**Annex 4.1. Sharing of Information Gained at Skills Acquisition Workshops[[1]](#footnote-1)**

The GDN Project strived to increase participating organizations’ competence in policy research and communicating the results of their analysis in part through transferring knowledge gained a workshops to other members of each think tank’s staff. During the period under observation, two workshops were held in the course of the project: the launch workshops, one in Asia and one in Africa, in summer 2009, and another held in March 2010 aimed primarily at peer-reviewing work accomplished since the launch workshop. The topics of the presentations made are summarized in Table A4.1.1.

Table A4.1.1 Topics of Presentations at Project Workshops

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Area** | **Workshop** | |
| **Summer 2009** | **March 2010** |
| ***Analysis*** | PETS and absenteeism study methods and examples of such studies | Cost effectiveness analysis |
|  | “Technical support” in sampling, survey design, and data analysis |  |
| ***Communications*** | Advocacy: case studies from past grantees | Constructive engagement & communications to achieve results |
|  | Advocacy: best practices |  |

a. Public Expenditure Tracking System

The discussion presents information on how the knowledge gained through participation in the workshops was shared with other staff at the participating organizations and the effectiveness of the workshops in improving Participating Organizations’ (POs) communications practices.

## Dissemination of Knowledge Gained at Project Workshops

To know whether the training of one or two staff from a project workshop is transformed into organizational capacity, one must determine the degree to which workshop attendees share information obtained in the workshop with others at the organization. If there is little sharing, the institution-level effects will be small, even though the individuals may have learned a lot and are using the new knowledge effectively. With workshop participants being researchers, it is especially important for communications staff to be informed about the content of presentations in this sphere.

Table A4.1.2 summarizes the information on within-institution sharing reported by POs. The questionnaire included the list of possible actions that could have been taken shown in the table and included pace for other action types to be included.

**Table A4.1.2 Actions Undertaken After Project Workshops**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Percents** | | | |
| **Yes, we did this** | **No, because staff know about this already** | **No, for other reasons** | **N** |
| **May-09 – Launch workshop** |  |  |  |  |
| **Analytic presentations** |  |  |  |  |
| ·   Distributed the materials obtained or a list of them to other researchers | 86.7 | 6.7 | 6.7 | 15 |
| ·   Led an informal discussion about program budgeting analyses | 78.6 | 14.3 | 7.1 | 14 |
| ·   Gave a formal presentation on program budgeting analyses | 41.7 | 33.3 | 25.0 | 12 |
| ·   Led an informal discussion on benefit incidence analyses | 78.6 | 14.3 | 7.1 | 14 |
| ·   Gave a formal presentation on benefit incidence analyses | 53.8 | 30.8 | 15.4 | 13 |
| **Communications presentations** |  |  |  |  |
| ·   Gave materials on communications and impact strategies to your communications team | 57.1 | 7.1 | 35.7 | 14 |
| ·   Met with the communications team to explain what the sessions on communications strategies were about | 53.3 | 0.0 | 46.7 | 15 |
| ·   Other | 100 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| **Jan-10 – Review workshop** |  |  |  |  |
| **Analytic presentations** |  |  |  |  |
| ·   Distributed the materials obtained or a list of them to other researchers | 92.3 | 0.0 | 7.7 | 13 |
| ·   Led an informal discussion about cost effectiveness studies | 91.7 | 8.3 | 0.0 | 12 |
| ·   Gave a formal presentation on cost effectiveness studies | 50.0 | 16.7 | 33.3 | 12 |
| **Communications** |  |  |  |  |
| ·   Gave materials on communications best practices to your communications team | 58.3 | 0.0 | 41.7 | 12 |
| ·   Met with the communications team to explain what the sessions on communications techniques were about | 58.3 | 0.0 | 41.7 | 12 |
| ·   Other (specify) | 100 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

The table shows a high degree of sharing the materials. Forty percent of POs reported having 3-5 sharing activities after the launch workshop and 60 percent after the review workshop. One-third reported 6 or more activities after the launch workshop.[[2]](#footnote-2) (Respondents were asked to indicate all activities they had undertaken; so there are multiple responses.)

Substantial activity at nearly all POs is evident for the knowledge gained on research techniques at both workshops, ranging from sending around a list of the materials obtained to making formal presentations. The incidence of sharing materials and leading informal discussions is in the 78-87 percent range. The pattern indicates that organization-level benefits on the research side should accrue from participation in the Project. There was a substantial increase in sharing of research technique material between the first and second workshops.

The pattern for the content of communications events at the workshops is quite different. For both workshops attendees from about half of the participating organizations passed on to the communications staff the materials from the “best practices in communications” session to the communications staff and met with them to review the material. Staff participating in the workshop who did not share the information from the analytic session fairly often said this was because other staff already was familiar with it. This is not the case for the communications information, where it appears that half of attendees just did not bother to share it.

We can explore this point further by examining how PO senior managers perceived the change in their staffs’ advocacy communications knowledge resulting from the GDN presentations. As shown below, there is essentially a normal distribution of responses, with 73 percent of managers reporting modest to large increases. Table A4.1.3 illustrates a clear relationship between a modest or greater capacity increase and the number of transfer activities undertaken, i.e., managers perceive real improvement where greater effort was made by those attending the workshops to inform their colleagues charged with communications responsibilities. For the two workshops, those reporting negligible increases in capacity had a total 10 transfer actions, while those with modest increases and large increases had 44 and 37 actions, respectively.

Table A4.1.3 Management Rating of Increased Communications Capacity from TAP Events

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **How would you rate the increase in your organization’s knowledge of advocacy and communications abilities as a result of GDN presentations on these topics?** | |
| Negligible increase | 13.3 |
| Modest increase | 40.0 |
| Large increase | 33.3 |
| Fundamental improvement | 13.3 |

Further to the issue of effectiveness of the communications sessions, 60 percent of respondents named a change in communications practice in response to the following question: “Can you name a major change you organization made to your communications practices due to what you learned at the GDN events?” The questionnaire asked for a short summary of these changes. Examples include: “Address issues systematically, convince with reasons,” and “We learned about the pitfalls to avoid when granting interviews to media networks.”

1. Source: Struyk, Damon and Haddaway (2010). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Figures are not in the table. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)