



SIMPLIFIED GUIDELINES FOR STANDARDIZING AGENTS OF CHANGE ACTIVITIES IN SCHOOLS



Reference Material for **Read to Succeed Project (RTS)** Staff, Guidance
& Counseling Teachers and Agents of Change

© 2015

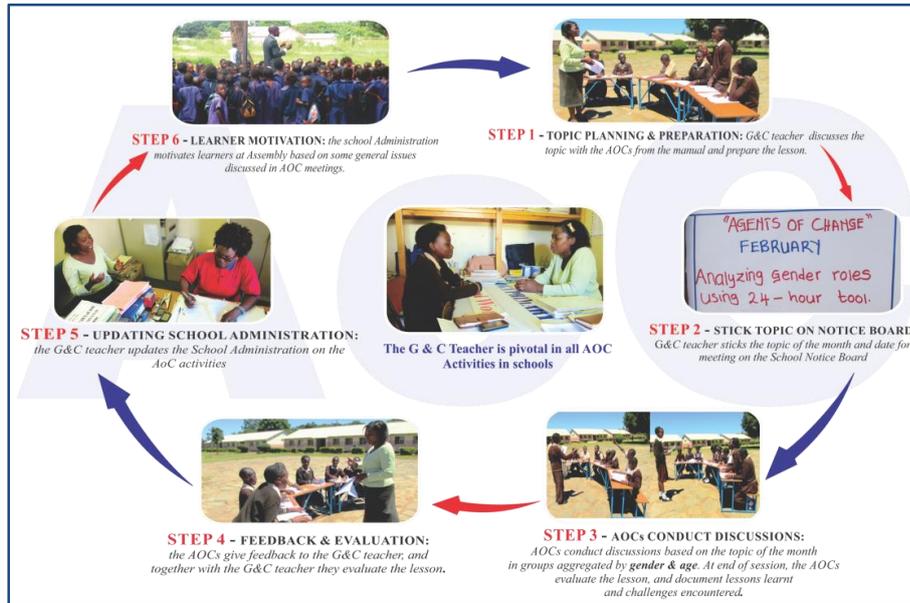


RTS Learner Support & Services Series # 8

I. Who are Agents of Change?

Agents of Change (AOC) are learners who have similarities with their friends in many ways. The members of the Change Agent groups at school level are similar and in the same age group and probably from the same school or class. An Agent of Change shares some of the same interests and dreams with the group he/she is responsible for. These are their peers. Monthly meetings give an opportunity to the Agents of Change to listen and learn from their peers and to share with them what they know and learnt from the G & C teachers.

STEPS TO CONDUCTING AGENTS OF CHANGE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS MONTHLY



Being an Agent of Change is a privilege: learners selected for this purpose gain experiences which will help them develop their knowledge and leadership skills. Like all privileges, being an Agent of Change comes with responsibilities: chosen AOC are expected to be role models for their peers in what they do as well as what they say.

Through the monthly meetings, Agents of Change and other learners learn many facts about *relationships, sexuality, gender and HIV/AIDS*. They gain skills in *team work, facilitation and leadership*. Agents of Change discussion meetings are not about teaching or lecturing, or simply singing and reciting poems, but **facilitating meaningful sharing and learning**.

II. Why Agents of Change?

Agents of Change are chosen because someone recognized their leadership abilities and skills. They are clever, energetic and, in becoming Agents of Change, they agreed to use their intelligence and energy to facilitate the development of their skills and those of their peers in their school to live healthy lives.

The Agents of Change and other young people have a lot to say and deserve to be heard, especially when it comes to issues which affect them, their health and their future. When it comes to sexuality and protecting oneself, many adults don't feel comfortable talking openly to young people. And yet, open and honest dialogue is what is needed to begin to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic, not only among young people but also among Zambians of every age. It may seem like adults want to tell young people what to do, rather than listening to them and having a dialogue.

The purpose of Agents of Change meetings is to allow for an open discussion and learning among young people, supported by teachers or other adults, so that they gain the knowledge and skills to grow into healthy adults.

III. Facilitation at Group Meetings

As facilitators, Agents of Change should help the members of the group share ideas and beliefs, to gain knowledge and dispel myths and to develop skills that will help them to stay healthy.

Facilitation is NOT:

- ☞ Judgmental
- ☞ telling others what to do
- ☞ giving out knowledge

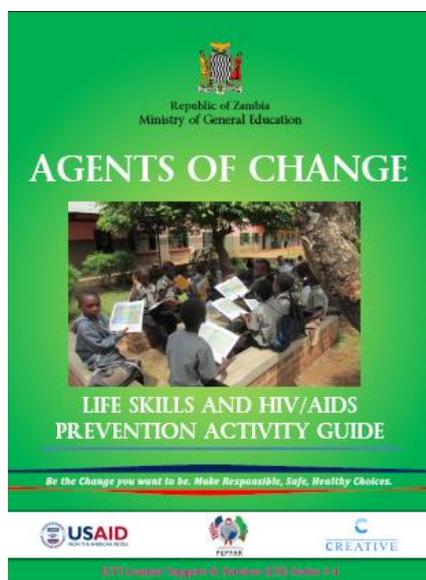
IV. Role of the Agents of Change

- ☞ draw a time table of activities for the term - **AN ACTION PLAN** – together with the G&C teacher,
- ☞ work with other AOCs at school to facilitate sessions of 20 to 25 members. Each session lasts for one hour, held once every month. AOCs should facilitate at least three meetings per term,
- ☞ agree at least one week before the next session on who will facilitate the next session, seeing that some sessions require more than one facilitator,
- ☞ carefully read through the session, together with the G&C teacher, and ensure that all materials needed are available, and that AOCs are familiar with the activities,
- ☞ refer to the Guide during sessions, but **SHOULD NOT** be reading the Guide when facilitating,
- ☞ conduct separate sessions for boys & girls according to age categories, e.g. 10-14; 15+ yrs, to allow for the free flow of information,
- ☞ show seriousness and hard work in order to be chosen to be Agents of Change, since this is a big responsibility,
- ☞ go through the topic and prepare the lesson together with the G&C teacher, or in the absence of a G&C teacher, another teacher should take the responsibility to assist AOCs prepare the lesson a week before the session.

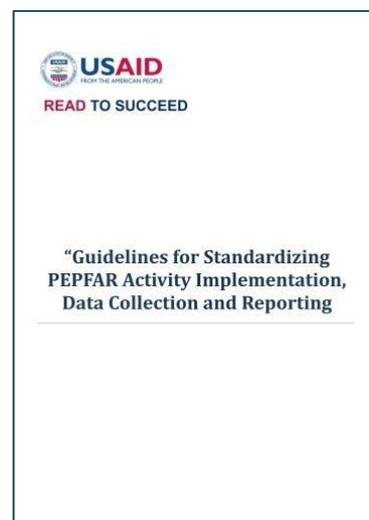


V. Activity Guides and Frequency of Meetings

Agents of Change have two activity guidelines in each school – the “*Agents of Change Life-skills and HIV/AIDS Prevention Activity Guide*”; and the *Guidelines for Standardizing PEPFAR Activity*”.



The guidelines have activities for each term. The topics in the Standardized activity guide has activities arranged by age category. Therefore, each term, the Agents of Change should facilitate at least three meetings. Based on these meetings, learners can be said to have fulfilled the required standard for the term. A learner who attends only one session may not be counted as having met the required standard. It is the responsibility of the Agent of Change to ensure that registers are entered after the end of the session.



VI. How are Meeting Groups Organized?

Each group should consist of a maximum of 25 people. Boys should have their own groups and girls should also have their own groups. The groups should be according to the age category, for example: **10-14 years** and **15+ years**. Each group should discuss topics as outlined in the Guide once a month.



VII. Guidance and Counseling Teachers

The role of the Guidance and Counseling Teacher is critical in ensuring that Agents of Change conduct meetings every month by supporting them to prepare for the sessions. They are pivotal in producing well balanced and productive learners. Some learners attend school with minds flooded with anxiety, illnesses from HIV, trauma and distress.

Others, due to these experiences, resort to alcohol, substance abuse, transactional sex to obtain good marks and other favors.

Specifically, the G & C teachers should ensure that learners are grouped according to their age categories with support from other teachers in the school. The following are specific roles:



- ☞ give individual & group counselling services to learners,
- ☞ facilitate the development of School Action Plans on G&C activities,
- ☞ facilitate Guidance & Counseling activities in the school,
- ☞ identify and invite resource persons for Guidance & Counselling activities from within and outside the school,
- ☞ ensure that all areas of G&C, namely: educational, personal, social, vocational and counseling are equitably offered to learners,
- ☞ interpret G & C Policy, and translate it into practical activities,



☞ provide feedback to the school administration on the welfare of the learners at least once a month,

☞ keep records (confidential & open files) on all learners in the school,

☞ create linkages with parents, PTA and NGOs in the school surroundings,

☞ act as Secretary for the G&C Committee at school,

☞ refer learners to specialised institutions like health centers, Social Welfare, etc, and make follow up on any progress made.

USAID/Zambia **Read to Succeed** Project

Creative Associates International

Private Bag E891, P.O. Box 642, Manda Hill, Katimamulilo Road, Olympia Park

Plot # 6831 – Lusaka, Zambia

Tel: +260-211-292610



READ TO SUCCEED



CREATIVE