evaluation managers may have to prioritize what sort of information to gather to best achieve the evaluation objectives.

7.2 CUSTOMIZE APPROACHES FOR RESULTS EVALUATION

Process evaluations

Process evaluations look at the quality of the learning management cycle and inputs. They may assess:

- quality of the needs assessment;
- quality of the training techniques;
- quality of the facilitator's/trainer's approach;
- quality of the facilities;
- quality of the learning materials;
- appropriateness of participant selection strategies/participant mix;
- appropriateness of the course length/content;
- appropriateness of the mix of presentations, discussions and activities; and
- quality and adequacy of the follow-up support.

The **Quality Assurance Checklist** in **Tool 8c** (Planning and Coordinating Toolbox) is a useful tool to carry out a process evaluation.

Process evaluations are important because they allow coordinators of learning initiatives to determine what needs to change in their plans and delivery so that other sessions or programmes will be most effective for participants.

Process evaluations are a valuable source of information to improve the quality and results of learning initiatives. Process evaluations can occur after the learning initiative or while the initiative is being designed, developed or delivered. Process evaluation can be done by instructional design experts or managers as part of quality assurance processes.

Evaluation approaches that may be used to gather process information include:

- review of documentation related to the event/initiative;
- observation of sessions by expert evaluators;
- participant satisfaction forms/questionnaires;
- oral feedback from facilitators, trainers, coaches and participants; and
- interviews with relevant stakeholders.

Results evaluations

Results evaluations look at the effects of learning on participants and their organizations. The most commonly known framework for evaluating results of a learning initiative is the Kirkpatrick model. Kirkpatrick divides results into four levels:

> Level 1: Participant satisfaction
> Level 2: Learning
> Level 3: Workplace behaviour outcomes
> Level 4: Organizational impact

All levels except the first one are linearly related. In other words, learning is a necessary but not sufficient precondition for behaviour change. Behaviour change is necessary but not sufficient for organizational impact. Participant satisfaction, however, is not strongly correlated with the other three levels of results. A learning initiative can result in learning even when participant satisfaction is low and can be ineffective in achieving learning goals even when participant satisfaction is high.

Level 1 - Participant satisfaction evaluations, generally administered through questionnaires at the end of the initiative, are the most common form of evaluation. It is important to note, however, that such questionnaires are not good predictors of the extent to which participants have learned or will be able to use what they've learned on the job. To the contrary, research shows little or no correlation between participant ratings of learning initiatives and actual learning/use of the learning. Thus, participant satisfaction questionnaires are generally useful for measuring quality of processes, but not for results other than satisfaction.

Check **Toolbox 7** on evaluation. It provides **detailed guidance, examples and tools** on developing evaluation tools for **Level 1-2-3 evaluation**.

Level 2 - Learning can be measured either formally or informally. Formal measures of learning can be done through pre- and post-tests to examine what was the starting knowledge of participants and how the initiative added to that knowledge. However, for many courses, such tests may not be feasible or particularly useful. Informal gauges of learning can include participant in-class presentations, projects or on-the-job achievements. In addition, facilitators, coaches or trainers can use questions on material to check participant understanding and reinforce learning.

Level 3 - Workplace behaviour outcomes is the most important level of results evaluation of learning initiatives, and one of the most challenging. For learning initiatives to contribute to organizational capacity, participants have to be willing and able to apply knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired through learning. To understand how participants have used learning in their workplaces, it is necessary to do a post-initiative evaluation of the behaviour outcomes. Such evaluations should generally be done at least six months but no more than two years after the initiative – enough time to ensure that participants have had sufficient time to implement learning, but not so long that they are likely to have forgotten learning content.

A range of methods may be used to gauge the use of learning. It is important to carefully choose evaluation options based on needs and available resources. Toolbox 7 contains examples of how it can be done.

BOX 11: FAO GOOD PRACTICES — ASSESSING BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

The project "Building in-country capacity for food security information products that support decision-making" was assessed with a view to analysing the extent to which FAO's training support was effective in enhancing countries' institutional capacities to produce more relevant, credible and accessible food security information products (FSIPs) that support decision-making in food security.

Workplace behavioural changes (Level 3) were assessed several months after the trainings took place through questionnaires, interviews and observations against a set of criteria for measuring FSIP improvements.

Concrete examples in all countries showed that several months after the training, participants had retained the learning, applied it successfully at their workplace and adopted new attitudes in carrying out their job. Evidence of this workplace behavioural change is summarized below:

Source: Assessment Report, Building In-country Capacity for Food Security Information Products that Support Decision-making, EC/FAO Food Security Programme Information for Action, December 2008

Level 4 – Organizational impact rarely results from stand-alone learning initiatives.[22] For this reason, while impact evaluations may be done of broader organizational capacity development programmes which address the various aspects of capacity problems, they are rarely done for learning interventions alone. Organizational impact of learning is often difficult to measure for three reasons:

> There is generally an attribution problem. Even where organizations have changed, it is often difficult to know the extent to which this was as a result of learning activities rather than other complementary interventions or changing conditions.
> There may be a time lag problem. Sometimes the impact of learning on organizations is only evident years later.
> It may be hard to find reliable quantitative measures for some forms of organizational change.

Through review of organizational performance and interviews with organization's management and stakeholders, it may be possible to gauge some general evidence of impact in terms of, for example, an organization being more responsive to the needs of stakeholders, forming new partnerships or showing an increased ability to manage emergency response to disasters.

Organizational development and change, and the role of learning in supporting organizational change processes, is the object of specialized research. Learning Module 4 of the Capacity Development series will explicitly deal with organizational development and analysis. Additional resources and examples of how to go about measuring the impact of capacity development are referenced in the LenCD Learning Package[23] and in Toolbox 7.

7.3 CUSTOMIZE INSTRUMENTS FOR PROCESS EVALUATION

Process evaluations are a valuable source of information for improving the quality and results of learning initiatives. It allows facilitators/trainers to determine what needs to change in their learning plans and delivery so that present or future sessions or programmes will be most effective for participants.

[22] *According to a World Bank Independent Evaluation Group study of training (http://www1.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/IEG_Ext_Content/IFC_External_Corporate_Site/IEG+Home), over 50 percent of all training does not contribute to sustainable capacity. The study found that while training achieves its learning goals, it often fails to result in sustainable capacity development because learning is not relevant to participants' work situation needs or because they face obstacles to implementing learning in the workplace. This finding has been reinforced in numerous other studies.*

[23] *LenCD Learning Package: How to measure capacity outcomes and results for different levels and contexts http://www.lencd.org/group/learning-package/document/how-measure-capacity-outcomes-results-different-levels-contexts; Synthesis report of the evaluation of Dutch support to capacity development http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/8/60/48678426.pdf*

KEY LEARNING POINTS

> Process and results evaluations are both integral components of the learning management cycle. Both should be carried out to the extent possible.
> Kirkpatrick's four-level framework for evaluating learning results is recommended for evaluating the impact of FAO's learning initiatives. Level 3 (workplace behaviour outcomes) is the most important level of results evaluation; it should be carried, to the extent possible, after FAO's learning interventions in Member Countries.

PLANNING CHECKLIST

	DECISION TAKEN	DISCUSSION STILL REQUIRED	N/A
1. Is the evaluation plan confirmed and have resources been budgeted, identified or committed for it?			
2. Does the evaluation plan include both process and Level 1-3 results evaluation?			
3. Have adequate mechanisms been developed (e.g. questionnaires, surveys, knowledge test), based on the evaluation plan and available good practices?			
4. Who will carry out the evaluation and have specialized resources been sought where necessary?			
5. Who has an interest in being informed about the result of the evaluation? Who has to be informed?			
6. How are evaluation results integrated in future planning?			

CONCLUSIONS

WHAT MAKES A LEARNING INITIATIVE EFFECTIVE?

One of FAO's most common activities is supporting learning of counterparts in Member Countries in various technical fields. This will most likely remain an important area of work for the organization in the future.

For learning to contribute to effective capacity development, some specific conditions must be addressed, which have been explored in depth throughout this Module. Most importantly, learning initiatives must be conceived, planned, designed and developed according to sound adult learning principles, established quality standards and existing good practices — both internal and external to FAO. The learning management cycle suggested in the Module is one possible model that offers guidance in the development stages of a learning intervention.

Learning initiatives must also be assessed and evaluated to ensure that investments and efforts are being used as effectively and efficiently as possible. Evaluation of the results of learning interventions, and particularly the effects of the intervention on work behaviours and practices, is becoming more and more important in the current result-based culture of FAO and in light of recent debates on measuring capacity development results. This explains the special attention accorded to evaluation in this Module.

Finally, no matter how successful a learning initiative has been, it will have no long-term impact on national capacities if it is not anchored in a national system that can sustain it and continue after donor support has ended.

It is hoped that some of the guidance of this Module will contribute to making FAO's activities in support of learning and capacity development an even stronger component of the organization's work.

ANNEX 1 – THE INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING

Over the course of the past two decades, the international community's understanding of the role of learning in developing sustainable capacity has evolved considerably. In its 2006 "Guide to good capacity development practice",[24] the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) states (OECD, 2006):

"The traditional capacity building tools of technical cooperation and training have often proved ineffective in helping to improve performance because they have not been linked to the necessary organizational and institutional developments…This implies approaching capacity development in an integrated way, so that individual skills and the organizational settings in which they can be put effectively to work are created simultaneously."

A subsequent 2010 report "Training and Beyond: Seeking Better Practices for Capacity Development"[25] highlights the following key points of the emerging consensus:

> In many circumstances, resources are wasted on inappropriate initiatives because complex contextual factors negate the potential effectiveness of training and other learning-based interventions. The design of any intervention should be informed by in-depth understanding of the local context and identification of opportunities and constraints, and appropriately aligned to broader capacity development initiatives;

> Training individuals may not be an adequate capacity development response and is rarely one in and of itself. Training is best used as a component of work at multiple levels of organizations and country systems, however defined;

> The ability to learn has been recognized as both a capability in its own right and an essential, underpinning capability for other aspects of sustainable capacity development. Activities need to go beyond training towards processes that support learning;

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[24] *OECD-DAC The Challenge of Capacity Development: Working towards good practice, (p. 30) http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/capacitybuilding/pdf/DAC_paper_final.pdf*

[25] *Training and Beyond : Seeking Better Practice for Capacity Development:, OECD-DAC, January 2010, Jenny Pearson, p. 2 http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/35/53/44696077.pdf*

- Achieving sustainable capacity development impact calls for long-term perspectives. There is a need to make strategic links between short-term activities, such as training courses, and long-term learning and change goals for sustainable capacity development impact. Additionally, there is a need to facilitate the continuity of long-term relationships that can make valuable contributions to success and enable persistence through difficulties;
- The quality of training design and training cycle management is fundamental to success;
- Training has often been both inappropriately used and poorly implemented as the response to capacity development needs. A results orientation can help to ensure that proposed training activities are appropriately implemented to meet identified needs, and that progress and the contribution to overall capacity development needs can be monitored and evaluated;
- Greater attention needs to be paid to translating resources and materials, to adapt concepts to the local context as well as into local languages, and this can be achieved through more effective use of local resource providers;
- Some donor agencies and Development Training Institutes (DTI) recognize the need to change their approach, practice or role, and understand that they need staff with soft skills in addition to their existing technical expertise.

ANNEX 2 – CONTENTS OF TOOLBOXES

TOOLBOX 1 – ASSESS THE CONTEXT: IS IT A LEARNING ISSUE?		
Tools	**Code**	**Relevance**
Assess the context: Is it a learning issue?	1a	CORE

References and resources

> FAO Capacity Assessment Matrix (CAM) available on FAO Intranet under the IDWG on Capacity Development http://intranet.fao.org/fao_communications/idwgcd/capacity_development_tools/

> It is also available in the CD Learning Module 2.

> Training and Beyond: Seeking Better Practice for Capacity Development, OECD-DAC, January 2011, Jenny Pearson, p. 2 http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/12/31/47064610.pdf

> Learning Network on Capacity Development (LenCD) – A useful collection of resources on most recent issues relating to Capacity Development and Learning. Check the Learning Package section of the website at http://www.lencd.org/group/learning-package

TOOLBOX 2 — STRATEGICALLY IDENTIFY THE TARGET AUDIENCE		
Tools	**Code**	**Relevance**
Identify the target audience profile	2a	CORE
Participant Application Form Template	2b	CORE

References and resources

> Guidelines for identifying participants for the FAO Training of Trainers on Collaborative Conflict Management for Enhanced Forest Management http://www.fao.org/forestry/29010-0891ed3c1db6578171c4c0e7deb9833ba.pdf

TOOLBOX 3 — ASSESS LEARNING NEEDS		
SELECT THE LEARNING NEEDS ASSESSMENT (LNA) APPROACH		
Guidance sheets	**Code**	**Relevance**
Learning needs assessment: Process and tips	3a	CORE
Overview of data collection techniques	3b	CORE
Tools		
Managing focus groups	3c	RECOMMENDED
Key informant interviewing	3d	RECOMMENDED
Developing surveys	3e	RECOMMENDED
UNDERTAKE THE LEARNING NEEDS ASSESSMENT (LNA)		
Guidance sheets	**Code**	**Relevance**
Learner analysis	3f	CORE
Tools		
Learning needs assessment checklist	3g	CORE
Work setting analysis	3h	CORE

References and resources

- Witkin, B.R., & Altschuld, J.W. (1995). Planning and Conducting Needs Assessments: A Practical Guide. Sage Publications, Inc.
- Designing and using questionnaires/surveys – Extracts, by D.S. Walonick http://www.promoteprevent.org/resources/designing-surveyand-questionnaires
- Multi-stakeholder Processes Resource Portal http://portals.wi.wur.nl/msp/?page=1180 About using appreciative inquiry: http://www.kstoolkit.org/Appreciative+Inquiry
- Asking open-ended and probing questions tip sheet: http://ppa.aces.uiuc.edu/pdf_files/Asking1.PDF
- Sustainability checklist, available on FAO Intranet under the IDWG on Capacity Development http://intranet.fao.org/fao_communications/idwgcd/capacity_development_tools/ It is also available in the CD Learning Module 2.
- Working with partners, LenCD website http://www.lencd.org/group/learning-package/document/how-establish-partnershipscale
- Practical resource about setting up partnerships http://assets.wwf.org.uk/downloads/wwf_parthershiptoolboxartweb.pdf

TOOLBOX 4 — DESIGN CONTENT AND SELECT DELIVERY MODES		
DEFINE LEARNING OBJECTIVES		
Guidance sheets	**Code**	**Relevance**
Essential principles for adult learning	4a	CORE
Tools		
Tips and checklist for writing learning objectives	4b	CORE
Task analysis	4c	RECOMMENDED
SELECT DELIVERY MODE		
Guidance sheets	**Code**	**Relevance**
Blended learning	4d	CORE
What is on-the-job learning?	4e	CORE
Coaching and mentoring	4f	RECOMMENDED
Study tours	4g	RECOMMENDED
Tools		
Is ad hoc technical coaching appropriate?	4h	RECOMMENDED
Elements of Terms of Reference for technical coaches	4i	RECOMMENDED
IDENTIFY, ORGANIZE AND DEVELOP LEARNING CONTENT		
Guidance sheets	**Code**	**Relevance**
Structuring the learning event	4j	CORE
Preparing written learning material	4k	RECOMMENDED
Tools		
Preparing a design outline	4l	CORE

References and resources

- Smith, M. K. (2002) 'Malcolm Knowles, informal adult education, self-direction and andragogy', the encyclopedia of informal education, http://www.infed.org/thinkers/et-knowl.htm
- About writing learning objectives http://www.park.edu/cetl/quicktips/writinglearningobj.html http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/templates/objectivetool.html
- About task analysis http://classweb.gmu.edu/ndabbagh/Resources/Resources2/Task%20Analysis.htm
- A comprehensive ITC-ILO Guide for the design of face-to-face events called 'Enhancing Learning for Effectiveness' can be found at: http://www.train4dev.net/fileadmin/Resources/Publications/T4D_Guide_final.pdf
- A good summary of Bloom taxonomy of learning domains http://www.businessballs.com/bloomstaxonomyoflearningdomains.htm
- WFP Toolkit - The toolkit aims to assist facilitators and trainers with the design and delivery of Food Security Assessments (FSA) learning events http://learning.vam.wfp.org/pages/dpg/pBookContent.asp?c=chap9&p=94. http://learning.vam.wfp.org/documents/Docs/FTK.pdf
- Ghirardini, B. E-learning methodologies. A guide for designing and developing e-learning courses, FAO, 2011.
- Bersin J. (2004). The Blended Learning Book. San Francisco: Pfeiffer Coaching successfully, J. Eaton and R. Johnson, Essential Managers, Dorling Kindersley Book, 2000.
- Coaching across cultures, P. Rosinski, Nicolas Brealey Publishing, 2003.
- CGIAR website provides access to a wealth of resources in scientific mentoring http://www.genderdiversity.cgiar.org/resource/links_mentoring.asp
- Coaching and mentoring network http://www.coachingnetwork.org.uk/Default.htm
- International coaching federation, hosts articles and research about coaching http://www.coachfederation.org/icf-research/icf-research-portal/
- FAO study tour report - The Role of Women Producer Organizations in Agricultural Value Chains, Practical Lessons from Africa and India, Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division (ESW)
- Lessons learned from the Togo-Mali study tour on Sector-wide Approaches in Agriculture, Investment Centre Division (TCI)
- Learning Routes, IFAD - http://www.slideshare.net/ifad/learning-routes-background-documentation

TOOLBOX 5 — DELIVER THE LEARNING SOLUTION		
ON-THE-JOB		
Guidance sheets	**Code**	**Relevance**
Experiential learning	5a	CORE
The technical coaching process: approaches and tips	5b	CORE
Tools		
Action learning	5c	CORE
Action plan for coaching	5d	CORE
Review of coaching progress	5e	RECOMMENDED
Learner's log	5f	RECOMMENDED
FACE-TO-FACE TRAINING WORKSHOPS		
Guidance sheets	**Code**	**Relevance**
Key tasks for trainers/facilitators	5g	CORE
Key phases of a training workshop	5h	CORE
Tools		
Post-workshop reflection and action plan	5i	CORE
Delivering effective PowerPoint presentations	5j	RECOMMENDED
ONLINE COLLABORATIVE		
Guidance sheets	**Code**	**Relevance**
Comparing face-to-face and online facilitation tasks	5k	RECOMMENDED

References and resources

On-the-job learning

- A good book on questioning techniques *Making questions work*, Dorothy Strachan, 2007, Jossey-Bass
- Anytime coaching – unleashing employee performance, Teresa Wedding Kloster, Wendly Shervin Swire, Management Concepts, 2009
- Useful website on coaching http://coach4growth.com/
- Kolb, D.A. (1984), Experiential learning: experience as the source of learning and development http://academic.regis.edu/ed205/Kolb.pdf
- Educational Foundations of the Field Schools. http://www.vegetableipmasia.org/Concepts/FarmerFieldSchools1.html. http://www.vegetableipmasia.org/docs/Nonformal%20Educational%20Foundations%20of%20FFS.pdf. ISNAR, The experiential learning approach, by Zenete Franca. http://www.farmradio.org/english/partners/archives/bdg/learning.pdf
- Action learning resource sites. http://www.kstoolkit.org/Action+Learning+Sets. http://www.fao.org/Participation/ft_more.jsp?ID=10423. http://www.adb.org/Documents/Information/Knowledge-Solutions/Action-Learning.pdf

Facilitating face-to-face training workshops

- ITC-ILO, Enhancing learning for effectiveness: Methodological guide on design, implementation and evaluation of Joint Learning Events, 2011
- Training for Change, Resource for Food and Nutrition Security, Training of Trainers, FAO 2011
- Facilitation course FAO, CSH
- Excellent resource page on facilitation: Multi-stakeholder Processes (MSP) Resource Portal http://portals.wi.wur.nl/msp/?page=1180
- How to organize and run learning workshops, UNICEF and Staff College, downloadable from http://unkampus.unssc.org/home/file.php/125/documents/How%20to%20Organise%20and%20Run%20Learning%20Workshops.pdf
- Training Works! http://www.reproline.jhu.edu/english/6read/6training/Tngworks/index.htm
- Knowledge Sharing Methods and Tools: A facilitator's guide
- Knowledge Sharing for Change: Designing and Facilitating Learning Processes with a Transformative Impact, Facilitation Handbook - http://i-p-k.co.za/wordpress/resources-downloads/
- Useful collection of tools and resources for running workshops in the World Café style http://www.theworldcafe.com
- Very good reference book for cross-cultural issues: F. Trompenaars, C. Hampden-Turner, Riding the waves of culture, understanding diversity in global business, 2nd edition, McGraw-Hill, 1998

> E-learning Module Knowledge Sharing for Development, Information Management Resource Kit (IMARK), 2011, available from the FAO CD Portal http://www.fao.org/capacitydevelopment/e-learning-services/en/

Collaborative online learning

> G. Salmon, E-moderating – the key to teaching and learning online, 2000, RoutledgeFalmer FAO Virtual Facilitation Field Book

> FAO Virtual Facilitation Programme, CSH

> Cross-cultural issues in content development and teaching online http://pre2005.flexiblelearning.net.au/guides/crosscultural.pdf

TOOLBOX 6 – PROVIDE FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT		
Guidance sheets	**Code**	**Relevance**
Developing a plan for follow-up support	6a	CORE
Tools		
Template for a follow-up plan	6b	CORE
Types of follow-up measures	6c	CORE

TOOLBOX 7 — EVALUATE LEARNING INITIATIVES		
PLANNING FOR EVALUATION		
Guidance sheets	**Code**	**Relevance**
Kirkpatrick's results evaluation framework	7a	CORE
Tools		
Designing an evaluation plan	7b	CORE

EVALUATE LEARNING INITIATIVES		
LEVEL 1: EVALUATION OF LEARNING RESULTS: PARTICIPANTS' SATISFACTION		
Guidance sheets	**Code**	**Relevance**
Evaluation of participants' satisfaction: methods and tips	7c	CORE
Tools		
Open feedback form	7d	CORE
End-of-course evaluation of face-to-face training	7e	CORE
Daily evaluation of face-to-face training	7f	RECOMMENDED
Mid-term evaluation of face-to-face training	7g	RECOMMENDED
LEVEL 2: EVALUATION OF LEARNING RESULTS: PARTICIPANTS' LEARNING		
Guidance sheets	**Code**	**Relevance**
Evaluation of learning results: formal and informal methods	7h	CORE
Tools		
Assessing changes in learners' perception	7i	CORE
Example of pre/post-course knowledge test	7j	RECOMMENDED
LEVEL 3: EVALUATION OF LEARNING RESULTS: CHANGES IN PARTICIPANTS' BEHAVIOURS		
Guidance sheets	**Code**	**Relevance**
Evaluation of changes in participants' behaviours and practices: methods and tips	7k	CORE
Tools		
Participant benchmark evaluation	7l	CORE
Example of participant benchmark evaluation	7m	RECOMMENDED
PROCESS EVALUATION		
Process evaluation	7n	CORE
Evaluating the quality of facilitation	7o	RECOMMENDED
Evaluating the quality of the coaching process	7p	RECOMMENDED

References and resources

Overall

> Kirkpatrick, D. L. (1968). Evaluating Training Programmes. San Francisco, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

> Using Training to Build Capacity for Development, An evaluation of the World Bank's project-based and WBI training http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTTRABUICAPDEV/Resources/full_doc.pdf

> If I were the facilitator – Assessing the quality of facilitation, taken from training materials of Market-oriented farm management for trainers of extension workers, 2007 (AGPS) http://www.fao.org/docrep/011/a1298e/a1298e00.htm

> FAO e-learning course, Impact Assessment of Large-scale Food Security Programme, available at: http://www.fao.org/spfs/learning-from-results/e-learning/en/

Level 1

> A good example for evaluating various aspects of a training course is included in the FAO training materials for Market-oriented farm management for trainers of extension workers, Module 7, Training Evaluation, pp. 23-30 (AGPS) http://www.fao.org/docrep/011/a1298e/a1298e00.htm

Level 2

> About writing test items
http://www.park.edu/cetl/quicktips/writingtest.html
http://www.go2itech.org/HTML/TT06/toolkit/evaluation/dev_eval.html

> Changes in perception test form. FAO training materials for Market-oriented farm management for trainers of extension workers, Module 7, 2007 (AGPS). The module also contains useful examples of final training examination. http://www.fao.org/docrep/011/a1298e/a1298e00.htm

Level 3

> Reflection, Consultation, Action template. Taken from Module 7 of the Market-oriented farm management for trainers of extension workers materials, 2007 (AGPS) http://www.fao.org/docrep/011/a1298e/a1298e00.htm

> Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) Survey of the project "Rehabilitation and sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture affected by the tsunami in Aceh Province, Indonesia"(Project OSRO/INS/601/ARC), 2009
http://typo3.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/oed/docs/OSROINS601ARC_2010_ER.pdf

> About using Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) evaluation and Most Significant Change (MSC):
http://www.anthropologymatters.com/index.php?journal=anth_matters&page=article&op=viewArticle&path%5B%5D=31&path%5B%5D=53
http://www.stoptb.org/assets/documents/resources/publications/acsm/ACSM_KAP%20GUIDE.pdf
http://www.kstoolkit.org/Most+Significant+Change

TOOLBOX 8 – PLAN, MANAGE AND COORDINATE.		
Guidance sheets	**Code**	**Relevance**
Writing a concept note	8a	CORE
Planning checklist	8b	CORE
Checklist for quality assurance	8c	CORE
Checklist for event preparation	8d	RECOMMENDED

References and resources

> Practical guidance for planning short courses – Cap-Net
www.cap-net.org/sites/cap-net.org/files/Planning%20short%20courses.doc

GLOSSARY

Capacity development: "Capacity is the ability of people, organizations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully. Capacity development is the process of unleashing, strengthening and maintaining of such capacity" (OECD/DAC). FAO supports the development of capacities in Member Countries through various modalities, which include educational and learning initiatives in addition to policy support, South-South cooperation agreements and knowledge sharing, to mention a few.

Formal education/learning: Education is generally defined as an organized and sustained communication designed to bring about learning. Formal education is provided in the systems of schools, colleges, universities and other formal education institutions. It occurs when an organization provides structured educational arrangements, such as student-teacher relationships and interactions that are specially designed for education and learning, leading to certification.

Non-formal education/learning: This is organized and sustained educational activities that may take place both within and outside educational institutions. It is typically provided in the form of short courses, workshops or seminars. It does not lead to formal or equivalent certification; it is, however, structured in terms of learning objectives, learning time or support. It is intentional from the learner's perspective.

Informal learning: Informal learning comprises various forms of learning that are intentional, but not institutionalized. It includes learning activities that occur in the family, in the work place, in the local community and in daily life. It is less organized and less structured and typically does not lead to certification.

Training: Training activity aims to provide the skills, knowledge and attitudes required for employment in a particular occupation, group or related occupations, or for exercising a function in any field of economic activity. For the purpose of this manual, the term "training" will be used to indicate a learning initiative that takes place through in-class or face-to-face interaction with an instructor, typically in the form of a workshop.

[26] *This and the following definitions are based on The International Standard Classification of Education Glossary, ISCED, 1997 and 2011 (not yet formally adopted).*

ASSESS THE CONTEXT: IS IT A LEARNING ISSUE?		RELEVANCE	PAGE	PRINT
	TOOLS			
1A	ASSESS THE CONTEXT: IS IT A LEARNING ISSUE?	CORE	95	

References and resources

> FAO Capacity Assessment Matrix (CAM) available on FAO Intranet under the IDWG on Capacity Development http://intranet.fao.org/fao_communications/idwgcd/capacity_development_tools/ It is also available in the CD Learning Module 2.

> **Training and Beyond: Seeking Better Practice for Capacity Development**, OECD-DAC, January 2011, Jenny Pearson, p. 2 http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/12/31/47064610.pdf

> Learning Network on Capacity Development (LenCD) – A useful collection of resources on most recent issues relating to Capacity Development and Learning. Check the Learning Package section of the website at http://www.lencd.org/group/learning-package

TOOL 1A ASSESS THE CONTEXT: IS IT A LEARNING ISSUE?[27]

WHAT: This tool helps you determine whether learning is likely to be an effective method to address an identified capacity issue, such as when national partners are not delivering the project up to the expected standard or are facing challenges as a result of changed circumstances.

WHO: Coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN: At the beginning of the Learning Cycle Management, before starting to plan the learning initiative

Instructions

This approach can be used when a capacity-related issue or a problem prevents individuals and/or the organization from effectively and efficiently achieving goals, or when changes in the internal and/or external context of the organization have occurred to the extent that new or revised learning activities are required.

It will help you address the following questions:

> Is all or part of the capacity issue a learning issue?
> What other factors from the context may contribute to the issue?
> What modalities, other than learning activities, can address the issue and the contextual constraints?

The approach should be customized for the specific use. It can be used to either facilitate a self-assessment by the people involved, or to run an exercise with the people who are affected, to achieve their involvement and ownership.

How to use it

1. Identify the capacity issue: Is an activity/goal not presently being achieved as efficiently or effectively as possible? Is a change in context affecting the individual/organizational work? P lease specify as appropriate.

Example 1: National partner is not coordinating the project effectively. Example 2: Country x has adopted a new Convention on pesticide management, requiring restructuring of the Ministry of Agriculture's organizational mandate.

[27] *Based on Instructional Design, P. Smith and T. Ragan, 1999*

2. Identify who is affected by the capacity issue and how they are affected.

WHO IS AFFECTED BY THE CAPACITY ISSUE?	Example 1: Project team, national partner Example 2: Ministry of Agriculture
HOW DOES THE CAPACITY ISSUE POTENTIALLY AFFECT THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE MISSION AND/OR THE GOALS OF THE ORGANIZATION?	Example 1: The credibility of the national partner and future funding are at risk. Example 2: The Ministry of Agriculture will have to shift its mandate to help various constituencies implement the Convention.

3. Determine whether the capacity issue is linked to insufficient/inadequate knowledge, skills and/or individual performance, or whether it primarily depends on other factors from the organizational context and enabling environment. Use the checklist below to facilitate the discussion among the concerned individuals. **Negative replies may indicate where interventions other than learning activities are needed.**

POSSIBLE CONSIDERATIONS	YES	NO	N/A
Do individuals have sufficient and reliable information (e.g. job description, purpose and expectations from the job and feedback on performance) to guide work performance?	√		
Do individuals have all the resources needed to perform the work?	√		
Where there has been a change in circumstances and/or in the context, does this change significantly affect what individuals must understand, know or do?	√		
Are financial and non-financial incentives adequate?	√		
Is insufficient knowledge or skill contributing to the issue?	√		
Do individuals have the appropriate motivation to perform this work well?	√		
Is the internal organizational environment supportive (e.g. supervisors, peers)?		√	
Does the organization have an appropriate level of resources (e.g. technological, infrastructure, financial) to support individual performance?		√	
Are appropriate processes, systems and procedures in place to allow individuals to conduct work, including mechanisms for performance appraisal, incentives and reward systems, where applicable?		√	
Is the mandate of the organization appropriate?		√	
Is organizational set-up conducive to good performance, such as institutional linkages, interdepartmental contacts, opportunities for knowledge-sharing?		√	
Are relevant policies, strategies and regulatory frameworks supportive of the goals of the organization?		√	
Is there political will to support the organization's work?		√	

4. Determine if the capacity issue can be completely or partially addressed by learning.

POSSIBLE CONSIDERATIONS	YES	NO*	YES, PARTIALLY
4.1 Can learning activities address the capacity issue completely or partially?			√
4.2 If a change in context has brought about new understanding, knowledge or required actions, can these be taught/learned?	√		
4.3 What learning objectives should be defined to address the capacity issue? Example 1 – National Partner is able to manage the project effectively Example 2 - Ministry of Agriculture's staff is able to provide advisory services to farmers and other groups on new standards and procedures resulting from implementation of Convention			
4.4 If learning can only partially address the problem, which are the factors/constraints that cannot be addressed by learning activities? Please list the factors here: Example 1 - The partner does not have external legitimacy to act and operate as required by the project, with no ability to link up with other national and regional institutions. The partner's mandate should be reviewed and strengthened. Example 2 – The Ministry of Agriculture may need organizational restructuring.			

**If your answer is 'no' to questions 4.1 and 4.2, go to question 5.*

5. Determine which other modalities can complement learning for better results. What modalities can address the factors/constraints that cannot be addressed by learning (as indicated in question 4 above)?

Example 1 - Assistance with mandate review and advocacy at a higher level to help strengthen the credibility of the partner in the country and within the region Example 2 – Assistance with organizational restructuring and setting a new mission

6. Next steps

Once the assessment is completed, there are two options:

- If learning is needed to address capacity issues, the next steps are:
  - to identify the target audience and assess learning needs, as appropriate;
  - to define and plan for complementary modalities to address the issues identified in the organizational and enabling environment.
- If the capacity issue is not a learning issue, the next steps are:
  - to undertake a broader capacity assessment to identify causes of the issue at the organizational level or in the enabling environment (the Capacity Assessment Tool is available from the FAO CD Portal);
  - to define non-learning modalities (e.g. technical support, financial support, policy review, access to knowledge and good practices) to address the issues identified.

EVALUATE LEARNING INITIATIVES

	TOOLS	RELEVANCE	PAGE	PRINT
2A	IDENTIFY THE TARGET AUDIENCE PROFILE	CORE	100	
2B	PARTICIPANT APPLICATION FORM TEMPLATE	CORE	103	

References and resources

> Guidelines for identifying participants for the FAO Training of Trainers on Collaborative Conflict Management for Enhanced Forest Management http://www.fao.org/forestry/29010-0891ed3c1db6578171c4c0e7deb9833ba.pdf

TOOL 2A IDENTIFY THE TARGET AUDIENCE'S PROFILE

WHAT? This tool is meant to guide FAO staff in defining the profile of the target audience for the learning initiative jointly with the national counterparts who are being targeted and who are likely to propose or appoint participants. It suggests the development of an "Invitation Note" to be prepared, discussed and agreed upon together with relevant partners as early as possible in the planning process.

WHO? Coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? From the early stages of planning the learning initiative

Instructions

Involve your key partners (particularly those who are likely to appoint participants to the learning initiative) in preparing and sharing the invitation from the early stages of planning. This is important to support their ownership of the process, secure their support throughout the steps of the learning management cycle and ensure their commitment to the results that will be brought about by the initiative.

Use the following sample to develop an invitation for your learning initiative. You may use this sample in conjunction with the Application Form (Tool 2b).

Sample invitation

The following information should appear in the invitation:

1. **Short description of the learning initiative, the learning objectives and delivery mode:**

Overall goal of the learning initiative:

Learning objectives:

Delivery mode:

2. Profile of candidates

Background: Explain the background that candidates should have (e.g. technical, managerial)

Gender and age: Explain which age range is targeted by the initiative, and whether there will be a quota/percentage set for female candidates

Job function/role: Explain which functions and roles are targeted by the initiative

Prerequisite qualifications and skills: Explain the required education levels of candidates and prerequisite skills (e.g. communication, project management) that must be mastered at the basic/good level

Minimum working experience: Indicate the minimum amount of work experience required in the subject matter area

Language: Indicate the language and proficiency levels that candidates must possess

3. Expectations at the individual and organizational levels

This section indicates expectations of individuals who will attend the learning initiative and of organizations that propose or appoint the participants.

Expectations at the individual level: Explain what is expected from the people participating in the initiative. Example: Selected individuals will commit to organizing at least two events to disseminate the new knowledge or skills within the local community. Such events could be training sessions, individual coaching sessions, information sessions, etc.

Expectations of the sending organization: Explain what is expected from the sending organization in terms of support and follow up. At a minimum, organization management should support the objectives of the learning initiative and any follow-up activities. This commitment should be demonstrated by alignment between the initiative and the organization's strategic plan and budget. Example: The organization will commit to providing full institutional support to the individual for organizing the events described above; it will also commit to provide the budget for scaling up the initiative the following year.

4. Description of selection process

This section describes the selection process, including the criteria by which candidates will be selected.

Description of the process: Describe the selection process. Example: The selection process will include pre-screening of candidates by using an application form and a telephone interview with a team composed of:

- FAO HQ staff
- FAO regional office
- National partner

Description of the selection criteria: Describe the selection criteria to be used. Example: The following criteria will be used to select the candidates:

- Practitioners of FAO-supported projects or from FAO operational partners
- Current job profile
- Prior experience of using given tools/methodologies in the technical area
- Availability and readiness to use the new knowledge and skills to promote local projects

5. Roles and responsibilities

This section indicates roles and responsibilities of FAO and national/local counterparts in the selection process. To support national ownership of the learning process and results, it is advisable to involve stakeholders as much as possible, such as by informing them of the status of the selection process and providing feedback about any difficulties with the candidates they proposed. Counterparts are more likely to cooperate by appointing different individuals if they are involved from an early stage of the process and not only when there is a need to communicate negative feedback about their candidates.

Roles and responsibilities: Describe the roles and responsibilities of FAO and sending organizations. Example: FAO will appoint the selection team in collaboration with national partners. National partners will be kept informed at each step of the selection process through email or telephone. When required, ad hoc telephone sessions can be held.

TOOL 2B PARTICIPANT APPLICATION FORM TEMPLATE

WHAT? A template participant application form, to be customized as appropriate

WHO? For potential participants in learning initiatives

WHEN? From the early stages of planning the learning initiative

Learning initiative:

A. General information

Applicant's Name: Contact address: Age: Gender: Your highest education level: Job function: Organization: Country:

B. Work-related information

1. To which technical area are your current work responsibilities related

____

____

____

____

2. How would you rate your knowledge and skills in relation to (subject matter area) (1=no knowledge/skills; 5= excellent knowledge/skills)

____

____

____

____

3. In your view, what are your strengths in doing your work?

4. What major constraints do you encounter in your job or in your work setting?

5. What knowledge, skills or other benefits would you most like to gain from the learning initiative? Please be as specific as possible.

6. How do you expect to use what you have gained here once you have returned to your workplace?

7. What support do you expect to receive from your organization/ institution to help you implement your new learning?

8. Are you willing to dedicate time to preparatory activities and follow-up work before and after the event? Yes/No/Comments

Thank you!

ASSESS LEARNING NEEDS

	ASSESS LEARNING NEEDS	RELEVANCE	PAGE	PRINT
	SELECT THE LEARNING NEEDS ASSESSMENT (LNA) APPROACH			
	GUIDANCE SHEETS			
3A	LEARNING NEEDS ASSESSMENT: PROCESS AND TIPS	CORE	107	
3B	OVERVIEW OF DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES	CORE	109	
	TOOLS			
3C	MANAGING FOCUS GROUPS	RECOMMENDED	111	
3D	KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWING	RECOMMENDED	113	
3E	DEVELOPING SURVEYS	RECOMMENDED	117	
	UNDERTAKE THE LEARNING NEEDS ASSESSMENT (LNA)			
	GUIDANCE SHEETS			
3F	LEARNER ANALYSIS	CORE	120	
	TOOLS			
3G	LEARNING NEEDS ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST	CORE	122	
3H	WORK SETTING ANALYSIS	CORE	124	

References and resources

- Witkin, B.R., & Altschuld, J.W. (1995). Planning and Conducting Needs Assessments: A Practical Guide. Sage Publications, Inc.
- Designing and using questionnaires/surveys – Extracts, by D.S. Walonick http://www.promoteprevent.org/resources/designing-surveyand-questionnaires
- Multi-stakeholder Processes Resource Portal http://portals.wi.wur.nl/msp/?page=1180
- About using appreciative inquiry: http://www.kstoolkit.org/Appreciative+Inquiry
- Asking open-ended and probing questions tip sheet: http://ppa.aces.uiuc.edu/pdf_files/Asking1.PDF
- Sustainability checklist, available on FAO Intranet under the IDWG on Capacity Development http://intranet.fao.org/fao_communications/idwgcd/capacity_development_tools/ It is also available in the CD Learning Module 2.
- Working with partners, LenCD website http://www.lencd.org/group/learning-package/document/how-establish-partnershipscale
- Practical resource about setting up partnerships http://assets.wwf.org.uk/downloads/wwf_parthershiptoolboxartweb.pdf

TOOL 3A GUIDANCE SHEET – LEARNING NEEDS ASSESSMENT: PROCESS AND TIPS

WHAT? This guidance sheet provides an overview of the process for carrying out a learning needs assessment (LNA) and offers some tips.

WHO? Developers, coordinators and/or managers of the learning initiative

WHEN? Usually after a context analysis has been conducted and learning activities have been found to be a solution to the identified need, an LNA can be carried out. However, it also can be done concurrently with the context analysis.

The process for a learning needs assessment

A good LNA will inform the scope, design and implementation of a learning initiative and help ensure that it addresses a real need.

A well-planned and effectively conducted LNA:

> helps ensure that the learning content is relevant and useful to participants;
> helps developers ensure that learning activities target the correct level for participants;
> ensures that learning activities will build on what participants already know;
> helps build participant motivation and organizational support to implement the learning;
> builds beneficiary ownership and involvement;
> provides a basis to evaluate results of learning activities; and
> maximizes cost-effectiveness of learning activities by focusing content on actual needs.

Below are some important elements of the process of undertaking an LNA:

1. **Plan your LNA.**
    > What is the purpose, range and scope of my LNA?
    > What is the available timeframe/budget for an LNA?
    > What are the main areas to be covered?
    > What information needs to be obtained and why?
    > Who are the main stakeholders to be interviewed/surveyed?
    > What form does my final LNA report need to take, and who should see it?

2. **Decide on data collection techniques.**
   > What data collection methods should be used, given the number of people to be interviewed, the resources and time available and the context in which individuals operate? See Guidance Sheet 3b for an overview of the main methods.

3. **Prepare questionnaires, surveys or interview protocols.**
   > What support documents do you need to prepare? Depending on the methods you've selected, you may need to prepare online questionnaires, interview protocols for one-on-one interviews or response sheets.

4. **Conduct the LNA.**
   > Who will conduct the LNA?
   > Have stakeholders been informed in a timely manner of the LNA?
   > Has sufficient background been provided to stakeholders to motivate them to participate in the LNA?
   > Are line managers, superiors or team leaders informed?

TIPS FOR CONDUCTING AN LNA

> Speak directly with participants. Do not assume that technical assistants, organizational managers or external counterparts have a full picture of participants' needs and constraints.
> Where possible, get a range of perspectives from various stakeholders.
> Focus on getting a clear picture of participants' competencies, experience and present work functions. A common mistake in designing learning content is including basic information that participants already know.
> Find out what challenges and constraints are anticipated for participants to implement the learning. Learning activities may be able to help address these constraints.
> An LNA is often performed inadequately because time and funding are insufficient. It may be necessary to build internal support within your own department to ensure sufficient allocation of resources to conduct an effective LNA.

TOOL 3B GUIDANCE SHEET – OVERVIEW OF DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES FOR A LEARNING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

WHAT? This guidance sheet provides a comparative overview of the data collection techniques that can be used for a learning needs assessment (LNA).

WHO? Developers, coordinators and/or managers of the learning initiative

WHEN? After analysing the context, decisions can be made about which LNA data collection technique is most appropriate.

METHOD	WHEN TO USE	TIME REQUIRED		COST	RESOURCES REQUIRED
		CONDUCT OR IMPLEMENT	ANALYSE DATA		
SURVEYS	> Conduct strategic, competency, job analysis or learning needs assessment > Respondents are geographically dispersed > Obtain quantifiable data > Responses to questions can be easily predicted	Low to medium	Low	Low	> Time > Knowledge of survey development and analysis > Administrative support
FOCUS GROUPS	> Conduct strategic, competency, job analysis or learning needs assessment > Collect qualitative data > Gather information when group behaviour determines job performance	Low	High	Medium to high	> Time > Skilled facilitator > Notetaker or recorder
ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS	> Conduct strategic, competency, job analysis > Obtain sensitive information > Discuss complex issues that require explanations > Gain support	High	High	Medium to high	> Time > Skilled interviewer

METHOD	WHEN TO USE	TIME REQUIRED		COST	RESOURCES REQUIRED
		CONDUCT OR IMPLEMENT	ANALYSE DATA		
PHONE INTERVIEWS	> Conduct strategic or training needs assessment > Gather small pieces of information > Ask follow-up questions > Obtain information when respondents are geographically dispersed > Obtain information from many sources quickly > Obtain more quantifiable and qualitative information > Save cost	Low to medium	Medium	Low	> Time > Skilled interviewer
OBSERVATIONS	> Conduct strategic, competency, job analysis or training needs assessment > Document performance > Understand tasks involved to perform a job	Low	Low to medium	Low	> Time > Availability of individuals > Knowledge of performance to be observed > Observation forms

TOOL 3C MANAGING FOCUS GROUPS[28]

WHAT? This tool provides a suggested process for managing focus groups for a learning needs assessment (LNA).

WHO? Coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? As part of an LNA when large numbers of people should be interviewed

Focus groups are a means of collecting information from a small group (5 to 12 participants) in a systematic and structured format. Two very distinct characteristics of the focus group interview process are: (1) the purpose of focus groups is to collect data; and (2) focus groups use group interaction to elicit information from the group members.

WHAT IS A FOCUS GROUP?

A focus group interview is an interview with a small group of people on a specific topic. Groups are typically six to eight people who participate in the interview for one-half to two hours. The focus group interview is indeed an interview. It is not a discussion. It is not a problem-solving session. It is not a decision making group. It is an interview. The participants are typically a relatively homogeneous group of people who are asked to reflect on questions asked by the interviewer. Participants get to hear each other's responses and to make additional responses beyond their own initial responses as they hear what other people have to say. It is not necessary for the group to reach any kind of consensus. Nor is it necessary for people to disagree. The object is to get high quality data in a social context where people can consider their own views in the context of the views of others.

Source: Patton, Michael Quinn. How to Use Qualitative Methods in Evaluation, Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1987.

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
You can interview multiple people at one time.	More reserved members may not feel comfortable inserting their contributions in the discussion. Other participants may try to dominate discussions.
Members of the focus group can build on each other's comments and reactions. This can yield synergistic discussion around topics or themes.	It can be difficult to coordinate busy schedules.

[28] *Adapted from WBI Needs Assessment Knowledge Base, WBI Evaluation Group, with permission.*

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
You can observe verbal and non-verbal interactions among participants.	Participants can easily get "off task" if the facilitator does not maintain structure and control throughout the process.
You can get buy-in from key players.	It may be costly if performed in person in different countries.

Suggested process

1. From the list of information required for the LNA, identify those elements that may best be obtained through focus groups.
2. Create a list of small groups of relatively homogeneous people with similar background and experience.
3. Prioritize the information requirements for each focus group and use this to create a facilitator's guide or protocol for each focus group.
4. Use an experienced focus group facilitator where possible, and ensure you have a notetaker in the room. The interviewer usually acts as the facilitator, introducing the subject, guiding the discussion, cross-checking participants' comments and encouraging all members to express their opinions.
5. If you facilitate the focus group, ask participants to reflect on your questions, provide their own comments, listen to what other group members say and offer their observations. Remember, the main purpose is to elicit ideas, insights and experiences in a context where people stimulate each other and consider their own views along with the views of others.
6. Immediately after the focus group has ended, the facilitator and notetaker should verify that all of the essential information from the group has been captured in a written document.
7. If appropriate, run several focus groups. This ensures that you gather enough information for the LNA.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Have a clear and specific goal for the focus group.
- Create a survey to be given out to participants in order to capture information that may not be discussed in the focus group because of time limitations.
- Carefully present each of your questions to the group, and allow the group members a couple of minutes to think about the question and record their answers.
- Complete a test-run of the focus group in order to identify potential problems, changes to questions or additional materials that should be available to participants.
- After a question has been answered, and before moving on to the next question, verbally report back a summary of what you heard. This confirms for the group members that they communicated what they intended to and allows them to make any suggestions for adjustments in the event that their thoughts were not accurately represented.
- Plan for the focus group to take between 40 minutes and three hours.

TOOL 3D KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS[29]

WHAT? This tool provides elements of process for conducting one-on-one interviews for a learning needs assessment (LNA).

WHO? Coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? As part of an LNA when it is important that the interviewees are allowed to elaborate through follow-up questions. It is particularly recommended when interviewing senior individuals, who may appreciate the additional personal attention that the interview can offer over a survey or focus group.

Key informant interviewing involves collecting information through a systematic and structured format from individuals who are especially knowledgeable about a topic. Interviews can be designed in three different formats:

> **Structured:** A controlled format, where the interviewee is asked predefined questions in a specific order. Following an interview protocol, interviewers read the questions to the interviewees. The format may also include a choice of predetermined answers.

> **Semi-structured:** A more flexible format, allowing new questions to be brought up during the interview as a result of the interviewee's responses to previous questions.

> **Unstructured:** A fully flexible format, which does not ask the respondent to select among predetermined answers, but instead advocates listening to how each person uniquely responds to the question.

Individual key informant interviews can often provide in-depth context, stories and discussion related to one or more topics pertinent to the LNA. They can help describe an environment or a situation with qualitative data, by documenting the knowledge and experiences of people using their own words. Interviews also offer an opportunity for the interviewee to become familiar with the LNA and its objectives.

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[29] *Adapted from: Conducting a key informant interview, University of Illinois Extension Service – Office of Program Planning and Assessment http://ppa.aces.uiuc.edu/pdf_files/Conducting1.PDF;*

Getting the Lay of the Land on Health: A guide for using interviews to gather information, written for the Access project by S. T. Sherry and A. Marlow, 1999 http://www.accessproject.org/adobe/getting_the_lay_of_the_land_on_health.pdf;

WBI needs assessment knowledge base, WBI Evaluation Group, 2007, with permission

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Interviews typically allow for more focused discussions and follow-up questions.	Time requirements for interviewers and interviewees can be significant.
Individuals may offer information in interviews that they wouldn't offer in a group context.	Interviews have the potential to reduce the scope and sample for data collection.
Interviews can be an excellent source of stories and context.	Results of multiple interviews may contradict each other or be difficult to analyse.
The interviewer can observe the non-verbal behaviours of an interviewee.	Interviewees may be biased or represent only a limited perspective on performance issues/themes.

How to conduct key informant interviews

Planning the interview

1. **What do you want to know?** The first step is to think about what you want to find out from your interviews. What are the issues you want to ask about? Brainstorm a list of the things you might want to cover. From there, draft questions that will get you this information. You will have to consider the wording for the questions. Does the question you are asking make sense? Will it get you the information you are looking for? Do the questions leave room for people to "tell their story"?

2. **Who to interview?** Selecting a key informant should be done with care. The informant needs to be someone who has personal knowledge or experience with a particular problem, or has professional training in that area. Be sure to have a mix of people – people of different ages, ethnicity, religious affiliation, educational level, etc. The informants must also be able to express themselves clearly.

3. **How many to interview?** This decision is largely a matter of time and resources (you will have to write up and analyse all of the interview information!) It should, however, be a sufficient number to begin to get a sense of the environment and to identify themes.

4. **Who should conduct the interviews?** Certain factors should be considered when deciding who will conduct the interviews, including:
   > **Time.** This is a major factor. Interviews will need to be scheduled, conducted, written up and analysed. A rule of thumb is that preparation and follow-up activities can easily take up to twice the time of the interview itself. The interviewing process should not drag out over too long a period, so you will want someone who has adequate availability within this timeframe.
   > **Skills.** The interviewer must possess: the capacity to listen well, the ability to write and take accurate notes, a good memory, the ability to be comfortable meeting new people, attentiveness to detail and strong communication skills.

Conducting the interview

5. **Introduce yourself and your objectives.** When you call to set up the interview, introduce yourself and your position. Thank the interviewee for her/his willingness to meet with you and be sure s/he understands the purpose of the LNA and what you intend to do with the information you receive.

6. **Address confidentiality issues.** Be very clear about how much confidentiality you can offer. Confidentiality is an important consideration in conducting key informant interviews. Information you obtain in the interviews should not be directly attributed to any particular individual. Assuring confidentiality will make your informants feel more comfortable sharing information that may be controversial or of a personal nature. Also, reports on the interview results will then focus on the content rather than on who said what.

7. **Ask questions.** Start the interview with some basic "ice-breaking" questions. Questions like this are not a waste of time; they give both of you a chance to get acquainted and feel comfortable with each other. Many interviewers find it helpful to start with general questions and then become more specific as the interview progresses. It's a good idea to have questions ready ahead of time, but sometimes what the informant tells you will change things, so you may have to ask different questions. It is also likely that someone may introduce a subject not included in your questions; let them talk (within reason!). The point of this whole experience is to allow the interviewees to tell you their stories, including their particular knowledge, opinions and experiences. Give them the space to say what they need to say. If the person deviates completely from the topic, then pull them back by referring to your questions.

8. **Use active listening techniques,** such as nodding your head, saying "uh-huh" or "Can you tell me more about that?". If the informant knows you are really listening, s/he will talk more. Never let something you don't understand pass without asking for clarification. You can do this by saying something similar to, "'I'm sorry, I don't understand how that would work," or "If I understand you correctly, you're saying...". Your role is to be a facilitator so you can get all the information you can from this person; it is not to impose your own interpretations or perspectives.

9. **Use prompts.** You may also find people who are more reticent or not certain about what specific information you are seeking. In these situations, you will want to use the "prompts" that accompany each general question. The prompts are designed to assist interviewees in thinking about the questions and what they know or have experienced. (see the link under References and resources: 'Asking open-ended and probing questions tip sheet')

10. **End with a summary.** If you've been really good at establishing rapport and listening, you may find it difficult to break off the interview. Beginning your summary of what they have said will help the informant know things are winding down. This summary is important because it gives you a chance to verify that you have understood the informant. Put what s/he has said into your own words and ask if you have said it correctly: "Now let me see if I have understood you correctly. You're saying that.. . .". If you have misunderstood, this gives the informant a chance to correct you and clarify the response.

Recording and analysing the information

11. **Keep track of what was said.** There are several ways to keep track of the information you have received. Sometimes interviewers make brief notes on 3 x 5 cards, which can be grouped later in a variety of ways. Sometimes the interviews are taped so the interviewer can listen again and make notes. It can be helpful to have someone else listen to the interview to confirm that you have correctly understood what was said. Whatever method has been decided upon, you need to be sure that you have some record of the main points. Usually it's a good idea to sit down right after the interview and put your thoughts on paper – a summary, your impressions of the key informant's feelings and anything else that seems relevant.

12. **Analyse the information.** After conducting several interviews, you will be able to begin analysing your results. This process involves comparing and contrasting what your informants told you. Overall, you will be looking for common themes among the informants. Are there similar stories about the experiences of a particular population? If there are, which parts are similar? All of these questions will help locate themes. It is, of course, also important to look for differences. You will want to look for places where different types of people disagree. Although there are no shortcuts to thoroughly reviewing and discussing interview information, there are some approaches that may make analysis easier. It is helpful to analyse your initial interviews to identify early themes that can be added to interviews conducted later. If you will have a lot of interviews, you might actually list issues/themes that emerge and tally how frequently these come up. You should also list themes by category or type of interviewee.

13. **Reporting on the results.** Once you have analysed your data, looking for the most important common themes and disagreements, you will write up your results. The report can follow a variety of forms, depending on your original purpose. Taking the time to produce a written document that can be shared with others serves multiple purposes and is well worth the effort. A list of your interviewees can be contained in a final report, but none of them should be specifically attributed. Writing a report on your interview results largely follows the process of planning and conducting the interviews. Elements of a report would include:
    - an explanation of why you conducted the assessment. What motivated you to do this research? What were some of the assumptions you had about the issue before beginning the research?
    - who you interviewed by category and how many interviews you conducted over what period of time. (The actual list of interviewees can be in an appendix.)
    - the general focus of your questions. (The interview protocol with the actual questions can be in an appendix.)
    - the themes that emerged, including use of unattributed quotes when these would help enliven the description.
    - a description of what your group concludes or will do as a result of what you learned.

TOOL 3E DEVELOPING SURVEYS

WHAT? Elements of process to develop surveys for a learning needs assessment (LNA)

WHO? Coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? As part of an LNA when the budget is small, the target audience is geographically dispersed and there is enough time to allow sufficient responses

A survey is a quick way to get a general sense of your learners' key needs and challenges. Both paper and electronic surveys may be distributed to audiences of varying sizes to gather information relevant to the LNA. For example, surveys can be administered to members of the target audience to gather data on participants' expectations, demand for the training, and reactions to the proposed delivery modes. Alternatively, surveys can be sent to all major stakeholders to identify potential obstacles, gauge the level of buy-in and determine the extent of resources available to support the development of the learning initiative.

Surveys are generally quicker than one-on-one interviewing and relatively low-cost. They should be planned well ahead to allow sufficient time for participants to respond (between two and three weeks).

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Surveys give you the ability to contact a large number of people in many countries.	Surveys require very clear questions and instructions.
They yield a lot of data at a relatively low cost.	Return rates are typically low.
Surveys provide a high-level snapshot of the situation.	

An easy way to survey learners is to develop a set of questions and make them available on the Web so that participants can answer them online. For those who do not have easy access to the Web, you can send a Word copy of the survey.

In general, the following steps are involved:

14. Define the objectives of your survey
15. Define the outline of the survey
16. Design the questions
17. Review and pre-test

The following checklist provides some guidelines on how to build survey questions and how to deliver the questionnaire. You can also check the resources indicated under References and resources.

Checklist

NO.	ACTION ITEM
DEFINE OBJECTIVES	
1	Write down the purpose of your survey and what you hope to achieve as a result. This will help you identify the specific objectives for the survey and the questions you want to ask for each objective.
DESIGN THE SURVEY QUESTIONS	
2	Create questions for each objective. This helps you better define what you want to find out from the survey. It will also help you avoid redundant questions and lengthy surveys.
3	Start with generic and easier questions (e.g. title, office, grade).
4	Put controversial or sensitive questions at the end of the survey.
5	Write concise and clear questions.
6	Ask about one piece of information per question. For example, the question "What training activities did you attend in the last year and what did you find useful about them?" should be broken down into "What training activities did you attend in the last year?" and "Please indicate what you found useful about them".
7	Group similar questions together. For example, you may build a group of questions on participants' demographics, one on the job they perform and another on the training they have received.
8	Provide instructions on how to answer a question.
9	Decide whether there will be mandatory questions and determine which ones they are.
10	Provide space at the end for any additional comments participants may want to provide.
11	Keep the survey short and indicate the time it will take to complete it. Try not to exceed 25–30 questions. Also, keep in mind that the length of the survey will depend on how many closed vs. open-ended questions you have included: the more open-ended questions available, the longer it may take to comment on them and to review the information gathered.
12	If you intend to follow up with some of the participants after the survey, the last question should ask participants to indicate whether they are willing to be contacted via phone or in person. State that the information gathered during a follow-up interview will remain confidential. Ask participants to provide their contact information voluntarily (unless you made the contact information a mandatory part of the survey).

NO.	ACTION ITEM
DETERMINE TYPES OF QUESTIONS	
13	**Open-ended:** Allow respondents to comment freely on a subject. They are more time-consuming to analyse but provide qualitative data that may shed more light on the question you are asking. When you build an online survey, you can decide whether or not you want to limit the space provided for the answer. Avoid negative or leading questions that may bias participants' responses. **Closed:** They provide a pull of predetermined answers. You need to decide whether people can provide more than one answer (multiple choice) or whether they are limited to one (mutually exclusive questions). Generally, try to limit the responses options to seven (exceptions include, for example, lists of titles and grades which may exceed seven. In such cases, use a drop-down menu rather than a checklist). **Scales:** **Likert scale:** Ask participants to rank or rate options. Examples: strongly agree, agree, somewhat agree, disagree, strongly disagree; very high, high, average, low, very low; excellent, good, fair, poor. **Interval scale:** Find out about a range of possibilities. Example: How much time do you spend on xyz-related activities in a week? Up to 1 day, between 2-3 days, more than 3 days.
DESIGN WELCOME PAGES	
14	Include a welcome email/message and instruction page to: > explain briefly the goal of the survey; > describe how it will be used; > indicate the length of time it will take; > provide instructions on how to proceed; > be clear that you prefer respondents to use the on-line version if they have access to the Internet. Also, explain how you intend to share the results of the survey (this is very important as respondents usually like to know the results).

TOOL 3F GUIDANCE SHEET – LEARNER ANALYSIS[30]

WHAT? This guidance sheet is to assist developers in identifying learner characteristics that might impact the design of the learning initiative

WHO? Developers, coordinators, managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? As part of the learning needs assessment (LNA); it addresses the "participants' characteristics"

When designing a learning initiative, it is important to understand the audience for which the initiative is being designed. Without an understanding of the audience, the instruction may be ineffective, incomplete or even potentially irrelevant. The purpose of learner analysis is to consider the characteristics of the audience and use those characteristics to help tailor the intervention to specially meet the audience's needs.

Some of the most important characteristics that affect learning include the following:

Baseline skills – Baseline skills are the initial levels of skills that participants bring to the learning initiative. They allow learners to develop new skills that build on their existing ones. Also, part of designing any learning initiative includes identifying what prerequisite skills participants need. It is important to determine that participants indeed do possess these prerequisites before they begin a learning initiative. If many learners do not possess the prerequisite skills, then steps may be taken to adjust the learning initiative to address that gap before moving on to the intended content of the initiative.

Prior knowledge of topic – If participants have good working knowledge about the background of a topic, then the learning initiative can immediately focus on achieving the specific learning objectives that are built on that base of knowledge. If, however, participants do not have a strong foundational knowledge of the topic, additional time likely will be needed to introduce the topic and establish the required working knowledge before moving into more advanced or complex skills.

Attitude towards content and motivation – Participants in a learning programme may have different attitudes towards learning or engaging with a specific topic, which can greatly influence the manner in which they will interact in a given learning initiative (i.e. the extent to which they will absorb the concepts of the initiative, and their likelihood of actually using the new skills). If participants have positive attitudes towards the learning intervention, they will likely interact more positively towards learning. If attitudes towards a learning intervention are negative and/or disinterested, then participants will likely interact poorly with learning. It

[30] *Content for this tool is adapted from Dick, W., & Carey, L. (2008). The systematic design of instruction. Boston: Allyn & Bacon; and WBI Needs Assessment Knowledge Base, WBI Evaluation group, with permission*

is important to differentiate between *attitude towards content*, which relates to participants' feelings towards a certain topic or subject, and their *motivation towards learning*, which may include factors surrounding a particular learning initiative or process. Although not every aspect of participants' attitudes towards content and motivation to learn can be adjusted, knowing that such attitudes exist can be helpful in making adjustments that might improve those attitudes.

Learning preferences and styles – Participants will have their own learning preferences, and it is helpful to know, in broad terms, what some of these preferences are so that the learning initiative can potentially be adjusted to suit them. Some learners, for example, may prefer to learn by watching interactive multimedia presentations; others may prefer to read written text. Some may prefer group activities, while others may prefer a more individual learning style. Rarely will all members of a group agree about learning preferences, but understanding the preferred learning modes can be helpful in designing a learning initiative so as to improve its overall impact.

A few of the many different theories on learning styles include the following:

> Kolb, an organizational behaviour expert, looked at four basic styles: Activist, Reflector, Theorist and Pragmatist. http://www.businessballs.com/kolblearningstyles.htm
> Honey and Mumford developed a questionnaire based on Kolb's styles. http://nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles/learn_style_survey.html
> The MyerBriggs Type Indicator is an inventory used to determine personality disposition and preferences based on Carl Jung's theory of psychological types. http://www.myersbriggs.org/my-mbti-personality-type/mbti-basics/; http://nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles/jung.html
> Felder and Solomon developed four categories with opposing perspectives: Sensing/Intuitive, Global/Sequential, Visual/Verbal, Active/Reflective http://www4.ncsu.edu/unity/lockers/users/f/felder/public/ILSdir/styles.htm

By asking questions to determine if someone prefers to 'see' concepts or to 'read' about them, you can help them find ways to best meet their development need. Also, you can use learning styles to diversify your material, as shown in the table[31] below:

LEARNER (BY KOLB)	WANTS	TYPES OF LEARNING
ACTIVISTS	Experience, variety, excitement, activity, people	Group-based, experiential, learning by doing, group reviews, debates
REFLECTORS	Objective data to draw conclusions, chances to reflect, analyse and deliberate	Distant learning, self-study, audio and video learning
THEORISTS	Models, theorems, complexity, reflection, coherence	Computer-based, models, simulators
PRAGMATISTS	Chances to experiment, new ideas and theories, new techniques, practical applications, problem solving	One-on-one coaching, on-the-job training

[31] *From: Understanding how people learn, David G. Reay, Nichols Publishing Company, New Jersey, p.83*

TOOL 3G LEARNING NEEDS ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

WHAT? Checklist of important areas to be addressed in a learning needs assessment (LNA)

WHO? Coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? As part of an LNA

Instructions

Use this checklist to verify whether all important issues have been addressed in your LNA, regardless of its scope or the methods to be used. Questions can be customized based on the target group, the subject-matter area or the selected LNA approach. Remember that engaging the target audience in genuine and active participation in this exercise is indispensable for its success.

AREAS TO BE ADDRESSED IN AN LNA		
A. PARTICIPANT PROFILE/CHARACTERISTICS AND EXISTING CAPACITIES		
1.	Who will enrol in the learning initiative?	
2.	What background do they bring to the learning initiative in terms of prior knowledge, skills, experience, exposure, etc.?	
3.	What are their strengths in terms of knowledge, skills or attitudes?	
4.	What is their attitude towards content?	
5.	What level of formal education does the target audience have?	
6.	How and where will learners want to learn (e.g. on-the-job, in class)?	
7.	What expectations will learners have of the initiative in terms of the work involved?	
8.	What is their degree of proficiency in the language of instruction?	

AREAS TO BE ADDRESSED IN AN LNA		
B. GOALS AND MOTIVATION		
9.	What are the participants' goals in relation to the learning initiative?	
10.	How do learners' individual goals relate to their organizational goals?	
11.	What is their motivation to undertake the learning initiative?	
C. CURRENT JOB TASKS AND KNOWLEDGE/SKILL ASSETS/GAPS		
12.	What are the current job functions of the target audience? (Depending on the depth of needs assessment being done, answering this question can range from a brief description to a very detailed analysis of job tasks).	
13.	What are the gaps in knowledge, skills or attitudes that hinder the achievement of individual and organizational goals?	
14.	Which of these gaps are most critical to address?	
15.	What are the possible consequences of not addressing one or more identified gaps?	
16.	Which gaps affect the largest number of potential participants?	
D. CONTEXT OF THE WORK SETTING/LEARNING ENVIRONMENT		
17.	What hardware and software will the learners have?	
18.	What resources will the learners have at their disposal?	
19.	What obstacles do participants face in fulfilling their work functions that may pose difficulties for implementing the learning?	
20.	What support from peers and/or superiors will be available to participants in their work environment to perform what they have learned?	
21.	How are participants currently interacting in the work setting to exchange information, network or share knowledge?	
22.	How can support from the work setting be strengthened?	
E. ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT		
23.	How do the course goals relate to the specific needs, challenges and culture of participants' organizations?	

TOOL 3H WORK SETTING ANALYSIS[32]

WHAT? This tool provides suggestions for conducting an analysis of the work setting in which learners will apply the new knowledge and skills. It helps to: identify the potential obstacles to implement and transfer the learning to the workplace; and to plan follow-up measures and complementary capacity development support.

WHO? Coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? As part of a learning needs assessment (LNA)

Instructions

Skills are not applied in a context-free setting; in fact, they are almost always intimately connected with the setting in which they are most frequently used. Therefore, an important part of designing a learning initiative is to consider the characteristics of the context – or the setting – in which the skills will be performed. Understanding the performance context can yield important information about how best to prepare participants for performing the skill in that setting, and can influence both the design and the ultimate delivery of the initiative.

Look at the four areas below, and consider the questions in the checklists. Discuss them with the target groups and other relevant stakeholders and ensure that conclusions from the discussion are reflected and addressed in the learning initiative design, delivery and follow up.

1. Relevance of skills to work setting

The designer of a learning initiative must verify that the proposed learning objectives actually meet a real need in the work context; that is, that the skills to be developed are relevant to the work setting. This can be accomplished through discussions with management, interactions with workers and even by a physical on-site visit to see the types of skills needed for that particular setting.

1.1. Is the skill to be developed relevant within the actual workplace setting? (It would be illogical, for example, to develop skills for using a particular piece of equipment if that equipment is not, nor ever will be, part of the workplace context).	
1.2. Will the skill remain relevant in the near future?	

[32] *Adapted from WBI Needs Assessment Knowledge Base, WBI Evaluation group, with permission*

2. Managerial or supervisory support

Managerial or supervisory support refers to issues regarding support, motivation and guidance from the supervisor to the participant who is performing the skill. The presence of absence of managerial support can have implications for the design of a learning initiative. If managerial support is present, it is possible to integrate that into the design of the learning initiative by indicating possible roles for the manager in the initiative itself. If such support is not present, it may be helpful to develop a more robust set of self-practice and evaluative techniques.

2.1. Will supervisors either directly or indirectly support the acquisition and proper implementation of the skill, or will participants be largely responsible for this on their own?	
2.2. Will supervisory personnel directly communicate with the participant concerning this skill, or is the participant alone largely responsible for maintaining ongoing focus on the skill?	

3. Physical aspects of the work setting

3.1. Does the work setting's current physical layout, design and/or facilities support the individual practising the skill, or will the skill be difficult to implement in the current physical context?	
3.2. What, if any, are the hindrances to the performance of the skill in terms of the physical characteristics of the work setting (e.g. work layout, on-site equipment or tools)?	
3.3. Is there anything that can be done to overcome such hindrances?	
3.4. Can the performance of the skill be modified in some way to accommodate any perceived shortcomings in the physical characteristics of the work setting? In what way?	

4. Social aspects of the work setting

Beyond direct managerial or supervisory support, there may be other individuals in the work setting who can support or impact skill performance in some way. When designing a learning initiative, it is important to understand these social aspects of the work setting because they can be powerful sources of support for proper skill performance.

4.1. Can fellow workers who are responsible for performing the same skill, or perhaps those in the immediate work setting who previously carried out the same or similar responsibilities, potentially influence the learners' ability to implement the new skills?	
4.2. Are there any gender or cultural considerations linked to the performance of certain roles in the work setting (e.g. biases about women in the roles of managers or leaders)?	

Communities of practice can be considered as part of the social aspect of the work setting, if they are integrated into the work setting and if they support the skills. Whether these are computer-mediated communities or simple social networking, communities of practice can play a decisive role in skills performance because of their potentially powerful effect on community members. If such support networks are in place, it is very valuable to integrate them into the learning initiative as much as possible. Not all participants will be aware of the existence of these communities in their work settings, and so providing information about them is an important part of delivering the learning initiative.

DESIGN CONTENT AND SELECT DELIVERY MODES

	DESIGN CONTENT AND SELECT DELIVERY MODES	RELEVANCE	PAGE	PRINT
	DEFINE LEARNING OBJECTIVES			
	GUIDANCE SHEETS			
4A	ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLES FOR ADULT LEARNING	CORE	128	
	TOOLS			
4B	TIPS AND CHECKLIST FOR WRITING LEARNING OBJECTIVES	CORE	131	
4C	TASK ANALYSIS	RECOMMENDED	134	
	SELECT DELIVERY MODE			
	GUIDANCE SHEETS			
4D	BLENDED LEARNING	CORE	138	
4E	WHAT IS ON-THE-JOB LEARNING?	CORE	141	
4F	COACHING AND MENTORING	RECOMMENDED	143	
4G	STUDY TOURS	RECOMMENDED	147	
	TOOLS			
4H	IS AD HOC TECHNICAL COACHING APPROPRIATE?	RECOMMENDED	151	
4I	ELEMENTS OF TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR TECHNICAL COACHES	RECOMMENDED	153	
	IDENTIFY, ORGANIZE AND DEVELOP LEARNING CONTENT			
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4J	STRUCTURING THE LEARNING EVENT	RECOMMENDED	154	
4K	PREPARING WRITTEN LEARNING MATERIAL	CORE	156	
	TOOLS			
4L	PREPARING A DESIGN OUTLINE	CORE	158	

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- About task analysis http://classweb.gmu.edu/ndabbagh/Resources/Resources2/Task%20Analysis.htm
- A comprehensive ITC-ILO Guide for the design of face-to-face events called 'Enhancing Learning for Effectiveness' can be found at: http://www.train4dev.net/fileadmin/Resources/Publications/T4D_Guide_final.pdf
- A good summary of Bloom taxonomy of learning domains http://www.businessballs.com/bloomstaxonomyoflearningdomains.htm
- WFP Toolkit - The toolkit aims to assist facilitators and trainers with the design and delivery of Food Security Assessments (FSA) learning events http://learning.vam.wfp.org/pages/dpg/pBookContent.asp?c=chap9&p=94 http://learning.vam.wfp.org/documents/Docs/FTK.pdf
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- CGIAR website provides access to a wealth of resources in scientific mentoring http://www.genderdiversity.cgiar.org/resource/links_mentoring.asp
- Coaching and mentoring network http://www.coachingnetwork.org.uk/Default.htm
- International coaching federation, hosts articles and research about coaching http://www.coachfederation.org/icf-research/icf-research-portal/
- FAO study tour report - The Role of Women Producer Organizations in Agricultural Value Chains, Practical Lessons from Africa and India, Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division (ESW)
- Lessons learned from the Togo-Mali study tour on Sector-wide Approaches in Agriculture, Investment Centre Division (TCI)
- Learning Routes, IFAD - http://www.slideshare.net/ifad/learning-routes-background-documentation
- A good summary of didactic methods and a description of their advantages, disadvantages and suggested use are provided by the Training Toolkit for developing, delivering and evaluating training on HIV-related topics and skills for healthcare providers. It is available at: http://www.go2itech.org/HTML/TT06/toolkit/delivery/methods.html under 'Instructional Methods'.

TOOL 4A GUIDANCE SHEET – ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLES FOR ADULT LEARNING[33]

WHAT? Adult learners differ from younger students in many ways. This guidance sheet presents some essential principles for adult learning and provides suggestions for adult-focused design and delivery strategies.

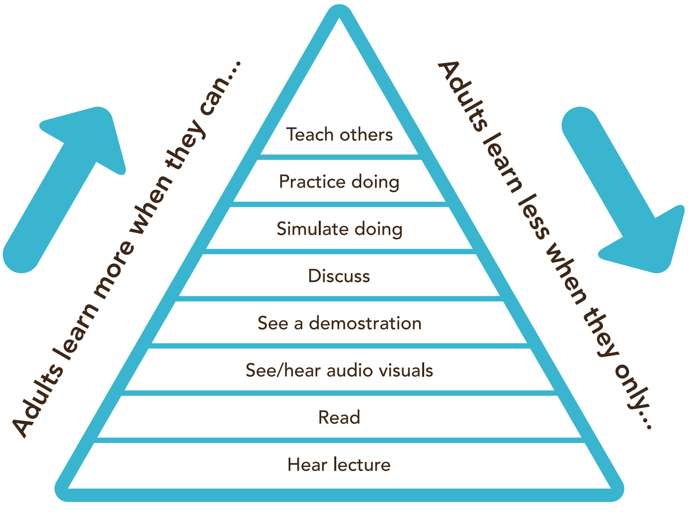
WHO? Developers, coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? In design and delivery of learning activities

Guiding principles

The principles presented below are built around the primary concept, illustrated in the Learning Pyramid diagram, that adult learners have specific requirements that must be addressed in any learning effort.

THE LEARNING PYRAMID



[33] *Adapted from Education & Counseling for Risk Reduction (ECRR) Curriculum, Center for Health Training (based on materials by Helmich J., in Making Connections: Teaching and the Human Brain. Renate M. and Caine G., Addison Wesley Publishing Company, 1994); https://courses.worldcampus.psu.edu/public/faculty/adults.html Dr. Gary Kuhne for "ADTED 460 - Introduction to Adult Education," a course offered through Penn State's World Campus)*

The Adult Learner: The Definitive Classic in Adult Education and Human Resource Development by Malcolm S. Knowles, Elwood E. Holton III, & Richard A. Swanson, 2005, Burlington, MA: Elsevier.

1. **Theory should be used to serve practice.**
   > Adult professionals tend to be pragmatic in their learning. Use instructional strategies that focus on practical, applied skills, using theoretical content only as necessary to inform discussion.

2. **Actively engage learners and encourage learning by doing.**
   > Actively engage learners to improve attention, enhance efficacy of training and enable trainers to gauge participants' abilities to translate acquired knowledge and skills into workplace practice.
   > Provide as many opportunities as possible for active learning. Learners can be asked to:
      > share case studies, perspectives, knowledge, insight and experience;
      > tell personal stories, creating common ground and connection;
      > develop materials and carry out tasks;
      > make action plans and decisions;
      > practise new skills and solve problem sets;
      > explore questions of values and feelings.
   > Identify learning strategies that give participants the opportunity to exercise some degree of control over their learning. Consider:
      > building in self-assessment and self-evaluation opportunities in training;
      > providing self-directed learning opportunities in which learners proceed through portions of the training in a self-paced, independent fashion.

3. **Ensure two-way feedback.**
   > Listen to what learners want and need and be flexible in your planning.
   > Change your approach if your agenda or methods are not working.
   > Give learners positive feedback so that they will feel encouraged and constructive suggestions to help them better learn.
   > Ask learners questions in order to gauge the extent to which they have understood and assimilated lecture content.
   > Provide frequent and meaningful feedback on learners' performance.

4. **Respect participants' experience and knowledge and use it to enhance learning results. Be the "guide on the side" rather than the "sage on the stage".**
   > Design activities to include specific opportunities for learners to share insight from prior experience and learning. This will help participants learn how to assimilate and apply learned knowledge and skills, will enable them to learn from each other and will enhance the relevance and efficacy of learning.
   > Verbally recognize that learners' knowledge and experience is an important resource for achieving class learning goals.

5. **Pay attention to surroundings.**
   > Learning involves both focused attention and peripheral perception. Trainers should pay attention to room temperature, ambient noise, seating arrangements and the use of visual aids (e.g. charts, illustrations, displays) to support learning.
   > Using music is a good way to cue memory and influence more natural acquisition of information.

6. **Learning involves opening up to challenges and taking risks. Adults may feel insecure in learning environments or be worried about appearing weak or incapable.**
   > Establish an environment where participants feel supported and safe enough to ask questions and try new things, where individual needs and uniqueness are honoured and where abilities and life achievements are acknowledged and respected.
   > Treat participants as peers – intelligent experienced adults whose opinions are listened to, honoured and appreciated.
   > Don't ask people to take risks too early in a workshop or course (e.g. by engaging in a role play exercise) unless they already know each other well.
   > Provide opportunities and allow time for people to establish themselves in the group.
   > Promote intellectual freedom and encourage experimentation and creativity.
   > Consider how to give constructive criticism in ways which support learning rather than discourage it.
   > Allow for "consequence-free" practice activities where learners do not feel judged.
   > Use introductory exercises or "ice-breakers" to allow learners to get to know each other at the beginning of training.

7. **Recognize and address resistance to change**
   > Recognize when learning is in conflict with learners' previously held values, attitudes understanding or beliefs. Build training content to reflect whether learning requires shifts in these attitudes or whether it is possible to broaden learning to accept different viewpoints.
   > Training content should explain "why" and not just "how".
   > Attempt to create connections between older, accepted concepts that learners already know and newer ones being introduced in the training.

TOOL 4B TIPS AND CHECKLIST FOR WRITING LEARNING OBJECTIVES[34]

WHAT? A learning objective is a statement of what a learner should be able to do at the conclusion of the learning initiative. This tool provides some tips and a checklist to help formulate effective learning objectives.

WHO? Developers, instructional designers, coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? After the Learning Needs Assessment (LNA) and the Task Analysis (if one is done)

Tips

> Learning objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timed. They should consider the time available and be coherent with the goals of the learners' own organizations.

__S__pecific, providing a situation or condition for the action

__M__easurable, indicating a standard or end result that is tangible

__A__chievable, for all participants who complete the exercises and readings

__R__elevant to the learners' needs and situations

__T__imed, so they do not involve a task or action that continues forever and would be difficult to measure

> Objectives should be short sentences. There should not be more than six objectives for a unit or a programme.
> The most critical part of a learning objective is the description of the observable actions that the learner can show to demonstrate that he/she has learned. An action verb must be used, avoiding the most ambiguous terms such as 'understand' or 'become familiar with'.
> Learning objectives should be formulated in terms of outcomes – not by describing learning activities.

[34] *Based on Ghirardini, B. E-learning methodologies: A guide for designing and developing e-learning courses, FAO, 2011, and Instructional Design, P. Smith and T. Ragan, 1999*

WRONG: IT DESCRIBES THE LEARNING ACTIVITIES	GOOD: IT DESCRIBES THE LEARNING OUTCOME
Learners will play a simulation in which they will experience...	Learners will be able to identify potential sources of water pollution…

> Learning objectives should consider the appropriate range of cognitive domains. A useful question could be: What type of learning outcome does the objective represent? In other words, what will learners learn: will they *memorize* the step of a procedure or will they be able to actually *perform* it?

According to the revised Bloom's taxonomy of the cognitive domain, learning objectives can imply six different **types of cognitive performance**, ranging from the lowest level (remember) to the highest level (create).

Learning taxonomy for the cognitive domain[35]

1. REMEMBER	The learner is able to recognize or memorize information.
2. UNDERSTAND	The learner is able to reformulate a concept.
3. APPLY	The learner is able to use the information in a new way.
4. ANALYSE	The learner is able to decompose and define relationships among components.
5. EVALUATE	The learner is able to justify a decision according to a criterion or standard.
6. CREATE	The learner is able to realize a new product or approach.

[35] *Source: Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001*

Here are some possible action verbs, ranging from the lowest to the highest level:

LOW (REMEMBER)			HIGH (CREATE)		
arrange cite classify copy define describe discuss express give example identify indicate list	name order outline recall relate report review specify summarize tell	apply calculate choose demonstrate discover distinguish draw employ explain illustrate	infer interpret operate practise prepare produce relate select show summarize	analyse appraise assess categorize combine compare construct defend evaluate examine	create justify formulate modify organize plan propose question rate score solve test value write

> To achieve overall coherence, the learning contents, learning activities and assessment tests must be aligned with learning objectives. For example, if the learning objective is about improving the learner's understanding of a concept, then activities and the final assessment test will have to be aligned with the same concept.

CHECKLIST

> Is the objective expressed in terms of knowledge, skill or attitude?
> Does the objective contain a clear, unambiguous description of performance?
> Is the objective expressed in terms of outcomes?
> Has an action verb been used to describe the observable actions that the learner can show that will demonstrate that he/she has learned?
> Is the objective based on accurate task analysis?
> Does the objective contain details of the conditions under which the performance is to be carried out?
> Are the conditions based on a real working environment?
> Does the objective include criteria for the performance standard to be achieved?
> Are the standards measurable?
> How will the achievement of the objective be assessed?
> Does the learner understand and agree with the objective?

TOOL 4C TASK ANALYSIS[36]

WHAT? This tool provides step-by-step guidance for analysing and articulating the kind of knowledge, skills and attitudes which learners should have to carry out their job. It helps answer what learners are supposed to know and be able to do to perform their job.

WHO? Developers of the learning initiative and, where possible, instructional designers

WHEN? As part of designing the learning initiative, before defining specific learning objectives

Instructions

Task analysis is particularly indicated when the learning initiative targets highly technical or specialized job functions. It ensures that learning content is relevant to learners' needs. Task analysis will help you:

- determine learning goals and objectives;
- define and describe in detail the tasks that the learner will perform;
- specify the type of knowledge that characterizes a job or task;
- select learning outcomes that are appropriate for content development; and
- prioritize and sequence tasks.

There are several ways of approaching a task analysis (see recommended resources). Here is the approach we recommend, followed by a template:

Step 1: Inventory the tasks
Identify and describe the tasks that learners should learn or improve to achieve the general goal of your learning initiative.

Step 2: Classify the tasks
Classify the tasks as:

- procedural (step-by-step tasks performed always in the same way); or
- principle-based (tasks requiring some judgment and decision to apply in different situations).

[36] *Adapted from Ghirardini B., FAO E-learning methodological guide, Section 3.6, p. 40*

Step 3: Break up the tasks

Break up the tasks into:

- steps (for procedural tasks); or
- guidelines that should be applied to perform the tasks (for principle-based tasks).

Step 4: Identify required knowledge and skills

Identify the knowledge and skills needed to best perform those steps or apply those guidelines.

EXAMPLE OF A TASK ANALYSIS

Let's take the example of an e-learning curriculum aiming at improving food security analysis and promoting its use in decision-making.

The curriculum audience is composed of mid-level managers, technical staff and field personnel who are involved in collecting, managing, analysing and reporting food security information.

Step 1: Inventory tasks

After discussion with several food security experts, it emerges that the most critical aspects that should be improved relate to: the selection of assessment methods and indicators; the analysis of the collected data; and, very importantly, the preparation of effective food security reports to communicate research findings to decision-makers.

Therefore, in this case, the tasks to be performed are the following:
1. Select the most appropriate method to assess food security in a given context.
2. Select indicators for different food security dimensions.
3. Analyse assessment results using standardized analysis methods.
4. Design and produce effective reports for decision-makers, providing them with recommendations based on analysis results.

Step 2: Classifying tasks

Undoubtedly, all these tasks are quite complex and the way they are carried out depends on a given context. This means that they are principle-based rather than procedural tasks.

Therefore, rather than providing learners with step-by-step instructions on what to do, we can provide them with guidelines they can apply to specific situations.

Step 3: Break up the tasks

Each task is then described and a set of guidelines are identified for learners to follow in order to correctly accomplish the task. Let's focus, for example, on Task 4:

TASK: REPORT RESULTS TO DECISION-MAKERS	GUIDELINES
Task description: Design and produce effective reports for decision-makers, providing them with recommendations based on analysis results.	Define the communication purpose
	Identify users' information requirements
	Construct a message in a logical and persuasive manner
	Choose a report format according to the context
	Write the report clearly and concisely

EXAMPLE OF A TASK ANALYSIS

Step 4: Identify required knowledge

What does the food security professional need to know to apply these guidelines?

TASK: REPORT RESULTS TO DECISION-MAKERS	GUIDELINES	REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE
Task description: Design and produce effective reports for decision-makers, providing them with recommendations based on analysis results.	Define the communication purpose	Difference between explanation and advocacy
	Identify users' information requirements	Potential readers of a food security report Difference between primary and secondary audience Methods to interact with users Timeliness of reporting
	Construct a message in a logical and persuasive manner	What makes recommendations relevant and feasible Structure of a message: current situation, problem, questions, response needed Consistency, relevance and brevity of supporting data
	Choose a report format according to the context	Components of: Baseline or Research Report, Early Warning Bulletins, Emergency Needs Assessments, Policy Papers or Briefs, Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
	Write the report clearly and concisely	Report elements: summary, introduction, main body and conclusions What makes sentences clear and concise The editing process

TASK ANALYSIS TEMPLATE

Step 1: Inventory tasks

Answer the following questions:

> What is the overall goal of the learning initiative? (This should be aligned with the target audience's organizational goals).
> What are target audience's major responsibilities in relation to the overall goal of the learning initiative?
> What are the critical aspects/tasks that the target audience needs to improve to accomplish the overall goal?

Write the critical aspects/tasks here:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Step 2: Classify tasks

Describe how these tasks are going to be accomplished by answering these questions:

> Do tasks imply the mechanical execution of steps? (Yes or No)
> Do tasks require judgment and decisions to be taken for which some guidelines are required? (Yes or No)

Step 3: Break up the tasks

Describe each task and list the type of judgment, decisions or steps that are required for each of the tasks. These explain "how" each task is accomplished.

TASK	GUIDELINES/STEPS
Task description:	

Step 4: Identify required knowledge

What do target audience members need to know to make those judgments, take decisions or undertake steps?

TASK	GUIDELINES/STEPS	REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE

TOOL 4D GUIDANCE SHEET – BLENDED LEARNING[37]

WHAT? This guidance sheet provides suggestions on using "blended learning" – a combination of different "media" (e.g. technologies, activities and types of events) – to create an optimum learning programme for a specific audience. The term "blended" means that traditional instructor-led training is being supplemented with other electronic formats.[38]

WHO? Developers, coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? When selecting delivery modes for the learning initiative

E-learning methods and activities can be integrated with more traditional classroom and live, face-to-face (F2F) events. Traditional methods (e.g. face-to-face classrooms, workshops, coaching and mentoring) can be combined with e-learning content and methods to make the most of the two delivery channels.

Blending F2F training with e-learning can take different forms. Bersin (2004) identifies two main models:

- **Programme Flow:** Learning activities are organized in a linear, sequential order and learners have deadlines to accomplish the various assignments; this is similar to traditional training, but some of the activities are conducted online.
- **Core-and-Spoke:** A major course (e-learning or F2F) is provided and a set of supplemental materials are available to reinforce the main course; these materials are optional and not scheduled.

The Programme Flow model is more suited for observable outcomes and assessment purposes (including certification), since it enables instructors and facilitators to easily monitor each step and formally track learners' progress.

Sequential programmes applying a Programme Flow model to allow for several combinations, for example:

An **online pre-class event** can be used to bring learners with different levels of knowledge and skills to the same level before the F2F class begins.

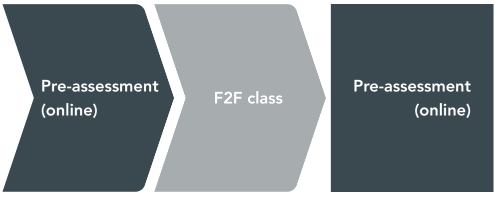
The online event can be an assignment. The instructor can review the results of the pre-class assignment for each learner and adjust the programme for the F2F class by focusing on gaps in knowledge and skills.

[37] *Adapted from Ghirardini, B., FAO's e-learning methodologies guide, Appendix*

[38] *Bersin J. (2004). The Blended Learning Book. San Francisco: Pfeiffer.*

This approach has several advantages compared with a traditional F2F approach: (1) it forces learners to come to the classroom prepared; (2) it allows the design of more efficient classroom activities which are tailored to the specific needs or interests of the participants; and (3) it reduces the total time in the classroom, which reduces the costs of the programme.

Another approach can be to start with a **core classroom event**, followed by **online independent experiences** such as interaction with online resources or e-mentoring services for continuous reinforcement. This would include, for example, developing communities of learners or further discussions on advanced topics of individual interest.



Online events can also be used to introduce and conclude a blended learning programme.

For example, they could be used to assess participants' knowledge prior to and after a course.

To optimize the design efforts spent in producing e-learning courses, trainers can adapt and reuse e-learning materials in classroom sessions and training workshops.

They can also reuse media elements, such as illustrations and diagrams, and textual content to create presentations for trainers and materials for learners.

Example: FAO blended learning programme for country teams and food security thematic working group members

A blended learning programme has been designed to provide members of national food security teams with the knowledge and skills required to design and implement country agriculture and food security investment plans.[39] The programme includes the following components:

> **Pre- workshop preparation:** A questionnaire will be submitted to participants a few days before the online phase. Participants will be asked to describe their role in the national food security system and their areas of expertise. The questionnaire will aim both to help facilitators tailor the activities based on participants' profiles and allow participants to understand each other's roles and responsibilities.

> **Online workshop (core component):** The workshop is a mix of individual study of interactive e-lessons on food security topics and online activities supported by facilitators and subject-matter experts. Both synchronous and asynchronous communication are used for online discussions and group work. The main outcome of the online component is an individual workplan that will help participants reflect on their country situation and serve as a supporting resource for F2F workshop activities.

> **Bridge period:** This is a period between the two core components of the course. Online support is provided to particpants to complete their preparation prior to the F2F workshop.

> **Face-to-face workshop (core component):** This is comprised of classroom events where participants can present and discuss their previous work, practise communication principles and techniques and proceed in their workplan with the assistance of a subjectmatter expert.

> **Q&A service and online resources:** A question and answer service will be offered after the completion of the course, together with access to additional online resources, to facilitate the transfer to the job.

[39] *The programme has been developed by FAO and GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit) with the University of Pretoria as part of a project entitled 'Developing the Capacities of Food Security Professionals'. The programme aims to support the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Pillar III - Framework for African Food Security (FAFS). It integrates e-learning materials on a wide range of food security topics developed by the EC-FAO Programme on 'Linking Information and Decision Making to Improve Food Security'.*

TOOL 4E GUIDANCE SHEET – WHAT IS ON-THE-JOB LEARNING?

WHAT? This guidance sheet provides an overview of different forms of on-the-job learning, including coaching, mentoring, job shadowing, study tours and action learning.

WHO? Developers, coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? When selecting delivery modes for the learning initiative. On-the-job learning is particularly suited when learning:

> takes place best through small groups or one-on-one relations;
> is needed to address a real situation that requires just-in-time learning, action or change;
> happens best in the job environment rather in a classroom or simulated environment.

On-the-job learning includes among the most flexible practices to meet individual learning needs. The individual learns while working on the job, i.e. by undertaking real tasks, using real tools, facing real challenges and confronting a real environment. As such, on-the-job practices are best suited to support individual ownership in learning and capacity development.

The following table presents some of the most widely used methods of on-the-job learning and describes how they are used in FAO.

METHOD	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLES
Coaching	Learner is paired with an expert from either within or outside his/her work setting. Coaching may follow a structured learning plan or can be unstructured, responding to needs as they arise. Learning can be scheduled at regular intervals, ad-hoc (i.e. unscheduled) or online.	TCI ad hoc technical coaching; FAO Executive Coaching Programme
Mentoring	Learner is paired with a more experienced or senior colleague, generally from the same workplace, who acts as a role model and guide. The mentor provides support and advice to facilitate both career and personal development.	Mentoring component of TOT on Conflict Management (FOEP) – See box 5 in the main document
Job shadowing	Learner closely observes one or more colleagues performing regular duties in the actual work environment. Can involve following one role or a variety of roles to get a more general overview of the tasks an office performs. Allows time for learners to ask questions of colleagues. It is generally a one-on-one activity.	Junior staff sit in a meeting and shadow more senior colleagues who facilitate a group discussion.
Study tours/ exposure visits	Learner acquires new perspective on existing skills, applied in a different context, and may also job shadow while on mission. The learner should generally be asked to complete a formal report outlining conclusions/ observations made during the period. It can be a one-on-one or team-based activity.	Examples of study tours by FI, TCI and ESW (See Tool 4g)
Action learning	Team-based learning through experience. Typically used to solve a real problem in the work environment. It is facilitated by an experienced colleague/advisor.	Farmer Business Schools (See box 8 in the main document)

TOOL 4F GUIDANCE SHEET – COACHING AND MENTORING[40]

WHAT? This guidance sheet provides definitions for coaching and mentoring and discusses the commonalities and differences between them. It also reviews when to use mentoring and coaching and describes the key skills and attributes of coaches and mentors.

WHO? Developers, coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? When selecting delivery modes for the learning initiative

Definitions

- Coaching is a process that enables learning for effective job performance or development of long-term capabilities. Technical coaching is used in this Module to indicate coaching in FAO-specific technical subject-matter areas.
- Mentoring is *off-line* help by one person to another to make a significant transition in knowledge or work. The mentor provides support and advice to facilitate both career and personal development.

Main differences

TECHNICAL COACHING	MENTORING
> A professional relationship, with purpose and goals, that focuses on the future > Coach supportively holds the coachee accountable for getting what he/she wants and challenges his/her thinking process > The relationship has a defined start and end > Coaches are generally experts in the subject matter and also have knowledge and understanding of process	> Mentor acts as an advisor, guide and role model > Mentor provides wisdom, experience, practical help and support to facilitate both career and personal development > Can be a two-way exchange process between mentor and mentee > Is an ongoing relationship with no clearly defined start and end point

[40] *Based on definitions of the coaching network (http://www.coachingnetwork.org.uk/Default.htm); Coaching Successfully; The Pocket Guide to Coaching (Internal resource, WBI); FAO Executive Coaching Programme, CSH.*

Commonalities

The mentor and the technical coach both:

- facilitate the exploration of needs, motivations, desires, skills and thought processes to assist the individual in making real, lasting change;
- use questioning techniques to facilitate the individual's own thought processes in order to identify solutions and actions rather than take a wholly directive approach;
- support the individual in setting appropriate goals and methods of assessing progress in relation to these goals;
- observe, listen and ask questions to understand the individual's situation;
- encourage a commitment to action and the development of lasting personal growth and change; and
- work within their area of personal competence.

When is it used?

Mentoring can be used:

- by FAO staff to provide continuous support and motivation to national counterparts in their own capacity-development efforts, including by enlarging their networks, making them aware of opportunities and resources and providing information, advice, useful contacts and links.
- as a component of twinning arrangements or South-South relationships between organizations in Member Countries, facilitated by FAO.

Technical coaching can be used:

- in either planned or ad hoc format or online to support counterparts' learning in specific areas, as part of FAO's ongoing technical work in Member Countries.

  Planned coaching can be used for:

  - on-the-job (or 'just-in-time') support to learning that takes place in the context of FAO Technical Officers' regular work tasks, site visits and technical assistance work with national counterparts;
  - part of blended learning programmes (e.g. in combination with e-learning or face-to-face training);
  - follow-up, a few weeks/months after a workshop or a learning programme has ended, to support implementation of new learning in the work setting.

Ad hoc coaching can occur anytime, such as when:

> national counterparts have taken on new tasks or projects which require developing new or enhanced skills/work behaviours;
> national partners' projects, tasks, activities or products are not up to standard and require focused support and improvement;
> new knowledge has been learned which requires practise, supervision and feedback to be internalized and institutionalized;
> there are individual performance problems which prevent the organization or project from progressing and/or achieving its objectives;
> people need to learn how to operate with newly introduced equipment, techniques, methods or procedures;
> new people have joined a project/an organization and need to be brought up to speed.

E-coaching (i.e. coaching done online) can be done by any combination of:

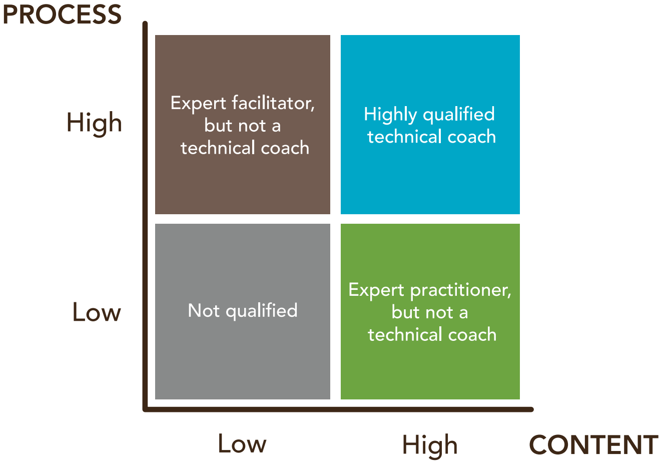
> skype/telephone coaching;
> online platforms;
> email;
> video conferencing; and
> where possible, face-to-face meetings.

The advantages of e-coaching are that it is less costly; supports virtual teams; and allows coachees to express themselves over the phone, which they may find more comfortable. The challenges of e-coaching are that it may require at least one face-to-face meeting to build trust and establish an informal, safe environment; it may be difficult to find the time to follow-up on a regular basis; and feedback is often not timely.

Required key skills and attributes

Technical coaches

Highly qualified technical coaches must possess knowledge and experience in the subject-matter and also be good at process-related tasks.



Mentors

The Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), which uses scientific mentoring in its programmes[41], offers a good description of a mentor. According to CGIAR, a good mentor:

is 'for life'	has enthusiasm	is good at questioning and listening
appreciates individual differences	knows how to develop skills	is available, has open doors
is good at teaching and communication	can balance direction and self-direction	provides advice on career decisions
is good at building communities	celebrates successes	uses his/her contacts to promote young staff
shows respect	shows sensitivity	is optimistic, inspires others

[41] *Nature: http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v447/n7146/full/447791a.html cited in the CGIAR website http://www.genderdiversity.cgiar.org/resource/links_mentoring.asp*

TOOL 4G GUIDANCE SHEET – STUDY TOURS

WHAT? This guidance sheet provides practical suggestions and tips on how to design study tours based on good practices.

WHO? Developers, coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? When selecting delivery modes for the learning initiative

Study tours are on-the-job or informal learning situations in which participants can acquire know-how or new perspectives on existing skills or see skills applied in a different context. Through study tours, learners are invited to visit a specific location, see with their own eyes how work is carried out and meet with key stakeholders to gain firshand information and insights about a specific topic.

Study tours have tangible and less tangible benefits. In general, study tours allow participants to:

- gain insights on specific topics;
- learn good practices;
- anticipate possible challenges in applying skills and practices to their own context;
- create or foster new alliances, networks and partnerships;
- reflect on processes;
- encourage exchange, open thinking and dialogue; and
- generate goodwill and support from management, leading to greater support for follow-up and implementation of learning.

When are study tours suitable?

Study tours can be used anytime as alternatives or complements to other types of delivery modes. They work best when combined strategically with other modalities as part of broader projects and programmes, although they have proven to be effective even by themselves. Job shadowing can be associated with study tours, although this is not a necessary component.

Study tours can be used strategically:

- at the beginning of a project, to trigger desirable changes in participants and organizations. In this situation, study tours can be followed by more structured learning initiatives (such as trainings) and project activities;
- towards the end of a project, to complete a learning journey by demonstrating how knowledge or skills are put into practice in a different context and by allowing participants to build alliances and networks among themselves.

How should study tours be organized?

To be effective, study tours must include well-defined responsibilities from the early stages of the initiative for the following roles:

- well-selected participants from the sending country;
- one or more host bodies in the host country with clearly identified focal points;
- a subjecmatter expert from the host country, when possible;
- a technical officer from FAO, who will act as a facilitator and organizer; and
- administrative and logistical focal points.

A typical process for organizing study tours involves:

- selecting participants, based on clearly determined criteria, from the visiting country;
- identifying the needs and priorities of participants and the needs and capacity gaps of the sending organizations;
- setting objectives for the study tour and choosing the topics, which should reflect the composition of the participant group;
- setting the agenda in collaboration with the visiting country/institutions and the hosting country/institutions to enhance ownership by all involved;
- identifying an appropriate itinerary and related activities, such as meetings to be held, discussions to be facilitated, site visits to organize and demonstrations to plan;
- hiring a local subject-matter expert, where appropriate, who can accompany the participants and provide explanations, clarifications and additional insights in the subject matter;
- arranging for debriefings at the end of each day or half way through the end of the study tour; and
- arranging for a final debriefing, in which participants should be encouraged to develop recommendations to bring back home to improve their own practice in the subject matter.

Tips and suggestions from FAO study tours

The following tips are based on existing practices in FAO:

> Study tours are most effective when they are proposed at the right time and combined strategically with other project components.

> A study tour should ideally last from three to four days and not exceed seven days, as long tours can create information overloads.

> Well-planned processes, clear division of roles and responsibilities and commitment/ownership are critical for the success of the tour.

> Selection of the participants and composition of the group should be done strategically. For example, depending on the nature of the project, it may be advisable to mix public-sector and private-sector participants, or individuals with operations and policy-oriented functions, or decision-makers. Such tours offer valuable opportunities for participants to create linkages among themselves, which are important to enhance the overall capacities of the individuals and their sending organizations.

> Study tour evaluations are best done using a three-step benchmarking tool (See Tools in Toolbox 7).

Study tour from India to General Santos Fish Port Complex (Philippines)
(as part of the project "Capacity Building in Support of Cleaner Fishing Harbours TCP/IND/3102 A, March 2007–December 2009)

This study tour was conducted over a period of five days and covered all aspects of fishing harbour operations. The General Santos Fish Port Complex is located in General Santos City in South Cotabato on the island of Mindanao in the southern Philippines. It is the main centre for landing marine fish in the area, and local fishing boats as well as foreign vessels are allowed to unload their catches.

Two participants, one from each harbour, participated in the study tour to learn first-hand how a fishing harbour in another Asian country was being operated and to pick up good practices to implement in their own harbour.

The following criteria were used to select the participant from each harbour:

- The person must have been directly involved in managing the fishing harbour for at least two years, and intend to be involved in direct management for the next five years.
- The person must be in a position to recommend and implement changes in the management of the fishing harbour.
- The person must be willing to prepare a write-up and presentation of the study tour and present it upon return to relevant state officials and stakeholders. The write-up and presentation must include recommendations on how the practices and lessons from the visited fishing harbour would be applied to their own situation, or modified as necessary.

The objectives of the study tour were:

- to observe the operations of a fishing harbour, learn lessons from the experiences of the management authority and explore how the best practices in the visited fishing harbour could be applied in their own situation;
- to analyse the structure and composition of the harbour management group and the operations pertaining to cleanliness and maintenance of sanitation and hygiene; and
- to learn how stakeholders are involved in managing a fishing harbour, determine the costs of running and maintaining the fishing harbour and see who is paying for what services.

Following the study tour, the participant from the Dhamara fishing harbour proposed managerial, financial and technical recommendations to manage fishing harbours in India.

TOOL 4H CHECKLIST: IS AD HOC TECHNICAL COACHING APPROPRIATE?

WHAT? This tool presents a checklist to support FAO technical staff to identify opportunities for technical coaching as part of their regular ongoing work in Member Countries. It is intended as an orientation tool to verify whether the conditions exist for ad hoc technical coaching with national or local counterparts, or whether other solutions should apply.

WHO? Coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? As part of delivery mode selection

ISSUE	YES	NO	COMMENTS
1. New tasks or projects have been taken on by national counterparts which require developing new or enhanced skills/work behaviours.			
2. Projects, tasks, activities or products accomplished by national counterparts are not up to standard and require focused support and improvement.			
3. New knowledge has been learned which requires practise, supervision and feedback to be internalized and institutionalized.			
4. There are individual performance problems which prevent the organization or the project from progressing and/or achieving its objectives.			
5. People need to learn how to operate new equipment, techniques, methods or procedures.			

ISSUE	YES	NO	COMMENTS
6. New people have joined a project or an organization and need to be brought up to speed.			
7. The areas of expertise to be covered through coaching are in FAO's areas of expertise.			
8. There are between one and six people who need technical coaching.			
9. It is important that people learn, apply and receive feedback on using the new skills while on the job.			
10. People have a clear understanding of the coaching concept and agree to be coached.			
11. Managers or supervisors of the people concerned approve technical coaching and commit to support their own staff in using the skills and knowledge.			
12. The Technical Officer who manages the project/programme can provide the requested coaching on the spot or while on mission, or required resources can be made available for additional coaches.			
13. Terms of Reference for the Technical Officer/mission have been integrated with coaching tasks.			
14. Reasonable time can be made available for technical coaching while on the job.			
15. Face-to-face coaching can be combined with distance coaching as appropriate.			
16. A learning plan, with specific learning objectives can be/has been defined.			
17. Forms are available for evaluating the effectiveness of the coaching and for reporting back coaching results.			

TOOL 41 ELEMENTS OF TERMS OF REFERENCE[42] FOR TECHNICAL COACHES

WHAT? This tool offers suggested elements of Terms of Reference (TORs) for technical officers and/or consultants undertaking regular technical work in Member Countries.

WHO? Coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? As part of delivery mode selection, after coaching has been considered a viable option

These TORs may apply, with some adaptation, to situations where the Technical Officer acts either as the technical coach or facilitates a relationship between an external technical coach and the learners.

> **Assess the situation and the need for coaching/mentoring.**

1. Establish the need for coaching or mentoring with counterparts.
2. Assess the actual interest and commitment of counterparts to take part in coaching or mentoring, and seek agreement from managers and supervisors.

> **Identify coaches/mentors and verify appropriate competencies.**

3. Identify potential coaches/mentors at the national or international level, as appropriate, whether internally at FAO or externally.
4. Verify subject-matter and process-related competencies of potential coaches.
5. Establish contacts between coaches/mentors and learners, either through face-to-face or distance methods.

> **Discuss and define the content of the coaching.**

6. Oversee development of a learning plan with learners or between coach and learner(s), which includes learning objectives, a tentative timeframe and means of measurement.
7. Oversee development of an action plan for progress to be made by the learner(s) during the coaching period.
8. Ensure that the contents of coaching remain within the context of the work programme or the organizational development plans.

> **Oversee evaluation of coaching/mentoring.**

9. Ensure that an evaluation of the coaching process takes place.
10. Ensure that an evaluation of coaching results takes place.
11. Report about coaching results.

> **Consider sustainability options.**

12. Facilitate the creation of a system that will allow learners to become coaches at the national/local level.

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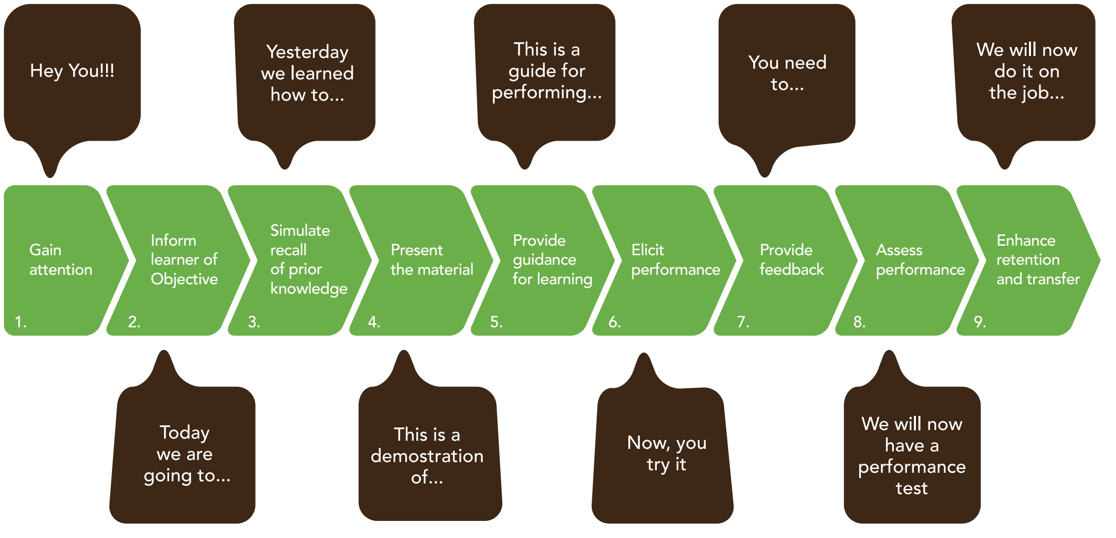
[42] *Inspired from: WB executive coaching programme, Coaches Terms of Reference, WB; and a concept note on distance mentoring shared by the Investment Centre Division (TCI)*

TOOL 4J GUIDANCE SHEET – STRUCTURING THE LEARNING EVENT

WHAT? This guidance sheet provides a suggested pattern for structuring and sequencing an effective learning initiative, whatever delivery mode is chosen. It is based on educational psychologist R. Gagne's "Nine Events of Instruction".[43]

WHO? Developers, coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? In design and delivery of learning activities



1. **Gain attention.** Present a problem or a new situation. Use an "interest device" that grabs the learner's attention. This can be thought of as a teaser – the idea is to grab the learners' attention so that they will watch and listen while you present the learning point.
   How? You can use devices such as:
   > storytelling
   > demonstrating
   > presenting a problem to be solved or a hypothetical situation (e.g. just imagine that...)
   > doing something the wrong way (the instruction would then show how to do it the right way)
   > appealing to a common memory (e.g. you all remember when...)

[43] *Based on Instructional Design, P. Smith and T. Ragan, 1999 p. 115. The diagram is based on: http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/learning/learning.html*

2. **Inform learner of objective.** This allows the learners to 'sit in the driver's seat' in the lesson, such as by organizing their thoughts around what they are about to see, hear and/or do. There is a saying in the training field: Tell them what you're going to tell them; tell them; and then tell them what you told them. This cues them and then provides a review which has proven to be effective.
   > How? Describe the goal of a lesson and then state what the learners will be able to accomplish and how they will be able to use the knowledge.

3. **Stimulate recall of prior information.** This allows the learners to build on their previous knowledge or skills. Although we are capable of having our "creative" minutes, it is much easier to build on what we already know.
   > How? Ask questions that remind the learners of prior information and knowledge relevant to the current lesson; make analogies or other comparisons as learners are presented with new information; and help learners search for relevant experiences or memories that make the new information personally meaningful.

4. **Present information. Chunk the information to avoid memory overload.**
   > How? By blending an expository sequence (i.e. concepts are presented before the examples) and a discovery sequence (i.e. examples of the concepts or applications of the principles are presented before the concepts and the principles).

5. **Provide guidance for learning.** Although the learner's attention was invoked at the beginning, it must be refocused continuously throughout the lesson.
   > How? You can ask leading questions to help learners attend to the most critical features of the lessons/contents, or use graphics and cues to direct the learners' attention.

6. **Elicit performance.** Practice by letting the learner do something with the newly acquired behaviour, skills or knowledge.
   > How? Use simulations, role plays or on-the-job performance opportunities.

7. **Provide feedback.** Tell the learner that his or her response is correct, or analyse the learner's behaviour. The feedback needs to be specific; telling them why they are doing a good job or providing specific guidance is better than just saying "you are doing a good job".
   > How? Provide the results of a test or quiz or give verbal comments.

8. **Assess performance.** Test to determine if the lesson has been learned.
   > How? Through exercises, tests and questions.

9. **Enhance retention and transfer.** The process of transfer, i.e. the application of new knowledge and skills to a variety of real-life situations and future learning tasks, can be enhanced by giving learners opportunities to apply their learning to a variety of circumstances. Research suggests that spontaneous transfer rarely occurs. In many cases, learners require prompting to see the connections between prior learning and a new situation.
   > How? Inform the learner about similar problem situations, ask learners to find examples or apply principles in real-life conditions that they would anticipate encountering or provide additional practise through action plans and follow-up support.

TOOL 4K GUIDANCE SHEET – PREPARING WRITTEN LEARNING MATERIAL[44]

WHAT? This guidance sheet contains suggestions for developing a manual, a booklet or any publication as part of a learning initiative.

WHO? Coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? As part of learning design and development

Organization of information

The first thing to consider is organizing the information into more manageable groups to improve the reader's comprehension and ability to access and retrieve the information. This technique is called "chunking". There are no hard rules on how big a chunk is supposed to be, but you can think of it as a main piece of information or a main learning objective, augmented by a few pieces of ancillary information.

From a layout perspective, you may want to discuss the main concept and place it in a prominent position on the page, and put related information on a different place on the page or format it in a different way. For example, you can:

> add a case study that illustrates your main point on one side of the page, surrounded by a box.
> add a tip or a note after you have discussed your main topic and separate it visually.

NOTE

Research suggests that human beings can understand and remember no more than seven, plus or minus two, items of information at a time. This phenomenon is called the "chunking limit". Further, as the complexity of the information increases, the chunking limit decreases.

[44] *Adapted from A. Marinetti, UNHCR, Global Learning Centre*

Secondly, consider how to sequence complex or large amounts of information. Here are a few suggestions:

- Discuss general concepts first, then the specifics.
- Start with simple notions/tasks, then discuss more complex ones.
- Display information based on a time sequence (i.e. what you do first, second, etc.).
- Start from what users are likely to know, then move into the unknown.

Reflection devices

To help learners reflect on what they are reading as they go through the materials and to help them through their thought process, consider adding reflection questions at key points in your document. Reflection questions are questions that activate users' minds and prepare them for what they are going to read next. This facilitates the reflection process and helps users retain information they are reading.

Questions also can be used to stimulate recall of prior knowledge. Before you introduce a new concept, it is useful to start the paragraph or chapter with a question or a sentence that may help bridge what users already know (based on their experience and background) to what they are reading. Of course, this may be a bit challenging because you don't know all of your learners' profiles, but if you are able to identify some common characteristics, you may be able to provide this link between their prior knowledge and the new information. This strategy helps learners retain information and facilitates comprehension of the new knowledge.

Memory devices

To help users retain information and new knowledge, you can use memory devices such as:

- headers or short sentences next to key paragraphs to draw attention to and help learners focus on a key concept. This is particularly useful when you are discussing complex topics that require long narratives;
- icons to point to key concepts or indicate recurring activities. If the icons are not self-explanatory, you may want to add a caption underneath them. Most importantly, use the icons consistently (e.g. use the same icon to always indicate the same type of activity);
- different typefaces (e.g. bold, italics) to emphasize key sentences and quotes;
- different layouts or graphical devices to separate different types of content. For example, use a box to separate a case study or a tip from your main narrative;
- bulleted lists to highlight key topics before you elaborate them further;
- graphics (e.g. charts and diagrams) to illustrate processes, flows, organigrams or steps; and
- a summary at the end of a chapter to recap key topics covered.

TOOL 4L PREPARING A DESIGN OUTLINE

WHAT? This tool suggests a template for a design outline to provide a clear picture of what the learning initiative will look like. It can be used to help monitor the design/development work as it proceeds.

WHO? Developers, instructional designers, coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? After the Learning Needs Assessment (LNA) and the definition of learning objectives

Instructions

1. **Overview –** In the first part of the template, summarize key decisions about:
   > the title of the initiative;
   > its overall goal;
   > the delivery mode that has been selected or which is envisaged;
   > the learning objectives; and
   > the envisaged follow up.

2. **Design plan –** Reflect on the following and complete the design plan accordingly:
   > List each learning objective or each cluster of learning objectives on a separate row of the design plan. Consider what type of learning each objective or cluster of objectives involves: does it primarily involve acquiring new knowledge, strengthening existing skills or acquiring new skills?
   > What content, in terms of knowledge and skills, will support the achievement of each objective or cluster of objectives? List your content in terms of key topics, using the results of the task analysis where one has been conducted. Remember to include both technical and functional skills as appropriate.
   > What resources (e.g. readings, websites, previous learning material) will be used to create content? List those that have already been identified.
   > What practical activities or exercises will be created to provide participants with the opportunity to practise and apply the knowledge or the skills (e.g. case studies, simulations)? List them in the table.
   > What type of follow-up measures do you envisage?
   > What means will be employed to assess learning and behaviour changes?

TEMPLATE: DESIGN OUTLINE

1. Overview

TITLE OF THE INITIATIVE	
OVERALL GOAL	
DELIVERY MODE	
LEARNING OBJECTIVES	
ENVISAGED FOLLOW-UP	

2. Design plan

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	CONTENT > TYPE OF CONTENT? > KEY TOPIC AREAS? > FUNCTIONAL/TECHNICAL?	RESOURCES > WHAT IS AVAILABLE? > WHAT NEEDS TO BE CREATED? > WHAT CAN BE ADAPTED?	PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES > HOW CAN LEARNING BE REINFORCED THROUGH PRACTISE?	EVALUATION EXERCISES > WHAT EXERCISES/TESTS CAN BE USED TO ASSESS LEARNERS' ACQUISITION OF KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS? > WHAT MECHANISMS CAN BE USED TO GAUGE BEHAVIOURAL CHANGES?
1.				
2.				
3.				

DELIVER THE LEARNING SOLUTION

	DELIVER THE LEARNING SOLUTION	RELEVANCE	PAGE	PRINT
	ON-THE-JOB			
	GUIDANCE SHEETS			
5A	EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING	CORE	163	
5B	THE TECHNICAL COACHING PROCESS: APPROACHES AND TIPS	CORE	167	
	TOOLS			
5C	ACTION LEARNING	CORE	176	
5D	ACTION PLAN FOR COACHING	CORE	179	
5E	REVIEW OF COACHING PROGRESS	RECOMMENDED	182	
5F	LEARNER'S LOG	RECOMMENDED	183	
	FACE-TO-FACE TRAINING WORKSHOPS			
	GUIDANCE SHEETS			
5G	KEY TASKS FOR TRAINERS/FACILITATORS	CORE	184	
5H	KEY PHASES OF A TRAINING WORKSHOP	CORE	187	
	TOOLS			
5I	POST-WORKSHOP REFLECTION AND ACTION PLAN	CORE	190	
5J	DELIVERING EFFECTIVE POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS	RECOMMENDED	194	
	ONLINE COLLABORATIVE			
	TOOLS			
5K	COMPARING FACE-TO-FACE AND ONLINE FACILITATION TASKS	RECOMMENDED	196	

References and resources

On-the-job learning

> A good book on questioning techniques
Making questions work, Dorothy Strachan, 2007, Jossey-Bass
Anytime coaching – unleashing employee performance, Teresa Wedding Kloster, Wendly Shervin Swire, Management Concepts, 2009
Useful website on coaching http://coach4growth.com/
Kolb, D.A. (1984), Experiential learning: experience as the source of learning and development http://academic.regis.edu/ed205/Kolb.pdf

> Educational Foundations of the Field Schools
http://www.vegetableipmasia.org/Concepts/FarmerFieldSchools1.html
http://www.vegetableipmasia.org/docs/Nonformal%20 Educational%20Foundations%20of%20FFS.pdf
ISNAR, The experiential learning approach, by Zenete Franca
http://www.farmradio.org/english/partners/archives/bdg/learning.pdf

> Action learning resource sites
http://www.kstoolkit.org/Action+Learning+Sets
http://www.fao.org/Participation/ft_more.jsp?ID=10423
http://www.adb.org/Documents/Information/Knowledge-Solutions/Action-Learning.pdf

Facilitating face-to-face training workshops

> ITC-ILO, Enhancing learning for effectiveness: Methodological guide on design, implementation and evaluation of Joint Learning Events, 2011
> Training for Change, Resource for Food and Nutrition Security, Training of Trainers, FAO 2011
> Facilitation course FAO, CSH
> Excellent resource page on facilitation: Multi-stakeholder Processes (MSP) Resource Portal http://portals.wi.wur.nl/msp/?page=1180
> How to organize and run learning workshops, UNICEF and Staff College, downloadable from http://influenzatraining.org/documents/s16095e/s16095e.pdf
> Training Works! http://www.reproline.jhu.edu/english/6read/6training/Tngworks/index.htm
> Knowledge Sharing Methods and Tools: A facilitator's guide
> Knowledge Sharing for Change: Designing and Facilitating Learning Processes with a Transformative Impact, Facilitation Handbook - http://i-p-k.co.za/wordpress/resources-downloads/
> Useful collection of tools and resources for running workshops in the World Café style http://www.theworldcafe.com
> Very good reference book for cross-cultural issues: F. Trompenaars, C. Hampden-Turner, Riding the waves of culture, understanding diversity in global business, 2nd edition, McGraw-Hill, 1998
> E-learning Module Knowledge Sharing for Development, Information Management Resource Kit (IMARK), 2011, available from the FAO CD Portal http://www.fao.org/capacitydevelopment/e-learning-services/en/

Collaborative online learning

> G. Salmon, E-moderating – the key to teaching and learning online, 2000, RoutledgeFalmer
> FAO Virtual Facilitation Field Book
> FAO Virtual Facilitation Programme, CSH
> Cross-cultural issues in content development and teaching online
http://pre2005.flexiblelearning.net.au/guides/crosscultural.pdf

TOOL 5A GUIDANCE SHEET – EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

WHAT? This guidance sheet provides an overview of the process of experiential learning, with tips for facilitating experiential learning sessions.

WHO? Facilitators, coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? When delivering on-the-job learning activities

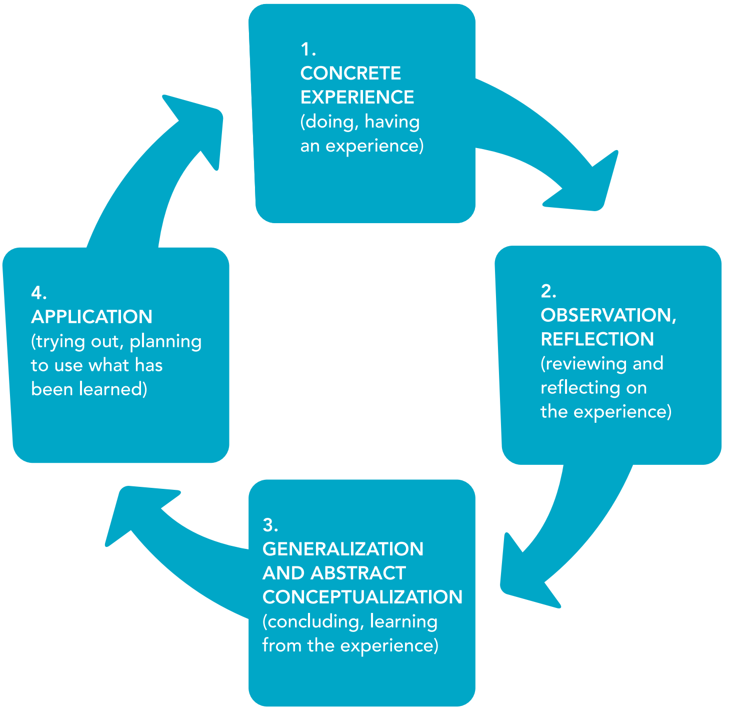
Experiential learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience (Kolb). It is based on the experiential learning cycle (below) which can be summarized in four stages:

1. **Concrete experience**
2. **Observation and reflection**
3. **Generalization and abstract conceptualization**
4. **Application**

The focus of experiential learning, which is clearly illustrated in the farmer field school (FFS) approach, is learning through discovery, experimentation, informed decision-making and group/community action. As shown in several FFS examples, the approach is important because it may produce an impact that goes beyond mere learning of technical skills, such as when participants master a process. This enables learners to help others learn, apply technical principles, acquire increased self-confidence and organize collaborative activities in their communities to institutionalize technical principles.

Because of its broad impact, experiential learning is among the most effective ways to develop overall capacities of a community. You can find a summary description of the FFS approach as applied in integrated pest management in Asia at:
http://www.vegetableipmasia.org/Concepts/FarmerFieldSchools1.html

The experiential learning cycle



1. **Concrete experience:**
   The experience stage is the initial activity and data-producing part of the cycle. This phase is structured to enable learners to "do" something. "Doing" includes a range of activities, such as participating in a case study, role play, simulation or game, or listening to a lecture, watching a film or slide show, practising a skill or completing an exercise. In this phase in a typical FFS example involving rice integrated pest management (IPM), farmers would go into a rice field and collect data.

2. **Reflection:**
   In this stage, learners reflect on the activity undertaken during the experience stage. They share their reactions in a structured way with other members of the group. They may speak individually, in small groups or in the larger group. They discuss both their intellectual and attitudinal (cognitive and affective) reactions to the activities in which they engaged. The facilitator helps the learners think critically about the experience and verbalize their feelings and perceptions, and he or she draws attention to any recurrent themes or patterns which appear in the learners' reactions. The facilitator also must help the learners conceptualize their reflections so they can move towards drawing conclusions. In the FFS IPM example, farmers at this stage would return to the meeting place to analyse the data.

3. **Generalization:**
   In the generalization stage, the learners form conclusions and generalizations that might be derived from, or stimulated by, the first two phases of the cycle. The facilitator must help the learners think critically to draw conclusions that might apply generally or theoretically to "real life." This stage is best symbolized by the following questions: "What did you learn from all this?" and "What more general meaning does this have for you?". In the FFS IPM example, farmers at this stage would use their data to prepare a presentation about field conditions and take decisions for the rice field, such as whether to apply fertilizer or insecticides.

4. **Application:**
   After learners have formed some generalizations, the facilitator must guide the learners into the application stage. Drawing upon the insights and conclusions reached during the first three stages, learners can begin to incorporate what they have learned into their lives by developing plans for more effective behaviour in the future. Techniques used to facilitate the application stage can include action plans, reviewing each other's action plans, formulating ideas for action, sharing action plans with the whole group and identifying additional learning needs. The facilitator assists during this process by helping learners be as specific as possible. At this stage, farmers in the FFS example would implement their decision in the rice field.

How to facilitate an experiential learning session

Although FFSs are the most effective examples of experiential learning in FAO, there are other examples of this type of learning practice.

One example of how an experiential learning cycle can be applied to a different situation is the case of the Maldive Islands after the Nargis cyclone. As part of its emergency intervention, FAO organized awareness-raising campaigns to change fishermen's behaviours and attitudes towards risk in order to improve their compliance with standard safety rules.

Safety rules at sea are not theoretical; they are part of daily reality. While awareness campaigns are effective to draw attention to an issue, learning might be required to ensure that the knowledge is actually integrated into the fishermen's practices. Experiential learning might be facilitated as part of, or to complement, the awareness-raising campaign, in the following manner:

Step 1 – Form groups.
The facilitator forms groups of fishermen, cutting across experience and age.

Step 2 – Groups experience a normal work setting.
The facilitator arranges for each group of fishermen to go out on a boat, performing the same tasks they would perform in normal situations. The facilitator asks them to observe and identify weaknesses in their implementation of safety rules and to come back with recommendations for improvement.

Step 3 – Group reflects on experience and thinks critically.
The facilitator conducts a group discussion with the fishermen. As part of this stage, he/she provides the group with standard safety rules guidelines, asking them to reflect and double-check their recommendations against the common wisdom reflected in the written guidelines.

Step 4 – Groups draws action plans.
Groups of fishermen come up with their own plan to improve compliance with safety rules, with the expectation that they will implement the plan.

The role of facilitator

In experiential learning, the facilitator plays a radically different role than that of an expert. For the approach to be successful, the facilitator takes a more ‘withdrawn’ facilitation role that promotes genuine ownership by the participants. He or she:

- observes the process and what is being said;
- motivates participants through questioning and encourages them to question as well;
- practises active listening without showing bias or judgment and provides feedback to members;
- assists members to see the situation as a learning environment and helps them assume responsibility for their own learning;
- encourages all participants to speak and focus on tasks;
- asks members to reflect on their interactions and the implications of actions in the learning process;
- intervenes during the problem-solving process or arranges a time at the end of each meeting for members to discuss and reflect;
- knows when the group is straying from the subject and brings them back to focus.

TOOL 5B GUIDANCE SHEET – THE TECHNICAL COACHING PROCESS: APPROACHES AND TIPS

WHAT? This guidance sheet describes the process and approaches that FAO Technical Officers/collaborators might use to coach national counterparts or partners in specific technical areas, either in planned or ad hoc coaching sessions. The process, with some adaptation, is also applicable to e-coaching.

WHO? Technical Officers /collaborators involved in delivering on-the-job learning

WHEN? When delivering on-the-job learning activities

The technical coaching process

The following steps describe an effective coaching process.

1. Set the context.

In this phase, you establish the need for technical coaching, build rapport, create an understanding of the coaching process and establish a mutual understanding of your roles. In particular, the coach must:

- understand the learner's motivation, needs, concerns and goals; and
- build rapport, trust and agree on ground rules (e.g. confidentiality).

DO	DON'T
welcome the learner on a personal basis.	jump into the contents too quickly.
initiate a discussion on the need and opportunity for coaching.	diagnose the need for coaching.
establish ground rules.	get distracted by other activities (e.g. reading notes).
listen to feelings, concerns and problems without jumping into the details of situation.	jump to quick solutions.
	interrupt.

2. Identify outcomes.

In this phase, the technical coach works with the learner to identify specific outcomes that will help develop or improve the learner's performance or address the situation that originated the need for coaching. At the end of this step, you will have gained an agreement on a set of specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound goals. In particular, the technical coach will:

> agree on learning objectives and identify the sequence of tasks/stages required to achieve them;

> draw up a **learning plan** together with the learner, where appropriate, showing the main content/topics and objectives for each session

> develop a **task list**, where appropriate. This is a detailed list of all the tasks the learner will be able to perform as a result of achieving the objectives. This can also include conditions and standards for successful completion.

DO	DON'T
determine minimum performance standards for objectives.	establish goals that are too vague.
highlight choices and help learners prioritize realistically (e.g. urgency, interest, resources required).	assume the goals are understood without checking.
listen and observe learner's behaviours.	tell the learner what do to or not to do.
ask many open-ended questions and check often for understanding.	
help the learner link the goal to the broader organizational goals where he/she operates.	

3. Assess the current situation.

In this phase, the coach works to establish a clear understanding of the learner's current situation including the level of skills, knowledge and behaviour. The coach will:

- help the person review what he or she has done or not done, and how his or her actions have led to specific results;
- examine the functions that the learner usually performs and what needs to be improved;
- highlight the gaps in performance between the learner's current behaviour and the desired performance goals.

DO	DON'T
encourage exploration (e.g. what do you see as possible reasons for...?).	criticize, judge or blame.
ask specific questions to focus attention on current behaviour (e.g. what action steps did you take to try to get the project back on track?).	
mirror or paraphrase (e.g. this is what I hear you saying..).	state what the problem is.
help generate options (e.g. let's brainstorm some possible options..).	tell the learner what to do or not to do.
ask for feedback around consequences of behaving in certain ways (e.g. what impact did your action have on..?).	jump to quick solutions before there has been a thorough assessment of the situation.
encourage reflection on experience (e.g. what does it mean to you?)	ask closed-ended questions that shut down exploration by the learner.
track the insights or learning the learner has about current behaviour so that these can be used during the action planning.	plan insufficient time to generate information required for planning.
help the learner discover his/her strengths and personal resources that will be needed to succeed with the project or the changes ahead.	withhold your own ideas and feedback.

4. Create an action plan (see Tool 5d)

In this step, the technical coach and the learner will come to a mutual agreement about specific action steps required to accomplish goals, and the coach will seek a commitment from the learner to implement the action plan. In particular, the coach will:

> help the learner maximize choices and options of action;

> encourage independent decision-making and real commitment to action;

> build a sense of confidence for the changes ahead.

DO	DON'T
ask questions about possible solutions and consequences (e.g. what would be the benefits for you if you did that?).	direct or tell people what to do.
facilitate alternative options (e.g. what additional things will you do?).	be too general about the help you will provide.
communicate your expectations for action (e.g. my expectations is that the report will be completed by..).	withhold information or useful suggestions.
encourage independent decision-making (e.g. of the options we have identified, to which ones will you commit?)	withhold your expectations of actions you want to see taken.
observe and explore areas of resistance (e.g. what might be an obstacle for achieving these changes?).	
identify specific resources that will be required (e.g. course, training materials, people).	
recommend resources where appropriate and/or provide job aids for the learner.	

5. **Provide ongoing feedback.**
In this step, the technical coach will provide ongoing support to the learner on the job. In particular, the coach will:
> make him/her self available for a longer period of time, either in face-to-face or online situations;
> provide specific and constructive feedback;
> recognize and acknowledge achievements and changes in performance.

DO	DON'T
seek opportunities – formal, informal, face-to-face or online – to maintain rapport and support.	be unavailable.
	fail to provide recognition.
monitor the milestones outlined in the action plan.	give too much or too little direction.
ask for feedback on your coaching.	provide feedback in an untimely and unfocused manner.
celebrate the learner's successes.	provide feedback in public.

Tips[45] for e-coaching

There are advantages and disadvantages to coaching from a distance . Once e-coaching or e-mentoring has been agreed upon, a number of tips should be considered for increased impact:

> Make sure you have a private and quiet area to talk; this will help you focus more on your coachee's tone of voice, expression and manner.
> Have at least one face-to-face conversation at the beginning of the coaching relationship and at agreed intervals after that.
> Plan ahead to ensure that your schedules incorporate the coaching session.
> Prepare and use agendas to keep the conversation on track.
> Prepare the next meeting's agenda at the end of the current meeting.
> Insert regular process checks into your conversations to make sure you are both on the same track.
> Take lots of notes so you can review actions and commitments.
> Ask the coachee to keep a learning log (see Tool 5f) to record behaviours and actions that were helpful on the job and when encountering obstacles.
> Remember that context setting and relationship building are still important, even at distance.

[45] *The Pocket Guide to coaching, a practical guide for leaders, WB internal material*

Approaches to coaching[46]

There are two main approaches to coaching:

Directive coaching (also called 'push' style)
You may use this approach when someone needs to learn a new, simple skill—such as using macros in word processing in order to save time. In such cases, a directive method may be appropriate. Actually, this method is more similar to providing 'instruction' than coaching. Directive coaching has three steps:

> Explain the purpose and process and check for understanding.
  Example: "You know, it would save you a lot of time if you used a macro instead of having to enter that whole paragraph every time. Do you know how to do that?"
> Demonstrate.
  Example: "Here, let me show you how. First, just …"
> Have the learner practise while you encourage.
  Example: "Now, you do the next section while I watch ... "

Non-directive coaching (also called 'pull' style)
This style can be called coaching by questions, discovery or exploration. Through this style, you "draw out" the learner's existing strengths instead of providing answers. Learners learn by being encouraged to discover the skill for themselves, partly through experimentation, but mainly with the help of well-directed and open-ended questions. As a coach, you must provide encouragement and guidance, **but the guidance is done through the art of asking questions and giving feedback.**

In non-directive coaching, the learner's active doing is central to the process instead of being the third step as it is in directive coaching. The art of questioning is a skill that needs considerable practise to develop. The general idea is to prompt the learner to explore issues in depth, either by direct or implied questions. It also keeps the learner fully engaged and responsible for his or her ownership of the learning process.

From the outset, the learner must explore alternative solutions to problems posed by your questions. The learner will feel in control as well as satisfied when the solution is identified. What's more, since the learner will have done most of the work, he or she is more likely to remember what was learned.

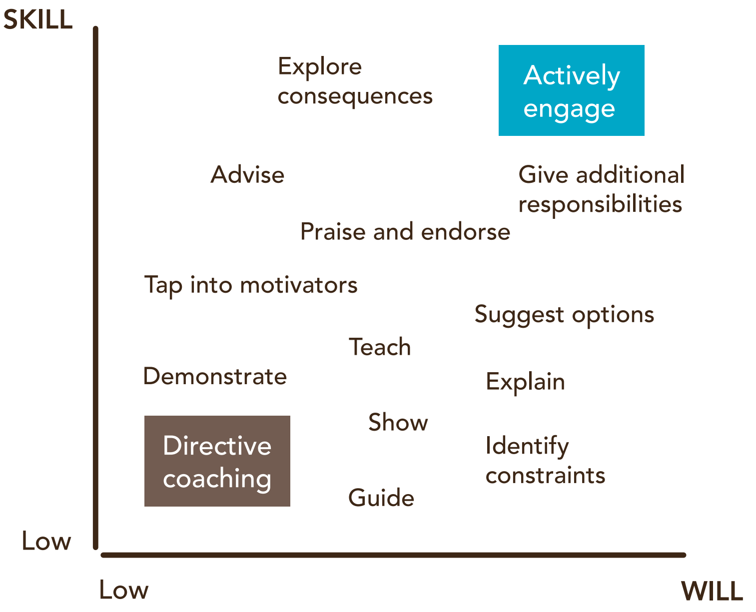
Selecting an approach

An effective Technical Coach should be able to move between the two coaching approaches, depending on the situation and on the learners' starting skill level and will/motivation to learn.

With learners who begin with low skill/low motivation, for example, a directive style might be preferred. This can then be changed into a less directive style as the learners' motivation and skills increase. The **non-directive approach is usually preferred because it reinforces learners' ownership in their own learning.**

[46] *Based on: UNHCR Management and Leadership Programme, Global Learning Centre with permission; and Coaching Successfully, Essential Managers series, p.16*

This diagram illustrates the two approaches and the various techniques associated with them:[47]



Tips for non-directive coaching

How good are you in listening, questioning and providing feedback? Non-directive coaching is sometimes described as "coaching by listening and asking questions". You may need to improve your skills in the following three areas to master the non-directive coaching approach.

Powerful listening
Listening is an underrated managerial skill that we all think we do well, although few actually do. Since we are able to process what we hear at three times or more the speed that anyone can speak, we all have a tendency to be preparing our response instead of truly listening. You can't be a good technical coach without really understanding the needs and concerns of the learner.

Listening is much more than the physical process of hearing. It's a process in which you integrate physical, emotional and intellectual input in search of meaning. Although complete objectivity is rarely possible, good listening requires a conscious attempt to understand the speaker without letting personal opinions influence interpretation of the speaker's words. This means trying to understand the message the speaker wants to communicate—not what you want to understand.

A coach who listens effectively uses three basic skills: sensing, attending and responding.

[47] *Freely adapted from: High Low Matrix Coaching Model – Coaching techniques for will and skill issues – Coach4Growth.com*

Effective listeners also:

> refrain from evaluation;
> try to see things from the point of view of the speaker;
> pay full attention to the speaker;
> identify the feelings and intent behind the words;
> watch for non-verbal cues as to what the speaker is thinking and feeling;
> use questions to clarify the message;
> paraphrase or summarize periodically to check their own understanding.

Effective questioning
As a technical coach, one of your primary responsibilities is to help learners define where they "want to get" and "which way to go" to get there. One of the most valuable tools in your arsenal of communication skills is the art of questioning: the ability to ask the right question at the right time.

Why ask questions? The obvious answer is to get information. But there is an even more important reason: questions promote communication. By asking a question, you open the channel to begin verbal interaction. You show learners that you're truly interested in them. Once you've established that rapport and opened the communication channel, you can begin to use questions towards other ends, such as: gaining information, uncovering motives and gaining insight, gaining participation, starting the learner thinking, guiding the discussion and checking your understanding.

Essentially, all questions are either closed-ended (i.e. can be answered with yes, no, maybe, either-or) or open-ended (i.e. require elaboration or explanation). In order to get your learners talking so that they can discover the answer or solution to their own problem (rather than your solution to their problem), **you need to ask open-ended questions most of the time.**

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS	CLOSED-ENDED QUESTIONS
What might have happened if you'd done it the other way?	Have you ever thought about the possibility of changing the system that you're using slightly?
So, what's the next step that you're going to take?	Wouldn't you agree that four is too many in this case?
Where are you thinking of holding the meeting?	Have you checked it yet?" (Can be answered yes/no)
How do you think your colleagues will react if you take that approach?	Balancing the high cost of air shipment against the fact that they're going to need the shelter goods by October latest, are you thinking of using air or sea freight?

Giving feedback

Providing feedback skilfully is extremely important in coaching. As a technical coach, you will need to provide constructive feedback as the learner masters new skills. The following tips will be helpful:

> **Show consideration.** Give feedback with attention to the needs and feelings of the learner. Everything you say, even a flippant remark, is likely to be noted, analysed and taken personally. Choose your words carefully and remember that the tone of your voice and your own body language also send important messages.
> **Think of the coachee.** Be sure that your feedback is truly for the benefit of the learner.
> **Withhold judgement on the learner.** Do not evaluate the personality of the coachees or judge their intentions. Focus your feedback only on their actions and the objective consequences of their actions.
> **Be specific.** Don't make sweeping or general statements: be specific about particular actions and always give examples.
> **Select priority areas.** Effective coaches may observe several areas that could be improved, but they feed back to the learner only a fraction of what they observe. They recognize that too much feedback can paralyse the learner, whereas too little leaves him or her unsure of what to do next. Judging the right quantity of feedback and concentrating on the most urgent areas for improvement is a critical skill.
> **Choose the timing.** You should provide the feedback as soon as possible, while the learner's actions are fresh. Be sure that there is time for discussion, and remember to choose your words carefully.
> **Check for clarity.** Make sure your feedback is clear and unambiguous. Ask the learner whether your feedback was understood. Observe signs of misunderstanding on the part of the learner as you give the feedback. If in doubt, ask the learner to paraphrase what you have said.
> **Reinforce the positive.** Look for things that the learner is doing right and mention them specifically. Point out the positive consequences of these actions. Positive feedback is easier to give than negative feedback, and praise is extremely important. Be sure to balance corrective feedback with positive comments.
> **Make it private.** The psychological environment is also influenced by the physical environment: choosing the right place to give feedback is as important as choosing the right time.

TOOL 5C ACTION LEARNING[48]

WHAT? A suggested template for planning action learning

WHO? Developers of the learning initiative and, where possible, Instructional Designers

WHEN? When delivering learning initiatives through experiential learning

Instructions

Action learning is a form of experiential learning, intended as the process of making meaning from direct experience. Action learning is based upon the concept of learning by reflection (or reviewing) on an experience, and is underpinned by the cycle of experiential learning as described in the Guidance sheet 5a.

Use the following tool to help plan the steps you need to take to prepare an action learning event.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION	
Number of people:	
Names of participants for the session *(Ideally 8-10 staff members)*	
Why were they chosen? *(Characteristics, experience etc.)*	
Level of support from management for this event:	
Ways to increase support:	

[48] *Adapted from UNHCR, Global Learning Centre*

LOGISTICS	
Capacity of meeting room: *(people space)*	
Facilities available: *(e.g. photocopier, computer, overhead projector, flip charts)*	
Time allotted for the event: *(At least two ½ day sessions are recommended)*	
Description of each session: *(Give a brief summary of the goals for each session)*	
Constraints:	
Ways to overcome constraints:	

ACTION LEARNING PROCESS	
Problem: *(What specific problem will the event address?)*	
Types of questions to ask (see examples below): *(Write down possible questions that will help you get the group working and moving towards conclusions)*	
Possible solutions: *(Write down ahead of time your opinion about potential solutions, but make sure you don't direct the group towards your conclusions! Use them only if the group is moving in an inappropriate direction and needs some help.)*	
Reflection activities: *(Think of ways that you can get the group to reflect on their conclusions/actions and when you would use those approaches.)*	
Resources necessary to support the group: *(Anticipate any documentation or materials that will help the group)*	
Next steps:	

Action learning questions

Part of facilitating an action learning event is being able to ask the right questions to help move a group through the process. Here is a sampling of questions that can help for various stages:

To focus on underlying assumptions and expectations:

> What are we (the organization/the group/the office) seeking to accomplish?
> What is stopping us from accomplishing it?
> What can we do about it (collectively and individually)?

To focus on the realities of the situation:

> Who has the real facts and can put things in proper perspective?
> Who cares about getting the solution implemented?
> Who can get the solution implemented? (Who has the power?)

To focus on next steps/actions:

> How can we/you move forward on this problem/issue?
> Can you think of three options for action?
> What are the pros/cons of these actions?
> What steps are you going to take before the next meeting?
> What do you most need from us (the group) now?

TOOL 5D ACTION PLAN FOR COACHING[49]

WHAT? This tool provides the learner with a suggested action plan to be used as part of the coaching process. The action plan can be formal or informal, but it is always recommended to be in a documented format. The plan might be used to review progress on achievements.

WHO? Learner, in collaboration with the technical coach

WHEN? As part of the coaching process

Instructions

1. Review your learning objectives as agreed with the technical coach. How are you going to address these objectives? Specifically, what are you going to do to achieve your learning objectives? These are your actions. Ensure that any action is consistent with the goal of your group, unit or organization.
2. List the specific action steps you plan to take, and the timeline for doing so. Examples of action steps include:
   - discussing the topic with someone who knows a lot about it;
   - observing someone who is good in that function and analysing what they do;
   - trying out a new behaviour and seeing if it gives the results you want;
   - asking for feedback from a colleague or supervisor on your behaviour in that area;
   - reading something, like a book or an article on the subject;
   - studying or taking a course on the topic.
3. Next, ask yourself what type of support/resources you will need in order to accomplish each step. Support might include: support by peers or managers, time to take an e-learning course, opportunities to practise in a forthcoming meeting, etc.
4. Determine by what date you could reasonably expect to complete that step.
5. Finally, you may want to review the questions on the next page to see whether your action items are appropriate.

[49] *Adapted from FAO Management and Leadership Programme material*

ACTION PLAN		
Coaching period:		**Date:** 5-10 June 2011
Learner's name:		
Learning objectives: *1. My project management skills are improved as a result of coaching*		
Action step	**Support/resources**	**Timeline**
Will talk with my colleague, who is excellent in statistics, in order to understand how data are compiled and how I can better incorporate them in my planning activities.	*Availability of colleague*	*Before July 15*
I will take a basic course in Excel using available online learning.	*Time to undertake an e-learning course*	

Questions about your action items[50]

You can use the question below to self-validate your action items and check whether they are realistic (i.e. are they achievable and do they consider the context?)

Resources

> Who will carry out the proposed action or help with it (formally or informally)?
> Are the skills for carrying it out available?
> How much time do you expect this to take?
> Are special materials or equipment required?
> What is involved in obtaining them?
> If so, how much adaptation is required?
> Is continual monitoring or follow-through required?
> If so, who will do it?

[50] *Adapted from F. Zenete and Associates, Managing Agricultural Research for Development within an Innovation System Perspective, IFPRI/ISNAR Learning Modules*

Implementation

> Do you have the authority to implement the action?
> If not, who does?
> How do you expect to go about getting approval?
> How much support do you expect for your idea?

Effects

> Who will be affected by this action?
> How will it affect them?

Environment

> What factors in the organizational environment might interfere with your doing this?
> What factors in the organization will support your effort?

TOOL 5E REVIEW OF COACHING PROGRESS[51]

WHAT? This tool provides a template for a periodic review of progress between the technical coach and the learner.

WHO? Learner, as part of discussion with the technical coach

WHEN? At agreed intervals during the coaching period

Instructions

Describe any changes in the context which occurred during or after the coaching. Then list each objective from your learning plan and your assessment of your progress in meeting each one, using the following scale:

5= objective attained; **4/3=** satisfactory progress towards objective; **2/1=** little or no progress.

NAME OF LEARNER:	
NAME OF COACH:	
AREA OF TECHNICAL COACHING:	Describe the technical area in which coaching takes place.
CONTEXT	Describe any change in context since the start of the coaching.
OBJECTIVE 1	Your assessment of progress (please circle) 5 4 3 2 1
OBJECTIVE 2	Your assessment of progress (please circle) 5 4 3 2 1
OBJECTIVE 3	Your assessment of progress (please circle) 5 4 3 2 1
DATE:	

[51] *Adapted from: World Bank Executive Coaching Programme*

TOOL 5F LEARNER'S LOG

WHAT? A tool to record the learner's main learning points during or at the end of the coaching period. While the log may be personal to the learner, it can also be useful for the coach and learner to monitor and finally review achievements, and for the action plan.

WHO? Learner, as part of discussion with the technical coach

WHEN? During the coaching period

Instructions

LEARNER'S LOG	
Learning points	**Questions for clarification**

Notes for self-reflection:[52]

What have I accomplished so far?

What didn't I get done, but had intended to?

What are the challenges I am facing now?

What are the opportunities available to me now?

What do I specifically want to be coached on during the next session?

What do I want my coach to be aware of?

TOOL 5G GUIDANCE SHEET – ESSENTIAL TASKS FOR TRAINERS/FACILITATORS[53]

WHAT? This guidance sheet provides an overview of the essential tasks that a trainer/facilitator must be able to perform to deliver effective face-to-face training workshops.

WHO? Trainers/facilitators of learning initiatives

WHEN? When delivering face-to-face learning initiatives

The trainer is primarily a 'facilitator of learning'. He or she must be able to:

> achieve the training objectives while maintaining good personal relations among the group;
> play several different roles as required: subject-matter expert, listener, learner, adviser, catalyst, devil's advocate, etc.;
> provide a structure and framework for learning;
> persuade participants to get actively involved;
> deal with challenges;
> visually reinforce participant and trainer communication and discussions by using flip charts, overheads, wall cards, etc.;
> be sensitive to cultural and gender issues;
> have a good sense of timing and knowledge of the subject matter; and
> be sensitive to the needs of participants.

[52] *Adapted from UNHCR Facilitated Group Learning, 2001, Facilitation of Learning, 2002, and WFP Toolkit* http://learning.vam.wfp.org/pages/dpg/pBookContent.asp?c=chap9&p=94

Trainer's task: content and process

The distinction between content and process is essential to the trainer. In a training activity, the content is the subject matter – the knowledge, skills and attitudes that the participants will be learning. The process is how the learning is structured and how the group and individuals work together. It is vitally important to strike a balance between the two elements. Too much emphasis on the content may damage the process; too much emphasis on the process may lead to poor results.

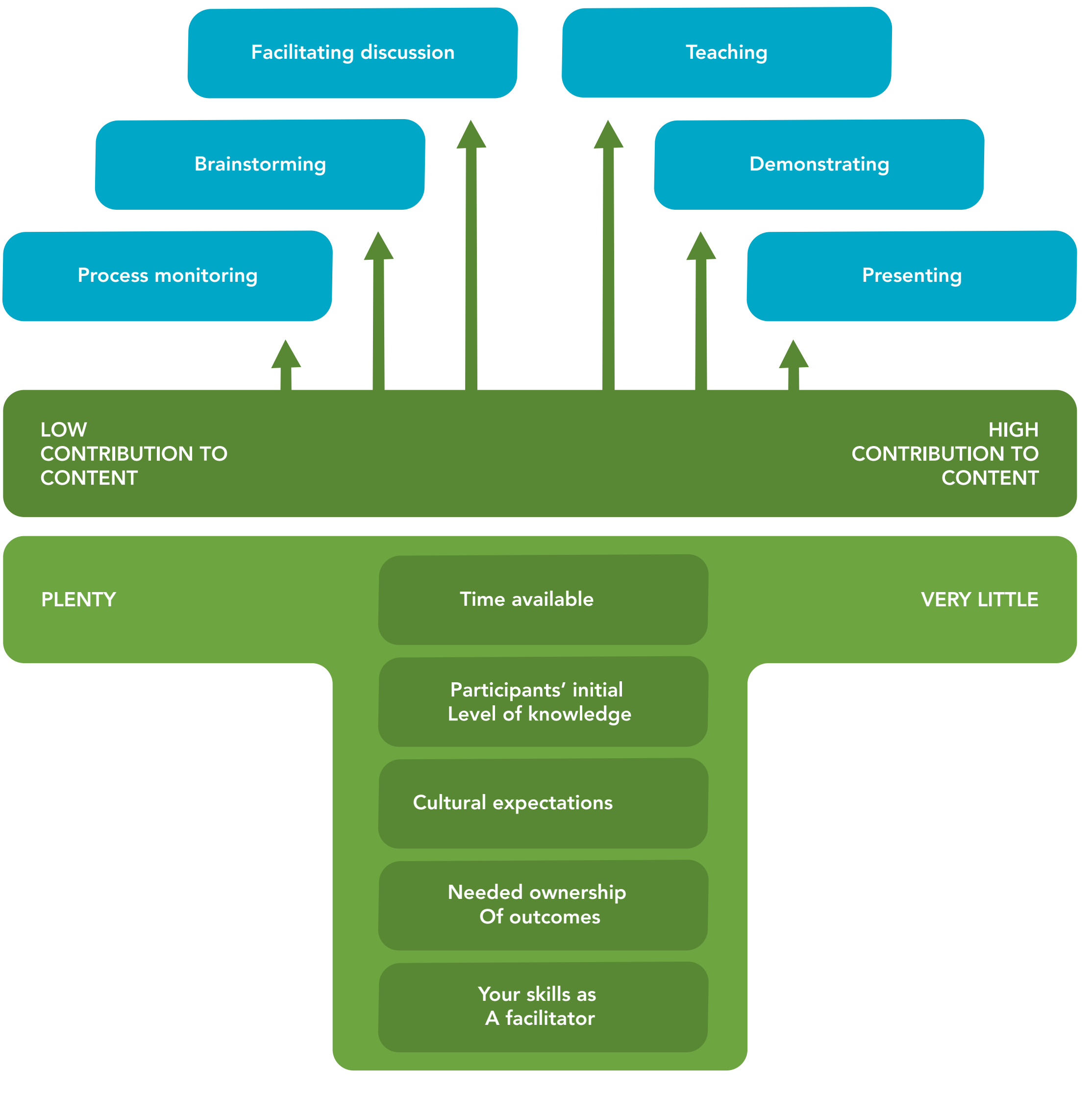
The trainer's main content-related and process-related tasks are described below.

Content-related tasks:
> Keep an overall view and think ahead.
> Encourage balanced participation.
> Ask for information and opinions.
> Summarize and reformulate key points.
> Clarify and elaborate.
> Concentrate on key issues and stop digressions.
> Test for consensus.

Process-related tasks:
> Try to establish a relaxed, amicable and cooperative atmosphere.
> Be patient and understanding.
> Keep communication channels open.
> Encourage individuals.
> Be alert, maintain eye contact and encourage by friendly nods, supportive smiles, etc.
> Maintain harmony by reconciling differences in opinions.
> Seek to perceive and verbalize feelings.

Training and facilitation styles/strategies

The following diagram[53] illustrates the tension between content-related and process–related tasks that a trainer/facilitator must perform, together with the various techniques or styles that he/she can use depending on the situation and context. A good trainer/facilitator normally is able to remain within the central areas of the diagram, by continuously involving participants through asking open-ended questions, showing interest in their ideas and helping them reach understanding, while using his or her own knowledge of the subject matter to guide the discussion. The diagram also illustrates the types of considerations that often influence which strategy or style to use in a particular event.



[53] *Freely adapted from the Facilitation Rainbow, John Townsend and Paul Donovan, Master Trainer Institute, 1997*

TOOL 5H GUIDANCE SHEET – KEY PHASES OF A TRAINING WORKSHOP

WHAT? This guidance sheet describes the key phases of a training workshop.

WHO? Trainers/facilitators of learning initiatives

WHEN? When delivering face-to-face learning initiatives

The following steps describe the progression of a training workshop.

1. Just before the workshop

A few days before the workshop, you will need to review the materials and double-check details and back-up plans in case things go wrong. Here are a few tips:

- Review the material and activities so you are comfortable with the entire workshop.
- Practise speaking in front of a mirror if you are new at facilitating.
- Brainstorm probable questions, think about possible answers and identify where to find more information and additional resources that may help participants.
- Review logistics.

Key logistical matters are described in the following chart:

Scheduling training > Preferably during working days > Three to five days is an ideal length > Four sessions a day, normally no more than 90 minutes each with three breaks > Avoid formal evening sessions, if possible > Avoid heavy sessions immediately after lunch > Include a half-day break on the afternoon on the third day if the workshop lasts for more than four days	**Resource people** > Where possible, use local resources. If the specialists have little training experience, bring in an external facilitator or help the specialists to improve their training skills > A small team of trainers/resource persons is almost always best > Coordinate carefully during the workshop > Don't have too many trainers/resource persons on the floor at any given time (maximum of three) > If you bring people from outside the country, make sure they co-train with local resource people
Group size > If one trainer, maximum 15 participants > If two or more trainers, maximum 25 participants > Don't have a workshop for fewer than six participants	**Language** > Avoid interpretation where possible > Try to use local trainers and the local language, if possible

2. The start of the workshop
How you start the workshop is important because it will set the tone for the day and will communicate your personal style to the audience. In general terms, you should cover the following topics during the first hour:

> Welcome participants.
> Introduce yourself and the co-trainers.
> Get participants to introduce themselves or each other.
> Review the agenda and workshop objectives.
> Discuss the workshop methodology and norms/ground rules.
> Describe the programme.
> Outline administrative and logistical arrangements.
> Use ice-breakers to get participants into their first active exercise.

3. The middle of the workshop
The actual content of your workshop can and should be delivered in a variety of ways. By varying the activities and the way you present information or allow participants to discover the content, you will reach more of your audience. While PowerPoint and frontal presentations/lectures can be effective in conveying information and knowledge, these cannot be the only method, especially when the workshop lasts more than a day. For ideas on how to combine and structure your sessions, you can refer to the learning methods described in Guidance sheet 4j (Toolbox 4).

In general, for virtually all training situations with more than eight to ten participants, it is essential to work in small groups. That is the key underlying method to ensure maximum participation for effective learning, whether you are engaged in a simulation, case study, problem-solving session, discussion or role play.

There are several techniques for working in small groups, such as the "World Café" style and many others. See the "References and resources" section at the beginning of this toolbox for guidance to information on using these techniques.

4. The end of the workshop

Ensure you finish on time and are able to provide:

- a summary of what was covered;
- time for questions, discussions and comments;
- time for evaluation of the workshop (see Toolbox 7); and
- time for a short activity that encourages use of the new learning in the workplace.

5. Anticipate follow-up

Although we recommend that you indicate throughout the workshop how participants can use their learning on the job, you should emphasize this at the end of the workshop. You will also have to announce what type of follow-up is envisaged so that they expect to be contacted or approached back home. Also, inform them of any post-course evaluations in which they will be asked to participate.

How will you encourage participants to use their learning in the workplace? Depending on the subject or programme, you could include assignments that must be done on the job before the course is considered 'completed'. Your goal throughout the workshop is to combat the typical workshop scenario where participants just leave, forget and go back to business as usual.

Possible types of short activities you can ask participants to complete during or immediately after the conclusion of a workshop but before they leave are presented in Tool 5i. Activities may include:

- action plans;
- informal reflection on existing challenges for implementing the new learning in the workplace and ideas on how to overcome them;
- reflection/paired discussion on how and to whom participants intend to disseminate the new knowledge.

6. Wrap up

Another important aspect of finishing the workshop is to summarize and close the subject matter for participants. Link the various activities and sections you discussed to the overall objectives and include any outcomes the group identified.

TOOL 51 POST-WORKSHOP REFLECTION AND ACTION PLAN

WHAT? This tool is intended to assist workshop organizers in supporting participants' reflection on how they want to go about using their newly acquired learning. It consists of a form and a template action plan.

WHO? The trainer/facilitator in a workshop

WHEN? At the end of a face-to-face learning event

Instructions

1. Distribute Worksheet A for each person to complete. Participants are free to work in small groups of three to four, but are not required to do so.
2. Ask each participant in turn to share the results of his or her reflections, reviewing one section at a time.
3. Encourage discussion among the participants. You can provide hints as suggested in the boxes below.
4. After reflecting on the issues above, encourage participants to fill out the Action Plan (Worksheet B).
5. Collect all forms. These should be copied for ideas to be used in developing future programmes and for arranging focused follow-up support. Then, return the forms to each participant so they can add them to their records.

Worksheet A: Reflection, consultation and action form[54]

1. What is the most important thing you have learned in this course?

[54] *Based on the "Evaluation of market-oriented farm management for trainers of extension workers", Module 7, AGPS*

2. How has this influenced your understanding of your work as a/an (your job title) ______________?

3. Which part of this course do you want to implement when you return to work? What are the opportunities and the challenges for implementing it?

Examples of opportunities (for the facilitator)
A recent partnership in which I will be required to play a coordinating role
A new project approved
Training I must facilitate/participate in
Advice I was requested to give

Examples of challenges (for the facilitator)
Support from my managers
Support from my peers
Lack of institutionalized processes
Lack of equipment
Insufficient interest by my organization to let me operate differently, because of…
Insufficient incentives for me to do things differently
Lack of political will to undertake changes at a higher level

4. How do you intend to disseminate your new learning among your peers/community or in your organization?

Examples (for the facilitator)
Organize training events
Provide on-the-job support to colleagues/peers
Raise awareness with my friends/ in my neighbourhood
Hold informal discussions with colleagues/peers
Create, join, or contribute to a network or a community of practice

5. **What steps are viable/realistic for you and your organization to use and institutionalize the new knowledge/know-how?**

Examples (for the facilitator):
Customize/translate information/knowledge for local use
Propose new procedures for internal functioning
Issue manuals/field guidelines/information sheets for national implementation
Incorporate the knowledge into national curricula
Influence decision-makers

Worksheet B: Action plan

After reflecting on the issues above, participants should be encouraged to fill out the Action Plan using the template on the next page (it can be customized as necessary).

The following questions may guide you in completing and validating the plan:

- What will you achieve by implementing your plan? What is the result you are after?
- What steps do you have to take to implement your plan? What resources do you need? Who might be your partners in this plan? When can you complete each step?
- Are the skills for carrying it out available?
- How much time do you expect this to take?
- Are special materials or equipment required?
- If so, what is involved in obtaining them?
- If so, how much adaptation is required?
- Do you have the authority to implement the action? If not, who does?
- How do you expect to go about getting approval?
- How much support do you expect for your idea?
- What factors in the organizational environment might interfere with your doing this?
- What factors in the organization will support you doing this?

ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE				
STEPS/ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES/ PARTNERS	SUPPORT I WILL NEED	PROGRESS CHECK	TARGET DATE
e.g. This is what I will do as a result of my training workshop....	*e.g. The following partners/ organizations might be valuable resources to explore..I may also need equipment to carry out my activity.*	*e.g. I may need support from the technical focal point in FAO to help me...*	*e.g. I will review progress on each step on the following dates:*	*e.g. I will accomplish this step by...*

TOOL 5J DELIVERING EFFECTIVE POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS (PPT)[56]

WHAT? The tool offers suggestions for delivering effective PowerPoint presentations.

WHO? The trainer/facilitator

WHEN? During a face-to-face learning event

Presenting clear information

1. Use your slides to visually punctuate your message.
   > Your slides should help your audience focus on the main points. Make sure each word and image helps convey your message in the strongest possible way.
2. Limit how much information you provide on each slide.
   > Use the slides for emphasis, but don't try to include all of the instruction on your slides.
   > Include only one main idea per slide.
   > Use key words to help the audience focus on your message.
   > Use active, visual language.
   > Cut unnecessary words: Look at a written copy of your presentation and cut paragraphs down to sentences, sentences down to phrases and phrases down to key words.
3. Give each slide a title.
   > Titles will help the audience quickly understand the main themes of your talk.
4. Organize your presentation into a logical sequence.
   > Make sure that your presentation is easy for the audience to follow by checking the sequence of your slides. The main point of each slide should flow logically from one to another.

Presenting clear visuals

5. Make your text large.
   > Small text is hard for audience members to read.
   > Use at least 32 point font size for titles.
   > Use at least 20 point font size for body text.
6. Keep the text slides brief.
   > Too much information can overwhelm your audience.
   > Choose brief, simple statements instead of full sentences.
   > Try to use no more than eight to ten words per line of text.
   > Try to use no more than eight to ten lines of text on each slide.

[55] *Adapted from http://www.go2itech.org/HTML/TT06/toolkit/development/presentation.html*

7. Use an easy to read colour format.
    > Pick a colour combination that offers a strong contrast between the background and the text. Dark backgrounds with light coloured text or light backgrounds with dark coloured text work best. If you know you will be presenting in a poorly-lit room, use a light background. Conversely, if you know you will be presenting in a well-lit room, use a dark background.
    > Limit the number of colours you use to no more than three. Colour can help add interest and can be used to emphasize key points. However, too much colour can be distracting.
    > Text drop shadows should be black or a darker shade of the background colour.
8. Keep images simple.
    > Images (e.g. graphs, tables and pictures) can help strengthen your presentation by conveying your message in an interesting and often easy-to-understand format. Before using art, ask yourself whether the art enhances or clarifies your message.
    > Unnecessary art and animation can create visual clutter and distract from your message.
    > Some art, especially photos and other high-resolution images, can also greatly increase the amount of memory needed to run the slide show.
    > Sometimes scanned images and photos are too large for a film recorder to handle easily, leading to delays in the slide presentation.

Tips for giving a successful presentation

9. Check your equipment before the presentation.
    > Make sure cables and cords are connected properly and all the equipment is operating.
    > If you are using someone else's computer, make sure it has adequate disk space, adequate memory and the appropriate version of the software you need (including PowerPoint).
10. Check your computer settings in advance.
    > Make sure the "system standby" function on the computer is turned off. If this function is turned on, your computer might temporarily turn off if you don't use it for a designated time period. On a PC, you can check this by going to the Control Panel and looking at the Power Options.
    > Turn off the screen saver, since a screen saver can slow down your presentation. On a PC, turn this off by going to the Control Panel and then to Display. Click on the Screen Saver tab to turn the screen saver off.
11. Interact with your audience.
    > Don't read off the screen.
    > Use slides as prompts, outlines or conversation points, not as a script.
    > Move around the room and make eye contact with as many people as possible.
12. Use your finger as a pointer, rather than the mouse.
    > Although you can use the mouse to create a pointer on the slide, using your finger to point is generally more accurate and less distracting to the audience. When you move the mouse to point, it is often difficult to control the little pointer and it can be difficult to see.

TOOL 5K COMPARING FACE-TO-FACE AND ONLINE FACILITATION TASKS[57]

WHAT? This tool guides you through the key differences between face-to-face and online facilitation.

WHO? The trainer/online facilitator in an online collaborative workshop

WHEN? During an online learning event

1. Before the meeting

ACTIVITY	FACE-TO-FACE	ONLINE
Developing an agenda	Develop agenda for face-to-face meeting.	Develop agenda for online meeting.
Designing group activities/ processes	Design activities for face-to-face interaction. Most activities are sequential; topics are discussed one-by-one, with occasional use of parallel sessions.	Design activities for online interaction. Many activities may run parallel. Set up different "threads" for parallel discussion of various topics.
Checking facilities	Check equipment, facilities and venue.	Check online workspaces and tools.

[56] *From IMARK Module KM4Dev*

2. Phase 1: Starting the meeting

The way a meeting begins sets the tone for all the processes which follow. If the group starts in a welcoming environment with clearly stated purposes and processes that are accepted by all participants, the group stands a good chance of achieving its goals. If these foundations are neglected, it will be hard for the group to function effectively.

ACTIVITY	FACE-TO-FACE	ONLINE
Creating a welcoming environment	Introduce yourself and any presenters. Ask participants to introduce themselves. If participants don't know each other, consider using "getting to know you" exercises, such as getting people to talk to their neighbours. These introductions usually take place within the first hour of a meeting.	Introduce yourself and any presenters. Ask participants to introduce themselves. If participants don't know each other, consider posting a short list of questions for participants to respond to relating to social and/or professional information. These introductions may take place over a week or so. In an ongoing online community, they may need to be repeated as new members join.
Statement of purpose, getting group to align on purpose	Present the goals of the meeting. Check whether participants all agree with the goals, or whether they would like to revise them. Recap any revisions and display on flip chart or whiteboard.	Present the goals of the meeting. Check whether participants all agree with the goals, or whether they would like to revise them. Give a deadline (usually within a day or two) for changes and additions. Post revised list of goals to the online workspace, or confirm original agenda.
Introduce process and get group agreement.	Present the agenda and explain the process. Check whether participants are happy with the overall process and whether they want any changes/additions. Make changes/additions immediately. Recap any revisions and display on flip chart or whiteboard.	Present the agenda and explain the process. Check whether participants are happy with the overall process and whether they want any changes/additions. Give a deadline (usually within a day or two) for changes and additions. Post revised agenda to the online workspace, or confirm original agenda.
Housekeeping	Announce logistics-type information: facilities, special requests, etc. Takes place at the beginning of the meeting, and as the need arises.	Circulate "house rules" and etiquette guidelines. Takes place at the beginning of the meeting, and as the need arises. In a large ongoing online community, consider posting guidelines monthly.

3. Phase 2: Providing initial information and encouraging discussion

ACTIVITY	FACE-TO-FACE	ONLINE
Presentations	Presenters make oral presentations, often using tools such as slide shows. Presentations are at a fixed time.	Presenters post presentations to online workspaces. Presentations are usually written, but may include multimedia elements. The date of presentations may be fixed, but (except in synchronous online spaces) the time is not.
Discussion	Discussion is oral and immediate. Larger groups are often subdivided into smaller groups for parts of the discussion.	Discussion is written and (except in synchronous online spaces) there is a time lag of hours, days or more between comments. Possible to subdivide group, but less common.

4. Phase 3: Synthesizing discussions and moving towards action

ACTIVITY	FACE-TO-FACE	ONLINE
Report backs	Small groups report back orally to the plenary on their discussions. Groups usually have little time to prepare their reports. Report backs usually take place within the space of a few hours or less.	Small groups report in writing. Groups have more time to prepare reports. Report backs usually take place over a few days or more.
Further discussion	Discussion is oral and immediate.	Discussion is written and (except in synchronous online spaces) there is a time lag of hours, days or more between comments.
Decisions and agreement on action	Participants are asked to indicate agreement orally or by a show of hands. Decisions are finalized in "real time".	Participants are asked to indicate agreement in writing or by responding to an online poll. Except in synchronous online spaces, decisions can take days or more to be finalized.

5. Phase 4: Concluding

ACTIVITY	FACE-TO-FACE	ONLINE
Summarizing decisions and agreement	Summaries are done quickly with little time for reflection. They are presented orally in real time.	Except in synchronous online spaces, the facilitator has time to process written information about decisions. Written summaries are posted to the workspace.
Thanking participants and recognizing achievement	Thank participants and outline group achievements orally. Physical gifts may be presented in real time to reward exceptional contributions. Closing session takes place over a short period.	Thank participants and outline group achievements in writing. Physical gifts are less common and cannot be presented in real time. Contributions tend to be rewarded through positive written feedback. Participants may have days or longer to post their own thanks and recognition of achievements.

6. Throughout the meeting

ACTIVITY	FACE-TO-FACE	ONLINE
Keep group focussed	Return group to topic if they stray (e.g. "Let's note this point and get back to it later."). If a new issue needs to be discussed before progress can be made on the original one, explain to the group why this is necessary and when you will return to the old topic. Summarize discussions thus far, or ask participants to summarize. Focus needs to be maintained over a short period.	Discussion needs to be kept on track, but there is greater scope for having parallel "off-topic" discussions in a clearly marked separate thread. If a new issue needs to be discussed before progress can be made on the original one, explain to the group why this is necessary and when you will return to the old topic. Summarize discussions thus far, or ask participants to summarize. Focus needs to be maintained over a longer period.
Ensure listening and understanding	"Listening" is aural. Even if communication is documented (through written notes or through audio or video recordings), facilitator and participants are responding to what they have just heard. Facilitator needs to focus on the moment. Check for understanding immediately using "active listening" techniques.	"Listening" means interpreting written messages. Communication is documented, and there is time to reflect on interpretation. After reflecting, check for understanding using "active listening" techniques.

ACTIVITY	FACE-TO-FACE	ONLINE
Manage conflict	Conflict may be overt or hidden. Conflict needs to be resolved in a short period of time. Not always possible to deal with conflict away from the main group.	Conflict may be overt or hidden. Conflict can be resolved over a period of days or weeks. Easy and sometimes more appropriate to communicate privately with individuals to help resolve conflicts.
Draw people into discussion	Get real-time input (e.g. "Let's hear from the people who haven't spoken." or "Let's go around and hear what everyone is thinking about this proposal.").	Get input over a period of time (e.g. "Let's hear from the people who haven't posted." or "Let's go around and hear what everyone is thinking about this proposal.").
Bring together diverse threads of a discussion	Think "on your feet" and identify and synthesize the main discussion threads (e.g. "We've got two proposals – to target farmers directly, or target extension officers.").	Reflect on and synthesize written input and post to the online community (e.g. "We've got two proposals – to target farmers directly, or target extension officers.").
Interpret silence and take action where necessary	Visual cues help to understand silence – people may look hostile, tired or confused. External factors (e.g. personal issues, existing power dynamics) may contribute to silence.	No visual cues to interpret silence. Many external factors (e.g. personal issues, existing power dynamics, other demands on time and attention, technology problems) may contribute to silence.
Ensure that ideas, decisions, etc. are recorded	Write key points on flip charts, whiteboard or computer. Make sure that key discussion points are physically visible to participants. Identify note takers among the participants. Notes are generally short and may need to be expanded. Discussions may need to be summarized, "cleaned up" and prepared in report format.	Communications are automatically documented, and participants can refer to them at any time. Discussions may need to be summarized, "cleaned up" and prepared in report format.
Manage time	Time is managed very closely with exact times (e.g. "five more minutes"; "the next session starts at 10 o'clock."). Limited flexibility. Facilitator may ask group if they are willing to extend sessions or meeting by minutes or at most a few hours. Participants may need to leave the meeting at a set time, or the venue may be unavailable.	Except in synchronous online spaces, time is managed in terms of days or weeks (e.g. "Please respond to these questions by Tuesday"; "We need to finish this thread by the end of the week."). There are often greater possibilities of extending meetings by days or even weeks. Time constraints relate to deadlines rather than physical presence. Some online communities are ongoing.

ACTIVITY	FACE-TO-FACE	ONLINE
Monitor energy levels	Physical and psychological energy needs to be sustained at a high level over a short period. There are often obvious physical indicators of low energy, such as yawning, slumping in seats and reduced participation and focus. Facilitator can introduce a physical break for all participants at the same time.	Psychological rather than physical energy has to be sustained over a longer period. No physical cues to identify low energy levels. Participants are in diverse physical contexts. Facilitator can introduce a new activity to re-energize the group.
Sustain motivation	Motivation needs to be sustained over a short period. Physical presence of participants enhances motivation.	Motivation needs to be sustained over longer periods. Motivation a major challenge in online communities.
Manage environment	Participants occupy the same physical environment. Facilitator can adjust some elements of the environment (e.g. change seating arrangements, turn on fan). Facilitator is aware of problems in the physical environment, even if he or she cannot adjust them (e.g. "The room is very hot, which is why energy levels are low.").	Participants are located in different physical environments. Facilitator usually has no control of participants' physical environments. Facilitator may not be aware of physical issues which are affecting participation. Facilitator may need to provide individual guidance on using online tools to community members.

7. After the meeting

ACTIVITY	FACE-TO-FACE	ONLINE
Ensure follow-up on decisions and action	By e-mail, phone and other media	By e-mail, phone and other media

	EVALUATE LEARNING INITIATIVES	RELEVANCE	PAGE	PRINT
	GUIDANCE SHEET			
6A	DEVELOPING A PLAN FOR FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT	CORE	203	
	TOOLS			
6B	TEMPLATE FOR A FOLLOW-UP PLAN	CORE	206	
6C	TYPES OF FOLLOW-UP MEASURES	CORE	207	

TOOL 6A GUIDANCE SHEET – DEVELOPING A PLAN FOR FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT

WHAT? This guidance sheet offers some suggestions for developing a follow-up plan. It should be used in conjunction with the template follow-up plan (Tool 6b).

WHO? Coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? Plan should be developed during the design phase of the learning initiative, and should be validated and acted upon after the initiative has been completed.

Background

The learning process that is enabled through a learning initiative should be viewed as part of a larger, ongoing process rather than as a single learning event. Once a learning initiative has been completed, participants return to a work environment in which they are asked to put in place what they've learned. Systematic follow-up ensures that the learning acquired is transferred to the work environment and has an impact on the organization in which the learners work. Hence, the follow-up events and strategies that follow the actual learning initiative should be considered as important and integral a part of the learning initiative process as the initiative itself.

What is the purpose of follow-up activities?

Among the potential benefits of systematic follow-up are to:

> promote the 'transfer' of learning from the individual to the organizational level;
> motivate participants to help diffuse new learning and innovations within the work context, including building support to integrate learning and innovation into existing systems or processes; and
> support the development of learning networks and peer support groups which can provide sustained on-the-job assistance in implementing the content of a given learning initiative.

What is a follow-up plan?

The follow-up plan is an outline document which helps you lay out the most appropriate follow-up measures for your learning initiative. Using this plan, you can figure out what kinds of measures you wish to use, the kinds of resources you will require and the best roll-out strategy for your plan. In short, the follow-up plan helps you establish a coherent strategy for a systematic and realistic approach to promote sustained engagement in the topics of your initiative.

How to build a plan

To maximize opportunities for follow-up, begin preparing the ground before the implementation of the learning initiative. Ideally, follow-up should be planned during the design phase of the initiative and included in your design outline. The plan can be further refined as the initiative is delivered and additional information is disclosed by participants. By the design stage, however, you should already have a clear picture of the type of support that might be required for participants to implement and use their learning. Budget provisions for the follow-up should obviously be made in advance.

To build a plan, it is useful to first determine the specific kinds of activities and opportunities in the work environment that can be used to apply or internalize the skills, knowledge or attitudes that participants will have acquired upon completion of the learning activity. To this end, you can use the information you've gathered throughout the previous steps of the learning management cycle, as shown in the table below:

WHAT INFORMATION YOU MAY HAVE GATHERED ALREADY...	WHEN?	LINK TO TOOL
> Whether there are contextual or organizational conditions that are likely to block implementation of learning (e.g. incentive issues, resources)	> During the initial assessment of context	> Context analysis **(Tool 1a)**
> Whether there is a need to work at a higher level (e.g. through advocacy) to ensure support by managers for the results of the learning initiative > The expectations of prospective learners, including in terms of post-initiative support expected	> When working with (government) partners to identify and select participants	> Invitation note **(Tool 2a)** > Application form **(Tool 2b)**
> Whether there is a need to provide refresher courses to ensure a standard level of soft and functional skills (e.g. project management, partnering, information and knowledge) required for the uptake of technical skills. > What aspects from the physical and social work setting may represent an obstacle to implementation of learning (e.g. gender, team location) > Ways in which participants plan to apply things they learn upon returning to their work environment > Support participants will require in order to apply the things they hope to learn once they return to the work environment	> When assessing learning needs	> Learning needs assessment checklist **(Tool 3g)** > Participants' benchmark evaluation questionnaire **(Tools 7l and 7m)**
> Difficulties that participants are experiencing with grasping a specific topic or skill > Theoretical issues that need supervised practise, guidance and support to be applied correctly > Opportunities and challenges for implementing learning	> During delivery of learning initiative	> Action plans **(Tool 5d)** > Open feedback and evaluation forms **(Tools 7l and 7m)** > Post-workshop reflection and action plan **(Tool 5i)**

TOOL 6B TEMPLATE FOR A FOLLOW-UP PLAN

Learning initiative: Example: Workshop on pesticide management for staff of national chambers of agriculture
Delivery date:
Identified constraints to implementation of new learning in work setting: 1. Example: Outdated work processes in learners' work environment, which makes it difficult for learners to implement new tasks 2. 3. 4.
Opportunities in the work environment that can be used to apply the new learning 1. Example: A new project recently approved in which learners will be involved 2. 3. 4.
Follow-up support that can be provided to address constraints and leverage opportunities in work setting 1. Advocacy with organization's management for updating work processes 2. On-the-job technical assistance to update work processes and test them in the context of the new project 3. 4.
Time frame: When is follow-up provided? In six months
Budget: Have provisions been made? Technical Cooperation Programme funds approved

TOOL 6C TYPES OF FOLLOW-UP MEASURES

WHAT? An overview of common types of follow-up measures, together with examples of FAO's use of those measures, where applicable

WHO? The developer, manager or coordinator of the learning initiative

WHEN? When developing the follow-up plan

FOLLOW-UP MEASURE	BEST USED WHEN....	FAO EXAMPLE
On-the-job technical assistance/technical clinics	Learning is highly theoretical and requires local adaptation to be put into practice.	
Follow-up visits with on-the-job coaching and mentoring	There are ongoing missions in the area which can provide a cost-effective opportunity for observation, additional guidance and problem-solving where needed.	
Study tours	Tours can add value to a learning experience by allowing participants to see the application of skills in a different context and build alliances and networks. Tours require resources, although they can be partially self-financed by participants.	TCI study tour in Mali-Togo
Online coaching/ mentoring support	Learners are likely to encounter problems in applying learning that can be easily solved through online consultations.	TCI online mentoring support to national counterparts after face-to-face meetings

FOLLOW-UP MEASURE	BEST USED WHEN....	FAO EXAMPLE
Face-to-face alumni groups/networks	Learners are in geographic or physical proximity and can benefit from peer-to-peer follow-up support.	Alumni network in FFS in Mali
Job shadowing	Learners can benefit from observing more experienced people doing the learned tasks.	
Alumni online forums or list serves	Learners are geographically dispersed and can best learn from each other. Budgets for follow-up support are limited.	GiZ thematic alumni networks
Online knowledge networks and communities of practice	Learners are geographically dispersed and can best learn from each other. Budgets for follow-up support are limited.	GiZ thematic alumni networks
E-learning refresher courses/sessions	E-learning is available, which can reinforce concepts learned through other modes.	
Help desks or focal points	There is an ongoing need for technical advice or knowledge resources that can be provided online.	Q&A service and online resources – FAO-GiZ Blended Learning Programme for Country Teams and Food Security Thematic Working Group Members
Web-based resources and toolkits	Resources are readily applicable and can reinforce theoretical concepts learned through other modes. Works best with a help desk/coaching component.	EASYPol resources

TOOLBOX

EVALUATE LEARNING INITIATIVES		RELEVANCE	PAGE	PRINT
PLANNING FOR EVALUATION				
	GUIDANCE SHEETS			
7A	KIRKPATRICK'S RESULTS EVALUATION FRAMEWORK	CORE	211	
	TOOLS			
7B	DESIGNING AN EVALUATION PLAN	CORE	215	
LEVEL 1: EVALUATION OF LEARNING RESULTS: PARTICIPANTS' SATISFACTION				
	GUIDANCE SHEETS			
7C	EVALUATION OF PARTICIPANTS' SATISFACTION: METHODS AND TIPS	CORE	221	
	TOOLS			
7D	OPEN FEEDBACK FORM	CORE	223	
7E	END-OF-COURSE EVALUATION OF FACE-TO-FACE TRAINING	CORE	224	
7F	DAILY EVALUATION OF FACE-TO-FACE TRAINING	RECOMMENDED	227	
7G	MID-TERM EVALUATION OF FACE-TO-FACE TRAINING	RECOMMENDED	228	
LEVEL 2: EVALUATION OF LEARNING RESULTS: PARTICIPANTS' LEARNING				
	GUIDANCE SHEETS			
7H	EVALUATION OF LEARNING RESULTS: FORMAL AND INFORMAL METHODS	CORE	230	
	TOOLS			
7I	ASSESSING CHANGES IN LEARNERS' PERCEPTION	CORE	232	
7J	EXAMPLE OF PRE/POST-COURSE KNOWLEDGE TEST	RECOMMENDED	235	
LEVEL 3: EVALUATION OF LEARNING RESULTS: CHANGES IN PARTICIPANTS' BEHAVIOURS				
	GUIDANCE SHEETS			
7K	EVALUATION OF CHANGES IN PARTICIPANTS' BEHAVIOURS AND PRACTICES: METHODS AND TIPS	CORE	238	
	TOOLS			
7L	PARTICIPANT BENCHMARK EVALUATION	CORE	240	
7M	EXAMPLE OF PARTICIPANT BENCHMARK EVALUATION	RECOMMENDED	244	
PROCESS EVALUATION				
7N	PROCESS EVALUATION	CORE	251	
7O	EVALUATING THE QUALITY OF FACILITATION	RECOMMENDED	252	
7P	EVALUATING THE QUALITY OF THE COACHING PROCESS	RECOMMENDED	254	

References and resources

Overall

> Kirkpatrick, D. L. (1968). Evaluating Training Programmes. San Francisco, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

> Using Training to Build Capacity for Development, An evaluation of the World Bank's project-based and WBI training http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTTRABUICAPDEV/Resources/full_doc.pdf

> *If I were the facilitator* – Assessing the quality of facilitation, taken from training materials of Market-oriented farm management for trainers of extension workers, 2007 (AGPS) http://www.fao.org/docrep/011/a1298e/a1298e00.htm

> FAO e-learning course, Impact Assessment of Large-scale Food Security Programme, available at: http://www.fao.org/spfs/learning-from-results/e-learning/en/

Level 1

> A good example for evaluating various aspects of a training course is included in the FAO training materials for Market-oriented farm management for trainers of extension workers, Module 7, Training Evaluation, pp. 23-30 (AGPS) http://www.fao.org/docrep/011/a1298e/a1298e00.htm

Level 2

> About writing test items
http://www.park.edu/cetl/quicktips/writingtest.html
http://www.go2itech.org/HTML/TT06/toolkit/evaluation/dev_eval.html

> *Changes in perception* test form. FAO training materials for Market-oriented farm management for trainers of extension workers, Module 7, 2007 (AGPS). The module also contains useful examples of final training examination. http://www.fao.org/docrep/011/a1298e/a1298e00.htm

Level 3

> Reflection, Consultation, Action template. Taken from Module 7 of the Market-oriented farm management for trainers of extension workers materials, 2007 (AGPS) http://www.fao.org/docrep/011/a1298e/a1298e00.htm

> Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) Survey of the project *"Rehabilitation and sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture affected by the tsunami in Aceh Province, Indonesia"*(Project OSRO/INS/601/ARC), 2009
http://typo3.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/oed/docs/OSROINS601ARC_2010_ER.pdf

> About using Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) evaluation and Most Significant Change (MSC):
http://www.anthropologymatters.com/index.php?journal=anth_matters&page=article&op=viewArticle&path%5B%5D=31&path%5B%5D=53
http://www.stoptb.org/assets/documents/resources/publications/acsm/ACSM_KAP%20GUIDE.pdf
http://www.kstoolkit.org/Most+Significant+Change

TOOL 7A GUIDANCE SHEET – KIRKPATRICK'S RESULTS EVALUATION FRAMEWORK[58]

WHAT? This guidance sheet provides an overview of Kirkpatrick's 4-level evaluation framework.

WHO? Coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? Selection of the appropriate evaluation level should be done at the design stage of the learning initiative.

Level 1 - Participant satisfaction

What it is and why it is important:
This level of evaluation helps a trainer gain immediate feedback about participants' experience of being in the course, workshop or other learning initiative. This evaluation level has little to do with whether the learning initiative was successful in educating participants or will lead to sustainable change. However, it can provide the trainer/facilitator with important insights about the quality of learning materials, presenters, facilities, etc. and about why participants may have had difficulty understanding some of the learning content.

Common questions to ask:
> Are participants satisfied with what they've learned?
> What was the quality of each of the instructors, coaches, lectures, instructional materials, course facilities?
> Which topics do participants believe were of greatest and least relevance to them?
> What are the specific elements of the course which participants most liked and which do they believe can be improved?
> Was course length appropriate?
> Was participant mix conducive to learning?

[58] *Adapted from World Bank, with permission. The overview is based on Kirkpatrick, D. L. (1968). Evaluating Training Programs. San Francisco, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.*

When to measure:
At the end of the initiative

How to measure:
Group or individual participant interviews or participant questionnaires. In order to capture possible areas for improvement of the training course, questionnaires should pose specific questions about the quality of each of the lecturers and each of the course topics.

What to be aware of:
Participant satisfaction questionnaires do not give information on learning results or behavioural changes in performing the job. It is possible for participants to give high ratings to a learning initiative even when they have not learned or when they will not be able to use what they've learned at work.

Level 2 - Learning

What it is and why it is important:
This level of evaluation focuses on immediate changes in knowledge, skills or attitudes based upon exposure to the learning initiative.

Common questions to ask:
> Do participants remember and understand how to use the skills and knowledge acquired through the learning initiative?
> Have participant attitudes shifted as a result of the course?

When to measure:
At selected intervals during and/or at the end of the learning initiative, when learning is still fresh in participants' minds. Tests also may be administered at the beginning of the initiative in order to compare against end-of-initiative tests.

How to measure:
Tests, in-class projects, exercises and assignments or participants' observations.

What to be aware of:
Testing of learning can be done either at the end of an initiative or by comparing scores on tests administered at the beginning and end of the programme.

Level 3 – Behavioural changes and workplace performance outcomes

What it is and why it is important:
This level of evaluation focuses on how the learning initiative has affected the behaviours and practices of participants and the way they perform on the job.

Common questions to ask:

> Are participants successfully using acquired skills, knowledge and attitudes in their work situations? In what way?

When to measure:
From six months to one year after completion of a learning initiative. Evaluation should occur a sufficient amount of time after the end of the initiative to ensure that participants have had the opportunity to use their learned skills and practise them in the work setting.

Evaluations generally should not be done more than two years after the initiative, because participants may have difficulty remembering how the learning experience affected their work.

How to measure:

- Interviews or surveys of participants, their supervisors, policy-makers and/or others who can report on participants' performance on the job.
- Observation of participants in their workplaces. For example, if participants were trained to perform certain tasks using a different procedure, their use of the new procedure can be monitored and compared with their practice before the training.

What to be aware of:
The most valid and reliable information about the results of learning on job performance is through direct measurement or observation of performance changes. This may not be possible where no baseline data exist, when measurement is prohibitively costly or when skills and attitudes have been taught which are not easily measurable. Surveys and questionnaires are cost-effective methods, although these may have low response rates or may not provide accurate measurement of on-the-job performance outcomes because participants may not be able to objectively judge the extent to which the learning event has affected their workplace performance.

Level 4 - Organizational impact

What it is and why it is important:
This type of evaluation measures the longer-term outcomes or impact of a learning initiative on broader development goals or on the capacity of participants' organizations to achieve their goals.

Common questions to ask:
> Where former participants have successfully used what they've learned at work, has this had an impact on their organizations' ability to achieve its objectives?

When to measure:
Minimally one year after completion, or realistically at the end of the project/programme; however, organizational impact generally will only be evident much later.

How to measure:
Interviews of organization management, personnel, clients or other stakeholders before and after the learning initiative in order to compare organizational performance/success at achieving organizational objectives.

What to be aware of:
Organizational impact rarely results from stand-alone learning initiatives. For this reason, while impact evaluations may be done of broader organizational capacity development programmes which address various aspects of capacity problems, they are rarely done for learning interventions alone. Organizational impact of learning is often difficult to measure for three reasons:

- There is generally an attribution problem. Even where organizations have changed, it is often difficult to know the extent to which this was the result of learning activities rather than other complementary interventions or changing conditions.
- There may be a time lag problem. Sometimes the impact of training on organizations is only evident years later.
- It may be hard to find reliable quantitative measures for some forms of organizational change.

Because of the difficulties listed above, this Toolbox will not elaborate further on Level 4 evaluation. Capacity Development Learning Module 4 will cover some aspects related to organizational development and change.

TOOL 7B DESIGNING AN EVALUATION PLAN[59]

WHAT? This tool describes a template to define the goals of the evaluation and the elements that should be incorporated into the evaluation plan to achieve those goals. It consists of: (1) a worked example of an evaluation plan; (2) an evaluation framework; and (3) a template of an evaluation plan

WHO? The coordinators/managers of the learning initiative

WHEN? An evaluation plan should be formulated before delivery, as part of the design process for a learning initiative

Instructions

You may use this format to aid you in designing your evaluation plan, or you may fill in the data on the template that follows. The level of detail in your evaluation plan should reflect the scope of the evaluation and the cost/importance of the learning activity. The example below is tailored to evaluating a beekeeping workshop for smallholders.

Worked example of an evaluation plan

1. GOAL OF THE EVALUATION:
Do you envisage evaluation to measure the initiative's results or the quality of learning processes? What is the purpose: accountability to stakeholders or learning for improvement of future training activities?
Example: The evaluation aims to assess both the quality of learning management processes and the results of the learning initiative in terms of participants' behaviour change in their work settings.

[59] *Adapted from World Bank, with permission*

2. EVALUATION OBJECTIVES
What is the evaluation trying to achieve in concrete terms? The evaluation objectives should be based on carefully defined desired outcomes and aligned with the programme's learning objectives.
Example: The evaluation will assess the extent to which: 1. the learning content was relevant to the needs of smallholders. 2. participants have acquired the necessary knowledge and skills to: > evaluate commercial and smallholder beekeeping; > provide needed policy and extension support to beekeepers; and > stimulate and train traditional beekeepers in their home countries by organizing local workshops in modern methods of beekeeping management. 3. participants have been able to successfully implement learning in a way that supports growth of beekeeping sector in their regions. 4. learning management processes have been in line with good practice standards.
3. EVALUATION QUESTIONS
Questions should be aligned with evaluation objectives and can be divided into evaluation levels.
Example: (This is a partial list of questions relating to the above objectives 1 and 2). 1. To what extent did participants learn required knowledge in: > hive management and production; > crop pollination; > queen rearing; > economics of production; > mechanization and technology; > sanitation and health? 2. To what extent have participants used learning upon their return to the workplace to: > evaluate commercial and smallholder beekeeping; > provide needed policy and extension support to beekeepers; and > stimulate and train traditional beekeepers in their home countries by organizing local workshops in modern methods of beekeeping management.

4. INDICATORS AND RESULTS MEASURES
For results evaluations, each indicator should measure impacts, outputs and outcomes that are relevant in the context of the results chain for the training programme.
Example (for evaluation question 2): > Number of beekeeping enterprises evaluated > Quality and number of policy and extension support provided > Number of local workshops organized > Number of new beekeeping enterprises created
5. DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND DATA COLLECTION PLAN APPROACHES
What methods are you envisaging to use (e.g. pre-course and post-course questionnaires, interviews, group feedback)? Who will collect the data and when?
Example: Post-course questionnaires will be administered by the workshop facilitator at the end of the workshop.
6. INFORMATION REPORTING PLAN
The following information should be indicated: > audience to whom the evaluation results will be reported; > purpose of the information (e.g. updating the status of the learning activity, redesigning the learning activity); and > scope of the information to be reported (i.e. the level of detail to which results will be presented and discussed)
Example: Evaluation results will be communicated to internal and external stakeholders on the occasion of a mid-term report on the status of the project.

The evaluation framework on the following page can help define evaluation objectives, indicators and the appropriate data source for the type of learning initiative.

Evaluation framework[60]

RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT TERM	KIRKPATRICK LEVEL	DESCRIPTION	TYPE OF LEARNING MODE	DATA SOURCE	POSSIBLE INDICATORS
ACTIVITIES	Level 1	Measures participants' satisfaction	Self-study	Course evaluations, surveys	> % of participants expressing positive scores on the initiative > Number of organizations requesting that the initiative be repeated for other individuals > Number of organizations requesting support to uptake the initiative locally
			Face-to-face (F2F) workshops	Questionnaires and interviews	
			On-the-job	Feedback sessions	
			Online collaborative	Surveys	
OUTPUTS	Level 2	Measures participants' effective learning (knowledge, skills, attitudes)	Self-study	Pre-and post knowledge tests	> % of participants who succeeded in their final tests > % of participants able to identify solutions when presented with problem > % of participants able to identify the need to upgrade own knowledge and skills in the technical area
			F2F workshops	In-class assignments, exercises	
			On-the-job	Observation, on-the-job learning achievement form	
			Online collaborative	Pre-and post-knowledge tests	

[60] *Adapted from WFP Food Security Assessment Facilitator's Toolkit, page 66* http://learning.vam.wfp.org/documents/Docs/FTK.pdf

RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT TERM	KIRKPATRICK LEVEL	DESCRIPTION	TYPE OF LEARNING MODE	DATA SOURCE	POSSIBLE INDICATORS
OUTCOMES	Level 3	Measures how learning has affected the way participants perform or behave in the work setting	Self-study	Interviews, surveys with individual participants and their superiors	> % of individuals able to carry out tasks independently up to agreed standards > % of participants confident to disseminate their knowledge to others > Number of new activities or products put in place or adapted to fit new situations > Number of projects or programmes led by national partners with increased quality > Number of new related networks and communities of practice established > Number of work processes improved > Attitude of senior management, community leaders, policy-makers, etc. more supportive and favourable to issue
			F2F workshops	Participant benchmarking evaluation forms, observation, interviews, surveys	
			On-the-job	Observation on the work setting, on-the-job learning achievement form	
			Online collaborative		
IMPACT	Level 4[61]	Measures impact of learning on own organization's goals and priorities and on overall capacity of organizations to achieve development goals	Self-study	Review of organizational performance, interviews with organization's management and stakeholders	> Number of organizations having reviewed their mandates and priorities in the area > Organization more responsive to needs of stakeholders > Productivity in given technical area increased
			F2F workshops		
			On-the-job		
			Online collaborative		

61 *This level of evaluation is rarely carried out as there are very important attribution problems with indicators. For example, although a review of mandates and priority could be an indication of renewal and transformative processes, it does not necessarily mean that this has resulted in better organizational performance or results. Indicators at this level are therefore only suggested to encourage further reflection and discussion.*

Template of an evaluation plan

EVALUATION QUESTION #	INDICATORS	RESULTS MEASURES	DATA COLLECTION METHODS	DATA COLLECTION PLAN	INFORMATION REPORTING PLAN

TOOL 7C GUIDANCE SHEET – LEVEL 1 EVALUATION OF PARTICIPANTS' SATISFACTION: METHODS AND TIPS

WHAT? This guidance sheet describes methods and tips for carrying out a Level 1 evaluation.

WHO? Developers, coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? Design of appropriate evaluation instruments should start at the design stage of the learning initiative, when developing the evaluation plan.

End-of-initiative participant satisfaction questionnaires provide information about the participants' level of satisfaction with the event. Questions can address participants' views about the degree to which the content was interesting and useful and about the quality of the instructors and materials.

Among other things, participant satisfaction questionnaires can help you determine:

- satisfaction with the physical environment/facilities;
- presence of distractions to learning;
- convenience of the learning activity;
- overall satisfaction with the learning experience;
- perceived relevance of learning objectives;
- perceived quality of lecturers and learning materials;
- usefulness of practise activities and exercises; and
- satisfaction with elements in training design such as course length, participant mix, level of learning.

Evaluation methods

There are different techniques for obtaining feedback from learners in the context of workshops, self-study activities and on-the-job learning events.

Questionnaires (or happy sheets) are most commonly used to solicit participant reaction. Participants may not feel comfortable criticizing a colleague's work, so it is better to keep questionnaires anonymous where feasible. They are typically used for workshops, but can also be used for distance learning programmes, online collaborative events or on-the-job situations like study visits and coaching. Examples of questionnaires are provided in Tools 7e, 7f, 7g.

Open feedback forms are another way to gather written feedback from participants. For informal learning situations in which you have only one or a few participants, you may provide a 'blank sheet' format – a page with an opening sentence that encourages them to provide as many comments as they wish on any aspect of the programme or the initiative. An example of open feedback form is provided in Tool 7d.

Interviews can be conducted with participants after an event. This is more useful for one-on-one situations (e.g. coaching or job shadowing) because it would be difficult and time-consuming to interview enough participants from a group event. You can arrange separate telephone or face-to-face meetings with the learner and the coach/experienced colleague. An independent party who was not involved in the event will need to conduct the interviews. To conduct effective feedback interviews:

- write down your questions beforehand;
- ensure that your questions do not lead the interviewee to a particular response. Don't show personal preference. Ask questions that will help determine what worked and did not work in the event;
- ask what they think can be improved for others; and
- if the event was online, ask about the technology and how effective the computer was for learning.

Group feedback can be useful for a group or team event. Arrange small groups either during or at the end of event to provide feedback. You may need to give the group specific areas to address to get the group started. Although there is the danger that one member of the group will sway others' opinions, this is a good way for participants to develop their feedback into more concrete suggestions.

TIPS FOR EVALUATING AT LEVEL 1 BY USING QUESTIONNAIRES

Ask questions about specific course modules/sessions rather than just asking about the course overall. Participant satisfaction questionnaires can provide valuable information to improve future courses. However, it is important to ask questions about specific lecturers, materials, modules and topics rather than only about the course overall.

Where feasible, use daily or mid-term evaluation forms alongside the end-of-course form (Tool 7f or 7g) to enable participants to assess individual course components while they are still fresh in their memory.

Supplement closed-ended quantifiable questions with open-ended questions that enable participants to freely list concerns and identify the most positive aspects of the course. Asking for a limited number of "most ________" and "least ________" aspects of the course often results in more focused, richer answers than simple open-ended questions. For example, ask "What were the three elements of the course that you found most useful?" rather than "What course elements of the course were most useful?".

Consider using rankings alongside or in place of ratings. Ratings scales (e.g. asking participants to rate the usefulness of a lecture on a scale of 1–5), are generally used to ascertain the merits of various course elements. Frequently, however, participants fill in rating scales in a uniform manner that makes it difficult to differentiate between better and worse aspects of the course. Another possibility is using questions that ask for **rankings**. For example, rather than asking participants to rate each course session, ask participants to list the three most useful and three least useful course sessions. This may give a better indication of which course modules are relatively weaker and could be improved.

TOOL 7D OPEN FEEDBACK FORM[62]

WHAT: This tool presents a form/template to gather feedback at Level 1 (satisfaction).

WHO: Participants in a learning initiative

WHEN: At the end of a learning initiative, when you prefer to leave the feedback areas open

Instructions

Use this feedback sheet as follows:

> KEEP IT! – For the special things that you appreciated in the initiative
> CHANGE IT! – For the things that you did not appreciate
> ADD IT! – For the suggestions that you would like to offer
> WHAT I WILL REMEMBER! – For the points that you will retain after the event

KEEP IT! I appreciated this:	CHANGE IT! I did not appreciate this:
ADD IT! These are my suggestions:	WHAT I WILL REMEMBER: I expect to retain these points:

[62] *Based on the FAO facilitation skills I course*

TOOL 7E END-OF-COURSE EVALUATION OF FACE-TO-FACE TRAINING

WHAT: This tool presents a form/template to gather feedback at Level 1 (satisfaction).

WHO: Workshop participants

WHEN: At the end of the workshop, when you want to have specific feedback on certain aspects of the training.

Instructions

Please complete this questionnaire to help us improve our activities in the future. Please be honest and open. Your responses — no matter how positive or negative — are valuable to us. To keep them anonymous, please do not write your name on the form.

1. The following statements relate to your satisfaction with the course. Please rate them on a scale of 1–5, where 1 = "I do not agree" and 5 = "I totally agree". If the statement is not relevant for your course, please check "n/a".

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
The course was relevant to my country/regional context.						
The course was relevant to my workplace needs.						
The trainers were of high quality. (Note: participants should be asked in this form to rate each trainer separately if they have not been asked to do so previously in daily evaluation forms).						
The course materials aided my comprehension of the course.						
There was sufficient time in class for group discussion and questions.						
The course was too long.						
The course was too short.						

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
I learned from the other participants in the room.						
The mix of participants was appropriate for this course.						
There were enough opportunities to practise learning in the course.						
Course projects and assignments enhanced my understanding of learning content.						
The classroom facilities were comfortable.						
The classroom facilities were free of distraction.						
The course was on too low a level for me.						
The course was on too high a level for me.						
The course was too fast-paced for me.						
The course was too slow-paced for me.						
I feel confident that I will be able to use what I have learned in my workplace.						

2. What did you find most useful in the activity and why?

___

___

___

3. What did you find least useful in the activity and why?

___

___

___

4. On what topics, if any, would you rather have spent more time—whether or not they were addressed in the activity?

___

___

___

5. On what topics, if any, would you rather have spent less time?

___

___

___

6. Please name up to three things that we could do to improve similar activities in the future.
   1. ______________________________
   2. ______________________________
   3. ______________________________

7. Please list up to three things that you intend to do as a result of your participation in this activity:
   1. ______________________________
   2. ______________________________
   3. ______________________________

8. What type of follow-up could help you make this activity more useful once you return to work?

   ____
   ____
   ____
   ____
   ____

9. Please list any further comments you may have on any aspect of the course personnel or classroom facilities.

TOOL 7F DAILY EVALUATION OF FACE-TO-FACE TRAINING[63]

WHAT: This tool presents a form/template to gather feedback at Level 1 (satisfaction).

WHO: Participants

WHEN: At the end of each day of a face-to-face training, when the initiative lasts more than two days

Name of learning initiative: ______________________**Date:** __________

1. What did you enjoy most about today?

2. What did you learn during today's sessions that you anticipate using in your work?

3. Was there anything you did not understand during today's sessions? Please provide specific examples.

4. What is the most valuable thing you learned today (knowledge or skills)?

5. What other specific comments do you have?

Thank you.

[63] *Adapted from: Levels of evaluation based on Kirkpatrick, D., 1994, Evaluating Training Programs: The Four Levels, San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.*

TOOL 7G MID-TERM EVALUATION OF FACE-TO-FACE TRAINING

WHAT: This tool presents a form/template to gather feedback at Level 1 (satisfaction).

WHO: Participants

WHEN: In the middle of a face-to-face training, when the initiative lasts more than three days

How do you feel about the training so far?[64]

1. Please rate the usefulness of the content presented to you.

Not at all useful		Somewhat useful		Very useful
1	2	3	4	5

2. In this training, how do you rate your participation in the small groups?

I did not contribute to the small group		I made some contribution		I contributed a lot to my small group
1	2	3	4	5

3. In this training, how do you rate your participation in the large groups?

I did not contribute to the group		I made some contribution		I contributed a lot to the group
1	2	3	4	5

[64] *Developed by Rosalie Husinga Norem and Patricia Colbert for SEAGA workshop held in Egerton University, Kenya 1998*

4. What training methods have been used in this training which really motivated you to get involved? (Please list)

5. What training methods have been used in this training which did not encourage you to get involved? (Please list)

6. What tasks/activities have we done that were very interesting? (Please list)

7. What tasks /activities have we done that were not very interesting to you? (Please list).

8. Do you feel that there are some participants who do most of the talking? (Yes or no)

9. What content would you like to have further clarified before the end of this training?

10. What additional content would you like to have covered before the end of the training?

11. Do you have any comments or suggestions you would like to make?

TOOL 7H GUIDANCE SHEET – LEVEL 2 EVALUATION OF LEARNING RESULTS: FORMAL AND INFORMAL METHODS

WHAT? This guidance sheet describes formal and informal methods for carrying out a Level 2 evaluation.

WHO? Developers, coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? Design of appropriate evaluation instruments should start at the design stage of the learning initiative, when developing the evaluation plan.

Evaluation at this level can be done on an informal or formal basis. It is also known as 'learner assessment' and allows you to determine the extent to which:

> participants have acquired the knowledge, skills and attitudes described in the objectives of the learning activity;
> participants' learning reflects the stated objectives of the learning activity.

Informal assessment

Trainers and facilitators should frequently check informally during learning initiatives to ensure that learners comprehend the knowledge and skills being taught. At the simplest level, this is done by asking questions during the initiative/event to ensure participant comprehension. In-class projects, exercises, activities or presentations also can be used to assess participants' absorption of course materials and ability to use learned concepts. Informal assessment of learning is an integral part of any learning activity.

Formal assessment

Formal assessment takes the form of learning tests or quizzes at the conclusion of a learning event, and may be useful where it is important to ensure that learners have grasped certain fundamental concepts, ideas or skills in learning programmes. In certain circumstances, such as in self-paced study, formal assessment is important in supporting learners' motivation because it will allow them to monitor the results of their own efforts as they proceed in the learning. In other types of learning initiatives there may be challenges in assessing learning. These challenges may include:

> **Not all types of learning are easily measured.** The easiest types of learning to measure are knowledge or hard skills. Much harder to measure are soft skills such as those imparted in management or leadership training or learning activities aiming to shift attitudes.

> **Pre-tests may be necessary to attribute participant knowledge and skills.** Without pre-tests, it is difficult to know whether correct test answers reflect learning or prior knowledge.

> **Higher-level participants may object to being "tested".** Testing may be viewed by some participants as being disrespectful to their rank or position.

> **Learning scores are likely to reflect, in part, the skill of participants in taking tests and not just participant learning.** This may be a problem particularly with participants who are not fully used to or comfortable with learning environments. When learning is tested, care should be taken to ensure that tests are administered in ways that don't discourage learners.

> **Writing and administering tests can be time-consuming.** Where evaluation resources and time are limited, learning tests may not always be a priority.

TOOL 71 ASSESSING CHANGES IN LEARNERS' PERCEPTION[65]

WHAT: This tool presents a method for assessing learners' acquisition of new knowledge and changes in their perceptions and attitudes (Level 2 learning). It also provides an indication about which follow-up measures could reinforce changes.

WHO: Participants

WHEN: At the beginning and at the end of any learning initiative, after appropriate customization of the questions

Instructions

1. At the beginning of the initiative, the trainer/facilitator asks learners to complete Worksheet A individually. Then he/she collects the completed forms.
2. At the end of the initiative, each participant should use Worksheet B to: (i) identify their perceptions that have changed and (ii) record how they have changed. Participants then divide into small groups of three or four to discuss what they have written and appraise and record the significance of the changes that have occurred.
3. The trainer/facilitator asks each group to share its findings for one of the nine statements, and repeats this until all nine perception statements have been discussed by all groups.

[65] *Taken from Market-oriented farm management for trainers of extension workers materials, Module 7, AGPS 2007*

The following example relates to the topic of farming, farm management and market-oriented farm management.

WORKSHEET A

STATEMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW
1. The main purpose of having a farm is to produce food for the family.			
2. The purpose of farm management is to optimize production on the farm.			
3. The main purpose of farming is to generate income.			
4. Farming should result in personal satisfaction.			
5. The purpose of farm management is to maximize profits from the farm.			
6. It should be the goal of every farmer to produce agricultural goods only for the market.			
7. To be profitable, farmers need to keep detailed records of income and expenses.			
8. Market-oriented farm management requires formal training.			
9. Semi-literate farmers can learn about market-oriented farm management.			
Other comments:			

WORKSHEET B - Changes in perception

At the beginning of the session/course/event, the following statements related to farming, farm management and market-oriented farm management were asked. Now that this programme has come to a close, read each statement again; think briefly about it and decide whether you "agree" or "disagree" with the statement or if you "don't know". When finished, compare these with your answers from the Worksheet A. Has there been a change? If so, what changed and why? If not, why not? Record your answers in the space provided under "change/no change".

STATEMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW
1. The main purpose of having a farm is to produce food for the family.			
Change/no change: why?			
2. The purpose of farm management is to optimize production on the farm.			
Change/no change: why?			
3. The main purpose of farming is to generate income.			
Change/no change: why?			
4. Farming should result in personal satisfaction.			
Change/no change: why?			
5. The purpose of farm management is to maximize profits from the farm.			
Change/no change: why?			
6. It should be the goal of every farmer to produce agricultural goods only for the market.			
Change/no change: why?			
7. To be profitable, farmers need to keep detailed records of income and expenses.			
Change/no change: why?			
8. Market-oriented farm management requires formal training.			
Change/no change: why?			
9. Semi-literate farmers can learn about market-oriented farm management.			
Change/no change: why?			
Other comments:			

TOOL 7J EXAMPLE OF PRE/POST-COURSE KNOWLEDGE TEST[66]

WHAT? This tool provides an example of a pre/post test to assess acquisition of new knowledge/skills (Level 2).

WHO? Developers, coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? Design of appropriate evaluation instruments should start at the design stage of the learning initiative, when developing the evaluation plan.

Pre-course evaluation: Climate change, agriculture and food security

The course team is always looking for ways to serve you better. Please take a moment to complete this short survey. It will help us know how we're doing and how we can better serve your needs in the future.

1. PLEASE INDICATE IF EACH STATEMENT IS TRUE OR FALSE OR IF YOU DON'T KNOW.	TRUE	FALSE	DON'T KNOW
Climate change is the only environmental challenge to the world food system.			
We cannot produce exact information about definitive future impacts of climate change in a given location.			
Disaster risk reduction interventions and climate change adaptation interventions are very different and are not complementary to each other.			
Globally, agriculture is the sector with the largest amount of greenhouse gases.			
The largest part of agriculture's mitigation potential, by far, lies in soil and biomass carbon sequestration.			
Climate change also can be addressed by specific climate change-centred interventions; incorporating climate change aspects in common development projects is not effective.			

[66] *Taken from FAO's online collaborative course on climate change, agriculture and food security aimed at strengthening the knowledge capacity of decentralized offices to address climate change. For post-course evaluation, the same form is used.*

2. HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU IN YOUR ABILITY TO DO EACH OF THE FOLLOWING?	NOT CONFIDENT	A LITTLE CONFIDENT	SOMEWHAT CONFIDENT	CONFIDENT	VERY CONFIDENT
Explain basic climate change terminology and concepts					
Explain how climate change and food security relate to each other					
Outline FAO's key messages on climate change, agriculture and food security					
Explain the position of climate change in FAO's strategic planning and programming					
Summarize FAO's priority themes on climate change globally and in the regions					
Explain the characteristics of climate change impacts in agricultural sectors					
Describe what determines vulnerability of people and food systems to climate change					
List the key methodologies for conducting impact and vulnerability assessments					
Explain the uncertainties in results from impact and vulnerability assessments					
Explain FAO's approach in climate change adaptation					

HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU IN YOUR ABILITY TO DO EACH OF THE FOLLOWING?	NOT CONFIDENT	A LITTLE CONFIDENT	SOMEWHAT CONFIDENT	CONFIDENT	VERY CONFIDENT
Define key strategies for adapting agriculture to climate change					
Explain process and steps for community-based adaptation planning					
Clarify existing synergies and differences between climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction					
Explain how agriculture can contribute to climate change mitigation					
Define key approaches for climate change mitigation in agriculture					
Describe synergies between mitigation, adaptation, sustainable productivity increase and food security (climate-smart agriculture)					
Outline steps and components to mainstream climate change at sectoral and project levels					
List major funding streams for climate change projects					

Thank you for completing this evaluation. We appreciate your input as we make every effort to improve our course.

TOOL 7K GUIDANCE SHEET – LEVEL 3 EVALUATION OF CHANGES IN PARTICIPANTS' BEHAVIOURS AND PRACTICES: METHODS AND TIPS

WHAT? This guidance sheet describes methods and tips for carrying out a Level 3 evaluation.

WHO? Developers, coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? Design of appropriate evaluation instruments should start at the design stage of the learning initiative, when developing the evaluation plan.

Evaluation of performance outcomes, i.e. how participants have used their new learning on the job, is the most important level of results evaluation. It is also, however, one of the most difficult levels of evaluation. It's normally carried out from six months to one year after the initiative has ended.

This type of evaluation can be done through:

> post-initiative questionnaires or surveys;
> participant interviews and observation;
> interviews with superiors and work colleagues; and
> measurement of participant outputs.

There are specific challenges to Level 3 evaluation. The major difficulty stems from the fact that post-course questionnaires or surveys sent to former participants often have very low response rates and do not produce very in-depth information about how participants have used learning in the workplace. Other forms of evaluation may be prohibitively costly or logistically difficult, particularly when learners are distributed geographically.

However, it is recommended that some form of Level 3 evaluation be done at the end of each learning initiative. Below are some tips for improving the design of questionnaires and managing the evaluation process to raise response rates and enhance the quality of information gathered.

Tips for designing post-initiative questionnaires and surveys

- **Inform participants at the end of the initiative that you will be sending them questionnaires.** Stress the importance of filling out these questionnaires and inform participants when they should expect to receive them.
- **Administer post-initiative questionnaires from six months to one year after the course is completed.** Earlier than six months may be too early to report back on how learning was used, and after one year, participants' memories about learning content and their willingness to respond to questionnaires may be reduced.
- **Use open-ended questions to ask for specific information about how learning was used.** Supplement closed-ended questions asking participants to rate their use of learning with open-ended questions asking for specific details about how they have used learning in their work situation. It will generally be possible to get a much better understanding of how learning was used from responses to open-ended questions than closed-ended ones. This information will help coordinators develop a much better understanding of how learning is being used by learners, how it may be possible to provide supplementary support and how future initiatives can be better adapted to participants' needs.
- **Ask participants to rate the extent to which their ability to implement learning was affected by various constraints/support factors.** Among possible constraints that can be rated are: support of managers, support of peers, availability of financing, availability of equipment, understanding of how to apply learning in the work setting, presence of supportive policy structure and presence of supportive organizational processes.
- **Remember that the purpose of post-course evaluation is not only to rate the results of learning activities but also to develop a better understanding of how learners use learning and how they may be better supported in implementing learning.** In many cases, participants may come from very different work situations and may use learning in very different ways. Gaining an understanding of how learning is used will make it possible to better target future interventions to the range of participants' needs and to ensure that supplementary capacity support is provided to learners' organizations.

Tools 7l and 7m describe one possible method for carrying out Level 3 evaluation through questionnaires. Another method, known as Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice (KAP) surveys, can be useful to identify changes in people's attitudes and practice in a certain area after they have participated in a learning initiative. The "Reference and resources" section at the beginning of this Toolbox includes some references on how this method has been used. The Capacity Development Learning Module 2 also refers to the KAP survey in its toolbox.

TOOL 7L LEVEL 3 PARTICIPANT BENCHMARK EVALUATION[67]

WHAT: This tool presents a comprehensive, participatory system for needs assessment and learning evaluation. It aims to provide a simple, cost-effective way to gather information on participant learning needs and on the results of learning on workplace performance and organizational capacity. It does so through three inter-locking questionnaires.

WHO: Participants

WHEN: The three questionnaires are filled out at three different stages: one at pre-initiative, one at the end of the initiative and one six months to one year following the initiative.

Instructions

The evaluation protocol can be administered either on paper or electronically. If administered on paper, participants should be asked to write their names on the forms to enable redistribution of the forms at all three stages of the evaluation. If electronically, provisions must be made so that participants can re-access their responses from earlier phases at later phases.

Stage 1. Pre-initiative needs assessment and setting learning goals. Before the learning initiative, participants are asked to write three individual learning goals for the course. For each of their individual goals, they should be asked to explain how they would like to use this learning in their work settings. This can be done as part of pre-course application or registration forms submitted in writing or online. Asking participants to design their own goals will increase their sense of ownership of and engagement in the learning process. It also helps participants reflect on how learning should support their work and may thus make them more proactive in the classroom to ensure that learning meets their needs. It is also possible to ask learners' supervisors to approve the learners' goals in writing or to add comments to the learners' goals, in order to help prepare support for implementation of learning in the workplace.

[67] *The method was developed by Ms.Aliza Belman Inbal, who agreed to contribute it to the Module.*

Stage 2a: End-of-initiative learning assessment. At the end of the initiative, participants should be given their individual learning goals from the pre-course needs assessment and asked to rate the extent to which they have achieved their goals and to comment on why. It should be noted that the learning goal table is meant to supplement, not replace, a standard end-of-course participant satisfaction questionnaire. Relating participant ratings of learning to their individual learning goals, rather than simply asking participants to rate course learning overall, gives a much clearer picture of the extent to which participants believe they have acquired the knowledge and skills which are important to them.

Stage 2b: End-of-initiative setting goals to use learning. Participants are asked at the end of course to choose the three most useful things they gained from the course, and to explain how they believe they will use this learning in their work settings. Setting individual goals on how participants intend to use their learning enhances participants' sense of ownership over the evaluation process and provides much richer and more nuanced understanding of the ways in which participants intend to use learning. In addition, having participants set use goals before returning to the work environment will make it possible to better gauge to what extent factors in the work environment hinder or help learning use. It should be noted in this context that intention to use learning is not the same using learning, and thus a third, post-course assessment of learning use is an essential part of participant benchmarking.

Stage 3: Assessment of how learning has been used. Six months to one year after the course, participants **are sent their responses from the end-of-initiative questionnaires (Stage 2b)** and asked to rate the extent to which they have been able to use learning as anticipated. For each of their goals on how they intended to use learning, they are then asked to provide input on what factors in their work settings supported or constrained implementation of learning. The learning use table filled out by participants at the end of the course should be sent to them either electronically or by mail, with a postage-paid, addressed, return envelope. Relating the questions about the enabling environment to support implementation of learning to the information about the participant's goals on using learning will give a much clearer picture of where there are obstacles to learning implementation. This information can then be used to better support these or future learners.

Personal benchmark evaluation template

These tables should be filled out in three stages. They can be administered electronically or on paper. Questions have been shaded to differentiate between those to be administered at different stages.

Stage 1: Pre-initiative. Questions shaded green.
Stage 2: End-of-initiative. Questions shaded blue.
Stage 3: From 6 to12 months post-initiative. Questions shaded lavender.

STAGE 1 — PRE-INITIATIVE		STAGE 2A — POST-INITIATIVE (ACHIEVEMENT OF GOALS)	
What knowledge, skills, or other benefits would you most like to gain from the initiative? Please be as specific as possible. You may list up to three goals.[68]	**For each of the goals listed above, how do you expect to use what you have gained here once you return to your workplace?**	**Now that you have completed the initiative, please review the goals you set for yourself. For each goal, please tell us the extent to which the initiative met your needs.** Please rate on a scale of 1–4 where 1 = "did not meet my needs" 4 = "fully met my needs". If the goal you set was not relevant for the course, please select N/A.	**Comments**
Goal 1:		1 2 3 4 N/A	
Goal 2:		1 2 3 4 N/A	
Goal 3:		1 2 3 4 N/A	

STAGE 2B — POST-INITIATIVE (SETTING GOALS FOR USING LEARNING)			
Of the knowledge/skills which you acquired in the initiative, which do you believe will be most useful to you back on the job? You can chose up to three knowledge/skill areas.	Knowledge/ skill area # 1	Knowledge/ skill area #2	Knowledge/ skill area #3
How do you believe you will use the knowledge/skills in your work?			

[68] *A simpler way is to ask participants to choose individual learning goals from a list of topics rather than asking them to write their own goals. The advantage to this method is that it can be used to compile quantitative data with regard to which topics are of greatest interest to participants. The disadvantage is that, by limiting responses to goals formulated by the training manager, it will not be possible to capture unanticipated learning goals.*

STAGE 3 — END OF ITNITIATIVE (HOW LEARNING HAS BEEN USED)			
At the end of the initiative, you were asked to share with us the three things you acquired in the course that you thought would be most useful to you back on the job, and how you expected to use these things in your work. For each of the knowledge/skill areas you listed above, please tell us the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements, where 1 = do not agree at all and 4 = fully agree. Choose N/A if the statement is not applicable to the knowledge/skill area you selected.			
I have been able to effectively use the knowledge and skills I acquired.	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
I received in the initiative the practical skills needed to use this knowledge/skill area in my work.	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
I have enough support from my managers to use this knowledge/skill area in my work.	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
I have enough support from my peers to use this knowledge/ skill area in my work.	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
I have the necessary resources/funds/equipment to use this knowledge/skill area in my work.	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A	1 2 3 4 N/A
Comments – Please give us specific details on your efforts to apply this knowledge/skill area. We are interested in examples of how you have tried to apply these areas and any obstacles that you have encountered in doing so.			

1. Are there other ways in which you have been able to use the knowledge, skills or contacts you gained in the initiative since returning to your workplace? Please give specific examples of any additional ways in which the initiative has contributed to your ability to achieve your work-related goals.
2. Are there areas of learning in which it would have been useful for you to get expert follow-up support in order to help you use this knowledge in your workplace? If so, what support would have been helpful to you and why?
3. Please list up to three further suggestions on how to improve the relevance and usefulness of initiatives like yours.
   1. ______________________________
   2. ______________________________
   3. ______________________________

TOOL 7M EXAMPLE OF LEVEL 3 PARTICIPANT BENCHMARK EVALUATION[69]

WHAT? This tool provides an example of how participant benchmark evaluation has been used in FAO for Level 3 evaluation.

WHO? Developers, coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN? Design of appropriate evaluation instruments should start at the design stage of the learning initiative, when developing the evaluation plan.

Dear Participant,

We hope that this training course will be interesting and useful for all participants. In order to allow us to improve our training programme and to assess the effectiveness of this particular course, we kindly ask you to complete three questionnaires as part of the course evaluation process.

All the information you submit will be used in confidence by the FAO Investment Centre to improve its capacity development work.

The assessment will be done in three stages:

Stage 1 – Pre-training course assessment: You will be asked to complete the questionnaire for Stage 1 before the training course begins. This collects "baseline" information, which describes your expectations.

Stage 2 – End-of-training assessment: You will be asked to complete the questionnaire for Stage 2 at the end of the training course. This information addresses the extent to which your expectations were fulfilled and how you expect to be able to apply the knowledge and experience in your job situation.

Stage 3 - Post-training assessment: You will be asked to complete the questionnaire for Stage 3 a few months (e.g. four to six months) after the training course. It evaluates which skills / ideas have been developed and the extent to which you have been able to apply the acquired knowledge and skills in practice.

The training course organizer will distribute these forms separately to each participant. Please complete the forms by hand and then return them to the training course organizer. He or she will then make two copies, keep one and forward one to FAO TCI.

Thank you!

[69] *Togo to Mali Study tour on sector-wide approaches in agriculture, sectoral M&E systems and the "Chambres d'agriculture", TCI*

Stage 1: What do you hope to get out of the training course?

To be filled in prior to start of training (or on Day 1).

Name:_______________________________________

Designation /Position: _________________________ Place of work: ______________________________

Question 1:

From a job perspective, what are your main expectations from participating in the training course?

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

Question 2:

What are the main constraints encountered in your job?

1. ____

   ____

2. ____

   ____

How do you think the training course could provide solutions?_______________________________

____

____

____

Question 3:

Please score the following training course topics in terms of their expected relevance for you:
(1= Not at all relevant, 2= To a little extent, 3= To some extent, 4= To a large extent, 5=Fully relevant)

List of topic (TOPICS TO BE SUGGESTED BY TRAINING ORGANIZERS!) Score (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

1. ________________________________
2. ________________________________
3. ________________________________
4. ________________________________
5. ________________________________
6. ________________________________
7. ________________________________

Question 4:

For each of the three topics that you rated as being most relevant to you in Question 3 above, please explain briefly why you consider them to be particularly relevant to your job:

Topic 1: ________________________________

Why relevant?________________________________

Topic 2: ________________________________

Why relevant?________________________________

Topic 3: ________________________________

Why relevant?________________________________

Stage 2: What did you actually get from the training?

To be completed at the end of the training course

Question 1:
Now that you have finished the training course, how would you rate the overall usefulness of the training from a job perspective?

Please use a scale from 1 to 5 (1= Not useful at all, 2= Useful to little extent, 3= Useful to some extent, 4= Useful to a large extent, 5=Extremely useful).

Rating:__________________

Question 2:
Were there any particular elements/topics that you were missing in this training course which you would recommend including in future training courses?

Topic 1: ____

____

Topic 2: ____

____

Question 3:

Based on the experience/learning you have acquired from this course, please select the top three topics (in prioritized order) that you consider to be the most useful to you from a job perspective, and explain briefly why you find them useful (use the suggested list of topics from Question 3 as guidance and add topics as needed).

NOTE TO TRAINERS/FACILITATORS: Participants should be given a copy of Question 3 (Stage 1 Questionnaire) to answer this question.

Topic 1: ______________________________

Why useful?______________________________

____

____

____

Topic 2: ______________________________

Why useful?______________________________

____

____

____

Topic 3: ______________________________

Why useful?______________________________

____

____

____

Question 4:

Are you considering sharing the experience/learning from this training with others? Y / N ______

If yes, please indicate how you may do that (e.g. post-visit briefing workshop/ seminar, dissemination of training report) and with whom.

How: ______________________________

____

____

Why whom: ______________________________

____

____

Stage 3: Have you made use of the training course experience in your job?

To be completed four to six months after the training course

Question 1:
Based on your work experience **after the training course**, please rate the extent to which the experience/learning from the training on the three topics listed under Question 3 (Stage 2 Questionnaire) has become useful to you.
NOTE TO TRAINERS/FACILITATORS: responses from Stage 2 Questionnaire will have to be sent to participants.

Please use a scale from 1 to 5 (1= Not at all useful, 2= Useful to little extent, 3= Useful to some extent, 4= Useful to a large extent, 5= Extremely useful). If you have been making use of the new experience/learning, please also briefly explain how.

Score (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

Topic 1: ______________________________

How? ______________________________

Topic 2: ______________________________

How? ______________________________

Topic 3: ______________________________

How? ______________________________

Question 2:
Is there any other experience/learning from the training (not listed under Question 1 above) that has become particularly useful to you in your job?

Y / N ______

If yes, please list these topics in the table below and explain briefly how you are making use of this experience/learning.

Topic 4: ______________________________

How? ______________________________

____

____

Topic 5: ______________________________

How? ______________________________

____

____

Question 3:
For each of the topics listed under Question 1 and Question 2 above, please indicate whether the following factors have been **limiting** or **supportive** of your ability to apply the acquired experience/learning on the job?

Please use a scale from 1 to 5 (1= Very limiting, 2= Limiting to some extent, 3= Neither supportive nor limiting 4= Supportive to some extent, 5= Very supportive).

	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3	Topic 4	Topic 5
1. Manager(s):	_______	_______	_______	_______	_______
Comment:______________________________					
2. Colleagues:	_______	_______	_______	_______	_______
Comment:______________________________					
3. Availability of equipment:	_______	______	_______	_______	_______
Comment:______________________________					
4. Access to advice/input from others:	_______	_______	_______	_______	_______
Comment:______________________________					
5. Specific job mandate/description:	_______	_______	_______	_______	_______
Comment:______________________________					
6. Other:	_______	_______	_______	_______	_______
Comment:______________________________					

Question 4:
Have you been sharing the experience/learning from the training with others?

Y / N ______

If yes, please indicate how you may do that (e.g. post-visit briefing workshop/ seminar, dissemination of training report) and with whom.

How: ______________________________

____

Why whom: ______________________________

____

TOOL 7N GUIDANCE SHEET – PROCESS EVALUATION

WHAT? This guidance sheet describes the importance of process evaluation. It should be read in conjunction with the "Checklist for quality assurance" (Tool 8c in the Planning and Coordinating Toolbox).

WHO? Coordinators and managers of learning initiatives with the help of instructional design experts, where feasible

WHEN? At the end of the initiative or while the initiative is ongoing

Process evaluations look at the quality of learning management and inputs. These may include: quality of needs assessment; quality of lectures; quality of learning materials; appropriateness of participant selection strategies/participant mix; appropriateness of course length/content; appropriateness of mix among lectures, discussions and activities; and quality and adequacy of follow-up support.

Process evaluation provides information on the quality of learning cycle management. It allows facilitators/trainers to determine what needs to change in their learning plans and delivery so that present or future sessions or programmes will be most effective for participants. Process evaluations are a valuable source of information for improving the quality and results of learning initiatives.

The "Checklist for quality assurance", contained in the Planning and Coordinating Toolbox (Tool 8c), can help you evaluate the learning management cycle process.

Please note that the checklist is intended for your own learning because it can help you identify whether your initiative was carried out in compliance with good standards of learning cycle management; it should not be distributed to participants. Also, it is indicative only. Some items may not be applicable to all types of learning initiatives, and may depend on factors like the scope of the programme, available resources, etc.

The checklist has been designed in four main sections, but you may modify it as appropriate.

TOOL 70 EVALUATING THE QUALITY OF FACILITATION[70]

WHAT? This tool presents a form that is suitable for assessing the quality of facilitation in a face-to-face learning initiative. It asks participants to put themselves in the position of the facilitator. It is particularly indicated for Training of Trainers programmes to encourage future trainers to begin to plan how they would present the training programme to others.

WHO? Participants

WHEN? At the end of the initiative/workshop

Instructions

Allow 20 to 30 minutes to complete

1. Distribute the form below to each person. Then, divide the participants into groups of three to four and ask them to discuss each point on the form.
2. During this exchange, participants can begin to record their answers on their form. Participants do not have to agree. The purpose of the group discussion is to encourage consultation and sharing of ideas to assist them in formulating their own answers.
3. Invite individuals to share some of their thoughts with the entire class. This should not be a requirement. Some members may be reluctant to share their thoughts openly.
4. At the end of the session, the facilitator should collect all of the forms. These can be used to improve the next presentation of the materials. Copy them and return them to the participants.

Note: It is important for the facilitators to refrain from defending themselves if criticized. Be very open to learning from the participants about trainer performance.

A number of days have been spent in this training course. You have a unique perspective to give on the training. What would you have done differently? Take sufficient time to provide complete answers to the questions below.

[70] *Adapted from Market-oriented farm management for trainers of extension workers materials, Module 7, 2007 (AGPS)*

What I would do differently if I were the facilitator:

Style of presentation

Relationship with participants

Use of visuals

Use of games and demonstrations

Providing feedback

Management of venue, accommodation, meals

Other

TOOL 7P EVALUATING THE QUALITY OF THE COACHING PROCESS[71]

WHAT? This tool presents a form to identify the strengths and areas in need of improvement of your technical coach.

WHO? The learner

WHEN? After coaching is completed

Name of learner: [71]

Name of coach:

Date: ________________________________

Please use the following ranking system to evaluate your coach:

1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Agree 4 = Strongly agree N/A = Not applicable

[71] *Adapted from WFP learning resource webpage* *http://learning.vam.wfp.org/pages/dpg/pBookContent.asp?c=chap9&p=94*

COACHING PROCESS	CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER
My coach conducted a thorough and detailed analysis of my learning needs.	1 2 3 4 N/A
My coach helped me identify learning or performance objectives that were realistic.	1 2 3 4 N/A
My coach displayed expertise in consultations with my superiors on my plans and progress.	1 2 3 4 N/A
My coach provided excellent, clear and productive feedback to me.	1 2 3 4 N/A
My coach displayed great sensitivity in the way s/he provided feedback to me.	1 2 3 4 N/A
My coach helped me identify a range of solutions to the problems or challenges I confronted.	1 2 3 4 N/A
My coach's technical guidance helped my organization greatly improve our methodological approach.	1 2 3 4 N/A
My coach's technical review and guidance greatly improved my work effectiveness.	1 2 3 4 N/A
I am generally satisfied with the way in which the coaching session was handled.	1 2 3 4 N/A
I generally agree with the coach's evaluation of my skills.	1 2 3 4 N/A

Additional comments you would like to make about this coaching experience:

PLAN, MANAGE AND COORDINATE

	TOOLS	RELEVANCE	PAGE	PRINT
8A	WRITING A CONCEPT NOTE	CORE	258	
8B	PLANNING CHECKLIST	CORE	261	
8C	CHECKLIST FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE	CORE	265	
8D	CHECKLIST FOR EVENT PREPARATION	RECOMMENDED	269	

References and resources

> Practical guidance for planning short courses – Cap-Net
  http://www.cap-net.org/sites/cap-net.org/files/Planning%20short%20courses.doc

TOOL 8A WRITING A CONCEPT NOTE[72] FOR THE LEARNING INITIATIVE

WHAT: This tool provides a template for describing key components of the intended learning initiative in order to gain buy-in and support from major internal/external stakeholders.

WHO: Coordinators and managers of learning initiatives

WHEN: After the learning needs assessment is done and broad learning goals have been established for the initiative

Instructions

The concept note should be as short as possible (generally not more than three to four pages, although larger programmes may warrant slightly longer notes). Below are the eight recommended ingredients for a concept note.

1. **Capacity gaps to learning**
   - Provide a brief description of the capacity issue that will be addressed through the learning initiative(s) and the relevance of the initiative to FAO's and Member Countries' global goals and MDGs.
   - Describe how the learning initiative will address the capacity issue and indicate what types of complementary capacity support will be needed to address factors other than knowledge and skill improvements that cannot be addressed by learning. Ensure that you consider both the level of organization and the enabling environment.
   - Describe the target audience for the learning initiative.

[72] *Adapted from World Bank Institute, Staff Development Group, with permission*

2. **Learning objectives**
   > Describe key findings from the learning needs assessment.
   > Indicate broad learning goals for the initiative.
   Example: "The goal of the programme is to enhance the ability of smallholders to understand the benefits of microcredit."

3. **Results and results indicators**
   > Results indicators should address the following questions in behavioural terms:
      > What results will be achieved through the learning initiative?
      > How will you know that you have achieved these results?
      > What will you do to collect information demonstrating these results?
   Example: "As a result of the learning programme, it is expected that participants will apply their knowledge of microcredit to improve the effectiveness of community-driven development projects handled by their country office. Within six months of the microcredit workshop, participants will submit an example of a community-driven development project/activity in which their application of knowledge about microcredit has had a demonstrable positive impact on the effectiveness of the project/activity."

4. **Design, delivery mode and follow-up plan**
   > Describe the delivery mode to be used in the learning initiative (e.g. workshop, self-paced learning); the main learning/didactic approach(es) (e.g., active learning, panel, lecture, simulations); the measures that will be adopted to follow up with learners to assist in the transfer of learning; and the estimated number of participants.

5. **Relationship to other learning initiatives**
   > Describe the related learning initiatives, if any.
   > Describe the steps you took to promote collaboration and synergies with those initiatives.

6. **Quality assurance**
   > Describe the mechanisms you will use to ensure the quality of the learning initiative.
   Example: "Before implementation, the learning design and workshop materials will be piloted and its outcomes reviewed by a manager, content expert from a country office, at least two sample learners and/or one learning expert."

7. **Required resources and sources of funding**
   > Provide a summary of the anticipated resources required for the design, development and implementation of the learning initiative. This may include team composition, staffing, peer reviewers, management oversight, estimated cost for development, delivery, post-activity follow-up and evaluation that your team plans to conduct.
   > Indicate the sources of funding.

8. **Sustainability**
   > Describe whether the initiative will be repeated in the current format and, if so, whether plans have been made to make it sustainable.
   Example: "The face-to-face workshop will be transformed into self-paced e-learning after the initial pilot testing."
   > Describe how the initiative will be institutionalized and integrated in countries' local contexts.
   Example: "TOT courses will be developed and offered so that the learning solution will continue to be provided locally by national trainers."

9. **Timetables and delivery schedule with key milestones**
   > Include key milestones in regard to development start date, schedule, pilot, rollout, follow-up, evaluation and so forth.

TOOL 8B PLANNING CHECKLIST

WHAT: This tool provides a checklist for planning the learning initiative.

WHO: Coordinators and managers of the learning initiative

WHEN: During the initiative

PLANNING CHECKLIST	DECISION TAKEN	DISCUSSION STILL REQUIRED	N/A
ASSESS THE CONTEXT: IS IT A LEARNING ISSUE?			
1. Have adequate resources been allocated for an organizational context assessment, and has such an assessment been built into the project planning?			
2. Has the assessment been planned with the maximum engagement and ownership of the concerned individuals?			
3. Is the planned context analysis likely to give a full picture of capacity assets and constraints to the achievement of defined goals?			
4. Based on data gathered in the context analysis, is a learning initiative appropriate to address the identified capacity issues?			
5. Does any type of support need to be planned to complement the learning initiative? What type of support?			
6. What synergies need to be created or other provisions made to ensure that such complementary support is provided?			

PLANNING CHECKLIST	DECISION TAKEN	DISCUSSION STILL REQUIRED	N/A
STRATEGICALLY IDENTIFY THE TARGET AUDIENCE			
1. Has participant identification started with the appropriate people involved?			
2. What is the optimal strategy for participant selection given the focus of the initiative? Competitive? Targeted? Widespread?			
3. Have national and local partners been involved in setting the profile for participants and are respective roles and expectations in the selection process clear?			
4. Has an appropriate application form and/or an invitation been prepared and shared with relevant actors in Member Countries? Do such documents contain an appropriate description of the candidate's profile and requirements, including gender?			
5. Have pre-course work assignments been considered to screen the motivation of prospective participants as part of the selection process? If not, why not?			
6. Who will communicate with prospective participants, how (e.g. writing, orally) and when?			
ASSESS LEARNING NEEDS			
1. Have adequate resources and time been allocated for the LNA?			
2. Does the LNA plan include direct consultation with target participants and their organizations?			
3. What resources (e.g. consultants, partners) are best placed to help carry out the LNA, and are these available locally?			
4. Have appropriate institutional partners been identified? Have requirements for the development of partners' capacities been considered?			
5. What information should be included in the concept note, with whom should it be shared (internally and externally) and for what purpose (e.g. fundraising, collaboration, synergies)?			

PLANNING CHECKLIST	DECISION TAKEN	DISCUSSION STILL REQUIRED	N/A
DESIGN CONTENT AND SELECT DELIVERY MODES			
1. Have S.M.A.R.T. learning objectives been defined?			
2. Has the optimal delivery mode been identified and have the learners' context and sustainability considerations been taken into account in the decision?			
3. Has the support of a professional Instructional Designer been considered in designing the initiative?			
4. Has a task analysis been carried out to help identify/prioritize content that is relevant to the needs of learners?			
5. Has a design outline been developed and consensus created around it?			
6. Has peer review and/or piloting of the initiative been arranged, and has integration of lessons learned been planned?			
7. Who will deliver the initiative, when and where? Have Letters of Agreement or contracts been stipulated and have all efforts been made to involve national/local resources?			
8. Has a follow-up plan been developed? What provisions can and should be made for follow-up support? Have adequate resources been allocated into current or future projects?			
9. What types of evaluation will be done to assess achievement of the objectives of the initiative? Have adequate resources been allocated?			
DELIVER THE LEARNING SOLUTION			
1. When identifying or appointing the facilitator(s), have appropriate skills for facilitating on-the-job and experiential learning been considered?			
2. When identifying or appointing the facilitator(s), have appropriate skills for facilitating formal face-to-face learning initiatives been considered?			
3. When identifying or appointing the tutors/ facilitator(s), have appropriate skills for facilitating online collaborative learning been considered?			
4. Have gender and cultural aspects been considered in selecting the facilitating team and in organizing the initiative?			
5. Have all opportunities been sought to use local resources for the initiative?			

PLANNING CHECKLIST	DECISION TAKEN	DISCUSSION STILL REQUIRED	N/A
PROVIDE FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT			
1. Is the follow-up plan being used as a reference for deciding the types of follow-up measures to put in place? Are these measures cost-effective?			
2. Are follow-up measures included in the relevant work plans for the learning initiative and have resources and time been committed?			
3. If local partners take on the initiative and intend to upscale it in the future, what sort of support are they likely to need?			
4. Do national partners need institutional support to uptake changes brought about by the learning initiative in their own context?			
5. Have synergies been created with relevant actors within and outside FAO to ensure that the appropriate support is provided?			
EVALUATE LEARNING INITIATIVES			
1. Is the evaluation plan confirmed and have resources been budgeted, identified or committed for it?			
2. Does the evaluation plan include both process and Level 1-3 results evaluation?			
3. Have adequate mechanisms been developed (e.g. questionnaires, surveys, knowledge test), based on the evaluation plan and available good practices?			
4. Who will carry out the evaluation and have specialized resources been sought where necessary?			
5. Who has an interest in being informed about the result of the evaluation? Who has to be informed?			
6. How are evaluation results integrated in future planning?			

TOOL 8C CHECKLIST FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE

WHAT: This tool provides a checklist to assure the quality of your learning initiative.

WHO: Coordinators and managers of the learning initiative, Instructional Designers

WHEN: During the initiative or after the initiative is completed

1. Context assessment, selection of target audience and learning needs assessment (Steps 1 – 3)

QUESTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS	YES	NEEDS MORE WORK	NOT FEASIBLE/ RELEVANT	NOTES AND FOLLOW-UP
Was an adequate context assessment done to determine whether learning can address the capacity issue?				
Were areas of needed complementary support identified, either at the organizational or enabling environment level?				
Was the appropriate target audience defined jointly with national partners?				
Were participants or their superiors consulted directly on learning needs?				
Did the learning needs assessment generate sufficiently in-depth information to guide formulation of learning goals and content?				
Were data collection methods sufficient or would others have been useful (e.g. a focus group, a questionnaire)?				
Were gender and culture considered when conducting interviews/surveys?				
Did the learning needs assessment generate adequate information on the present level of participants' knowledge/skills?				
Did the learning needs assessment generate adequate information on participants' skill gaps affecting the achievement of organizational/ development goals?				

2. Design and develop content, select delivery mode (Step 4)

QUESTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS	YES	NEEDS MORE WORK	NOT FEASIBLE/ NOT RELEVANT	NOTES AND FOLLOW-UP
Were learning objectives sufficiently specific, measurable and action-oriented?				
Was the course design aligned with and appropriate for achievement of the stated objectives?				
Were adult learning principles considered when designing and developing the initiative?				
Were learners' prior knowledge, skills and attitudes taken into account when designing the initiative, and were devices included to help learners tie what they will be learning to such prior knowledge?				
Was the learners' context /work setting considered in the way the initiative was designed?				
Was the delivery mode appropriate to the contents and the context in which learners operate?				
Was there adequate input from content experts?				
Was a review and/or pilot initiative conducted with a good representation of stakeholders?				
Was the time allotted for each portion of the learning initiative appropriate?				
Was the level of content appropriate for participants?				
Were learning modules/sessions logically and appropriately sequenced?				
Did content areas have sufficient examples, exercises and case studies to reinforce practise?				

3. Deliver the learning initiative (Step 5)

QUESTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS	YES	NEEDS MORE WORK	NOT FEASIBLE/ NOT RELEVANT	NOTES AND FOLLOW-UP
Was there adequate time/opportunity for group activity, individual exercises, questions and practise?				
Were the presence, style and overall effectiveness of trainers, technical coaches and facilitators adequate?				
Were trainers, technical coaches and facilitators sufficiently knowledgeable in their field of instruction?				
Was the participant mix and size appropriate for the goals of the initiative?				
Were materials provided sufficient, and sufficiently clear and helpful?				
Were the facilities clean, comfortable and free of distraction?				
Were participants treated with respect by facilitators, technical coaches and trainers?				
Were participants given adequate opportunities to share and discuss their own experience?				
Did trainers, technical coaches or facilitators make constructive comments on learners' work and specify the ways in which they could improve?				
Did trainers and facilitators ensure inclusion and engagement of all participants in the group?				
Did trainers, facilitators and technical coaches encourage learners to relate what they are learning to their daily lives/work, so that it has some relevance and meaning for them?				
Did trainers and facilitators provide a variety of media where possible, so that learners can benefit from both visual and written material?				

4. Follow-up and evaluation (Steps 6 – 7)

QUESTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS	YES	NEEDS MORE WORK	NOT FEASIBLE/ NOT RELEVANT	NOTES AND FOLLOW-UP
Were learners provided adequate follow-up support to ensure that they could apply what they learned?				
Were arrangements made for a local/ regional provider to continue providing the learning initiative?				
Did the local/regional training provider receive adequate capacity support to enable it to sustain the initiative?				
Were Internet forums, list serves or other support platforms established to enable continuing interaction, knowledge exchange and peer support among participants, and are participants active in these support platforms?				
Does the program evaluation plan foresee evaluation of the learning processes and participants' satisfaction (Level 1), including the quality of individual facilitators/trainers and materials?				
Does the program evaluation plan foresee evaluation of participants' acquisition of new knowledge/skills (Level 2)?				
Does the program evaluation plan foresee evaluation of participant behavioural change and use of learning (Level 3)?				

TOOL 8D CHECKLIST FOR EVENT PREPARATION

WHAT: This tool provides a checklist for the preparation of face-to-face events. It may need to be adapted for other types of initiatives.

WHO: Trainers, facilitators, coordinators and/or managers of learning initiatives

WHEN: During the design phase

WHEN	ACTIVITY	COMPLETED (√)
BEFORE THE WORKSHOP		
3 months	Develop training concept note with related budget (See a suggested format for a budget at the end of the checklist.)	
2-3 months	Identify workshop venue and location, and begin negotiations for accommodation and transport package (See considerations for selecting the venue at the end of the checklist.)	
1-2 months	Communicate with target groups: finalize participant list and start discussing the agenda.	
	Ensure organizations and line/managers of selected participants are informed and well on-board.	
	Assist participants with travel clearance process and with visa application, if required.	
	Pouch required documents and material to workshop location.	
2 weeks	Finalize workshop material to be distributed to participants.	

WHEN	ACTIVITY	COMPLETED (√)
BEFORE THE WORKSHOP		
1-2 days	Arrive in the location and check: > workshop facilities and equipment; and > transport, accommodation and eating arrangements.	
	Review the workshop preparation checklist and course agenda with all the people involved in running the course.	
	Define the roles and responsibilities of the course organizers, including responsibility for: > liaising with hotel staff: providing hotel managers with the workshop agenda, including break and lunch times; arranging the distribution of participants' welcome packs; and clarifying where breaks and lunches will be held – if possible, arrange for flexible buffet lunches, to allow learners to work during lunch breaks; > participants' financial and travel issues: issuing daily subsistence allowances (DSAs); confirming air tickets, etc.; and ensuring that hotel staff and participants understand what is – and what is not – included in the workshop package; > equipment in the workshop venue: ensuring it is secure after hours.	
	Ensure with hotel managers that participants will be picked up from the airport, where possible.	
1 day	Decide who will welcome the participants at the start of the workshop.	
	Meet all session presenters and/or resource people in advance to ensure they know the start and end times for their sessions. Clarify the materials that presenters and resource people need, and what they will bring themselves.	
	Decide on note-taking: who will take notes? How it will be done?	
	Ensure that the venue's Internet connection functions. If Internet access is not available in the venue, they should identify inexpensive sources for Internet access for participants during the course.	
	Test all the equipment to be used during the course. Ensure that computers are compatible with the data projector, and load all the slides to be used on to the computers.	
	Photocopy required documentation for participants, including evaluation forms.	
	Check that breakout rooms are available when needed, and that tables and chairs are properly arranged in the rooms.	
	Find out where the venue's and other's keys are kept after hours.	
	Identify a few affordable restaurants within easy reach of the accommodations so that participants can make their own dinner arrangements.	

WHEN	ACTIVITY	COMPLETED (√)
DURING THE WORKSHOP		
Beginning	Circulate a list of participants with their addresses, phone and e-mail details and ask them to edit their entries. The list should be revised and distributed at the close of the workshop.	
Middle	Provide participants with copies of all the learning event presentations or prepare a workshop CD to distribute at the end of the workshop. The CD could contain copies of presentations, handouts, photos from the workshop, the participant list and other materials. Learners can then reproduce materials for further in-country learning once they return to their offices.	
	Be available for participants who want to discuss issues at the end of or in between sessions.	
End	Provide contact points for the training team and indicate own availability for further follow-up questions or advice.	
	Inform participants about additional resources on the topic, for example, by providing Web links or contacts for other resource organizations.	
	Inform participants of next steps (e.g. follow-up).	
AFTER THE WORKSHOP		
1 day	Review evaluation or feedback sheets returned by participants.	
	Arrange for debriefings or after-action review with the training team and organizers to review strong and weak points of the workshop.	
	Provide honest feedback to the venue staff coordinator for future events.	

Budget[73]

The following format can be useful for setting the budget for the event.

NO.	PARTICIPANTS	COUNTRY	TICKET	DSA + TERMINALS

[73] *Adapted from: Planning Short Courses*
Cap-Net, http://www.cap-net.org/sites/cap-net.org/files/Planning%20short%20courses.doc

DESCRIPTION	BUDGETED		ACTUAL	
	LOCAL CURRENCY	USD	LOCAL CURRENCY	USD
Air transport costs				
Other transport costs				
DSAs	Total air ticket	Total DSAs		
Facilitators				
Venue				
Equipment and material				
Conference room and break-out rooms				
Lunch/coffee breaks				
TOTAL				

Choose a host and venue[74]

When facilities are not available in-house or at a 'host partner' institution, external facilities (e.g. hotels, conference centres) are often used. Both options have advantages and disadvantages:

	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
INTERNAL FACILITIES	> inexpensive > exposure of the partner's institution > resource people (internal or from host partner) are ready and available as appropriate	> location may not always be convenient > lodging and food facilities may not be adequate > IT facilities may not be appropriate > bureaucratic administrative procedures
EXTERNAL FACILITIES	> participants stay together > away from distractions > no transportation between hotel and venue required > audio-visual facilities may be more adequate > location may be more convenient	> less 'ownership' of the course > interference/noise of other events in the same location

[74] *Ibidem*

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