



Suggested strategies and activities for Capacity Building

Mechanism and general target audiences	Points to consider
<p>The way the Nutrition Cluster coordinates and shares information</p> <p>For Cluster partners and relevant stakeholders</p>	<p>The way that the Nutrition Cluster communicates and engages with partners can promote partner participation, and therefore exposure to new skills or information. For example, consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ holding meetings at the offices of the national authority to increase participation by national staff or using communication strategies that allow national actors to participate; ✓ minimising information and reporting requirements to save time and accommodate weaker IT and reporting capacities of some agencies; ✓ providing information and training in forms that are appropriate to the recipients, e.g. consider use of language and terminologies, translation, understanding of signs and diagrams; ✓ promoting good human resource management practice, including a policy of working through local organisations rather than recruiting skilled staff to work with international organisations.¹
<p>Orientations to the cluster</p> <p>For newly arrived staff and staff who are new to their positions; senior policy-makers; focal persons from other clusters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Orientation to the Nutrition Cluster refers to sharing an understanding of who/what the Nutrition Cluster is, what it is doing, and standards, guidelines and resources in nutrition. ✓ This information can be shared through leaflets (e.g. WASH in Indonesia) or bilateral introductions to new cluster members (e.g. asking newly arrived staff to come to the cluster meeting early for an overview), as well as through more formal orientation sessions.
<p>In-service training</p> <p>For national and international actors in nutrition, as well as staff in relevant sectors working on programming that can affect the nutrition response</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In-service training refers to initial training (to expose individuals to new knowledge and skills) as well as refresher training (to upgrade knowledge and skills). ✓ These trainings need to ensure an appropriate balance of theoretical information and practical work. They also need to take into account the diverse backgrounds that trainees may have, which will influence the format and depth of information presented. ✓ In-service training may be done on a one-time only basis where those who are trained are expected to implement their new knowledge and skills, or it may be done through a “training of trainers” approach where those trained are expected to train others. Practically, however, it can be difficult to ensure quality in this second type of “cascade” training. Training of trainers activities are also of limited use if they are not tied to a specific, and feasible, follow-

¹ For more information, see <http://www.peopleinaid.org>.



	<p>up/scaling-up plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The limitations of training also need to be very clear. Just because someone has gone through a training session, they cannot be immediately expected to have mastered the material without time to practise their new skills with supportive supervision.
<p>Pre-service training</p> <p>For national actors in nutrition, e.g. nutritionists, midwives, paediatricians</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ This refers to incorporating key principles, information and skills into the training courses and curricula of academic training institutes in line with technical standards for the Nutrition Cluster and nutrition in emergencies. Work in this area also has to be linked to updating certification of cadres of staff. ✓ Influencing pre-service training requires an in-depth assessment of available courses, resources and needs. It is not often done during an emergency itself, but can be done as part of the transition strategy and also as part of early recovery activities.
<p>On-the-job learning</p> <p>For national and international staff, for specific areas and issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ This refers to one individual providing technical backstopping to another person as they learn to implement specific skills. This is most often undertaken on a one-to-one basis within the same organisation. ✓ Capacity building through on-the-job training needs to meet specific objectives. National authorities often ask for some of their staff to participate in Nutrition Cluster activities, such as assessments, in order to build capacity. Without a clear TOR or clear outputs, the pressure of deadlines may undermine good intentions. Observation does not equal on-the-job training. The individual needs to be able to put the new concepts into practice, which requires additional time, and this needs to be taken into consideration in planning activities along these lines.
<p>One-to-one mentoring through peer-to-peer learning</p> <p>For national and international staff, for specific areas and issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ This refers to one individual giving support and feedback to another individual around new skills and knowledge, either as needed or on a regular basis. It may not happen on a daily basis, and the two individuals may not be working in the same organisation. ✓ Innovations that arise through peer-to-peer learning are shared through the Nutrition Cluster mechanism.
<p>Organisational mentoring</p> <p>For organisations working in the same geographic location</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ This refers to one organisation with strong capacity specifically working with another agency at all or at specific levels of operation (e.g. supervision, management, technical skills) in order to achieve specific improvements in service delivery. ✓ This often requires additional human and financial resources, as well as a clear TOR for expectations and inputs by both agencies.
<p>Centres of excellence</p> <p>For national and international staff, for</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ This involves organisations which have met specific performance standards providing the opportunity for individuals from other agencies to spend some time working in their organisation or in point-of-service delivery in order to develop skills through on-



<p>specific areas and issues</p>	<p>the-job learning in a specifically supervised situation. Individuals learn practical skills for a specified period of time and then return to their own jobs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Criteria for a centre of excellence must be very clear. The centre may be supported by the national authority or by another Nutrition Cluster partner. In order to provide this service, however, the supporting agency needs to have additional administrative support. This function is ideally linked to longer-term national development and pre-service training.
<p>Organisational support</p> <p>For national authority departments, e.g. nutrition directorates in the Ministry of Health (MOH)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ This refers to the provision of specific financial, material or human resources to a specific agency in order to improve the policy and operational environment. ✓ This type of capacity building can include the secondment of staff, financial support in specific areas or donations of equipment. The inputs from both agencies and the expected outputs need to be outlined in a clear Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). ✓ For these inputs to be sustainable, the Nutrition Cluster needs to advocate for running costs and maintenance costs to be mainstreamed into national authority budgets.