UNIT 16 PLANNING TRAINING SESSIONS

Structure

16.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous Units, you have learnt about the various training models and how these can be used for preparing training designs. You are also familiar now with the process of needs assessment and selection of appropriate training strategies and methods. You know that each training programme consists of many sessions assigned to different content areas which may be tackled often either by you or other experts. Each one of these sessions requires planning. Can you explain why you need this planning process?

You already know that planning a training programme gives a holistic picture of the initiation, training process and outcome of the training programme. Through planning, you can assess the availability of human and material resources like time, resource persons, finances as well as the information available for the programme. You also become aware of your own style of influencing others and the on-going situation and thus increase your efficiency. It creates a conducive environment for the smooth progress of the programme and also helps in the development of the trainer as well as the trainees. Similarly, planning a training session helps in smooth or effective conduct of the sessions. Since a session is a micro unit of the total programme, each successful session contributes towards the success of the total programme. Now, let us see how one can plan training sessions effectively.

Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- list the points to be considered in organizing and planning training sessions;

- describe the factors to be considered in selecting the appropriate aids and equipment in relation to the content of the training sessions;
- state points to be considered while getting the venue ready; and
- plan the evaluation of the learners in terms of knowledge and skills gained.

16.2 HOW DO WE PLAN TRAINING SESSIONS?

In planning training sessions we need to consider:

- timing and duration;
- content;
- preparing and distributing background materials;
- identifying resource persons;
- deciding methods;
- deciding on training aids/ equipment;
- deciding on methods of collecting feedback; and
- deciding on techniques of evaluation.

Let us begin with the aspects of timing and duration.

16.2.1 Timing and Duration

Time and duration of the sessions are already fixed at the time of designing a training programme. These are important parameters to be considered by anybody who wishes to conduct the session. Can you explain why? Well, you are right. Knowing about the time and duration of your session helps you to plan your session, organize support materials, decide how much content to include, what methodology to use to transact this content and how to test if trainees have understood. You can decide whether to show a film or just discuss a related TV programme to make your point clear; use a chart to explain things or stick to chalkboard; take trainees out to the field or use a model.

Another important factor on which the above said decisions rest is the background experiences/knowledge of the trainees. The new knowledge given becomes so much more meaningful if it is related to what trainees already know or have experienced. It also helps the learner to recall new knowledge from the repertoire (already known facts) of knowledge and skills of the trainees.

Once you have decided about an appropriate plan for the session, you need to prepare the venue accordingly. For your session you probably need seating on the floor in a semicircle or if you are using a TV the seating has to be at proper distance from the set. In case of a puppet show you need a stage and for a skit or play your trainees need to sit in a circular arrangement. You may also need to display some reference materials – charts, actual objects, models, books etc., which you may want the trainees to see during and after the session. Cleanliness, ventilation and lighting are some of the other aspects of the venue which you can keep in mind. As an expert coming from outside you may not have control on these things. But as incharge or organizer you can contribute a lot. If you are sensitive towards these things you will see that the venue is clean, tidy, lighted and well ventilated. In summer, you would ensure that the venue is cool and in winter it is cosy and comfortable. Even as an expert, when you reach the venue and find it is untidy, you can spend five minutes to bring order into the room. If your session is a practical which involves using a lot of materials and equipment that can make the room untidy, plan to spend five minutes to tidy and bring order in the room before leaving. Making these preparations would require proper planning and arrangement of the venue. Remember that appropriate and thoughtful preparation of the venue goes a long way in contributing to the success of the session.

16.2.2 Content

The content of a training session depends on the objectives to be fulfilled by that session in the context of the entire training programme and also the background of the participants. As an example we can consider a training session on the concept of self-help groups and how such groups can be helpful in empowering women. How should we develop the content based on the objectives?

Table 16.1: Deciding Content on the Basis of Objectives

Objectives	Content
After participating in the training session, the learners should be able to: • differentiate self help groups (SHGs) from other groups; • explain how women organized into SHGs can become empowered.	• Nature of groups • Nature of SHGs • Formation of a self-help group and the contribution of this process to empowerment through providing: a means to credit for food or survival related activities support for community action in health, agriculture, enterprises, maintenance of common community land; confidence building by improving awareness and laying the foundation for working together as a group to get results.

As already discussed, the interest and aptitude of the audience will determine the content of the training session. Again, three questions need to be asked here regarding the information to be imparted. These are – 'what', 'how' and 'how much'. Let us explore this in greater detail.

i) *What information to convey:* Let us consider an example – a training session on SHGs for semi-literate and illiterate women. These women are to be trained in the technique of forming thrift and credit groups and handling inter-loaning within the group and account keeping on their own.

Women do generally manage to save some money from their household expenditure, which they keep aside for a 'rainy day'. But, they need to be made aware of avenues through which they can save money and see their money grow. The SHG offers a means whereby they are able to save and also manage to get loans at their doorstep and not go to the moneylenders who charge exorbitant interest rates. This is an easy concept to adopt and is totally managed by the women themselves with a little help from some NGOs working in this field. Since SHGs would be a relatively new concept and need some time for the women to understand, such a training programme will need to be conducted for a longer duration with more time allotted to concerned sessions. It will involve both theoretical and practical inputs plus field trips to understand the concept better. Thus, what is the information imparted and how new it is for the trainees will determine the coverage and depth of content.

ii) *How the information is imparted:* Depending on the content, and the background of participants, the methods of imparting information may include lectures, group discussions, practicals, question/ answer sessions, demonstrations and so on. It may also involve field trips for actual observation of ongoing programmes to understand the concept and practice.

iii) *How much information is to be imparted:* This will be determined by the following factors:

- Time available with the audience — depends on the routine of the audience and their availability at a given time of the day, week, or year.
- Type of information — whether the information is only verbal through lecture method or group discussion; whether it requires practicals and demonstrations.
- When the programme is held — week ends or week days, full day or half day etc. This will again determine how much information can be imparted and how duration is assigned, to a particular aspect of the programme.

Basic course content is the fundamental knowledge required for developing the specific knowlege for a particular activity, skill or concept.

Now suppose this specific knowledge is to be put into use in a particular activity, say forming SHGs. Let us see what one needs to know or what skills one should develop in order to form SHGs. Yes, besides knowledge of women's development (basic information component), the worker/trainer also needs to develop the skill of developing the groups step-by-step and phase-by-phase and interact with the community, as also understanding the needs of the women. The worker also needs to actually practice how to keep records and how to have liaison with other agencies. These are the application components.

Developing the actual skills through practice or simulation with respect to the basic information component is called the Application Component of the activity.

Field Visits/Field placements

Along with developing the skills of actual work in the actual setting, is the need to go and actually look at the SHGs which are working and how the trainers do their jobs. How can this be done? We can visit SHGs in different areas which cater to women from different strata of society. This is one example of a field visit. This can also be done by another method i.e. by actually working with a SHG but under the supervision of an experienced trainer. It is then that one actually realizes the hurdles that can come in the way of empowering women through a strategy such as a self-help group.

Preparation of content includes:

- its sequencing;
- selecting the right experiences;
- selecting appropriate methodologies for transacting contents;
- preparing questions for seeking feedback, reinforcing and reviewing;
- preparing assignments(s) and activities for consolidating application and follow up.

Let us find out more about these.

Sequencing: It refers to arranging the content from simple to complex, concrete to abstract, and known to unknown. Hence, look for concepts, examples and experiences which are simple, known, concrete. The knowledge and explanations which are unknown, complex and abstract should build on these.

Right/ relevant experiences: Identify experiences and knowledge that are already with the trainees. See the relation between new and old. Locate examples from the environment and from old learning experiences.

Appropriate Methods: One very good method of transacting content is the use of structured experiences, which are based on the experiential learning cycle. These include a number of methods like group discussion, case study, role play, simulation. You will learn more about these in the later part of this Unit.

But there are a host of other appropriate methods like lecture, hands-on experiences, practice, demonstration, use of TV programmes or video, etc. All these methods have their strengths and weaknesses and therefore are suited to transact different contents.

Questions: In a training session there can be questions with varied objectives. You can probe what learners have learnt or already know, if they have understood what is being transacted, to link already known to new knowledge, to explore and analyze, to reinforce, to recapitulate or review and to consolidate. Frame questions for all these right at the planning stage. Framing questions in advance ensures that all the above stated aspects are taken care of.

Assignments and activities: Small activities organized during the session will liven the learning when these are related to what one is learning. They make learning active and meaningful. So, do remember to plan these before you put your plan into action. Small activities and assignments also help in the application of knowledge.

16.2.3 Preparing and Distributing Background Materials

Background materials are usually in printed form, and are given away to the trainees, generally for future reference. Therefore, these consist of information on basic facts, processes, guidelines/ precautions, etc. The idea is that the trainer possesses important information and can refer to it as and when required.

Can you think of some background material on the theme "Making women's work visible"?

Sometimes the background materials are also in the form of some activities or games practiced during training sessions. For example, participants are asked to state five ways of avoiding discrimination against girls. It can also be about small case studies on some current problems printed on paper and circulated amongst trainees. They can be asked to read these, reflect on and analyze the information to draw some conclusions. The application can be discussed thereafter.

Refer to the example on SHGs considered earlier while discussing the content. If you were to suggest some kind of background material to be given, what would be your choice? One useful kit would be video programmes, printed descriptions of the concept of SHGs adopted by various agencies such as Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK) and National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). There may be posters depicting advantages of self help groups for women in rural areas or urban slums. Leaflets or pamphlets can be distributed to each learner. If any readily available training kits or materials are available, these can also be shared.

16.2.4 Identifying Resource Persons

You know that for any training session, availability of resource persons is very important. They must be the ones who can appropriately handle the session and achieve the objectives of the session and training. While fixing sessions with them, ensure that the time and duration of the session suits them. Equally important is to find out how they would reach the venue. If they require any materials for the session, these must be arranged.

16.2.5 Deciding Methods

There are several factors we need to consider before deciding on a suitable training method. These include: training objectives; the content; the trainers and practical requirements.

Factors in Selection of Training Method

- The training objectives – The proposed training outcomes.

  Will the selected method ensure reaching the objectives better than other methods?
- The content – Depending on the subject matter, opt for theoretically based or practically oriented methods.
- The trainers – Be sure that the trainers are competent enough to use the various communication tools.

- Practical Requirements
  - Decide if the method is appropriate to the physical environment
  - Time – preparation time or training time
  - Materials and
  - Cost limitations

Check the suitability of the training method according to objectives to be achieved. Table 16.2 indicates the types of changes which could be promoted in the trainees through appropriate training methods.

Table 16.2: Type of Change required in the Trainees and Training Methods Suggested

Type of Change Required	Methods to be Used
1. Knowledge Acquisition	Lecture, panel discussion, symposia, interview etc.
2. Skill Development	Observation, Demonstration, Practical work (Participatory work)
3. Attitudinal change	Role play, games, field work, project (participatory work)

Some important points to keep in mind include:

- Selection will depend on the size of the group.
- Ensure that by using the selected method, *information* would *reach every trainee.*
- Mode of *communication* you have selected should be *effective* for achieving the set objectives.
- Make sure that you as the trainer or the resource person *have sufficient expertise in the use of the method selected* e.g., if you have to give a demonstration, ensure that you have had enough practice in the method.
- See that the method ensures *active participation of the learners*. (Interaction is a must).
- Ensure that necessary facilities, arrangements and resources are available for you to appropriately use the method selected e.g. in case you are giving a demonstration, facilities like the demonstration table, equipment, materials etc. are all necessary for you to be successful.

Continuing with the example on SHGs, examine once again how content was decided on the basis of the objectives and how we decided that both objectives and content would become the main determinants of the training methods we use. Later in the training sessions on self-help groups, we listed the objectives and content in terms of topics we would have to cover. Now, what are the methods we should use? We may decide to have a group discussion in 3-4 small groups followed by plenary presentations where group leaders make presentations of the views of each of their groups. You, as the trainer, can summarize and add new points at the end. But, of course, this would work well if your learners already have some experience of working in the self-help groups. If your learners know nothing about SHGs, you may prefer to give a short lecture about specific points. This can also take the form of a panel discussion with plenty of opportunity for the learners to interact with you and the invited resource persons. An even more interesting way may be to give the group a prepared script which brings out the content areas and let the group volunteer as actors. Give rehearsal time and then allow the volunteers to put up the skit or drama. We will learn more about such methods in Section 16.3 focusing on planning structured experiences.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

1) List points which a trainer has to look into before attending to the content to be covered in training.

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2) Give five reasons why a training session needs to be planned.

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3) If the venue is available to you even after the training programme ends each day, what can be two advantages to you as an organizer of training?

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16.2.6 Deciding on Training Aids/Equipment

Once the content is consolidated and methodologies are discussed, it is important to select suitable training aids and equipment for the training sessions. You have already learnt how these will help you in reaching out to the target audience better and aid in better understanding. In earlier Units you have already learnt about the characteristics of different training aids, how these can be prepared/ procured and how these can be used for more effective learning. In this section let us recapitulate that knowledge once again and understand it in an overall context.

Any training programme has some theoretical inputs to develop basic understanding and some practicals for developing skills. The theoretical aspects may be handled with lecture demonstrations mainly entailing information for generating awareness about a problem and its solution. This lays the foundation for building up the session gradually before going on to the practical sessions. Let us discuss this further with an example. Suppose you are conducting a training programme for female health workers in a village. How will you begin this programme? You will ideally begin by telling them about health and what it entails. Will you show them a TV documentary on health? Will you start with a skit or a story presentation through flash cards? Or, will you just use a flip chart to give them information? Take a few minutes to think about it before you read on. The first thought that crossed your mind is, probably, the audience – the size of the group, the education level of the trainees, the information they already have, and so on. All the points pertaining to the audience that have been discussed in the earlier Units of this Block and this Unit hold true here as well.

Now, let us move on to the presentation of the content. You have already learnt that various visual and audiovisual (AV) aids can be used for imparting information to the audience. For awareness generation among an illiterate audience, a flash card story would be effective. For a semi-literate audience, flip charts can be used which will include more textual details than flash cards. For an urban audience, aids like transparencies with an overhead project (OHP) can be used. Electronic AV aids like television can be used for a larger audience. For more information on teaching/ training aids, refer to Units 10, 11, and 12 in Block 3. For demonstrations, certain equipment may be required. As a trainer, you should ensure that all the required training aids and equipment, suited to the audience and the topic of the programme, should be made ready well in time before the beginning of the training sessions.

When you are training a person in a particular field, you are trying to impart to that person expertise in being able to handle problems pertaining to that field. For this, practical experience in the relevant field is of great importance. In the practical sessions, each trainee would like to apply the information gathered in a practical situation. For example, in a training session on bank loans each trainee would like to try and fill the forms required by the bank with the help of the trainer. Another example can be a session with women farmers, who are being taught the use of new implements. Each participant would like to try out the new implement to find out its suitability and feasibility.

Besides arranging for training aids and equipment, a very important aspect that needs to be looked into is organizing the venue and the infrastructure for the training session. In fact, it needs to be determined beforehand so that based on the venue, suitable equipment can be used. For example, using an Overhead projector, a plug point and electricity supply would be required. The same would be relevant for use of television and other electronic equipment. Depending on the availability of a blackboard, stand for flip charts, flannel board for use of flannel graph, the respective training aids can be used. Remember that you will probably need the assistance of support staff like sweeper, peon, technician, typist, photocopier, etc. and may need to seek permission for use of equipment available at the venue.

The infrastructure would also include the seating and work area arrangements for the training sessions. We have discussed this while looking at the preparation of the venue. Nevertheless to remind you once again, you should check on arrangements for:

- Chairs and/ or daris for sitting during the lecture-demonstrations which would be determined by the number of trainees and location of the programme (e.g. rural or urban)
- Tables and daris for practical sessions and group activities which would be determined by the type of programme. For e.g., a practical session on teaching neo-literates in a rural or a semi-urban area can be conducted on daris. A training session on carpentry would require the provision of suitable tables and equipment used for carpentry.

Scaling and work management would vary with the theme. Thus, the aids and infrastructure need to be thoroughly planned beforehand for the successful conduct of training sessions.

16.2.7 Deciding on Methods of Collecting Feedback

Once a training session has been planned and a timetable drawn, it is time to implement it. But how will you find out whether the session is going as planned? Is the programme effective in reaching out to the target audience? What more is required to improve the programme and make it more effective? It is very important to keep monitoring the programme during its implementation to check for any deviations and take corrective action. Information feedback is an important tool for controlling the programme in action and to help in the smooth progress of the sessions.

Feedback about a programme can be collected at two levels:

1) *During the programme:* Feedback when a programme is in progress helps to make any modifications or additions to the content of the programme and the way the information is imparted. This feedback will come from the audience itself through discussion between the programmes at the end of each phase.

2) *After the programme:* The end of a training session does not mean the end of work for the trainer. This is because after the training, one has to find out the outcome of the training programme. This feedback is required for three purposes.

    a) To know the kind of sustained inputs required which are needed to help the participants adopt the new practices.

    b) To know the effect of the programme in terms of:

        - How well has the programme been received?
        - How useful has it been for the learners/ trainees?
        - How well has it been implemented whether in terms of use of new technology or in terms of attitudinal change?
        - Was the programme in accordance with the cultural values of the group?

c) To know the response of the audience in terms of the conduct of the training sessions and their suggestions on the follow-up action required.

This kind of feedback also highlights the problems in the community or those faced by the learners as well as helping to identify new leaders.

Feedback can be collected in the following ways:

- Through discussions during the programme;
- Discussions immediately after the programme;
- Survey through interview schedules, questionnaires;
- Informal group discussions during tea time or lunch/dinner time; and
- Personal observations.

Depending on the nature of training given to the learners and the time anticipated for the benefits of the programme to become visible, feedback maybe collected within a day, week, month or year after a training programme is over. This information can be gathered from:

- the participants themselves;
- the group leaders;
- village leaders;
- other members of the community;
- officials from government and non-governmental organizations working in the relevant field; and
- through personal observations during field visits by the trainers.

You will learn more about feedback and evaluation later in Unit 19.

16.2.8 Deciding on Techniques of Evaluation

We conduct training to bring about changes in the learners. We may decide to find out daily/at the middle/or after the training, what these changes are and whether the changes meet the objectives of the training. These are called daily evaluation, mid-term evaluation, evaluation immediately after training and evaluation at specified intervals after the training programme. Although you will learn all about these in Unit 19, we will give you some useful knowledge here also. You must understand that for any session, selection of evaluation procedures and tools depend on many factors. Three of these are presented here in the form of questions.

- *What types of changes do we evaluate in the learners?*
  - Conceptual development;
  - Performance changes;
  - Attitudinal changes; and
  - Behavioural changes

- *What kind of information will we use for the evaluation?*

Primary Sources	:	Learners, colleagues of learners or peers, trainers
Secondary Sources	:	Diary maintained by learners and others during and after training; records of training and other related activities and reports of organization.

- *What are the techniques of assessment?*

Learners may share their views orally. We may use a questionnaire, interview, observation or records. Unlike the others, records are second-hand information. But they can provide useful information for the evaluator to compare the results of the post-training phase.

Check Your Progress Excercise 2

1) Give one example each for what, how and how much of content.

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2) Why are training needs of participants, their characteristics, background knowledge and time duration important while planning a training session?

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16.3 PLANNING STRUCTURED EXPERIENCES

What is a structured experience? How is it different from an unstructured experience? You may have participated in training sessions where a free and open discussion takes place on a particular theme/ topic. The learners relate their own experiences, share their feelings with each other and this process contributes to fulfilling the aims and objectives of the session. As you would have realized, such a session is "unstructured". Here we can leave it to the learners because they feel comfortable sharing their experiences. However, there are other times/ topics, when participants do not have enough experience or they do not feel secure in sharing experiences. Then we have to create a "structured" experience from relating *others*' experiences in an appropriate form. We may, for example, choose a case study or ask the group to do a role play or have a discussion on a picture. In other words, we are providing a real or simulated experience for participants to analyze and draw information and conclusions in order to support desired learning.

A structured experience refers to those learning-training methods where the trainer uses experiences for the purpose of learning. The experiential learning cycle is used while planning such experiences. Are you familiar with the experiential cycle? Yes, you are right. It is as follows, simply explained. A more technical description of the cycle can be studied in Unit 17.

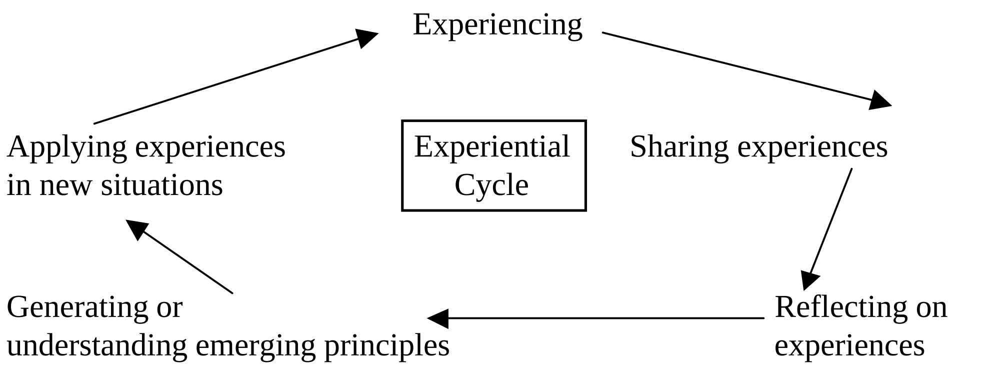

Figure 16.1: A Simple Explanation of the Experiential Cycle

Activity: List all the experiences we have provided you with to understand this Unit on planning training sessions. Can you classify these as structured experience(s)?

The structured experiences used in training, therefore, would flow as follows:

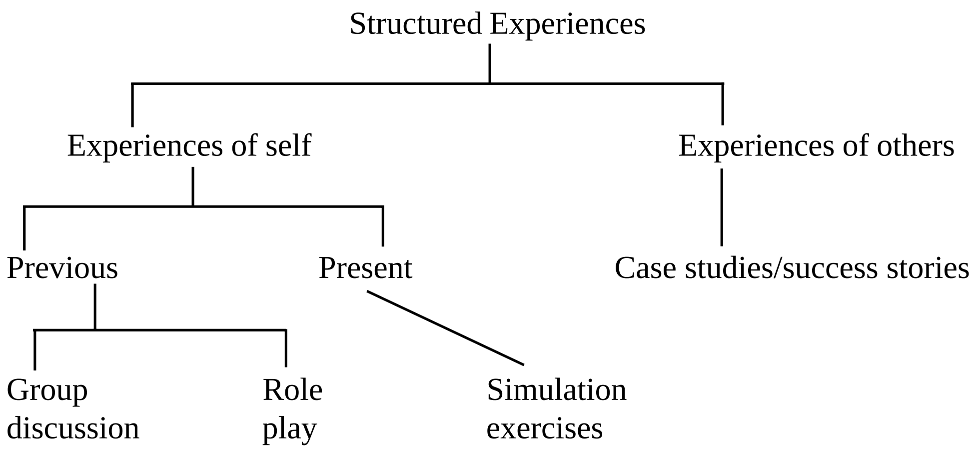

Figure 16.2: Structured Experiences

(Source: PRIA (1995) A Manual for Participatory Training Methodology, p. 72)

A more detailed elaboration of this figure can be referred to in Unit 17. While conducting a session you can decide to use any or all of these structured experiences. Of course it will depend on the need of the trainees, time available, and topic being discussed and so on.

So, what are the steps we must follow in planning structured experiences? These are:

1) Outline the purpose and the specific learning objectives.

2) Detail the contents for achieving each learning objective and describe the theoretical framework on which the content is based.

3) Choose an appropriate structured experience (role play or case study or simulations or exercise based on):

- Relevance;
- Depth/ complexity required;
- Closeness to reality;
- Number of events within the experience; and
- Available time for the exercise.

4) Determine the method(s) you will use for the structured experience. What will be the activities? What would be the process followed for each activity? When would the breaks occur in each exercise? When would each exercise be completed? How many learners would be involved in the activity?

5) Outline how you will create a set of materials that will help the learners to meet specific learning objectives?

6) Work out the trainer's responsibilities.

7) Outline how debriefing will be done: The debriefing framework for processing and analyzing data needs to be formulated. (Learners are asked about their feelings, emotions, experiences, and anything else the trainer may consider necessary during the debriefing process).

Let us see how we can use the structured experiences in conducting a session.

Use of Structured Experiences

Topic	:	Effective Use of Forest Products (non-timber)
Group	:	20 women, heterogeneous
Objectives	:	After the structured experiences, learners will be able to do the following: • list the various uses of forest products in their area; and • develop the potential for replacing trees/ plants which are removed during deforestation
Methods	:	Group discussion, role play, simulation and case study.
Group Discussion	:	Five groups of 5 each (heterogeneous) to teach everyone the potential for using forest products by discussing personal experiences. Allow time to reflect on what everyone has learnt. The trainees may make presentations on use of forest products for various uses. Add what is not included and consolidate.
Group Discussion	:	Three groups (homogenous) of those who use forest products – one group for each type of use e.g. for food; for fodder; for traditional medicines. Make group presentations before the larger group. Add what is not included and then consolidate.

At the end the trainer consolidates the total structured experiences first by discussions and then by presenting conclusions on use of forest products.

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

1) Give two reasons for using group discussion and role play for structured experiences.

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2) Why are structured experiences useful in learning?

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3) Present a plan for a session on "empowerment of women through self help groups"

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16.4 CASE STUDIES

Now, after learning all about how to plan training sessions, let us take up a case study to find out how it works. Here, we will take the example of planning training programmes for women living in urban slums on self-help group formation. A non-governmental organization (NGO) working in the field of women's empowerment decided to form women into small thrift and credit groups to encourage and enhance their savings. This NGO was already working in the slums of west Delhi and was involved in imparting literacy and vocational skills to the women living in these slums.

The NGO was already familiar with the background of the women. Most of the families are very poor with very little savings. Whenever the need to take loans arose – for emergency needs, for any family function like the engagement or marriage of a daughter or son or for repair of the house – their only option was to approach the money lenders who charged exorbitant rates of interest.

In order to overcome this problem to some extent and to make loan money easily available especially for emergency needs, the idea of an SHG was suggested by the NGO.

The NGO had to first motivate and mobilize the women to form small groups and start saving. For this, it first took the women leaders of the slums into confidence. These women had the power to influence the women of their settlements. These women leaders, in turn, motivated other women to at least attend the training sessions being held for them. The work routine of the women was taken into account to determine the meetings to be held which were scheduled for the afternoon as that is the time when most of these women are free from their household chores.

The training sessions were conducted in the courtyard of one of the participants' *jhuggis*. The advantage of holding the session in the slum itself was that even out of curiosity, more and more women would come and join the session. Thus, more women could be mobilized to be part of SHGs. The women were first asked about how they save money and where they keep this money. Most of the women said that they kept the money at home and used it as and when the need arose. Of course, they could not save it for very long as it got spent one way or the other. Also, most of the women were illiterate here, so they also did not have much of a say in money matters as far as their families were concerned.

The NGO then acquainted them with the concept of thrift and credit groups and how they function. It encouraged the women to start saving in groups and to use that money to give loans to groups members at very low rates of interest. This money could also be saved in a savings bank account in the name of the group and withdrawn as and when the need arose. Women were hesitant initially to be part of any such group. But some were enterprising enough to try it out as it seemed beneficial. Consequently, sessions were held to explain how such groups work, how to open a bank account, how to keep records of savings of individual group members, loans disbursed, instalments of loans received and so on. The women were asked to elect their own group leaders who would look after the functioning of the groups. For record keeping purposes, they elected someone who was either literate or at least semi-literate. Once the groups were formed, the leaders were taken for field visits outside Delhi for them to observe women's groups that were being run successfully. This motivated the leaders to come back and form more SHGs so that more women benefited from this whole exercise.

All this while, there were constant inputs from the NGO personnel in helping the women come together and also to keep record of the transactions taking place. But the decisions about the functioning of the groups were taken totally by the women themselves. Slowly, more and more women started joining the groups. Those who did not feel interested dropped out. Regular feedback was collected from the community to check the success of the SHG strategy among the slum dwellers. But the NGO waited for sometime to evaluate the success of the programme before implementing the same in some more slums. Also, this helped in establishing the credibility of the groups before being linked to external financial institutions which give loans to well established self help groups through NGOs or directly to the groups.

Thus, the success of the training emerged only over a period of time after the sessions were conducted. But the interest of the learners can be gauged by the kind of responses they generally give while collecting the feedback and the programmes can be modified accordingly to address their interests also in the programme.

16.5 LET US SUM UP

This Unit introduced you to the need for planning training sessions and how to go about it. The specific aspects included content, timing and duration, background materials, methods, training aids/ equipment, collecting feedback and evaluating learners. In each case the characteristics and background of the learners becomes most important. “What”, “When”, “How” in relation to training programmes are directly determined by the learners or trainers. In addition to this, there are several practical considerations to be taken into account: What will be the venue? What will be the equipment to be provided? Who are the resource persons and how will they reach the venue? What will all these arrangements cost? Who will provide the funds for these activities? So, in order to plan training sessions you cannot limit yourself to thinking only about content and methods.

16.6 GLOSSARY

Break : Interval between training sessions.

Debriefing : After conducting a programme, the organisers can explain the process and what was achieved and seek reactions from the learners – their feelings, perceptions, their analysis.

Heterogenous : A group where each individual is the same in terms of particular aspect(s).

Homogenous : A group where each individual is the same in terms of particular aspects(s).

Scaling : Adjusting to the scale of the training programme especially in terms of the number of participants.

16.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

1) Time and duration of session

   Venue and its preparation

   Past experiences

   Background materials

   Methods for transacting content

   Questions

2) It helps in thinking through:

   i) an introduction;

   ii) framing questions and exercises;

   iii) securing aids and other support materials;

   iv) preparing the venue;

   v) selecting structured experiences/ methodologies.

3) You can use it even after the training timings. You can display informative/ background materials. You can store important things and make these available when needed.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

1) What: Empowerment of women through self help groups

   How: Group discussion and field visit

   How much: Formation of women's groups, promoting empowerment through building confidence, self esteem.

2) We need to consider the requirements of the trainees in planning training sessions because the type of training, the objectives of the training, the expected outcomes of the training will all depend on this.

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

1) Relating others' experiences and learning from them. Providing a real or simulated experience. Closeness to reality, relevance.

2) Structured experiences are based on reality – real experiences of oneself or others. They are planned beforehand and not group discussions. It is sometimes possible to learn more concretely in such learning situations. Structured experiences provide opportunities to learn real life applications in an organized way.

3) Present the plan on the basis of: aim/objectives; content; methods. You can use the information in Table 16.1.