

PRE-DEPARTURE EBOLA RESPONSE TRAINING

(November 2014-June 2015)



REDR EBOLA © Amy Murrell 2015

SUMMARY OVERVIEW

Between December 2014 and May 2015 RedR delivered 16 five-day pre-departure trainings for National Health Service Volunteers and Foreign Medical Teams travelling to Sierra Leone or on standby for the Ebola response. In total 362 individuals were trained, of whom 95% rated the course as Good or Excellent, and 98% Agreed or Strongly Agreed they were better prepared for their deployment following the training. RedR is now prepared to design and deliver a two-day refresher training in early September to ensure additional standby capacity until the end of November 2015.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

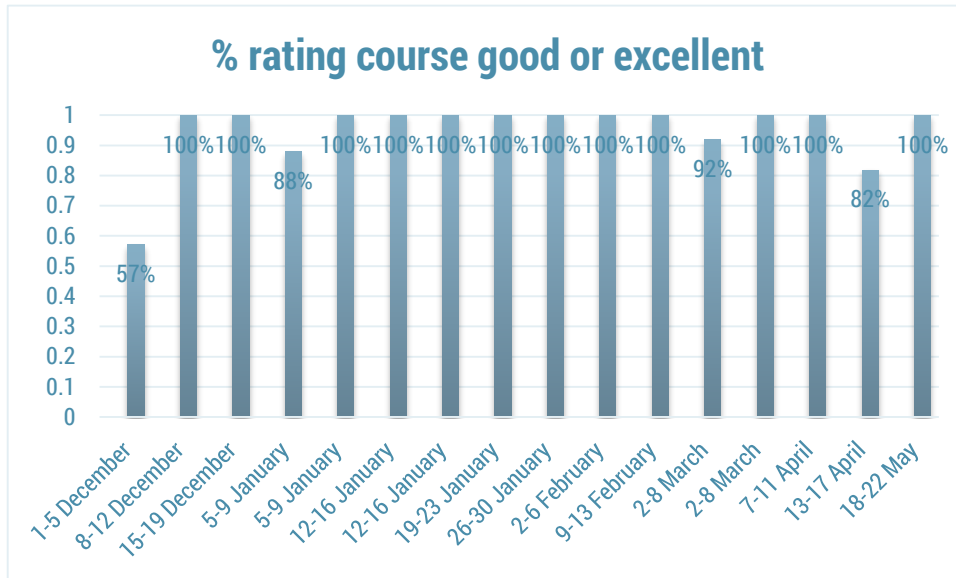
Since November 2014, RedR UK has been running a capacity building project to prepare medical staff for deployment to work in Ebola Treatment Centres in Sierra Leone through the delivery of pre-departure trainings. This project has contributed to the UK-led response to the Ebola crisis in Sierra Leone by preparing medical volunteers from the NHS and Danish, Norwegian, and South Korean foreign medical teams to function as effectively and safely as possible in the environment of the Ebola Treatment Centres (ETCs) run by Save the Children, International Medical Corps, Médecins du Monde, Emergency, and GOAL. RedR began delivering training in December 2014 and thus took on responsibility for the pre-departure training from the MoD, who had provided training in the initial stages of the UK response.

The RedR Ebola pre-departure training that was run from December was a 5 day intensive face-to-face training with a holistic approach to preparing participants for their humanitarian deployment. The training included sessions on essential medical topics such as Ebola symptoms and characteristics, triage, and medical case management, but also integrates topics necessary for Health Care Workers deploying to this humanitarian response such as humanitarian principles, safety and security, protection and vulnerability, Sierra Leone cultural awareness, and stress and resilience. The course agenda and content were developed in collaboration with a number of organisations with experience and expertise in this response and have undergone a series of informal revisions and formal reviews to ensure the course continues to meet the needs of the current situation and response in Sierra Leone.

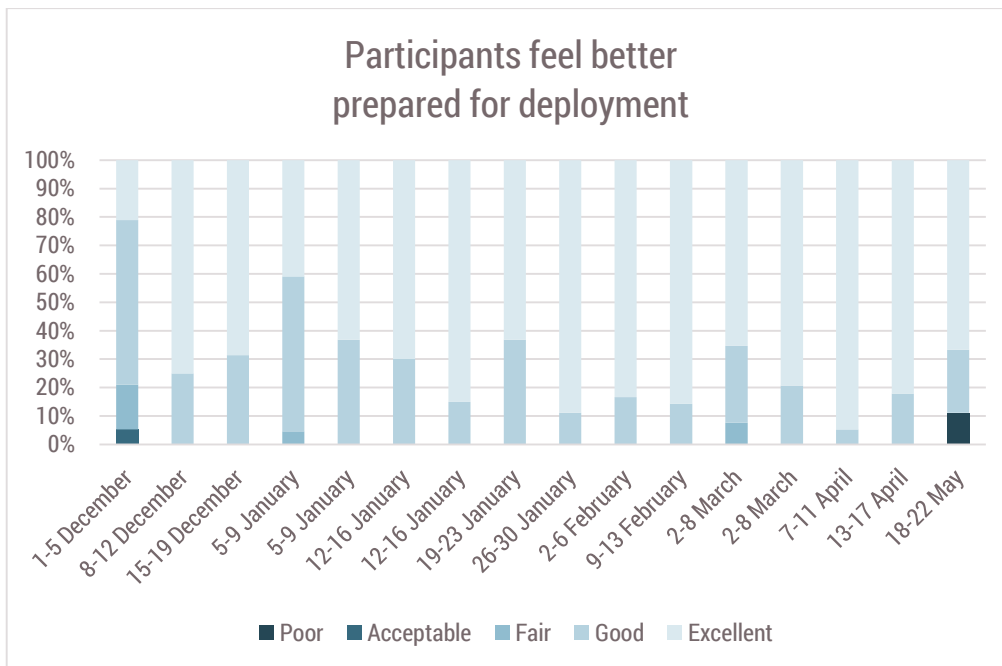
The training methodology used is informed by adult learning principles and current best practice in learning and development. Daily practical sessions are included where participants practise patient care and waste management tasks in their personal protective equipment. The course benefitted from specialist knowledge through the use of expert-delivered sessions and carefully composed training teams. Each team was led by a RedR Associate Trainer with extensive experience in humanitarian training, who worked alongside one Infection Prevention and Control/Logistics specialist and one or two clinicians, each with experience from the response in West Africa.

PARTICIPANT EVALUATIONS

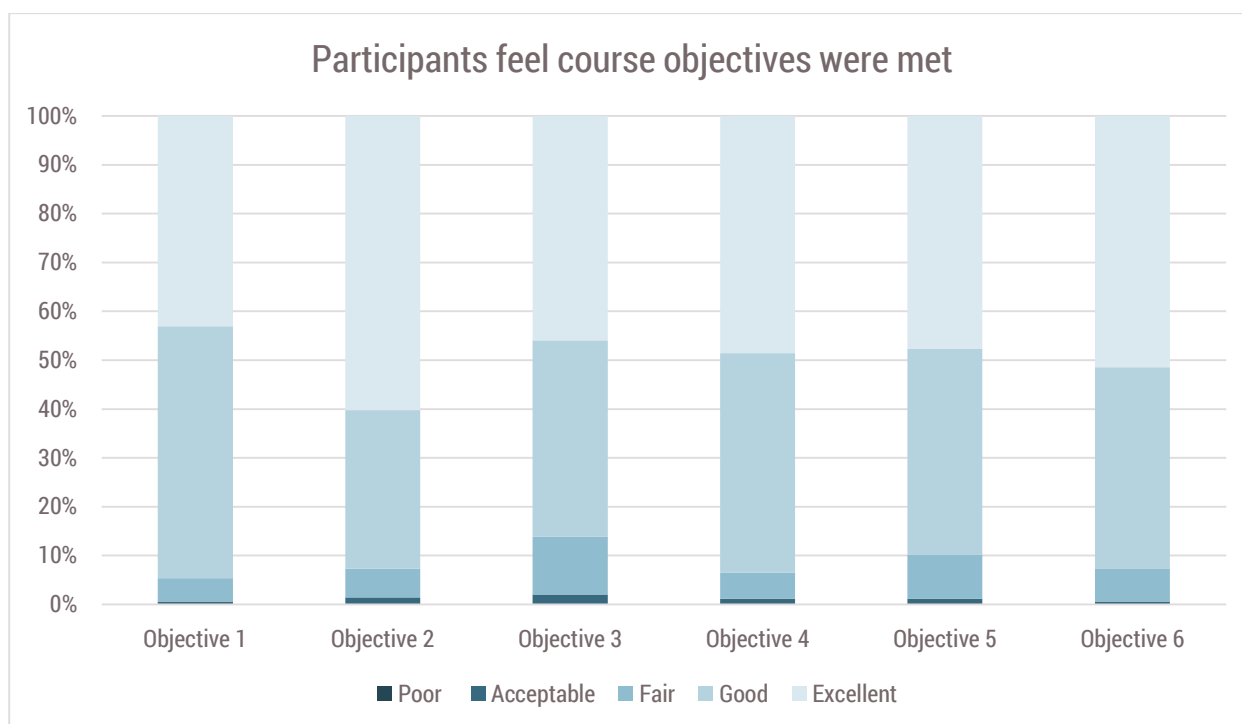
Participant feedback on the training was overall very positive. On average, 95% of participants rated the course as “good” or “excellent” when asked to give an “overall approval rating”. As the overall approval ratings show, the course was given a 100% rating in 12 out of the 16 courses delivered between December 2014 and May 2015.



Overall, most participants indicated that they felt better prepared for their deployment after the course and those who felt ill-prepared for the most part referred to issues outside of RedR’s control.



The majority of participants felt course objectives were met across all trainings:



The course evaluations asked for feedback on specific sessions, the training team, course materials and methodology. When asked what they liked best about the course, participants' most common responses fell into four general categories:

- The practical activities and PPE practice were appreciated;
- The diverse training methodology enabled learning;
- The trainers were knowledgeable and approachable;
- The broad range of topics to put the Ebola response in context was appreciated.

When asked what could be improved, participant responses generally fell into three categories across the whole training programme:

- There should be more PPE and medical sessions;
- There should be fewer/condensed humanitarian and non-medical sessions;
- The days were long and intensive.

PARTICIPANT QUOTATIONS

“I thought the overall training given was excellent and the best as could be given to prepare us prior to entering Sierra Leone. Please pass on my thanks to the team who led our training, it was a very helpful and informative 5 days.”

“The training’s been extensive and thorough. I value its wide approach, the PPE focus, the realities of treatment centres, the practical tasks we’ll all be expected to do. At the same time, it’s good that the training also deals with psycho-social concerns, with our motivations, and the inclusion of cultural sessions, which help us get an idea of what to expect in Sierra Leone. I really appreciate its breadth.”

“My mind works in a very clinical way. Having other broader aspects is really helpful to me. I am impressed that the training has been delivered non-didactically, enabling us to interact and get to know the team we’ll be working with quickly and well. We are being trained together and the approach means we will know each other very well even before we arrive.”

“It’s also been excellent to have information given to us by returners about what it will be like – it’s a real chance for us to be mentally prepared. The training with the PPE suits is also very important and I think it makes us feel better, to know there is a process, what it is and to get used to it. It’s extremely good.”

“The training was also good because of some of the other things it taught us. I found it useful when I was in the field that I had learned about the humanitarian sector. It was good to understand what we were doing in the context of humanitarian responses around the world. I wouldn’t say that’s a surprise, but it was more useful than I thought it might be.”

“RedR’s training was really useful. The PPE training was vital – and also reassuring. It was good to get used to putting the suit on and taking it off, to feel protected, to get used to the protocols and to feel a little better prepared. It would have been far far more difficult to get used to if we had learned that in the field – the heat would have made it so much harder.”

ASSESSING IMPACT

RedR has a commitment to continuous learning from our projects. Therefore, RedR has done several analyses of the project to evaluate achievements and impact, as well as draw out lessons learnt for our organisation and the wider humanitarian sector. Three such analyses thus far conducted internally as a follow-up to this project are:

- DFID EVD Project M&E Report
- Lessons Learnt Report
- ODI coordination article