Unit 16

Developing a Community Engagement Plan

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| OverviewThis unit introduces trainees to the various resources and elements they will need to take into consideration in order to build their community engagement plan. ObjectivesBy the end of the unit trainees will be able to:* Describe the different parts of a community engagement plan
* Develop the beginnings of the site’s community engagement plan
* Understand that a community engagement plan is developed in collaboration with site staff, the CAB and others in the community

Materials* Cross-Network Community Engagement Reporting System Forms in pdf (all sections)
* Cross-Network CE Reporting System Guide\_v1.2
* Flip chart paper and markers

Approximate time 3 hours |

# Warm-up/Introduction (20 Minutes)

Things we plan

* Parties
* Funerals
* Travel itineraries

## Procedure

**Step 1: *Write Things We Plan*** on the flipchart and ask the trainees: What are some things in life that people normally plan ahead of time?

**Step 2:** Elicit from the group things people plan in their lives. Make a list of all the items the group identifies. Once they have exhausted the items, make sure “Parties” is on the list.

**Step 3:** Ask the Group, “Why do people plan parties?” Let the group have a brief discussion around this question.

Why do we write plans?

**Step 4:** Write on a flipchart sheet, ***Why Do We Write Plans?*** Then ask the group, “Why do you need to plan your community engagement program?”

**Step 5:** End the warm-up by emphasizing how important it is that sites have a strategic plan for community engagement and that it can only be developed by a local site. A comprehensive work plan helps the site to navigate and provide engagement to their communities thereby increasing support for the research and for study participants.

# Presentation of Information (1 hour)

## Preparation

* Cross-Network CE Reporting System Guide\_v1.2
* Cross-Network Community Engagement Reporting System Forms in pdf (all sections)

## Procedure

**Step 1:** Just like planning a party or a big life event, planning for a successful community engagement program is essential. The HVTN Annual Work Plan has several key areas.

**Step 2:** Write up on the flip chart the main sections of the Annual Plan. Distribute a copy to each trainee.

HVTN Annual Work Plan

Report on previous year’s plan

A. Community Education

I. External (Community Outreach & Education)

II.Internal (Community Advisory Board/Group)

B.Recruitment

C.Retention

Site narrative

**Step 3:** Go through each section, explaining the importance of each. You may want to ask if there is specific information they have learned throughout their training (if you are conducting a training on several topics) that may help them in preparing this plan.

**Step 4:** For all sites, they will be asked to include or update a community assessment.

**Step 5:** On a new flipchart sheet, write ***Our Community***. Have the group brainstorm all the things they need to know about their communities before talking about HIV vaccines and research.

Our Community

Some examples may include the list of topics below. You do not need to go through each one of these, but mention that they will be part of the assessment in their first year Annual Work Plan.

Questions to consider for a community assessment:

* Who is the community that lives or works around your site (age range, ethnic or cultural backgrounds, education level, languages, living conditions)?
* What social issues impact this community (equality of men and women, equality and legal status for gay people/same-sex partners, unemployment, etc.)?
* What are the existing challenges to community education? Consider literacy levels, myths and misperceptions, taboos surrounding sex and drug use, HIV stigma, religious beliefs, etc. What is needed to overcome these challenges?
* What other research is being done in your area? Are there any trials at your site where you are competing with yourself for the same population?
* Who are the groups in your community that are under-represented in research or that your site has had difficulty enrolling? What efforts are being made by your site to reach these people? What support might you need to enhance these efforts?
* Is HIV prevention research familiar to your community? What information regarding HIV prevention is well understood? What information is of particular concern to the community? Are there messages that the site needs to focus on? If so, what are those messages? What materials do you need to support these efforts?

**Step 6:** Remind the group that as they go back to their site to develop their own Annual Work Plan that they will want to work with other site staff and their CAB to assess where their own community stands in terms of social, political, and economic issues related to HIV and research before moving on to planning activities.

**Step 7: Goals, Objectives and Activities.** Each section of the Annual Work Plan asked for activities in a slightly different format depending on if there are network standards or site-specific standards. Ask for a volunteer to read through the explanation from the *Annual Work Plan* document.

**Goals, Objectives and Activities: Working definitions used by the CEU**

Each section of this template is laid out a bit differently, so be sure to read the instructions carefully. If something is not clear, just ask!

**► Goals**

Goals are very broad and over-arching. They are “the big picture.” We have provided Network goals that are common across all sites. You can add additional local goals if you wish.

**► Objectives**

Objectives are specific and measurable, and they describe the work that you will do in order to address the stated goals. All objectives should be written in the following format:

**MODEL: Who** will do **What, ## (how many times/how much)** during \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (time period).

**EXAMPLE**: ***Community Education staff******will distribute HIV Vaccine brochures*** *to* ***different shops in neighborhood surrounding the research site*** *during the next year.*

**► Frequency**

Frequency is noted in a separate field just below each objective, and the input for this field is only numerical (a number). How many times will the staff do this objective in the coming year? Consider that you want to be able to evaluate whether what you are doing is working, so the frequency should be something you think is achievable, but perhaps also encourages you to stretch a little bit.

We encourage you to consider these carefully, and set realistic expectations.

**Step 8: Tracking Progress.**

* Cross-Network Community Engagement Reporting System Form in pdf (all sections)

Two times during the reporting year the Community Engagement Unit asks to see a report from each site. This provides the HVTN an opportunity to see how the site is progressing in accomplishing the tasks it has outlined for itself in the Annual Work Plan. This also is a way for sites to track all of the work they are doing throughout the year so that it is easier to compile their progress when it comes time to report on the current year and prepare for the next.

**Step 9:** Ask a volunteer to read through the sections of the Mid-Year and End-of-Year reports, stopping for questions as they arise. Note that the sections are identical.

# Group work (1hour, 30 minutes)

## Preparation

* Flipchart paper

## Procedure

**Step 1:** Distribute flipchart paper to each set of trainees.

**Step 2:** Using the working definitions of Goals, Objectives and Activities from the annual report, have trainees break into groups of 2 to work on developing their own site-specific Goal plus 2 objectives such as requested in the Community Education part of the Annual Work Plan.

**Step 3:** Allow each group 30 minutes to develop their goal and objectives and to write them on their flipchart paper. Tell trainees they may want to develop a budget estimate of these objectives as well. This is not something the HVTN will review but may help when proposing the objective to the site’s fiscal manager.

**Step 4:** Invite each group to the front of the room to present their goal and objectives. Each group will have 5 minutes to present then the full group will have 5 minutes to assess whether they feel they meet the definitions presented in the Annual Work Plan. Comments from the group should be written down directly onto the flipchart sheet.

**Step 5:** When all groups have finished presenting, point out that they have all now developed real goals and objectives that they may use in their own site plans.

# Wrap-up Activities (10 minutes)

## Procedure

**Step 1:** Ask the group, “Who should be involved in helping develop the plan with the community educator?” Try to have the group move toward the answer that everyone should be involved, from the Principal Investigator to the CAB. Engagement and recruitment may be the primary role and responsibility of educators and recruiters at the site, but everyone should be involved in some way.

**Step 2:** Point out to the group that the exercise of writing a community engagement plan is very similar to what it takes to write a proposal to apply for a grant to solicit funds and/or resources for any given program or project. In learning how to write a clear, concise and well thought out plan, the trainees will gain skills beyond educating on HIV vaccines.

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| Additional resourcesAVAC’s community mapping tool [www.avac.org/resource/community-mapping-tool](http://www.avac.org/resource/community-mapping-tool)HANC recommendations on community involvement: <https://www.hanc.info/content/dam/hanc/documents/community/Recommendations-for-Community-Engagement-v3.0-Nov2020-English.pdf>  |

[The HIV Vaccine Trials Network is supported through a cooperative agreement with the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases](http://www.hanc.info/cp/resources/Pages/recommendationsInvolvement.aspx)