

Quality Guidelines for Training and Consultation Workshops

November, 2002

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Preface

Workshops and training activities are key tools for achieving the objectives of the UNDP/GEF project "Strengthening Implementation Capacities for Transboundary Cooperation and Nutrient Reduction in the Danube River Basin" (i.e. the Danube Regional Project) in both Phase 1 (2002-2003) and Phase 2 (2004-2006) of project implementation.

Whereas workshops and training are essential for a variety of purposes e.g. consultation, information dissemination, strategy development, capacity building etc. it is our experience that the full potential benefit is not always achieved because of insufficient preparation and execution.

Given this, these Workshop Guidelines have been prepared for the Danube Regional Project by its Training specialist, Holger Nauheimer.

We believe that by using these guidelines consistently, the respective experts, consultants, institutions etc. that organize workshops on behalf of the DRP, will have a higher probability of reaching the desired results and of optimizing benefits.

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1. Introduction

When to Use the Guidelines.

These guidelines should serve as a tool that applies to all gatherings related to any of the project outputs which fulfill <u>one</u> of the following criteria:

- an expected audience of more than 7 people,
- an intended duration of more than half a day,
- meetings to which invitations are sent out in written form (including email).

To make things easier, the term 'workshop' will be used in following for all types of gatherings.

For whom this guidelines are intended

These guidelines should be applied by those who are responsible for the organization, design and conduct of workshops under the DRP. In case these three roles are divided, different parts of these guidelines might apply to organizer, facilitator and trainer. However, it is important that the responsibilities for particular requirements such as evaluation and reporting are clearly marked **beforehand**. We have tried to simplify procedures as much as appropriate and have restricted the lengths of required reports up to the necessary minimum.

Rationale for the Guidelines

A major objective of many technical assistance projects is capacity improvement, either directly as an overall objective or as a means to achieve the overall objective. The long-term development objective of the Danube Regional Project (DRP) is

to contribute to *sustainable human development* in the Danube River Basin (DRB) *through reinforcing the capacities* of participation countries to develop effective mechanisms for regional cooperation in order to ensure protection of international waters, sustainable management of natural resources and protection of biodiversity.

Seminars and workshops are important means for enhancing capacities of people, for example through

- training,
- demonstration of pilot projects,
- exchange of views and experiences,
- dissemination of new methods or technologies, etc.

Further, they might be the central events in the project cycle during which components are planned or joint decisions are made.

It is common sense

- that poorly organized meetings are a waste of time,
- that learning can happen in a conducive environment, and that
- projects have a better chance of success if the project cycle is based on broad participation of the stakeholders involved.

For these reasons, the DRP introduces a quality management system for all its workshops, meetings, seminars and training courses in order to facilitate a significant outcome of all this events (effectiveness), to make sure that resources spent have a high rate of return (efficiency) and long-term benefits of the project are sustained (impact).

2. Defining Workshop Objectives

The first step in planning a workshop should be the definition of its objectives and the means of verification of these objectives. Without predefined objectives, there is no justification for organizing a workshop, and without success indicators, there is no possibility of measuring achievements of the workshop. We distinguish short and medium term objectives.

Short term objectives are measured at the end of the workshop and mainly describe whether

- the predefined agenda has been accomplished,
- participants have understood the central messages,
- agreements have been reached,
- plans have been elaborated,
- etc.

They can be described by specific milestones, which could be documents elaborated, certain tasks/assignments completed, etc.

Medium term objectives are measured some time after the workshop (generally, 6 months later) and describe whether

- participants apply new skills,
- participants have changed specific behaviour,
- agreed actions are taken,
- plans are implemented,
- etc.

Objectives are generally worded in present or perfect tense, e.g.

Short term

"After completion of the workshop, participants have gained skills to elaborate a concept of cost-recovery in municipal water services", or

"At the end of the workshop, a plan for implementation of new policy guidelines on XYZ has been elaborated."

Medium term

"Selected communities start to implement new cost-recovery schemes in municipal water service."

"New policy guidelines on XYZ are put into practice in the member countries of ICPDR."

Indicators for medium-term objectives could be of quantitative or qualitative nature, e.g.

"The use of the DANUBIS Information System has increased by 25% from November 2002 to April 2003, measured by the logins."

"National focal points have discussed the implementation of the WFD and designed plans for implementation of first steps."

Objectives should be SMART, e.g.

Simple

• A good objective identifies a single, simple, goal, in language that others find easy to understand.

Measurable

• It should be possible to measure the <u>extent</u> to which the objective has been achieved.

Achievable

• It should be possible to achieve the goal in the time available and with the resources at disposal.

Relevant

• The goal should be <u>directly</u> related to the DRP project.

Time-constrained

• It should be when you intend to achieve it (short term – at the end of the workshop, or medium term, after a certain, specified time).

While for medium term objectives you will need qualitative or quantitative indicators, short term objectives are mainly verified by milestones, e.g.

- draft implementation plan
- minutes of group discussions
- etc.

The workshop organizer is principally responsible for monitoring the short and medium term objectives of the workshop. However, the responsibility for monitoring medium term objectives can be delegated to other persons.

Template 1 (Defining Objectives and Indicators) will help you to define the workshop objectives and the accompanying indicators. It must be submitted when you plan to organize a workshop with support of DRP.

3. Identifying the Target Group for the Workshop

After the workshop objectives have been defined, the target group needs to be clearly described as a base (but not the final selection) for the invitation list. The selection is based on a more profound analysis of the predefined objectives. In particular this analysis deals with the following questions:

- Decisions and agreements: Who needs to participate in order to consent to certain agreements? If the final decision-makers can not participate, who has the mandate to prepare decisions?
- Planning procedures: Who needs to be involved in the planning procedure? Who can obstruct plans if not consulted? Are there any legal provisions for participation, e.g. in the European Water Framework Directive?
- Who is supposed to take specific actions or steps after the workshop?
- Will the workshop directly work with the final target group (=those who are supposed to act)? If not, you will be working with mediators, e.g. trainers, elected or mandated representatives or NGO staff. Who exactly are they? What is their mandate? How are they supposed to pass on the workshop messages to the final target group?

At this step, you should make an estimation of the size of the target group of the workshop. This will help you to select the appropriate workshop methodology.

Template 2 (Identifying the Target Groups) will help you in that process. It must be submitted when you plan to organize a workshop with the funds of DRP.

4. Selecting the Right Methodology

Depending on your expected outcomes of the workshop and the number of participants you want to invite, you need to choose the appropriate methodology. The issues to be addressed vary depending on the type of the workshop. For simplification, we distinguish two types:

a) **Consultation workshops.** These are workshops, which do not have capacity building as a first priority. Rather, they serve harmonization of procedures or laws, agreements on new standards, planning of projects or project components, reflection on project progress, establishment or reinforcement of networks, etc. In general, all participants have a near to equal information base. However, if participants share knowledge during the workshop, consulting workshops can also have aspects of human resource development.

b) **Training workshops.** Their focus is on enhancing human resources through active capacity building. Generally such workshops are guided by trainers, who have an advantage in knowledge, skills or methodology against the participants and possess certain training skills. The goal of a training workshop is always connected to a human resource development process.

The choice of methodology will reflect on the following aspects:

Participation. Stakeholder participation is essential, whether the aim is consultation or training. Without active participation of a majority of workshop participants, the chance of successful implementation of the workshop results or the training content goes to zero. This is particularly true for workshops in which agreements are to be made or plans to be devised. The importance of active learning has already been mentioned. There are several methods and tools which help to increase the participation in a workshop. They are summarized under the title "moderation technique", which describes a set of facilitation/visualization tools and principles. The principle of active participation must be considered in all DRP workshops.

Workshop size. The number of participants is a major influence factor for the success of the workshop. There is no general rule for a minimum or maximum participation. However, consultation workshops need a critical number of stakeholders, usually at least 12, to provide the necessary diversity of opinions. As a rule of the thumb, groups of more than 7 participants need to be moderated or split up into sub-groups to achieve equal participation. Groups of more than 20 participants are difficult to moderate, a higher number than that will endanger the principle of equal participation. However, there are certain workshop methods which allow much bigger groups to interact (e.g., Open Space Technology, Future Search, Rapid Time Strategic Change, etc.). They require particular preparation and management and can only be applied with a trained facilitator.

Training groups should be limited in size. One trainer can hardly handle more than 14 participants. On average, one trainer should be employed per 10 participants; in case of intensive managerial training this number should be reduced to 8 people per trainer).

Consensus building methods. To guarantee implementation of agreements after the workshop, as many decisions as possible should be taken unanimously. Workshop subjects that are expected to meet a high diversity of opinions should be discussed under application of certain negotiation techniques and consensus building tools.

5. Moderation / Facilitation

Moderation is essential for all workshops. The degree of which a workshop needs to be steered depends on the number of participants and the subjects. The role of the moderator can be exclusive or inclusive, and the person in charge of moderation can be internal or external. Exclusive moderation means that the moderator will not interfere with the content of the workshop, inclusive means that the respective person switches roles. Moderation could be shared among participants. However, if an internal participant takes over the moderation, he should abstain from interfering with the discussion for the time he takes over this role. An external moderator should be employed

- for large workshops,
- when disagreement can be expected and consensus needs to be established, and
- when internal participants can not be expected to refrain from interference with content while moderating.

If the decision for an external moderators is made, this person needs to be involved in the preparation and planning of the workshop. The external moderator has the ultimate responsibility for selecting the workshop methodology, in close cooperation with the workshop organizers.

6. Training methods

Training methods firstly depend on whether the workshop is knowledge, skill or behaviour oriented. Knowledge oriented training is focused on passing information from an expert to the participants, e.g. laws and regulations, scientific background, results from pilot activities, etc. Skills oriented workshops include practical experience in *DOING*, e.g. new laboratory methods, moderation and communication skills, participation tools, etc. Behaviour oriented workshops aim at changing awareness of stakeholders, e.g., management styles, environment friendly production in agriculture and industry, environmental friendly consumer behaviour, etc.

The appropriate mix of theoretical input, practical exercises and group discussion reflects the objectives of the training. People differ in their learning styles, and this should be addressed by the application of different training tools. Some people learn mainly by visual means, others need practical experience. Some learners are more comfortable if they have the big picture first, others want to start with the details and build their own model.

The choice of methods will also depend on the background of the learners, however, assumptions on the educational status and the willingness of the participants to master new skills need to be challenged and tested during the workshop. It is a sign for a flexible workshop approach, when the organizers, moderators or trainers have alternative methods and tools in mind which they can apply as "Plan B".

Central to learning are practical exercises, in which participants can test new skills and behaviours. For each exercise, like for the workshop as a whole, objectives, group size, facilitation need to be defined. Some exercises might be performed by individuals. However, in many cases the learning impact is bigger, if the exercise is performed in small groups with a subsequent peer feed back on individual performance. There should be a time provision that gives space for preparation, exercise and debriefing.

7. The Agenda

The agenda of the workshop should be provided to the participants together with the invitation. It should cater for some flexibility and should highlight the main topics. A more detailed plan should be prepared as a guideline for organizers, moderators and trainers which is not provided to the participants.

Example for a detailed workshop plan

Day/Time	Торіс	Method	Responsibility
Friday, 11/10/02	Opening		N. Nnnnnn
9.00	Introduction of participants		
9.30	The new Water Framework Directory	Theoretical Input	M. Mmmm
10.30	Exchange of perspectives	Small working groups of 5 participants	participants
11.00	Coffee break		
11.20	Feed back from small groups	Moderated plenary discussion	M.Mmmm
12.00			
	Evaluation	Individual questionnaire	

8. Material Needed

From the detailed workshop plan, the necessary workshop material can be deducted, such as

- overhead projector
- video beamer / Power Point
- computer
- flip chart(s)
- pin board(s)
- etc.

Special provision should be made for visualization of result. As a rule, major discussion points should be visualized, preferably on a flip chart or a pin board. Moderation techniques, using paper cards to be prepared by the participants should be applied as much as possible.

A detailed check list is provided in Template 6.

9. Evaluation of Workshops, Reporting

As a principle, each workshop under DRP must be evaluated, applying a standardized methodology. A template to be handed out to the participants at the end of the workshop is provided in the Annex (Template 7). Participants must fill it before leaving the workshop venue. Participants who need to leave earlier, should receive the template and should be asked to mail the evaluation sheet to the DRP office during the following week. The workshop agenda must provide at least 15 minutes for evaluation.

The evaluation sheets should be attached with the final workshop report (Template 8). The template does not substitute the minutes of the workshop.

Annex: Templates and Check Lists

The templates will help you to plan, organize, document and evaluate your workshop. In order to fit into the standardized quality requirements of the DRP, and to facilitate monitoring, the space is limited and can not be exceeded. Some of the templates are mandatory, while others are optional.

In principle, the templates are the same for training and consultation workshops, except

Template 3: Methodology, and

Template 7: Evaluation

Template 4 (Exercises) applies to training workshops only

Templates should be principally filled with a word processor and submitted as an email attachment to

andy.garner@unvienna.org or

marcella.fabianova@unvienna.org

The evaluation of the workshop is to be filled by every participant and mailed in original or copy to the project, attention: Ms. M. Fabianova

We appreciate feedback. If you have specific questions regarding the use of the templates, please contact the project team or our training coordinator, under

h.nauheimer@snafu.de.

Template 1: General Information and Workshop Objectives

Status: mandatory, to be submitted to DRP	for endorsement of workshop 19/11/02
Intended workshop title	
Choose any 4-letter/number acronym	
Consulting (C) or Training Workshop (T)?	
Intended date of workshop	from to
Intended place of workshop	
Name of organizer	
What are the short term objectives of the workshop? At the end of the workshop, what will be achieved?	
How will you measure the achievement of the short term objectives? Please specify at least one milestone/indicator for each short term objective.	
What is the medium term objective? What do you expect to happen after the workshop completion?	
When do you want to achieve your medium term objective?	in months
What will be indicators for measuring the medium term objectives (please specify for each medium term objective)? Please specify who exactly is involved in the achievement and where do you want to achieve it (basin- wide or in specific countries/regions/cities)	
Who will be responsible for the measurement of the indicators for medium term objectives?	

Status: mandatory, to be submitted to DRP t	for endorsement of workshop
Workshop acronym	
Who needs to be involved and why? Who are the end beneficiaries of the expected medium term outcome?	
How big is the final target group (e.g., those who are supposed to agree to something, to benefit, or to learn)?	
If you can not invite the final target group because of size, who are potential mediators? On which base will you choose them? Do they have this mediating role already, or will it be created through the workshop (e.g. in the case of new trainers)?	
If you invite mediators, what are the institutional arrangements which insure that they will execute their role after the workshop (e.g., act as multiplicators, facilitate decisions, assure participation in planning processes, act as trainers for the final target group)?	

Template 2: The Workshop's Direct and Indirect Target Groups

Template 3a: Methodology (Consultation Workshops)

Status: mandatory, to be submitted to DRP	before the start of the workshop
This template might be filled together with t	he external moderator
Workshop acronym	
By which means will you assure full participation of all participants?	
For which subjects do you expect disagreement among the participants?	
What negotiation techniques / consensus building tools will be applied?	
Will you work in working groups? If yes, how many working groups of which size?	
Will you need an external moderator to assure equal participation?	
How will the results be visualized / documented?	

Status: mandatory, to be submitted to DRP l	before the start of the workshop
This template might be filled together with the	he trainer(s)
Workshop acronym	
Will the workshop be knowledge, skill or behaviour oriented?	
What assumptions do you have about the knowledge level of the participants? Did you test these assumptions?	
How much of the syllabus will be (i) theoretical input (ii) practical exercises (iii) discussion and reflection? Which methods will you apply to assure that the intended objectives will be achieved?	theoretical input % practical exercises % discussion and reflection %
How many trainers do you intend to have for the workshop? If you have more than one, will they have different technical or methodological know-how? Will participants act as resource persons as well?	

Template 3b: Methodology (Training Workshops)

Template 4: Objectives of Exercises (complete one form for each exercise)

Not applicable for consultation workshops

Status: obligatory, not to be submitted to DI	۲P
Workshop acronym	
Name of exercise	
Name of trainer	
What are the learning objectives for this exercise?	
How are this learning objectives related to the short term objectives of the training course?	
What are participants supposed to do in this exercise? Please give a short outline.	
How many participants do you expect to work together on this exercise (group size / individual exercise / plenary)	
What is the time provision for this exercise?	introduction minutes exercise minutes debriefing minutes

	be submitted to DRP		
Day/Time	Торіс	Method	Responsibility

Template 5: Internal Workshop Plan (not to be handed out to participants)

Status: obligatory, not to be submitted to DRP		
Material	Amount required	checked
Overhead projector		
Video beamer / Power Point projector		
Computer		
Digital camera		
Scanner		
Internet connection		
Printer		
Photocopy machine		
Flip chart stands		
Pin boards		
White boards		
Flip chart paper	sheets	
Pin board paper	sheets	
A4 white paper	sheets	
A3 white paper	sheets	
Marker pens, black		
Marker pens, red		
Marker pens, blue		
Marker pens, red		
White board markers, black		
White board markers, red		
White board markers, blue		
White board markers, green		
Push pins		
Paper cards for moderation, size:		
Paper cards for moderation, size:		
Paper cards for moderation, size:		
Paper cards for moderation, size:		
Overhead transparencies, for drawing		
Overhead transparencies, for copying		
Felt pens for OH, permanent		

Template 6: Workshop Material

Template 7a: Evaluation of the Workshop – Consulting Workshop

(to be handed out to participants)

Please fill out and return to workshop organizer or trainer									
Workshop title									
Date of workshop	from	to							
How long before the workshop start did ye	ou receive the in	invitation? weeks							
With the invitation, did you receive the ag objectives and related background materia		agenda yes no objectives yes no background material yes no							
Were the objectives spelled out at the beg	inning of the wo	orkshop?] yes)		
Did the workshop fully meet its predefined	d objectives?		□ ye	es 🗌] partl	y		no	
If not, please tell us, why.									
Please score the following criteria with 5 l and 1 being the lowest mark	being the best		5	4	3	2	1		
Did the workshop achieve all its objective	s?	Fully						not at all	
How was the level of participation?		very high						very low	
How was the moderation of the workshop	?	excellent						very poor	
How would you rank the quality of results	5?	very good						very poor	
What is the applicability of the results to y working context?	/our	very applicable						not at all applicable	
Please give us some recommendations of what could be improved next time such a workshop is held.				-					

Template 7b: Evaluation of the Workshop – Training Workshop

(to be handed out to participants)

Please fill out and return to	o workshop org	anizer or trai	iner							
Workshop title										
Date of workshop	from t	0								
How long before the worksh	op start did you	receive the in-	vitation?			W	eeks			
With the invitation, did you	receive the agen	da and the obj	jectives? agenda yes no objectives yes no					no		
Were the objectives spelled	out at the beginn	ing of the wor	rkshop?			□у	ves [no		
Did the workshop fully meet	t its predefined o	bjectives?		yes		partly	I] no	
If not, please tell us, why.			I							
Please score the following of and 1 being the lowest mark		eing the best		5	4	3	2	1		
Overall quality of the training			excellent						very poor	
How was the level of participation?			very high						very low	
Were the training methods a	ppropriate?		very appropriate						not all	at
What is the applicability of working context?	the training cor	ntent to your	very applicable						not at applicab	
Which part of the training content was most important for you? Please give us some recommendations of what			<u>.</u>	·			·	·		
could be improved next time such a training workshop is held.										

Template 8: Workshop report

Status: mandatory, to be filled by the or workshop evaluation	ganizer ar	nd submitted	to I)RP 1	togetl	ier w	rith p	articipa	nts'
Workshop title									
Workshop acronym									
Date and Place of workshop	Date	Place							
Name and address of venue									
Number of participants invited / present	invited	present	t						
Did you have external moderators or trainers?		o 🗌							
	-		1	1	1	1	1	1	
Please score the following criteria with 5 bein and 1 being the lowest mark	ig the best		5	4	3	2	1		
				<u> </u>					
Achievement of objectives		fully						not all	at
								an	
Quality of moderators / trainers		excellent						very	
								poor	
Quality of training venue		excellent						very	
Quality of training venue		excellent						poor	
Lessons Learned (1): What did you like in		1		<u> </u>	1		1	.1	
particular about the workshop?									
Lessons Learned (2): What needs to be improved in the future?									

Template	Status	checked
Template 1: General Information and Workshop Objectives	mandatory submission to DRP	
Template 2: The Workshop's Direct and Indirect Target Groups	mandatory submission to DRP	
Template 3: Methodology	mandatory submission to DRP	
Invitation list	mandatory submission to DRP	
Template 4: Objectives of Exercises (not applicable for consultation workshops)	obligatory, no submission	
Template 5: Internal Workshop Plan	obligatory, no submission	
Template 6: Workshop Material	obligatory, no submission	
Template 7: Evaluation of the Workshop	mandatory submission of participants' evaluation to DRP	
Template 8: Workshop Report	mandatory submission to DRP, inclusion in DANUBIS database	
Minutes of workshop, including list of participants	inclusion in DANUBIS database	

Template 9: Checklist