



# THE NINE STEPS

## TRAINING MATERIALS SERIES

### BASIC PHDP, NO. C14

Outreach International's Participatory Human Development Paradigm (PHDP) is carried out through a methodology involving nine basic steps, also the Participatory Human Development Process (PHDP). The Nine Steps are not undertaken in rigid order (that is, one step can begin without having accomplished the preceding one). Two or more steps can take place simultaneously at any given stage of the process. Throughout the process one must keep the PHDP goals, objectives, characteristics and principles in mind. Outreach International has proven PHDP as a very effective methodology for engaging people, especially the poor and disadvantaged, in a process of empowerment and problem solving. The steps are as follows:

**1. Integration** is a continuing process of establishing rapport with and among the members of the community, creating mutual respect, trust and open communication. It is achieved by living with the people, visiting homes, conversing on a one-to-one basis, and participating in the various aspects of community life. Understanding where the people are is vital to preparing them to undertake change. Integration helps the group to understand the role of the Human Development Facilitator (HDF) and build contacts that might lead to a partnership. The program is the people's, but the HDF, who is indigenous to the area or country, will be a partner to help facilitate their plan. Integration can often take up to eight months or longer before the people have become open for discussion or have expressed their concerns and willingness to move into the next steps of development.

**2. Social Investigation** is the gathering and analysis of data about the community and its issues. This information serves as the basis for organizing and planning. It may be obtained by conducting surveys, interviewing individuals, discussing in small groups, observing the people, obtaining available information from documents (demographics, etc.), and developing an open flow of communication. Who are the natural leaders? What help might government be induced to give? When Social Investigation is properly performed, it enables the HDF to assist the people with the next step. Data gathering will also help the people to gather data.

**3. Problem Identification and Prioritization** must be done collectively by the people. Often what is perceived to be a problem by one person may not be seen as pressing by the community as a whole. Developing the people's confidence to identify and prioritize problems is important. Once problems are identified, the group then determines which problem to tackle first, using criteria they themselves have identified. The first problem should be within the capability of the group to resolve, not be divisive and have the opportunity for people to develop their skills and analysis.

**4. Groundworking**, sometimes also called agitation, is a process of preparing people physically and psychologically to participate in group activities. It is awareness-raising, making people feel the issue or problem at hand. Groundworking's objective is not limited to preparing and enabling people to participate in organizational activities, but to enable people to undertake such activities on their own on a continuous basis. The goal is to ensure that many persons will participate.

**5. Meeting:** people come together and analyze and plan for the solution of their problems as a group. It is here where the seed of an organization starts to germinate. Individual and personal perceptions and aspirations become consolidated into collective knowledge and goals. The people develop trust, respect, openness and confidence with each other, regardless of their positions in their group and community. Leaders become apparent and begin to take their places.

**6. Role Playing:** acting out or simulating all possible scenarios or situations and the appropriate tactics or responses prior to the actual mobilization or action. Its objective is to help people overcome their initial feelings of timidity and lack of confidence. It ensures the people gain confidence and ability to effectively negotiate on an equal footing with the authorities responsible for making decisions concerning the people's problems.

**7. Mobilization/Action** is the implementation of a solution to a problem or the face-to-face contact between those affected by a problem and those responsible for making decisions concerning it. It can be either internal (requiring local self-help solutions) or external (when outside resources are needed). This step helps the people to realize their poverty or situation of helplessness does not make them less worthy as human beings, allowing them to relate with equality, dignity and respect to those who are "privileged or powerful."

**8. Evaluation** is the assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the Mobilization/Action to determine whether the goals were achieved. Learning from each experience will help make the next activity more productive and effective. What did we set out to do? Did we accomplish our objectives? Why or why not? What were our strengths? What could we have done better? Re-planning should follow each evaluation. Through

review of their action, people can gain a new sense of community power, support and joy of achievement.

**9. Reflection** can be conducted immediately following a mobilization/action, project or any activity of the group. It must occur before it becomes only a memory. Reflection draws out learning and lessons from an action, to determine new values, knowledge and awareness. These help to sustain further action and organizational activities. Positive values are reinforced, while the need to change negative ones is determined. If no lessons are learned from the people's experiences and actions, they will remain only memories. The people should be reminded of how things were before they mobilized and what they felt like before they made their decisions. Also considered should be the good qualities they found among those that assisted in the solution. Reflection may be conducted by the HDF but developing leaders capable of presiding over such a session is desirable.

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