INNOVATIVE IMPACT ASSESSMENT IN HUMANITARIAN TRAINING

SUMMARY OF PROJECT FINDINGS

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people and skills for disaster relief

HIF Humanitarian Innovation Fund

Introduction

In May 2017, RedR UK and the University of Sussex were awarded an early stage innovation grant from the Humanitarian Innovation Fund to test the recommendations identified in our earlier collaboration, the results of which are available here.

Ongoing engagement

Recommendation from previous work:

‘In order to extend the learning journey and prolong contact between the training provider and the learner, a recommendation emerges to maintain regular contact with learners in the period following the main capacity building intervention.’

To address this recommendation, a series of six scenarios and discussion questions were developed for two established RedR courses. In each instance, the scenarios were closely linked to themes from the course competencies and built on content considered within the face to face training event. The methodology was piloted with one instance of each course during the project period. Participants received a group email

‘I could go at my own pace and raise things specifically of concern and interest to me. It wouldn’t be so tailored to the individual in a training course.’

The timeframe for interaction is longer, which allows more time for reflection, and to achieve and observe change and impact

‘Coaching provides a much longer timeframe for interaction with the

Simulation and video capture

Recommendation from previous work:

'Recording participants' performance in practical exercises and providing this for them to watch back could be used as a means to support them to identify their own learning, and areas for continued improvement.'

To address this recommendation, a human-centred design approach was used, loosely based on IDEO.org's toolkit. The different stages of research entailed in-situ research at RedR's headquarters with managers, trainers and M&E staff, which was used, together with findings from the literature, to develop an initial concept. Three pilots followed, each taking place during a different training course. Between each pilot interviews were conducted with the trainers, training manager and participants, with learning incorporated into changes ahead of the subsequent pilot.

First pilot

In the first pilot, a Training of Trainers course, video capture took place as a before and after exercise. On the first day of training, participants delivered a 10-minute training on a topic of their choice. This was captured on video and participants then viewed the footage individually on a laptop and filled out a reflection sheet. User feedback was gathered initially through observing reactions to the view back, and f particular was more positive, writing that 'I think it is reassuring to know I do not appear so nervous. Means I can go into future training sessions feeling more relaxed which allows me to elaborate and say everything I had planned to say.'

On the fourth day, after a number of training sessions on various aspects of training design and delivery, participants worked in groups of three to deliver a 30-minute training activity on a humanitarian topic of their choice. This was captured and edited and then the groups watched their footage, discussing it and again filling out a reflection sheet. Observations during the view-back of the group activity highlighted peer support, for example one participant saying 'I look less competent because I move around so much' and another responding 'no, that's not true'. This reflection remained at a superficial level. Once again, the main focus of the discussion was on physical behaviour. This was reinforced by feedback collected in a subsequent interview with the lead trainer, who stated that:

'most people identified that they want to work on physical things like their body language (shifting from foot to foot, using their hands a lot, fidgeting, etc.) when in reality these things are normal and don't detract from a session. They failed to pick up on what we would cite as more important aspects of facilitation…I do wonder if this is because they could see themselves on the tape and so they focused only on the physical aspects of their session.'

Review of reflection sheets after the second video and view back session show the emergence of more awareness of pedagogical aspects, for example: 'I have to make sure I link the different parts of my presentation (work on transitions),' 'I need to keep an instruction simple and say it

once and don't repeat it in a different way, it leads to confusion' and 'my question asking style, try to be less frm when stating something, ask clarifying questions to avoid making participants feel uncomfortable.' Such learning can be supported and reinforced through more tailored questions on the reflection sheet, which was redesigned following the pilot.

Simultaneously, the opportunity was taken to test a number of different technologies (mobile phones of various qualities, a DSRL camera and a low-cost digital video recorder). Because of the low-light and acoustic conditions in the training room, we also tested using a microphone for sound enhancement. This experiment identifed the Samsung 7 as the best option of those tested, as shown in the summary table below:

Second pilot

In the second pilot, a Security Management course, flming took place on the fourth day of training, during a crisis management simulation exercise. The participants were placed in three rooms simulating different offces (international HQ, national office and feld office), which resulted in a highly dynamic flming environment, compounded by the general high-pressure environment of the simulation needed. The flming was focused on injects, when actors unexpectedly burst into the rooms pretending to be journalists, board members, local government representatives, etc. and intended to capture participant responses to these high-pressure moments.

Device	Price	Ranking of camera performance under poor light conditions (5 highest)	Ranking of sound performance under poor acoustics conditions (all were boosted with external mic)
Low-cost generic smart phone Android	£64	2	1.5
Midrange-cost Android	£130	2.5	1.5
Apple OS 4S	£220	3	2.5
Samsung 4S	£164	3	3
Samsung 7	£288	4	3.5 (up to 4.5 with mic)
Low-cost digital video recorder(Vivitar)	£35	1.5	1.5