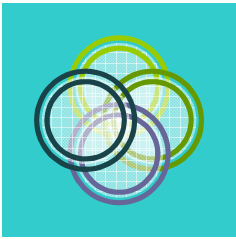


COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

FOR YOUTH AND WOMEN DEVELOPMENT, GHANA
(CPYWD, GHANA)

*A programme for rural & urban youth and women education,
training, counseling, capacity building, empowerment, outreach
and networking*



AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Manual for facilitators

2008

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Introduction

As a project interested and specialized in youth development, we observed Ghanaian youth lacking skills that are appropriate for personal development as well as for the development of the environment. To undertake direct action in the field where needed, we decided to meet the youth in their own environment and give them the chance to actualize their capacities with an after school program combining learning and having fun.

Development means that something new is added to what already exist to reach a higher level. To invent something new, *creativity* is demanded. When the new idea is created, it has to be executed. This means that someone has to *take the initiative* to bring the idea into practice or at least express the idea. When executed, the person has to *reflect upon his own actions* to be able to improve performance in the future. Although more skills contribute to development, this program focus on being creative, taking initiative and reflecting upon own actions in order to form a basis on which further development can take place.

This after school program contains activities that promote the above-mentioned skills. But even more important is the approach of the facilitator, which is needed to create an environment where the participants dare to take initiative in order to use their creativity and feel comfortable to reflect upon their actions. This manual is therefore made as a guide for volunteer facilitators to implement the after school program in a participant-centered approach. For that reason if the manual states the word you it is meant for facilitators. Besides training on the role of facilitator, all necessary materials and support can be acquired from the CPYWD office. For more information, remarks or suggestions, you are most welcome to visit or contact our office. Because with joined hands, we develop!

Good luck and enjoy!

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1. Program Outline

1.1 Target group of the program

All participants from the After School Program of CPYWD in Northern Ghana: Motivated youth aged 7-25.

1.2 Goal

We want participants to develop themselves and have fun.

Therefore we want every training to promote:

- Taking Initiative
- Being creative
- Reflecting

Besides these main skills we want trainings to promote extra skills like:

- Cooperation
- Self-Identity
- Cooperation and Physical training
- Brain development
- Expression

As a facilitator you can add one of these or more of these skills to his/her trainings in order to help the participants to develop and to have fun.

1.3 Approach

While some knowledge can be gained by listening to a teacher, *experience* is necessary to fully understand and work with knowledge. A pleasant way to gain experience and practice is playing. Therefore this program has a **learning-through-play approach**. Therefore it is essential for the participants to get an active role so they get the full benefit of the program. Instead of the teacher, the participants are the center of attention, which makes this program **participant-centered**. However, you, as a facilitator play a key role in guiding and creating an environment for growth. Here, participants can develop and learn to be creative, take initiative and improve their behavior by reflection on themselves and each other. In other words: you create an environment for development by playing an encouraging. More information about the different roles can be found in chapter 2, while chapter 3 treats the approach.

1.4 Method (how will we do this)

The above-mentioned approach will be practiced through weekly participant-activating activities combining fun and education through games, acting, dancing, singing, sporting and discussing. Often, participants will cooperate in subgroups to achieve an assignment and later perform for each other. Every meeting ends with an evaluation, where group members are questioned about the process and the result of the meeting. A more detailed instruction of the method and instruction for implementation can be found in Chapter 3,4,5 and 6.

2. Roles

2.1 The role of the participants

Since this after school program has a participant-centered and learning-through-play approach, the participants are in the center of attention. They only get the full benefit out of it, if they achieve the following demands:

- Attendance of every meeting on a voluntary basis
- Willingness to develop
- Active participation
- Respect towards other participants and the facilitator

All participants are equally important in this program. No matter what age, gender, educational level or background, every group member can contribute. Participants can learn from each other.

2.2 The role of the group leaders

All clubs and groups in the program elect their group leaders within their group. The tasks of these leaders are summarized below. The club formation manual of CPYWD contains more information on the youth club organization. Some of the roles mentioned below are not used in every group. They are indicated just for your information.

1. *President*: Leading the group, executing group laws, gathering all members in time for the meetings, giving them relevant information on organizational issues.
2. *Vice-president*: Assisting president, standing in for the president by his/her absence.
3. *Secretary*: Filling in attendance list, writing a summary of the meetings and evaluations, responsible for external correspondence.
4. *Treasurer*: Keeping track of clubs resources.
5. *Organizer*: Organizing activities besides the arranged meetings or in absence of the facilitator.

2.3 The role of the facilitator

The tasks of the facilitator can be divided in tasks during the meeting and tasks beyond the meetings. During all these actions it is important for a facilitator to be aware of his/her function as a role-model. All participants will expect you to behave perfect. If you want your participants to behave well it is advised that you yourself behaves as it should (For example: always be on time, don't laugh at your participants, etc.)

1. During the meeting:

- *Introducing activity*

Every activity should be introduced differently. You can always start with welcoming the participants. After that you can introduce the activity. All the activities and the explanation how to introduce them is explained in the folder.

- *Guiding activity (to facilitate)*

As mentioned before, you have to create an environment, where the participants can develop. In chapter 3 the general approach is described. In chapter 5 the application of this approach in guiding cooperation is considered. More concrete instructions can be found in the description of the activities in the folder in the office.

- *Leading evaluation*

Since reflecting on your own behavior will improve future behavior, an evaluation is an essential component of each meeting. The right procedure how to evaluate will be described more detailed in the next chapter.

2. Beyond the meetings:

- *Monitoring the progress of individual development and group development*

It is important to monitor the activities and the behavior of the participants. If you do so, you will be able to interfere if you observe unwanted developments and if you want to improve activities.

Examples of questions that you can ask yourself:

- Are the participants giving out their best?
- Do I see any (even if it is small) progress in their performances?
- Do they enjoy the activities?
- Can they go along well with each other?

Write all these observations down in your logbook. In this way you can pay attention to some developments you don't agree with and you can do that every activity so that the unwanted movements can be changed by talking about in the group. In the end you will be able to prevent these unwanted actions because you will have a good knowledge of the group dynamics.

- *Evaluate the program with CPYWD*

Once in a while, you visit the CPYWD office to discuss your experiences, ask for advice and give suggestions on how to improve the program. Working together as a team is, in this case, as important as it is in the groups!

- *Encouraging participants to gather even if the facilitator is absent*

It is necessary for the development of the participants that they gather every week. If there is no facilitator they can use their own creativity or their memory of the previous games to have a meeting. As a facilitator you can encourage them to do so!

3. Approach

3.1 PAC-approach

Three important components are essential for stimulating an environment for growth: **P**ositivism, **A**ctivity and **C**reativity. Every facilitator will therefore be a PAC-man.

When approached in this manner, participants will develop themselves. A positive approach will reward the efforts of participants, so they will have enough self-identity to play an active role. Through an active role during the activities, a participant can explore and practice newborn skills and gain experience. An active role also promotes creativity.

When you observe undesired behavior you need to explain to the participant why this behavior is not appropriate, so he/she can learn from it by linking behavior and consequences (causality). After giving this explanation, you can provide positive alternatives for the behavior. In this way certain behavior can be a choice.

3.1.1 Positivism

A positive approach is emphasizing and encouraging what is there or positive, instead of focusing on what is lacking or what is done wrong. Positivism will build self-identity in the participants so they dare to take initiative. Therefore it's important to stimulate and support a participant. When you observe undesired behavior you need to explain to the participant why this behavior is not appropriate, so he/she can learn from it by linking behavior and consequences (causality). After giving this explanation, you can provide positive alternatives for the behavior. In this way certain behavior can be a choice.

Tasks for the facilitator:

- *Encourage and compliment the student*

First focus on the positive aspects of a contribution and compliment a participant with a correct answer or his/her effort for giving an answer even if it is wrong. A positive approach will build self-identity so the participant dares to take initiative. Punishment can inhibit the answer and can also limit the whole thinking process.

- *Explain why an answer or a particular behavior is wrong, so they can learn from their mistakes by linking behavior and consequence (causality)*

When a participant gives an incorrect answer, don't just correct him/her, but give explanations why an answer is incorrect.

- *Provide positive alternatives when observing inappropriate behavior*

In this manner, the participant will experience that there are more appropriate behaviors and that a behavior can be a choice.

- *Stimulate thinking*

If participants don't know the right answer to questions or if they don't exactly know how to do an activity stimulate them to think for their selves. If they think on their own the result of the thinking process (the understanding of the activity or the answer to the question) will stay better in his/her head and give him/her a better feeling of self-identity (he/she thought of it on her/his own through stimulation).

3.1.2 Activity

All participants should be involved. Also shy or withdrawn participants should be stimulated to think and participate. In this way every participant feels appreciated. Circulate roles and make sure that every participant gets the opportunity to express him/herself and perform. Encourage students to ask questions when there is any problem or unclearness. Also ask for active contribution to the evaluation. In this way the students get a better understanding of behavior (his/her own and that of others) and its consequences (causality).

Tasks for the facilitator:

- *Involve all students*

Make sure that all pupils are challenged to think and participate. Give the opportunity to answer not only to the ones who raise their hands, but also question the others. In this way every participant can have an active role and feels appreciated and a part of the group.

- *Reward effort regardless the correctness of the contribution*

Show appreciation when a participant or a whole class is willing to participate and think along. Wrong answers also contribute to the good result.

- *Ask students for explanations*

Before correcting or approving, ask the children to motivate their answer. In this way they are forced to explain their answer and think it through.

- *Encourage students to ask questions*

You need to state that students who don't understand the matter can always ask questions. Give opportunities for asking questions.

3.1.3 Creativity

Consider individual differences and allow students to have ideas and preferences of their own, as long as they won't harm any other person. Stimulate students to explore ideas. Skills as decision-making, critical thinking and responsibility should also be motivated. Encourage students to make an effort and to contribute to the final product. This is just as important as the final product itself. It doesn't matter who is the best. It's about being creative, taking initiative and having fun.

Tasks for the facilitator:

- *Consider individual differences*

Consider that not every participant has the same level of understanding. Therefore you must level with every student in particular.

- *Stimulate curiosity and exploration*

Before giving the right answer, let each participant think for him/herself. In this way you give each participant the opportunity and time to think things through. Allow students to ask questions when they don't understand or if they want to know more about the subject.

- *Provide opportunities for choice*

Give the students the opportunity to make his/her own choices. In this way students will get a sense of responsibility, learn to make decisions and see the consequences of those decisions (causality).

- *Encourage to generate several ideas before choosing one*

To support a participant in making choices, encourage him/her to think of various alternatives so that he/she is able to choose a good option.

- *Putt emphasis on the process and not only on the product*

When an answer is incorrect, don't just correct the answer but ask the participant to explain his/her answer. In this way, you prevent students from guessing. When you assist during the thinking process it will help the participant make new links. The final product will be thought through and therefore be more appropriate and supported by the whole group.

3.2 Keep up the good work!

Because development demands effort, as a facilitator you need some perseverance. The approach in this program is completely different from what participants are used to in school or society. This means it will take a while for them to adopt to this new way of learning. Don't give up when meetings didn't turn out the way you expected. Learning is a process and behavior won't change instantly. But when you hold on, you will see the growth of your pupils. This should be a good reward for all your efforts.

4. Structure of meetings

Every meeting has the same structure in order to support clearness, uniformity and efficiency. When the participants know what to expect from the structure of the meeting they can pay full attention to the content.

Each meeting you have to start with an introduction of the activity. After that the participants will do the activity. And at the end of the meeting there will be an evaluation.

4.1 Opening and introduction

Begin the meeting in time. Don't wait for absent participants, the next time they will be in time in order to miss nothing. If desired, give the group the opportunity to do an opening prayer. The secretary of the youth group fills in the attendance list (and also reports when someone is late), the president gives his announcements and after that he/she will give you (the facilitator) the opportunity to start the meeting.

Always start with explaining the content of the meeting; which main subject you will work on and which activity or activities they are going to do. In this way participants will know what to expect. If you need materials for the activity you can show them to the participants. If you need materials for your meeting don't forget to collect them at the CPYWD office. If the participants need to use some materials you need to explain how to use them in the right way. When the content is clear to everybody you organize the participants and materials for the activity; by making subgroups when necessary and divide the materials among the participants.

4.2 Activity

Since we want the participants to learn through experience and play, most of the meetings will be practical and playful. You have to create an environment where the participants can be creative and develop themselves. Therefore you can use the PAC-man approach. Cooperation is also an important aspect to get to the learning through play approach. Therefore chapter 5 handles on the use of cooperation.

4.3 Process and product

Process and product are strongly connected to each other. During the activities the participants have to work together with the given materials and instructions to create the final product. This working together is the process. The relationships between participants are essential parts of the process. The product can be a presentation, a piece of work or just the outcome of an activity (for example if you play a sport).

If there are problems in the process it will reflect on the product. The other way round, if the product isn't what they expected it will reflect on the relations between the participants.

Because of this strong connection, there needs to be an alternation of attention for the process and the product.

If there is a problem in the process, for example a conflict between two participants, you can ask the participants some questions and give positive alternatives to clear the situation. If there is a problem with the product, you can give practical solutions and opportunities to solve the problem or do something different the next time (see evaluation).

4.4 Evaluation

Reflection will give the participant the opportunity to learn from a situation, therefore an evaluation is an essential component of each meeting. So you need to encourage all the participants to reflect upon the whole activity (their behavior, behavior of others, execution, etc.). To stimulate self-identity and development and to improve the meetings. It is useful if the secretary (or you as a facilitator) writes down the evaluation points, in order to remember and utilize them in the future and give feedback to CPYWD.

- What is your opinion on the meeting?
- What went well?
- What went wrong?
- Are you satisfied with the result?
- What did we learn from this meeting?
- What can be improved next time?
- Is there any other comment?

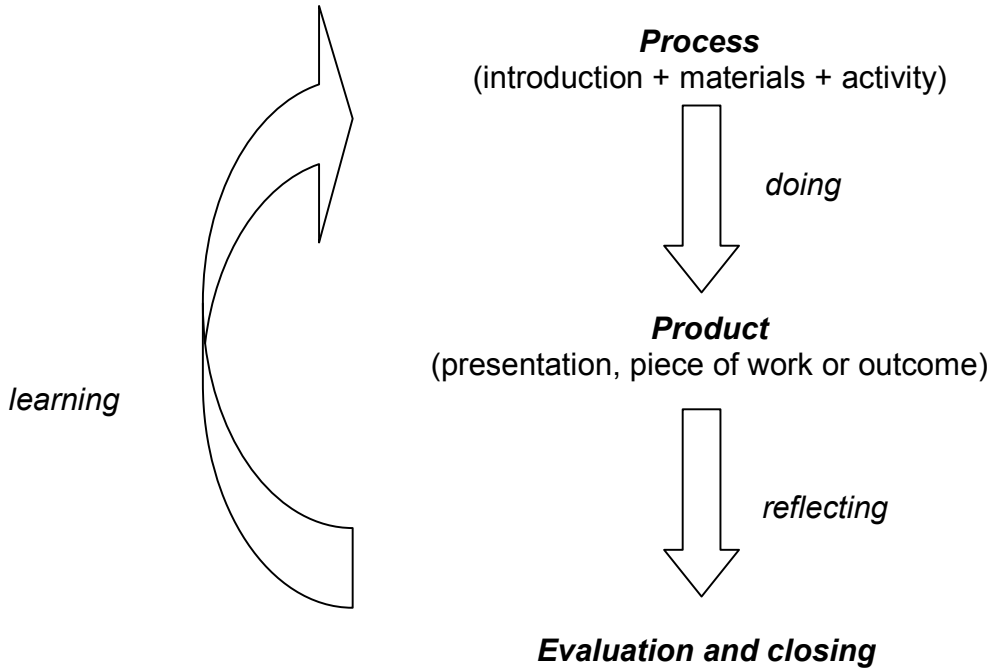
Also stimulate participants to ask questions to one another to promote critical thinking. Try to let every participant say something about the meeting. Make sure they respect each other. Everybody needs to feel free to express themselves in his/her own way, without being laughed at. Through this evaluation you can conclude what went well and what could be improved.

4.5 Closing

Other announcements for the group can be made and participants can ask questions they have besides the current meeting. Thank the participants for their attention and participation and inform them on the date and time of the next meeting. Give the group the opportunity to lead a closing prayer.

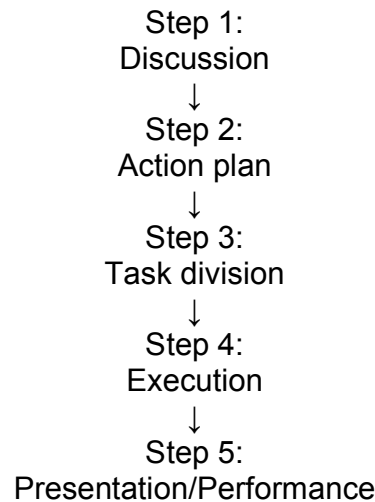
After closing there is time to talk with individual participants if someone seemed not motivated or not happy. Try to solve problems that exist in the group in cooperation with the group leader.

4.6 Structure of meetings in a picture



5. Cooperation

In almost every meeting, participants have to cooperate. If properly guided, cooperation can lead to strong relationships and to deliberate decisions. To have a good cooperation, a friendly positive atmosphere is essential for every participant to enjoy and learn. Below the complete cooperation process is described. It is a process in five steps. In some activities, the whole process will take place, while in others activities only some steps of cooperation will be done.



5.1 Subgroups

The bigger the group the harder to cooperate properly. For this reason, during many activities you can divide the big group into subgroups. The groups can be formed by the group members themselves or by you (the facilitator). The advantage of the first option is that subgroup members get a sense of being taken serious. They are likely to be friends, won't quarrel and will have fun. The disadvantage is that they could be less serious and will soon agree with each other, what obstructs having a good discussion. If you divide the participants into groups, they will learn to cooperate with several different personalities. They might be more withdrawn because they don't know the others. As a facilitator you can decide each meeting how to form the groups. It is good to make different subgroups every meeting, so the participants learn to cooperate well with different people. Always be aware of your tasks stipulated above (stimulate, encourage, etc.)

If you have a subgroup of three participants or more and you want to make sure that every participant is involved in the cooperation, you need to appoint a subgroup-leader. Either you as a facilitator can choose somebody or you can let the subgroup do it itself. The task of a subgroup-leader is to give every participant in the group the chance to give ideas and work on the product. Decisions will be taken by the whole subgroup, which means that the opinion of the subgroup-leader does not have more weight. Make sure that each subgroup-leader is aware of his/her task. In several meetings, the role of subgroup-leader has to circulate among all participants, so you give every participant the chance to practice leadership skills.

5.2 The steps of cooperation

Step 1: Discussion

During cooperation, discussing is a key component to assure that the result will be a group product instead of that of an individual. To achieve the best results, different ideas and opinions have to be generated in one group. Don't allow participants to agree on one idea before looking at alternatives! The subgroup leader is the discussion leader and gives every person the chance to participate.

A discussion can be divided in the following four stages:

1. Releasing and sharing of ideas
2. Defending of ideas with arguments
3. Discussion
4. Group decision

The first stage is releasing several alternatives to accomplish the assignment (1). When each participant has named his/her idea, each idea has to be defended with arguments (2). If all participants have shared their ideas and arguments, the participants can question each other and the discussion will take place (3). Which idea has the most advantages over disadvantages? If not all participants agree on the same idea, they can vote. The idea that gets the most votes will be executed. So at the end it needs to be a group decision (4).

Step 2: Action plan

When the idea is born and the decision is made, participants have to make an action plan. Which tasks have to be done in what order? Or what steps do we have to take? What materials do we need? Then the group will make a plan of execution together.

Step 3: Task division

After making a plan of action the tasks have to be divided. So after deciding what we will do, we have to decide who will do what. The participants need to discuss which participant will do which part of the work. The task division can be based on motivation or expertise. It is the responsibility of the subgroup-leader that every member gets at least one task that satisfies him/her.

Step 4: Execution

After the dividing the tasks, the actual execution can start. Once again, there must be a positive working atmosphere. Participants must support each other. Helping each other by giving advice or feedback will help the process. Feedback is a positive formulated and constructive suggestion how to handle things in a better way. If the executor asks for help, after trying himself/herself, a group mate can help him/her. However helping does not mean taking over the task. The person who was been assigned to a certain task must finish it.

Step 5: Presentation/Performance

Depending on the assignment, either one subgroup member or the whole subgroup will present or perform their product to the rest of the group. This will help the participants to learn to speak in front of a public. As a facilitator you have to make sure that everyone pays attention to each other. After the presentation/performance, the other participants can ask questions if something is not clear or if they are interested to know more. This promotes involvement and a better understanding of the content of the presentation.

6. Meetings

You should plan every meeting ahead. As a facilitator you must have a certain group in mind when you make a program. Not every group is the same and every group should be approached different. All the activities that could be used are available at the CPYWD office. Try to visit the office as much as possible so you can use different activities every time. The activities are divided into different trained skills. Try to train two (or more) different skills every time you do a meeting and try to do different skills as much as possible.

The total amount for the activities is estimated on one hour. With the opening, evaluation and closing, the total meeting will take one hour and a half. You should estimate, before a meeting how long you will do a certain activity so you use the time presented as useful as possible.

Share your ideas with the CPYWD office for other and new activities as well as adaptations to the old activities. You can also encourage the group to come up with own activities. It is important for them to gather even when there is no facilitator present. When you support the stated goal of the program and use this exposition as a guideline, you are free to be creative with this manual and make well-considered own choices. Try to indicate in the meeting book which games you played with the participants. This way other facilitators who also have to guide the group will know which activities are already done.

Have fun!