Orientation

The Harmonized Training Package

The Harmonized Training Package (HTP) provides a technical overview of nutrition in emergencies.

It is ***'harmonized'*** because the information contained in the package has been agreed upon by a large number of humanitarian organisations. It represents current theory and practice on nutrition in emergencies. Some agencies have their own particular methods and guidelines for doing assessments or implementing programmes. Agency-specific methods may well be mentioned in the text. However, the guidance that is described is established policy and practice, and accepted by all agencies.

It is a ***'training'*** package because the material contained can be used to develop individual training courses. While it does not replace specialized in-depth training (such as detailed training on the treatment of severe malnutrition or breastfeeding counselling), the package can be used to provide general training and increase awareness of issues in nutrition in emergencies.

It is a ***'package'*** because it covers a wide range of subject matter relating to nutrition in emergencies divided into 21 'modules' each of which has four 'parts'. The modules are 'stand-alone' in that they can be used either individually or in combination with other modules. The four parts have different purposes and are aimed at different audiences.

The modules

The HTP has 21 modules. Each module covers one subject area. The modules have been grouped into four sections as shown in **Box 1**.

Box 1: The modules

Section 1: Introduction and concepts
1. Introduction to nutrition in emergencies
2. Agency mandates and coordination mechanisms
3. Understanding malnutrition
4. Micronutrient malnutrition
5. Causes of malnutrition

Section 2: Nutrition needs assessment and analysis
6. Measuring malnutrition: individual assessment
7. Measuring malnutrition: population assessment
8. Health assessment and the link with nutrition
9. Food security assessment and the link with nutrition
10. Nutrition information and surveillance systems

Section 3: Interventions to prevent and treat malnutrition
11. General food distribution
12. Supplementary feeding
13. Therapeutic care
14. Micronutrient interventions
15. Health interventions
16. Livelihood interventions
17. Infant and young child feeding
18. HIV and AIDS nutrition
19. Nutrition information, education and communication

Section 4: Monitoring, evaluation and accountability
20. Monitoring and evaluation
21. Standards and accountability

The parts

Each module is divided into four parts. These are described in turn below.

Part 1: Fact sheet

The fact sheet provides a summary of the subject area and is a quick reference document. The fact sheet avoids technical jargon and assumes that readers have limited knowledge and experience of nutrition and/or emergencies. The minimum information is provided that allows readers to have a basic grasp of the technical issues and be in a better position to take decisions.

The fact sheet can be used:
- to brief senior managers in government and international agencies
- to handout to training course participants in advance of a training session

Each fact sheet is short, up to four pages, and ends with a box of ***key messages*** with bullet points summarizing the most important points in the text.

Part 2: Technical notes

The technical notes provide more detailed information about a subject area. They cover the main technical issues, give clear guidance on currently accepted policy and practice, and highlight contentious areas or gaps in knowledge. Detailed technical information and jargon are clearly explained. The focus is on practice rather than theory. Material from existing guidelines and technical documents is deliberately included as much as possible.

The technical notes can be used:
- to inform field workers and policy makers about accepted policy and practice
- to handout to training course participants in advance of a training session

The technical notes vary in length depending on the subject area and can be up to 75 pages in length. The notes start with a box of ***key messages*** with bullet points which summarize the most important points in the text (same as for the fact sheets). There is a second box that contains the relevant ***Sphere standards*** and key indicators from the Sphere Handbook 2004. This serves to remind readers of internationally accepted standards for humanitarian action.

Case study boxes are used widely in the text as 'real life' illustrations. In addition there are ***challenge*** boxes which highlight contentious areas or gaps in knowledge. The last paragraph of the challenge box clearly sets out current accepted practices.

Very detailed technical material is presented in ***appendices*** at the end of the technical notes.

Part 3: Trainer's guide

The trainer's guide provides guidance on how to design training sessions for a particular subject area. It is NOT a fully developed training course. Rather, it provides tips and tools for the trainer to tailor to the needs of a particular training course and set of participants. The trainer's guide is aimed at trainer's who already have some training expertise.

The trainer's guide can be used:
- to develop training courses for a specific set of course participants

The trainer's guide is divided into six sections
1. ***Tips for trainer*** provide pointers on how to prepare for and organize a training course.
2. ***Learning objectives*** provide examples of learning objectives that can be adapted for a particular participant group.
3. ***Testing knowledge*** contains an example of a questionnaire that can be used to test participants' knowledge about the subject area either at the start or at the end of a training course.
4. ***Classroom exercises*** provide examples of practical exercises that can be carried out in a classroom context either by participants individually or in groups to reinforce learning objectives.
5. ***Case studies*** to get participants thinking through real-life scenarios.
6. ***Field-based exercises*** outline ideas for field visits that may be carried out during a longer training course.

The trainer has to spend time in advance to prepare the course. The trainer should especially remember the following:

- ***Get to know the participants*** before the course starts.

- ***Adapt case studies and exercises*** to suit the local context and to reflect the experience and knowledge base of the participants.

- ***Timetable*** each session to ensure that plenty of time is available to carry out the practical exercises. Participants learn more through practical exercises than theory.

- ***Link modules*** so that participants are made aware of related modules.

- ***Demonstrate equipment or new foods*** such as measurement tapes or 'ready to use therapeutic foods' where these are included in the subject area. Participants learn more through seeing the real thing than through being told about it.

Part 4: Training resource list

The training resource list provides a comprehensive list of all documents that are available on the subject area. This includes guidelines, manuals, technical papers and training resources.

The training resource list can be used:
- to identify relevant policy documents, agency guidelines and training courses
- to decide what material to use in a training session

There are two parts to the training resource list. The first is a list of ***guidelines and manuals*** listed alphabetically by agency. A full references is given together with information about the availability of the material; whether in hard copy, electronic form or on CD-ROM.

The second part is a list of existing ***training resources*** and provides a clear indication of the implementing agency**,** overall content, intended use, target audience and length of time the course session has been designed for.