TRAINING FOR BETTER CITIES

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Training for Better Cities

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GLTN Global Land Tool Network WAC Water for African Cities

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Foreword

With the world's population having just reached seven billion and an expected population of six billion to be living in cities by 2050, cities are becoming arguably the most complex and important development context.

Cities are already home to half of humankind, with urbanization occurring in both the developed and developing world. More than 50 per cent of the population in many of the developing country cities are slum dwellers, who have little or no access to shelter, water, and sanitation, education or health services. Couple this with the constantly growing and changing nature of cities as a whole, makes it imperative for UN-Habitat to have a holistic understanding of their operating context. This is especially important when engaged in training for capacity development, an expenditure which is modestly estimated between 15-20 per cent of all UN-Habitat activities.

While training has the potential to develop the capacity of individuals, organizations, networks, and institutions, the most recent theories and studies by the *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee, Learning Network on Capacity Development, World Bank Institute* and other prominent institutions have revealed that the contrary is increasingly common. This Practice Note, explores the reasons why this trend is emerging and will guide UN-Habitat and other agencies that engage in training with local, national, and regional training organizations to better, more effective training practices.

Developing an individual's capacity is not a result of the acquisition of new knowledge alone. What results in increased capacity is the ability to apply that knowledge. To train means that there must be something learned; that there must be something changed in the trainees' understanding, application and behaviour; that there must be space within their organization for them to freely apply their new knowledge. Effective training looks not only at the individual, but at their organization and even institutional policies within which they operate under and abide by.

This Practice Note encourages UN-Habitat to look at when, why and how training is conducted. It indulges to know if training is the best solution change and not a habitual process. If training is the best option, it becomes important to determine how that training should be conducted to ensure effective application of the trainees' new capacities once they return to their place within the greater city as a whole. It is imperative to look not only at the individual level, but the entire environment, stakeholders and linkages, of which the trainees are surrounded. Understanding the greater context will confirm if training is the most appropriate response and assist in answering key questions, such as determining who should be involved as trainees. Knowing these will enable the training to be designed in the most effective way, ensuring that training entry points and delivery will have an optimal effect in transferring learning to trainees' as individuals and members of their organizations. Furthermore, by adapting these cutting edge theories into training, UN-Habitat's contribution of resources, such as finances and staff time, will be maximized, earning it the reputation of a leader in effective and efficient training.

Taking cutting edge theory in training for capacity development and making it practical, this Practice Note highlights the best practices within all aspects of effective training: assessing, designing, following up, monitoring and evaluating. Specifically engaged in the debate of training effectiveness, this Practice Note has been written clearly with plenty of practical, successful and challenging examples, lessons learned, expert opinions and advice from professionals in the field. For a list of practical questions that help guide through the training process, please see page 35-36. This is followed by appendices of suggested resources and specific tools for each stage of the training process. Each tool has practical steps outlining how to use it; however, like any tool the templates will need to be slightly modified to the specific context for valuable results.

Engage with us in the capacity development training debate and make training for our cities more effective.



The 21st century is seeing a rapid increase in urbanization worldwide, illustrated by the fact that in 2008, for the first time in history, more than half the world's population was living in urban areas. Trends such as 90 per cent of new urban development in Africa taking the form of slums are of particular concern among the current escalation of major issues, including the threats of climate change, that need to be taken into account by all concerned with urban environments and how they function. UN-Habitat's pro-poor work in urban systems is frequently in post-disaster and post-conflict situations, which massively complicates already complex issues. The agency's multi-dimensional programmes are striving to respond to the constantly changing complexity of multi-level and multi-sectoral challenges against the trend of limited, and in some cases shrinking, resources. In order to fulfil its mandate as a change agent within this demanding environment UN-Habitat needs to be able to do more with less and must, therefore, constantly Important documents like the "Berlin Statement on International Training Development"² have noted that all relevant institutions need to make the shift from seeing themselves as expert providers of learning for others, to seeing themselves and their partners travelling together on a shared learning journey. Their role should increasingly become that of facilitator, supporting Southern providers as they provide support to others. Donors and development training institutes are increasingly acknowledging that technical skills alone are insufficient to address organizational and institutional constraints to sustainable capacity development. Their staff now need the skills to work with a broad range of approaches to support the development of sustainable learning, capacity and change.

UN-Habitat is currently searching for 'smarter' ways of working and this involves looking at all aspects of its functioning, including achieving an increased and improved rate of return on

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