BEST PRACTICES FOR INCLUSIVE SECURITY TRAINING

UNDSS Training and Development Section
2021

United Nations | Department of Safety and Security

United Nations
Department of Safety and Security

VISION

Security for the United Nations, for a better world.

MISSION

To enable United Nations system operations through trusted security leadership and solutions.

VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS

**Professionalism
Collaboration
Solution-oriented
Transparency**

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I. Purpose and background of guidance

The purpose of this document is to collect and list best practices for ensuring any security learning or training activities are inclusive for all learners. It sets out the standard for UNDSS's Training and Development Section's efforts to ensure inclusion in its training. UN personnel are a diverse workforce in terms of religion, culture, ethnicity, beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity expression and sex characteristics and aspects that make us all unique, as well as in terms of disability[1] and neurodiversity[2], such as autism. Many of us have intersectional vulnerabilities, which means that elements of our identity, i.e. race, gender, disability etc. may be more vulnerable to specific threats in certain contexts. These vulnerabilities should be mitigated, including during training.

The Deloitte Safe Spaces Survey showed that when it comes to UN personnel experiencing sexual harassment and sexual violence, some 5.4 per cent of incidents occurred during training events and 17.1 per cent occurred at a social event where colleagues were present. As trainers we are responsible for making a learning environment safe and inclusive, both physically and psychologically.

This means ensuring zero sexual harassment[3] of learners, trainers and others present in class or outside the classroom as well as factoring in reasonable accommodation of needs.

The focus of UN security training should always be about ensuring that participants are able to demonstrate the learning objectives; it's not about 'toughening' anyone up. By the end of the training, all participants need to have demonstrated the learning objectives even if that means more for some than others.

All UNDSS training, within the scope of the target participant group, needs to be inclusive in terms of how participants are selected, including a variety of age, seniority, background, ethnicity, gender and all profiles. This means that everyone is invited/welcome and must feel sufficiently comfortable to fully participate, contribute and learn.

As trainers we can make that happen. Good trainers manage and navigate through problems in order to ensure that everyone, regardless of their profile, can achieve the learning objectives. For the most part, that means planning.

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1   Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities https://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf

2   Neurodiversity is a concept whereby neurological differences are to be recognized and respected. Neurological differences could refer to those with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Dyslexia, or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), for example.

3   Harassment is any improper or unwelcome conduct that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another person.

II. Psychological safety

Here are some suggestions and examples of concrete actions you can take as a trainer to ensure learner-friendly environments.

Prior explanation that a course has a mentally or physically demanding component allows for people to prepare, but also allows for enquiries from people who may be considering a particular training.

Use the joining instructions to explain about the course and the type of learning activity, not only to ensure that everyone is correctly dressed and equipped, but also to ensure that they can prepare and seek further advice on any potential difficulty they feel they may face, such as nursing or expressing milk. Conversations prior to the start of training can alleviate stress and allow for planning.

Some training may have an element of secrecy to it, such as SSAFE training, where learners gain the most from realistic simulations for which they may not be fully prepared. Trainers deliberately provoke certain feelings, thoughts and sensations in order to enable learners to recognize specific stressors and develop resilience. Some SSAFE participants have experienced decades of exposure to harm and different experiences at their duty stations and throughout their careers, whereas others may have little or no such experience. However, it is important to ensure a balance between delivering a prepared simulation and associated shock or surprise with learners' health and well-being. This can be achieved through giving advance warning to learners that may be broad in nature, such as possibilities without specifics. Trainers should consciously aim to maximise the amount of advance warning that can be given to learners.

III. Disclosure

Working with learners who are trauma-affected

In our training, case studies, simulations or even classroom discussions may lead to a learner making a disclosure of something that happened to him/her in the past that may constitute prohibited conduct[4]. Firstly, our obligation should be to ensure the well-being of the learner making the disclosure to ensure that they are respected and supported. There are a number of support services that may be made available to the learner, most importantly, referral to the counsellor, if desired. However, if learners disclose previous trauma, it is better to refer them directly to the counsellor and, if that is not possible, to contact the appropriate Regional Counsellor in the Critical Incident Stress Management Unit (CISMU) in New York. This information should only be discussed with others with the consent of the UN personnel concerned.

It is also important to consider the well-being of all learners present in the training. Finally, it is important to be aware of the policies and guidelines that govern the disclosure of prohibited behaviour in the workplace[5]. In our training, case studies, simulations or even classroom discussions may lead to learner making a disclosure of something that happened to them in the past that may constitute prohibited behaviour[6]. Firstly, our obligation should be to ensure the well-being of the learner making the disclosure to ensure that

they are respected and supported. There are a number of support services, including CISMU, that may be made available to the learner, but all health care professionals in contact with learners must be trained to support LGBTIQ+ staff as well. Finally, it is important to be aware of the policies and guidelines that govern the disclosure of prohibited behaviour in the workplace.

Collaboration with trauma-affected UN personnel is the best approach to work out which topics, roleplay and simulations may trigger negative reactions. Some learners who have experienced trauma may expose themselves to SSAFE to 'test' their reactions to stress. For others it may be an opportunity to unpack their feelings on one-off or cumulative experiences. SSAFE must be a psychologically safe environment, free from judgement and characterized by empathy.

It is essential to inform learners that they may leave a session if they feel too uncomfortable and that support is available. Learners may wish to achieve the learning objectives without exposure to direct stimulae. This can be decided on a case-by-case basis, guided by a spirit of flexibility, problem-solving and doing whatever it takes to support the learner. SSAFE Guidelines recommend that mental health professionals/counsellors be present, preferably for the duration of the training, but at least for the simulation. Every course should be risk assessed and the relevant measures taken.

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4   Prohibited conduct is the collective term for discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment) and abuse of authority.

5   ST/SGB/2019/8 Secretary-General's bulletin addressing discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority

6   Prohibited conduct is the collective term for discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment) and abuse of authority.

IV. Neuro-diverse learners

UN personnel may or may not disclose this to trainers. Regardless, changing media and activities during lessons, providing additional support as requested and above all being patient, not putting anyone 'on the spot' or criticizing their opinion supports learners. By using active listening, speaking respectfully and with empathy, learners will be more likely to trust that any disclosure will be treated in confidence. Informal moments are often the best opportunities for learners to approach trainers.

V. Before a workshop (face to face)

Application and selection of learners

- Ensure that appropriate prerequisites are set that are as inclusive as possible

- When considering course applications, review the diversity and take measures to promote inclusivity in selection decisions

VI. Training facilities requirements

- Ensure a private space, lockable from the inside, in which learners can nurse or express milk, which contains a microwave if possible (for sterilization of pump parts), a fridge, water, soap, towels, bench/chair and snacks

- Ensure facility has all toilets that are gender-neutral, with supporting signage

- Ensure accessible bathrooms

- In the case that you have only gender-binary toilets, there should also be at least one additional toilet facility identified that is single-use or for any gender or for families, and labeled as such (with a toilet symbol and wording, but not with a half-male/half-female sign, as that is offensive)

- Designate one bathroom that is for all genders

- All bathrooms regardless of gender designation should be stocked with hygiene supplies such as tampons and sanitary towels and soap

- Ensure waste disposal facilities allow for hygienic disposal of tampons, sanitary towels and other waste

- Ensure that the venue and accommodation are wheelchair accessible, including toilets

- Consider chronic pain and fatigue for learners, so try to ensure that movement between accommodation, training venues and meals are as least physically demanding as possible

- Select safe venues in terms of fire safety

- Venues should be selected for their accessibility and accessible parking

- Venues with low ceilings that are well lit are desirable for those with hearing or visual disability but may be too warm in some contexts, so a review is helpful

- A sign language interpreter may be considered

- Ensure that all venues are well ventilated and hygienic

VII. Administrative instructions for students

Pre-course information/Administrative or Joining instructions for students

- Nursing and lactation requirements. Ensure via Joining Instructions that learners inform the training team in advance so that provision can be made to allow for time to feed or pump and to ensure a clean and private environment

- Use the Joining Instructions to draw attention to any late finishing times

- Inform all learners what snacks will be available and what food they should bring, as this will assist pregnant/lactating learners and others who may have an increased energy intake

- Consider using 'pronouns' at the bottom of a signature block to demonstrate gender-identity awareness, for example, Pronouns: He/his or She/her or They/them

- Outline the physical and psychological demands of the course and highlight elements that may be triggers

- Request learners to inform training staff of any physical, sensory[7] and psychological challenges that they anticipate; for example, personnel with visual impairments may appreciate the offer to give large screen print of hand-outs in advance, documents that can use voice recognition and read back

- Inform learners on how to access psychosocial support for the immediate situation, considering existing problems and in order to build resilience

- Inform learners how to approach trainers to explain their challenges and to discuss support together

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7 Sensory challenges could be not tolerating flickering lights, background noises, visual distractions, to tactile sensitivities such as claustrophobia with a hood, or enclosed spaces.

VIII. Online preparation (or modules)

Inclusive Language

- Remove all gendered language[8] from course materials, such as documents, power-points, evaluations and materials for printing

- Include UN personnel with disabilities and of different backgrounds, race, ethnicities and genders in training photos and videos. Do not assume that everyone is heterosexual

- Represent LGBTQI+ personnel in training material as well as when talking about family or children. UN-GLOBE is a resource to review   LGBTIQ+ training material for suitability and updated language

- Use potentially disturbing images only when strictly necessary, that is, when there is a key learning point

- Timekeeping and planning. If training is non-residential, ensure that the training day finishes on time so that parents/caregivers can return in good time

- Include UN personnel with disabilities and different profiles when using training photos and videos

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8   UN Guidelines for gender-inclusive language in English https://www.un.org/en/gender-inclusive-language/guidelines.shtml

IX. During a workshop/course: Trainer's guide

- Ensure enough time for learners nursing or expressing milk to eat and drink and to pump or feed

- Inclusive language. Replace all gendered language in course materials, such as slideshows, evaluations and hand-outs, with gender-inclusive language

- Refrain from referring to senior people automatically as 'he' and instead demonstrate a recognition of gender bias by referring to senior staff as 'she' or 'they' as much as 'he' or junior staff as 'he' or 'she'

- Recognize unconscious gender bias in referring to Directors as 'he' and support staff as 'she'; instead refer to 'people' by their name unless gender is relevant

- Provide accessible toilets and breaks during exercises for those menstruating, nursing and expressing milk and others who may have personal needs to address as this will maximise their focus on the learning and minimize distractions

- Respect and ground rules. Stop interruptions of learners by others politely and importantly without shaming anyone; invite the person already speaking to continue, with a kind reassurance to the interrupter that he/she/they will have his/her/their turn.

Also, don't be the one to interrupt, also setting a very good example. Take a breath after someone has finished speaking

- Don't put anyone on the spot, even if they are saying things that are considered uncivil. For example, a trainer could avoid saying, 'you're homophobic or you're racist'; it may be more productive to say, 'the correct terminology is' or 'what you said is homophobic'

- Stop any learner 'mansplaining' (men telling women things they already know[9]) by recognizing it, observing the reactions of those targeted and reacting in a timely and appropriate manner by reminding the 'mansplainer' that what he is saying could be considered mansplaining. If it persists, take him privately to one side and bring his attention to the problem without shaming him, and politely request that he consider his words more carefully and reflect on better ways of expressing himself

- Recognize informal hierarchy and power dynamics in class and use your face time to include and give equal attention and support to all. Also, do not allow anyone to be excluded or mocked, again by drawing attention to the situation in private through constructive comment such as, 'I'm sure you didn't realise it, but laughing about x and excluding y person could be considered

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9   "It's what occurs when a man talks condescendingly to someone (especially a woman) about something he has incomplete knowledge of, with the mistaken assumption that he knows more about it than the person he's talking to does" (Merriam-Webster dictionary)

hurtful, and while I'm sure that was not your intention, your making sure to include everyone will set a good example'

- While jokes and humour aid learning and create a fun environment in which to learn, make sure that jokes are not in any way offensive or cause anyone to feel excluded

- Set an example for all by including everybody (and not excluding anybody) in tasks. For example, if a vehicle needs moving, an object needs to be lifted or something needs to be cleaned, ask for volunteers from the group rather than asking for a particular gender to volunteer

- Be discreet and empathetic of other learners who extract themselves from exercises or who are struggling by coming alongside them in a collegial and supportive manner

- Check in regularly with different learners to get a sense of whether the training appears to be inclusive

- Include LGBTQI+ and extended family concepts in training material as well as when talking about family or children by going beyond a binary, nuclear family to include many examples, such as same-sex couples, adopted children, remarried parents, multiple spouses and more

- For topics that may be more challenging for some, such as sexual violence, state your intent to cover them, then give a break so that those who wish to miss that part after the break can do so subtly; follow up with them afterward

- Remember that UN personnel with invisible disability such as PTSD[10] may not disclose, so assume that every learner may have any profile

- Only use graphic images, such as violence, crime in progress, injuries, death or disproportionate power images, such as slavery, domestic violence or others, when the learning value clearly outweighs the potential for trauma among any of your learners. Provide a clear warning beforehand, giving enough time for learners to discreetly leave the room or to look away or cover their ears

- Inform learners on how to access psychosocial support for the immediate situation, considering existing problems and in order to build resilience

- Consider enabling learners with visual impairments to sit closer or further away from screens, using different sized fonts or printing or allowing extra time to read learning documents

- Consider enabling learners with hearing impairments to be near the front of a training room or group to enable them to see the mouth of whoever is speaking. You may also consider a sign language interpreter, rooms with lower ceilings, not creating lots of background noise and subtitled videos. You may consider speaking more loudly and encouraging everyone involved in the training to speak more loudly if there are people involved in the training with hearing impairments and if they are comfortable with your doing so

- Consider that learners with auditory sensitivities will come to class with noise cancellation headsets; learners with visual sensitivities may request to sit in a particular location away from visual distractions; a learner with tactile needs will probably bring their tactile tools to class

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10 PTSD: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

X. During a workshop/course: Learner's guide

- Inform your trainer if you would like to make them aware of any additional needs you may have or any worries or concerns

- Plan ahead and ensure that any accessibility software, equipment or facilities are available to you

UNBLLFFC Training 2019: *Tulin, on 14 May 2019, Security Officers Lara Khodor and Ahmad Sidani during the BFF 2019 training in Vienna, hand to hand training to protect the UN staff and assets. UN Photo*

XI. Group standards in class

- Remove all gendered language from exercise materials (power-points and group work), for example, by ensuring that everyone is referred to as he/she or he/she/they instead of he/him

- Much of the UN's SSAFE training is done in country locations or where missions operate. Refrain from referring to such places as 'hostile environments', since this is where the majority of UN personnel live

- Refrain from referring to senior people automatically as 'he' and instead demonstrate a recognition of gender bias by referring to staff as 'they' or by name or position title

- Ensure equal access to discussions for all learners. Where a learner appears to have been interrupted or talked over unfairly, stop such interruptions politely and without shaming anyone and invite the interrupted person to finish their contribution. Also, be aware of your own biases and don't minimise the contribution of people purely because of your assumptions about their profile

- Ensure that any discussions are based on the learning objectives to keep them on track. It is quite reasonable to interrupt or redirect discussions that are not focused on the learning objectives or that are focusing disproportionately on one or more objectives but not others

- Stop any learner 'mansplaining' (men telling generally women things they already know) by recognizing it, observing the reactions of those targeted and reacting in a timely and appropriate manner by reminding the 'mansplainer' that what he is saying could be considered mansplaining

- Recognize informal hierarchy and power dynamics in class and use your influence to include and give equal attention and support to all

- While jokes and humour aid learning and create a fun environment in which to learn, make sure that jokes are not in any way offensive or cause anyone to feel excluded

- Set an excellent example of how to accommodate diverse (not average) profiles in tasks; for example, if a vehicle needs moving, don't only ask men to do that

- In group work, represent LGBTQI+ personnel in training material as well as when talking about family or children; consider disability and diverse profiles

- Invisible disability. Remember that UN personnel with invisible disability such as PTSD may not disclose, so assume that the class has all profiles of UN personnel, taking this into account when commenting in class, group work or exercises

- Be discreet and empathetic of other learners who extract themselves from exercises or who are struggling by coming alongside them in a collegial and supportive manner

- In group work, only use graphic images, such as violence, crime in progress, injuries, death or disproportionate power images, such as slavery, domestic violence or others, when the learning value clearly outweighs the potential for trauma. Use potentially disturbing images only when strictly necessary, that is, when there is a key learning point and after discussion with the trainer. Provide a warning beforehand, giving enough time for learners to look away or discretely leave the room

- Personnel with visual impairments may appreciate consideration such as sitting close to a screen or extra time to read a document in group work

- UN personnel with hearing impairments may appreciate being at the front of the class, being able to see the mouth of whoever is speaking, as well as the entire class and trainer speaking up and not creating lots of background noise

XII. Individual standards for trainers and learners outside class

- Do not engage in prohibited conduct, including harassment (harassment is any improper or unwelcome conduct that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another person)

- Harassment in any form because of gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, sex characteristics, physical ability, physical appearance, ethnicity, race, national origin, political affiliation, age, religion or any other reason is prohibited at UN system events

- Sexual harassment is a specific type of prohibited conduct. Sexual harassment is any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offense or humiliation

- Sexual harassment may involve any conduct of a verbal, nonverbal or physical nature, including written and electronic communications, and may occur between persons of the same or different genders. Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to: making derogatory or demeaning comments about someone's sexual orientation or gender identity and/or expression, name-calling or using slurs with a gender/sexual connotation, making sexual comments about appearance, clothing or body parts, rating a person's sexuality, repeatedly asking a person for dates or asking for sex, staring in a sexually suggestive manner, unwelcome touching, including pinching, patting, rubbing or purposefully brushing up against a person, making inappropriate sexual gestures, such as pelvic thrusts, sharing sexual or lewd anecdotes or jokes, sending sexually suggestive communications in any format, sharing or displaying sexually inappropriate images or videos in any format, attempted or actual sexual assault, including rape[11]

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[11] Code of Conduct to Prevent Harassment, Including Sexual Harassment at UN System Events. https://www.un.org/management/sites/www.un.org.management/files/un-system-model-code-conduct.pdf

XIII. Key Points

- Making UN training inclusive for as many potential learners as possible is actually much easier and more inclusive than trying to focus on just one or two profiles. For example, putting a door on toilets may be much simpler than having multiple bathrooms and layouts for different genders

- Using inclusive language is often much easier than trying to mention or acknowledge one or more profiles. For example, greeting 'everyone' is much simpler and more inclusive than 'ladies and gentlemen' (and many other genders)

- Treat learners as people. If you want to know something about a person, ask him/her. If it is something personal, just be sure that you have a good reason for asking. One of the most helpful guides is to consider whether knowing the information will help towards the achievement of the learning objectives. Also, be sure to respect people's privacy and their choice of whether or not to share personal information

- Ensure that, if priorities for training must be made, they reflect the learners most at risk as informed by data

UNDSS Tajikistan Security Officers facilitate a drill in 2017. UN Photo

- Refrain from making assumptions that could be perceived as judgmental about the local population and, by association, locally recruited learners and the threat that is posed by them to the UN. Draw attention to threats posed by those within the UN, especially exclusion, bullying, harassment and aggression and sexual violence

- When discussing vulnerabilities, ensure that visible and invisible vulnerabilities are considered. It is important for trainers to find the positives in vulnerabilities and how they can be utilised or capitalised upon

- For LGBTQI+ UN personnel, their intersectional diversity, while potentially posing difficulties for them that may require mitigating measures, could also be the source of celebration and pride, so refrain from making assumptions

- Language matters so remember that describing someone as 'living' with a condition is better than saying that someone is 'suffering' from a condition

- Nursing or expressing and feeding milk is a right, defined by UN Policy. As trainers, within our skills and available resourcing, we should try to ensure that we do everything possible to enable learners who may be accompanied by babies to feed them in a timely manner, while also being able to achieve the learning objectives

- Disability, invisible or otherwise, can be managed with a collaborative, inclusive and problem-solving approach

- Flexibility, planning, anticipating issues and considering the needs of others are all extremely important to ensure that all learners and trainers are safe and get the maximum benefit from their training time

In adult learning we use the knowledge, skills and attitudes that learners bring and engage in peer learning, with everyone having something unique to offer, not just the trainers as 'experts'; in this manner, we ensure that every learner feels included and his/her/their opinions and experiences are valued.

In this regard, TDS is not only encouraging all those who train with us to use these guidelines, but we welcome feedback and further suggestions for improvement from trainers and learners alike. Likewise, If you're unsure about any of the above, don't assume but ask instead by contacting undss.learning@un.org. Everyone is part of the training team; learners and trainers alike have different but equally important roles.

XIV. References

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Be Stigma Free Resources on YouTube. https://www.un.org/management/sites/www.un.org.management/files/un-system-model-code-conduct.pdf

UN For All: Dignity and Inclusion in the Workplace including LGBTI* colleagues. English Subtitles

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1PtlhP8HxLw.

Spanish subtitles: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3QB4jnZgKc&list=PLW-5wb4yx1oUSlo4JqUIYtZ82DR_cO-zEu

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