

Organising an activity to raise awareness and/or influence authority



Level 2

Learner Manual

The learning materials for Development Practice and Management were specifically designed to complement and give substance to the competence standards drafted with the assistance of community based development practitioners in South Africa. It is envisaged that practitioners, capacity builders, grant-makers and others will use these standards and learning materials, improve them and in turn share their learning with others via www.developmentpractice.org.za.

AIDS Consortium Tel: +27 (0) 11 403 0265
info@aidsconsortium.org.za www.aidsconsortium.org.za

Community Connections Tel: +27 (0) 21 371 2909
info@connectionsafrika.org.za www.connectionsafrika.org.za

Keystone Tel: +27(0) 21 788 5685
andre@keystoneaccountability.org www.keystoneaccountability.org

Sustainability Institute Tel: +27 (0) 21 881 3196
manda@sustainabilityinstitute.net www.sustainabilityinstitute.net

C. S. Mott Foundation Tel: +27 (0) 11 726-1552
info@mott.org www.mott.org

Investec Bank Tel: +27 (0) 11 286 3141
Social.Investment@investec.co.za www.investec.com



Organising an activity to raise awareness and/or influence authority

Level 2

- Learner Manual -

The development practice project

These learning materials were generated by the Development Practice project, hosted by the [Sustainability Institute](#) and in partnership with [Community Connections](#), [AIDS Consortium](#) and [Keystone](#). This project generated a set of competence standards with development practitioners in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban, between 2005 and 2009. This manual is part of a set of materials consisting of a competence standard, **learner's manual**, **facilitator's guide** and an assessment tool. More information on this project is available on the [Development Practice](#) website.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Development Practice Project wishes to acknowledge and thank the following contributors:

- [Investec](#) for providing principle funding.
- [C.S. Mott Foundation](#) for providing seed and continued funding
- Karin Webber of DTF Solutions for researching and compiling this set of learning materials
- The partner organisations who contributed their materials
- The many other thinkers, writers, and published works that contributed indirectly to this product
- The project team for logistics, coordination and editing

Questions and queries on the project and materials can be forwarded to info@developmentpractice.org.za.






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OVERVIEW

Welcome to this manual, Organising an activity to raise awareness and/or influence authority. The manual will assist you to organise activities to raise awareness or influence authority more effectively in your community.

This learner manual, accompanied by a facilitated programme of activities, should **be followed up by practical ‘on-the-job’ experience and practise (supported by a mentor if possible)**. Once you have read through this learner manual, done all the exercises, implemented the learnings in your organisation, you will be ready to have your competence assessed, if you choose.

Below follows the Specific Outcomes and Assessment Criteria that this learner manual is based on. This means that at the end of your learning period, you will be able to practice all the points listed below. During the learning period you will be reminded to keep and file proof of your work. This is called a Portfolio of Evidence. It is a collection of evidence to show what was learnt during the course and from past experience, including all other training courses attended. Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is when all your learning is taken into account and acknowledged when assessed for a specific standard. Outcomes are the result of your learning. At the end of each section there is a symbol for you to check your understanding.

Please read the competency standard below carefully.



SPECIFIC OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Specific outcomes	Assessment criteria
<i>Competence in this standard means that the learner has clearly shown that s/he is able to...</i>	<i>Tasks and activities completed by the learner contain the following evidence of competence...</i>
Identify a behaviour or policy that needs to change and motivate why	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A range of behaviour that affects the community negatively are described ▪ A specific behaviour that the organisation can realistically influence is described ▪ The benefit of this change to the community is explained
Identify who (people and or institutions) can be approached to make change happen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ People or institutions who can influence change on this selected issue are listed ▪ Possible risks in approaching these people and institutions are described
Plan relevant activities to influence the target group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A range of ways to raise awareness and influence authority are discussed ▪ Relevant activities to achieve the objective of change are selected ▪ Relevant allies who can help to achieve the goals are identified ▪ A short plan is drawn up

Note: Tasks may be presented for an actual or hypothetical organisation but must be learner's original work and not copied from existing documents. Learners should be able to explain and justify their statements.



ACTIVITIES

There are a number of activities in the manual. These activities are an important part of the learning approach and you are encouraged to complete them as part of your learning process. They will become part of your own “toolkit” to help you work more effectively. Some of these activities can also be used as part of your portfolio of evidence (PoE), which you need to compile if you wish to be assessed for competence in this standard.

Symbols used in this workbook



Important thought

This sign shows an important thought or idea for you to take note of.



Definition

When you see this sign, a term is explained here.



Self-test

This designates a self-test section - this is an opportunity for you to check your understanding and if you are unclear, to discuss with your trainer.



Case study/Example

Case studies or examples will tell you about a practical application of something that has been discussed or covered in the course.





Individual activity

This sign marks an activity – either during the class or as homework. These activities are important to complete – both for your understanding but also as they can be included as part of your Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) for assessment.



Group activity

This sign means that this activity is a group work activity.

INTRODUCTION

When we are busy with our work in the community, we sometimes come across issues or problems that we cannot solve on our own. This manual will help us to look at ways to organise ourselves, to take part in activities that can raise awareness about these issues, or influence those people in authority.

In this manual we will look at how we can identify the issues that are affecting our communities negatively and who we can work with to make change happen. We will also look at specific ways to plan and run activities to raise awareness or influence authority.

If you and your organisation want to raise awareness about specific issues in your community or influence authority about these, then this manual is for you.





ORGANISING ACTIVITIES TO RAISE AWARENESS OR INFLUENCE AUTHORITY



Case study: Sisonke AIDS Project

SISONKE AIDS PROJECT

Chapter 1

Some time ago two women from the same street whose children had died of AIDS related illnesses decided to do something to help other mothers. They felt that if parents could be more involved they could save many lives amongst the youth. They felt that the cultural barriers that hinder parents from speaking openly to their children about safer sexual practices were a big issue so they decided to offer awareness programs that would teach youth safer sexual practices. The one woman had a big house and they used one of the rooms for training. They started with the children from their street but soon they had youth from many different streets and the community attending.

Many people within the community who were affected by the impact of HIV/AIDS felt they needed to be involved with this project and soon the two women had eight volunteers. The project grew over time and now has a Board and is run by a manager.

Because of the good work they were doing and the fact that people could see that



the organisation really wanted to help the community, people started to raise other issues with them.

Chapter 2

During this time they became more aware of other difficulties that affected people living with HIV&AIDS and also other community members. They realised that if they really wanted to help their community they would have to look at how they could raise awareness about some of these issues and try to influence authority to make the necessary changes happen. They also realised that there were many problems, but they needed to find out exactly what were the ones that were affecting the community most negatively. There were a number of issues that Sisonke identified with the community such as the fact that the clinic closed early on a Friday afternoon and that made it difficult for many patients to receive the assistance they needed in time. They also identified the fact that not all the children who were HIV-positive were receiving ARVs as a big problem. The community also identified other problems like access to grants for those who are HIV-positive etc. After a lot of discussion at Sisonke they decided that although there were many issues, the first problem that they would raise awareness about to change the situation, would be the clinic hours on a Friday. Over time, the organisation had received many complaints from working clients that despite their shorter working day on a Friday, they were not able to access the clinic for services and had to take unpaid leave on other days to attend. This would be a good issue to deal with, because people have tried before to get the clinic to stay open for longer on a Friday and the situation had not changed. They also felt that if they could raise awareness about the clinic hours, it would ensure that not only patients living with HIV&AIDS would get a better service, but the general community would



also benefit. The manager had already made a phone call to the Sister-in-charge at the clinic to set up a meeting to discuss the issue but was not listened to or taken seriously and so far nothing had happened. As they are a small organisation they felt that this was also an easy issue to start with as their first campaign – it would prepare them to take on the more difficult issues in future.

Chapter 3

The manager of Sisonke met with the Board and volunteers to look at who the people were that they needed to work with, if they were going to start a campaign to raise awareness about this issue in their community. They decided that one of the first groups of people they needed to work with was the staff at the clinic, the Department of Health officials and the local Health committee. They also needed to meet with the community to get information about the problem and how it affected them.

The team at Sisonke were now getting very excited because they had made contact with their target audiences – the decision makers and the community. They realised that when they started talking to people that not everyone felt the same way about the problem and that there were even people who did not think it was a good idea for them to raise awareness about it. The clinic sisters for example were not happy that they wanted to ensure that the clinic stay open until later on a Friday, because they used that time to do their admin and did not know when they would find time to do it, if the clinic was open for longer. They realised that they would have to find ways to work with all those concerned and get their message across even to the clinic staff. They would have to find a way that everyone would support the idea and maybe also help look at other solutions so that the clinic staff



would not be against the change. This would not be easy! Their manager was very supportive and the Board members also gave some ideas of how to overcome these problems.

Chapter 4

They were now ready to start planning how they would put together a campaign to raise awareness about these issues. They organised a meeting with the community, the Sisonke Board and volunteers to draw up the message that they wanted to send out with their awareness campaign. They knew that the message **had to be short and to the point so that it would get people's attention.** The message had to say something positive about why they wanted the clinic to remain open later on a Friday. It took many attempts to get the right message, but eventually they were very happy with the message that they put together. In the end their message was "The community has a right to service during all working hours. Keep the clinic open for the full working day on a Friday and ensure better **access for the whole community**".

The group also decided that they would then send a letter to the decision makers, about the issue and their message. They would also use the radio, newspapers, public meetings and other individual meetings as channels to get their message to the target groups and to inform people about the issue.

Chapter 5

Once they had a message they were ready to start planning their activities for raising awareness. The activities that they looked at were all the things that they would want to do to raise awareness about the issue of the clinic closing hours.



Luckily the manager had done some planning before and so it helped them all in the team to put their ideas together and come up with a plan that they could put into action!

Chapter 6

As this was a very important issue that did not only affect people living with HIV&AIDS, Sisonke decided that they needed to look at the other organisations in their community that they could form partnerships with to help them with their awareness raising. They identified a number of organisations like the church, the Health Committee and a NGO working in their community that could support them. They were also part of a bigger network of organisations that worked in the province and used this network to get more ideas about how to raise awareness and influence authority.



Organising activities to raise awareness can be a very exciting and an important part of the work that we as CBOs do. When working in our communities there are sometimes difficult situations or issues that we need to help with. These issues may be things like, the clinic closing earlier on a Friday afternoon or that people are struggling to get access to child care grants. Many people in our communities are affected by these issues and one of the things that we can do is to raise awareness so that the relevant concerns can be reflected in the change. We call this process advocacy and lobbying. If we look at the story of Sisonke then we can see that they had to do the same, so let us look at a few definitions that will help us.

Firstly let's look at advocacy:



Definition: Advocacy

This is the process we use to organise activities to make people aware of the problems and difficult situations in our communities.

Advocacy is using different steps and ways to make sure that things change around these issues.

Some of the reasons why we want to use advocacy is to:

- Build support for our issue or assist with a problem that our community has
- Get others to support our issue for change
- Try to influence people who make policies and rules to change certain things so that it will help us

Notes

Now let's look at **lobbying** and how it works with advocacy when we are raising awareness or influencing those in authority to make changes.



Definition: Lobbying

Lobbying is another way that we can use to make people aware of things that need to change – in lobbying we use specific activities e.g.

- An information campaign with posters or interviews or adverts on the radio
- Working with other organisations and people in our community who are concerned with the same issue
- Organising our community e.g. protest marches and petitions

Identifying the problems and issues in our communities that need to change



Case study: Sisonke AIDS Project

During this time they became more aware of other difficulties that affected people living with HIV&AIDS and also other community members. They realised that if they really wanted to help their community they would have to look at how they could raise awareness about some of these issues and try to influence authority to make the necessary changes happen. They also realised that there were many problems, but they needed to find out exactly which ones were affecting the community most. There were a number of issues that Sisonke identified with the community such as the fact that the clinic closed early on a Friday afternoon and that made it difficult for many patients to receive the assistance they needed in time. They also identified that not all the children who were HIV-positive were receiving ARVs and that the access to grants for those who are HIV-positive were further problems experienced.

When we look at our story then we will see that the first step is to clarify exactly what the problem or issue is. There can be many different problems and we also need to decide which one is the most important.

For example one of the problems that the group identified was that the clinic closed earlier on a Friday afternoon. They might have felt like saying “The clinic is



useless”. Actually the issue is that it is unfair that they close early on a Friday, and can then not help everyone who needs assistance at that time.

When we are specific about the issue that needs to be addressed, it helps us to identify who the people are that we need to speak to and how we will tell them about our problem. We are able to target the person who can help us without having to speak to different people who are unable to help and keep referring us to others thus causing frustration and they appear unhelpful.



Group activity

1. In your group look at the story of Sisonke. There we find 3 problems that they have identified. Discuss in your group what you think the real issue is behind each problem.
2. Once you have done that think of your own communities or organisations and make a list of the main problem areas that need to be addressed in your communities. These problems can include policies or the behaviour of people. Discuss this with your group members and decide which one you would like to work on as an example of how to raise awareness about a specific issue.
3. Also discuss in the group why it would be good to make people aware about this issue and why they need to try and change them. What would the benefits to the community be?





Individual activity

Once you have discussed it in the group look at your own community. Think again of the story. They identified 3 issues – i.e. the clinic closed early, not all HIV-positive children could get ARVs and that people who were living with HIV had problems accessing grants.

1. Make a list of the problems or behaviours that you would want to change in your community?
2. Choose one of the above problems or any other as an example for learning how to organise activities to raise awareness. This issue will be used as an example in the exercises to follow.
3. What will be the benefits to your community if you raise awareness about that issue?





Case study: Sisonke AIDS Project

After a lot of discussion at Sisonke they decided that although there were many issues, the first problem that they would raise awareness about to change the situation, would be the clinic hours on a Friday. This would be a good issue to deal with, because people have tried before to get the clinic to stay open for longer on a Friday and the situation had not changed. They also felt that if they could raise awareness about the clinic hours, it would ensure that not only patients living with HIV&AIDS would get a better service, but the general community would also benefit. The manager had already made a phone call to the Sister-in-charge at the clinic to set up a meeting to discuss the issue but so far nothing had happened. As they are a small organisation they felt that this was also an easy issue to start with as their first campaign - it would prepare them to take on the more difficult issues in future.





THE PEOPLE WE WILL WORK WITH: OUR TARGET GROUP



Case study: Sisonke AIDS Project

The manager of Sisonke met with the Board and volunteers to look at who the people were that they needed to work with, if they were going to start a campaign to raise awareness about this issue in their community. They decided that one of the first groups of people they needed to work with was the staff at the clinic, the Department of Health officials and the local Health committee. They also needed to meet with the community to get information about the problem and how it affected them.


Now that we have identified the issue that we want to raise awareness about, we must look at who the people are that we should contact and work with. There are usually two different groups of people, namely those that can help us and those we want to work with. These groups are our target groups.

Who do we want to work with?

Let's look at the people that the Sisonke group would have to work with. The first group are the people or organisations that are able to make decisions about their specific issue namely that the clinic closes early on a Friday. Look at the example and make a list of the first group of people that they identified.



If we look at that list we will see that they are all the people who make decisions about matters related to the clinic or people who can influence the decisions that are taken. Our first target group then is the decision makers



Examples of people or organisations that are able to make decisions

- Politicians
- Government officials
- Community and church leaders
- Media

The Sisonke group also identified a second target group, namely the community. When we are organising activities to raise awareness or influence authority we cannot do it without this very important target group - our community. Our communities are very important for us to work with when we are raising awareness about specific issues. We must make sure that we understand our communities well so that they can support our activities. Our communities need to see that if the changes happen it will be good for them.

As members of a CBO, our organisation may be an important voice for change.



Case study: Sisonke AIDS Project

The team at Sisonke were now getting very excited because they had made contact with their target audiences – the decision makers and the community. They realised that when they started talking to people that not everyone felt the same way about the problem and that there were even people who did not think it was a good idea for them to raise awareness about it. The clinic sisters for example were not happy that they wanted the clinic stay open until later on a Friday, because they used that time to do their admin and did not know when they would find time to do it, if the clinic was open for longer. They realised that they would have to find ways to work with all those concerned and get their message understood by the clinic staff. They would have to find a way that everyone would support the idea and maybe also help look at other solutions so that the clinic staff would not be against the change. This would not be easy! Their manager was very supportive and the Board members also gave some ideas of how to overcome these problems.



Important thought

It is important to remember that there can be difficulties involved in working with certain people or organisations when you want to make changes. Keep this in mind when selecting the people to work with.



Different ways to reach the people we want to work with

There are many different ways that we can use to reach these two groups of people that we want to work with.



Examples of ways to reach people we want to work with

- Hold a community meeting
- Write a letter to the newspaper about the issue in the community
- Use posters and pamphlets to tell people about the issue
- Go from door-to-door to talk to people about the issue and get their support



Self-test

You should be able to:

- Describe the behaviours or problems that negatively affect your community
- Describe a specific behaviour or problem that your organisation can realistically influence
- Explain the benefits of this change to the community
- Identify the individuals, organisations and institutions you wish to influence
- Describe the risks in approaching certain people and institutions

Please ask your facilitator if you are unsure of any of the above.

ACTIVITIES TO INFLUENCE PEOPLE AND RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT OUR ISSUE

We have now looked at the issue that we want to change and we have looked at the people we want to work with to make things change. Now we need to look at specific activities or actions we can take to raise awareness or influence people in authority about the issue.

Some questions that will help us with our activities are:

- What message do we want to send?
- How are we going to get our community involved? How will we approach the decision makers? What are the channels that we can use?
- What are our plans and activities?

The message

Let us look at the message that we want to send. This message will tell people what we want to raise awareness about and is called our advocacy message.

Notes





Definition: A good message

A good message will tell us what we want to change, why we want to change this and how we want to do it. Such a message must be short and to the point.

In our Sisonke story, they had to think of a message that they could use to raise awareness about the issue of the clinic closing early on a Friday.



Case study: Sisonke AIDS Project

They were now ready to start planning how they would put together a campaign to raise awareness about these issues. They organised a meeting with the community, the Sisonke Board and volunteers so that they could draw up the message that they wanted to send out with their awareness campaign. They knew **that the message had to be short and to the point so that it would get people's attention.** The message had to say something positive about why they wanted to get the clinic to remain open later on a Friday. It took many attempts to get the right message, but eventually they were very happy with the message that they put together. In the end their message was **“Keep the clinic open for the whole day on a Friday – the community has a right to service during all working hours – ensure better access to the clinic for the whole community.”**



Now let's look at how we can put together our own message for the issue that we have selected. We can practice writing a message in the bigger group first and then look at our own issue and write one for ourselves.

There are a few things to remember about a message:

- Keep it short and simple
- Make sure that the message is clear
- Make sure that the message says what it is you want to change
- Make sure that the message is specific to your target group
- Keep in mind where your message will be used e.g. newspaper, poster in clinic or advert on the radio



Group activity

1. Write down your specific issue on the newsprint. Now you can work on your message.
2. Remember that your message must be specific to the problem e.g. the clinic closes early on a Friday and this makes it difficult for everyone who needs help to be seen on a Friday. Many people are sent home and need to come back to the clinic on a Monday. So an example of a message for this problem could be **“Keep the clinic open for longer on a Friday so that members of the community can have better access to the clinic.”**
3. In your group write a message for your problem, keeping the guideline

The channels we can use to raise awareness



Case study: Sisonke AIDS Project

The group also decided that they would then send a letter to the decision makers, about the issue with their message. They would also use the radio, newspapers, a public meeting and other individual meetings as channels to get their message to the target groups and to inform people about the issue.

Our next step is to look at the channels that we will use to get the message to the people in the community and those who are able to make decisions.

There are two main channels that we can use:

- The media e.g. newspapers, TV, radio
- Face-to-face e.g. a meeting or home visits



Group activity

1. Look at the example of the channels that the Sisonke group wanted to use for their message.
2. Brainstorm and discuss in your group what the different channels are that you can use to raise awareness and influence authority?
3. Make a list of all the different channels that you could use to reach your two target groups, namely the decision makers and the community.



Self-test

You should be able to:

- Develop a message for your activity to raise awareness and influence authority
- Discuss ways to raise awareness and influence authority
- Identify appropriate channels through which to raise issues

Please ask your facilitator if you are unsure of any of the above.



Our activities to raise awareness and influence authority

Before we start to look at our activities we need to stop for a minute and do some planning for our activities.

The steps needed to plan our activities include the following:


- What do we want to achieve with our activity over the long-term? This is the goal of our activities that tells us why we want to do the activities.
- We then look at the specific activities needed to make this happen. The activities are all the things you want to do to ensure that people get your message and become aware of the issue that you want to raise (i.e. raise their awareness about).

Notes



A simple way to plan activities is to use this table.

Activities for raising awareness



Example: Activities to raise awareness

What - goal	Activity or action	Who must do it	By when must they do it
To keep the clinic open for longer on a Friday afternoon so that more people can be helped.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a meeting with the Sister-in-charge • Write a letter to the Department of Health • Organise a march to the clinic to hand over the petition • Arrange a public meeting to discuss the issue • Get people to sign a petition to keep the clinic open 	Chairperson of Health Committee Secretary of Health Committee	End of the month After meeting with clinic



Group activity

Discuss in your group what your goal, and activities will be for the issue that you want to raise awareness or influence authority about? Use the table to help you (fill your ideas in on the table).

What - goal	Activity or action	Who must do it	By when must they do it





Self-test

You should be able to:

- Select relevant activities to achieve the objective

Please ask your facilitator if you are unsure of the above.



RELEVANT ALLIES WHO CAN HELP US ACHIEVE OUR GOALS



Case study: Sisonke AIDS Project

As this was a very important issue that did not only affect people living with HIV&AIDS, Sisonke decided that they needed to look at the other organisations in their community that they could form partnerships with to help them with their awareness raising. They identified a number of organisations like the church, the Health Committee and a NGO working in their community that could support them. They were also part of a bigger network of organisations that helped in the province and used this network to get more ideas about how to raise awareness and influence authority.

Awareness raising is not easy to do on your own. It is a good idea to look at other people and organisations that are working in the community that can help us to reach our goal. When we do this we are forming partnerships with allies and building networks between people and organisations. Allies are people or organisations that can help, support or partner with us to achieve our goals and assist us in the work that we do.





Definition: Network

A network is a group of people or organisations who are willing to talk to each other about specific issues and help or support each other where necessary to make changes happen. Often a network is made up of a group of organisations that have similar aims, like organisations working against women and child abuse, working in TB, human rights etc

Notes





Individual activity

As your final activity for this manual you need to draw up a short plan using all the information you have learnt in this course. Remember to include the following:

- Behaviour or problems that exist in your community that you want to change
- The benefits for the community if these things change
- The people you need to approach to make change happen – the decision makers and your community
- Different ways and channels you can use to raise awareness or influence authority
- Activities to achieve your goals
- Relevant allies that you can work with to achieve your goal

The behaviour or problem that exists in your community (that you want to change)

The benefits for the community (if the problem is changed)



The target group: Decision makers (make a list of the decision makers that you will work with)

The target group: Community (describe your community)

Different ways and channels to raise awareness or influence authority



What - goal	Activity	Who must do it	By when must they do it

Allies and partners that can support the campaign to raise awareness or influence authority





Self-test

You should be able to:

- Identify relevant allies who can help to achieve the goals
- Draw up a short plan

Please ask your facilitator if you are unsure of any of the above.

USEFUL WORDS

Activities

The activities are all the steps that are needed to ensure that people get the message and become aware of the issue that you want to make them aware of (i.e. raise awareness for).

Advocacy

This is the process used to organise activities to make people aware of the problems and difficult situations in our communities.

Advocacy is using different steps and ways to ensure that things change for relevant issues.

Allies

Allies are people or organisations that can help us to achieve our goals and support us in the work that we do.

Lobbying

Lobbying is another way that we can use to make people aware of things that need to change – in lobbying we use specific groups of activities

Networking

Is when a group of people or organisations are willing to talk to each other about specific issues



and support each other where necessary to make change happen.

Message

A good message will tell us what we want to change, why we want to change this and how we want to do it. Such a message must be short and to the point.

Partnerships

A partnership is a special kind of relationship where people and organisations work together on specific activities.

Target group

A target group is those people that you need to work with when raising awareness. There are two target groups, namely the decision makers and the community.

