HEA Baselines Training

24th to 30th October 2016

Badplaas, Mpumalanga, South Africa

Report to:

South African Vulnerability Assessment Committee, Directorate: Subsistence Farming, Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the

Regional Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis Programme, Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Directorate, SADC

Charles Rethman, November 2016

Activities Summary

The Baselines Training for the SAVAC / MpumaVAC / LimVAC consisted of the following activities:

1. Preparing and customising the training materials. Done on 10th–14th October 2016.

2. The delivery of the training itself, including one day with a field visit to explore the actual implementation of what was being learnt. Completed on 24st–30th October 2016.

3. Customising and printing of materials for use by the teams in their field work. Done on 13th–14th October 2016.

Preparation

Completed in Pretoria.

The consultant handed over all the materials for printing, except those that required customising and adjusting for conditions in Mpumalanga and Limpopo. The consultant also prepared an Agenda or Programme for the training.

The HEA Practitioners' Field Handbook, in particular, needed amending again for local conditions. Units of measurement had to realistically reflect those in use in the local context (e.g. a 'bag' of grain is 50 kg) and recent local examples (e.g. of the seasonal calendar) had to be included. Aspects such as local names and variants were also included. The energy values in the booklet had to be listed in kilojoules, not kilocalories (and the threshold for the average human requirement set at 8800 kJ).

The programme was developed and discussed with the SAVAC Secretariat. Agreement was reached on Tuesday 18th October and the drafts were handed over for printing. The files containing the session notes, presentations and handouts with exercises that were to be printed for participants have been made into a single document, which can be printed at a go and removes the need for collating, which is an onerous and time-consuming task. The Department did its own printing and the materials were of reasonably good quality. **Printing nevertheless still takes two full working days to complete**.

Delivery of the Training

This was a small training. There were only eight new participants who sat for the whole course. The reason for this was that more than half of the field team came from either Limpopo Province (and thus had been trained in 2014-15) or they were from National Government (and thus had received training at the very least once before).

The training began on Monday, 24th October. The first few sessions, those covering introductory concepts and a background to HEA, were delivered by staff from the Department of Agriculture. Participants were eager and asked a lot of questions, which slowed delivery but aided understanding.

Training for baselines assessments must get across three important aspects of the work that is being trained for:

1. Participants need to clearly *understand all the underlying concepts* within HEA, especially regarding the calculations and meanings of the results

2. Participants need to learn *how carry out their interviews with people* in order to to undertake the work;

3. Participants need to *remember key elements* of the approach, as they must not leave out any essential work in the field.

The trainer therefore tried to balance the delivery to allow enough time and to include enough examples that covered the first two aspects above, with enough revision to ensure the third.

At the end of the training the participants were asked to complete evaluation questionnaires, the summary of which is as follows:

Table 1 - Evaluation summary

Item	Question	Ranking				
		Strongly Agree	**Agree**	**Neutral**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**
1	My main expectations of the workshop were achieved	50%	50%	-	-	-
2	What I have learned in this workshop will help me in my work	50%	50%	-	-	-
3	The objectives of this workshop were relevant to me and were achieved	33%	67%	-	-	-
Item	**Question**	**Very Good**	**Good**	**Average**	**Bad**	**Very Bad**
4	What do you think of the pre-workshop preparation and planning?	-	50%	33%	17%	-
5	What did you you think about the format of the workshop?	-	67%	33%	-	-
6	What did you think of the support provided for the workshop?	-	50%	50%	-	-
7	What did you think of the venue?	-	17%	50%	33%	-
8	What did you think about the food?	-	17%	83%	-	-
9	What did you think of the practical arrangements?	-	50%	33%	17%	-

Participants' comments on the first three questions were that they have learnt about targeting (understanding why some have needs) and that they have insight into making provincial policy more effective. They also mentioned finding the herd dynamics interesting.

Organisational issues (such as pre-workshop planning and the practical arrangements) were sometimes flagged as 'Bad'. This highlights the need to plan well in advance, know the venue and to think carefully about how to avoid rushing through the training.

Table 2 - What participants did and did not find interesting

Interesting		Less Interesting	
Data analysis	29%		%
Interview rehearsals	29%	Interview rehearsals	33%
		Herd dynamics	17%
		None	50%
Calculations	14%		
Group discussions	14%		
Theory	14%		

Participants found different things interesting in the course but the preference seemed to lean towards the analysis and calculations. However, interview rehearsals were considered interesting by some; this highlights individual preferences for type of work, rather than the content (some people find the 'soft science' of interviewing interesting, while others prefer the 'hard science' of analysis). As for the least interesting section, the greatest number said None and a few mentioned interviews and herd dynamics.

Overall, the participants from the Mpumalanga were interested, enthusiastic and they conducted themselves professionally. The workshop included active work on a Saturdays and Sunday, although the latter had to be cut short to allow participants to travel to their field destinations.

Charles Rethman

November, 2016.