



Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment

A JOINT CENTER OF COLUMBIA LAW SCHOOL
AND THE EARTH INSTITUTE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Second Meeting of Negotiation Support Providers Trainings and Capacity Building: Increasing Coordination

June 8, 2016, 9:00am
Columbia Law School, New York

Organized with support from



BACKGROUND

In October 2015 the Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment (CCSI) launched the first of a series of meetings of Negotiation Support Providers, to create a forum to discuss common challenges and opportunities and to facilitate greater coordination among support providers. The overall objective of these meetings is to improve the availability, accessibility and quality of technical assistance and trainings at all stages of preparing for, negotiating, and implementing large-scale deals.

The first meeting focused on the challenges associated with the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the provision of technical assistance and training regarding large-scale investment projects. While the challenges are many, participants agreed that greater coordination and knowledge sharing among support providers of training content, materials, participants, and trainers could prove beneficial in improving the effectiveness of such capacity-building initiatives.

This second meeting of support providers is being convened to advance these issues, including the question of how support providers can improve the effectiveness and uptake of short-term trainings and other capacity building programs through increased knowledge sharing, more strategic outreach and engagement of training alumni, and better inter-organizational coordination. To facilitate the discussions, CCSI has also prepared a mapping of trainings and capacity building initiatives on the basis of a questionnaire that was circulated to and completed by 15 support providers, which will be circulated in advance of the meeting.

AGENDA

9:00 – 9:30am **Breakfast**

9:30 – 10:00 am **Welcome, brief updates from participants on new developments at each organization (with a specific focus on training/capacity development), and presentation of mapping of existing training and capacity building efforts**

Speakers: Lisa Sachs, Director, CCSI; and Sam Szoke-Burke, Legal Researcher, CCSI

This session will set the stage for the day's discussions by presenting the results of the questionnaire on trainings and capacity building activities circulated by CCSI to participating support provider organizations in early 2016. Key themes, trends and opportunities will also be discussed.

10:00 – 11:30am **Session I: Trainings: Content and approaches**

Facilitators: Perrine Toledano, Head of Extractive Industries, CCSI; and Sophie Thomashausen, Senior Legal Researcher, CCSI

Short term trainings and professional development / executive courses are generally designed to equip participants with the knowledge and skills to effectively navigate and manage a range of issues they may need to address in their careers in relation to the preparation and planning for, negotiation, implementing, and monitoring of large-scale investment projects in their home countries. This will necessarily include trainings on substantive issues that governments are likely to encounter, such as legal frameworks governing oil and gas investments or environmental protection, as well as “soft” or transferrable skills, such as negotiation techniques. Trainings can also be used not only to train participants, but also to encourage them to spread their learnings to colleagues and other stakeholders in their own countries. This session will review the current state of trainings being offered by support providers, and will examine: (i) the main themes that emerge from trainings offered; (ii) whether specific skills or topics are under- or over-represented, and (iii) how support providers can coordinate regarding program plans and training techniques.

Discussion questions:

- Are certain skills or topics under- or over-represented in the various training programs offered? Is this a problem? What actions are needed to better address this?
- Is there a need for more training on “soft skills”, such as negotiation skills, recruiting staff, managing ministries, etc.?
- How effective is a daylong or weeklong course in teaching substantive content? Is the purpose of such courses actually to teach participants the substance of a particular issue or rather to teach them to identify when issues arise so that they can troubleshoot appropriately?
- What are the different perspectives taught at trainings (for instance, sustainable development; human rights; investor perspectives; market-oriented policies, etc.)?
- How can we more effectively design training programs that encourage participants to become “trainers” or advocates of the ideas learnt during our trainings, and to spread their learnings to colleagues and other stakeholders in their own countries?

11:30 – 11:45

Coffee Break

11:45 – 1:00pm

Session II: Tracking participants of trainings and capacity building programs

Facilitator: Amir Sheikh, Chief Legal Counsel (Head of Projects), African Legal Support Facility

Ensuring that training is pitched at the right level, and that participants have appropriate levels of experience and seniority can be a challenge. In some cases, a participant will have already attended training on a similar subject and stands to gain little from revisiting the same issues; in others, programs will be more effective if participants have previously undertaken base-level courses, and thus have a firm understanding of fundamental issues and principles. Tracking participants can help to identify potential candidates for training programs, and allow for more strategic and coordinated awareness of which trainings trainees have attended. In this session, participants will consider options for tracking participation in trainings and capacity development efforts, and discuss opportunities for collaboration. The African Legal Support Facility will also present an update on its efforts to create a database of participants.

Discussion questions:

- What options are there for tracking the educational background or past vocational experience of participants, including courses participants have already taken?
- How would a cross-organizational initiative (such as a database of participants) be used by different organizations?
- What data (regarding the participant and regarding the training attended) would be needed for such tracking to be effective?

1:00 – 2:00pm

Lunch Break

2:00 – 3:00pm

Session III: Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of trainings and capacity building programs

Facilitators: Perrine Toledano, Head of Extractive Industries, CCSI and Sophie Thomashausen, Senior Legal Researcher, CCSI

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of trainings can take various forms, including surveys, post training interviews, self-reporting, and informal feedback mechanisms. The depth and content of what is monitored also varies depending on the organization and the type of program in question, amongst other factors. This session will review different strategies for monitoring and evaluating trainings, and explore the opportunities for shared learning amongst support providers.

Discussion questions:

- What kinds of questions are typically asked in surveys, and which are most likely to elicit a useful/ helpful response?
- What other forms of feedback could be useful – for instance, one-on-one feedback; end-of course tests and certifications, etc.?
- What are some of the recurrent themes in participant feedback? Are there any types of feedback or problems identified that can't be easily incorporated into future training?
- Do support providers seek assistance on monitoring and evaluation from colleagues at other organizations? For instance, by seeking their feedback on training materials or class formats?

3:00 – 3:15pm

Coffee Break

3:15 – 4:30pm

Session IV: Alumni engagement

Facilitator: Elisabeth Baraka, Head of Partnerships & Legal Services, Advocates for International Development

Support providers take different approaches to maintaining relationships with the individuals who participate in their trainings or collaborate in country during capacity development projects and the implementation of technical assistance. Engaging alumni can help track the effectiveness of training programs, build productive working relationships on other development projects, and act as an early warning system when further interventions are needed. At the same time, maintaining contact with alumni requires the time and effort of organizations whose resources may already be over-stretched. This session will explore how support providers stay in touch with alumni, the benefits this achieves in practice, the benefits this could achieve if this engagement was carried out more effectively, and whether there is a need for cross-organization alumni engagement strategies. The purposes or opportunities linked to alumni engagement — including whether it can be a channel for “training the trainers” or ensuring that participants maintain, build, and share their knowledge — will also be discussed.

Discussion questions:

- What are some of the more innovative means of alumni engagement being employed by support providers?
- What value is there in encouraging alumni from particular trainings to keep in touch with their cohort — for instance, through online forums?
- How can alumni engagement assist participants to spread their knowledge to colleagues and other stakeholders? What kind of alumni engagement strategy is needed to facilitate such a goal?
- A common motivation for alumni engagement is to build the organization’s network of future collaborators. What other opportunities does alumni engagement present, and how can these be seized?

4:30 – 5:00pm

Concluding comments and next steps

Facilitator: Lisa Sachs, Director, CCSI

LOCATION

The event will take place in the Jerome Greene Annex of Columbia Law School, which is located at 435 W. 116th Street (cross street: Amsterdam Avenue) in New York.

Directions to Jerome Greene Annex: *From Broadway and W. 116th Street -- Enter the Columbia campus through the large gates. Continue walking across campus and exit through the Amsterdam Avenue gates. Cross Amsterdam Avenue and continue walking along the north side of W. 116th Street. Pass the Jerome Greene HALL on your left and continue until you see a set of gates on your left. Enter the courtyard and follow the courtyard around to the right. The Jerome Greene Annex will be on your right, before you reach the Columbia Faculty House.*

