

# Capacitar: Research & Reflection

*Joan Rebmann Condon, Project Director*

Trocaire, the Catholic Development Agency of Ireland, recently awarded Capacitar a grant for its Research and Reflection Project. This project focuses on assessing the impacts and outcomes of Capacitar training not only for individual participants but also for organizations, staffs of organizations and clients. We are also looking at how Capacitar methods can be integrated into the larger social systems. Results of this study will be shared both within the Capacitar global network, with other partners and with larger systems in education, mental health, health, development and social justice.

We began work in March 2009 developing strategies for interviews, data collection and research approaches. We conducted interviews and focus groups in Rwanda in July and began that process in El Salvador in September. In October we interviewed training participants in Argentina and in November in Santa Barbara, California. In May 2010 we plan to conduct interviews in England, Ireland and Northern Ireland. We have also sent questionnaires by email to participants around the globe. To chart the multiplication of Capacitar practices and the impact of this multiplication, we have adapted a pathway analysis/netmapping tool.

The most complete data to date is from Rwanda. The results in Rwanda show real transformative change in individuals and in organizations. Initial analysis shows that all participants interviewed report positive individual change. For example, participants described themselves before receiving Capacitar training as impatient, unable to handle conflict, confused, unfocused, burned out, and resistant. After training they describe themselves as courageous, hopeful, focused, centered, clear, able to manage emotions and able to manage conflict.

Many of the participants work in social change organizations. One hundred percent of the organizations studied that have integrated Capacitar methods into their work report improvement in relationships among staff and with clients. Staff members report greater team spirit, being more tolerant of each other, having more enthusiasm for their work, being more caring with each other, having more trust in each other, and having better communication and more unity. They also report being more open, more welcoming and more tolerant with their clients.

We also measured the way that training participants multiplied the work with others using the netmapping tool. The multiplication or cascading training model is an important aspect of Capacitar's popular education approach, so we were interested in studying this level of impact. The Leader's Group in Rwanda had just completed its second year of Capacitar training. The 27 leader participants represented 17 organizations in 4 provinces. We developed a simple scale that the leader participants could use to measure their levels of influence as a result of workshops they conducted with individuals and organizations. Level 1: Small Influence (Capacitar practices used by some participants); Level 2: Medium Influence (Capacitar practices used by participants and in their organization); Level 3: Strong Influence (Capacitar practices used by participants, used in the organization and service programs and multiplied with groups and communities). These 27 leader participants made 8,374+ contacts. Of these 1,691 scored Strong influence; 2,962 scored Medium Influence; and 3,721 Small influence. Among the groups impacted by the leader participants were: education (school based children and non-scholarized children), youth groups, single mothers, prisoners, child head of households, agricultural workers, women, widows, prostitutes, trauma counseling, religious congregations (both men and women and

their outreach), HIV/AIDS groups, and the Ministry of Mental Health. Their outreach not only has been within Rwanda but also to individuals and organizations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (refugee camps), Burundi, the Republic of Benin, France, Belgium and Ireland.

One of the valuable benefits of this project is the opportunity to study Capacitar work and growth in different countries and cultures. We will be able to analyze if and how training differences (amount of human and financial resources invested), cultural or political differences, human and financial resources within the area, and leadership etc. affect the impact and outcomes of Capacitar work. With this information we can work with groups in each area to develop strategies to meet their training needs and to use the tools we have developed to track the impacts and outcomes of their own programs. From our participatory process we will be able to build consistent research methods into all of our trainings. This study will also help us identify successful strategies for introducing and integrating Capacitar into organizations and larger social structures.

The study will continue until October 2010. Stay tuned for additional information and reports that will be posted in future newsletters and on our website: [www.capacitar.org](http://www.capacitar.org).



**RWANDA:** Project Director Joan Condon, with Capacitar Rwanda Coordinator Antoinette Gasibirege and Central Africa Coordinator Dr. Genevieve van Waesberghe meeting with Trocaire Rwanda Director, Paul Watson, and Program Officer Modeste Sibomana—Kigali, July 2009.

## Capacitar Netmapping—Rwanda Team Outreach

**N = 27 Participants**  
**17 Organizations**  
**4 Provinces**

**8,374+ Contacts**  
**1,691 = Strong**  
**2,962 = Medium**  
**3,721 = Small**

### Level of Capacitar Influence

**Strong =** Practices used by participants, in the organization & outreach service programs

**Medium =** Practices used by participants and in the organization

**Small =** Practices used by some participants

