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Community Empowerment

Hand Book for Mobilizers

by Phil Bartle PhD

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How Nature loves the incomplete. She knows
If She drew a conclusion it would finish Her.

Christopher Fry

Preface:

This handbook is the result of six years of mobilization and community management training in the Community Management Programme, executed by UN-HABITATand implemented by the Directorate of Community Development of the Government. (*While originally designed for Uganda, it is now being used in dozens of countries on five continents*).

Many lessons were learned over these years, some by success, some by failure. Through it all, we have seen the potential strength and amazing resilience of the communities.

What we have come to realize is that all communities, no matter how poor, have resources *(many that still need to be identified)* that can be tapped, so that they, and all of the society , can develop. To release and best use this huge national resource, mobilization and management training are needed.

This handbook *(one of three companion handbooks)* is intended to show how those potential resources can be released for sustainable development.

It is intended for Government, NGO, professional and voluntary mobilizers everywhere. We pray that it is useful to you.

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1992-1998

Introduction:

Community participation does not happen by itself. It must be stimulated and encouraged.

This book is aimed at those who wish to initiate that stimulation.

This is a *"how-to"* book, intended for community mobilizers who want to stimulate social change in a community in the direction of more development, poverty eradication, better governance, increased integrity and transparency in the management of community affairs; in short, empowerment of that community.

There is therefore a minimum of history, theory, ideology and description here, and an emphasis on the needed skills and understanding of concepts useful to community workers.

Who should use this book?

While this book is primarily aimed at new mobilizers in the field, we encourage planners, administrators and managers to read it, if your responsibilities include those same goals of community strengthening.

This is the first and core book in a series of three companion handbooks.

The others, which complement this, are: *"Handbook of Monitoring and Evaluation"* and *"Handbook of Wealth Generation."*

At the end of the document are a series of links to guides and notes for trainers using this hand book.

1. Getting Prepared:

Before you can successfully stimulate self help development in a community, you must prepare yourself.

You must be clear and knowledgeable about your goals; you must know about your target community; you must have the required skills; you must understand the fundamental concepts of mobilization.

The first thing to do now is to start a journal. An inexpensive school notebook is OK. You might wish to use four notebooks and title them: (1) Goals and Concepts; (2) The Target Community; (3) Mobilizing Skills, and (4) A Day-to-Day Journal record.

However you choose to organize yourself, it is important to start making notes and records now. Write with your replacement in mind as your reader.

This chapter informs you of the things that you need to get prepared. Do not assume, however, that you can get prepared *"once and for all."*

We mobilizers are continually learning more and more about all the things mentioned in this chapter. It is a never ending process, and we will be doomed to failure if we ever think we know it all.

Workshop Handout

1.1. Know Your Goals:

One of the slogans we use in management training is, *"If you do not know where you are going, then any road will do."* *(See "*Slogans*.")* This applies to you, too, in preparing for mobilizing.

It is easy to run around, looking busy, arranging meetings, getting latrines constructed, talking to community leaders, moving advocacy groups, stimulating action, without moving forward in accomplishing genuine community strengthening. You need to clarify your goals, first to yourself, then on paper, then to those around you.

Here you should begin writing in your journal, or the section of it you have set aside for goals and concepts.

You must set them as your own goals, not think of them merely as a list of someone else's ideals.

The goals of mobilization to develop a community may vary from person to person, community to community. Nevertheless, there are common elements.

These include: poverty eradication, good governance, change in social organization, community capacitydevelopment, empowering low income and marginalized people, and gender balance.

As you go along, reading this hand book, engaging in mobilization, you will see that each of these goals becomes more interesting and challenging, the more you know.

Go back to your journal often to update, refine, and add details to all these goals.

Poverty reduction, for example, is more complex and challenging when you work with it, in contrast to just listing it. We learn to avoid *"poverty alleviation"* because that merely temporarily alleviates the pain and discomfort, and does not lead to a durable solution.

Poverty is not merely the absence of money *(as you will see later in these handbooks)* and attacking the causes of poverty means fighting apathy, ignorance, disease, and dishonesty. That is only one example where your understanding of the goal expands through experience.

Similarly, good governance does not simply mean strong leadership and efficient administration. It also means transparency, people's involvement, trust, honesty, and a vision for the future.

You will learn, also, that you can hardly expect community leaders to be *(or become)* transparent in their use of community resources if you yourself are not transparent in your community activities.

Look in the: Glossary of Key Terms, for introductory discussion about these goals *(poverty reduction, community development).*

Compare them to your notes in your journal.

Workshop Handout

1.2. Know Your Target Community:

Another proverb that we use in community development is, *"The potter must know her/his clay."* Your clay is the community. You want to mould it, develop it into something strong.

To do so, you must know a lot about the community *(and about the nature of communities in general).* You must know as much as possible about its social organization, economy, languages, layout *(map),* problems, politics, and ecology.

Your research should not be merely to get a list of unrelated facts; you need to analyse them to understand the nature of community as a social system. (*See *What is Community?*)

Think about how the different elements are related.

A good start is to make a map. Where do people live? What facilities are in the community? *(eg roads, paths, water supply, clinic, school, sanitation, market and other communal facilities and services).*

Later, when you lead community members through an assessment of the community situation *(resources, needs, opportunities, problems);* you will guide them in making a community map. Doing one now for yourself will help you to prepare for that participatory activity later.

Put your notes into your journal. Make observations about the community's: Social organization, economy, language(s), politics, shared values, traditions, and its relationship to the physical environment *(ecology).*

Continue to analyse how the different elements relate to one another.

You will learn that a community is not merely a collection of individuals, but a system that transcends those individuals. As a system it has various dimensions, technological, economic, political, institutional, ideological and perceptual. People come in and go out of the community, by birth, death and migration, yet the system persists. And it is always changing.

Your job is to understand that system so you can nudge that ongoing change in certain directions *(as indicated in your goals we discussed earlier).*

There is a lot you can learn about your target community, and you should never stop.

Workshop Handout

1.3. Know the Skills You Need:

The skills that you need as a mobilizer are not exceptionally difficult to learn, but can be very powerful tools. They can be misused. As an analogy, think of the skills of a lock smith. A locksmith performs many useful and valuable services, but they can be misused for breaking, entering, and theft.

As you learn mobilization skills, use them for the benefit of the community, not to benefit yourself at the expense of the community.

Since your target group is the community as a whole, most of your needed skills belong to communication abilities. You need to learn how to be a public speaker, but not just any kind of public speaker. The kind of public speaking you need to know is the kind needed for leadership and facilitation.

You must learn how to draw information and decisions out of a group, which requires a full understanding of your goals and a relaxed confidence in front of people. You must be able to recognize preaching, lecturing, and making speeches, and avoid those styles.

The technical skills you need as mobilizer include: public speaking, planning, managing, observing, analysing, and writing. The best way to learn these is through being self taught.

You also need to develop a personal character that is honest, enthusiastic, positive, tolerant, patient and motivated.

You have to know how to listen and understand when people talk. You have to know how to ensure that information is accurate. You have to know how to illustrate a point and make it interesting to a listener. You do not preach like a preacher; you do not make speeches like a politician; you do not lecture like a professor.

You need to learn how to remain confident while sensitive to others while standing among or in front of many people. You need to know how to know and to like people. You need to know how to avoid being self centred, vain, or arrogant. You need to know how to lead a discussion without being bossy, dictatorial or sarcastic. Teach these to yourself.

You learn these skills by doing *(not by just reading a text book).*

If you went to classes in community development, and only sat and took notes, you did not get the best training. You should practice, first in front of your classmates, then in front of a community group.

Since you must organize community groups and form executive committees, you need some organizational skills. Since you also strengthen by giving management skills, you need management skills yourself. Since you guide community groups through their own planning, you need some planning skills yourself.

Since you advise and guide groups to keep honest and accurate financial records and accounts, you need some accounting skills yourself. Since you guide groups in writing reports and need to write your own reports, you need writing skills. Learn by doing.

You need to know how to learn a language fast, *(see An Aural Method to Learn an Oral Language)* and to become familiar with several languages in a community.

More than just technical skills, you need to have some personality characteristics that are necessary for success as a mobilizer. *(Look at the training handout: To Be a Mobilizer).*

Your reputation is your strongest asset. If you are known to be honest, diplomatic, fair, hardworking, moral, clean living, tolerant, enthusiastic, humble, and forthright, your reputation will assist your mobilization efforts. If you are not, seek a different calling or vocation.

Workshop Handout

1.4. Know the Basic Concepts:

What is development? Community development? Community participation? Poverty? Community?

Empowerment? Transparency? Sustainability? *(These words are discussed in the "Keywords.")*

To be a successful mobilizer, you need more than a few technical skills in public dialogue and organizing groups for action.

You need to know why to use those skills. You need to know principles.

If your target is a community, then you should know some sociological concepts about the nature of communities and the nature of social change *(including development)* of communities. This means that you need some understanding of social organization, the subject matter of sociology, anthropology, economics, politics, and the forces and processes that belong to those disciplines. *(See "Culture.")*

Right now it is not necessary to have a university degree, but you should teach yourself the principles and knowledge of those subjects.

If you want to strengthen *(empower)* a low income community, you must understand the enemy, which is the dependency syndrome. *(See: "Dependency").*

If your aim is the removal or eradication of poverty, you need to know more than the symptoms and results of poverty. You also need to understand the causes of poverty, in order to support and promote changes that will counteract those causes.

You must see that poverty alleviation merely reduces the pain, temporarily, but does not contribute to poverty eradication. Poverty is not merely a question of money, and money alone will not eradicate poverty. *(See the companion to this: "Handbook of Wealth Generation").*

If you look in "*Key Words*," you will find a fairly comprehensive list of basic concepts for the community worker. *(Hyper links to all the appendices are listed below).*

With each you will not find a dictionary definition; you will find a few notes relevant to the purposes of this hand book: how to be a mobilizer.

Do not memorize those notes. Think about each concept. Write about them in your journal. Discuss them with colleagues at meetings, conferences, workshops.

During your relaxing times, after work with friends, take a little time away from discussing football scores to talk about one or two of these concepts.

Trying to learn *"once and for all,"* Is like trying to eat, *"once and for all."*

Learning, like community development, should never end. When you stop learning, you are dead.

Workshop Handout

1.5. Outside Resources:

As a mobilizer, you will find that it is difficult to find a balance between resources that originate outside the community, and those from within. You and the community executive will be under considerable pressure to bring outside resources into the community.

Donor agencies want to help, while community members want to receive. You know, however, that bringing in outside resources contributes to the **dependency syndrome** and reduces the chances of sustainability and self reliance.

Yet there are ways to maximize the strengthening ability of using outside resources as illustrated by the story of Mohammed and the rope. *(see Telling Stories).* If you can convince an outside donor to provide some costs of skill training, management training, and mobilization, and assist the community in obtaining most of its own construction resources, you can contribute to self reliance and sustainability.

If the Prophet had merely given food to the beggar, he would have been training the beggar to be a beggar; by giving him some advice and capital instead, he assisted the beggar to become self reliant.

This handbook does help you in obtaining outside resources, as in **Project Design**, which can be used for preparing effective proposals.

Like any powerful tool *(eg fire),* these skills can be misused, and may contribute to poverty in the long run. Use them well, and for the correct ends.

Workshop Handout

2. Getting Started:

In the previous chapter you read about some of the things you need *(as a mobilizer)* to do and learn in order to get prepared. In this chapter you will read about getting started, yourself.

You do not get the community into action until you take action to prepare it for action. Your getting started phase is the community's getting prepared phase.

After raising awareness among the authorities, and getting any necessary permissions for you to do your work, your next task is to raise awareness among the target community or communities that you want to mobilize and strengthen.

Raising awareness among the authorities mainly means (1) explaining your goals and (2) methods, and (3) convincing them that they can benefit from your success. Remember that you will find resistance to social change, and often those with the most vested interests are among this target group.

Raising awareness among the target communities means explaining your goals and methods, and also means taking positive steps to prevent the raising of unrealistic expectations.

Ensuring accurate information and interpretation will be your biggest concern here.

This chapter shows you how to get started.

Workshop Handout

2.1. The Mobilization Cycle:

There is a logical and functional social process of strengthening a community.

It varies in length and some details, but the pattern remains basic. Your role is to initiate the process and follow it through.

The Mobilization Cycle here is just one example, borrowed from the Uganda Community Management Programme, of the process.

Yours will vary from community to community, from time to time, and according to your resources available, your employer's policy, or other circumstances.

The essential process is something like this: First you get permission and authorization to do your work. Then you start raising awareness in the community that there are problems. You caution against people assuming that you will solve the problems but point out that the community has the potential resources to solve its own problems. All it needs is the will, and perhaps some management skills which you can help them get. You facilitate their community unification, assessment and agreeing on a priority goal. You help them to organize an executive committee, or revitalize an existing one. You help them prepare an action plan and project design. You cheer them on as they, not you, implement it, ensuring that there is transparency, monitoring, reporting. You help them celebrate its completion, then evaluate the results.

The second assessment starts the process all over again, which is why we call it a **cycle**. The second time they are stronger and more self reliant, and perhaps you have identified local mobilizers who will help sustain the cycle as you slowly withdraw.

You repeat the cycle as appropriate.

Workshop Handout

2.2. Clearing the Pathway:

Before you begin working in your target community *(or communities),* you must have obtained both the needed permissions, and also the active co-operation, of the authorities and leaders responsible for the area.

Remember that you really have two targets *(beneficiaries)*, not only (1) the community but also (2) the authorities who are responsible for the area that the community is in.

Your goal for each community is to strengthen it by promoting self-help actions. Your goal for the authorities is to work towards sustainability by moving towards an enabling context or environment *(political and administrative)* around and above the community.

Your goal for leaders *(political and informal),* administrators *("bureaucrats"),* and technical experts *("technocrats")* is to persuade them from being *"providers"* to becoming *"facilitators of self help by the communities."* This is no small job. When politicians can claim they *"provide"* *(eg to provide any communal facility),* then they obtain popularity and votes. They are likely, therefore, to have a vested interest in the *"provision approach."*

Likewise, when administrators and technocrats can claim they *"provide,"* then they believe *(often rightly)* that they will enhance their careers and obtain promotions. They may have a vested interest in not changing to *"facilitators."* Your strategy is to demonstrate and convince them that they will benefit by abandoning the *"provision"* approach and moving to a *"facilitating"* approach.

The truth is that, if they shift from a *"provision"* approach to an *"enabling"* approach, in time, they will benefit. That is because every community has hidden resources that will not be identified and used so long as outside authorities are expected to provide all the resources.

If the community gets the responsibility to provide its own facilities and services, and given management training to do so, many hidden resources are revealed and used. If leaders and responsible authorities shift to an enabling approach, the resulting strengthening of the communities can become the bases from which they can obtain their popularity, votes, career advances and promotions.

It is your duty to demonstrate that the *"provision"* approach may benefit leaders and authorities in the short run, but is not sustainable, whereas the *"enabling"* approach contributes to genuine development and growth which benefit them in the long run.

To the extent to which you can convince the authorities of their benefits from strengthening communities, you will more easily obtain permission to work, obtain their active co-operation, and counteract vested interests that would seek to hinder the strengthening and self reliance of the communities.

To obtain clearance or permission from the authorities, it is useful to provide them with some documentation, referring to official policy, agreements and memoranda of understanding (MOU), that you might have. *(This depends upon your circumstances).*

As you do, explain to them how they will benefit from having stronger, self reliant communities in their areas of responsibility.

If your budget and work plan allow, this is the time to organize a workshop for sensitizing authorities.

Workshop Handout

2.3. Awareness Raising:

After you have prepared yourself, and obtained clearance from the authorities, it is time to encourage the community to take action.

You begin this by calling for a public meeting with all members of the community. This starts the *"awareness raising"* phase of the cycle.

You may find a tendency for only some persons to show interest in attending a meeting. Maybe men will come and assume women should not.

Your job is to ensure that women attend. The same with other people who need to be encouraged: the youth, the disabled, the ethnic minorities, the shy people, the religious minorities, the illiterates, the very poor, and the marginalized.

When you start talking about community problems, and asking what their priority problems are, there will be a tendency to assume that you are there to solve their problems for them. You must counteract this assumption and explain that they have to solve their own problems; you can only assist and guide them, not do it for them.

Similarly, they may assume that you will provide resources. Quickly and firmly squash that assumption, explaining that they must identify and provide their own resources; you can only assist and guide them in doing so.

You will learn to use stories, proverbs and analogies to illustrate your points. One of those is: *"Do not ask a cow to give you eggs; do not ask a chicken to give you milk."*

You are there to provide management training and encouragement; you are not there to provide money, pipes or roofing material.

You can not expect people to avoid making assumptions. They will. You must actively and publicly contradict those assumptions that will falsely raise their expectation *(that you provide resources).*

If you do not, then you will find destructive disappointment later that will undo all the work you have done. People will claim that you promised them resources but that you failed to keep your promise.

So if you want to raise awareness, then awareness about what?

Remember that your goals differ from the goals of the community. They may want a water supply, clinic, school or road. You want the community to become strong and self reliant, reducing poverty, increasing gender balance, improving governance.

The awareness you want to raise is that, no matter how poor the community is, it has the potential to solve its problems, to become stronger. All it needs is the willingness to do so, and the management training that you can provide.

Providing accurate information is important *(avoid raising false expectations).*

Workshop Handout

2.4. Unity Organizing:

I mentioned above that you should ensure that women attend the community meetings you call *(exception: conservative Islamic communities).*

Also: the disabled, the youth, the aged, the very poor, the disenfranchised, the marginalized, the shy and retiring. This is part of your strategy of unity organizing the community.

See *Unity Organizing*. Every community has forces pulling it apart.

These may be based in differences in clan, ethnic group, religion, class, gender, age, education, physical and mental abilities, occupation, income, wealth, land access *(owner, tenant, squatter, other)* and other characteristics that divide people.

It is important that, as a mobilizer, you are seen as neutral *(like a referee),* not allied to or favouring any faction.

This means you must know the community very well. If you spend much time with some people, others may feel you are biassed.

Do not be afraid in public to mention the differences and factions in the community, but then quickly point out that you are not aligned with any faction or factions.

Remember, too, that you are not aiming at making the community homogenous *(all the same),* but unity of the community means all factions are loyal to the community as a whole and, in an atmosphere of tolerance, all people understand and respect all others, irrespective of religion, class, clan, gender, ability, wealth, ethnicity, language, or age.

A unified community is a pre-requisite to identifying a single community priority problem and goal.

Workshop Handout

2.5. Public Dialogue:

For both raising awareness and community organizing, your main tool is a public meeting in which discussion is the central feature.

Here it is very important that you are thoroughly informed and conversant with your mobilizers' goals, as indicated above in chapter one, and the key concepts, as in Key Words.

And more. Do not memorize definitions; reinterpret all those concepts as you understand them, and debate them in your journal and with colleagues.

Do not preach sermons like a priest; do not make speeches like a politician; do not lecture like a professor, avoid pontificating, haranguing, or dictating. Facilitate. Ask questions. Guide.

Your best role model should be that renown educator of ancient Greece, Socrates, who taught by always asking questions, never giving answers. He was a great facilitator, guiding people to think *(analyse, observe)* for themselves.

Appear relaxed, confident and informed. Draw questions out of the participants.

Especially ask the quiet and shy ones for their opinions. Do not allow the over confident and dominating ones to take over or control the discussion.

In the public meetings you also introduce the *"brainstorm"* session, which you will use again in planning sessions of the executive committee. Explain that different kinds of sessions have different ground rules. The open dialogue, where you guide by facilitating and questioning, allows for debate and cross talk; the *"brainstorm"* does not.

In a brainstorm you emphasize that there is no debate, no criticism, no cross talk. You will call for suggestions and write them on the board, all of them, even the silly ones, and later prioritize the list of suggestions. The *"brainstorm"* is very structured and focussed and the participants must learn and practice the ground rules.

Never tell a community group what to think or what to do. You may want to, for you have your goals of empowering them, fighting apathy, ignorance, dependency, disease and dishonesty *(the causes of poverty).*

But you have to facilitate them in coming to their own realization, and their own decision. You must take this facilitation approach if you want to empower or strengthen them. (*Avoid lecturing and preaching*).

Workshop Handout

2.6. Challenging the Community:

While you want the community to develop strength, you do not passively and automatically accept at first what appears to be the community's priority goal.

Resistance produces strength; your arm muscles become strong when you do push-ups. If your muscles never meet resistance, they will grow weak. If you do too much for a community, it will not become stronger.

The first suggestion of a priority by the community might not be well thought out, and if you challenge it, they may think more carefully about what action they would take.

Let us look at a hypothetical example. Perhaps the community members say that their priority goal is to build a clinic.

"Fair enough," you reply, *"But what is your reasoning behind that choice of goal?"* *"Does the community have the capacity to build and maintain a clinic?"* *"What problems will the clinic solve? And what problems will it cause?"* Strengthen them by letting them defend their choice.

If it turns out that community members want a clinic because a rival community down the road has one, that their main motivation is pride, then you can clarify that.

"Remember that it is your own resources that will go into building it; is that really how you want to spend your money?" you say. Perhaps it then comes out that babies are dying, and that is their primary concern.

Here is your opportunity to point out an important principle of **PHC** *(primary health);* that prevention is much better than cure. Children are dying mainly from diarrhoea caused by water borne diseases.

A clinic may help in curing disease, but it is more humane, cheaper, and less risky to reduce water borne disease by a combination of three things: (1) hygiene education leading to behaviour change, (2) a clean potable water supply, and (3) effective sanitation that keeps human wastes away from the drinking water.

By being challenged to analyse its problems and search for practical and feasible solutions, the community may respond by re-examining its priority problems and re-defining its priority goals.

Do not passively accept their first choice of goal.

Workshop Handout

2.7. Community Chooses Its Action:

The focus of your public dialogue and awareness raising will be the community choice of action to take.

It is very important to your success that the final decision is that of the whole community, not merely the desire of one or two factions within the community.

There will be a great eagerness, and pressure, to complete the action, be it construction of a latrine, clinic or water supply, new legislation protecting tenants rights, or some social work service. Do not be diverted by the eagerness and pressure.

The community has its goal *(eg latrine)* while you have your goal *(community empowerment).* They are not the same. You assist and guide the community in obtaining its objectives, the right way, however long it takes.

Politicians, journalists, and administrators will try to judge you by the community goals *(eg building the latrine).* Do not be deceived by that. The latrine construction is your *"means"* not your goal.

If it is constructed without empowering the community, without increased gender balance, without increased transparency, without increased self reliance, then you have failed to reach your objective.

It is relatively more easy to pump resources into a community *(eg money, pipes, roofing materials)* to build the physical structure, but it is not likely to be sustainable; the community members will not feel they own it, and not feel responsible for maintaining it.

You may reach the short term objective of the politician or journalist to provide a latrine for the community, but you will fail to reach your own long term mobilizer's goal of strengthening that community.

If it is not done correctly, it is not worth doing at all. The *"provision"* approach weakens the community and contributes to the socially debilitating *"dependency syndrome."*

Once the community has been prepared *(awareness raised, unity improved, information accurate, priority action chosen),* it is now ready to go into action.

The next chapter shows you your role in that.

Workshop Handout

2.8. Organizing for Strength:

While there are many factors that contribute to strength, capacity, or empowerment, the one that most concerns a mobilizer is *"organization."*

Other factors being equal, the level and effectiveness of organization determines the strength of a group, agency or community.

Let us use a foot ball team as an example. If you have two football teams, with the same number of individuals, the same range of skills, physical condition, and technology *(eg quality of shoes),* they would be equal. Let us say one team is not organized; there is no division of labour, no co-ordination, no recognizable social structure. The other team is organized, has a coach with authority, has different roles for goalie, defence, left and right wings, centre forward, and other division of labour.

Different team members have different roles and practice playing in an integrated manner *(eg passing the football).* In this case it is easy to see that the second team is more powerful, has more strength and capacity than the first one, even though their other characteristics are equal. Better organization makes better capacity.

So, too, with whole societies. Take this example *(not for the history it contains, but for the sociological principle).* The Akan of West Africa expanded rapidly during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and rapidly conquered the Guans who preceded them.

The level of technology *(including weapons)* was about the same, as were most other characteristics. But the Guan were patrilineal and lived in dispersed lineages, while the Akan were matrilineal in a way that organized the different clans into functional alliances, lived in nucleated settlements, each clan having a different role in warfare *(forward, left, right, rear, domestic, and paramount)* and a state organization. Like in the organizing of a football team, other factors being equal *(technology, skills),* the more organized system *(Akan, the epitome of whom were the Ashanti)* conquered the less organized.

The point, for you as a mobilizer, is that your goal in strengthening a low income community, is to help your target group consciously organize for more effectiveness. You do not form a CBO executive for its own sake, or help them choose chair, vice, secretary, and treasurer, just to have pretty titles.

You help them get organized, get better organized, or reorganized for effective action, to empower them. Better organization results in better power.

The following chapter guides you in organizing. Be conscious of why you organize *(to what end?)* and let your target group participate as partners in this noble endeavour *(the empowerment of low income communities).*

Workshop Handout

3. Organizing the Community:

Most educators and trainers know that learning in the classroom, listening to lectures or presentations, reading text books, are all less effective than letting the trainees learn by doing.

You want the executive of the community organization to become stronger by being organized effectively and trained in the necessary skills. This chapter shows you how to combine action and training.

With the whole community, you organize an executive. (*See* Organizing by Training). It may have different names, eg CBO Executive, CIC *(Community Implementing Committee),* Project Committee, or Development Committee. Then, with this executive, you make a detailed participatory assessment of conditions *(including problems and resources)* in the community.

Using brainstorming techniques, you show the committee how to prepare an action plan. You then guide the executive in presenting their findings to the community as a whole. Then, using brainstorming techniques again, the community modifies *(if necessary)* and approves the action plan.

You also explain about requesting outside resources *(the skills of writing proposals),* warning them of the danger of the dependency syndrome.

You also train them in the importance of monitoring and have them decide on how it should be done. Finally, you help them to organize for action; their action.

Workshop Handout

3.1. Action Training:

The actions the community will now undertake are to:
1. **form an executive committee;**
2. **assess community conditions;**
3. **prepare a plan of action;**
4. **obtain needed resources;**
5. **ensure that all community activities will be monitored,** *and*
6. **organize most effectively for action.**

Action by itself will not necessarily strengthen a community, nor will training.

Your task is to integrate community action with training and guidance of community members.

At all times you are guiding the community, show them that this is an opportunity to learn.

Preparing an action plan may at first seem to them to be an unnecessary nuisance; you must be enthusiastic in showing them its importance and usefulness.

The community gets stronger when its members learn by doing and when you facilitate their self learning.

Workshop Handout

3.2. Forming the Executive (*CIC*):

The executive committee must be chosen by the whole community not just a faction or a few factions. *(That is why unity organizing remains important, see* Unity Organizing*).* **The executive must be part of the community, and be responsible to the community.** CIC.

You, as mobilizer must make this clear to the community members, using whatever communication skills you have. It is advisable to repeat yourself in different ways, and to different groups in different circumstances.

You also need to break down assumptions in this phase. The choice of treasurer, for example, may be fraught with assumptions. Many people, especially in rural communities with many illiterates, may assume that they must select the most educated member of the community as treasurer.

This may have been a school teacher. It has often been our experience that the school teacher is from a far off district, has a low salary, has no roots in or loyalty to the community, and absconds with the community resources he has been entrusted to handle.

Why does the treasurer have to be educated? That is an assumption. One does not need to read and write in order to count. If an older woman, a grandmother, deeply rooted in the community and well trusted, is chosen, then she can be the treasurer, even if illiterate.

As she gets her school-going neighbours and relatives to set up the books, the accounts are more likely to be transparent, as each expenditure is explained and discussed. Being treasurer means being responsible for the money; it does not necessarily mean physically keeping the books.

Your job is to help the executive get formed by the whole community. (See "*Training as Organizing*"). Forming the executive should be a transparent and democratic process *(see both those in the key words)*.

The process must be culturally appropriate and acceptable to community members *(that is why, explained in chapter one, you must learn about the community characteristics as much as possible)*.

Workshop Handout

3.3. Assessing Conditions:

A community should undertake its activity from an informed base. See: PAR.

The executive committee should make an on-site assessment, analyse it, then present their findings to the community as a whole. This is a *"situation analysis."*

Although you have already made your own assessment, including a map, as part of your preparation phase, it is important that the executive committee make its own assessment.

Do not do it for them. They should not delegate this to anyone else.

Set a convenient date for you and the executive committee to walk around the community. Set aside as much time as possible. Walk around all or as much of the community area as you can, looking, talking to people, making notes, drawing sketches.

Meet afterwards to compare observations and draw up a combined assessment report. Ask one member of the executive *(not you, the mobilizer)* to write up the combined findings of the assessment, to be presented to the community as a whole. Their write-up, or report, is called the *"situation analysis."*

If you can make a few copies of the report *(at least maps)* to pass around, very good.

In your assessment walk, look for problems and solutions, resources and constraints. Indicate broken water stand pipes and other communal facilities. Show roads that need repair. If you (*including the executive*) identify an old retired carpenter, determine if he could give some training to some young people; if he is supported by his family would he donate his energy and advice, or need a small honorarium?

Look for other potential resources, human and physical. Note them in the assessment.

After the executive meets to agree upon a combined assessment and after the report is written *(copied if possible)* they should present their findings to the community as a whole. This requires calling another whole community meeting at a convenient time.

If you, as mobilizer, have a flip chart and news print for their presentation, to loan them, or can borrow some, all the better. You should not present their findings. You facilitate the meeting and let them present their findings to their whole community.

The assessment is a prerequisite to the community plan of action (*CAP; see Acronyms*).

Ensure that there is complete understanding among the community members what the executive observed, and that there is consensus about the nature and extent of problems and potentials.

Workshop Handout

3.4. Preparing a Community Action Plan (*CAP*):

In training and encouraging the community and its executive to become stronger *(more self reliant),* you must impress upon them the necessity of management and planning.

In planning, it is first necessary to have a vision, *"Where do you want to go?"* To illustrate that, we often quote Lewis Carroll, the author of Alice in Wonderland: *"If you do not know where you are going, then any road will do."*

It is important that the community is unified in sharing its vision. Your job as mobilizer is to ensure that.

The essence of management planning *(detailed in Management Training).* is condensed into four questions:

1. *"What do we want?"*
2. *"What do we have?"*
3. *"How do we use what we have to get what we want?"* and
4. *"What will happen when we do?"*

The community assessment should answer question two.

To answer questions three and four, the community should prepare a Community Action Plan *(CAP).*

This can be a one year plan, a five year plan, or some other time period, consistent in length with district plans.

The action plan should indicate:

1. how the community is now;
2. how it wants to be by the end of the period; *and*
3. how it intends to get from 1 to 2.

It can make reference to any planned community projects; those are described below.

The action plan should be drafted by the executive committee, based on community feedback from the presented assessment. The draft action plan should then be presented to the community as a whole for refinement and approval.

Again you, as mobilizer, should not present it, but facilitate so that the executive can present it. Its acceptance must be by the whole unified community.

Workshop Handout

3.5. Project Design, Proposals, Outside Resources:

Remember that your job is to fight **dependency**, where community members come to rely on outside assistance for community improvements. Your emphasis should be on community self reliance *(where the community relies mainly on its own resources).*

If the community chooses an expensive project, and cannot expect to raise enough money, you must caution them to be more realistic (*not to depend upon outside charity*).

A **proposal** is a request for funds from a potential donor. The best proposal is designed like a **project action plan**, which serves to justify to the donor why it should donate funds.

The same project action plan should be the basis for submitting to higher levels of Government to access ceded funds.

Do not do the work of the committee, however tempted you are. The executive must learn by doing.

Illiterates on the committee must be fully involved in its preparation, verbally, line by line.

A project design can be used as a proposal for obtaining outside funds. It must be used for getting the approval of the whole community for undertaking the project.

In that sense it is still a kind of proposal. It might be required by district authorities; it surely is advisable to give them a copy.

The essence of the project design, like the brainstorm, is to systematically answer **The Four Key Questions**, *(what do we want, what do we have, how can we use what we have to get what we want, and what will happen if we do).*

It is your duty, as mobilizer, to go through these four key questions in detail with the executive, putting them into the relevant context, and systematize the answers into an appropriate document to be written by the executive.

When discussing resources, you will often hear executive members saying that the community does not have enough funds. There is a tendency to rely on one outside donor only.

Relying on only one source increases vulnerability, thus decreases the strength of the community. With some effort, community members can pull in resources from many and varied sources. See **Resource Acquisition**.

The mobilizer does not dictate to the community that all these must be provided by the community.

Instead, you can mention all of these, and ask the community members to identify those which the community can provide.

Sources of support can include:

- **Donations: cash, land, buildings, supplies and equipment, donated by individuals who want to support their community.** *(Acknowledged and thanked in public meetings);*
- **Commercial: gifts from firms and businesses that want to advertise their good will and support of the community.** *(Acknowledged and thanked in public meetings);*
- **Communal Labour: time and labour donated by community members, some unskilled** *(clearing grass, laying bricks),* **some skilled** *(carpentry, masonry),* **meetings, planning, supervision;**
- **Agricultural: farmers may donate food for the project:**
    - ○ **to communal workers who are working on the project,** *or*
    - ○ **to the executive committee to sell to raise cash for the project;**
- **Food: people who donate the preparing of food and refreshments to the community members on communal working days;**
- **Contributions and fees: for credit club and similar financial projects, contributions from all members; service fees, such as for obtaining water;**
- **Governmental: partial funding from central, district or local governmental sources. Sources may include district development committee participation;**
- **Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs): local community based organizations, churches, outside NGOs working locally;** *and*
- **Anonymous Donors: benefactors who remain unknown.**

This list is not complete. Seek suggestions in brain storming sessions with community members *(not only leaders).*

See **Resource Acquisition** for more details about obtaining resources for community projects.

When discussing resources, you will often hear executive members saying that the community does not have enough funds. There is a tendency to rely on one outside donor only.

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Workshop Handout

3.6. Monitoring Arrangements:

The word _"monitoring"_ sounds a bit like technical jargon, and some of your community members might feel a little threatened by your talking about it. Never fear; the idea of <u>monitoring</u> is very simple.

It is also important for community strengthening, and serves many purposes so long as it is an essential integrated element, not something separate which was tacked on like an after thought. _(See the companion to this document, "<u>Handbook of Monitoring and Evaluation</u>")._

Again, to get your point across, use a metaphor. The _"bicycle"_ analogy can be useful here. Ask the group, _"How many of you here know how to ride a bicycle?"_ We hope and expect at least one says yes. _(If not, you will have to be hypothetical, or ask about any other activity that requires sight)._ "Yes"? Good!

"Have you ever tried shutting your eyes while riding a bicycle?" _"If not, can you imagine what will happen?"_ You can draw out a number of answers, which should indicate disaster, like running into a tree or person, going off the track, falling down. Laugh.

Now say that the community is the rider; the bicycle is the project design; the ride or journey is the community project.

The project design _(bicycle)_ will get you to where you want to go (objectives), but you must keep your eyes open _(monitor your progress)._

Every project, large or small, can easily go a little off track, and usually does. If it is not closely and continuously monitored _(watched),_ then it will soon go off the road, hit something, and fall down.

If it is constantly monitored, then small deviations can be quickly and easily corrected, and failure avoided.

The community must be in the driver's seat.

Others will also want to monitor. Any external donors will want to know if their donated resources are being well used.

District officials will want to monitor for their own purposes. You will want to monitor to see how well you are strengthening the community.

The community has the greatest reasons for monitoring.

Your job as mobilizer to impress upon the community members the importance and simplicity of monitoring. *(Simple does not always mean easy).*

Your job is also to guide the executive in ensuring:

1. **that how monitoring is to be done by them is included in the project design;**
2. **that the monitoring is seen as important as the action itself;**
3. **the executive is committed to monitoring;**
4. **that the executive carries out monitoring,** *and*
5. **that the executive reports its observations to the whole community, and asks for the same back from all/any community members.**

How the community project is to be monitored should be agreed upon and understood by the executive and community, and carefully spelled out in its planning documents.

Workshop Handout

3.7. Organizing for Action:

Many people do not realize the different kinds of organizing done by a mobilizer, for different purposes.

The two most important kinds in this hand book are:

1. **organizing for decision making;** *and*
2. **organizing for action.**

Of course these two are closely related.

When you assisted the community to form the executive committee, you were organizing for community decision making.

Now, when you work with the community to decide who does what *(eg in the project),* **you are organizing for action.** See **Organizing by Training**.

Although there will be overlap, action organizing should also identify certain individuals to carry out specific tasks. This is essential.

If a task has been identified *(eg transport roofing sheets to the project site),* **it should not be left up to the group as a whole. That way it may never get done as everyone thinks it is someone else's responsibility.**

A large number of tasks should not fall on one person, eg the chairperson of the executive. It is important that as many tasks and responsibilities be delegated to as many other community members *(especially those not on the executive)* as possible.

Emphasize the value of as much and widespread participation and contribution as possible. Make sure that when a task or responsibility is delegated to an individual, that it is well known by everyone, and if it is not completed on time, that individual can be called to account by the community.

Community action should not be spontaneous and *ad hoc.* It should be organized.

Workshop Handout

4. Into Action:

You, as mobilizer, have already been in action *(ie preparing the community).* Now it is time for the community to go into action.

The whole community has participated in decision making, it has formed an executive, created a community plan of action, designed a project, and an organization for acting. Time for it to start moving.

As an example, let us say the action is building a latrine. Plans are examined; resources collected, building begins. There are several areas where you, as the mobilizer, have work to do. Do not organize, supervise or work in constructing the latrine.

Your role is to facilitate needed technical training *(identified by the community and its executive during construction),* ensure that the work is monitored, that there is full and free information about all aspects *(especially financial disbursements)* and that community members never become complacent or slip into thinking that it is not their own project.

This chapter tells you some of your tasks and roles while the community is in action. You do not control their action; you encourage and assist them to do it. You provide praise, positive advice, public recognition.

You assist in obtaining needed training, you promote public knowledge, gender balance, transparency, and a high project profile.

Workshop Handout

4.1. Implementing the Community Plan:

In the community preparation phase, at least two documents should have been prepared *(ie by the executive)* and approved (*ie by the whole community*). These are: (1) the **CAP** *(Community Action Plan)* or Plan of Action, and (2) the Project Design *(which may or may not have been used also as a proposal).*

Unless these are changed by the executive and the community as a whole, they should be referred to often, especially if a dispute, or question of what to do next, arises. The project design should be seen as linked to, and part of, the community action plan.

Your job is not to implement the plan, but facilitate the community to do so.

Ensure that the people designated to do specific tasks do so. Ensure that monitoring is carried out. Ensure that there are frequent meetings of the executive *(where progress reports are discussed)* and meetings of the whole community. Ensure that accurate records are kept, especially of all financial expenditures.

Assist the executive in recording the monetary value of their management contributions *(how many hours do they spend in meetings, planning, supervising, implementing, and what is the monetary value of their donated time and energy?).* This means many meetings between you and the executive, and a few public meetings with the whole community.

Workshop Handout

4.2. Monitoring:

Earlier *(Section 3.6)* it was noted that monitoring is important, and needs to be included in the project design. Now that the project is underway, you need to ensure that it takes place.

Monitoring is as important as the action being monitored. See the companion to this handbook, "*Monitoring.*"

Remember the analogy of riding a bicycle? If pressing the pedals is the action, then watching where you are going (*monitoring*) is as important, if you do not want to go off track and fall down. You say that the people working on the project at the time can see what is going on, but that is not enough.

The whole rider is riding the bicycle, not only the eyes. The eyes must send reports to the brain which sends adjustment messages to the rest of the body. Different people work on the project in different ways and at different times, but the whole community *(and donors)* must know what is going on overall.

Now that the project is underway, it is your job as mobilizer to remind the executive that monitoring is part of the project design, is important, and must be carried out.

Workshop Handout

4.3. Community or CIC Generated Needs:

While the project is underway, the community and its executive will become more aware of needed skills.

Some of those skills may be artisan, craft or technical skills, such as carpentry, masonry, electric wiring and others necessary for construction. Others may be financial, planning or management skills, such as keeping accounts, fund raising, report writing, conflict resolution, communication skills, and supervising and managing the activity.

Training ranges from informal to formal, on the job site showing skills by experienced to inexperienced, paid training *(apprentice-style),* through workshops you organize, to sending participants to a commercial or Government training institute.

As much as possible, emphasize the informal skill training from resources inside the community. Older and skilled artisans who donate their labour to the community project should show younger unskilled youth how to do the work.

Where artisans have to be hired, try to hire within the community if feasible, and include training of unskilled community members *(male and female youth)* as part of the hiring agreement contracts. Ensure that the executive records and reports all informal training.

Where informal training is not possible, you might propose training workshops. You must have a budget, a source of funds, to cover the training costs.

If such training needs are foreseen early by the executive it should be encouraged to include a training proposal in its community project design. See: **Preparing a Workshop**.

Depending upon your budget, and the policy of your agency or programme, you may have resources for sending some people for more formal, or institutional training.

Your task is to ensure that the training is approved by the whole community, has an appropriate and needed subject matter for the community project, and is not just a means for giving a perk to a crony. Ensuring that the choice of participants and choice of topic is approved by the whole community will help avoid suspicions of favouritism by you or the executive.

Whatever the training, while the project is underway, ensure that the choice of participants and topics or skills transferred, are needed by the community, approved by the community as a whole, monitored and recorded, and included in progress reports.

Workshop Handout

4.4. Needed Skills:

Although you do not dictate the needed training topics to the community or its executive, you should be prepared to assist it if they themselves identify training needs as they go along *(See* **Preparing a Workshop** *about the importance of justification).*

Here is a short list of some possible training topics that may arise.

Accounting;	CBR;	Group Dynamics;	Monitoring;	Project Design;
Brick Making;	Communication; .	Management;	Planning;	Report Writing; *or*
Carpentry;	Fund-raising;	Mobilizing;	Primary Health;	Social Work.

You may not be skilled enough to train in some of these topics, so you need to identify other specialists and resource people who could do the training with you.

You may find it necessary to show specialists how to engage in participatory and facilitative training.

Workshop Handout

4.5. Communication Between Executive and Public:

Just as in your own work of mobilizing you need to be transparent, facilitating, non dictatorial, and involving the community in decision making, so you should also encourage the executive to be the same towards its community.

For maintaining good communications between the community and its executive, if carried out frequently, three useful methods are: meetings, reports, and inspections.

Public community meetings are the most important means of ensuring a good flow of information between the executive and the community as a whole. *(Elaborate meetings may include celebrations noted in the next section).* At meetings you want to encourage and train the executive to take a *"facilitating"* role as you have been doing as a mobilizer.

They need to develop good public speaking skills, avoiding speeches, lectures, sermons or pronouncements, learning to draw responses out of the participants. That two-way flow of information *("dialogue"* means *"two-way"),* assists in increasing transparency and promotes good governance, participatory management and democracy.

Reports are important, too. They should be well written in very simple language, and should be verbally announced at community meetings. Seek community responses.

Inspections, where the community members walk around the project site with the executive, also encourage good communication and transparency.

Posters and posted notices can assist in a good flow of communicating, but should not be used alone. They can complement public meetings but not substitute for them. They may be focussed on raising awareness, or on reporting the results of project activities.

A statement of accounts, including income and expenditures, posted on the clinic or school while under construction, improves transparency.

The important thing for you, as mobilizer, to emphasize is to encourage good governance, participatory management, integrity, transparency, by good communication between the executive and the community as a whole.

The degree to which you have learned facilitation methods of leadership contributes to the degree to which you can encourage and train the executive and the community leaders to learn and use them too.

Workshop Handout

4.6. Celebrations:

Organizing and implementing community celebrations are hard work, and are important and vital parts of mobilization.

Once you might not have realized this; for pupils and most workers, a celebration is an exciting break from the monotony of work or study. For you, the mobilizer, it is part of your job description.

As well as the obvious time for a celebration *(ie the completion of a community project),* you should encourage other celebrations through the process:

fund raising harambee, laying a foundation block, cheque handing-over, finishing a key phase *(walls, roof, painting)* and other key turning points.

Drumming, dancing, plays or skits, parades, talent shows, and other entertainment or semi-entertainment, should be included in every celebration. Invite local amateur culture groups and school groups to perform.

Ensure some *"big-shots"* attend, to make speeches of public praise *(but not to politically hi-jack the celebration),* and invite the press and media.

Why?

The celebration adds public recognition, validation and legitimacy to the whole developmental process, not just the project.

It is a good venue for raising awareness, improving transparency, and making the community project a more high profile activity.

**With the executive, plan and organize well.
Do not do everything for the executive.**

**Encourage, praise and advise,
––that they take charge.**

Enjoy.

Workshop Handout

5. Sustaining the Intervention:

If you look again at the key words and basic concepts mentioned in Chapter One as important for you to know, you will find the word *"sustainability."* (*It is not found in most dictionaries*).

How can something we put in place be made sustainable so that it stays in place?

For the community, whose goal was improved health, and objective was to construct a latrine, its concern with sustainability is in questions like, *"How do we ensure the latrine will be kept clean, repaired, maintained and used?"*

The answer is in ensuring community responsibility *(by community participation in decision making and control)* from the beginning of the project.

For you, who has put in place a social process of social change, strengthening the community, your concern with sustainability is more in questions like, *"How will the community continue to take charge of its improvements, making her assessments, choosing new priorities, seeking new resources, undertaking new actions, increasing its self reliance?"*

The goals of you and of the community are different but complementary. You want your intervention to be sustained. The question of sustainability is answered in how you go about your mobilization.

Your goal is not a once-and-for-all latrine, school, clinic or water supply.

It is sustainable development.

This chapter looks at how you can make your work sustainable.

Part of the answer lies in repeating the mobilization cycle itself; part of it lies in identifying and training mobilizers from within the target community.

Workshop Handout

5.1. The Development Mobilization Cycle:

Earlier, your work —— your intervention —— was described as stimulating a social process.

The series of activities, *(assessment, awareness raising, unity organizing, planning and implementing action, and assessment again),* stimulates community strengthening and increased self reliance.

The word *"cycle"* may be a bit misleading here. Surely at the end you go back and start at the beginning again, but it is a changed you and a changed community.

An old Buddhist proverb says that, *"The same man can not cross the same river twice,"* (both man and river become different; they are always changing).

Nevertheless, you want to repeat the essential interventions and stimulate the essential social process.

Like a bicycle wheel that goes round and round, each part meets the path farther along each time round.

Meanwhile, you must keep your inevitable departure in mind, right from the beginning of your work.

If the community can not develop without you, then it has become dependent upon you. Your enemy is dependency.

While you repeat the cycle, therefore, you aim for your own pull-out, so that the cycle can continue without you.

If you are replaced, your notes in your journals, going back to those of Chapter 1, should be the basis for your hand-over briefing to your replacement. If you are not replaced by your agency, you must find and develop potential mobilizing resources from within the community.

Workshop Handout

5.2. Community Leadership and Internal Mobilization:

The key to sustaining the intervention of stimulating the community towards increased self reliance, is in the community.

Your agency may be willing and able to replace you, but your ultimate goal is to have the community continue mobilizing on its own.

The way you do this is to identify persons living in the community who have the potentials to become mobilizers, and the appropriate attitudes and values, and train them in your skills, train them to take over from you.

You want to work yourself out of a job.

Community development is a process of social change. You do not develop a community; the community develops itself.

The most you can be is a catalyst and stimulant to that social process. Here a famous quotation from Mwalimu Julius Nyerere is appropriate, *"People can not be developed; they can only develop themselves."*

Remember also that the tools and skills you have can act as very powerful catalysts of social change. Like any tools, therefore, they can be misused. When you identify community members to train to replace you, it is vital that you examine their character to ensure that they will use mobilization tools to benefit the community, not to benefit themselves at the expense of the community.

Know that some people have political and career objectives. With good participatory and facilitating skills, a person can misuse mobilization for personal benefit. See again Chapter One (*Section 1.3*) and the "*locksmith*" analogy. When you identify potential mobilizers from within the community, carefully observe them over time. Do not be in a hurry to find your replacement; take enough time to do in right.

When you tell a group they should take time and do something right, you can tell this little story of two bulls from a cattle society in West Africa.

Two bulls were coming over a hill and saw over a hundred cows down in the valley before them. *"Oh, uncle,"* said the young bull, *"Let us run down there and do a few."* "No," said the older bull, *"Let us walk down there, and do them all."*

Take enough time to find and train your replacement.

When you identify one or a few persons who appear to have potential to become mobilizers, having qualities of honesty, leadership, genuine concern for development of the people, you need to train them. If they are interested, you can set them up as something like *"apprentices,"* taking time to explain to them why you do what you do.

Cover all the topics in the first few chapters of this hand book. Helping them learn the principles is as important as their learning the skills. Let them try to lead a facilitation session from time to time. More often as their skills grow. After they have gone through two or more mobilization cycles, they should be ready to carry on in your absence.

You are well on the way to make your mobilizing sustainable.

Workshop Handout

5.3. Lessons Learned and Awareness of Possibilities:

We humans can learn from both success and failure, from achievements and mistakes. Remember that mistakes, failures and disasters are not the same.

A mistake is not a failure; to err is human. A failure is not a disaster; failing to achieve something does not mean you are a failure. A disaster does not mean the end of life or the end of time. When we fall down we must pick ourselves up and carry on. A day at a time.

If you have been successful at guiding a community to build its own latrine, or complete some other objective, then you have gone one step towards making it more self reliant.

It will have not gone smoothly or perfectly. If you think it did, then you are not being honest with yourself.

Analyse the process and your role in it. Be courageously honest in admitting your mistakes. Write down your analysis of the mobilization cycle. Be objective and neutral about mistakes and failures; do not use them as an excuse to paralyse yourself with depression.

Use them as lessons to be learned; far more useful and realistic than what you can learn out of a text book or a hand book such as this one. Use your journal, use your analysis, use your lessons learned, to grow stronger and more skilled as a mobilizer.

Do the same with, and for, the community.

[Workshop Handout](#)

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