GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING TRAINING MANUAL FOR ABET TRAINERS

RIVONINGO PROJECT

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Table of contents

INTRODUCTION

Educators of adults in the Rivoningo project have been exposed to various inputs at various levels. They have acquired knowledge and skills that enable them to meet the needs of adult learners (ALs) in their various centres. The support programme in guidance and counselling (GAC) has been developed in order to enable them to be of more assistance to their adult learners in more ways than they have hitherto been able to. It will help them provide adult learners with access to resources and information that they require in order to advance the course of their development, both in terms of their educational needs and in terms of their training.

This manual is designed as a learning tool for the adult educators (AE) in the Public Adult Learning Centres (PALCs) around the country. It is meant to assist them in deciding on what resources and information should be made available to adult learners, how they arrive at that decision and in what form this information should be made available. It will help the adult educator to acquire skills for intervention in order to maximize their assistance to the adult learner. But it will also enable the adult educator to decide what agencies or professionals to refer the adult learner to, whenever the adult educator does not feel equipped to provide the assistance that is required. In order to do this, the manual was designed to meet certain specifications.

Seven modules were developed for the learning course. Each of these modules is further divided into between 1 and 4 units, according to varying degrees of intensity, the range of component topics and the amount of content intended for the module. Each unit, on the other hand, is presented with the components "Learning outcomes" and "Learning Activity", depending on the content of the unit.

Outcomes orientation to the workshop is an important cornerstone. By and large, the Specific Outcomes referred to in the manual are those that are stated in the Unit Standards for Adult Basic Education and Training band. They guide the content of the modules and are pitched at the NQF levels 4 to 6, consistent with the level of preparation – i.e. education and training – that the adult educators come on the learning course with. In the text, where the specific outcomes is stated as 4.3 (i.e. S.O. 4.3) it means that it is the specific outcome no. 3 on the NQF level 4; and S.O. 5.2 is specific outcome no. 2 on the NQF level 5.

In each case, these stated specific outcomes are stated at the beginning both of the module and then of the units. In this way, the learner is alerted to what he/she can expect to learn in interaction with the materials. In a minority of instances, the authors of the manual have designed additional outcomes and materials to meet these outcomes. This was done to help cement and consolidate the learning and the different components. It was also done in the interests of making the learning experience more whole for the adult educator,

considering the nature of environment they operate in and the consequent challenges they are faced with, for which practitioners usually lack the skills. In sum, the use of the specific outcomes to guide the guidance and counselling course is a conscious effort to ensure comparability of the learning course to NQF standards and certification for the guidance and counselling course.

The guidance and counselling course assumes that the adult learners come onto it with a wealth of prior knowledge, skills and applicable experience. These factors are taken into account, in an INSET way, and in order to make the learning experience more meaningful and developmental. In addition to this and the outcomes approach, the guidance and counselling course is very interactive, and it requires the learner to be an active rather than passive learner that brings his/her prior knowledge, skills and experience to bear upon the current learning experience. In this process, the adult learner will be required to role play, to fill in questionnaires and to do other activities Therefore, the course facilitates acquisition of additional skills, but it does not bring knowledge to the doorstep of the adult educator, in a passive manner. What it does, though, is to help the adult educator acquire the skills and design their own road map to help them find the information and resources that will make their PALC servicable.

Clarke, (1996) argues that Adult learning is about people learning things such as skills to write, read, do baking, become entrepenuers. It is learning about things they do not

know. Such learning is meaningless if these adults cannot access the learning site, have no fees to pay for the course, have no support to overcome barriers such as childcare, lack of basic skills, study skills, and any other skills that will bar them from learning. This guidance and counselling course is designed to enable the adult learner to be of as practical assistance to the adult learner as possible, closest to where the adult learner is located.

Through this program, the learner is given access to a range of professionals with wide experience in the various aspects of guidance and counselling and beyond, working both within a range of institutions and independently. The rich tapestry of their different backgrounds and range of approaches, while taking into account the learner's accumulated knowledge and basic understandings, combine to give the adult learner added knowledge and understandings that can only benefit the learner's professional practice.

In order to maximize gains, assessment of what is learnt is done at two levels. The assessment tasks that will be done at the end of each module are designed to assess more for content and recall. Since it can be said that material that is learnt can be forgotten, it is likely that some of what is learnt on the course could be forgotten some time after the course. The outcomes modality to training and learning will reduce the incidence of this phenomenon. The second level of assessment will reduce this incidence even further. The eighth and last session of the workshop is designed to consolidate what will have been learnt throughout the seven earlier sessions. Assessment in this session is designed to determine the level of application rather than recall. It is therefore meant to test the knowledge and skill of the learners beyond the limits of recall to the extent to which they are able to re-visualize the skills they need to apply in a particular presenting situation. The assessment task is in the form of case studies that resemble real life situations to the extent possible.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PURPOSE OF THE FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

As a conscious approach to personalize the communication, the guide addresses the Facilitator in the first person. This approach makes communication direct and engages the Facilitator in a dialogue with the guide.

This guide is not meant to be a blow-by-blow tool on every details of the training activity. Instead, it is meant as a **guide** to ensure that important considerations that must be made by the facilitator are kept in mind in preparing for training, in the training itself, and in the review of the progress of training.

Any tool is as good as the person in whose hands it is. It is proposed that facilitators take time to familiarize themselves with the contents of the training manual and the training guide. This will ensure that the participants get the best of the facilitators' expertise, experience and knowledge. The guide does not attempt to suggest levels of readiness for the facilitator.

Facilitators should use their own style to ensure complete comfort with the materials and the program. Where it is appropriate to introduce anecdotes to assist understanding and improve interaction at any point in the process, this should be done. It however cannot be done without sufficient preparation, regard being had especially to its appropriateness at the chosen time. The guide does not provide assistance in this regard.

In the same vein, facilitators should draw as much as possible from their own experience to make the interaction with the participants as exciting as possible. The facilitator should try more creative ways of interaction rather than mimic what they have previously been exposed to which originated with someone else. In this manner, they could make the learning a new and unique experience for both themselves and the participants.

SUGGESTIONS TO THE TRAINER ON HOW TO FACILITATE EACH ONE OF THESE MODULES

It is important that you read through the introduction so you understand fully how the modules are structured.

Introducing a session

· The manual has been broken down into seven modules. In designing these materials the agency was guided by the standards and qualifications for Guidance and Counselling (Unit Standard Levels 4, 5 and 6) submitted to S.A.Q.A. by the Occupation-directed ETD Standards Generating Body in January 2000.

· The number of participants in each one of the groups should be between 25 and 30. The discussion groups could then be between 4 and 6. Remember again that if you have fewer groups reporting back after discussions, you have more time for interaction with the participants. On the other hand if you have smaller groups they are more intimate and more people have a chance of giving input.

· Introduce yourself to the participants at the beginning of the session.

· Welcome the participants

· Allow each participant to introduce themselves or pair them and give them some time to get to know each other within each pair. Thereafter, let them introduce each other to the whole group. In the case where they have gone through training together as a group, and they know one another well, you might not need to go through this exercise.

· Establish ground rules and put them up for the rest of the session and add to them if necessary

· Explain logistics and how workshop will be run.

· Ask participants to state their EXPECTATIONS. Write these, and display them on a flipchart

· Display workshop OBJECTIVES on a flipchart or transparency

· Clarify what the workshop will cover and what it will not cover by comparing both expectations and objectives.

· Each module provides a number of activities, sometimes more than can be covered in a single session. You should examine each one of the activities and decide on those that you will use in the session because some modules are longer than others.

· It is your choice to use an ice-breaker at the beginning as a way of establishing some relationship and rapport, and of relaxing your participants.

Pre-Assessment

To assist learning, it is important to determine the level of readiness of the trainees for the training program. This can be done through a pre-assessment exercise which could include things like their knowledge of the subject, their experience, their levels of education as well as their expectations.

Situation Dictates

Participants are advised to remain sensitive to the situation they interact with. This is important in order to make observe what the situation requires in each case and to then respond accordingly. This is something that comes with experience as facilitators take leadership in more and more interaction opportunities.

Duration of each module

The modules are designed such that every module is completed in two hours. It is important that you prepare in advance, so you know which aspects can be covered in two hours. Some modules will tend to have more information than others and the facilitator might suggest that participants read aspects at home.

Group Participation

It is important that the whole process of training be interactive and that your participants are actively engaged in the training. Avoid teaching participants. This will ensure that they remember and learn to apply what they have learnt. Active involvement will also ensure that they do not get bored. Remember an important principle: adults learn by doing.

Group Assignment

In order to make the workshop more interactive, it is suggested that different methods of dividing the group be found. A suggested plan is included to make it possible to divide the same group in various ways, and avoid having the same participants landing in the same discussion groups each time group activities are required. In addition to using this manner of dividing the groups, it is advisable that a different group leader, scribe and reporting person are selected by the different groups each time, in order to give everyone an opportunity to play a different role.

Assessment Tools

Assessing each module will help the facilitator in establishing the extent to which the participants understood the contents of the module. To assist you, Assessment tools have been designed for each module, and are attached as Annexures 1 to 7. However, you are free to either use these tools or design your own. As already stated earlier you are at liberty to use your own experience to enrich the whole process. If participants fail to complete these, request that they submit them the next day if you train for more than a day.

Evaluation Tools

· The participants should be requested to complete an evaluation questionnaire at the end of the workshop.

· A sample of the questionnaire used in this workshop has been provided at the end of the manual as Annexure 8.

· When working out a training schedule, time should be allocated for evaluation. Participants usually want to leave as soon as training is done and might get away before they complete the evaluation questionnaire. Prepare them in advance and warn them that the process will only be complete when the evaluation has been done. They should also know that you will need their input in order to improve on your facilitation and on the whole process for the benefit of both themselves and others after them.

Overheads/Transparencies

Facilitators have individual styles. Some use overheads, others flip charts, others direct projection from their laptops, whilst yet others simply don't use these devices. Where overheads were developed and used for the introductory part of the workshop, they are provided at the end of this guide as Annexure 9. Overheads developed and used for specific modules, where this was done, are referred to at the beginning of the relevant modules. Miscellaneous transparencies that can be used for unspecified sections of the workshop are listed as Annexure 10. These have headings that correspond to specific sections of clearly marked units and can be easily distinguished from all others. In most of these instances, where a transparency sheet is available, the letters "Tr" appear in brackets after the relevant heading.

Case Studies

Not all case studies have to be covered at the workshop, especially where there are time constraints. Where the facilitator feels they could use other case studies that reflect more the issues that the participants are faced with in their daily challenges, they should feel free to do so.

Notes to Facilitator

Throughout the guide, there are notes written in to guide the Facilitator. These notes are written in *italics* for ease of identification.