Understanding & Applying the Training of Trainers (TOT) Model:

Learning, Good Practice and Guidance

Written and Researched
by **Enabling Outcomes**

Comissioned by
Primark

Contents

Executive Summary

Primark is interested in better understanding the Training of Trainers (ToT) model. This includes in which situations ToT should be used and how to implement the model most effectively. This paper frames the ToT model including in what contexts it works best, identifies the limitations of ToT, advises on how to best design and implement ToT, and guides Primark staff and other interested parties on how best to apply ToT to optimise its effectiveness. The insights in this paper are derived from the limited literature available and interviews with experts and practitioners.

Training of Trainers is not well-defined, can be misunderstood, and is often confounded with direct training methods or awareness campaigns. We defined Training of Trainers (ToT) as a model whereby through a resourced programme a pool of competent trainers is equipped with skills, knowledge, and a specific curriculum as well as a methodology to impart this curriculum onto others.

The approach, disseminated through a Master Trainer via Lead Trainers, should enable Lead Trainers to present information effectively, respond to participant questions, and lead activities that reinforce learning and foster behaviour change. An effective ToT model therefore is heavily reliant on the competencies of the Master Trainer and Lead Trainers, but also relies upon a supportive enabling environment that is conducive to behaviour change.

ToT is often used to reach large numbers of individuals. The model is best suited for simple concepts that build knowledge and encourage behaviour change, ToT is also recognised for imparting skills. For complex topics, ToTs might not be the most appropriate format. As there are other forms of trainings and building awareness, it is important to question whether a ToT is fit for purpose for specific content.

Successful ToT programmes rely upon strong content and curriculum that is well-suited to the audience. ToT effectiveness also depends on the facilitation skills of the trainer, which is often an aspect undervalued and under-supported. The facilitation skills of the trainers and their ability to communicate effectively and engage with others are key aspects of a ToT. Rigorous and thoughtful selection and building capabilities of trainers are thus deemed critical inputs.

The enabling environment also plays an important part in the success of a ToT. For a TOT to succeed, the infrastructure, systems, operations, and support need to be in place for the learner to activate and apply the learning. Assessing the enabling environment becomes an important part of the ToT model. A ToT also requires buy-in and a sustainability plan. Ensuring an enabling environment that aids and does not impede the ToT requires diagnostics, an investment in relationship building, and sometimes even incentives.

ToTs can be perceived as a cost-effective and easy way to train large numbers of individuals—yet they require significant investment. Not only is there a significant financial investment, but also a need for substantial human resources. Furthermore, ToTs take time—time to design he curriculum and methods, equip Master Trainers, select, train, and develop Lead Trainers, refine the programme, implement, and evaluate the effectiveness. ToTs are best suited for the long-term and as such require a long-term vision and resourcing plan.

This research highlighted that ToTs are often not studied or evaluated. The ToT model needs a level of scrutiny and learning to make continuous improvement and build the compendium of good practice. It is an important dimension of building capacity and capabilities: the learning needs to be shared to build the field. This research is hopefully the start of that process of learning, improvement and sharing.

Introduction

🗨 Background

Primark delivers a large amount of its supply chain focussed ethical trade work through training at a supplier or factory level, often using a 'Training of Trainers' model (ToT).

ToT is a way to disseminate information and equip individuals with knowledge, skills and know-how. It is viewed as an efficient way to reach large numbers of individuals—individuals with whom Primark does not have direct relationships. ToT is also used as a way to empower suppliers and factories to deliver content, leverage leaders that might have influence over their peers and/or their community, and help empower local ownership over ethical trade issues.

In a typical ToT setup for Primark, a specific training is rolled out to selected staff of a supplier or factory, who are designated as Lead Trainers. These Lead Trainers are then expected to train more individuals in their organisation. This approach is also used in rural settings, leveraging community leaders as Lead Trainers to help build knowledge and skills within a community (such as in the case of individual cotton farmers). Other brands, NGOs, and international organisations use ToTs, each having a nuanced interpretation of the ToT model and methodology.

🗨 Purpose

Primark is interested in better understanding the ToT model—when to use ToT and how to use it effectively. This paper is intended to:

- Frame and understand the ToT model, including in what contexts it works best

- Identify the limitations of ToT

- Advise on how to best design and implement the ToT model

- Guide Primark staff and other interested parties on how best to apply ToT

Methodology

The ideas and analysis in this paper are based on interviews with Primark staff, experts in training, and third-party desk-based research. An interviewee list can be found in **Annex 1**.

It is important to note that the ToT model is not well-studied or analysed. There is very little monitoring and evaluation on ToT models, and scant literature on how to design, deliver, and evaluate ToT. The lack of literature is acute in areas of relevance to Primark's business model, ethical trade programming, and sectors such as apparel manufacturing and cotton farming.[1] Most of the practice, ideas and insights shared in this paper are from ToT practitioners, training experts, and Primark staff.

The overarching principle that training should deliver behaviour change leading to results and outcomes is taken from the Kirkpatrick evaluation method, which is presented in **Annex 2**.

---

[1] Online research into the availability of studies on the ToT model found that the largest number of studies are in the health sector. Some transferable lessons from these studies have been included in this report.

Definitions

Primark is interested in better understanding the ToT model—when to use ToT and how to use it effectively. This paper is intended to:

Training:

Any one-off or series of sessions planned to impart knowledge, skills or know-how on an issue, a process, or a set of related issues. The sessions are designed with the intent that the learner will apply the knowledge, skills or know-how acquired, resulting in behaviour change and delivering intended outcomes.

Trainer:

A generic term referring to an individual qualified or tasked with delivering specific content to a designated audience. The trainer has the mandate and authority to guide and facilitate the audience through a learning process with defined objectives and intended outcomes.

Master Trainer:

The individual responsible for equipping Lead Trainers in the curriculum's content and delivery methodology. The Master Trainer's role is to build a pool of competent Lead Trainers who can then disseminate the content / skills to other people.
The Master Trainer role includes:

- Providing insight into how adults learn

- Helping Lead Trainers build their facilitation skills and content knowledge

- Making observations and providing feedback to help Lead Trainers improve their skills and confidence

- Signposting Lead Trainers to helpful resources and materials

- Supporting Lead Trainers during and after the training

Lead Trainer:

An individual equipped by the Master Trainer with the content and delivery methods to train others. The Lead Trainer is tasked with delivering the training to others as per an agreed-upon plan. (More details on Lead Trainers are contained in **Section 3**: A closer look at Lead Trainers.)

Training of Trainers:

A model whereby through a resourced programme, a pool of competent trainers is equipped with skills, knowledge and a specific curriculum as well as a methodology to impart this curriculum onto others. The approach should enable the Lead Trainers to present information effectively, respond to participant questions, and lead activities that reinforce learning and foster behaviour change.

Simplified*Training of Trainers Cascade Model

Master Trainer → **Lead Trainer** → **Learner** / **Learner** / **Learner**
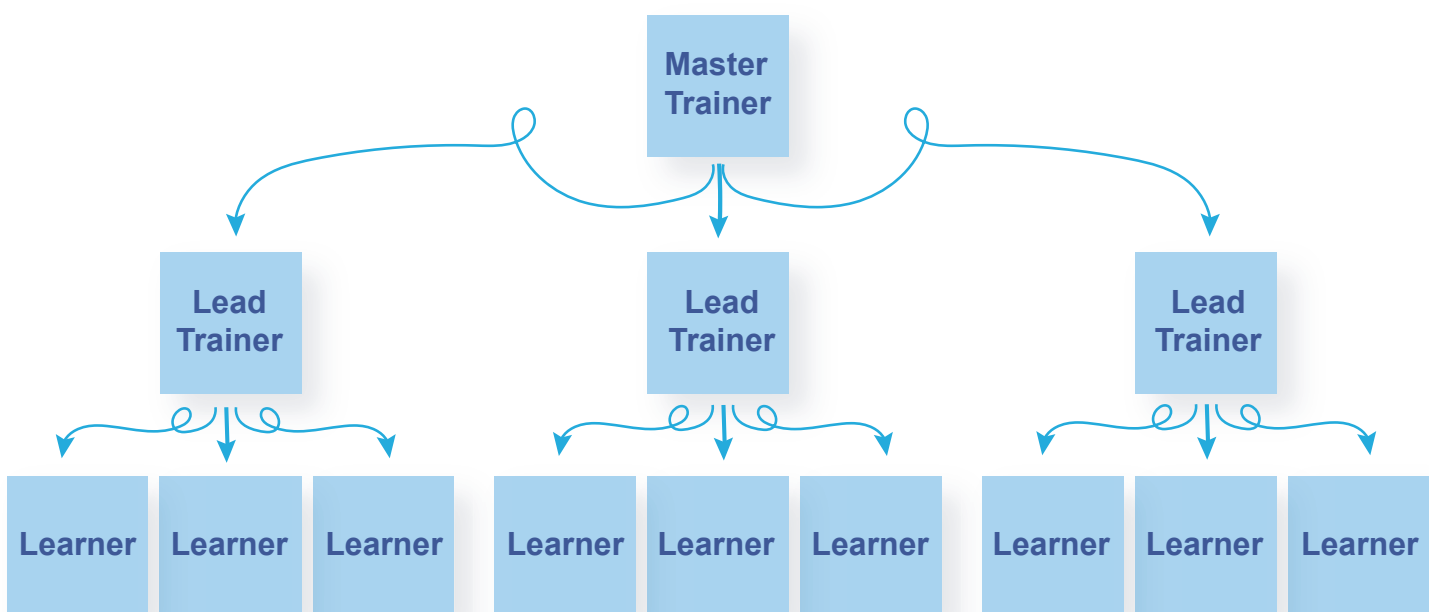
*Some ToT programmes are very large and have multiple levels. In those cases, there are multiple Master Trainers (e.g.--who operate at national, regional and local levels) who are ultimately accountable to the individual or organisation that leads the ToT programme.

1. Deciding Whether to Use a ToT Approach

ToTs are most often used to (i) reach large numbers of sites and individuals, and to (ii) convey simple messages or skills. Interviewees noted that NGOs, multilateral organisations, and even brands often default to ToT because they are under pressure to hit "reach" numbers. Due to the pressure to reach a large audience and to spread awareness and action on critical issues, there is a strong reliance on ToTs, but the method may not necessarily be the most effective to deliver change.

According to experts interviewed, if you are looking to create substantive change a ToT might not be the solution on its own, but part of a larger and more comprehensive solution or programme.

If it is important that knowledge is passed on with little to no likelihood of misinterpretation (i.e.—there are significant risks and consequences to "getting it wrong") then direct training or other forms of sharing information are deemed more appropriate, and a ToT would not be the preferred model.

In the course of the research a number of key areas emerged to consider when deciding whether to choose a ToT model.

Content should be Appropriate for a ToT

The view from interviewees is that ToT is more suited for simple concepts. If an issue is complex and nuanced (such as gender-based violence and sexual harassment in the workplace) it might be preferable to deliver the information through direct training and/or to rely on experts who can not only convey the correct information, but can also respond appropriately to questions.

- Programmes to promote health and hygiene, including Unilever and Oxfam's **Mum's Magic Hands Programme**

- Dissemination of a **healthy schools** curriculum by the U.S. Centre for Disease Control and Prevention

- GAP Inc.'s **P.A.C.E.** (Personal Advancement & Career Enhancement) programme for factory and rural settings

- If complex or technical information needs to be conveyed through training, it is recommended that trainers be teamed up with subject experts to co-deliver training, or experts are skilled up on training facilitation, but this would not be considered a traditional ToT.

- Although many ToTs are focused on knowledge building and behaviour change, ToT is also recognised as a good model for imparting skills.

💬 What is not a ToT

There is sometimes confusion about what actually constitutes ToT and what does not. There are other methods that Primark and its partners use to train and share information. Campaigns, direct training, and programmes that cascade or disseminate information are not necessarily ToTs. Leveraging worker "champions" or developing "promoters" appear similar to a ToT approach (i.e.—training committee members or having staff designated as resource point-people because they been equipped with certain knowledge). These methodologies might seem like a ToT and leverage some of the same concepts, but they do not meet the definition and characteristics of a ToT approach as outlined above.
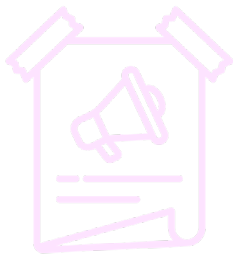
Campaigns: A fire safety programme in Bangladesh is delivered to workers in a video format and then uses posters, leaflets, public address (PA) broadcasts within the factory. Workers designated as "promoters" reinforce the messages from the video.

Although this reinforcing of the messages from the video borrows on elements of ToT, the promoters are not trained as "trainers" or recognized as such. This might be categorised as a "campaign" approach to information dissemination. As one interviewee noted, a training of trainers is beyond just absorbing information to share—it is about facilitating learning.
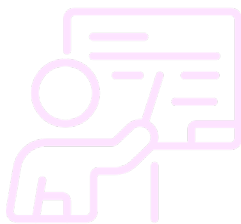
Direct Training: ToT is also sometimes used to label trainings delivered by Primark's partners when providing direct training to committee members (i.e.—Health and Safety committees, Worker Committees, Sexual Harassment Committees).

Although the designated members of these committees go through rigorous training so that they can serve on their committees, represent the workforce and liaise with management, the training they undergo is not ToT. These committee members are trained in a way that they can be resources to their peers and can act as facilitators; however, they are not trained as "trainers" in order to train others. This type of training would be categorised as "direct training".

Time and Resource to Deliver a ToT

Although ToT is often thought of as a cost-effective model to reach large numbers and impart important knowledge, skills and know-how, it is a resource-intensive model. Interviewees noted that ToT requires substantial planning and resources as well as a long-time scale for design, testing, refinement, implementation, on-going monitoring, continual support, and evaluation.

ToT should be framed as a multi-year project that requires continuous support from the ethical trade team—it requires a long-term vision.

One important investment is the Master Trainer. Staff members either need to be trained and developed as Master Trainers (which involves time and money), or Master Trainers need to be contracted via partners or training institutes.

The above points are just a few guiding parameters, but we heard many considerations to determine whether or not to pursue a ToT. Based on discussions with interviewees and the areas outlined above we would suggest asking the following questions when deciding whether to use a ToT approach and to ensure that it is a method fit for purpose.

??? Questions to consider when deciding whether to use a ToT

- Is delivering a training going to address the root cause of the problem?

- If not, what else is needed and where does training fit into the broader solution?

- Is ToT a part of an integrated approach to change and problem-solving?

- If the training is successful and the participants are to act upon what they are learning, is the infrastructure there to support them?

- In a work setting, are supervisors, managers, human resource departments equipped to handle the outcomes of the training and set up to support the actions?

- Are there committees or grievance mechanisms that workers can go to?

- What infrastructure, platforms, and resources are available?

- Do the ToT and the rollout methodology consider formal and informal systems and networks in a factory setting?

  _____

- Do the ToT and the rollout methodology consider formal and informal systems and networks in a factory setting?

  _____

- When transmitting simple messages, is training the best method? Or would a campaign approach or an approach leveraging videos, posters, Apps, or other methods be more appropriate?

  _____

- Who does the message of the training need to come from? Who is the most appropriate "mouthpiece" for the message and are they capable of delivering the message?

  _____

- Is the ToT to convey knowledge and information that would have great risks to the company's aims if the message were diluted in any way?

  _____

- Are the resources and time available to support a ToT over the short, medium and long term?

  _____

- Are there skilled Master Trainers available and ready to deliver, or is that an investment that needs to be considered?

2. Designing a ToT Model

Many of the considerations of a well-designed ToT model are the same considerations one would apply in developing a direct training.

For instance, the training design needs to be based upon the learner experience. If the training is about changing behaviours, you need to be very clear about what is to happen: what should the learner be doing in the hours, days, weeks, or even months after the training? Interviewees discussed the importance of being learner-centric, designing with the learner in mind, making concepts simple and applicable to the learner and their lives and contexts, and considering the capacity of the learner to absorb and apply the training concepts.

Considerations about the ultimate learner also apply to the Lead Trainers: considering their ability to absorb information, their personal and professional context, and their ability to retain methods and knowledge. It is important to realise that the quality of the trainers determines the quality of the training.

Hence, it is advisable to train fewer trainers at a time and take the time and resources needed to train them well [i] (although there is a propensity to train "in bulk" for fear of attrition). It is also advised to identify top-notch trainers and ensure that they are supported, continue in the role and have opportunities to advance. In the course of the research a number of key areas emerged to consider when designing a ToT model, which are highlighted below.

In-Person or Online

Interviewees who spoke of online ToTs believe that most effective ToTs are delivered in person.

However, that does not eliminate the possibility of online ToTs. Training designers noted that the approach needs to be entirely different and it needs to be built with online design in mind, recognising the different methods for engagement with learners and the ways in which content can be disseminated and tested.

In other words, you cannot transfer an in-person ToT to online, but instead you need to redesign the entire programme. It is important in those cases to work with digital content and online training experts. Key considerations for online include how to ensure high levels of engagement and energise the learners, build games, share and test knowledge and skills, and create connections amongst the participants.

Standardisation vs. Customisation

Whilst content can be standardised globally, there were interviewees of the opinion that 80 per cent of the content should be standard and fixed, and that there should be room to customise the other 20 per cent to take into consideration local context.

The development of the content should rely on experts, and local experts should contribute to development (such as in the case of labour rights, legal frameworks, and gender-based violence as examples).

Facilitation Skills

Training is fundamentally about facilitation: facilitating the process of learning and the exchange of information. [ii]

As such, the investment in ToT needs to focus not only on content but also in the training of facilitation skills and methods. One interviewee estimated that about 90% of the investment in a ToT project goes into training on content and only 10% into training skills, and that those proportions need to shift so that more is invested in skills development. Those interviewed who develop ToTs stated that building a foundation in adult learning theory is fundamental and should be embedded into the training methodology.

[iii]
Guidance on designing ToTs highlights the importance of Lead Trainers developing proven facilitative skills to promote learner engagement, reflective practice, critical thinking, and skill acquisition, and that Lead Trainers should master training strategies such as brainstorming, quizzes and processing/process checks, role-playing, games, and practice sessions.

Learning Process and Environment

Practitioners were keen to emphasise that when designing a ToT model, you are training individuals to be trainers and you are training them to deliver a specific training. A Master Trainer should pay attention to the learning process using activities that are carefully selected and paced.[iv] Variety is important to appeal to all intelligences—and thus training should be designed around several modalities and sensory stimulus.[v]

According to a study by the University of Southern Connecticut, "Because learning is a social process, it is essential that trainers foster positive training climates among all trainers and trainees. Positive training climates include relationships that are based on trust and respect, the creation of materials that are culturally relevant and based on trainees' needs as well as the understanding that adults learn differently in that the new learnings need to be applicable to their work and/or personal lives.[vi]

The goal of the Master Trainer is to prepare the Lead Trainers to present information effectively, respond to their questions, and lead activities that reinforce learning.[vii] The Master Trainer should prepare objectives, exercises and activities that introduce and then reinforce methodologies and content through a combination of presentation and process.[viii]

Training of Lead Trainers should be a highly interactive and empowering process that allows the Lead Trainers to explore their own strengths and creativity (and not be a way for Master Trainers to demonstrate their knowledge or prowess). It should take into account what is appropriate in a local context: role-plays could be embarrassing but fun and may build bridges and connections. Master Trainers need to be culturally sensitive about how they give feedback and how peer-to-peer feedback sessions are facilitated. This includes considering gender dynamics if there are mixed gender trainings and to consider how gender plays out in the local context.

As Lead Trainers are going through the training, they should be able to ask questions in what they consider to be a safe space. They need to feel that they can reflect, raise their hand, ask for help, and know that this is a continuous improvement journey. It is important that there is observation and real-time feedback.

Prepare
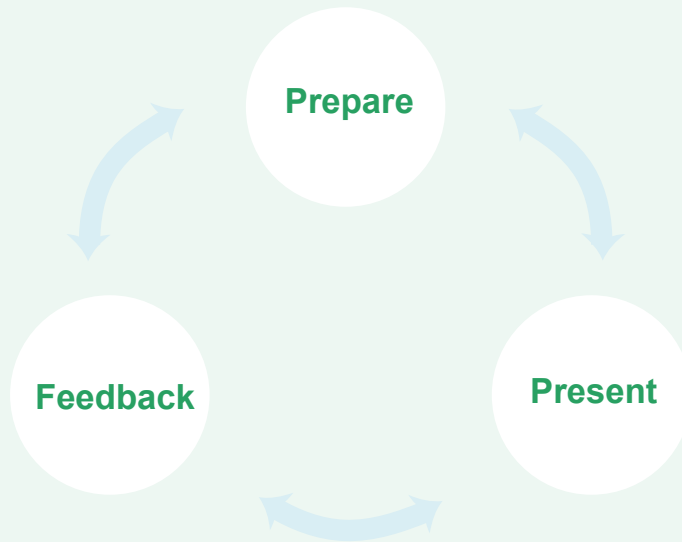
Feedback

Present

Women Win apply a cycle of "Prepare, Present, Feed Back" to allow for Lead Trainers to practice and improve.

Women Win also emphasise the importance of connecting information to context and knowledge.

Connect

Reflect

Apply
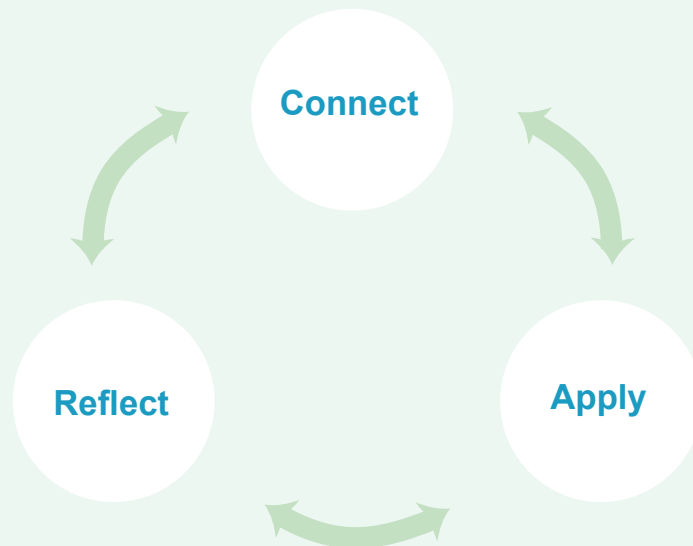
Content

In addition to training on how to be a trainer, the Lead Trainers need to learn the content, not just how to deliver it. There was consensus that content needs to be focused, sharp, and simple. It needs to be designed based on what the learner can absorb and retain. It is also important to consider that context helps with memory and retention.

The best way to determine what learners can absorb, according to one interviewee, is to speak with them in advance (e.g., through focus groups) to understand the possibilities and limitations. It is also advised to test out a curriculum directly with Lead Trainers and learners and refine the curriculum based on efficacy and feedback before rolling it out as a ToT.

Testing

Lead Trainers need to be tested in some way to ensure that they can effectively deliver the training, without simply testing rote memorisation. Interviewees suggested this testing should be administered through various scenarios, mock trainings, discussions, and observations. It is up to the Master Trainer to determine whether the Lead Trainer is "ready", although self-evaluation is also encouraged.

Sample Learning Assessment Diagnostic

Knowledge: "I know it."

Skill: "I can do it right now."

Attitude: "I believe it is worthwhile to train others."

Confidence: "I think I can do it."

Commitment: "I intend to do it."

Kirkpatrick—the widely recognised training evaluation method—considers four levels of an effective training programme: Reaction, Learning, Behaviour and Results. The Kirkpatrick method to assess learning could be applied to determine how "ready" a Lead Trainer is to deliver the training to others.

Learning evaluates the degree to which participants acquire the intended knowledge, skills, attitude, confidence and commitment based on their participation in the training. The Kirkpatrick learning questions are framed in a ToT context on the left side.

Materials

When the Lead Trainers complete the training, they should be "given" the curriculum.

As one interviewee noted the Lead Trainers should have a toolbox at their disposal. This should include a training manual and/or training notes and/or supporting videos. They should be given props if needed and appropriate. The ToT study by Southern Connecticut University, referenced earlier, highlighted that "It is essential to have everything in writing. We recommend that ToT Guidelines be written and shared and include the trainers' expectations, pedagogical tools and tips as well as examples of feedback letters."

However, these guidelines, tools and tips should be digestible: one interviewee observed Lead Trainers receiving a 70-page manual, which felt too technical and burdensome. Language and culture are also to be considered. There might be many languages and thus translation of the curriculum into multiple languages could be costly and burdensome. There also might need to be adjustments made to the curriculum and props to make sure they are culturally appropriate.

Pairing & Observation

The ToT model does not end with the completion of the aforementioned steps.

Interviewees were keen to point out that Lead Trainers need extensive supervision and oversight at the beginning of delivering training. It is important to identify if something is wrong because of the cascading and viral nature of the ToT method. Some interviewees suggested pairing Master Trainers and Lead Trainers or more-experienced Lead Trainers with lesser-experienced Lead Trainers when Lead Trainers are first starting to deliver training.

Refresher Training

There is debate and uncertainty as to when refresher training should be conducted.

Is it a month or two after the training? Quarterly? Annually? There is no clear guidance or consensus. Listening to the trainers, asking them what they need, encouraging them to speak up about their needs, and observing them delivering training are the methods that should help determine at what point a refresher training needs to be administered, as well as what content or methods need to be covered or refreshed, and why.

On-going Support

In addition to refresher training, there are other ways to keep the content and methods fresh and to respond to Lead Trainers' questions and needs. The Southern Connecticut University study[ix] recommends using mobile technology to follow up with Lead Trainers and highlighted the use of WhatsApp. They found WhatsApp a valuable tool to support local teams, answer questions, receive feedback and maintain strong relationships with trainers.

Networks and mentoring are other ways to provide on-going support. GAP Inc.'s P.A.C.E. programme, having run for over a decade, has multiple networks of trainers—trainers at the local, regional and national levels. There are social networks and informal networks amongst these trainers as well as formal gatherings, which provide on-going support. Another training expert interviewed witnessed success with a ToT that incorporated mentoring so that Lead Trainers felt supported and could access advice on an as-needed basis without feeling supervised.

Coordination

The level of effort and resource needed to coordinate a ToT programme should not be underestimated. One Primark team member noted the amount of time that they invested in the scheduling and coordination of trainers getting to factories, the amount of cancellation and rescheduling, and trying to bundle trainings together in the same geographic location. In the case of a large ToT, project coordinators have been hired by the implementation partner to ensure that the trainings are scheduled and delivered. Coordination and administration are necessary, but ways to minimise the costs and create efficiency are important as well.

Learning Environment

Where possible, training should take place in a location that maximises the Lead Trainer's understanding of the context and environment that learners will experience.

For instance, it makes sense that some of the training of Lead Trainers for a sustainable cotton programme would take place in cotton fields, at demonstration plots, or in agronomy centres. This mimics the approach of farmer field schools, where the learning environment is the farm itself.

3. A Closer Look at Lead Trainers

For instance, the training design needs to be based upon the learner experience. If the training is about changing behaviours, you need to be very clear about what is to happen: what should the learner be doing in the hours, days, weeks, or even months after the training? Interviewees discussed the importance of being learner-centric, designing with the learner in mind, making concepts simple and applicable to the learner and their lives and contexts, and considering the capacity of the learner to absorb and apply the training concepts.

Considerations about the ultimate learner also apply to the Lead Trainers: considering their ability to absorb information, their personal and professional context, and their ability to retain methods and knowledge. It is important to realise that the quality of the trainers determines the quality of the training.

Hence, it is advisable to train fewer trainers at a time and take the time and resources needed to train them well (although there is a propensity to train "in bulk" for fear of attrition). It is also advised to identify top-notch trainers and ensure that they are supported, continue in the role and have opportunities to advance. In the course of the research a number of key areas emerged to consider when designing a ToT model, which are highlighted below.

" Trainers are at the centrepiece. They hold the quality of the programme in their hands. People tend to focus on the learner, but the trainer is the important individual. They need to take pride in the training, be influencers, see and live the value of the training. Your programme is only as good as your trainer. "

-Interviewee

21

Qualifications

Lead Trainers ideally have some type of qualification. This qualification might be based on previously acquired skills or knowledge.

This might be because they have been accredited as a trainer by an institute, they work for a training organisation, or they have "trainer" as their job title. If an individual does not have a qualification or relevant skills or knowledge, they must have passion for the content and for the role of trainer. Interviewees spoke of attitude and motivation as the most important qualification, and some mentioned that a personal connection to the content also helps.

A Lead Trainer should have—prior to the training or acquired through the training process—the ability to maintain eye contact, present a positive attitude, speak in a clear voice, gesture appropriately, maintain interest, and dissipate confusion.[x] An interviewee noted that it is easy to overemphasise "hard skills" such as knowledge of the subject, but in her opinion, it is the soft skills that matter, such as communication, negotiation, and empathy. Another interviewee noted that the most important qualification is that the trainer understands people well. When selecting Lead Trainers, the person selecting them should feel confident that they can facilitate learning and that target individuals being trained will have confidence in this person.

Women Win, a longstanding partner of Primark, uses a "Head, Heart, Hand" model emphasising knowledge, personality/characteristics, and skills to help identify and select trainers as demonstrated below.

??? What does a My Life Trainer look like?

"Head, Heart, Hand"
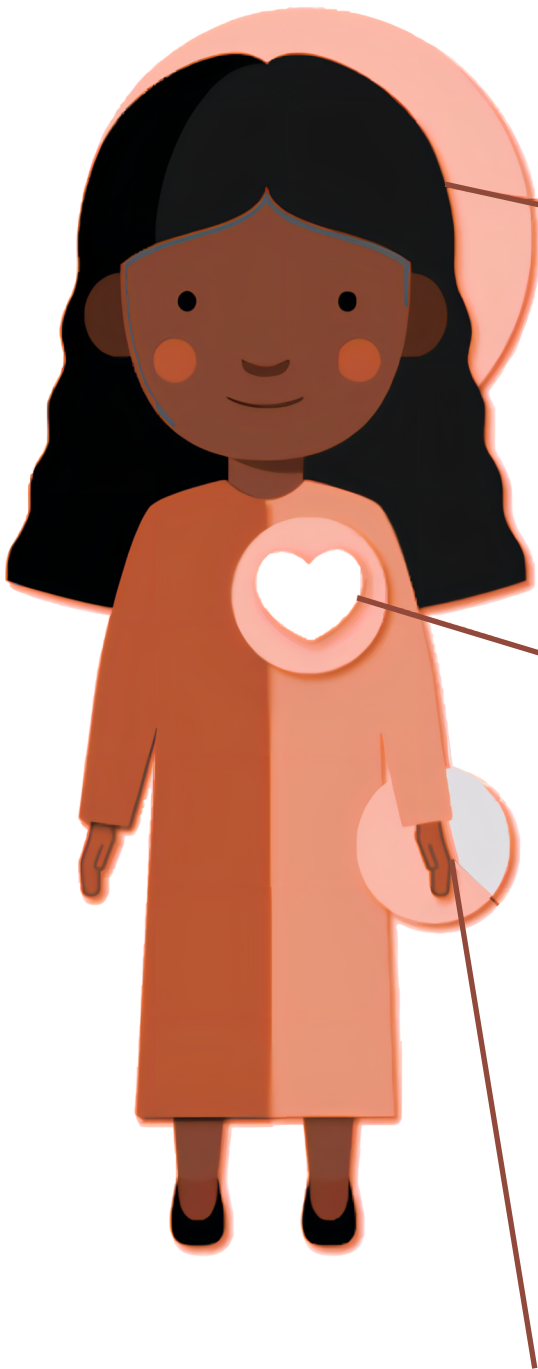
Knowledge

- Recognises the importance of educating garment factory workers on skills and rights in the workplace.

- Has some knowledge related to the topics of workers' rights and responsibilities, health & hygiene.

- Understands the factory context and the dynamics between workers, supervisors and management.

Personality/Characteristics

- Has a genuine interest about the well-being of factory workers.

- Has a willingness to learn and determination to improve personal skills.

- Enjoys leading groups towards a common goal.

- Is relaxed and approachable, yet confident and decisive.

- Patient and flexible.

Skills

- Strong organisation and time management skills.

- Able to provide receive quality feedback.

- Able to negotiate with factory management about importance of programme, availability of workers, access to a safe space, etc.

Other

- Hindi or Tamil speaking

- Female (required for female groups)

◗ Role in the organisation

Opinions are divided on using workers as trainers. The use of effectively deploying workers as Lead Trainers is by some considered an exception. Some interviewees expressed concern and reticence about using workers as Lead Trainers.

They question whether workers have the mandate to train and whether workers have the dedicated time to be trained and train others. Turnover of workers is also a concern. However, there are others that argue using workers as Lead Trainers is an effective strategy—and frame this strategy in a peer-to-peer ToT model. Workers are often be trusted by their peers. Workers can have many of the traits required to be successful trainers: a passion to teach and share, a desire to give back to their peers and community, role modelling, and lived experience. Some feel that workers, if they are to be trainers, should be offered a pathway to growth, such as becoming a supervisor. Others would argue that it is fine to have a classic peer-to-peer model, as long as there is a willingness to accept that there might be some slippage in terms of content transfer and retention.

Another theme is that the message and messenger should align: it is important to match the content with who is most appropriate to deliver it. For instance, an interviewee noted that a peer should not be training other peers on human resources issues. In the case of human resources, training should come from those responsible for and who have the knowledge of human resources policies.

Trainers should be recognised as trainers. A Lead Trainer ideally should be labelled and identified—this might be in their job description or explicitly stated as a function of their role and responsibilities. Ideally a Lead Trainer should be compensated to recognise the skills and the responsibility that comes with training others or have accelerated career opportunities. These individuals should have both the time and resources to be trained and to deliver training.

Setting Training Up for Success: Understanding the Trainer and Dynamics in the Learner Context

Trust, respect, authority, lived experience, and power—these were mentioned by interviewees as factors that determine the success of a ToT.

- When identifying Lead Trainers, an interviewee noted the importance of understanding how that person is viewed by subordinates or peers: does the person have power and influence in the factory (and is it positive or negative influence)? Is it a person that others will listen to?

- Another interviewee emphasised trust. When third-party trainers come in, can workers trust this person that they don't know? Will they open up? Engage? Ask questions? Will there be more or less engagement and participation with external third-party trainers versus internal teams?

- Does the training need to come from someone with authority or respect such as someone in management, human resources, production, or some type of supervisory position?

- Should the training come from a peer? Someone with lived experience? Or someone who is practicing the intended behaviours themselves?

Assessing Training Competence

Master Trainers can use exercises to assess the competence of a potential trainer.

For example, Primark's Learning & Development Team seeks Lead Trainers to train up managers and other retail team staff on a number of subjects. They ask potential Lead Trainers, "Could you train me on folding a t-shirt?" Through this exercise they observe the potential Lead Trainer vis-à-vis a training opportunity and are able to assess a number of the attributes that they look for in a trainer.

As the ToT is rolled out to Lead Trainers, the Master Trainer should be distinguishing who is connecting with the curriculum and who has strong facilitation skills. The Master Trainer needs to identify the high performers. The Master Trainer also needs to determine whether to advance with those that are not natural trainers or are struggling with the content.

Based on the advice and insight from interviewees, we recommend the following trainer selection criteria.

✔ Recommended Trainer Identification Criteria

☐ Do they have a qualification or relevant skills or knowledge?

☐ Do they demonstrate a passion for training, have an interest in being a trainer, and a willingness to learn and train others?

☐ Are they willing to adapt and change?

☐ Are they willing to listen to others?

☐ Do they show some ability to be a trainer and facilitate learning?

☐ Do they have the time and capacity to be a trainer?

☐ Do they demonstrate soft skills such as communication and empathy?

☐ Do they naturally command respect?

4. The Enabling Environment of ToT Models

An enabling environment is critical to whether the ToT will succeed. There needs to be buy-in from key stakeholders. There needs to be resource allocation and commitment. Supporting mechanisms need to be in place that enable change. An effective enabling environment determines the quality of implementation, the sustainability of the ToT, and the delivery and longevity of ethical trade outcomes.

Working with Suppliers and Factories

Some of the Primark ethical trade team members emphasised the importance of how any overarching ToT strategy should focus on suppliers (and factories). Suppliers and factories are important partners for ensuring a successful ToT. Primark ethical trade team members have concerns and doubts about the sustainability of ToT programmes and the capacity of suppliers and factories to deliver them.

One interviewee noted that there are two ways to win over suppliers' factories to implement ToT programmes: through the head and through the heart. The approach will differ depending on the factory leadership. Some will want data on the programme and studies to prove the business case. This interviewee emphasised the importance of continually investing in data collection (and not presenting old/outdated/irrelevant data). He noted other factories would support the ToT because they have witnessed changes in their staff. These factories recognise the importance of their reputation with current and potential workers. Some will see that aligning with a cost-effective ethical trade training programme is a good way to attract international brands. These are the factories that want stories and the positive affiliation with the programme.

This same interviewee noted that if you want a factory to own the programme, it has to come with flexibility. That means training is scheduled at their convenience. It means that they select internal Lead Trainers. He also noted that this is a cost saving: not negotiating schedules and coordinating with third-party trainers saves time and money. But this means also giving up some control.

In addition to the observations above, there is some research and thinking which might be helpful to consider improving the sustainability of a ToT model when working with suppliers and factories.

A 2020 evaluation[xi] of Gap Inc's Better Work program on Workplace Cooperation conducted in partnership with York University and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) provided some interesting observations and findings in relation to the enabling environment and sustainability. The project aimed to train workers and managers to more effectively address and resolve noncompliance issues and broaden workplace cooperation beyond the ILO Better Work's formal worker-manager committee structure. It consisted of providing ToT for Gap Inc. staff on different workplace cooperation training modules and skills in order to deliver training in selected vendor sites, including deeper knowledge of content, facilitation skills, and industrial relations. Some key considerations that emerged from the report are the following.

Time

One of the key challenges for the programme is time – or the lack thereof. Not all of the learners had attended all of the training modules, as they are usually involved in overseeing production, it's hard for them to get away from the line to attend all of the trainings. A recommendation is to acknowledge production constraints when scheduling and to train during times when production is slower.[xii]

Informal Processes

The reality is that in many factory contexts and cultures, there is an informal process of spreading awareness. This is reiterated in this description given by worker representatives in India: 'Basically after every training, we would just go and talk to the people around us and say this is what we learned today. And then those people would talk to other people, so slowly through this fusion and osmosis everybody has learned about everything in the training...when new tailors join, we would go talk to them and say look if you have any issues you can come to us, if you have a small or big issue don't worry, just come to us. We informally have chats with workers for 10 or 15 minutes on a daily basis but then if there's something specific we use a tea break, or we'll have them come for a half hour session and do a training with them.[xiii]

Turnover & Training of New Hires

Turnover was recognised as a challenge in some markets. It is why the learning and behaviour coming out of the training needs to be practiced and embedded, and according to the evaluation reinforces the need for better systems to support knowledge transfer through the training and re-training and of ensuring that ownership transfer is done properly between the brand and the supplier/factory[xiv]

Incentive/Buy-In

"The management needs to recognise that the programme helps, but for some factories, it depends on their mindset. If it doesn't help or brings nothing, they don't carry on. For us, we think this programme is really helpful, actually helps us, so we will continue to run this programme".[xv]

Below are considerations and advice for working with suppliers and factories on designing and delivering a ToT programme, sourced from interviews.

Considerations and advice for working with suppliers and factories on designing and delivering a ToT programme:

- Invest in building the overall capacity of the suppliers and factories and train them specifically on how to organize ToTs. Build the case for up-skilling their teams, managers, and supervisors.

- Ensure that there is up-to-date data and stories to demonstrate the effectiveness of the ToT.

- Recognize that the suppliers and factories might be capacity and resource constrained, so focus on the critical elements and components of a ToT: determine what is absolutely necessary.

- Get clarity upfront as to whether or not the supplier / factory can spare the bandwidth to deliver the ToT.

- Because the suppliers and factory management are critical to the implementation, get them involved early and involved in the process. Make the ToT relatable and relevant to them, not just to fulfil a Primark agenda.

- If a factory owns and implements the ToT, ensure they get the recognition for it.

- Share a holistic vision for all of the training offers and needs so that suppliers and factories have a clear vision of "what is on offer", elaborating the content and methods, so that they can plan and resource accordingly and also see where there is overlap or duplication with other programmes.

- Encourage suppliers and factories to send multiple managers to a ToT to be skilled up so that they can build the capacity and have a larger pool or trainers to insulate the TOT programme from being a victim of turnover.

- Ensure a commitment factor from the supplier or factory.

🗨 Building a Long-Lasting and Sustainable Model

While the Gap Inc. evaluation focused primarily on factors related to the working environment and the business, it is also important to understand the broader context within which training is taking place and the interplay between internal and external factors. Consultants tasked with the evaluation of Global Health Partnerships (funded by the UK Department for International Development through the Tropical Health and Education Trust)[xvi] developed the TRAIN model— a conceptual framework for ToT interventions in global health.

The model is intended as a starting point for further refinements and discussions about the factors affecting capacity building strategies based on training cascades. The key message underpinning TRAIN is that the sustainability of a cascade depends on a number of factors being present or developing at different operational levels (individual, organisational and supra-organisational) during the course of a project.

The TRAIN model should be relevant to other programmes and sectors:
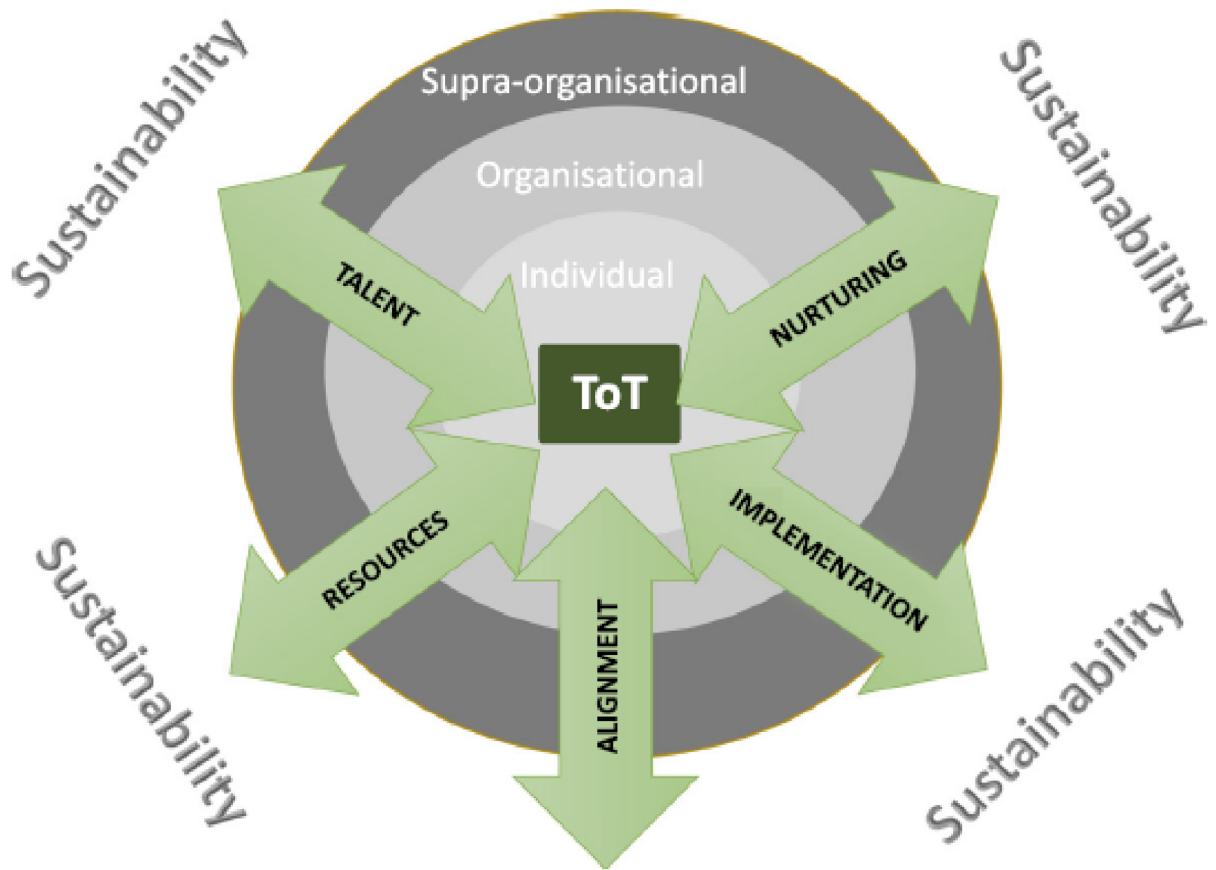
T alent

R esources

A lignment

I mplementation

N urture

TRAIN stands for Talent, Resources, Alignment, Implementation and Nurture, which capture the various elements that need to be integrated if the ToT model is to succeed.

The TRAIN Framework [xvii]

Talent

With talent there is a focus on selection of both the master trainers and the lead trainers. At the individual level consideration should be given to enthusiasm and communication skills **as well as** qualifications. At an organisational level there is a need to incentivise trainers but also to have a clear process for identifying suitable candidates and developing them. At a supra-organisational level, incentives for training—for instance through accreditation—were identified as helpful factors.

Resources

The two main areas identified were unsurprisingly time and money. At individual level the importance of not expecting trainers to do this work in addition to their full workload. The notion of "time to develop" as trainers was also outlined. At an organisational level the responsibility was of course to ensure that the resources of time and money were made available to both trainers and participants. The importance of resource allocation by organisations for information dissemination about training events was also underlined.

Alignment

If training aligns with the goals of the different actors, then there is likely to be greater buy-in at every level and thus better resource allocation and more motivation to make trainings a success. At the individual level to what extent does becoming a trainer align with professional goals? To what extent does the training provided align with the organisation's strategic objectives?

Implementation

The model highlights that the long-term effectiveness of ToT is often quite poorly assessed. At an individual level the importance of collecting evidence of skills gained is vital to understand whether a ToT scheme is being conducted effectively. To have the best chance of creating a sustainable impact "a clear implementation strategy (at the organisational or supra-organisational level) is critical to cascade the training." This may mean making training mandatory within an organisation or make maximum use of those newly qualified trainers.

Nurture

This reiterates the importance of not just focussing on the technical competencies of trainers. "ToT courses must also help individuals develop soft skills, i.e. attitudes and behaviours that enable learning: ability for constructive criticism, empathy, flexibility, etc.". An obstacle to this can be the fact that ToT courses are often short workshops which leads to a focus on transferring technical skills quickly. However, the sustainability of the ToT depends not only on initial training "but crucially on preventing de-skilling over time". "Sustainable upskilling of the workforce requires opportunities for continuous professional development to be integrated into the long-term vision."

5. Lessons from Implementing a ToT model

The following are some of the key lessons learned from interviewees who have designed and/or directly delivered ToT models.

Time and Resources: It is hard to underestimate the importance of time and resources. This includes acknowledging the long timeline and resources needed for effective design, building buy-in with the suppliers and factories, selecting Lead Trainers, administering the training, observation and quality control, delivery times, and monitoring of ToT progress and outcomes.

ToTs are multi-year projects that require long-term commitment and resources. Planning is critical. Teams need to map the resources. Sufficient time needs to be delegated to the training activities: Master and Lead Trainers need to have the allocated capacity to deliver. There also needs to be time and resourcing for follow-up support, refresher activities, reviews and evaluation.

Asking Smart Questions: Interviewees commented on the importance of defining the measures of success and assessing whether a ToT can deliver change, what type of change, and to what extent. Those overseeing the ToT need to be clear about how the ToT will work in practice. Although needs assessments are expensive, they are considered important, as well as contextual analysis.

There can be confusion about whether a programme's intent is to training trainers or just skill up implementers of a programme. Skilling up workers to participate in committees or using promoters to share messages are often labelled as "ToT programmes." It is important question: are we building up a cadre of trainers or a cadre of implementers/champions/promoters?

Other important questions that surfaced in the interviews were: is there enough infrastructure in the workplace/community to both deliver the training and to enable change to occur? Do organisations have the people, tools and infrastructure to put the training into practice and support the outcomes? If not, as one interviewee pointed out, the training becomes a "box-ticking exercise." The recommendation is to ask: What is the problem I am trying to solve? Is training the tool that will work? What else is needed?

Assessing Trade-offs: Designing a ToT and implementing a ToT is not easy. In a ToT you need to find a fine balance between flexibility and consistency. There is always the risk of the approach, content or methods being diluted. There are trade-offs between depth versus engagement and scale. There needs to be an assessment as to whether trust can be built, and flexibility can be offered in the hopes of that leading to local ownership and sustainability.

6. Recommendations

There are many considerations, tips and advice throughout this paper. The following are the overarching recommendations for how to better utilise ToT as a model for delivering ethical trade outcomes.

- Distinguish ToT from direct training and campaigns, and trainers from promoters and champions. Once those distinctions are made, it should then be determined whether the cascade of knowledge, skills, and know-how is best suited for a ToT and whether or not to invest in a ToT process.

- When considering how to deliver change, identify the root cause of the challenge and determine if a ToT is a solution, and whether a ToT needs to be delivered alongside a wider package of training and/or support measures.

- Assess the enabling environment, including any barriers, advocacy, or incentives needed to create buy-in with suppliers and factories as well as the sustainability plan.

- Ensure that partners understand all of the aspects of a ToT, are committed to the good practice featured in this report and have the willingness to pivot and learn.

- Always remember that the quality of the ToT depends on the quality of the trainers, including the Master Trainers, so one needs to ensure that there is enough thought, investment and time built into selecting and building the capacity of trainers.

- Be willing to invest for the long term in terms of time, money, and human resources if going the ToT route. This includes building the experience, knowledge, and ability of internal colleagues to be Master Trainers or use external resources and partners.

- There are opportunities to leverage the expertise that already exists on ToTs with partners, with other brands, and with consultants.

7. Annexes

Annex 1: Interviewees

▪ Ann Sunil & Crycilda Meyne	**Primark (India)**
▪ Wim de Groof	**Primark (Southeast Asia)**
▪ Dragon Wang & Youli Ge	**Primark (China)**
▪ Caroline Gee & Harrish Banga	**Primark (Europe & Africa)**
▪ Neelanjana Khan & Sajal Kanti Roy	**Primark (Bangladesh)**
▪ Mehmet Ozveren	**Primark (Turkey)**
▪ Emma Lennon	**Primark Sustainable Cotton Programme**
▪ Sarah-Jane Nicholls	**Primark Learning and Development**
▪ Conor Doyle	**Primark Ethical Trade Central Support**
▪ Joanne Martin	**Working Minds**
▪ Laura Hawkesford	**CARE International**
▪ Kathleen Brenninkmeijer & Libbie Randolph	**Women Win**
▪ Elvis Francis	**GAP Inc.**
▪ Jane Davies	**Jane Davies Consulting**
▪ Helena Pérez	**Improving Work Life**
▪ Minna Maaskola	**ILO**
▪ Kelly Pike	**York University**

Annex 2: The Kirkpatrick Model

The **Kirkpatrick** model is an approach for evaluating the effectiveness of training programmes.

Level 4: **Results**
The degree to which targeted outcomes occur as a result of the training and the support and accountability package

Level 3: **Behaviour**
The degree to which participants apply what they learned during training when they are back on the job

Level 2: **Learning**
The degree to which participants acquire the intended knowledge, skills, attitude, confidence, and commitment based on their participation in the training

Level 1: **Reaction**
The degree to which participants find the training favourable, engaging, and relevant to their jobs

References

i   Brion, C., & Cordeiro, A. P. (2018). Lessons Learned from a Training of Trainers Model in Africa. Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, 2(1

ii   Skills Converged. The Art of Training Delivery. 2016.

iii   Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Understanding the Training the Trainers Model. https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/professional_development/documents/17_279600_TrainersModel-FactSheet_v3_508Final.pdf

iv   https://ventureteambuilding.co.uk/trainers-and-facilitators-whats-the-difference/#.YvpY9OzMLVo

v   Skills Converged. The Art of Training Delivery. 2016.

vi   Brion, C., & Cordeiro, A. P. (2018). Lessons Learned from a Training of Trainers Model in Africa. Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, 2(1

vii Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Understanding the Training the Trainers Model. https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/professional_development/documents/17_279600_TrainersModel-FactSheet_v3_508Final.pdf

viii Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Understanding the Training the Trainers Model. https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/professional_development/documents/17_279600_TrainersModel-FactSheet_v3_508Final.pdf

ix   Brion, C., & Cordeiro, A. P. (2018). Lessons Learned from a Training of Trainers Model in Africa. Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, 2(1

x   Training for Impact materials and Skills Converged. The Art of Training Delivery. 2016.

xi   https://betterwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Gap-WPC-Evaluation_Impacts-on-the-Shop-Floor_2020-003.pdf

xii https://betterwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Gap-WPC-Evaluation_Impacts-on-the-Shop-Floor_2020-003.pdf

xiii https://betterwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Gap-WPC-Evaluation_Impacts-on-the-Shop-Floor_2020-003.pdf

xiv https://betterwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Gap-WPC-Evaluation_Impacts-on-the-Shop-Floor_2020-003.pdf

xv https://betterwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Gap-WPC-Evaluation_Impacts-on-the-Shop-Floor_2020-003.pdf

xvi Mormina, M., Pinder, S. A conceptual framework for training of trainers (ToT) interventions in global health. Global Health 14, 100 (2018). https://doi.org/10.1186/s12992-018-0420-3

xvii https://globalizationandhealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12992-018-0420-3

Credits:

Written by **Caren Holzman** with research support from **Ken Boyce**. Oversight by **Matthew Davidson**.