

Report – Day I

Forum Agenda

The Second Training for Real Forum began with a short message by Brian Reed [Brian], who set out the agenda for day one as:

- introductions;
- activities so far;
- detailed research findings;
- group analysis and recommendations;
- ekimeeza; and
- summary.

Following is a report on each of these items.

1. Introductions

Sam Kayaga [Sam] set proceedings off by welcoming everyone to the second Forum and extended a special welcome to all those participants who were also at the first Forum. He noted that in the intervening months since the first Forum, ownership of the project had transferred from the WEDC team, to stakeholders and pointed out that this was a source of great satisfaction. Sam then invited participants to introduce themselves. Sam then requested representatives of different sectors to identify themselves by a show of hands, to demonstrate the breadth of stakeholders represented at the Forum.

Sam then called upon the acting Director of Water Resources, Engineer Shillingi to deliver his speech and declare the Forum open. The acting director began by delivering apologies from Engineer Sottie Bomukama the DWD Director who was on leave. In his remarks, the acting director noted that the first Forum was held in March 2005 at the Fairway Hotel. He emphasised that the issue of sustainability of the project post-December 2005 when it ends is important. He explained that participants at the Forum will hear of progress and activities undertaken since the last Forum. He added that examples of best practice would be presented as well as a number of case studies. He went on to say that the development of HR is very important and that there are many way it could be done hence the importance of Training for Real. He concluded his remarks by declaring the Forum officially opened. Sam then invited Sue Coates [Sue] to give an overview of the agenda for the first day of the Forum.

2. Activities So Far

Before the presentation on Training for Real activities since the first Forum, Sue gave an outline of the objectives and different components of the Training for Real project for the benefit of those who were not present at the previous Forum. She followed this with a description of the activities under Output 1 of the project for which she has responsibility. She then explained that Output 3 would be discussed in detail following the coffee break. Brian then gave a short description of activities under Output 4 as did Frank Odhiambo [Frank] for Output 5. Frank's short presentation was followed by a coffee break.

COFFEE BREAK

3. Detailed Research Findings

Presentation of project activities by TFR team Activity 3.3 and 3.2

The coffee break was followed by a detailed presentation of research under output 3. By way of background information, Sam pointed out that:

- the Directorate for Water Development [DWD] had spent over 1.1 bn Ugandan shillings in the last four years on capacity building;
- there are no sector indicators for assessing the impact of this training; and
- in spite of the significant expenditure on training, there are minimal linkages between supply and demand side institutions and organisations.

He then outlined the research objectives. These were:

- to identify perceptions of both tutors and tutees with regard to training activities offered over the past four years;
- to identify current training practices in key institutions; and
- to initiate dialogue between demand and supply organisations.

3.1 Activity 3.3

He then gave a brief description of the methodology adopted for Output 3.3 of the research which was case study based and covered four district headquarters and one National Water and Sewerage Corporation [NWSC] area office. Specific research activities carried out included: literature reviews, a questionnaire survey, personal interviews, focus group discussions, and observation of training events.

The methodology for Output 3.2 comprised paired interviews between five major sector organisations and seven key training institutions. This was intended to initiate dialogue between demand and supply.

To illustrate how the research worked, Sam conducted mock interviews with a sample of staff who were interviewed in the research under activity 3.3. the main findings were that:

- some TSUs have had a positive impact on district-level capacity building [CB];
- there is an emphasis on hardware training in districts with fresh graduate staff;
- good recruitment lessens the need for capacity building;
- there is a need to coordinate capacity building;
- there is no procedure for a systematic review of capacity building efforts;
- the use of private providers of capacity building is counter productive as they often lack a good understanding of local government issues;
- there is a need for capacity building in management of urban water supplies, and management of integrated water resource;

Additional findings were that past training

- evaluation and valuation of past training is ad hoc and not always connected to appraisals;
- certificates are valued more than the content delivered;
- there is a lack of coordination of training budgets between the three line ministries in the sector;
- there is a preponderance of workshops in the sector;
- sometimes training is considered a reward not a requirement of the job;
- the cost and benefits of CB is not always considered;
- staff should be involved in planning CB;
- there is need for a critical mass of capable staff if impact is to be achieved; and
- capacity building only part of the enabling environment.

Following his presentation, Sam opened the floor to discussion. A participant said that she concurred with the finding that a critical mass of trained staff is important if impact is to be achieved.

3.2 Activity 3.2

It was reported that this component of the research is still ongoing. It involves facilitating dialogue between supply and demand side institutions through the use of interviews. A mock interview was held to demonstrate the research methodology employed under this heading. Mr Charles Kanyasegiye represented Nsamizi Institute of Social Development. Sam Kayaga put the questions. During this interview, it was revealed that Nsamizi offers:

- training;
- fieldwork;
- Consultancy; and
- Production of materials for the sector.

Sam then outlined the key findings of the research with regard to current practice among supply institutions. These were that:

- There is some good practice (though limited);
- Some institutions are working with employers, mainly through industrial training. This is either through individual students or groups and leads to many additional benefits (e.g. feedback, practical experience, direct actions);
- some training institutions have received contracts (from NGOs and donors) to develop training courses;
- a variety of teaching methods are used. For example, guest lectures, case studies, demonstrations and so on;
- there is some liaison between supply and demand with regard to curriculum;
- student projects [Nsamizi], are designed to provide community service which is welcomed by the communities they work in;
- some training institutions are contacted by NGOs and development partners to provide training;
- supply institutions recognise the need to improve their own capacity;
- there is minimal interaction between supply and demand with regard to supply-side capabilities;
- there is stickiness in changing curricula;
- there are some demand-driven courses;
- one institution relies upon its former students as ambassadors and does not advertise to recruit new students;

key findings of the research with regard to current training practice in industry included that:

- policies, plans and strategies are in place in some but not all departments;
- a number of organisations have HR budgets for capacity development;
- some organisations offer students practical placements. This is the main way in which supply and demand interact;
- responsibility for capacity building is dispersed at different levels of the management hierarchy in different organisations;
- the training function has a low profile in some organisations; and
- there is the view that it is important to retain skilled staff as per capita training expenditure is often high.

The presentation was followed by a round of questions.

Questions:

1. Who is providing workshops? Engineer Cong reported that the perception that workshops are provided by supply institutions was wrong.

2. John Pinfold suggested that some analysis of workshops and their impacts would be useful. An analysis of the effectiveness of capacity building through TSUs would also be useful.
3. Engineer Cong asked how training could be linked to performance? In response, John Pinfold noted that performance is a function of skills and motivation.
4. A participant asked whether it was correct that there was no evidence of conference attendance by staff in the districts? The TFR team confirmed that this was the case.

There were also a number of observations made. These were that:

1. workshop attendance is driven mainly by a desire to supplement incomes and not through a desire for self-improvement;
2. the policy of aggregating all training institutions under the ministry of education is questionable; and
3. with regard to supply side institutions in the project, DWD would welcome information about training opportunities and courses that they offer.

Following the questions, Brian announced the lunch break and informed participants that the Forum would reconvene at 2pm.

LUNCH

Following lunch, Sam gave a breakdown of the different types of training sector professionals attended in the last four years. He also presented a breakdown of the agencies that funded the trainings. He noted that only one of the supply institutions [UMI] was recorded as providing capacity building in the sector in the past four years.

Sam's presentation was followed by a breakout session in which the Forum divided into six groups with each group asked to answer one general question [all groups] and one specific question. The questions were drawn from the findings presented in the morning under activities 3.2 and 3.3. The ice-breaker question answered by all groups was:

- Please provide one easy action to improve training ~ tomorrow!

The group questions were designed to elicit recommendations. They were:

- Should "HRD/Training/ CB" be coordinated ? if so why, how and by whom?
- How do we improve links between:
 - ~ supply & demand (what links and support ?)
 - ~ supply & supply (what links and support ?)
 - ~ demand & demand (what links and support?)
- How can we measure "HRD/Training/ CB" ?
 - ~ do we want to measure and why?
 - ~ what are the costs and benefits?
 - ~ are the investments paying off?
- What do we do about workshops?
 - ~ what are they used for ?
 - ~ how can they be efficient and effective for all their uses ?
 - ~ how we justify them when they are useful ?
 - ~ can their supply be managed/ influenced?
- Who should lead capacity building?
 - ~ experts in colleges ?
 - ~ employers doing the job ?
 - ~ centralised or decentralised ?
- "HRD/Training/ CB" training plans
 - ~ do we need them
 - ~ what basis are they developed
 - ~ focussed and time bound ?
 - ~ or flexible and long term ?

4. Group Analysis and Recommendations

4.1 Should “HRD/Training/CB” be coordinated? Yes!

One thing to do: Carry out a training needs assessment.

Why?

- To set out training priorities
- Avoid duplication
- Maximise resources

How?

- Pooling training budget.

By whom?

- Training coordination unit. However, where would it be located? How would it be coordinated?

4.2 How do we improve links between

One thing to do: Define the purpose of the organisation.

Supply and demand:

- open dialogue and there should be a demonstration of interdependency
- carry out market survey
- human resource survey
- promote work placement for students
- recognise alumni as valuable resources

Supply and supply

- Both should view competition positively
- Identify possible areas of collaboration
- Network

Demand and demand

- As in supply and supply above.

4.3 How can we measure “HRD/Training/CB”

Do we want to measure and why?

Why do we measure?

- To deliver desired services at minimum cost

Cost and benefits

- Time and money
- Improved service delivery
- Efficiency
- High profit
- Reduced per capita investments

4.4 What do we do about workshops?

One thing to do: better targeting of participants

What are they used for?

- Participation in studies
- Reporting activities
- Dissemination and sharing of information
- Specific tailored trainings
- Retreat

How can they be efficient and effective

- Choose training mode to meet training needs
- Should peg workshop cost to training required [provide guidelines]

How can we justify them

- Use a needs assessment that is linked to staff competencies
- Outputs should be clearly defined
- Link workshop needs to performance of trainees

Can their supply be managed /influenced

- Should be some coordination so that district workshops are coordinated by ministry of local government
- There should be some analysis and guidelines for workshops
- Procurement plan for workshops
- Utilise valid workshops as an incentive for improved performance

4.5 Who should lead “HRD/Training/CB”

One thing to do: training should be as participatory as possible

Experts in colleges or MoPS?

Actors:

- MoPS
- Ministry of labour
- Universities and colleges
- Private sector
- NGOs
- Line ministries
- Conclusion: DWD should lead the HRD function.

Planning should be centralised at the national level and implementation decentralised.

4.6 “HRD/Training/CB” training plans

One thing to do: undertake training needs assessments and secondly, trainers should collaborate.

Do we need them? Yes!

- To ensure organised implementation
- Avoid duplication of effort
- Easier monitoring

On what basis are they developed?

- Availability of resources
- Skills needs on the demand side
- Skills needs on the supply side

Should they be focussed and time bound?

- The plans should be focussed on individual and organisational needs
- They should be time bound: long term and with an in-built review mechanism

Each group gave a summary of their recommendations in plenary. This was then followed by a round of questions.

Questions:

- Why have workshops increased? Government structures today requires participation. This may in fact have contributed to the proliferation of workshops. Response: there needs to be a rethink about the needs for workshops.
- Workshops the way forward: John Pinfold – an analysis of workshops by classification to determine which are effective or not, and on this basis, decide which types of workshops are effective and efficient.

Agreed: there will be a short survey at the WEDC conference to find out more about workshops: who initiates, funds and runs them. Also, what is their utility from the perspective of participants?

5. Ekimeeza Event

Following the tea break, Brian explained that one of the objectives of the TfR was to introduce different methods of delivering training. To this end, it was decided to include an Ekimeeza to illustrate one way of providing information. He explained that a panel of high-level experts working in the area of transboundary water negotiations under the Nile Basin initiative, had been invited to take questions in an Ekimeeza session. He commenced the Ekimeeza session with some background information about the history of agreements relating to the use of the waters of the Nile by riparian countries. Members of the panel then introduced themselves. They were:

- ~ Ambassador David Etuket – Director of Regional Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Uganda.
- ~ Apollo Okwii, Office of the President, Republic of Uganda.
- ~ Robert Opolot, Office of the Solicitor General, Republic of Uganda.
- ~ Ssenfuma Nsubuga, Commissioner of Water Resources Management in the Directorate of Water Development, Republic of Uganda
- ~ Simon Gitonga, Counsellor and Head of Chancery – Kenya High Commission

Each Panellist was given five minutes to talk about their role in the negotiation process before the session was opened to Forum participants to ask questions. The following were the questions put to the panellists:

Question: How are the competing sectoral interests in Uganda harmonised and presented as a cohesive position?

Answer: A technical committee comprising 13 sectors consulted stakeholders, ironed out any inconsistencies and prepared a single policy document. The same applies in Kenya. In addition, there is a subcommittee representing the five East African Community nations.

Question: Are other national water resources considered in trans-boundary negotiations?

Answer: Yes, the Ugandan position is holistic. Further, the Ugandan government position is informed by a consideration of issues pertaining to river systems rather than river basins.

Question: How representative of different stakeholders is the negotiation process?

Answer: There was a process of national consultations which collated the views of a wide cross-section of stakeholders. Further, environmental impact assessments are required for any proposed project. The representative on the panel from Kenya pointed out that stakeholders in the riparian states have broadly similar concerns.

Question: What national indicators are used to discuss performance at the international level?

Answer: The 10 golden indicators are used for this purpose. There are protocols and principles which govern trans-boundary issues. So, issues such as quality, obstruction of flow and so on are taken into account.

Question: What time-scale informs a country's negotiating position?

Answer: The strategy adopted for decision-making is consensus based. As such, it takes a longer time to reach agreements. The panellist emphasised that any negotiations involving nine states is necessarily complex and will inevitably be long drawn out. He also went on to say that the negotiation process is premised on a long-term time-frame of any agreements reached.

The Ekimeeza raised the awareness of some of the difficulties experienced in such negotiations. It also revealed how all stakeholders are involved and consulted. He concluded by thanking the panellists for taking part in the Forum.

6. Summary

Day I of the Forum concluded with a summary of the day's activities by Frank Odhiambo.

Report – Day II

Day II began with Brian giving participants a short introduction to the day's Agenda. The agenda, based on the training cycle, was to look at why we train, what we train and how we train, using both theory and case studies.

Before embarking on the day's proceedings, Brian offered participants a summary of the Ekimeeza event held the previous evening, and carried out a short evaluation of the event. The evaluation considered what was learnt, how it was learnt, and the potential for carrying out other Ekimeeza on other subjects such as sanitation, agriculture or contracts.

7. Why Train?

Sue restated the rationale for the TfR fora and the balance of supply and demand. She noted that the level of discussion has risen and tackling more difficult problems. TfR is stimulating discussion and working with the whole sector. The participants introduced themselves to show the breadth of the sector. The standard of training being demanded is rising – and is a long-term investment and planning is required. Deciding what training is needed is sometimes just done by the employer, but joint training needs analysis, working with training institutions allows both partners in capacity building to understand what each other needs and can be provided.

Duncan Karlule from Nsamizi college then presented a case study, sharing experiences in TNAs. The college is not an authority on TNAs, but is trying to explore this area. Founded in 1952, the college trained people to work in the colonial administration and prepare people for further studies (including how to use cutlery!). The college grew into a large institution and departments moved to other institutions (such as UMI). The college now just focuses on social aspects – as a training arm of the Ministry Gender Labour Social Development, training according to the Social Development Investment Plan (SDIP). Original courses include a certificate/ diploma in social work which developed into a degree course at Makerere. Other diplomas followed (adult education and development studies). New courses include juvenile justice, entrepreneurship, gender and development, but other certificate courses include counselling, social mobilisation, approved by National Council of Higher Education and National Curriculum Development Board. The courses are reviewed every 4 years. There are also short tailor-made courses, for projects, NGOs, governments and donors, such as USAID on "Advocacy in Family Planning" and orientation of local government workers working in the area of MGLSD. These do not have a standard curriculum; this is developed in conjunction with the sponsoring institution. The college specialises in training at grass roots and middle level, rather than top management. It focuses on skills and attitudes, not knowledge.

As lecturers work with students (e.g. adults with experience), they identify gaps that concern them at a local level. Field work practicals are a core part of the training (and mandatory). This allows assessment to be part of the core teaching activities. Themes identified then feed into course development. Feedback is also from practitioners – many of whom are former students. Lecturers also do fieldwork, allowing their knowledge to be put into practice.

Consultation includes NGOs and CBOs (e.g. Save the Children, Concern Worldwide), public servants (policy makers at Ministry headquarters) and colleagues from other institutions (e.g. Makerere provides external examiners for the diplomas). Inputs from TNA can vary in cost; streamlining HIV/AIDS into the curriculum was only US\$ 70 million/= whilst overhauling the whole curriculum cost US\$ 300 million/=.

New courses are being developed – such as a post grad course and a BA. These are at inception phase at the moment, with lots of consultation from grass roots to policy makers to ensure the course is targeted correctly. Training of the people who will be teaching this course is also planned, to ensure the material is delivered well.

Capacity gaps within the Institute include staff development (e.g. PhDs and Masters are planned in the Netherlands and in Uganda). Co-opting staff from other institutions and consultants help develop the courses, as well as hiring some part time staff and inviting guest lecturers in certain areas, where intutional staff do not have the expertise required (e.g. in procurement or law). Staff who do not upgrade qualifications cannot continue to work in the institution.

Managing the change process (not a one-off event) is a 4 year cycle, documenting gaps as the course is run, allowing new themes to develop over time and not be a sudden change. This does need resources and commitment over time; team work is essential – all staff working as equals in this activity.

Former students provide both marketing and information on training needs. Competent students provide an example of the quality of the teaching.

Questions arising from the presentation include:

- Are there distance learning arrangements from Nsamizi? *Some courses are residential, some are distance learning. We training people in service and private practice so distance learning is used. There are 13 satellite centres around the country to support learners, which the lecturers visit periodically, with learners coming to the central college at the start and end of the course. We focus on providing facilities for learning, with the private sector providing accommodation for students.*
- Whose demand – government, donors seem to demand – is there evidence of grass roots demand? *Our generic training is locally demanded resulting from evidence of what is carried out by the institutions, rather than externally controlled.*
- Does demand driven approach balance with change of attitude?
- The original objective was grass roots – is higher education and BAs part of this objective and are they sustainable without continual external funding? *External funding is being used to start the programme; the demand in the first year is over 200 students, showing its demand. The BA is unique in its content.*
- Can attitudes be changed without providing knowledge? (e.g. attitudes to latrines need knowledge of health impacts). *This distinguishes universities from the college but the emphasis is on skills and attitudes rather than knowledge even though knowledge is needed.*

8. What Information?

Frank set his presentation in context, matching supply with demand, but with a quality standard. Quality training requires quality information, so:

- What resources are available at a national level?
- Do you know where you can go to find information for your work (research/ project)?
- Should there be a national resource centres – there are many; should they be combined?
- What about grey literature? 90% will not be published and can be duplicated by other people again and again
- There are huge numbers of workshops – but where is this learning catalogued?
- What arrangements are there to disseminate information. How can other institutions benefit from Makerere university's research
- What resources do you have to support you in your institution; are the libraries well stocked?
- How can knowledge be exchanged between people; it is in our minds resulting from our experiences, values and belief; how can this be shared?
- Interpersonal communication is underrated – yet it is often the first point of information used, but not structured and facilitated. Staff rooms are important!

Keeping up to date is important – lecture notes 15 year old are not up to date. People use the internet or interaction with others (though this does not by itself ensure quality). Some people use institutional libraries, but they are not always used as we prefer the easiest way to source

information. Systems have to be simple if people are going to use it to seek information. Value added with quality information is not always evident immediately.

Quality information may be in libraries or in people's personal collections – in cupboards in offices, as knowledge is power ...! Journals are too expensive so libraries may not be up to date. Many people believe that computers solve information problems, but this is not always the case, but it is a useful tool. However a computer is only a tool, but can be used more effectively, such as making an intranet for storing internal information used regularly.

Managers are often bad at providing information, setting tasks but without explaining why, which limits effectiveness. This engages people in the task and sends a message of trust and value. Time needs to be set aside for staff to keep up to date, researching or thinking. Institutional dissemination strategies set out the types of activities, audiences, formats and other things to share information. The onus is also on the individual to keep up to date, such as networking or reading.

IT can be used more effectively by refining search techniques using search engines. Try *integrated water resources* or *integrated + water + resources* or "*integrated water resources*", alternatively use + and – to include or exclude terms, try capitals to only find words with capital (such as names). Use domain names such as *+domain:ug* to limit results to Ugandan sites. Use "*integrated water resources*" *+title:text* to limit search to just titles. Quality is indicated by logos, author's names, contact details, good design (indicating investment in the site).

Sources of information includes resource centres, such as WELL (www.lboro.ac.uk/well) which includes an enquiry Service and document Delivery. The WSSCC site (www.wsscc.org) lists institutions that provide information. Others include Source Weekly www.irc.nl, Sanitation Connection www.sanicon.net, Pubmed www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez, Ingenta www.ingentaconnect.com, Directory of open access journals www.doaj.org, Virtual library www.vlib.org, Reference www.britannica.com. Reference www.yourdictionary.com, Google scholar www.scholar.google.com.

Use Bookmarks, providing you a 'catalogue number' to find the page again. Save searches to repeat common searches to notice up to date information. Other sources include newspapers, authors (people are generous – and like to be flattered by the request!).

Questions include:

- how to access the WELL site
- how to capture local information (that is not on Internet or from people on the ground)
This is often in grey literature – this needs a sector strategy to house grey literature, but individuals need to place reports in the library and catalogue them. Grey literature is difficult to catalogue (with no ISBN, no author etc), so is often put off till later. Mind sets need to change how we catalogue literature; this limits access but at least gets them catalogued.

Frank's presentation was followed by a short coffee break.

COFFEE BREAK

9. How to Deliver Information

Following Frank's presentation, Brian gave a presentation on how to deliver information. In his presentation, he aimed to raise awareness of the different ways we access information. He asked participants to consider the following:

Talking

1. Do you dislike listening for a long time? (*See, picture, imagine*)
2. Do you enjoy listening/ talking? (*Say, hear, think*)
3. Do you like to gesture? (*Feel, touch, hold*)

Contacting people

1. Do you prefer face to face meetings
2. Do you prefer telephone?
3. Do you like to talk whilst walking / other activity?

Doing something new

1. Do you like to see demonstrations/ diagrams/ flow charts?
2. Do you like verbal or written instructions?
3. Do you like try it straight away and try different ways?

He concluded by saying that it is important to consider these questions when planning any communication, including training, to ensure that you select the most appropriate means for communicating your message.

The session on how to deliver information continued with a presentation from Sam Kayaga in which he introduced the pilot of the writing skills and consultancy skills modules. The aim of this presentation was to showcase an example of a different and innovative way of delivering training which had been attempted under the project. There were two groups of students on the writing skills module and one on the consultancy skills module. Each group of students was introduced and asked to give their experience of the distance learning module.

Joseph Epitu was asked to talk about the writing skills group he was acting as mentor to. He said that the group was drawn from the DWD. The initial group was eight, but fell to six. The module was initiated in April 2005. The course has a tutor from the UMI Sylvester Kugonza, and a mentor, Joseph Epitu. Sam Kayaga based in Loughborough acts as a coordinator. The first action under the module was a meeting of the participants, mentor and tutor. The meeting was to establish rapport and agree rules for running the module. These rules were in the main, the guidelines provided in the module. All participants have completed the first two units. Each unit has a coursework assignment. The group meets to launch each unit. Assignments are submitted electronically to the mentor who submits these to the tutor. Assignments are returned and a meeting arranged to discuss issues arising.

Observations: participants have taken ownership of the module. The module is an efficient way of delivering training: no allowances are involved, for example. It is intended to roll the module out within DWD, and possibly, to Local Government.

Robert Mugabe, a participant, spoke for the group and had the following to say. The module content is appropriate. Time however has been a constraint. The module is very relevant and applicable in participants' day to day work. The main challenge has been the amount of time allocated to complete the course. As a result, not all the resources given in the module have been accessed. The group receives feedback from their tutor. One participant travels from Entebbe to Luzira once a week for meetings. He suggests that a residential session might be a more appropriate delivery method for this module.

A second participant said the module is very interesting and relevant. However, time has been a problem especially given the pressures of work. A second constraint has been simply finding the time to read. The course tutor said that he has learned a number of things himself in running the course. It involves exercises on writing documents of a range of different styles. Many people have expressed interest in the module. Some of the exercises have been tweaked to better fit the Ugandan context. It is the tutor's opinion that the module should be popularised and widely disseminated. He concluded by suggesting that module participants be issued with a certificate.

The second strand of report writing comprised a group of independent learners. Delivery of material was timely and consistent. The group faced a number of challenges, notably time to complete the exercises. Downloading of materials was a problem. There was limited interaction among the participants and limited interaction between participants and their tutor. Improvements would include more time, greater interaction between participants, and efficient access.

They reported that they have learned of useful websites, books and other resources to improve writing skills. The purpose of writing and writing reports is to communicate information in a recognised format. What the title of the report, the basic rules of writing remain the same. Language should be kept short and simple. They were taught how to understand terms of reference and prepare report objectives. Report structures and standardised report formats were considered. They were also taught how to assess the language and readability of their report. Writing styles and ways of presenting arguments are also addressed. They also learned and practiced new strategies to improve our reading technique. They were also provided with a checklist for editing documents and techniques for writing executive summaries.

Issues arising

- ~ Certification is an issue.
- ~ Facilitation of mentors and learners
- ~ Ways to assist slower learners
- ~ Sustainability of the programme
- ~ Compare the institutional-based approach with the independent approach.
- ~ Consider having some specialised courses eg. Contract management lobbying and negotiating, fundraising etc.

One participant mentioned that the training provided was “for real.”

A strategy adopted by the tutor to keep learners motivated was communication through phone. Requests were made for extensions of time. This raises the issue of how to manage willing learners who are unable to progress for lack of time. The tutor’s overall assessment is that the course is rich and broad. It is applicable to both new graduates and those already in jobs. Makerere university senate has expressed an interest in their students being provided the course. Further, how can the module be scaled-up?

The tutor of the consultancy skills module reported that contact was made with all eight students. However, progress has been very slow. Only two students have done some work and both are on unit two.

Observations:

Sylvester Kugonzya pointed out that there is an issue of handling adult learners. Flexibility is important. The module is an excellent module.

Sam Kayaga pointed out that quality assurance is very important in the whole process. If training for real is to move forward, quality assurance is key. It is the intention of training for real that the delivery of modules should be flexible and should respond to learners’ needs.

In wrapping up, Sue pointed out that within the WELL contract, it was quickly identified that there was a skills gap in some areas. As a result, DFID funded a capacity building programme under the contract. WELL is happy to scale up the modules so long as quality assurance procedures are met. Flexibility is an important aspect of delivering the module and issues such as time allocated should always be negotiated. Sue emphasised that there is need for a renewed commitment. Sue announced that there will be a Training for Real event at the WEDC conference.

10. Forum End

The Forum concluded with the launch of the Training for Real website. Engineer Richard Cong called up the website on the screen and participants were given a quick explanation of the features of the site. The website launch was followed by a presentation of books to representatives of Kyambogo University, Makerere University, Mbale School of Hygiene, Nsamizi Institute of Social Development, and UWASNET. The Forum was then officially closed and participants proceeded to lunch.

LUNCH

