

Manual

Training Needs Assessment and Training Outcome Evaluation

In an Urban Context



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GLOSSARY

Capacity Development:	The process whereby people, organizations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt, and maintain capacity over time. ¹
Capacity Assessment:	A capacity assessment identifies capacity on three levels; individual, organizational and enabling environment. It is a more comprehensive approach than training needs assessment as it also looks at the interrelation between each of these levels of capacity.
Impact:	The positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. ²
Learning:	Learning is directly related to increased knowledge and understanding; improved technical, mental or social skills; or changes in attitudes or values.
Learning Objective:	Learning objectives clearly define what the goal of the training is: what the trainees are expected to learn from the training and be able to achieve after the training.
Outcomes:	The likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs. ³
Outputs:	The products, capital goods and services which result from a development intervention; may also include changes resulting from the intervention which are relevant to the achievement of outcomes. ⁴
Training:	The passing of knowledge, skills or attitudes from one party or individual to another.
Training Needs Assessment:	A training needs assessment looks specifically at the skills, knowledge and attitudes of potential trainees. It uses this information to determine if and how the issue can be improved by training.
Training Outcome Evaluation:	A training outcome evaluation is carried out to see if the objectives of the training have been met and how the training process can be improved. Results can be measured on four levels: the event and the participants' immediate reactions, the participants' learning, the participants' job performance, and the organizational performance.
Transfer of Learning:	The application of learning to the workplace.

1 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/The Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC), *The Challenge of Capacity Development: Working Towards Good Practice, DAC Guidelines and Reference Series*, Paris, 2006. Available at http://www.oecd.org/document/7/0,3746,en_2649_33721_38549470_1_1_1_1,00.html (accessed 2012-05-23)

2 OECD/DAC, *Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management*, 2002, p. 24. Available at <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/29/21/2754804.pdf> (accessed 2012-05-23)

3 *ibid*, p. 28.

4 *ibid*, p. 28.

PREFACE

Half of the world's population already lives in cities. Many cities in developing countries will continue to experience rapid growth rates. In order to manage urban development challenges – which will be exacerbated by this growing population pressure, climate change and ongoing devolution of power – the need to further develop the capacities of cities to address these will also grow. Within its mandate to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities UN-Habitat collaborates with and supports Local Government Training Institutions. These institutions are key actors in developing the capacities of the cities in their countries or regions.

Training is one of the most common types of capacity development activities, with millions of dollars spent on it each year. These interventions aim to change and improve the individual and their organization's performance. Training needs assessment and training outcome evaluation are crucial steps of the training cycle to ensure this change. However, when financial resources are scarce assessment and evaluation are often among the first steps to be cut back, in particular as they are perceived as rather complicated. The intention is, of course, to save money, but the effect might very well be the opposite, that resources are wasted on training that is not relevant and provides no verifiable results. Additionally, at this time of global financial crisis it is increasingly important for all stakeholders in training to be able to prove value for money by showing that the training investments are paying off. We cannot afford to spend time and resources on training that does not improve the work of the organizations being trained. Consequently, all actors wishing to contribute to a sustainable urban development should engage in training needs assessment and training outcome evaluation.

This manual provides the basic theory of, and affordable methods for, conducting training needs assessment and training outcome evaluation along with concrete tips and

tools to support their practical application. It builds on the UN-Habitat practice note *Training for better cities*, which presents cutting edge theory and useful tools on training for capacity development. While *Training for better cities* concerns the entire training process, this manual focuses and expands on needs assessment and outcome evaluation of training. In addition, further elaboration, details and practical examples concerning different approaches to training needs assessment, modes of training, prioritization of training interventions and examples of training outcome evaluations can be found on the website of the Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies (IHS), http://www.ihs.nl/research/ihs_publications/ihs_manuals/.

The rationale behind creating one manual for both assessment and evaluation, instead of two separate manuals, is that the two steps are closely linked and consequently the quality of one greatly affects the other. Training needs assessment produces learning objectives for the training, while training evaluation measures how well the outcomes of the training match these same objectives. Ideally the evaluation also feeds back into the next training cycle to improve the process.

This manual is primarily intended for use by training institutions providing capacity development activities related to sustainable urban development, although other actors may find it useful as well. Local governments and other organizations who are recipients of training could benefit from using this manual to assess internal needs before engaging with training institutions.

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