Purpose of this Guide

This trainer’s guide is for use by Counselors facilitating PTSS information sharing group sessions and counselors facilitating HIV support groups. This guide will also be of benefit to any Project Accept staff, such as outreach workers, conducting community group meetings. As a multi-site, it is important that all sites implement modules as outlined in the training manual. The training modules outlined here are designed to form a core training, however, refinement to allow for cultural and site-specific needs is encouraged. Please document any changes you make and submit them to the Intervention sub-committee for review and implementation.

General Course Objectives

The aim of this training is to equip Project Coordinators and Counselors with effective group facilitation skills that will enhance the maximum participation of group members. It will provide a clear understanding of what is meant by group facilitation within the context of Project Accept PTSS activities. The training will also clarify roles and relationships among facilitators and group members. It will identify facilitation methods, skills and tools and their applications.
Module 1: Introduction to Training Course and Other Participants

Overall Objectives
The purpose of this session is to welcome the participants and get them acquainted with one another and with the trainer. The trainer will give participants an outline of the training and briefly explain the structure and content of the 7 modules. The group will also gain an understanding of the participants’ and trainer’s expectations.

Materials and Advance Preparation
Refer to the Pre-Meeting Checklist (Appendix A) and make sure that you have the following available:
- Flipcharts
- Markers
- Participant Handouts
- Overhead projector/LCD
- Overhead Slides
- Refreshments

Delivery

Introductions and overview
- Introduce yourself and describe your background in facilitation and training.
- Ask participants to introduce themselves and to share one expectation they have of the course
- Write each participant’s expectation on the flipchart.
- When all participants have shared their expectations, show overhead 1.1 to the group and discuss these with the group to gain consensus.
- Give each participant a copy of the Guidelines for Facilitating Sessions and explain the contents.
- Put up a flipchart paper outlining all the “housekeeping” items and invite questions (cover break times, lunch arrangements, toilets, messages, etc.)
- Provide time for participants to ask questions or present concerns.

Training Methods
The modules in this guide are used to impart facilitation techniques to participants through engaging them in exercises (role-plays, small group discussions), brainstorming, slides, and mini interactive lectures. The responsibility of the facilitator is to deliver the materials as prescribed in the Guidelines for Facilitating Group Sessions and those in the Trainer’s Guide. This trainer’s guide recommends the style of facilitation that is regarded as being most effective. However, the trainer’s guide allows for flexibility by encouraging trainers to incorporate their own cultural and site specific examples to illustrate the tools used to achieve the skills required for facilitators.
Outline of Course Modules
The guide presents facilitation skills and tools that will enhance effective group facilitation. It has 7 modules covering the following topics:

Module 1: Introduction to Training Course and Other Participants
Module 2: Introduction to Group Facilitation
Module 3: Overview Of Facilitation Skills
Module 4: Facilitating The Opening Of A Group Session
Module 5: Facilitating Discussions and Decisions
Module 6: Dealing With Challenges
Module 7: Facilitating The Conclusion - Wrapping up the Group Session

[Show Slide 1.2 Outline of Course Modules]

Module 2: Introduction to Group Facilitation

Overview
The purpose of this session is to define the roles and responsibilities of a facilitator, specifically, with respect to Project Accept. The session will also explain what is meant by facilitation.

Objectives
By the end of the session, participants will have a better understanding of:
- What a facilitator is and is not
- The qualities and skills required for good facilitators
- What facilitation is

Materials and Advance Preparation
- Flipcharts
- Markers
- Participant Handouts
- Overhead projector
- Overhead Slides

Delivery

Brainstorming
Ask if any of the participants have led a group discussion or chaired a meeting before, and ask them to briefly explain what their role was.
Write each role mentioned on a flipchart
Read all the facilitators’ roles outlined on the flipchart and engage the group in a brief discussion about:

- What a facilitator is and is not.
- What facilitation is
- What is the role of a facilitator
- Which PTSS activities would require a facilitator

Explain these concepts further by showing Slides 2.1, 2.2, and 3.3

Module 3: Overview Of Facilitation Skills

Overview

The purpose of this session is to give an overview of the qualities and skills required for a good facilitator. This session will outline the four (4) types of skills that enable one to be a good facilitator. The session will also identify and discuss in detail the seven (7) major skills together with the tools that facilitators can use to achieve each skill.

Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will have a better understanding of:

- The basic skill required of a good facilitator
- The various tools to use to achieve each facilitation skill

Materials and Advance Preparation

- Flipcharts
- Markers
- Participant Handouts
- Overhead projector
- Overhead Slides

Delivery

1. Exercise 3.1: 4 types of facilitation skills

Write on the flipchart the four (4) types of skills that enable one to be a good facilitator [Engaging skills, Informing skills, Involving skills Planning skills]. Ask for volunteers from the group to explain what they understand about each skill and how they would use the skill when facilitating group sessions.

Discuss further to highlight how:

- Engaging skills promote imaginative learning
- Informing skills promote analytical learning
- Involving skills promote common sense learning.
- Planning skills correspond to dynamic learning.

Relate these skills to some Project Accept PTSS activities
2. Small Group Exercise 3.2: 7 Major facilitation skills (Role-Play) – 20 minutes

Show Slide 3.1: 7 Major Facilitation Skills
Ask participants to break into small groups and assign 2 or 3 facilitation skills to each group. Ask each group to pretend that they are having a group discussion on a topic of their choice and to choose 1 person to play the role of a facilitator. The facilitator should role-play how he would achieve each of the skills assigned to his group. They can refer to the tools outlined in the participant’s guidelines under this section.

Small Groups return for role-play. Ask each group to present their role-play in front of the larger group. Have the participants comment and critique each of the role-plays.
Show Slides 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4. Discuss with the participants the tools for achieving each of the following 7 facilitation skills.

- Making everyone feel comfortable and valued
- Encouraging participation
- Preventing and managing conflict
- Listening and observing
- Guiding the group
- Ensuring quality decisions
- Ensuring outcome-based discussion

Note: It is important for participants to consider whether some of the tools recommended in the training guide would be culturally acceptable in their settings.

Exercise 3.3 Creating a parking lot
Create a parking lot for your training session on a flipchart. During the course of the training session, write on the flipchart items that you and the participants decide should go on the parking lot for discussion at the end of the session.
This technique and the parked items will be discussed in detail in Module 5: Facilitating The Conclusion
Module 4: Facilitating The Opening Of A Group Session

Overview
The purpose of this session is to highlight some common facilitation tasks and tools you may use at the beginning of a group discussion or meeting. Remember that some of the skills and tools you use in opening a group session also work well throughout the discussion.

Objectives
By the end of the session, participants will have developed skills on how to initiate a group session:

Materials and Advance Preparation
- Flipcharts
- Markers
- Participant Handouts
- Overhead projector
- Overhead Slides

Delivery

NOTE: Before you go to the sessions, prepare carefully for your role as facilitator. Refer to Appendix A used previously in Module 1: Pre-Meeting Checklist

Show slides 4.1, 4.2: Opening The Group Session
- Welcome Participants
- Introduce participants and yourself
- Set the tone and pace
- Go over and approve meeting objectives and agenda
- Review minutes (if it is group practice to take minutes of discussions e.g. in meetings)

Go through each of the skills and discuss with the participants the tools used to achieve the skills. Encourage participants to give their own examples of tools they would use

1. Exercise 4.1: Self-introductions

Consider an icebreaker, such as:
Asking participants to say something light and personal but non-threatening as they introduce themselves. Icebreakers, if chosen well, allow group members to relate to each other on a personal level.

Instructions
Orally or on flip chart, list the information you would like members to give as they introduce themselves, e.g., name and relevant identifying information (location, marital status, etc.). Ask them to limit their introduction to 10 to 20 seconds.
Participants may at this stage be familiar with each other, having introduced themselves at the beginning of the TOT meeting. However, ask them to introduce themselves in a light and non-threatening way by saying a few words, even if only just one sentence. Ask them to comment on each other’s introductions and suggest ways of improving those introductions they may feel threatening.

**Exercise 4.2: Helping the group develop ground rules**

Having the group set and agree on certain ground rules makes your job as facilitator a little easier, and may help when conflict arises.

**Instructions**

Ask participants to develop some ground rules for this particular training session. Write these on a flipchart and paste the paper on the wall where everyone can read the rules.

Encourage participants to indicate the importance of the rule they suggest and justify why the group should accept the rule. Allow for discussion and have the group members endorse each rule either by polling a vote or through general agreement.
Module 5: Facilitating Discussions and Decisions

Overview
The purpose of this session is to show how participants can effectively conduct a group discussion and help the group to arrive at decisions. The session also outlines the main tasks for the facilitator and gives the tools for achieving these tasks.

Objectives
By the end of the session, participants will have developed skills on how to:
- Keep the group on task
- Assess the group’s concentration and engagement
- Clarify feedback to the group
- Enforce ground rules

Materials and Advance Preparation
- Flipcharts
- Markers
- Participant Handouts
- Overhead projector
- Overhead Slides

Delivery

Exercise 5.1: Making group decisions
Show slides 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3: Facilitating The Group Session

Slide 5.1
- Keep the group on task

Slide 5.2
- Assess the group’s concentration and engagement
- Enforce ground rules

Slide 5.3
- Provide feedback to the group
- Clarify confusing discussions

Go through each of the 5 skills on the 3 slides and discuss with the participants the tools one can use to achieve the skills. Encourage participants to give their own examples of tools they would use to help a group reach agreement and arrive at decisions.
Module 6: Dealing With Challenges

Overview
Occasionally, as a facilitator, you will face challenging behaviours and situations as you facilitate group sessions or meetings. The purpose of this session is to equip you as facilitators to deal with these challenges in a manner that will promote positive behaviours and encourage full participation in the process.

Objectives
By the end of the session, participants will have a better understanding of why these challenging situations arise, and what tools to use to deal with them.

Materials and Advance Preparation
- Flipcharts
- Markers
- Participant Handouts
- Overhead projector
- Overhead Slides

Delivery

Mini Lecture
This session is best done as an interactive mini lecture involving the participants in discussions.

Dealing with Challenges
General guidelines to dealing with challenging behaviours and situations include:
- Always looking positive,
- Going easy with participants,
- Putting prevention before intervention
- Looking to the group for support
- Seeking outside assistance

Show Slide 6.0 Dealing with Challenges

The nine challenging behaviours and situations specified in the training guide are as follows:
- Side conversations
- Conversation domination
- Repeaters, parrots, and ramblers
- Verbal attackers
- Disruptive audience
- Absolute silence
- Inability to reach consensus
- Revisiting of decisions
- Charges of being culturally incompetent
Show each of 9 Slides [6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, 6.7, 6.8, 6.9] to highlight some of the challenges a facilitator may face when conducting a group session.

Discuss each of the challenges, focusing on why these behaviours or situations sometimes occur and what techniques a facilitator can apply to overcome them. It is important for participants to think through the suggested techniques to determine if they are culturally appropriate in their settings. Encourage them to develop their own examples for the tools.

Remind participants that the group sets ground rules at the beginning of the session (see Module 3). As such, the group shares responsibility for the members’ behavior. However, for especially difficult situations, a facilitator may get technical assistance or an outside mediator (Team Leader or Project Coordinator). Often an objective outsider can help to ease tensions.
Module 7: Facilitating The Conclusion – Wrapping up the Session

Overview
The purpose of this session is to close the group session or meeting and create a plan for future sessions. At this stage both the facilitator and the group members should feel that they have accomplished the goals of the meeting. The session will equip participants with the skills to wrap up a group session in an effective way and enable all the group members to feel that they have contributed to the decisions arrived at.

Objectives
By the end of the session, participants will have developed skills on how conclude a group discussion. It is necessary that the group should plan for and identify the next steps for the following session or meetings. It is also critical that the group adjourns on a positive note. Therefore, the facilitator makes sure that all issues and concerns from the group members are attended to before the session is ended. Show Slide 7.1 This slide will guide the facilitator and the group on how to wrap up a group session or meeting.

- Identifying the next steps
- Evaluating the session
- Adjourning the session on a positive note

Materials and Advance Preparation
- Flipcharts
- Markers
- Participant Handouts
- Overhead projector
- Overhead Slides

Delivery

Identify the next steps
- Complete an action plan
- Visit your parking lot
- Update the group’s meeting schedule

Evaluate the session
- Do a group evaluation

Adjourn on a positive note
- Thank members for their hard work
- Recall agreement
- Make it official

Exercise 7.1: Dealing with the Parking Lot
Refer to your session’s ‘parking lot’ created during Module 3 session, “Guiding the group” and read out each item posted. Cancel out those items that participants think have been covered in the past sessions. For those items that are still pending, decide with the participants if there is adequate time to discuss them. If there isn’t adequate time, have the participants decide as a group how they would like to resolve the items. Suggest assigning them to a smaller group to discuss later in the evening and report back to the larger group the next morning at the beginning of the training session (consult the presenter for the next session to find out if the schedule can accommodate this).
References

3. Group Facilitation Skills: A Toolbox for Effective Meetings, Ohio Watershed Academy, Running Effective Meetings Library Module (download pdf)
5. Jeff E. Brooks-Harris & Kevin G. Shollenberger (1998) Group Facilitation Skills for Student Leaders University of Hawai‘i at Manoa

Sources

A. Group Facilitation and Problem-Solving
   http://ctb.ukans.edu/tools/EN/chapter_1016.htm Community ToolBox (ctb)
B. Effective Meeting Facilitation: The Sine Qua Non of Planning,
   http://www.nea.gov/resources/Lessons/DUNCAN1.HTML
C. Group Facilitation Skills: A Toolbox for Effective Meetings, Ohio Watershed Academy, Running Effective Meetings Library Module (download pdf)
D. Effective Meeting Facilitation: Sample Forms, Tools and Checklists
   http://www.nea.gov/resources/Lessons/DUNCAN2.HTML National Endowment for the Arts (nea)
E. Consensus: Tap Into a Powerful Decision-Making Tool
   http://www.nsdc.org/library/publications/tools/tools9-97rich.cfm (national staff development council (nsdc)
F. Ohio Watershed Network: Group Facilitation Skills –Lesson Modules
   http://ohiowatersheds.ous.edu/owa/lessons/4.html
Appendices

Appendix A: Pre-Meeting Checklist
Appendix B: People, Process, and Product
Appendix C: Structure of Closed and Open Support Groups

Exercises

Exercise 3.1: Four Types of Facilitating Skills
Exercise 3.2: 7 major facilitation skills (Role-Play)
Exercise 3.3: Creating a parking lot
Exercise 4.1: Self-introductions
Exercise 4.2: Helping the group develop ground rules
Exercise 5.1: Making group decisions
Exercise 7.1: Dealing with the Parking Lot

Slides

1.1 Course Objectives
1.2 Outline of Course Modules
2.1 What is a facilitator?
2.2 What is facilitation?
2.3 What is the role of a facilitator?
3.1 7 Major Facilitation skills
3.2 Skills & Tools
3.3 Skills & Tools
3.4 Skills & Tools
4.1 Opening The Group Session
4.2 Opening the Group Session
5.1 Facilitating The Group Session
5.2 Facilitating The Group Session
5.3 Facilitating The Group Session
6.0 Dealing with Challenges
6.1 Side conversations
6.2 Conversation domination
6.3 Repeaters, parrots, and ramblers
6.4 Verbal attackers
6.5 Disruptive audience
6.6 Absolute silence
6.7 Inability to reach consensus
6.8 Revisiting of decisions
6.9 Charges of being culturally incompetent
7.1 Facilitating the Conclusion