

Strategic points for planning short courses.

Short courses can be a lot of work to implement but it is made much easier with attention to key points.

Value to networks:

- With proper planning you will be much more realistic as to the timing, the relevance and the cost of the course.
- Normally a course will be held without full funding available and so will need to have some elements of cost recovery.
- Clear budgeting and planning helps you decide if you will make a surplus of income over expenditure (useful for seed funding other activities), break even, or have to subsidise the course.
- Consistency with planning improves the quality of the course and reputation of the network/ institution.

1. Choose a Host.

It is better to organise the course through an institutional member (or members) of the network who is experienced with delivering training.

This host then gets the credit for the course along with the network and the other partners. It is also important that the responsibility is clearly allocated to this organisation. Spreading the responsibility for activities around members brings them benefits and reduces the workload of the network secretariat.

2. Draft the budget.

2.1. The course should be organised on the basis of cost recovery. This is the only basis of planning as even if you find a donor they can see how costs and charges have been arrived at.

2.2 It is usually better to separate the management arrangements and costs of the course from the travel and per diem arrangements. As far as possible get others, such as sponsors, to deal with the per diems and travel and that reduces the work load on you.

2.3 How do you calculate a course fee to cover the management costs? This is a bit more complicated as this is where you have to get into detail. (see box for example).

a) the course fee should include things such as:

- hiring venue,
- facilitators costs,
- teaching materials,
- field trip,
- local travel,
- preparation time of organisers,
- lunches and tea breaks.

b) Most of these costs will be fixed regardless of the number of participants. Items such as lunch and refreshments will depend on the final number of participants. Make the budget based on a minimum of 15 or 20 participants. That way if you get too few

participants you know you will lose money and may have to cancel the course. If you get more participants you will make a small profit which will help you plan the next course.

c) You may be able to avoid some of these costs or reduce them by negotiating with hotels or the host institution. An important factor is the source of the trainers/ facilitators, their number and fee. In the end a regional course fee should be about US\$500 for a week - it could be less. If it is much more expensive then you run the risk of not being attractive for participants or sponsors.

A rough example for a 5 day course (US\$)

2 trainers 2 x 5 days @ \$150/day	= 1,500
Perdiem 2 trainers x 5 days x \$150/day	= 1,500
Travel, trainers 2 x \$500	= 1,000
Venue 5days x \$100	= 500
Materials and general copying	= 500
Local travel	= 500
Lunch 5days x 15people x 12\$	= 900
Refreshments 5days x 2 x 15people x \$5	= 750
10 days preparation @ 150\$	= 1500
total	= \$8,650

For 15 participants this makes \$575 per participant to cover costs. If you actually got 25 participants at this fee you would have a comfortable margin of surplus.

3. Develop the programme and brochure.

3.1 The course content needs to be developed thoroughly and with partners if you expect to attract them to send participants. They do expect you to be the experts and so you should have a clear idea of the central programme but allow them to change some pieces to fit their interests.

3.2 Plan to make course materials available immediately to participants. It is preferable if these are in the form of properly prepared training materials however this is too expensive for one-off courses.

3.3 A partner/ sponsor may agree to bring in an additional expert to fill gaps in the available expertise or to add an international dimension.

3.4 At all stages keep communication with potential sponsors/ partners to gain their commitment to the course and develop a brochure to promote the course through networks and partners.

4. Checklist.

The checklist on the following pages was developed by IWSD, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Course:

Date:

Venue:

Partners:

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Person Responsible</i>	<i>Date complete</i>
1 Identification of participants		
Course outline developed and agreed with partners		
Course flyer developed		
Electronically distributed to partners and other interested parties.		
Participants list finalised		
Successful participants notified		
VISA letters prepared for those who need them		
Special preparatory requirements communicated to participants (anything to be prepared prior to coming)		
2 Development of Course Programme		
Draft programme ready		
Distributed to partners for Comments		
Programme finalised		
Final Programme communicated to partners, participants and facilitators		
3 Development of course budget		
Draft budget prepared		
Course fee set.		
4 Identification of Facilitators		
Facilitators identified		
Facilitators notified + any special format for material development		
5 Preparation of course materials		
Materials ready and sent to organisers		
Material assessed for appropriateness		
Feedback to Facilitator		

6	Travel Arrangements (if managed by organiser)
	Itinerary ready and communicated to travelers
	Arrangement for ticket collection/purchase communicated
	Arrival and departure dates communicated
7	Development of pre and post course evaluation forms
	Pre-evaluation forms developed
	Send to successful applicants
	Feedback from participants received
	Post course evaluation forms developed
8	Purchase of Course materials
	Files, name tags, flip charts, VIP cards Markers etc
9	Preparation of Course Venue
	Course venue ready +equipment and other teaching aids
10	Registration Form designed & ready
11	Course Certificate
	Certificate designed and shared with partners
	Design finalised
12	Preparation of Training Report
13	Preparation of Training Pack
