Participatory Training:
A Book of Readings

A Resource Book for Front Line Workers of Development Organisations
Preface

Since early eighties participatory training methodology has emerged as an educational strategy based on an alternative view of training, which is learner centered, experience based and open ended. For the last two decades, PRIA, along with its partners, has been engaged in promoting Training of Trainers (TOT) programmes, aimed to prepare trainers in participatory training methodology. The initial TOTs helped in preparing a manual on participatory training methodology, which has since been translated in nearly twenty languages in India and abroad. In collaboration with regional partners, regional TOTs have been organized, helping in scaling up this methodology.

During late 1990s PRIA, along with regional partners, convened a series of regional consultations with practitioners of participatory training methodology in different part of the country to understand the impact of participatory training methodology on development. The current document is an outcome of that intervention.

The Book of Readings focuses on various themes on participatory training methodology. It is intended to serve as reading material for practitioners of participatory training methodology as well as for their use in their own training programme. It is adapted from PRIA’s manual for participatory training methodology, with an aim to simplify the content and tailor it for front line workers of development organisations. Besides proving a conceptual insight on participatory training methodology, the document also provides practical illustrations in support of the methodology.

The book of readings is part of a set of three documents on participatory training methodology. The other two companion documents are Chains of Change and Methods of Participatory Training. Chains of Change is based on a process of inquiry into contributions of participatory training methodology in bringing about individual and collective learning for social change. The Methods of Participatory Training is a compilation of wide spectrum of methods, techniques and variations which have been developed in practice.

We hope that the Book of Readings, along with the other two documents, will assist in dissemination and upscaling of the participatory training methodology as an approach for empowerment and social change.

Rajesh Tandon
President, PRIA

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PERSPECTIVES OF
PARTICIPATORY TRAINING

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Development Context of Learning and Change

Development is a process of change from the present situation to a better one through planned, systematic and deliberate interventions, in the context of individual families and communities. The overall purpose of development is to create an opportunity for people's participation to acquire control over the developmental processes and decision making, leading to individual and collective growth as well as community betterment.

At one level, the change includes change in physical infrastructure. This may include provision of roads, buildings, irrigation and transportation mechanisms, communication, land improvement, etc. At another and perhaps more complex level, development also implies change in social and human infrastructure. Improvement in health care, for example, does not only occur through the provision of primary health care centres and district hospitals. It comes about through the work of actors like Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANMs) and doctors and multi-purpose health workers, in the field, as well as (and perhaps most critical) the actions of the individuals, families and communities towards improved health care practices. Thus, any development effort requires strengthening human and social infrastructure, for which structured preparation is essential.

Strengthening of human and social infrastructure necessitates changes in attitudes, behaviour, skills, capacities, knowledge, information etc. which in turn requires learning on part of the people. Training has always been viewed as a learning process—learning of new skills, concepts and behaviour. Training is not something new to development managers. It is through training that we prepare our field workers, multipurpose health workers, teachers, agriculture extension workers and their supervisor.

How is participatory training different? Participatory training is all about learning. If the purpose of training is to promote learning among individuals, families and communities then this purpose must be translated in practice. Much of the training in its conventional sense does not focus on learning, but on training. As a result, the training, training goals, training structure, training methods and trainers' become the focus of conventional training while the learners are missed out. This is where participatory training methodology makes a radical departure. It focuses on the learners and it therefore, concentrates on learning for change.
Participatory Training and its Role

Participatory training needs to be looked at separately from the term 'training.' Participatory training is based on a certain value premise that believes in the empowerment of the poor and other marginalised section of the society, including women.

It would be a mistake to interpret the word 'participatory' as synonymous with methods like role play, simulation and other training exercises. No method makes training participatory or non-participatory. Participatory training is based on the article of faith of the trainers which in turn, is biased towards the marginalised groups. Participatory training is rooted in certain basic values, which gives centrality to poor people's participation in rebuilding their own future and creating their own reality. The trainer makes an educational intervention, whereby the people start thinking about their situation. Participatory training facilitates learning and critical thinking process to create an enabling environment.

Ordinary people, which include the poor, oppressed and marginalised, whose basic knowledge and experiences have been devalued and de-legitimised for centuries, lack confidence to exercise control on issues which affect their lives. They suffer from low self-esteem. The underlying reason is the conventional approach to education for the poor and oppressed, which presumes they are ignorant and thus promotes top down delivery of information.

Training related to social development and change does not focus only on information giving or skill-building but encourages the practitioners and people to articulate their own knowledge and need to learn more. This principle is the same for any programme, whether it is watershed development, forestry, income generating activities, food security or savings and credit.

Illustration

In a community health programme, for health workers can be trained on how to conduct a safe delivery. The training however will only enable the health workers to practice the learning, if they are given the opportunity to analyse their own experiences of conducting deliveries. This would enable them to evaluate the 'good' and 'bad' in their own practices and understand the need to adopt new methods. This kind of training raises self-confidence and increases participation of the health workers.
Principles of Adult Learning and Learning Environment

Participatory training deals with adults and has its theoretical base in principles of adult learning. Various efforts in adult learning and adult development have so far brought in a variety of experiences. Some experiences are encouraging while others are not.

Adults learn, adults grow, adults change contrary to the belief that learning is difficult to alter once it has taken place, and learning can only happen with children and adolescents. Adult learning is based on principles and conditions different from the formal set of learning principles.

- Adult behaviour changes in response to various pressures - both internal as well as external. Therefore, adults can and do learn throughout their lifetime.
- Adults enter learning activities with a perception about themselves that influences the learning process. This perception is based on their past experiences interpreted and valued by them. This, therefore, influences new learning.
- The past experience of adults needs to be valued and nourished during the learning process. Otherwise, adults may feel worthless or threatened by the learning process.
- Adults learn best when the environment is safe, accepting, challenging and supportive.
- Adults enter learning programmes with immediate and personal needs, problems, feelings, hopes and expectations. The 'here and now' feeling must be respected and recognised, if their motivation to learn is to be enhanced.
- Solutions that adult learners seek must come from their own understanding and analysis, and be congruent with their lifestyle and functioning.
- In skill - oriented learning, there should be active participation on the part of the adult learner in those activities, which use the relevant skills.
- Continuous monitoring of progress of learning needs to be done by adults. Relevant information and feedback are essential and should be available to the adult learner.
- Success in satisfying the expressed learning needs and achieving the desired objective is a powerful reinforcement for further learning. Therefore, this element should be built into the learning process.
Learning creates several emotions in adults - excitement, agitation, tension, confusion, disorientation, fear, frustration, etc. Stress and anxiety can affect a learning process and should be sensitively tackled.

Different adults learn differently. The variety of learning styles and preferred modes of learning necessitate a heterogeneous design for learning by adults. This also demands use of diverse sets of learning methods to enable the learner and the learning process.

Principles of Participatory Training

The principles of participatory training are based on a set of value premises, built on the adult learning principles and learning environment. Some of the principles are:

♦ It is learner-centred and learner’s learning-need specific.
♦ The learning focuses not only on the knowledge but also on enhancing awareness and skills. This makes the learning complete, critical and useful.
♦ Learning is derived from the experiences of the participants. Experiential learning is crucial to participatory training.
♦ Participatory training requires a learning environment where participants and their experiences are valued and participants feel psychologically secure and safe to unlearn, try their new ideas and share their experiences.
♦ When participation is valued, participants develop their own norms and values and take responsibility for their own learning.
♦ Since, ensuring participation and building a safe environment are key requirements of participatory training, the role of the trainer becomes very crucial. The trainer should not only believe in the participatory principles, but must demonstrate it as a way of life.

Characteristics of Learning Environment

Besides principles of adult learning, building conducive environment is the pillar of participatory training. In the context of learner and learning process, the challenge of building and sustaining an environment that would facilitate both individual and collective learning becomes very crucial. The trainers have to create conditions for the principles of adult learning to become operationalised. Some of the key characteristics of learning environment are:

♦ Valuing Learners and Their Experiences
The fundamental aspect of the learning environment is valuing the learner, his/her uniqueness, experiences, contributions, knowledge, and capacity to learn, grow and change. Valuing and respecting the learner becomes the
hallmark of creating a learning environment. This involves that the trainer, both during formal and informal sessions (outside the training) pays keen attention to the learners, tries to understand what they are saying and sharing and provide support.

♦ **Sharing Personal Experiences**
Since adults learn from their experience, conditions have to be created for an easy, open, systematic and effective sharing of their past experiences. Sharing of experiences doesn’t mean endless, open-ended storytelling sessions. Sharing has to be focussed in relation to specific learning objectives. The purpose of sharing is also to promote critical analysis and encourage experimenting with new ideas, feelings, behavior and action. Mutual sharing processes involve not merely learners’ sharing, but the trainers also sharing information about themselves and their experiences.

♦ **Openness**
Another principle of the learning environment is openness - to oneself, to others, to question, to examine and to observe. Conditions have to be created so that learners and trainers can be open with their thoughts, their feelings and their actions.

♦ **Challenging**
The next characteristic of learning environment is that there should be a challenge to the learners. Conditions must be created for people to be stimulated, to stretch themselves beyond their immediate capacity, to utilise their potential creatively, to utilise their capacity, to unfreeze themselves and to realise their critical faculties.

♦ **Safety**
Another key characteristic of the learning environment is psychological safety and comfort. The learner should be challenged, stimulated and provoked but never undermined. The learner should be questioned, but not demolished. A sense of psychological safety - I can be myself, I can say to my self, “I can look at myself, I can try myself, I can make mistakes and yet be acceptable to and by others”, is an essential aspect of the learning environment.

♦ **Support**
A related aspect, therefore, is support - emotional, intellectual and behavioural support. This support should be available individually and in small groups. To facilitate this conditions need to be created so that learners are supporting each other as much as the trainers and facilitators are supporting the learners.

♦ **Feedback**
And finally, the learning environment must have conditions built in for feedback to come back to the person and to the group. This information should be obtained through mechanisms which are easy and relaxed, and not constrained and difficult for feedback process.
Conventional Vs Participatory Training

Conventional Training
In conventional training, the trainer defines what is to be taught and the method to be used to teach. This approach to training believes that trainer knows everything, while the learner knows nothing. The trainer defines what a particular set of learners need to learn and how these learning needs can be met. Learners do not have any other role except passively learning during this process. In conventional training, the trainer becomes the central point around whom the entire process revolves. It is thus a trainer-centred approach and not learner-centred.

Underlying Assumptions in Conventional Training are:
- The acquisition of subject knowledge by participants leads to action.
- Individual action leads to improvement on the job.
- The participants learn what the trainer teaches. Learning is a simple function of the capacity of the participant to learn and the ability of the trainer to teach.
- Training is the responsibility of the trainer and the training institution.

Participatory Training
Participatory training on the other hand believes that people cannot be developed, they develop themselves through their own actions and reflections.

The participatory training is an educational process which encourages participants to see themselves as a source of information and knowledge about the real world. It recognises the value of popular knowledge and encourages people to participate in their own learning process. The process of learning during participatory training is controlled by the participant, and not by the trainer. The trainer plays the role of a facilitator in this learning process. This process of involving participants in the learning process gives them a sense of empowerment. They start recognising their existing knowledge and its value, and are more open to seeking new knowledge.

This educational experience takes place in several ways
- Existing popular knowledge is recognised and valued

Participatory training believes that participants already possess some knowledge. Participants do not start with a clean slate. In the participatory approach, the synthesis of popular knowledge with existing scientific knowledge strengthens the educational experience of the participants.
New knowledge is built on the existing knowledge
In participatory training, the starting point for creating new knowledge is the existing knowledge that people have. As people begin to appreciate what they already know, they are more open to seek new information. This desire to seek new information and knowledge enhances the learning process.

Participants learn to exercise control
The participatory training puts emphasis of the active participation of learners in generating own knowledge. This encourages them to take responsibility for their own learning. This process helps learners to exercise control over their learning.

It becomes a collective process
One of the elements of participatory training is the promotion of collective responsibility for seeking new knowledge. As a result, participants learn to get together, collectively seeking and analyse information.

It creates informed options
The very process of collectively analysing a particular situation gives rise to various alternatives. As part of the process of analysis, options are debated on the basis of concrete information. As a result, participants are able to accept and reject options on an informed basis. This creates a sense of empowerment, which is based on the confidence that information has been interpreted and understood.

Actions emerge out of this analysis
The very act of involvement in the process of analysis of a given reality creates a sense of ownership of that knowledge and willingness to transform that situation. The participants are then able to take concrete action.

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Adapted from FMD Consultant, BV, Apeldoorn
Strategic Use of Training

Much of the discussion on training assumes that it is a set of events conducted to acquire a limited set of skills and knowledge that can then be used by a group of learners to accomplish their objectives. This gives a very mechanical and limited meaning to training. How can we look at training in its strategic sense? How can training contribute to a larger strategy of social change?

Training can be utilised in a strategic way to contribute to the process of strengthening forces engaged in social transformation. This encourages us to look beyond a preconceived notion of training as an event and look for ways in which it can contribute towards a wider and more substantial intervention in the process of social change.

- **Training and change**

  In order to proceed, we need to look at some key issues of social change:

  - In our theory of social change, is there a place for individual and collective learning and thereby its contribution towards the wider process of social change?

  - If individual and collective learning is important in our framework of social change, how does it relate to the wider issues of control over the minds of people?

  - If individual and collective learning is an important element in our framework of social transformation (particularly as a mechanism to counter the forces engaged in controlling the minds and thinking of ordinary people) the educational opportunities and interventions that need to be created should be examined to bring about the desired learning at the individual and collective levels.

  - What roles can training play in bringing about such an educational opportunity to facilitate the desired individual and collective learning necessary for enabling the over-all process of social transformation?

An educational intervention focusing on the desired individual and collective learning can bring about an important contribution towards the larger process of social transformation, and training as a specific form of educational intervention can make that possible.

- **Strategic assessment**

  In a simple and yet critical way, the following steps can help us think through the strategic use of training in relation to specific issues of social change.
Step 1: Analyse the external environment
Define the overall strategy of change and its key components by analysing the external environment, such as:
- What are the key favourable and hindering trends that influence this process of change?
- Who could be the potential allies, interested persons, groups, and organisations in this process of change?
- Who are likely to oppose this change?

Step 2: Identify educational goals for different constituencies
In examining the educational goals for different constituencies, it may be useful to keep in mind that different constituencies may require different educational approaches as well. The educational goals for our allies may be of one type and those for opponents may be of a different type.

Step 3: Examine the educational goals for individuals and groups
The third step essentially involves examining the educational goals for individual and collective learning, by members of those constituencies who are our allies. It is important to keep in mind that all educational goals need not be met through training.

Strategy for use
It is at this stage, when the strategic use of training has been outlined and simplified that we can begin to look at the question of resources and capacities. We can then examine how this training would actually be carried out in different locations and different ways, and what kind of resources and capacities would be needed to carry this out. Possible mechanisms for intervention need to be discussed in detail. Alternatives and a concrete action plan must also be chalked out at this point of time.

Some of the strategic uses of training practiced and experienced by the practitioners are:
- Promotes capacity building
- Develops organisational competence
- Changes peoples' attitude towards equality, social and gender justice etc.
- Helps in perspective building
- Promotes critical questioning
- Develops faith in peoples' capacities
- Helps in building faith in training
Current Issues in Training

Training has become an integral component of most development programmes whether in areas of community health or improvement in agricultural production, social forestry or income generation, organising of the poor, landless, women, etc. Both government and non-governmental organisations in the country use training extensively in various forms, with varying and diverse impacts. The current training scenario in the country is accompanied by a number of serious issues and concerns. It will be worthwhile to identify and reflect on some of them.

- **Learner centred vs. trainer centred training**

In the last ten to fifteen years, increased attention and resources available for training have made it predominantly a trainer-centred activity. The purpose of training is to support the learning of a group of learners individually and collectively. However, in each step of the training intervention, the needs, interests, and preferences of the trainers are determining these aspects. By and large, training has become trainer-centred as opposed to its essential focus on learners.

A lot of training today is patterned after, and is an extension of, the formal educational system. It perpetuates the “Banking” concept of education and does not recognise the differences between children and adults. The trainer’s analysis, beliefs, frameworks, opinions, are introduced or attempted to be introduced to the learners.

- **Commercialisation of training**

There has been a growing commercialisation in training. Different people, training institutions, training firms, training teams and trainers have come into existence. They use training to serve their vested interests rather than to enhance individual and social change.

- **Misuse of Methods**

The use of participatory methods in training has become rampant. Various development actors from donors, government to the grassroots groups are interested in finding methods that facilitate participation. This has resulted in extensive abuse and misuse of exercises, games, role-plays, group discussions, simulations, etc. There have been instances where these methods were used to fill up the training time, with no concrete learning agenda. Innovative methods are not documented.

- **Uniqueness vs. diversity of learners**

Most of the training designs, materials and methods are insensitive to the uniqueness of the learners. They do not seem to take into account the
needs of the learners, their preferred learning styles and modes. The learners' sense of self, self-concept, its relation to their willingness and case of learning, etc are disregarded. The current practice seems to look at learners like "clones" who have to be treated identically. Experience suggests that each learner is unique with a unique learning style. This issue needs to be recognized to facilitate learning.

- **Building training capacity**

Most people who are involved in training, whether they are from the government or voluntary organisations, have themselves had very little opportunity to go through the experience of becoming trainers. Many see it as an opportunity for their own development as trainers, for their own growth and learning. Even where attempts have been made to increase the trainers' capacity there is much greater focus on props and fixtures, on aids and tools, on building and equipment and not on the personality of the trainer. It is of crucial importance that ways of strengthening the capacity, the potential and the competence of trainers as individuals, as a team, and as institutions are found and developed.

- **Training designs**

The issues and concerns related to training designs are:

- Need assessment has been reduced to a ritual.
- Though participants receive insights and become aware of the self in the participatory training, they find it difficult to relate to behaviour change in the work context.
- There is less emphasis on follow up and practice which shows that follow up is rarely considered as part of the design.
- In recent years there have been advancements in participatory philosophy as well as methodologies. There is a need to incorporate these concepts and methods in our training designs.

- **Evaluation**

Issues related to evaluation are:

- Evaluation is treated as a ritual rather than an essential component.
- Standards for comparison of the training are missing.
- Stereotyped formats are being used.
- Focus of evaluation remains on assessment of immediate effect of the training rather than on impact.
Understanding Groups and their Process
Understanding Groups

The most common form of human interaction is interpersonal interaction. A large number of our daily activities are in relation to one or more persons. We spend a lot of our time at work and at home in small groups. A small group is a collective of more than two persons. The family is a small group; our work place may have one or more small groups.

A small group has:

- A common objective (though not every member of the group may know it fully or agree with it).
- A stable membership (a relatively fixed number of people who remain members of the group over a period of time).
- A clear boundary (in relation to physical space and time. It is possible to identify who is a member and who is not).

An evening club, a voluntary organisation, a trade union, and a household are all examples of small groups. Normally, a membership of 5-13 persons is considered a reasonable size for small groups. This size of membership allows for face-to-face interaction; which may become increasingly difficult beyond this number. A small group can be permanent (like a family), or semi permanent (like the governing body of a voluntary organisation for a three year period) or temporary (like a training programme of a week’s duration where seven participants work as a group for three hours). Whatever the size, objective, permanency or membership of a small group, they share several common aspects.

Why Small Groups?

Small groups function more effectively therefore, we need to learn about them. Besides, there is special relevance of small groups in participatory training. This relevance is three fold:

- Small group is a powerful vehicle for learning
  
  In a small group, we are able to share our experiences and reflect upon them; others are able to give feedback about individuals in a small group. The process of interaction with others motivates learning in a small group. Thus, a small group acts as an arena for generating insights and analysing experiences. The experiential nature of participatory training makes it imperative that learners work and learn in small groups.

- Small group is a basis for action and change
  
  In participatory training, learning is seen as a step towards change in
existing actions and facilitation of new actions. The nature of participatory training is such that it promotes collective actions, and hence, small groups become the context for planning and undertaking such collective actions.

**Small groups are building blocks of organisations**

People's organisations develop from the building blocks of small groups. When activists work with tribals, women and landless labourers to form their organisations, they start with small groups. Besides, village meetings and camps of women and pavement dwellers are also examples of small groups. The executive committee of a co-operative, or a union or a Mahila Mandal is a small group too. We can strengthen people's organisations by creating a strong base of small groups. Thus, as fieldworkers and activists, we work with small groups in the field all the time.
Small Group Processes

When we observe a group, we usually take note of what the group is talking about, the ideas being exchanged, the goal the group is working towards. All this refers to the 'CONTENT' of the group task.

But there is another aspect, which is equally important, since it effects performance of the task. This refers to how the group functioning, i.e. how it handles communication, how members try to fulfill the task, how they relate to each other. These aspects refer to the 'PROCESSES' going on within the group.

There are a number of such 'processes' to be observed:
- Communication
- Participation
- Leadership
- Decisions making
- Problem solving
- Conflict resolution

Every group manifests these processes. As a skillful observer within or outside the group we can identify the patterns in which these processes occur. It can then be decided whether these patterns should be changed or improved. The understanding of processes helps the trainer to facilitate individual as well as group learning. Continuous monitoring of processes helps in revisiting the pace, selection of methods, and many a times logistics and physical setting as well.
Communication

Communication within a group deals with the spoken and the unspoken, the verbal and the non-verbal, the explicit and the implied messages that are conveyed and exchanged relating to information and ideas, values and feelings. To clearly understand the various exchanges while they occur various aspects of communication, like direction, mode, etc. need to be taken into consideration.

One-way and two-way communication

One-way communication relates to a situation where one person conveys the message and the other passively receives it. Some schools of thought dismiss it as not deserving to be called communication but merely the passing on of information and ideas.

Two-way communication implies a situation where not only do the two parties talk to each other, but they listen to each other as well. It helps in
- Clarification of doubts, confusions and misconceptions
- Both parties understanding each other
- Receiving and giving of ‘feedback’
- Indicating the degree of respect between the two parties.

Vertical and horizontal communication

Two individuals, or an individual and a group, may sometimes treat each other as inferior or superior. This could be on the basis of differences in sex, caste, religion, education, status etc. Those who assume an inferior position tend to talk ‘up’ to the other person, demonstrating humility or submission. Those who assume a superior position tend to do the opposite. If however there is a position of relative equality, as between good friends, communication can occur ‘horizontally’.

The mode of communication

We are used to equating communication with conversation, or the exchange of words. A great deal of what we express and a great deal of what we understand from others does not occur through words at all. There are a vast number of ‘signals’ that we send and receive consciously or unconsciously. These include gestures, expressions and changes in voice among others. Communication occurs through both verbal and non-verbal modes. In fact, it has been estimated that of the entire message that gets transmitted, words constitute a tiny part, and the bulk comprises non-verbal expressions.
Non-Verbal Communication

- Using our bodies – through gestures, posture, nodding, facial expressions, and eye movements.
- Using our voices – to laugh, yawn, groan, scream, whisper
- Using our skin – to touch, to pat, to push, to caress
- Using distance – sitting close, standing very far apart, sitting on a higher seat, standing behind a table and so on to indicate intimacy or distance.
- Using clothes, hairstyles, perfume, jewelry, accessories etc to make a certain statement about ourselves.
- Using silence – very effectively sometimes, to convey a range of emotions like shock, disapproval, hurt, great joy, togetherness etc.

Listening

Most of us are so busy thinking and putting across our own ideas and points of view, that we seldom listen carefully to others, until of course we consider them experts or perceive some direct benefit from what is being said. Listening involves much more than passive hearing and the mere fact that two people are talking to each other does not automatically mean that listening is also taking place. Listening is based on hearing and understanding what others say to us. It is possible only when we pay attention to what is being said.

Guidelines for Effective Listening

- Concentrate on hearing – we think about four times faster than the other person can speak, so our thoughts tend to stray.
- We must listen with an open mind – we often stop listening when we hear some key words – ‘red flags’ – which touch our personal biases or preferences.
- Pay attention and try to understand what is being said – listen beyond the words, try to understand the feelings, the emotions, and what is being implied. Be alert to the various non-verbal messages.
- Do not predict what the speaker is trying to say – do not jump to conclusions and stop listening, be sure to confirm whether what you think is true or not.
- Do not pretend to have understood when you have not – clarify your doubts, request the speaker to re-explain, ask relevant questions.
- Do not become defensive and do not argue or interrupt – when the speaker challenges some of our favourite ideas our immediate reaction is to either stop listening or to interrupt and argue.
- To ensure that we are listening attentively we should, from time to time, restate, repeat and summarise what we think is being said.
At the personal level

- Our values, opinions, prejudices and attitudes
- The tendency to speak or react before thinking
- Stereotyping people – making quick generalizations
- Words and phrases have specific personalized meanings, we assume the same meanings when others use them
- Lack of trust

Situational

- Physical well-being and mood of the individual
- Differences in backgrounds and context between the parties
- Differences in language
  (Adapted from “Training for Transformation”)
- The members listen to each other?

Observing Communication

- Who talks? For how long? How often?
- How are silent people treated?
- Who talks to whom? To the group as a whole or to some people in the group?
- Who talks after whom? Is it to encourage or to challenge?
- Who interrupts whom? Are some people interrupted all the time?
- What non-verbal messages are being transmitted?

Field Illustration

In a training of trainers of members involving twelve VDOs from West Bengal working on strengthening Panchayat Raj Institutions, the group was given a topic for group discussion “Mainstreaming gender concerns in PRI functioning”. The facilitator observed that from the group of eight participants, two women and four men were very vocal. Throughout the discussion, most people addressed issues to one woman and one man to thus signifying their influence in the group. Two men and one woman were seen to form a triad, with each supporting the others’ viewpoint on regular occasions. The facilitator found some of these communication patterns useful to identify emerging leadership and participation patterns.
Participation

Participation is a fundamental process within a group, because many of the other processes depend upon participation of the various members. Levels and degrees of participation vary. Some members are active participants – talkative, demanding, volatile; while others are more withdrawn, quiet and passive. In essence, participation means involvement, concern for the task, direct or indirect contribution towards the group goal.

Participation by members is basic to the existence of a group. If members do not participate, the group ceases to exist. But this participation does not mean just physical presence or being vocal. Silent members could be listening very carefully. What needs to be identified and tackled are the members who are ‘there but not there’ – those who are indifferent and uninvolved. They can potentially damage the group.

Factors which affect members’ participation

- The content or task of the group – is it of interest, importance and relevance?
- The physical atmosphere – is it comfortable physically, socially and psychologically?
- The psychological atmosphere – is it accepting, non-threatening?
- Member’s personal preoccupations – are there any distracting thoughts on their mind?
- The levels of interaction and discussion – is adequate information provided for everyone to understand? Is it at a level everyone understands?
- Familiarity between group members – do members know each other previously?

Observing Participation

- How much talking does the leader do, how much is done by the others?
- To whom are questions usually addressed – the group as a whole or to particular members.
- Do members appear interested, bored, apathetic or self-conscious?
- Is formation of pairs and subgroups taking place and are they discussing issues other than those addressing the group task?
- Are quiet members being encouraged to speak?
Field Illustration of Participation

While undertaking a perspective building intervention on saving and credit ((S&C) with a S&C women’s group in Andhra Pradesh, the facilitator observed that out of the twenty women, only five women were more vocal in the group discussion. The leader did the most talking and focused on two-three of the vocal women, who belonged to her caste. Of the remaining fifteen, six women did contribute intermittently to the discussion, while about four women were bored and indifferent, disturbing the group by talking amongst themselves on unrelated topics. About five women were quiet but attentive to the discussion. The leader made no effort to encourage the quiet members to participate in the discussion.

On observing these processes, the facilitator intervened to ensure that the quiet women were encouraged to put forward their views. The facilitator also ensured that the conversation among the indifferent women was interrupted and their interest in the topic was enhanced.
Decision-Making

Decision-making within a group takes place in one or more of the following ways:

The plop:

A decision is suggested by one individual, to which there is no response and the decision is adopted. "Plopping" usually occurs in a new groups, where a number of members have equal status, or when one member is overly aggressive.

Self-authorised:

The individual who assumes authority makes a decision. The others find it easier/ convenient to accept the decision than to reject it. The essential difference between this and the 'plop' is that the 'plop' is not tendered with authority but gets adopted by default, whereas in this case the decision is tendered with the assumption that it will be adopted.

Pairing:

Two individuals joining forces make a decision, one floats the idea, the other seconds it and the decision is made on behalf of the group.

Minority group:

The clique makes the decision and the rest accept it.

Vote:

The decision depends upon the number of people adhering to it. Vote may be taken by a show of hand or even by ballot.

Consensus:

This is essentially a minimum consent by all. It is important to differentiate between a true and a false consensus. True consensus occurs when everyone has contributed to the discussion, all angles have been considered and everyone is in full agreement. This type of consensus, though desirable is not always possible. What can be aimed at is that everyone feels that they have had the opportunity to put forth their views and influence the decision, it was a good and open discussion, they are prepared to act on the decision taken.
Observing Decision-making Process

- Does anyone make contributions, which do not receive any kind of response or recognition? What effect does this have on the member?
- Does anyone make a decision and carry it out without checking with other group members? For example, he decides on the topic to be discussed and immediately begins to talk about it. What effect does this have on other group's members?
- Who supports other member's suggestions or decisions? Does this support result in the two members deciding the topic or activity for the group? How does this affect other group members?
- Is there any evidence of a majority pushing a decision through over other member's objections? Do they call for a vote?
- Is there any attempt to get all members to participate in a decision? What effect does this seem to have on the group?
- Is the decision made by consensus? Are differences fully explored? Is there unanimity or full agreement?

Field Illustration of Decision Making

In a development training for village water and sanitation committee members (fifteen in number) of Ramgarh village of Uttar Pradesh, the group was given a task of making a village sanitation plan. It was observed that the village pradhan, representing the strong Rajput section of the village, took all the key decisions in the plan. He was supported in his decision by six more men of the Rajput community. The suggestions of the five women in the committee were not given much significance. Nor were the dalit men given much role in the decision making. Dissatisfaction and discomfort in the group were clearly evident.

Identify the role of the facilitator in this situation.
Problem-Solving

Most groups find themselves unable to solve a problem because they address it at a superficial level. After that they find themselves blocked because they cannot figure out why the problem occurred and how they can tackle it. Therefore an effective problem solving procedure would be to:

- **Clearly define the problem** Collect additional information, from elsewhere if necessary, and analyse it to understand the problem further.

- **Look for solutions** and the normal sequence of events. Sometimes it pays to deliberately think of ‘wild ideas’ which are apparently not relevant. The objective should be to generate as many ideas and suggestions as possible.

- **Choose the appropriate alternative.** This will involve resolving some conflict. Collaborative and consensus based resolution is preferable rather than forcing a choice. Considerable discussion is needed to evaluate the various alternative solutions on the basis of constraints and available resources.

- **Implementing the solution** through a plan, and evaluating how the problem is solved.
Leadership

Leadership involves focussing the efforts of the people towards a common goal and to enable them to work together as one. In general, one individual is designated as the leader. This individual may be chosen from within or appointed from outside. In a small group, the leadership function (unlike the leader) is not static, but is performed by different members at different times. Thus one member may provide leadership with respect to achieving the goal while a different individual may be providing leadership in maintaining the group as a group. These roles can also switch and change. It is interesting to note how leadership is assumed, challenged, and changed in the course of a small group’s life.

Leadership Styles

Leadership styles may be classified on the basis of the behaviour of the leader:

The Autocratic Leader: who imposes his own will with very little concern for the members’ needs, opinions and preferences. Such a leader has great concern for accomplishing the task but little or no concern for the members.

The Laissez-faire Leader: who has little or no concern for the task at hand, but is concerned about the people, letting them act according to their own wishes.

The Democratic Leader: who is concerned equally with the task and the people. In the ultimate democratic tradition, the leadership function is shared between members of the group.

The same individual in different circumstance and/or with different groups may behave differently.

In order to understand this we can consider the following factors affecting leadership behaviour.

Factors Affecting Leadership Behaviour

➤ Within the leader: Is the leader convinced about sharing authority? Does s/he have confidence and trust in the rest of the group, a sense of security? What is her/his value system?

➤ Within the group: Are members willing to take responsibility? Are they mature and interested? How cohesive is the group? Can they act together? What is the degree and level of involvement? Is there a sense of autonomy or of dependence?

➤ Within the situation: Is there a time constraint? Is there a crisis? What is the nature of the problem the group is working on? What is the intrinsic
nature of the organisation within which the group exists? What is the overall environment?

Thus, the leader must assume greater responsibility to be open, equal and accountable, humble, sensitive and committed. S/he must enable the group to identify and analyse issues of vital concern to the group, and as the group grows, share his/her leadership with other members.

Role of the leader:
- Raise the members’ awareness and motivation
- Increase the readiness of members to accept responsibility
- Develop group work and group morale
- Convince the group that they can affect change
- Further individual members’ needs for growth and development

**Observing Leadership process**
- Which members are highly influential? That is, when they talk, do others listen?
- Which members do not wield much influence?
- Do you see any rivalry in the group? Is there a struggle for leadership?
- Who are the members trying to assume leadership? Do they rely on coercion, expertise, formal authority, personal qualities?
- How is the designated leader behaving? Is the style autocratic, democratic or laissez-faire?
- How are people reacting to the leadership?

**Field Illustration**

In a training of trainers for aganwadi women workers from ten aganwadi centres from four districts of Himachal Pradesh, the facilitator observed that from the group of ten women workers, two women wielded high influence on the group, at different points of a group exercise. One took lead in initiating the task, ensuring that the group completes the task on hand, with less focus on the member’s participation. The other focus was on ensuring that each member got a chance to contribute to the group discussion and also complete the task. The task-oriented woman was knowledgeable about the task and did most of the talking, getting attention of most members of the group. The people oriented woman however spoke relatively less. There was no apparent conflict among the two women, reflecting an effective instance of shared leadership.

The facilitator did not make any external intervention, as she observed the effective functioning of the group due to the perceived leadership of the two women.
Conflict Resolution

Conflict is inevitable in the life of a group. When members with different experiences, attitudes and expectations come together in a group, differences are bound to arise. These differences are sometimes suppressed and not openly discussed. On occasions, the emotions behind the differences in the two parties make the expression of conflict quite intense and visible. The important thing to remember is that conflicts exist in all small groups.

The differences arising out of information, facts and knowledge are easy to resolve. Confusions about roles, co-ordination and responsibilities can also be sorted out in the group. The most difficult conflicts to resolve (they perhaps never get resolved) are those arising out differences in values. The most important thing that can be done in these situations is to understand the real causes for differences.

Why is conflict resolution seen as a process? Because conflicts do not go away, each conflict resolution also feeds into the next conflict in a group. It is, therefore, useful to see conflicts as a series of differences in a group, each with some link to the next. How the group deals with conflicts affects the manner of its’ functioning.

Ways to deal with conflicts in a group:

Avoiding: Withdraw from conflict situation, leave it to chance.
Smoothing: Cover up the differences and claim that things are fine.
Bargaining: Negotiate to arrive at a compromise, bargain for gains by both parties.
Forcing: Push a party to accept the decision made by some leader.
Problem-Solving: Confront the differences and resolve them on a collaborative basis.
The Unconscious Processes of Groups

The various processes mentioned do not provide information about why things happen the way they do. In order to understand this, one needs to consider some unconscious processes that occur within groups, some emotional undercurrents that produce interfering or destructive behaviours.

Response to authority – From the moment we enter a group we unconsciously try to relate to the authority figure in the group. Depending upon our individual experiences and reactions to authority in the past, the first response is either one of dependency, or of counter dependency.

- **Dependency** – Members look up to the authority to tell them what to do. They are lost without the authority figure and seek security from it.

- **Counter-dependency** – Members resent authority, their behaviour reflects hostility towards authority.

Emerging from these stages what has to be achieved is a state of interdependence where members can relate with each other reciprocally.

**Fight, flight and pairing** – Working cohesively in a group is not a natural function. The unconscious response to being in a group is either to fight, to flee, or to pair up. Various behaviours within the group provide clues to these unconscious processes:

- **Fight** – Disagreeing, asserting dominance, attacking whatever is believed to be responsible for stress, trying to get one’s own way.

- **Flight** – Staying out of discussion, daydreaming, changing the topic of discussion, making irrelevant remarks, and cracking jokes continuously.

- **Pairing** – Forming dyads, triads or subgroups that are not task-oriented, in which members protect and support one another.

In order to function cohesively and work towards the goal these unconscious processes must be resolved. They have to be recognised, not ignored or denied. Once these processes are identified, the group needs to work with them so that emotional energies are channelled towards the group’s effort.
Role of Group Members

A variety of behaviours are seen in-groups.

Task role behaviour

Some group members many tend to be ‘all business’, they try to set task objectives, they process information necessary for the task and they push for completion of the group assignment. Behaviour of this type is often referred to as task-oriented role behaviour.

- **Initiator:** S/he takes the lead in making suggestions about new goals and procedures of operation. S/he defines the constraints of the problem and is instrumental in seeing that the group makes progress on accomplishing its task.

- **Information processor:** This individual seeks and gives information and checks the accuracy of the information available. S/he seeks the opinions and values of group members so that they may be incorporated into the task processes.

- **Summariser:** S/he helps the group in its task by processing information into more complex forms. This may be done by restating and summarising the group’s information into forms which may be more meaningful to the group. S/he helps by clarifying and elaborating on the thoughts of the groups. S/he helps to orient the group with respect to its goals.

- **Evaluator:** S/he subjects the output of the group to tests such as practicality, logic and morality. S/he tests to ensure that the output meets the objectives and purpose of the group.

Maintenance role behaviour

Some behaviour is directed towards maintaining group harmony and cohesiveness; encouragement is given, communications are fostered and conflicts are mediated. This is referred to as maintenance role behaviour. This behaviour maintains the vitality and functioning of the group, whereas task-orientation behaviour is focused on the solution of the problem or achievement of the task established for the group.

- **Encourager:** S/he acts to elicit the contributions of others by agreeing with others and accepting their ideas. S/he tries to promote group involvement through praise of their work and acceptance of others’ ideas.

- **Harmoniser:** S/he leads in the efforts to reconcile differences of opinions
and to settle conflicts. S/he acts to relieve tensions when conflicts arise.

- **Compromiser**: When involved in a conflict s/he often offers compromises by yielding on her/his position in order to maintain group harmony.
- **Gatekeeper-expediter**: S/he acts to facilitate communication. Her/his behaviour is designed to elicit or deny participation to members. S/he helps to reduce tension and conflict by directing communication into safe channels.

**Individual Behaviour**

Individual behaviour that is not oriented toward any group function but rather is directed toward the resolution of a person's own needs. This is different from the others in that it is not relevant to the functioning of the group, while the others are relevant.

Gross differences between individuals in a group or individuals not identifying with the task can often lead to a pattern of individual behaviour which is detrimental to group work. The differences could be on the basis of temperament, attributes, values, background and so on and the behaviour exhibited includes:

- The aggressor – deflates the status of others and expresses disapproval, attacks the group.
- The blocker – tends to be negativistic and stubbornly resistant.
- Recognition seeker – calls attention to him/herself, through boasting, acting in unusual ways;
- The dominator – tries to assert authority and superiority by manipulating the group members.
- Help seeker - attempts to gather sympathy from other group members;
- Self confessor – uses the group opportunity to express personal, non-group oriented feelings and ideas;
- Playboy – displays lack of involvement in the group processes by being cynical, nonchalant;
- Self-interest pleader – speaks for grassroots, 'marginalised' to cover his/her own prejudices in the stereotypes which best fits his/her present needs.
The Group: A Cycle from Birth to Death

Inclusion

When the group is new, everyone is engaged in a self-identification process, each member wants to be included in the group. In this process the following issues become important: quality, quantity, and style of participation; fairness and equity in membership; norms and standards of personal behaviour; physical comfort, one’s own share of task responsibility, and the costs and benefits of membership.

Influence

The second issue complements the first and deals with the member’s perception of other’s identities. The focal question is “Who is the other in relation to me in the context of the group, and who must he become to be a full group member?” Self-definition is an interactive process. The basic process involved here is one of influence. Issues that members become preoccupied with in relation to it are others’ conformity to norms and rules, acceptance and expulsion, co-operation with or resistance to group authority, and equability and fairness.

Intimacy

The final question is “Who are we (self and others) - what is our relationship - in the context of the group?” As particular members interact more with each other than with others, they take on an identity as a dyad or clique in the eyes of the rest of the group. This is the intimacy process. It involves expressions of closeness or distance, jealousy, warmth, love, hate, friendship, enmity etc.

All three processes -inclusion, influence, intimacy -are tightly interwoven in a group’s life and the group, in its development, shifts from one process to another in a fixed sequence; from inclusion to influence to intimacy.
Group Developmental Stages

When the group is viewed as a whole, definite patterns of behaviour occurring within the group can be observed. These can be conveniently grouped into stages or phases. One convenient way to describe these patterns of group behaviour is as follows:

Stage I: The "Forming" Stage
The initial stage in the life of a group is concerned with the formation of the group. This stage is characterized by members seeking safety and protection, tentativeness of response, seeking superficial contact with others, demonstrating the dependency on existing authority figures (e.g. trainers or facilitators), complaining about physical and trivial matters (e.g. light, sleeping and food arrangements), and attempts to gain approval of authority figure. Members at this stage either engage in 'busy' or hectic type of activity or show apathy.

Stage II: The "Storming" Stage
The second stage in the life of the group is marked by the formation of dyads and triads. Members seek out familiar or similar individuals and begin a deeper sharing of self. Continued attention to the subgroup creates a differentiation in the group and tension may appear across dyads/ triads. Members feel comfort and support in their subgroups and feel strong enough to challenge the authority figure. Strong dyads may attempt to show defiance against authority. Focus on task performance is beginning to emerge, but energy is mostly spent within the subgroup. Pairing is a common phenomenon.

Stage III: The "Norming" Stage
The third developmental stage is marked by a more serious concern about task performance. The dyads/ triads begin to open up and seek out other members in the group. Efforts are made to establish various norms for task performance. Members begin to take greater responsibility for their own group and relationship, while the authority figure becomes relaxed. Dissimilar members in the group are accepted and interaction among dissimilar people takes place in activities related to the task.

Stage IV: The "Performing" Stage
This is the stage of a fully functioning group, where members see themselves as a group and get involved in the task. Each person makes a contribution and the authority figure is also seen as a part of the group. Group norms are followed and collective pressure is exerted to ensure the effectiveness of the group. The group redefines its goals in the light of information from the outside environment and shows an autonomous will to pursue those goals. The long-term viability of the group is established and nurtured.
Facilitating a Group

A group cannot function effectively on its own initiative; it needs to be facilitated. Facilitation can be described as a conscious process of assisting a group to successfully achieve its task while functioning as a group. Facilitation can be performed by members themselves, or with the help of an outsider.

In order to facilitate, it is important to understand fully the areas that need to be facilitated.

Facilitation may be required for:

- the effective performance of task and maintenance functions
- the processes like participation, communication, decision making and leadership
- the effective resolution of issues like inclusion, influence and intimacy
- the smooth transition of the group from one stage to another
- the accomplishment of the task

To facilitate effectively the facilitator needs to:

- understand what is happening within the group
- be aware of his/her own personality and how s/he comes across, and
- know how to facilitate.

Diagnosing a Group

The process of finding out what is going on in a group may be called diagnosing. It is an essential skill of a facilitator. S/he can help solve the problem only if s/he is able to diagnose what it is that is going wrong. Diagnosis involves understanding the causes including influential factors that may exist outside the group (e.g. history of past relationship between members). The following examples illustrate the point.

Problem: Everyone does not participate or show an interest, few remain silent.

Possible causes may be:

- the goal or task is not relevant to everyone.
- some members are insecure
- some members are dominant on the basis of caste, class, education or sex.

Problem: Subgroups occur within the group and they get involved in their own conflicts.
Possible causes: Existence of different value systems that become more important than the task of the group. Existence of differences/conflicts between individuals that existed prior to the formation of the group.

An Appropriate Intervention
Having diagnosed the possible causes of the problem, the facilitator needs to decide upon how s/he will help the group go forward. This conscious act is called facilitating. Simple methods of facilitating include:

- encouraging
- bringing the conversation to the point
- mediating and peace keeping
- maintaining order
- requesting

But then in some cases, these alone are not enough. It is then that the facilitator needs to look deeper and understand clearly the unconscious processes and the levels of awareness within the members of the group, and of the group as a whole. Depending upon the facilitator's grasp of the situation, different styles of facilitation can be used.

Some essential skills of a facilitator

In order to facilitate the learning process the facilitator needs some basic skills:

- **Listening**: the ability to listen carefully and creatively; picking out positive aspects and problems, difficulties and tensions.

- **Observation**: the ability to see what is happening; to understand non-verbal clues, to monitor the group's work objectively.

- **Sensitivity/empathy**: the ability to pick up implicit messages; to see problems through the eyes of the members; to understand their feelings, ideas and values; to focus on structures and roles rather than personalities or competence.

- **Diagnosing**: the ability to define the problem; to synthesize diverse data and form a working hypothesis to choose intervention and action.

- **Supporting/encouraging**: the ability to provide verbal and non-verbal indicators of encouragement, affirmation, appreciation and caring – to assist in a joint search for solutions.
Challenging: the ability to confront, to disagree, and stop a process without being rude.

Openness: the ability to invite dialogue, to receive feedback, and to be prepared to examine one's own attitudes, values, and ideas and to change them, if necessary.

Modelling: the ability to include oneself as a model in the group, responding spontaneously, without being idealistic, or posing as an expert.
Facilitation Styles

Groups vary in the kind of support they require depending on the nature of their tasks, their composition and the problems they face. The facilitator chooses his/her style of facilitation depending upon the following factors: his/her understanding of the situation; the objective of the change, i.e., in the action or the awareness; and focus of the change, i.e., the level of group or the level of the individual. The following illustration gives an overview of the levels of facilitation:

Four different styles of facilitation have been described, taking into consideration the variables: task or awareness and individual or group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus of Interventions</th>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Awareness</strong></td>
<td>Intrusive</td>
<td>Interpretive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actions</strong></td>
<td>Interactive</td>
<td>Inclusive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Intrusive Mode: Here the facilitator diagnoses the problem with the individual and the focus of the change is at the level of awareness. With the assumption that the individual is interested in learning about becoming aware of his/her true self, the facilitator presents to the individual what he/she has observed and what that could possible indicate about that particular individual. This presentation is deliberate and impersonal and may be likened to an intrusion into the individual life space.

2. Interpretive Mode: Having diagnosed the problem at the level of awareness of the group, the facilitator deliberately chooses to be an outsider. She/he analyse the problem objectively and gives her/his interpretation to the groups impersonally.

3. Interactive mode: Here the facilitator diagnoses the problem as being at the individual level and the facilitation is thus individual centered. This mode focuses on the level of knowledge. It is benign and educative, and change in behaviour of the individual is brought about by providing support and encouragement.

4. Inclusive Mode: This mode is used when the facilitator diagnoses the problem to be at the level of the group and focus is on a change in action. The facilitator deliberately includes him/herself as a member of the group and provides model behaviour that the group could adopt. The facilitator needs to be careful that s/he does not present an ideal infallible model but one, which includes his/her feelings, values, needs, opinions and weaknesses as an ordinary human being.

(A word of caution: Using these various styles of facilitation consciously requires practice, more so with the interpretative and intrusive styles. The facilitator must remember that the style depends upon the focus of change. The facilitator must also be very conscious of his/her own self and avoid taking an authoritarian or moral stand during facilitation.)
Designing a Training Programme
Designing a Training Programme

The Context
The most critical and neglected aspect of training in the development sector is its designing. We tend to borrow standard formats and designs from others and fit sessions to the requirements and availability of resource persons. Materials are organised and locations selected to suit the needs of the training institutions and budgets. While all these are important considerations, participatory training and its principles emphasise on a systematic and comprehensive designing effort to conduct and facilitate training.

> The design is one of the most important blueprints for the conduct of any training programme.
> The design reflects the philosophy and strategy of the training intervention.
> A training programme does not operate in isolation; it draws its validity from the organizational mission and its nature of interventions, key programmes and activities, primary tasks etc.
> A training design needs to be congruent with the specific objectives of the training, learning needs of the learners and learning styles of a group of learners, particularly a group of heterogeneous learners.
> In the context of the Participatory Training framework, the design of a training programme also reflects the values and principles of learning processes with adult learners.
> Some key considerations of designing that emerge are: Value and respect of learners’ experience and knowledge, creating conducive conditions for both individual and group learning, encouraging collective discovery of new knowledge, and enhancing the learners’ self-esteem and empowering them.
> The design captures both the commonalities and uniqueness of different sets of learners and is creative, flexible, reflective, challenging and dynamic based on “reality-testing” (that is steeped in actual practice in the field).

The Process of Designing
Designing is a systematic process comprised of a series of steps. The first step involves identifying the learning needs. This provides a basis for the entire design. Specific learning objectives are derived from these learning needs. These learning objectives form the broad framework for the training programme. The contents of training result from these training objectives. An appropriate sequence of training is then made, whereby it is determined
how to start a programme and end it, how to sequence the various contents to develop the pace for learning. Appropriate learning-training methods are then selected and a time frame for each content area and session is outlined. Therefore, the process can be summarized in the following steps:

**Step I: Assessing learning needs**

**Step II: Defining learning objectives**

**Step III: Identifying and sequencing contents**

**Step IV: Selecting appropriate methods**

**Step V: Setting a time frame**

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The Designing Process:
Assessing Learning Needs

The very first step in designing a training programme is to find out the different learning needs of a group of learners. Why should a training programme be conducted? This question can be answered only in the context of a particular set of learning needs. Many times trainers tend to assume the learning needs of a group of learners and outline the training objectives without delay. Despite past familiarity with a group of learners and vast experience in training, this step of assessing learning needs should be undertaken carefully and seriously.

Learning needs are those set of tasks that a person or a group of persons needs to learn in order to perform their role effectively and meet some of their specific requirements of the work s/he is involved in. In order to identify learning needs, a variety of methods are used.

Common methods of need assessment:

- **The job or task that learners have to perform** gives insight to the learning needs of the group. The nature and requirements of their work become a source of information about their learning needs. This exercise can be done for each individual learner, for the entire group of learners as well as for an organization as a whole.

- **Existing records, documents and other such materials** can also become useful sources of information. These records may be minutes of meetings, progress reports, performance review documents, etc. They can also be records of events and problems that a group of learners might already have worked on.

- **Previous training conducted** with the same learners and reports of the session could also be a source of useful information. Some time these reports may also have future learning need assessment.

Sources to assess learning needs

A wide range of sources exist that can be used to assess learning needs of a group of learners. Clearly, learners themselves are the most direct source; we can find out from the learners what they want to learn. We can find out from people who know the learners what those learners may want to learn. For example, you can ask what an animator should learn in order to become a more effective animator. Similarly, we can find out from members of the community with whom that animator works what that animator should learn further. Individual and groups who regularly interact with learners are also useful sources of information about the learning needs of the learners.
Sources of Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learners themselves</th>
<th>Individually, collectively</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Others who know the learners</td>
<td>Colleagues, community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job requirements</td>
<td>Individual jobs, organizational work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records</td>
<td>Reports, documents, past training reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Literature, newspapers, magazines</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Methods of Information Collection

Methods of information collection vary considerably and depend on sources of information. When collecting information from learners and others individuals, the following methods may be used:

- **Interviews** can be used with a group of learners by creating a group discussion. Interviews can be individual too. Discussion has very different connotations.

- **Questionnaires** are also a useful tool for collecting information from learners as well as other persons around them. Questionnaires provide an advantage of being used extensively without the necessity of face to face interaction. Unlike interviews, questionnaires can be sent far away for assessment of learning needs.

- **Pre-determined tests** are also used to assess learning needs. For example, in assessing literacy skills of neo-literate learners, simple tests are administered. Results of these tests indicate the learning needs of those learners.

- **Study of records and documents** is an appropriate method when they are being used as a source of information.

- **Field observations** in some cases are a useful method of collecting information. Learners may be observed in their own environment conducting their usual activities. This observation can be used to infer learning needs. Another variation of observation is ‘participant observation’, this means that one observes even as one participates in a setting.
Defining Objectives

All learning needs do not get fulfilled through a single training programme. Training is a systematic, structured intervention to accelerate learning. Learning takes place on an ongoing basis while training is an occasional intervention to accelerate and stimulate the process of learning. Therefore, all learning needs may not be met through training. Hence, those learning needs that are structured, systematic and planned should selected to be addressed in a training programme.

This requires a strategic appreciation of training. Sometimes learning needs can be met in a sequence of planned and phased training programmes. In such situations, a critical task is to interpret precisely and clearly, the objectives for each training programme. Accordingly, the focus of learning becomes important.

Focus of learning

Foci of learning can be classified in three ways:

- The first is learning of knowledge i.e. gathering of information, concepts, and ideas. This is “cognitive learning” - it includes mental, abstract and intellectual effort.
- The second focus of learning is called *awareness where an emotional appreciation* of the issues is done. It includes themes like motivation, commitment, values, emotions, (matters of heart) etc.
- The third focus of learning, of course, is to *build skills* in specific area, for example, skills in vaccination.

This framework of learning helps us to separate and clearly specify the objective of a particular training programme. This is important because each type of learning focus becomes necessary. Certain questions such as when, how and for whom should be exemplified in a training context. There is always some component of awareness raising and some component of skill building. The actual mix of these components varies from one particular situation to another.

**Illustration:**

A set of objectives for a training of trainer’s programme maybe:

- Developing an understanding of participatory training (cognitive level).
- Raising awareness about one’s own self as a facilitator (affective level).
- Developing basic skills related to designing a training programme (skills).
Identifying and Sequencing Contents

Once we have derived the objectives of a particular training programme precisely, the next task in designing is to identify contents, which will help us to achieve those objectives.

In identifying these contents, we once again need to look at:

- Who our learners are?
- What is their level?
- What is their starting point?
- What do they already know?
- How much detailed information can be given?
- Which combination of learning foci need to be emphasised with that group of learners?

For example, a training programme to generate greater commitment towards education of the girl child among members of the village education committee has to be conducted. This would require an emphasis on creating awareness rather than skills because the village education committee is not directly responsible for teaching; that is the job of the teacher.

The elaboration of content in order to respond to each of the objectives of training requires considerable knowledge of the subject matter. Experts may have to be consulted. Yet, it must be ensured that the contents are appropriate to the level of learners and not overly detailed.

Sequencing content

Having identified different content areas, the sequence or flow of different contents needs to be specified. The important thing in sequence is to determine how the entire training programme will flow from the beginning to the end and how one content area follows another.

There are several important considerations when determining a useful sequence. Logically sequenced contents take learners step-by-step from one pace of knowledge and learning to other. Sequencing of the contents can be done in the following ways:

- **First**, the content related to the individual is dealt with followed by content related to the group, moving on to the community and then to the society. It is a micro to macro sequencing of contents.
Illustration: Micro-Macro

Sensitisation workshop on violence against women for victims of violence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.30 am - 10.30 am</td>
<td>Welcome Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.30 am - 11.00 am</td>
<td>Tea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.00 am - 1.00 pm</td>
<td>Issues and challenges concerning women</td>
<td>Individual exercise and group discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00 pm - 2.00 pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00 pm - 4.00 pm</td>
<td>Violence against women: personal experiences</td>
<td>Individual case studies and open discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.00 pm - 4.30 pm</td>
<td>Tea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.30 pm - 6.00 pm</td>
<td>Video on strategies to combat violence against women</td>
<td>Video and open discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.30 am - 11.00 am</td>
<td>Perpetuation of violence against women: Psychological and family analysis</td>
<td>Case study and discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.00 am - 11.30 am</td>
<td>Tea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.30 am - 1.00 pm</td>
<td>Perpetuation of violence against women: Societal analysis</td>
<td>Case study and discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00 pm - 2.00 pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00 pm - 4.00 pm</td>
<td>Strategies to combat violence against women</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.00 pm - 4.15 pm</td>
<td>Tea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.15 pm - 6.00 pm</td>
<td>Individual strategies to overcome violence against women</td>
<td>Individual assignment and group discussion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

> **Second**, the sequence moves from society to community to the group followed by self. This is macro to micro sequencing.
### Illustration: Macro-Micro

**Sensitisation workshop on PRIs:**
**For first time Pradhans of Panchayats**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.30-10.30 am</td>
<td>Welcome Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.30 am-11.00 am</td>
<td>Tea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.00 am-1.00 pm</td>
<td>Perspective on development and Participatory Development</td>
<td>Buzz group and lecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00 pm-2.00 pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00 pm-4.00 pm</td>
<td>73rd constitutional amendment-salient points</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.00 pm-4.30 pm</td>
<td>Tea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.30 pm-6.00 pm</td>
<td>Video on PRI functioning</td>
<td>Video and open discussion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Day 2**

| 9.30 am - 11.00 am | Roles and responsibilities of Pradhan | Lecture                     |
| 11.00 am-11.30 am | Tea                                      |                            |
| 11.30-1.00 pm | Factors promoting and hindering functioning of Pradhans | Case study               |
| 1.00 pm-2.00 pm | Lunch                                    |                            |
| 2.00 pm-3.00 pm | Presentation of group report and discussion |                            |
| 3.00 pm-3.30 pm | Tea                                      |                            |
| 3.30 pm-5.00 pm | Plans for applying learning to own work  | Individual assignment and group discussion |

> **Third**, is a combination of these two sequences, where one starts with macro, comes to micro and then moves again to the macro level. The sequence flows from society to community to group to self and back to the group to community to society.
Choosing Methods

The next step in the process of designing is selection of appropriate methods. In this area of work, we use learning - training methods as these, address each focus of learning directly.

If the focus of learning is knowledge, concepts and information, it can be best provided through what is known as the lecture method. The other methods of acquiring new knowledge could be demonstration, field visits, etc.

- For literate participants, reading materials can also be provided. But the quality, level and appropriateness of those materials need to be ensured.
- Other aids like flip charts, posters, transparencies etc. may also be used. But essentially the purpose of lecture either by one person or by a panel of persons is to provide additional information, new knowledge and concepts to the group of learners.

When the focus of learning is awareness, the existing experience of learners can be utilized. Methods appropriate for awareness have been called structured experiences because they make structured use of either the past or the present experience of learners or others.

- Group discussion as a vehicle for learning is one such example. Learners in a small group share their experiences and critically analyze them to develop new insights and appreciate the issues involved.
- Exercises and simulations generated during the training programme are other examples of structured experiences. These make use of the experience generated during the training itself.
- Role-play is another example of structured experience. It encourages the learners to enact a part of the reality they have observed or experienced. Role-play also promotes awareness.
- The case study method is useful in situations where other people’s experiences are used for the learning of a group. The case study may be written, oral, audio, or audio-visual.

The third focus of learning is the learning of skills. No skills are learnt without practice.

- Apprenticeship is a long-standing method of learning skills. Be it playing a sitar or repairing of scooters, in both cases the model of practice is apprenticeship. During the training programme itself, methods should be such that allow practicing of skills by the learners.
Some important considerations for selecting a method are:

- Who are the learners and what is their background?
- How can a conducive learning environment be created?
- Availability of physical infrastructure, material and other resources.
- Size of the learning group and facilitator.
- What are the trainers' capacities and competence?

The choice of the learning method is a crucial determinant of an effective training programme. Following the above steps, a time schedule is set, learning materials are prepared, resource persons are identified if needed.
Important considerations while Conducting Training

Even where a high quality design has been prepared, all physical arrangements have been made, learning materials readied, the real challenge in promoting learning comes during the training itself. In conducting training expertise in the subject – matter is important. It is very necessary to make sure that the trainers along with all the resource persons deal with the subject matter well. This is, of course, conventional wisdom too. In most conventional training programs, the trainers are experts in the given subject and bring a depth of knowledge to the learners. But beyond the expertise in the subject matter, there are several other significant considerations while conducting training within the framework of participatory training methodology.

- **Conducive learning environment**
  The first consideration relates to creating a conducive learning environment. Participants often come to a training programme with fears, doubts, expectations and confusion. Some are informed about the purpose and programme of the training, and some are not, some have been forcibly sent, some have come because they thought that the programme would be useful to them. As a result, the first task in a training programme is to prepare participants to become learners.

- **Energy level of participants**
  Participants should be excited about learning. They need to be encouraged to become active learners. Energy levels may be stimulated through a variety of interventions, change of pace and methods, through some energisers (like songs, physical exercises etc.).

- **Psychological comfort and safety**
  Another important aspect of the learning environment is a sense of psychological comfort and safety. Adults learn when they find that they have a reasonably comfortable learning environment. This is particularly relevant when the new information and learning challenges one’s deep-seated attitude, emotions and values; a change of behaviour, skills, and readjustment may be required.

  Psychological safety can be significantly enhanced by promoting mutual co-operation and trust within the group, by building a level of rapport and confidence between learners and trainers and by ensuring risk-taking by participants where mistakes may be committed in the process of learning (without fear of penalty).
- **Building self esteem**
  Learning is influenced by a variety of emotions. It can be fun, pleasurable, exciting; it can be painful, or create fear and doubts. The self-esteem of learners has a tremendous impact on how they learn. When learners have low self-esteem, they do not feel confident about their ability to learn and to speak out. A learning environment can contribute to the enhancement of their self-esteem, in ways that they can pursue learning.

- **Homogenous and heterogeneous groups**
  There is no learning group where all the individual learners are alike. In fact even where strict criteria and screening procedures have been used for selection of learners for the training programme, individuals differ in their style of learning, pace of learning, their self-esteem, etc. This heterogeneity can both be a constraint as well as a resource within the learning group. It is important to recognize and understand this heterogeneity in order to facilitate individual or group learning.

- **Trainer's role and behaviour**
  In participatory training methodology, a distinction has been made between a facilitator and a subject matter expert. A subject matter expert is the trainer who provides knowledge, concepts and builds skills on the subject matter at hand. This may be done by bringing in external resource persons or by members of the training team. The role of the facilitator of the learning process is very different. This role needs special preparation and is a major challenge in participatory training. Interventions aimed at strengthening the learning environment, monitoring the learning process, adapting the pace and depth of coverage etc. all require skilful facilitation. Therefore, one of the first challenges of conducting a successful training program is preparation of the trainers to be facilitators.
Documentation of the Training Process

Generally, report writing is considered a time consuming and boring job. It is a common feeling that the report is only useful for administrators or researchers. Report writing however is a basic tool, which provides information about the event, the objectives, content, process and methodology. Report writing is important as it helps maintain records of an event and can later give rise to new ideas on reflection. A report is also a part of the organizational memory and follow -up strategy.

Types of Reports

Although there are no specific types of reports, for the purposes of training they maybe broadly classified into:

(a) Process-based training report
(b) Data-based training report and
(c) Research based training report

The process-based report is meant to help one understand the event in detail. Along with a quantitative data the main emphasis of the report is to provide its audience the elements of methodology used by the trainers in achieving the objectives. It also explains the methods and techniques used in such a way that the readers can develop the skills themselves. Most of the case-study types of training reports fall under this category. The style of presentation of this type of report outlines both process and contents in detail. This type of report is useful for those who are trainers or those who would like to see how a particular training programme was facilitated and how a particular method was used in achieving a particular objective.

The data based report is a report that informs the readers about the event. It presents the objectives of the training and outlines the content of the training with the types of methods and materials as well as the resource persons in a precise form. This kind of report stresses more on factual data. These reports are generally used by the donors, government departments, administrators etc, because of their interest in knowing the type of people involved, the outline of the content, and the use of funds for the event.

The research - based training report emphasizes the how and why of a training event. The objective of this report is to identify some of the basic learning that is used by the trainers in attaining a particular objective. The analysis of the methodology is used as a basis for this kind of research report. Researchers use such training reports to study different aspects and methods of training used by the trainers. Sometimes such reports are also prepared to evaluate the effectiveness of the training program and
whether such a training model can be used in future. At times, a report maybe a combination of all three types.

*Report writing is an art, which requires interest and skills for writing.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Some key questions to be kept in mind while writing a report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ What is the purpose of report writing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Who is the audience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ What will be the mode of presentation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ What is the availability of resources?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After answering these questions, then the next step is developing the structure of report. Various aspects need to be considered:

- Objectives
- About learners
- About trainers
- Approach of training
- Main themes and subjects
- Materials and methods used
- Process - the happening
- Evaluation
- Critical analyses of process by the trainer

The structure or format of the report depends upon the audience at whom the report is directed. The style of presentation should also meet the needs of the audience. While writing the report the following questions should be considered:

- What were the objectives of the training?
- How was the training planned?
- What were the subject / content areas?
- How were these subjects/ content areas developed?
- What were the methodologies used by the trainers?
- What was the result of the training?

**Tips on report writing:**

- Take detailed notes during the training programme.
- If possible write a brief - report daily.
- Make a record of the important activities conducted during the training on a regular basis, while the training is going on.
- Record the behavioral aspects of the trainees during the training.
- Capture processes along with the contents.
- Keep one set of learning materials for reference.
- Note details of presentations made by groups.
- Write in a simple lucid language and try to write the report soon after the completion of training.
- Seek inputs from your co-trainer/co-facilitator.
Learning Training Methods

In participatory training a wide range of methods can achieve effective learning and ensure learners’ involvement and sustained interest. In conventional training methods, lectures are a favoured method for conveying any subject matter. In participatory training there exist a number of experiential learning training methods besides the lecture method. Besides, information technology offers a number of tools, aids and techniques for learning training. Many at time it is useful to differentiate between the methods, tools/aids and techniques in order to use them effectively. The following table makes an effort to do so:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difference between methods, aids and techniques</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refer to how subject matter is going to be dealt with in a broad sense. e.g. group discussion, lecture, role play, demonstration, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Methods used in Participatory Training

The participatory training basket has a number of learning/ training methods, which include not merely lectures and group discussion but also role plays, simulation, learning games, case studies, structured exercises, instruments, field visits, practice sessions, video reviews and others, which enhance the impact of learning. The broad factor guiding the selection of methods is the focus of learning.

- If the focus of learning is increasing knowledge then the methods used are lectures, field visits, demonstrations, self-study etc.
- If the focus of learning is increasing skills, then the methods used are practice sessions, demonstrations, apprenticeship and learning by doing.
- If the focus of learning is generating awareness then the methods used are role-plays, small group discussion, case studies, simulation, learning games, structured exercises etc.
One's own experiences, both past and present and others' experiences form an important source of learning. Hence the experiential learning methods provide an opportunity for learners to: experience, share reactions and observations, reflect upon implications and consequences, discuss patterns and dynamics, develop practical and conceptual understanding and apply it to the real life situations.

Besides the focus of learning, there are some other important considerations for selecting methods, such as who are the learners, what are their backgrounds? Are the knowledge and experience base of learners being used? Which methods are helpful in building a conducive learning environment at a particular point of time? How can individual and collective learning be ensured etc? Other factors that play an important role are time, space, competence of trainers, group size, etc.
Lecture

The lecture method is an effective way to introduce new information or concepts to a group of learners. The learners always appreciate a concise, stimulating and well-delivered lecture.

The lecture method is primarily used to build upon the learners' existing base of knowledge. The lecture must always be suited to the learners' level. Asking some relevant and elective questions can help elicit information about this. Thereafter, the trainer will have to make constant efforts to situate the new information in the context of the training by continuously providing examples and illustrations to relate it to the learners' context.

Why are lectures useful?
• for conveying new information and concepts to the learners
• when learner's experiences need to be situated and related within a theoretical framework
• for stimulating and motivating learners for further enquiry
• for presenting a specialized body of external information

How to lecture effectively

• prepare for the lecture, become very familiar with the subject matter
• identify and prepare supporting aids to illustrate the points
• provide examples to link the subject matter to the lives of the learners
• ask questions to check whether the learners are following
• provoke the learners to ask questions and note key points
• maintain eye contact with the learners to assess whether they are following or not, whether they are interested or bored
• have a seating arrangement in which all can see the aids equally well and hear the lecture and maintain time stipulations
• be aware of your own body movements and facial expressions
• speak clearly, loudly and use simple language
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Advantages</strong></th>
<th><strong>Disadvantages</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>† allows the presentation of facts, information and concepts in a relatively short span of time</td>
<td>† the world view of the speaker dominates the knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>† makes possible interaction of learners with multiple resource persons with different points of view</td>
<td>† It does not promote interaction in most cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>† can be used with illiterate learners</td>
<td>† the input may be too abstract if not related to real life situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>† a diverse range of supportive materials can be used to support the content areas e.g. slides, charts, posters, etc.</td>
<td>† the pace of learning is determined by the trainer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>† a large number of learners can be accommodated at one time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Small Group Discussion

This is the most commonly used method in structured experiences because a small group discussion (SGD) uses learners’ past experiences in a very deliberate manner. In this method the learners are divided into groups and given a real life situation or relevant subject matter or a question to discuss. The learners on the basis of their own past experiences, attitudes and values carry on this discussion. They then arrive at new knowledge and new insights.

Why are Small Group Discussions used?
- this method can be used for sharing information and experiences
- provides an opportunity to learners to use their knowledge and experiences
- Promotes collective analysis and reflections

How are Small Group Discussions conducted?
- clarify the group task, specify time and the form of presentation
- divide the large group into small groups
- let the groups discuss (through sharing and analysis) the matter under consideration for the stipulated time
- let all the groups reassemble into a large group
- let one or two individuals from each group present their discussion to the large group
- add any relevant points that you feel have been left out and use the group presentations to arrive at a theoretical framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• it allows the learners to be in control, of pace, content and focus</td>
<td>• it is time consuming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• it provides opportunities for the learners to express themselves</td>
<td>• if facilitation is poor then the process may lead to unexpected ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• it allows the learners to validate their knowledge and skills</td>
<td>• there is a possibility that dominant or aggressive members may take over the process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• it allows learners to clarify, reflect and reconfigure their experiences</td>
<td>• members might not be serious and that affects the quality of the discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• it helps in promoting a sense of belonging in a group</td>
<td>• requires more space to accommodate different groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• it can be empowering once the learners realize their own ability for critical thinking and change through this medium</td>
<td>• in mixed gender groups, women may be ignored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• trainer needs special skills to facilitate, debrief and summarize the discussions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case Study

In the case study method, others’ experiences are provided to the group in the form of a case. These experiences are reflected upon and analyzed by the learners to derive new principles. The learner’s own experiences, values, feelings form the basis for analysis of others’ experiences. Case studies may be presented in written or verbal forms or even through the medium of films or songs, depending upon the background and levels of learners.

How is the case study used?
- present the case study to the group
- divide the group into smaller groups and give them the task (question)
- allow individuals to reflect and discuss
- debrief and consolidate

Why is the case study needed?
- can be used to convey complex theoretical concepts in a simple way
- allows the group to reflect on it’s the study’s suitability in their situation
- complex situations can also be discussed
- sharpens learners’ analytical and diagnostic skills
- exposes learners to situations they might not ordinarily experience in their own lives.
- exposes learners to similar experiences elsewhere to enable them feel a sense of solidarity and validation
- helps in creating new knowledge through collective reflection, analysis and synthesis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• simple</td>
<td>• may be difficult to find an appropriate case study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• can be used with illiterates and relatively unsophisticated people</td>
<td>• the case study may be too general to focus on a specific issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• can be used for cognitive learning too</td>
<td>• case studies written by someone else contain the writers perceptions, feelings and ideologies which may lead to distortion of the objective reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• low cost, culturally appropriate</td>
<td>• hypothetical or prepared case studies may be too idealistic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Role Play

One of the most common training methods is the role-play. Role-play is useful where learners share a somewhat similar experience, which is difficult to recall because of its emotional nature. It can also be used where the uniform possibility of recall is less likely among the learners. Role-play as a structured experience implies learning from re-enactment of past experiences. It is a powerful training method if the focus of learning is awareness.

Why is role-play useful?
• Helps learners utilize their experiences of real life situations
• The enactment is helpful in developing awareness at individual and group levels
• Complex social issues can be discussed in a non threatening environment

How to use role-play effectively?
• Select a suitable role play depending on the purpose of learning
• Identify role enactors/performers
• Prepare briefs and explain situation to the learners
• Explain the points to be observed by the observers
• Set the stage and start role-play
• Consolidate and debrief

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>it is energizing</td>
<td>there is a possibility of the role play becoming entertainment, which vitirates learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it helps the suppressed and illiterate to express their feelings</td>
<td>participants can get too involved in their roles and later lose objectivity during analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it is simple and low cost learning tool</td>
<td>acting can become an end in itself and participants can overact or distort the roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it focuses on problems which are real</td>
<td>if points for observations are not clear, it may dilute the focus of learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it presents complex issues simply and in a short while</td>
<td>it does not need materials / props or advance preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses of Role-play</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✷ Role-play is used in a variety of ways. A small group enacts role-play about a situation while other learners observe the role-play. A discussion follows that enactment. In this case, the role-play is similar to a demonstration where learning occurs through observation. The trainers themselves, or a few outsiders or a handful of learners, with or without trainers, can enact such a role-play.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✷ Role-play is also used to stimulate discussion on complex issues. A brief enactment by trainers or learners or both, can be used to stimulate further group discussion on similar issues and experiences that learners share. This method of learning is essentially group discussion where role-play merely acts as a stimulant or catalyst for the discussion that follows. Its use in this case is similar to an aid e.g. charts, video clipping, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✷ In certain situations, a role-play is also used to practice skills. For example, the adult education instructors can practice how to motivate adult learners by enacting different roles. The prime method of learning here is practicing and receiving feedback from learners and trainers after that practice.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✷ A role-play may also be used as a re-enactment of past experiences. For instance, all learners enact a past situation with which they are familiar. For example, a group of 25 illiterate women learners can be divided into five sub-groups to prepare and re-enact the experience of being a wife in the family. Since all the learners share this experience and all of them are involved in re-enactment, learning occurs here through the twin steps of preparation and re-enactment.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Simulation

Simulation is a method based on 'here and now' experience shared by all the learners. It involves assigning very definite roles to each participant and having them act out a situation according to the given roles. It is carried on long enough to generate responses and reactions based on real feelings - participants need to genuinely 'get into their role'. However, learning takes place without any serious risk because the situation is after all 'make-believe'.

The original meaning of the method is derived from the situation used to train aircraft pilots. Since real life training is too risky, any error during learning would prove fatal, realistic conditions of air and pressure are created inside a 'simulator' cockpit, and the pilot learns how to fly.

Why use simulation?

- to understand complex societal issues
- to learn in a situation which is very similar to real life
- learning takes place at different levels.

How is simulation carried out?

Steps involved in "Pre-Simulation" phase

- Select a simulation according to the purpose of learning and develop a conceptual framework
- Prepare a list of rules/ instructions and briefs for all roles. Assign roles to different learners. Try to include all learners, as simulations should not have observers
- Define the situations and events in which the characters will interact. There may be more than one situation/ event
- Decide the location for simulation. The site/s chosen should be as close to real life sites of the chosen situations
- Keep necessary props ready at hand, to be used for the different roles.

Conducting a Simulation

- Assign roles, give each person the appropriate role brief. Ask the participants to study their roles and try to 'become' the role
- Do not let different roles study each other's briefs
- Prepare name tags or some other appropriate means of identifying the
different roles
• Brief the participants about the situation and let them start acting according to their interpretation of the role
• Stop the simulation when appropriate, or when the essential part is over, or if it is getting out of hand

After the Simulation
• Give the participants time to get out of their roles
• Ask the participants to share their feelings, ask direct questions, for instance, what happened to you during the simulation, how did you feel etc.
• Try to draw parallels with real life while analyzing the patterns in the data
• Collate these feelings, give necessary inputs and summarize.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• allows for an explorations of real</td>
<td>• it requires that participants cooperate and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>life situations, social processes</td>
<td>internalize the roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and behaviors in a relatively non</td>
<td>• it is a difficult method and requires an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>threatening manner/situation</td>
<td>experienced and skilled trainer to conduct it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• it allows for the study of very</td>
<td>• mismatch of roles may lead to poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>complex social processes</td>
<td>performances by the learners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• it is entirely controlled by the</td>
<td>• critical skills are needed to handle feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learners’ pace</td>
<td>generated in the process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• it involves activity and universal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• learning takes place at the awareness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>level</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Instruments

‘Instruments’ are usually in the printed format containing clear instructions and a series of questions, either with multiple choices, or requiring brief replies. Participants fill in the questionnaire individually or in twos/threes for each other. There are instructions at the end of the instruments explaining how to examine answers, assign scores and tally them. The connotations of different scores are also clarified.

The purpose is to generate data about each learner. However, it is left to the learners to decide how to use this information about themselves. Some examples of instruments are the personality trait inventory, interpersonal perception form, T-P questionnaire for Leadership, FIRO-B, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>can be very an effective method for learning more about one's own self through systematic self-examination, reflection, and in cases, feedback.</th>
<th>can only be used with a group which is highly literate.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the learner does not feel external pressure or compulsion.</td>
<td>needs a certain amount of honesty and genuine interest of the learner to generate meaningful data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning takes place at the individual's own pace according to his/her interest and inclination.</td>
<td>works better with people who can learn intellectually at the level of abstractions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very difficult to design instruments.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learning Games

Learning games are seemingly fun activities involving all participants. There are rules and regulations and the games may or may not include a competitive element. They are usually employed to convey feelings and processes which are implied within the game being played, e.g. trust games, leadership games and so on. After the game has been played, it is essential that the feelings of the participants are debriefed and consolidated, otherwise it will remain either an icebreaker or an energizer.

Why play learning games?
- To explain group processes
- To explain issues of trust, social relationships and so on.

How does one play the learning games?
- Explain the game
- Involve the learner in the game
- Consolidate, debrief and derive learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- It is lively, fun and involves everyone's participation</td>
<td>- finding or designing appropriate games is not very easy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Complex issues can be explained in a simple manner</td>
<td>- the focus of the game must be clear to the trainer otherwise debriefing will be confused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- It allows the participants to experience the matter under consideration within the course of the training itself, (also called here-and-now experience)</td>
<td>- may generate lot of feelings obstructing learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- entertaining without learning is not the objective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other Methods

- **Demonstrations**
  Demonstrations refer to methods in which the learners are provided with an opportunity to observe for themselves the object or processes that they wish to learn. It can be real-life or make believe situations or models. This method is useful in conveying complex information simply, as seeing and understanding is considerably easier than hearing and understanding. Examples include - demonstrating what a biogas plant or a sanitary latrine is through a model, demonstration by the trainer on how to conduct an interview demonstrating how to conduct safe deliveries to dais (TBA)- through models, etc.

- **Field visits**
  Field visits refer to demonstrations in practical situations i.e. where the subject matter actually occurs or happens in real life. Some examples of field visits are as follows - taking the learners to a hospital in the course of a health training, or taking learners to villages in the course of a Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) training, or taking community level workers to the block office for a training on local government etc. The emphasis again is on observing, asking questions and understanding.

- **Apprenticeship/ Practice**
  Apprenticeship and practice are methods of paramount importance for skill training. The difference between the two lies in that practice is done in controlled situations while apprenticeship is done in real-life situations and is usually of longer duration. It is essential in both methods that the learner be supervised by the trainer and given feedback. These two methods can be used for any skill. In the course of a training it is easier to incorporate practice, while apprenticeship can be an entire training in itself.
Debriefing and Consolidation

Debriefing and consolidation following an experiential learning situation are very necessary. If the learners have gone through a moderate to intense emotional experience, it is necessary to allow them some time to get out of that emotional framework otherwise they can get too involved and carried away.

- Debriefing consists of eliciting from the learner or learner group- their feelings, emotions, experiences and whatever else the trainer might feel is necessary.
- The debriefed information must be noted down publicly (published).
- The trainer must provoke analysis on the information presented, enabling the derivation of broad principles (processing).
- The debriefed information needs to be put into a real life context, so that people can relate to it in a broader framework (generalizing).
- Wherever necessary the trainer must provide additional information for the learners to arrive at the broad principles (generalizing).
- The debriefed information needs to be put into a real life context, so that people can relate to it in a broader framework (application).

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is the broad theoretical framework followed by the trainer. The conceptual framework relates to the learning objectives and the content area. It forms the basis for debriefing and analysis. The objective of the trainer is to put the debriefed information into this theoretical framework after analysis and additional information. It is essential that it be situated in/ related to real life.

A Scheme for questioning

- What did you see? How did you feel? What did you say during discussions?
- These questions help in bring out the participants perceptions and experiences. The information gathered is noted down on a board or chart paper.
- Why did you feel the way you did? What did you say? What did you do during the discussions?
- These questions enable participants to analyze the reasons and causes behind their behavior, perceptions, experiences.
- Do such situations occur in real life, when? Has it happened to you?
- Questions like these try to relate the experience to reality and try to draw parallels with real life.
- Why do you think this happens?
- This is an attempt to analyze and derive principles and conclusions which form the core of the new learning. It may be necessary at this point to provide additional information.

As a trainer it is important to note that one must complete the debriefing cycle in all the structured experience methods. An outline of steps involved in debriefing is provided:

**DEBRIEFING CYCLE**

- Application Planning how to use learning
- Experiencing Involvement/Activity Phase
- Generalising Deeping conceptual and practical understanding and developing principles
- Publishing Sharing Reactions and Observation
- Processing Analysis Why? How? Discussing patterns and dynamics Deriving learnings
Trainers' Preparation and self Development
Roles of Facilitator in Participatory Training

Given the learning agenda, trainers have to play several critical important roles to ensure that the learners and learning process that are at the centre of all training. The trainer needs to ensure:

- the critical analytical faculties of learners are being stimulated;
- the experiences of learners are being valued, analysed, shared and reflected upon;
- the self-image of learners is being enhanced in the process and they begin to feel empowered;
- Conditions conditions of learning are being created and nurtured.

The trainer needs to keep in mind that these multiple roles are being played not only during the training, but prior to the training and after the training as well. Each of the roles during training and after the training require a particular set of critical competencies and can also be seen as comprising of the three components: knowledge, awareness and skills. An effective performance of any one role involves the use of multiple competencies. Some of the key roles of trainers are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roles of Trainers</th>
<th>Manager</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Training designer and planner</strong></td>
<td><strong>Manager</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- assessing learning needs and evolving learning objectives</td>
<td>- mobilizing financial resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- planning strategy of training</td>
<td>- planning dates/venue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- working out the detailed contents, sequencing them and choosing appropriate methods</td>
<td>- scheduling logistics and required administrative support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- involving learners in the designing phase</td>
<td>- ensuring communication with learners, resource persons regarding the venue, travel details etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- identifying and preparing resource persons</td>
<td>- planning and co-ordinating arrangements for field trips, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- preparing and selecting learning materials and aids</td>
<td>- arranging for needed support systems at the venue (separate formations for men and women; arrangements for children accompanying mothers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- preparing self and the trainer-team</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitator</td>
<td>Educator/teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>• facilitating group processes, to keep the group together and let it grow (participation, communication, decision-making, leadership, conflict-resolution, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• summarizing, synthesizing information</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• appreciating and encouraging individuals and the group as whole.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• initiating discussions, articulating unsolved group issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>• creating a learning environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>• pursuing, nudging, pushing, cajoling, building their confidence so that participants can perform beyond their existing potential</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• managing the heterogeneity within the group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friend/philosopher/guide</strong></td>
<td><strong>Learner</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• being accessible to learners, listening to them, their anxieties, thoughts, problems, joys, by being a sounding board</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• sharing one's own life experiences with the learners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• providing a sense of direction, by giving feedback</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• paying attention to what others are sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• being open to and accepting differing frameworks of analysis and perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• seeking additional information, clarifications, asking questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• acknowledging others' abilities and appreciating them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• accepting &quot;learning structures&quot; set up by others during the training and supporting each learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recorder/documenter</td>
<td>Evaluator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• observing keenly the flow of content and processes taking place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• maintaining detailed roles on a regular basis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• involving learners in the recording/documenting efforts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• exchanging roles with co-trainers and incorporating it into further planning of sessions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• learning more in depth about individuals, group, learning process, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• using data for monitoring, evaluation purposes,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• addressing additional issues of individuals and groups that may arise in the process.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• planning evaluation/monitoring mechanisms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• involving learners in the evaluation process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• soliciting formal and informal reviews to assess every event and ongoing process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• matching feedback with objectives of the session and assessing if learners are learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• sharing reflections/analysis with co-trainers and feeding it into further planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• providing relevant feedback to the trainer team and learners to facilitate the learning process.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manager</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• managing all material and financial logistics related to food, accommodation, travel, doctors medical aid etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• managing time and space for each session (planning ahead where group discussions will be held and preparing those rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• preparing all related audio-visual materials and testing it prior to a session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• co-ordinating with key support systems to ensure that timings, facilities for breaks, field visits, return journey etc. are well planned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• addressing crisis situations, e.g., sickness, emergency telephone calls from home etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report writer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• planning a reporting format (from learners' needs expressed by learners)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• organizing all the needed information, notes, flip charts for report-writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• preparing separate reports for different constituencies, if need be (i.e. funders, learners, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• disseminating it to both learners and wider audiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Counsellor</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• developing a close rapport with learners and building their trust and confidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• being a sounding-board when required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• responding positively and understanding the origins of the anxieties or problems of the learner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• setting up sessions to enhance the self-confidence and self-esteem of the concerned individuals, in an informal manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• showing solidarity, holding hands, offering a shoulder to cry on, being sensitive to and responding to a crisis if any.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• communicating at regular intervals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• disseminating feedback from individuals and organisations to feed into the next training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• assessing future learning needs and planning additional events for the same.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• providing support through participation, involvement in designing, preparing strategy and materials, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• reflecting and evaluating the training outcome with co-trainers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As evident from the above table, the trainer has to play multiple roles. This requires a very systematic deliberate and planned process of trainer preparation in the context of participatory training.
Trainers’ Preparation

The role of trainer in participatory training is much more radical and critical than the role of trainer in traditional training. Participatory trainer has to be much more resourceful, competent and creative to fulfill his task as facilitator-manager of the training processes. The trainer has to systematically prepare himself/herself to effectively play the multiple roles, fulfill the engrossing functions and shoulder the demanding responsibilities incumbent on him.

Three Key aspects Of Trainer’s Preparation

- The first key area is theory or knowledge.
- The second key aspect or element is developing skills as a facilitator.
- The third essential aspect is none other than the self of the trainer. In fact the third is the most important, since the other two are of no use in the absence of the third one.
Understanding Self

It is important to understand the self in context of Participatory Training.

What is the ‘self’? We can call the combination of our knowledge, intellect, values and attitudes, the conscious and the unconscious, all that is within us, the ‘self’. There are a number of frameworks for understanding the self. In India our ‘rishis’ and ‘munis’ have been in quest of understanding the human self from time immemorial, and the West has had its’ celebrated philosophers. Over the last hundred years or so, a process of scientific enquiry into the self has begun, but our knowledge is far from complete. Since our actions or behavior is the only observable part of our self, scientists have focussed largely on this aspect and on the personality, as manifestations of self.

Aspects of Self

It is generally agreed that the self has three broad aspects. These three constantly interact with each other causing confusion or congruence depending whether they are in harmony or not.

• **The Cognitive Self:** This refers to our mental or intellectual capacities. Our ability to store and process information, our memory and logical abilities.

• **The Affective Self:** This refers to our emotional side, our capacity to feel and express emotions.

• **The Behavioral Self:** This refers to our behavior aspects, our actions, skills and expressed behavior.

A common assumption is that knowledge automatically leads to appropriate changes in behavior. For example, all smokers know that smoking is injurious, but they don’t stop smoking. This shows that there is an incongruence between the cognitive and affective self, hence there is no change in the behavior.

Similarly our behavior is often not congruent with the ideas we hold or the statements we make. Emotionally we may believe in something quite the opposite. Ultimately the belief dictates our behavior. As a facilitator, we may lecture on social equality but in action we may be unable to relate to our subordinates as equals: deep down we are emotionally convinced that we are superior.

**Importance of Understanding Self**

• Developing congruence between cognitive, affective and behavioral aspects of self.
Developing sensitivity towards learners and understanding their self development process.

To develop faith in others capacity to learn, grow and change.

Build the low self-esteem of the learners into a realistic and positive self-concept.

It is only when we personally experience the transformation of the self and a sense of personal growth, that we as a trainer in participatory training are convinced that others can also achieve the same. This conviction forms the basis of our articles of faith.

Self Development of Facilitator

Development of self implies several different things. In reality, these different meanings may overlap, but it is useful to understand them distinctively. In this section, some of the main meanings of self-development have been dealt with:

- Self-development is developing a realistic self-concept. This implies developing a positive and healthy appreciation of ones capabilities, limitations and the self. It means overcoming the negative self-concept in some cases, and excessively unrealistic self-concept in others.

- Self-development is acquiring internal control over oneself. In many cases, we depend on others to define ourselves. We need to develop our own definition of ourselves and not allow our definition of self-concept to be exclusively and totally determined by others. It involves creating a sense of initiative and self-control in each person.

- Self-development is to develop the cognitive, affective and the behavioral aspects of ourselves. This implies developing and sharpening our cognitive capacity; becoming sensitive to ones own emotions and feelings, developing the ability to articulate and express them and sharpening emotional capacities.

- Self-development is to create a sense of congruence between different aspects of self. This implies an internal congruence and consistency between cognitive, affective and behavioral aspects. This also implies that our behavioral aspect represents authentically our cognitive and affective aspects-our actions are congruent with our thoughts and feelings. This is one of the major challenges in self-development.

Self Development has two important aspects, understanding one self and changing oneself. Understanding one self requires collection of information about "ones own self", whereas change of behavior also requires self-disclosure. As a trainer, we need to develop "openness" in ourselves, and feedback and self-disclosure become essential in this process.
Feedback and Self-Disclosure

Feedback from others and self-disclosure are reciprocal activities crucial for self-development.

Feedback

- Feedback is a verbal or non-verbal communication with a person or group which provides them with information on how their behavior affects you.
- Feedback is also a reaction by others usually in terms of their feelings and perceptions, about how your behavior is affecting them.

Self-Disclosure

- Self-disclosure is a process of sharing of "myself" with others.
- The process of giving and receiving feedback can be illustrated through a model called the Johari Window. The model can be looked upon as a communication window through which you give and receive information about yourself and others.

The Johari Window

The Johari Window is a useful model to understand oneself, one's behavior, and openness. In its simple form, the Johari Window consists of 4 equal panes of a rectangular window as given below.

Feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Known to others</th>
<th>Known to me</th>
<th>Unknown to me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Known to others</td>
<td>OPEN</td>
<td>BLIND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown to others</td>
<td>HIDDEN</td>
<td>UNKNOWN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Self-disclosure

Open Self - This is that aspect of each person, which is known to the person and to others as well. The way I perceive others, others also perceive the same.

Blind Self - This is that aspect of each person, which the person is not aware of, but others know about it because it gets revealed to them through behavior. For example, somebody uses a particular suffix or prefix, which s/he is not aware but others definitely notice it.
Hidden Self - There are various aspects about oneself that one chooses not to reveal or disclose to others, this constitutes the hidden self. For example, I can sing well but still the group doesn't know that I am a good singer.

Unknown Self - There are aspects of the self which remain unexplored, and as such are unknown and unrevealed to both the person and to others. One may manifest these aspects or become aware of them sometime in the future.

Through the process of feedback and self-disclosure the open self can be expanded, and the blind, hidden and unknown self reduced. This would assist the individual and to others have a realistic assessment of his/her self.

Guidelines for giving Feedback

'Feedback' is information given to a person (or a group or an organisation) about how s/he affects others. It helps her/him become more aware, both of her/his strengths and of her/his weaknesses. It does not tell her/him what s/he should do, but it raises questions for her/him. It helps her/him to decide whether to change her/his behavior, so that s/he can be more effective and better able to achieve what s/he wants. If feedback is given in a positive way it can be helpful. But if it is given ineffectively, it is not only unhelpful, but can also be destructive.

Some guidelines for giving feedback:

• Do be specific. Give examples and data. For example, "When you interrupted me just now I felt annoyed". The other person is able to make use of such information if s/he chooses to do so.
• Do describe your own feelings and reactions. For example, "I felt hurt." This is what you actually know.
• Do think of the needs of the other person and of what will be useful to him/her. Feedback should be constructive.
• Do speak only of behavior, which the other person could change, for example, her/his habit of interrupting. This is within her/his control.
• Do choose the right time, climate and company to give feedback. It is most useful/ effective immediately after the event.
• Do give feedback when the other person asks for it. Even better is to ask her/him exactly what s/he wants to know.
• Do encourage her/him to check with anyone else who was present about the accuracy of the feedback. This can be done in a group. Feedback is more effective if it is received from several sources.
• Do ask the receiver if s/he understands what you are saying even though s/he may not accept it.
• Don’t make general statements, such as, “I feel annoyed because you never listen to me.” Unless you can give some specific examples, the receiver may not understand or believe what you are telling her/him.
• Don’t describe the other person’s feelings or motives or intentions. For example, “You wanted to hurt me.” You do not know this: it is only your guess or interpretation. Such feedback will probably be rejected.
• Don’t judge the other person’s actions. For example “You were wrong to shout at me,” Statements like this will only produce a defensive reaction.
• Don’t make general evaluative statements about the other person’s character. For example, “You are dominating and inconsiderate”. The person who is told this will probably react defensively.

Feedback is a way of giving help. It is a corrective mechanism for the person who wants to learn how well his behavior matches his intentions. It is a means of increasing a person’s autonomy and establishing his identity - to answer the question “Who am I?”
Planning for Self Development

Planning for self-development usually involves the following steps:

**Identify developmental areas**

One can identify aspects about oneself that one would like to develop; for example, I want to reduce my aggressiveness or I would like to be able to say no without feeling guilty, etc.

- **Prioritize these needs and assess their importance over the next few months**
  
  There may be several aspects that one would like to develop. It helps to assess what is more important and needs immediate attention. Choose one priority area to begin with.

- **Identify obstacles in self and in environment**
  
  A thorough analysis of influencing factors that are likely to block this process of self-development should be identified. This could involve looking inside oneself - behavioral patterns, attitudes, temperaments etc. The environment, other people and situations can also create obstacles in the process of self-development.

- **Planning activities**
  
  The next logical step is to decide how to go about improving an aspect of oneself. This includes detailed planning of activities to be carried out in order to achieve this goal. A time frame also needs to be developed for this plan.

- **Seek other's help**
  
  Self-development plans invariably necessitate seeking help from other persons. It is rather impossible to develop oneself in isolation, all by oneself. We need the help of others - our colleagues, family members, etc. to be able to engage in self-improvement activities.

- **Monitor self-development**
  
  Any change process has to be regularly monitored in some form or the other self-development process also needs to be closely monitored. A mechanism for such monitoring needs to be evolved at the time of planning itself.
Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring: Meaning and Importance

Evaluation: Meaning and Importance

The Evaluation Process

Follow up of Training
Monitoring: Meaning and Importance

Monitoring is essentially an ongoing process to ensure that the training programme is on track and that the pace and content of learning remain relevant to the group of learners. The pace of learning is closely observed to adapt its pace and depth to the requirements of learners.

As an ongoing assessment process, monitoring can take several forms:

- Predominantly, it is an exercise done by the trainers themselves; it may include a group of learners from time to time. The mechanism of a steering committee that reviews the day’s proceedings at the end of the day is a practical example.

**Field Illustration**
At a leadership training for presidents of village forest committees, the facilitator asked for three volunteers each day, to form a steering committee. The responsibility of the steering committee was to monitor the progress of the day’s proceedings, inside and outside the training hall. They were asked to informally enquire from other participants their opinions about the training programme, the day’s sessions, and the methods used, about logistics and other administrative and learning related components. Each evening the steering team briefed the facilitator team about the perceptions of the participants and also provided suggestions for enhancing the effectiveness of the training programme. The steering team thus played an important role in guiding the training programme in right direction and at the correct pace.

- Monitoring can also be done through daily or weekly reviews conducted in a somewhat more structured and formal manner. Clearly, one has to be on top of the learning process during the training in order to being able to utilize the feedback from monitoring.

- Monitoring by trainers and facilitators entails observing learning processes as they occur during a training programme. This observation can also focus on a specific individual or sub-group in order to ensure that they participate actively in the learning processes.

(Formal and more structured mid-term reviews can be undertaken during the training program to elicit a feedback from the participants. But this is not a substitute to the requirement of ongoing and continuous monitoring of the process of learning of various learners, their sub-groups etc.)
Evaluation: Meaning and Importance

Evaluation in the context of participatory training means the systematic eliciting and analysis of feedback information about the relevance and impact of the training in order to assess whether learning or change has been effectively brought about. It is not aimed at being judgmental; rather, it brings out strengths and weaknesses. It helps to reflect on and consolidate present learning for participants, it also helps trainers modify and revise the programme, and strengthen future programmes.

Traditional evaluation practices seek passive involvement of learners, who are usually the objects of evaluation. The evaluation is often one sided, by the trainers, who may not even share results of the evaluation with learners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of Participatory Evaluation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Shared Control</strong>: Both the learners and the facilitator maintain shared control over the process of evaluation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>Developmental</strong>: It helps in strengthening the training programme by working out the difficulties faced by learners and trainers; it is intended as a developmental intervention.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>Awareness raising</strong>: It leads to a process of collective awareness-raising. All the learners and the trainers are aware of what is happening to them at a given point of time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>Empowering</strong>: In this methodology, information is shared with the group and the learners maintain control over the process of evaluation. As an outcome, it becomes an empowering experience.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>Mobilization</strong>: Learners are motivated towards contributing to the effectiveness of the training programme through such an evaluation process.</td>
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</table>
The Evaluation Process

In evaluation of participatory training, we assess changes in the learners, and overall effectiveness of the programme, including the trainers. The assessment is not only during the programme but also after the programme is over.

In the context of learners

Some of the important aspects evaluated in the learners context include:

- **Attitudinal change:**
  Has the training brought about any changes in the attitudes and values of the learner? Does the learner perceive certain significant changes in his/her orientation to people, work, self-etc.? Is there a feeling of personal growth?

- **Behavioral changes:**
  Have the learners shown any behavioral changes during the training programme? Have they noticed any behavioral changes at home/work after the programme?

- **Conceptual development:**
  Has knowledge about relevant topics increased? Has that knowledge been useful during transactions at work? Has there been exposure to processes that the learner knew nothing about before the training?

- **Performance changes:**
  Has the training contributed to an improved performance? Have there been any distinct changes in the functioning of the individual learner in the field of work?

In the context of Training Programme

Following are some of the important aspects, which we evaluate in the context of training:

- **Training objectives:**
  Are the objectives realistic, simple and relevant? Have they been achieved? If so, to what extent?

- **Contents and training methods:**
  Is the content of the program adequate and meaningful? Are the training
methods appropriate? Do they facilitate or hamper learning?

- **Group process:**
  Are the groups functioning effectively? Is the group process contributing to learning or hampering it?

- **Trainers:**
  Are the trainers keeping pace with the learners? Are they too slow or too fast? Are they sensitive to the learners' needs? Are they competent?

- **Learning materials:**
  Are they well organized? Are the learners finding them relevant? Are materials appropriate to the contents?

- **Physical equipment:**
  Is the training venue comfortable? Are the living arrangements suitable? Are the food arrangements satisfactory? Does the physical environment facilitate learning, or hamper it?
How to Evaluate?

It is important to obtain valid and authentic information for evaluation. Individual learners have their own indicators and standards for evaluating. Therefore, for evaluation, feedback can be sought from different sources; these may be primary and secondary sources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Sources</th>
<th>Secondary Sources</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* The learner himself/herself (first and major source)</td>
<td>* Diary (maintained by the learners and others during and after training)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Colleagues (people around the learner at work and elsewhere)</td>
<td>* Records (of training and related activities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Trainers (have seen learners closely)</td>
<td>* Reports of organisations (performance and progress reports)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When to Evaluate?

Evaluation can be done daily, mid-term or immediately after the training and at specified intervals after the training.

Daily Evaluation (Monitoring)

* Daily evaluation is very helpful in identifying and resolving problems as they arise. One method to carry this out is to form a steering committee. Members either volunteer to be on the committee or are chosen by the group members. Membership could also be on a rotational basis, new members joining every day.

* The committee members seek information, reactions, feelings and suggestions from other members of the group throughout the day. They also keep track of what is happening during the session. At the end of the day, a meeting of the committee is held. Based on the concerns shared, solutions can be developed jointly and appropriate responsibilities can be taken to effect these changes.

* Sometimes, less structured ways of daily monitoring can also be used. For example, spending some time (say, half an hour) in the morning on such concerns could also be done to facilitate daily evaluation.

Mid-term Evaluation

* A quick evaluation may be held in the middle of a training programme. This
is a vital stage for consolidating the present learning, giving opportunity for catharsis to take place and ensuring the right direction for the remaining period of training.

- In a group, individual learners can share their feelings, concerns, new learning, their reactions to the content and process of the training, or any new aspects they would like to learn etc. The groups’ stage in development can also be gauged in this way.

- Mid-term review can be done orally, through a questionnaire and/or individual interviews. The results of this evaluation can be used both at the individual and group levels.

Immediately After the Training

- Soon after the training has been completed, an evaluation is held to assess its impact. This information must be elicited when experiences are fresh in the minds of the learners or it may be forgotten.

- This evaluation can be done through the oral sharing process in-groups, questionnaires, small group meetings and individual meetings. Suggestions for future training programmes can also be sought at this stage.

At Specified Intervals after the Training Programme

- Back home, after the training programme, the learner through his/her practice can gain some additional insights into the training programme.

- To strengthen future training programs, such insights are very essential. The learners and the trainers can decide upon the method of sharing this feedback. A questionnaire or face-to-face dialogue, or both may be used.

Methods of Assessment

- Oral sharing: In this method, participants evaluate the training in pairs, threes, or groups. A set of parameters or a questionnaire is given to them. Each pair or small group can have a reporter, or a spokesperson. In a large group, the trainer may take notes.

- Questionnaire: A questionnaire is a series of written questions on a given topic. These questions are either open-ended or close-ended. Open-ended questions do not have the answers categorized into specific scales. Close-ended questions provide a scale (for example, good, satisfactory, poor).

- Interview: Interview is a face-to-face method of collecting information. Specific and concrete data can be generated through this process. This technique can also be used in a field setting to cross-validate information obtained through other sources.
Observation: Observation techniques are useful methods of collecting data unobtrusively in a natural setting. Data about individual performance, group interactions and organizational culture can be collected by observation. A person observes and notes the information needed.

Records: Organizations maintain numerous records that reflect the various stages of their performance and growth. Records are by definition information obtained second hand. However, records are still valuable sources of information for an evaluator. They provide the background information with which the evaluator can compare the results of the post-training phase.

It must be recognized that no one single method of data collection is complete in itself. In combination with different methods, valuable information can be obtained. The important thing is to obtain valid and authentic information from a variety of sources and methods. This provides the opportunity for crosschecking the information. Also the cost of obtaining information should be borne in mind when choosing methods. A trade-off may be necessary between the extent of information needed and cost of obtaining it.

Monitoring and evaluation at a glance

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>• Content, processes, session flow, logistics, language</td>
<td>• Mood meter, Recap, Large group discussion, Steering committee, Observations</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-training</td>
<td>• Pace of learning, groups stages, design</td>
<td>• Using questionnaires, Large group discussion, With different groups of participants</td>
<td>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-training</td>
<td>• Achievement of objective Learning Material and logistics Trainers Understanding awareness and skills developed.</td>
<td>• Questionnaire, Large group discussion, Open space and standard considerations</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After some time</td>
<td>• Impact of training Attitudinal and behavioral change Follow-up support</td>
<td>• Field visits, Impact assessment study, Organizing meetings/ workshops.</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Follow up of Training

Follow-up of the training programme is essentially meant to continue the process of learning initiated during the training programme. Each training programme creates a set of knowledge and ideas, which learners try to implement in their own situations. These efforts may require further support as follow-up.

Everything that is done by learners and trainers after the training programme does not constitute follow-up. Follow-up is any process of intervention and support provided to an individual and/or group, to further enhance their learning process, for a specified period of time, following the training programme. Thus follow-up implies activities carried out to support the learning process after the training programme within a given time frame.

Follow-up to a training programme can be used for several purposes:

• Follow-up provides support, encouragement, knowledge and resources needed to implement the learning the learner acquires during the training programme.

• It helps to define additional learning needs during the period immediately after the training programme. It helps to continue the learning process by bringing out new learning needs.

• Follow-up is also used to assess the training programme and its impact on the learners, their work and their organizations. This helps the trainers in designing future training programmes.

• Follow-up provides an opportunity for the learners to consolidate their own experiences acquired during the training programme.

• In a broad sense, follow-up can also be used strategically. If training has larger objectives of social change, follow-up can be used in a strategic way to:

  a) Foster a feeling of solidarity among the like-minded activists and organization.

  b) Sustain the process and efforts of cadre building and formation of networks.

  c) Strengthen formation of small groups and facilitate a process of building a larger and stronger organization.
Methods of Follow-up

Follow-up can be conducted in different ways. It can be planned differently for each learner; it can also be done for the entire group of learners, it can be done for a selected sub-group as well. Methods of follow-up depend on its purpose and group of learners. Some possible methods are:

- Face to face interactions among learners themselves and between learners and trainers. Example, field visits by other learners or trainers to a site, meetings of just learners, as well as along with trainers, meetings of all learners or a sub-group. It may also involve conducting advance training, providing additional learning material, providing opportunity for apprenticeship, etc.

- The choice of the method should depend on the needs of the learners and availability of resources. Illiterate, rural and urban poor learners may require greater use of direct methods; project holders may be satisfied with indirect methods only. A combination of direct and indirect methods is generally very effective.

- It is important to plan for follow-up deliberately and consciously. It does not happen automatically. Broad follow-up plans should be considered at the time of developing the design of the program. Details of the follow-up can be again worked out at the end of the programme along with the learners.
Resource Section


31. Staley, John, 1982, People in Development - A Trainer's Manual for groups, Published by SEARCH.


