



Coordinating with Communities

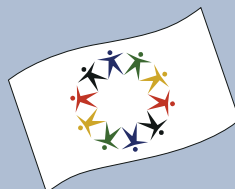
Workshop Facilitation Notes



AfriCASO

International
HIV/AIDS

Alliance



ICASO
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF
AIDS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

Supporting the use of the
“Guidelines on the involvement of the
community sector in the coordination
of national AIDS responses”

These Workshop Facilitation Notes were developed by the International Council of AIDS Service Organizations (ICASO), the African Council of AIDS Service Organizations (AfrICASO) and the International HIV/AIDS Alliance (the Alliance), with funding and support from the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).



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About these notes

As national efforts to combat HIV/AIDS become increasingly shaped by the 'Three Ones' principles – one agreed HIV/AIDS Action Framework, one National AIDS Coordinating Authority, and one agreed country-level Monitoring and Evaluation System for HIV/AIDS – the community sector faces new opportunities and challenges. In response to this, a set of guidelines 'Coordinating with Communities' have been developed by the International Council of AIDS Service Organizations (ICASO), the African Council of AIDS Service Organizations (AfriCASO), and the International HIV/AIDS Alliance (the Alliance).

These Guidelines are aimed at increasing and improving the active and meaningful involvement of the community sector in the coordination of national AIDS responses. The Guidelines provide practical options – including standards, structures, processes and methods – from which stakeholders can select those that are most appropriate and useful in their own context.

This set of workshop facilitation notes have been developed to support the use of the Guidelines to take workshop participants through an action-planning process to develop specific country plans on the involvement of the community sector in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes.

These notes provide a range of tools and advice intended to help facilitation teams design workshops that are appropriate to the different contexts. The notes are divided into two sections:

1. The Planning the Workshops section provides the context and overall guidance on planning the workshops.
2. The Workshop Facilitation Notes section provides detailed suggestions for designing and facilitating the workshops.

These notes are meant for experienced facilitators. They are therefore designed to be flexible and adaptable to the needs of each workshop. Some tips on using and adapting the notes are provided.

A. Planning the Workshops

This section contains some basic points that facilitators should consider before organising the workshops.

1. Participants

a) Deciding on the sectors to involve and the participants to invite

The context of each country will influence the decision either to limit the workshop to community sector participants or to involve other stakeholders, such as donors, international organisations and government officials.

It is important for the workshops to provide a safe environment allowing community sector participants to feel that they can speak freely. In countries where the community sector is not yet used to working together on HIV/AIDS issues at the national level, or where it has previously had difficulty having its role accepted, it may be reasonable to reserve at least part of the workshop strictly for community sector representatives.

However, it is also important that the community sector not be perceived as working alone and that the workshops not provoke tensions with other sectors. It is likely that there are representatives from other sectors who understand the importance of community sector involvement, who wish to help improve the environment for community sector involvement, and who are able to advise community sector representatives on ideal courses of action, by explaining why certain obstacles exist. They will also be important allies in helping to improve community sector involvement after the workshops.

One way of dealing with the question of whether or not to involve other sectors is to set aside some sessions specifically for a broader group. This could include involving authorities in an official capacity, for example by inviting them to a formal workshop opening. It could also include reserving the final part of the workshop to present action plans to the other sectors.

Workshop organisers should consider these issues and discuss them with HIV/AIDS community sector leaders before taking a final decision. The community sector should aim to show itself as an open and willing partner, and care should be taken to avoid confrontation. Ultimately, what is most important is for the workshops to achieve their objective of generating plans for strengthening community sector involvement in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes. Therefore, facilitators should select a group of participants who are most likely to ensure that outcome, including a commitment to undertake follow-up activities to ensure implementation of the plans.

A number of points should be considered in selecting workshop participants representing the community sector:

- Participants should be as representative of the community sector as possible. This means that they should represent different parts of the country, different ethnic or religious groups, different types of organisations, and groups that are the most vulnerable to HIV in the country, particularly the most marginalised groups. The Guidelines¹ indicate the different types of organisations and key populations that may be part of the community sector:

¹ See Action Card ①

Organisations	Key populations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living with HIV/AIDS, their groups and networks • Community networks and community-based organisations, including those that involve or support key populations • Local, national and international non-governmental organisations • AIDS service organisations • Faith-based organisations • NGO networks • NGO support organisations 	<p data-bbox="834 317 1333 415">‘Key populations’ refer to groups of people that are key to the dynamics of, and response to, HIV/AIDS. Examples are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People living with HIV/AIDS • Orphans and vulnerable children • Women and girls • Youth • Sex workers • Injecting drug users • Men who have sex with men • Transgenders • Migrants • Refugees • Prisoners

- At least some of the participants should already be involved in representing the community sector in national or regional policy or governance bodies. Representatives should come from a range of different community sector ‘constituencies’. [See table above.]
- Participants should ideally have a range of skills and experiences that are relevant to strengthening community sector involvement in national coordinating bodies and processes.² The level of skills and experiences that will vary in different countries include:
 - Understanding of the national coordinating bodies and processes
 - Understanding of the ‘Three Ones’ principles
 - Experience with organising and networking within the community sector, in particular with regard to HIV/AIDS
 - Experience working within the national HIV/AIDS policy and governance environment
 - Representational and communication skills
- As many of the participants as possible should be in a position to be able to continue working on community sector involvement in national coordination bodies and processes after the workshop, particularly in terms of putting into action any plans that emerge from the workshop.

Participants from other sectors should be people who are in a position to influence, improve and provide resources to support community sector involvement in national HIV/AIDS coordination efforts such as one agreed HIV/AIDS Action Framework, one National AIDS Coordinating Authority, and one agreed country-level Monitoring and Evaluation System for HIV/AIDS.

² See Action Cards ② and ③

b) Planning workshop dates

Given that the workshop will involve a process of analysis and action planning, it is important that all of the participants be available from beginning to end. If possible, the facilitators should contact the participants in advance (especially those already heavily involved in national HIV/AIDS policy and decision making) to choose the most convenient dates. Facilitators should also contact the authorities to check that the workshop dates do not conflict with proposed dates for other important meetings (e.g., those of the National AIDS Commission and Country Coordinating Mechanism). Facilitators should inform participants of workshop dates well in advance, particularly if the participants must travel a long distance to the workshop.

c) Ensuring equal involvement of all participants

The participants' skills and experience with working on issues to do with national coordination may be mixed. Facilitators should take care to work at a pace and level that enables all participants to contribute. This may mean spending more time on initial sessions to build understanding of the issues, even though some of the more experienced participants may already know the content. In such cases, asking the more experienced participants to share their experiences can be a way of ensuring that everyone's participation is valued. If participants do not share a common language, care should be taken to ensure that they are able to contribute fully, for example, through the help of translators.

d) Deciding on the number of participants

The total number of participants will depend on resources, people's availability, and the need to include representatives from as many community sector constituencies as possible. However, given that the workshops need to be action-oriented and require concrete follow-up, the overall number of participants must also be manageable. The Facilitation Notes assume that there will be between 15 and 25 participants, although the Notes can still be used in workshops with fewer or more participants.

2. Facilitation team

Because the primary objective of the workshops is to ensure that participants end up with concrete plans for strengthening community sector involvement in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes, it is vital that the facilitation team be made up of individuals who are known and trusted by the community sector and who do not have biases towards any particular community sector organisation or priority. The team should also include people with skills and experience in the following areas:

- Understanding of the 'Three Ones' principles
- Experience with working in a multi-sectoral context, particularly in terms of strengthening collaboration between the government and the community sector
- Excellent knowledge of the national HIV/AIDS environment and its history, including the main systems and structures, the main actors, the current status of the national AIDS coordination (including community sector involvement)
- Facilitation of action planning, especially action planning for the community sector as a whole rather than for one organisation

Although not every member of the facilitation team needs to be experienced and skilled in all of these areas, efforts should be made to ensure that the team collectively covers them all.

Finally, at least one member of the facilitation team – preferably more than one – should be available to take the lead or support the coordination of the action plan implementation in collaboration with workshop participants and the sector as a whole. This person should of course be acceptable to the community sector, for example, someone who is already active and well-known in community sector networks.

Action-planning activities during the workshop will most likely require focussed facilitation. The facilitation team should therefore have at least one facilitator for every five or six participants. This will help ensure that small-group activities receive full support from the facilitators. If possible, a team member who is not directly involved in workshop facilitation should deal with administrative and logistical questions.

3. Preparation by facilitators

Facilitators should collect as much information as possible about the current level of community involvement in HIV/AIDS policy and decision making in the country, including:

- Existing national strategic frameworks, joint AIDS review documents, etc.
- Current community sector involvement in implementing one agreed HIV/AIDS Action Framework, one National AIDS Coordinating Authority, and one agreed country-level Monitoring and Evaluation System for HIV/AIDS (including lists of members and terms of reference)
- Levels of community involvement in other HIV/AIDS policy-making or decision-making bodies (this may provide lessons and precedents)
- Networking or coordination initiatives that exist in the community sector
- Plans developed by donor agencies, government authorities and other stakeholders to implement the 'Three Ones' principles and to strengthen community sector involvement in particular
- Dates of future meetings of coordinating bodies or processes (opportunities for input, e.g., if a national HIV/AIDS Action Framework is being developed)

Considering that this information may influence decisions on the selection of workshop participants and the context, this research should ideally be carried out beforehand.

Once decisions have been made on the overall context and the participants, facilitators should set aside some time to familiarise themselves with the Guidelines and these Workshop Facilitation Notes. The entire facilitation team should carry out the detailed planning of the workshops, including session planning and allocation of facilitation roles, to ensure that all team members share a common understanding of the objectives and the process. This might include simulating complicated sessions. Ideally, facilitators should set aside two days to prepare the technical aspects of the workshop. They should also reserve time to prepare the materials or presentations and to ensure that logistics go smoothly (including accommodation and travel arrangements for participants).

4. Preparation by participants

The need for preparation by participants will depend on the choices that facilitators make regarding the workshop programme. Section 2 of these Notes indicates which sessions would benefit from participant preparation. This is most important if the facilitators decide to ask some participants to present relevant experiences to date. If participants are asked to prepare presentations, the facilitators should also explain which format they should use (transparencies, PowerPoint, flip chart or poster, whiteboard). The facilitation team should offer any necessary support in preparing these presentations.

Apart from these specific preparations, it may also be useful to provide participants with materials that they can read in advance of the workshop if they have time.

Suggested materials include:

- *Coordinating with Communities: Guidelines on the involvement of the community sector in the coordination of national AIDS responses*. International Council of AIDS Service Organizations, African Council of AIDS Service Organizations, and the International HIV/AIDS Alliance, 2007.
- *'Three Ones' Key Principles*, UNAIDS, April 2004.
- *The 'Three Ones' in Action: Where We Are and Where We Go from Here*, UNAIDS, May 2005.
- *Discussion Paper: Civil Society and the 'Three Ones'*, International Council of AIDS Service Organizations and the International HIV/AIDS Alliance, May 2005.

If any materials or reports exist on the current status of community sector involvement in the country or on the community sector's networking efforts, they should also be sent to participants in advance.

5. Venue and equipment required

Venue and equipment requirements will depend on the final workshop programme developed by the facilitators. On the whole, plenty of flip-chart paper, tape, marker pens, Post-it notes and A4 paper should be provided, as these will help working groups report back after each exercise. Projectors, laptops, sound-amplification devices, and so forth, should be provided according to the facilitation team's preferences.

The venue should be large enough to seat all the participants, including any additional guests who might be invited at the start or end of the workshop. There should be adequate space and furniture for small-group discussions throughout the workshop. Organizing residential workshops and providing lunch on-site often make it easier to start sessions on time and to build a friendly working environment. These decisions will naturally depend on what is customary in the context and on the resources available.

6. Donor support for action

Given that the aim of these workshops is to develop action plans that will support community sector involvement, facilitators should previously identify and engage donors potentially interested in funding actions identified by the workshop participants. Often a key barrier to taking action is the lack of resources to implement the action plans. Such donors include those who have publicly committed to, or shown an interest in, supporting community sector involvement and the implementation of the 'Three Ones' principles.

7. Terminology

Although the term the 'Three Ones' principles is in common usage, it is important during the workshop to remind participants that these refer not to a single activity or project but to three distinct principles for coordinating national AIDS responses.

In addition, facilitators should try to use the names of the specific national AIDS coordinating bodies or processes, for example, 'National AIDS Plan' and 'National AIDS Council'.

8. After the workshops

Members of the facilitation teams should be available to carry out or support follow-up activities after the workshops.

a) Documenting and communicating the results

Facilitation teams should ensure that the results of the workshops, and specifically any future action plans, are documented and communicated as quickly as possible to participants and any other stakeholders after the workshops.

b) Monitoring the implementation of the plans emerging from the workshops

Additional information (e.g., regarding national plans or resources) may be required before the action plans can be finalised. Facilitators should monitor and where necessary provide support for this process. Once the plans are finalised and resources have been committed, facilitators should help ensure continuity in monitoring the implementation of the plans if possible.

c) Providing feedback on the Guidelines

The main feedback needed relates to the usefulness of the Guidelines. For example: How useful is the content for supporting involvement and developing action plans? What guidance is missing or unclear? If possible, facilitators should share any workshop documentation and action plans with ICASO, AfriCASO and the Alliance, as these may provide useful input for future versions of the Guidelines. This would also allow these partners to monitor progress on community involvement in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes. Contact icaso@icaso.org.

ICASO and its partners would also appreciate feedback on any facilitators or participants who could potentially become champions for strengthening community involvement in the 'Three Ones' principles. These champions include participants who demonstrate an excellent vision of the role the community sector can play, who understand the complexities of this area of work, and who have strong consensus-building and facilitation skills. It is hoped that these champions will become involved in facilitating action-planning activities in other countries in their region.

B. Workshop facilitation notes

How to use these notes

The specific focus of the workshops

While the main objective of these workshops is to enhance the community sector's active and meaningful involvement in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes, a number of key factors will influence each workshop's specific focus and the choice of sessions. These factors include:

- The community sector's level of understanding of national coordination bodies and processes
- The community sector's capacity to engage in national AIDS coordination
- The enabling environment and the willingness of governments and other stakeholders to involve the community sector
- Forthcoming opportunities for involvement in national coordinating bodies or processes (e.g., renewal of the national strategic AIDS plan)

The facilitator or a group of community sector stakeholders should previously consult with their constituencies and other stakeholders (e.g., government and the UN) to identify priorities and to analyse forthcoming opportunities, which will help identify the specific focus of the workshop.

These Workshop Facilitation Notes have been developed in conjunction with the Guidelines to lead workshop participants through **an action-planning process designed to develop specific country plans** to improve community sector involvement in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes. Each workshop, however, is not expected to address in detail all coordinating bodies and processes, given that the choice of focus will depend on priorities, capacities, resources and forthcoming opportunities.

Approaches to designing and facilitating the workshops

Part B of this document offers a range of sessions that can be held during these workshops. Each session contains an objective, advice on how to achieve this objective, facilitation questions and suggested time allocations. Some sessions have long and short versions. We have offered suggestions for both, allowing facilitators to decide on the most appropriate way to hold the activity. Most of the suggested activities are participatory to encourage participants to engage with and take ownership of the workshops.

Important note

It will not be possible – or desirable – for a single workshop to offer every session provided in these notes. Facilitators should choose those most relevant to their context. We have nevertheless indicated the sessions that are recommended for each workshop. In addition, other sessions form a sequence (especially in the action-planning section) and should therefore be kept together. The final pages of Part B contain sample plans, which provide examples of how different sessions can be combined into a workshop, depending on the country's context.

In several cases it is suggested that participants be put into working groups. Facilitators should work out beforehand how they are going to form these groups. Although the easiest method is to randomly divide the participants into the number of groups required, it can be useful to ensure that groups have representatives from different regions, organisations and sectors (if sectors outside the community sector are involved). Working groups should ideally have from five to eight people. Groups with more than eight are difficult to manage. Groups with fewer than five people may not have enough experiences to share. Also, having a large number of groups reporting back to the plenary will take up time.

When the aim of the working group is to develop an action plan, each group should include at least one person who will be directly involved in coordinating the plan and putting it into action. For some of the working group sessions, however, a facilitator should sit in with each group and take the lead on running the session to ensure that it stays focussed on the objective. The 'tips' section included in each of the session plans indicates where it is strongly advised to have a member of the facilitation team run the group sessions.

1. Opening the workshop

Most facilitators have a preferred way of opening a workshop, introducing the participants and presenting the workshop programme, so we have not provided detailed instructions here. However, some important points should be considered in preparing this opening session.

1.1 Opening, introductions, expectations

Objective: To introduce the participants to one another and to adopt the workshop objectives and programme.

Equipment / materials required:

- Overhead projector, PowerPoint or flip chart
- Handouts of the workshop objectives and programme
- Name badges

Time required:

90 minutes
maximum

Description:

- The opening sets the tone for the whole workshop. If you wish to create a relaxed working environment, aim to keep the introductions informal. Suggestion: Ask participants to mingle for ten minutes and introduce themselves to two or three people they don't know; then ask them to introduce themselves one by one to the whole group. To help make the opening session even more relaxed, ask participants to share something about themselves, for example, something they have learned since becoming involved in the response to HIV/AIDS.
- Present two or three clear objectives to be achieved during the workshop. Provide an indication of the workshop programme and propose some start and end times. Instead of using the term 'Three Ones' principles in the

objectives, describe them in full (one agreed HIV/AIDS Action Framework, one National AIDS Coordinating Authority, and one agreed country-level Monitoring and Evaluation System for HIV/AIDS).

- Encourage active participation from the start, given that the participants will be asked to develop work plans. Suggestion: Present the objectives and programme. Then invite the participants to discuss them with their neighbours and to comment on whether they meet their expectations or not. Note down the comments and find an opportunity to discuss whether the workshop programme should be changed as a result.
- If participants come from very different social backgrounds (a likely situation if marginalised groups are involved), the social hierarchies may influence people's confidence and ability to participate. Although this needs to be managed throughout the workshop, one way of helping to 'even' things out is to ask participants to introduce themselves by their first names or nicknames, rather than by using official titles such as 'Dr' or 'Professor'.
- Although an official opening ceremony is by no means required to achieve the objectives of the workshop, in some countries it is important to start this way, especially if officials are present. Facilitators should contact official guests in advance to make clear plans for the start time, to brief them thoroughly about the workshop, and to give them an indication of what they would like them to say. In addition, if officials do speak at the opening, at least one community sector representative should be asked to make some opening remarks.
- In your opening remarks, make sure to explain what is meant by the 'community sector' (see Guidelines, Part A, Section 1.2) and how the participants were selected.

Tips:

- * The introductory session is of course essential for all workshops. If all the participants know each other well and are used to working together, personal introductions are not required.

2. Understanding national policy, coordination and decision making for HIV/AIDS

This section provides sessions aimed at ensuring that all participants understand the key issues surrounding national policy and decision making for HIV/AIDS. Alternative sessions are proposed according to the participants' level of knowledge, which means that it is not necessary to offer each of these sessions. Facilitators should nevertheless try to build a short sequence to ensure that the main issues are covered. The overall aim of these sessions is to build understanding of each of the national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes.

2.1 How is the response to HIV/AIDS organised in our country?

Objective: To establish, with participants, what are the main national structures that exist for coordinating HIV/AIDS responses.

2.1 Option (a): Participatory version

Equipment / materials required:

- Boards or flip charts and markers for noting down participants' ideas

Time required:

15-30 minutes

Description: Short brainstorming session

- Ask participants which structures exist for governing and coordinating the national response to HIV/AIDS.
- Find out who the main stakeholders are: Which organisations or bodies are involved in and responsible for coordinating the national response to HIV/AIDS? (If you need prompts, refer to the list of stakeholders in the Guidelines, Part A, Section 1.2.)
- Note down on the board ideas from five or six participants. If all the ideas are 'national structures', clarify what they mean. For example, if large national projects are mentioned, explain that these are 'projects' rather than 'governing structures'.
- Ask participants to identify the role of each of the structures listed on the board (e.g., coordination, monitoring, fundraising, management). Note down these ideas on a separate sheet.
- If any important roles are not mentioned, add them to the list and explain them.
- Ask participants if everything is clear. Provide any necessary clarification.

Comment:

- * Use option (a) if you feel that the participants are generally knowledgeable about which national structures exist; otherwise, use option (b).

2.1 Option (b): Presentation version

Equipment / materials required:

- Overhead projector, PowerPoint or flip chart to display the presentation
- Handouts of the presentation

Time required:

15-30 minutes

Description: Presentation:

- Present or ask a guest to present the key structures that exist for planning, coordinating and monitoring the national response to HIV/AIDS.
- Invite the presenter to point out if there are currently any parallel or overlapping

structures, if there are any clearly perceived gaps in these structures, and/or if there are current plans to revise the structures.

- Ask participants if everything is clear. Provide any necessary clarification.

Tips:

- * Use this option instead of option (a) if you feel that some of the participants do not have a clear understanding of the national structures in place or if you consider that the complexity of the different overlapping structures or bodies requires a presentation.
- * A guest from the government can be invited to give this presentation.

2.2 Introducing the 'Three Ones' principles

Objective: To provide an overview of the 'Three Ones' principles and to discuss their application in the country.

Equipment / materials required:

- Overhead projector, PowerPoint or flip chart to display the presentation
- Handout copies of the key components of the 'Three Ones' principles

Time required:

15-30 minutes

Description: Presentation

- Present each of the 'Three Ones' principles in turn. Explain the relevance of each.
- Note that this presentation should last no more than 10 minutes, leaving time for questions and discussion.

Tips:

- * Refer to the Guidelines, Part A, Section 2.
- * If you wish, invite a guest from the government or an agency such as UNAIDS to give this presentation. This is particularly desirable if this person is responsible for implementing any or all of the 'Three Ones' principles in the country.
- * Use the local names for the different coordinating bodies and processes (e.g., 'National Strategic Plan' instead of 'HIV/AIDS Action Framework' or 'National AIDS Commission' instead of 'National AIDS Coordinating Authority').
- * If all participants already have a good understanding of the main national HIV/AIDS mechanisms in place, you may prefer not to include this presentation.
- * If you opt to do Session 2.3, the presentation given here should be fairly generic and should not make reference to what is currently in place in the country. Also, less time will be required for discussion as Session 2.3 will provide an opportunity for this. However, if you prefer not to use Session 2.3, this presentation should also explain current efforts to implement the 'Three Ones' principles, and the status of these efforts.

2.3 How are the 'Three Ones' principles being applied in our country?

Objective: To discuss how effectively the 'Three Ones' principles are being applied.

2.3 Option (a): If you have used sessions 2.1 and 2.2

Equipment / materials required:

- Board or flip chart, markers for noting participants' ideas

Time required:

15 minutes

Description: Plenary discussion

- Draw attention to the results from sessions 2.1 and 2.2 listed on the flip chart or board.
- Ask participants the following questions:
 - How effectively are the 'Three Ones' principles being applied in this country?
 - Are there any inconsistencies between the principles and the way in which they are applied in this country? If so, why?
- Note down the main conclusions from this discussion and post them on the wall for future reference.

Tips:

- * Use this option to enable participants to draw conclusions from sessions 2.1 and 2.2, if the workshop includes those two sessions.

2.3 Option (b): If this is the first session after the introductions

Equipment / materials required:

- Flip-chart paper and markers for working groups

Time required:

60 minutes

Description: Working groups and plenary discussion

- Divide participants into groups of four or five each. Then ask them to discuss the following questions:
 - How effectively are the 'Three Ones' principles being applied in this country?
 - Are there any inconsistencies between the principles and how they are applied in this country? If so, why?
- Give groups 15–20 minutes to discuss these questions. Circulate among the groups to ensure that everyone understands the questions.
- Have each group present its work to the plenary, and then discuss the results. Note down the main conclusions from this discussion and post them on the wall for future reference.

Tips:

- * Use this option if you have decided that sessions 2.1 and 2.2 are not necessary because all the participants already have a good understanding of the issues discussed in those sessions. In such case, you can use this option as the first session after the workshop opening.
- * Alternatively, conduct this session by dividing participants into three groups, asking each group to focus on a different 'Three Ones' principle: HIV/AIDS Action Framework, National AIDS Coordinating Authority, and/or agreed country-level Monitoring and Evaluation System for HIV/AIDS.

2.4 What are the strengths and weaknesses of the national AIDS coordinating bodies or processes in the country (HIV/AIDS Action Framework, the National AIDS Coordinating Authority, and/or the national Monitoring and Evaluation System for HIV/AIDS)?

Objective: To discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the national AIDS coordinating bodies or processes already in place in the country

Equipment / materials required:

- Flip-chart paper and markers for working groups

Time required:

60 minutes

Description: Working groups

- Divide the participants into three groups. Ensure that each has a mix of experiences. Ask each group to discuss one of the following questions:
 - What are the strengths and weaknesses of the current national HIV/AIDS action framework (or strategic plan)?
 - What are the strengths and weaknesses of the national AIDS coordinating authority (e.g., national AIDS commission)?
 - What are the strengths and weaknesses of the national monitoring and evaluation system for HIV/AIDS?
- Allow 20 minutes for this discussion, then have groups make a brief report.
- Ask if any of the groups can explain why these strengths and weaknesses exist. Ask if any of these strengths and weaknesses are clearly linked to community sector involvement or lack of involvement. Note down and underline these points.

Tips:

- * Use this option instead of sessions 2.2 and 2.3 only if all participants are experienced in these areas.
- * If the workshop is focussing on only one or two national coordinating bodies or processes, prepare to discuss only these and arrange the working groups accordingly (e.g., four groups, with two groups working on each question).

3. Understanding the community sector and its current engagement in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes

This section provides short sessions designed to ensure that all participants understand: (a) what is meant by 'community sector', (b) how the different parts of the community sector currently work together, and (c) where the community sector is in terms of being involved in national coordination and decision making on HIV/AIDS. These sessions will therefore help identify priorities to focus on in the rest of the workshop.

Alternatives are proposed according to the participants' level of knowledge, therefore not all of these sessions should be used. However, facilitators should try to build a short sequence to ensure that the main issues are covered. One way to save time is to run some of the sessions in parallel with different working groups focussing on different issues. The advantage is that this method will cover ground more quickly, but the disadvantage is that there will be fewer perspectives on each issue. An example is provided in the workshop plans section at the end of these Notes.

3.1 What is the community sector?

Objective: To discuss what constitutes the community sector in the country.

3.1 Option (a): Participatory version

Equipment / materials required:

- Boards and markers for noting participants' ideas

Time required:

30 minutes

Description: Short brainstorming session

- Ask the following questions:
 - What do you understand by community sector? (Collect five or six ideas.)
 - Which types of organisations or people make up the community sector? (Try to obtain as many ideas as possible.)
 - Which types of HIV/AIDS activity is the community sector involved in?
- Note down participants' ideas legibly and visibly. Ask participants to comment on whether they agree or not.
- Use the third question to recognise the diversity of activities that the community sector is involved in, and to point out whether or not, in this context, the community sector is currently engaged in national coordination, policy and decision making.
- Conclude this session by asking the participants to say which are the most important points mentioned.
- Underline these points and leave them posted on the wall for future reference. If necessary, add your views about the key points.

Tips:

- * Use the definitions in the Guidelines, Part A, Section 1.2, and Action Card 1, to frame your remarks.
- * To encourage participants to think about these questions and to frame their answers, ask them to spend five minutes discussing the questions informally with their neighbour before opening the brainstorming session.

3.1 Option (b): Presentation version

Equipment / materials required:

- Overhead projector, PowerPoint or flip chart to display the presentation

Time required:

15–30 minutes

Description: Presentation and plenary discussion

- Present the definition of 'community sector' outlined in the Guidelines, Part A, Section 1.2. This should require just one or two slides. Invite participants to comment. Ask for clarification of the definition. Note down any additional points.
- Ask the question: Which types of HIV/AIDS activity is the community sector involved in?
- Note down participant's answers and lead a discussion. If involvement in national policy or decision making is not mentioned, give the necessary prompts and provide examples, if any.

Tips:

- * Because participants are given the option of adding to the definition, it is preferable to do the presentation on flip-chart paper, so that ideas can be added by hand.
- * Option (a) is more participatory and therefore preferable. Option (b) should be used only if there are significant time constraints or if there are clear advantages to being directive in providing the definition of 'community sector' presented in the Guidelines.

3.2 How is the community sector organised?

Objective: To discuss how the community sector organises itself with respect to national HIV/AIDS responses and to share information on existing initiatives.

3.2 Option (a): Plenary discussion version

Equipment / materials required:

- Overhead projector, PowerPoint or flip chart

Time required:

15 minutes

Description: Plenary discussion

- Draw attention to the results from Session 3.1 ('What is the community sector?') and ask:
 - Does the 'community sector' organise itself at the national or regional level to discuss and act on things together?
 - What are these initiatives? Are they formal? Networks?
 - Does the sector have leaders or representatives at the national level?
 - Do these initiatives facilitate community sector involvement in national AIDS coordination bodies and processes, in particular the national HIV/AIDS Action Framework, the national AIDS Coordinating Authority, or the national Monitoring and Evaluation System for HIV/AIDS?
- Note down the answers to these questions and display them visibly on the board or flip chart. Ask participants if everything is clear. Allow some time for discussion and clarification if necessary.

Tips:

- * Use this option if a significant number of the participants are likely to be aware of efforts to organise the sector.

3.2 Option (b): Presentation version

Equipment / materials required:

- Boards and markers for noting down participants' ideas

Time required:

15-30 minutes

Description: Presentation

- Present these initiatives briefly yourself or have them presented by one or more participants who are currently involved in organising/leading community sector involvement or networking on HIV/AIDS. Presentations should answer the following questions:
 - When did the initiative start? How did it come about?
 - Which parts of the community sector are involved? Can any part of the community sector be involved or is it just for a specific group (e.g., network of faith-based organisations)?

- What is the aim or objective of the initiative?
 - Does the initiative facilitate community sector involvement in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes, in particular the national HIV/AIDS Action Framework, the national AIDS Coordinating Authority, or the national Monitoring and Evaluation System for HIV/AIDS?
 - What has it achieved so far?
- Note down the answers to these questions and display them visibly on the board or flip chart. Ask participants if everything is clear. Allow some time for discussion and clarification if necessary.

Tips:

- * Use this option only if few of the participants are aware of efforts to organise the sector, as it is designed to allow those who are aware to share information with the rest of the participants.

3.3 Why is it important for the community sector to be involved in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes?

Objective: To discuss the importance of community sector involvement in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes.

Equipment / materials required:

- Flip-chart paper and markers for working groups
- Copies of Action Cards 1–11 from the Guidelines.

Time required:

90-120 minutes

Description:

Stage 1: Working groups

- Divide the participants into three groups. Have each group discuss one of the following questions:
 - Why is it important for the community sector to be involved in developing a national action framework for HIV/AIDS?
 - Why is it important for the community sector to be involved in a national HIV/AIDS coordinating authority?
 - Why is it important for the community sector to be involved in developing a country-level monitoring and evaluation system for HIV/AIDS?
- Encourage the working groups to think about how community involvement can improve the overall response to HIV/AIDS. Give them 25–30 minutes to discuss their question. Ask them to present their results in point form. Allow time for discussion of each group's results. Ask participants to point out the answers that are the same for each question. Underline the points that are specific to each question.

Stage 2: Plenary discussion

- Ask participants to outline the main points that need to be taken into account to strengthen community sector involvement in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes. Suggestion: Use the following prompts based on the Action Cards in the Guidelines:
 - *Representation*: Those involved should be selected by the community sector and should adequately represent all parts of the community sector. (Note: If you did Session 3.1, remind participants of the results related to who and what makes up the community sector.) [Action Cards 1, 2 and 3]
 - *Skills/capacity*: Those involved require the skills necessary to work with other sectors and to participate in an effective way. [Action Cards 4 and 5]
 - *Acceptance by other sectors*: The community sector is accepted by other sectors as an important contributor to these processes. [Action Cards 7 and 10]
 - *Communication and consultation*: Mechanisms are required to share information and consult with the community sector as a whole on important issues. [Action Cards 8 and 9]
 - *Resources*: Time and resources are required for the community sector to participate in an effective way. [Action Card 6]
 - *Independence*: The community sector should be able to participate yet also maintain its independence, raising difficult or sensitive issues if necessary. [Action Card 11]
- Try to organise the participants' suggestions into these categories if possible.

Tips:

- * Refer to the Guidelines, Part A, Section 3.2 (Box 4: 'Benefits of community sector involvement for national responses to HIV/AIDS').
- * Use *either* Session 3.3 or Session 3.5, not both. Session 3.3 is appropriate when most participants are not yet very involved in national policy-making and decision-making efforts.
- * If other sectors are involved in this session, it might be helpful to have them each work on their own and then come together to discuss differences/similarities regarding the issues identified.
- * This session provides an indication of the priorities that should be selected in Section 6 of these facilitation notes.

3.4 What are the main characteristics of meaningful community sector involvement in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes, and what needs to be in place to achieve this outcome?

Objective: To discuss the overall characteristics that need to be in place both within and outside the community sector to ensure that community sector involvement is meaningful.

Equipment / materials required:

- Small pieces of paper (Post-it notes or quarter sheets), markers and a board

Time required:

45 minutes

Description: Plenary exercise

- Ask participants to discuss with their neighbour what all of the stakeholders need to do to ensure meaningful involvement of the community sector in national AIDS coordinating body and processes. (Note: Refer to the stakeholders listed in Session 2.1 in these Notes or in the Guidelines, Part A, Section 1.2.)
- Keep the discussion to no more than ten minutes. Then ask participants to note down one or two ideas on small pieces of paper, *one idea per piece of paper*.
- Ask participants to volunteer one by one to explain their idea. Post it to the board or the wall.
- Each time a new idea comes up, ask if any other participants have a similar idea. If they do, gather these ideas and post them together.
- Use the list of characteristics included in the Guidelines, Part B, Section 1.1, to prompt or add new ideas. Note: The ideas from the Guidelines should not merely be listed but each one should be discussed, and the participants should be given an opportunity to say whether it is relevant to their context.

Tips:

- * Many of the points raised in this session will have already been covered in previous exercises, and a number of them will come up in later sessions with respect to each of the national coordinating bodies and processes. This session should therefore be considered optional, and used only if there is a specific additional message the facilitators wish to get across.
- * A shorter version of this session would involve simply presenting and explaining the characteristics provided in the Guidelines, Part B, Section 1.1. These should then be posted on the wall for reference. This version of the session may be more appropriate for participants who do not have much experience in this area of work. Ample time should be given for questions and explanations.
- * If you use this session as well as Session 3.3, you should consider whether to include Stage 2 of Session 3.3. Some of the points from the list provided in Stage 2 are likely to come up in Session 3.4; if they do not, you can introduce them.

3.5 What are the strengths and weaknesses of current community sector involvement in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes?

Objective: To assess current community sector involvement in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes.

Equipment / materials required:

- Flip-chart paper and markers for working groups
- Copies of Action Cards 1–11 of the Guidelines

Time required:

60-90 minutes

Description: Working groups

- Divide the participants into three or four groups, ensuring that each group has a mix of experiences. Each group discusses the strengths and weaknesses of community sector involvement in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes, for each of the following points:
 - *Representation:* Were the representatives involved selected by the community sector? Do they adequately represent all parts of the community sector? (Note: If you did Session 3.1, remind participants of the results in terms of who and what makes up the community sector). [Action Cards 1, 2 and 3]
 - *Skills/capacity:* Do those involved have the skills necessary to work with other sectors and to participate in an effective way? [Action Cards 4 and 5]
 - *Acceptance by other sectors:* Is the community sector accepted by other sectors as an important contributor to these processes? [Action Cards 7 and 10]
 - *Communication and consultation:* Are there mechanisms to share information and consult with the community sector on key issues? [Action Cards 8 and 9]
 - *Resources:* Is there sufficient time and resources for the community sector to participate in an effective way, including for consultations within the sector? [Action Card 6]
 - *Independence:* Is the community sector able to participate yet also maintain its independence, raising difficult or sensitive issues if necessary? [Action Card 11]
- Invite groups to report their results to the plenary. Allow 30 minutes per group. Ask participants to say if they disagree with any points. Ask them to identify the main patterns of strengths and weaknesses emerging from all of the group discussions. Underline these and leave them on display for future reference.

Tips:

- * Suggest that groups draw a two-column table (strengths and weaknesses) with one row corresponding to each point raised. It may be useful for a

facilitator to sit in with each working group in order to ensure that discussions stay on topic.

- * Instead of asking each group to address all the listed points, assign one or two of the points per group; otherwise, each point is unlikely to be addressed in equal measure. This will also give each group more time to focus on each point, although the disadvantage is that there will be less feedback to compare at the end.
- * It is proposed that *either* Session 3.3 *or* Session 3.4 be used, not both. Session 3.4 is appropriate when the majority of participants are already strongly engaged as community sector representatives on these issues. If participants are at this level, facilitators should also consider omitting Session 3.2.
- * This session provides an indication of the activities that should be selected in Section 6 in these Facilitation Notes.

4. Developing action plans for improving community sector involvement in specific national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes

This section describes how to facilitate the process of setting priorities and developing clear action plans for improving community sector involvement in specific national AIDS coordinating bodies or processes. It may not be possible or desirable to develop action plans for all bodies or processes. (See the first section of Part B of these Facilitation Notes for the factors to consider in identifying the specific focus.)

The activities in this section are generally more appropriate for a community sector that has some established mechanisms for sector-wide organisation and representation. If these mechanisms are weak or absent, it may be more useful to focus on action plans for strengthening the community sector itself, as suggested in Section 5 of these Facilitation Notes.

Facilitators should obtain in advance all documentation concerning progress to date (e.g., copies of national strategic plans or terms of reference), as these documents are necessary for this session. Remember to make use of the local names for the different coordinating bodies and processes (e.g., 'National Strategic Plan' instead of 'HIV/AIDS Action Framework' or 'National AIDS Commission' instead of 'National AIDS Coordinating Authority').

Sessions 4.2 and 4.3 are designed to be used together in a seamless fashion. However, if facilitators are facing time constraints, feel that less time is required for analysis and planning, or decide to use the workshop to obtain an indication of future plans without finalising the plans, they should use one session or the other.

Facilitators should make it clear that participants are not expected to resolve the issues during this workshop: They are merely going to develop plans that will help the community sector resolve the issues in the short to medium term.

Distribute copies of the Guidelines to participants, if you have not yet done so, as they contain important information for the following sessions.

4.1 Assessing the current status of a specific national AIDS coordinating body or process

Objective: To decide which of the key steps outlined in the Guidelines should be addressed as a matter of priority by the community sector.

4.1 Option (a): Participatory priority-setting version

Equipment / materials required:

- Overhead projector, PowerPoint or flip chart to display the key steps
- Copies of the relevant pages from the Guidelines, Part B, Section 1.2 and of the relevant Action Cards for reference (one set per working group)
- Flip-chart paper and markers for working groups

Time required:

90-120 minutes

Description: Presentation and working groups

- Present the key steps outlined in the Guidelines, Part B, Section 1.2:
 1. Developing terms of reference
 2. Selecting representatives
 3. Providing induction for members
 4. Raising awareness
 5. Building effective relationships
 6. Engaging in joint decision making
 7. Supporting decisions and actions
 8. Monitoring and reviewing
- During the presentation, explain the different steps outlined in the Guidelines, Part B, Section 1.2. At the end of the presentation, invite participants to ask for clarification.
- Remind participants of the key characteristics of meaningful involvement (Session 3.4 or text from the Guidelines, Part B, Section 1.1). These are what we are hoping to achieve through our plans.
- Once the steps are clear, divide the participants into working groups. Allow the groups 45–60 minutes to discuss the steps, whether these have been achieved, and which ones need more work if community sector involvement is to be improved. By the end of the discussion, each group should have chosen three steps that need to be addressed as matters of priority. They can choose steps that have not been addressed at all, steps that are about to be taken or that are in progress (and that therefore provide a good opportunity for improved community involvement), or steps that have been addressed but not in a way that promotes meaningful community sector involvement.

- Ask the groups to present their work to the plenary. After all the presentations, ask the participants if the priorities are the same. If there is consensus on the priorities, move on to the next session. If there are major differences of opinion, encourage the different groups to discuss them, and help them come to an agreement. Aim to have no more than three or four steps as a final priority list, and reassure participants that the other steps can also be addressed later.

Tips:

- * A facilitator should sit in with each working group to ensure that discussions stay on topic.
- * It is important for the facilitators to ensure that they know which steps have already been undertaken, and what the strengths and weaknesses are, so that they can provide input to the working groups.
- * Participants should also be encouraged to consult the Action Cards that are relevant to the steps they are examining. The relevant Action Cards are indicated in the Guidelines, Part B, Section 1.2.

4.1 Option (b): Pre-selection of priorities by facilitators / community sector leaders version

Equipment / materials required:

- Overhead projector, PowerPoint or flipchart to display the steps
- Copies of the relevant pages from the Guidelines, Part B, Section 1.2, for reference

Time required:

45 minutes

Description: Presentation of the key steps and priorities

- Present all the key steps outlined in the Guidelines, Part B, Section 1.2. Then underline three or four steps that have been selected as priorities, given the current context.
- Explain why these steps have been set as priorities. Invite participants to comment and discuss. If possible, when participants put forward concrete arguments, you should exercise some flexibility in terms of changing the list.

Tips:

- * Use this option only if there are clear and obvious priorities: for example, if the renewal of the national AIDS coordinating authority is underway or imminent, and urgent action is required on the part of the community sector.
- * Discuss these priorities with relevant community sector leaders before the workshop.

4.2 Assessing the current situation of the priority steps identified for improving community sector involvement in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes

Objective: To carry out an in-depth assessment of the steps identified as priorities during Session 4.1.

Equipment / materials required:

- Copies of the relevant pages from the Guidelines, Part B, Section 1.2 and of the relevant Action Cards for reference (one per person)
- Copies of relevant national-level documents (e.g., national strategic plan, terms of reference of the national AIDS coordinating authority, national M&E system)
- Flip-chart paper and markers for working groups

Time required:

2-3 hours

Description: Working groups

- Divide participants into groups, with one group per 'priority step' identified during Session 4.1.
- Have participants read the step carefully and spend some time discussing the current status of that step:
 - Has it been undertaken?
 - Does it facilitate community sector involvement in its current form?
 - What are the main problems identified?
- Use Step 1.2.1 (Guidelines, Part B) as an example to encourage participants to find out the following information:
 - Do terms of reference exist for the authority?
 - Do they cover all the issues outlined in the Guidelines?
 - Does the authority follow them?
 - Is there adequate financial support to ensure that they are put into practice?
 - Are the terms of reference readily available?
- Encourage participants to closely examine the Action Cards that are referenced under each step in the Guidelines and any other relevant documents that are available.
- Allow at least one hour (ideally up to two hours) for this working group discussion.
- Have working groups come together to report on their analysis of the main issues or problems. Allow ample time for the different groups to comment and provide their opinions on each others' work. Comments should be discussed and noted.
- Ask participants to identify whether there are obvious overlaps in the issues identified for different steps. Note these down, as it may be possible to address them simultaneously in the action plan.

Tips:

- * A facilitator should sit in with each working group to ensure that discussions stay on topic.
- * Working groups for this session must include a mix of sectors (if the participants are multi-sectoral) and capacities.
- * An alternative way of facilitating this session (particularly if there are only two or three priority steps) is to ask two or more working groups to look at each step. The discussions of each group may go in different directions and reveal different points, resulting in a more in-depth analysis than otherwise.
- * Obtain and duplicate in advance all relevant documents, as they form an important basis for this work.

4.3 Developing action plans to address the priority steps for improving community sector involvement in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes

Objective: To develop an action plan, including a timeline, addressing each of the steps identified as priorities during Session 4.1.

Equipment / materials required:

- Flip-chart paper and markers for working groups

Time required:

3-4 hours

Description: Working groups**Stage 1:**

- Ask participants to stay in the same groups as for Session 4.2, with one group per 'priority step' identified during Session 4.1.
- Have the participants discuss the feedback and comments provided by other groups during Session 4.2. Does the feedback change any of the issues raised? Does it make them more or less problematic?
- Ask participants to write a summary list of the main issues or problems related to the step they are discussing.
- For each problem or issue, ask participants to write down what the ideal situation should be (the 'objective'). Then lead a discussion on what would need to be done to reach this objective by asking these questions:
 - Are these solutions realistic?
 - What are the opportunities for raising and resolving these issues (e.g., a forthcoming meeting of the national AIDS coordinating authority, a forthcoming AIDS conference, or a forthcoming meeting of community sector networks)?
 - Is the community sector able to resolve them alone?

- Is the community sector able to resolve them in collaboration with other sectors, and are these other sectors willing to collaborate?
- What key steps are needed to move on resolving this problem or issue?
- Invite groups to consult the Action Cards that are referenced for each step in the Guidelines, and use these as a basis for developing their plan in detail.
- Allow groups at least 90 minutes for these discussions, before they report back to get more feedback from other groups.
- Have the working groups come together to report on their analysis. Allow ample time for the different groups to comment and provide their opinions on each others' work. Comments should be discussed and noted, as in Session 4.2.
- Ask participants to identify whether there are obvious overlaps in the proposed actions. If there are overlaps, the groups should consider whether a joint plan combining the proposed actions would be more efficient and effective.

Stage 2:

- Ask participants to return to their working groups to make a final plan containing the following:
 - A summary of the problem or issue
 - Objectives that express the ideal situation (resolution of the problem or issue)
 - The actions to be implemented, an indication of the time and the human resources that this plan will require, and any other cost indications
 - Who will be responsible for implementing the actions, or coordinating their implementation
- Allow groups at least one hour before they present their final plans to the plenary.

Tips:

- * A facilitator should sit in with each working group to ensure that the discussions stay on topic.
- * Working groups for this session must include a mix of sectors (if the participants are multi-sectoral) and capacities.
- * An alternative way of facilitating this session (particularly if there are only two or three priority steps) is to ask two or more working groups to look at each step. The discussions of each group may go in different directions and reveal different points, resulting in a more in-depth analysis than otherwise.
- * In deciding who will take the lead on implementing or coordinating the actions, facilitators should encourage participants to put forward people who already hold an official representative or coordinating position within the community sector. If this position does not exist, some of the activities in Section 6 may be necessary before concrete steps for specific national AIDS coordinating bodies or processes are planned.
- * The Action Cards provided in the Guidelines are referenced for each step. These cards outline in detail the key activities for each step and should therefore be used as a basis for planning.

5. Developing action plans for strengthening the community sector

This section describes how to strengthen the community sector – in terms of capacity, organisation, leadership, and overall positioning – so that it can be more effective in its involvement in national AIDS coordination bodies and processes. The sessions are based on the Action Cards found in Part C of the Guidelines. All of the activities described will be potentially helpful for implementing the plans that emerge from Section 4 in these Facilitation Notes. If the community sector is not yet well organised, coordinated or positioned, it may be useful to focus on these activities rather than on steps related to a specific coordinating body or process, as these activities provide a strong platform for better community involvement in all coordinating efforts. The sessions in this section follow naturally from Sessions 3.3 and 3.5.

Although the activities in this section concern the community sector specifically, the community sector should look for support from other sectors or stakeholders to implement these activities.

Facilitators should make it clear that participants are not expected to resolve the issues during this workshop: They are merely going to develop plans that will help the community sector resolve the issues in the short to medium term.

Facilitators should obtain in advance all documentation concerning progress to date (e.g., statutes from national civil society AIDS networks, examples of selection of community sector representatives, or current reports of national community sector activities), as these are necessary for this session.

Distribute copies of the Action Cards (Guidelines, Part C) if you haven't yet done so because they contain important information for these sessions.

5.1 Establishing priority areas for strengthening the community sector

Objective: To determine the priority areas to focus on in the action plans.

5.1 Option (a): Participatory version

Equipment / materials required:

- Copies of the Action Cards (one per person)
- Flip-chart paper and markers for working groups

Time required:

45 minutes

Description: Presentation and working groups

- Give a brief presentation of *either* all eleven of the Action Cards *or* the following list (which was also presented in sections 3.3 and 3.5):
 - *Representation:* The people involved should be selected by the community sector and should adequately represent all parts of the community sector. (Note: If you did Session 3.1, remind participants of

the results related to who and what makes up the community sector.)
[Action Cards 1, 2 and 3]

- *Skills/capacity*: The people involved require the skills necessary to work with other sectors and to participate in an effective way. [Action Cards 4 and 5]
 - *Acceptance by other sectors*: The community sector is accepted by other sectors as an important contributor to these processes. [Action Cards 7 and 10]
 - *Communication and consultation*: Mechanisms are required to share information and consult with the community sector as a whole on important issues. [Action Cards 8 and 9]
 - *Resources*: Time and resources are required for the community sector to participate in an effective way. [Action Card 6]
 - *Independence*: The community sector should be able to participate yet also maintain its independence, raising difficult or sensitive issues if necessary. [Action Card 11]
- Divide participants into three or four groups. Ask each group to look at either the Action Cards or the list above, and to discuss which items on the list emerge as urgent priorities. Invite them to select three or four priorities from the list. Working group discussions do not need to last longer than 15 minutes.
 - Invite each group to present its priorities. After all the presentations, ask the participants if the priorities are the same. If there is consensus on the priorities, move on to the next session. If there are major differences of opinion, encourage the different groups to discuss them, and help them come to an agreement. Aim to have no more than three or four steps as a final priority list, and reassure participants that the other steps can also be addressed later.

Tips:

- * If you did Sessions 3.3 and/or 3.5, these questions have already been discussed to some extent, so this session can be done more quickly.
- * A facilitator should sit in with each working group to ensure that discussions stay on topic.
- * It is important for the facilitators to ensure that they know what is already in place in terms of these questions, and what the strengths and weaknesses are, to be able to provide input to the discussions.
- * The list provided above is an alternative to listing all the Action Cards and is proposed as a simplified approach: the contents of some of the Action Cards are dealt with jointly under one heading.

5.1 Option (b): Pre-selection of priorities by facilitators / community sector leaders version

Equipment / materials required:

- Overhead projector, PowerPoint or flip chart to display the steps
- Copies of the Action Cards

Time required:

30 minutes

Description: Presentation of priorities

- Present all the items contained in the Action Cards. Then underline three or four areas that have been pre-selected as priorities, given the current context.
- Explain why these steps have been selected as priorities, and invite participants to comment and discuss. Note: If possible, when participants put forward concrete arguments, you should exercise some flexibility in terms of changing the list.

Tips:

- * Use this option only if there are clear and obvious priorities (e.g., if the revision of a national monitoring and evaluation system is underway or imminent, and urgent action is required on the part of the community sector).
- * Discuss these priorities with relevant community sector leaders before the workshop.

5.2 Assessing the current situation of priority areas for strengthening of the community sector

Equipment / materials required:

- Copies of the Action Cards (one per person)
- Copies of any relevant documentation on existing efforts for community sector organising or positioning
- Flip-chart paper and markers for working groups

Time required:

2 hours

Description: Working groups

- By way of an introduction, remind participants of the discussions held during Session 3.3 or 3.5 about the main points to be taken into account to strengthen community sector involvement in national AIDS coordination bodies and processes (3.3) or the strengths and weaknesses of the community sector regarding these points (3.5).
- Divide participants into groups, with one group per 'priority' identified during Session 5.1.

- Have participants read the relevant Action Card(s) carefully, and then spend some time discussing the current status.
 - What is already in place with respect to this area of work?
 - What has been achieved?
 - What are the main problems identified?
- Using Action Card 2 'Identifying roles, responsibilities and selection criteria for community sector representatives' as an example, participants might ask whether there is already agreement in the community sector on the roles and responsibilities of its representatives, whether there is donor support for this area of work, whether terms of reference have been developed and disseminated.
- Invite participants to closely examine any relevant documents that are available (again, using Action Card 1 as an example, participants should examine the terms of reference for community sector representatives if these exist).
- Allow at least one hour for this working group discussion.
- Ask working groups to come together to report on their analysis of the main issues or problems. Allow ample time for the different groups to comment and provide their opinions on each others' work. Comments should be discussed and noted.
- Ask participants to identify whether there are obvious overlaps in the issues identified for different steps. Note these down, as it may be possible to address them simultaneously in the action plan.

Tips:

- * A facilitator should sit in with each working group to ensure that discussions stay on topic.
- * Working groups for this session must include a mix of sectors (if the participants are multi-sectoral) and capacities.
- * An alternative way of facilitating this session (particularly if there are only two or three priority steps) is to ask two or more working groups to look at each step. The discussions of each group may go in different directions and reveal different points, resulting in a more in-depth analysis than otherwise.
- * Make sure to obtain and duplicate in advance all relevant documents because they form an important basis for this work.

5.3 Developing action plans to address the priority areas for strengthening community sector involvement in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes

Objective: To develop an action plan, including a timeline, addressing each of the priority areas identified during Session 5.1.

Equipment / materials required:

- Flip-chart paper and markers for working groups

Time required:

3-4 hours

Description: Working groups

Stage 1:

- Have participants stay in the same groups as for Session 5.2, with one group per 'priority area' identified during Session 5.1.
- Invite participants to discuss the feedback and comments provided by other groups during Session 5.2. Does the feedback change any of the issues raised? Does it make them more or less problematic?
- Ask participants to write a summary list of the main issues or problems related to the area they are discussing.
- For each problem or issue, have participants write down what the ideal situation should be (the 'objective') and then ask what would need to be done to reach this objective:
 - Are these solutions realistic?
 - What are the opportunities for raising and resolving these issues (e.g., a forthcoming meeting of a community sector network)?
 - Is the community sector able to resolve them alone?
 - Is the community sector able to resolve them in collaboration with other sectors, and are these other sectors willing to collaborate?
 - What key steps are needed to move on resolving this problem or issue?
- Allow groups at least 90 minutes for these discussions, before they report back to get more feedback from other groups.
- Have working groups come together to report on their analysis. Allow ample time for the different groups to comment and provide their opinions on each others' work. Comments should be discussed and noted, as in Session 5.2.
- Ask participants to identify whether there are obvious overlaps in the proposed actions. If there are overlaps, the groups should consider whether a joint plan combining the proposed actions would be more efficient and effective.

Stage 2:

- Have participants return to their working groups to make a final plan, containing the following:
 - A summary of the problem or issue

- Objectives that express the ideal situation (resolution of the problem or issue)
 - The actions to be implemented, an indication of the time and human resources that the plan will require, and any other cost indications
 - Who will be responsible for implementing the actions, or coordinating their implementation
- Allow groups at least one hour before the present their final plans to the plenary.

Tips:

- * A facilitator should sit in with each working group to ensure that discussions stay on topic.
- * Working groups for this session must include a mix of sectors (if the participants are multi-sectoral) and capacities.
- * An alternative way of facilitating this session (particularly if there are only two or three priority steps) is to ask two or more working groups to look at each step. The discussions of each group may go in different directions and reveal different points, resulting in a more in-depth analysis than otherwise.
- * In deciding who will take the lead on implementing or coordinating the actions, facilitators should encourage participants to put forward people who have the capacity to commit the necessary time and resources.

6. Presenting the action plans to other stakeholders

This section is required only if the facilitators decide not to include all sectors from the beginning, but to invite key stakeholders either from the community sector or from other sectors to attend the close of the workshop, with a view to stimulating their commitment to following up on the action plans.

6.1 Presenting the analysis of community sector involvement to key stakeholders

Objective: To have participants present some of the analysis carried out during the workshop to key stakeholders from the community sector and other sectors.

Equipment / materials required:

- Overhead projector, PowerPoint or flip chart to display the key points

Time required:

1 hour

Description: Presentation

- Ask participants to present the key points of their general analysis of the current status of the national AIDS coordinating bodies or processes and of community sector involvement. Presentations are based in particular on Sessions 2.4, 3.2, 3.4 and 3.5.
- Allow a short plenary discussion after the presentations.

Tips:

- * This session should be considered optional. Facilitators should discuss with participants, before the other stakeholders arrive, whether there is value in presenting these more general analyses. Facilitators and participants should also choose which of the sessions listed above to base their presentations on, depending on the message they want to transmit (e.g., 3.5 if they wish to discuss what is needed to build community sector involvement, or 2.4 if they wish to focus more on the current status of the AIDS coordinating bodies and processes in the country).

6.2 Presenting and discussing the action plans with key stakeholders

Objective: To have the participants present their action plans to key stakeholders from the community sector and other sectors.

Equipment / materials required:

- Overhead projector, PowerPoint or flip chart

Time required:

1-2 hours

Description: Presentations and working groups

- Ask representatives from each working group to present the key points of their plans indicating either specific steps to improve community sector involvement in a specific AIDS coordinating body or process (Section 4) or the steps to strengthening the community sector itself (Section 5).
- Ask participants to return to their action-planning groups, and invite the guests to join these groups to ask questions and discuss the plan in more detail.
- Don't ask for group feedback to the plenary, but invite guests to share their comments on the plans: their relevance, in particular their appropriateness. Encourage guests to state whether they intend to support the community sector involvement agenda, including financial and technical support.
- Close the workshop.

Tips:

- * An alternative, shorter way of facilitating this session, is to avoid breaking out into groups and move straight to comments and feedback in the plenary.
- * If the guests include likely providers of technical or financial support, facilitators should try to meet with them before this session to discuss what their plans are, and should inform them that this session will provide an opportunity to talk about their possible support.

7. Sample workshop programmes

This section includes two sample plans outlining alternative ways of combining sessions into a three-day workshop. The sole purpose of these samples is to help facilitators think through how to structure the sessions described above, and they should not be considered as being directive. As was mentioned previously, the facilitators may decide not to hold many of the sessions, and the programme should reflect that.

Sample 1: Context of weaker community sector capacity and coordination mechanisms

Session	Day one	Day two	Day three
Morning	<p>1.1 Opening, introductions, expectations</p> <p>2.1 (b) How is the response to HIV/AIDS organised in our country?</p> <p>2.2 Introducing the 'Three Ones' principles</p> <p>2.3 (a) How are the 'Three Ones' principles being applied in our country?</p> <p>(2 hours 45 minutes)</p>	<p>3.4 What are the main characteristics of meaningful community sector involvement in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes?</p> <p>5.1 (b) Establishing priority areas for strengthening the community sector</p> <p>5.2 Assessing the current situation of priority areas for strengthening the community sector</p> <p>(3 hours)</p>	<p>5.3 (continued)</p> <p>(3 hours)</p>
Afternoon	<p>3.1 (a) What is the community sector?</p> <p>3.2 (b) How is the community sector organised?</p> <p>3.3 Why is it important for the community sector to be involved in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes?</p> <p>(3 hours)</p>	<p>5.2 (continued)</p> <p>5.3 Developing action plans to address the priority areas for strengthening community sector involvement in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes</p> <p>(4 hours)</p>	<p>6.1 Presenting the analysis of community sector involvement to key stakeholders</p> <p>6.2 Presenting and discussing the action plans with key stakeholders</p> <p>(3 hours)</p>

Sample 2: Context of a well-developed community sector

Session	Day one	Day two	Day three
Morning	<p>1.1 Opening, Introductions, expectations</p> <p>2.3 (b) How are the 'Three Ones' principles are being applied in our country?</p> <p>2.4 What are the strengths and weaknesses of the national AIDS coordinating bodies or processes in our country? (3 hours 30 minutes)</p>	<p>5.1 (b) Establishing priority areas for strengthening the community sector</p> <p>5.3 Developing action plans to address the priority areas for strengthening community sector involvement in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes (3 hours 30 minutes)</p>	<p>4.3 Developing action plans to address the priority steps for improving community sector involvement in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes (3 hours 30 minutes)</p>
Afternoon	<p>3.1 (a) What is the community sector?</p> <p>3.2 (b) How is the community sector organised?</p> <p>3.4 What are the main characteristics of meaningful community sector involvement in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes?</p> <p>3.5 What are the strengths and weaknesses of current community sector involvement in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes? (3 hours)</p>	<p>4.1 Assessing the current status of a specific national AIDS coordinating body or process</p> <p>4.2 Assessing the current situation of priority areas identified for improving community sector involvement in national AIDS coordinating bodies and processes (3 hours 30 minutes)</p>	<p>6.2 Presenting and discussing the action plans with key stakeholders (2 hours)</p>




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