

Teaching Tool description	
Title	Communication skills- Training manual-interviewers in all health fields- Haaland- WHO
Language:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English
Profession:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health workers
Level of learner(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> all
Topic:	<p>Primarily What to Teach/Assess resource</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> relationship building (including empathy) challenging situations professionalism inter-professional communication
Core curriculum objectives match	This tool covers the following HPCCC objective(s) – B1,3-12 C6,9, 13-15
Goals/educational objectives	<p>After the training course, the students will have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > gained knowledge in all the theories and concepts covered, and skills in those which are easy or fairly difficult to learn in communication > increased their knowledge and awareness about the factors which can cause problems in an interview > increased their choice of strategies to deal with problems when they arise > increased their confidence to deal with the problems, and gained a sense of empowerment > improved their motivation to perform the work well > increased their involvement in the research process, especially the development of questionnaires.
Type of tool:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training Manual
Brief description: Limit to 200 words	Training manual on practical communication skills for field researchers and project personnel
Practical resources	
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List of tool files	Haaland_Quality information in field research

Quality information in field research

Training manual on practical communication skills for field researchers and project personnel



Ane Haaland and Sassy Molyneux
with Vicki Marsh

Resource group:
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**Wellcome-KEMRI
Research Programme
and WHO/TDR**

TDR/IRM/PCT/05.1

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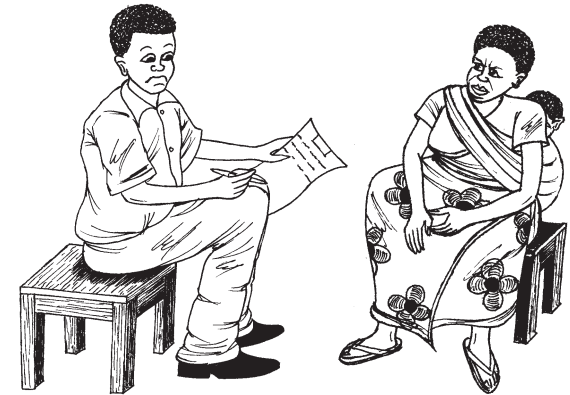
Quality information in field research

Training manual on practical communication skills for field researchers and project personnel

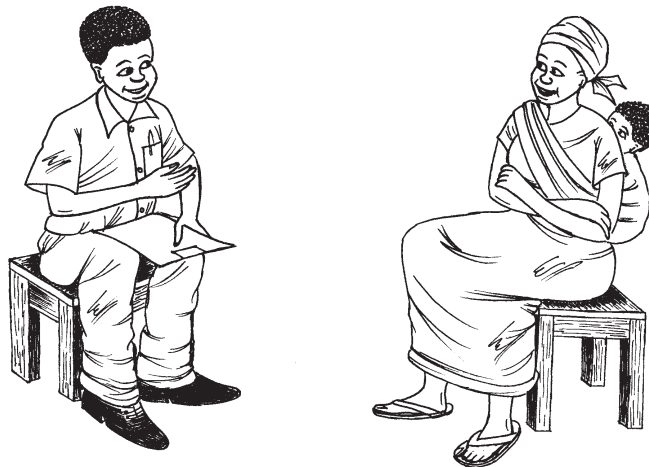
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Before the course:
"She is difficult and ignorant"



After the course:
"She is a challenge. I have to use my good mood, confidence and communication skills to motivate her. And I have to listen carefully to her needs."

Illustrations: Bosco Kahindi
Testing and coordination: Lewis Mitsanze

UNICEF/UNDP/World Bank/WHO
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Foreword

It is a very great pleasure to see the publication of this manual. The utility of all research depends on the quality of the information, and in the case of information collected from talking to people, it depends critically on the quality of the communication between the research participants and researchers. This is so obvious that we often fail to give it much thought, paying more attention to practical details such as optimizing protocols and questionnaires and the logistics of data collection. This is compounded by the fact that few of us feel we communicate badly ... its always others who do that!

The research programme at Kilifi is multidisciplinary and focused on the prevention and treatment of major causes of ill health, particularly in children, in a rural area. The approaches described in this manual grew out of an increasing recognition among a whole group of colleagues in our programme of the critical role of communication and the realization that there are remarkably few resources that we can draw on to improve researchers communication skills. We were very fortunate in having the collaboration of Ane Haaland, who worked with us and brought her enormous experience, commitment and enthusiasm to bear in helping the team in Kilifi tackle these issues and develop their own approaches. Key aspects of the approach include that it begins with interviewers' own experiences; these are used to define the problems encountered in their work and to recognize how often these reflect, to some degree, unsatisfactory communication. The interviewers learn to see 'problems' as challenges that can be tackled by the application of communication skills and strategies. The process is fundamentally

participatory; communication skills, above all things, cannot be taught in lectures. Finally, enhancing communication skills is not a one-off event but a continuous process. The benefits of the approach were immediately apparent at a personal level from the very positive reactions of those who participated in the development of this manual, and particularly from their increased confidence and motivation. Importantly, these benefits were maintained two years later when participants were again asked about their perceptions of problems arising from their work.

Any sort of training requires an investment of time and money, which in busy, overstretched research settings can be difficult. However, our conclusion after watching this process develop is that it is not so much a question of whether we can afford to do it, rather that we cannot afford not to do it. We hope that colleagues in related fields will find this manual useful. The approaches described here were primarily developed with and for 'fieldworkers' at the coalface of research, who collect the information on which research depends and who form the critical interface between researchers and the communities in which they work. However, we believe that the approaches described here will be useful, modified as necessary, to anyone, at any level, whose work involves communication ... and that must mean pretty much all of us.

Kevin Marsh

Director KEMRI Wellcome research
programme Kenya

Norbert Peshu

Director KEMRI Centre for Geographic
Medicine Research Coast (CGMRC)

Acknowledgements

The development and implementation of the training process and the idea for the manual were a low-cost operation organized and financed by the Wellcome-KEMRI research programme. The training would not have been possible without full support from a research environment open to innovative ideas. We would like to thank the directors of the research programme in Kilifi, Professor Kevin Marsh and Dr. N. Peshu, for management support and the freedom to go ahead and test out our ideas, as well as using the staff and the facilities.

Vicki Marsh deserves special thanks for going through and supervising the awareness phase (together with Sassy), making reports from the discussions, and trusting that this somehow would turn into a training programme.

A big thank-you to our team of resource people – Vicki, Wilfred Mutemi, Annie Willets and Washington Onyango-Ouma – for their contributions to developing and teaching the course. They trusted (most of the time!) that the creative chaos of the planning phase would turn into a product in the end.

The biggest thank-you goes to the field workers in Kilifi. They have participated fully in the whole process, and have sat patiently through a number of elaborate assessments to provide a measurement of what they have learned. They have contributed their time, insight and efforts to this process.

Lewis Mitsanze, who is a senior field worker, deserves special thanks for his contribution to developing and testing the pictures, and for coordinating the feedback process.

Bosco Kahindi, the artist, is thanked for his illustrations, and for his patience in changing them until they were JUST right!

We thank the Home Management Task Force of TDR, under the chairmanship of Dr Jane Kengeya-Kayondo, for seeing the potential of this work and supporting it with a grant, thus making the development of the draft manuscript possible. This work was continued by Dr Franco Pagnoni. TDR decided in 2002 to give an additional grant to finalize the manual.

It is our hope that this manual will be of use to those who see the need to obtain better-quality information from interviews and field work, and see that improved communication skills can contribute to this goal. Better-quality information can lead to more reliable research results and more effective development projects – as well as greater job satisfaction among the field researchers and project workers.



*Ane Haaland
Sassy Molyneux
September 2005*

Terminology

“Field workers” (FWs), “field researchers” and “interviewers” are terms used for the participants in the Kilifi course throughout the manual. Their job is to collect information in the field, based on questionnaires, checklists, etc. developed by and with the research staff in the programme. Their training ranges from secondary school leavers to graduates.

“Research scientists”, “researchers”, “scientists” and “resource team/people” are terms used for the scientific staff in the Kilifi Research Programme. The staff consists of people with (bio)medical and/or social science training at Masters’ and PhD level.



Abbreviations

ABC	Attitude and behaviour change
FW	Field worker
KEMRI	Kenya Medical Research Institute
NVC	Nonverbal communication
R	Respondent
TDR	UNICEF/UNDP/World Bank/WHO Special Programme for Training and Research in Tropical Diseases
WHO	World Health Organization

Background

This manual is the outcome of a training process developed at the Kenyan Medical Research Institute (KEMRI)-Wellcome Trust Collaborative Research Programme in Kilifi, Kenya, where multidisciplinary research with a focus on prevention and treatment of severe childhood malaria has been carried out since 1989. The aim was to build on the communication skills of the field workers collecting the data, and thus improve the quality of the information they gathered. When the process started, we looked for resource materials to use in the training. We found very little, and decided to develop our own.

The idea was conceived in 1996, emerging from a growing interest in communication skills among the staff in Kilifi. In 1996, the KEMRI-Wellcome Research Programme had 90 staff, including 31 field workers. In 2004, the programme had 360 staff, including about 110 field workers. The programme has carried out large-scale community-based multidisciplinary research activities, including the establishment and maintenance of a demographic surveillance system, a case-control study on the effectiveness of insecticide-treated bednets, and an intervention study on the effectiveness of training shopkeepers in the appropriate distribution of first-line antimalarials. Such research activities depends to a large extent on the ability and motivation of the field workers, whose primary responsibility is interacting with and gathering data from community members. All KEMRI-Wellcome field workers are members of the local community, typically undergraduates, who are carefully trained in the technicalities of every research activity in which they are involved. As the programme has expanded, researchers and field workers

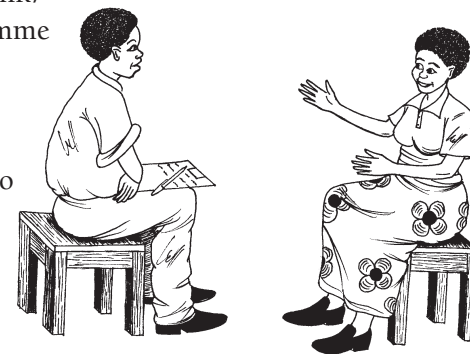
themselves have increasingly identified formal input into communication skills as an essential training need.

A three-phase training process involving 22 field workers, five training assistants (researchers working with the field workers) and one senior trainer took place over a six-month period in 1997. The overall aim was to “develop awareness and insights about strengths and weaknesses in their personal communication style in interview situations, improve knowledge and skills on communication, and develop and practise strategies to deal effectively with a number of different interview situations, using new awareness, skills and insights”.

In Phase 1 – the awareness-raising period over three months – the field workers observed their own practice during work, and discussed observations about once a week with the researcher. This was followed by Phase 2 – an intensive seven-day skills training course, building on the observations made during the awareness-raising. After the training followed Phase 3, a period of approximately three months of integrating the skills into daily practice, where discussions were held and problems and achievements further discussed.

The development and implementation of the training process and idea for the manual has been a low-cost operation financed by the Wellcome-KEMRI Research Programme.

The UNDP/World Bank/WHO Special Programme for Training and Research in Tropical Diseases (TDR) recognized the need to spread these ideas further and financed the development of the manual.



PART I

Introduction to contents, methods and results

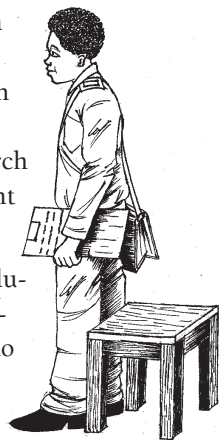
Why this manual, and for whom?

Good quality information is critical to planning and implementing successful research and intervention programmes. The information-gathering link – where the researcher turns over the task of collecting data to interviewers or research assistants with local language and cultural skills – is particularly vulnerable. It is often at this point that the researcher hands much of the control and responsibility for the quality of data to others, who play the critical role of negotiating between the needs, expectations and norms of interviewees on the one hand, and project leaders on the other.

What problems do interviewers face in this role, and what knowledge and skills do they draw upon to handle them?

What impact do the strategies they use have on respondents' comfort and trust in their work, and ultimately on the quality of the information given? Are interviewers' knowledge, skills and strategies being incorporated into initial research questions, fieldwork planning, tool development and data interpretation?

Despite the complex range of factors which influence the quality of data collected through interviews, the training of interviewers often tends to focus on technical and practical aspects. For example, interviewers may go through a questionnaire prepared by the researcher, familiarize



themselves with the contents, be taught definitions and probes to gather the necessary details or enable reliability or validity checks, and be informed about how to select respondents. They are also informed about what to do if vehicles break down, if potential respondents are constantly absent, and how completed questionnaires should be gathered, checked and stored. Depending on the complexity of the research, the training may take anything between a few hours and several weeks. Communication skills are rarely covered: Supervisors and interviewers may not be aware of the many interpersonal issues which can negatively influence the quality of the information they collect. The consequence may be large margins of error in research, and intervention plans that do not address problems optimally.

The aim of this manual

Good communication skills improve field researchers' confidence and motivation, strengthen team interaction and improve data quality. There are few opportunities to learn practical communication skills in universities or projects in the South, and few training guides address these issues as a process of training over time.

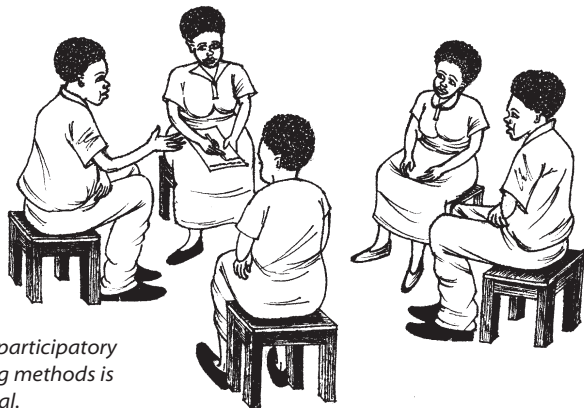
The manual is an attempt to address this need. It says **why communication training is necessary** in field research and project work, and shows, step by step, **how to plan and conduct** a practical communication-skills course to improve the quality of information and field work.

By sharing insights and experiences from the Kilifi training course, the manual aims to motivate readers to start their own training process and learn about themselves and their effect on others.

The writers also aim to contribute to the process of building up practical tools for training researchers and field staff in the skills needed for carrying out basic, operational and/or intervention research, as well as project work where gathering information from and interacting with community members is necessary.

Who can use this manual?

The manual is written for professionals from various disciplines who plan and conduct field research and project work and feel that the quality of their data and their fieldwork could be improved by training their staff. Potential users are:



Use of participatory training methods is essential.

- community-based research and operational programmes, including intervention research
- trainers of field researchers/interviewers
- PhD students
- trainers of other development/project personnel who need to do fieldwork.

It is our hope that this manual will be of use to those who can see the importance of communication skills in interviews and who are keen to draw on the knowledge and skills of interviewers familiar with research/interview settings, but who do not yet have access to practical applications of communication theories and effective communication strategies. These theories and strategies can increase awareness of communication issues, facilitate discussion about the choice between options for appropriate action in different situations, and encourage participatory working relationships. Use of these skills will lead to better relationships, better quality information and better project work and results.

Structure and results of the course

This course is about training people to see challenges instead of problems and to develop skills to meet those challenges constructively. To be able to do this, participants need to learn communication skills and strategies, and to look at what may stop them, personally, from practising the skills effectively. Essential to the Kilifi course approach were:

- training being seen as a long-term process
- participants being encouraged to observe and define their own problems
- dealing openly with feelings and relationships as an important aspect of effective field research and project work.

In Kilifi, participants reported moving from feeling powerless and frustrated with respondents to assessing the situation, taking charge gently, negotiating what they required in a friendly and confident way, and respecting the right of the respondent to say “no”. The result is that they are more likely to be appreciated and respected, and respondents will more often choose to give them the right information. This leads to more useful research results and interventions and project activities which are more relevant to people’s real needs.

Participants changed from being unaware and afraid to having strategies to handle most situations well.



A three-phase training process

- Phase 1** A three-month awareness-raising period: Examples of some of the problems identified by researchers, field workers and trainer are included in the box below and in the Annex.
- Phase 2** An intensive seven-day skills training course that emerged from the awareness-raising period. Table 1 gives an overview of the theories, concepts, skills and strategies covered, and those that the field workers found easy, fairly difficult and difficult to learn.
- Phase 3** A period of approximately three months of integrating the skills into daily practice: We assessed the impact of our course on researchers and field workers using a number of qualitative and quantitative research tools, including knowledge tests, skills tests (using video role-plays) and group discussions (see Annex).

Assessment tools:

Questionnaire:

begins awareness-raising and participant input to course planning and material (Appendix ■)

Questionnaire and role play video:

Pre-intensive course baseline, and participant input to course planning and material (Appendices ■-■)

Questionnaire:

Course evaluation by participants, and identification of gaps/concerns (Appendix ■)

Repeat if appropriate during/after Phase 3

Questionnaire and role play video:

Post-intensive course. Course evaluation and individual exams. (Appendices ■-■)

Repeat if appropriate during/after Phase 3

Figure 1: Structure of Kilifi course

1. Awareness raising – 3 months
(FWs and supervisors)



Planning of skills training
(Supervisors and Ane Haaland)



2. Skills training – 11 modules over 7 days
(FWs, supervisors and Ane Haaland)

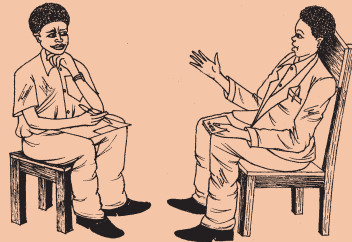
1. Programme, expectations and methods
2. Information, communication and feedback
3. Asking good Questions
4. Awareness and Active Listening
5. Moods, attitudes and behaviour
6. The practical interview situation
7. Strategies: Negotiation
8. Strategies: Getting the full picture
9. Strategies: Seating and introduction
10. Strategies: Identifying personal style
11. Strategies: Adjusting your own action
12. Understanding the reasons behind moods, attitudes and uncertainty
13. Summing up: Review. And further learning needs



3. Integrating knowledge into practice
(FWs and supervisors)

Some problems identified by field workers and researchers through awareness-raising, in order of priority

- Dealing with misconceptions about who you are and what you do.
- Knowing whether a respondent has given you **real** information, as opposed to telling you something just to make you happy or to make you go away, or deliberately giving you misinformation.
- Responding to people of high socioeconomic status who think they are more knowledgeable than you.
- Obtaining information which will give the respondent trouble, or make her feel uncomfortable.
- Feeling trapped – that you have to accept a certain way of sitting, or certain behaviour from the respondent, in order to get your information.
- Dealing with people who are ignorant, uneducated, drunk, stubborn or old.
- Meeting the expectations of community members.
- Dealing with problems created by colleagues.
- Dealing with distractions during the interview.
- Having to respond to questions which are not related to the objectives of the study.
- Getting very short answers intended to get the interview finished quickly.
- People often see us as doctors, and expect that we will treat their children.



Points identified by trainer

- Field workers usually interpret the situation following their assumptions of what the respondent feels or thinks, without checking out with the respondent whether the interpretation is correct.
- When faced with a problem, field workers often react defensively.

The way in which these problems were linked with the theories, concepts, skills and strategies covered in Phase 2 is discussed in the Annex.

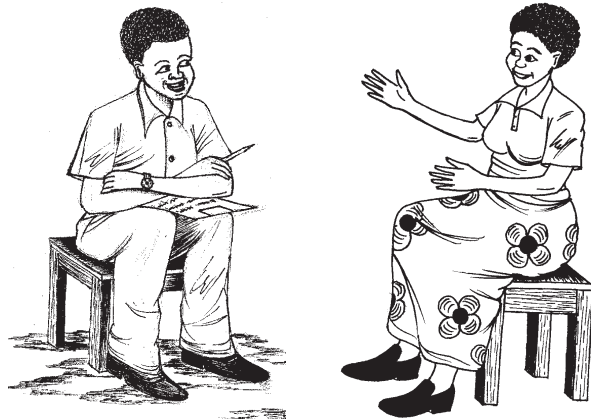
Overview of course contents

Interpersonal communication theories and concepts	Assessment showed			Module
	Easy to learn	Fairly difficult	Difficult	
Why use participatory methods		x		1
Sender-receiver model	x			2
Difference: information – communication	x			2
Nonverbal communication (NVC)	x			2
Awareness – “antennae”	x			4
Moods, attitudes and behaviour change			x	5
Understanding both sides’ needs	x			6
Understanding the full picture		x		8
The concept of insecurity			x	12
Skills and strategies				
Giving and receiving feedback		x		2
Asking Meta Model questions and probing		x		3
Using antennae – practising awareness		x		4
Active listening		x		4
Showing empathy		x		6
Negotiating to meet both sides’ needs		x		7
Choosing appropriate strategy to take constructive action		x		7-11
Analysing implications of own skills on quality of data			x	7-11
Introduction of interview	x			9
Creating a good atmosphere and seating	x			9
Recording and use of feedback form		x		10, 11
Assessing own communication style and identifying needs for change			x	10-12

After the training course

After the training course, field workers had:

- gained knowledge in all the theories and concepts covered, and skills in those which are easy or fairly difficult to learn
- increased their knowledge and awareness about the factors which can cause problems in an interview
- increased their choice of strategies to deal with problems when they arise
- increased their confidence to deal with the problems, and gained a sense of empowerment
- improved their motivation to perform the work well
- increased their involvement in the research process, especially the development of questionnaires.



Some comments from field workers on their own learning

“If I had a problem, I got upset, and did not always deal well with the situation. Now I know what ruins good information, and I have strategies to ensure that I get the best info I can.”

“Before, if a respondent was unhappy, I just ignored her. It was not my problem to make her happy. Now, I care about this, because if she

is unhappy, she may give me inaccurate information. If she is happy, I know she will give me good information.”

“Before I was just doing the job, I didn’t know how the data was used. Now, I am involved in making the questionnaires, and discuss with the supervisor why to ask each question, and how the data will be used. This increases my confidence to deal with the respondents who ask questions, and it also increases my motivation for doing a good job.”

“There were many misconceptions among people about what we were doing, and we did not know how to deal with this problem. Now, we can find out when there are misconceptions, and explain things clearly to the respondents.”

“Now, we realize when we do something wrong, because we look at both sides – ours, and the respondent’s. We negotiate, and make sure both sides’ needs are met.”



“There has been a big change. Since the course, there hasn’t been an issue of a supervisor having to go and solve a communication problem, e.g. because of misconceptions people have of what we do. Now, we can tackle this well.”

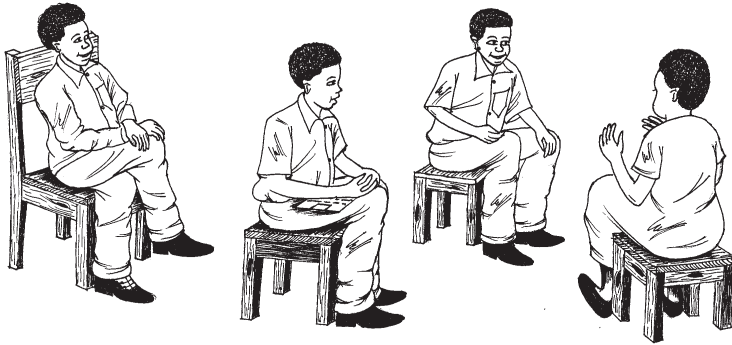
Comments from resource people on their own learning

Resource people observed interviews in the field during the awareness phase. They saw how many things can go wrong, what influences these things, and why you have to improve skills.

“During the awareness phase we had huge debates, and a lot of fun as well. It was a big learning experience for us all; time well spent.”

“We became aware of our automatic reactions in certain situations, like when we hear judgemental comments, or get drawn into power games, or face sexist remarks. Over the course we learned some simple strategies to hold back and question our automatic reactions, find out and listen rather than stereotype and judge.”

“I feel happier to sit in the background now, and be comfortable about not having all the answers. The field workers had been used to a different kind of teaching before and expected “experts” with all the answers ... now, discussion and debate is the norm.”



“Before the course, we were doing many things well, but were not aware. When we make the framework and strategy clear, we can use it more consciously. The knowledge has moved from the unconscious space (“knew it”) to the conscious one (“can use it”), and is then much more available for use.”

Assessment after two years: lasting improvements

Two years after the course, we asked field workers which of the initial set of 33 problems highlighted at the outset of the course (see Annex) they still found a problem. Now that they had used their new skills and knowledge in the field, very few of the problems remained a concern. The only one which had increased was flirting! Dealing with a mother who is grieving for a dead child was still seen as a problem by some of the field workers.

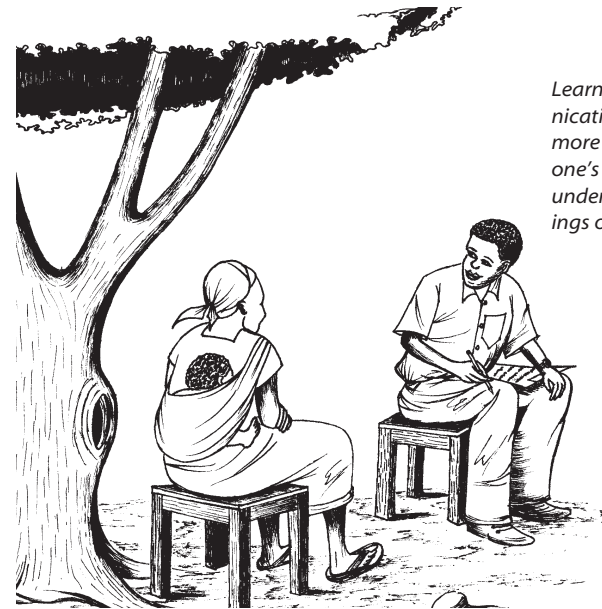
Over these two years, the programme was working in an increasingly participatory way, thus enabling the field workers to continue to practise what they had learned and deepen their skills.

See Annex for an overview of the changes in the list of 33 problems.

Participatory methods: rationality and feelings

Learning more effective communication skills requires a number of different inputs

- Awareness about own problems and training needs.
- Information about effective communication strategies in different situations.
- Insight into characteristics of your own personal communication style.
- Knowledge about what needs to be changed, and why.
- Knowledge about the importance of feelings for the outcome of a communication/interaction, and how to read, understand and manage those feelings.



Learning good communication means getting more in touch with one's own feelings, and understanding the feelings of the respondent.

- Insight into people's moods, the reasons behind them, and how to react to them constructively.
- Supervised practice to put new skills into action and make them your own.
- Reflection on the effects of the new methods and skills on yourself, on others, and on the outcome of the interview.

This manual deals with the above issues, step by step.

These issues cannot be taught through lectures alone: Learning effective communication skills requires extensive use of participatory training methods, where participants are involved in discovering and practising new skills, and becoming more aware of the emotional aspects involved in interpersonal relations.

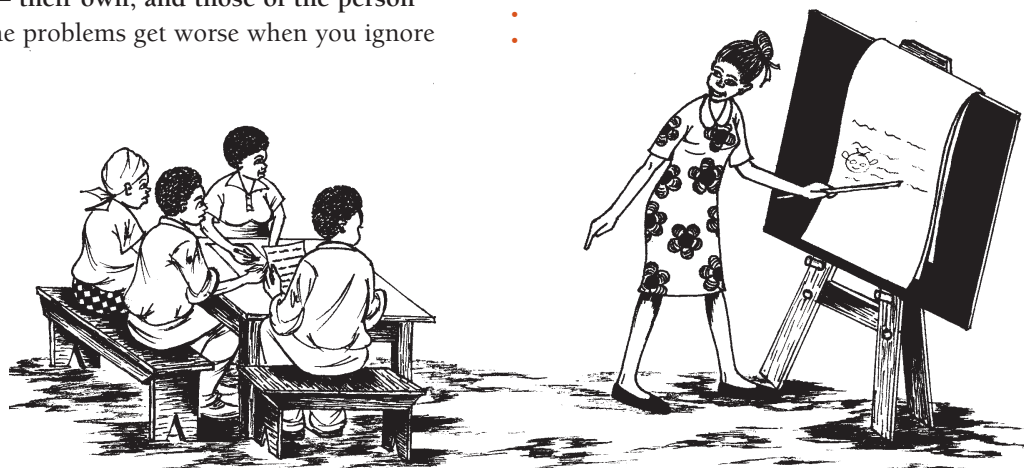
There are relatively few “facts” surrounding these issues:

A reliance on interpretation requires that participants be comfortable with less defined answers. Often, participants are challenged to find the answers within themselves, rather than relying on getting the “truth” from outside. For people used to dealing mainly with hard facts in their work, this can be a real challenge.

When learning about communication, participants are encouraged to discuss feelings related to the new skills and their effects. **Communication problems usually happen because people do not understand feelings – their own, and those of the person they are talking with.** The problems get worse when you ignore

feelings and try to solve the problem by using rational arguments only. Thus, becoming a better communicator means becoming more aware of your own feelings and how they influence your actions. You need to learn what triggers off your automatic reactions in different situations. It is the work of **getting more familiar with inner strengths and weaknesses** which is the major challenge in learning to become a better communicator. You also need to understand the feelings of the person you talk with, by learning to observe and become aware of the feelings behind people's actions – or reactions. Learning about these topics is best done through e.g. role-plays, group work, demonstrations, observation, home-thinking and reflection. The most effective way to learn is by the trainer introducing the topic/skill and giving the reasons or theories required, followed by appropriate demonstrations of how it works. Participants can then practise, give and receive feedback and then reflect together with the trainer(s) on what has been learned and its implications. Then – more practice.

Participatory methods require flexibility, and the programme is often changed to adapt to the learning speed of the participants. There are a number of good training manuals available on participatory methods, and we recommend that you use one of these if your resource people are not familiar with participatory approaches (see literature list on page 130).



How to use the manual

Within the broad and flexible framework we provide, there are two essential prerequisites for the success of the course: a **period of awareness-raising and the use of participatory training methods**. The training is seen as a **process**, and a longer process will be more effective in changing information-collection methods in a sustainable way. We recommend that users take these issues as a starting point, and **use the manual creatively** – as a resource, to fit the needs defined in each setting.

The training process in Kilifi lasted six months. Alternative and shorter schedules are possible. The awareness phase may be fitted into normal work (as was done in Kilifi) – i.e. incorporated into a pilot phase, or into an ongoing field study or intervention project. The modules can also be used flexibly – for example one module at a time, as a natural part of learning on the job. The important issue is **to follow the stages logically**, i.e. be sure to do some awareness-raising before you start any of the modules, and to

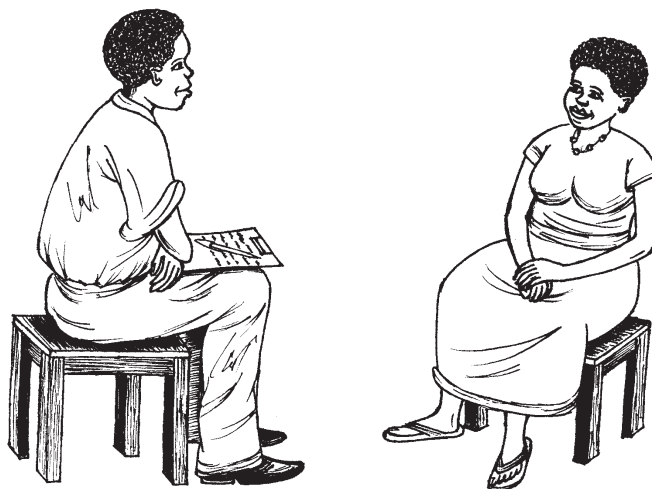
follow the modules more or less in the sequence they are presented in the manual. The modules are built up carefully, to take into account the “stepping stones” which participants need before they can learn the next topic effectively.

Handouts: At the end of each section, there is a summary of points to be remembered or practised. We recommend that you pick out these summaries, and the illustrations, and make your own “summary of the day” to give out to the participants.



“Now, it is easy to get an idea about whether a mother is ready for an interview, or whether she is a “silent refusal”. Before, we’d just get the information to the programme whether or not we thought it was the correct information.”

“We used to go directly into collecting the information. Now, we explain the reason for the visit, and ask whether the respondent has time. Before, we used to just introduce ourselves, and start. We didn’t really consider whether it was a convenient time for the respondent.”

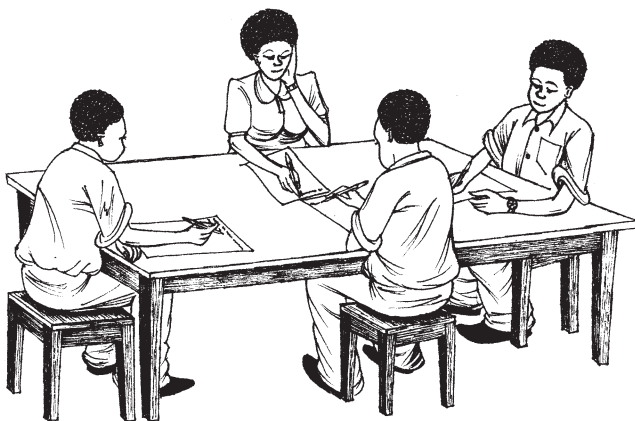


PART II

Planning and implementing training

This main section of the manual shows you how to implement the three different phases, step by step. The closer you relate the specific contents of the course to the field workers' own examples, the more relevant the participants will feel the training to be for them, and the better they will be able to integrate the new skills into their work.

We would recommend that you make an assessment of present skills and knowledge from the perspectives of both the participants and the supervisors/researchers before you start the awareness phase (“baseline” in Figure 1), and again after the intensive skills training. These two measures should be enough to show changes in the participants' **knowledge**. If you are able to use a video, or do an assessment of a role-play using a checklist, you could also incorporate a **skills** assessment into the training.



Planning the training process

How do you know whether you need communication training in your project, and whether you can plan and implement a training course? Supervisors may have an “instinctive feeling” that interviewers could do a better job, or interviewers may request assistance with issues that supervisors do not feel able to respond to adequately. It may be difficult to put these uncertain feelings or issues into words which will lead to a clear identification of problems.

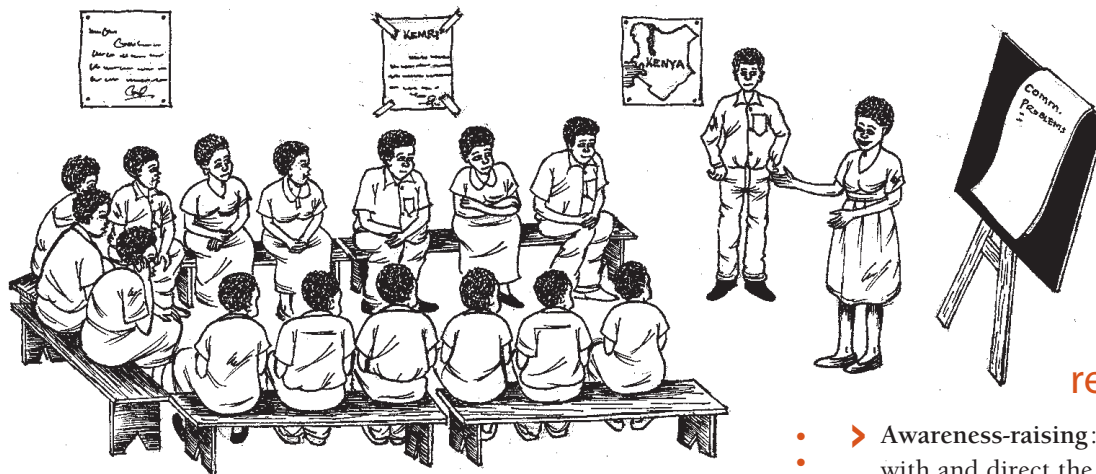
Conducting awareness-raising will also give you information about whether a skills training course is needed, and whether your staff are motivated to learn such skills. The awareness-raising phase will give insights into the problems which are the most prevalent in your setting, and provide examples which can be incorporated into the intensive course. The awareness-raising will also be a learning experience in itself. The cost is low (no outside resources needed), and very little risk is involved.

Most of the modules in this manual can, however, be used as they are, and will be relevant for any field workers whose job is to collect information in or work with communities.

Practical issues

The following is a brief overview of issues you need to consider to implement a training process on communication skills.

Three stages are essential: The Kilifi course was carried out in three stages – on-the-job development of awareness of the need for training (over a period of three months), an intensive seven-day training course, and integration of the new skills into interviewing practice, with supervision/discussions, over a further three months. A major reason for the positive impact of this training on field workers' practice is the length of the process (six months in total). When the task is to learn new skills and change behaviour, a one-off training programme of one week often does not have a lasting impact.



Skills and personal characteristics of resource people

Support from management: It is important to involve the project or programme management in the planning process for the training at an early stage, and make sure you have their support for what you want to do. This will also give the management an input of ideas into the training. Prepare draft aims and objectives and a budget for the course (give cost estimates for different venues, and for external resources needed, e.g. a trainer) and discuss these with the management. Also discuss the selection and number of participants.

Size: We recommend that the course include 6-20 participants with field interview or project experience, a minimum of two researchers or trainers, and input from at least one person with training in participatory methods and communication skills. If the group is small (fewer than 10), one person can handle the awareness-raising phase.

Time: Flexible, but as a general guide, awareness phase three weeks to three months; intensive course 5-10 days; integrating skills into practice three months, or more.

- > **Awareness-raising:** Two resource people are required to plan with and direct the field researchers to observe their work, and then facilitate meetings with them to report on, discuss and record their observations.
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- > **Intensive skills training:** Project resource team (minimum two, maximum four people – including those participating in the awareness-raising) which plans the intensive course; experienced trainer with skills in participatory methods and in communication training and/or training of interviewers or project staff. The trainer should plan the course with the resource group, and train them in participatory methods before and during the course.
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- > **Integrating knowledge into practice:** Two resource people are required to design follow-up tools for field researchers to monitor their own skills and to facilitate regular discussions on new skills gained and problems still persisting. The resource people should also be able to observe the field researchers using their new skills, and give constructive feedback.
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- > **Personal characteristics** of the resource team are as important as the professional skills they bring to this work. People who are perceived as open and friendly, with the ability really to listen to others, will often find it easier to learn and teach good communication skills and attitudes. The training team should include persons who feel comfortable about dealing with and teaching about feelings.

Status and importance of the course: Discuss with the management how they can promote the status of the process and the course, e.g. by announcing the course through their regular channels, and participating in the opening and closing of the course (preferably the Director). The management should also sign the certificates, and agree on practical implications for the certificate – e.g. will it count towards higher pay, or other incentives?

Assessing results: Discuss how you will assess the progress of the participants and trainers, e.g. through a formal assessment of the training (before and after). Self-assessment will strengthen the participatory approach that is so critical to this training. See Annex.

Materials for teaching: Flipcharts and markers, and handouts. The summary page from each day, and the feedback forms, were essential tools. Some handouts are reproduced in the Annex (see also diagram).



Videos can be used for objective assessments of skills and attitudes, and to demonstrate the changes in participants' performance. It is usually interesting for participants to watch and observe themselves at work. In Kilifi, all field workers conducted a role-play interview in front of the camera before and after the skills training. This was a very useful and direct way of showing progress to the field workers themselves, the trainers and the management.

Set flexible goals: You can formulate aims and objectives initially, and adjust them to the emerging reality and needs of participants and process during the awareness-raising phase.

Low cost

The investment of time and personnel resources in the Kilifi training were significant, but the actual monetary costs were not high. The personnel doing the work were attached to the project, the training hall was already available, and the only outside resource used was the communication specialist, Ane Haaland. This situation may not be atypical: a project may already have most of what it needs to do this training, if it pulls the resources together. Some projects may also choose to conduct a simpler version of the course. What projects most likely lack – participatory training and communication skills – can be hired for the time needed (mainly planning and implementing the intensive skills training course, and preferably participating in the initial planning of the whole process).

Implementing the training

Phase 1: Awareness-raising

Awareness-raising is a process of observing your own work and habits in a structured way, to identify your strong points and the places where you have problems in doing a good enough job.

When many people in a group are observing the same issue, and get together to discuss the observations, the result will be a collective summary of strengths and weaknesses on this issue, and group members will become aware of problems in themselves and in the group.

The method is very effective in motivating group members to learn, and to take responsibility for their own learning.



Many field workers have great ideas about how to deal with problem situations. They may not have experience in sharing strategies and discussing how to solve problems. How do we use their skills and experiences to help the other field workers learn?

When a group of researchers and/or practitioners are led through such an awareness-raising process for a number of issues which they struggle with in their work, they will see that they are not alone in experiencing the problems. This legitimizes acknowledgment of the problems, develops motivation to change how these are dealt with, and opens the door to real learning. When a training course is built on such a process, participants help to set the agenda for their own training and feel more responsible for making it a success.

Why training programmes may have a limited impact

Often, training needs are formulated by outsiders – usually persons with higher status and a different background from those who “need training”. An “expert” from the outside can tell participants what they need to learn (which may be “objectively true”), and set out to train them in these skills. However, when needs are defined from the outside, the participants may not have had a chance to identify and deal with their “felt needs”, and the reasons why they are not doing a good enough job may not have been explored. Even though participants may learn the new skills mechanically, they may not develop confidence and be motivated to put the new skills into action, because they have not been involved in defining the programme, and do not feel responsible for the results. The impact of such training on field workers’ skills and the quality of the data may be limited¹.

How to develop awareness

The work should be broken down into small units which are easily observable, such as “How do I introduce myself and the purpose of my visit when I do an interview?” The observation of this point can be done over a period of a week or so, using a checklist. The group then goes on to observe the next issue (such as how they ask questions, and how they probe). It is important that each observation task has a clear focus, and is specific.

The awareness process for field researchers could be structured as follows.

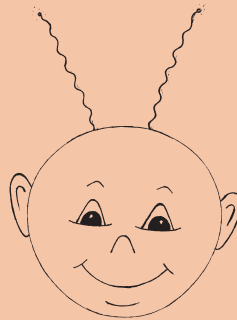
1. Meeting between researcher(s) and participants to discuss the idea of an awareness phase. What is it, what is its purpose – how people feel about it – any suggestions for how to do it. Share the information from the boxes (see above).

¹ See the literature list for a reference to “Health Workers for Change”, which describes a similar method which has been evaluated and found very effective in improving health workers’ attitudes, skills and confidence in dealing with their clients: clients clearly perceived an improvement in the quality of care they received.

Some good reasons for doing awareness-raising

Participants :

- experience that there are problems in their practice
- are invited to specify these problems
- experience that others (colleagues) have the same problems as themselves
- share good strategies for solving problems
- become used to learning in a group
- become used to looking at their own practice with awareness and a critical eye
- collect examples from their field-work which can be used directly in the intensive skills training – this makes the training feel directly relevant
- feel that their needs will be the basis for the training programme – this increases motivation
- learn to listen to each other
- become used to observing their own practice and incorporating the questions, reflections and learning into their regular work
- become used to giving each other feedback and being involved in each other's learning.



In summary – participants take responsibility for their own learning

“You are the expert – tell us what to do!”

In Kilifi, the process started with the field workers requesting a communication course, and one of the researchers asking me to talk with them about it. The management had essentially agreed that they could get a course to upgrade their skills. I was very pleased that the field workers had chosen communication, and asked them what they wanted to learn. “You are the expert – tell us what we need to learn”, was the reply. I asked more questions to find out what they had in mind. No one could tell me.

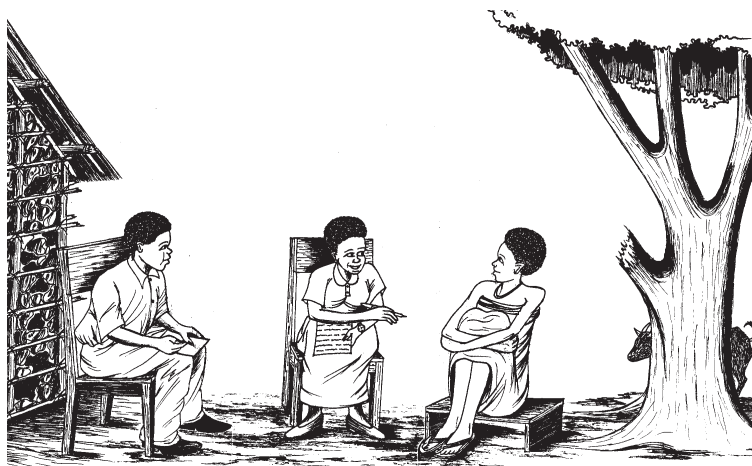
I made it clear to the field workers that I would not design a course based on being “the expert” on the subject – even if I knew a lot about communication, I was NOT the expert on THEIR needs for training. THEY were the experts on their own needs, whether they knew it or not. If we were to work and learn together, they would have to do some work to find out what their problems were, and what they wanted to learn. Many were puzzled, and some were negative. This group was used to being told what to do, and was not sure whether it wanted to change.

2. **Observation.** Divide the interview situation into smaller units.

In Kilifi, the following units were selected:

- explaining the purpose of the interview
- creating a suitable atmosphere
- asking questions
- probing/asking follow-up questions
- tackling unexpected situations
- tackling sensitive or difficult questions
- how good are your listening skills?
- your nonverbal communication style – gestures etc.
(NOTE: easier to observe when you have a colleague with you)
- observation of your choice! (x2).

Field workers were divided into pairs and asked to observe their own and their partner's skills over the course of their field interviews [illustration]. A checklist may be developed to help



structure the observation (see Annex). Each week was devoted to just one of the above units. Each field worker was given a dedicated notebook to document their observations and thoughts.

3. At the end of the week, meet to **discuss the observations**, with the researcher/supervisor as a facilitator. Structure the discussion so that you treat one problem at a time, and record the main points. Write it up, and use as input to the planning for the intensive skills training. If an outside trainer is identified, these notes should be sent to him/her, in order to involve the trainer in the ongoing process.

NOTE: As a part of these meetings, you could teach participants about how to give constructive feedback, see Module 2 section 5.3.

In Kilifi, these meetings were structured as follows:

Description (of what was observed, what happened etc. – an open sharing)

Analysis:

- what we do well
- what we are not sure whether we are doing well or not
- problems we have come across
- problems we were not able to solve

- how we solved problems where we were able to
- what we would have done differently.

NOTE: These questions were designed to create awareness not only about the field workers' problems, but also about their strengths, seeing what they do well, and what strategies they already use to solve problems. This creates a good basis for training on how to solve other, perhaps more difficult problems. It also gives the trainer very valuable information about the field workers' perceptions of themselves.

4. In Kilifi, participants also did a **weekend observation**: “Observe a social situation with friends or family (for a limited time – e.g. half an hour or an hour). Pick out one or two people and observe how they communicate with or relate to others. Reflect on the differences between the person(s) you observed and your own communication style. Note this in your book”.

The resource group could also design some observation tasks for themselves during the awareness phase, especially on ways of working with the participants which could enhance or create barriers to learning. For example, resource people could observe how they give feedback (Module 2), how they ask questions and how they listen (Module 3), how well they understand the needs of the participants (Module 6), how they negotiate (Module 7), and how they deal with different feelings in themselves and in the participants (Module 12). Such observations will give useful input to the learning of the resource team, and will show the participants that the learning is a collective task.

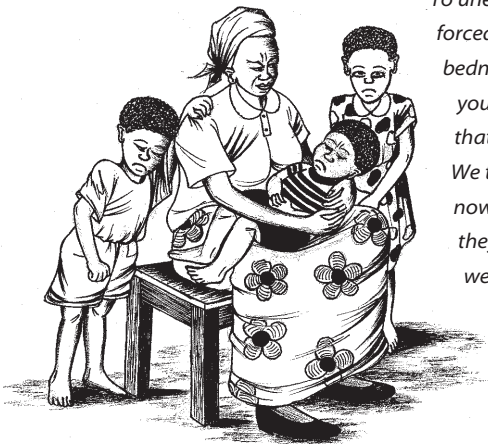
We also highly recommend that resource-team members spend some time observing how the field researchers carry out interviews in the field, either before or during the awareness-raising phase. Suggested criteria to observe may be found in the Annex.

Field problem into course topic: examples

In the Annex we show how we identified the course needs, together with the participants, and how we linked their own examples with the core theories and concepts and turned these into course topics. We used different methods to find the problems “on the surface” and the underlying problems, which field workers did not verbalize. The key to strengthening the confidence of the field workers lies in understanding and dealing with the underlying problems as well. Many of the underlying problems are related to feeling unsure (see Module 12).

Example 1: The topic was greetings and introductions

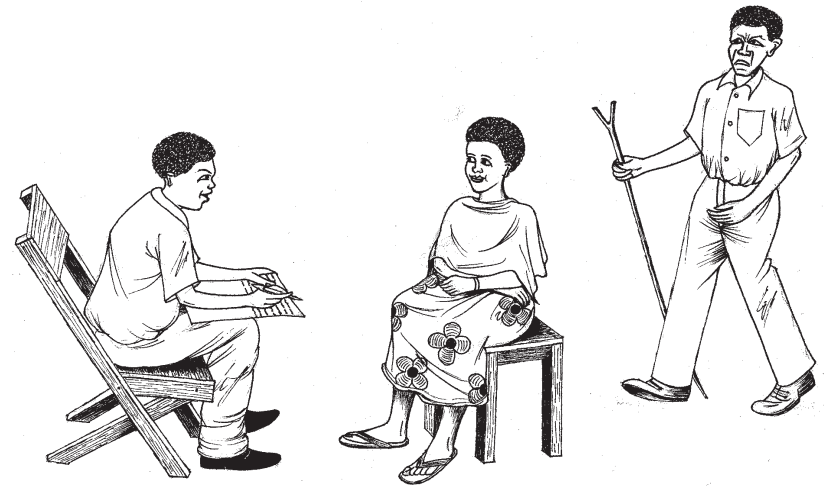
The field workers had previously worked on a research project to assess the impact of impregnated bednets on child mortality. Bednets were issued to some communities (“intervention group”), while other communities did not receive the nets until the trial was finished (“control group”). Several years later, field workers were still being asked for bednets by community members. Comments from the discussion included:



“To uneducated women you are forced to cheat them about the bednets. To the educated women you must tell them the truth: that the study is over. We tell the uneducated that for now the nets are out of stock, they may receive some later. If we don’t say that they will refuse to answer questions.”

This comment was translated into the following three problems:

- meeting the expectations of community members (e.g. getting a mosquito net)
- dealing with people who are ignorant and uneducated
- choosing a “white lie” to solve the immediate problem, while possibly creating other problems in the long term.



A specific problem was dealing with conflicts in the interview situation.

The first two problems were identified by many field workers in the discussions, the last by fewer of them. In the course, these problems and the field workers’ comments and examples are dealt with under “Insecurity” and “Judgement” – what lies behind our reactions.

Example 2: “Problems are the fault of the respondents”

Most of the field workers would believe that the cause of the problems was the respondent (i.e. the cause lay **outside themselves**), and use this to explain their low-quality data. They would judge respondents for being difficult, uneducated, pregnant, etc.

These problems translated into the following topics in the course:

- understanding own insecurity and how this affects attitudes and actions
- understanding how people change
- teaching strategies to deal with the problems met
- building self-confidence.

Most of these “underlying problems” were related to basic psychological issues, with **insecurity** being the major one. One does not have to be a psychologist to be able to deal with this in the course. The “recipe” is to acknowledge insecurity as a problem, to learn to recognize it and still act constructively, and to have skills to approach the problems represented by different types of respondents.



Anger might be a cover-up for insecurity. When the field worker can listen to the anger, and the reason for it (without getting angry himself/herself), the respondent will often calm down.



Understanding your own insecurity, and learning to recognize and deal with respondent's insecurity, were important topics in the course.

You can change from being a “victim” of the problems to being an “actor” with the skills and confidence to solve the problems you meet.

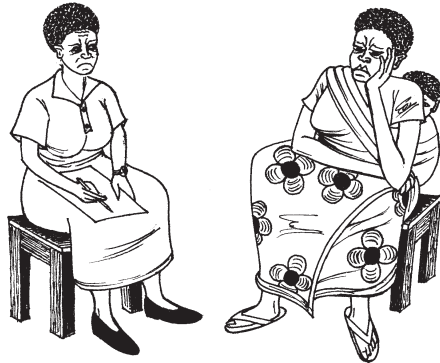
Field workers' insights resulting from observations and analysis – what we would have done differently:



"We may laugh at something inappropriately. For example, when you are seen arriving at a household someone called out to me: 'Ah! So you've arrived with my net at last!' I said no and laughed. The man got angry with me and said, 'So you even find it funny, do you?' I had to immediately change myself to be humble and respectful and explain I am sorry, but that I had thought it was meant as a joke. I shouldn't have laughed."



"For example, when you go to confirm a date of birth and the mother gives you what you know to be a wrong date. Then you just show it in your face that you know she is wrong and embarrass her. Finally she gets around to the real date of birth and you wish you'd never made such a face to show she was wrong. She would have got around to it with probing anyway."



"Sometimes we wish we'd explained more clearly to the wazees (the older men) what we were there for before calling the mothers."

A strong recommendation

Even if you are short of time, do some awareness anyhow: Awareness-raising is an essential part of this communication training. The intensive skills course will be more relevant to your staff after going through the awareness-raising phase: you will train your participants on issues you are sure fit their situation. If you do a short awareness-raising phase (minimum three weeks), you will still see progress – by people starting to reflect more on what they are doing, and how, and by seeing the need to learn more skills. The skills training (Phase 2) grows out of the awareness phase, and Phase 3 deals with implementation of and reflection on the skills learned, and the implications for the quality of data collected. The more time you allocate for the training process, the deeper the behaviour change is likely to be, and the more effective the natural integration of new skills into practice.

Phase 2: Intensive skills training course

The course presented here (Modules 1-13 below) is designed to last seven full days over two weeks, including one day for the examination. Even if you decide to run a shorter five-day course, we recommend that the course is broken over two weeks, for the following main reasons.

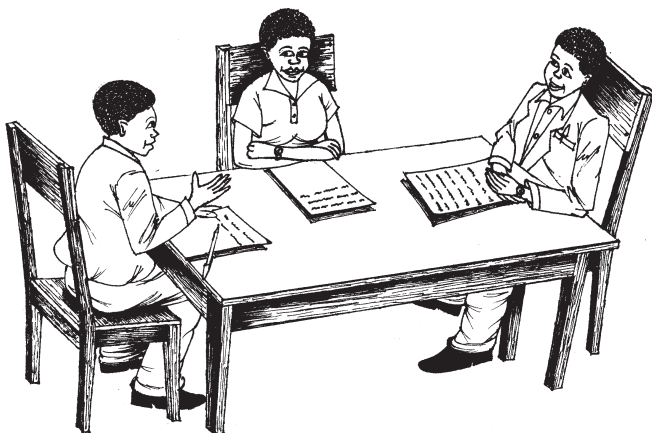
- **Participants get a lot of new information:** Having a weekend in between gives them time to "digest", to discuss with friends and colleagues, and to come back to the course with new questions and ideas – in addition to "new" energy.
- **The weekend can be used for small observation exercises,** to continue the awareness process in "normal" life situations. Participants can start appreciating the usefulness of better communication skills in their private life as well – within the family, and with friends. This will usually increase their curiosity and motivation.

Participants should have enough input in the first week (for example by covering Modules 1-6) to be able to carry out observation

exercises at the weekend. The Kilifi course occupied two days in the first week and four days in the second week. On the last day of the course, we held the exam. The following day (Friday) we had a ceremony to give out the certificates. There was a general consensus that this model worked well.

Practical notes for the resource team

There should be at least two resource people in the organization who want to invest time and effort in the training process. Their motivation and perceived need for the training is the most important factor in ensuring the success of the training in the long term. With the right support, they will gain the necessary knowledge and skills.



At the beginning of the process, identify the experience and strengths of the team members in relation to the tasks, as well as their weaknesses. For the course, the team members can **choose tasks and topics for teaching which appeal to them**, and which they feel they can handle – with or without support from a more experienced trainer. One member can take on the task of summarizing the main points from each day, and present these to the group the next morning, using both visuals and words (see Annex). These summaries became very popular and useful on the

Kilifi course – both for their content and for their form. They were also useful for assessing the clarity of the sessions: if the team member responsible for the summaries had not understood a point well, it was because it had not been made clear enough in the sessions. It could then be made clear the next morning.

Other members can prepare role-play scenarios, group tasks and presentation notes, based on their own experiences with the field workers and themes from the awareness-raising. The suggestions can be discussed in the group and revised. Another trainer may, if necessary, go through presentation notes with individual members who want to make presentations, and practise methods with them.²

Keep the programme flexible

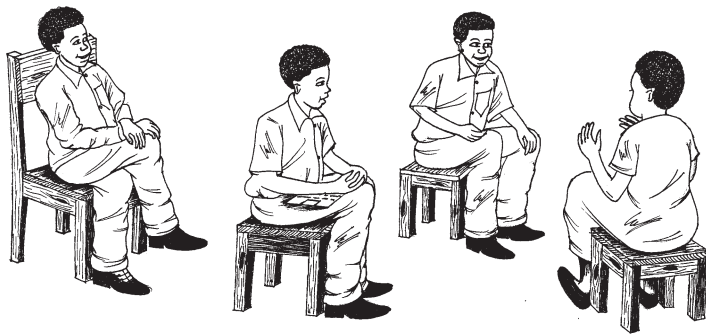
It is very difficult to predict how fast your participants will pick up the essential skills. Usually, they will learn more slowly than you expect or, to put it another way: **very often, our ambitions about the speed of learning are too high**. Thus, it is essential to build flexibility into the programme and be prepared to drop (or add) topics as you go.

People who are not used to skills training using participatory methods may feel uncomfortable during the sessions, and may not feel confident that these methods will lead to important learning. They may find the lack of a fixed programme unsettling. Make it clear to them from the beginning that:

- **you have planned a programme** for the full course, based on your assumptions of how they will learn
- **learning communication skills is an unpredictable process** in terms of time and will require adjustment as the group (participants and resource team) learns together – if the learning pace is slower than you assumed, it is the fault of your assumptions, not of their learning pace

² Presentations may be done in pairs, with the senior (or more experienced) trainer as one of the pair. Thus, new trainers can be encouraged to try out new ideas in a “safe” environment – the senior trainer can support and supplement the points when needed.

- **if you push, they won't learn well:** if you ignore the realities of how they learn, and just press on in order to get through the programme, they will not benefit, and not learn well
- **follow-up:** if you have to cut important sections, you could have shorter training sessions at a later stage (preferably within two weeks) to teach the additional skills
- **they will have a certificate of attendance at the end,** even if you cut down on the programme or have to plan follow-up training.



*If the learning pace is slower than you assumed, it is the fault of your assumptions – **not** of the participants' pace of learning.*

You need to balance the **flexibility** of having an initial programme with a **clear strategy**, to give participants the assurance that you know what you are doing. When you have to adjust the programme, it is important to inform them clearly about this, and give the reasons for your rescheduling. This will help participants feel settled, see that you are in charge, and acknowledge that the learning process is OK.

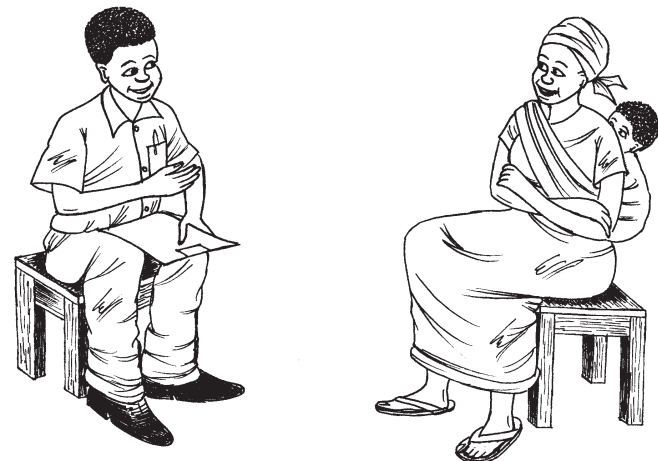
By showing flexibility, you are “practising what you preach” – the participants will see that you take their needs and progress seriously, and that **responding to what actually happens is the best strategy**. This is what you are teaching them: you give them a set of tools to use, and the most important skill is to assess the

situation carefully and sensitively, and then to choose the right tool and the appropriate strategy. And to adjust the goals, where necessary.

In Kilifi, the aims and objectives of the skills training were formulated partly when real training needs started to emerge from the awareness-making phase, partly when the resource group was planning the intensive skills training course, and partly during the course itself.

Phase 3: Integrating skills into daily practice

A period of approximately three months of **integrating the skills into daily practice**: we assessed the impact of our course on researchers and field workers using a number of qualitative and quantitative research tools, including knowledge tests, skills tests (using video role-plays) and group discussions (see Annex).



Module 1

Programme, expectations and methods

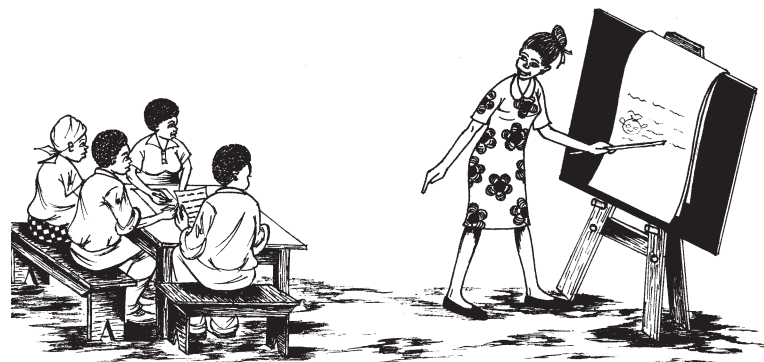
Introduction

1. Background for trainer

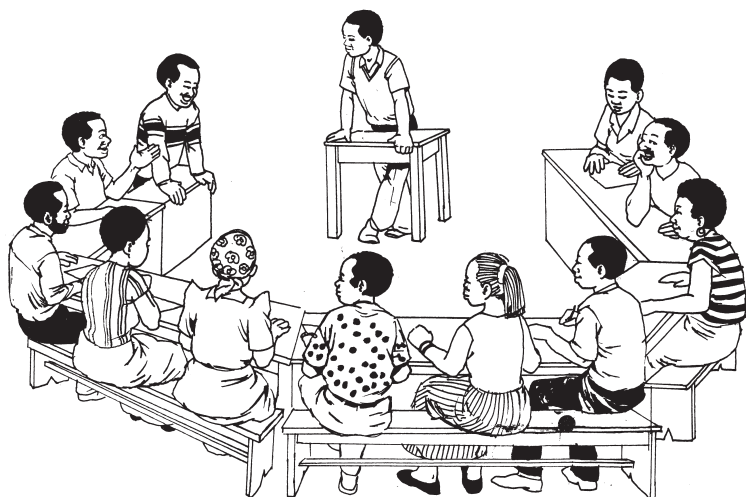
This module will introduce the participants to the purpose and the programme of the course, discuss their expectations, and prepare them for constructive learning. To do this well, you need to pay attention to both the cognitive/rational/intellectual side and the emotional side of the participants and resource people, and prepare them to learn in a different way from the one many of them may be familiar with. The trainer's action plan will take you through this process step by step, and you can adapt it to your specific contents and purpose.

“Setting the climate” for a workshop means creating an environment which inspires participants and trainers to learn actively. In this workshop, active participation is essential for gaining new skills and knowledge. Participants will learn better when they feel at ease with each other and the resource people. When people feel free with each other, they will be more willing and able to share ideas and experiences and to discuss difficult issues. Thus, it is important that the participants should develop constructive working relationships based on mutual trust and self-confidence from the very beginning. This should be easier after working together in the awareness-raising phase.

We assume participants will be used to rational/scientific methods of learning, and we are thus suggesting that the programme should start by introducing **aims, objectives and the draft programme** in a traditional way, using straight presentation tech-



niques. Emphasize that **the contents of your programme are based on the problems you have discovered together in the awareness-raising phase**. Then ask about expectations for the workshop, discuss these, and settle on a “joint” agenda for the skills training. Participants come to the workshop with a number of different expectations for what they would like to learn, and which other benefits they would like to get. Some expectations may differ between workshop organizers and participants. It is important that such differences are defined at the beginning and resolved. Some additional expectations can be met, others not. Trainers must address these sincerely, and explain diplomatically why it is not possible to meet certain expectations. In some cases, a few participants may have misunderstood the purpose of the workshop, and may not want to participate under the present terms. It is better that such cases are made clear at the beginning, and dealt with by negotiating with the participants until they either agree to stay under the present terms, or agree to leave.



The next step will be to introduce the use of participatory methods – the way you do this will depend on how familiar you and your participants are with these methods. We are assuming that you have access to experienced trainers, since explaining how to use the methods is beyond the scope of this manual. In the Annex, we refer you to manuals that explain the basic principles and practices of participatory methods. We would recommend that you approach training in practical skills as a cycle: **The trainer** introduces the topic/skill, giving the reasons or theories required, and appropriate demonstrations of how it works. **Participants** can then practise, give and receive feedback, and then reflect together with the trainer(s) on what has been learned and its implications. Then – more practice. Short lectures or presentations, lasting no longer than 15-20 minutes, are used to introduce new ideas or theories.

The attitude of the trainers to participatory methods, and to their participants, is the most critical factor for a successful training programme. Most people will teach the way they were taught themselves. For many new trainers, the way they are used to being taught is by lectures, where the teacher “has all the answers”, and the students take notes and ask few questions. To change this practice and the underlying patterns of thinking takes time. The participants must be able to observe, experience, practise and feel comfortable with the new methods.

- The essential point to get across to participants is that learning about communication requires rational thought as well as emotional skills and awareness. Most problems in communication occur because people are not aware of their feelings, and do not understand the feelings of others well. Throughout the course, you always need to keep both elements in mind. Participants need to understand and accept this, and to be willing to open up to learning in new ways.

2. Objectives

- Inform participants about what they are going to learn – the course programme.
- Assess their expectations, discuss, and agree on possible changes.
- Inform participants about how they will learn – the training methods to be used.
- Get to know each other – participants and resource people.
- Create a good climate for constructive learning.
- Inform participants about practical issues and logistics.

3. Teaching methods

Presentation, buzzing (see Annex, Section 9C).

Refer to manuals on participatory methods and to Annex (main methods used in manual described).



4. Materials

- Flipcharts: (1) aim of the course; (2) contents: title of modules and when they will be taught; (3) overview of teaching methods to be used (trainers prepare, based on local plan).
- Flipchart markers, several colours.
- Notebooks and pens for participants.
- Papers and crayons for making animal drawings for introduction.

5. Trainer's action plan

5.1 Introduction – aims and content of the course

- Arrange seating in a half circle.
- Welcome everyone, and explain that participants will be introduced after the programme has been explained.
- Explain the aim of the course, using flipchart no. 1.
- Add your own points.

Sample flipchart

The aim of the course is to improve your overall interviewing skills and obtain better data by learning:

- basic communication theory
- communication skills
- use of these skills in field work.

Explain: The focus will be on learning about personal communication – how we understand ourselves and each other. There is no “set standard” for how much you should learn: you will all progress from where you are today. Learning about communication is probably new to many of you, and to learn well you will need to open up to new ways of learning. We will get back to this point throughout the course.

How will the course help participants' qualifications?

The course will not get you to university, or give you formal qualifications.

Explain, if you have decided to give a certificate, how you will assess participants' progress.

The **contents** of the course (flipchart no. 2)

Explain how you have developed the contents (e.g. by reviewing notes from the awareness phase to identify problems facing the participants, and by using this manual and other manuals, consulting other professionals, etc.)

Display and explain the draft programme. Explain that the programme is flexible, and will be adapted to the participants' progress as they gain new skills.

5.2 Participants' expectations: agreeing on programme

Explain: You have introduced the aims of the course, which are based on your best opinion of what the participants should learn. However, participants may have other ideas and needs, and it is important to find out what these are – at the beginning of the workshop. Then they can be discussed and resolved, so that participants will settle down and learn better.



Buzz: Ask participants to buzz in pairs or small groups about their expectations of the course.

Ask the pairs/groups to report back in plenary and list their expectations on the flipchart.

Go through the expectations and comment on the ones which can be met, and the ones which cannot.

Be flexible If there are important expectations which you can meet by adjusting the programme slightly, try to do so. For those expectations you cannot meet, explain the reasons why you cannot.

Discuss and agree on an adjusted agenda.

5.3 Training methods to be used in the course

Explain, using flipchart no. 3, that you are using participatory training methods throughout the course, and why you are doing so (see manuals for additional reasons besides the ones below).

Some reasons for using participatory methods to teach communication skills

- **Learner-centred:** Each person learns differently, and needs to be able to fit new skills into his/her existing habits. This is best

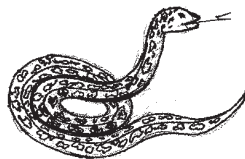
done by practice, with supervision and feedback. This course will have many practical exercises.

- **Personal style:** Communication skills are related to personality. Adjusting a personal style requires careful interaction with co-participants and trainers, respecting each other.
- **Example focus:** The basis for the training comes from participants' own work and examples. They need to participate in interpreting examples, analysing and learning from them.
- **Learning by observation:** Being able to observe oneself (if video is used) and colleagues in role-play situations, will develop their "antennae" – i.e. awareness of what to look for and how.
- **Motivation to learn** is higher when participants feel that they are being taken seriously as individuals, and allowed to learn the way that feels right to them.
- **Effective:** Participatory methods are gaining in popularity, as it has been clearly demonstrated that they are the most effective way of learning new skills.
- **Ownership:** Participation involves people in learning and the decisions to be made about progress, results, importance of topics, etc. This makes participants feel responsibility for the training and gain ownership of the process – which again provides motivation to learn.

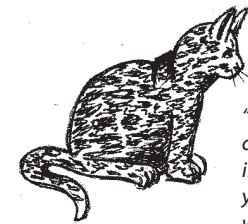
Ask participants to comment

- **Experiences:** Have they been exposed to participatory methods before? What did they feel about learning with these methods? How well did they learn? Any disadvantages?
- **Opinions:** What other advantages might there be? What disadvantages?

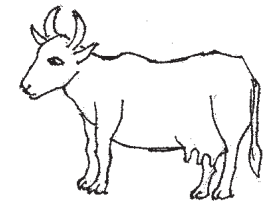
Discuss the difference between experience and opinion based purely on information. Point out that experience-based learning is the most modern and effective way to gain new skills. The lecture method is not effective in skills training or in bringing about change.



"I want to be a snake, because then I have the power to kill! I can come quietly without being noticed, and I can lie in a tree and observe, without being noticed."



"I want to be a cat, because it is independent, and you can't tell it what to do."



"I want to be a cow, because the cow is friendly, it gives milk, and keeps the family well fed."

5.4 Introduction of participants and resource people

Explain: So far, we have been using teaching methods you are familiar and comfortable with: presentation and discussion. Now we will start using participatory methods, by using a new method of introduction. We will do it first, and then reflect on it and discuss what we have learned.

The animal game

(there are many other "alternative" introduction methods – see manuals)

Ask participants to:

- **Make** a drawing of an animal which has characteristics similar to those you want to be identified with; write your name on the drawing
- **Find** yourself a partner, explain your drawing to him/her – what does it represent? why did you choose this animal for the course? Add any other information about yourself which you would like to share with the others
- Your partner will then **introduce you** and your animal (in plenary, at the end).

Time: 20 minutes

NOTE: Resource people should participate in the introduction, and pair up with participants.

In plenary, let participants introduce each other, and explain the animal's characteristics and why it was chosen. Hang the drawings on a wall.

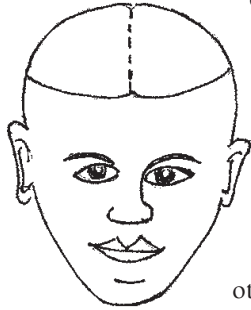
Discussion: Why do we introduce each other this way?

Ask participants how they felt about doing this exercise. (It usually brings out some fun and laughter, and makes people feel good, but there may also be people who find it “silly”, because it is new, and unusual, and it makes them feel uncomfortable or not in control.)

Ask whether people remember something about each other now – names, characteristics? Is this different from the way we usually introduce each other on a course? How is this different?

Sum up

- This method of introduction brings out other sides in us than the commonly used method of introducing by name (self-introduction – often done quickly, no one can hear, no one remembers the names



because they are nervous about introducing themselves). Self-introductions appeal to the logical, rational side of the brain (left), which deals with words and numbers.

- The animal introduction appeals to the other side of the brain – the right side, which is creative, fun, and more linked to feelings.

- When working with communication, it is important to let both sides come out.
- When we do this, we learn better and remember better.
- We need both sides to be able to communicate effectively with other people, including our respondents.

Creating the climate

By the end of this introduction, there should be a good atmosphere in the group, with participants feeling comfortable and ready to learn. If this is not yet the case, you should decide whether to use additional methods for creating a good climate (see manuals).



5.5. Summing up main points from the module

Make a handout from Section 5.3, showing “some reasons for using participatory methods to teach communication skills”.

Make your own summary, including points such as the following.

- The course programme is developed with inputs from your awareness phase (add important findings).
- Expectations are discussed, and will likely be met.
- Participatory methods will be used, because this is the most effective and modern way to learn communication skills. Using these methods requires the participants to share questions, ideas and problems from their own experience.
- Learning good communication skills includes learning about feelings – your own, and those of the respondent. Understanding feelings is necessary in order to get good quality data.
- The animal game was used to bring out the creative and fun side, which is more linked to feelings than the rational side. Using such methods is effective in getting people engaged and making them learn and remember better.

Module 2

Communication principles and skills (1)

Information, communication and feedback

1. Background for trainer

Giving an overview of some of the main communication theories and principles will give credibility to this course for people used to operating in a scientific environment, and provide a needed link to the type of learning they are used to. This will give participants confidence in the new materials they have to learn. Once you have established these theoretical “hooks”, you can relate the practical work to the theories whenever needed.

The sender-receiver model is simple and basic. It provides a way to explain about the differences between giving information and engaging in communication exchange, and introduces the concept of feedback. Information, communication and feedback are the central basic concepts in the course. Another important basic concept is nonverbal communication.

Many skills are related to these concepts. In this module, you will teach the skill of giving constructive feedback. The other basic

skills of asking (open) questions, active listening, and developing awareness by using “antennae” will be taught in the next module.



How can we understand each other better? Learning theory gives us a common basis for further work.

2. Objectives

- › Understand the sender-receiver model of communication.
- › Understand the differences between information and communication.
- › Understand the function and principles of constructive feedback.

3. Teaching methods

Presentation, demonstration.

4. Materials

- › Flipcharts, markers.
- › Prepared cardboard models (different colours) of squares and arrows to illustrate the sender-receiver model.
- › Prepared figures – one looking right, one looking left, for making the verbal and nonverbal communication figure.
- › Handout: rules for constructive feedback.

5. Trainer’s action plan

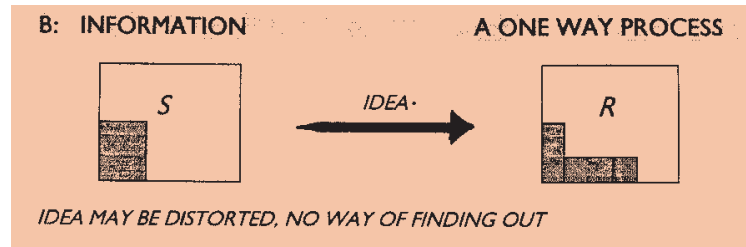
5.1. Information, communication and feedback

Put up two flipchart sheets on the wall: one entitled “Information” and the other “Communication”.

Ask participants the difference between information and communication. Record their points on the two different flipchart sheets.

Introduce the first part of the sender-receiver model: the sender (S) explains an idea (I) to the receiver (R). Make the box/shape representing the idea in the sender's head look different from the one in the receiver's head (see illustration).

This is the INFORMATION model.



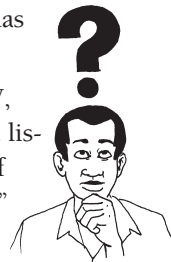
Ask: How do we know that the idea has been understood by the receiver?

Why could the message be different when it reaches the receiver?

Conclude: We don't know whether the idea has been understood the way the sender intended it to be. The receiver will interpret what has been said in his/her own way, depending on a number of factors (which we will get back to later in the course).

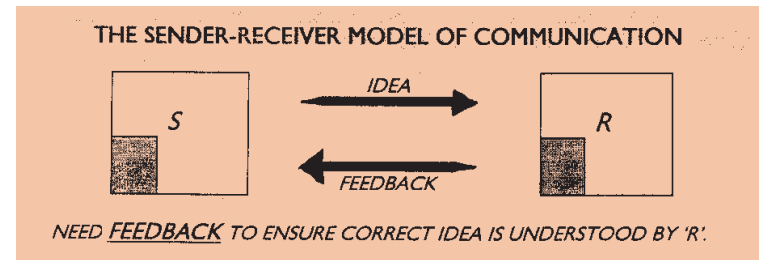
Information is ONE-WAY. We don't know what has been understood. Misunderstandings may occur.

Ask for examples to illustrate this. (Radio and TV, a lecture, someone telling you what to do without listening to your questions, etc. Get real examples of misunderstandings. Trainer should have a "reserve" example in case there are not enough from the participants.)



Ask: How do we ensure our idea is understood the way we intended? (Refer to some of the points under "Communication", from the discussion above, on the flipchart sheet.) Agree that you need Feedback from the receiver.

Put up the second part of the sender-receiver model: the COMMUNICATION part, with feedback as a second arrow. Change the shape of the idea in the box/head. Now the receiver has the same understanding as the sender.



Conclude: Communication is a TWO-WAY process, where one person gives information to another and gets feedback (and adjusts the initial information if necessary – to ensure a shared understanding).

Good communication should lead to a shared understanding

These models can be referred to throughout the course. Leave them on the wall in the classroom.

NOTE: We are using "idea", not "message" when discussing these issues. "Message" usually implies one-way traffic: "I am telling you what to do", often through the media. "Idea" is a term which invites sharing and exchange – i.e. communication.

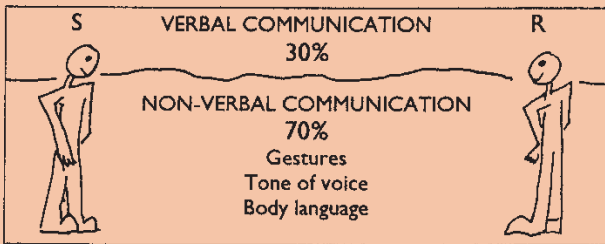
5.2. Nonverbal communication

Ask participants to define what nonverbal communication is (gestures, tone of voice, body language...).

Explain: Feelings and emotions are often expressed through nonverbal communication, so it is important to become aware of how we (and others) communicate nonverbally.

Mostly, we are concerned with our verbal communication (WHAT we say), and pay less attention to the nonverbal communication (HOW we say it).

Ask: How important is nonverbal communication in determining how we understand each other's ideas? What percentage of our communication is verbal, and how much is nonverbal? Get suggestions.

D: A KEY FACTOR IN COMMUNICATION: NON-VERBALS

Being able to “read” nonverbal communication means having your antennae up, and knowing what to look for.

Agree: Nonverbal communication accounts for about 70% of the communication in an interaction. This has been documented through research. Show the illustration, or make one with stick figures on the flipchart.

5.3. Giving constructive feedback

Feedback means two main things in this course:

1. Receiver giving feedback to sender, based on his/her interpretation of the original idea.
2. Participant commenting on how a colleague has done a task.

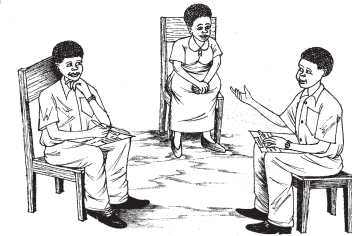
Explain: When learning practical skills, feedback is essential. We need to help each other learn how to communicate better by observing and commenting on the way colleagues practise new skills. To become aware of what we do well and where we have problems in communication is not easy for most people. In this course, we will help each other develop such skills. It is easier for another person to see how we communicate, but we need to develop our own skills in this as well.

When commenting on how another person communicates, we should follow some simple rules for constructive feedback. Ask for suggestions for the rules. Write on flipchart, and add the rules below, if they are not mentioned. Put the flipchart on the wall, and refer to the rules during the teaching of the next section.

Giving constructive feedback

Rule no. 1: Comment on positive things first

Point out what the person is doing well. This makes him/her feel good, and puts him/her in a positive mood to listen to you and receive constructive criticism with an open mind.



Rule no. 2: Be constructive

Constructive criticism helps the person receiving feedback to do better. Ask people first whether they can see any areas where they could do better and, if so, how they might improve on those areas. If the person does not see any way to improve, then suggest how you would do things in a better way.

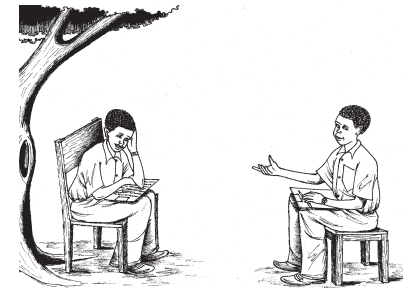
Positive (above) and negative (below) feedback: different aims and results.

Rule no. 3: Be specific

Give advice which the person can use. Avoid generalizations.

Aim (by using rules 2 and 3): helping the person to learn.

Effect: Motivation to learn, and improve. Person takes action.



Rule no. 4: Do not give direct or blaming criticism

When you do this, you imply that he or she is not as good as you are.

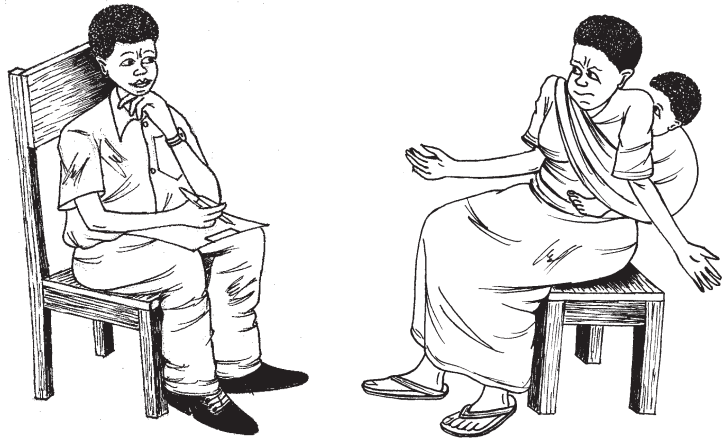
Aim (when criticizing or blaming): to imply that you are better than him/her, you are superior.

Effect: the person feels inferior and bad. Becomes passive and stays passive.

NOTE: In many settings where hierarchical structures are strong, blaming criticism is common. Many participants may have grown up with this as the norm. Spend some time discussing how it feels to be criticized this way, and whether blaming criticism is likely to lead to improvements. Discuss why being constructive is more likely to inspire the person to learn and improve.

Discuss the rules.

Suggestion: Teach about constructive feedback during the awareness phase, and let participants use these methods to give each other feedback about strengths and weaknesses they observe in themselves and each other. The topic can then be repeated briefly here, by asking participants to describe how they have used this method, what their experiences have been (positive and negative) and what they need to learn now to be able to practise better.



“Now we observe with the gestures if what he or she is telling us is a lie or something.”



“You make sure that everyone is happy when you leave that household. There are others who might want to visit that home again.”

5.4. Summing up main points from the module

Make and distribute handout on “Giving constructive feedback”.

Make your own summary, such as the following.

- Information is a one-way method. When giving information about an idea to another person, directly or through the media, you do not know whether the person has understood the idea the way you intended.
- Communication is a two-way process. When you get feedback from another person on your idea, you will know whether the person has understood the idea the way you intended.
- WHAT we say is important, but HOW we say it is even more important: 70% of communication is nonverbal.
- Giving constructive feedback (positive first, constructive, specific) helps people to learn and motivates them to take action.
- Blaming or criticizing a person implies that you are better than he/she is, and makes the person feel bad and be passive, without taking action.

Module 3

Communication principles and skills (2)

Asking good questions

1. Background for trainer

Asking open questions and listening actively are basic skills which are essential for communicating well. It is important to learn and practise these skills from the beginning, and reinforce and improve them throughout the course. Active listening is dealt with in the next module.

Mastering the use of open and closed (or direct) questions is very important for communicating well. Experience shows that people



“WE have changed from asking direct questions, to Meta Model questions. I now ask a mum to describe a situation. This makes me understand. The Meta Model questions have really helped us.

If I ask a direct question, the mum feels forced to say Yes when it is not a yes. “They are from Kilifi hospital, I’d better say yes!”

often assume that they do this well, but in practice they don’t. We are introducing a simple and effective model to teach the skill of asking open questions – the “Meta Model”, which builds on methods developed from research on successful communication. We are recommending that you spend time and effort on learning this model, as the ability to practise these questions is closely linked to feelings of self-confidence.

The examples and issues from this module and Module 4 should be brought up again at various stages in the course. Changing awareness, active listening and practice in asking questions are major aims of the course, and the ability to practise these skills make an important difference to how people communicate. They are essential skills to ensure the collection of good-quality information.

2. Objectives

- Understand why and how to use open questions.
- Understand how practising these skills effectively will influence the quality of information.
- Be able to ask open questions and probe.

3. Teaching methods

Presentation, small-group work, buzzing, demonstration

When using participatory methods, we often demonstrate an issue (by showing “good” and “bad” practice), and let people feel and experience the difference between them. Then we explore what the difference is, and distil out principles and rules. We can then explain why the rules make sense, using the example as well as (in some cases) theory. The demonstration used in this module is an example of this strategy.

4. Materials

- Flipcharts, markers.
- Handout on the Meta Model.
- Handout describing the exercise to practise asking Meta Model questions.

5. Trainer's action plan

5.1. Basis for all communication: your personal communication style

Explain: Our own personal communication style determines the outcome of our communication with others. We need to become aware of how this works, and then to have methods to improve our communication style.

Ask participants to give examples of their communication style. Let them buzz for a few minutes with the person next to them.



Explain: An important rule for the course: no one will be forced to speak about personal issues and feelings that are uncomfortable. You will be invited to share insights, questions and feelings. Being open about these issues helps you learn faster and become a better communicator. But you have to be ready to do it, and that is a choice only you can make. We will respect the choices you make for yourself.

Personal communication style: Invite participants to share their observations from the buzzing. Resource people may start giving examples of the things they often do (e.g. talking very softly, always trying to convince others, being argumentative/always having to be right/having the last word, using hands a lot when talking, waving with a pen when explaining something, etc.).

NOTE: This is early in the process – if the participants do not have much to share, it is OK. The important issue is that they are continuously invited to become aware of their own habits and skills from the very beginning, and that they get used to talking about personal issues in the group.



5.2. Using open questions: explaining the Meta Model

Explain: Our own “view of the world” affects our communication with others. We expect (without “knowing” it) that everybody else will behave and react like us. It feels safe when they do, and we feel unsure when they don't.

Becoming aware of how we affect – and are affected by – others is important. We need to have methods of adjusting our communication style and making it more effective.

We need a method which will enable us to obtain information in a neutral way, without putting the other person on the defensive.



*“Meta” means “above, on a higher level” – which means we “see” ourselves **and** the person we talk with. We are concerned also with the **effect** of what we say on the other person.*



The META MODEL is one such method. It was developed by a group of professionals in the United States of America, based on observations of how people in a number of different situations (in personal and professional life) communicated effectively.

Their findings were the following:

- > people who communicate effectively ask many more questions than others
- > they ask many open-ended questions, asking for a description of the other person's ideas, feelings, etc., and often for the reasons behind such ideas
- > in brief, people who communicate well seek to **understand** the other person's **intention** before they give their own opinion.

The Meta Model is developed from this study.

It is a language tool designed to:

- > collect information in a neutral way
- > improve the possibilities for understanding the **intention** of the communication partner
- > help structure unclear communication.

The Meta Model consists of a number of different components showing how to deal better with a variety of communication structures. The simplest and most essential part is the one we have introduced in this course – dealing with different types of questions, and their effect on the quality of information you get.

Ask participants which types of questions give you a lot of information, and which give only a little information. Let them give you a few examples.

Demonstrate the use of open and closed questions.



*My name is...
I went to school...*

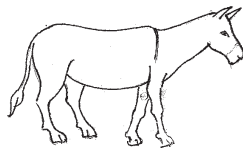
Demonstration 1. Ask a participant (possibly one of the shy ones):

- Did you learn in the introduction that the animal game is useful because it engages the creative side of the brain?
- Do you agree that most people don't remember others' names if they introduce themselves?
- Don't you think training courses should use different methods of introduction instead?

Let the participant answer just the question asked, and not elaborate. The answers will be "yes" or "no".

Demonstration 2. Ask another participant (one of the confident ones):

- What did you learn about the reasons for using the animal game in the introduction?
- How did this help you to remember names and characteristics of other participants?
- How do you think your insights can be used in other training courses?



*I am a donkey,
because...*

Let the participant answer the questions.

Ask which set of questions gave the most information, and why. Explain that you can divide questions into two main groups.

Closed questions: these questions are also called "leading questions" or "direct questions", and require a restricted or closed response. They are usually answered by "yes" or "no", how much of something (numbers), etc. They are most commonly used in quantitative questionnaires. Examples:

- Do you like participatory training methods?
- Do you think these methods are good for learning communication skills?
- How many times did you get malaria last year?

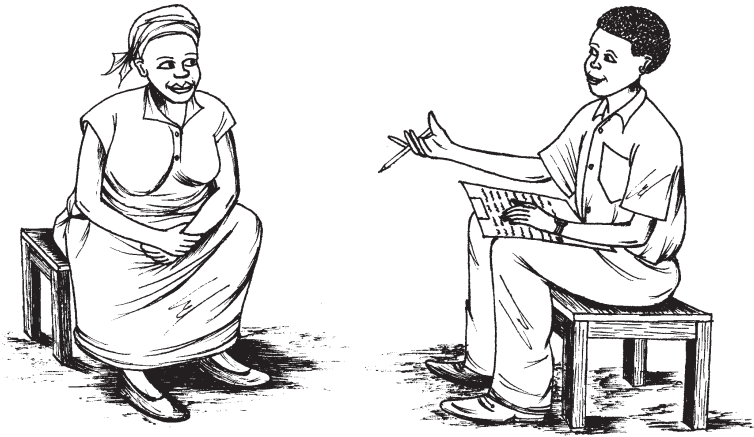
Closed questions give little information, and often (but not always) wrong information. They are often asked to confirm the idea or opinion of the researcher.

Open questions: these questions ask the person to **describe** something, and there is no "right" or "wrong" answer.

- What do you think about using participatory methods in training?
- How do you feel about discussing your personal communication style?
- Where would you go for help if your child was sick?

Open questions give a lot of information

Discuss how to use open and closed questions. Ask participants for examples of open questions, and note the words that **start** the questions on their flipchart. If closed questions come up, answer the question with "yes" or "no", and ask the participant to rephrase the question to an open one. When the **why** question comes up, write this separately (in a different colour) from the **what, how, etc.**, and explain at the end what the difference is.



Open Meta Model questions which are used to *describe* a situation start with:

- > What... How... In what way...
- > Where... From where ... Who... From whom ... When...
- > Please give an example ... Please say something more about this ...

Explain: Such questions are usually felt by the respondent to be **neutral**. They ask you to **describe** an idea, event, opinion, etc. They communicate a sincere wish to learn and listen: they invite open communication, and seek to hear the **intention** of the respondent.

NOTE: that the tone of voice is very important here: even a neutral question may feel challenging if you use an unfriendly or sharp tone of voice. Remember – people will respond more to the nonverbal sign (i.e. your tone of voice) than to the verbal – i.e. the words you use!

The “Why” question is special – it asks for an ANALYSIS

Questions starting with “Why” often make people feel uncomfortable. This is because you are asking them to justify what they have done. Often, it is clear that the person asking the “Why” question disagrees, and judges them negatively for what they have done.

Example: If you ask “*What medicines did you give her?*”, the person will describe what she has done, and is usually happy to do so (this is an open question).

If you ask “*Why did you give her that medicine?*”, you ask the person to justify what she has done, and it often means you disagree with her (even if you don’t say so – she may feel it).

When asking **Why ...** you are asking for an **analysis** of a situation. People often feel threatened or challenged, and may give you an emotional (often negative) response.

Conclude: It is not **wrong** to ask “why” questions – but the person asking should be aware of the dangers, and rephrase the question if necessary. **Note the tone of voice** – if this question is asked in a friendly way, the “challenge” may not be felt!

“I gave her that medicine because I had it at home. And I had no money to buy more medicine. But you wouldn’t understand that. You probably get free medicine from the hospital!”



Explain: Some leading questions can give you biased information. These are questions which contain the researcher’s own perceptions, judgements or conclusions, and make the respondents answer questions in a way that they think the researcher is interested in. **These responses affect the quality of data.** Biased questions normally start with **WHY** or **DO YOU**:

Ask for more examples of biased and leading or direct questions:

- > Do you think you are lucky to have a doctor in your area?
- > Don’t you think...?
- > Do you also have problems with...?

- Don't you think malnutrition mainly affects children under five?
- Can you see that this idea is a good one...?
- Wouldn't you say that...?
- Why do you go to the traditional healer rather than to the clinic?

Closed questions are often asked in order to confirm the idea(s) of the interviewer. They do not invite the respondent/communication partner to give her/his own ideas: "Have you understood the instructions I gave you?"

Important NOTE to Trainer

In Kilifi, the field workers were quick to point out that, in the questionnaires they were asked to carry out, many questions are closed. We discussed, and agreed that closed questions are not "bad" or "wrong" – sometimes they are effective ways of getting the answer. We highlighted the importance of using open questions in all the communication work that concerns the interpersonal interaction, and enables you to get an agreement with a respondent who is happy to sit down and answer the questionnaire with closed questions **and** open ones.

PROBING is another good questioning skill

Explain: When asking closed questions, you can follow up with probes to obtain more information. A probe is a question to follow up or get more information on the same subject, building on people's responses. A probe is usually an open question (who, what, how, in what way, when...), and can be used after a closed or an open question. Probes are used to generate more in-depth or complex information or to clarify certain issues. The questions are not predetermined, but formulated as the interview proceeds. Good probing depends heavily on the researcher's listening and communication skills.

Examples

Does the child have fever? (Closed question)

Probes How high is the fever?
Since when has he had the fever?

Have you given the child medicine?

Probes What kinds of medicines have you given?
How much? For how long?

Habit, or feeling unsure: When we ask leading questions, it is often because we feel unsure of ourselves. When we don't know what to do or say, we ask a leading question, because we need people to "agree" with us, to make us feel safer. We usually don't know that this is going on (the subconscious is directing our action), so the behaviour is automatic. Many people also use closed questions most of the time, without thinking: it is a habit. Sometimes, they do not get the information they need. We should be aware of when we need to use open questions to get more information, and practise how to ask such questions.

To change the habit of asking leading questions automatically, is hard – but possible!

The Meta Model is a useful method when we want to find out what people REALLY think and feel.

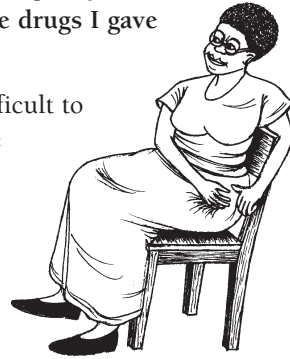


5.3. Practising the Meta Model in plenary

Ask participants to rephrase the following closed questions to make open questions:

- Do you agree that chloroquine (or sulfadoxine-pyrimethamine) is the best drug for malaria? (**Open: What do you think is the best drug for malaria?**)
- Do you believe that pregnant women are always difficult respondents? (**How do you find pregnant women as respondents?**)

- Why did you not...
- Have you understood the instructions I gave you? (Please tell me how you will take the drugs I gave you)
- Are people with higher education difficult to interview? (What is your experience with interviewing respondents who have higher education?).



An open question will communicate to the respondent: “I really want to hear what you have to say about this”.

Another very useful function of the Meta Model is to **question generalizations** to find out the underlying idea. Mostly, when we start to argue on the basis of a generalization, we get nowhere – except into disagreements and often bad feelings that make us wonder what the issue was all about. Here, the Meta Model can help us postpone our conclusions (e.g. that the other person is stupid/does not know what he/she is talking about/etc.), and increase the possibility of understanding the other person’s underlying idea or experience and his/her intentions.

Many people use generalizations without really being aware themselves what is the basis for their statements. In such cases, using the Meta Model will also help **them** become aware of what they say and do, and can lead to a more meaningful discussion.

Example: Give a generalization (e.g. “Pregnant women are difficult respondents”³). Ask the participants to use open questions to challenge you, and find out the basis for your statement. When they give a leading question, a WHY question, or start arguing – ask them to rephrase. (NOTE: Practise with a colleague before the session, to have a “good story” for whatever generalization you choose.)

³ This is an opinion some of the field workers have voiced. Using this example will help them become clearer about the possible reasons for this opinion. It is a good idea to use a problem/generalization which is common in the group.

The example could be discussed like this

Trainer: Pregnant women are really difficult to interview.

Participant: Why are they difficult?

Trainer: I don’t know. They just are. (*This does not get information – answer like this, and ask the participant to rephrase.*)



Participant: In what way are they difficult?

Trainer: (*Comment – this is a good Meta Model question*). They are so moody, you never know what they think.

Participant: I agree! This is exactly how I feel!!

Trainer: (*Acknowledge the comment, and ask the other to continue challenging you*)

Participant: What do you think could be the reason she is moody?

Trainer: Well, I guess she is not feeling so well, she might be tired, and she has a lot of work to do.

(Trainer comments: Now we are getting to an interesting point. The “interviewer” is starting to look behind the mood, to the reason(s) for the mood. This means he can understand her better, and not be focused on his own reaction.)

Participant: How do you feel when you have to interview a pregnant woman?

Trainer: (*Comment – this is a good Meta Model question*) I don’t quite know... uncomfortable, I think.

NOTE: The two are now getting closer to the Trainer's experience base for his/her generalization, and can see that there is a genuine frustration there, but until now the field worker has not looked at the possible reasons why the pregnant woman may be moody, and also not looked at his own feeling of being uncomfortable. With this information on the table, they can now discuss in a much more meaningful way. They will now be talking about the same thing, and maybe even come up with a solution! And most likely, the Trainer will have gained some insights on his own feelings, and will not use this generalization again!

Discuss briefly, and answer questions.

Practise asking Meta Model questions to challenge generalizations

Ask participants to work in pairs. One person gives a generalization (ask them to select topics related to the interview work, if possible), and the other asks Meta Model questions to find out the underlying idea or experience, and the feelings involved. Then they change roles, and repeat.

Some possible generalizations (if people don't come up with one readily):

- the household heads always ask for something to "show our appreciation"
- the women in [area] are so stubborn, they are impossible to interview!
- the educated men are acting so superior, and they won't answer questions well.

Ask, and discuss in plenary:

- what functioned well in asking the questions?
- what was difficult?
- what were the feelings involved?
- what were some outcomes of the discussions – did anyone learn anything new?



Conclude the discussion by summing up the main points.

5.4. Summary – the Meta Model

- The Meta Model is based on systematic observations of successful communication.
- The Meta Model is a useful tool to get good information.
- The Meta Model is good for challenging generalizations and get to "the heart of the matter".
- Meta Model mostly uses open, descriptive questions starting with "what", "how", "when", "where", "in what way", etc.
- Meta Model questions are a useful tool for keeping a neutral tone in interview on sensitive issues.
- Using the Meta Model is an alternative to intuitive and subconscious patterns of reaction.
- Asking Meta Model questions is a good way to understand the **intention** of the other person and to avoid misunderstandings.
- The Meta Model helps us to become aware that we all have our own "model of the world" and react from it. The awareness prevents us from ASSUMING we understand the other person, and urges us to check by asking questions.



Open questions make respondents want to tell you their story.

These points can also be used for summing up the main points from the module. Please add points which came up in the discussions, especially about what participants were doing well, what they found difficult to do, and what feelings came up when they practised asking Meta Model questions.

Advantages and disadvantages of open-ended and closed questions

Open-ended questions

Advantages

Information is provided spontaneously and provides more valid information.

The respondent has leeway to give further information that will be helpful to the researcher.

Information provided in the respondent's own words may be useful as an illustration which will add interest to the final report.

Disadvantages

Skilled interviewers are needed to get the discussion started and focused on relevant issues and to record all important information.

Analysis is always time-consuming and requires experience because of the volume of information collected.

If not carefully thought through, may be too vague to be of use.

Closed questions

Advantages

Answers can be recorded quickly.

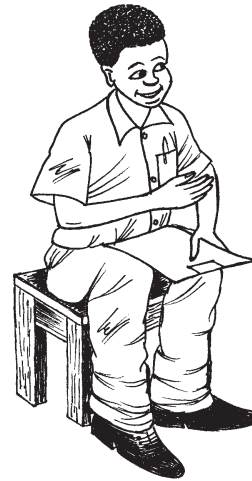
Analysis is easy because there is a pre-programmed data entry and analysis method.

Disadvantages

Respondents may choose options they would not have thought of themselves (leading-question bias).

Important information may be missed because people may give wrong information.

Both respondent and interviewer may lose interest after a number of closed questions.



Asking open questions needs skilled interviewers.



Answers to closed questions are quick, but not always reliable.

Module 4

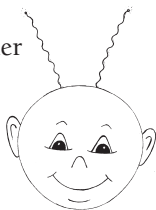
Communication principles and skills (3)

Awareness and active listening

1. Background for trainer

Asking open questions and listening actively are basic skills which are essential for communicating well. In Module 3, we dealt with asking questions which invite people to answer honestly and give good quality information. This module teaches you how to listen well, and how to find out whether your strategy (e.g. the type of question you ask, and the way you behave) works well and gives you the information you need.

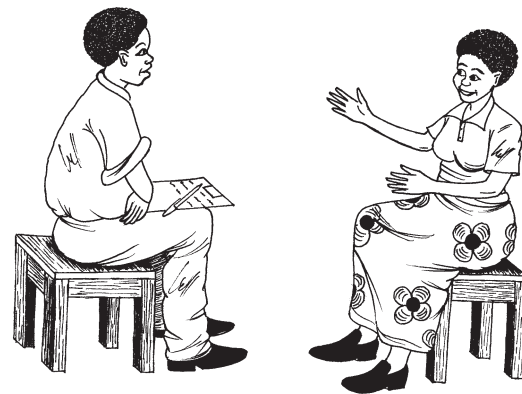
A major focus of the course is thus to develop awareness: to learn to pull back, observe and consider the situation instead of reacting automatically. The ability to do this will increase with practice. We are introducing a symbol for this skill which will be used throughout the course: the **communication antennae**. You can use this with humour as well – it is a useful concept when participants (and resource people!) fall back into old habits: “Get your antennae up, and see what you should do!”



Active listening is a key skill with important emotional connections: when a person feels that she is really being listened to, she usually feels good, relaxed and ready to give her honest views on the questions being asked. The ability to practise this skill is linked with one’s own experience of being listened to (when field workers feel how good it is to be listened to themselves, they will

make more of an effort to learn and practise the skill with others), and it is linked with the ability to focus on the respondent. It also has connections with insecurity (like most of the skills).

Mastering the use of open and closed (or direct) questions (Module 3) is very important for communicating well. We will therefore continue to work on asking questions in this module.



The examples and issues from this module should be brought up again at various stages in the course. Changing awareness, active listening and practice in asking questions are major aims of the course, and the ability to practise these skills makes an important difference to the way people communicate. They are essential skills to ensure the collection of good quality information.

2. Objectives

- Understand the importance of developing awareness, and how this can be done.
- Understand the function and principles of active listening.
- Understand how practising these skills well, together with asking open questions, influences the quality of information.

3. Teaching methods

Presentation, small-group work, buzzing, demonstration.

4. Materials

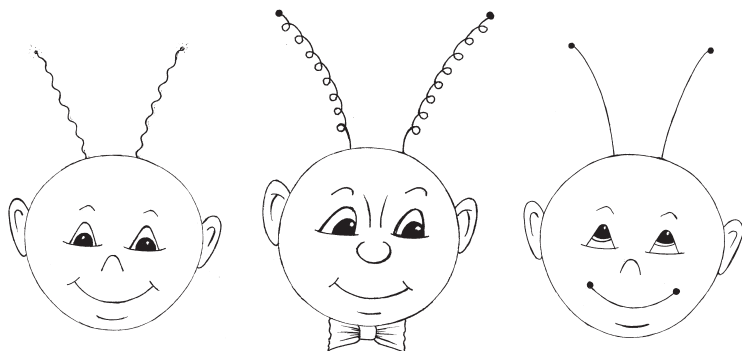
- Flipcharts, markers.
- Prepared cards with illustrations: “reading’ the situation”, “understanding the situation” and “taking appropriate action”.
- Handout describing the exercise.

5. Trainer’s action plan

5.1. Developing awareness (“antennae”)

Explain: We are continuing to learn about our personal communication style, and about what works well (has a good effect on others) and what does not work well – and how to find this out. Thus, in order to learn to communicate better, we need to observe closely what we ourselves do in different situations, and what others do. We need to sharpen our sensitivity to the way people say things, and the way they act, and thus be able to choose more effective ways of acting. We call this “developing awareness” [use local term]. We can illustrate this by a person having imaginary antennae on his head:

Make a drawing (see sample logo – different versions – choose one or make your own!)



Suggest that this will be the “mascot” for the course, as well as a major method of learning skills.

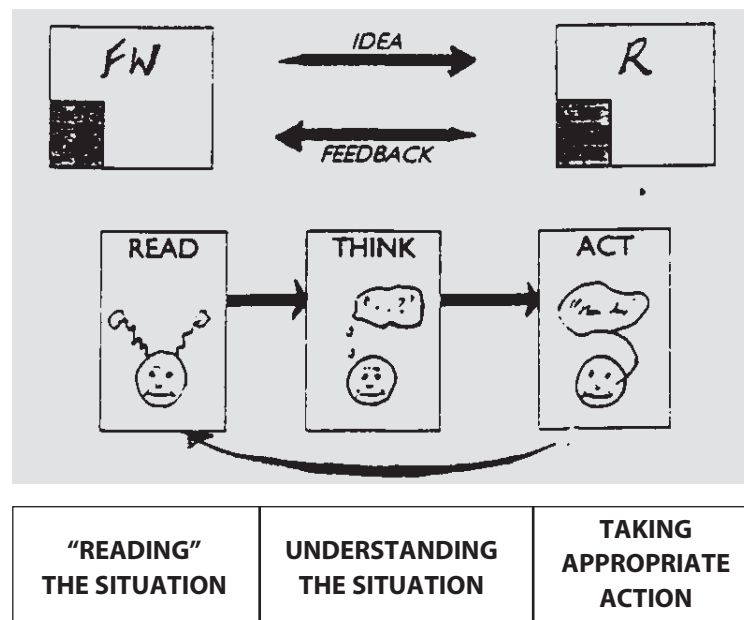
Give the participants the following scenario:

A field worker comes to a homestead, does his introductory work, gets the agreement of the household head, and gets on with the interview. After a while he realizes that the respondent is not answering well, and that they are preparing for a funeral next door.

Ask participants to buzz: What would the field worker do if he had his antennae up? What would he do if they were down? What would be the outcome for the quality of the data, in each case?

Discuss in plenary, and emphasize the need to keep the antennae up, read the situation, and ask questions to find out what the problem is. The field worker needs to focus on the other person, and find out how to meet his/her needs – which in this case is probably to postpone the interview to another day.

Explain, and put up the visuals (individual cards). We will be looking at the interview from different perspectives, and relate all our communication skills and strategies to the following:



Comment on the visuals, and discuss.

Explain: We will be learning communication skills which can be used in all three stages.

We are starting with individual communication skills, and will then combine them and learn about different communication strategies.

Summary

- Using your antennae makes you focus your attention OUTWARDS rather than on yourself; it helps you develop awareness, and get an overview of what is going on.
- Focussing the attention outwards, on the situation, enables you to find the right strategy.
- When you have become aware by using your antennae, you are better able to solve problems constructively.
- Antennae prevent you from being blinded by your own emotions.

5.2. Active listening: introduction

Explain Active listening is an essential basic skill in good communication. It means to give someone your full attention and try to understand what the person means to say – from their perspective, without judging them (i.e. you have to set your own opinions aside for a while).

Give a brief demonstration with your co-trainer.

Example: Ask your co-trainer “What did you do at the weekend?”

Scenario 1: She answers, and you are not very interested. You ask a few more questions, but look bored, using verbal and nonverbal signs of boredom and uninterest, and also judgement. Your co-trainer does not give much information and does not feel comfortable.



Scenario 2: She answers, and you really want to hear what she has been up to. You continue asking, and listen actively (use verbal and nonverbal signs) to what she has to say, and encourage the story to come out. You both have a good time.



Ask: What was the difference in outcome in the two scenarios?

Why is active listening important? List suggestions on flipchart sheets, and add the following points if they don't come up.

Active listening is important because:

- it is the best way to get good-quality information
- it makes you feel good – you have the full attention of another person
- it stimulates openness and creativity; easy to formulate own ideas and opinions
- you feel respected and valued, personally and professionally.

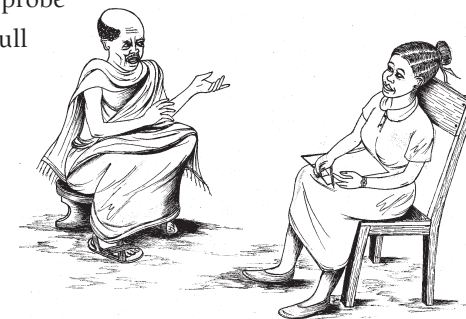
Agree: The outcome of **Scenario 1** was little information, and bad feelings – probably on both sides.

Ask participants to buzz: How do you do active listening?

List suggestions on flipchart sheet, and discuss.

Points for the list – how do you do active listening?

- show interest, both verbally and nonverbally
- accept and value what the person says, and the emotions behind it
- use open questions, and probe
- focus on partner – give full attention
- communicate positive feelings nonverbally
- set your own prejudices aside
- check that you have understood.



Ask: How do you check that you have understood what a person means to say?

List suggestions on flipchart sheet, and discuss.

Points for the list – check whether you have understood the other person by asking (trainer can reformulate in own words):

- do I understand you rightly to say...
- what you are saying, does this mean...
- I hear you saying that ... have I heard you right?

You can interrupt, if you do it nicely/gently, with the purpose of understanding better.

Ask: What are important points to avoid when you listen actively?

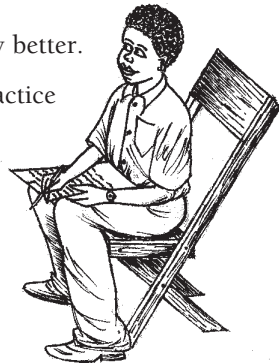
Points for the list – what NOT to do:

- judge/evaluate what the person says, does or feels
- think about how you are going to respond/think about other things
- inject comments that “show” you know better.

Ask: Why is active listening a difficult practice for most of us?

Points for the list – active listening is difficult because:

- we have bad habits (judging without thinking)
- standing up for ourselves/our ideas: culture – values – strengths
- good listener = feminine, weak (“men act” – “women talk”).



Conclude: active listening is a very important skill in effective communication

Please continue to emphasize the need for active listening throughout the course, and give participants feedback when they manage to use the skill well. Awareness, practice and feedback are needed to improve this skill over time.

5.3. Exercises to practise Meta Model questions, active listening and feedback

Choose a (simple) subject which came up in the awareness-raising phase.

You can also choose a more emotionally charged subject (e.g. female field workers interview male field workers on how they feel about interviewing pregnant women, and why this is so difficult).

Exercise for asking open questions, listening, and giving feedback

In pairs, take turns to obtain information on two given topics. Your task is to make your co-participant feel comfortable and willing to talk. Use your personal communication style, raise your antennae, ask good questions and listen actively. **(Add your two topics here.)**

In part 1, one participant is the interviewer, and asks a colleague questions on the given topic. Use as many open questions as possible, listen carefully to the respondent’s answers, then decide on your next question. Try to understand how your colleague sees these issues, and make him feel you are trying to understand.

The aim of the exercise is to ask, listen and understand – NOT to give your own views.

After five minutes, the one who was responding gives feedback on the personal communication style of the interview, using feedback rules.

QUESTIONS: Did the interviewer ask open questions?

LISTENING: How did he/she listen in order to understand your ideas?

How did you feel about his/her interest and concern?

Change roles and repeat the exercise using the second topic (part 2).

How to carry out the exercise

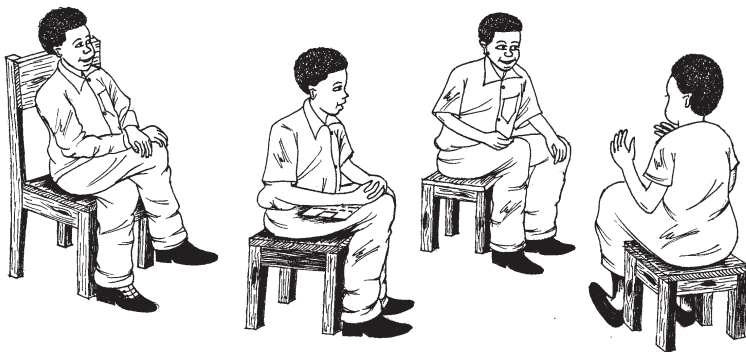
Put up the rules for constructive feedback on the wall, and remind participants to follow them.

Divide participants into pairs, and give them the following instructions (explain verbally, and then give as a handout. Adjust the text in the box, and make your own version).

Trainers should circulate and listen to the conversations (this is NOT a time for trainers to have a coffee break!) If a participant is asking only leading questions, interrupt gently, and ask him/her to rephrase the last question into an open one. Stay with the pair until he/she has asked a couple of open questions, giving encouraging feedback. In general – keep back, let people learn by also making mistakes, but intervene to help them move on when they are stuck.

When listening, write down examples of leading and open questions for the plenary. Help participants to give feedback in the pairs (after they have given theirs), if necessary, and remember to practise the rules for constructive feedback yourself!

NOTE: Your observation of participants' practice is essential for finding out how well they are doing, and how fast you should proceed to learning the next skill. If participants are very uncomfortable with practising a skill, it is better to continue practising until they are managing better. Otherwise, they will not feel ready to put their energy into learning the next skill. They need a certain experience of mastering a skill before moving on.



Discuss the experiences in the large group.

If time permits, **ask one pair (volunteers) to demonstrate** in front of the group how they asked the questions, and get comments from the others. Discuss the responses they got in the pairs to open and leading questions - which ones gave them the most information, and what kind of effect the different questions had on making the other speak freely and openly.

Questions and points to be brought out during discussion :

- how did you manage to keep your own opinions back?
- how did you use your antennae?
- did you feel you were listened to; what did he/she do to make you feel you were listened to?
- how did you give feedback – did you have any difficulties? (ask participant to describe)
- how easy/difficult was it to ask open questions?
- open questions make the person being interviewed feel most free to explain what they think
- open questions give most information
- “why” questions can make people feel uncomfortable
- closed questions give very little information and often get inaccurate responses
- listening well means taking time, being relaxed, trying to understand the other
- having someone listen well to you makes you feel good and give accurate information
- giving constructive feedback is a skill that needs to be practised.

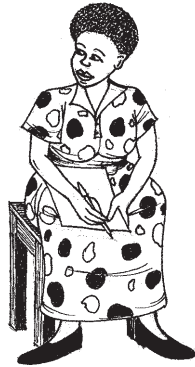
5.4. Preparation for the next module: understanding attitude and behaviour change, and moods

Ask How do we define moods, attitudes and behaviours?
What are some examples? List on flipchart.

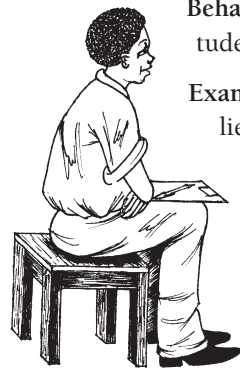
Clarify the following points:

Attitudes are “in our head”: opinions about how things/people are, what is right/good, and what is wrong/bad. Attitudes influence our actions, often without us really knowing (being aware).

Examples (e.g. uneducated people are ignorant; pregnant women are difficult; understanding feelings is women’s work; etc. – give your own, based on the awareness-raising).



“I think they are ignorant”



“I tell her a lie”

Behaviour is what we do, our actions. Our attitudes cause us to behave in certain ways.

Examples (with uneducated people, I tell them a lie to keep them quiet; with pregnant mothers I am very quiet/careful/impatient; with well-educated people I am passive and polite, etc. – give your own, based on awareness-raising.)

Moods are a more superficial state, and can be changed relatively easily, once we are aware. We can also influence others to change their moods, once we know how.

Examples (Grumpy, impatient, “in a good mood”, tired, etc.)



“I feel lousy today”

Explain: Attitude and behaviour change (ABC) is an essential concept to understand when working with communication. We will discuss how this change happens in other people, and how we ourselves change. We thus ask you to think about your own change process before the next session by identifying a behaviour which you have changed in the past 2-3 years and reflecting on the following questions:

- what or who inspired you to change?
- how long did it take you to change?

We will invite you to share some of your reflections in the next session. However, sharing is completely voluntary: no one will be forced to share. Attitude and behaviour change is a very personal issue. The important thing is that you think through for yourself what has changed, and why and how it happened.

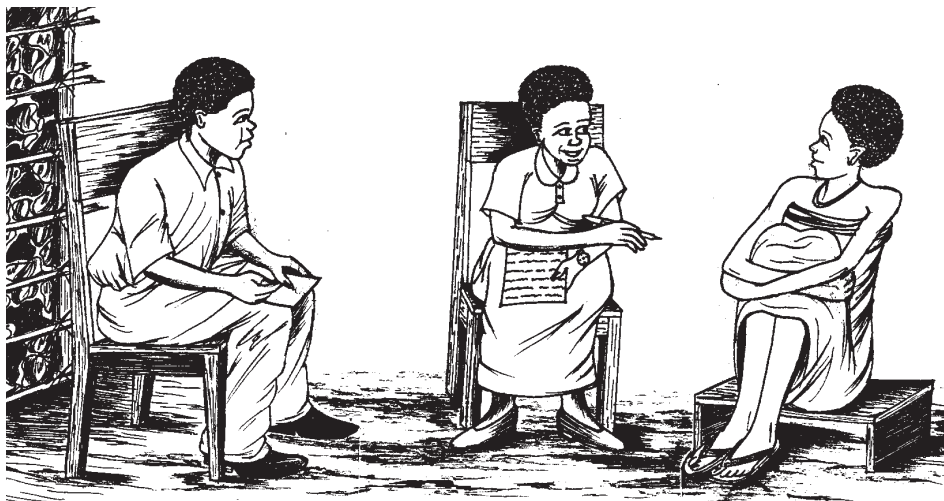
NOTE: You will obtain the best effect from this exercise if you give people the chance to think about this assignment overnight.

5.5. Summing up main points from the module

- Using antennae and listening actively are two major skills in effective communication.
- To develop awareness and antennae means learning to pull back, observe and consider the situation instead of reacting automatically. Your ability to do this will increase with practice.
- Using antennae makes you focus your attention **OUTWARDS** rather than on yourself. It helps you develop awareness and get an overview of what is going on, and then find the right strategy for action. Using your antennae prevents you from being blinded by your emotions, and increases your ability to solve problems constructively.
- Active listening is an essential basic skill in good communication. It means to give someone your full attention, and to try to understand what the person means to say – from their perspective,

without judging them (i.e. you have to set your own opinions aside for a while).

- Active listening makes the person feel respected and valued, personally and professionally, and is a very good way of getting quality information.
- How to do active listening: show interest, both verbally and nonverbally; accept and value what the person says, and the emotions behind it; use open questions, and probe; focus on partner – give him/her your full attention; set your own prejudices aside.
- Barriers to active listening are: judging or evaluating what the person says, does or feels; thinking about your own response rather than focusing fully on what the other person says; injecting comments that imply you know better, or have a more exciting story.
- Add points from the discussions and the exercises to the summary.



Practice, using antennae and awareness, makes you a better communicator. Feedback from colleagues is another vital tool.

Module 5

Moods, attitudes and behaviour

Why change, and why not?

1. Background for trainer

Understanding moods, attitudes and behaviour, and what makes them change, is a key factor in improving communication skills. When people have a sense of how and why they themselves change, they will understand better how others change. It is an important part of the course to become more aware of the way such changes occur, especially in a research environment where most people do not have a background in these areas (see discussion of rational and emotional skills in Part I).

Attitude and behaviour change is a complex subject with many aspects, and it is not our ambition to go into depth in this area. However, experience from other courses has shown that it is entirely possible for people without much training in this subject to understand some basic concepts, and that this understanding makes a big difference to what they expect of others, and how they act, in areas related to attitude and behaviour change.

A **mood** is a superficial state of mind and emotion which can be changed relatively easily, once we are aware of it. We can also influence others to change their moods, once we know how. A mood is something you might have for a short time, for some reason you may or may not know. For example, you might get out of bed feeling really grumpy, and just note to yourself “this will be a grumpy day/morning”, without reflecting on what caused you to become grumpy, and you might “spread” this grumpiness to others. Or you might feel on top of the world, and spread smiles all around you, and maybe not be able to understand why others feel very low.



“Before the course, if I was interviewing someone and she was banging a stick, I’d just do the interview anyway sometimes. Now I try my best to stop her doing it. Most of the things I’ll try to do are, for example, a story to try and distract her, or try to understand if she’s shy or something. If she’s shy maybe I won’t face her directly.”

Attitudes are “in our head”: opinions about what is right/good, and what is wrong/bad.

Behaviours are what we do, our actions, which we have learned by trial, failure and success over many years. Attitudes and behaviours are much more fundamental than moods: they are difficult to change and it takes more time.

In this course, we will learn to become more aware of the way moods and behaviours affect our interviews, and thus the quality of the data. We will learn strategies to handle moods more constructively – our own moods, and those of others.

We will also learn about the deeper level, the attitudes and behaviours that are behind the moods. Changing some of these may be necessary to become a better professional in your field, but this is a question that has to be dealt with over time, and the decision of what and how to change is a very personal issue. However, understanding how we ourselves can change will give us a better understanding about how to manage change in others, and be more realistic about what it is possible to achieve.

For example, a field worker is in a community, and meets a mother who has taken her child to the traditional healer to be treated for

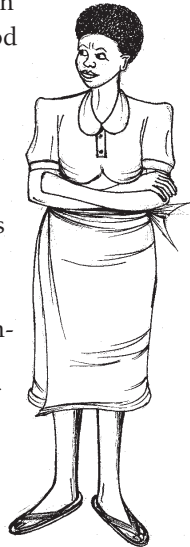
fits (which the field worker knows are probably due to malaria, and he knows that the child needs a different treatment). He says (probably in a rather angry voice): “Why did you do that? Surely you have heard before that the hospital is the only place to treat a child with fits”. The mother feels attacked, and does not give any more information. The field worker has allowed his negative attitude to traditional healing to come out, and has ruined his chance of getting more information – and of possibly helping the mother to get a new understanding.

There is a very common misconception that “I can make people change” and that “giving people good (sensible, rational) information will make them change”. These misconceptions cause frustration and anger among people who try to make others do something new, and fail.

When participants are guided through an analysis of their own behaviour-change process, and link this to the simple behaviour-change model, they usually get a very different perspective on the concept of attitude and behaviour change. This perspective gives them more realistic expectations of what others will choose to do, based on the suggestions/information from the field worker.

When asking participants to share their examples, it is important to be careful and sensitive, as the examples are very personal, and it is easy to hurt people’s feelings.

If the resource people are not familiar with this subject or with the exercise, it is recommended that they go through examples of attitude and behaviour change in their own group before teaching it to the participants. The concepts are simple, and essential. **It is important not to skip this module.** The information here is very basic, and we will go more into depth in Module 12, building on what has been learned during the course.



When asking participants to share their examples, it is important to be careful and sensitive, as the examples are very personal, and it is easy to hurt people’s feelings.

The behaviour-change model referred to here is from E. Rogers’ “Diffusion of innovation” model. There are many different models. This model is chosen because it is simple, and because it contains a simple and straightforward explanation of the stages of change which people go through. Other models may give the stages different names, but most of the models have in common that change happens in stages, that there is an intellectual and an emotional component, and that change takes time – and that it matters who you are in relation to the person who “needs to change” for that person to be influenced by you – or not.

2. Objectives

- Understand the difference between moods, attitudes and behaviours.
- Understand how attitudes and behaviours change in ourselves, using practical examples.
- Understand the theoretical model of attitude and behaviour change.
- Understand why, how and when we can influence others to change moods.
- Link this understanding to the interview situation in the field.

3. Teaching methods

Demonstration, presentation, large-group and small-group discussion, buzzing.

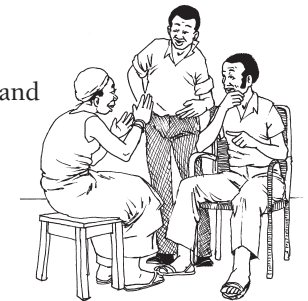
4. Materials

- Flipchart and markers.
- The ABC model.
- The Read-Think-Act model.

5. Trainer’s action plan

5.1. Understanding how we change

Ask participants to share their examples of attitude and behaviour change (from the assignment given yesterday). Get at least 2-3 examples. If participants are reluctant to start, one of the




Buzzing is a very quick and effective method to involve the participants, and get them to share experiences – and questions.

resource people should share his/her example. Make the distinction between moods and behaviour, if both come up in the examples.

As they explain and describe their examples, **probe** to get out the following points:

- What (and/or who) triggered the change?
- If it was a person, how important is that person to you?
- How long a time did it take to change (from when you started thinking about the need to change, to actually making the change)?

	Stages of Behavior Change		Who/what influences somebody?
	1. Awareness	Cognitive/Intellectual ("Head")	Mass media, events, books, films, friends, family
	2. Interest		
	3. Trial	Emotional ("Stomach", feelings)	Emotional event (particularly if it involves people close to you) People you respect and trust (such as friends, family, professional colleagues)
	4. Evaluation		
5. Adoption / Rejection			

Attitude and behaviour change model.

Put up (or draw) the ABC model with the five stages of change – without the words which show who/what influences someone (these should be filled in as part of the discussion). Put a figure of a person next to the model.

Explain: We are faced with many new ideas every day, from people around us, from the media and from books, articles, etc. Most of these ideas do not cause us to change.

When we become **aware** of a new idea, we can become **interested**. Still, this does not cause us to change or take action. These ideas are still only in our head. We call the first two stages the **cognitive, or intellectual**, stages. (Draw the line under “interest” – through the person’s neck.)

Link these stages to the examples given by the participants.

An example: A mother might hear on the radio that you should give a person with fever a full course of malaria medicines. She becomes aware of this idea, but she continues to give her child the malaria drug only until the fever has gone away, as she has always done.

Another example: A man hears from various sources (radio, papers, friends) that smoking is bad for his health. He knows. Still he continues to smoke.

An example from Kilifi: Impatience didn't get me good information



“I used to be very impatient. For example, when asking questions like “what causes malaria?”, or “what are your opinions about the use of bednets?”, respondents would often pause, and take their time to reply. This made me very impatient, because I would think (1) They were wasting my time: I had a job to complete within a given time and I wanted to push onto the next homestead; or (2) They were deliberately taking time in order to think up an answer that they thought I wanted to hear (not necessarily what they believed to be correct). This would result in my collecting fake information.

This attitude, I’m sure, was reflected in either actions or words which would cause the respondent to become defensive – uneasy, irritated, and cause them to reply shortly, stiffly and curtly. The problem did not only happen in interview situations, but also in other daily situations.

Because of my impatience to get on with the job, I often did not create a conducive atmosphere for the interview, I did not “listen” well, there was sometimes a total breakdown in communication, and I am sure I collected inaccurate information. However, I did fill my quota of homesteads allocated for the day, even if I had to manage 15 of them!

During the communication course, I became aware that I needed to change. I observed myself on video, I got feedback from colleagues, and I experienced what my impatience can lead to. I understood that (1) When the respondent takes time to reply to a question, >>

> it is not because they are fabricating answers in order to say what they think I want to hear, nor are they (deliberately) wasting my time. They are actually thinking, trying to remember, and formulating the best language they can use in order to be understood; and (2) The quality of the information I collect is more important than the number of questionnaires I complete in a day.

Thus I began to practise patience, active listening, giving time to respondents, and also practised seeing what they say in their own light (empathy). This gave me a better understanding of what they know to be true, rather than making assumptions.

My new behaviour is one of patience, being nonjudgemental, and being aware of the respondent's feelings and needs. I assess the overall situation, understand when to push on and when not to do so, and always find better solutions favourable to both of us in difficult situations. My work is now simpler and much easier, because the information I collect, no matter how sensitive and difficult the questions, is if not 100% accurate at least 95% accurate.

It took me quite a long time to change – about two years to feel I was almost there! The change was achieved through personal awareness of the problem, the will to change – bearing in mind the advantages, and lots of practice where I could see I was making progress.

Lewis Mitsanze

The next three stages involve ACTION – now the person has decided to try to change. (How that decision is made is a key issue!) The person **tries** out the new behaviour, **evaluates** it to see if it fits in with his/her life, and then **decides** whether to **keep/adopt** the new behaviour, or go back to the old one (**reject** the new behaviour). These stages involve feelings: there has to be an emotional reaction before you decide to try out a new behaviour. We call these stages the **emotional** stages.

An example: The mother whose child had fever sees that her child does not get well, he gets better from the fever for a few days, but then he gets sick again. She is afraid he might die. She goes to the local health worker, who explains to her (in a nice way) the reason why she should give a full course of drugs to the child – some germs get killed with every dose, and they get stronger again if not all are killed. She is ready to try new action, and gives the child the full course of the drugs (**trial**). The child stays well (**evaluation**), and it is likely that the mother will give the full course of drugs again the next time the child is sick (**adoption** of new behaviour).



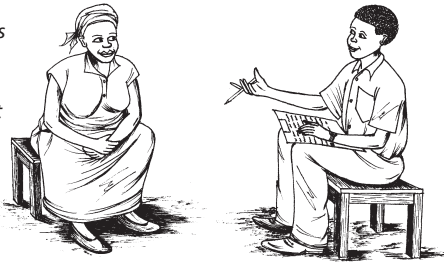
Constructive feedback from supervisors or colleagues you trust, can influence you to change.

Another example: The smoker has a friend, who also smokes. The friend gets sick, he has lung cancer. The smoker experiences his friend's slow death, and gets scared: *This could happen to me*. He decides to quit smoking (trial), and has a tough time (evaluation), but is backed up by his family who want him to live. He manages to stay off the cigarettes, slowly feels healthier, and decides it is worth the pain (adoption of new behaviour).

Link the five stages to the examples given by the participants, to pull the examples into the different phases. Discuss the feelings involved in making the changes, and the time it takes.

Ask: Who or what influences somebody to take action in the different phases? List suggestions on the model.

Asking open questions is a good way to learn about what people do, and why they do it this way.



Conclude:

- **in the cognitive or intellectual stages** (awareness and interest), anything or anybody can influence you (media, books, films, events, family, friends)
- **in the emotional stages** (trial, evaluation and adoption/rejection), you will be influenced by people you respect and trust, e.g. friends, family, professional colleagues; you can also be influenced by an emotional event (e.g. you get very sick, and need to change behaviour for this not to happen again, or you cause someone a big problem when you are drunk, get very embarrassed, and decide to stop drinking).

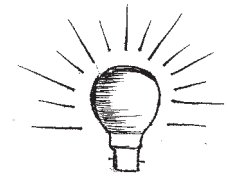
Pull together the discussion, and make the following points to sum up:

- attitude and behaviour change is often triggered by an event (action, and emotions)

- it is influenced by someone close to you, someone you respect, and/or your own experience
- it usually takes a long time.

Some additional points to include in the discussion now, or later in the course:

- **Only you can change yourself.** Others can influence you, but not “make you change”. The decision to change has to come from within yourself, otherwise the change will not last (you are changing temporarily to please others).
- **To change behaviour, you need a good reason** – from YOUR point of view. You need a better reason to change than the reason you have for keeping your present behaviour. People often forget this: they believe that a reason which is good for them will also be good for you. Very often, this is not the case.
- **No one has a “wrong idea”.** If someone keeps an idea or behaviour that YOU think is wrong, it is because they have not yet seen the need to change.
- **You can help people see the need to change** by expanding their vision: by asking questions (using the Meta Model), discussing other options and leaving them with ideas to think about.
- **Never try to push someone to change:** this will just make them stick even more to their old ideas.
- **To change, you require time and energy to think and reflect.** You will then be more open to considering change, and flexible enough to try out something new.
- **When people are in a stressful situation (overworked, undernourished, tired), they will not consider change:** Their focus is then to get out of the stressful situation, or simply to cope. (Example? When you walk into a household where...)
- **We often judge people as being stubborn or ignorant when they don't want to change.** This is a reflection of our own lack of understanding of what makes people change, and when and why they don't change.



You can help people “see the light”, but the decision to change is their own!

5.2. Implications of understanding attitude and behaviour change for work and personal life

Ask participants to discuss in small groups, using examples from their field work:

- do we sometimes expect others to change because we (or others) tell them to do so, how realistic is this?
- when do people change, what makes them want to change?
- what could prevent people changing?

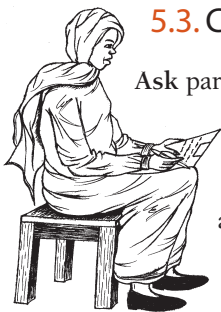
Ask participants to be aware of using Meta Model questions and active listening when they discuss, and pay attention to each other's ideas and opinions.

Discuss, and agree on main points (from the information above).

An alternative exercise

In pairs, use Meta Model questions and active listening to ask your colleague about (a) his/her own behaviour change or (b) opinions about change or experiences related to change. Ask about the implications of understanding how such change happens – both for work, and for one's personal life. Give feedback on use of questions, and listening skills/being heard.

Change places, and repeat the exercise.



5.3. Can you hide how you feel?

Ask participants: Can people “read” your feelings and attitudes – or can you hide them? How do your attitudes influence the quality and reliability of the information you obtain? Is there a danger of biasing the information you collect?

Ask for an example. If none is given, use the following: if your opinion

“We used to come back from the field with headaches and frustrations. Now, we know how to handle the situations, and we come back happy.”

is that pregnant women are very difficult to handle, and you don't like interviewing them, do you think the pregnant woman might

feel this during an interview (when you try to hide your feelings)? How might she feel it? How might this be influencing the quality of the data you get?

Refer back to the discussion about nonverbal communication, where it was agreed that 70% of our communication is nonverbal, and that people react to these signs more strongly than they react to the words we say.

Discuss.

Conclude that it is important to become aware of our own feelings, and be able to read the feelings of others better. With this skill, we can make better decisions about how to act.

Example from Kilifi: stereotyping uneducated respondents

Many participants had a negative attitude towards “uneducated people” (especially women). They felt that “these people” were very difficult to interview. We discussed how this feeling/attitude could influence the way the field worker behaved with such respondents (the respondent would feel the negative attitude and become defensive), and therefore influence the quality of the data.

We used Meta Model questions to challenge the attitude/feeling and find out what was behind this stereotype (stereotypes are generalizations). We asked for a definition.

We challenged the field workers to look at the reasons why people are uneducated, and agreed that a woman could be acting “difficult” because of:

- her lack of opportunity to go to school to learn (she may not understand some of the questions you ask, or THINK she does not understand, and thus feel unsure)
- the consequences of living in a situation she has little control over
- the outcome of traditions and culture!

We challenged their judgements, and asked: perhaps your judgement means “I don't know how to deal with this person/situation”?





We agreed that this was often the case, and that raising your antennae is a good way of avoiding prejudice. Feelings are contagious, and in meeting “uneducated people”, there was often anger and bad feeling – on both sides.

Generalizations are communication barriers!

NOTE: Some of the problem was due to language – field workers often felt “ignored” by respondents, and then labelled the person ignoring them as “ignorant”. This was, however, part of the same problem – labelling someone (negatively) for what we think they “are”, or the way they behave, and then acting defensively.

5.4. Summing up main points from the module

Use the ABC model in the summary

- Changing behaviour usually takes time: From an awareness that change is needed until the time you actually implement the change can take several years.
- The first two stages in the ABC model are awareness and interest. In these stages, we do not change or take action. The ideas are still only in our head. These are **cognitive or intellectual stages**. During these stages, anything or anybody can influence you (media, books, films, events, family, friends).

- The next three stages involve **ACTION**: The person tries out the new behaviour, **evaluates** it to see whether it fits in with his/her life, and then decides whether to **keep/adopt** or **reject** the new behaviour. There has to be an emotional reaction before you decide to change.
- During these **emotional stages**, you will be influenced by people you respect and trust (e.g. friends, family, professional colleagues) or by emotional events.
- **People will not change** if you push them to do so, or if they are stressed, overworked or undernourished. They may change if they feel the problem is relevant to them, the solution practical, acceptable and affordable, and the reason for change is better than the reason(s) they have for keeping the old habit or behaviour.
- Showing or hiding feelings? About 70% of our communication is nonverbal. Thus, it is likely that the person we communicate with will “read” our feelings. If we say something, and feel something else, the person will experience “double communication”, and may be confused. It is important to become aware of our own feelings, and be able to read the feelings of others better. With this skill, we can make better decisions about how to act.
- We often judge people who are uneducated as being “ignorant”, and get angry. Our reaction can mean “I don’t know how to deal with these people”. Getting out the antennae to check out feelings, and where they come from, can avoid prejudice.

Module 6

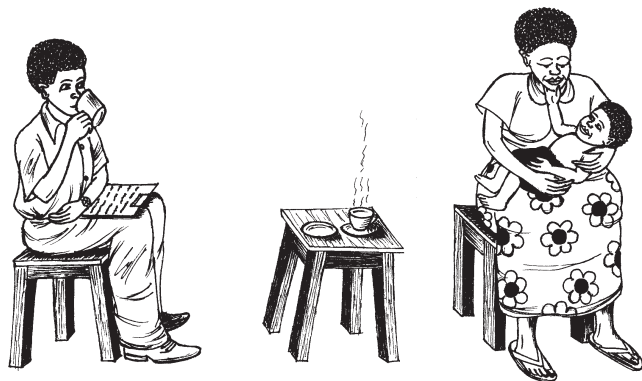
The practical interview situation

Understanding the needs of respondent and interviewer

1. Background for trainer

So far, we have dealt with the more general skills you need to communicate better, and to understand change. Now we will focus more directly on the interview situation and on getting good quality data, use the skills we have already learned, and build further skills directly into this framework.

A person will give you honest information (i.e. good quality data) if he or she feels comfortable about giving the interview to you. Many untrained field researchers will focus strongly on their own need to get the interview done, and not pay much attention to the needs of the respondent. If the respondent is busy, or in a bad mood, the interviewer will often feel it is best to press on, ignore the problem and get the interview done.



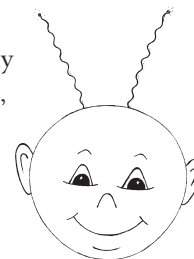
In this module, we will learn how the field worker can take care of his own needs as well as of the needs of his respondent. By understanding her needs, and accepting that she has the right to decide whether, and when, to do the interview, the field worker will be able to get good cooperation and good quality data.

The main skills for finding out about the respondent's needs are observation, asking questions and using empathy. And, of course, using your antennae throughout! You should be able to draw on these skills in dealing with questions from the field workers throughout the course.

When he/she understands what the respondent's needs are, the field worker must use negotiation skills to get an agreement to do the interview, or find a time to come back. This skill will be dealt with in the next module.

2. Objectives

- Understand that the field worker and the respondent have different needs, and that it is important to take care of both in order to get good quality data.
- Understand how to use antennae and empathy to tune into the respondent's way of thinking, and understand his/her views, feelings and needs.
- Understand why and how to negotiate to meet both sides' needs.
- Identify what to do: the Read-Think-Ask/Act model.



3. Teaching methods

Demonstration, role-plays, group work, buzzing, plenary discussion.

4. Materials

Flipchart and markers, role-play scenarios, demonstration outline, the Read-Think-Act model.

5. Trainer's action plan

5.1. Practical problem: she has no time for the interview

Ask for an example from the field where e.g. a field worker answered a difficult respondent with impatience and a negative attitude, and discuss how this attitude (or mood) may influence the outcome of the interview.

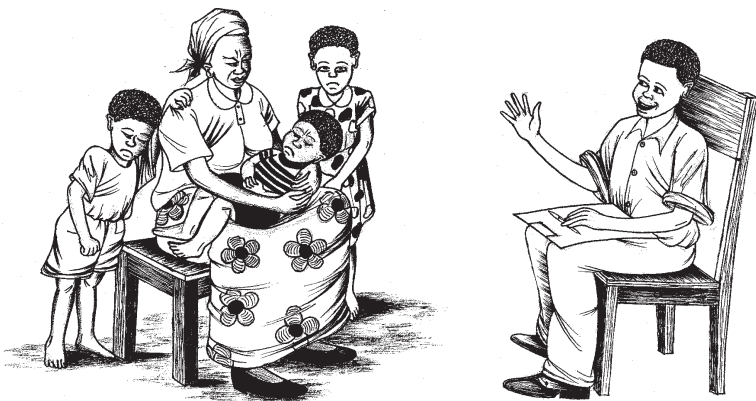
(We recommend that you prepare for this – ask around beforehand, and agree with a field worker who will give his/her example in this session.)

Ask How did you deal with this situation before?

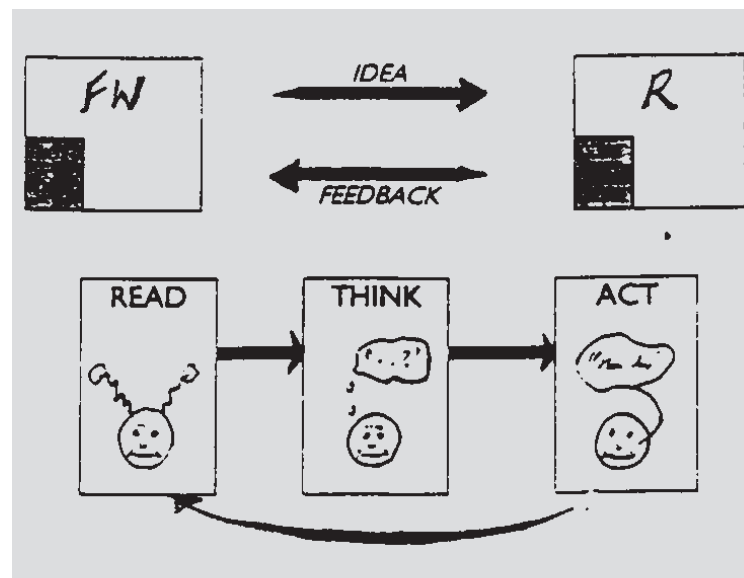
Discuss what was the outcome? (Possibly confusion, not a good interview, feeling bad, low-quality data, etc.) Ask for other examples, if necessary.

Suggest: new way to deal with the situation (see illustration).

Add the new layer to the model with the participants. Start with the Sender-Receiver model, now calling the sender “field worker” (FW).



This is a situation where the field worker does not consider the needs of the respondent. The respondent apparently needs to take care of her children. What are the implications of pushing on with the interview here?



Discuss (still referring to the problem identified and shared above):

- how would you now READ the situation? (using antennae/ awareness)
- what would you be THINKING? (she would have had good reasons for her “bad” behaviour/not giving good information; consider – what is the best thing to do now?)
- how would you be ACTING? (what is the best action to take to make the respondent feel understood, and allow her to do what she needs to do?)

Conclude: Both the field worker and the respondent will be reading, thinking and acting.

As field workers, we will focus on our own ability and need to read, think and act.

5.2. Understanding the needs of respondent and interviewer

Ask: Someone with more power or status asks you to do a task for him or her. You had planned to do something else which is important to you, but you don't feel free to say no, because the person who asks you expects you to say yes. How do you feel? How will your feelings influence how you do the task?

Let participants buzz in pairs for a few minutes. In plenary, record points on flipchart.

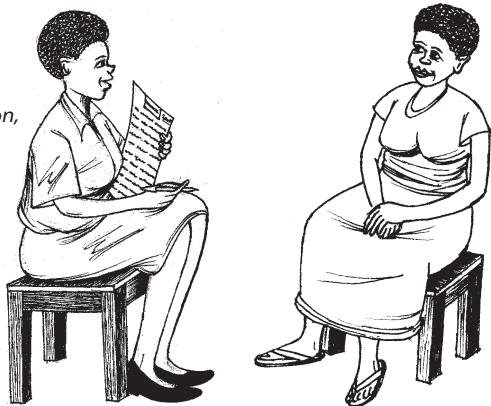
Ask: What would be different if the person had discussed with you when you would have time to do the task? Discuss.

Ask: How can we apply this to the interview situation? Discuss.

Summarize: Good cooperation between the interviewer and the respondent is essential for obtaining good quality data. When someone feels that she is respected, and that her tasks are seen as important, she will usually find a time to help you with your task. When she feels she has a real option to say no, she will try to find time. She will be motivated to give her full attention to the interview when she gives it, and give her honest opinions.

Meeting the needs of both field worker and respondent is important for getting good quality data

"Now I realize when I do something wrong. I look at both sides to see what is wrong. I do more negotiation, and make sure the needs of both sides are met."



5.3. Empathy: tuning into the respondent's way of thinking

Ask: How can you understand another person well? Get some suggestions.

Explain: The best way to understand someone else is to try to put yourself "in that person's shoes" – that means to try to understand the person's ideas, opinions, needs and/or feelings from **their** point of view. We call this **empathy** – a very important and useful concept in communication. It is related to using antennae, but goes one step further in understanding the other person.

Introduce a quick exercise: A field worker has been out working all day. At the end of the day he/she comes to a rather poor house where two small children are screaming, they are quite thin, and the mother looks very tired and is pregnant. The house looks messy. Use a picture of the situation, if possible.



Ask participants to buzz in pairs.

Half of the group buzz on:

- How does the field worker feel?
- What are his/her instinctive reactions?
- What are his/her needs?

The other half buzz on:

- How does the mother feel?
- What are her reactions when she sees the field worker walking towards her house?
- What are her needs?

Let each group suggest how the field worker and the mother feel. Write on flipcharts – one for the mother, one for the field worker. Discuss.

Ask: How can the field worker make sure he/she understands the mother's needs? What might be the influence on the quality of data if the field worker only sees his/her own needs?

Emphasize: To be able to practise empathy, it is important not to judge or criticize the other person. You are trying to see the world from his/her point of view, and give him/her all your attention and understanding. To do this well, you need to use observation and active listening skills and ask open questions.

You need to be able to set your own negative reactions aside for a while. It is common to react very judgementally to a situation you find in such a house, especially when you are tired yourself. Use your antennae!

Professionals who are very good at their jobs and work well with people are usually skilled in empathy.

The difference between sympathy and empathy

Explain: Many people confuse sympathy and empathy. The two are very different.

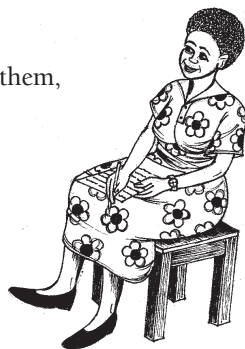
Ask participants what they think are the differences.

Illustrate the differences by explaining (or getting the points from the participants).

Sympathy – being subjective:

- to go into someone's feelings, take part in them, and STAY THERE
- to accept the feelings
- not to be critical.

Sympathy is a short term method of helping / sharing feelings with the respondent



Empathy – being objective:

- to go into someone's feelings and OUT AGAIN with the freedom to ACT
- to understand the problems/feelings from the person's point of view
- to be critical (NOT judgemental).

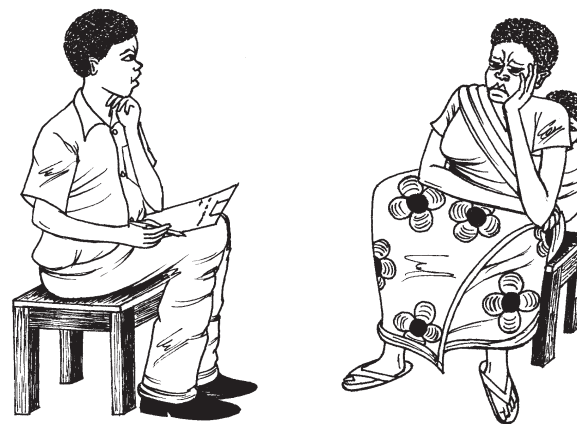
The AIM when practising empathy:

- to control our emotions
- to use the emotions constructively
- FOCUS on the respondent.



Showing empathy is a longer-term method of helping the respondent

Ask participants to comment, give examples, and conclude.



"I came to a village and there was a funeral for a child. The body was about to be buried. I asked for the mzee, said I was sorry about the child. He called the mum and asked us to talk under a tree he pointed out to us. He asked me to tell him when we were through, and they would then continue with the funeral. Everybody was very cooperative."

5.4. Introducing negotiation skills

We find out how to meet both sides' needs by negotiating with the respondent.

Ask: What is negotiation? Define negotiation together, e.g. **Negotiation is a form of communication to reach an agreement between two or more people.**

Ask: What skills do you need to negotiate well?

List points on flipchart, discuss. Add to the list as you go through the demonstration and the exercise (in the next module).

Some points for the list

(NOTE: these will vary from one culture to another – make your own list!):

- being friendly and patient
- listening carefully, using a polite voice
- using clear and common speech
- finding out the respondent's point of view by using Meta Model questions
- being honest
- being confident
- using appropriate nonverbal communication, such as gestures, for emphasizing important points.



5.5. Summing up main points from the module

- Good cooperation between the interviewer and the respondent is essential for getting good quality data.
- The field worker needs to Read and Think before Acting in an interview situation; he/she must consider the needs of the respondent as well as his/her own needs, and take care of both.
- If the field worker ignores the respondent's needs and reluctance to carry on with an interview, this will have a negative effect on the quality of information the respondent gives.
- If the field worker respects the respondent, and gives her a real option to say no to the interview, she will be motivated to give her full attention and honest opinions.
- **Empathy** means trying to understand the person's ideas, opinions, needs and/or feelings from **their** point of view. Using empathy means to focus on the respondent, to control our emotions, and to use the emotions constructively to help the other person.
- When giving **sympathy**, one is more subjective and tries to share the other person's feelings and take part in them. Sympathy is given from a person's own perspective, and usually does not lead to action.

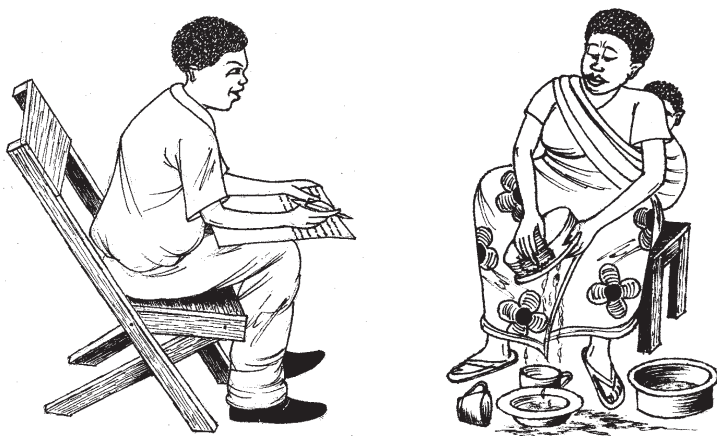
Strategies for action (1)

Negotiation skills

1. Background for trainer

Good negotiation is based on satisfying both sides: it is a win-win situation. Thus, what is needed for a successful result is an understanding of both sides' needs (previous module), good communication skills and basic negotiation skills.

For the field worker, the first item to be negotiated is whether to carry out the interview right away, or to come back at a time that suits the respondent better. The field worker may also have to negotiate with the head of household to be allowed to interview certain members of the household. Furthermore, negotiation skills could be needed at various times during the interview – e.g. to deal with a husband who comes home during the interview, or a drunk older member of the household, or a mother-in-law who



feels that **she** should be the one to be interviewed. The main strategy is to recognize the needs of both parties, keep the antennae out, and stay calm.

When choosing examples for this (and other) modules – remember to develop your own examples, role-plays, demonstrations, etc. from the context where you work. Relevant familiar examples are essential for the participants to feel really involved in the training, and thus to learn on a deep level that also includes their emotions – i.e. beyond intellectual understanding alone.

2. Objectives

- Recognize verbal and nonverbal communication skills used in good negotiation.
- Understand why and how to negotiate to meet both sides' needs and the implications for the quality of the data.
- Identify what to do: the Read-Think-Ask/Act model.

3. Teaching methods

Demonstration, role-plays, group work, buzzing, plenary discussion.

4. Materials

Role-play scenarios, demonstration outline, “Read-Think-Ask/Act” model.

5. Trainer's action plan

5.1. Demonstration of good negotiation skills

Remind participants that negotiation is “a form of communication to reach an agreement between two or more people” (or other definition agreed on in the previous section/module).

Ask what field workers experience as the most difficult problems when negotiating with respondents, heads of household or others to get an agreement to carry out the interview.

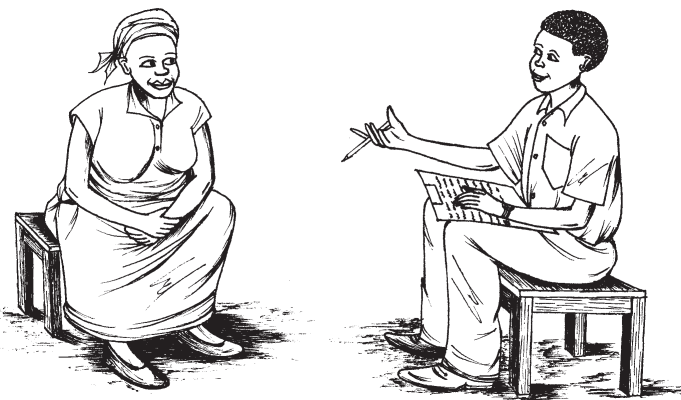
List problems on flipchart.

Resource-persons conduct a role-play, demonstrating good negotiation skills. Choose a typical situation from the field, which you identified during the awareness-raising phase, e.g. “negotiating with the husband about interviewing the wife on her own about breast-feeding issues”, or “field worker comes to a home, the mother is cooking and busy – how to obtain agreement for an interview?”

Develop the role-play, and practise several times before using it in the session, with a colleague to observe you and make comments, if possible. Be sure to use several Meta Model questions to find out how to solve the problem. Make the respondent a bit “difficult”, so that you can demonstrate good verbal and nonverbal communication skills, and negotiation skills, and also add some humour (if culturally appropriate – humour is a good way of loosening up a situation).

Ask participants to observe:

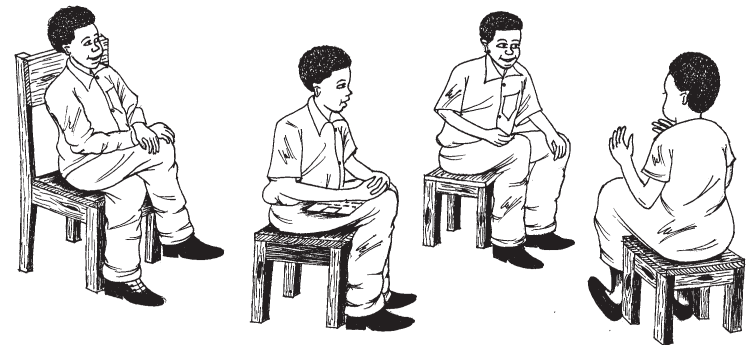
- what verbal communication skills (type of question, probes) did the interviewer use?
- what nonverbal communication skills did he/she use (how did he/she ask the questions, what gestures were used)?
- what was the outcome of the discussion? effects on respondent’s motivation to cooperate?
- what would you have done differently?



Remind participants to use feedback rules when they comment. **Discuss**, and summarize the points.

If you have time, you could choose to do a “bad” scene first – where the field worker pushes on with his need to carry out the interview even though the respondent is busy, asking for an agreement to do the interview, but making it clear he will not take “no” for an answer. You could ask participants to comment on your method, and discuss the possible implications of the method on the quality of the data. You could then proceed to demonstrate a good negotiation.

5.2. Practising negotiation skills



Divide participants into small groups of no less than three and no more than five people. Introduce a role-play scenario which you have prepared (pick a common scene/problem from the awareness-raising phase). Ask them to decide on roles in each group: one is the interviewer, one is the respondent and the other(s) the observer(s). Give each person a written note with background information about his/her role.

Remind them of the rules for giving constructive feedback when discussing the role-play in the group.

See **Annex** for sample role-plays, with specifications for the three roles.

Let participants practise, and circulate in the groups to observe. Do not interfere, unless someone has misunderstood the instructions, or has questions they cannot answer themselves. If you are asked to give feedback on a role-play in a group, only do so after the group members have given their own feedback.

In plenary, ask the observers from each group to give feedback.

Structure the discussion, e.g.

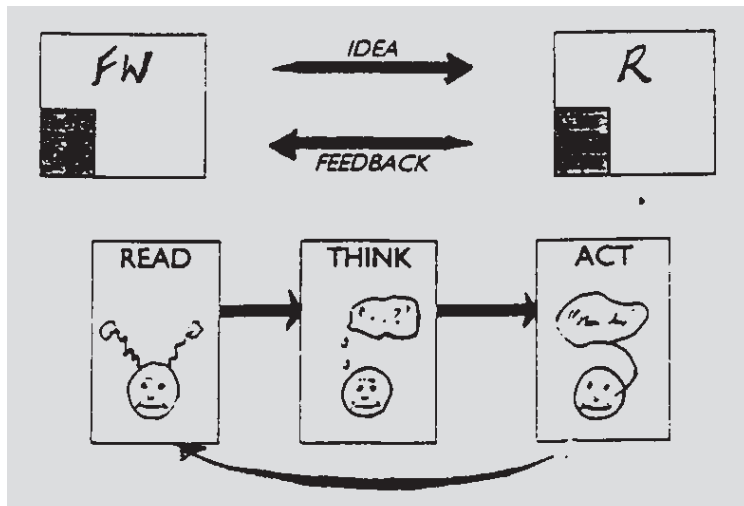
Interviewer: How were the VERBAL skills (types of questions asked, probing)?

How were the NONVERBAL communication skills (how did he/she ask the questions, use of gestures, tone of voice, use of mood, etc.)

Respondent: VERBAL: How did the respondent react? How relevant were the arguments used by the interviewer to her needs/ what she feels is important?

NONVERBAL: How is her mood initially, and how is it at the end? What makes it change?

Outcome: Is the respondent happy with the results of the negotiation? Were her needs being met? What did the field worker do to make the respondent feel her needs were being met?



Both respondent and field worker should be happy with the decision about when and how to do the interview.

Add points to the list of important negotiation skills.

Discuss: What could the field workers have done differently, and how would this have affected the respondents and the outcome of the negotiations?

Agree on the areas where there are still problems with negotiation skills and more practice is necessary.

5.3. Summarizing: the Read-Think-Ask/Act model

We can put what we have learned so far into our model, and add another layer, and apply the model to the field interview situation.

Many different skills and strategies:

- > being patient
- > using polite tones
- > listening carefully
- > being friendly
- > using clear, everyday words
- > identifying the respondent's point of view
- > being honest
- > being confident
- > using appropriate nonverbal communication such as gestures to emphasize important points.

Both respondent and field worker happy with the decision when and how to do the interview

Both the field worker and the respondent will be reading, thinking and acting throughout the interview. Most of the negotiation will take place at the beginning, but there can be incidences during the interview that also demand good negotiation skills (e.g. the husband coming home in the middle of the interview, and he has not been asked for permission).

Since we cannot control how the respondent reads, thinks and acts, we must focus on our own ability and need to read, think and ask/act – as interviewers. The field worker needs to be able to ask questions (mostly Meta Model questions) to assess the (new) situation when needed, and to take appropriate action.

Sum up the possible outcomes of the negotiation process and the implications for the quality of the data:

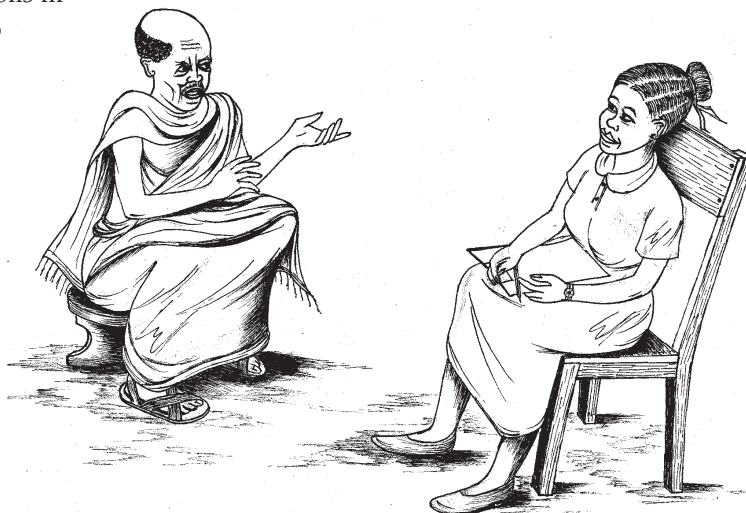
1. Field worker gets his/her way (interview now, this is the most convenient time).
2. Respondent gets his/her way (no interview).
3. A compromise or solution is reached (postpone the interview to a time convenient for the respondent).

Discuss the importance of reading, thinking and acting, taking both sides' needs into account and the implications of the different choices for the field worker, the respondent and the quality of the data.

Conclude that there is a need to make a choice that takes care of both field worker's and respondent's needs.

Emphasize the need to ask Meta Model questions in a sensitive way, and keep your antennae out to detect nonverbal communication signals.

"Now we try to understand someone's attitude and negotiate for the time and chance to do the interview. For example, we make sure we talk to the household head before the interview so we have consent for the interview."



"Negotiation is a form of communication to reach an agreement between two or more people"

5.4 Summing up main points from the module

Sum up difficulties field workers experienced when negotiating with respondents.

- Good negotiation is a win-win situation, where both sides feel they have been listened to, respected, and got their needs met.
- The Read-Think-Ask/Act model is a good tool for finding out what to do. If you add good communication skills (verbal and nonverbal), the chances are good for a successful outcome.
- When using good negotiation skills, the field worker lays the basis for obtaining good quality data.

Module 8

Strategies for action (2):

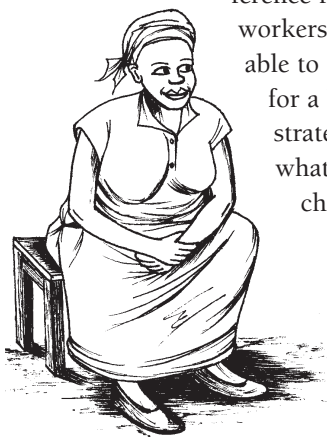
Getting the full picture

1. Background for trainer

“Understanding the full picture” is a very useful concept which helps field workers look at a situation from several viewpoints, and try to understand the respondent’s needs as well as taking care of his/her own. From now on, we will practise using this concept in the course.

In this module, we bring together the basic “understanding respondent’s needs” with communication and negotiation skills in order to understand a more complicated problem. This will also serve to practise the skills the participants have gained in the previous modules, and start putting the skills together for use in the field.

The ability to “rise above” one’s own situation and assess it before deciding what action to take is a skill that makes an important difference in determining how constructively field workers deal with a situation. When they are able to set their own views and feelings aside for a little while, and have methods and strategies so that they can really find out what the respondent thinks and feels, their choices for action expand.



When her needs are understood and respected, it is likely she will give you good quality data.

2. Objectives

- Understand the concept of “understanding the full picture”, and why this is important in field work.
- Understand the implications of understanding the full picture for the quality of the data.
- Practise understanding the full picture.

3. Training methods

Role-play, group work.

4. Teaching materials

Role-play scenarios, table (drawn on flipchart, see below) with space for writing questions, types of question, how they were asked, and outcome.

5. Trainer’s action plan

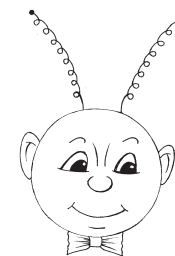
5.1. Review: skills to identify the whole picture and take action

Put up the model of recognizing field worker and respondent needs and getting the full picture through reading, thinking and acting (Module 7, Section 5.3).

Ask participants: What are the main skills needed to identify the whole picture?

Agree on:

- need to keep antennae out for nonverbal communication: sensing the mood of the respondent
- use of Meta Model questions in a sensitive way (practise some examples)
- use of active listening, and empathy.



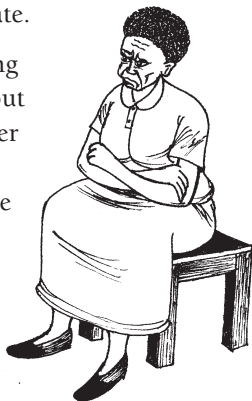
This will help you to understand both sides’ needs and the full picture BEFORE deciding on action

Ask What are the main skills needed to take appropriate action to understand the full picture?

Agree that this skill is negotiation and using empathy. **Discuss**, ask for examples.

Asking Meta Model questions helps you to expand the choice of options for taking action: when understanding the reasons for the situation/mood, it is easier to respond in an appropriate way and to know the basis on which you can negotiate.

For example, if the reason for a mother being worried is her sick child, you need to find out what the problem is, and whether the mother feels she needs to take immediate action. Even if she does not, she might not be in the right mood or feel she has time for doing an interview.



There is a good reason for her anger – Meta Model questions, listening and empathy will help you understand the full picture.

Review the possible outcomes of the negotiation process

1. Field worker gets his/her way
2. Respondent gets his/her way
3. A compromise or solution is reached.

The field worker needs to make a choice that takes care of both the field worker's needs and the respondent's needs, and then negotiate to reach an agreement.

5.2 Demonstrate: identifying the whole picture and taking action

Demonstrate a role-play that shows how to identify the whole picture and negotiate in a way which results in appropriate action. Please make up your own role-play, based on a real situation from the field (edit reality to suit your pedagogical requirements!) If possible, build on the role-play used in the last module.

NOTE: When discussing the situation, be careful not to get hung up on disagreements about “who said what” – ask participants to relate to the role-play as you present it. The main purpose is to have a common reference example to learn from.

Ask participants to observe closely, and pay attention to:

- verbal communication – WHAT is being said/asked (make a note of some questions)
- nonverbal communication – HOW are questions being asked?
- results – what is the effect on the respondent of asking different types of questions?

Role-play used in Kilifi: the reasons behind the reluctance

Behaviour / mood: the field worker is open and friendly throughout the interaction.

A field worker visits a mother to do a migration questionnaire on health-seeking behaviour, and introduces herself as a KEMRI field worker.

The mother refuses rather roughly to do the interview, and says she has no time.

The field worker explains the importance of the exercise (we have been told by people in this area that rural people have very different ways of dealing with illness than urban people, even though all are Mijikenda; we wanted to learn more about this), the field worker asks what the mother thinks about this.

Mother softens a bit, but says she still has no time.

The field worker asks WHY she has no time.

Mother gets annoyed again, says she is cooking food for her children who will come home in half an hour, and that she has lots of work to do.

The field worker backtracks, says she is sorry, did not mean to say her task is more important than the mother's ...

(NOTE: This is to demonstrate the potential effect of asking the WHY question.)



Mother accepts the apology (nonverbally).

The field worker explores other possible solutions: If you wanted to talk with me, would there be someone else in the house who could help you?

Mother says ... mmm, no, not really.

The field worker asks if she can come back another time that suits the mother better.

Mother says ... mmm, no, she does not think so.

The field worker says that's a pity, because she is sure the mother has a lot of experience and advice that would be useful to the study. Asks if there is anything she can do to convince the mother to talk with her.

Mother says – actually, she does not want to talk to KEMRI people, because two years ago there was a KEMRI field worker who came to her house and finger-pricked her child. The child got very sick afterwards, and the KEMRI field worker did not come back to help.

NOTE: you can stop the role-play here, and ask participants what they would do. Below is a possible continuation.

The field worker asks what happened to the child (displays concern).

Mother says the child finally got well.

The field worker asks (using Meta Model questions to get to the “heart of the matter”) if the other field worker had promised to come back.

The mother said yes, he had promised.

The field worker says she does not know what happened, this is not how it is supposed to be. The field worker should come back when he has promised to do so. Maybe he got sick, or had some other problem. She says she will try to find out, but it may be difficult since it is such a long time ago, and the mother does not remember the name of the field worker.

(NOTE: The field worker remains neutral, and does not try to defend or criticize her colleague – she displays concern for the mother, and for what happened.)

The mother seems to be satisfied with the explanation, and with the field worker taking her complaint seriously. She is now more friendly.

The field worker asks – Could I suggest I pass by tomorrow and see whether it would be possible to do an interview? What do you think?

Ask participants to comment on the role-play, on what was said (verbal) and how it was said (nonverbal communication), and on the process of reaching a conclusion.

Points for discussion: what was important?

VERBAL communication:



- giving a good introduction – mother became a bit interested, despite her opinion about KEMRI
- respecting her right to refuse to do the interview
- asking open-ended questions, and how this helped uncover the real reason for her refusal to participate
- what happens when you ask a “WHY” question: they can trigger a respondent’s emotions
- how to correct a mistake/apologize for what you said – do not be afraid to apologize, even if you did not mean to hurt or annoy; use antennae to see that she is annoyed, and choose the right strategy to solve the problem (don’t get stuck on trying to justify yourself, or showing you were “right” !)
- showing concern for the mother’s needs.

NONVERBAL communication:

- keeping your antennae up and your attention focused outwards – on reading her mood, and responding to what she says and feels; this ability can help you pick up on possible “hidden reasons” for her behaviour.

Sum up: What were some of the specific questions asked?

Summarize them in a table, ask participants what type of questions they were, how they were asked, and what the effect was on the mother.

Discuss the outcome, and agree on further learning needs.

Question asked	Type	How asked	Outcome
What did KEMRI do to make the child sick?	Open/descriptive	Friendly	Mother motivated
Why are you so busy?	Open/analytical	Friendly	Mother annoyed unintentionally
What problems did KEMRI cause you?	Open/descriptive	Neutral	Mother open and motivated
How long ago did this happen?	Open/descriptive	Neutral	Mother open and motivated
What happened to the child?	Open/descriptive	Friendly, concerned	Mother freed by field worker's concern
Could I suggest I pass by tomorrow and see whether it would be possible to do an interview? What do you think?	Leading (yes/no) + open	Friendly	Mother felt free to make a choice, because field worker had already been open and friendly. Not pushed to commit herself

Ask: What are possible other outcomes and consequences of the discussion, if understanding the fuller picture had not been achieved?

- Field worker gets her way – unreliable information/no interview.
- Mother gets her way – no interview.

Discuss.

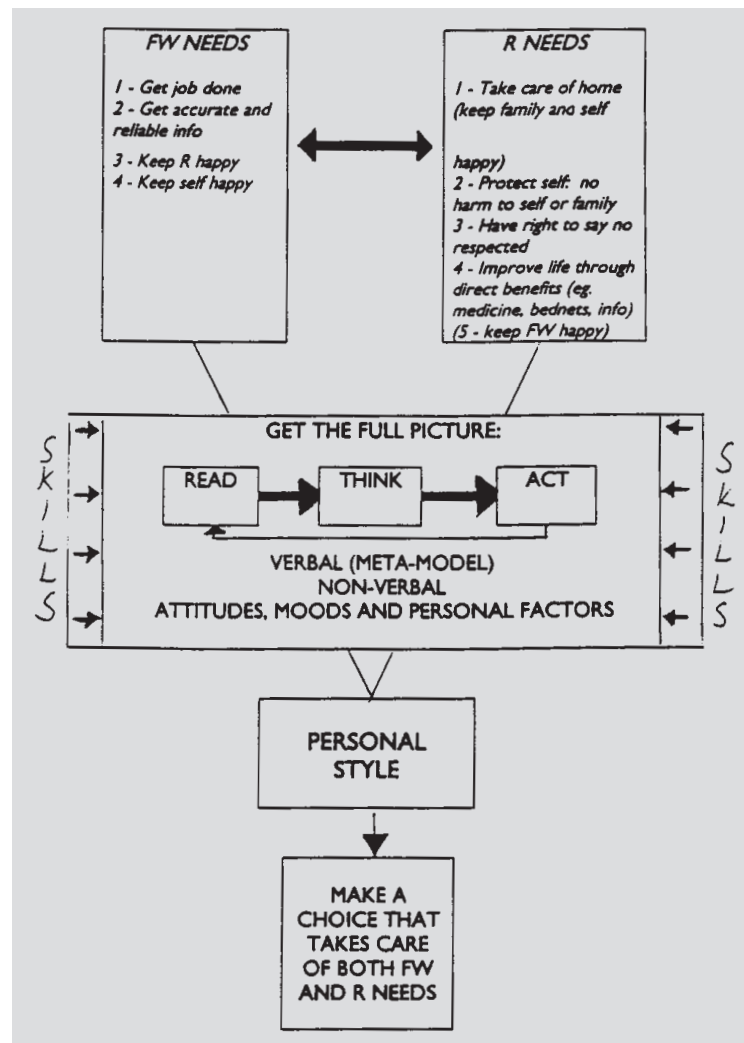
5.3. Group work: practise finding the full picture and taking action

Divide participants into groups of 3-5 people, and ask them to practise understanding the full picture, and taking appropriate action. Develop a role-play appropriate to your situation. Give the field worker instructions to e.g. get acceptance to carry out an interview, and give the respondent a story where he/she has some hidden reasons for his/her behaviour. Give instructions to the observers, as for previous role-plays (verbal and nonverbal points). Add an instruction about observing the consequences of the action taken by the field worker, and assessing whether the field worker got the full picture.

Ask small groups to give feedback in the group (get feedback from observer first), and then to feed back in plenary on main points. To avoid repetition, ask groups to only add to the points raised by the first group.

List main points on flipchart, and discuss.

Sum up with the following model.



5.4. Identifying further learning needs

Ask participants to buzz in pairs to identify where they now feel they are doing well, and where they need more practice on understanding both sides' needs, getting the full picture and negotiation. Ask them to be specific (e.g. "I need more communication skills" needs to be more specific, participants should probe to find out more from each other. For example "I need to practise how to ask open questions" is a specific point, and trainer and participant can then take action on such points).

It is important to sum up participants' own assessment of where they are. Learning to recognize what they do well, and where they need to practise more, will help build up their awareness and analytical skills to be able to check their own progress.



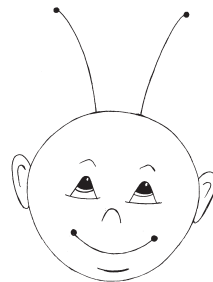
"What's good for us is we're seen to be organized and considerate. We feel we have a sense of responsibility too on their side. We're getting the full picture now. The good thing for them is that they feel part of the study."

5.5. Summing up main points from the module

Use the model of getting the full picture.

- "Understanding the full picture" helps field workers look at a situation from several sides, and try to also understand the respondent's needs as well as taking care of their own.
- Field workers will act more constructively if they have the ability to "rise above" their own situation and assess it before deciding what action to take. Their choices for action expand when they are able to set their own views and feelings aside for a little while, and use strategies to find out what the respondent really thinks and feels.
- Using antennae, Meta Model questions, active listening and empathy gives good results.

"We feel more professional now, more fully equipped before the interview. We focus on both sides now: we're not there only for our needs and that makes us more professional. We're much better off than those who've not done the course. We're in control, quietly."



"These things are all very important, because otherwise you just get the wrong information."

Module 9

Strategies for action: Interview (1)

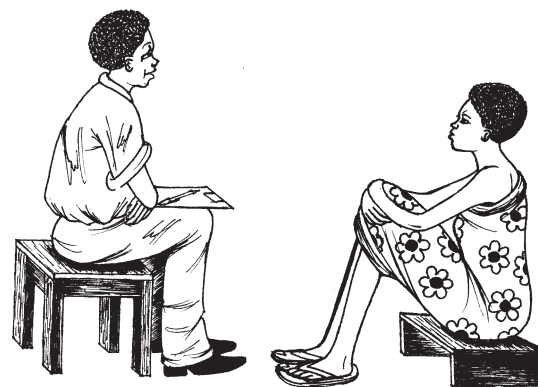
Seating and introduction

1. Background for trainer

So far, we have dealt with the more general skills you need to communicate better and understand change: getting the full picture and negotiation. Now we will focus more directly on the interview situation and on getting good quality data, using the skills we have already learned and building further skills directly into this framework.

The respondent's motivation to give good information in an interview is influenced by how comfortable he/she is, and by how he/she understands the purpose of the interview to be interesting or relevant to his/her life. It is during the introduction that a (potential) respondent decides **whether** and **how** to give information – this is a crucial time for motivating the respondent to agree to be interviewed and to decide to give full and honest information.

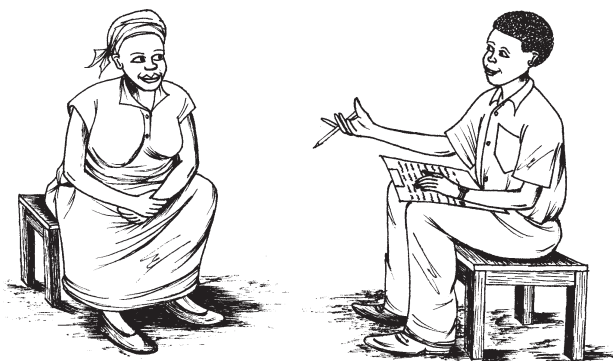
A comfortable seating arrangement is usually obtained by merging local customs with good communication principles. For example, in rural Kenya, local customs say a woman should sit lower than a man, and at a distance, while communication principles say you should sit at the same level if you want the person to feel respected, and not too far away from each other so that you can hold a good conversation. The field worker, knowing customs and having learned communication principles, will assess carefully when and how he/she can adjust to make the seating comfortable for both. He/she will use negotiation skills to adjust the seating to



This position may not lead the respondent to feel at ease and respected. It can feel challenging to sit right opposite each other.

preserve cultural respect for the respondent, as well as communicating that he/she wants them to sit on the same level.

Usually, a good seating arrangement is to sit at a slight angle from the other, rather than directly opposite. If you sit directly opposite, it may feel challenging, especially when the field worker has a strong personality: The respondent has to look at the field worker all the time, if he/she looks away, it feels uncomfortable. Sitting at an angle gives both interviewer and respondent the choice to look at each other, or to look away, and still be comfortable. This is a very simple adjustment to make, once a person is aware that it makes a difference.



In this position, the respondent is free to look at the interviewer, or to look away.

In the introduction, it is important to explain the work you have to do, and at the same time answer the (usually unspoken) question: why should I spend my time answering your questions? What is in it for me – what are the benefits?

*This does not feel very comfortable ...
What can the field worker do?*



Some people will agree to do the interview because they don't think they have a choice – if someone “from above” comes to ask for an interview, they have to accept it. Others may feel pushed to accept the interview by an insensitive field worker. In both cases, the respondent will most likely not understand the purpose of the interview, nor the reason for her/him to give honest responses or good quality data. The field workers need to understand the importance of making a good introduction, and the implications for the quality of the data of **not** making an introduction where the respondent feels he/she has the right to say no. And then the field workers need to have the practical skills to carry out a good introduction.

Over the course of the interview, the field worker may have to repeat his/her introduction – perhaps more than once. If the respondent has been distracted during the first explanation, she may need a repetition once she has settled down to the actual interview. Important household members – the husband, mother-in-law or head of household – may arrive in the middle of the interview, and need to be informed about what is going on, and why. Good, flexible introductory skills are thus essential for the field worker.

2. Objectives

- understand how to create a comfortable seating arrangement, and why this is important in the interview
- understand what to say in an introduction, how to say it, and why covering these points is essential to motivate the respondent to give good quality information.

3. Teaching methods

Demonstration, role-plays, group work.

4. Materials

Role-play scenarios, demonstration outline.

5. Trainer's action plan

5.1. Creating a comfortable seating arrangement

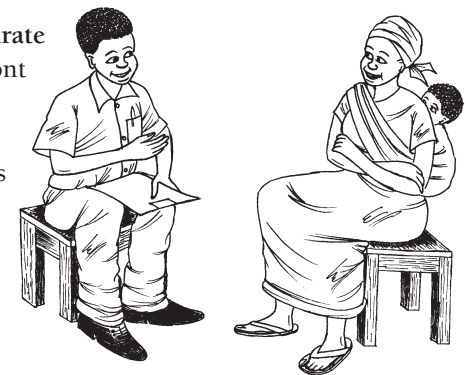
Ask participants: How important is the way we arrange our seating? Why is it important?

List points for discussion (e.g. making respondent feel comfortable, keeping a balance in the power relationship, respecting cultural rules, etc.).

Discuss.

Ask: How would you make a good seating arrangement?

Let participants demonstrate by setting up chairs in front of the group, and discuss why each position is a good one. Let participants sit in the other chair as well, feel how it is to be a respondent, and discuss how comfortable this feels.



Agree that it is good to avoid challenging positions (like sitting right opposite each other, sitting too close), and to pay attention to distance and levels.

Ask: What are cultural rules for seating? To what extent do you have to follow the rules, and how much can you adjust through negotiation?

Ask for a volunteer to suggest how to negotiate a situation with e.g. a woman insisting she will sit at a lower level (by doing it in practice, if time allows). **Discuss.**

Agree: The way you sit will indicate your power. The intention in good communication is to be as much as possible on the same level, as this will facilitate a good exchange. This aim has to be balanced with the cultural rules.

After this discussion, ask if participants want to change anything in the seating they suggested above. Agree on some basic rules for what to do to make both the respondent and the field worker comfortable.

Use video: You can also view a video from the field, and ask participants to comment on the way the seating arrangement has been made, using the points above. This method is a good way of making the learning practical.

5.2. Introduction to the interview

Ask: What is the function of the introduction? What do you want to achieve?

List points, and discuss.

"I did a follow-up on a child who died of tetanus, in a village far away. There were no vehicles in this place. When they saw our vehicle, everyone ran away, except one man. I greeted him in our language, and he became settled. We were on the same level. We discussed traditions. Later on, I inquired about the child. By this time the other people had also come back. He felt free to tell me about the child."



Include points:

- motivate the respondent to agree to be interviewed
- make the respondent see how the purpose of the interview is relevant to him/her
- make respondent feel that the field worker is friendly and respectful, and that the respondent has the right to say no, or that this is not a good time
- motivate respondent to give honest answers, leading to good quality data
- make respondent feel that he/she can ask questions.



Well-educated respondents are often demanding and ask a lot of questions. A good introduction will set the tone for the interview.

Ask participants to buzz in pairs What do you include in the introduction?

List points, discuss.

Include points:

- identify the field worker by name, ID and name of the (research) organization
- what the research is about; what are you trying to find out?
- why are you trying to find this out; what is the purpose of the research? why is it important? what will the results be used for?

- will the results be of (direct or indirect) benefit to the respondent?
- will results be fed back to respondent?
- how long will it take?
- invitation to ask questions
- confidentiality.

The field worker needs to follow the instructions from the researcher/supervisor about what to say, and at the same time link this to the situation of the respondent, keeping the focus on respondent's needs.

5.3. Demonstrate: introduction

Ask for volunteers to demonstrate a good introduction in front of the class (remember to use a local/own example!) Let them demonstrate, ask for comments on verbal communication (WHAT did he/she say (contents) using the points above) and on nonverbal communication (HOW did he/she say it). After the demon-



"We are now more careful with our presentation: the language we use, our mood, setting up an appropriate atmosphere, and make sure people are willing to share information."

stration, ask the interviewer first to identify what he/she did well, and where he/she could improve, before opening up for comments from the rest of the group.

Encourage this self-commenting continuously in the training – stressing that being able to look at your own strengths and weaknesses is an effective strategy for improving skills.

If there were many points which were not covered well, ask for more volunteers, and repeat the exercise.

You can also let people practise the introduction in pairs with an observer, comment on themselves and each other, and then come back to the plenary to share observations, conclude where there are still problems, and decide how to continue learning.

5.4. Summing up main points from the module

- Respondent is influenced by how he/she understands the purpose of the interview (interesting? relevant?) and by how comfortable he/she is. This determines whether respondent will be motivated to give good quality information.
- A friendly and respectful field worker, who makes the respondent feel that he/she can say no to the interview and can ask questions, is more likely to obtain good quality cooperation and information.
- A comfortable seating arrangement is usually obtained by merging local customs with good communication principles.
- How to introduce the interview is usually decided by the researcher/supervisor, in cooperation with the field worker. The introduction (or introductory discussion) can include the field worker's name, ID, name of the (research) organization, what the research is about, why you are trying to find this out/what the results will be used for, whether the results will be of (direct or indirect) benefit to the respondent, if results will be fed back to the respondent, how long the interview will take, invitation to ask questions, and confidentiality. The field worker needs to link this to the situation of the respondent, keeping the focus on the respondent's needs.

Module 10

Strategies for action – Interview (2)

Identifying personal style

1. Background for trainer

Most people are quite unaware of their personal communication style. It is common to observe, judge and comment on how other people behave, but less common to look at yourself. Many people will say “I don’t know how I behave – this is for others to say”.

We have learned skills and strategies to improve communication in the interview situation. Now we need to look carefully at our own interviewing style, and look for special things we can do better in order to become more effective communicators. We need to build

up skills over time to observe and assess our behaviour, and to build up our confidence that we can look at ourselves and decide how well we are handling a situation. When people gain these skills, they are empowered:

they are no longer dependent on others to tell them how well or badly they are doing. They will then also have the freedom to decide to change.

It is difficult to do this by ourselves at this stage, as we do an interview. There are two alternative methods we can use to learn –



ask someone to watch us, and watch them in turn, and then give each other feedback, or record the interview on video, and watch it to observe and learn what we do well, and where we need to improve.

In this module, we will practise observing personal communication style in others and in ourselves. It is important to have actual examples to view and discuss, in order to start developing a vocabulary for the different characteristics. Thus, role-plays previously recorded on a video would be a good tool to use, or if not available, use actual role-plays in the session. The role-plays need to be planned carefully, to illustrate in a realistic and practical way some of the characteristics that are most common in the field workers you are training.

A video is also an excellent tool. You film people doing an interview and ask them to view it afterwards and observe themselves. If using this method, you should allow a lot of time, and make sure you are very familiar with the technology before you start.

To help structure the feedback, we will be developing a tool to assist with observation of field interviews and role-plays in order to learn more about personal communication style. This tool can later be used in the field, when participants will be integrating the new skills into their daily work. Thus, it is important that this tool should be developed in the group to suit your particular situation, and not just copied from the version shown in the manual.

The rules for giving feedback should be observed.

During the role-play interview practice, the interviewer should be asked to fill in the questionnaire the way the field researchers are usually asked to. **This is the time to start integrating the new skills into real practice, and identify problems field workers have in doing so.**

2. Objectives

- Develop a feedback form to structure interview observation.
- Use the form to observe and give feedback to colleagues.

- Receive feedback from colleagues on personal communication style, and identify which actions affect a respondent positively, and which negatively.
- Decide which personal actions can be changed, and how this can happen.

3. Teaching methods

Observe video, using a checklist/feedback-form (or role-play), buzzing, role-play.

4. Materials

Video clip of interview taken before the course. Role-play scenarios. Draft feedback form. Questionnaires/survey tools.

5. Trainer's action plan

5.1. Developing a feedback form or checklist

Ask participants: What would you look for in an interview to give feedback to your colleague? Note some points on the flipchart to make sure they are on the right track.

Divide participants into groups of three or four, and ask them to develop a feedback form on one page. The form should be practical to use in the field when observing a colleague. It should allow for observation on major points learned in the course so far. Use an overhead projector if available – give one sheet to each group. Or use flipchart sheets.

NOTE: In the Annex there are two examples of feedback forms – one developed and used by the field workers in Kilifi after the course, and a checklist to assess the video role-plays before and after the course.

Let one group present their form, in plenary. Ask for the others to comment, and agree on a form to use. Agree that the form needs to be tested in action, and then revised.

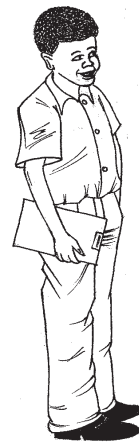
5.2. Test the form, and revise

In the same groups as above, view a video of a few interviews taken before the course (or ask two volunteers to do a role-play), and let the participants fill in the form.

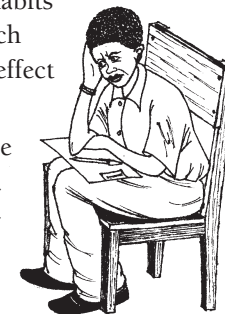
Discuss what worked and what did not work well, revise, and agree on a form to use. If possible, have someone type out and print the draft form, and make copies to use in the exercise.

5.3. Identify “personal communication style”

Pick one of the examples from above (video clip or role-play: be sure to get the field worker's agreement to use his/her example for analysis; alternatively, the resource people could conduct a role-play in front of the group, and let them comment) and discuss.



- What is “personality”, which cannot be changed or adjusted?
- What is the “positive communication style”; what are behaviours or habits the field worker has which are good/have a beneficial effect on the respondent?
- What is the “negative communication style”; what are behaviours or habits the field worker has which are bad/have a negative effect on the respondent?
- Is this a mood that can be easily changed when you are aware and have strategies available, or is it a behaviour that needs more “personal work”?



Find out what is your style and how it affects your communication with others.

Let participants **buzz**. Invite them to describe and comment on positive and negative style (from the point of view of the respondent) and on what can be changed.

Review the feedback form to see whether any insights from this discussion should be used to revise the form.

5.4. Practise and become aware of your communication style

Ask participants to **buzz** in groups of three to help each other begin to identify their style. They should also start identifying what they want to change.

Leave them some time to buzz on the positive and negative habits they are already aware of. Then give them role-play scenarios typical for their work, and ask them to practise – the interviewer filling in the questionnaire as he/she usually does, and the observer using the feedback form. Ask them to take turns, and let everybody have each role once (interviewer, respondent, observer).

The observer should use the feedback form to note good practices/habits as well as habits which have a bad effect on the respondent.

Ask the groups to give feedback in their small group after each practice. Let the “interviewer” comment first on his/her strong points/good habits, and then on points/habits that could be improved. The interviewer should also comment on how he/she experienced filling in the questionnaire/survey tool and trying to integrate the new skills into real practice. The “respondent” should add comments from his/her point of view, and the observer should comment last, using the structured feedback entered on the form. This process will help the interviewer build up his/her awareness.

After the role-plays, let the participants **buzz on what they would like to change** in their personal communication style, and on how they will work to make the changes happen. Be specific!

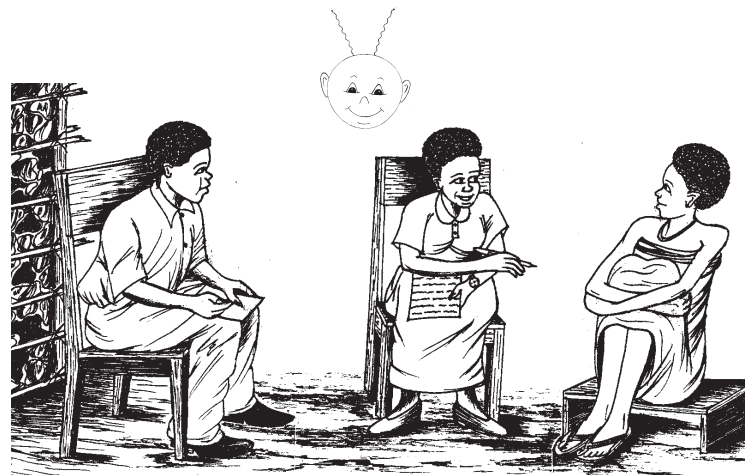
In plenary, let groups share experiences from their work. Focus on making a list of the styles/habits which participants want to

change, and discuss how to work on these issues over the remainder of the course.

Stress that these changes take time, and that the work started in the course will have to continue when they go back to work, as the tendency will often be to go back to old habits when you are out of the course mood and environment.

Here, the feedback form will help to keep the field workers on track. It will only be used if participants have gained positive learning experiences from using the form. Working with a colleague in the field from time to time, getting feedback and discussing progress and problems will help to continue the learning and integration of skills into practice.

Review the material from Module 5 about how people change, if necessary.



Your colleagues, and your own antennae, are the best helpers to make you aware of your personal style.

5.5. Summing up main points from the module

Review material from Module 5 about how people change.

- We need to build up skills to observe and assess our behaviour, and to build up confidence that we can look at ourselves and decide how well we are handling a situation.
- Having these skills means you are empowered: you are not dependent on others to tell you how well or badly you are doing, and you will have the freedom to decide to change.
- Two methods can be used to learn – ask someone to watch you, and watch them in turn, and then give each other feedback, or record the interview on video, and watch it in order to learn.



"The biggest difference for me now is that I have courage. For example, if before I popped into a household and I was told the owner was drinking liquor, I'd be scared and feel bad. I'd come back the next day. Now I've got the courage to just go and speak to them. I've modified my tongue to fit into any group. Before I was scared because I was a woman."

Module 11

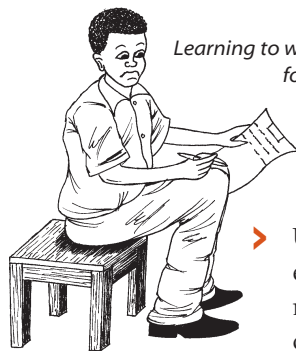
Strategies for action – Interview (3)

Adjusting own actions

1. Background for trainer

It is now time to use new communication skills actively in the interview situation, and try to integrate the learning into practice. The personal communication style and problems in recording information, which were identified in the last session, need to be addressed.

Many field workers find it very difficult to keep their attention on the respondent and record the information on the questionnaire at the same time. Learning to record in an effective way is usually a matter of becoming aware of the effects of one's own practice on the respondent and on the outcome of the interview and the quality of the data, defining realistic changes, and practising the changes with feedback from colleagues. There may also be a need to learn practical ways of writing faster and more efficiently.



Learning to write more efficiently may help the field worker focus on the respondent

2. Objectives

- Understand how to record an interview efficiently while keeping a focus on the respondent and making him/her feel comfortable.

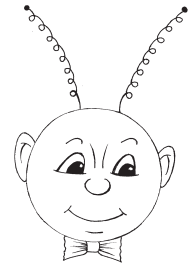
- Practise good recording skills.
- Practise adjustments to your personal communication style and comment on the changes.
- Receive feedback from colleagues on personal communication style while recording, and identify which actions need further improvement.

3. Teaching methods

Buzzing, observe video (or role-play) to note recording practices, role-play.

4. Materials

Video clip of interview taken before the course. Role-play scenarios. Feedback form, with added observation of recording. Questionnaires/survey tools familiar to the participants.



5. Trainer's action plan

5.1. Review consequences of communication style

Show a video of an interview or do a role-play. Ask participants to note positive and negative communication styles. Continue the analysis of the role-play by looking at the potential consequences of each action.

Discuss:

- Where is the focus of attention in each case – self, or respondent?
- What do the different styles say about the attitudes of the field worker?
- What are the consequences for the respondent of the different behaviours observed?
- What could be realistic aims for the person to change?
- What would be the “desired new behaviour”?

Be specific in your suggestions.

5.2. Recording information

Ask field workers to buzz in groups of three about their personal communication style when recording. What problems do they find? What are the implications of those problems for the respondent and for the quality of the data they obtain?

You can also view videos of field workers doing interviews and list problems you observe and the consequences of those problems for the respondent.



Report in plenary, list, and discuss.

Ask: What are good reporting practices?

List, and agree.

View a video clip of field worker doing an interview, or make a role-play where the field worker records. Identify good practices and points to improve, and add the points to the list above.

Points for discussion (add your own):

- Focus on the respondent while doing your writing. Specifically:
 - **Managing silence.** Long gaps are uncomfortable. Try to make some small comments to the respondent. If you are a slow writer, practise writing faster (at the office). In the

interview, explain to the respondent that you have to write, and that you are a bit slow, use some humour if appropriate. Thank the respondent for being patient.

- **Filling breaks.** You don't have to talk all the time, it is OK to have silence part of the time. If you fill all the breaks, you do not allow the respondent to come up with unplanned comments, and it feels like you are controlling the situation too tightly.
- **Be aware of disturbing nonverbal communication.** Refer to the points raised in the last module.



Agree on additional points to observe when focusing on recording practices (add them to the feedback form).

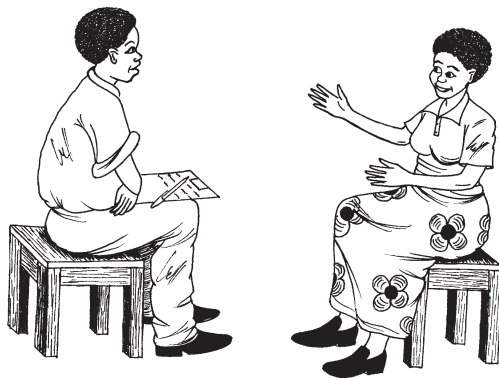
Ask how they can overcome the problems they have identified: buzz in the same groups to set aims for themselves for how they want to change.

Some examples of positive style or action noted in Kilifi		
Style / action	Effect	Adjustments
Filling breaks	R comforted	Be aware when OK to do this
Appreciative nonverbal communication	R reassured	Be aware not to do this all the time

Some examples of negative style or action noted in Kilifi		
Style / action	Effect	Adjustments
Talking all the time	R feels dominated	Talk less, allow gaps
Long pauses / gaps	R bored	Make occasional comments. Practise writing faster
Short sharp questions	R intimidated?	Practise softer questions
Fiddling with pen	R distracted	Put pen down when asking

NOTE: Reducing periods of silence is a skill that many need to learn when filling in a questionnaire. You should be careful not to replace it with having no gaps at all, as this can be felt as very controlling, and it does not leave the respondent any chance to come up with own comments.

“The other thing that we’re doing differently is filling the gaps to stop the respondent getting bored. Now we know if they’re getting bored, and fill the gaps with hmmmms, nodding etc.”



5.3. Practise recording information and improving style

Ask participants to continue buzzing in groups of three to help each of them to set goals for adjustments in their personal style which they want to practise.

Give the groups role-play scenarios typical for their work, and ask them to practise, using the questionnaire/research tool and the feedback form with the additional points for recording. Ask them to take turns, and let everybody have each role once (interviewer, respondent, observer).

Before starting each role-play, the “interviewer” should make the observer aware of which points on the feedback form he/she would like to change and get specific feedback on.

The observer should use the feedback form to note good practice/habits, and habits which have a bad effect on the respondent, and pay special attention to the recording points.

Ask the groups to give feedback after each practice, and let the “interviewer” comment first on how well he/she felt he/she was making the adjustments. Add other strong points/good habits, and points/habits that can be improved. The “respondent” should add comments from his/her point of view, and the observer

should comment last, using the structured feedback entered on the form, with the added recording points. This process will help the interviewer build up his/her awareness.

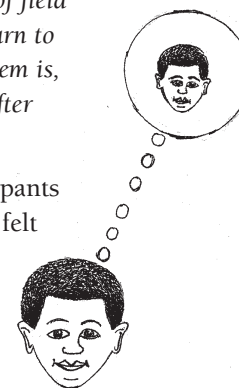
Remember to follow the rules for constructive feedback!

In plenary, let groups share experiences from their work. Focus on the recording practices – what worked well, and where adjustments are still needed. How can these adjustments be made?

(NOTE: One good method is to use the skills of field workers who record well to help the others learn to record better. Depending on how big the problem is, this is something that might need to be done after the workshop.)

Ask for feedback on the changes the participants made in their own style, and how well they felt they managed to do this.

Make a list of the main points that need more practice over the remainder of the course.



5.4. Summing up main points from the module

- When recording, it is necessary to keep your attention on the respondent and record the information on the questionnaire at the same time.
- Learning effective recording methods involves becoming aware of the effects of your own practice on the respondent and on the outcome of the interview and the quality of the data.
- Field workers should define realistic changes needed in their recording style, and practise with feedback from colleagues.
- Some field workers may need to learn practical ways of writing faster and more efficiently.
- Important skills to learn are how to manage silence comfortably, how to fill breaks without taking too much control, and awareness of nonverbal communication and how this affects the respondent and the outcome of the interview.

Module 12

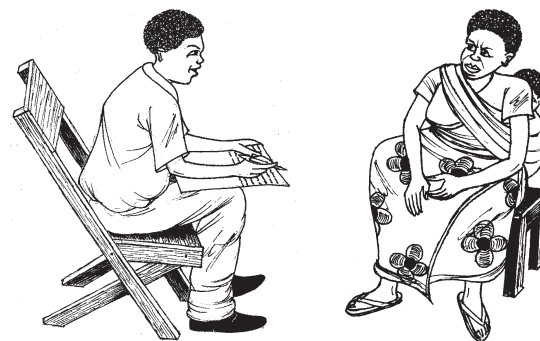
Understanding the reasons behind

Moods, attitudes and uncertainty

1. Background for trainer

Our actions and moods are guided by underlying attitudes and feelings. Understanding some of the reasons behind different actions gives people increased self-confidence. They are not as easily thrown off balance when they have this knowledge. It becomes much easier to keep your attention on the respondent when you are able to look behind her immediate reaction (e.g. anger) and not respond by being afraid or angry yourself (i.e. taking it personally). You can take her anger seriously, look for the reason for the anger, let her express it, listen and experience (in most cases) that she calms down and is willing to talk. This is an extremely powerful skill which is very useful for managing conflict in the field – and at home. To practise it, you need to be willing and able to recognize and acknowledge your own feelings in the situation, and set them aside – to be able to focus on the respondent.

The concept that needs to be understood is insecurity or uncertainty. Participants need to understand that concept and feeling in themselves, and experience how insecurity makes them focus on feelings (their own) and not on facts, or on the respondent. The same is true for the respondent – someone who is feeling insecure (which can be hidden behind anger, arrogance, impatience, etc.) will focus on his/her own feelings and not listen “objectively” to facts which the field worker may try to present.



Behind the anger is often a person who has been hurt, or feels insecure, and uses anger to cover up. If you can meet the anger with openness, and listen to the reason for the anger, the person will usually relax and cooperate with you.

It is common for many of us to judge negatively something we don't like, or don't understand, or which makes us uncomfortable. For example, many field workers had strong feelings against “ignorant people”. They found them difficult to deal with, and this increased their anger and judgement, and probably did not produce good quality data. Pregnant women were another group which drew a lot of judgemental comments, mainly from the male field workers. Furthermore, field workers noted big problems in dealing with respondents who are stubborn or uneducated, in managing conflict, and in tackling the feeling of being trapped. These are all problems related to understanding and handling insecurity in a constructive way.

Understanding our reactions in such situations means that we have an awareness about what is happening, and why we react – and thus we have the choice to react in a different way. The antennae are out!

This is not a course in psychology. However, in our experience, understanding these basic psychological issues does not require sophisticated training. It requires a person to be willing to take a closer look at his/her own reactions – a curiosity, based on a positive experience with the course and the awareness-raising period. It also requires an ability to use the antennae and focus on another person.

2. Objectives

- Understand further how people's moods, attitudes and personal factors affect the outcome of interviews.
- Understand these factors in ourselves.
- Develop skills to recognize these factors in others.
- Develop skills to control and adjust these factors in ourselves.
- Understand reasons behind certain moods, attitudes and behaviours.
- Understand how uncertainty affects our actions.
- Understand how to recognize uncertainty in others and deal with it constructively.

3. Teaching methods

Role-play, buzzing, presentation.

4. Materials

Flipcharts.

5. Trainer's action plan

5.1. Attitudes, moods, behaviours and personal factors

Ask participants for examples of attitudes, moods and behaviours which affect the outcome of an interview. Let them buzz if examples do not come up readily. Put up three flipcharts, and list suggestions under each title. Refer to the issues discussed in Module 5, as needed.

Agree on definitions:

Attitudes are “in our head”: opinions about what is right/good, and what is wrong/bad. Attitudes influence our actions, often without our really knowing or being aware of it.

Examples (can be included in the list): patient, impatient, open, determined, positive, negative, curious, confident, insecure, shy, judgemental, rude, superior, inferior.



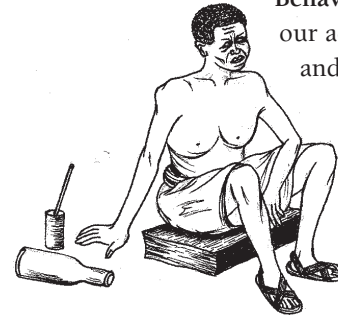
Moods are more temporary, influenced by the activities of the day. They can change quickly.

Examples: friendly, happy, sour, grumpy, distanced (“not quite there”), inviting/open, tense/stressed



Behaviour is what we do, our actions. Our attitudes and moods cause us to behave in certain ways.

Examples (with uneducated people, I tell them a lie to keep them quiet; with pregnant women I am very quiet/careful/impatient; with well-educated people I am passive and polite, etc.)



Give your own examples, based on awareness-raising.

Discuss, relate to interview situations, and discuss implications for outcome of the interview and quality of data.

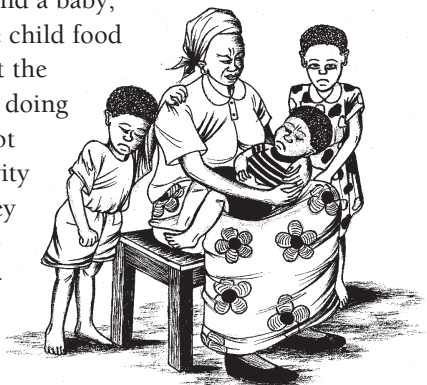
5.2. Review and expand on attitude and behaviour change model

Review the model from Module 5 and remind people of their personal examples: who influenced them to change, and how long did it take?

Give a “lecture input” where you review and expand on the following (from Module 5):

- **Only you can change yourself.** Others can influence you, but not “make you change”. The decision to change has to come from within yourself, otherwise the change will not last (you change to please others).
- **To change behaviour, you need a good reason** – from YOUR point of view. You need a better reason to change than the reason you have for keeping your present behaviour. People often forget this: they believe that a reason which is good for them will also be good for you. Very often, this is not the case.

- **No one has a “wrong idea”.** If someone keeps an idea or behaviour that YOU think is wrong, it is because they have not yet seen the need to change. If a person has an opinion or attitude, it is right for him/her. Thus, to tell somebody they are wrong will usually make him/her defensive and not open to change.
- **You can help people see the need to change by expanding their view** – by asking questions (using the Meta Model), discussing other options, and leaving them with ideas to think about.
- **Never try to push someone to change.** This will just make them stick even more rigidly to their old ideas.
- **To change, you require time and energy to think and reflect.** You will then be more open to consider change, and flexible enough to try out something new. This may be the case in a training course, for example.
- **When people are in a stressed situation (overworked, undernourished, tired) they will not consider change.** Their focus is to get out of the stressed situation, or simply to cope. (Example: when you walk into a household where a mother is trying to cope with two sick children and a baby, and you see she has given the child food from a dirty plate – this is not the time to tell her she should be doing something else!) They will not have time for a “luxury” activity – like thinking about how they should change. This may be the case for many of the community members who are to be interviewed.
- **We often judge people as being stubborn or ignorant when they don’t want to change.** This is a reflection on our own lack of understanding of what makes people change, and when and why they don’t change.
- **People usually don’t change just by being given information.** We have good reasons for what we do, and to change, we need to look at and discuss the reasons why we do it. A mother may



give her child traditional medicine from the neem tree for a slight fever, because she has no money for drugs and no time to go to the clinic. She might borrow money if the child gets worse. Her behaviour is not because of lack of information: she knows that drugs are available, and where to get them. If a field worker or someone else tells her she should get drugs because the fever might be malaria, it will not change what she does. She has the situation under control, and will take other action if and when it is needed.

Summarize You keep a behaviour for YOUR reasons, and you are right, from YOUR perspective.

Someone else keeps another behaviour for HIS/HER reasons, and the person is right, from HIS/HER perspective.

Ask for comments and questions and examples; clarify points when necessary. Refer back to examples of how participants (and/or trainers) have changed.

5.3. Implications of understanding attitude and behaviour change for work and personal life

Ask participants to discuss in small groups, using examples from their field work.

- Do we usually expect others to change because we (or others) tell them to do so? How realistic is this?
- When do people change, what makes them want to change?
- What could prevent people changing?

Discuss in plenary.



*“I have my reasons for what I do. Ask me, and then I MIGHT consider **your** reasons!”*

5.4. What is behind the feelings?

This is a short introduction to the subject of “Uncertainty”, to be discussed after the role-play.

Ask participants: can people “read” your feelings behind your behaviour?



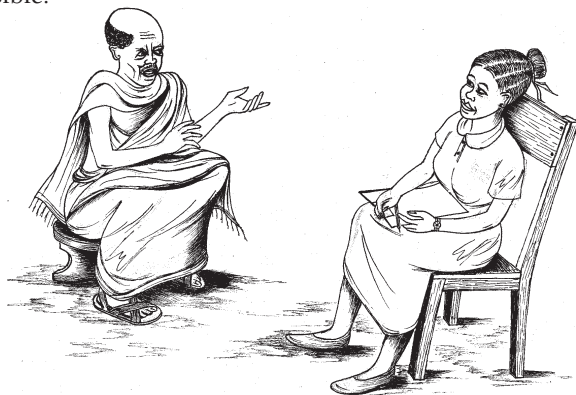
Give some examples: someone is being angry, arrogant, rude, superior.

Ask: What are the feelings behind these behaviours? When you yourself act arrogantly, is this “how you are”, or has something made you “act out”?

Let people buzz in pairs, then discuss in plenary.

5.5. Demonstration role-play: looking behind actions and feelings

Develop a role-play to demonstrate some field-worker attitudes and moods, and the effects on the respondent. This role-play should be carefully planned and practised by the trainers, both the “interviewer” and the “respondent”. It is important to display a number of different attitudes and moods (see table below), some negative and some positive, and exaggerate a bit to make the effects more visible.



Covering up insecurity may make you feel in charge in the moment. In the long term, it causes problems – and often bad-quality data.

In Kilifi, we used the following role-play

A field worker is conducting a survey for treatment-seeking behaviour. She introduces the purpose of the interview to a father (use some points from your normal introduction) but not fully.

The father hopes to get a bednet and says “Maybe you will be bringing nets later?”

The field worker does not deny or confirm, but smiles and says “Who knows!”

The field worker questions the father about treatment-seeking behaviour in the family for a child with fever. The father quickly claims that his wife took the child straight away to Kilifi hospital because she had heard how good the doctors are there.

The field worker carefully (nonjudgementally) probes on what his wife usually does when the child has fever. The field worker reassures him that it is OK to try home treatment first, that many people do this. The father then “remembers” that the mother did try some local herbs first, and bought some aspirin from the duka [shop].

The field worker goes on asking questions, displaying a number of different attitudes, moods and personal factors, with various effects on the respondent (see table).

Ask participants to observe the role-play carefully, and pay attention to what kind of attitudes, moods and personal factors the field worker displays, as well as the effects of the different moods on the respondent. Put up a flipchart with the three column headings (see table) to remind them.

After the role-play, discuss the content issues first: what was important?

Points for the discussion (using the Kilifi role-play – please change)

- Giving a full introduction – explaining the purpose of the interview.
- Possible consequences of raising false hopes. **Short-term**: creating a bias in the interview and getting wrong information (father wanting to please the field worker). **Long-term**: creating anger, disappointment, disillusionment with research(ers), problems for other field workers.
- How use of “antennae” and Meta Model questions, plus your own knowledge about what people usually do, can help you uncover the REAL answers; *the probable reason for the father giving a “wrong” answer first was lack of trust. Open communication between the field worker and the father could have helped establish such trust.*
- Even if you “mess up”, you can limit the damage if you have a method to help you do so – and antennae to identify the problem in the first place.

Secondly, discuss the attitudes, moods and personal factors observed, and ask about the effect of each one on the respondent. Leave the column in the middle blank until all the attitudes, etc. and effects have been filled in.

Ask: What were the reasons behind the attitudes and moods displayed by the interviewer?

If you yourself act this way, what could be the reason(s)?

Discuss.

Conclude

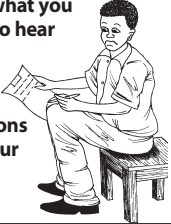
- Very often, when you do not feel sure about what to do, you “cover it up” by showing some “power behaviour” – arrogance, impatience, rudeness, etc. These behaviours make it seem that you are in charge, and you may believe “no one can see” that you are actually feeling unsure.



- However, remember from the discussion on nonverbal communication: **60-80% of your communication is nonverbal**. If you feel unsure and act sure (“power behaviour”), people will be confused, will also feel unsure, and will cover up with power behaviour of their own. You have two people acting out power to cover up their feelings. Usually, we call this interaction an argument, or a quarrel!

- By understanding the feelings behind (usually insecurity), you can avoid the problem, or recognize it when it happens – and get out!

What we learned from the role-play (fill in your own)

Attitudes/ moods/ personal factors	Effects on others	Reasons behind
Arrogant Judgemental Persistent, insisting Rude Impatient Dishonest Evasive/noncommittal	Nervous, insecure Insecure, offended Irritated Offended, hurt Annoyed Lack of concentration Discomfort, insecurity	UNCERTAINTY Not sure of anything Stomach feeling (uneasy) Antennae down Selective hearing Hear what you want to hear  Emotions fog your view
Patient Friendly	Open, confident Open, friendly	Personal confidence Seeing the whole picture

5.6. Understanding the reasons behind moods and attitudes

Explain: the main reason behind many of the negative reactions we show in an interview is **insecurity**. We don’t feel “on top of things”. It is important for us to understand insecurity if we want

to communicate better. Insecurity has a negative impact on the quality of the data we obtain.

Ask participants to buzz in pairs. What makes you unsure (ask them to find a specific situation to discuss for each participant) How do you react when you are unsure? What happens if someone gives you information/facts when you are unsure?

In the discussion, include the following points.

What does insecurity do to you?

- **Strong stomach feeling:** Your stomach feels tight, uncomfortable. Focus: yourself and your feelings, not the subject being discussed.
- **You lose your antennae:** You don't see clearly what is going on, and are not able to take constructive action. You often lose control.
- **Feelings “fog your view”,** your plan, your overview. Feelings take over.
- **Your instinct is to avoid danger** or conflict. Insecurity feels dangerous, and you try to get out of the situation, to feel secure again.
- **You don't know what to do** – and you feel the need to protect yourself.

Insecurity makes you lose your ability to listen and understand the full picture

You listen selectively, and it is very likely that you will misunderstand. Insecurity will thus influence the data.

Ask for an example from participants' own experience, where the field worker meets an insecure respondent.

If no one comes up with an example, give your own (prepared in advance).

Example: A field worker comes to a house where a mother is illiterate and poor, and has a sick child at home. She will probably be worried and insecure when the field worker arrives.

Scenario 1: If the field worker just presses on with his/her need to do the interview, without taking time to assess the situation and decide what to do to



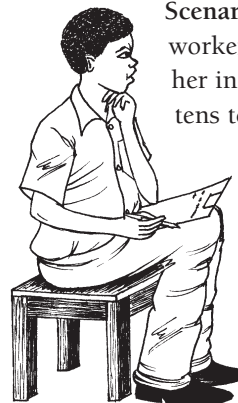
make the mother feel comfortable first, the mother is likely to agree to the interview just to get it over

with, and not give good quality or correct data.

(Or she may just say no.)



Scenario 2: If the field worker responds to her in a friendly way, listens to her, tries to understand the situ-



ation from her point of view, is sympathetic and reassures her, she may calm down and be ready to give the interview freely: she will feel less insecure, and will be able to concentrate on the task of answering the questions and give good quality information.

Or the field worker can negotiate to conduct the interview at a different time.

Discuss, and ask for personal examples and experiences.

5.7. What to do when you or your respondent feel insecure

Ask: When you are feeling unsure just before, or during an interview – what do you do? How does your feeling influence your actions (e.g. how you ask questions)?

Ask participants to think back to situations where they felt unsure, and ask them to describe what they did, and how they asked questions.

NOTE: They will probably not remember. Point out that this is very common. When our feelings take over, we don't remember what we actually said, or how we said it. The feelings "speak louder than words", and we just remember how we felt.

If they have difficulties coming up with situations, bring out some examples from the awareness-raising phase. In Kilifi, the following situations were difficult to handle, mostly because of insecurity:

- > knowing whether you have got REAL/true information
- > solving difficulties in relation to respondents who are stubborn, ignorant or uneducated
- > feeling trapped
- > flirting
- > managing conflict
- > obtaining information which makes the respondent feel uncomfortable
- > dealing with respondents' curiosity.

Explain that, by instinct, we tend to do the following when we feel unsure:

- > **ask leading questions** (a "quick fix" – the person will answer yes or no, and will confirm our views – this will make us feel better)
- > **react**: show negative emotions
- > **reduce unpleasant feelings**: cover up by showing arrogance or superiority
- > **stick to old ideas**: "I am right"
- > **argue** (often aggressively).

The consequence is that we have little or no control over the interview, and will probably not get good quality data.

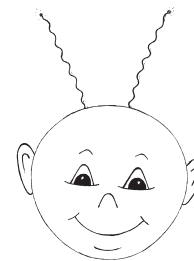
Ask: What can you do to make yourself feel better when you notice you feel unsure?

Get suggestions, list on flipchart.



Points to include on the list:

- > be aware how it works; you are likely to react and misunderstand
- > try to get your antennae back out
- > tell yourself to relax
- > think/talk about something that makes you feel good/safe; something you are interested in, or a baby (small children have a tendency to make us feel good)
- > take a break/drink/eat.



Ask What can we do to make the respondent (or someone else) feel better when they are unsure?

Get suggestions, list on flipchart.

Points to include in the list:

- > **take care of respondent's feelings first**; recognize that the person will not respond to facts or intellectual talk until he/she is feeling better (i.e. less insecure)
- > **listen** to what he/she is concerned or upset about
- > **reassure** – say something nice (about the children, the house, the environment...)



- talk about something safe and positive (like the weather, or people in the community being very nice, or observing that the crops look good ...)
- words alone won't solve it – you have to make an effort to be nice and friendly (but not intrusive); when the person is feeling more relaxed, he/she will be open to discussing the problem/issue in an objective way and finding a solution.

Agree: The main aim is to become aware and recognize what is happening. When you become aware, you have a choice. You can

First take care of feeling/emotion, then proceed with the interview

take action to make yourself or the respondent feel less unsure. Such action will have a positive effect on the interview and on the quality of the data.

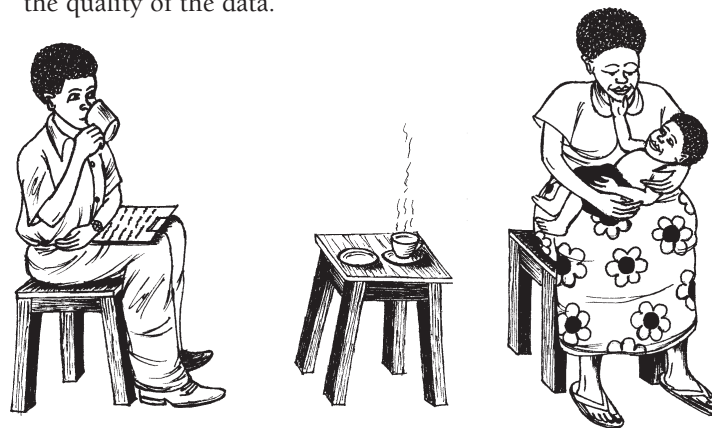
5.8. Summing up main points from the module

Insecurity makes us focus on ourselves, and not on the respondent – and thus not listen and understand the full picture. You listen selectively, and the chances are high that you will misunderstand.

- This has a negative impact on the quality of information you collect.
- Insecurity is often covered up by “acting out” – e.g. anger, superiority, impatience, rudeness. It is normal to want to respond the same way. However, this does not solve the problem.
- When you get the antennae out and listen to what the person wants to say, without showing anger/impatience yourself, you can usually resolve the situation. Remember, what is behind the reaction may be insecurity.
- Insecurity may have the following effects. **Strong stomach feeling:** your stomach feels tight, uncomfortable. Focus: yourself and your feelings, not the subject being discussed. **You lose your antennae, and maybe you lose control.** You don't see clearly what is going on and are not able to take constructive action. Feelings “fog your view”, your plan, your overview.

Insecurity feels dangerous, and you try to get out of the situation, to feel secure again. **You don't know what to do** – and you feel the need to protect yourself.

- When we are insecure, we tend to do (one or more of) the following: **ask leading questions** (people will “agree”, and make us feel better); **react**, show negative emotions; **reduce unpleasant feelings** by covering up, showing arrogance or superiority; **stick to old ideas**: “I am right”; **argue** (often aggressively). The consequence is that we have little or no control over the interview.
- To make **yourself feel better** when you notice you are unsure, you can: be aware how it works – you are likely to react and misunderstand; try to get your antennae back out; tell yourself to relax; think/talk about something that makes you feel good/safe; or take a break/drink/eat.
- To make an insecure respondent feel better, you can: **take care of their feelings first**, recognize that the person will not respond to facts or intellectual talk until he/she is feeling better; **listen** to what he/she is concerned or upset about; **reassure** by saying something nice; **talk about something safe and positive**. You have to make an effort to be nice and friendly – **words alone won't solve the problem**.
- The main aim is to become aware and **recognize what is happening**. When you become aware, you have a choice. You can take action to make yourself or the respondent feel less unsure. Such action will have a positive effect on the interview and on the quality of the data.



Summing up

Review and further learning needs

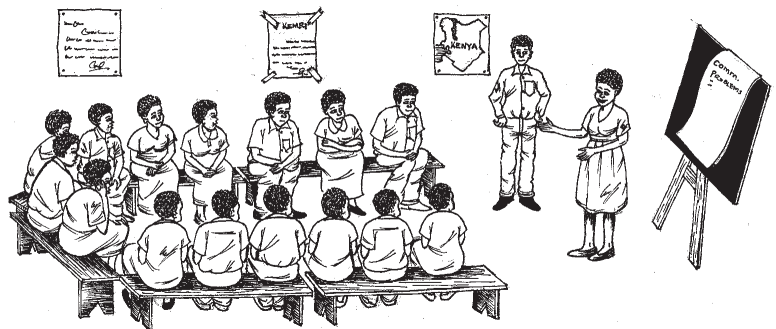
1. Background for trainer

The participants have been presented with a number of new concepts and skills during the course, and it is important to sum up what has been learned before closing the programme. However, some participants may suffer from “learning overload”, and may not be able to gain very much from a thorough review at this stage. Thus, we suggest two alternative ways of summing up.

1. A very short summing-up, followed by a full day’s review

A review after 2-4 weeks allows participants to try out the new skills in the field, and come back with fresh questions. A review at a later stage would fall on even more “fertile ground”.

This model may be possible for those running the training for a project group, or for a group of projects in a single locality.



2. A longer summing-up, with no review later

This model may be necessary for projects where participants are too widely scattered to call them together again after they start using their skills in the field, and would therefore leave the follow-up to the individual participant, or smaller groups of participants who could organize themselves to meet. Setting up a model for how this could be done would be very useful.

Here we present the longer version, with comments on the parts which we would recommend for the short version. However, the best people to know what to review will be you, the trainers, as you will by now have a good sense of the places where there are still problems.

In this module, we will also sum up the personal progress each participant has made. This will be an important inspiration and a useful way of summing up and verbalizing their feeling of progress, which will again help to motivate them for the next phase – putting the new skills into action in their daily work.

We will relate the learning to the behaviour change model, and use this as a preparation for the next phase. Participants have become **aware of** (stage 1) and **interested in** (stage 2) new communication skills, they have **tried them out** in the course (stage 3), and now comes the time to **evaluate** how the skills work in the field (stage 4). This is an essential phase that will decide whether you will **adopt or reject** the new skills (stage 5). We will discuss what can prevent participants from adopting the new skills and go back to their old ways, and what they can do to encourage each other to continue practising the new skills.

2. Objectives

- Review important aspects of the course.
- Sum up personal progress during the course.
- Identify further learning needs.
- Identify what can prevent you from translating the skills into action, and what can encourage you to do so.

3. Teaching methods

Presentation, buzzing, small-group discussion, role-play.

4. Materials

Old flipcharts from methods and topics to be reviewed, role-play scenarios.

5. Trainer's action plan

5.1. Introduction and summary

Introduce each review by asking participants to sum up essential points for the topic/skill: ask them to be very specific. Ask them to use examples to illustrate their points. Then put up the (old) flipcharts on the wall, and leave them there. Add new points.

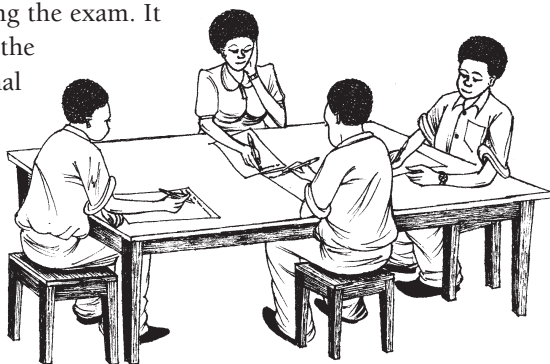
Vary this method by presenting the points from the flipcharts, and asking participants whether they now have any additional points, and whether they have examples where they have used this skill.

Be aware of overload and boredom factors here, and break up the presentations/reviews with buzzing, sharing of examples, energy exercises, etc. (see books on participatory methods).

Preparing for the exam

If you are going to have an exam, you need to prepare participants for this, and inform them about the criteria you will use to judge them. Also inform them about the implications of failing the exam. It is wise to do this at the beginning of this final module, so that they can keep in mind what to look out for.

In Kilifi, a few participants failed the exam. We



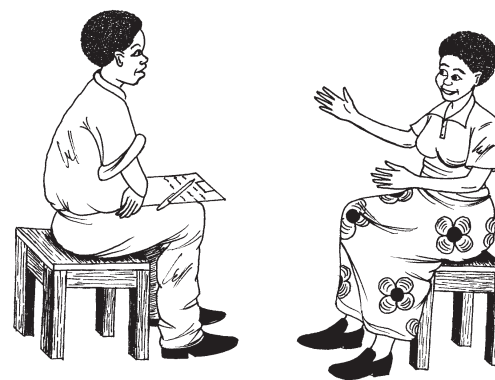
gave them the opportunity to take it again a few days later. The second time, they all passed and were then given their certificates.

5.2. Review awareness and observation skills

See Module 4.

5.3. Review Meta Model questions and probing

See Module 3.



For the short review – include this, unless trainer is confident that participants are practising this skill well!

5.4. Review active listening skills

See Module 4.

5.5. Review attitude and behaviour change, link to use of new skills

Review the behaviour change model explained in Module 5 and ask participants to relate it to the learning in the course.

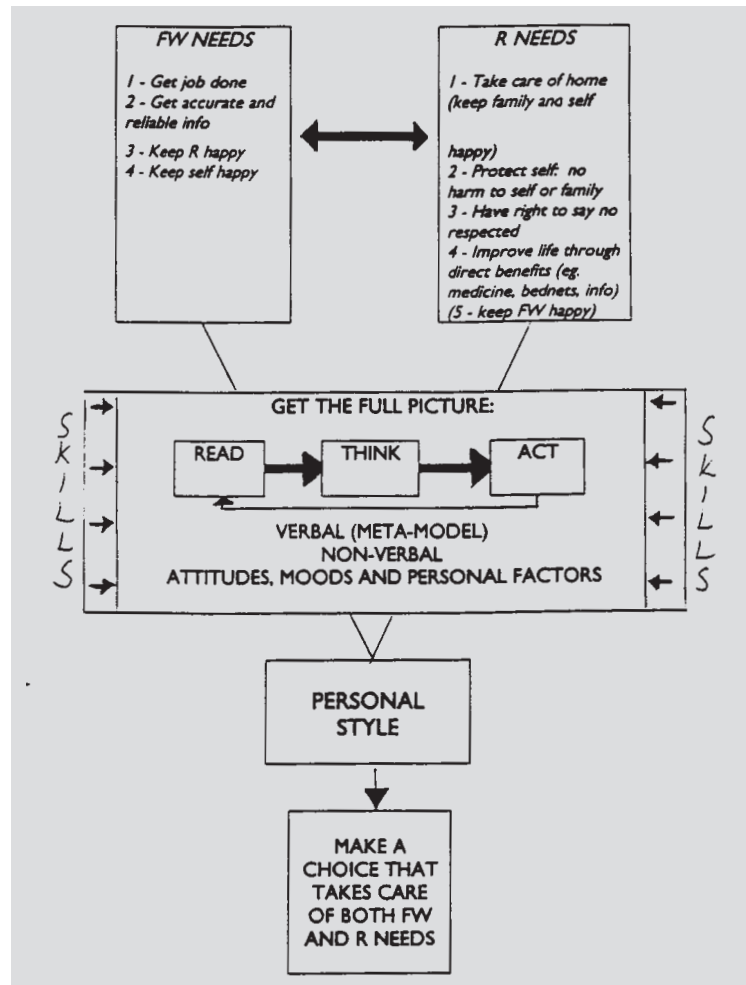
Agree: Participants have become aware of (1) and interested in (2) new communication skills, they have tried (3) them out in the course, and they have evaluated (4) them by practising them in role-plays. Now comes the time to evaluate how they work in the field. This is an essential phase that will decide whether they will adopt or reject (5) the new skills.

Discuss.

For the short review – include this, briefly, to link the model to the practice.

5.6. Review negotiation skills to meet both sides' needs

See Module 7.



5.7. Review understanding the full picture

See Module 8.

5.8. Review uncertainty

See Module 12.

Discuss how understanding uncertainty has affected participants' feeling of personal confidence in practising the new skills and will continue to do so in the future.

For the short review – include this, briefly, to link uncertainty and confidence.

5.9. Identifying personal progress during the course

Ask participants to buzz in pairs, and help each other identify where they have made progress in their personal communication style during the course. Ask them to include comments on their understanding of uncertainty, and how this has affected their practice of the skills. Let them buzz with someone they have worked closely with/participated in a group with, so that the colleague can help to identify positive changes that she/he has also noticed.

NOTE: Emphasize that the participants should START by identifying the progress they can see in themselves (i.e. practise giving themselves positive feedback!), and only afterwards ask their colleagues for additional observations and comments.



Ask for volunteers to share their observations.

Celebrate! Whatever way is culturally appropriate – clapping, singing, etc. The idea is to let the emotional celebration accompany the intellectual one, and thus make the experience whole and strong!

For the short review – include this, and celebrate!

5.10. Identifying further learning needs

Ask participants to buzz with the same person as above, and identify where they still need to improve their skills. Use same method as above – participants commenting on own needs first, then the colleague adding his/her observations and suggestions.

Ask for volunteers to share their learning needs, and discuss.

Suggest how to continue learning. Decide when next to meet, how often, and how to structure the meeting(s).

In Kilifi, we used structured feedback exercises, at least once or twice a week. This kept the learning process alive, and reinforced practising the skills. It was also a good forum for discussing questions that came up when using the new skills in the field.

For the short review – include this.

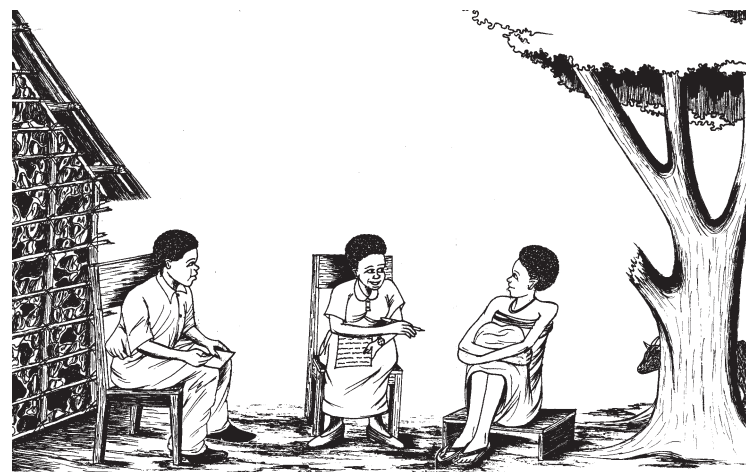
5.11. Barriers and encouraging the adoption of new skills

Ask participants to buzz: What could prevent them from adopting the new skills in their daily practice in the field? What could encourage and motivate them to continue using the new skills?

List suggestions, and discuss.

Points for the discussion: encourage use of new skills:

- supportive feedback from self, colleagues and supervisors
- continued use of feedback forms, and discussion of these
- meetings to discuss progress and problems



- practising keeping own antennae out
- seeing that the new skills give good results
- informal discussions among colleagues to exchange experiences and questions.

Lack of these factors will be barriers to adoption!

5.12. Practising “the perfect interview”

Develop three role-plays on problems identified in the awareness-raising (e.g. dealing with misunderstandings and interruptions; dealing with flirting; tackling conflict). Let participants practise in groups of three (interviewer, respondent and observer), using a research tool they are familiar with and the feedback form. Let them take turns to be in all three roles. Ask the interviewer to share his/her further learning needs with the observer before the interview starts, and comment on these in the feedback, as well as asking for special comments from the observer on these skills.

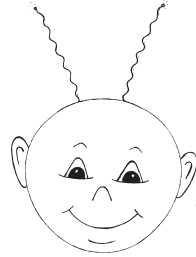
For feedback in the groups, ask the observer to comment on the interviewer’s skills in identifying “the full picture” and choose an appropriate communication strategy.

In plenary, ask for a pair of volunteers to demonstrate skills they feel are functioning well (it need not be the whole interview but, if time permits, let them show at least five minutes).

Let the other participants comment, and be generous with your praise!

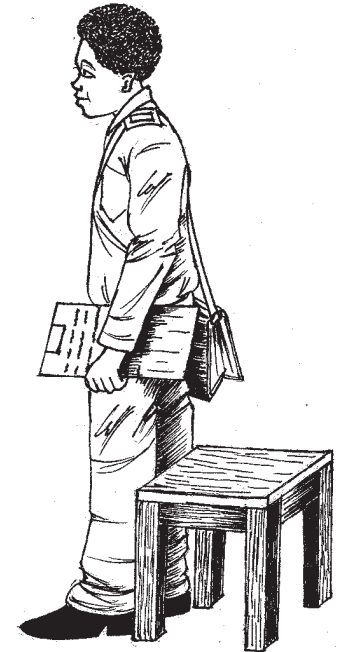
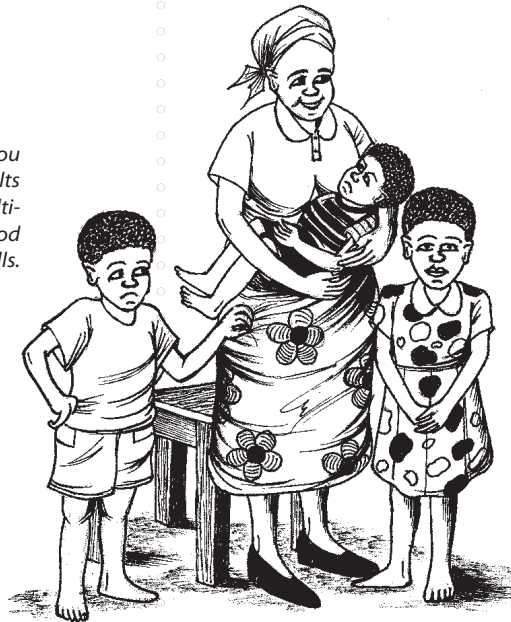
Structure the discussion, and focus on e.g.:

- how they managed to identify the full picture
- how they felt about being able to choose the appropriate strategy
- whether they felt they were doing well on practising some skills (be specific)
- to what extent they are now clear about where they need to improve
- other important topics!



Close the session by congratulating everybody on good and hard work well done!

Becoming aware and learning good communication skills make you able to collect good quality data, which will lead to research results that better reflect people's real problems and potentials, and ultimately – to better public health! It takes time to become a good communicator, and – practice improves skills.

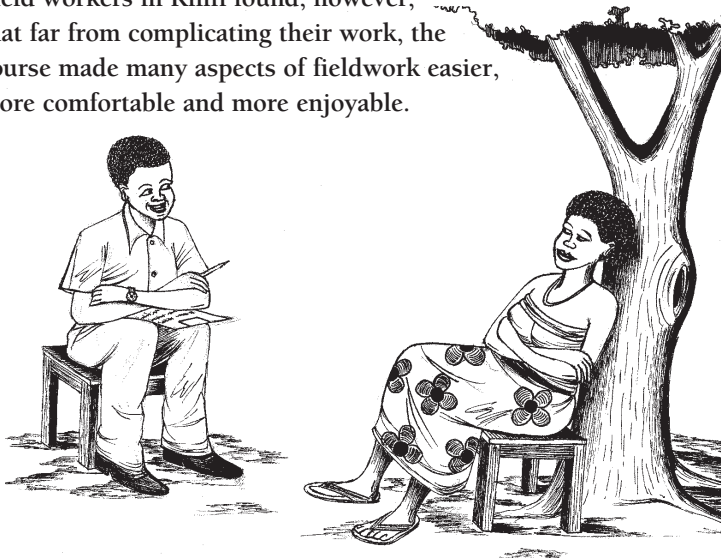


PART III

Integrating knowledge into practice

The intensive course will have given most participants new knowledge and skills and added to their range of strategies to tackle difficult situations sensitively. While there are opportunities to try out this new knowledge in role-plays and informally among colleagues and at home, the real test of the skills and strategies learned, and the value of the course, comes when returning to the field and carrying out real-life interviews. Here, the pressures are multiple: meeting sample sizes; keeping within funding limits; satisfying colleagues and bosses; keeping questionnaires technically accurate and legible; and handling diverse and often unexpected questions and concerns from community members.

Given these pressures, the task of integrating the course knowledge and skills into practice might be considered an additional hurdle. Field workers in Kilifi found, however, that far from complicating their work, the course made many aspects of fieldwork easier, more comfortable and more enjoyable.



The process of integrating new course knowledge into practice takes time. This is particularly true for allowing new skills and strategies (such as using Meta Model questions to understand the full picture) to become automatic rather than carefully considered. In Kilifi, supervisors and field workers began to achieve this using three principal approaches. These ensured that all course participants were regularly reminded of and able to discuss the intensive course contents, that participatory approaches became more regularly incorporated into study designs and, crucially, that the technical quality of the work was not only maintained but strengthened. The three approaches are summarized below.

Approach 1: Observations using carefully designed feedback forms

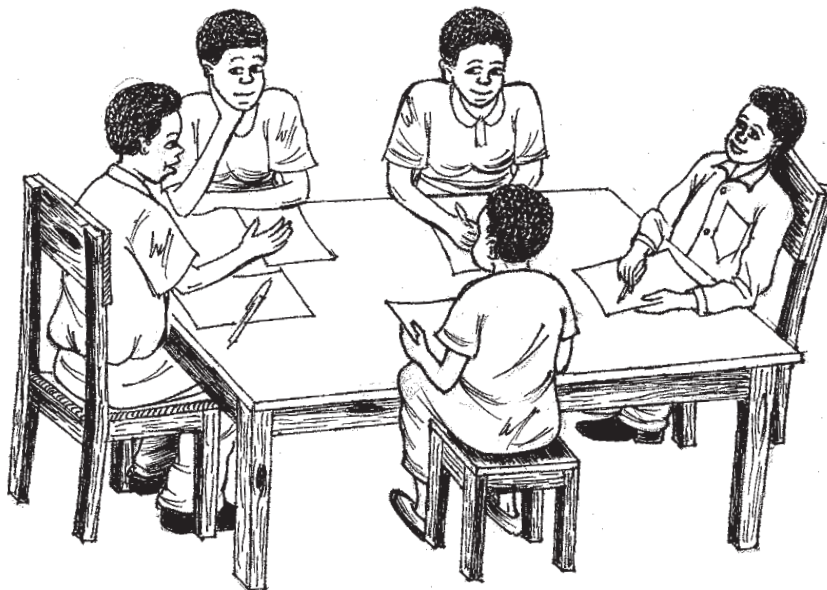
➤ Drawing on the experience of developing feedback forms in the intensive course (Module 10), feedback forms were designed by field workers with their supervisors for use in the field. These forms included both general communication issues and technical aspects of the work that field workers found difficult or that required special monitoring (see Annex for an example). Feedback forms were filled by a fellow fieldworker (in which case field workers worked in pairs, taking turns in being observed) or by a supervisor. The form(s) served as reminders for feedback discussions on field workers' return to the office, and highlighted communication and technical issues that required consideration by the whole team. Some supervisors reported that the feedback forms enabled them to observe field interviews far less selfconsciously and far more constructively than had previously been the case.

NB: When an observer is filling a feedback form in the field, the respondent should be told that this is part of a learning exercise for the interviewer, and permission should be sought to continue. The observer should not interrupt or disturb the interview. He/she should give feedback after the interview to avoid taking up too much of the respondent's time and to avoid the interviewer "losing face" in front of the respondent.

Approach 2: Regular group discussions to share problems and solutions

- Discussions involved both a supervisor and field workers, and provided a forum for raising practical, technical and communication issues arising from the fieldwork. Such discussions were common in research groups before the course. However after the skills training, communication issues became incorporated as a specific aspect for discussion. Some of these issues were brought forward from feedback form observations (described above). The skills and strategies that were learned on the intensive course were regularly raised as a potential solution to a whole range of problems. For example, some groups developed standardized responses to regularly asked questions, partly based on these discussions. Standard responses were designed to 1) involve two-way communication, to ensure that field workers were not having to guess and were able to give consistent answers, and 2) to ensure that underlying misconceptions (for example regarding the reasons for bednet distribution) were challenged rather than supported.

NOTE: Discussions generally work best when people are relaxed, and with a group of 10 or fewer (including one supervisor). For bigger teams of field workers, senior field workers and supervisors may be able to lead one group each, and later meet to compare notes. If huge groups meet, not all field workers will be able to, or want to, give their viewpoints. Quieter field workers are likely to have much to offer: they may be careful observers and listeners rather than talkers!



Approach 3: Field-worker involvement in the design and development of feedback forms and questionnaires



Field workers became increasingly involved in designing forms and questionnaires with the researchers, for several reasons.

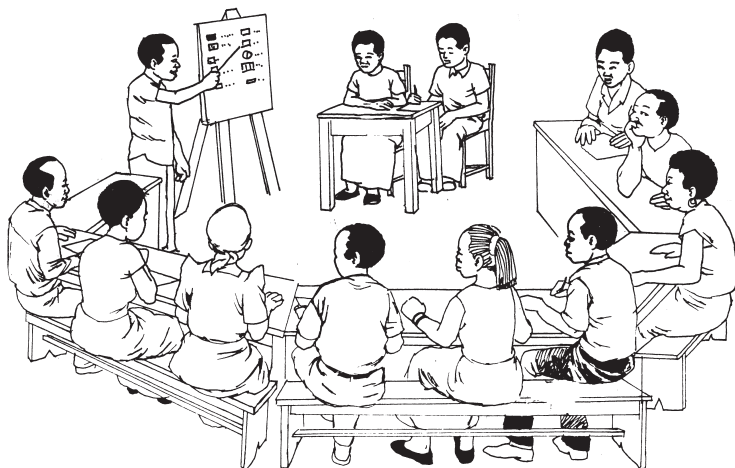
- Field workers saw that their own knowledge of the setting and community norms and sensitivities could contribute significantly to the wording, format and approach of field activities (i.e. field workers became aware that changing the design or wording of questions is easier and leads to greater consistency than devising strategies to overcome design/wording problems).
- Both field workers and supervisors appreciated that supervisors who involve field workers in the design of their work are not inadequate or lacking in any way, but are drawing on what are often significantly different understanding (e.g. of cultural issues) and skills, all of which are critical to producing good quality work.

- Supervisors became so convinced of the value of involving field workers in this way that they made sure the necessary time and energy was put aside.

NOTE: The extent of field-worker involvement in the design of questionnaires ranged from discussing, and often rewriting, every question in a pre-prepared draft, to developing the questions from scratch (once the study aims etc. had been discussed). The latter leads to greater field-worker control, ownership and motivation, but depends to a large extent on their experience in the subject area and familiarity with carrying out similar work in the community. Supervisors will have to consider such issues in their own setting.

A key factor in all the above approaches is that all participants, supervisors and field workers are involved and supportive. This can be time-consuming and is not always easy. Supervisors have to balance the requirements of their funders and of field workers; field workers balance those of their supervisors and of community members. If supervisors focus only on the needs of their funders, field workers may be under too much pressure to practise much of what they have learned. If field workers focus only on what interviewees want, and do not consider the pressures and concerns of the researcher/supervisor, work may not be completed adequately and further funding may not be forthcoming. In juggling all these different pressures and needs, the key message is that there should be regular and open communication and negotiation between supervisors and field workers. The awareness phase and the intensive course should have created enough trust between the resource people/researchers and the field workers for both groups to be able to bring out concerns at an early stage, and deal with them constructively.

Lasting improvement in quality of information



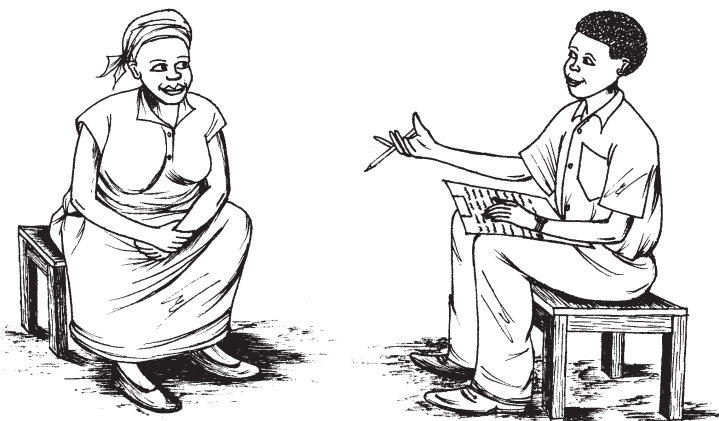
Two years after the intensive course, field workers and supervisors in Kilifi remain as enthusiastic about its value as they were immediately afterwards. If anything, the responses are increasingly positive. In addition to senior field workers and supervisors holding several refresher and new courses for recently employed staff, reported spin-offs include field-worker training courses to help explain what research is, an understanding of the centrality of interpersonal communication skills in informed consent procedures, and the incorporation of interested field workers into the scientific and ethical review processes at the research programme. The general perception is that the course (ALL THREE PHASES!) has led to a big improvement in the quality of the information collected by those who were involved. It is clearly very difficult to measure this quantitatively. However, field workers who have collected information for the research centre over a long period have expressed this view particularly strongly, which supports our assumption. This is the least visible of the numerous benefits of the course but, we believe, one of the most valuable.

Assessment: fewer problems, better strategies, more respect

The qualitative assessment made at this time showed the perceived changes in the work and which of the 33 original problems (see Annex) field workers still saw as problems. The scores were compared with the ones made before the intensive course. Field workers participated in developing the tools for this assessment. The table (see Annex) summarizes the changes in the field workers. Below is an annotated summary of results.

Concepts that have been grasped well

- **Seeing the needs of both respondent and field worker:** All comment on this – it seems to have made a lot of sense, and there are many examples of how this works. It appears that all the field workers have tried to use this concept in their work, and found that it works well – thus the practice has been reinforced.
- **Asking open questions:** Almost all field workers comment on the usefulness of this method, and use such questions consciously to solve a variety of problems (e.g. when a person does not want to talk much, when a person is bored, when they feel they may not be getting “real” information, etc.)



- **Reading the whole situation:** Many field workers comment on this. They seem to be able to read the situation at the beginning, when they see the head of household, and decide on their strategy. They also read the situation throughout the interview and are aware of new aspects that might require changes in the strategy.
- **Putting the antennae up:** This is related to the point above – and many comment on their new ability to be continuously aware of what is happening around them, see what it means, and take appropriate action.
- **Bringing yourself to respondents' level:** Many comment on this – could we say this is the field workers' way of explaining empathy? It is used as a concept for people who are better educated, or less educated/illiterate, pregnant, or “different” in any other way.
- **Arranging a good setting:** Most comment on this, and are aware of different ways of creating and maintaining a setting which is comfortable for the respondent. Many mention the need to focus here on the respondent and accept a less comfortable place for themselves, if necessary.



- **The importance of making a good introduction:** Many commented on this for the beginning of the interview, and as an issue to get back to when certain problems occurred.
- **Not being judgemental:** Many comment on the need to keep this in mind, and say that it works well – in interviews as well as in private life. Several relate this to quality of data: if you are judgemental, respondents will feel it, and will not give you the right information.



- All participants (with the possible exception of one or two) seem to have a good sense of confidence in themselves, and say that they feel they have access to a number of different strategies and can handle any situation they are faced with.

Improved respect, better professionals



Many field workers made comments relating to **professionalizing their work**: they don't use that word, but this is the conclusion one can draw from a number of different comments: They now feel they are more respected for their work – by themselves, by their supervisors and by KEMRI in general.

Choice of strategy

The field workers divide into two very distinct groups when it comes to their choice of strategies.

Group 1: reads the situation, listens, observes problems and decides what the needs are and what to do – based on their assumptions of the reasons for the problems. They give (more) information, and negotiate (more) with the respondent, depending on their own interpretations.

This is an information-directed approach

You can also call it a “knowing (or assuming they know) what to do” approach.

Group 2: reads the situation, asks questions, listens, observes problems, investigates reasons for the problems by asking questions, and negotiates actions based on a fuller understanding of the situation.

This is a communication-directed approach



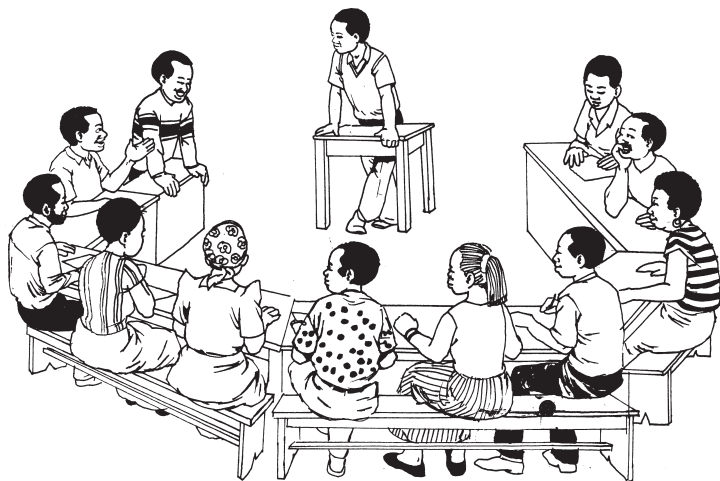
- You can also call it a “knowing what to do, and understanding why this the best” approach.
- The two approaches are most probably linked to personality issues, and definitely to insecurity and confidence. Training people to use an “information-directed approach” is simpler than training for a “communication-directed approach”. In a training course, the latter can be the long-term goal, while training for the information-directed approach will be a realistic short-term goal and will have a positive influence on the quality of the data.

ANNEX

1. Using participatory training methods

Participatory training methods are learnt mainly through practice: nobody from the Kilifi training team (except the senior trainer) had had any training in using these methods before the intensive course. Most of them developed skills during the course, usually by co-teaching with the senior trainer and getting feedback afterwards, and then gradually developing enough confidence and skills to practise on their own.

This manual assumes that trainers are familiar with participatory methods, or are able to get hold of manuals that show how to teach using such methods (see literature list in Section 10 for suggestions). For those who are not able to find a suitable manual right away, and want to start the training, we have included some quick guides about different methods (Section 9), and a guide to what you should aim for as a facilitator (Section 8).



Other points which could help trainers to be more successful

- The participatory trainer is continuously involved in the training process, especially when groups are practising new skills. Helping participants to learn means observing them closely when they practise, leaving them enough room to make mistakes and learn from them, but also being there to point them on the right way so they don't get stuck. Close observation is the trainer's best way of finding out how fast to proceed – if participants are not able to practise a skill well, they need to carry on working on it until they are reasonably comfortable.
- **Encourage participants to discuss feelings** related to the new skills and their effects. Communication problems usually happen because people do not understand feelings – their own, and those of the person they are talking with. The problems get worse when feelings are ignored, and one tries to solve the problem by using rational arguments. Thus, becoming a better communicator means becoming more aware of your own feelings and how they influence your actions.
- It is the work of **getting more familiar with inner strengths and weaknesses** which is the major challenge in learning to become a better communicator.
- **Be generous with feedback** when participants show good skills and make progress, and be gentle and constructive when commenting on what needs to be improved.
- Participants should be challenged to **find the answers within themselves**, rather than relying on getting “the truth” from outside. This is radically different from the methods used in the natural sciences. The trainer should make participants aware of the difference, discuss it with them, and look at its implications for training.

2. From awareness to course contents

Relating the specific contents of the course to the field workers' own examples makes the learning more relevant to them, increases their motivation and makes them better able to integrate the new skills into their work.

The following is a summary of how the resource team developed the course contents, based on the findings from the awareness-raising phase and on a number of other sources. The team, together with the participants, identified the course needs and ways of linking their own examples with the core theories and concepts.

It is highly recommended that you spend some time observing how your field researchers carry out interviews in the field, either before or during the awareness-raising phase.



We recommend that you do an assessment from the perspectives of both the field workers and the supervisors/researchers before you start the awareness phase, and one after the intensive skills training, to show up changes in the participants' knowledge and skills. You may use the following methods:

- self-assessment (structured or unstructured, individual, or in a group), to describe **perceived training needs**, reasons for these, and **expectations** from the training

- questionnaires (structured, or semistructured), to assess **knowledge**
- observation of interviews (by supervisor or trainer in the field, or by role-play; role-plays can also be videotaped) using a checklist, for assessment of **key skills and attitudes**.

The assessment will form the basis for planning the training course, and will also function as part of your awareness-raising. When field researchers start considering situations which they have difficulties solving in the field, they may realize that many of them are related to communication skills. Neither field workers nor supervisors may have strategies readily available to deal with these.

The assessment may be of interest to the funders of the training, and will also be valuable for the participants themselves. An assessment of change gives people a sense of accomplishment. It also helps participants verbalize what has happened to them in the training process, and thereby make them more aware of the changes. This is an important step in being able to integrate changes into their daily work. Furthermore, if an assessment is followed up by a group discussion, for example, where changes are acknowledged and commented on, colleagues will also be aware of each other's progress and can continue to help each other learn and grow. Success breeds more success, when used wisely.

Decide how accurately you need to measure progress. If you do not need to document exactly ("objectively") what the changes were, use self-assessment by the participants, supported by colleagues and supervisors' assessment. Self-assessment will strengthen the participatory process.

From discussion notes to identification of needs to course contents: three stages

Developing the course contents from the discussion notes was done in three stages, using a number of different methods to find both the "surface" and the underlying problems. You may need a

senior trainer to identify the reasons behind the problems experienced. The key to strengthening the confidence of the field workers lies in understanding and dealing with the underlying problems as well.

Stage 1: Get an overview of the situation and formulate problems by reviewing discussion notes from the awareness-raising phase from several angles. The questions asked were the following:



- what were the **general** problems the field workers perceived and identified?
- what were the **specific** problems?
- what strategies did they use to solve problems, and how effective were these? how much choice did they feel they had in difficult situations?
- where were the “blank” spots – i.e. which problems were they **not** aware of (underlying problems that could be picked up by an experienced trainer)?
- to what extent were they aware of the **reasons** for the problems they experienced?

The results of this review were translated into a list of 33 problems and issues (see below), which then became the basis for the further planning with the field workers and the resource team. It was also used for designing exercises like role-plays and group-work questions.

Stage 2: Problems identified directly by the participants Field workers were asked to rank the problems (from the list of 33, see below) which they saw as the top five priorities.

See Part 2 – “How to develop awareness” – for how an example from “Greetings and introductions” was translated into the following problems:

- meeting expectations community members have (e.g. getting a mosquito net)
- dealing with people who are ignorant and uneducated

- choosing a “white lie” to solve the immediate problem, while possibly creating other problems in the long term.

In the course, these problems and the field workers’ comments and examples are dealt with under “insecurity” and “judgement” – what lies behind our reactions.

Stage 3 – Finding the underlying problems: The rating of the problems by the field workers was one criterion the senior trainer used to plan the programme. A high score allocated by the field workers meant that they were aware and felt something as a problem, a low score meant that they did not see it as a problem. Many of the problems with low scores were still problems, but the field workers were not aware of them, or did not recognize them in the way they were formulated.

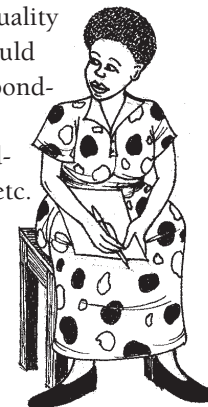
The other main criterion was the trainer’s own perception of what the problems were. By reading through the discussion notes from the awareness-raising phase, she could see an overall trend that spoke of problems “under the surface”: problems the field workers were not aware of, or could not express verbally.

Attitudes and approach to the work



“Problems are due to the respondents”

Most of the field workers believed that the cause of the problems was the respondent (i.e. a cause outside themselves) and used this to explain the low-quality data. They would condemn respondents for being difficult, uneducated, pregnant, etc.



These problems translated into the following topics in the course:

- understanding own insecurity and how this affects your attitudes and actions
- understanding how people change

- teaching strategies to deal with the problems they meet
- building self-confidence.

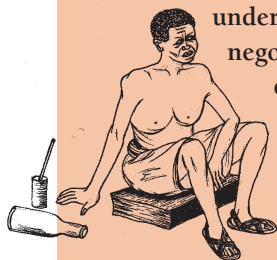
People can change from being “victims” of the problem to being “actors”; with the skills and confidence to solve the problems they meet

Most of these “underlying problems” were related to basic psychological issues, with insecurity as the principal one. One does not have to be a psychologist to be able to deal with this in the course. The “recipe” is to acknowledge insecurity as a problem, to learn to recognize it and how to act constructively despite it, and to have skills to approach the problems presented by different types of respondents.

Problems identified in Phase 1, with course contents

The specific problems were the easiest ones to tease out from the notes. The parentheses show the main course contents designed to respond to the various problems.

- Mothers can often talk for a long time out of the topic, and ask questions to which we don't know the answers (negotiation skills, awareness, insecurity).
- Mothers often give very short answers to get the interview finished (awareness, understanding the full picture, negotiation skills, Meta Model questions, insecurity).
- People are ignorant and uneducated (awareness, empathy, negotiation skills, Meta Model questions, attitudes, behaviour and moods, insecurity).



- It is difficult dealing with people who are very stubborn or drunk (awareness, empathy, negotiation skills, Meta Model questions, insecurity).
- Highly educated people think they are more knowledgeable than us and are difficult to deal with (awareness, communication strategies, insecurity).
- People often think we are doctors and expect us to treat their children (awareness, empathy, communication strategies, insecurity).
- Community members often have expectations that we cannot meet (awareness, negotiation skills, insecurity).
- When we are offered a place to sit, we have to accept it, even if it is not ideal for the interview (negotiation skills, insecurity).



Some general problems not directly mentioned by the field workers, but which an experienced trainer will be able to identify by going through the notes.

- The field workers usually interpret the situation on the basis of their assumptions of what the respondent feels or thinks, without checking out with the respondent whether the interpretation is correct (understanding the full picture, negotiation, attitudes, behaviour and moods, insecurity).
- Field workers read nonverbal signs, interpret and take action – without much awareness of possible misinterpretations (using antennae, awareness of own communication style, understanding the full picture, insecurity).

- Field workers do not often invite the respondent to ask questions (awareness, Meta Model questions, negotiation, insecurity).



- Field workers do not often negotiate (negotiation skills, insecurity).
- When faced with a problem, the field workers often react defensively (awareness, communication strategies, insecurity).

Strategies used to solve problems were mainly reading the situation from the participants' own perspective, and then taking action. Often they reacted to a problem auto-

matically, without much sense of being in charge or having a choice. These strategies often worked, but in difficult situations there were many frustrations. There was a tendency to be passive in a situation of conflict, because of lack of strategies and lack of confidence (awareness, understanding the full picture, personal communication style, communication strategies, attitudes, behaviour and moods, insecurity.)

The "blind spots" that field workers were NOT aware of, or at least did not mention, included the issue of insecurity and the ability to see behind a direct action (i.e. anger, or unfriendliness) to the good reasons behind the action, and thus be able to choose a good strategy. The field workers were not used to looking at their own communication style and seeing this as a factor to work with in order to become more effective in their data collection. They were also not aware of how strongly their own judgement of the respondent ("she is uneducated, she is difficult, stubborn, etc.") affected the interview situation and the quality of the data they collected (awareness, understanding the full picture, personal communication style, insecurity).

Awareness of reasons for problems was limited: field workers had a tendency to say the problems were the fault of the respondent, and not due to their own lack of skill in dealing with the situation in a different way (awareness, insecurity).

Field workers' insights resulting from observations and discussions during the awareness-raising phase

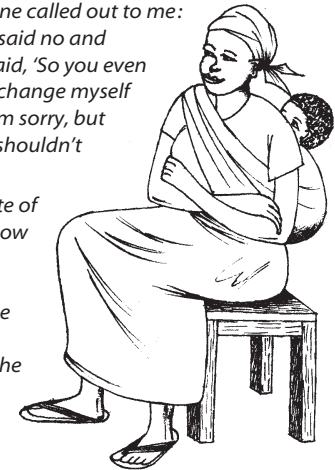
The awareness-raising phase was also an opportunity to highlight and share strengths, including awareness about what they should do, and gaining the motivation to use such strategies more consistently. The field workers agreed during the discussions that it is important to consider many of these strategies in certain circumstances.

Some examples from the discussion "What would we have done differently?"

"We may laugh at something inappropriately. For example, when you are seen arriving at a household someone called out to me: 'Ah! So you've arrived with my net at last!' I said no and laughed. The man got angry with me and said, 'So you even find it funny, do you?' I had to immediately change myself to be humble and respectful and explain I am sorry, but that I had thought it was meant as a joke. I shouldn't have laughed."

"For example, when you go to confirm a date of birth and the mother gives you what you know to be a wrong date. Then you just show it in your face that you know she is wrong and embarrass her. Finally she gets around to the real date of birth and you wish you'd never made such a face to show she was wrong. She would have got around to it with probing anyway."

"Sometimes we wish we'd explained more clearly to the wazees (the older men) what we were there for before calling the mothers."



Thirty-three problems – two years later

Discussion notes from the awareness-raising phase's weekly meetings were analysed by the senior trainer, who developed a list of 33 problem areas from them. The list of problems was then given to the field workers, who rated them. The higher the score, the more serious the problem was felt to be by the field workers.

Two years after the course, a qualitative assessment was made of the field workers' perception of the same 33 problems after using

their new skills and knowledge in the field. The results show that very few of the problems are felt as problems any more – the only one which has increased is flirting! Dealing with a mother who is grieving for a dead child is still seen as a problem by some of the field workers.

- The problems are listed in the table in order of priority before the course (most severe first).
- NB: We allocated three points to “big problems” and one point to “small problems” when counting together the score.

Problem	Assessment before course			Assessment after 2 years		
	Big (3 points)	Small (1 point)	Score	Big (3 points)	Small (1 point)	Score
Dealing with misconceptions about who you are and what you do	6	11	29	0	1	1
How do you know if a mother has given you REAL information?	6	9	27	1	6	9
Responding to people of high socioeconomic status	5	9	24	0	2	2
Obtaining information which will give the mother trouble or make her feel uncomfortable	5	9	24	1	3	6
Meeting expectations community members have	4	6	18	0	1	1
Dealing with ignorant, uneducated, old	2	12	18	0	3	3
Feeling trapped	4	6	18	0	7	7
Dealing with distractions	3	8	17	0	0	0
Dealing with problems created by colleagues	2	11	17	1	4	7
Making sure you spend the right amount of time to get all the information you need in an interview	2	11	17	0	2	2
Keeping respondent's attention when she gets bored	1	13	16	0	0	0
Responding to questions not related to the study	2	10	16	0	2	2
Dealing with drunk and/or stubborn mothers	2	10	16	2	2	8
Dealing with mothers' curiosity	2	9	15	2	0	6
People talking about issues not related to the study	1	10	13	0	0	0
Dealing with pregnant women (“difficult”, “ignorant”)	2	6	12	1	2	5
Dealing with flirting (men and women)	2	6	12	3	4	13
Dealing constructively if you cannot help her with a problem she presents to you	1	9	12	0	3	3
Has mother understood your introduction?	2	5	11	0	1	1
Managing conflict before or during an interview	1	6	9	1	4	7
Dealing with mothers who are grieving for a dead child	0	8	8	2	2	8
Using “white lies” to solve the immediate problem	1	5	8	0	3	3
Mother is shy and won't look at us, giving short answers	0	7	7	0	3	3
Obtaining information about e.g. traditional health habits	0	7	7	0	1	1
Social setting is uncomfortable for you or the mother	1	4	7	0	0	0
What should you include in your introduction?	1	3	6	0	0	0
Avoiding stereotypes/treating people as a “category”	0	6	6	0	2	2
Hierarchy, power and culture: helping or hindering communication?	0	5	5	0	0	0
Reassuring insecure mothers: how do you reassure her that she is doing well?	0	4	4	0	0	0
Making sure you get truthful answers to questions e.g. using agreed explanations of the purpose of an interview	1	1	4	0	0	0
A common habit: attributing good intentions to oneself, and bad intentions to others	0	3	3	0	0	0
Whose needs guide our actions – the mothers', or our own? How do we find the balance?	0	2	2	0	0	0
Anticipating problems/issues: preventing them from happening by taking appropriate action beforehand	0	1	1	1	1	4

3. Sample tools for assessment

The training process in Kilifi was assessed using a number of qualitative and quantitative research tools throughout the course process:

- **knowledge test** (before and after), using questionnaires
- **skills development** (before and after), using video, supervisor’s observation, self-assessment, exam
- **perceived problems** (before and after), using opinions about the questions
- **group discussions** (formal and informal, during the awareness phase and the evaluation/follow-up phase)
- **overall progress and changes** – an in-depth written assessment two years after the course.

The assessment showed that most field workers had gained knowledge in all the theories and concepts that were covered, and skills in those that were easy or fairly difficult to learn. Interviews with field workers and researchers confirmed the value of the course.

Keep tools relatively simple: We present examples of some of our tools here. Our aim was to document the changes in as much detail as possible, in order to be able to write this manual and justify our suggestions. Some of the tools were too elaborate, however, and the number of tools exceeded what a “normal” programme should aim for.

Use local language One strong suggestion would be to consider conducting the assessments in the local language (subject to resource people’s ability to understand it). This will enable the participants to express themselves accurately.

Make tools specific: Participants typically give general rather than specific answers. You will get more useful information if you take care to ask participants to be specific and give examples, and explain why this is important.

A. Baseline questionnaire – communication skills for field workers

NOTE: This questionnaire can be used before and after the course, in order to show what participants have learned. Please adjust it to your own needs so as to pick out the skills and situations relevant to your group.

1. Please list what you feel are important communication skills which you need to carry out your field work.
2. What communication problems are you facing in the field when interviewing people, and what skills do you use to deal with the problems? Please comment on where you have problems and what you are good at in the following situations:

(Please be specific and give examples whenever possible)
 - 2(a) Creating a good atmosphere for the interview
 - 2(b) Introducing the interview and motivating the respondent to participate
 - 2(c) Asking questions – conducting the interview
 - 2(d) Solving conflicts that may arise
 - 2(e) Dealing with unexpected situations (please describe a situation, what you did, and how it worked/what was the result).
3. Are there situations (or types of people in the field) which you feel are very difficult to handle, and where you don’t have the skills to handle them well enough? If yes, please describe, and mention the skills you feel are needed to handle the situation better.
4. Which communication skills do you need in your interactions with your supervisors, colleagues and friends?
5. How do you know if a respondent has given you REAL information, as opposed to telling you something just to make you happy, and make you go away?

6. What do you do when a respondent has expectations you cannot fulfil (e.g. wanting a bednet, or to get some benefit from giving you time and information)?
7. How do you handle a respondent who is very shy and insecure?
8. How important are listening skills for a field worker? Please give reasons for your answer.
9. If you were to be given a(nother) communication course, what would you like to learn? Please be specific, rather than just giving broad areas or topics.

NOTE: Field workers' perceptions of their own training needs can also be gathered in a group discussion, possibly as a start to the awareness-raising phase.

You can also develop a tool to measure changes in knowledge about communication issues (the above tool measures awareness and skills). We recommend that you consider carefully how the answers to the questions are relevant to the participants' work, and how you would use the answers in the training. It is important not to make the questionnaire too long.

B. Course evaluation

An evaluation was conducted to give feedback to the resource team about how participants found the course – for the resource team to learn. We asked them to be specific in their comments, and give examples wherever possible.

Participants were asked about the most important thing they had learned on the course, about themselves and about communicating with others/with a respondent; what were the skills most and least relevant for their work; the most difficult skill to understand, and to practise; what they liked most, and least – and why. We also asked what they thought we should do differently, if we were to run the course again.

C. Skills assessment, using video and field observation

Videos of role-plays, before awareness-raising, and after skills training. Some observations were also done by the resource team members of real interview situations in the field.

The tapes and observations can be used in two ways:

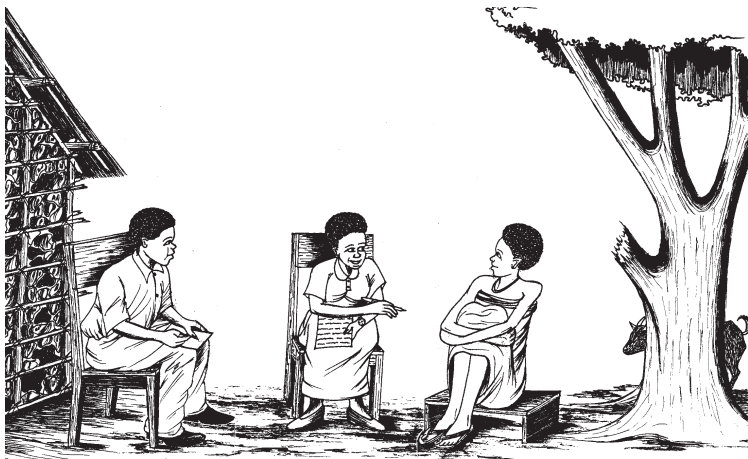


1. Observe differences in individual field workers before and after the course (with videos to enable field workers to observe themselves).
2. Comment on “collective problems” before the course (by making an overview of problems displayed, with qualitative frequency – i.e. most of the field workers did ... etc.), and the problems after the course.

Observation of a real interview situation (in the field) can give the most realistic picture of what practices the field worker is using. We would really recommend this, if the resource person is familiar enough with the local language. Even if the resource person may not know what to look for at this stage, he or she will learn, and then it will be a joint learning process with the participants. This can be an excellent starting point for the course.

However, a good alternative is to use role-plays in a controlled environment and videotape them. The videos may be analysed later and can be compared with similar videos after the course.

A checklist can be a useful tool in observations (see below). In Kilifi, researchers and field workers later adapted this tool for ongoing paired observation and supervision of fieldwork, in many cases incorporating key technical issues related to questionnaires or study tools (for example asking observers to note how particularly difficult sections of the questionnaire are handled). An observer can then use his/her comments to give constructive feedback to the interviewer. Note that observers should be introduced to community members participating in the research, with an explanation of the observer's role in assisting the interviewer.



When bringing an observer, introduce him or her, explain why they are there, and ask permission for them to stay. If the respondent is reluctant, respect this, and ask the observer to leave.

Analysis of own performance (descriptive or analytical).

NOTE: This analysis should be done before and after the course, using the same tool, and comparing them to see what progress has been made.

Assessing skills through video/ field observations

Name of field worker:

Criterion	Good	Could be improved	Comments
1. Establish and maintain a comfortable atmosphere Assess the mood, respond			
2. Introduction Greetings Name Organization Purpose of interview Inviting questions			
3. Asking questions Using open questions when appropriate Not using leading questions inappropriately Probing effectively Rephrasing appropriately			
4. Technical communication points Speaking clearly Not using difficult words Not interrupting Knowing questionnaire well Management of silence			
5. Communication skills Using nonverbal communication appropriately Responding to respondent's nonverbal communication Active listening Appropriate "small-talk" Appropriate humour Appropriate negotiation			
6. Attitudes and behaviour Showing respect Concern/appropriate feedback Not judging/blaming Being neutral Sensitivity			
7. Confidence Focus on respondent Keeping antennae out/awareness Comfortably in charge Continuously reading situation			

Qualitative self-assessment of progress is also a useful tool: the participants are invited to describe for themselves what changes they have experienced and acknowledge them. This process is important, and will be meaningful to the field workers – the method emphasizes the building of awareness about personal growth. When assessing by video, from the outside, the “judgement” about progress is done by outsiders. To increase the participants’ ownership of the process and progress, one can also ask them to assess progress with one another, as a group. A checklist can be developed within the group (e.g. by viewing one or two of the role-plays and asking everybody to note down what points/ issues they would assess), and then the group can watch the videos together, and assess individually and/or together.

A simpler tool: feedback form for observing interviewing skills

The interview	(a) Good points (b) Points to improve	Effects
Introduction		
Sitting position		
Verbal communication		
Questions		
Nonverbal communication		
Moods, attitudes, personal factors		
Style		
Negotiation skills		
Outcome		

This form was developed and used by the field workers to observe each other doing interviews in the field during the awareness phase. It is a simpler version of the form above. The form filled one page, in order to give space for comments. It is shown here in a condensed form.

The form can be used as a draft, and can then be adjusted to make it fit your situation better – possibly incorporating some of the points from the table above.

Final assessment

In Kilifi, we did a final assessment after the field workers had been using the skills in the field for two years. The field workers worked in groups to develop the assessment tools, based on discussions and guidelines developed by the resource group. They then filled out a qualitative questionnaire, one part of which was to note which of the 33 problem areas they still had difficulty dealing with. See table in Section 2 above for a summary of findings.

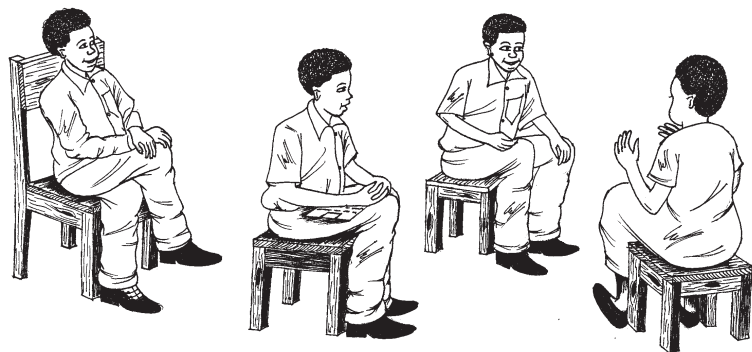
4. Sample role-plays

Most role-plays are conducted in groups of three, with one field worker, one “respondent” and one observer. Notes for the observer are provided for the first role-play only – these should be adjusted for each role-play task.

Give the field worker and the respondent their instructions on separate sheets – they should not know each other’s instructions. The observer should have copies of all instructions.

When debriefing after role-play, it is important to give the people playing the roles a chance to comment first on their own “performance” – what they did well, and where they could have done it differently. This will strengthen their ability to reflect on their own knowledge, skills and attitudes to the work. The observer should comment last, and then the trainers should comment (from their own observations in the groups, as well as on what has been said by the different actors).

See Appendix 9 below for an assessment of the “pros” and “cons” of role-plays.



Role-play 1 Finding hidden information

Instructions for field worker

You visit a home to find out about health-seeking behaviour for malaria in children, and also to follow up on the purchase of anti-malaria tablets for a child two days ago (observation from the SHOP STUDY¹). You need to find out how the medicine was given, and the present status of the child.

When you arrive, you find that the father is a community leader, and is just finishing a meeting with two elders.

You should record a summary of the information you receive.

Instructions for respondent

You are a community leader, and have completed high school. Your son had fever two days ago, and your wife went to the shop to get some medicine. Your son is still sick. You know your wife gave him the medicine, but not exactly when she gave the medicine, or how much.

You don’t want to admit that you don’t know, and you don’t want to ask the field worker (or accept his suggestion) to talk to your wife – unless the field worker behaves in a very sensitive way that makes you trust him or her. If the field worker gains your confidence and you feel you can admit your “ignorance” without losing face, you will tell him to talk to your wife.

You will try to impress the field worker with your knowledge to divert his attention from the medicines, and talk about malaria as a problem because of all the stagnant water and mosquitoes in the area. You will also assert your status, and show that talking about these tablets is not very important. You do not feel you have much time for this.

¹ The Shops Study was an intervention research study to assess shopkeepers’ actions and behavior when selling malaria drugs for children, and to teach the shopkeepers why and how to sell such drugs correctly (giving a full course), and give clear advice to the customers.

Notes for observer: general points

Observe what the interviewer/field worker and the respondent are doing.

Interviewer. Observe specifically how the interviewer/field worker does the following:

- **verbal communication skills:** WHAT is the field worker saying to the respondent, what method is the field worker using to ask questions, is the field worker using appropriate probes?
- **nonverbal communication skills:** HOW does the field worker ask the questions (mood created?), what are the gestures the field worker uses?

CONCLUSION: How did the field worker communicate? How successful was his/her method? What could he/she have done differently?

Respondent. Observe specifically how the respondent does the following:

- **verbal:** how does the respondent react to what the interviewer/field worker says, how relevant are the arguments to the respondent (what he/she feels is important)?
- **nonverbal:** how is the respondent's mood initially, how is it at the end, what makes it change?

CONCLUSION: Is the respondent happy with the results of the interview/interaction?

Discussing the observation in the small group:

Discuss the outcome of the exercise in the group.

First, let the interviewer and the respondent give feedback on how they felt about the way they played their roles. Then other members should give comments.

Cover all the points mentioned above.

(REMEMBER to start the feedback with commenting on the positive things they did, and be constructive and specific in your

comments. The aim: they should know exactly what it is they have to improve, and how to improve it, and feel OK about having exposed their skills – and weaknesses – to the group.)

One participant should report back to the large group from the discussion in the small group.

Remember: you cannot change what the respondent says or does – you can only change what you – the field worker – do

NOTE: The role of the observer should be added in all the role-plays, and the task should be adjusted as needed. Remember always to include observations of verbal as well as nonverbal issues.

Role-play 2

Hidden information (2)

Instructions for field worker

You are a field worker. You have come to interview a mother about **breast-feeding** as part of a study on child health. You are interested in finding out whether mothers know about the **importance of breast-feeding and how often they do it.**

You have information that breast-feeding rates are very low in the area.

Start by asking: What food do you give to your baby?

Instructions for the mother

You are a mother of two children aged 4 years and 8 months. You are a teacher in the local primary school. A field worker comes to interview you on **breast-feeding**. You **stopped breast-feeding early** for your own reasons. However, you **would want to show the field worker that you know more about breast-feeding** if he/she approaches you in a proper way. You ask the field worker to make sure she jots down all the points you mention. You prefer to deal with the field worker fast because you have a lot of work to do at home in addition to your school obligations.

Points for discussion after role-play

1. Managing the interview, e.g. recording skills, time management, taking care of the respondent's needs
2. Active listening and asking questions, using the Meta Model
3. Personal factors that influence outcome– attitudes
4. Discovering and understanding the full picture
5. Taking action.

Role-play 3

A difficult mother?

Instructions for field workers



You are a field worker conducting a census. You have come to interview a **pregnant mother expecting her sixth baby**. You are interested in finding out the **number of children and their dates of birth**. You believe that pregnant women are very difficult to handle.

Start by asking the mother the number of children she has.

Instructions for the mother

You are a **mother of five children and expecting the sixth one**. You **dropped out of school in class 6** due to pregnancy and got married.

A field worker comes to interview you. You feel ashamed that you do not know the dates of birth and **undecided whether to admit this or not**. You have also heard that **they ask too many questions**. You feel **insecure** and wonder **why** the field worker wants to know this information. At last you say that your husband does not want anything to do with KEMRI.

Role-play 4

Negotiation skills practice

Explain the role-play SCENE (in plenary, before giving out the instructions).



The field worker walks into a house, mother is standing on the other side of the room, field worker greets mother. Mother replies. The field worker introduces the reason why he/she is there, and asks mother:

Field worker: Is it OK if I do this interview with you now?

Mother: I am in the middle of cooking.

Task: Use negotiation skills to meet both people's needs.

Divide participants into groups of 3-5 members. Ask group members to choose who will be the interviewer, the respondent, and the observer(s).

- Give each person different slips of paper, depending on which role he/she will play.

- **Task for interviewer/field worker**
(can be given verbally, rather than on a piece of paper)

- Negotiate with the mother, balancing the needs of the mother with your need to do your job.

- **Instruction for respondent (not to be shown to interviewer)**

- You will always be aware of your own needs to take care of your family, which is now the food you are cooking. You will not allow the interview to proceed until you know how long a time it will take. You will not be satisfied with the answer if you think the field worker is not being straight with you. You may want to ask the field worker also to talk to your husband/mother-in-law to make sure it is OK for them that you delay their food.

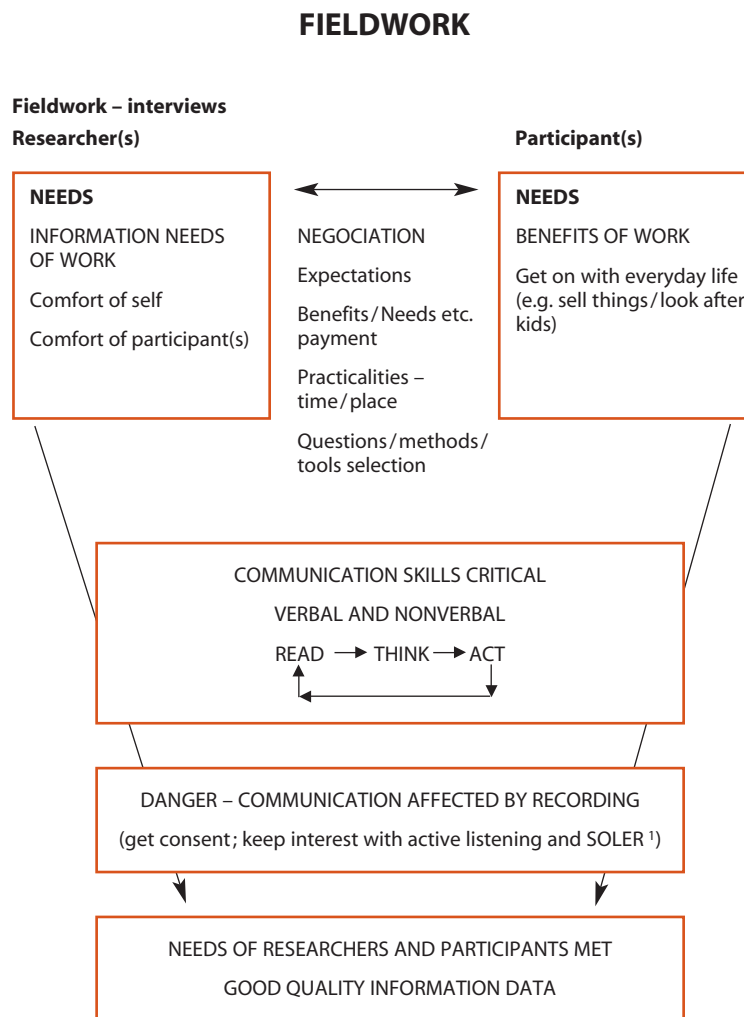
5. Sample summaries of days

Summarizing the main issues from the day's teaching and giving it to the participants the next morning is a very useful way of helping participants remember what they have learnt, and be able to use it to build further learning on. In Kilifi, these summaries were very popular, and we spent the first half hour every day to go through these points.

Make your own summaries, using a mixture of the models in the text, the summary points at the end of each module, and points that were brought out by your participants. It is important to include participants' own issues every day, rather than prepare the summaries beforehand.

The model below is a computerized version of the hand-drawn model used during the course.

Meeting the need for quality data



¹ SOLER: five steps to attentive listening – **s**quarely face the person, **o**pen your posture, **l**ean towards the sender, eye contact maintained, **r**elax while attending.

6. Sample handouts

Handouts can be used in addition to the summaries of the day, and can be prepared before the course. They can be copied as they are shown here, or adapted to your needs.

A. The Meta Model of communication

The **basis** for all communication is our **personal communication style**. This is the main tool determining the outcome of our communication with others.

Becoming aware of how we affect – and are affected by – others, is important. We then need to have methods to adjust our communication style and make it more effective.

We need a method which can enable us to obtain information in a neutral way, without making the other person defensive.

The **META MODEL** is one such method. It was developed by a group of professionals in the United States of America, based on observations of **how people in a number of different situations (in personal and professional life) communicated effectively.**

Their findings were:

- people who communicate effectively ask many more questions than others
- they ask many open-ended questions, asking for a description of the other person's ideas, feelings, etc, and often ask for the reasons behind such ideas
- in brief, people who communicate well seek to **UNDERSTAND** the other person's intention before they give their own opinion.

THE META MODEL is developed from this study

It is a **language tool** designed to:

- collect information in a neutral way
- improve the possibilities to understand the intention of the communication partner
- help structure unclear communication.

The Meta Model consists of a number of different components showing how to deal better with a variety of communication structures. The simplest and most essential part is the one we have introduced in this course:

To get **DESCRIPTIVE** information, ask questions that start with:

- What ... How... In what way ...
- Where... From where... Who ... From whom... When...
- Please give an example ... Please say something more about this ...

Such questions are usually felt by the respondent to be **NEUTRAL**.



The **DESCRIPTIVE** Meta Model questions will usually communicate a sincere wish to learn and to listen (IF supported by non-verbal communication that gives the same message!)

Such questions are an invitation to **open communication**.

To get ANALYTICAL information, ask questions that start with

➤ Why ...

Such questions are often felt by the respondent to be **challenging**, and he/she may give you an **emotional (often negative) response**.

Asking leading or direct questions

Questions starting with e.g.:

➤ do you think .../don't you think ...

➤ do you also have problems with ...

➤ can you see that this idea is a good one ...

➤ wouldn't you say that .../agree that.

Have only two options for answers: **yes or no**.

Such questions are often asked to **confirm the idea(s) of the interviewer** or other person who asks the questions. They do not invite the respondent/communication partner to give his/her own idea.

If you are communicating with a person who is a bit **shy or insecure**, asking direct questions will usually not give you any valuable information. It is likely that the respondent will give you the answer he/she thinks you want to hear.

People you know well, or people who are **confident**, will usually not let a leading question stop them if they have something they want to say.

When we ask leading questions, it is often because we feel **insecure ourselves**. It is also because we do not always **THINK** about what we say and how we say it – asking leading questions is a **habit** for most people. To change the habit of asking leading questions, is hard – but possible.

The Meta Model is a useful method to use when we want to find out what people REALLY think and feel

• Asking questions which give only two alternative answers

• Asking questions like:

• ➤ do you think we should go swimming or bicycling?

• ➤ are you a Christian or a Muslim?

• ➤ would you think we should use role-play or demonstration?

• **all limit the respondent to only two choices.** In most cases, there will be many more choices, and asking the question in a different way would open up those other choices.

• Confident people will give you their idea of other choices if they think of them, but shy people may not do so.

• **Thus, you should be aware of whom you are talking with, and what that person's characteristics are, before you choose what style of question you will use. If you don't know, the safest is to start with an open question.**

• If you fail to do so, you may not be able to trust that the **“information” you receive is true** (i.e. represents the REAL opinion of your respondent).

• **Important note:** It is NOT WRONG to ask leading questions – you need to be aware of how you ask questions, whom you ask and when, in order to assess the information. In questionnaires used in survey research, many questions are closed. Closed questions are not “bad” or “wrong” – sometimes they are effective for getting the answer (for example about numbers). It is important to use open questions in all the communication work that concerns the interpersonal interaction – this enables you to get an agreement with a respondent who is happy to sit down and answer the questionnaire with closed questions and open ones.

B. Active listening

Active listening is an essential basic skill in good communication. It means to give someone your full attention, and try to understand what the person means to say – from their perspective, without judging them (i.e. you have to set your own opinions aside for a while).

Active listening is important

Because:

- it is the best way to get good information
- it makes the respondent feel good – he/she has the full attention of another person
- stimulates openness and creativity: easy to formulate own ideas and opinions
- the respondent feels respected and valued, personally and professionally.

How do you do active listening?

To listen actively:

- show interest, both verbally and nonverbally



- accept and value what the person says, and the emotions behind it
- use open questions, and probe

- focus on partner – give full attention
- communicate positive feelings nonverbally
- set your own prejudices aside
- check that you have understood.

Check whether you have understood the other person by reformulating

Use your own words:

- do I understand you rightly to say?
- what you are saying? ... does this mean?
- I hear you saying that... have I heard you right?

You can interrupt, if done nicely/gently, with the aim of understanding better.

What not to do when you listen actively

Do not:

- judge/evaluate what the person says, does or feels
- think about how you are going to respond/think about other things
- inject comments that “show” you know better.

Why is active listening a difficult practice for most of us?

Because:

- we have bad habits (judging without thinking)
- standing up for ourselves/our ideas: our culture values strength
- good listener = feminine, weak (men act – women talk).

Active listening is a very important skill in effective communication

Awareness, practice and feedback are needed to improve this skill over time

C. Giving constructive feedback

When learning practical skills, feedback is essential. We need to help each other learn how to communicate better by observing and commenting on how colleagues practise new skills. To become aware of what we do well and where we have problems in communication is not easy for most people. During the course, we will help each other develop such skills. It is easier for another person to see how we communicate, but we need to develop our own skills in this as well.

When commenting on how another person communicates, we should follow some simple rules for constructive feedback. Ask for suggestions for the rules. Write on flipchart, and add the rules below, if they have not been mentioned. Put the flipchart on the wall, and refer to the rules during the teaching of the next section.

GIVING CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK

Rule no. 1. Comment on positive things first

Point out what the person is doing well. This makes him or her feel good, and puts him or her in a positive mood to listen to you, and receive constructive criticism with an open mind.



Rule no. 2. Be constructive

Constructive criticism is helping the person receiving feedback to do better. Ask the person first if he/she can see any areas where they could do better, and if so how he/she might improve on those areas. If the person does not see any way to improve, then give suggestions for how you would do things in a better way.

Rule no. 3. Be specific

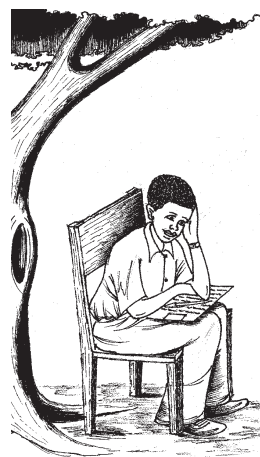
Give advice which the person can use directly. Avoid generalizations.

Aim (by using rules 2 and 3): helping the person to learn.

Effect: motivation to learn and improve. Person takes action.

Rule no. 4. Do not give direct or blaming criticism

When you do this, you imply that he or she is not as good as the person giving feedback.



*Positive (left) and negative (below) feedback:
Different aims & results.*



Aim (when criticizing or blaming): to imply that you are better than him/her, you are superior.

Effect: the person feels inferior and bad. Becomes passive and stays passive.

NOTE: In many settings where hierarchical structures are strong, blaming criticism is common. Many participants may have grown up with this as the norm. Spend some time discussing how it feels to be criticized this way, and whether blaming criticism is likely to lead to improvements. Discuss why being constructive is more likely to inspire the person to learn and improve.

D. Attitude and behaviour change

Stages of behaviour change		Who/what influences somebody?
1. Awareness 2. Interest	Cognitive/ Intellectual ("HEAD" feelings)	Mass media, events, books, films, friends, family
3. Trial 4. Evaluation 5. Adoption/rejection	Emotional ("STOMACH" feelings)	Emotional event (particularly if it involves people close to you) People you respect and trust (such as friends, family, professional colleagues)

WHICH IDEAS RESULT IN CHANGE, AND WHY?

NOTE: We are faced with many new ideas every day, from people around us, from media and from books, articles etc. Most of these ideas do not cause us to change.

When we become **aware** of a new idea, we can become **interested**. Still, this does not cause us to change or take action. These ideas are still only in our head. We call the first two stages the **cognitive, or intellectual, stages**.

An example: A mother might hear on the radio that you should give a person with fever a full course of malaria medicines. She becomes aware of this idea, but she continues to give her child the malaria drug only until the fever has gone away, as she has always done.

Another example: A man hears from various sources (radio, papers, friends) that smoking is bad for his health. He knows. Still he continues to smoke.

In the cognitive stages, only the "head" is involved

Decision: I will try change. How?

The next three stages involve **ACTION** – now the person has decided to try to change. (How that decision is made is a key factor!) The person **tries** out the new behaviour, **evaluates** it to see if

it fits in with his/her life, and then **decides** whether to **keep/adopt** the new behaviour or go back to the old one. **These stages involve feelings**. There has to be an emotional reaction before you decide to try out a new behaviour. We call these stages the **emotional stages**.

An example: The mother whose child had fever experiences that her child does not get well, he gets better from the fever for a few days, but then he gets sick again. She is afraid he might die. She goes to the local health worker, who explains to her the reason why she should give a full course of drugs to the child – some germs get killed with every dose, and they get stronger again if not all are killed. She is ready to try new action, and gives the child the full course of the drugs (**trial**). The child stays well (**evaluation**) and it is likely the mother will give the full course of drugs again the next time the child is sick (**adoption** of new behaviour).

Another example: The smoker has a friend who also smokes. The friend gets sick, he has lung cancer. The smoker experiences his friend's slow death, and gets scared: **this could happen to me**. He decides to quit smoking (**trial**), and has a tough time (**evaluation**), but is backed up by his family who want him to live. He manages to stay off the cigarettes, slowly feels healthier, and decides it is worth the pain (**adoption of new behaviour**).

Think about your own example, and look at how it fits into the five stages. Reflect on the feelings involved in making the changes, and the time it took.

Reflect on: who or what influenced you to take action in the different phases?

CONCLUSION

➤ **In the cognitive or intellectual stages** (awareness and interest), anything or anybody can influence you (media, books, films, events, family, friends).

- In the emotional stages (trial, evaluation and adoption/rejection) you will be influenced by people you respect and trust, e.g. friends, family, professional colleagues). You can also be influenced by an emotional event (e.g. you get very sick, and need to change behaviour for this not to happen again, or you cause someone a big problem when you are drunk, get very embarrassed, and decide to stop drinking).

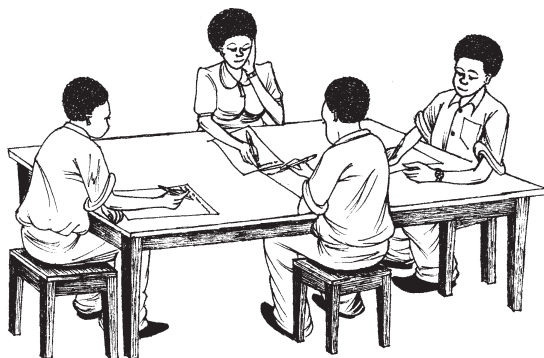
• Attitude and behaviour change in summary

- Attitude and behaviour change is often triggered by an event (action and emotions).
- It is influenced by someone close to you, someone you respect and/or your own experience.
- It usually takes a long time.



7. Criteria for passing the exam

The exam in Kilifi was conducted as a practical exercise, where participants were asked to conduct an interview and demonstrate what they had learned. Two resource persons assessed them independently and then compared notes. We used a tool which assessed the issues below.



1. Skills

A. Interviewing

Demonstrate an ability to practise the following:

- creating a good seating arrangement
- active listening
- using open questions appropriately
- probing
- keeping the attention (appropriately) focused on the respondent
- discovering and understanding the “full picture”
- taking appropriate action
- if making mistakes, taking appropriate action to “recover”.

B. Feedback

- reading nonverbal communication signs
- assessing appropriately the good points and points to be improved in a colleague

- giving positive feedback first
- giving constructive feedback
- giving specific feedback which can be acted upon by the field worker.

2. Attitudes

Demonstrating an ability to recognize the following

- which personal factors influence the outcome of an interview (as practised by others in an interview)
- HOW these personal factors influence the outcome
- which personal factors in themselves influence the outcome of an interview
- an ability to control at least one of these personal factors.

3. Knowledge

Demonstrating a comprehension of central issues discussed in the course (see table in Section 1), by answering a questionnaire.

The rating can be done the following way:

- – (minus) (or zero) = skill not practised at all
- + (one plus) = skill practised to some extent, needs improvement to pass exam
- ++ (two pluses) = skill demonstrated satisfactorily, exam passed.

The participants may be rated on these skills and attitudes on the last two days of the course, to assess where extra inputs are needed. Also, individual feedback can be given to them based on this (informal) assessment.

In the Kilifi course, three of the participants failed, and were given a second chance to pass a few days later. They then all passed. The strictness of this system helped make the participants feel that they really had gained some skills, attitudes and knowledge that could be rated.

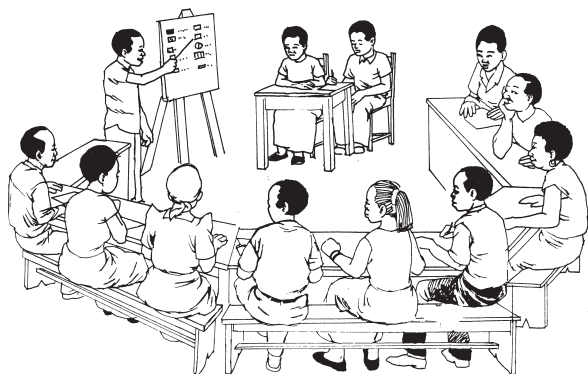
8. Facilitating groups

A good facilitator is essential for the success of a workshop

Facilitation is a skill learnt partly through training and mostly through experience. Some people have a talent for facilitation, others have not. The attitude of the facilitator is essential. He/she has to have respect for and interest in people's opinions and feelings, be a good listener, and be able to make people feel that what they are saying is important and acceptable.

It is not so easy to find out whether people have these qualities – especially if you just review their curriculum vitae or conduct an interview with them. The best way to make sure the facilitator is able to do the job is to watch him/her demonstrate the skills during a practice facilitation session with a group.

The attitudes of a facilitator are important – especially if he/she is an attentive listener and seems to be able to comprehend and follow up what you are saying, rather than just talk about his/her own concerns. The facilitator must have self-confidence – i.e. be comfortable in herself/himself (but not confident to the degree of being arrogant!). This is important, because a good facilitator needs to be able to put his/her own needs and ideas aside when facilitating, and if a person is very uncomfortable with himself/herself this tends to influence the facilitation negatively.



CHECKLIST

A good facilitator should:

- establish a good physical setting, create a good atmosphere in the group before starting
- manage the group; encourage people to talk, and make sure everybody gets the chance to speak (subdue the dominators, encourage the silent ones etc.)
- build on people's responses, follow up questions, get to the "bottom" of an issue
- listen to what people are saying, checking that he/she has understood by summarizing what has been said
- check that all participants are able to understand
- be aware of nonverbal messages
- use open-ended questions
- give examples from own experience where appropriate
- acknowledge contributions, and reinforce good points verbally or nonverbally.

A good facilitator should not:

- judge participants for what they are saying (either verbally or nonverbally)
- interrupt participants
- display own opinions



- encourage or accept power displays from participants (e.g. a nurse interrupting a cleaner)
- show disrespect for anybody in the group
- ignore anybody in the group.

When observing a facilitator at work, you can also use this checklist as a tool to determine whether or not he/she is doing a good job.

9. User's guide: selected participatory training methods and tools

A. Plenary discussion

All participants are involved in a plenary session, and the trainer aims to teach by leading a discussion to draw out specific information from the group members, to give the group an understanding of the topic. Full participation should be encouraged. The method requires the trainer(s) to keep careful control, to ensure that only the accurate information which comes out is accepted by the group. Summing up main points to remember is a useful way to focus on the accurate information and leave out the rest.

The role of the trainer

- Lead and guide the discussion, keep own ideas back until it is necessary to provide input.
- There should be two trainers, one to lead the discussion, one to record the main points in a structured way on a flipchart sheet (with clear headings); the “recorder” could also keep a separate sheet to record good points to return to in later modules/discussions.
- Keep the objectives of the discussion clearly in mind, and use this to choose which comments and questions to follow up in the discussion.
- “Bounce” incorrect or confusing information back to participants (“what do others think about this?”) For comments and discussion, rather than providing explanations and answers.
- Clarify technical points through brief and clear inputs when necessary.

- Encourage everybody to participate; control dominant participants by sometimes asking them to hold back their comments, then asking quieter participants to comment.
- Allow only one person to speak at the time.
- Acknowledge all comments; never judge what people say – if you do, you will discourage open thinking and creativity in the group.
- Don't interrupt.
- Use open-ended questions to assess participants' understanding.
- Encourage participants to evaluate understanding by inviting volunteers to summarize main points.
- Manage the time well, and use energizers or breaks when needed.
- Summarize key issues at the end of the discussion.

When to use

- To teach topics where participants already have some knowledge.
- Can be used in combination with an introduction or presentation by the trainer.

Advantages

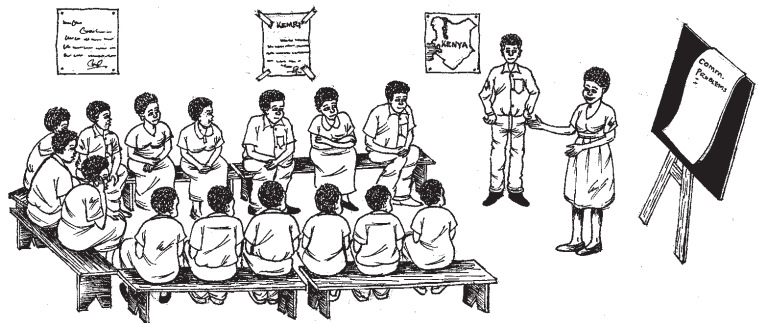
- Encourages participation, allows some evaluation of participants' understanding.
- Is less time-consuming than e.g. small-group work.

Limitations

- Requires a skilled trainer team with clear minds and the ability to structure while still encouraging “open thinking” – often the quieter participants will keep very quiet.

B. Large-group presentation

This method is often referred to as a “lecture”, and involves the trainer giving information to the group, without much interaction.



Large-group presentation is often misused, and must be used sparingly and with care in this training.

Rules for using large-group presentation

- The trainer should make sure the participants are in the right mood to listen, by e.g. asking some questions before starting the presentation.
- The presentation should be well structured and logical.
- The trainer should use notes with points, but not read out from a manuscript.
- The presentation should be broken up by questions after a logical item of content is finished.
- It should not be too long – maximum 15-20 minutes, and not straight after lunch!
- Use examples from local situation which participants can recognize and identify with.
- Use teaching aids to keep people interested.
- Speak slowly and avoid difficult words.
- Watch for nonverbal signs that people are losing interest (looking out the window, looking bored, reading ...).

When to use large-group presentation

- To introduce a topic, to be followed by a plenary discussion.
- To give a technical input.
- To clarify issues.
- To summarize a session.
- To give information, e.g. practical, logistics, etc.

Limitations/disadvantages

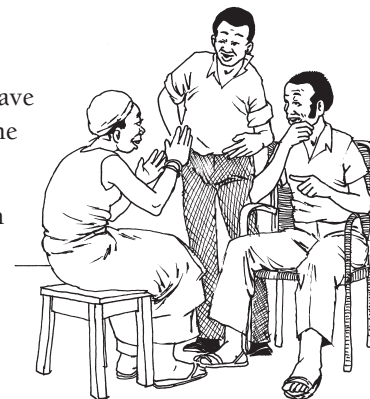
- Gives knowledge only, not skills (needs to be combined with other methods).
- Trainer does not know what participants have understood – evaluation is difficult.
- Does not allow participation.
- Demands good skills from the trainer to keep participants' attention.

C. Buzzing

Buzzing/buzzing is a quick method (up to five minutes) where participants in groups of two or three are asked to discuss an issue, decide on a response, and feed this back to the plenary.

Use buzzing when

- The trainer feels participants have many ideas, but they don't come out in discussion.
- The participants are “stuck” on an issue.
- An individual participant is dominating the discussion.
- For introductions.



Don't use buzzing

- To create time for the trainer to sort out a problem (take a break instead!).
- To discuss a complicated issue.

Basic rules

- There is no need to write (unless asked to prepare a flipchart sheet).
- When reporting in plenary, it is not necessary for all groups to report; the important thing is to get the discussion going, and to make sure everybody feels they are able to contribute with their points.

D. Small-group work

- Small-group work is used to increase participation and understanding, and to practise new skills and get feedback.
- 4-6 participants is optimum; when forming groups, pay attention to gender, age and educational background.



- Make sure the group sits in a circle, to allow everybody to participate.
- Volunteers should be sought for the posts of chairperson and recorder.
- Give specific topic for discussion, write on flipchart sheets, allow time to ensure task is clearly understood before starting.

- Set a time limit.
- Small-group work is also a way for trainer to assess understanding and communication skills by listening to the groups.

Norms for participation in small-group work

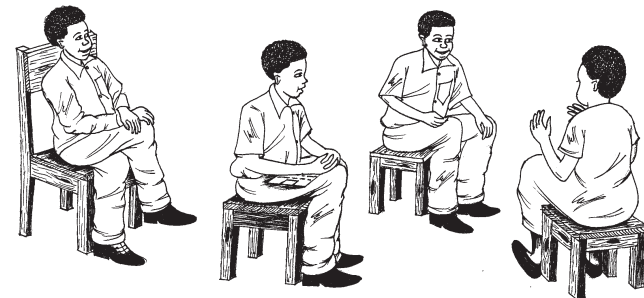
- Encourage all members to contribute.
- Do not interrupt – allow all members to talk.
- Respect each others' opinions – do not judge (verbally or non-verbally).
- Support the reporter and the chairperson.

Role of the facilitator in managing small groups

- Guide groups when needed (clarify the topic, help if they are stuck, intervene if they are arguing).
- Manage time – assess whether more time is needed.
- Don't interrupt or join in discussion if not needed; don't make them feel you are “controlling” them.

E. Teaching method: role-play

- Role-play is a dramatic, fun and effective way to introduce a topic for discussion; it needs to be used with care to avoid hurting the players' feelings, especially when they expose their own problems.



- Role-play can also be used in the middle of a session, e.g. If the real issue does not come out through discussion.
- It is a good method for dealing with sensitive issues which can be difficult to discuss with “straight” methods like plenary discussion, e.g. Attitudes or illegal practices.
- The method can be used to assess whether participants have acquired the knowledge and are able to apply it, i.e. Whether they are practising the skills.
- It is a good method for practising communication skills.
- A role-play can also be stopped halfway through, and the participants asked to discuss (in pairs/small groups) how it should continue, and then invited on to the “stage” to finish the role-play.

Some rules

- Focus on one main problem.
- Brief (max. five minutes).
- Give instructions, written or verbal; these should include description of the role and the problem, and then actors will put into the role what they think is important – sometimes instructions are given to only one actor, and the other is left to play the role of e.g. “a common provider” and respond as he/she sees fit.

MOST IMPORTANT RULE: When commenting on the role-play, separate the roles people play from the participants who play them. Use the names of the characters in the role-play, rather than the participants’ real names, when discussing what went on. By doing this, you protect the players from having to take any criticism personally, and they are also free to show an attitude or a problem which they (as “themselves”) may not want to admit to.

F. Demonstration

Demonstration is when a trainer or participant shows the group how to do a practical task correctly. It can be done in several steps, and usually involves skills as well as knowledge.

How to use

- Demonstration with subsequent practice is an efficient way of teaching skills.
- It is important that the demonstration is done clearly, slowly, and step by step, carefully explaining each step and what to pay attention to.
- The demonstration should be repeated by a volunteer participant in front of the group.
- After this, the participants are ready to practise the new skill, observed by the trainer, who can continue to give guidance and feedback when necessary.
- At the end of the practice, sum up experiences from participants and agree on areas where further practice is needed.
- Where appropriate, summarize what to do to get a good result.

G. Using flipchart sheets

Flipchart sheets are a cheap and useful teaching aid. There are some basic rules to follow, which will ensure that your participants learn well.

- Do not overload; write main points only; if detailed information is needed, use handouts.
- Write clearly and in large enough writing; it is better to take the time to write more slowly than to hurry and confuse the participants (this takes some practice; a good way to find out is to ask your co-trainer to go to the back of the class after a session and read out to you what you have written).

- Use different colours for different topics; this helps participants keep topics separate.
- When a marker is getting faint, throw it away ... (go to the back of the class and see if you can read it yourself – you’ll be surprised!).
- Using pre-prepared sheets – write main points only, when explaining the points to the class, face the group, speak from memory and/or use small cards to remind yourself of the main points (do not turn your back on the group to read a lot of script from the newsprint – this is bad practice, and ineffective “teaching”!).

Use flipchart sheets during discussion

- They are useful tools for recording main points from e.g. a plenary discussion.
- Two trainers are needed, one to lead the discussion, one to record the main “points of agreement”.
- To do this effectively, it is important that (a) both trainers know the main points they want to bring out and (b) the recorder does not write too early – he/she should wait until an agreement is reached about the issue.
- If a facilitator wants to add a point, bring it up in the group first and make sure there is an agreement about adding the point.

Write “correct” information only

If a point or suggestion is brought up which is not correct, bounce it back to the group and ask for comments (you should do this with “correct” information occasionally, to make it less obvious when you are bouncing back “incorrect” information).

**Remember the power of the written word –
what is on paper is seen as “the truth”!**

H. How to use energizers

Trainers must be alert for signs that participants are bored or tired, and take frequent breaks for games, songs, stories, tea, food or just a stretch or short walk. Playing games is a good way to make people relax together, which will also help them learn better together. These games and “energizers” can be used in the training course. Use your own locally appropriate games.

Examples of energizers

Traditional songs and dances: Ask trainers and participants for examples. The songs which involve movement are the best: they allow participants to get up from their chairs and do something physical. One can e.g. make a long line, with hands on the shoulders of the one in front, and move around the room, or clap as one moves around, or form a circle which moves in and out, holding hands or clapping.

One word game: If participants look confused or tired, trainer can use this game. Ask participants to describe in one word how they are feeling. Move quickly around the room, asking several people. If problems are brought out, they can be dealt with immediately.

Exercises: Jumping, shaking arms, etc. These can be used to relax tension, e.g. if participants have been concentrating very hard. Turn exercises into games, e.g. the “Nyala-nyala” (meat-meat) game from Kenya: the trainer asks participants to jump (or do whatever the trainer does) when he says a meat they can eat, e.g. beef, pork, chicken, but do nothing when he names meat you cannot eat, e.g. monkey, dog. The ones who jump at “monkey meat” are out!

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