

CHAPTER TWO

The basics of training

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What is training?

Training is a process which seeks to educate and inform those who participate. To do this effectively, communication is the key. Making the training inter-active, varied, fun but still businesslike helps to keep the participants alert, enthused, and alive to what is being taught and/or discussed.

Training is an interactive process of teaching, discussing and doing. All three aspects are central to effective training and in the context of training those who work in the media, the “doing” is critical to help journalists, editors, photographers and media managers translate new information and new worldviews into the day-to-day deadline and active pace of journalism.

Anyone or any organization involved in any form of training for the media must ensure that the training includes practical exercises. These should not only be exercises to gauge attitudes and measure understanding of key concepts, but exercises which can simulate in some fashion the actual work that journalists do – writing, reporting, editing, interviewing, designing and working with images.

Those who engage in training those in the media must have knowledge and skills on how the media works and a basic understanding of the principles of journalism.



Training tips

- **Read widely** and have a clear understanding of the area being taught – this is extremely important in areas like gender, HIV/AIDS and rights. A good understanding of all three areas and how they interlink is key to helping the target audience to grasp the concepts and issues, and to gain new insights that can be translated into their own work.
- **Do not discount what you know, live, hear and see all around you each and every day** – this grounds the training in a reality that cannot be dismissed as “lofty ideals”, or “talk only”. In addition to the secondary literature, the lived experience of people provides wonderful material for illustrating points and concepts during a training programme.
- **Know your audience:** It is important to have some understanding of the background of the people who will be trained. The techniques and material used for college students will not be the same used for adult learners with no media experience or for journalists/editors who work in the media.
- **Be prepared:** Before setting foot into the training room, the trainer/facilitator should prepare some basic outline of the course and the material and exercises to be covered in the training. This prior preparation helps one to approach the training competently and not give the impression of “talking off the top of your head.”
- **Be flexible:** While it is good to be prepared and have a map of where the training will go during the time allotted, it is also important to be ready to switch gears and to concentrate on the material according to the trainees’ needs. Listen attentively throughout the training to the various issues, concerns, knowledge gaps they share. In this way the trainer/facilitator can constantly add new information to meet these concerns as the training progresses.
- **Have clear objectives (outcomes):** During the preparatory process, set out clear objectives for the training. These objectives should be shared during the planning process with the audience (primary and secondary) and discussed again during the first day of the training when discussing the participants’ expectations. It is important to set achievable objectives, especially within the time-span allowed for the training. Be realistic about not changing the world or making the participants experts right off the bat. Training is a process and within a set time period, there are some measurable goals that can be achieved.
- **Building blocks:** Think of the toys – building blocks or puzzles – and keep this image in mind when designing a training programme. You cannot send someone out on the first day to write a story until you’ve taught the basics of reporting. You cannot ask someone to solve a square root problem in Maths until you’ve taught basic arithmetic and algebra. The same applies to gender, HIV/AIDS and rights training – one must think of a course design whereby the areas link and fit together, building on each other until the end of the training is reached.

- **Assessment and evaluation:** This should always be built into training, even within formal institutions (other than just by way of exams), to measure the effectiveness of what you set out to do with the participants. Training is a learning experience not just for the participants, but for the facilitator and the evaluation helps you to identify areas of strengths, weaknesses, and will prompt ideas for future training.

Training methodology

The manual presents an array of topics and exercises to foster a participatory approach to the training sessions. A basic assumption of the manual's methodology is that the primary target audience, as listed earlier, will be adult learners – journalists and information and communications officers who are employed. The information imparted and the activities used throughout this manual are to help those in the training do the work of communicating HIV/AIDS better.

The participants will have varying degrees of knowledge and understanding of gender and HIV/AIDS, and some of this knowledge may be informed by personal experiences that should be drawn upon and discussed within the context of the training.

Box one: Adult learners

- The needs and interest of adult learners are the ideal starting-points and benchmarks for organising and delivering training.
- Adults view training in terms of its relation to their lives and work.
- Experience is the richest source of adult learning. So the most effective core methodology for adult learning programmes is participative: learners take part in a planned series of experiences, analyse them and relate them to their own life and work situations.
- Trainers/Facilitators need to be partners with their learners in a process of questioning, analysing and decision-making. Trainers of adults need to move away from transmitting knowledge to learners and then judging their conformity to it.
- Age and experience develop even apparently similar adult learners in very different ways. Adult learning programmes need to have sufficient flexibility to accommodate different learning styles.

Source: Malcolm Knowles, quoted in Chapter Two "Gender in Media Training – a Southern African Tool Kit" (2002) by Gwen Ansell, Executive Director of the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism.

Facilitator's role

The facilitator's primary role is to set up a context in which learning can take place.

The facilitator does not have to be a fountain of all knowledge. The handouts and the information throughout the chapters provide the facilitator with a good stock of key information needed to help guide the participatory learning process.

Given the subject area of this manual, the methodology used should include a strong emphasis on both the conceptual (understanding the key issues) and the personal contexts. HIV/AIDS affects us all. It is not an issue of the "infected" alone, because of the far-reaching impact of the pandemic on the entire social fabric of a society. The sharing of individual experiences and personal stories can greatly enrich the training process and help communicators to find ways to incorporate the training into their own work experience and into their lives.

When using this manual, the facilitator should keep the following key points on effective learning uppermost in his or her mind:

Learning is most effective when:

- It respects the participants;
- It starts from people's needs and existing knowledge;
- It is active and composed of varied activities;
- It has clear goals understood by both participants and trainers; and
- More time is spent on participant activity than on trainer talk.

(Gender in Media Training – A Southern African Tool Kit: 2002)

Getting started

On the first day of the training, the trainer/facilitator may use a number of ice-breakers/energizers he or she is familiar with to start the day.

Some musts that should be accomplished before the trainer/facilitator moves into topical areas are the following:

- Introduce yourself, the organization you represent and provide the participants with some background on “why this training?” (Pointers for this can be drawn from “*Why this manual*” in Chapter One.)
- Ask the participants to first introduce themselves by giving their names, name of organization they work for and their country of origin, if the group is comprised of people from several countries. Ask for this information only on “first” introductions.

Trainees expectations

Exercise one

Give each trainee a card and a marker and ask them to write one expectation they have of the training. Gather the expectations and place them on a wall, or a flip chart. Read aloud each expectation.



Tips for trainers: At the end of the exercise, the trainer should note first the expectations which will be met during the training, and then note those expectations which may not be met during the training, and indicate that perhaps these are issues that can be developed further in follow-up programmes. At the end of the training, the trainer should assess which expectations have been met.

Exercise two

Hand out the case study, “A House of Hope”, in **Handout one** to the participants. In small groups, ask them to read the case study and then identify what they think are the key issues emerging from the case study. They should also be asked to think about how the issues that they identify have an impact on their work and on how HIV/AIDS messages are communicated.



Tips for trainers: This is a lengthy article and you must allocate enough time for the participants to read and discuss it. Some of the issues that should emerge will include:

- The age of women infected in Botswana – it represents the reproductive age group of women worldwide and raises issues of women's vulnerability to the infection and their reproductive health rights.
- The article emphasizes a multi-sectoral approach – this is significant for how information and communications campaigns on HIV/AIDS are constructed and implemented. Narrowly targeted campaigns have tended to have little impact on behaviour change. Media articles that do not report on HIV/AIDS in a context that analyses the gender, social and other factors that fuel the epidemic continue to misinform, build little awareness and sensationalize the issue.
- HIV/AIDS has no boundaries – this is illustrated by the quote by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the opening paragraph to this introduction.
- The involvement of men – this is a key and missing area in not only communications and information campaigns and messages, but also in media articles.
- The language and tone of the story is one of hope, people taking control; this is not the norm of HIV/AIDS reporting.
- The quote about “maintaining the momentum” is an ongoing challenge – this is a pointer for those who cry “media fatigue on HIV/AIDS coverage” as well as to those who cannot find new angles or insights.

handout one

Case study: A house of hope in Botswana

By Christina Stucky

Palapye, Botswana: The high-pitched sounds of toddlers singing the Botswana national anthem emanate from behind a closed door covered with children's drawings. These cheerful voices contrast with the sound of serious matters being discussed by the adults next door, but the discussion will affect their lives, their futures. The grown-ups are community leaders in Palapye, a small town a few hours' drive from the capital Gaborone. The topic is how the district is handling the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

The 50-odd children are orphans who spend their days at the House of Hope. Some have lost their parents to AIDS-related illnesses, some may even be HIV-positive, though none have been tested. Community leaders in Serowe/Palapye district are responding to the growing need to care for children orphaned by AIDS.

As part of an initiative of the Serowe/Palapye Multi-Sectoral AIDS Committee, the House of Hope was opened in November 1999, to deal with the after-effects of AIDS, according to Klass Motshidisi, the volunteer chairman of the House of Hope. This response is one of the many examples across Botswana of people addressing the HIV/AIDS pandemic in their own backyards – with the assistance of the Botswana Government and organisations like the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Botswana's 36 percent HIV prevalence rate is the highest in the southern African region. According to UNDP's Human Development Report 2001, 150,000 women aged 15 to 49 are HIV positive. Given a population of only 1.6 million, these figures indicate that few families remain unaffected by HIV/AIDS in Botswana.

Many sectors – one aim

But with the assistance of UNDP, Botswana is proving that a “multi-sectoral approach” is perhaps the most effective answer to fighting the spread of AIDS and dealing with its consequences.

“AIDS affects all people, all genders, ages, ethnicities in all regions. In a sense, it's a comprehensive epidemic. To be able to respond effectively, one needs to mobilise effectively,” says Macharia Kamau, UNDP Resident Representative in Botswana. “A multi-sectoral response just makes good sense. It's the right thing to do.”

HIV/AIDS can no longer be dealt with simply as a disease under the auspices of a health ministry. Every sector, both private and public, is affected. “The spread of AIDS is also about what is going on in people's communities, homes and bedrooms,” says Kamau.

The catalyst for Botswana's comprehensive response, and a key element in the government's successful approach to HIV/AIDS, came straight from the top, from President Festus G. Mogae. He chairs every meeting of the National AIDS Council, which includes all government departments and ministries, and the National AIDS Coordinating Agency (NACA), which monitors the government's HIV/AIDS programme.



UNDP supported the launch of NACA a year ago and helped to build its capacity to fulfill its role. Approximately 25 agencies and community groups report to NACA, including one designed to involve men in the effort.

In addition, UNDP has helped Botswana finance studies on the impact of HIV/AIDS, leading to more effective responses. The goal is to mainstream HIV/AIDS in all ministerial programmes, dealing with the impact of AIDS on their own staff, as well as on their clients.

While a national response is crucial, the involvement of local authorities, districts and chieftaincies is vital to maintaining the campaign's momentum.

The linchpin of the local response are multi-sectoral AIDS committees, which pull together key stakeholders at a district level – from mayors to school teachers, nurses to youth leaders, local chiefs to businesswomen.

In districts like Serowe/Palapye, two United Nations Volunteers, Jean-Pierre Tshamala, a Congolese, and David Saliadie, from Botswana, are working with district managers.

Local HIV/AIDS committees are the conduit by which national directives reach the grassroots, Kamau notes. UNDP supports the process vigorously and works to strengthen the response of non-governmental sectors.

Still, such efforts mean little unless individuals become involved. Tshamala says that many Batswana are still in denial about AIDS. Saliadie adds that people living with AIDS are now being encouraged to speak openly in the community about their status.

Motshidisi and his colleagues at the House of Hope are acquiring an entirely new vocabulary. Sitting in a slightly cramped room at the House of Hope, elderly men like Motshidisi speak of “anti-retrovirals” as if talking about the weather.

A school teacher, paid by the House of Hope, is busy next door teaching the children songs and expanding their vocabulary. A nurse, seconded from the government, conducts regular check-ups of the children and assists with a fledgling home-based care programme. A social worker regularly assesses children at the House of Hope on a volunteer basis.

More volunteers come in and out of the House of Hope, depending on its needs. For example, when the garden or its poultry are in need of assistance, the home draws help from the district's agricultural department.

“The biggest success by far has been getting the Botswana Government to adopt in an effective, committed and political way the multi-sectoral response,” says Kamau.

Though maintaining momentum is an ongoing challenge, the volunteers at the House of Hope are doing a great deal to ensure that the “multi-sectoral approach to HIV/AIDS” is translated into reality for thousands of people living with AIDS in Botswana.

(“CHOICES”, December 2001, published by the Communications Office, UNDP New York)