LESSONS LEARNED

Online CBS training November 2020

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INTERNAL PLANNING

The training happened to take place during a time of turnover within the team, resulting in shifting **roles and responsibilities**. The process leading up to the training was affected by this, and a lot of it ended up as ad-hoc **tasks** – especially on the administrative side of things. Roles and responsibilities were not clarified in advance, which led different team members sitting on different pieces of related information (access to and changes being made to the participant list being an example). This slowed the process down and caused some frustration.

Due to the abovementioned point, participants received emails from three different senders prior to the training, which led to a bit of confusion and more than a few emails being bounced between colleagues when some participant needed to change the email used, were not able to attend after all, wanted more info etc. We eventually landed on one person being the **point of contact**, which worked well.

Distinct parts of the training itself were assigned to different team members, which worked well. Using templates and presentations from the previous training, the content was updated and adapted to the online format, before being presented back to the group.

We eventually had **weekly planning meetings** in the month leading up to the training, for clarifications, division of tasks, status updates, and feedback. This was very useful and ensured that we were all on the same page.

LESSONS LEARNED / RECOMMENDATIONS

- Set a detailed action plan / timeline for the process leading up to the training/event.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities.
- Make <u>one</u> person the point of contact for participants.
    - This person should also be in charge of the participant list.
- Have frequent planning meetings with everyone involved.

PARTICIPANT INVITATION AND SELECTION

Invitations and sign-up

The **invitation** to the training was written by the CBS team, including intro to the training, selection criteria for delegates, timeline and modality, deadline for signing up etc. The invitation also included some pre-reading materials but should probably have more clearly stated the need to complete these, and the estimated time (X hours) needed, prior to the training.

Finally, it was stressed that signing up meant that one would be available throughout the training week. (We did, however, experience several participants being unable to attend several days of the training, due to other commitments. This is of course unfortunate, as the training becomes insufficient for deploying the delegate. In the future, it should be reinforced that virtual still means that one will need to be available and logged on throughout – just as if one had travelled to a location to partake.)

<u>See invitation text here.</u>

Some participants mentioned that it was nice when they were finally able to put faces on the different facilitator names. In the future, it could be a good idea to include a picture and a title and/or short bio of each facilitator in the invitation (as an attachment).

The invitation was sent out by HR to all PH roster delegates, relevant GSTs lacking the training, and relevant partner NSs defined by the CBS team and DRM colleagues.

The participants were asked to sign up by filling out an **online registration form**, asking the following questions:

Questions	Available answer(s)
Email	[*free text*]
Name	[*free text*]
Surname	[*free text*]
Are you registering for the complete CBS training or only the Nyss component?	• *"Full CBS training – Nov 23 to 27"* • *"Only Nyss training component – Nov 26"* • *"I am unavailable to attend, but wish to remain on the roster"*
Are you available for deployment in the next 12 months?	• *"Yes"* • *"Maybe"* • *"No"*
Do you have Epi and data analysis knowledge / experience? – Please explain (e.g., education, trainings, work experience, etc.)	[*free text*]
Language skills French	• *"Basic – A-level"* • *"Intermediate – B-level"* • *"Advanced – C-level"* • *"Native speaker"*
Language skills Spanish	• *"Basic – A-level"* • *"Intermediate – B-level"* • *"Advanced – C-level"* • *"Native speaker"*
Language skills Arabic	• *"Basic – A-level"* • *"Intermediate – B-level"* • *"Advanced – C-level"* • *"Native speaker"*

We assumed that only those with sufficient **English language skills** would sign up for a training in English and did not include that as a separate question in the registration form. In hindsight this should have been done, as several participants did not have the level of English needed to get the expected outcome of the training. This may have been exacerbated by the online format and the fact that the time of the training was in the evening for most participants – after a full day of work – leaving a lot of them more tired and less focused.

Registrations trickled in, especially after HR sent out a **reminder** about a week before the deadline (Wednesday November 6th).

Selection

We decided on a **cap of 24 participants**, based on the assumption that we needed one facilitator per group: each group consisting of 5-6 participants. Out of these 24 participants, we reserved up to 5 slots for PNS participants.

We decided to give priority to participants meeting the following **selection criteria**:

1. Those with no CBS training/mission experience or with CBS training from before 2019[1].
2. Those who are available to deploy in the coming 6-12 months.
3. Those with Epi and data analysis knowledge/experience.
4. Those with previous field experience.
5. Those with French, Spanish, or Arabic language skills.

Additionally, HR would prioritize those that are more engaged/responsive to alerts.

For day 4 of the training, focusing solely on **Nyss**, we opened the training to anyone – as this is a new component. Delegates with recent CBS training (but lacking the Nyss component) were particularly encouraged to participate.

We ended up having room for all of those who had signed up and could include all of them. It could be argued that this was maybe not the best use of resources, as a few participants were unavailable for deployment in the coming 12 months. This pertained to so few that we decided to include them in the training regardless.

Confirmation emails were sent on Monday after the deadline (November 11th), by the CBS coordinator.
See confirmation to full training participants here.
See confirmation to Nyss training only participants here.

By then, we had already received a couple emails asking if they had been accepted into the training. We assume that this is due to a) it taking a bit too much time from deadline to confirmation email was sent out, especially since b) this was done only a couple weeks prior to the training.

Suggested timeline prior to training

When	What	Who
Min. 6 weeks prior to training (preferably 8-12)	Write and send out the invitation.	Contact person + HR
5 weeks prior to training	Remind participants of the deadline.	HR
4 weeks prior to training	Deadline and selection of participants.	CBS team + DRM + HR
	Confirm participation and send out calendar invite, pre-training quiz, doodle or similar scheduler for technical onboarding sessions, and pre-reading materials.	Contact person
3 weeks prior to training	Remind those who have not responded of the quiz.	Contact person
2 weeks prior to training	Remind those who still have not responded of the quiz.	Contact person
	Set up individual technical onboarding sessions à 15 minutes with every single participant.	Contact person / tech responsible
1 week prior to training	Technical onboarding sessions.	Contact person / tech responsible

[1] Those receiving CBS training in 2016, 2017, and 2018 received previous and now outdated versions of the training and would not be up to date on many of the tools currently in use.

LESSONS LEARNED / RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue a good collaboration with HR on inviting and selecting participants.
- Keep the invitation short and concise:
    - Links related to the subject and/or learning objectives may be included, but pre-reading materials should only be sent out after participation is confirmed.
    - Emphasize the need for good English skills to partake in the online training.
    - Emphasize the need to be available and engaged throughout the entirety of the training – no different than if the training was on-site somewhere.
    - Emphasize the expected time needed to complete the prerequisites for the training (pre-reading etc.)
    - Attachment with an overview of facilitators, including photos, titles, and/or short bios.
- Include self-assessment of English language skills in the online sign-up form.
- Establish a clear timeline for communication with participants, roles, and responsibilities.

COMMUNICATION

We did not set a **detailed timeline** for reminder emails, confirmations, information emails etc. beforehand, nor who would be responsible. This resulted in a few ad-hoc decisions, and messier processes for both the team, and potentially the participants. One example being the confirmation email, which was sent out quite close to the training. This email was followed by another onboarding email, a separate calendar invite, and then the agenda was announced in the chat in Teams. These could all together have been one single email.

Onboarding email

The **onboarding email** contained both a checklist for participants, as well as a more detailed document on how to log into Teams and check out the features before the training. This was attempted written in a clear and concise, but also informal and friendly, language – setting the tone for the training. This seemed to be working well.
See the onboarding email for the entire training here, as well as the attachment here.
See the onboarding email for the Nyss training here, as well as the attachment here.

One of the tasks given in the onboarding email, was to get logged into Teams, find the correct channel, and **introduce themselves** there. This worked very well as both a way to keep track of who had managed to log in and who had not, as well as create a sense of community and "buzz" before the training. Those who had not logged into Teams by the Friday before the training, received a reminder email to do so. It's important that facilitators lead by example here, introducing themselves and welcoming the participants in Teams.
See reminder email here.

Once all participants had logged into Teams, communication was a lot easier, and happened more informally, mostly through chat. Some participants mentioned that there were a lot of emails before the training, mostly due to **email notifications** from Teams. The onboarding should include how to turn those off or reduce the frequency, for those that are new Teams users.

Technical onboarding sessions

Technical onboarding sessions were set up for those not familiar with Teams, to offer an opportunity to test the functionality in practice (adjusting settings and testing mic, speakers, and camera etc. was all described in the written attachment). Three different times (Thursday evening, Monday morning, and Monday afternoon) were offered to allow for different schedules and time zones. A small percentage of the participants took advantage of this offer and said that it was useful and nice to get a face behind the name of one of the facilitators.

Once the training was ongoing however, it became clear that many more of the participants were not familiar with Teams, and had difficulties navigating the program. Ironing out the kinks during the live training was suboptimal, and in the future, it makes sense to schedule individual onboarding sessions à 15 minutes with each participant in the week prior to the training.

This should include the main video conference window – mic and camera buttons, screen sharing and chat box, locating the different channels, locating the documents used in the training, downloading documents, where downloaded documents end up on your computer and how to be in several windows at once.

Quiz and pre-reading

In the onboarding email, participants were given links to the pre-training quiz and the pre-reading materials.

The **quiz** was completed by most participants. The quiz results allow for an evaluation of which areas of the training require more time and discussion – both when taken before the training commences, but also when taken again after the trainings, for evaluation. The quiz is also intended to help participants evaluate their progress over the course of the training. After the training, slightly fewer participants responded, but they had much better results.
See the questions asked here.
See the results from the post-training quiz here.

Upon completion, respondents received no indicator of how they did, and after the deadline we had some participants reach out and ask for the results. In the future, this should be provided.

The **pre-reading materials** were all stored in a folder in Teams, that the participants got access to as soon as they logged in. They were instructed to log in, locate the files, and read up in the onboarding email. It became clear during the training that very few had done so, and that several of them had trouble locating the documents – leading to facilitators needing to email them the needed documents.

We also received feedback that it was difficult to know in which order they should have read the documents and which days the different documents applied to. The tight schedule, where a lot of participants attended the training directly after their daytime jobs, allowed for little to no time to read up between sessions. Ultimately, we ended up using only a few of the documents. In future trainings, a more selective approach towards what is suggested and what is mandatory pre-reading should be taken. If only a few documents are to be used, they may be attached to the onboarding email.
See the pre-reading materials here.

It would be worthwhile investigating whether some of the pre-reading could be shared in other (potentially more engaging) formats, e.g., to gain an understanding of Community-Based Health and

First Aid (CBHFA), the completion of the online CBHFA course could be a prerequisite for attending the CBS training, and participants would need to share their course certificate in advance (this is common practice in Public Health in Emergencies (PHiE) trainings). Similarly, it could be interesting to adapt equivalent online/interactive learning tools for the CBS assessment and the CBS protocol.

LESSONS LEARNED / RECOMMENDATIONS

- Pick one person to be the focal point for participants.
    - This person should oversee the registration form and participant list.
- The focal point should send out one email after the participant selection, based on the onboarding email used in this training. The email should include:
        - Confirmation of participation
        - Onboarding info and checklist
        - Pre-reading (organized by what needs to be read by when)
        - Agenda
        - Calendar invite/link to the training
        - Invite or scheduler for individual technical onboarding sessions
- Find a way for participants to connect and engage with one another before the training.
- Continue with technical onboarding sessions but make them individual and mandatory.
- Explain to participants that they will take the same quiz both before and after the training.
    - Share the correct answers with explanations after the deadline.
- Provide the pre-reading materials in a more structured manner, clearly indicating by which session each document needs to be read.
    - Consider alternative ways of sharing the documentation.
    - Consider other formats (online/interactive learning tools) of sharing the prerequired knowledge
    - Potentially structure the entire training differently, to allow for reading and other preparations between the sessions.

ONLINE TRAINING FORMAT

Teams

For the training, we needed the following **functionality**:

- Video conference
- Chat functionality
- Document storage and sharing
- The ability to divide participants into sub-groups (Breakout group functionality), where they could have their own video conferences, chats, and document storage.

Teams was chosen as the platform for the training for two main reasons:

1. NorCross has a license, and strongly promotes the use of Teams as the preferred video conference and collaboration tool.
2. Teams offers all the functionality listed above, allowing users to only log in and learn how to use *one* (potentially new) tool to attend the training.

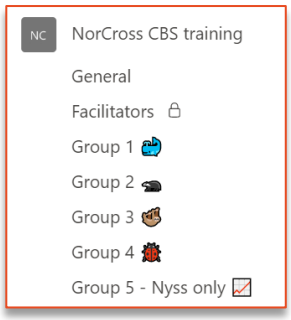
That being said, we ended up forgoing a lot of our **nice-to-haves** by opting for Teams. Functionality such as a collaborative online whiteboard (the Teams offers very limited functionality and didn't

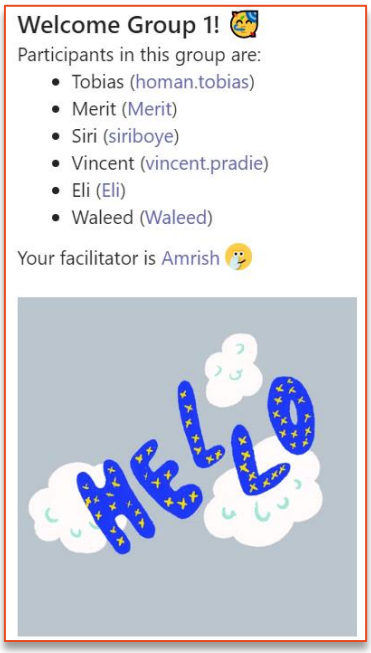
work for all participants), breakout rooms (not available in Teams at the time), annotation on slides, and more, would have made the training more interactive, engaging, and enjoyable for all parties involved.

If virtual trainings are to be a format more often used moving forward, it might be worthwhile looking into platforms design for online trainings specifically – which Teams is not, althoug its functionality is being expended. There are many other programs specifically designed for trainings, that provide more functionalities and ease of use. Investigating what is used in domestic activities for training volunteers, or what Federation uses is recommended.

Channels

We created a NorCross training team, and in addition to the main General channel, we also made a private Facilitators channel, and channels for each participant group. Emojis were added to the group names to make them easier for them to remember and distinguish from each other, as well as adding to the informal feel of the training.





Before onboarding everyone, a **welcome message** was posted in each channel, to showcase who was in each group, and to tag each group member in their respective groups. This seemed to work well both for onboarding purposes, but also as a reference throughout the training, to remind facilitators and participants who were in their group.

Breakout rooms / Group sessions

Since breakout rooms were not a feature in Teams at the time, these channels were utilized for the **group sessions**. Facilitators would leave the main training meeting, go into their respective group channels, and then initiate a new meeting from there. Once the meeting had started, they would call inn their group participants. This prompts a notification on the participant's screen, asking if they want to join the new meeting. When accepting, they are put "on hold" in the main training meeting, until they leave the group meeting, and press "resume" within the main session.

In theory, this was a pretty good replacement for breakout rooms. However, it created a lot of confusion for a handful of participants, and a good amount of time was spent getting participants in the meetings they were supposed to be in.

Technical issues

Another complication we had not foreseen, was that some participants utilize Teams at work, and that some workplaces have strong **restrictions on Teams** usage – or do not allow downloading Teams at all. Some were unable to connect to meetings from outside their organization through the app, others were unable to use a different account than their work one etc. This resulted in some

participants needing to use multiple accounts, try both the app and the web version of the program, and some other workarounds. These issues were also more difficult to solve when limited to chat/mail.

Since the participants were on either the desktop or web **version of Teams**, and several of them on different versions of the app as well, it was sometimes also difficult to help them technically, as buttons and settings could be in different locations, they could be missing some functionality (the whiteboard feature was for example only available for a few participants, and only what a couple of them wrote was visible for other, leaving the feature completely useless).

We also experienced technical issues when we attempted to **record** one of the presentations, and Teams slowed down so significantly that we were unable to continue the recording.

Finally, both facilitators and participants found it difficult to be in the meeting, while opening and using different documents, and keeping track of the chat. A different platform would maybe not be the answer here though, rather a different structure of the training, to limit the occasions where all of this is happening simultaneously.

Technical facilitation

We chose to have one person facilitating the main sessions, introducing the different sessions and topics, but also technical features and concepts in plenary, and provide technical support to those needing it. Outside of leading different icebreakers/exercises, this person did not give any other presentations, or lead any group work (except day 4) and could thus focus on the overall agenda and getting everyone through it. This seemed to be working very well. This was the same person that sent out the onboarding email and did the technical onboarding sessions, so that there was the same focal point/contact person throughout the training.

This person was also in charge of ensuring that we adhered to the timeframes allotted in the agenda, as well as posting reminders in the group chats once there were 10/5/1/0 minutes left of the group work, and participants needed to return to the main session.

This person was also key in helping participants join their breakout sessions and solve any technical issues.

LESSONS LEARNED / RECOMMENDATIONS

- Make an overview of which functionality is needed for the training/workshop/conference and ensure that the platform chosen meets those requirements.
    - Consider platforms/programs that are specifically designed for online training.
- Preferably, choose a platform that will not vary too significantly between different versions.
- Use the technical onboarding session with each participant to iron out any issues with the platform before the training, and/or to find out which version of the platform they have, to better help them during the training.
- Prepare the platform as much as possible in advance.
    - Give participants a task that makes them interact with each other before the training, e.g., introduce themselves in the chat.
    - Give participants a task that makes them get familiar with different channels before the training, e.g., locate their group.
    - Give participants a task that makes them get familiar with document storage on the platform, e.g., locate and read pre-reading materials.

- Use breakout room functionality if possible.
- Limiting occasions where anyone involved will need to look at multiple things at the same time – most people only have one monitor. Options to look at here may be:
    - Have people download documents in advance, make them share their screens, and upload the documents once changes have been made (limits navigation within Teams)
    - Structure the training differently, so that most time spent looking at documents happens offline between sessions.
    - Have one person in the group being responsible for the document and sharing their screen.
- Have one person facilitating the entire training, preferably the focal point/contact person.
- Have one or more people provide technical support throughout the training and make it clear to participants how this/these may be contacted (this may be the same person as the facilitator).

TRAINING METHODOLOGY

The training was mostly made up of a combination of plenary sessions and problem-based learning sessions (PBLs) in the participant groups. We also included multiple icebreakers and energizers throughout the training.

Plenary sessions

Each day we included **presentations** on different topics in plenary. This was often accompanied by slides, shared by the presenter themselves. Most presentations allowed for a short Q&A directly after they were given. We also included a **Q&A** session at the end of each day, to clear up any confusion or unaddressed issues. For a couple of group work tasks, we also asked for **group work presentations** in plenary. For more details on the topics covered, please see Training Content below.

Problem-based learning sessions (PBLs)

The group work in the training used problem-based learning to guide the participants through the different phases and aspects of a CBS implementation. As in previous trainings, the case worked on throughout the sessions, took place in the fictive country of **Mandawi**, and the tasks given built upon each other. This worked very well. The participants were given tasks that gave them insight into everything from a CBS assessment, through the protocol design, advocacy, issues that may occur on the ground, Nyss, and more.

While PBLs have been standard methodology used in these trainings in the past, we did find it challenging to translate them into an **online format**. The time allocated to group work became too short and did not allow for sufficiently in-depth discussion and enough interaction between participants. This is of course also because only one person can talk at any given time when interacting virtually. More time is necessary when conducting these trainings online; either more time allocated for PBLs or pacing the whole training differently with somewhat longer sessions only every other day, leaving time for “homework”, preparations, and more group work, reflections, and questions triggered in between sessions.

Because of the **time constraints**, participants often ended up rushing through tasks given, and important discussions that otherwise would have provided nuance and deeper insight needed to be cut short. In general, the tasks given were very wide, e.g., "design the protocol based on the assessment". Given the training format and time given, this did not work as well as it does in an on-site training. This became even clearer on day 4, when the subject was Nyss. To guide them through the functionality of the platform and ensure that they got acquainted with it without getting overwhelmed, we had designed a form with questions that they followed. The form included both step-by-step instructions with explanations of features and reasoning behind them, as well as questions for reflection. This seemed to work very well, and since they got to know how many questions there were in total, and how much time they had, they were able to pace themselves much better.

The participants could enter their responses into the form, but this resulted in some groups spending too much time formulating their written responses, and too little time discussing and exploring the platform. For the next iteration, a new version of the form could be developed, with the same type of instructions, some open-ended questions that prompts the participants to discuss and explore the platform, and finally, some multiple-choice questions (or similar) to verify their understanding.

It is possible that something similar can be done on other days/topics. By fine graining all the details that we want participants to think of, we can provide them with a better overview, and ensure that no important aspect is forgotten. This does of course provide more "hand-holding" throughout the training and may need to be "compensated" for through prompting more reflections from the participants, introducing alternative scenarios, issues, and problems they may need to address once deployed. It is important to remember that learning does require a certain level of discomfort; putting people "on the spot" does prepare them better for the realities they will be facing and seems to help longer term retention.

Icebreakers

Throughout the training we also included multiple icebreakers and energizers. Most were done in plenary and some within the groups. A few were used in different versions throughout the training (e.g., polls).

Intro to Teams features

1. Asking everyone to present themselves, and while doing so, unmuting and then re-muting their **microphones**. All participants were given one minute to think of an adjective beginning with the same letter or sound as their first name – and the adjective had to be positive. The facilitator went through the participation list and gave the word to the next speaker.
2. Asking everyone to turn **cameras** off, and then to turn the camera back on if the statements posed were true for them. The Facilitator would comment on who, to make participants feel seen and included. The statements given were:
    a. I have a dog.
    b. I like to cook.
    c. I am excited about this training (resulting is everyone leaving their cameras on – fortunately!)
3. Asking everyone to use the **raised hand** feature if the statements posed were true for them. The facilitator would comment on who or ask questions, to make participants feel seen and included. The statements given were:
    a. I am an only child.

   b. I play an instrument.
   c. There is a plant in the room I am sitting in.
4. Asking everyone to use the **chat** and type in where they were connecting from.

Polls

We did several polls throughout the training, both as part of the plenary presentations to keep the participants engaged, but also as icebreakers. Some of the icebreaker polls were:

1. How are you feeling today? Use different emojis as response options.
2. What is the weather like where you are? Use different emojis as response options.
3. Are you wearing pajamas right now? Response options: Yes, Never, Business on top, PJs on the bottom, I changed right before the training.

To use polls, Microsoft Forms has to be added to your meeting or channel. Once done, all polls can be created in advance and posted when ready. After responses have come in, polls can be closed, deleted, and/or exported to save the results.

Find things

As a quick energizer, we gave participants 30 seconds to retrieve a version of the following objects, and show them off on camera:

1. Something round
2. Something yellow
3. Something that starts with the letter "T"

Facilitator commented on who had which object, or which objects were "popular", to make participants feel seen and included.

Stickies on a whiteboard

Using the whiteboard feature, asking participants to create a sticky note with the one thing that stood out to them from the previous session. This is one way to have the participants contribute to the recap.

Group photos

Ensuring that everyone has their camera on, and that everyone can be seen (potentially necessary to turn on "gallery mode" in Teams), take a screen shot (or several) where the group is waving, making funny faces, or some other coordinated move.

Icebreaker experiences

The **intro to Teams** worked very well on the first day. It was a playful way to have everyone get acquainted with the platform, while also being introduced to each other, and setting an informal and friendly mood for the training. We did realize later in the training that this exercise should have included how to locate documents, download them, and how to share your screen in some way, as this was something several participants struggled with.

Other icebreakers that worked well, were the polls, "find things", and the group photos for those groups that had time for them.

The stickies on the whiteboard did not work, as participants had **different versions of Teams**. Not everyone could see the whiteboard, and not everything that was submitted to the whiteboard was visible for those who could.

We had another whiteboard-based icebreaker planned for day 4, where additional participants would join the rest for the Nyss training only, where we would ask everyone to mark on a world map displayed on the whiteboard where in the world they were connecting from. We also had an energizer where participants would be asked to draw different things on the whiteboard planned, but due to the issues with the whiteboard, we had to skip these.

Facilitation

In addition to the technical facilitator of the main sessions, each group had its own **facilitators** – one main facilitator with a public health background, and one additional facilitator with insight into Nyss. We strived to have facilitators with public health backgrounds *and* long field CBS experience, to provide needed nuances and examples for the discussions. The facilitators stayed with their group throughout the entire training, which worked very well, especially when it comes to evaluating the participants and seeing how they performed throughout the training, being able to prompt participation from those a bit more reserved etc.

Being two facilitators per group also allowed for one of them "virtually stepping out" if needed, and the two of them discussing approach/performance/next steps. Some groups made the second facilitator responsible for the chat, keeping time, etc. This is recommended, so that the main facilitator can focus on the topic and participants.

All facilitators were included in the pre-training planning meetings in the weeks leading up to the training. On the first day of the training, an extra meeting for the facilitators was held, where we went over the agenda, the technical features we would be using in Teams, how the "breakout" sessions would work etc.

Throughout the training, "**facilitator huddles**" were held the 30 minutes prior to the training each day, and the 15 minutes directly after the training. This worked well to talk through the plan for the day, as well as compile lessons learned and follow-up points for the next day after each session. These meetings were especially important considering the format of the training, and that all the facilitators were in separate locations as well.

Duration

The training took place on five consecutive days, each session being 4 hours long. For most participants, this ended up being after work in the evenings. It became evident that this resulted in very long days for some, with limited energy left over for the training. We also got feedback on many wanting more time to prepare and more time for the group work – even though most were very understanding of the virtual and condensed format due to the pandemic.

For future online training, it would be worthwhile to consider other **durations/structures** of the training. Some ideas and suggestions could be:

1. Spread the training over two weeks, with sessions every other day instead of every day. Let the in-between-days be used for reading, group work/preparations, and recharging. Group work in between sessions would potentially not include facilitators though, who would miss out on opportunities to see the participants "in action".
2. Offer the plenary sessions/presentations twice through the training, at separate times. Mandatory to attend one of them. This would make it easier for people in different time zones.

3. Pre-record the presentations, and provide them as e-learning, spending the time in the live sessions on Q&A and PBLs.
4. Do full-day trainings (so that people have to take time off work) but split the day up in 3 sessions à 2 hours or so. This will only work for participants within similar time zones.

LESSONS LEARNED / RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue with a combination of plenary sessions, PBLs, and icebreakers/energizers, but further adaptation of plenary sessions (more interaction, maybe prerecorded presentations + live Q&A) and PBLs (time allocated and format) is needed.
- Ensure that all participants have access to technical features needed to complete session/exercises.
- Adapt the Nyss training form as per the suggestions listed above.
- Strive to have two facilitators per group (on one fixed per group and others alternating between 2-3 groups each) and divide tasks between them.
    - Each group needs one facilitator with a public health background and field CBS experience. If this is not possible, those with the needed background should be "roaming" and share their presence between 2, max 3, groups.
- Use facilitator huddles to connect and reflect before and after each session.
- Consider a different duration and/or structure of the training as per suggestions listed above, to further optimize it for a virtual format.

TRAINING CONTENT

Agenda and topics

Each day of the training had its own topic. See the detailed agenda for facilitators here.

We also shared a less detailed version with the participants, by saving it under Files in the General channel in Teams and announcing it in the chat.
See the condensed agenda for participants here.

Each day had different **reading materials** related to the topic. It became clear that we could have sorted the pre-reading materials better (e.g., by day), and have been more explicit about what should be read before the next session. In several groups, a lot of time was lost in the PBLs to browse the materials.

We also found that we should have more explicit regarding **availability and presence** throughout the training: the expectation being mandatory full and engaged attendance. Several participants were late due to other meetings, or doing field visits while connecting via phone etc. Even though this training was virtual, being able to focus on only that is key – probably more so when attending online.

Day 1: Introduction to CBS and Nyss

Day 1 was the only day without any PBLs. In spite of some breaks, the session ended up feeling very long – after the introduction to Teams, the participants did not interact outside of asking questions to presenters. This could be amended by adding some polls, or a role play, or discussions in groups.

Additionally, it became clear the following day that the presentations should have provided a deeper dive into the technical language, e.g., what health risks, reports, alerts, all the acronyms, etc. are, as these were not familiar terms for all. These terms and their definitions could be noted down once

explained – either in a document, on a virtual whiteboard, etc. – so that participants can refer to it throughout the training.
See day 1 presentations here.

Day 2: CBS Assessment and Design

Day 2 included two PBLs where the groups were to finalize a CBS assessment for Mandawi and get started on the protocol design for the CBS implementation, both after an introduction to the subjects in plenary. Additionally, the groups carried out a role play focused on advocacy.

This mix of plenary sessions and PBLs worked well, albeit the time for the PBLs felt too short for most groups.
See day 2 presentations and PBLs here and the CBS advocacy role play here.

Day 3: CBS Protocol and Design

After a brief recap, day 3 took participants right back into the protocol design PBLs and included a presentation on the protocol design from each group. The participants were told they had 5 minutes each (in reality we allocated 10 minutes per group) to present what they had produced.

The goal of presenting helped the groups stay focused on the task, but we did experience insufficient time to provide proper feedback and discussions.
See day 3 presentations and PBLs here.

Day 4: Nyss

This CBS training was the first one that incorporated training in Nyss. The prepared form worked well; it was self-guided and highly structured. The participants were more comfortable with this task format for online training. However, some of the instructions could still be tweaked into questions. For instance, instead of instructing participants to go to the data collector performance page, they could be asked to find out where to see the performance of the volunteers.

It was difficult to ensure that everyone got to try Nyss and got to try all the different user accesses. This is potentially a good “homework” task, where everyone can log into Nyss at their own convenience between sessions. It was also apparent that there were large discrepancies in computer literacy, which led to some people needing a lot more time than others. A way to solve this could be to have people work together in pairs, with one more and one less computer literate, instead of in groups. Those more comfortable with technology would then still gain valuable learning by helping the other use Nyss.
See day 4 presentations and PBLs here.

Day 5: CBS for Public Health Action

After the highly guided Nyss exercise on day 4, the participants seemed to have a harder time going back to the more loose, less guided format on the last day. After working in Nyss for a full day, they were also clearly expecting to get all the data they needed from Nyss, during the PBL on data for decision-making. Further analysis is almost always needed, and this PBL thus needs tweaked in the future to make it less Nyss dependent, but also make it clear for the participants that they will not find all their answers there.

Day 5 also included an exercise that could be given as either a table-top discussion, the facilitator prompting one of the participants to respond at a time, or as a role play. This flexibility was great, as the task could be adapted to the participants within each group, and the time available.

It became clear during the discussion on the last day that we could have focused more on how CBS links to other programs, as it is rarely a "siloed" program. One way to approach this could be to share a plan of action for an emergency, to showcase how CBS can fit into the wider emergency response.
See day 5 presentations and PBLs here and the discussion/role play exercise here.

LESSONS LEARNED / RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create a detailed agenda for facilitators and a simplified agenda for participants.
    - The detailed agenda should allow for some flexibility timewise each day.
- Share materials in an organized fashion and be explicit on what should be read before each session.
- Be more explicit when it comes to expectations of presence and focus, from the invitation and throughout the training.
- Ensure that "basic" topics, such as the definition of health risks, reports, alerts, etc. are included on the first day. Have them visible throughout the training if possible (e.g., on a whiteboard)
- Use a mix of tabletop exercises, role play, reflections, step-by-step tasks, and presentations in plenary for the PBLs.
- Showcase how CBS links to other programs.

FEEDBACK POST-TRAINING

Although not done this time, we do recommend following up participants after the training, particularly when it comes to the correct answers to the quiz, and feedback on what they produced during the PBLs. In earlier on-site trainings, participants have been given time to finish their designs, and they have then received a more detailed written comment from the facilitators. This is of course more work intensive for the facilitators, but helps the participants gain a more in-depth understanding, as a lot of the sessions in the training are condensed and pressed on time.

LESSONS LEARNED / RECOMMENDATIONS

- Give participants the correct answers to the quiz (either immediate feedback on the online form – with explanations or send out the correct answers and explanations per mail after the quiz deadline).
- Give the participant groups written feedback on what they produced during group work, after the training.