Community Facilitation Programme
Community Development
Module 3. Purpose, Goals and Objectives of Community Development. Implications of the Community Development Strategy.

1. Introduction

What we have learned in the previous model:
- Community development is a method, process, programme and strategy by which change agents facilitate a developmental process.
- Community development is distinguishable from social development which has a far greater statutory influence that effects economic growth at all levels of the community.
- The existence of social capital in communities can greatly enhance the developmental process, and vice versa.

Aim of this module:

The aim of this module is to identify the purpose, goals and objectives of community development.

To simplify our understanding of community dynamics, theorists of community dynamics identify 8 different spheres or cycles of community life. We have already briefly referred to these spheres. Before we look at these spheres, a brief study of what civil society constitutes may help us in our understanding of these spheres. The Centre for Civil Society at the London School of Economics defines civil society as follows:

> *Civil society refers to the arena of uncoerced collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. In theory, its institutional forms are distinct from those of the state, family and market, though in practice, the boundaries between state, civil society, family and market are often complex, blurred and negotiated. Civil society commonly embraces a diversity of spaces, actors and institutional forms, varying in their degree of formality, autonomy and power. Civil societies are often populated by organisations such as registered charities, development non-governmental organisations, community groups, women's organisations, faith-based organisations, professional associations, trades unions, self-help groups, social movements, business associations, coalitions and advocacy group.*

It is within this arena of unforced collective action that we find the playground in which community development unfolds its plans and purposes. Since boundaries are often blurred and it is difficult to distinguish where voluntary actions are the order of the day and where "forced" policies and procedures emanate, there will always be an overlap. Nevertheless, the spheres of community life also allow for the freedom of expression that allows change agents to play a meaningful role in transforming their communities.

2. Goals and Objectives of Community Development

We have established up to now that Community Development aims to bring about substantive and sustainable change in all spheres of community life in order to improve the standard of living and quality of life of its members. It very seldom tar-

gets all of these spheres at the same time and is often limited to one, or a few at the most.

Studying them individually will allow us to consider possible interventions.

2.1 Economic Sphere

As mentioned previously, there are many role players and stakeholders having an interest in economic development. For the purpose of this module, our attention is fixed on what voluntary change agents can do to empower communities to become self sustainable entities. For this to happen it is important that:

- Small enterprises and cooperatives should grow and multiply.
- Where goods are manufactured there should be made available for local needs at market related prices before they are distributed elsewhere or exported.
- Appropriately scaled home and other industries should be developed to supply the need for local products.
- Increasing earnings within a community and decreasing expenditure outside of the community should be pursued all the time. Keeping the exchange of money within a community for as long as possible before its leaves that community, greatly improves the circular flow of money in a community which is a pre-requisite for economic development in any geographical area.
- Individuals and communities should invest in their own communities.
- A consumer loyalty to local products should be developed.
- The dependency on external energy and food sources should be decreased.
- A focus on renewable local resources and tourism should always be pursued.
- Local capital resources should be developed and should be made accessible.
- Access to credible financial institutions should be increased in order to be able to borrow money.
- High standards of service delivery in both the informal or formal business sector should be pursued at all times.

2.2 Psychosocial Sphere

The interaction between an individual's behaviour and his or her social environment, whether conscious or unconscious, plays a critical role on how it impacts the individual as well as their environment. It is easily understood that this relationship can have a very positive, or very negative influence. One of the key variables in this relationship is values. Key personal values which influence community development positively are:

- A high level of personal motivation.
- A productive, self-sufficient, vibrant and future-orientated mindset.
- To have a belief in civilised humanity, human solidarity, social equity, democracy, reconciliation and justice and to have a sense of national pride.

Where these values are present it will enable and motivate each member of the community to achieve their personal purpose in life and for them to take corporate responsibility for the wellbeing of community members, neighbours and to move away from any dependency on external systems.

Within the boundaries of these values lies the essence of the goals of individual and communal self help.

2.3 Bio-physiological Sphere

The bio-physiological sphere in South-Africa is characterised by the proliferation of

disease, a high infant mortality rate, high levels of HIV infections, primary health care service delivery shortcomings and malnutrition. Recent press releases dashed the hopes of South Africa showing a decline in the number of people living with HIV/Aids. This leaves change agents a serious challenge to play a role in addressing these problems through:

- Enabling communities to supply basic foodstuffs to meet their basic nutritional requirements. The concept of food gardens is well known and established, but still has not achieved its full potential as the source for supplying basic food-stuffs.
- The educating of community members about the importance of basic nutrition. People buy or produce basic food-stuffs mostly because of the need to have food and not because it is a basic nutritional requirement.
- The establishment of HIV/Aids home based care services. Where these services are established they have proved to be an invaluable service to the community as formal services are limited in the number of people which they can reach.
- The support of primary and secondary health services.
- General health education which is primarily the task of the parents or caregiver.

2.4 Technological Sphere

There is a direct relationship between the number, and level of skilled people and the economic development of a community. Change agents can play a role in helping communities to:

- Identify and prioritise the technological needs of the business sector of a community, whether it is service based, manufacturing, mining or agriculture.
- Compiling a database of appropriate training institutions and facilitating easier access to learning, especially for younger people.
- Enable the transference of skills and knowledge and linking ideas to needs of local groups and circumstances.
- Develop in community members the confidence to start using new technology and empowering them to use and apply their skills.
- Help community members to acquire skills needed to be successful in the informal sector.

Every person has a goal in life. The goal is tied to the ability of that person to pursue and achieve that goal through acquiring the necessary skills to achieve it. Often people give up on this goal not because they don't have the ability to acquire these skills, but because they don't have the opportunity to acquire it. Change agents can play a critical role in helping community members not only to acquire skills but to apply them to the benefit of the community.

2.5 Spiritual-Cultural Sphere

Of all the spheres of development, the spiritual-cultural sphere is the most difficult to influence because it directly relates to a person's world view and value system that is almost always deeply ingrained. World view on the other hand is strongly connected to a person's culture. All people have a particular model of the universe. Their worldview does more to shape their development, their prosperity or poverty, than does their physical environment or other circumstances. Three worldview archetypes are distinguished in literature. These are biblical theism, secularism and animism. Each of these worldviews create unique cultural stories and produce different values. Ideas produce behaviours and lifestyles that affect people, cultures

and nations.

The purpose of this module is not to clarify different worldviews but a brief description will help us to understand it's significance in how it can shape people's behaviour and understanding. Biblical theism; the biblical worldview understands that because God exists, an objective reality exists that is known and has been established by God. Therefore reality is ultimately personal because it has been established by the ultimate Person. Secularism in contrast sees reality as ultimately physical. This worldview denies the existence of any spiritual reality. Animism views reality as essentially spiritual. The physical world is "maya", an illusion that is animated by 'spirits'.

Darow Miller who is a theologian and not an academic, helps us through his working definition to better understand what is worldview. He defines it as follows: "A worldview is a set of assumptions held consciously or unconsciously in faith about the basic makeup of the world and how the world works".

The relationship between the spirituality of a person and how he sees the world and its own community is critical in engaging a person in the process of changing his or her community. This is often a long term process. This can be achieved through:

- Helping people to understand their fundamental world view and value system and how it influences their behaviour.
- Introducing people to applicable values, attitudes and behaviour and helping them to internalise these values.
- Challenging fatalistic religious orientation, an external locus of control, fatalism and a lack of initiative.
- Installing a belief that people have the capacity and could gain the power to control their own lives.

Worldview is a difficult concept to clarify and therefore would require of change agents some more in-depth study to be able to fully understand it. For the purpose of this module it is important to know that a persons worldview strongly influences his or her makeup and behaviour and if we want to engage people in the process of community development, we have to understand their worldview.

2.6 Political Sphere

This sphere of community life needs very little introduction. Change agents can utilize political structures and forces to the benefit of the community development process. This can be achieved by:

- Improving citizen participation in local government decision-making.
- Improving access to government officials and procedures for lodging grievances.
- Helping communities to establish a corporate vision for their community.
- Lobbying on behalf of the community. Change agents often fulfil the role of activist although not all change agents are comfortable in this role.
- Creating an awareness of future development initiatives by government and how it will affect the community.

2.7 Environmental Sphere

Over the last few years the United Nations Development Programme Cleary departed from their previous discourse of focussing mainly on people by focussing more on developmental programmes that clearly define people's relationship with their environment and how they should contribute towards the conservation and sustain-

able use of resources and land. This is against the backdrop of global warming and climate change and how these influence the production of food and the availability of water.

Change agents should focus on:

- Creating an appreciation for their environment.
- Education about the environment and the positive role it plays in the survival of people.
- Environmental projects that include conservation.
- Following the guidelines of the UNDP that recommend environmental management to be integrated into poverty reduction efforts.

2.8 Educational Sphere

People ought at all times to be central in development, because development is ultimately concerned with the individual, the quality of his life and his relationships with others. The goal for change agents would be to:

- Empower community members with skills and knowledge to enable them to manage their lives more effectively and to improve the circumstances of the people around them.
- Involve role players in education and skills training.

3. Handouts for Self Study

- The circular flow of money in a community.
- Community profile checklist.

4. Recommended Reading

Where there is no doctor. A village health care handbook
by David Werner with Carol Thuman and Jane Maxwell. Updated 2009, 512 pages, **Where There Is No Doctor**, is perhaps the most widely-used health care manual for health workers, clinicians, and others involved in primary health care delivery and health promotion programs around the world. With millions of copies in print in more than 75 languages, the manual provides practical, easily understood information on how to diagnose, treat, and prevent common diseases. Special attention is focused on nutrition, infection and disease prevention, and diagnostic techniques as primary ways to prevent and treat health problems.

This 2009 reprint includes new material on childhood vaccinations, HIV prevention and medicines, treating serious injuries, the resurgence of yaws, drug resistance and changes in STI and malaria medications, asthma treatment, and the differences in signs of heart attacks in women and men.

The book can be downloaded freely from www.hesperian.org, or ordered from various online bookstores.

5. Conclusion

In this module we have taken another step in getting more familiar with the process of community development by studying its desired outcomes in the 8 spheres of community life. In conclusion we want to emphasise that this module is merely a guideline for possible interventions and not a complete list. There is much more.