

Community Development

Trauma survival has many serious consequences, two of which can be apathy and withdrawal. After trauma healing, other ways to improve life can be considered. Encouraging participation in a small project can help to break this isolation and further regenerate energy. For this reason, development projects can provide this next step forward, for individuals and groups, as well as the wider community. Additionally, development projects allow for strengthening individual healing, as well as social healing. Working together, people can share their wounds and help build resilience. It is a good tool to connect community members and to build additional resources in the community. Therefore, this module is about the training of local committees and community members to develop community projects.

This is the first version of this module and it is the author's hope that it will develop through use. To that end, please feel free to share your experiences with the author.

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1. Background

The war in Burundi resulted in increased apathy and dependence, which in turn resulted in low production on a community level. Now that many people have recovered from their war trauma, it is time for further development. Experience has shown that those who have learnt to live with their traumas have a desire to undertake development initiatives. Members of the communities have now started to tackle other important areas of their lives, such as income. Unfortunately, however, they often find themselves struggling again but this time to strengthen their livelihoods. Therefore, it is time to find the necessary resources for this new phase in their lives.

2. Message and objectives

Psychosocial workers should know:

- *How to empower local committees and communities for development*

- *How local community can set up local organisations as a process to achieve self-reliance*
- *How to enhance development within the available local resources, both human and environmental*

Objectives for training Enhancing development through promoting self-reliance within local organisations, and stimulating strong networking.

3. Introduction

Discussed in this module are the basic, important points for every development worker training local community members.

The first issue is community empowerment and understanding the concepts of poverty, development and empowerment. Then, comes practical actions that can be used to empower the community, and finally, presenting the concepts of local organisation, a must

for any community working to become stronger. The second issue deals with community mobilisation and organising a community for action. This is not easy and can require informal leaders to facilitate sensitisation sessions and mobilise the efforts of the community. This also requires certain know-how. Development cannot be an isolated activity. People not only need to work together, but also their organisations need to work together, in order to remain strong and well equipped to meet any challenges they have to face. For that reason, roles and responsibilities must be defined, so that every community member and every partner knows their responsibilities and required actions. This is developed in the third and fourth parts of this module.

4. Community empowerment for development

4.1. Understanding poverty

Poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon. It is not only a lack of money, as many tend to believe. Lack of money is often an individual experience and should not be confused with the social problem. 'Poverty as a social problem affects many aspects of culture and society. If income from community members remain consistently low, access to services such as education, markets and health is poorly developed and the capacity for decision making are inadequate' (Bartle, P., 2007).

For this context, poverty is referred to as the lack of material resources such as food, access to drinking water, clothing, and housing, and encompasses poor living conditions in general. Also considered included in poverty are the more abstract resources, such as access to education, the right to pursue rewarding activity, and respect received from others.

4.2. Historic causes of poverty in Burundi:

- Colonisation interrupted the momentum of development,
- War destroyed human and material resources, reducing innovative projects to zero, and leaving a lot of trauma, which further slows productive processes.
- Dictatorial regimes have hindered specific ethnic groups, while others were given access to greater development.
- Other causes that have contributed to poverty can be found in more cultural causes. For example, sharing beer in Burundi is a cultural social activity. Today, this practice has brought about a new phenomenon of 'drinking clubs' (i.e., people who regularly meet in bars to drink and have discussions).

This encourages dependency not only on the group, but also on alcohol.

In order to differentiate between the 'causes' and 'factors' of poverty, they are presented in more detail below.

4.3. Factors of poverty

Bartle identifies five factors of poverty: ignorance, disease, apathy, dishonesty and dependency (Bartle, P., 2007).

Ignorance refers to a lack of information or knowledge. For many, the word 'ignorant' is an insult. However, while there is no shame in simply lacking information of knowledge, without it, it is not only difficult to initiate projects, but any project initiated is likely to fail. The Burundian economy is mainly based on agriculture. Apart from the fact that national policy did not enable innovation in the agricultural sector, lack of knowledge and skills are the most important constraints for modernising agricultural techniques in local communities.

Disease has serious consequences when a community is plagued by illness and absenteeism. As a result production drops and community members have no choice but to accept aid.

Apathy is sometimes associated with a fatalistic philosophy, such as '*accept your condition because decided your fate has been decided*'. In countries recovering from serious socio-political crises, it is an often serious, collective trauma that has affected society. A Burundian proverb says that God helps someone, when he helps himself, ('Imana ifasha uwifashije'). People have many abilities: to choose, to collaborate, to organise, to improve the quality of their lives. It does not help to say this is Gods will that I am suffering like this, people have the ability to actively improve their own situation.

Dishonesty expresses itself through all forms of corruption, embezzlement, extortion and theft. Dishonesty is viewed as a lack of social or professional integrity that enriches the few at the expense of many others. It occurs when money for development of the whole society is illegally, and often secretly, diverted to benefit individuals who abuse their position of trust as servants of society. For this reason it is important that facilitators, in their role as mobilisers and organisers of community organisations, should promote transparency, integrity and honesty.

The *dependency* syndrome may be defined as an attitude or belief that one group will not succeed in solv-

ing its own problems without outside intervention. It is a weakness that is aggravated by acts of charity. An example of dependency can be seen in the story of Nzitunga & Nzisabira

Nzitunga and Nzisabira are young women who were born in the same village in Gitega Province. They grew up together, and at age 17, young men approached them and proposed marriage. Nzisabira refused to marry and asked to return to school. A rich man from the village agreed to pay her school fees. Nzisabira was not a brilliant student, as her education had been interrupted, but her benefactor refused her nothing.

At 19, Nzitunga married a young man who sold meat grilled in the taverns of the village. On three occasions, she delivered daughters, and her husband became upset. The eldest daughter attended primary school, but her father did not contribute to her education. All he earned with his trade of grilled meat was used to get drunk and eat in local restaurants. Nzitunga found herself powerless to fulfil the needs of her family, which she alone must ensure. She met the rich man, the benefactor of Nzisabira and approached him to ask for a loan of 10,000 francs which she promised to pay back as soon as she would have her own capital. From her savings she had managed to keep 5000 F. The rich man said: "I will lend you money if you give me permission to come and assess where you are after three months." Nzitunga had already targeted a business project in banana beer. She accepted. She begun the project in August with 15,000 F. At Christmas, the rich man came on vacation and planned to go and evaluate the project of Nzitunga. She showed him 30 000 F, and a bunch of bananas with a value of 13000 F which she was planning to brew and sell it on 1st January at the "New Year". And to congratulate her with the boy she had given birth to in November, the rich man gave her 10 000 F. He strongly encouraged her and told her that he would forfeit her debt just to let her have advantage of her progress. Meanwhile, Nzisabira got her diploma in September. However, as she lacked nothing during her schooling, she forgot to make friends. With her education, it was not easy to find work in Burundi and she had no work for the whole year. The rich man told her to manage, because she was now old enough. Nzisabira stayed in Bujumbura, going from friend to friend [the sentence above then makes no sense], from acquaintance to acquaintance, and lived off other people. She thought it would be humiliating to return to

farming, while waiting to be employed.

In August, the rich man returned to the village and found Nzitunga doing better than the last time he had seen her; she had bought a pig and a field to cultivate in the surrounding marshes. Her husband had become interested in the family again, and living conditions had improved significantly. The week before, Nzisabira visited them. She was amazed at the development of the family. Nzitunga advised her to stay in the village, and provided the possibility for Nzisabira to work in her business. Nzisabira categorically refused, saying scornfully: 'with or without work, I prefer to live in Bujumbura, I have lived in the capital for 8 years, how do you expect me to become a peasant?'

Discuss the story above in-group work to give the participants an opportunity to discuss how one can become dependent on outside help. Try and find examples in your own lives.

4.4. Local wisdom

In this kind of work it is important to draw on local knowledge and solutions. It increases motivation and ownership of ideas, and also results in better sustainability.

Exercise

Ask the participants what proverbs exist in their culture that warns against dependence. After they have had a chance to brainstorm, you can also share the sayings discussed below.

'Complacency kills'

In Burundi there are local Kirundi proverbs that remind us not to let ourselves be fooled by kindness and charity.

People in circle



(Alphonse Twite)

Examples of other sayings

'Ivyagusa bitera ubwenge buke' literally means 'free things diminish intelligence'. This is a reminder to be wary of dependency. When whatever you need is given to you, without any effort on your part, you should be worried where it leads to, as this situation does not encourage either initiative or creativity.

'Akimuhana kaza imvura ihise' literally means, "we always want to borrow the tool from another household when the rain stops falling". It is always recommended to have essential tools like, for example, an umbrella. When it rains and you need something urgently, it is not sure that you will find it in time. We must wait until it stops raining before we can go to the neighbour, and once it stops raining it is too late. *'Amazi masabano ntamara imviro'* literally means 'the water you ask from your neighbour can not remove dirt.' Do not expect to have enough for your needs when you have to get everything from outside. Things you get for free will never satisfy you.

Elucidation

Rewarding people when they take action, motivates them to do it more often. If you reward negative behaviour, you also encourage a repetition of the negative behaviour. If you reward dependent behaviour, you encourage dependency. Giving alms to a beggar leads him to continue in this way. A donation from one country to another encourages representatives of beneficiary countries to expect, even demand, more. Giving a latrine or water to a community with low income may lead to a dependence on such donations if the community starts thinking all problems will be solved with outside help. When you contribute to dependency, you may indirectly contribute to poverty. Obviously, after a natural disaster or after a war, it is not good to let people die, saying they must help themselves. During a crisis one must provide food to keep people alive. However, after the crisis period when poverty sets in, people should be empowered to enable them to take charge of their own living situation.

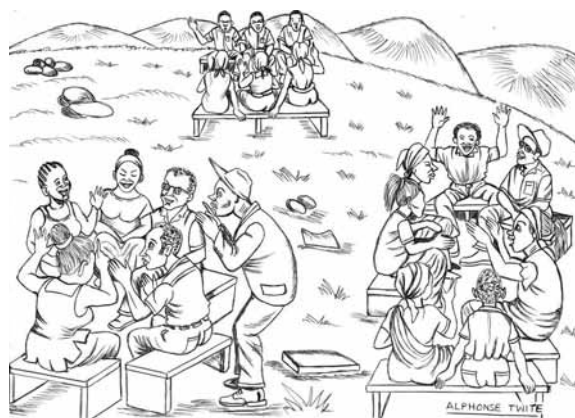
Any donor agency should try to avoid giving without also encouraging people to contribute. Always encourage community members by telling them that they can complete the project by themselves, and you are there to provide some expertise and advice. As a facilitator, you can provide guidelines on how to raise funds and other resources, on the verification of bookkeeping so that it is simple and transparent, and how to enter non-financial donations into financial inputs. However, it is essential that resources be obtained by the community itself, or by an organisation based in the

community, which works for them and not part of the facilitating organisation.

4.5. Understanding community development

Often when speaking about development we consider the quantitative growth, infrastructure built, the visible material achievements. When speaking about psychosocial work, in relation to development, we are referring to social change that is based on behaviour, and challenging to achieve.

Groups of people discussing



(Alphonse Twite)

Psychosocial tenets speak of the integral development of people, including physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual dimensions. This implies that development does not stop at the physical and intellectual growth, but also needs a good relationship with the environment and a political responsibility, however small, in the local community.

To understand these concepts, we refer to the book *'Empowerment and Poverty Reduction'* [please give a proper reference here]. In this book community development is defined as a process that gives the control of decisions and development resources to community groups. These groups usually work with local governments, the private sector or NGOs to develop and implement projects that meet their immediate priorities in education, health, sanitation, transportation, resource management, economic activities and other issues related to life. It is something every community development project should strive for.

Community empowerment

The principles of community development cannot be understood without the concepts of empowerment. The commonly accepted definition of empowerment is: *the growth of assets and capabilities of poor people, to*

enable them to better participate, negotiate, influence, control and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives.

Since poverty is multidimensional, poor people need the assets and capabilities at both an individual level (such as access to health, education, and housing) and a collective level (such as the ability to organise, mobilise to take collective decisions and solve problems).

Four key elements of empowerment

The four key elements that ensure the success of empowerment are discussed below.

Access to information: Information is power. It is necessary that information flow seamlessly from government to citizens, and vice versa. Informed people are better able to seize opportunities, access services, exercise their rights and demand that the stakeholders in the public and private sector are accountable for their actions.

One of the Psychosocial Workers' Association members of the Ubuntu network managed to win the trust of the local population, as well as locally based community organisations and an international NGO working in the area, because he conducted helpful community activities, after having been trained in psychosocial techniques. Now most of the stakeholders intervening in their scope of operation have to deal with them, or call on their advice.

Thanks to the NT activities carried out in many communities since 2005 by the Centre Ubuntu, local Ubuntu committees have now been set up. They are composed of local people, including people who had little influence in their community prior to their participation. Members of these committees had to constantly work with local political leaders. Their work made their self-esteem grow, and they are now considered informal local leaders.

Empowerment through participation: Very low income people that are acting as co-producers through their actions and decisions, increases their participation. The involvement of the impoverished, and other excluded or vulnerable groups, in decision making is crucial to ensure that the distribution of limited public resources is based on local priorities. Their participation helps create a climate conducive to change.

Accountability: All stakeholders in the public and private sectors are responsible for decisions and policies they undertake that affect people's lives.

Local organisational capacity: The local organisational

capacity is the ability of people to work together, to organise themselves and mobilise resources to solve problems of common interest. Groups and communities that are organised and structured are more likely to be heard, and to have their requests taken into consideration.

In most of the communities where our NGO has conducted psychosocial activities, there have been informal leaders who initiate local community based organisations (CBO). Organisations that have been initiated by local residents play a big role in the development of the community.

4.6. Developing local organisational capacity

Impoverished communities tend to not be well organised. However, one of the most important elements of development is the ability of impoverished people to mobilise and organise collective action. In this section, particular focus is given to the establishment of community based organisations (CBOs) and organisations for community development (OCD). It should be stressed that such organisations should promote the development of both families and of individuals. Community interests must be harmonised with both the family, and individual, interests.

A training



(Alphonse Twite)

Members of local communities must be mobilised to form associations, CBOs or OCDs, to be strong enough to face the demands of development. In most of the regions where Ubuntu Local Committees have been working for more than 3 years, the tendency is now to form associations. This is the case in Itaba community for instance, where they learn from an association called AEKA that was initiated in 2005 by someone who had attended training on development organised by the Centre Ubuntu.

Community members should be encouraged to fight

against the factors of poverty, but especially to break the vicious cycle of dependency by using their own resources whenever they start a development initiative.

CBOs or OCDs should also be mobilised to forge strong partnerships and learn to work in networks, in order to foster collaboration and coordination of interventions in the community.

4.7. Mapping resources

What is a resource?

A resource can be any goods or service that is useful. In short, it concerns potential for value and wealth. Not any wealth, but one that has to be used as a factor for production of a desirable output. This is the first step to create a productive activity in the context of the community; it is a contribution for a community project.

In the context of the field of community development, talking about resources encompasses:

- Human resources (or human capital) refers to people capable of providing services that community members need to initiate a production activity and who are available within the community.
- Information resources: information or information technology available in the environment.
- Physical resources: land, clay, wood, equipment, tools, buildings etc. usable for production.
- Financial resources: budget, liquidity, capital, activities, which can be generated locally, or granted by a bank or donor, as a credit or gifts of financing.

Identifying available resources is to be able to identify or recognise people or agencies and organisations (local, municipal, provincial or government, NGOs, or bilateral and multilateral donors), which can donate either useful services or help to raise funds for project implementation. It is also the ability to find and recognise materials that could contribute to the realisation of the project.

Through the technique of Brainstorming the role of the facilitator is to encourage and assist the community to identify and utilise their local resources. It is also useful to organise group discussions with a range of issues likely to orientate participants on how to discover latent resources.

Example of mapping resources in a brick making project

In 2003, sixty students from Buhoro Parish in the Diocese of Gitega (from the AJEB association),

wanted to make bricks in order to earn the money required to pay their secondary school tuition and materials. Each one needed 30,000 Burundian Franc (BIF) for school fees, and about 15,000 BIF for materials, adding up to 45,000 BIF (US\$ 36) in total. They did not have any bricklaying experience, nor the clay they needed, but they had seen there was a need for them. At a meeting they discovered a clay-based-marsh belonging to a *farmer* living on Kagoma hill. Fortunately enough, the marsh was for sale, but they did not have the money to buy it.

They met and brainstormed possible solutions. Among the group were some *talented young people* who were able to entertain the public with games and dance performances. They decided to organise a cultural evening for the following month. They performed a play, with a lot of interesting music, dance, poems, and games to entertain the audience. They earned 124,000 BIF (about US\$ 100) from this cultural event, enough to buy the marsh. After buying the clay marsh, they continued to host more events to buy brick moulds and other useful tools. Meeting again, they were concerned they did not have sufficient skills to assemble and make a brick oven. However, they learned that *the father of one of them* had completed technical studies at a vocational training school. They delegated the student to convince his father to volunteer for the project as a technical consultant. They were also informed that the *Administrator of ITABA Commune* was interested in the activities of the students. They asked their supervisor to lobby on their behalf, and to ask for firewood from the administrator, to bake the bricks.

At the third meeting, they noted with satisfaction that everything was ready; the clay soil, a technician to supervise them in brick making and in assembling the brick oven, trees for firewood, young people determined to succeed, moulds and water-carrying-containers. These were bought with the money they had made, as well as other items contributed to the brick making project. In the end, they made 250,000 bricks that were sold for 3,750,000 BIF (about US\$ 3000), and each member of the AJEB managed to get 50,000 BIF (about US\$ 40) for their studies, as well as some the money for further association activities.

Resources identified by the students:

Human resources (or human capital): The farmer who provided the clay-based-marsh, the talented

young people within the Association members, the father who would be the technical consultant, the Communal Administrator and all the members of AJEB to make bricks.

Information resources: technique of making bricks, techniques to assemble and make a brick oven, The physical resources: clay-based-marsh, infrastructures where the cultural evenings could be performed, brick moulds and fire wood.

Financial resources: the money raised through their creativity and hard work.

(Please see Appendix 1 for how local credit groups can be established.)

5. Community mobilisation for development

Mobilising the community

According to Bartle (Bartle, P., 2007) all interventions of mobilisation and training of management should meet the following step diagram (which has been adapted according to the local context).

First step is to raise awareness and authority through meetings with local officials and members of the public administration.

The following concepts should be a focus:

- Awareness: meetings with members of target communities.
- Training: Define the roles of local development facilitators.

People on market



(Alphonse Twite)

- Organisation of unity: Gather the various groups within the communities.
- Management training: The training of community leaders and facilitators so they know how to prepare and develop projects effectively.
- Participatory assessment: Identification of priority issues, use of the priority goals as solutions

- Community Action Plan (CAP): In agreement with the plans of the region.
- Design of community projects: Submitted by the target communities as proposed.
- Negotiation: Discussion of proposals until an agreement satisfactory to all members of the community is reached.
- Implementation: The members of the community get started on the community project.
- Monitoring and reporting: Status of implementation.
- Project led to its purpose: Implementation, monitoring, reporting, payments.
- Official ceremony of completion: Invitation to design other community projects (a process, not a limited end).

Choose a small project that may generate some income. All participants should understand what business they want to develop. They must know that not all projects necessarily lead to success in terms of profit. People from low-income communities or rural areas are already involved in income generating activities, and therefore the choice of one or another enterprise will always have social or financial benefits. The following list shows possible activities in a community. During training, the facilitator will hang the list on the wall and start a discussion with participants.

- Agriculture and livestock to generate additional income
- Fishing, hunting, the art of trapping animals
- Processing of crop and catch: grinding, smoking fish
- Repair of equipment for farms, manufacturing
- Weaving, sewing, basketry, embroidery,
- Making briquettes, making charcoal
- Hair dress salon for men or women and beauty salon
- Cooking, restaurants
- Carpentry, forgery, masonry
- Small business, marketing

You should be sure that you can find potential customers (how much they want and at what price). During a session for making decisions on a planned project, participants must find answers to the following questions:

- At what price can their product be offered?
- Who will buy the product, or who are the customers, and where do they live?
- How often and for how long will they buy the

product or service? Will they be ready to make the purchase on each market day during the next three months?

- Are there any competitors?
- Where will the raw materials come from, and at what price?

Prerequisites

You, as facilitator, and the beneficiaries should know the following:

- What skills are required if you are trying to set up a small project?
- Do participants have the physical ability to perform the required tasks?
- Does the individual or group have an interest in learning the necessary skills?
- Is there a member of the group or community that already has the necessary skills and the ability to share his/her knowledge with others?
- If initial training is required, how long will the training take?
- How much will the training cost?

Qualifications to become a development mobiliser.

In light of everything discussed in this module, some qualities are the basis of all interventions for the development facilitator, and they are listed below.

- Change of mentality: S/he must know that people believe in the effectiveness of foreign aid without realising that the resources within the community are as crucial to any development project.
- Being able to identify community resources: Be able to recognise: who can satisfy the informal needs and resources, human resources, material resources and financial resources in the environment.
- Be able to have a good analysis of the situation: Especially in the political, economic, social, technological, and environmental context.
- Enjoy working with people at grassroots level: it is not evident that everyone will become a development facilitator. You cannot just act as a facilitator, but you have to become one.
- Have the desire to produce social change in response to the eradication of poverty: Not only reduce, but eliminate poverty.

6. Building networks for development

The legal recognition by local government

Once a CBO is created, it is very important to seek legal recognition for the CBO within its municipality, or from the Ministry of Interior. This not only paves

the way for collaboration with local government leaders, but also and especially, it helps avoid trouble in case of conflicts.

Sometimes a NGO decides to find local partners in an area of intervention, it is usually the local government's responsibility to identify if the CBO meets donor criteria. When they are unaware of your organisation, it's a missed opportunity. On the other hand, the administration needs to know all the development initiatives that have been launched on its territory. It has the duty to coordinate and to bring it to the notice of local government.

Partnerships and networking

Isolation is counterproductive. Alliances and partnerships with other national and international organisations multiply the opportunities to find funding. In Burundi, a national network called Ubuntu Network is a good example of how organisations work together on the same project, yet with different perspectives. There are about twelve organisations around the Centre Ubuntu that trained their psychosocial workers with the help of Centre Ubuntu. During network meetings is an opportunity to learn from one another. They plan together and, most of the time, donors do not hesitate to give them funds to carry out their projects because their activities are very much appreciated. In the same province or commune, the same can apply to a local organisation: working together allows mutual enrichment and organisations can grow significantly by learning from other's experience. Belonging to a strong network increases the potential to influence social and political decisions. (Please see Topical Outline 2 where these ideas have been described more fully.)

On another level, CBOs forges partnerships with other CBOs and individuals in order to facilitate its business. It increases its social capital by 'bonding' with others.

By partnering with major national NGOs, administrations, and institutions, it opens the door to a good reputation and develops its social capital by 'bridging'. It also comes in contact with institutions and international NGOs and policy makers, thereby opening the gate to opportunities to influence political and economic decisions at national, regional and international levels. This lifts the organisation to a higher level, which in turn provides opportunities for advocacy and lobbying, and therefore to develop social capital through 'linking'.

The importance of partnerships and networking lies in the need for collaboration in interventions and coordinating activities that intersect.

7. Roles and responsibilities of stakeholders

Psychosocial workers become facilitators and mobilisers for development In the post war context, psychosocial workers invest more in the work of detraumatization. However, once a person or community is healed from their trauma, the reflex is to 'stand up' and think about his/her development. Also psychosocial workers have no choice but to put in place organisations for self reliance. Being part of a project can also actively contribute to the healing process.

Local committees as a centre of mobilization The local Ubuntu committees can become the starting point for the mobilisation of development. When the local committee members have been trained and are qualified, they will become mobilisers in development.

Small development committees It is possible that development is organised around the local Ubuntu committees in Burundi. They just need to be properly supervised.

Reflect on other roles and responsibilities The development mobilisers and facilitators should be flexible and open to finding other roles and responsibilities for local committees, to encourage the natural development of autonomy in the community.

Final Poem

Go

To the People;
Live among them;
Love them;
Learn from them;
Start from where they are;
Work with them
Build on what they have.

But of the best leaders,
When the task is accomplished,
The work completed,
The people all remark:
"We have done it ourselves".

Lao Tzu

References

Bartle, P., 2007, Factors of Poverty, workshop notes, retrieved from internet 06-2011, <http://www.scn.org/cmp/modules>

* Permission for the ideas of Phil Bartle to be included in the chapter was obtained directly by the author of the chapter.