

5. The Training of Trainers

The main message of the Training of Trainers

The main message of the training of trainers is: *training is an interactive process in which trainers and participants cooperate in order to further develop their insights, knowledge and skills.*

Training methods used in the training of trainers

The following methods are included in the program: giving short lectures, group discussion and group reporting, role-play exercises¹ and some expressive and relaxation techniques.

The program

The program consists of the following elements, or items:

1. Ensuring the cooperation between local trainers and international trainers;
2. Explaining the program;
3. Preparation for giving short lectures;
4. Preparation for group discussions;
5. Exercising group work;
6. Reflection of the day;
7. Preparation for role-play exercises;
8. Practising role-play
9. Discussing the problems most frequently encountered during group work;
10. Evaluation of the training of trainers;
11. An overview of the program, roles and functions of local trainers in seminars for teachers;
12. Preparation of the program of the first module.

The items

Item 1: Ensuring the cooperation between local trainers and international trainers

Purpose:

1. To establish a respectful partner relationship between international and local trainers, so that the local trainers will identify with the program,
2. To encourage the local trainers awareness that they are co-creators and therefore co-owners of the program, and that the outcome of the program depends mainly on the quality of their work and personal involvement,
3. To assess the knowledge, attitudes and concepts of the local trainers about training.

Content: The knowledge and opinions of the participants on:

1. The situation, needs and existing resources for helping children in the region,
2. Prevailing educational practices and those of dealing with psychosocial problems,
3. Training needs of teachers.

Method: Group discussion.

Item 2: Explaining the program

Purpose: To explain the whole program and its basic assumptions as described in the previous chapter to the participants, who may have authoritarian attitudes and practice methods.

Content: Important principles and the main characteristics of the program, as well as the most common errors made by inexperienced trainers.

The important principles are:

- Trainers have to respect the teachers' knowledge and experience and to be

aware how these can complement trainers' knowledge and skills. Only a synthesis of knowledge and skills from both teachers and trainers' will enrich school practice.

- The trainers should use a language that is understandable to teachers, which means that they have to avoid the use of professional jargon, and in particular, medical terms.
- Trainers must be aware that teachers learn the most from one another, and that their own training activities may serve mainly as a warming-up for the exchanges between teachers.
- Group discussions, interactive learning and other social processes are the most important vehicles of the program.
- During the program, school-based activities are enhanced, or developed. These school-based activities are aimed to at empowering teachers to provide support and assistance to children with psychosocial difficulties, and to enrich and improve the psychosocial climate of the school as a whole.
- The program also is aimed at linking the community with the school, and developing methods of mobilising resources in the community, especially through developing voluntary work.
- During the training course for teachers, the participants are given opportunities for exchange and for active involvement. The discussions are about their work with children and their families, but may also be about losses, traumatic experiences and post war stress of the teachers themselves.

Method: Lecture and discussion.

Item 3: Preparation for short lectures.

Purpose. To train the participants in preparing and giving short, or mini, lectures about

topics relevant for teachers in areas of armed conflict.

Content:

1. General information on topics relevant for teachers in areas of armed conflict, provided by the trainer and local information on the same topics provided by the participants.
2. The skill of preparing and giving lectures, using paper sheets (flipcharts), whiteboards, or blackboards.

Method:

1. Individual work on preparing a lecture. Texts are prepared by the trainer and translated into the local language are then provided. The participants are requested to choose topics they want to present during the Seminars for Teachers according to their prior knowledge and interests, and to write mini lectures about the topics they have chosen.

It is explained to the local trainers that their lecture has to be based on concepts and experiences that are close to the social and professional reality of teachers. The lecture has to connect with the prior knowledge of teachers.

2. Individual discussion of the lecture with the trainer.
3. Presentation of the prepared lectures followed by group discussion, during which the quality of the lecture is discussed; this process should be handled with delicacy in order not to trigger anxiety or offence in presenters.

Item 4: Preparation for group discussions

Purpose: To discuss the educational method of group discussion, the rules during group discussions and the tasks of the group leaders.

Content:

1. Basic principles: Group discussions are

opportunities for the participants to express themselves and exchanges experiences within a safe atmosphere where they feel accepted and respected. In addition, group discussions are meant to produce a product, such as a summary of the different views, or strategies to resolve a problem.

2. Rules: Quite often leading group work presents a new, or personally not yet experienced, form of pedagogic activity for trainers. The house rules for group discussions have to be presented to local trainers in a clear and simple way. It is advisable to give the trainers an example of house rules in writing (Box 1.).
3. Tasks of the discussion leaders, as summed up in Box 2.

Method. Lecture and discussion. The lecture is presented with examples of the most common problems, and those appearing through group work (for instance: how to stimulate shy participants, how to limit long speeches, etc.).

Item 5: Exercising group work

Purpose: Training in the skill of leading and facilitating group work.

Content: A subject chosen from the program of the seminars for teachers, for example: a traumatised child in my classroom (or in my family, or vicinity). How did I help him/her and what else could we do for him/her?

Method.

1. Small group discussion. The trainer divides the participants in two or more groups. Each sub-group is asked to choose two group leaders. The topic is then discussed for 45-60 minutes (depending on available time).
2. Discussion in plenary session. After the discussions in the sub-groups have finished, the groups are invited to present their findings in a plenary session, on posters or orally.
3. This exercise is done on the first day and repeated during the second and third day of Training of Trainers. On the second day and third day, the participants are invited to comment on the performance of the group leaders, and their feelings.

Box 1. Rules for group discussions

Group work should be run in a pleasant atmosphere.

Each group member is equal to all other group members, regardless of differences in age, gender, professional position or social status.

Each group member is free to state her/his opinion.

Each group member should tolerate and respect the opinions of other group members.

When one person talks, the others listen and do not interrupt.

All group members come on time.

The discussions are confidential.

Group work should conclude a few minutes before the agreed time; these last minutes should be dedicated to reflection on the question 'How did you feel as a member of the group?'

A member of the group makes a report that can be presented to other participants in the training seminar.

Item 6: Reflection on the day

Purpose:

1. To receive feedback from the participants,
2. To develop critical thinking in the participants,
3. To promote group cohesion and a sense of safety within the group,
4. To help the participant's get an overview of what they learned,
5. To discuss possible changes in the program for the next day.

Content: The program and the events of the day.

Method: Group discussion. All persons present are invited to comment on the proceedings of the day, and to point out positive events and difficulties, as well as strengths and weaknesses, of the program. They are also encouraged to suggest alternatives, or express desired changes for the coming days.

During the discussion the participants are encouraged to talk openly about their opinions and feelings. The trainer acts as 'role model' by discussing his/her own fears and

negative emotions, or admitting mistakes or lack of knowledge on certain matters, in front of the group.

Item 7: Preparation for role-play exercises

Purpose: To introduce the purpose and the method of role-play exercises ².

Content: Purposes of role-play and procedure (Box 3.).

Method: Lecture and discussion

Item 8: Practising role-play

Purpose: To exercise the educational method of role-play, in order to be able to apply this method during the Seminars for Teachers.

Content: A role-play about a problematic event relevant to for teachers in areas of armed conflict, for example: an experience of one of the participants with a traumatised child in which this participant did not know how to respond.

Method: Two participants are asked to act as facilitator of the role-play. They are asked only to facilitate the choice of the scenario and players, and not to dictate what should be done. After the role-play all participants

Box 2. Tasks of the group leaders

They introduce themselves to the group and invite the participants to do the same.

They give the participants basic information on group work, including the purpose and the rules.

They explain their own role as moderators and facilitators.

They ensure that one or two reporters are chosen and that each time other members of the group will act as reporters in the plenary session.

They ensure what the tangible object the group discussion will produce through exploration of the topic, for example: problem solving, sharing experiences, mutual counselling, and how this will be reported (e.g. through a poster).

They try to find an appropriate balance between creating a safe and comfortable atmosphere in the group and the efficiency of the group; through maintaining respect of rules, ensuring that the discussion does not diverge, and by keeping time.

To provide psychological assistance if some member of the group has an intense emotional break down.

To report critically about group work at the evaluation meeting of trainers at the end of the day.

are invited to offer feedback to the whole group concerning their feelings, their attitudes to the solutions for the problem presented, or suggestions for different solutions.

Item 9: Discussing the problems most frequently encountered during group work

Purpose:

To prepare the participants to cope with problems arising during group discussions.

Content: The following problems:

1. How to stop a participant who talks too much and who takes too much time,
2. How to do this when the person in question is either elderly, or someone with special authority,

3. How to do this with a traumatised person, who really needs time to express inner distress.

Method: Role-play.

Item 10: Evaluation of the training of trainers

Purpose: To receive feedback about gains, feelings and sense of satisfaction of the participants, to evaluate the impact of the training on the participants, and to develop a constructive critical attitude.

Content: The skills acquired by the participants during the training, reflections and feelings, questions and uncertainties, issues to be clarified.

Method: Plenary group discussion.

Box 3. Purpose and procedure of role-play

Purposes: Role-playing enables participants to:

- Better understand others and the dynamic of interpersonal relations,
- To empathise with others,
- To find out and elaborate new solutions for problem situations,
- To reflect on and analyse personal feelings and interpersonal processes.

Procedure of role-play. During the role-play, a real, life event personally experienced by one of the participants is acted out. It is best to start with relatively simple situations and with a minimum of characters. In order to prepare the play, the participant who experienced the event has to briefly explain the situation and the people involved. Then, other participants are requested to play the roles of these characters. Each of the participants taking part in the role-play then gets a description of the reactions of the character she/he will play. The trainer explains once more that the exercise is not concerned with acting-skills, but an instrument used for the purpose of gaining an understanding of the event in question.

Playing should not last longer than 5 – 10 minutes. After that, each player is asked how they felt while playing the character, how they perceived the other characters, and what they learned from the experience. In addition, the group is invited to comment on the event that was acted out.

In the discussion, participants may say they would have reacted differently to the event, and suggest an alternative way of coping with the situation. In that case the role-play can be repeated with the participant in question in the role of the teacher. This second play is also discussed, and in turn this discussion may lead to yet another way of problem solving that can be tried out in role-play, and so on.

To conclude the session, the trainer summarises what was learnt from role-playing and writes it down on a poster.

Item 11: An overall prospect on the program, roles and functions of local trainers in seminars for teachers

Purpose: To give the participants a clear idea about their tasks³ during the seminars for teachers and the implementation of the program in schools.

Content:

1. The program of the seminars, mentioning the topics of all modules (Table 1.) and the content for group discussions (Table 2.). It is stressed that this program is only a point of departure and that it will be adapted to the needs and circumstances of the teachers participating in the seminars.

2. The roles and functions of presenters, moderators and facilitators.
3. Previous experiences of the participants with similar programs.

Method: Plenary group discussion.

Item 12: Preparation of the program of the first module

Purpose: To prepare the first module.

Content: The initial draft of the first module prepared by the international trainer, specifying:

1. Some obligatory topics, which should be dealt with during the first module for teachers, like presentation of the program, the role of the school and the

Table 1 An example of a program of the seminars for teachers

Seminar	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the program • Philosophy and methods of work • The current role of the school and teachers in the region • The protective role of the school and teacher in the psychosocial development of the child • Introduction to group work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychosocial climate of the school • Communication in the classroom • Relationship of teacher to pupil • Cooperation with parents • Introduction to role-playing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burdens and stress on teachers • Prevention of burn out • Information about next module
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school and the family • Dysfunctional families • Child abuse in families • How poverty affects the child, his position within the school and school achievement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traumatized child, his family and his teacher • Stress and chronic adversities in childhood • Resiliency and coping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school and the community • Voluntary work in schools • Information about next module
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physically handicapped children, children with health problems, etc. • Cooperation between school and health services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The depressive child • The hyperkinetic child • The aggressive child • Fear in school / school phobia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug abuse and its prevention • The teacher and his family • Information about next module
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer relationships • Education for pro-social behaviour • Violence in school and peer bullying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation for learning • School failure, how to help the child • Specific learning difficulties • Intellectual disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child's rights • Relationships among school staff • Conclusion of the program

- teachers, the present situations of the schools and the teachers in the region.
2. Topics chosen according to the needs of the served population. Each module should include a topic dealing with teachers' job related or other burdens, stress and ways of coping⁴.
 3. Important topics the local trainers are not familiar with, for instance peer bullying and other 'taboo' topics, should not be dealt with during the first module before some mutual trust has been established among the participants.

Method: Plenary group discussion.

¹ *Expressive techniques and physical exercise.* Personally I do not use expression techniques often within my programs because I give priority to reflections, insights and psychodynamic dimensions. However, it can be useful to integrate some techniques into the program. Expressive techniques, such as drawing, may stimulate self-reflection. Physical exercises may work as energisers or ways to restore concentration, as well as help the participants to acquire relaxation skills (Van der Veer, 2003). Yet, care must also be taken that these techniques do not overload the program. Local professionals,

Table 2 Content of group discussions

Seminar	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A child at risk in my class – how does the school help the child and what else could be done? (group work) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercises in good communication (group work) • 'Difficult parents' of my pupil – how can I improve relationship and cooperation (role-playing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burdens and stresses related to my job – what helps me cope? (group work) • Evaluation of the module – what have we learnt, what will we use in our work? (group work)
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some relaxation exercises • The teacher helping pupils to cope with poverty (role-playing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The traumatised child in my classroom – how can the teacher and the school help him/her to cope? (group work) • Some cases of resilient children and children who coped well – what helped them? (group work) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introducing voluntary work in school (group work and role-playing) • Evaluation of the module – what have we learnt, what have we already used, and what will we use in the future?
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A child with serious health problems in my classroom – what can schoolmates and teachers do for him? (role-playing) • Cooperation of school and health services (group work) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My hyperkinetic pupil – how can I help him and myself? (role-playing) • My pupil was afraid of school – how did we help him, what else could be done? (group work) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention of drug abuse in our school (role-playing) • How the profession influences a teacher's family life (group work) • Evaluation of the module – what have we learnt, what have we already used, and what will we use in the future?
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we promote pro-social behaviour of pupils within the framework of the school (group work) • My experience with bullying – how I intervened, what else could be done (role-playing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing motivation for learning (group work) • Helping a child with learning difficulties or school failure (role-playing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships among school staff (group work) • Evaluation of the module • Evaluation of the whole program – what have we learnt, what have we already used, and what will we use in the future?

who have learnt these techniques in various international programs, often wish to introduce these approaches extensively. This can create unhappiness amongst the teachers because local trainers can force them to experience situations perceived as inappropriate for their age and position, such as sitting on the floor or climbing during games. Many exercises are, on the other hand, highly accepted by teachers, sometimes with great enthusiasm, because teachers have the feeling that they have concrete work to do with children.

Other methods of work. It is possible to introduce other methods of work, such as using dolls to explore a difficult situation a teacher has experienced during her/his work (Van der Veer, 2003). With regard to each of the educational methods described in this chapter, the trainer should always consider how they would be experienced and perceived by people of a different cultural or religious background.

² Role-playing is a method usually less known to local trainers (and teachers) than group discussions. Even though I have often expected that trainers and teachers

will not wish to cooperate, or participate in this form or work, it has never happened. On the contrary, role-playing has always been implemented with a lot of fun. The problem was that they often saw this kind of work as a game. They did not initially recognise it a tool for analysing a problem, for understanding the emotions of the people the play was about, for understanding the dynamic of events, or for trying out new coping strategies. As a result, the role-playing itself was usually very interesting, but later reflection and discussion, was mostly poor.

³ At the end of the first Training of Trainers the participants must form pairs, who in turn will lead the groups during the seminars for teachers. Our advice is that pairs should be mixed in a variety of ways: male and female, experienced and less experienced, school worker and health worker (or other professional combinations).

⁴ This topic is recommended for the third (last day) as it gives to teachers the feeling that the program is taking care not only of children with whom they work, but also the wellbeing of the teachers in considered.