

# HOW TO FOSTER LEARNING AND DELIVER EFFECTIVE TRAINING FOR ADULTS ?

## TRAINING, What is it about ?

Training often brings to mind images of a classroom, a trainer and content to be delivered. This top-down format, which is still common because it is simple and reassuring, does not always promote learning, especially among adults.

In reality, training is a structured process designed to facilitate learning and develop knowledge, skills, and behaviors that are useful for professional development.

It can take various forms: practical internships, online training, peer exchanges, field demonstrations, farmers field schools, self-training, etc.

## SOME PEDAGOGICAL PRINCIPLES

Several conditions must be met for an adult to learn effectively.



### Need for meaning

*Why am I  
learning this?*

Adults learn better if training addresses a specific objective or a real problem they encounter.



### Valuing experience

*I do not come  
empty handed*

Adults come to training with their own knowledge and experience. Trainers build on participants' experiences.



### Be active

*I learn by  
doing*

Adults need to experiment, try things out, and manipulate things in order to remember. Practical involvement in learning is essential.



### Hindsight and appreciation

*I make progress  
when I can see it*

Adults learn better if they can reflect, take a step back, and see that their efforts are recognized.

## STEPS TO BUILD A TRAINING PROGRAM

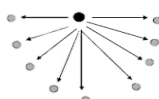
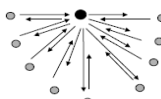

### 1 ANALYZE THE CONCRETE NEED AND DEFINE THE OBJECTIVE

Effective training must be tailored to the needs and realities of trainees. It does not start with what the trainer wants to convey, but with what the trainee is seeking to resolve. This creates immediate interest, boosts motivation, and facilitates memorization, as knowledge is anchored in a concrete situation.

Needs analysis is carried out by questioning future trainees: who are they? What are their difficulties, obstacles, expectations, etc.? It enables clear objectives to be defined and formulated as follows: At the end of the training, trainees will be able to ".....". The objectives must remain achievable and in line with the level and needs of the participants. They can be simple objectives, such as "understanding a particular subject" or "reproducing a particular practice," but also more ambitious objectives, such as "adopting agroecological practices adapted to their farm."

### 2 BUILDING YOUR TRAINING SCENARIO

After defining the objectives, a training scenario must be developed, setting out the desired sequence, methods, activities, and training tools to be used within the allotted time. There are three different methods:

Affirmative Method (Focused on the trainer)	Participative Method (Focused on exchange)	Active Method (Focused on the trainee)
The trainer explains and demonstrates what to do.	The trainer asks questions to help participants discover	The trainer asks trainees to search, either independently or in groups
		

Alternating pedagogical methods is essential, even in a short training course. This involves a variety of activities: theoretical content, group exercises, individual reflection, field observations of plants or soils, visits or practical applications, etc. This alternation helps to give the training course a rhythm, maintain attention, and promote memorization. Repeating messages in different forms reinforces learning: **pedagogy is the art of repetition.**

### 3 LEADING TRAINING: A DUAL ROLE

First and foremost, the trainer is a **learning facilitator**. He guides trainees by constantly moving back and forth between their experiences and the theoretical content, thereby promoting knowledge acquisition. Group discussions allow participants to compare points of view, prompting them to question their assumptions and acquire new knowledge. The trainer also plays an **organizational role**: he prepares the venue and training supplies, delivers the training, manages time, adapts to unforeseen circumstances, and ensures that everyone has a chance to speak.

### 4 EVALUATE THE TRAINING

During training, it is important to test trainees on what they have learned: testing a practice, summarizing ideas, answering a quiz, etc. The trainer encourages, validates what has been learned, and also corrects mistakes in a constructive manner. At the end of the training, the trainer assesses what has been learned and whether the objectives have been achieved through a group review, a roundtable discussion, or a questionnaire evaluating the content, organization, and satisfaction.



Training in plant health  
Cowpea FO, Burkina Faso



Training in animal health  
CGA, Kenya



Training in nutrition  
Cap Malagasy, Madagascar



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## FUNDAMENTALS TO REMEMBER

- Training is an organized and planned process aimed at imparting knowledge, skills, and attitudes. It is limited in time and has defined objectives. **It is one way of learning... but not the only one!** Training alone does not solve the problems faced by farmers. In all cases, it is essential to support farmers before and after training.
- To be effective, training must not only convey content: it must respond to a specific need, encourage the sharing of experiences, and engage trainees through field visits, observations, and practical demonstrations/trials.
- Beyond training, informal learning situations should be encouraged: exchange visits, demonstration plots and learning sites, technical posters and leaflets, crop year review meetings, etc. Learning can take place at any time, between peers or with a field officer !



## WORDS FROM TRAINERS

"What has changed is that we no longer train just to pass on knowledge. We support farmers in implementation, we follow them in the field, we adapt the content. (...) Field officers are not there to know everything, but to listen, observe, and help farmers reflect on their practices." CGA, Kenya

"The training courses are now more practical. Each activity is demonstrative: we show how to make compost, produce organic inputs, feed chickens..." CGA, Kenya

"Initial training for field officers is important, but it is the entire professional environment that enables them to continue learning: exchanges between peers, visits, feedback." Ceffel, Madagascar

"Field officers organize exchange visits between farmers, demonstrations, and field trials. These are key learning opportunities." Cap Malagasy, Madagascar

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Webinar 21—Pedagogy and Training  
on YouTube [agri-agencefert140](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=agri-agencefert140)

