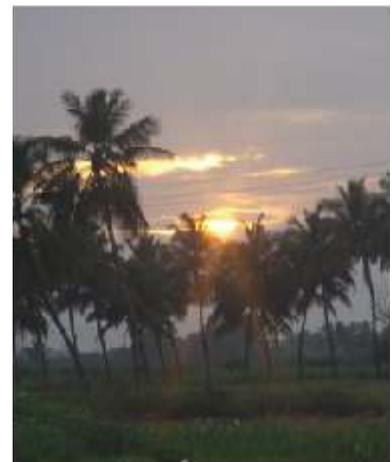
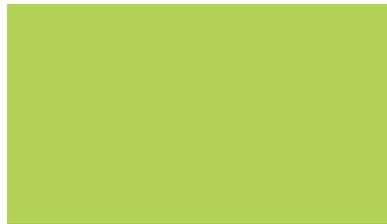
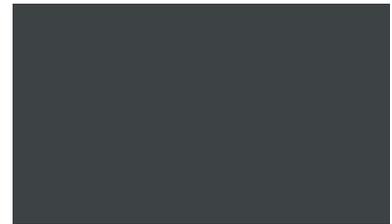
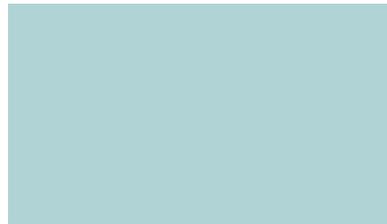
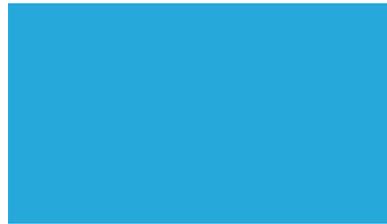




DEVELOPMENT
ACTION
CONSORTIUM
TRUST



TRAINING GRASSROOTS NGOs IN RESEARCH

Process, Feasibility and Experiences



Supported by
wellcometrust

This study was supported by The Health Systems Research Cell of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), India and the Wellcome Trust, United Kingdom, International Engagement Programme.

The opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the ICMR or Wellcome Trust.

Published in October 2012

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Funding Support: Health Systems Research Cell - Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), India and Wellcome Trust, UK.

Partner NGOs: Arogya Agam, Maitri, SRED, MMS, Vasantham

Lead Trainers: Ms. Vijayarani, Ms. Saraswathi, Ms. Annalakshmi, Ms. Hanora, Ms. Sakkubai, Ms. Sumathi, Mr. Senthil, Mr. Kasi, Mr. Singaraj, Mr. Veeravel, Mr. Mayakrishnan and Mr. David Jones

Participants: Directors and Staff of other NGOs in Theni and adjoining Districts.

Special Thanks To: Dr. Abhay Kudale, Dr. Shilpa Karvande, Dr. Laila Garda and Prof. R.K. Mutatkar

All administration and programme staff at DAC Trust, Theni and MAAS-CHRD, Pune.

RESEARCH TEAM

MAAS-CHRD: Mr. Saju Joseph and Dr. Sheela Rangan

DAC Trust: Mr. David Jones, Mr. Pandiaraja, and Ms. Vanajaa Augustine

Target TB: Ms. Nikki Jeffery

SUGGESTED CITATION

MAAS-CHRD, DAC Trust & Target TB (2012). *Training Grassroots NGOs in Research: Process, Feasibility and Experiences*, Dissemination Report, Pune, India.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS CONTACT US AT

The Maharashtra Association of Anthropological Science-Centre for Health Research and Development (MAAS-CHRD)

Akanksha Residency, B-Wing, Flat No. 201, Near Shivaji Statue, Aundhgaon, Pune 411007, Maharashtra, India.

Tel: +91-20-25884150 / 25897298; E-mail: chrd@maas.org.in

Target Tuberculosis

Refuge House, 49-50 North Street,

Brighton, BN1 1RH

Tel: +44-(0)1273-827070; E-mail: info@targettb.org.uk

Report Prepared for MAAS-CHRD by the Centre for Documentation and Dissemination at MAAS.

NGOs AS IMPORTANT STAKEHOLDERS IN HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Health systems research is concerned with improving the health of people and communities, by enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the health system as an integral part of the overall process of socio-economic development, with full involvement of all partners¹. While it is acknowledged to be essential for development, there is inequitable distribution of research efforts and funds directed towards populations suffering the world's greatest health problems². This imbalance has fostered major attempts at redirecting research to the health problems of low and middle income countries. There is hence, an increased momentum for building stronger health systems.

Over the years, the health sector has seen the emergence of several stakeholders, resources, mechanisms and commitments towards meeting various health and development needs. Increasing emphasis is also being laid on developing evidence-based health policies. Recent reports calling for more resources to improve health in developing countries, and global pressures for accountability, draw greater attention to research-informed policy-making³. Research is a part of an orderly and systemic policy making process and policy decisions are often based on information obtained through research⁵. In policy making, researchers are one of the many interest groups, and research but one input among many equally legitimate elements to be considered by policy-makers⁴.

NGOs, who are important stakeholders in the health sector, have contributed to the development of communities around the world and are important partners of many governments. NGOs work with the aim of improving the lives and living conditions of the poor and marginalized and hence work done by them goes a long way in addressing issues at the grass root level. By and large, NGOs work in the community, have hands-on experience and target problem solving, thus undertaking need-based work and strive to produce credible evidence to support their case⁵.

As important stakeholders, NGOs can no longer be relegated to simple advisory or advocacy roles in the policy process. They should be a part of the way decisions are made and this is the direction in which advances need to be made. There is, hence, a need to more effectively include NGOs in all aspects of health research in order to maximize the potential benefits of research¹. However, if NGOs are to be part of the research and policy process, there is a need to substantiate their positions with solid research in order to be taken seriously. Less ideology, more evidence is required and a need has arisen to harness academic research methods to marshal knowledge generated through decades of grass root work⁴.

Building research capacity of NGOs takes a long time and requires persistence. It needs academics and researchers to engage with NGOs and their networks, after developing a clear understanding of their ideology and their contribution to health and development of communities. At the same time, NGOs must be both proactive and interactive within the framework of the health research agenda.

1. Health Systems Development. *Health Research and Medical Ethics*. Downloaded from http://www.whoindia.org/en/Section2_1524.htm
2. Delisle H., Roberts J., Munro M., Jones L. and Gyorkos T., (2005). *The role of NGOs in global health research for development*, Health Research Policy and Systems, 3:3. Bio Med Central, UK.
3. Hanney SR, Gonzalez-Block MA, Buxton MJ, Kogan M.. (2003). *The utilisation of health research in policy-making: concepts, examples and methods of assessment*. Health Research Policy and Systems.13;1 (1):2.
4. Carden Fred. (Document (s) 7 de 19) Chapter 4_ *Context matters the influence of IDRC-supported research on policy processes1*. Downloaded from www.Centre de recherches pour le développement international.htm
5. Mably Paul; (2006). *Evidence Based Advocacy: NGO Research Capacities and Policy Influence in the Field of International Trade*.

CONTEXT OF THE CURRENT PROJECT

In 2005, Target TB-UK requested MAAS-CHRD to undertake an evaluation of a community based TB control programme supported by them and implemented by DAC Trust and its partner NGOs in Theni district of Tamil Nadu.

Following this evaluation, researchers from MAAS-CHRD helped DAC Trust and its partner NGOs design standardized documentation formats to be used for various programmes and also created a centralized data recording and data management system. The analysis of the data collected over a five-year period was used to lobby with programme managers and key decision makers on the need for adapting and extending successful NGO interventions in the Revised National Tuberculosis Control Programme (RNTCP), based on well researched evidence⁶. The realization, among DAC Trust and its partners, of the importance of research in implementation and evaluation of evidence based interventions led DAC Trust, MAAS-CHRD and Target-TB to undertake the present project.

The project aimed to develop the capacity of DAC Trust and its partner NGOs' staff in research and its application in their programmes, and extend this work to other NGOs in and around Theni district. Target TB-UK, MAAS-CHRD and DAC Trust collaboratively submitted a proposal towards achieving these objectives to the Health Systems Division of Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and Wellcome Trust's International Engagement Programme.

The project was designed to train staff from DAC Trust and its partners to become Lead Trainers, who would then train and help other NGOs build their research capacity to implement evidence based health and development initiatives. The ultimate aim was to develop a resource base at the local level to help NGOs initiate and sustain evidence based interventions and advocacy. This was an attempt to build upon the already existing partnerships and expand the horizon and scope of partnerships to contribute to effective service delivery by NGOs.

6. MAAS-CHRD & DACT (2010). Introducing Operational Research to NGOs: Facilitating Evidence Based Advocacy, Dissemination Report, Pune, India.

PAPERS PRESENTED AT NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

NETWORK THENI TB PROGRAMME

1. Can 'Community Based DOT' be an effective strategy for Tuberculosis treatment in hilly and inaccessible terrain? Paper presented at First International Conference of South East Asia Region (The Union) and 63rd National Conference on Tuberculosis and Chest Diseases, New Delhi, 2008.
2. Monitoring TB in HIV infected patients through Community Based DOT in Theni District, Tamil Nadu, India. Paper presented at SAARC II Conference on TB, HIV/AIDS and Respiratory Diseases, December 2008, Kathmandu, Nepal.
3. Community-based DOTS: Perspectives of various stakeholders. Paper presented at 64th National Conference on Tuberculosis and Chest Diseases, December 2009, Kolkata, India.
4. Community-based DOTS in Theni district of Tamil Nadu State. Paper presented at 64th National Conference on Tuberculosis and Chest Diseases, December 2009, Kolkata, India.

PROJECT METHODOLOGY

Aim & Objectives

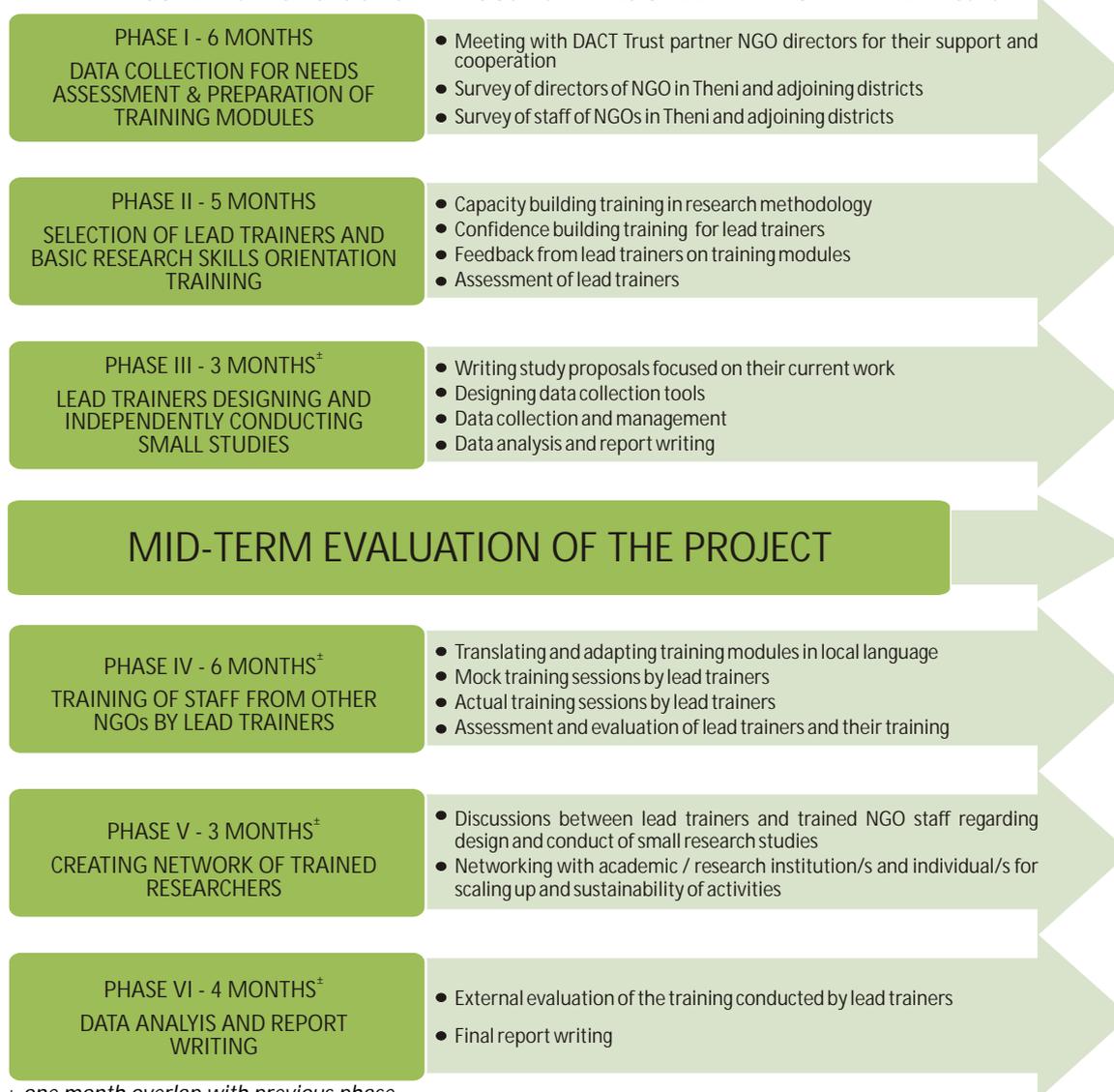
The two year collaborative project between MAAS-CHRD, DAC Trust and Target TB-UK aimed to respond to the agenda of strengthening research skills capacity of the NGO sector, which would contribute to achieving equitable health system delivery, especially in a geographically and socially vulnerable population. The specific objectives were the following:

1. To provide basic research skills orientation training to DAC Trust and its partner NGOs' staff
2. To train a group of skilled NGO staff from DAC Trust and its partner NGOs as lead trainers in core subjects of operational research, to be able to train other NGOs in Theni and adjoining Districts
3. To support the lead trainers to conduct training programmes
4. To create a sustainable resource base in Theni and adjoining Districts, through a network of NGO staff trained in research

Approach of the Project

The project team which has expertise in research, training and networking, built on their existing partnership, and after assessing the needs of NGOs, used locally available resources and participatory methods to train staff of DAC Trust and its partner NGOs as lead trainers. These lead trainers then trained staff of other NGOs in Theni and adjoining Districts to understand and use research. This was done to ensure the feasibility, replicability and sustainability of the project. Figure 1 highlights phase-wise details of various activities undertaken under the project.

FIGURE 1: CHRONOLOGY OF VARIOUS ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN UNDER THE PROJECT



[±] one month overlap with previous phase

The project adapted training modules to address the needs of the participants and local NGOs. Interactive and participatory training, continuous and importantly participatory monitoring and evaluation and identifying the need for retraining were some of the key principles of this project. Process documentation of the entire training component and pre and post evaluation of each training session provided learnings to help develop the study initiative as a feasible and replicable model.

Ethical Issues

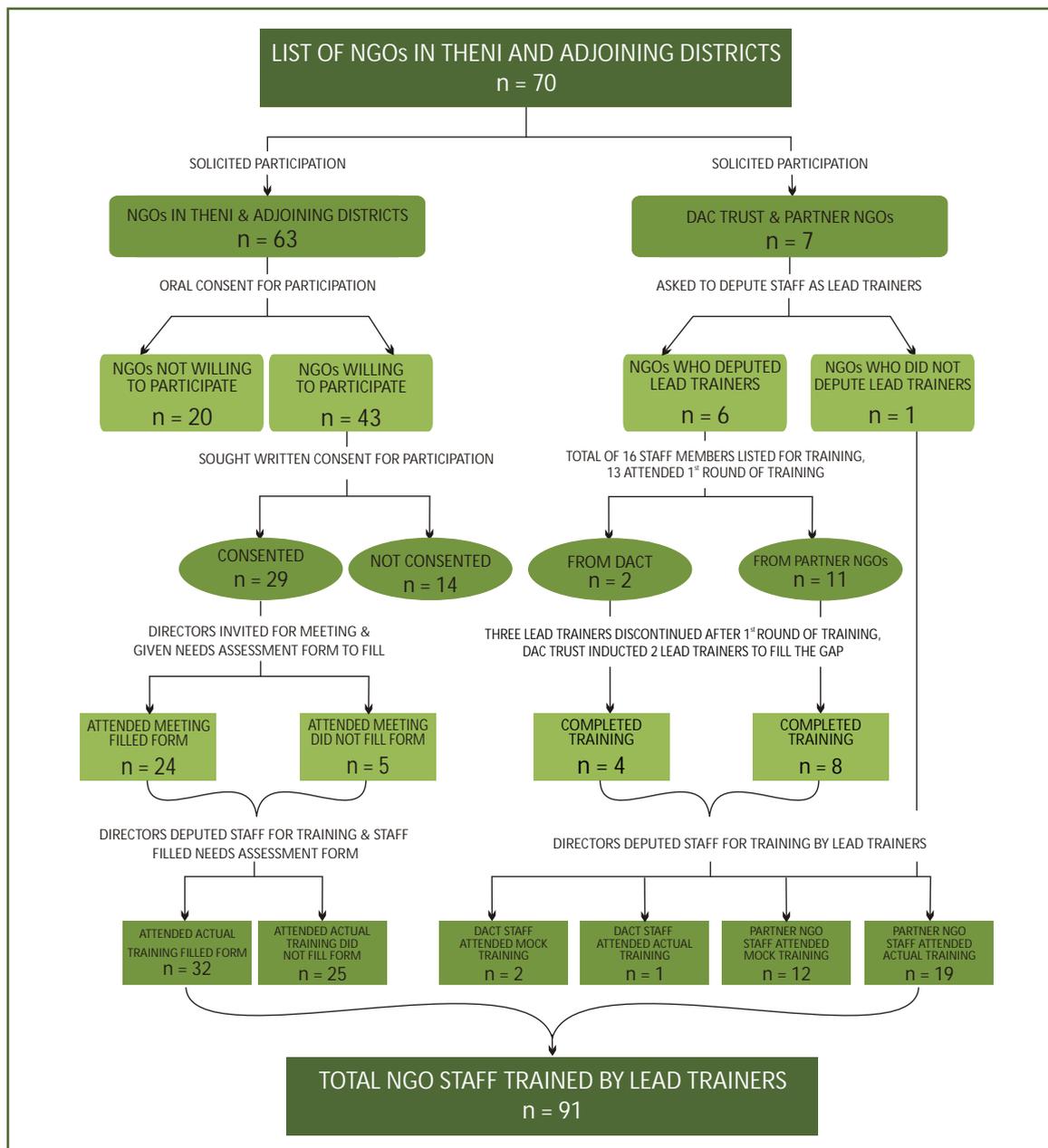
Written consent from each partner NGO of DAC Trust was sought for involving their staff in the lead trainers training programme; care was taken to organize the training without disturbing the NGO staff's work. The time and place for arranging training programmes was decided based on the convenience of the NGO staff. The partner NGOs were explained that after completing the training, lead trainers would be undertaking training of staff of other NGOs in the District and adjacent Districts, in order to ensure their commitment to the project. Separate written consent was sought from the staff members selected for undergoing training as lead trainers.

TRAINING GRASSROOT NGOs IN RESEARCH: THE PROCESS

Needs Assessment Survey for NGO Directors and Staff

The study team through the Right to Information (RTI) Act got the list of NGOs working in the field of health and development in Theni and adjoining Districts. A total of 63 NGOs (excluding DAC Trust and its 6 partner NGOs) were identified and listed to solicit their willingness to participate in the project. A carefully worded covering letter explaining the purpose of the study was sent to the NGO Directors. Figure 2 gives details of the NGOs and their staff participation in the study.

FIGURE 2: PARTICIPATING NGOs AND STAFF FROM THENI & ADJOINING STUDY DISTRICTS



The findings from the needs assessment surveys of NGO directors and staff highlighted the importance of training grass root staff in the basics of research and research methods. Respondents felt it was very important to introduce such activities for the staff in order to improve staff efficiency in day-to-day activities of the organization. The findings helped the project team to mould the lead trainers training programme to suit the needs and understanding of NGO staff by simplifying the modules and training exercises for easy understanding and using a mix of English and Tamil languages during the training sessions.

Preparation of Training Modules

Being an academic NGO, MAAS has been involved in training in research methodology through coursework, seminars, symposia and workshops since its inception, but had never offered training in research to grass root NGO staff. This required MAAS-CHRD researchers to adapt their training strategy and tools to make the training informative, easy to follow and for the lead trainers to be able to understand, situate and contextualize the various terminologies used in research in their day-to-day activities. The following strategy was decided to be used for the training:

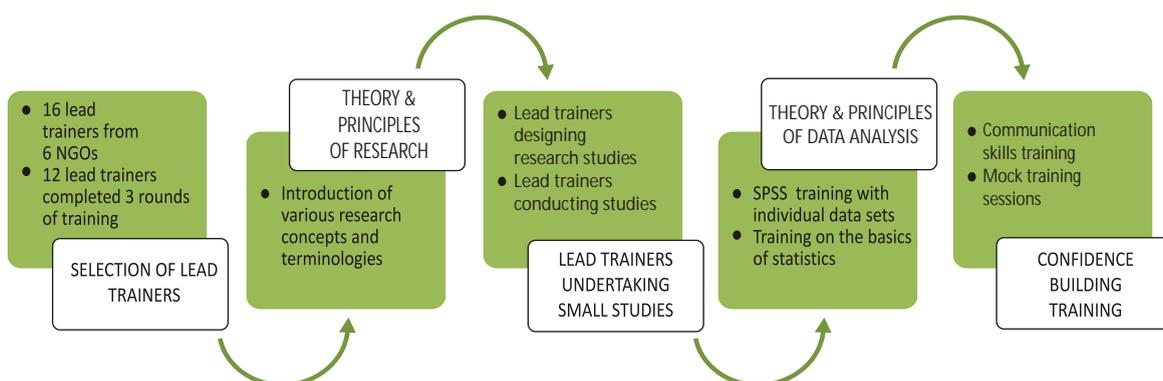
1. Each session started with a situation or problem, which the group discussed with help from the facilitator.
2. The facilitator led the discussion towards the key topic of the session.
3. The facilitator introduced the theory / principles guiding the topic.
4. The participants were divided into smaller groups and each group was given one more situation / problem to discuss and present in a larger group, and discuss and summarize the key points.
5. Feedback on the session, content, approaches / methods used for learning, what they liked / did not like and need for more inputs / clarifications were sought at the beginning and end of each session.



Selection and Training of Lead Trainers

A total of 16 potential lead trainers (graduates, who had been with the NGO for more than five years, those with good communication skills and were already working as trainers) were shortlisted from DAC Trust and its six partner NGOs; 13 participated in the first training workshop. However three were not able to continue after the first round of training citing personal reasons for their inability to stay. Two project staff members of DAC Trust were inducted during the 2nd round of training to tackle the attrition problem. Both these project staff had participated in the 1st training workshop as support staff, so their induction at this juncture was justified. Researchers from MAAS-CHRD were the lead training facilitators. Figure 3 gives a graphical picture of how the training of lead trainers was undertaken.

FIGURE 3: GRAPHICAL PRESENTATION OF LEAD TRAINERS TRAINING



The training was conducted as a residential workshop in three stages. A total of six modules were designed for training of lead trainers. The topics on introduction to basics of research, research design and methods of data collection, data documentation and sampling and sample size determination were covered during the first training workshop. Through the first training workshop lead trainers were able to acquire basic knowledge about different research types, research designs, primary and secondary data collection methods, different documentation techniques and knowledge about quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection.

To help the trainers apply their knowledge and develop research skills, each lead trainer was asked to work on an individual problem / topic

of their choice (as per the need of the NGO that they represented) using a research framework which covered justification and rationale for the study, aim and objectives, research questions, sampling, data collection methods and the tools for data collection.

During the second training workshop, the outline proposals submitted by the lead trainers were discussed in the open group and improvements made based on suggestions given by the researchers from MAAS-CHRD, senior staff of DAC Trust and other lead trainers. The module on basics of research ethics was introduced during this training workshop. The principles of developing a research tool and the various components of the tools were discussed. This discussion also helped deepen the participants' understanding of ethics in research. This activity of proposal development was followed up with the actual conduct of study by each lead trainer. Table 1 gives details of the studies conducted by the lead trainers:

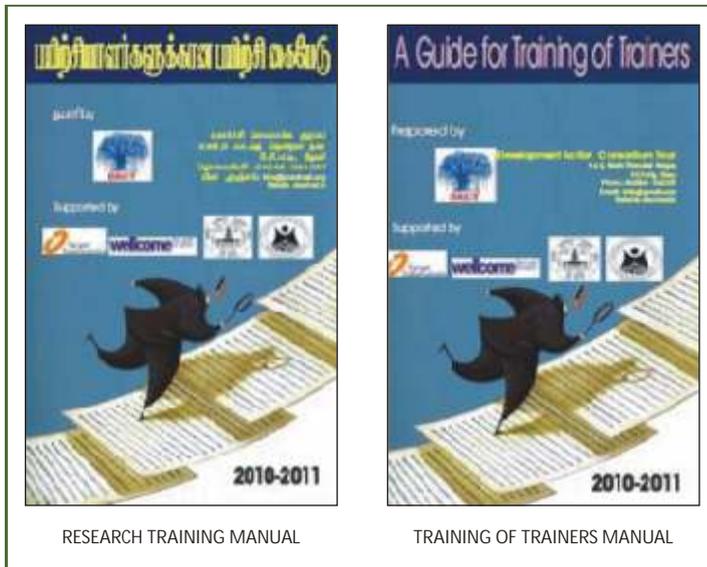


TABLE 1: DETAILS OF THE STUDIES CONDUCTED BY THE LEAD TRAINERS

Sr. No	TITLE OF THE STUDY	RESEARCH METHOD	TOOL OF DATA COLLECTION	SAMPLE SIZE
1	Knowledge, Attitude and Practice of Domestic Violence Act among Police Officials in Theni District: A Study	Survey	Questionnaire	n = 13
2	A study of attitudes among adolescents towards HIV/AIDS in Theni district of Tamil Nadu	Survey	Questionnaire	n = 50
3	A Comparison of the psycho-social problems faced by HIV positive & negative pregnant women (ante & post natal) in Theni district	Survey	Interview Schedule	n = 26
4	A study of the poorest of the poor in Varusanadu Valley, Theni district	Survey	Interview Schedule	n = 30
5	An appraisal of care and support of old age people in Theni district in Tamil Nadu	Survey	Interview Schedule	n = 30
6	A research on the causes behind the non-repayment of loans by the women's federation in Theni block of Theni district	Survey	Interview Schedule	n = 30
7	A study of health seeking behavior among HIV-infected patients treated for TB in Periyakulam block in Theni district	Survey	Interview Schedule	n = 20
8	A study on domestic violence due to alcohol in Periyakulam block, Theni district, Tamil Nadu	Survey	Interview Schedule	n = 22
9	Assessing the knowledge and awareness among Village Health Nurses about TB and TB programme in Chinnamanur Block of Theni district	Survey	Interview Schedule	n = 14
10	Awareness about drunken driving among staff of various NGOs in Theni district	Survey	Questionnaire	n = 35
11	A study to measure the stress of CAT-II TB patients in Theni block of Theni district	Survey	Interview Schedule	n = 20
12	A study of knowledge of disability programmes and schemes among the disabled people in Theni district, Tamil Nadu	Survey	Interview Schedule	n = 35

The final research training session on the module introduction to data analysis was conducted during the third and final training workshop after each lead trainer had completed data collection of their individual study. This was done so as to help lead trainers understand the importance of each stage in a research process and the influence it has on data analysis and report writing. The lead trainers were also given hands-on experience of doing data entry on SPSS.





The final stage ended with lead trainers adapting the six training modules in local language, designing research training for NGO participants and helping the project staff with preparation of training of trainer's manuals. DAC Trust staff and the lead trainers spent significant time adapting and translating the manuals, which proved necessary for the cascade training to NGO staff members who primarily understand Tamil rather than English. Lead trainers conducted mock training sessions, to enable them to test

their training abilities and practise the various sessions. Colleagues from within their NGOs participated in two rounds of mock training, giving feedback, while also being oriented on the basics of research in the process.

Training by Lead Trainers

The lead trainers trained a total of 91 participants from 36 NGOs (including DAC Trust) in four batches through a three day residential training in research. Each training module was conducted by two lead trainers and two modules were covered each day. The trainers used a range participatory techniques and relevant practical examples to explain the research concepts. Participants provided favourable feedback on the skills of the lead trainers not only on their understanding of the topics they were training them on, but also in terms of their skills as trainers.



The training manuals produced for training NGO participants received good feedback, particularly the fact that they were bi-lingual. Participants also felt that the training manuals were a useful resource, which they used after the training to check their understanding and reinforce their learning.

TRAINING GRASSROOTS NGOs IN RESEARCH: FEASIBILITY OF THE STUDY

Rating of Training Sessions

Three senior staff members from DAC Trust were observers for the lead trainers training workshops. The observers used structured formats to make observations on the content, process and outcomes of the training. The rating was done on 15 parameters using a 0 to 4 rating system and based on the points scored, the sessions were categorized as poor, average, good, and very good.

All the sessions except one (which was rated 'good') received a rating of 'very good'. Lead trainers also used pre and post evaluation forms to rate each session. Table 2 highlights the indicators used for rating each training session by the observers

RATING INDICATORS	
1.	The session was effective in introducing concepts on the issue / topic
2.	The content was sound & appropriately presented
3.	Participants were intellectually engaged & able to understand important concepts through the session
4.	The situations used for group work / individual exercise were relevant for the participants
5.	Participants understood the situations used for group work / individual exercise
6.	The pace of the session was appropriate for training and the needs of Lead Trainers
7.	Active involvement of all the participants was encouraged & valued in order to generate ideas, questions, conjectures, and propositions
8.	There was a climate of respect for participants' experiences, ideas, and contributions
9.	The facilitator(s)' background, experience, and/or expertise enhanced the quality of the session
10.	The facilitator(s)' management style/strategies enhanced the quality of the session
11.	Facilitator displayed an understanding of concepts (in his / her dialogue with Lead Trainers, the examples which he gave etc.)
12.	The facilitator(s) language & behaviour clearly demonstrated sensitivity to variations in participants' a. Experience and / or preparedness b. Access to resources c. Gender, and / or culture
13.	The session had an effective post assessment format for the Lead Trainers

Rating of Lead Trainers

The observers from DAC Trust and the facilitator from MAAS-CHRD used a seven parameter checklist to assess each lead trainer for each session using a 0-4 rating system. The scores of all the four sessions for each participant were added and the total scores for each lead trainer calculated to help rank the lead trainers. Table 3 highlights the parameters used to assess lead trainers.

Based on the ranking, the 12 lead trainers were paired up to include a trainer with higher score and a trainer with lower score - this enabled the project to help increase the capacity of the weaker trainers.

TABLE 3: PARAMETERS USED TO ASSESS LEAD TRAINERS DURING THE TRAINING SESSION

PARAMETERS USED FOR ASSESSMENT	
1.	Shows interest in the session
2.	Asks questions in the session
3.	Answers questions when asked
4.	Participates in group discussions
5.	Takes the lead in initiating discussions within the group
6.	Takes the lead in making group presentations
7.	Has good presentation skills

Rating of Sessions by participants of other NGOs: Training by Lead Trainers

One researcher from MAAS-CHRD (for two batches of training) and two senior staff from DAC Trust were observers for the research training workshops conducted by the lead trainers. The observers used the same structured formats used during the training of lead trainers to make observations on the content, process and outcomes of the training (Table 2).

The same rating system was followed for the trainees from NGOs. All the modules except the modules on research design (rated 'average' during the 1st training) and introduction to the basics of research (rated 'average' during the 3rd training) received a rating of 'good' in the four batches of training.

Seventy-seven participants who attended the actual training workshops were given evaluation forms to rate the sessions and the lead trainers. More than three-fourths of the participants (n = 60/77; 80%) reported that the training met their expectations and a majority of the participants (n = 69/77; 90%) reported that the methods used during the training workshop made the concepts, terminologies and contents of each session easy to grasp and understand.

"Many of the trainers had very good flow. I felt they had a good grasp of the subject."

"The manual you have prepared and given is really good resource material for us. The Tamil translation is also exact. It will really help us in future"

External Evaluation of the Training by Lead Trainers

An external evaluator from Madurai Kamaraj University was invited to evaluate the lead trainers and the training method used for training staff of other NGOs. The evaluator used the following 9 parameters to evaluate the lead trainers and their training methods:

1. Knowledge in Subject
2. Communication Skills
3. Teaching Aids used
4. Response to query from participants
5. Approach to training
6. Overall presentation
7. Interaction with participants
8. Coordination with participants
9. Consolidation of the session by the lead trainer



The evaluator felt that the lead trainers used training methods which were successful in introducing their topics to the participants. The method used by them for teaching enabled the participants to grasp the various research concepts and terminologies with ease. He was pleased to see the lead trainers using energizers (short games) during their sessions which kept the participants active and alert. He was particularly content with the various group exercises used by the lead trainers for giving hands-on training to the participants on various aspects of research.

Mid-term Evaluation

A project review, at the mid-point of the project (month 15 of 27) was conducted. The key project team met to have focused discussions on project progress, challenges, and future activities. This was followed by a whole day of group discussions and interviews with the lead trainers, Directors of participating NGOs, and representatives of other NGOs who received cascade training from the lead trainers.

NGOs involved in the project clearly identified how research skills could enable them to develop strong evidence bases for their programmes. Many of the NGOs felt that the benefit of this project would not only be in strengthening the quality of their programme interventions through utilising research skills (e.g. documentation, data collection using standardised formats, data analysis using relevant software etc.), but also help in fundraising to support those programmes. They felt that properly conducted needs assessment surveys designed using their newly acquired research techniques would be particularly useful for NGOs to request support for their work from donors.

"Usually this kind of training is given to students and professionals. You have done a really good thing by offering this kind of training to grassroots NGO staff. All these topics are very relevant to the work we NGOs do in the community. For example we also do documentation, but now we have learnt the importance of proper documentation which will help us prepare good reports for our funders."

The Directors of the NGOs, from, whom the lead trainers were drawn reported that while deputing lead trainers for this project had been difficult in terms of managing their routine programme activities, they were very happy to have staff attend the trainings, since they expected to be able to see benefits of the training in the longer term. They expressed concern regarding losing some of the lead trainers due to the additional skills developed through this project.

The lead trainers' and NGO participants' understanding / perceptions about research had changed as a result of the information provided through this project. Many participants spoke about how they had always thought research was only to do with clinical / bio-medical aspects and not relevant to them as NGO project workers. As a result of the orientation and training provided by this project, they clearly articulated how this had changed and how they now had a good understanding of the relevance of research to their work, and its application.

"As a result of the training, the way we present documents and studies to officials has changed. By using research, we can provide better evidence, which is taken more seriously by the officials"

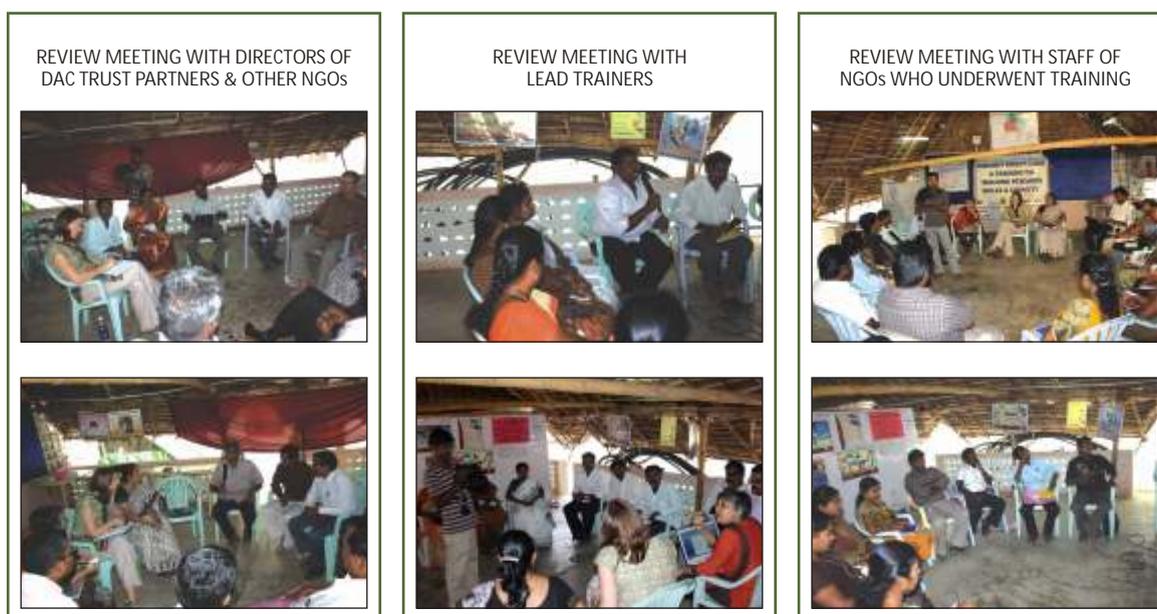
There were high expectations from the NGO participants who received the three day training from the lead trainers. Having found out about research, they were very keen to know more, and receive further training, both refresher and on more advanced topics. In order to help them understand the application of the training in their work, the trainees were encouraged to take up small studies in consultation with their directors.

"You have created a thirst for new knowledge in us. We will need more and more sessions now."

"You have led us midway into this river by showing us this treasure called research. Now we are knee deep in the river. We have no way but to keep searching for this treasure and reach the other bank. We only hope you will help us in this quest."

End of Project Feedback from NGO Directors

The Directors of all the NGOs, who had deputed their staff members for being trained by the lead trainers, were contacted in the 27th month of the project (8 - 10 months after the training of their staff members) and requested to participate in a feedback survey. They were contacted by telephone and then a survey questionnaire was mailed/ handed over to them. Fifteen Directors provided feedback. Only four of them felt that deputing staff for the three-day residential training had been a problem because their routine project activities were affected. Fourteen Directors reported that the trained staff members continued to work with the organization. While all the Directors felt the training had helped their staff members, 12 of them felt their organization had also benefited from the training. They reported the trained staff had gained skills in planning, conducting surveys, documentation, analysis and reporting, apart from communication and leadership. All of them agreed that the training had resulted in improvements in the performance of their staff members. Ten of the Directors reported that their trained staff members had been able to put their training into actual use in their routine work; moreover six NGOs had used their staff's newly acquired skills to plan and undertake a survey. Fourteen of the 15 Directors reported the training manual given to the trainee was available to all their staff members and eight of them reported their trained staff continued referring to the manual. All 15 Directors desired that this type of training should be continued to be offered to their staff members both for more staff members and as refresher training.



Knowledge Assessment Test of Lead Trainers

Each lead trainer at the end of the 4th batch of training NGO staff underwent a research knowledge assessment test. This test was followed up with another test conducted six months after all training activities were completed. The exercise helped understand the level of knowledge retention by the lead trainers.

The Paired Samples T Test was used to compare the means of the two test scores (variables). The test computes the difference between the two scores for each case, and tests to see if the average difference is significantly different from zero.

There was a positive correlation ($p=0.054$) between the two scores indicating that lead trainers who did well in the 1st test also did well in the 2nd test.

There was no difference between the two test scores ($p=0.923$), indicating that the group of lead trainers had retained their knowledge levels on research across the six modules even after six months of no research related activities.

TRAINING GRASSROOTS NGOs IN RESEARCH: EXPERIENCES FROM THE STUDY

Experiences and Learning

- Grassroots NGOs are keen to understand the basics of research and apply the M & E framework to their work; they are interested in finding ways to generate evidence based on carefully planned and conducted interventions and research studies, so as to be able to disseminate information and undertake advocacy at local, national and international levels
- It is necessary to understand the needs of grassroots NGOs and their work profile, so as to be able to plan the training and tailor the practical group exercises
- It is important to orient NGO directors/supervisors to appreciate the value of the training in their day-to-day work so as to get them to support their staff during and after the training
- It is possible to keep NGO staff engaged in training sessions on research using participatory methods and group exercises and using examples from their work situation; the training needs to be planned such that the trainees are allowed to simultaneously apply their learning in the course of their work
- It is feasible to train grassroots NGO staff as trainers who can train staff from other NGOs in research; they need to be supported adequately and allowed to adapt the training modules used to conduct the training sessions
- It is important to develop a framework for assessing and evaluating the training sessions and the trainers so as to help them constantly improve their knowledge and training techniques
- NGO staff trained under this project could understand how research was relevant and could be applied to their work.
- In the long term, such training offered to NGOs could strengthen the quality of their interventions in health, development and allied sectors, through better documentation, analysis and reporting.
- It could help NGOs use appropriate research techniques to undertake baseline studies among communities and plan and evaluate their interventions.

FELICITATION OF LEAD TRAINERS



STUDY OUTPUTS

- Training modules for training of lead trainers (bilingual English-Tamil)
- Training modules used by lead trainers for training NGO staff (Tamil)
- Manual for Training of Trainers (TOT) in English
- Manual for Training of Trainers in Tamil
- Observation sheets for training sessions
- Feedback form for trainees
- Formats for evaluation of training sessions and trainees
- Knowledge assessment forms for lead trainers

THE TEAM: RESEARCHERS FROM MAAS-CHRD & DACT and LEAD TRAINERS



ABOUT THE COLLABORATING ORGANISATIONS

Maharashtra Association of Anthropological Sciences-Centre for Health Research and Development (MAAS-CHRD)

MAAS is a research organisation recognized as SIRO (Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation) by Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India, New Delhi. Since 1976, it has functioned through three arms, Centre for Tribal and Rural Development, Centre for Health Research and Development and Centre for Documentation and Dissemination. MAAS is involved in training in research methodology, health and development through course work, seminars, symposia and workshops. The unit CHRD, has trained and expert researchers in different disciplines like medical anthropology, health and social science, public health and epidemiology.

Development Action Consortium Trust

Development Action Consortium (DAC) Trust is a large integrated, health and women development organisation working in partnership with five grass root NGOs. It facilitates, assists and monitors the activities of NGOs in Theni District of Tamil Nadu to socially, economically and politically empower poor and marginalized communities. Its priorities are to promote independent women's federations, strengthen Panchayat Raj Institutions and empower and equip the community to participate in health. The objectives of DAC Trust are to undertake, coordinate or liaise development activities of partner NGOs, to assist these NGOs in development of skills and capacity, to identify, mobilize and provide services and resources to these NGOs and to liaise with the state, national and other bodies, and financial and research institutions.

Target Tuberculosis

Target TB is a UK based international development organization with a vision of a world free from TB. Its mission is to stop vulnerable people in Africa and Asia dying from TB by improving access to information, treatment, care and support. Building effective linkages and collaborations between research organisations and NGOs delivering TB services at the community level is a key component of Target TB's work to bring about sustainable improvements in the global TB response.