

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 2014.

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

<http://intranet.fao.org/departments/idwgcd/>

Thank you,
FAO Capacity Development Team

Reprint: September 2013

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this information product do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) concerning the legal or development status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The mention of specific companies or products of manufacturers, whether or not these have been patented, does not imply that these have been endorsed or recommended by FAO in preference to others of a similar nature that are not mentioned.

The views expressed in this information product are those of the author(s)
and do not necessarily reflect the view or policies of FAO

© FAO, 2011

FAO encourages the use, reproduction and dissemination of material in this information product. Except where otherwise indicated, material may be copied, downloaded and printed for private study, research and teaching purposes, or for use in non-commercial products or services, provided that appropriate acknowledgement of FAO as the source and copyright holder is given and that FAO's endorsement of users; views, products or services is not implied in any way.

All requests for translation and adaptation rights, and for resale and other commercial use rights should be made via www.fao.org/contact-us/licence-request or addressed to copyright@fao.org.

FAO information products are available on the FAO website (www.fao.org/publications) and can be purchased through publications-sales@fao.org.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview and objectives	8
Introduction	11
Step 1 - Assess the context: Is it a learning issue?	19
1.1 The importance of context	20
1.2 Analyze the context: is it a learning issue?	21
1.3 Identify complementary support	23
Key learning points	24
Planning checklist	25
Step 2 - Strategically identify the target audience	27
2.1 Strategies for identifying target audiences	28
2.2 Work with counterparts in Member Countries	30
Key learning points	32
Planning checklist	33
Step 3 - Assess learning needs	35
3.1 Define the approach for a Learning Needs Assessment	36
3.2 Undertake a Learning Needs Assessment	36
3.3 Identify local resources to support sustainability	38
3.4 Developing a concept note	42
Key learning points	43
Planning checklist	43
Step 4 - Design content and select delivery modes	45
4.1 Define learning objectives	46
4.2 Define delivery mode and learning method	48
4.3 Organize learning contents	55
4.4 Define Follow-up support	61
4.5 Define logistics for delivering face-to-face learning	62
Key learning points	62
Planning checklist	63
Step 5 - Deliver the learning solution	65
5.1 Identify roles for delivering learning initiatives	66
5.2 Ensure quality and coherence in delivering learning initiatives	69
Key learning points	69
Planning checklist	69
Step 6 - Provide follow-up support	71
6.1 Arrange Follow-up support	72
Key learning points	74
Planning checklist	75
Step 7 - Evaluate learning initiatives	77
7.1 Evaluation objectives	78
7.2 Customize approaches for results evaluation	79
7.3 Customize instruments for process evaluation	82
Key learning points	83
Planning checklist	83
Conclusions	85
Annex 1 - The international understanding	86
Annex 2 - Contents of Toolboxes	88
Glossary	99

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This Module was developed by Cecilia de Rosa, OEKC Capacity Development Officer with the support of Ms Aliza Inbal Belman, OEKC Consultant. The following people contributed to the Module: Astrid Agostini, Lorenzo G. Bellù, Sally Berman, Marco Boscolo, Rosana Frattini, Kevin Gallagher, Lavinia Gasperini, Beatrice Ghirardini, Gabriela Gold, Claudia Hiepe, Joe Hoper (UN-Habitat), Helga Josupeit, Fred Kafeero, David Kahan, Jamie Morrison, Andrew Nadeau, Patrick Otto, Jenny Pearson (Independent Consultant), Ana Peralta, John Preissing, Mike Robson, Mariagrazia Rocchigiani, Stephen Rudgard, William Settle, Susana Siar, Ilaria Sisto, Katrin Taylor, Sophie Treinen, Francoise Trine. Resources have been used and adapted, with permission, from the World Bank Group and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Global Learning Centre.

Special appreciation goes to Skiprock Creative for the visual design of the module.



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 Capacity Development Team, 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. MARCELA VILLARREAL
DIRECTOR, OPC

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

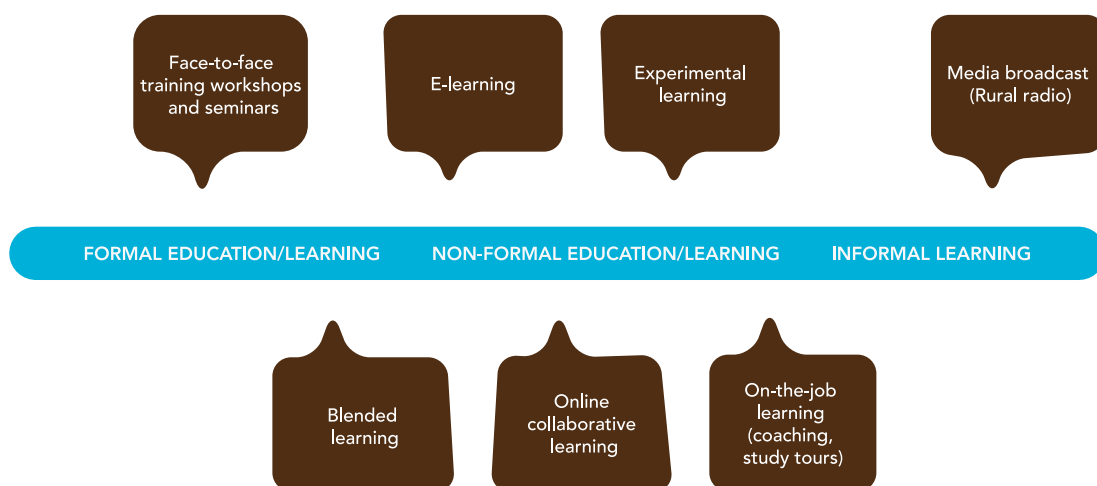
[Table 1] LM3 Personal Learning Paths

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 area² have suggested that one-off interventions are rarely successful in developing sustainable organizational or institutional capacity.

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

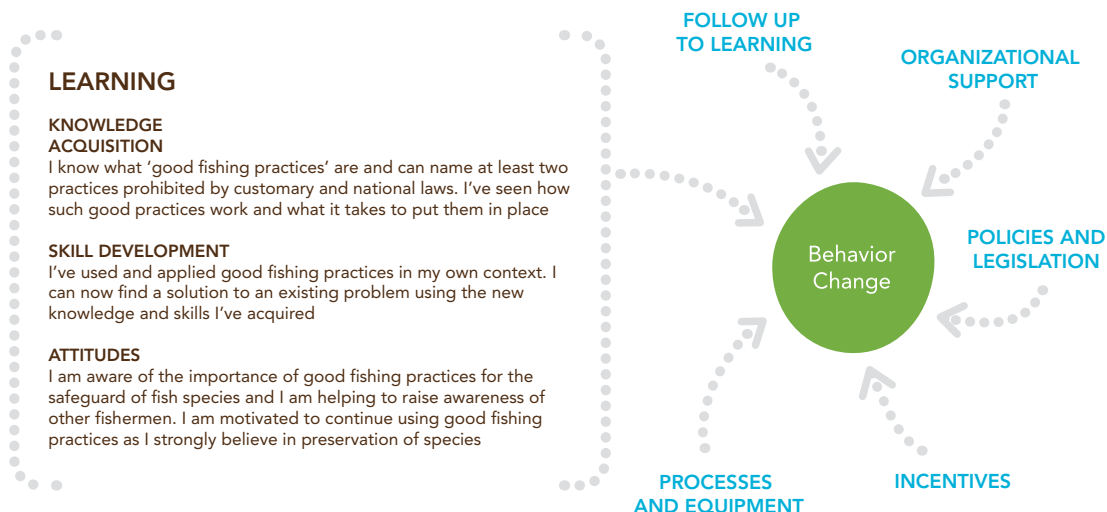
Learning alone is rarely sufficient to address complex organizational problems or improve the overall capacities of stakeholders. However, it can support the development or further enhancement of knowledge, skills and attitudes that can empower individuals and increase their potential to achieve their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

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

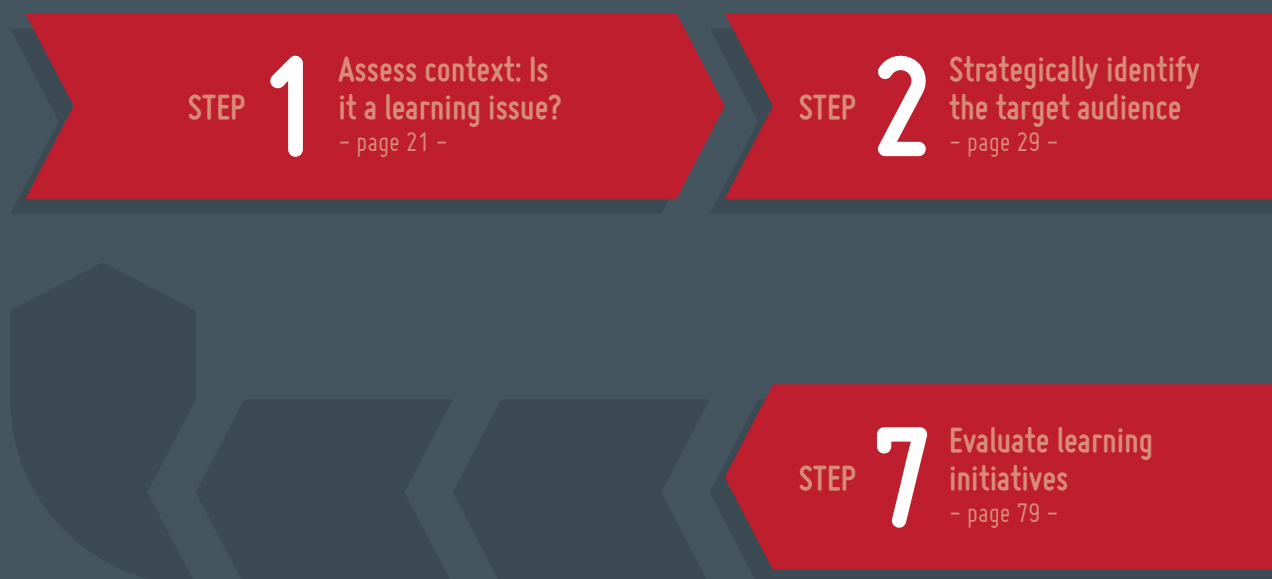
- > Whether the learning initiative is targeted to local or national organizations, ministerial bodies, research institutes, individual farmers and producers or civil society, local and national ownership are essential. One of the clearest indicators of ownership is the quality of national partners' 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



STEP **3** Assess
learning needs
– page 37 –

STEP **4** Design content and
select delivery modes
– page 47 –

STEP **6** Provide follow-up
support
– page 73 –

STEP **5** Deliver the
learning solution
– page 67 –



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 bylaws 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 livelihood⁵.

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?

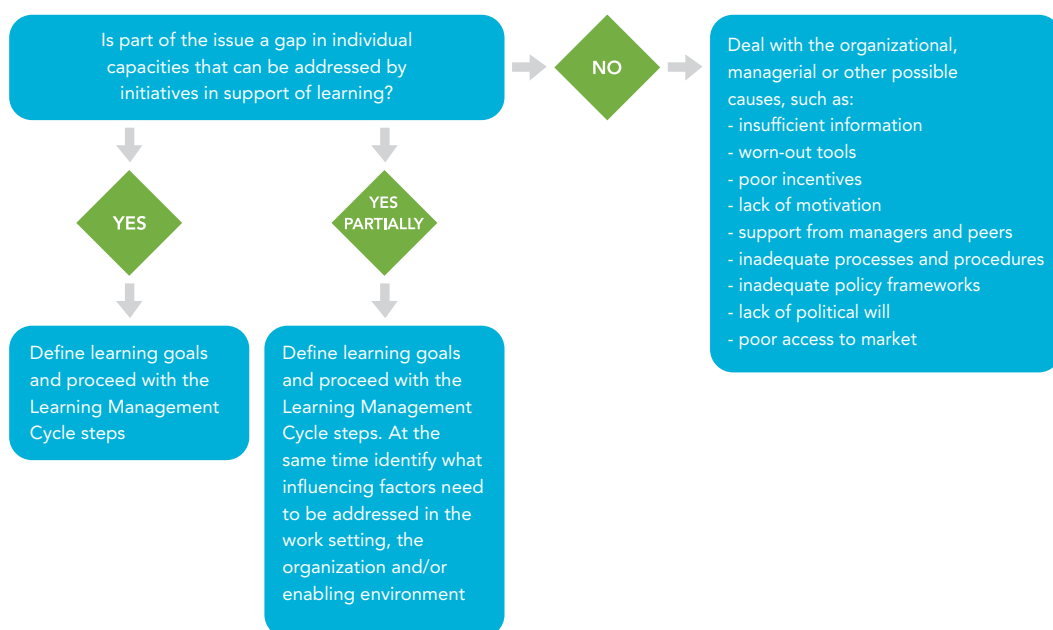
[Table 2] Factors influencing individual and organizational performance⁶

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 scale⁸.

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

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. Evaluations¹¹ 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.len.cd.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

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.



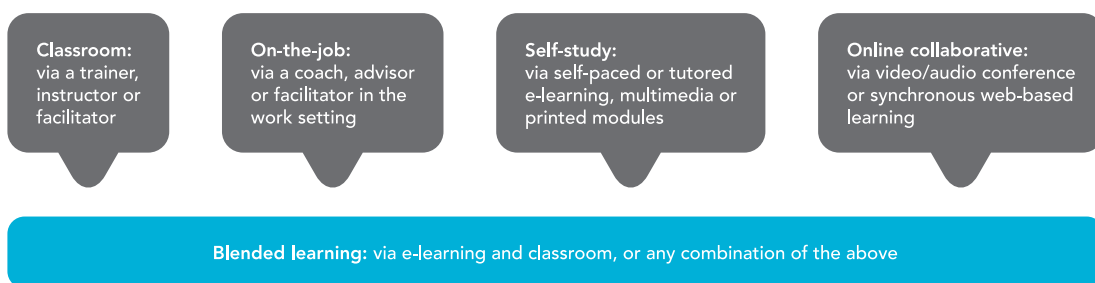
Want to know more? **Tool 4b** contains tips for **formulating good learning objectives**.

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.



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?

CLASSROOM: IN-PERSON, REAL-TIME COURSES, WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS DELIVERED VIA AN INSTRUCTOR OR TRAINER

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

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

FAO example:

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)

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

- > 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

Challenges

- > 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 4!).

- | |
|---|
| 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	<p>Unique, specific information that answers the questions: who? where? when?. They are shown, exhibited and indicated.</p> <p>Examples: data, lists, historical events</p>
CONCEPT	<p>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 ...?".</p> <p>Example: the "advocacy" concept</p>
PROCESS	<p>A flow of events that describes how something functions. They are events that involve more than one actor. They can be divided into phases.</p> <p>Example: "the assessment process"</p>
PRINCIPLE	<p>Strategic guidelines which can guide decisions and complex tasks.</p> <p>Example: "guidelines for writing clearly and concisely"</p>
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS	<p>Verbal and non-verbal skills for interacting with other people.</p> <p>Example: content related to "negotiating" or "solving group conflict"</p>
ATTITUDES	<p>Predispositions to behaviour</p> <p>Example: content related to appreciating the "importance and urgency of adopting measures to limit the negative impacts of climate change"</p>

[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] Must-have and Nice-to-have content

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

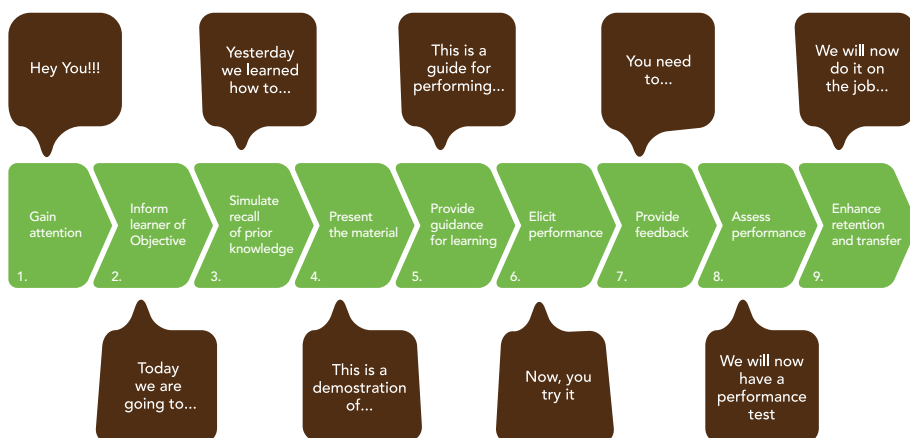
Most of FAO's learning initiatives aim to enhance knowledge, skills and attitudes of key actors in the areas of its specialization (e.g. food security, agriculture). To be sustainable, however, learning in technical areas has to be complemented by development of functional skills that allow a sustainable 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

5q

5h

5i

5e

5f

5j

5k

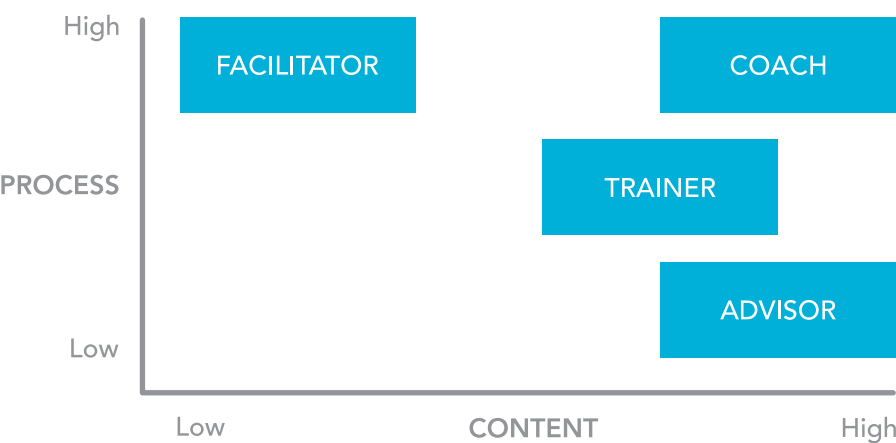


This chapter will discuss the roles that FAO Technical Officers, partners and collaborators must play to create effective learning situations on the job, in a face-to-face context and in online collaborative learning environments.

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

<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>

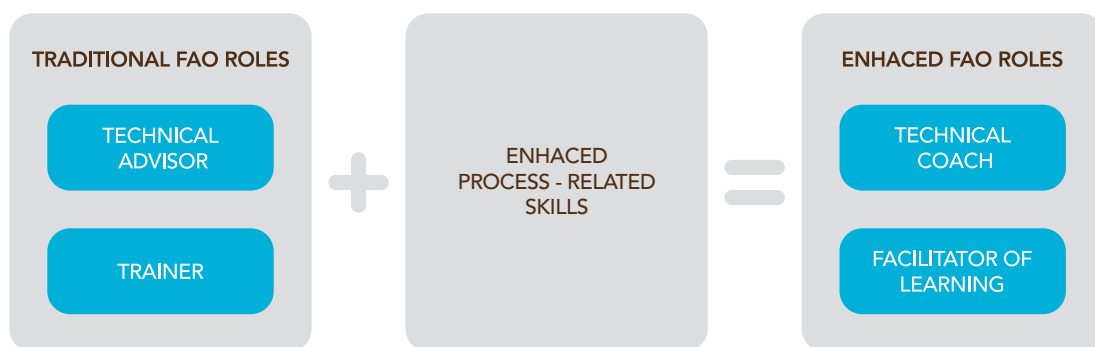
[Table 7] Roles in delivering learning initiatives²¹

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?			



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

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 Package²³ 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;

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

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).



FAO CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

WWW.FAO.ORG/CAPACITYDEVELOPMENT

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00153 Rome, Italy

E-mail: capacity-development@fao.org



www.fao.org