

Module 10

Action Planning



FLOW CHART

Content Flow at A Glance Module 10: Action Planning

Subject/topic/activity	Objective	Page No.
Exercise - Is change possible?	To realize that change is possible.	10-3 to 10-4
Exercise – Theme for a dream.	To develop a vision for the future.	10-5 to 10-6
Exercise – How real is it?	To check if a dream is achievable.	10-7
Exercise – Getting there.	To set goals.	10-8
Exercise – Setting objectives.	To develop achievable objectives.	10-9
Exercise – What to do?	To make an activity chart.	10-10
Exercise – How to do It?	To develop a resource chart.	10-11
Exercise – How to do it? - continued.	To develop a table of who can do what?	10-12 to 10-13
Exercise – Making a commitment.	To ensure participant commitment.	10-14
Exercise – Expectations!	To understand that different groups have different roles to play in the fight against HIV/AIDS.	10-15 to 10-16
Exercise – Making requests.	To learn the art of requesting another for help and support.	10-17 to 10-18
Exercise – Timeline	Preparing a timeline for future work.	10-19

Module 10

Action Planning

*“The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep”.*

Robert Frost

Introduction

Having a vision for one’s future, and charting a course to achieve it, is called planning. Studies have consistently shown that vision, planning and goal setting can positively influence personal and organizational performance. Planning can force future thinking, highlight new opportunities and threats and refocus a person’s mission. It’s a tool for taking control of a wandering life style. Productive planning focuses on the most critical problems, choices and opportunities. Planning is also effective in modelling behaviour and norms that one would like to follow in one’s life.

Planning requires time and a process. If used effectively, it is a powerful tool for self-management and goal based achievement.

The aim of this module is to help participants develop basic planning skills. This will lead to effective action planning and allow the charting of a course for the achievement of a vision.

Session 10.1

Is Change Possible?

Expected Outcomes

Participants will be able to decide whether behaviour and attitude change is possible and required.

Participants will spend time in introspection and start thinking about their lives.

	To Change Or Not To Change
<i>Objective</i>	To know that change is possible. To focus on what can and cannot be changed.
<i>Materials</i>	Flash cards, markers.
<i>Time</i>	1 hour.
<i>Process</i>	<p>Invite the participants to sit in a circle on the floor.</p> <p>Explain that change is a part of life and that some changes are possible while others are not. Change usually requires effort and practice. This exercise will enable participants to explore whether or not they want to change something about themselves or their lives. How can these changes be achieved?</p> <p>Pass out flash cards and ask each participant to pick 2.</p> <p>Ask them to write something on one card that s/he would like to change about himself/herself and one card to write something s/he would not like to change.</p> <p>Allow the participants 10 minutes for this activity.</p> <p>Invite them to place the cards in two vertical lines on the floor – "would like to change" and "would not like to change".</p> <p>Ask the participants to read the cards and group them. The cards should be sorted and grouped under both the categories.</p> <p>Once this is done, invite the participants to sit in a circle around the cards.</p> <p>Go through both lines of cards and examine the reasons why certain changes are possible and others are not. Also, examine the reasons for not wanting to change certain things.</p> <p>Now ask the participants to make a list of the ways/methods in which the listed changes can be brought about.</p>

Put all the three lists up on the wall. Facilitate a discussion using the following questions:

- *Is change possible? Why/Why not?*
- *Have you ever tried to change something about yourself? How easy or difficult was it? Why?*
- *Does one need support and guidance in their attempts at change? What and why?*
- *What can you do to change your own and your friends behaviour so that you do not contract HIV/AIDS?*

Note for the Facilitator

This is an interesting exercise to start the session on future planning and directions. Behaviour change is an important and critical element in the struggle against HIV/AIDS. It is also the most difficult. Therefore, a discussion on change and its multiple dimensions, possibilities and impossibilities is a good starting point for future planning. This exercise is open ended, but you may feel the need to make it simpler and more focused. To this end, you can ask the participants to focus on behaviour that they want to change and those they do not.

Session 10.2

Vision for the Future

Expected Outcome

Participants will think about and develop a vision for the future.

	Theme For A Dream
<i>Objective</i>	To dream a dream.
<i>Materials</i>	Flip charts, markers/crayons.
<i>Time</i>	1 hour.
<i>Process</i>	Invite the participants to sit in a circle.

Explain that planning is an important element of this training and of life. In order to plan, one must have a dream. One must have a vision of where one wants to be. This vision may be of an individual for himself/herself, or it may be the vision of a group for the group.

Ask the participants to work individually and arrive at a vision for themselves.

Explain that they should each draw a picture of, or create in words, a dream that they would like to realize for themselves. Something that represents the life they want to have for themselves.

Allow the participants 20 minutes for this exercise.

Invite them to share their vision with each other through a presentation.

Ask them to put their “vision” up on a wall so that everyone can see it.

After everyone has heard and seen all of the visions, facilitate a short discussion using the following questions:

- *How did it feel to dream and share the dream? Why?*
- *Can dreams come true? Why/Why not?*
- *How can you make your dream come true?*

Note for the facilitator

This is a simple exercise used to encourage dreaming and setting a vision for oneself. This can be altered to suit the needs of the participants. For example, if you are doing a training for young people to work as peer educators, you could ask them to dream about the kind of peer educator they would like to be. This can also be used for a group, community or organizational dream. Just remember that it is essentially about dreaming, and therefore, allows space for imagination. Do not decide what can and cannot be dreamt.

Session 10.3

Reality Check

Expected Outcomes

Participants will learn that unrealistic dreams can be more harmful than good.

Participants will be able to set a realistic vision for the future.

How Real Is It?

<i>Objective</i>	Reality check.
<i>Materials</i>	Outputs from the dreaming exercise, markers, flash cards.
<i>Time</i>	45 minutes.
<i>Process</i>	Invite the participants to stand next to their dream/vision output with some flash cards and markers.

Explain that you will be giving them some instructions. They should listen to the instruction, and write the answer on the flash card.

After writing their answer, they should tape it next to their dream/vision in the sequence in which instructions are given.

The instructions should be given in the order that follows:

- *How long will it take you to achieve your dream/vision?*
- *How can you achieve your dream/vision?*
- *Invite the participants to share their responses to these questions. Point out that time and methodology are extremely important for achieving a vision or a dream.*

Note for the facilitator

A dream, or a vision, is usually a distant goal that one strives for. It is, therefore, more an aspiration than a reality. However, the dream can be further broken down into achievable and time-bound objectives. Encourage and commend the participants on their dream. Their responses to the two questions should be enough to indicate whether the dream is achievable, or not. Take this opportunity to explain the difference between a dream/vision and an achievable goal and objective.

Session 10.4

Goal Setting

Expected Outcomes

Participants will learn to set achievable goals for themselves.

Participants will be able to apply this method in their day-to-day lives.

Getting There

Objective Setting a goal.

Materials Flip charts, markers.

Time 45 minutes.

Process Invite the participants to sit in a circle on the floor.

Explain that everyone tries to set goals for himself/herself in life, but goals must be realistic. For example, the goal of this training programme is to change at least one unsafe behaviour of young people in order to reduce their chances of contracting HIV/AIDS.

Similarly, the participants must set some goals for themselves, goals that take the goal of this training further.

Encourage the participants to ask questions and clarify their doubts.

Give the participants 30 minutes to discuss and individually set their goals.

Remind them that goals should be realistic and time-bound.

Invite the participants to present their goals.

Ask the participants to read each other's goals and see if they have shared goals.

Invite the participants to discuss whether they can help each other to achieve their goals.

Note for the Facilitator

Depending on the objective of the exercise, it may be done in the large group with all of the participants or individually. If you expect the participants to set at least one individual goal for themselves, to be reviewed over a period of time, then you should ask them to do this exercise individually. On the other hand, if you want them to have common goals (as a group or as an organization) this exercise can be done in the large group. Since the training primarily focuses on behaviour change, individual goal setting may be more useful. In either case it is up to the facilitator to decide.

Session 10.5

Learning to Set Objectives

Expected Outcomes

Participants will be able to set achievable targets for themselves.

Peer educators will be able to use these objectives for monitoring the progress of the participants.

Getting There - Continued

<i>Objective</i>	Setting objectives.
<i>Materials</i>	Flip charts, markers.
<i>Time</i>	45 minutes.
<i>Process</i>	<p>Invite the participants to place their goals before them and think about SMART objectives. Explain that objectives need to be:</p> <p>S Specific M Measurable A Achievable R Relevant T Time-bound</p> <p>The goals that they had set for themselves earlier can be further broken down. For example, a goal of giving up cigarette smoking can have multiple objectives, such as reducing the number of cigarettes to five a day within the next week. Further reducing the number of cigarettes to three a day in the next one-week and so on.</p> <p>Give the participants 25 minutes to set their objectives. These can either be common or individual; the facilitator decides.</p> <p>Invite the participants to share the objectives.</p>

Note for the facilitator

Objectives are important for follow up and monitoring an activity. Therefore, these need to be very specific, time-bound and, if possible, measurable. You may want to start the planning cycle from this point onwards, and ignore the dream and goal setting exercises. As mentioned earlier, these exercises are to be used at your discretion. If you feel that the participants only need to plan for a short period, then it is advisable to start with the objective exercise. If the participants are expected to plan for a behaviour change, then it may be useful to start with the dreaming exercise.

Session 10.6

Breaking down the Objectives into Activities

Expected Outcomes

Participants will list specific activities that they will undertake for each objective. Peer educators will be able to use these activities for follow up.

	What To Do
<i>Objective</i>	Making the activity chart.
<i>Material</i>	Flip charts, markers.
<i>Time</i>	1 hour.
<i>Process</i>	Invite the participants to place their objectives before them.

If the objective setting was done collectively, this exercise should also be done collectively. However, if the objective setting was done individually, or in small groups, this exercise should be done accordingly.

Ask the participants to draw up a list of activities that would have to be done to achieve each objective.

Give the group 30 minutes to do this exercise. Facilitate the activity, and encourage the participants to make a detailed chart specifying all large and small activities required to achieve their objective.

Invite them to present their activity list if it is a common list, or ask them to put it up on a wall. Ask them to visit each other's list.

Note for the Facilitator

Activity lists should include all of the activities required to achieve a particular objective. These may be activities that the participants will do alone or will seek support for doing. They may need to ask someone to do it for them. Whether you make this an individual exercise, a small group exercise or a collective exercise is your choice.

Session 10.7

Making a Resource Chart

Expected Outcomes

Participants will know what support and resources they require to accomplishing their activities.

Peer educators will be able to plan for the support, resources and time needed to achieve the activities.

How To Do It

Objective Setting the time, responsibility and resources for the activities.

Materials Flip charts, markers.

Time 45 minutes.

Process Invite the participants to convert their activities list into a table with columns and rows.

The table should have four columns and rows corresponding to the number of activities (an example is provided below):

Activities	Time (when will it be undertaken)	Responsibility (who will do it)	Resources (what will be required to do it)

This table may be done collectively, in small groups or individually, depending on the process followed in the goal, objective and activity setting exercises.

If it is an individual or small group exercise, ask the participants to display the outcomes on the wall to share. However, if it is a collective exercise, do it on the floor with chalk in a participatory manner.

Note for the facilitator

This exercise is useful for personal, group and organizational planning. It is simple and can be done individually or in a participatory manner. It is your responsibility to ensure that the columns are filled in specifically i.e., in the time column specific dates/weeks/months should be filled in. Keep in mind holidays, weather constraints, availability of other people and places. Similarly, the responsibility column should be specific in stating the name of the person, or organization or group that has been assigned the responsibility. The resources column should include finance, material and human resources. If you think it would be useful, you could sub- divide the fourth column into 3 columns.

Session 10.8

Resources and Support Table

Expected Outcomes

Participants will be able to identify things they can do on their own and things they require support for.

Peer educators will be able to use this exercise for planning his/her schedule of support and future activities.

How To Do It - Continued

Objective Making the match.

Materials Flip charts, markers.

Time 1 hour.

Process Invite the participants to examine their time, responsibility and resource chart (outputs of session 10.7). Explain that on the basis of this chart they should make another chart in order to access the resources required for each activity. This could be done using a matrix similar to the one shown below:

Resources needed	Can do it myself/ourselves	Need support from family/peers	Need professional support

*The resources needed column will be taken from the previous exercise. Give the participants 30 minutes to complete this exercise.

If it is an individual or small group exercise, allow them to share the outputs.

If it is a collective exercise, facilitate a participatory matrix using chalk and the floor (flash cards are an option)

Note to the facilitator

The planning exercises can be brought to a close with this final matrix. However, in order to complete the spectrum of activities undertaken in a planning phase budgeting, spatial concerns and reconciliation steps also be considered.

Budgeting may be undertaken, if required, on an approximation basis for each planned activity. This may be done with the help of secondary information gathered from the market, newspapers and previous proposals. One could invite a resources person for this exercise. The resource person could be a commerce graduate with some experience in making budget statements, or it could be a colleague within your organization responsible for financial management. It could be a participant with similar experience.

Spatial concerns Include the physical place and location of the activities. It also pertains to arrangements, such as places to stay, resource staff and others involved in the planned activity.

Reconciliation Deals with a review of the compatibility of the goals, objectives and activities. This will confirm whether or not the final plan will enable the dream/vision to be achieved.

It Is Easy!

Planning seems like a complicated issue but it isn't. All of us plan all of the time. Even effortless daily activities are an example of planning. Good planning is essential for a life well lived, and it is essential for an activity, programme or project. Here is how you can do it:

Why do you want to do what you want to do?

Who will benefit from it, who will support it and who will oppose it?

Where will you start the activity, project or programme, determine the physical place/space?

When will you start and when will you finish, and in between when will you do what?

What will you do? (the activities)

How will you do it, monitor it and evaluate it? (the methodology)

Session 10.9

Making a Commitment

Expected Outcomes

Participants will realize that commitment is essential for achieving goals.

Participants will need to keep to their plans and promises.

I Commit

Objective To elicit participants' commitment.

Material None

Time 45 minutes

Process Invite the participants to stand in a circle.

Explain that the personal commitment of everyone is of great value in the collective fight against HIV/AIDS. Throughout this exercise, the participants will be able to pledge their commitment and support to the struggle.

Start at one end of the circle, and ask the participants to complete this sentence "I will..."

Put up a flip chart and record the participants' responses.

After the exercise, this information should be typed and distributed.

Alternatively, put up a list of the participants' and record each one's commitment beside their name.

If you plan to monitor the progress of the commitment, ask the participants to specify the time within which they hope to fulfil their commitment.

Note to the Facilitator

This is a simple exercise and its seriousness depends on how it is facilitated. It is also possible to use this activity as a session closing exercise. However, if you wish to follow up on the commitments, make sure that these are documented beside every participant's name and have a definite time frame.

Session 10.10

Who Should do What?

Expected Outcomes

Participants will realize that multiple stakeholders have a role to play in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Participants will be able to state their expectations from the various stakeholders.

Participants can sum up the statements and use them as advocacy tools or send them to the respective stakeholders as suggestions.

Expectations

Objective To explore the participants' expectations of self and others in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Materials Flash cards, markers.

Time 1 hour and 30 minutes.

Process Invite the participants to sit in a circle on the floor.

Explain that many people, organizations, groups and governments have a role to play in the fight against HIV/AIDS. This exercise is designed to explore the expectations that participants have of themselves and others in this fight.

Ask each participant to pick up four flash cards and a marker

Explain that they should use one flash card to write one thing that they expect to do themselves to contribute to the fight against HIV/AIDS. The other three cards should be used to write their expectations of the community, government and medical professionals.

Allow 20 minutes for this activity.

While the participants are busy writing their cards set the headings; expectations of self, expectations of the community, expectations of the government, expectations of the medical professionals. Ask the participants to place their cards in a vertical line on the floor under the headings.

Ask them to examine each vertical line, and group the similar cards. Invite the participants to sit in a circle around the final sorted card lines, and facilitate a discussion using the following questions:

- *How do you feel about your expectations of self and others? Why?*
- *Do you think these expectations can be met? Why/Why not?*

- *How can we ensure that the expectations discussed in this group are actually met?*
- *What possible steps can be taken to make these expectations a reality?*
- *How much time should be allotted to fulfil these expectations?*

Note to the Facilitator

This is a useful exercise to undertake if time for planning a future activity is short and you need to draw up a tentative plan for future areas of work. You can also use the outcomes of this exercise as recommendations for concerned groups. You can increase or decrease the groups of people from whom support is expected. For example, you could include religious leaders and teachers as possible groups from whom support is sought.

Session 10.11

Making Requests

Expected Outcomes

Participants will get support in their fight against HIV/AIDS.

Participants will learn to communicate and negotiate for something they want.

	Request
<i>Objective</i>	For participants to think and decide upon one special request concerning their own lives and HIV/AIDS that they would like their peer group to accept.
<i>Materials</i>	Flip charts, markers.
<i>Time</i>	1 hour.
<i>Process</i>	Ask the participants to divide into 4 groups.

Explain that they should brainstorm in their respective groups and come up with one request that they would like the other 3 groups to accept.

The request should pertain to HIV/AIDS and their lives. For example, a group may want to request the other three groups to help them perform a play in their community to show the ways in which HIV/AIDS can and cannot be transmitted. Another example may be, one group asking the other group to start using condoms while having sex with their partners. Encourage the groups to discuss issues that are most important in their peer group concerning HIV/AIDS.

Give them 10 minutes to brainstorm. Invite the four groups to sit in the four corners of the room.

Start with one corner and ask them to state their request to the other three groups.

Facilitate a discussion to achieve consensus on the request. It is possible that the request will be accepted by all three groups without any counter argument, or it may be that one group accepts and two ask for certain modifications. The final outcome must be based on consensus.

Allow each group 2 to 3 minutes to state its request and 10 minutes to reach a consensus.

After each group has stated its request and consensus has been reached, facilitate a discussion using the following questions:

- *How easy or difficult was it to get your request accepted by the other groups? Why?*
- *Will you be able to present these requests to the community or your peer groups? If yes, how? If not, why?*
- *Can the final requests be implemented? If yes, how? If not, why?*

Note for the facilitator

This is an interesting way to explore the issues the participants would like to work regarding their lives and HIV/AIDS. It also looks at the issue of support from others and reasons why the support may or may not be given by the others. It allows the participants an opportunity to hone their debating skills while defending and presenting their request for acceptance by others. You can also use this exercise in the community to reach consensus on sensitive issues linked with HIV/AIDS, such as condom use, inclusion of women in the property share or sex with multiple partners.

Session 10.12

Charting the Course

Expected Outcomes

Each participant will have a timeline of the things s/he wants to do in the future. Peer educators will be able to use these timelines to decide his/her work schedule and future plan of action.

	Timeline
<i>Objective</i>	Preparing a time -line for future work.
<i>Material</i>	flipcharts, markers.
<i>Time</i>	1 hour.
<i>Process</i>	<p>Invite the participants to each take one flip chart and markers.</p> <p>Explain that they will make a timeline to show how they would use the learnings from the training just received.</p> <p>Each participant should draw a timeline showing his or her action plan for the next six months (the time can be reduced or increased depending on the peer educator's objective for this session).</p> <p>Allow the participants to work individually for 30 minutes.</p> <p>Invite them to display their timelines on the wall.</p> <p>Examine the timelines with the participants, and encourage them to discuss each other's timeline.</p> <p>Ask the participants to gather in a circle and facilitate a short discussion using the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>How do you feel about your respective timelines?</i> ▪ <i>Will all of you be able to accomplish the tasks shown in your timeline?</i> ▪ <i>How will you accomplish what you have depicted on the timeline?</i> ▪ <i>Do you have any suggestions on how we can monitor the progress on these timelines?</i>

Note for the Facilitator

Timelines are useful participatory tools for historical analysis as well as future planning. In this case, the participants are using the timeline in the individual context to plan a future course of action. The timeline can be drawn using a daily weekly or monthly chart, or at random, depending on the convenience of the participants. It is important that each timeline have a stated objective, date and place of preparation. It should also have the name of the participant and the facilitator. This will enable the participants to use this as a monitoring tool. You could make a copy of the timelines for yourself for monitoring progress. It may be useful for you to make a timeline for yourself and to share it with the participants.