

Summary Report of Sphere Training of Trainers (ToT) Course in China



Sphere Training of Trainers



樂施會
OXFAM
Hong Kong

無窮世界
World
Without
Poverty

Guiyang, 2021-9-1~9-5



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Summary Report of Sphere Training of Trainers (ToT) Course in China

Preface

Host

The ToT course was hosted by Oxfam Hong Kong and the local partner organization Guizhou Blue Sky Rescue Team.

ABOUT OXFAM HONG KONG

Oxfam Hong Kong (OHK) was established in 1976. OHK envisages a world free of poverty and the injustices that stem from it. Around the globe, OHK works to find practical and innovative ways with people from poor communities, so they can lift themselves out of poverty and thrive. The working approaches include implementing long-term development programs in vulnerable communities, saving lives and rebuilding livelihoods when disaster/crisis strikes, and campaigning so that the voices of the poor influence the local and global decisions that affect them.

In China, in addition to implementing humanitarian responses, OHK prioritizes introducing and contextualizing universally recognized standards, such as the Sphere standards, with our partnership with local authorities, NGOs, and other relevant actors. In the past two decades, OHK has played a leadership role in communication, dissemination and localization of international humanitarian standards and best practices in China, especially on WASH and CASH Programming.

Oxfam Hong Kong translated the Sphere Handbook 2018 into Simplified Chinese.

ABOUT GUIZHOU BLUESKY RESCUE TEAM

Guizhou Blue Sky Rescue Team was established in 2008 Wenchuan earthquake period, in 2012 officially registered in Guizhou Provincial Civil Affairs Department. After more than 10 years of development, Guizhou Blue Sky Rescue Team has developed from a civilian rescue team composed of professional volunteers into an integrated humanitarian agency, covering emergency rescue, humanitarian assistance, emergency response capacity enhancement, post-disaster order restoration and disaster reduction and prevention and other fields.

Introduction of the Training Course

In recent years, the Sphere training in China was mainly facilitated by non-local trainers. Due to the travel restriction after the pandemic outbreak in 2020, the external trainers were difficult to travel in and out of the country. Almost all Sphere trainings were suspended in the country. Training up the local Sphere trainers is urgent for the future development and promotion of Sphere standards in the country.

On the other hand, the civil societies were actively engaged in humanitarian response since Wenchuan Earthquake 2008. After over than years, the extensive frontline experience was learned among the local NGOs. Following a number of Sphere trainings were held in China, the local NGO workers acquired a good understanding of Sphere Project based on their frontline practical experience. Some good examples were demonstrated on using Sphere in practice. Some experienced workers or learners are ready to be local Sphere trainers.

In 2018, the new edition of Sphere Handbook was released. Oxfam Hong Kong translated the new edition into Simplified Chinese version. The Chinese Handbook is an important training material and resource for Sphere ToT course.

This ToT course was the first-ever ToT course conducted in China using the latest edition of the Sphere Handbook. Through this training programme, the trainees will be equipped with a strong knowledge foundation of the latest edition of The Sphere Handbook 2018 as well as have their practical skills excelled through the in-depth practice sessions on the four technical chapters of the Sphere Handbook: WASH, food security and nutrition, shelter and settlement, and health. The ToT course symbolized a new milestone of Sphere promotion in China. This report is a summary of the training objectives, content and lesson learnt in our ToT course in China which may facilitate the learning in other ToT courses in the country or outside the country.

Facilitator and Guest Speaker

Mr. Chris Wong, the lead facilitator of this Sphere ToT course. He is an experienced Sphere trainer conducting over 15 Sphere trainings in China or overseas. Chris has been working on rural development and disaster management for over 16 years. Chris was also the coordinator of the translation and printing of the Sphere Handbook in Simplified Chinese 2011 and 2018 Edition.

Reference Link: <https://spherestandards.org/training/tr-info/chris-wong/>



Print Screen of the Webinar

In addition, Ms. Laishan Chung, a gender expert, joined this training as a guest speaker to highlight the importance of preventing sexual exploitation and abuse, and power abuse throughout the humanitarian response which is to ensure that all humanitarian beneficiaries and actors are protected from possible harm.

Date and Venue

Date: September 1-5, 2021

Venue: Sunsea Forest Hotel, Guiyang City, Guizhou Province, China

Aims and Objectives

- To learn the development of Sphere Project and understand different parts of the Sphere Handbook and how to apply them in our humanitarian response.
- To prepare for running a Sphere learning event by stating the principles of adult learning, how to set aims and objectives of the training and learning a range of training and facilitation skills.
- To practice the above principles and skills by organizing a participate-led session.

Participants

- a) Participants: 9 from local NGOs and 4 from Oxfam Hong Kong, 13 in total. *(See Appendix 2: List of Participants)*

b) Participant's criteria: All eligible selected trainees possess at least 5 years of experience in humanitarian work and have previously participated in Sphere training.

c) Selection Process

- Selection Panel was formed by two organizers and the lead trainer
- All participants filled in the application form, including the information of their experience to join humanitarian response, Sphere trainings, training experience, Sphere promotion plan in the future etc.
- Participants were recommended by Oxfam Hong Kong's staff and BlueSky two weeks ahead of the training. The selection process ensured that the participants coming from different parts of the country.
- Participant list was confirmed a week ahead of the training.

Methodology

- The training applied a wide variety of methods, including presentation, participatory exercises, case studies, group discussion, role play and video playing etc. The participants were asked to complete a pre-training assignment refreshing their knowledge on Sphere, to help them prepare for the ToT.
- As the aim of the course was to train trainers, all the participants planned and delivered a 70-minute session (in groups of two or three), which was filmed and was then given to the participants after their session. All participants shared their constructive feedback to the facilitators who held the participant-led sessions as mutual learning.
- Due to the travel restriction of COVID, it's hard for the overseas trainer to access to the training venue. 10 participants were gathered to receive the training on-site. 3 participants attended the training online. The lead trainer conducted the training online with the support of the organizers.
- The training was carried out in Mandarin, the official language used in China. A Simplified Chinese Sphere Handbook was used by all participants for reference throughout the ToT course.

Daily Summary

Below is the daily summary of the sessions carried out throughout the training course.

Day 1

Session 1 Introduction to Sphere Handbook

The objective of this session was to refresh the participant's memories on the history and background of the Sphere Project. It started with a short questionnaire including the questions of the history of the Sphere Project, the Sphere Handbook, the Humanitarian Charter, the Protection Principles and the Technical Chapters etc. Then, we went through again the origin of the Sphere Project, different components of Sphere Handbook and the difference of 2018 edition to 2011 edition under the increasing threat of climate change, context changes in humanitarian response (e.g., urban response, complex crisis etc.) and the emerging trend of using cash transfer and market intervention etc.

Session 2 Humanitarian Charter

To reinforce learning of the above topic, participants were given a role play in two scenes. The first scene was to show that a reporter interviewed an earthquake-affected recipient who received relief items from humanitarian organizations but the items were not culturally appropriate. The second scene was a TV show to discuss what's doing inappropriate in the quake zone, what's doing right and how the Humanitarian Chapter could be applied to the situation – rights to a life with dignity, rights to receive humanitarian assistance and rights to protection and security.



Role-playing

Session 3 Protection Principles

The session started with ten scenarios in different countries. The participants had to match the relevant Protection Principles with the scenarios. This activity helped the participants to further understand the principles with examples. Then, the lead facilitator illustrated the concept of each Protection Principles with the egg model (i.e. response, remedial actions, prevention and environment building to the protection issues). Professional Standards for Protection Work was introduced at the end of the session.

Session 4 Safeguarding: Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, and Power Abuse in Humanitarian Response

Under protection issues, PSEA and power abuse is the topic we want to highlight and have in-depth learning during the ToT course. In recent years, safeguarding was a hot topic for all humanitarian organizations to be alerted. And PSEA is also one of the topics in the Sphere 2018 training package.

Ms. Chung, Laishan, gender specialist in Oxfam Hong Kong was invited as a guest speaker to deliver this session in order to enhance the participants' awareness of PSEA and power abuse. Through case discussion and True or False questions, Ms. Chung introduced the concepts of sexual harassment, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation and the strategy to prevent and respond to the issues that happened in the workplace and field.

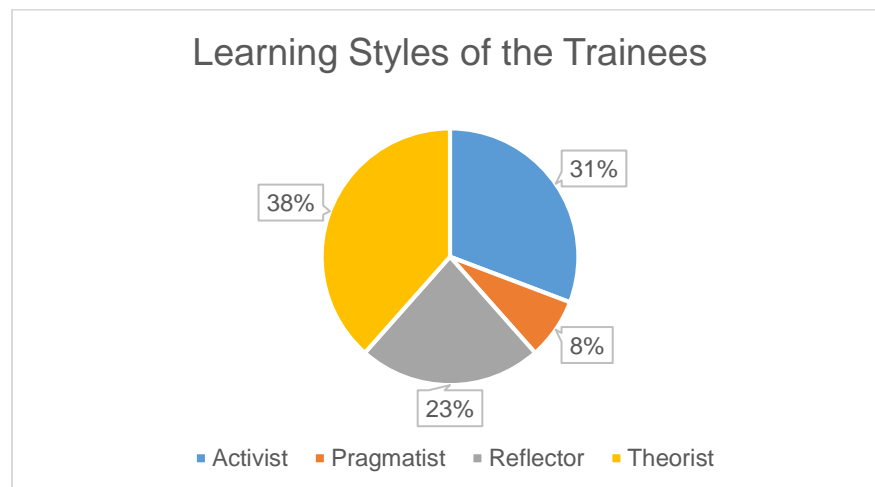


Ms. Chung, Laishan (left first)

Day 2

Session 5 Adult Learning Principles

The session was aimed at increasing participants' awareness of the adult learning principles and the various learning styles so as to allow a Sphere trainer to design the training accordingly. Malcolm's four adult learning principles, Kolb's experiential learning and accelerated learning were introduced in the session. The participants learned their own learning style introduced by Kolb. They understood that more experiential activity, knowing why to learn, problem solving and learning with their daily experience enhanced adult's learning motivation. On the other hand, they recognized every participant and facilitator own their learning styles, i.e., activist, pragmatist, reflector & theorist. Through the mini- and maxi-sessions (participant-led sessions), the participants reflected the advantages and shortcomings of their own learning styles. It's important to improve the shortcomings in the future by practicing.



Session 6 Preparing Training Event, Session Plan and Facilitation Skills

In this session, the overview of a training cycle and its link to Sphere trainings was discussed among the participants. The training cycle served as a reminder to participants who were already trainers in their own capacity. Participants conducted an exercise on listing the sequence of planning a training event. It was emphasized that there is a need to be clear of problems that participants-organizations wished to address when implementing Sphere trainings or other events. Participants were also reminded that they should not confine only to Sphere training or orientation sessions but may design and deliver other Sphere initiatives or activities as seen relevant and benefitting the context.

The format of a session plan was shared with all participants whereby descriptions of objectives, method, duration and resources needed for each session were further discussed.

Participants were asked to use the session plan template to design the participant-led session. The tips on facilitation skills, using PowerPoint and video were also introduced.

Session 7 CHS and Session 8 Mini Session

Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) is a new element in the 2018 edition Handbook. The CHS session was combined with the Mini Session. To start with, the background of CHS and the structure of CHS were shared with the participants. On the first day, all participants were assigned one Commitment or one Protection Principles. Each of them delivered the Mini session with their topic in 8 minutes. The exercise provided opportunities for the participants to learn at least one Commitment or one Protection Principles in-depth. They would also have a trial on speaking in front of other participants before the Maxi session. Feedback was given by all participants and the lead facilitator as well.

<i>Mini Session Topics</i>	<i>Facilitators</i>	<i>Mini Session Topics</i>	<i>Facilitators</i>
Protection Principles 1	Lei, Guang Qing	CHS Commitment 4	Cui, Yazhou
Protection Principles 2	Chang, Hong Lei	CHS Commitment 5	Wang, Kaibo
Protection Principles 3	Wang, Yan Bin	CHS Commitment 6	Mo, Rihua
Protection Principles 4	Li, Jun Bin	CHS Commitment 7	Ji, Shuguang
CHS Commitment 1	Wang, Yi	CHS Commitment 8	Chen, Xu
CHS Commitment 2	Zhang, Lixia	CHS Commitment 9	Yu, Liang
CHS Commitment 3	Fu, Yu		

保护原则3:

- ◆ 帮助人们从威胁、暴力、胁迫和剥削带来的心理和生理伤害中恢复。

Protection Principle 3:

Assist people to recover from the physical and psychological effects of threatened or actual violence, coercion or deliberate deprivation

Humanitarian actors provide immediate and sustained support to those harmed by violations, including referral to additional services as appropriate.

This Principle includes:

- Referring survivors to relevant support services;
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the affected population is not subject to further violence, coercion or deprivation; and
- Supporting people's own efforts to recover their dignity and rights within their communities and be safe.

Central to this Principle is the idea that communities and people affected by crisis receive coordinated, complementary assistance ➡ see *Core Humanitarian Standard Commitment 6*.



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Print Screen of the Webinar Film of "Protection Principles 3"

Day 3

Session 9 Technical Chapters

The Technical Chapters session aimed at demonstrating different ways to facilitate the technical chapters, WASH chapter using as an example. The session was started with a set of photos to show different techniques or types of WASH interventions such as Jerrycan, trench latrine, hand-pump well, water filters etc. which drew attention from the participants and introduced various WASH minimum standards alongside the photos. Following that, group work on designing water supply and excreta management interventions based on a flood scenario that occurred in China. The participants learned the standards, indicators, key actions and guidance notes by reading the Handbook and to design the interventions guiding by the Handbook. The session was concluded by going through all WASH minimum standards.

Session 10 Using Sphere in Context

This session was to reflect on how to use Sphere standards in practice. A WASH project example was shared in the beginning which showed how Sphere standards and indicators guided the WASH project design. The participants reflected on the good practices, challenges and how to overcome the challenges by group discussion and shared in the plenary.

Session 11 Participant-led Sessions (Maxi sessions)

The participant-led sessions were started at the afternoon of Day 3 to Day 5 morning. The session's topic was assigned to the participants at the end of the first-day training.

Maxi sessions 1: Introduction of Sphere Project and Humanitarian Charter

Wang, Yi & Yu, Liang



Day 4

Maxi sessions 2: Food Security and Nutrition

Lei, Guang Qing & Mo, Ri Hua



Maxi sessions 3: Sphere, Cash and Market

Wang, Yan Bin, Li, Jun Bin & Chang, Hong Lei



Print Screen of the Webinar Film of "Sphere, Cash and Market"

Maxi sessions 4: Shelter and Settlement

Zhang, Li Xia & Fu, Yu



Maxi sessions 5: WASH

Chen, Xu & Ji, Shu Guang



Print Screen of the Webinar film of "WASH"

Two to three participants were arranged in one group for one topic. In each session, the participants facilitated their topics in 70 minutes. Then all participants were paired up to discuss their feedback to the facilitators in sense of their facilitator skills, training materials, team work etc. within 3 minutes. To build a constructive learning environment, all participants were required to give three encouragements and three constructive suggestions. Mutual learning was emphasized before and during the feedback sessions. As same as mini session, maxi session was all recorded. The participants could play back and conduct self-reflection themselves. Overall, all participants prepared and conducted the sessions in good quality even the interaction in the class should be improved especially for those participants with theorist learning style. However, it's worthwhile to learn from their logic and concise presentations.

Day 5

Maxi sessions 6: Sphere and Project Cycle

Wang, Kai Bo & Cui, Ya Zhou



Session 12 Sphere and HSP

After all Maxi sessions, the last session of the ToT course was Sphere and Humanitarian Standard Partnership. This session aimed at letting all participants learn about other international humanitarian standards and the link with Sphere standards. They were complementary as companion standards to support humanitarian agencies to respond to different groups or in different themes like Elderly and Disabilities, Child Protection, Education in Emergencies, Economic Recovery, Market Analysis, and Livestock. Participants were divided into six groups to discuss the need of each people group or issues in humanitarian settings, why important and their practical experience. The lead facilitator concluded the session by going through all these companion standards.

Evaluation and Learning

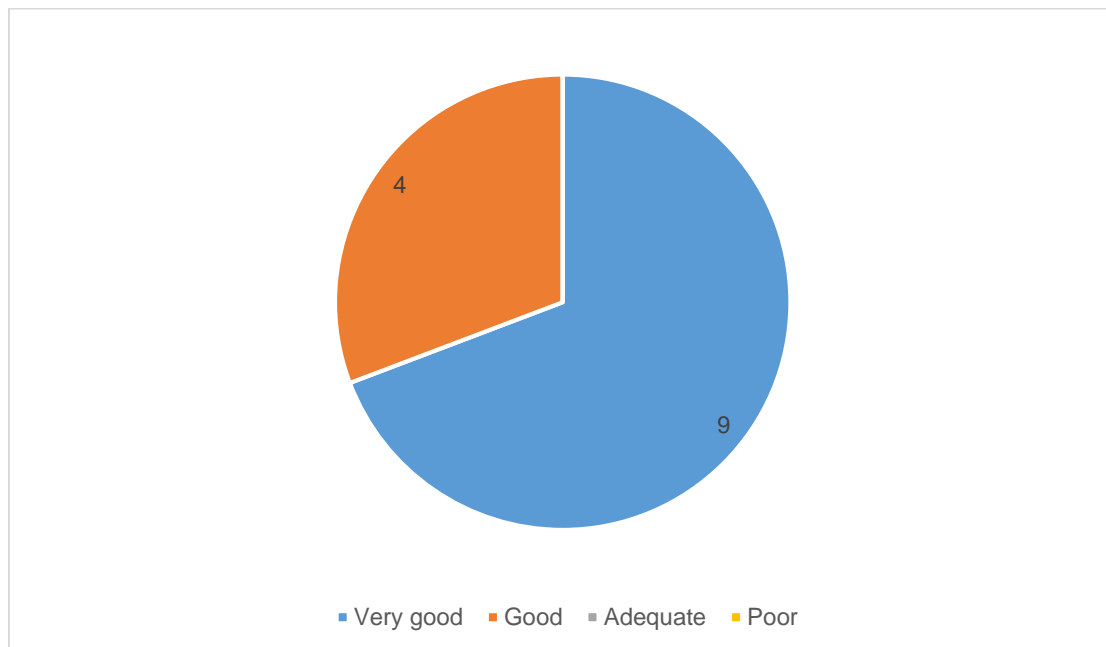
Daily Evaluation

Daily evaluation was conducted at the end of each day's training. The daily evaluation was conducted by an online survey, including the participants' comment on the logistics, facilitation, training content and any questions they want to clarify.

End of Course Evaluation

Final evaluation was conducted at the course closure in reference to the evaluation form provided by Sphere ToT Guidelines.

1. 9 out of 13 participants rated "Very Good" in the "Overall Rate", "Design & Structure" and "Presentation and Facilitation". Others 4 rated "Good".



2. Almost all of them thought that all sessions were important, and individual participants felt that the technical chapters were not necessary because it was not teaching techniques.
3. Five participants considered the principles of protection (including PSEA) and the core humanitarian standards (CHS) to be most useful because these chapters had previously been neglected.

4. Five participants considered adult learning theory and practice to be the most useful because they had mastered the training skills.

Recommendation made by the participants:

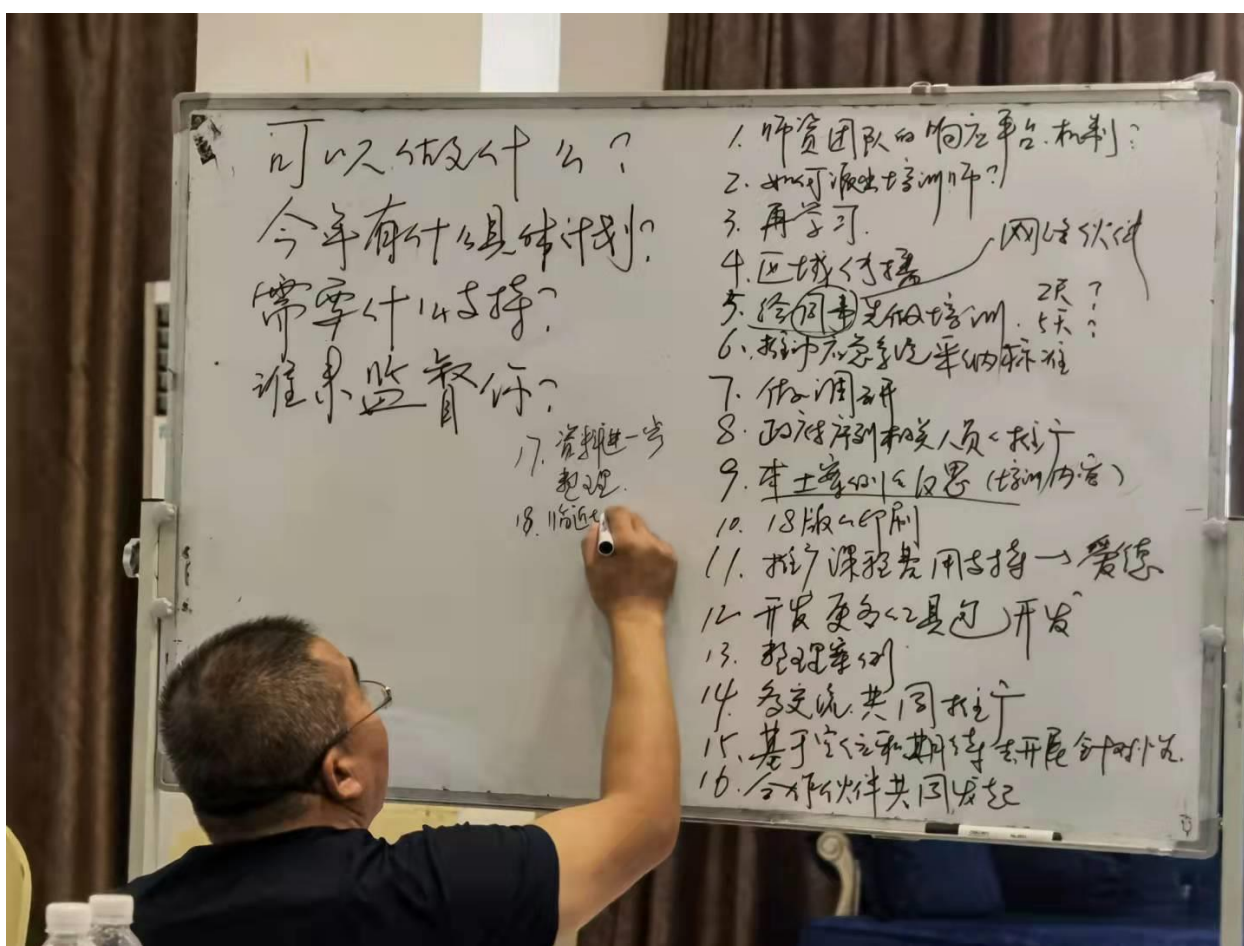
1. Eight participants said it would be better if the facilitator was able to teach on-site. But some thought that we have already done well in a combination of online and offline settings.
2. Individual participants believed that more sessions on "participatory learning theory" can be added. Participants felt they need to strengthen their teaching skills. For example, lengthen the session time of the Maxi session, e.g., from 70 mins to 180mins that may fit the actual training needs and to strengthen the participants' facilitation skills.
3. The link between PSEA and other sessions is to be strengthened.
4. In the session of technical chapters, the course should focus more on facilitation skills instead of knowledge.
5. More case studies and sharing are appreciated.
6. Better to have regular on-site technical support.

Best Practices

1. The use of Guest Speaker to share the topic of PSEA and power abuse based on their expertise and experience added great value to the overall ToT.
2. A good trial combining online facilitation and on-site/online participants. To ensure network stability, a few pre-tests were done before the training. And video recording was done for each session as a contingency plan in case the network was interrupted during the training.
3. After the first-day trial, the network seemed stable enough to keep interaction with the participants and online facilitation. The rest of the four days training was facilitated in real-time.
4. The profiles of the participants were well selected, i.e., from different parts of the country, key persons for sphere standard promotion in their organizations, well understanding of Sphere Project with frontline practical experience. They've already been quite ready to be a Sphere trainer.
5. Sphere training pack 2018 was translated into a Simplified Chinese version before the training. It was an important resource to support the participant-led sessions and future training in the country.
6. A WeChat group was set up for all participants and facilitators to enhance communication during the training. Most of the materials were shared by the group to save papers and printing effort.
7. The training was held in the countryside of Guiyang City. The participants could concentrate on the training and not be distracted by their own business.

Follow-up Actions

- Two basic Sphere courses were planned to be held by the end of 2021. The participants will be invited to be the lead facilitators or co-facilitators in order to provide more training opportunities for them after the ToT course.
- Chris, the lead trainer will join these two basic courses online and share feedback for the participants as mentorship.
- Through this mentorship process, the participants will keep improve and grow as a more professional Sphere trainer.
- A few of them will be recommended to Sphere Project Office as to joining the Sphere's trainer database.



Action Planning

Appendix

Appendix 1: Training Content

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
8:30-9:00	Welcome	Review	Review	Review	Learning on PowerPoints Graphics
9:00-10:30	Introduction to the course	Adult Learning Principles	Using technical standards and indicators	Participant-led Session 2 (Food Security and Nutrition)	Participant-led Session 6 (Sphere and Project Cycle)
10:30-10:45	Break				
10:45-12:30	Introduction to Sphere The Humanitarian Charter Protection Principles	Assessing learning needs Designing a learning event The role of the trainer Skills and methods for the facilitator and trainer	Using technical standards and indicators	Participant-led Session 3 (Sphere, Cash and Market)	Sphere and HSP Action planning Course evaluation and closure
12:30-2:00	Lunch				
2:00-3:30	Introduction to Safeguarding: preventing sexual exploitation and abuse, and power abuse in humanitarian response	Introduction to Oxfam training methods	Using Sphere in the Context	Participant-led Session 4 (Shelter and Settlement)	Leave
3:30-3:45		Break			
3:45-5:30		Mini Session	Participant-led Session 1 (Introduction to Sphere, the	Participant-led Session 5 (WASH)	

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
			Humanitarian Charter)		
5:30	Daily Evaluation				
Evening	Preparation for the Mini session	Preparation for Participant-led Session	Preparation for Participant-led Session	Preparation for Participant-led Session	

Appendix 3: Training materials

Training materials (in Chinese version only) Download by the link:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1rd409YWxDoTChPE6CtC_w6ittJ99IIoi?usp=sharing