BRITISH COUNCIL

Train the Trainers & Cascade Models

A practical guide and toolkit

This toolkit has been compiled following a workshop on
17th January 2018 at the British Council, Spring Gardens, London

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Train the Trainers & Cascade Models – A practical guide and toolkit
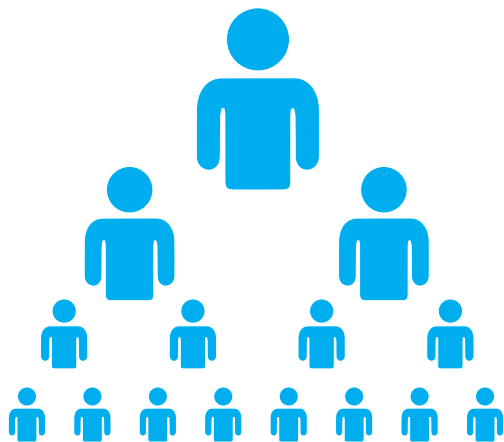
DEFINITIONS

1

CASCADE MODELS

The cascade model involves the delivery of training through layers of trainers until it reaches the final target group

OR

"training is conducted at several levels by trainers drawn from a level above."
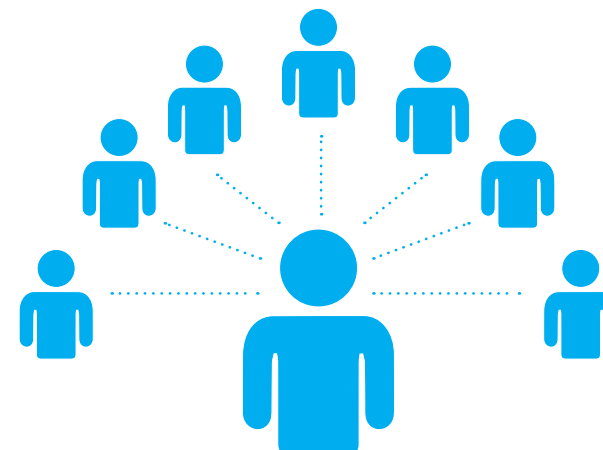
TRAIN THE TRAINERS

Train - the -Trainer is a model used to describe, training potential instructors or less experienced instructors, on the best ways to deliver training materials to others.

OR

The Train the Trainer model is a training and learning strategy. It allows the rapid expansion of knowledge and skills

ADVANTAGES

2

SITUATIONS IN WHICH THE APPROACHES COULD BE USED

Where you need to train a large number of individuals

When funding is an issue and there is a need for a cost-effective approach

In challenging environments where there is a need to rely on local delivery of training packages

Useful in delivering a range of contexts, from teacher training to leadership and management development

SOME EXAMPLES

British Council Algeria engaged in cascading best practice in teaching and learning in Algeria through national inspectors. The focus is in both teaching and learning and school leadership.

British Council Iraq were subcontracted by UNESCO to train 10 existing leaders to deliver a 12-month leadership development programme (informed by a detailed Training Needs Analysis) for 100 current leaders of TVET institutions across Iraq. This is part of a much wider TVET reform programme that includes teacher training and the development of a qualifications framework – due to be completed in 2019.

British Council Nigeria was subcontracted by Mott MacDonald/ Cambridge Education to develop a programme of activities to improve the English language proficiency and pedagogical skills of primary and junior secondary teachers in Nigeria. 6 year programme reaching 62 thousand teachers, 816 teacher educationalists and 2 million pupils.
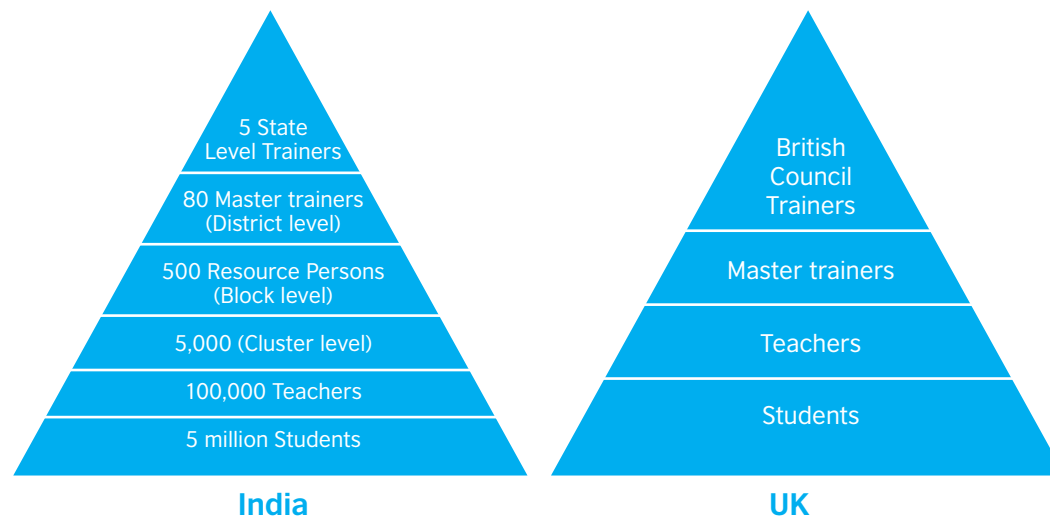
British Council South Africa worked with the Department of Basic Education. The overall objective of the programme is to contribute to sustainable development in South Africa by improving the quality of English First Additional Language (EFAL) Teaching in South African state schools.

DISADVANTAGES

3

DILUTION – CHINESE WHISPERS

This is a recurring theme in all the literature and in the examples that have been given. As information is passed from one level down to the next there is often a dilution of the material.
The more levels there are the more the dilution is seen to occur

India

5 State Level Trainers
80 Master trainers (District level)
500 Resource Persons (Block level)
5,000 (Cluster level)
100,000 Teachers
5 million Students

UK

British Council Trainers
Master trainers
Teachers
Students

QUALITY ASSURANCE

This is of course linked dilution but also to the selection and performance of the trainers at each level and the outcomes of the training. (A more detailed consideration of this whole area is given in section 4 utilising David Hayes taxonomy of success criteria.)

In the Iraq TVET project outlined above, there was a need to select 10 trainers to deliver in pairs across 5 venues in Iraq. The method used was to select more than 10 trainers for initial training and to use this training as a way of selecting the best trainers. The method used for this was observation of delivery of sections of the materials during the Train the Trainers week that took place in Erbil. We were able to identify 6 'good' trainers and pair these with 4 of the weaker ones and the really poor ones were excluded.

DISADVANTAGES

3

MONITORING AND EVAUTION

Often funding constraints mean that this element is given insufficient attention.

> *In all the case studies considered at the workshop it was clear that only those that built this in from the start, ensured that there was sufficient funding to have sufficient focus on this.*

LANGUAGE AND TRANSLATION

In many British Council projects this is a significant issue.

> *In the Iraq TVET project outlined above, translation emerged as a significant issue. Often material translation is given to outside organisations as in this case. The selected trainers were very dismissive of the translation suggesting that much of it was inaccurate and had been done using 'Google Translate' and therefore with scant understanding of the language register of TVET. It is suggested that the best approach to this issue – funding being available – would be to have the translation translated back into English to check where it is inaccurate.*

CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is vital that there is a sensitivity and awareness of cultural issues and that the intervention is not seen as simply showing how good the UK system is and expecting it work in other cultural contexts.

> *In the Nigerian project it was necessary to recognise the inbuilt practices in the classroom that meant getting studnets to leave their desks would have been a step to far – but focussed on helping teachers to become comfortable with moving from their desks*
>
> *In the Iraq TVET project it became necessary to recognise that the working day was not from 09.00 – 17.00 and so the programmes had to be amended by converting modules to self directed learning.*

MITIGATION STRATEGIES

4

David Hayes identifies 5 criteria that he sees as vital in designing and delivering a cascade model of training.

DR DAVID HAYES

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1

The method of conducting the training must be experiential and reflective rather than transmissive.

2

The training must be open to reinterpretation; rigid adherence to prescribed ways of working should not be expected.

3

Expertise must be diffused through the system as widely as possible, not concentrated at the top.

4

A cross-section of stakeholders must be involved in the preparation of training materials.

5

Decentralisation of responsibilities within the cascade structure is desirable.

On the following pages are two worked example/case studies that identify mitigating strategies that can be – and have been employed to deal with challenges that have presented themselves during recent projects.

MITIGATION STRATEGIES: IN ACTION

4

IRAQ TVET LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

Quality Assurance Mechanisms	Challenges and lessons learned	Mitigation strategies
Experiential and reflective methodology of training - rather than transmissive.	Trainers were not familiar with experiential learning – or reflective approaches.	Each module was provided in Power Point with detailed notes on possible delivery approaches. This was backed up with demonstrations of all the different approaches during the training week.
Training must be open to reinterpretation.	Initially there was little trust among the group of trainers and they wanted to follow instruction without question.	Using confidence building group activity helped to establish the trust within the group. The peer review of the demonstration elements was invaluable in validating different approaches.
Expertise must be diffused through the system.	There was only one group of 10 trainers.	Establishing an active learning set sought to alleviate this problem. It was also planned to incorporate distance mentoring into the programme. So far this has not happened but is expected to be incorporated into later stages.
A cross-section of stakeholders must be involved in the preparation of training materials.		The TNA conducted prior to the TTT week had included a wide range of stakeholders.
Decentralisation of responsibilities within the cascade structure.	This was going to be a top down model.	The detailed TNA was a major element in validating the materials that were being delivered.

MITIGATION STRATEGIES: IN ACTION

4

SOUTH AFRICAN ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAMME

Quality Assurance mechanisms	Challenges and lessons learned	Mitigation strategies
Experiential & reflective methodology of training (rather than transmissive)	Trainers not used to experiential & reflective methodology.	Embedded daily sessions with trainers to consider relevance of what they learned and consider how to apply in their own contexts.
Training must be open to reinterpretation.	Trainers sometimes resistant to the training methodology as they felt it was UK centric.	Refresher training was provided halfway through the programme encouraging reinterpretation of the training experience. Fostered ownership of the programme.
Expertise must be diffused through the system.	First phase was concentrated solely on top level of cascade (chief education specialists).	In subsequent phases, provincial and district advisers and lead teachers included thus helping to mitigate the dilution of the training.
A cross-section of stakeholders must be involved in the preparation of training materials.	DBE wanted to change materials provided by BC and BC initially reluctant.	Co-branding of courses provided credibility etc. Mapped to curriculum. Ownership
Decentralisation of responsibilities within the cascade structure.	Programme driven by DBE – top down.	Involving teacher unions helped in shared ownership – and to identify best teachers.

GUIDE FOR SUCCESSFUL TRAINING

5

1 Identify and engage stakeholders – ongoing throughout.

2 Conduct Training Needs Analysis (TNA) – helps also with stakeholder engagement.

3 Identification and communication of clear outcomes – to assist with evaluation.

4 Selection of top level trainers – robust and transparent process required.

5 Translation 1 – ensure materials are accurately translated when using a range of languages.

6 Translation 2 – ensure there are enough translators who understand the vocabulary.

7 Identify on-going trainer support needs and delivery mechanisms – mentoring, action learning sets etc.*

8 Insert regular evaluations as part of the quality assurance process.

9 Adapt programme in the light of evaluations and feedback.

**10** Evaluate achievement of outcomes.

*This is a vital element for success and sustainability. One good example of how this has worked is the British Council ELISS project in India . See references section.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE WORKSHOP

6

At the workshop participants were asked to identify the most significant success principles for large scale projects and the most important design and programming considerations. The following provides the output from the participants' considerations.

Workshop participants were asked to prioritise the elements that they considered the most important of the success principles in these two areas. They did this using 'sticky dots' and the results are shown against each element.
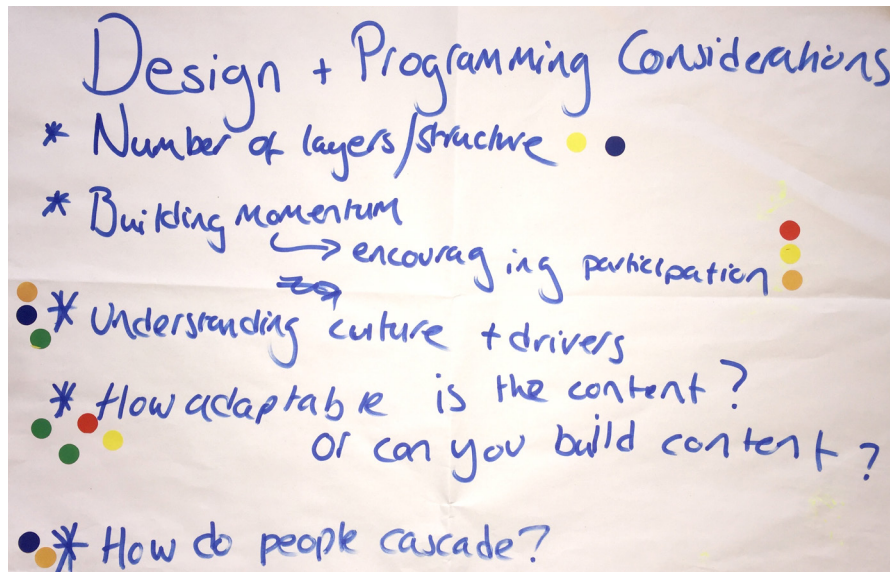
Large scale projects

Buy in form all stakeholders	2
Consider/embed local cultural realities and norms	3
Did it make any difference?	3
Was learning captured for future use	
Embed Monitoring and Evaluation from the outset and use it to adapt and change project	2
Embed in the system	3
Flexibility and authenticity	

Design and programming considerations

Number of layers	2
Building momentum – encouraging participation	3
Understanding culture and drivers	3
How adaptable is the content or can you build content	4
How do people cascade?	2
Thorough TNA/early investment in development	4
How to get the right people involved including all stakeholders and how to make the best of what you have got!	6
Build in a leadership programme	2

REFERENCES

Alison Barrett
Cascade models in India: an effective tool for educational change?

Arlene Gilpin
Cascade Training: Sustainability or Dilution?
University of Bristol

David Hayes
Cascade training and teachers' professional development.

Wedell, M. (2005)
Cascading training down into the classroom: The need for parallel planning,
International Journal of Educational Development.
Volume 25 (6), 637 - 651.

ELISS Case Study (British Council Intranet)

The Teaching for Success sharepoint site has the following document that also give useful background on the subject:

Simon Borg
Contemporary perspectives on CPD

CPD models looking at integrating Train the Trainer with other CPD models.

Teacher Educator Framework

WORKSHOP ATTENDEES

Workshop lead

Rossi Vogler – Skills Adviser, Development

Contributions

Rebecca Ingram – Senior Schools Adviser

Geoff Pine – Skills Consultant

Mike Solly – Senior Adviser, EES

Attendees

Alex Abel – Global Programme Manager, Skills

Chris Cooper – Global Head of Skills (acting)

Tracy Ferrier – Global Head of Skills (former)

Andy Hall – Skills Adviser, Policy

Carina Kanbi – Assistant Skills Adviser

Maggie Milne – Teacher Development Adviser, EES

Damian Ross – Business Support Manager, Teaching for Success

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Dessislava Stoitcheva – Global Skills for Employability Evaluation and Finance Manager

Artur Taevere – Senior Schools Adviser

Brian Wilson – Skills Adviser, Partnerships

Anne Wiseman – Head of Research Publications, EES