United Nations

Division for Social Policy Development (DSPD)
Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)

Toolkit on
DISABILITY for **AFRICA**

UN DESA Toolkit on CRPD – TRAINERS' TIPS

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TOOLKIT ON DISABILITY FOR AFRICA

This short document presents:

1) A note on the methodological approach and facilitation strategies, which trainers are encouraged to apply when using this Toolkit.

2) Suggestions on how to design a training programme using the Modules of this Toolkit.

3) A sample workshop timetable.

1. Methodological Approach - Underpinning Principles

Active and experiential learning, centred on the learner, aims to strengthen personal ***involvement and ownership*** of the learning process. This requires interaction both between facilitators and participants and between participants.

The learning design must be based on the learners' needs as it is only through providing ***timely and relevant learning*** that participants can transfer the learning back to their place of work and make a difference. To achieve this level of relevance, it is necessary to analyse the profile of the participants and engage in conversations in which participants are asked about their situation, needs and constraints. Through such an analysis the materials and training event can be adapted to increase the likelihood participants achieving their desired results.

Quality is important and while it is expected and encouraged that ***local adaptations*** will be made to the programme, the programme is designed in such a way that participants can recognise when they have addressed the core issues affecting inclusion and the rights of persons with disabilities.

Experiential Learning Cycle

On initial reflection it would seem almost impossible to maintain the four different styles in one learning event, but it can be easier than one might imagine. David Kolb and his team, who developed the Experiential Learning Cycle, recognised that learning is a process which one has to complete.
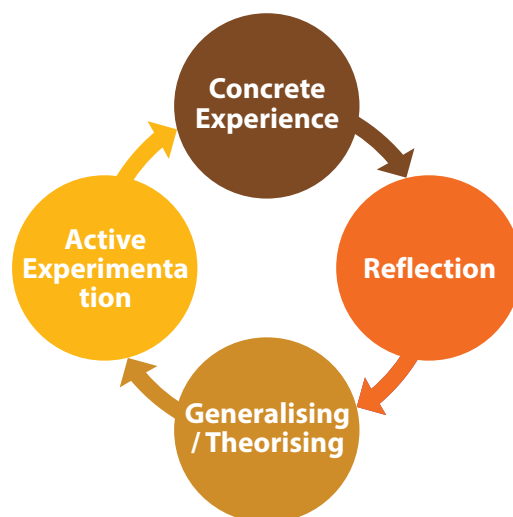
Kolb describes a process that can start from any point; but trainers often begin with **concrete experience** through trying something out, with their full participation and involvement (learners who are activists enjoy this the most). This is often a good starting point as it allows the facilitator to validate the experience of the group, and assess the levels of knowledge and understanding.

However the experience alone is not enough to guarantee that learning has taken place, and the facilitator needs to lead the group into the second stage, that of reflection. By asking questions, encouraging people to observe and make notes, those learners who are capable reflectors move into their comfort zone and can spend time on reflection and decision-making before they commit themselves to an idea.

To be able to replicate actions and situations it will help the group to understand any underlying principles or models that can explain what has happened. This is often a good point in delivering a presentation as it lends itself to filling gaps that may have been missed by the group or to challenging misinformation or urban myths about the subject in hand. It will also provide a space for

The final stage is active experimentation. This provides a chance for the participants, but especially the pragmatists in the group, to test whether the theories and ideas will work in practice and more importantly in their own situations or contexts. Even within one small part of a training session it is therefore possible to provide the appropriate space and activity for each different learning style that may be present in the group. A common mistake is always to begin with the presentation and skip the opportunity for participants to practise and develop their own ideas and theories.

Training Delivery

Working in Groups

Depending on the different target groups present, the facilitator could encourage working:

► in groups with mixed experiences and interests, *or*
► in specialised groups according to membership or profile, for subsequent comparison of the different points of view in plenary.

When breaking participants into small working groups, it is useful, especially early in the training event, to mix the groups regularly. Where possible use a transparent process for group membership selection, unless there is an obvious need to work in specialized groups, such as country teams or in accordance with roles. Distributing individually wrapped chocolates or counters can be a more creative method used to help individuals select their groups.

The size of the group should:

► give sufficient time for each participant to contribute to the discussion, provide facts, and share personal experience;
► allow both the groups and the plenary meetings to consider facts, discuss inputs, elaborate output, and agree on results.

Taking into account the above points, **the recommended number of participants** in a workshop should be not less than eight and not more than 24, with small group activities organised for between four and six participants.

Selecting Learning Activities

There are innumerable methods of training, from the very formal to the more participatory. The methods used will depend on the available trainers' capacities and skills, their roles as resource persons or facilitators, the degree and type of knowledge to be imparted, the time available, and the participants' degree of knowledge of the rights of persons with disabilities and cultural expectations.

Participatory training events are often very lively but it is necessary for the facilitators to know in advance what they aim to achieve, so as to maintain a sense of direction. It is also important to have time for questions and discussion and to present in advance a number of topics for participants to think about.

When selecting an appropriate intervention style there are a wide range of considerations to take on board. There is no right or wrong style, but some are more appropriate depending on the desired outcome.

Ice Breakers and Energisers

There is a temptation is to skip icebreaker exercises in order to get straight to the heart of the subject. Icebreakers serve an important purpose and through them it is possible to create an environment conducive to learning.

The first icebreaker should allow people to find out a little about who they will be working with through sharing a small amount of uncontroversial data (for example their names, workplaces and background), creating a space in which people feel they can share honest thoughts and opinions. Everyone has sat through the first morning of a course feeling too shy or confident to contribute, and to avoid this we need to break the ice, not just in terms of introductions, but also to create the atmosphere we want to create for the whole programme. Plato said, "You learn more about a person in an hour of play than in a lifetime of conversation". If you do not want to spend all your time 'second-guessing' what participants really think, then develop an environment in which it is acceptable to have some fun. Of course, fun is also cultural and the 'fun' you create needs to be within the bounds of cultural acceptability, developed on the basis of an understanding of cultural and group dynamics.

An additional reason for creating a conducive learning environment is energy. To be able to take in all the new ideas, tools, concepts and approaches, groups require enough energy. Without adequate energy, concentration will slip, participants will feel bored and some will probably leave the training room. As facilitator, a key part of your role is to ensure that participants stay engaged and that the energy level remains as high as possible. There are several ways of doing this. The first is through laughter; careful use of humour and fun will keep the energy level high. The second is through physical activity; if the group has been sitting for too long, find appropriate ways of getting them to stand or move around; sometimes it is good to take feedback sessions whilst standing gathered around a flipchart rather than always sitting. The third method is to encourage group members to take control, and exercise responsibility. Keep them engaged by asking for their points of view, opinions or ideas. If you see members of the group 'sleeping' you know it is time to do something different.

Electronic Presentations

One of the worst crimes in the training environment is "death by PowerPoint". These days there are no real excuses for killing off participants with long, boring, and difficult-to-follow electronic presentations. There are some simple rules to ensure that your presentations are effective. Make sure that no electronic presentations are more than 20 minutes in duration, for thereafter participants cannot concentrate or take in information. It is better to stop for an activity and then return if you have more slides. To discuss and explain one slide, you should budget for three minutes - so that means no more than seven slides in any one presentation. Many inexperienced trainers like to believe that they can and will get through more than seven slides in less than 20 minutes. It is better to make every slide meaningful rather than rush through many, and if you do not have time to properly explain a given slide and its content, it is better not to show it.

Today there are many animations and features available in electronic presentation applications. To avoid having your presentation look like something that has escaped from the circus, use a few simple fonts and colours, avoiding too may distracting slide transition techniques and choosing your images to reflect your audience. Avoid images from clip-art, they are over-used and appeal to only a small proportion of the world population.

Addressing Different Contexts

The training event aspires to create a level of consistency in the way people think about and respond to the rights of persons with disabilities. This does not mean that the programme should not be tailored to reflect the context and realities of the participants. Case studies are useful here – both written and "living" – that is the real experiences of group members - shared with others and used to achieve the objectives of the learning activity.

In participatory training activities it is important to check how participants are feeling in terms of both content and the learning processes and be willing to adapt either in the light of the feedback received. It is expected that each morning, or at the end of each day, participants will be asked questions to elicit this feedback. This does not have to be formalized or complex, but can be one or two simple questions that give participants an opportunity to give timely and ongoing feedback.

The training event is designed to be modular with the intention of creating some flexibility in the duration and content delivered. Adaptation of the training event may require changing some of the material to reflect local culture or changing the nature of some of the activities to reflect the expectations and needs of the participants.

Validation and Evaluation

There is a common misunderstanding about validation and evaluation. Validation answers the question: "Has the training done what we said it would do?"

One of the reasons that the learning objectives are categorised as outputs is that they become relevant to the process of validation. Therefore if an objectivee states that during a session participants will identify "X" it is very straightforward to verify whether or not this has taken place.

Validation can monitor learner progress, which enables the training team to take a snapshot of the group's progress and identify if any changes need to be made to the programme. This can be done in a number of ways. The form that is completed at the end of a training event is in fact a validation form (even if it is almost always erroneously called an evaluation form) but there are other quick ways of measuring progress; such as question and answer sessions, quizzes and tests, action planning, or even using 'smiley face' stickers can quickly test the temperature and how participants feel. Asking a participant to summarise the key learning from the previous day is also a quick method of validating the learning process and progress.

Evaluation refers to the transfer of learning and the impact or outcome or result of the training. This cannot be measured at the end of the programme, but only after the participants have had an opportunity to return to their work and implement their learning and action plans. If participants are asked to make action plans, this can be a good starting point for measuring the impact of the programme. Evaluation should refer to the overall aim of the programme.

Attribution is sometimes a thorny issue. How can you confirm that impact is a direct response to the training event? It may be that there are significant improvements in accessibility and rights for persons with disabilities, but it may only be in part, if at all, related to the delivery of a training event. Maybe a government has made it a priority and changed its policies. Or maybe that there has been no significant change to the situation for persons with disabilities, which could be for a number of reasons. Therefore care needs to be taken when thinking about the impact of the programme, usually it is not clear-cut.

2. Designing a training programme using the Toolkit

The programme outline provides one idea of how the modules may be linked to provide a one-week face-to-face training programme. The toolkit comprises of a total of 14 modules, consequently there is not enough time to deliver all the modules in a one-week programme. Each module has been designed as an individual stand-alone module with its own learning objectives. Most modules and their associated activities are designed to fill two 90-minute sessions, this being equivalent to half a normal training day, the idea being to provide enough flexibility for trainers to tailor training inputs to meet the needs of their target audience. Modules may be added to other training programmes, or conceived and designed as a one-, two- or three-day training programme.

We suggest that the introduction to the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the module "Cultural, Beliefs and Disability" (shown in the outline as the basis of the first day of a programme) be considered "core" modules, as they lay the foundations for understanding and commitment to the implementation of the other modules. However, this decision is advisory and dependent, to a large degree, on the knowledge and experience of the target audience. If the audience is generally new to the issues, it is recommended that shorter overviews of a wider range of subjects be provided, whereas if there is much experience and interest in one or more aspects it is advisable to dedicate more time to, and provide a deeper examination of, the issues and content of the modules. Experienced trainers will of course want to adapt the materials to reflect their own style and experience; we welcome this and suggest the inclusion of local examples of promising practice.

3. The Suggested Programme (See attached programme outline)

Day One

After the initial welcome and introductions, the first module provides an overview of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as a firm foundation for the rest of the programme.

During the afternoon session, and before moving into technical content, the module "Culture, Beliefs and Disability" will help to examine attitudes and the diversity of cultural responses to disability. This is essential if participants are going to feel comfortable sharing their own perspectives and for understanding why there may be different responses to the definition of disability and to the rights of disabled people.

Day Two

Depending on the target audience, it is suggested that the second morning be dedicated to exploration of the frameworks for implementing and monitoring (this would be especially suitable if the participants are mainly drawn from government and government agencies) or for building multi-sector partnerships (which would be useful if, in the country context, there are as yet no mature working relationships between the main government agencies, disabled peoples' organisations and other key stakeholders). A third option here would be to introduce the concept of disability-inclusive development.

This is also a good point at which to introduce the concepts and practices of accessibility in a general sense before examining it from different perspectives such as health, education and employment.

Day Three

Day Three is dedicated to exploring access and, depending on the interests and needs of the target group, the emphasis can be changed to give more or less time to health, education and employment. In the example programme, access to health has been given slightly more time, with education and employment addressed during the afternoon sessions.

Day Four

The fourth day of the programme begins by examining the legal framework and access to courts and justice. Again, depending on the target audience the emphasis may be placed on either legislation for disability rights or the issue of access to courts and justice. If both issues are of interest it is suggested that one activity be selected from each of the modules and that an introduction rather than an in-depth examination of the issues be provided.

The afternoon of this day is divided into two parts: a first session on an investigation of participation in political life, and a second and final session on the role of ICT.

Day Five

The final module examines how to develop and implement national action plans and the activities here may form a precursor to the final session of the event: the afternoon session is given over to action planning. This is an important aspect of the programme as the objective of the event is not just to increase knowledge and awareness of the convention but also to ensure that the learning is transferred and that participants are engaging in a range of activities that will contribute to improving the lives of people with disabilities.

There are many different action planning tools and techniques available, and frameworks for monitoring are addressed within the Convention. These may be selected and used for the end-of-programme activities. Some week-long events close earlier on the final day to cater for travel arrangements and may also incorporate presentation of certificates, programme validation sessions and closing remarks from hosts. Such activities have not been presented in this toolkit as they are varied and specific to the expectations of each organization.

See attached file for Sample programme.

Toolkit on Disability for Africa

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Opening Welcome Introductions & Expectations The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (M1)	Frameworks for Implementing and Monitoring the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Or Building Multi-stakeholder Partnerships for Disability Inclusion Or Disability-inclusive Development	Health and Rehabilitation Services for Persons with Disabilities	Legislating for Disability Rights Access to Justice for Persons with Disabilities	National Plans and Programs for Persons with Disabilities in Africa
Culture, Beliefs and Disability	Accessibility	Education and Disability	Participation in Political and Public Life	Action Planning
		The Rights of Persons with Disabilities to Work	Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Disability	