

# IN-SERVICE TRAINING FOR CSO STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS: HOW TO CONDUCT PERSONALISED SUPPORT GROUPS FOR ACTION

Note: CSO staff and volunteers will be trained simultaneously

## OBJECTIVES

This training will be conducted for CSO staff and volunteers during their monthly supervisory meetings. By the end of this lesson, participants will:

- Understand and use the 4 steps to conducting personalised support groups for action;
- Understand and use the 5 steps to conducting follow-up personalised support groups for action;
- Understand and use the list of small, do-able actions (SDAs);

**Duration:** ~4 hours

## MATERIALS

1. CSO supervisors' guide to monthly meetings (English only)
2. Support group checklist for CSO supervisors for all topics (English only)
3. Support group job aid for CSO volunteers for all topics (English and Kiswahili)
4. Small, do-able actions CSO volunteers and CHWs can recommend to families (English and Kiswahili)
5. Word strips with steps to conducting personalised support groups for action (English and Kiswahili)
6. Word strips for steps to conducting support groups
7. Word strips with tasks within each step for conducting personalised support groups for action (English and Kiswahili)
8. A4 paper or flipchart paper and markers (if possible)

## PREPARATION

- Ahead of time, CSO staff should already be familiar with materials 1-3, above.
- To the extent possible, have CSO staff read the steps to conducting personalised support groups for action ahead of the monthly meeting.
- Develop an acronym for the 4 and 5 steps of conducting improved support groups.

**In attendance:** all CSO staff and all volunteers from the CSO

## INTRODUCTION [5 minutes]

Explain that:

- CSOs have been conducting support groups to improve community members' behaviours and improve the nutrition and health of women and children.
- We thank you for the way you have conducted support groups and changed the communities where you work.
- *Mtoto Mwerevu* has developed additional guidance about how support groups can become even more effective in changing people's behaviours.
- Today we are going to present, discuss, and practise **Personalised Support Groups for Action**.

## EXPLAIN SOME OF THE CHALLENGES VOLUNTEERS HAVE HAD WITH SUPPORT GROUPS GLOBALLY [5 minutes]

Mention some of the bullets below (bolded text is particularly important for today's training):

**For parents:**

- Lack of time, long distances to arrive at support groups
- Parents feel scolded
- Support groups might not be interesting or fun
- Support groups might not be relevant to the people in attendance
- **Support groups don't build on people's personal experiences.**



#### For volunteers:

- Low attendance
- Target group doesn't attend
- Few mothers (or fathers) return for second support group meeting
- Parents seem to lack motivation
- Volunteers aren't appreciated for their hard work
- **Volunteers don't witness behaviour changes: resulting in kids remaining unhealthy**
- **Support groups often only provide information (and frequently, too much of it: support groups can be unfocused)**

#### **REVIEW CSO STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS' EXPERIENCES WITH SUPPORT GROUPS** [5 minutes; Assigned Person]

Ask:

- What is going well?
- What can be improved upon?
- What has been particularly successful about support groups?
- What has been challenging?

#### **EXPLAIN THE PURPOSE OF TODAY'S TRAINING** [10 minutes; Assigned Person]

Pilot an improved approach to facilitating support groups.

Get feedback from you:

- Will this new approach work?
- What did you like about the training?
- Was anything confusing or difficult?
- How might you change (improve upon) this training when we work with other CSOs?

This is the first time we've tried this approach. We need your input – now and after you've worked with this approach for a few months.

#### **DEMONSTRATION OF A PERSONALISED SUPPORT GROUP FOR ACTION**

[30 minutes; Assign two people to lead this portion and take alternating turns leading]

- Assigned person and assigned person demonstrate:
- Personalise: Assigned person
- Discuss and brainstorm solutions: Assigned person (for the first round with a good CSO), Assigned person (for the second round with a struggling CSO)
- Teach back and commit: Assigned person
- Tell others: Assigned person

Discussion in plenary of what's different in the demonstrated support group generally, compared to support groups you're familiar with (use paper and markers if available).

Share handout (in Kiswahili) with steps and description of each step. Review each step one-by-one and have group ask questions and teach back what they understand.

As a review, show word strips for Personalise, Discuss and Brainstorm Solutions, Teach Back and Commit; and Tell Others. Have CSO staff arrange the word strips in the order they think is best.

#### **REVIEW OF STEPS AND TASKS AND PRACTISE** [30 minutes review; 30 minutes practise]

Two organisation leaders and two CSO staff members help with the following tasks.

Break into four groups (each group is assigned a step) and have them do the following:

1. Read the tasks and clarify meaning with the two organisation leaders, and two CSO staff members.
2. Organise the tasks under each of their steps in order, using their handout.
3. Take away one of the papers with a task written on it. Group members repeat the step that is missing. At this point, it's no fair consulting the handout!
4. Repeat for every task until every slip with a task written on it has been taken away and group members can recite each step.
5. Identify a rationale for their step overall (e.g., the reason we need to personalise the support group is because...)
6. Pick one member of the group to demonstrate their step in plenary.

In plenary, the following will occur:

1. Describe at least one rationale for their step overall.
2. Demonstrate their step to the rest of the group.

Thus, each group demonstrates in plenary and in order (Personalise, Discuss and Brainstorm, etc.) the step corresponding to their group. *Only after all four steps have been demonstrated, everyone gives feedback, starting with the first step (Personalise).*

Observers (those not facilitating a support group during a given step) use checklists for support groups to make sure other elements of support groups are also present.

Once the entire support group has been demonstrated and everyone has had a chance to give feedback, have everyone review the handout with the steps and name any that were missed. Also review support group checklists to comment on what went well and what needs to be improved.

*Emphasise that the support group should be a natural conversation and not something that requires rigidly following each step.*

### **PRESENT AND REVIEW SDAS**

**[15 minutes; Assigned person]**

1. Purpose
2. When used
3. How used
4. Questions?

**PRACTISE IN THE FIELD** [60 minutes; Assigned person and CSO staff oversee this part of the training]

### **RETURN TO THE CSO OFFICE TO DISCUSS WHAT WENT WELL AND WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED**

**[15 minutes; Assigned person]**

Should be based on handout on personalised support group for action and checklists for support groups.

### **DISCUSS FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT GROUP**

**[10 minutes; Assigned person]**

Ask what happens in the next support group session.

Hand out 5 steps for following up on personalised support groups for action. Briefly review the handout.

### **FEEDBACK**

Get feedback from you:

- Will this new approach work?
- What did you like about the training?
- Was anything confusing or difficult?
- How might you change (improve upon) this training when we work with other CSOs?

### **DEVELOP A PLAN** [15 minutes; all]

Come to an agreement (CSO staff and volunteers) about a plan for conducting personalised support groups for action (implementation, monitoring, improvement).