Community Organizing and Advocacy

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This chapter provides three activities and one assessment for training community health workers (CHWs) in conducting community organizing. Throughout history, people excluded from power and decision-making have come together and organized to assert their needs. Organizing campaigns have achieved significant improvements in people's lives. Because CHWs have a special relationship with communities, they are often ideally situated to facilitate community organizing efforts.

This chapter corresponds to, and is meant to be used with, Chapter 23, “Community Organizing and Advocacy,” from Foundations for Community Health Workers, Second Edition.
CHAPTER AT A GLANCE

Community Organizing and Advocacy

Community organizing is a rich and time-intensive activity that requires genuine relationships with the community involved. These activities are a brief introduction to key aspects of community organizing and are not meant to reflect the entirety of this complex and rewarding process.

The three activities in this chapter are linked and sequential and provide learners with an opportunity to develop components of a mini community organizing effort to improve an aspect of their CHW training program or process. In this sense, they learn about concepts and skills for community organizing by applying them to their own community of people engaged in training to become CHWs (or to advance their careers as CHWs).

- Activity 23.1 starts by defining community organizing and then supports learners to use a consensus decision-making model to identify key challenges or concerns that affect their CHW training program.
- Activity 23.2 uses a strategy chart to identify goals, resources, allies, targets, and actions for the community organizing project.
- Activity 23.3 asks learners to apply the Community Action Model (CAM) to analyze their progress so far and to develop a plan for advocating for changes to the CHW training program, working to ensure that changes are maintained over time.

Although we have designed these activities to focus on developing a mini campaign to change or improve one aspect of their own CHW training, these activities could also be adapted to address different issues and communities.

**OPTION** Trainers may wish to determine in advance how applied to make these training activities. If you don't wish learners to identify and advocate for proposals to strengthen the CHW training program you work with, you could adapt these activities to address another topic, such as a current public health concern in the county or state where you work. You could also choose a focus for these activities in advance, such as specific concerns and proposals related to the CHW training curriculum. This can prepare CHWs for their work in the field, since sometimes the topic or area of concern for community organizing efforts has often already been defined by community leaders, a local health department, funder, or policy makers.

This guide is meant to be used when teaching/training Chapter 23 of *Foundations for Community Health Workers, Second Edition*. We have included step-by-step activities for key sections, not the entire chapter. We recommend reading Chapter 23 in *Foundations*, as the textbook provides more material about community organizing, as well as a deeper explanation of concepts related to activities in this guide.
### CHAPTER AT A GLANCE (continued)

Community Organizing and Advocacy

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<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
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| **ACTIVITY 23.1: CONSENSUS DECISION-MAKING** *(60–120 MINUTES)* | ▶ Define and discuss the process of community organizing.  
▶ Discuss the process of consensus building.  
▶ Identify how consensus building relates to community organizing.  
▶ Practice trying to reach consensus among the large group of learners. |
| This activity engages learners in a practice of group consensus building that highlights shared beliefs and provides opportunities to identify and discuss differences in cultural norms, beliefs, and values. Small and large group activity and discussion Includes:  
● Learner Handout 23.1 A: Small Group Questions: Concerns of CHW Leaders | |

| ACTIVITY 23.2: CREATING A COMMUNITY ORGANIZING STRATEGY *(60–75 MINUTES)* | ▶ Identify steps to developing a strategy for community organizing.  
▶ Develop a common goal for community organizing based on the issue or concern identified in Activity 23.1.  
▶ Identify organizational resources, allies and opponents, targets, and tactics for the proposed plan to improve an aspect of the CHW training program. |
| This activity provides learners with the opportunity to understand how to map out a community organizing strategy. Small group activity Includes:  
● Learner Handout 23.2 A: Strategy Chart | |

| ACTIVITY 23.3: APPLYING THE COMMUNITY ACTION MODEL (CAM) *(60–90 MINUTES)* | ▶ Define the five steps of the CAM.  
▶ Apply issues of feasibility and sustainability to a community organizing campaign.  
▶ Plan a community organizing project to implement within the community of CHW learners. |
| This activity provides learners with the opportunity to analyze the work they did in Activities 23.1 and 23.2 through the framework of the CAM. Large group brainstorm Includes:  
● Learner Handout 23.3 A: Community Organizing Implementation Plan | |

<table>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ASSESSMENT 23.1: COMMUNITY ORGANIZING CAMPAIGNS</strong></td>
<td>▶ Answer key</td>
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<td>This assessment asks learners to research an organization in their community (or a state or national organization, if there are no local ones) and describe a community organizing campaign that the organization is conducting.</td>
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ACTIVITY 23.1: Consensus Decision-Making . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 1134
ACTIVITY 23.2: Creating a Community Organizing Strategy . . . . . . . . . . 1142
ACTIVITY 23.3: Applying the Community Action Model (CAM) . . . . . . . . . 1148
Activity 23.1

Consensus Decision–Making

This activity engages learners in defining community organizing and the process of consensus decision-making. Learners will brainstorm a list of challenges or concerns related to their CHW training experience and will use a consensus decision-making model to see if they can reach consensus on a priority concern. They will use the issue or concern they select to guide Activities 23.2 and 23.3 and develop a small-scale community organizing plan to improve an aspect of the CHW training program that you work for or volunteer with.

The practice of group consensus building highlights shared beliefs and provides opportunities to identify and discuss differences in cultural norms, beliefs, and values. Consensus building is a valuable approach to community organizing and can help community members identify and prioritize shared values, concerns, and possible solutions.

1 Introduction

Frame this activity as an opportunity for learners to define and discuss the value of community organizing, and the role that CHWs may take. Learners will define and analyze the concept of consensus decision-making and use a consensus decision-making process to select one of several ideas for how to improve the CHW training program in a way that provides meaningful support to learners.

2 Large Group Discussion: Defining Community Organizing

Invite learners to share their understanding about community organizing, based on their reading from Chapter 23 and their own experience, by asking questions such as these:

- What is community organizing?
  
  Please refer to Chapter 23 for a definition. You may wish to stress that community organizing allows the community to advocate on their own behalf, is
Consensus Decision–Making (continued)

headed by grassroots leaders, helps shift power into the hands of the community, and builds skills of residents.

- Why is community organizing important for the communities you may serve? What can community organizing achieve?

  Communities that have been excluded from power and decision-making can come together and organize for social change and to create a better life for themselves and their children. It is one of most effective strategies for creating lasting social changes that will improve the lives and health status of large groups of people, including changes to health–related policies that determine access to key resources such as food, housing, employment, civil rights, education, and health care.

- What are some community organizing/social change movements that you know of?

  Learners may name local movements, or larger, national movements such as civil rights movements, Black Lives Matter, local educational or housing campaigns, global warming campaigns, and so on. You may wish to give examples of some recent, local movements that might affect learners and their communities.

- Has anyone observed or participated in a community organizing campaign? What was your experience?

- Are all community organizing campaigns successful at first?

  For example, some campaigns can last for years and may revise their goals and action along the way through conversations with key stakeholders or unsuccessful first attempts at change.

- What role can CHWs play in community organizing?

  Because CHWs have a special relationship with communities, they are often ideally situated to facilitate community organizing efforts. CHWs can help build alliances and ensure inclusiveness in the process.

  You may wish to emphasize here that community organizing should be led by and mainly conducted by the community. The key role of CHWs should be to facilitate and support the leadership and decision–making of the communities that stand to be most affected by the outcome of the campaign or project.

You may wish to draw comparisons between community organizing and the skill of action planning that learners have also been studying (see Chapter 10, “Care Management”). In community organizing, CHWs support community members to establish a goal and to develop a plan of actions or tactics to implement to meet their goal. In action planning, CHWs support an individual client—or a family—to set a health goal and to identify and implement a set of actions to meet their goal. Both are client– or community–centered, with the CHW playing a facilitating role that supports the autonomy and empowerment of the client or community.
Consensus Decision-Making (continued)

3 Defining Consensus

Invite learners to define the term *consensus decision-making*, and then engage them in a brief discussion about the importance of consensus, asking questions such as these:

- How do you define consensus and the process of consensus decision-making?
  Refer to the definition provided in Chapter 23 or another source of your choice. Emphasize that consensus is a process that involves all members of a group or community in making a common decision. It strives to achieve a decision that everyone can support or accept. A key difference from decisions made by majority vote is that consensus values the opinions of a minority and provides opportunities for group members to raise questions or concerns about a proposed decision.

- Does consensus mean everyone believes exactly the same thing? How is it different?

- What is the value of consensus decision-making to a community organizing effort? What are the benefits to the community?
  A consensus process values the voice and ideas of all community members. It invites everyone to share their ideas, and their concerns, and ensures that minority opinions are considered. It encourages a group or community to agree to support a common decision about the goal, strategies, or process of a community organizing campaign.

- What can happen if a group has not built consensus? What are the risks?
  Building consensus takes time and commitment. It can take much longer to reach agreement. It can be held up by just one person who strongly disagrees with the rest of the group. Trying to reach consensus poses risks as well as benefits to building a positive experience of community.
  Share some examples from your own experiences of times when consensus was reached or times when there was no consensus. What happened?

4 Large Group Discussion: A Model for Consensus Decision-Making

Take time to introduce and explain the Thumbs Up framework for consensus decision-making, explaining that learners will use this model to select an issue for their mini community organizing effort. Emphasize that the topic they select will serve as the basis for developing a proposal for how to improve the CHW training program, so they should think about issues that would be possible to address within a few months (or the remaining length of their training).

Explain that there are many different models for consensus decision-making. One fairly easy process to use with a small group is the Thumbs Up model. When it is time for the group to vote or make a decision about a particular proposal—such as the issue for a
community organizing effort—all participants are asked to express their opinion by raising a hand in one of the following three ways:

- **Thumbs up**: This signifies support for the proposal. The person who places their thumb up is ready to move forward with the proposed idea or decision.

- **Thumbs down**: This signifies a strong objection or concern about the proposed idea or decision. It means that the person’s concerns are so strong that they are prepared to block the decision. When someone puts their thumb down, this is a time for the group to pause, listen to, and discuss the person’s concern. By paying attention to strong concerns or opposition, the group is provided with an opportunity to further discuss or refine the original proposal or to explore other options.

- **Thumbs sideways**: This signifies that the person is not 100 percent in support of the proposal, but they can put aside their concerns and will support the group’s decision.

Consensus is reached when all of the group members express their opinion with either a thumbs up or thumbs sideways vote and no member displays a thumbs down. The idea behind consensus is not to arrive at a point where everyone enthusiastically (thumbs up) agrees to a specific proposal, but to allow the group to address key concerns and provide their common consent or agreement to move forward with an idea or action.

Leave space for learners to ask questions about the Thumbs Up model and to be ready to try it on and attempt to reach consensus.

### 5 Small Group Activity: Brainstorming Challenges and Barriers for CHW Learners

Clarify that for the community organizing effort learners will conduct in the next two activities, they will address the interests of their own community as part of a CHW training program. The first step is to work in small groups and to brainstorm a list of concerns, challenges, or barriers that they face in the process of training to become CHWs. Remind learners that later on they will apply the Thumbs Up consensus model to select one of these issues or challenges to serve as the basis of a mini community organizing campaign. Remind learners that they want to select a challenge or concern that they may be able to do something about in the course of the next several months—something that could result in a meaningful change or improvement to the CHW training experience for the current training group as well as for future groups.

Assign learners to work in small groups of three to five, and distribute to each group the small group discussion questions, five pieces of blank paper, and some markers. Learners will have 5 to 10 minutes to brainstorm a list of concerns in response to the questions presented in the handout.

Circulate among small groups to answer questions and clarify their task, as needed. Call time after 5 to 10 minutes, or when you think that small groups have made sufficient
Consensus Decision–Making (continued)

progress in generating a good list of ideas. Ask each group to select five priority concerns from the list that they brainstormed (this does not have to be through a formal consensus process) and to write in large print one idea on each of the five pieces of blank paper using the markers provided.

6 Large Group Activity: Grouping Ideas

Ask for one volunteer from each small group to tape the sheets of paper representing their concerns on a wall or board in the training room. Once all the papers have been taped up on the wall, ask all learners to stand in front of the wall. Invite them to identify pieces of paper with ideas that could be moved or grouped together. As learners offer suggestions for how the pieces of paper should be grouped, move the pieces of paper, helping to further organize them into key themes, trends, and similar ideas. These may include, for example, concerns related to the CHW curriculum, support for study skills, social or emotional support, collaboration with other community groups or organizations, internship placements, or program costs.

Encourage learners to explain why they believe certain pieces of paper should be grouped together, and ask learners to speak up if they disagree. This is an important aspect of consensus building and communication in which learners can clarify beliefs, ideas, and perspectives.

Once all the papers have been moved to where learners think they best belong and learners are in general agreement about this, ask them to name the themes or categories of the groups they have created. Again, encourage active participation from learners as they collectively name some of the themes reflected on the wall. Identify places where there are discordant opinions or themes, and identify if unresolved questions need to be answered. Continue this process until there is a shared understanding among the group members.

Facilitate a discussion about the activity, asking questions such as the following:

- What do you notice about the challenges and concerns we came up with as a group?
- What seem to be the most pressing issues for our group? How do you know?
- What, if anything, is missing from the wall?

7 Making a Decision by Consensus

Explain that it is time for learners to use the Thumbs Up consensus model to select one concern or challenge to address in their community organizing project. Please note that, given the time constraints of this training, this is an abbreviated consensus process: not every proposed idea or concern will be addressed. Start by asking each learner to come up to the board and to place one check mark (using chalk or markers) next to their top concern. Count the number of check marks that each concern or topic received to identify the two issues that received the most votes. The group will use a Thumbs Up consensus
Consensus Decision-Making (continued)

decision-making process to determine which of these issues they wish to select as the focus of their organizing effort.

**OPTION** Expand the time allocated to this activity as necessary to support more extensive practice with consensus decision-making.

**OPTION** You may wish to invite a learner to co-facilitate the Thumbs Up decision process with you, or on their own, with you providing guidance along the way.

Start with one of the top two concerns. Ask all learners to indicate their position for each issue by presenting either a thumbs up, sideways, or down. Note how many learners express a thumbs sideways or down position. Facilitate discussion by asking someone who voted thumbs up to explain why they support selecting this concern to be the focus of the community organizing effort. Next, ask anyone with a thumbs down to explain their concern about or opposition to selecting this issue.

Through discussion, and by listening to the voices of those who have reservations or who are in opposition, the group of learners may chose to modify the definition or write-up of the selected concern or issue. As the discussion progresses, the facilitator may also ask the group to vote again to see if their positions have shifted (Do more people now support the proposal with a thumbs up vote? Are there still thumbs down votes?).

8 Large Group Discussion: What If We Don’t Agree?

During the discussion, the group may identify areas of disagreement that are not easily resolved. For example, one learner may feel very personally invested in a particular issue whether or not that feeling is shared by the group, or they may have a different interpretation than others. This learner may also oppose a proposal that is supported by the rest of the group. If this happens, start by asking the larger group (the majority) to listen closely to the concerns raised by the individual (the minority). You may also ask the person or small group that opposes a particular proposal if it could be modified in a way that they could support in order to move from a thumbs down to at least a thumbs sideways position. Sometimes smaller changes or revisions to a proposal are all that are required for people to be able to support them. Or, you may need to ask the learner if they are willing to set that issue aside or let it go, as it becomes clear that it is not the most important issue for the group as a whole.

The disagreements that arise during discussion provide a valuable learning opportunity in the moment. Allow the group space and time to respectfully disagree with one another and to share their ideas and feelings, while using your role as a facilitator to keep coming back to the needs of the group as a whole.

There are many issues for a community and each deserves a community organizing campaign, but for a campaign to be successful, it needs to focus on one specific issue. This doesn’t diminish the value of the other issues. It’s important to recognize that a group
Consensus Decision–Making (continued)

cannot focus on all issues at the same time but must determine what is the top priority for the whole group in this moment.

Continue discussion to see if a consensus decision can be reached in which all learners select a topic or concern by voting thumbs up or sideways, and no learner chooses to block or oppose this decision by voting thumbs down.

If the group is unable to reach a consensus decision in the time that you have to complete this activity, you may wish to revisit the process at a future date, or invite learners to select a different method for selecting the focus of their community organizing campaign, such as a majority vote. No matter what decision is made, and what process is used to reach the decision, this activity still provides an opportunity for learners to explore a model for consensus decision-making.

Large Group Debrief
Facilitate discussion among the large group by asking questions such as these:

⦁ What did you learn from participating in this activity?
⦁ How was the topic or concern that the group selected shaped or influenced by the consensus decision–making process?
⦁ What was most challenging about the process of trying to achieve consensus?
⦁ What value do you see in using a consensus decision–making model?

Reinforcement
As you close out the discussion, reinforce key points such as the following:

⦁ A consensus process isn’t always used to guide community organizing efforts, but working to build consensus can be important to a community organizing process, and it can serve as a way for a group to establish shared vision, values, and goals. Without consensus, organizing efforts can be diffuse, confused, and ineffective.

⦁ Building consensus means allowing space for everyone’s opinions to be expressed while highlighting trends and common ground.

⦁ If a group does not have consensus, members of that group may be working out of step or even in conflict with the goals of the group.

⦁ Activities such as grouping ideas by common theme can help to identify the most pressing issues facing a community, providing opportunities for a group of people to reach consensus about their shared interests and needs and to clarify different values and beliefs.

⦁ This activity can also be used in many different settings, including to develop research questions, to summarize information, or to evaluate a project.
Learner Handout 23.1 A: Small Group Questions: Concerns of CHW Learners

Activity 23.1

Your task is to brainstorm a list of challenges and concerns that you face in the CHW training process or program. Please remember that, ultimately, you will be asked to select one of these concerns to serve as the focus for a scaled-down community organizing effort. Following are some things to keep in mind during your discussion:

- Issues and concerns should be those that are important for your success, as well as things that you may be able to change or revise in the next three to six months.
- The textbook encourages communities who are seeking to affect change to keep issues of power and lack of power in mind and to share ideas with policy makers and institutions that they seek to change in a way that encourages them to listen and take action.
- You are sharing these concerns with one or more trainers who may be in a position to support or block your final proposal for making changes to the CHW training program. Be thoughtful not only about your concerns and issues, but also about the language you use to express them to your audience.
- As you express your concerns, you may wish to remember the guidelines for providing constructive feedback in order to increase the chances that your ideas will be truly heard, respected, and considered.

As you brainstorm, please consider the following questions:

1. What challenges or obstacles have you faced during the process of this CHW training?

2. What aspects of this program would you like to see changed or revised in order to improve the quality of CHW training?

3. What other concerns or barriers do you and your fellow learners face in your training?
Activity 23.2

Creating a Community Organizing Initiative

This activity provides learners with the opportunity to analyze and discuss how to map out a community organizing initiative. Learners continue their work from Activity 23.1, using the issue or concern identified to develop common goals and create a strategy plan for implementation.

1 Introduction

Frame this activity as an opportunity for learners to continue their work from Activity 23.1; they will use the issue or concern they identified and take the next steps to map out a strategy for conducting a small scale community organizing project. This activity allows learners to start with a clear and focused issue and strategize potential steps to create change in their own community.

Remind learners that this is an opportunity to advocate for some type of realistic and meaningful change or new service to benefit CHWs in training. Explain that community organizing is a complex activity that requires time and resources to conduct properly.

Briefly review Activity 23.1 by asking questions such as these:

- Do you have any further thoughts or questions about the topic you chose?
- Do you have any further thoughts or questions about the process of making a decision based on consensus?

OPTION If learners did not reach consensus and make a decision during Activity 23.1, you may wish to ask if they would like to try the Thumbs Up model process again. This should last no longer than 10 minutes.
Creating a Community Organizing Initiative (continued)

OPTION If you did not use Activity 23.1, or if learners do not wish to retry consensus, use an issue you selected ahead of time that relates to the most pressing needs of the community of CHW learners. One example of a possible issue is the content of the CHW training curriculum. Learners could provide input about topics, skills, or specific curricula resources—such as videos, articles, or websites—that they would like the CHW training program to consider incorporating. Other examples of possible topics include the stress of attending a training program while working full time, the lack of a local CHW network for ongoing advocacy and peer support, the challenge of keeping up with readings and assignments, the lack of certain types of internship opportunities, or the cost of the training sessions and materials.

2 Using a Strategy Chart

Explain that for community organizing to be effective, it must be well-planned and thought out. Explain that you will be reviewing and working with a strategy chart developed by the Midwest Academy, one of the top training centers for community organizing and social justice in the US. Distribute the handout with the strategy chart and allow learners a few minutes to review it. Note that this chart is designed for larger community organizing campaigns, but it can also be used with a small-scale initiative such as the topic that has been selected for this training activity.

You may wish to draw a parallel between a strategy map for community work and an action plan that learners have used for individual client work (see Chapter 10). For example, both include goals, steps to take to achieve goals, and challenges and resources.

Review the strategy map with learners, inviting questions, and making sure they understand it. You may wish to solicit examples from learners for each column. If necessary, you may wish to pose a few questions such as these:

- What is the difference between a short-term and long-term goal? What are some examples of each?
- Why may it be important to identify both potential allies and opponents of a community organizing campaign?
- What are some examples of possible targets for a community organizing campaign?

3 Large Group Discussion: Developing Goals

Explain that the first step for learners is to translate the challenge or concern that they identified in Activity 23.1 into a proposal for improving the CHW training program.

Write the issue or concern on the board (such as “A lack of training about maternal and child health issues”). Ask learners to translate the problem or concern statement into a
Creating a Community Organizing Initiative (continued)

positive statement about the type of change that they hope to achieve (such as “The CHW training program provides training on maternal and child health topics.”).

Post the flip-chart paper titled Goals on the wall or board. Explain that this is the first column of the strategy chart that they will fill in as a large group before breaking into small groups to complete the remaining four columns of the strategy chart. Ask learners to brainstorm a series of goals or desired outcomes related to their stated community organizing proposal. As learners share their ideas, write them down on the flip-chart paper. If learners get stuck when considering possible goals, or they mainly suggest actions instead of goals, pose additional questions designed to help them think more broadly about the possible impacts of their proposal.

⦁ How may additional training prepare CHWs to promote maternal and child health?
⦁ How may additional training benefit the clients and communities that CHWs work with?
⦁ How may working to improve the quality of the CHW training program benefit future learners, trainers, and employer partners?

For example, learners might suggest inviting someone from the local women’s clinic to speak to the class, which is an action. A goal might be, for example, to prepare learners to work as CHWs in maternal and child health agencies.

Finally, ask learners to distinguish between short-term and long-term goals or outcomes.

4 Small Group Activity

Explain to learners that their next task will be to identify key strategic elements for their community organizing effort. Remind them to keep their stated goals in mind. For example, as they talk about targets for their community organizing project, consider the types of organizations and people that seem most likely to help them achieve their stated goals for improving the CHW training program.

Divide learners into four groups, and provide each group with markers and a piece of flip-chart paper with one of the remaining four strategy chart categories written at the top: Organizational Resources; Constituents, Allies, Opponents; Targets; and Tactics. Ask learners to identify one person in their group who will record ideas on the paper and one who will present it to the large group.

Encourage learners to do their best to identify specific examples for each category or question. Note that for the second column—Constituents, Allies, Opponents—the constituents are the learners in this CHW training program. If learners get stuck or have questions, ask them to raise their hands for assistance.
Creating a Community Organizing Initiative (continued)

**TIP** Remember to stick to the role of facilitator here. Ask questions, but let the learners identify and develop all of the key ideas for their community organizing effort. Try not to steer or influence learners by injecting your own ideas for the types of changes that you would like to make to the CHW training program.

Address any questions learners may have, and give groups 10 to 12 minutes to complete the assignment. Circulate among small groups during the activity to offer any additional guidance, as necessary, and to note issues for the large group debrief.

### 5 Large Group Presentation and Debrief

Starting with the Organizational Resources, ask each of the four groups to post their paper on the board or wall in the order of the strategy chart and to report their ideas. Remind learners that this exercise was not about crafting the perfect community organizing campaign, but about understanding what goes into the steps needed to plan a campaign.

**TIP** As a trainer who works for the CHW training program, do your best to demonstrate Big Eyes, Big Ears, and a small mouth while learners report and discuss their ideas. You may wish to acknowledge that some of the ideas shared by learners for this community organizing initiative have the potential to strengthen the training program and increase support for present and future learners.

Allow time for questions and discussion after each group presents their ideas. If desired, groups may change or add to their answers based on the discussion. By the end of this activity, learners should have completed at least an initial draft of their strategy chart including a list of possible tactics or actions to take.

Please save the flip-chart papers with the strategy chart (or take a photograph of it) if you plan to use it for Activity 23.3. Explain to learners that they will be using the strategy map in the next activity to help guide their plan for implementing their community organizing project.

If learners have not already covered these topics in their discussion, you may wish to pose questions such as the following:

- Was it easy coming up with ideas for each category? Why or why not?
- Why is it important to map out your strategy before starting a campaign?
- Does creating a strategy map guarantee that a campaign will be successful? Why or why not?
- How confident would you be engaging with stakeholders and people who have power in the community (including, potentially, your teachers/trainers and the learning institution)?
Creating a Community Organizing Initiative (continued)

- What challenges might you anticipate to working with a community to develop a strategy chart?
- What roles might a CHW have in this process?

6 Reinforcement and Next Steps

This is an opportunity to reinforce key aspects of community organizing, drawing on content from Chapter 23, the ideas shared by learners, and your own resources. Key messages to reinforce may include the following:

- Developing a strategy and mapping out the steps to conducting a community organizing campaign can help ensure that it is achievable and sustainable.
- Community organizing has the potential to create meaningful improvement in people’s lives.
- Community organizing identifies and supports leadership from within the community and increases community members’ capacity to work together and take effective action for social change. In this way, the balance of power and resources shifts toward the community.
- Some roles for CHWs in community organizing might be to listen to the community, help recruit participants, provide trainings, and so on. CHWs should not take on the lead role, make key decisions, or do most of the work.
- Community organizing is similar to creating an action plan with individual clients. For example, both include goals, steps to take to achieve goals, and challenges and resources.
Learner Handout 23.2 A: Strategy Chart

**Activity 23.2**

**Issue:**

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<th>GOALS</th>
<th>ORGANIZATIONAL RESOURCES</th>
<th>CONSTITUENTS, ALLIES, OPPONENTS</th>
<th>TARGETS</th>
<th>TACTICS</th>
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| Goals are the desired outcomes for the campaign or initiative. | Organizational resources include money, number of staff, facilities, reputation, reach, and so on. Organizations can be strengthened by increasing experience with organizing, building membership, raising money, and so on. Internal problems might be lack of experience, poor communication, problematic ties with the community, and so on. | Constituents are the people and community who will be most affected by the campaign. Allies are people and groups who care about the issue and can help the campaign. Opponents are people or groups who are barriers to your campaign. | A target is always a person. It is never an institution or an elected body. Targets are people who have the power to give you what you want. | Tactics are the actions taken in a campaign and they should be:  
• Flexible and creative  
• Directed at a specific target  
• Make sense to the community |

1. List the long-term goal(s) of your campaign or initiative.  
2. State the intermediate goals for this campaign or initiative. What constitutes victory?  
3. What short-term or partial victories can you win as steps toward your long-term goal?  

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1. List the resources that your organization brings to the campaign.  
2. List the specific ways in which you want your organization to be strengthened by this campaign.  
3. List internal problems that have to be considered if the campaign is to succeed.  

1. List your primary targets.  
2. List your secondary targets. These are people who have power over the people with the power to give you what you want.  
3. List your opponents.  

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This activity provides learners with the opportunity to analyze the work they did in Activities 23.1 and 23.2 through the framework of the Community Action Model (CAM). Learners will use the CAM to discuss and identity possible last steps for putting into action and maintaining their mini community organizing issue. This activity is designed to follow and build upon Activities 23.1 and 23.2.

This activity can be done as either an exercise about what the CHWs could do if they were to take an action, or as a planning session for a small–scale community organizing project to support learners and to improve an aspect of the CHW training program. To the extent possible, we encourage you to support learners to select actions that could actually be implemented—without many or any new resources—in the next few months or by the end of the training. Again, this could include ideas such as, for example, structured study groups, increased access to a library or computers, a peer–led support group, modifications to the training curricula, better recruitment for the CHW program, and so on.

**Introduction**

Frame this activity as an opportunity to continue the work done in Activities 23.1 and 23.2 and for learners to plan and potentially implement a community organizing project designed to improve the CHW training program. Explain that learners will first review the issue previously selected and the strategy chart and then apply them to the steps of the CAM. Learners will then work together to discuss the final steps of the CAM.

Take time to review the work and decisions that learners made in Activities 23.1 and 23.2. If you saved the flip–chart pages from Activity 23.2, you can repost...
Applying the Community Action Model (CAM) (continued)

them (or project the photograph) and refer to those now. Facilitate a brief discussion by posing questions such as these:

⦁ What is the issue or challenge that the group selected as a focus for community organizing during the consensus decision-making process?

⦁ What were some of the goals brainstormed for the community action project?

⦁ Who were some potential allies?

⦁ What tactics did the group identify as a way to achieve their stated goals?

2 Review the CAM

Post or project the five-step CAM on the board, or have learners look at the model in their textbooks. Ask for a volunteer (or volunteers) to read the five steps, and ask learners to identify which steps they have already taken on their way to advocating for an improvement to the CHW training program. The five steps are as follows:

⦁ Step 1: Identify the Problem

⦁ Step 2: Assess the Problem/Community Diagnosis

⦁ Step 3: Analyze Findings

⦁ Step 4: Identify and Implement an Advocacy Action

⦁ Step 5: Maintain Actions and Results

Learners should note that they completed “Step 1: Identify the Problem,” during Activity 23.1. Remind learners that the activities in this chapter are designed to plan and conduct a mini community organizing project based on the needs of the community of learners in this training program. You may wish to ask learners how addressing Step 1 of the CAM might be different if, as a CHW, they were working on a large-scale community organizing campaign in a community they were not familiar with.

Step 2: Assess the Problem/Community Diagnosis, and Step 3: Analyze Findings were completed, on a small scale, during the brainstorming process in Activity 23.1; they were expanded upon in Activity 23.2 when learners discussed the strategy map. Again, remind learners that this is a very shortened version of the CAM steps, and that a full-scale community organizing campaign is a time-intensive and rewarding activity that requires true collaboration with and participation of all of the community involved.
Applying the Community Action Model (CAM)  (continued)

**OPTION** If you completed Chapter 22, “Community Diagnosis,” of this Training Guide, you may wish to facilitate a brief review and discussion of that process, asking questions such as these:

- What does it mean for a community diagnosis to be strength-based? What does it mean to be community-driven?
- What are some of the tools you can use to conduct research on a community diagnosis topic?
  
  Some answers include, for example, Internet research, surveys, focus groups, community mapping, and stakeholder interviews.
- What are some benefits of working with a community you know quite well (such as this community of CHW learners) when conducting community diagnosis? What are some potential issues to be aware of?

**3 CAM Step 4: Identify and Implement an Advocacy Action**

Explain to learners that together they will take Step 4 of the CAM by selecting an action or activity to implement in order to reach their stated goal. Refer to the flip-chart papers or photograph from Activity 23.2 and review the fifth column, the list of tactics or actions learners developed. Note that although the Midwest Academy uses the term tactic, the CAM uses the term action to describe the activities that will take place in the community organizing project.

Explain that you will use a grid to analyze the list of potential actions. Draw or post the Impact/Feasibility grid (which you will see momentarily) on the board or wall, leaving the inside squares blank. Explain that the purpose of this activity is to analyze each proposed action—based on available knowledge and best guesses—in terms of its feasibility (or how possible or easy it will be to implement) and impact (meaning both the size or significance of the impact on learners and the percentage of the group that will benefit from the impact).

For example, doing door-to-door outreach and education to all the houses in a neighborhood may have a high impact in increasing awareness about an issue, but low feasibility, since it requires significant time and people power. On the other hand, posting educational messages on social media sites can have high feasibility, since it is easy to do, but it may have a low impact on or benefit to the group.
**Applying the Community Action Model (CAM)**  
*(continued)*

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<th>LOW FEASIBILITY</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>HIGH IMPACT</strong></td>
<td>(High impact, low feasibility)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LOW IMPACT</strong></td>
<td>(Low impact, low feasibility)</td>
<td>(Low impact, high feasibility)</td>
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Ask for a volunteer to help facilitate the next steps of this activity and for learners to select an action from the fifth column of the strategy chart to start with. The learner facilitator will then ask the group where they think the action belongs in the grid, using prompting questions as necessary, such as these:

- Will this action be easy (feasible) for us to implement?
- Will this action have a positive effect on most of the group of people who are training to become CHWs?
- How significant will this effect be for our group?

When learners can agree or mostly agree, the facilitator can write the action down where it belongs in the feasibility and impact grid. Proceed to discuss each of the proposed actions and to place them where they best belong in the grid.

Finally, focus discussion only on the action(s) that the group has placed in the upper right square of high impact and high feasibility. These will be the best options for a community organizing project that the group can successfully implement.

If there is more than one action in this square, the group can select a single action to focus on. Learners may choose to do this using the Thumbs Up consensus model again, or with a simple majority vote.

**Cam Step 4, Continued: Implementation**

Ask for a new volunteer to take over the role of facilitator. Explain that their task is to get the large group of learners to brainstorm realistic ideas for how to implement the action that they just selected, keeping in mind the first four columns of the strategy map developed in Activity 23.2 (Goals; Organizational Resources; Constituents, Allies, Opponents; and Targets). If, for example, learners decided that their action was to advocate for a support group, mentorship program, or scholarship fund, the facilitator may pose questions such as these:

- What needs to happen for our action to be implemented?
- What organizational resources do we have or need to develop?
Applying the Community Action Model (CAM) (continued)

- Who do we need to consult with about our action? Who are our allies who can work with us?
- Who is the target of our action? How do we best address them?
- What result would we like to see? What would constitute success?
- How does this action meet our stated goals?

If desired, ask for another volunteer to work with the facilitator to record the ideas using the implementation plan included at the end of this activity.

For example, if the action is to update the training curriculum to address a specific topic or competency area, these might be examples of possible steps:

- Conduct research on the relevance of the topic to health of local communities (for example, how common is the issue and how does it impact or influence health status?) and the work of local CHWs.
- Consult with local organizations that are working to address the identified issue.
- Talk with CHW trainers about the topic and to share research findings.
- Meet with the coordinator or director of the CHW training program to advocate for revising the curriculum.

5 CAM Step 5: Maintain Actions and Results

Now that the group has selected an issue and action and has developed an implementation plan, it is time to talk about what they could do to ensure that these actions are maintained or enforced (CAM Step 5: Maintain Actions and Results). Again, we encourage you to ask for a volunteer from the group to facilitate this discussion. Share the following types of questions (or another set of questions) with the facilitator:

- If we are successful in implementing our project, what needs to be done to make sure that our action is maintained over time?
- What might need to be done to make sure any new policies or services are enforced?
- Who could help us to make sure that our initiative or project continues?

This is an opportunity to foster discussion about a sometimes overlooked aspect of community organizing and the unique challenges of making sure that actions have a lasting effect on the community. If desired, the group can add some of the ideas brainstormed to the implementation plan.

6 Large Group Debrief

Take a moment to debrief the process of planning a community organizing project by asking questions such as these:

- How does it feel to create a concrete plan to improve your well-being and the well-being of future CHW learners?
Applying the Community Action Model (CAM) (continued)

- How confident do you feel in your ability to complete this plan?
- What was this process like for you?
- What worked well in the process?
- What would you do differently?
- If you are successful in implementing your project, how would the CHW training experience change for future learners?
- How would you feel if you are not successful in implementing your project?
- How might implementing the CAM in a CHW training setting be different from implementing a CAM in a community setting?
- How has this process informed your ideas for what you might do as a CHW who is participating in a community organizing effort?

Reinforcement

This is an opportunity to reinforce key messages from this activity and the activities in this chapter using the large group's experience, the textbook, and other sources. Potential messages include the following:

- Community organizing campaigns have achieved significant improvements in people’s lives, and the gains of one campaign (such as a new law recognizing community rights) can serve as a platform from which to pursue further goals.
- Community organizing is similar to creating an action plan with individual clients, only the client is the community. For example, both include goals, steps to take to achieve goals, and challenges and resources.
- Community organizing campaigns, like action plans, can sometimes be successful as conceived, but they may also meet with bumps in the road and setbacks. CHW skills such as rolling with resistance and OARS can be helpful if this happens.
- The CAM features a five-step process designed to assist community members to further develop their capacity to advocate for social justice by creating changes in social policies.
- Determining the impact and feasibility of potential actions is a helpful way to narrow choices for a community organizing campaign and to ensure the greatest success in a limited period of time. However, it is important to note that many successful community organizing campaigns have lasted for years and have tackled some of the largest, and seemingly unchangeable, social injustices.
Applying the Community Action Model (CAM)  (continued)

- Developing and nurturing alliances with other organizations and stakeholders can assist community organizing in increasing potential resources and their reach and impact.

- When a community organizing campaign is successful, it is important not to simply declare victory and leave the field. Maintaining and enforcing results helps with long-term sustainability of social change.

8 Optional Next Steps

If the group has developed a sound community organizing plan and wants to move forward with implementing it, you may wish to do the following:

- Determine what role you might or might not take to support the plan (such as providing references or introductions to key stakeholders, reviewing written materials, and so on).

- Invite learners to schedule a follow-up meeting in a few weeks time to check in on progress of the plan.

- Discuss the plan and any suggestions with other faculty/trainers in the CHW program.
Activity 23.3

Learner Handout 23.3 A: Community Organizing Implementation Plan

Action: ________________________________

Target(s): ________________________________

Steps:

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<tr>
<th>STEP</th>
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Results:

Maintenance:
We have included an assessment that covers important skills for this chapter. There is not an assessment for every activity or for every learning outcome in this chapter. We encourage you to adapt this or add any other assessments from your own resources.

**ASSESSMENT 23.1: Community Organizing Campaigns**

- This assessment asks learners to research an organization in their community (or a state or national organization if there are no local ones) and describe a community organizing campaign that the organization is conducting.
Assessment 23.1 Community Organizing Campaigns

This assessment asks learners to research an organization in their community (or a state or national organization if there are no local ones) and describe a community organizing campaign that the organization is conducting.

Learners may choose to visit an organization and conduct a brief interview to find out about the campaign; or they may do their research online using an organization's website and follow-up with any questions via e-mail or phone.

You may also wish to develop a list of some organizational websites that learners have the option of choosing from. For this assessment, we are using the California Coalition for Women Prisoners (http://womenprisoners.org/) as an example in the Answer Key.
Community Organizing Campaigns (continued)

This assessment asks you to find an example of community organizing in your community and to analyze some of the key aspects of the campaign. You may choose to visit a local organization to find out about their campaign, or you may choose to visit an organization’s website to do your research.

Your assignment is to research and write a brief paper (no more than two single-spaced pages) on a community organizing campaign in your community, answering the questions that follow. You may choose your own organization, or your trainer may have a list of organizations for you to choose from.

This assignment is due ________ and is worth ________ points. Clearly type or print your full name at the top of the assignment.

Please answer each of the following questions and be as specific as possible in describing your answers. Note that questions 7 and 8 are optional, depending on the campaign you choose.

1. What is the name and address of the organization? Please provide either the URL or street address.

2. Describe one community organizing campaign this organization is conducting. Please give the title of the campaign and a brief description of the topic.

3. What is the goal of the campaign? Please note any short-term or long-term goals.

4. Who is most impacted by this campaign? Please name the population and geographic area of the people who will benefit from this community organizing campaign.

5. What tactics are they using? Please list two specific actions this campaign is taking, such as hearings, media events, and so on, and describe each action.

6. As a CHW, what role might you have in conducting a community organizing campaign such as this one?
Community Organizing Campaigns (continued)

The following questions are optional, depending on what you may find from the chosen campaign.

7. What startling statistics, if any, are highlighted in the campaign?

8. What are some of the successes, if any, that this organization has achieved so far?

Please keep our grading or assessment rubric in mind as you write. For example, we are looking for you to respond directly and clearly to the questions asked, to demonstrate the ability to reflect on your own life experiences, and to link your reflection to key concepts and skills from the CHW training program.

RUBRIC FOR ASSESSING OR GRADING COMMUNITY ORGANIZING WRITING ASSIGNMENT

We grade these assignments based on six different performance categories and possible scores ranging from 0 to 20 points each. At CCSF, a passing grade is generally 70 percent of possible points.

Acceptable performance may vary from trainer to trainer. We are including our version of a grading rubric, but feel free to adjust this to fit your unique situation.

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<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EMERGING Less than 70%</td>
<td>SATISFACTORY 70–89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Responsiveness to assignment</td>
<td>Paper does not respond to the questions and topics posed in the assignment.</td>
<td>Paper is partially responsive to the assignment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Goals and tactics</td>
<td>Paper lists no goals or tactics for the campaign.</td>
<td>Paper gives incomplete information about the goals and tactics.</td>
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Weight these ___/100

___/15

___/20
## Community Organizing Campaigns (continued)

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<th>CATEGORY</th>
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<th>POINTS</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3. Clarity</strong></td>
<td>EMERGING Less than 70%</td>
<td>Greater clarity of organization or writing would strengthen this paper to the level of proficiency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SATISFACTORY 70–89%</td>
<td>Paper is well organized, clearly written, and easy to follow.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROFICIENT 90–100%</td>
<td>Weight these ___/15</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4. Use of evidence to support analysis and the ideas presented</strong></td>
<td>Paper does not present any evidence to support arguments or ideas. Fails to properly cite the ideas of others. Plagiarizes.</td>
<td>Paper shows an incomplete or unclear connection between evidence and the writer's point of view, ideas, and arguments.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SATISFACTORY 70–89%</td>
<td>Paper clearly presents evidence (including personal observations) to support the learner's point of view, ideas, and arguments.</td>
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<td>PROFICIENT 90–100%</td>
<td>___/15</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5. Self-reflection</strong></td>
<td>Paper fails to reflect upon learner's own life experiences, study, or CHW practice.</td>
<td>Paper shows limited self-reflection or application of insights to the work of CHWs.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SATISFACTORY 70–89%</td>
<td>Paper demonstrates reflection on personal experiences, cultural identity, values, and so on, and application to the work of CHWs.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROFICIENT 90–100%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6. Originality</strong></td>
<td>Paper closely repeats ideas from class or training, textbook, or assigned readings.</td>
<td>Paper reframes ideas or analysis from class or training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SATISFACTORY 70–89%</td>
<td>Paper presents an original analysis of the ideas of others or original ideas and perspectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PROFICIENT 90–100%</td>
<td>___/15</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total points</strong></td>
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Grading guidelines for reflective writing assignments are as follows: Passing = 70 points or above.

Letter grades are as follows: A = 90–100 points; B = 80–89 points; C = 70–79 points; D = 60–69 points; F = below 60 points.
Community Organizing Campaigns (continued)

ASSESSMENT 23.1: COMMUNITY ORGANIZING CAMPAIGNS, ANSWER KEY

For this example, we are using the California Coalition for Women Prisoners (http://womenprisoners.org/) to give a sense of what some types of responses could be. Actual answers will depend on the organization that learners choose.

1. What is the name and address of the organization? Please provide either the URL or street address.

   California Coalition for Women Prisoners (http://womenprisoners.org/ and https://nonewsfjail.wordpress.com/take-action/)

2. Describe one community organizing campaign this organization is conducting. Please give the title of the campaign and a brief description of the topic.

   The campaign is “No New SF Jail!” This campaign is trying to stop the construction of a new jail in San Francisco. Instead, they urge the city to invest in affordable housing, residential treatment programs, outpatient mental health services, health care for all, and quality schools, parks, and recreation program.

3. What is the goal of the campaign? Please note any short-term or long-term goals.

   The goal is to stop construction of a jail in San Francisco and to invest that money into the community.

4. Who is most impacted by this campaign? Please name the population and geographic area of the people who will benefit from this community organizing campaign.

   Black women, women of color, transgender women, and poor people in San Francisco and California as well as women who are already in jail or are at risk of being jailed.

5. What tactics are they using? Please list two specific actions this campaign is taking, such as hearings, media events, and so on, and describe each action.

   Public hearings. They held a public hearing on “Alternatives to a Jail Rebuild” at San Francisco City Hall. They also spoke at a hearing of the San Francisco Planning Commission to ask them to require a full environmental impact report for the jail construction site.

6. As a CHW, what role might you have in conducting a community organizing campaign such as this one?
Community Organizing Campaigns (continued)

The following questions are optional, depending on what you may find from the campaign.

7. What startling statistics, if any, are highlighted in the campaign?
   - Black women in SF account for nearly 50 percent of the city’s arrests of women while they make up only 6 percent of the women’s population.
   - 84 percent of people in SF jail are pretrial, which means they haven’t been sentenced of a crime; they simply can’t afford bail.
   - San Francisco already has too much jail space. There are approximately 1,000 empty jail beds in county jails every single day in San Francisco, and the jail population has been declining steadily, remaining at between 62 and 65 percent of its total jail capacity for almost four years.

8. What are some of the successes, if any, that this organization has achieved so far?

   They successfully organized a public hearing on “Alternatives to a Jail Rebuild” at San Francisco City Hall sponsored by Supervisor Jane Kim and Board President London Breed. Their passionate testimony directly resulted in Supervisor Eric Mar openly speaking out against the jail rebuild proposal. Supervisor David Campos also flipped his position on the issue.