

**Knowledge Sharing Meeting IV**  
**Training**  
**5 November 2002**

**Highlights from Rick Sullivan's presentation on pre-service education and inservice training:**

- It can be institutionalized and sustained (included in line-item budgets)
- It can have a national impact
- It is a relatively cost-effective measure
- Both faculty and stakeholders must be involved
- In-service and pre-service training must be balanced and carried out concurrently

**Discussion on pre-service training:** The discussion focused around the question of whether or not missions are under-investing in pre- and in-service training and, if so, why.

One important perception is that pre-service training activities do not have an immediate impact on service delivery. When developing a pre-service curriculum, we must work with the Ministry of Health, and sometimes even the Ministry of Education. We must make a long-term commitment in our relation with these ministries in order to change curricula.

Choosing one type of training over another should be determined by what skills are needed. Mission buy-in to training depends on the objective of the mission. If pre-service and in-service education are part of their objectives, then they will invest. Missions make their own objectives. But the USAID system focuses on short-term results and this can negatively influence decisions particularly regarding investment in pre-service training. We need to step back from the short-term results to see the larger picture and focus on the longer term.

Revised curricula are indeed a result, though perhaps not an impact result. We need to articulate our case better when reporting results to show that things are actually taking place. There are many issues with trying to document the long-term impacts. We reap "soft" benefits like more positive interactions between providers and their clients. What is a fair measurement of results?

What is the follow-on demand with a revised curriculum? When one curriculum is successfully revised and applied do missions desire to revise other curricula?

In-service training focuses on skill. Pre-service needs more coordination around content areas among various agencies (USAID, WHO, etc.). Skills are transferable – if you teach nurses skills in FP, they can try to change the curriculum in other areas of healthcare.

There was some discussion about the specificity of training providers receive. Some sites require specific skill sets - separate clinics for STI's labor/delivery, etc. But many sites require general skill sets. It depends on where the providers are deployed.

Tensions in short-term results exist. We assume that investments in pre-service training will bear long-term results. But we must question if we are training the right people and in the right subjects. Will they still be around as active providers in a few years? We need better documentation of what happens to the students that are trained. Do they continue on to provide services?

We can legitimize skills by putting them in the curriculum. For many students there is no interest in particular skills until it is made part of the licensing requirements. One of the keys to effective pre-service training is the human resource element in recruiting the right people.

Perhaps we are underselling training to the missions by not claiming credit for what we are doing. We must present our results in a fashion that they can understand -- we are making important changes. We are creating "systems change" and down the line we will see other results. While many of our results are long-term, we must start claiming our successes in the interim.

There was much discussion about the possibility of Core money funding training since missions seem to be reluctant to invest in this. Lack of mission buy-in to training does not mean that they are not convinced of the importance. The reality is that they have overall funding constraints and training is a big investment.

Perhaps we are looking at the issues too narrowly. Maybe we need to take more of a multi-sectoral approach. If we look at pre-service too narrowly, it will not have much impact. We must look at it broadly. The reality is that people want to see results and missions feel that they must report out on annual results. But we can look at intermediate results and report on those.

Scaling up is also a big issue, especially in the larger countries.

We must determine how to balance between in-service and pre-service training. Nurses often end up in a facility and do not know how to run it because there was no management training in their curriculum.

Institutional change is a management issue that requires a great deal of time and energy. It may seem overwhelming at times. Most countries do not have national in-service training. What are we moving towards? It is better to have more pre-service training that result in less need for in-service training (the more costly of the two).

UN agencies are quite in favor of pre-service training. This is an important opportunity for partnering with other agencies. USAID should offer its expertise in a partnership with other agencies like the World Bank. Different bodies are able to do training and certification for continued licensure.

Both pre-service and in-service training and materials must be continually revised to remain updated. What kind of investment will that take? Faculty rely on the organization to provide materials. We must take good content to both the faculty and the students. Thus there will always be a need for international agencies to provide updated materials, etc. How do sustainability issues play into this?

Some limitations arise in the form of standardization across countries. It is difficult to find common standards even within one country, let alone internationally. We need to develop standards and guidelines that can be adapted for each country. We do not need to start from ground zero with each country, but there must be room for adaptation and ownership. We must involve faculty and key stakeholders in this process. But this is challenging in that each country is at a different point and it is difficult to determine a common standard of quality.

Another challenge is determining who is being recruited. Some students do not have the educational background necessary to tackle a standardized curriculum. How far back into the realm of education do we step? In some areas providers are paid very little and therefore do not even try to attract many clients.

For the future we should be looking at shifting to broader, more encompassing programs. Integration with other offices is very important, as there is a demand for training in a broad sense -- not just limited to

FP. We need both breadth and depth and we must determine how to achieve this. It is difficult for individual CAs to manage projects with great breadth.

### **Highlights from presentation by Wally Hannum and Bea Bezmalinovic on On-the-job Training and Distance Learning:**

- On-the-job (OJT) training must be planned and structured
- OJT must focus on the learner
- OJT and distance learning (DL) must be supported through incentives
- OJT is not meant to substitute for group-based training and can be linked with classroom training
- Learner support is critical in DL
- DL provides opportunity to practice new skills, reduces isolation, and links with others individuals
- Quality content is key
- We should look at how technology can help us achieve our objectives rather than using technology simply because it is available
- Blended learning approaches are most effective

### **Discussion on On-the-Job Training and Distance Learning:**

There was discussion on the cost of investments of setting up e-learning sites. Computer access to technology is essential for any of these programs to work. The World Bank has invested quite a bit of technology (computers) in some countries, but the problem remains that many of the individuals are not trained on how to use the data. It would be beneficial to use leveraging strategies – let other agencies (like the World Bank) set up the computers and then USAID can use their expertise to teach people how to use the data sets.

New and improved content is key. There must be blended approach to learning using some technology based programs and other more traditional training as well. Some use e-learning only for reinforcement. The content is critical and must be appropriate – this is where our expertise lies. We must look at pedagogy and determine the best mix of training approaches for the learners.

Training is usually group-based whereas e-learning is more of an individual experience. What are the motivations for using technology? Just because we have the capabilities does not mean that they are effective and that we should use them. While individualized tools can be very effective, we must select the right combination to meet the needs of the learners.

Issues of support and supervision still exist. Do we see technology as a means of communication or a way to distribute materials? One example brought up was how the US military connects retired military personnel with less-experienced officers to provide counseling and mentoring. This has been very effective.

We must address the access gap, but the idea that “if we build it, they will come” is unrealistic. It will take much more than that to make it an effective program. We must identify and target those areas that are useful. Furthermore, ensuring access requires initial and continued investment.

We assume that the learners have a willingness to be trained, but we must also consider those who are passive about their approach to learning. Sometimes this can be overcome through a skilled facilitator. But overcoming this in individualized learning is much more difficult. Issue of learner support is key. If there is no ultimate accountability then we run into problems. We need to disentangle supervisors and

supervision. Coaching, encouragement, and learning support do not have to be facilitated by a supervisor. This can be done through peers as well.

We must consider where institutions will be in a few years from now. It is likely that most will have access to technology. One challenge we must face is how will we develop appropriate courses to standardize training and work with changing environments.

It is important for us to expand the team of learners. Site based and on-the-job training for teams is important. In terms of technological access we must look at where we want to be in five years, and how we will get there. We must start now to stay ahead of the curve. We can start testing these projects in areas like Latin America where there is greater access to computers.

We must consider what kind of content we can leverage across contexts. A “one size fits all” approach will not work, though a general base that can be adapted is important. Our investments must be carefully planned. But we do need to try to foresee the market and be prepared.

Technology itself will not improve the quality of instruction. Some on-the-job aids could help to reduce the need for training. But these need to be *good* job aids that are linked to job expectations. Job aids need to be adapted, not just translated for the various contexts. Training has largely become “mystified.” We must look at how we can expand training methods and maintain both the real and perceived value.