

Concept Note

Virtual Dialogue on Understanding Change through Training for Gender Equality



24 April - 14 May 2017

Online Community of Practice Platform

<https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/CoP>

Webinar:

Wednesday, 3 May 2017

9.00am EST/10.00am AST/3.00pm CET

Virtual Dialogue

Understanding Change Through Training For Gender Equality

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Introduction

Since the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, training for gender equality has steadily gained recognition as a key tool for gender mainstreaming – it is now increasingly used in projects, programmes and initiatives to advance gender equality around the globe.¹ Its conceptualisation as a “process of transformation”² is grounded on the understanding that training can, and does, lead to tangible change. The underlying assumption behind this understanding of training’s transformative power is that *“a change in understanding can lead to a change in behaviour, and furthermore that change in individuals can lead to change on an institutional level and impact existing policies and practices.”*³ Yet, questions remain about the ways in which this assumption plays out in practice and the nature of the change involved. For instance, the question of whether training for gender equality itself leads to transformational change, or whether it must be embedded in broader change projects in order to be truly effective.⁴ Processes of capacity development and institutional change *“are not linear but involve an often messy and incremental, step by step, sometimes going backwards, change.”*⁵ Thus, the issue of how such change can be accurately captured, assessed and evaluated presents challenging questions. Thus far, training for gender equality as a field has often struggled with issues of evaluation, particularly in terms of measuring long-term change through training processes.⁶

With the proliferation of training for gender equality worldwide, it is an opportune time to take stock of the change which such training has achieved, the change it can aspire to achieve, and how this change can be assessed and evaluated. To discuss these issues, the UN Women Training Centre will host its 10th [Virtual Dialogue](#) in **April-May 2017 on understanding change through training for gender equality**. This three-week online discussion and accompanying live Webinar are a unique, exciting opportunity for participatory reflection on the nature of the change which can be – and has been – achieved through training for gender equality, and how its impact can be gauged. Drawing together a broad audience – including the over 1,800 members of the UN Women Training Centre’s [Community of Practice](#) (CoP), experts, practitioners, researchers, academics and development organisations – the discussion will move us closer to understanding and evaluating the transformative potential of training for gender equality, in the interests of catalysing ever more transformational change.

1 UN Women Training Centre (2015) [Training for Gender Equality: Twenty Years On](#). Prepared by Dr L. Ferguson. Santo Domingo: UN Women Training Centre.

2 UN Women (n.d.) [Training for gender equality and women's empowerment](#). Santo Domingo: UN Women Training Centre.

3 Callerstig, A-C. (2016) “Gender Training as a Tool for Transformative Gender Mainstreaming: Evidence from Sweden”, in M. Bustelo, M. Forest and L. Ferguson (Eds.) *The Politics of Feminist Knowledge Transfer: Gender Training and Gender Expertise* (pp. 118-138). Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, p. 119.

4 UN Women Training Centre (2016) [Compendium of Good Practices on Training for Gender Equality](#). Prepared by Dr L. Ferguson, E. Wretblad and R. Leghari. Santo Domingo: UN Women Training Centre.

5 Walters, H. (2007) [Capacity Development, Institutional Change and Theory of Change: What do we mean and where are the linkages](#), p. 11.

6 UN Women Training Centre (2016) [Compendium of Good Practices on Training for Gender Equality](#).

Objectives and Key Questions

The **objective** of this Virtual Dialogue is to discuss the change which training for gender equality can aspire to achieve; the change it has achieved to date; and how this change can be assessed and evaluated. Each week of the Virtual Dialogue will be guided by one or more **key questions**, in addition to other topics for discussion which arise during the course of the Webinar.

Save the Date

The Virtual Dialogue will last for three weeks (**24 April – 14 May, 2017**) via a discussion forum on the UN Women Training Centre's [Community of Practice platform](#). A live English-language **Webinar** will be held on **Wednesday, 3 May, 2017** ([register here](#)).

Week 1: 24 – 30 April 2017 (online forum discussion)

1. What kind of change can training for gender equality aspire to?

- i Does training for gender equality target individual change and can it evoke such change?
- ii Can training for gender equality contribute to institutional change? If yes, how can it evoke such change?
- iii Does individual change through training for gender equality necessarily lead to institutional change?

Week 2: 1 – 7 May 2017 (Webinar and online forum discussion)

2. What kind of change does training for gender equality lead to?

- i How change can be articulated in training?
- ii What evidence and examples do we have that that training for gender equality can lead to tangible change?
- iii What is the relationship between training for gender equality and longer-term change processes?
- iv What is the state of the field of evaluation in terms of capturing change through training for gender equality?

Week 3: 8 – 14 May 2017 (online forum discussion)

3. How can change through training be assessed and evaluated?

- i How can we better measure change in gender and power relationships as a result of training for gender equality? How can we do so in line with the principles of feminist evaluation – i.e. evaluation that is collaborative, participatory and reciprocal?⁷
- ii What kinds of evaluation tools and methods are appropriate for capturing change through such training?
- iii What should our next steps be?

Format

Week 1

Online
Forum
Discussion

The Virtual Dialogue will begin with a **week-long discussion** on the UN Women Training Centre's [Community of Practice \(CoP\) platform](#), guided by the key questions outlined above on understanding change through training for gender equality.

In the **second week** of the Virtual Dialogue, a live English-language **Webinar** will be held. Three invited gender equality experts will give short (5 minute) presentations on change through training for gender equality. A Question & Answer session will then be held to generate debate between the panel. CoP members are invited to submit questions via the **Webinar's "questions" facility**, to be posed on their behalf by the Moderator, who will closely monitor the Webinar questions' function. A recording of the Webinar will be posted on the CoP platform.

Week 2

Forum Discussion
& Webinar

**Remember to pose
your questions for
the Webinar
speakers**

⁷ Greene, J. C. (2006) "Evaluation, Democracy, and Social Change", in I. Shaw, I. Graham, R. Shaw, J. C. Greene and M. M. Mark (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Evaluation* (pp. 118-140), p. 131.

Week 3

Online
Forum
Discussion

During the remaining **second and third weeks** of the Virtual Dialogue, the dedicated discussion forum will continue on the CoP platform. Here, participants will be able to share thoughts, experiences, lessons learned, and raise further questions for reflection. The panel discussion will be moderated by Virtual Dialogue Consultant, Ruya Leghari, and the expert Webinar panellists will be asked to contribute to the debates.

The discussions held during the Virtual Dialogue will be synthesised into a comprehensive **report**, to be disseminated throughout the Community of Practice and via UN Women's communication channels. All participants in the forum discussion, and those who pose questions during the Webinar, will be mentioned in the report.

Follow-
up

Virtual Dialogue
Report

Webinar Speakers

Webinar Expert Panel Members (3rd May, 2017)



Maram Barqawi, *Monitoring and Evaluation Manager, Jordan Education Initiative and Instructor for EvalPartners*

Maram is a certified expert in Evaluation Practice (CEP)[™] from the Evaluation Institute with over 15 years' experience in Monitoring & Evaluation techniques, performance management, setting smart key performance indicators, as well as collecting and analysing quantitative and qualitative data. She has worked on several areas, including result-based management, performance monitoring systems, capacity building, information technology, education and economic research. She has extensive experience with USAID/Jordan M&E methodology; has collaborated as a consultant with UNICEF, UNDP and ESCWA in monitoring the MDGs; and has carried out projects in Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, Jerusalem, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, India and Tunisia.

Laura Gonzalez, *Regional Evaluation Specialist for Latin America and the Caribbean, UN Women Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) (TBC)*



Claudy Vouhe, *Founding Member, Genre en Action*

Claudy Vouhé has worked as a gender expert for over 20 years. She specialises in training and supporting gender mainstreaming, including gender responsive budgeting (GRB), mostly in West African countries. A feminist, she has been working alongside women's organisations as well as international and national institutions. She is also a founding member of Genre en Action, a francophone research and advocacy network.

Target Audience and Audience Participation

Participation in this Virtual Dialogue can take two forms – by participating in the live panel discussion during the Webinar and/or by contributing to the [open discussion forum on the CoP platform](#). The discussion forum will remain open between the 24th of April and the 14th of May, 2017.

The Virtual Dialogue is open to all members of the UN Women Training Centre’s Community of Practice; UN Women and UN System Staff; government representatives; experts and practitioners in training for gender equality; academia and research institutions; civil society partners, especially women’s organisations; and all those interested in the nature and evaluation of change through training for gender equality. We particularly welcome the participation of experts in training for gender equality and trainers in other fields, whose knowledge and experiences will significantly enrich the debate.

To participate in the Virtual Dialogue, you must be a member of the Community of Practice.
[Click here to become a CoP member and join the Forum Discussion](#)
[and here for the live Webinar](#)

Background Information: *What are Virtual Dialogues?*

Virtual Dialogues are online discussions aimed at promoting debate, dialogue, exchange of good practices, ideas, and information on topics related to training for gender equality that respond to the interests, needs and motivations of [UN Women Community of Practice in Training for Gender Equality \(CoP\)](#). The CoP provides gender experts and practitioners with an open forum for articulation and debate, as well as a clearing house of [resources](#), [institutions](#) and [training opportunities](#) related to training for gender equality.

The overall aim of the Virtual Dialogues is to develop effective, inclusive processes of collective knowledge production with the end goal of improving the quality and impact of training for gender equality, while highlighting its transformative potential. This will be the tenth Virtual Dialogue run by the CoP.

Past CoP Virtual Dialogues	
-	Professionalization of Trainers for Gender Equality (October-November 2016)
-	Theory of Change and Feminist Pedagogies (October 2016)
-	Compendium of Good Practices in Training for Gender Equality (August-September 2016)
-	Resistances in Training for Gender Equality (May 2015)
-	Online and Mobile Training for Gender Equality (February 2015)
-	Training for Gender Equality and Beijing +20 (October 2014)
-	Transformation through Training for Gender Equality (July 2014)
-	Knowledge on Training for Gender Equality (February 2014)
-	Evaluation of Training for Gender Equality (July 2013)

We hope you will be able to join us by participating in the UN Women Training Centre’s 10th Virtual Dialogue on Evaluating Change in Training for Gender Equality.

For more information on the Virtual Dialogue, please contact tc.cop@unwomen.org