

The Epicenter Strategy Training Toolkit



Produced by
The Hunger Project Malawi with
Kadale Consultants Ltd.

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Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ART	Antiretroviral Therapy
DLO	District Liaison Officer (An Implementation Officer)
EPO	Epicenter Project Officer (An Implementation Officer)
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GVH	Group Village Head (A Traditional Local Leader)
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IGA	Income Generating Activity
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MUSCCO	Malawi Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
SS	Sector Specialist (An Implementation Officer)
SACCO	Savings and Credit Cooperative Organisation
THP	The Hunger Project
THPM	The Hunger Project Malawi
ToC	Theory of Change
VBW	Village Based Workshop
VCA	Vision, Commitment and Action
VH	Village Head (A Traditional Local Leader)
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Association
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WEP	Women's Empowerment Program

Introduction

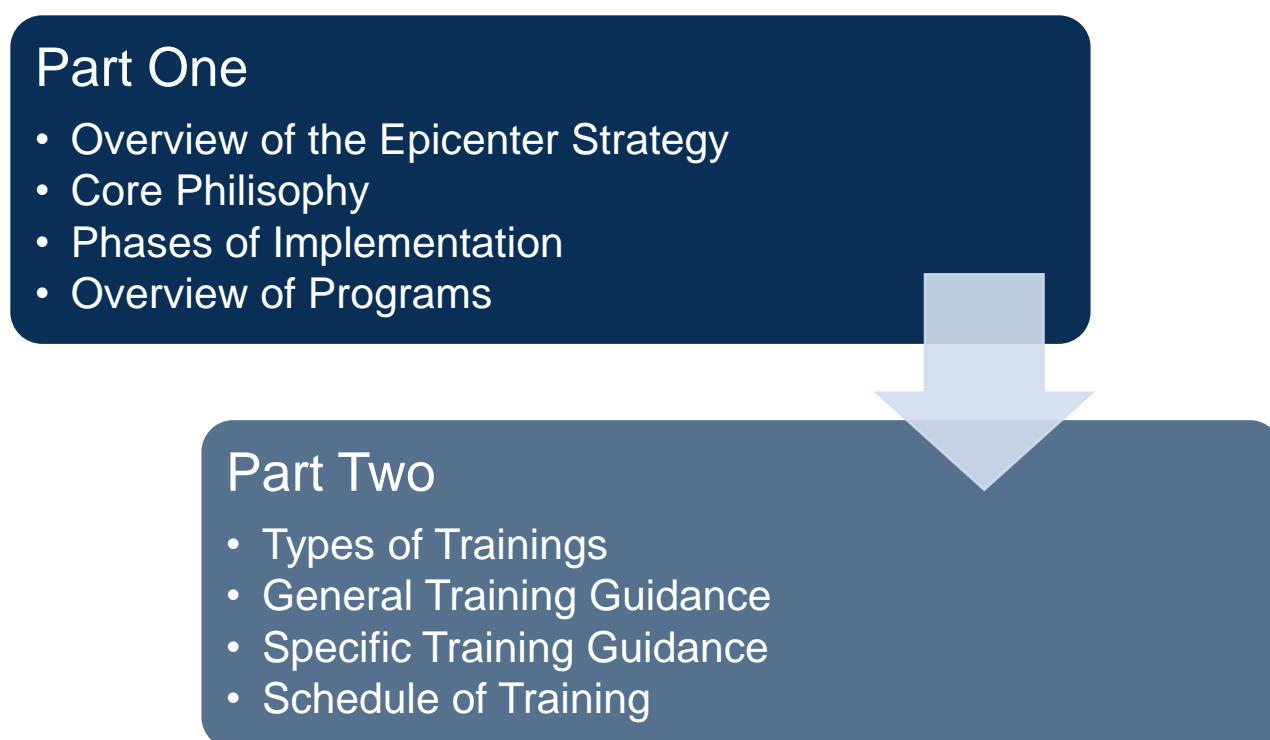
The Hunger Project (THP) has been implementing its Epicenter Strategy across eight different African countries over the past 20 years. With the aim of scaling up its reach and impact, THP now wishes to partner with other like-minded organisations who wish to implement the Epicenter Strategy themselves.

The key activity of the Epicenter Strategy implementation is a series of training courses, which are conducted throughout the five to eight years over which the strategy is implemented. The training courses are delivered by a mixture of THP staff, local Government staff, external consultants and by the members of the community themselves. In order to empower their partner organisations to implement the Epicenter Strategy, THP has undertaken to develop a comprehensive training toolkit. The Hunger Project Malawi (THPM), volunteered to complete this task, with assistance from Kadale Consultants Ltd, a Malawi-registered consulting firm.

The purpose of the toolkit is to capture all aspects of the training courses, in particular the Animator Training Courses, conducted as part of the Epicenter Strategy in an accessible and standardized format. The aim of this is to ensure that the Epicenter Strategy is implemented to the same standard and with the same culture by implementing partners as it has been by THP to date.

This toolkit is split into two sections:

Figure 1: Structure of the Toolkit



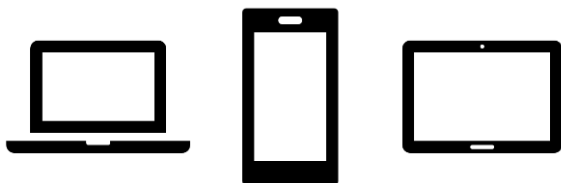
Part One give essential background information on the Epicenter Strategy, which must be understood by implementing partners before training courses are conducted. This includes a general overview of the strategy, describes its core philosophy, outlines the phases of implementation and gives an overview of the programs (also known as ‘thematic areas’) that make up the Epicenter Strategy.

Part Two focusses on the actual training courses conducted and assumes knowledge of the terms and concepts covered in Part One. This includes an explanation of the different types of trainings, general guidance notes that should apply to all training courses, specific guidance notes for each individual training course and an outline of the schedule in which courses occur throughout implementation.

Where this toolkit makes reference to other documents that are used in the training course, such as templates, forms and checklists, these are included as annexes at the end of the toolkit. The Training Manuals, which contain the content used in each course are referenced in the [‘Specific Guidance by Program’](#) section and are attached separately.

Finally, a series of video mini-clips has been developed to accompany this toolkit and communicate key points. Links to the clips (via YouTube) are embedded within this toolkit document at the relevant points and listed below for reference:

1. Epicenter Strategy Overview: <https://youtu.be/JdJRW1DyeQw>
2. Roles of Implementing Officers and Government:
3. Animators and Committees:
4. Core Philosophy:
5. Phases of Implementation:
6. Epicenter Training Courses:
7. Vision, Commitment and Action Workshops:
8. Focus on Microfinance:
9. Focus on Monitoring and Evaluation:



Part One



1 The Epicenter Strategy

Before providing the details of how training courses should be implemented, it is essential that implementers have a good understanding of the Epicenter Strategy as a whole. This section gives an overview of what the Epicenter Strategy is, then explains the key roles involved in terms of both the implementation officers and the community themselves, as well as other partners, such as local Government.

1.1 Strategy Overview

GENDER-FOCUSED, COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AFRICA

Film clip link 1: The Epicenter Strategy Overview



The Hunger Project's Epicenter Strategy unites 10,000 to 15,000 people in a cluster of villages¹ to create an 'Epicenter', or a dynamic center where communities are mobilized for action to meet their basic needs. This holistic strategy takes them on a path to sustainable self-reliance through four distinct phases over a period of about five to eight years. During this time, individuals build the confidence to become leaders of their own development, and communities come together to unlock a local capacity for change

Epicenters are located in communities that have been identified, in partnership with local Governments, as being in serious need and ready to take self-reliant action to meet those needs.² Implementation of the Epicenter Strategy happens over four phases, namely; Mobilization, Construction, Program Implementation and Transition to Self-Reliance ([see Part One, Section 3](#)), which take place over period of around five to eight years.

The Epicenter building itself is an L-shaped building that houses various service centers for the community, such as a clinic, pre-school and rural bank. It acts as a central hub for the various development activities that take place under the strategy.

These activities fall under twelve³ thematic areas, namely;

¹ In Malawi for example, Epicenters service between 21 and 33 partner villages, with an average of ~27

² Epicenters are also located a reasonable distance from the capital (or major city) to serve as a demonstration to policy makers and ease staff accessibility. They are never located in conflict zones

³ The number of different thematic areas may vary between countries. Malawi for example groups its Epicenter activities under nine program areas. Going forward THP expects implementing organisations to structure activities under the eleven programs shown here.

Figure 2: Thematic Areas



1. Also known as *Vision, Commitment and Action*
2. Also known as *Village Savings and Loans*
3. Also known as purely 'Education'

1.2 Implementing Officers

Film clip link 2: Roles of Implementing Officers and Government

Three types of Implementing Officers are involved in the Epicenter Strategy training courses, overseen by the Head of Programs and Country Director. The roles of the three officers responsible for training courses are described below:

Sector Specialists⁴

Sector Specialists (SS) are responsible for the overall management of one or more of the different programs that make up the Epicenter Strategy. In partnership with the Epicenter communities, SS set targets for each thematic area. The community give insights into what they think is achievable in the period and this ensures the community own the targets and commit to

⁴ These officers are known as different things in different countries. In Malawi, they are known as Program Officers. The term 'Sector Specialist' more accurately describes their role.

achieve them. The SS on the other hand gives insights to what was achieved for the same indicator in the previous years. The SS support the community in the implementation program activities to help ensure these targets are met. For the SS, this involves allocating budgets, scheduling and delivering training courses, liaising with the other implementing staff, Government and other Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) to plan project activities and participating in Local, Regional and National level coordination meetings for their thematic areas. SSs, in conjunction with the Head of Programs⁵ and Country Director help to coordinate the different program activities to ensure an orderly schedule is being followed.

Epicenter Project Officers

Epicenter Project Officers (EPOs) live and work within the community full time, residing in one of the villages in the Epicenter catchment area and participating in the full range of Epicenter activities. The EPOs work with the community to set their own monthly, quarterly and annual objectives (e.g. number of workshops held, number of people attended). This involves working closely with the Epicenter Committees ([see Part One, Section 1.3](#)).

EPOs also conduct a range of training courses, either in conjunction with SSs or external facilitators, or by themselves. They are present at all training sessions, even if not facilitating. They will also conduct half-day informal training sessions when necessary. They are responsible for notifying and mobilizing the community for different training courses and activities that happen at the Epicenter. EPOs also conduct monthly, quarterly, biannual and annual review meetings with Epicenter Committees, where they report on activities, compile and submit reports. EPOs also help manage and support the village ‘animators’ ([see Part One, Section 1.3](#)), monitoring and encouraging them in their volunteer roles. EPOs leave the community once it has achieved ‘self-reliance’.

District Liaison Officers

District Liaison Officers (DLOs) carry out a similar role to EPOs, with the key differentiation that they are responsible for several Epicenters in a district and are based at the district center rather than within the Epicenter community. The DLOs represent the Epicenter at a district level, participating in district committees, liaising with local Government and other NGOs operating in the area. They are responsible for identifying the needs of communities in their districts and the corresponding training courses and activities that are required to meet them. Like EPOs, DLOs carry out several different training courses themselves and organize training courses to be delivered by Government staff and other external facilitators.

⁵ In Malawi, the Head of Programs is also a Sector Specialist

Figure 3: Implementing Officers



1.3 Community Partners

Film clip link 3: Animators and Committees

The Epicenter Strategy is a community-led development approach. In line with this approach, members of the community are known as ‘partners’ rather than ‘beneficiaries’. The key community partners in implementing the strategy are volunteers, known as ‘animators’. The animators also form the various thematic area committees that manage the Epicenter’s operations.

Animators

Animators are volunteers from the community, selected by the community to serve them in different thematic areas of the Epicenter Strategy. Local leaders meet and identify people with the right characteristics from among their community to become animators. The personal requirements of animators are that they should be a confident public speaker, a good role model, influential in the community, willing and able to volunteer their time and able to read and write. The animators work closely with the EPOs on a daily basis, who provide them with information, coordination and support.

Animators are recruited and trained for each thematic area. The two key roles of the animators are to mobilize their community to carry out development activities and to disseminate information in their thematic areas. The Epicenter Strategy adopts a ‘training of trainers’ methodology, where animators are trained by specialists, either from the implementing organization or relevant Government department, so that they are able in turn to go and train the wider community through village-based workshops ([see Part Two, Section 1.4](#)).

Given the vital importance of Animators in implementing the Epicenter Strategy, these Animator Training Courses are the primary focus of this toolkit.

Animators from each thematic area elect a committee from among themselves to manage the activities under their program. The thematic area committee choose from among themselves one person to be trained as an M&E animator, this is typically the committee secretary. This is because minute taking (the main role of secretaries) is included in the M&E training. If the secretary is not willing/able, then the EPO suggests the best person for the job from the other committee members. Therefore, all thematic areas must have their animators recruited before M&E Animator selection and training takes place.

Committees

The Epicenter has an overall leadership committee known as the Epicenter Committee. Members are drawn from village clusters (with typically three villages per cluster), with one member from each cluster. The community are introduced to the Epicenter concept and sensitized on the need for good leadership by the SSs who make intensive visits to the community in the early phases of implementation. Each village cluster then nominates members from among themselves and informs the EPO. These committees have two-year terms and hold quarterly accountability meetings. Epicenter Committees must have equal numbers of men and women as members.

Working under the leadership committee there are committees made up of animators from each thematic area. The animators in each thematic area elect a committee from among themselves to oversee and monitor their program implementation activities.

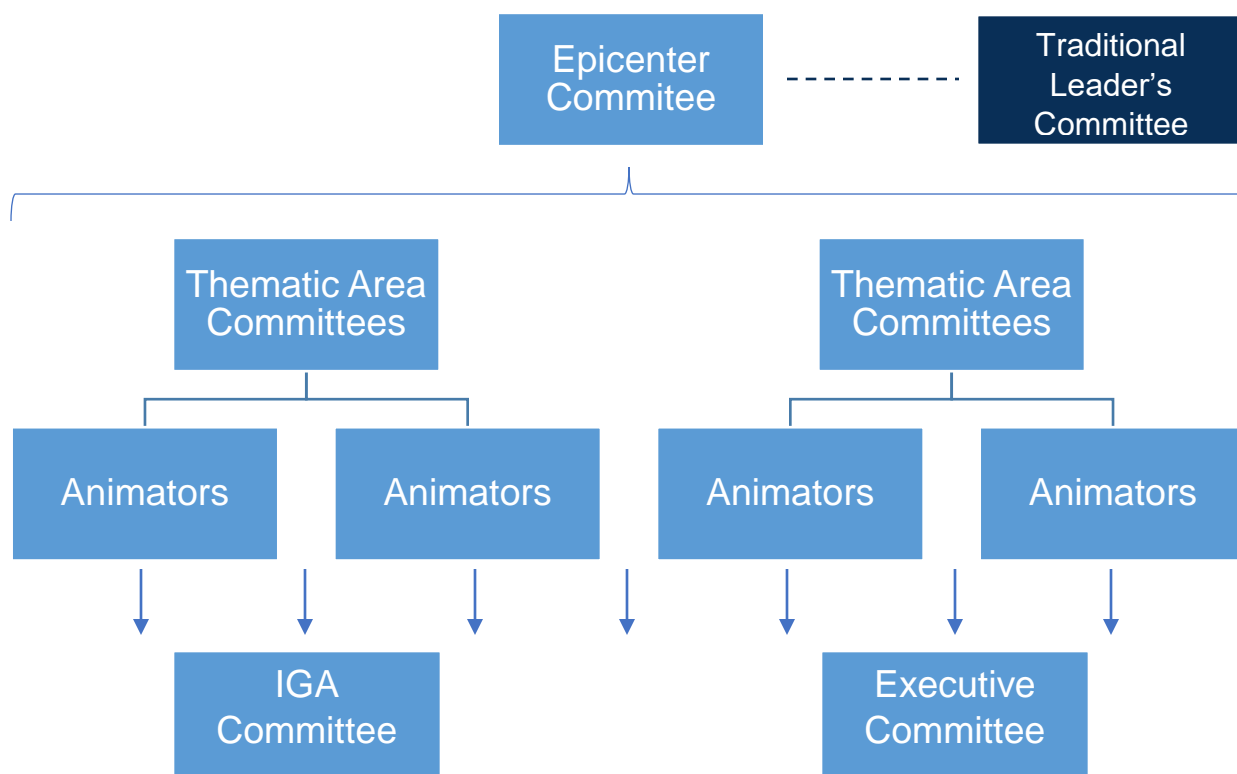
When an Epicenter is ready to transition to self-reliance, the most committed animators are chosen to form an Executive Committee, who will manage the transition. Epicenter may also form an Income Generating Activity (IGA) committee to manage any income generating projects that have been started to ensure financial sustainability.

“Committees are the ones that drive the development activities, so they need to have good leadership, and there must to be an overall leadership committee they are accountable to.”

Abridged Partner View, shared at Champiti Epicenter, Malawi

There is also a committee of Traditional Local Leaders (in Malawi known as ‘Traditional Authorities’). In Malawi for example, this committee is typically made up of the Village heads (VHs) from all participating villages, and Group Village Heads (GVHs), who are responsible for several villages, where appropriate. This committee is responsible for managing conflict between the Traditional Local Leaders and mobilizing their communities.

Figure 4: Community Partners



1.4 Other Partners

Government

Implementing officers and community partners need to work closely with and coordinate different parts of Government that deliver training courses and services to the Epicenter communities. Local and (if appropriate) national level Government officials should be involved from the very start of the strategy implementation. When a location for an Epicenter is being chosen, Government staff will provide socio-economic profiles to assist the implementing organization in selecting the communities in most need of assistance. Local Government should be consulted and involved at all stages to ensure their ongoing cooperation with Epicenter activities and to ensure the long-term sustainability of community development activities initiated under the strategy.

“If there is not proper coordination with the Government, they can frustrate your efforts”

Sector Specialist

Traditional Local Leaders

Another key aspect of the strategy is that it must work closely with Traditional Local Leaders in the communities. The importance of this depends on the cultural significance of these

authorities in the location the strategy is being implemented. In Malawi for example, this is seen as being very important:

“Chiefs are the owners of the project, since the chiefs ‘own’ the people”

Sector Specialist

Traditional Local Leaders are involved from the very start and all the way through the implementation phases. Implementing Officers visit VHs before any other workshops take place in Phase One to explain the Epicenter Strategy and encourage the participation of them and their community. A VH’s committee is formed and identifies members from their communities to be trained as animators, in conjunction with EPOs. It is important for Implementing Officers to communicate regularly with VHs and to be approachable and attentive to their views and concerns. VHs should be informed about the development activities going on in their communities and the tasks assigned to animators, so that they can monitor, encourage and support their efforts.

““We did not think that ending hunger was possible and we have seen other NGO’s operating in this area without success, but the chief’s support encouraged us to participate.”

Abridged Partner View, shared at Champiti Epicenter, Malawi

Other NGOs

There may be multiple other NGOs working in the same communities as the Epicenter Strategy on development activities. Some of their activities may be complimentary, others may be conflicting. Either way, it will be beneficial when implementing the Epicenter Strategy to coordinate with these organisations. This may take place through a local Government Development Committee (in Malawi known as the District Development Committee) or may require the implementing staff to build networks with these organisations individually.

Adapting to The Local Context

When the Epicenter Strategy is first introduced into a new country, it is essential that the implementing organization has a proper understanding of local and national governance structures. This includes traditional leadership, civil society and Government structures. Partnering effectively with these structures is essential to the success of the Epicenter Strategy, please refer to [\[INSERT NAME OF RELEVANT DOCUMENT HERE\]](#) for further guidance on this subject.

2 Core Philosophy

Film clip link 4: Core Philosophy



THP is keen to ensure that the core philosophy of how it implements the Epicenter Strategy is clearly communicated and transferred to its implementing partners. The best way to achieve this is through face-to-face interaction with THP staff who embody the culture daily and by spending time at THP Epicenters in person to see them in action. To complement this however, this toolkit aims to capture, by video and in text, some of the core elements of the culture and philosophy behind how the Epicenter Strategy should be implemented. THP's Vice President for Africa summarized the essential elements of the Epicenter approach in three ways:

- 1. Start with Women: Empowering women as key change agents**
- 2. Mobilize Everyone: Mobilizing clusters of rural communities for self-reliant action**
- 3. Engage Government: Forging effective partnerships with local Government**

2.1 Start with Women

Women's Empowerment

The Epicenter Strategy is summarized in the program brochure as *Gender-Focused, Community-Led Development in Rural Africa* and has women's empowerment at the core of its philosophy. The majority of animators are women, as they are better able to reach other women with the key messages of the strategy. As well as the Women's Empowerment Program itself, the Microfinance, HIV and Food Security programs have a strong focus on women participants and the particular issues faced by rural women.

When women are empowered, agricultural production increases; birth rates, childhood malnutrition and child mortality are reduced; more children go to school, including girls; and all of society benefits.

Mainstreaming of Other Disadvantaged Groups

The Epicenter Strategy also seeks to address the challenges faced by other disadvantaged groups in society. This might include the disabled, people living with HIV/AIDS or the youth. These groups should be mainstreamed into Epicenter Strategy activities where appropriated. This could, for example, mean setting a target that a certain percentage of those trained in good agricultural practices are disabled.

2.2 Mobilize Everyone

Vision, Commitment and Action Workshops

A Vision, Commitment and Action workshop emphasizes the critical importance of leadership, creates a clear vision of the future, and generates commitment and action at the individual and community level to achieve the eradication of hunger and poverty on a sustainable basis.

Change of mindset, stimulated by the Vision, Commitment and Action (VCA) workshops, is the first and most important step to successfully mobilizing the community to take charge of their own development.

The Epicenter Strategy has five principles for ending hunger and poverty:

- 1. Change of mindset – means taking the community from the belief that hunger and poverty will always be part of their lives, to the belief that hunger and poverty can be ended and that the community themselves are the ones who have the power to achieve this.**
- 2. Good Leadership – Emphasizes the need for good leadership, including from Traditional Local Leaders in achieving and end to hunger and poverty.**
- 3. Vision – The community must be able to visualize what an end to hunger and poverty would look like for them.**
- 4. Commitment – The community must be committed to achieving this vision and are encouraged to make a public declaration as such.**
- 5. Action – The community must work hard with their own effort to achieve this vision and take tangible actions.**

The Epicenter approach targets mindset change in all areas of life that are perpetuating cycles of hunger and poverty or holding back development.

“In this area, people used to use their spare money to buy beer. The VCA workshops changed people’s mindsets, so now people use spare money to buy farm inputs.”

Abridged Partner View, shared at Champiti Epicenter, Malawi

The first round of VCA workshops are conducted by SSs and EPOs directly. Workshop are conducted intensively in the early stages of implementation, with each village in the Epicenter community covered. VCA workshops continue throughout the life of the Epicenter.

“Change of mindset is a long process, it doesn’t happen overnight.”

Head of Programs

After the initial stages, EPOs continue to conduct the workshops. Then, once VCA animators have been trained, they conduct the workshops themselves in their communities until the Epicenter reaches self-reliance.

Volunteerism

In many communities where Epicenter’s are established, there has been a history of NGO interventions. The majority of these NGOs provide some form of direct hand-out or economic incentives for community members to participate in their development activities. The Epicenter

Strategy is different in the sense that it does not give handouts or incentives, it relies purely on the commitment of volunteers to their own community development. This has frequently been found to be a major challenge in implementation as community members are, initially at least, reluctant to participate without instant economic incentives.

“In the first few months there is a high turnover of volunteers (animators) when they realize they won’t receive handouts for doing their work”

Sector Specialist

It is crucial to set out clearly in the early phases of implementation that handouts will not be given, to ensure communities have the right expectations and participants have the right incentives. Careful selection of animators is also very important in this context.

Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation

The Epicenter Strategy takes a participatory approach to monitoring and evaluation (M&E). The core of this approach is to make the members of the community responsible for monitoring and evaluating their own development activities. This is done to build ownership of these activities and allow the community to judge for themselves the efficacy of the Epicenter strategy. Regular data is collected by trained M&E animators and is presented back to the community via the thematic area committees. The emphasis is on collecting and analyzing data that allows the community to be continuously learning how to better implement their development activities.

Participatory M&E is designed to recognize and include communities as important stakeholders in data collection and evaluation. It expands the notion of accountability to answer not only whether organizations are fulfilling the terms of the funding they receive, but also whether they are fulfilling the needs and goals of the communities they serve. Participatory M&E requires including community voices in monitoring and evaluation and building the capacity of community members to become active partners in this process.

*Note: Monitoring and Evaluation for the Epicenter Strategy is covered in a separate document, **INSERT NAME HERE FOR SEPARATE M&E DOCUMENT**.*

2.3 Engage Government

Working with Local Government

Long-term sustainability is central to the Epicenter Strategy’s approach. Local Government officers are actively consulted and involved in the full range Epicenter activities, so that after the implementation period the Epicenter can continue conduct training courses and other development activities with support from the Government. A key aspect of the strategy is supporting the community in establishing effective partnerships with local Government and other organizations to ensure that services are available locally.

“One day, The Hunger Project will leave (the community), but the Government will always be there”

Head of Programs

(THP) partner with local Government and build the capacity of epicenter communities to negotiate effectively to ensure Government programs are effective and people are able to access resources that are rightfully theirs. Whereas before these communities were largely isolated from public services, now they are managing effective links with district resources to build skills, develop additional infrastructure and increase access to services. The epicenter communities are active members of civil society and remain committed to the fulfillment of ongoing and future needs.

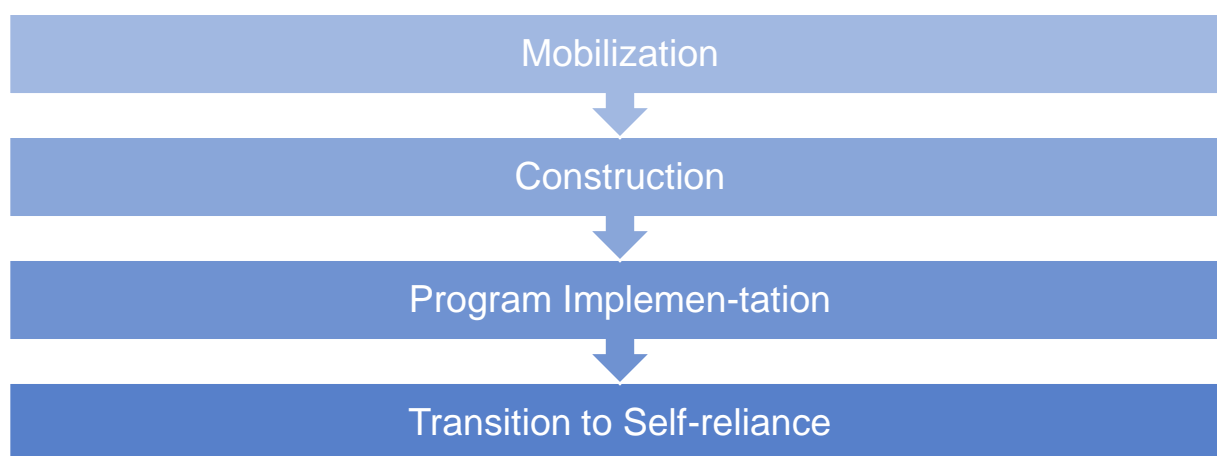
3 Phases of Implementation

Film clip link: Phases of Implementation



The Epicenter Strategy has four distinct phases, as outline below, that happened over a five to eight-year period. The explanations given in italic below are quotes from THP’s Epicenter Strategy Brochure, with additional comments in relation to training specifically from the THPM team.

Figure 5: Phases of Implementation



3.1 Phase One: Mobilization

In phase one, communities are mobilized to participate in Vision, Commitment and Action (VCA) Workshops to develop their own vision of a different future. Local volunteers, called ‘animators’, work with their communities to make a firm commitment to achieve their shared vision of the future and create action plans for moving forward. Community-level action projects are launched and build cohesion among communities. The Hunger Project supports the community in gaining the support of Government officials and encouraging local traditional leaders and Government to contribute sufficient land for epicenter construction.

EPOs move into the community once the site is identified. Their role at this time is to sensitize the community about what the Epicenter Strategy is and what impact it can have on their community. VCA workshops are the key activity in phase one but carry on through the life of the Epicenter. SSs and EPOs all conduct VCA workshops with whole communities. Once they have been trained VCA animators then in turn conduct VCA workshops themselves in their own villages to reach the wider community. Training of first animators in the different thematic areas will also begin in phase one ([see Part Two, Section Four](#)). A learning visit may be organized to take members of the community to an established Epicenter to help them the develop a vision of what could happen in their own community.

3.2 Phase Two: Construction

Phase two begins with the construction of the L-shaped Epicenter building. Community members work together to mobilize construction materials and create a food bank, community fields, a meeting hall, a rural bank, a clean water source, public latrines and, where they don't already exist, a health center, food processing units and classrooms. The Epicenter quickly becomes a vibrant center of community action and a strong symbol for positive change.

To physically construct the epicenter building, The Hunger Project hires an experienced local contractor to train community members in construction. The Epicenter Committee mobilizes voluntary labor to pull together the materials (stones, sand), clear the land, construct the bricks and begin laying the foundation.

3.3 Phase Three: Program Implementation

Once the epicenter building is constructed, the community continues working to address its needs.

Training courses and other program activities occur in phase three once the Epicenter building facilities are operational. Clinics will be staffed with Government health staff, nursery school and adult literacy classes will take place, the food bank will be stocked with harvested produce and the rural bank will be opened for business. Training of animators will continue, both in the form of refresher courses and training for new animators who have joined in later years or replaced those that have dropped out.

3.4 Phase Four: Transition to Self-reliance

The Hunger Project ends its financial and staff support for the epicenter's programs but continues to monitor progress for two additional years. This transition allows time for epicenter leadership to affirm its partnerships, ensure funding streams from revenue-generating activities and begin relying on its leadership structures for future growth. An epicenter that has reached sustainable self-reliance exhibits:

- *Effective, gender-balanced and fully trained epicenter leadership, with democratic processes and transparency;*
- *A strong Women's Empowerment Program;*
- *Access to basic services, including healthcare, education, clean water, agricultural tools, and microfinance savings and credit opportunities; and*
- *Epicenter income, with revenues that cover all expenses and a self-reliant microfinance institution.*

In general, following five years of frequent visits and training courses by Hunger Project staff, (there is) one year of intensive work to solidify the program implementation and two years of transition for an epicenter to reach a point of self-reliance.

4 Overview of Programs

The Epicenter Strategy is made up of twelve programs or thematic areas:

Figure 6: Epicenter Strategy Programs



Summary extracts from THPM's Program Description Documents are given for each program below by way of introduction:

4.1 Community Mobilization

The Epicenter Strategy recognizes the community as its partners in development; it aims at empowering them with skills to end their own hunger and poverty. Epicenter community mobilization is a capacity building process through which community partners plan, carry out and monitor development activities in a participatory and sustainable way, to meet their own needs with their own initiative or stimulated by others. This program involves training the Epicenter leadership in various thematic areas, identifying and training animators at Epicenter

level, establishing functional community committees in each of the thematic areas, organizing the Epicenter into a legally recognized institution for sustainability and capacity building of the community to effectively demand their rights from duty bearers.



Goal: Mobilize rural communities that continuously set and achieve their own development goals

4.2 Food Security

Low crop yields, limited access to and use of improved farming technologies, limited crop diversification, low family incomes, low community resilience to negative impacts of climate change and unsustainable agricultural practices are some of the underlying causes of food insecurity in sub-Saharan Africa. To combat this, the Epicenter Strategy assists communities by promoting modern farming technologies, non-rain fed agriculture, sustainable land-use practices, off-farm household income opportunities and the establishment of community food banks.



Goal: To improve land productivity and resilience of smallholder farmers and mitigate the effects of climate change

4.3 Microfinance and Livelihoods

The Epicenter Microfinance Program is a savings and credit program that addresses a critical missing link in achieving the end of hunger: the economic empowerment of the most important but least supported food producers on the continent - Africa's women. This involves promotion of off-farm household income, women-only and men-only credit groups, the establishment of Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) groups, creation of community Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations (SACCOs) and training in business development and management.



Goal: To reduce the incidence of poverty in rural communities

4.4 Health

Health: Maternal mortality rates remain high in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa. Complications of pregnancy and childbirth are a leading cause of death and disability among women of reproductive age. The objective of this program is to improve access to basic primary health care services in situ to the Epicenter communities. Epicenters work with the Ministry of Health at district level to achieve this by; building a clinic and/or a maternity facility within the Epicenter building, with the Government providing personnel and drugs for the facilities; providing accommodation for nurses near the clinic to allow for 24-hour emergency medical care; providing an out-patient dispensary stocked with necessary medications and vaccinations enables on-site and distributing Insecticide Treated Mosquito Nets for free to the community.



Goal: Improve access to and use of health resources in rural communities

4.5 HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS: AIDS is 100 percent preventable. If empowered with accurate information, and freed from social taboos, attitudes and behaviors that fuel the epidemic, the people of Africa have proven that they can protect themselves and their families. Empowered HIV/AIDS animators conduct village-based HIV/AIDS workshops disseminating facts and addressing cultural-based myths about the disease and use of condoms as well as ART services. Epicenter clinics provide testing, care, treatment and support services for people infected and affected by HIV and AIDS. Support groups provide nutrition advice and access to targeted microfinance loans and farm input loans to people living with HIV. Action groups against Gender Based Violence (GBV) are formed who monitor and counsel offenders and victims and report GBV.



Goal: Improve access to and use of HIV&AIDS related services

4.6 Nutrition

The first 1000 days of a child's life characterize cognitive, intellectual, and physical development. Epicenters therefore focus much of their efforts on maternal nutrition, safe delivery for pregnant women, lactating women and infant and young child feeding practices. Epicenters conduct nutritional counselling for caregivers with children below two years old and pregnant and lactating women. This involves promotion of crop diversification for dietary diversification, eating the six food groups with emphasis on growing and using high nutritional value crops, promotion of exclusive breastfeeding for children below six months and complementary feeding when a baby reaches 6 months, proper feeding of a sick child and infant feeding in the context of HIV. Other activities include promoting good water and sanitation practices for disease prevention, promoting good health and hygiene practices for good nutrition at household level and promoting growth monitoring and health seeking behaviors.



Goal: Reduce prevalence of hunger and malnutrition, especially for women and children

4.7 Women's Empowerment

Women are still frequently marginalized in many societies in sub-Saharan Africa. This is characterized by lack of access to education, limited ownership of productive resources such as land, farm inputs, micro-credit and limited contribution to leadership positions. Improving the situation requires society acknowledging women's rights and allowing women access to development opportunities. Epicenters train women's empowerment animators (1 female per village) to conduct village-based workshops to promote gender equality in development, legal rights education, sexual reproductive health rights, and leadership skills. Other activities include counseling to GBV victims, raising awareness on effects of the malpractice, and guidance on referral points; promoting women's access to productive resources and micro-credit through the Microfinance Program and educating women/couples on how to write a will, and know its benefits.



Goal: Empower Women and Girls in Rural Communities

4.8 WASH

Many communities have no/limited access to improved fresh water sources, basic sanitation and hygiene facilities. In most cases this has led to increased incidences of waterborne illnesses. In many cases women are the most affected group as they have to walk long distances to fetch water, often in darkness of the early hours of the morning, which is both unproductive and unsafe. Epicenters address this issue by training animators to increase community awareness on hygiene and improved sanitation facilities (latrines, rubbish pits, hand washing facilities, drying bays, drying lines etc.); drilling of new boreholes; establishing and training community water point committees; improving school water access and access to school sanitary services.



Goal: Improve access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities

4.9 Environment

In Malawi, this is not a separate program area, but is combined with WASH. The main activities under Environment are around forestry, as deforestation is a major issue facing Malawi, impacting smallholder farmers particularly due to increases in erratic rainfall patterns and soil erosion. Both of which are linked to deforestation. Activities aim to educate communities on the benefits of trees and encourage tree planting and protection.

4.10 Literacy and Education

Education is seen as a pre-requisite for combating poverty, empowering women and protecting children from labor and sexual exploitation. Of equal importance, adult literacy is seen as a necessity for people to conduct a basic business and is therefore a pre-requisite for participation in Microfinance groups and other developmental activities. To address this challenge, each Epicenter establishes a Nursery School, staffed by two teachers identified by the Epicenter Committee and trained by the Government. Classes are held every weekday for children between two and a half and five years old. Every child receives a nutritious meal, with ingredients supplied by the Food Bank and parents' contributions. Epicenters also run Adult Functional Literacy courses. Instructors are identified by the community and trained by the Government to deliver a 10-month program to teach basic reading, writing and simple arithmetic. Epicenters also have a Rural Resource center, a library where the community can access educational material.



Goal: Improve literacy and education of rural communities

4.11 Youth Engagement

This program is not yet operation in Malawi but is under development at the time of writing and will be part the Epicenter Strategy going forward.

4.12 Monitoring and Evaluation

Effective Monitoring & Evaluation procedures are crucial ensure quality and efficiency and to be able to demonstrate these to funding partners. The Epicenter Strategy believes in building the capacity of the target community themselves to conduct their own M&E activities, interpret the outcomes and use it as a management tool. The Epicenter Strategy advocates an outcome-based approach to M&E in line with a Theory of Change (ToC). Activities under this program include; a comprehensive baseline study, establishment and training of community members as M&E Animators to perform collection of output based data on a monthly basis on each program, capacity building of M&E animators to develop their processes, facilitating backward reporting platforms, acting as a quality control for program reflection, documentation of success stories and related photos, conducting outcome evaluation surveys in three year intervals.

Note: Monitoring and Evaluation for the Epicenter Strategy is covered in a separate document, INSERT NAME HERE FOR SEPARATE M&E DOCUMENT.

Part Two



1 Types of Trainings

Film clip link: [Epicenter Trainings](#)



There are different in which knowledge, information and skills are transferred to the community in the Epicenter Strategy;

1. **General Training Sessions**
2. **Animator Training Courses**
3. **Informal Training Sessions**
4. **Village-Based Workshops**

1.1 General Training Sessions

General Training Sessions are led by Implementing Officers or, more commonly, External Facilitators, mainly from local Government departments. These training courses transfer knowledge or skills directly to members of the community to assist them with their development activities. The main courses are those in improved farming practices, delivered to all interested farmers and those in SACCO or VSLA management, delivered to respective group members.

1.2 Animator Training Courses

Animator Training Courses are delivered by Implementing Officers or External Facilitators to Animators, who are trained in how to effectively pass on what they have learned to their communities, through conducting Village-Based Workshops. The first part of any animator training is on the community mobilization principles of 'vision, commitment and action', with the second part focusing on specialized content relating to their thematic area.

Implementing Officers may facilitate entire courses themselves, or only just certain components, or it may be fully delivered by an external facilitator, with Implementing Officers present to check quality. Though all Animator training courses contain an element of training on 'vision, commitment and action', only the VCA Animators are trained in depth on conducting VCA workshops with their communities.

Animator Training Courses are the primary focus of this toolkit.

1.3 Informal Training Sessions

Informal Training Sessions are mostly conducted by EPOs. These are arranged when some aspect of a training has not been fully understood or to address a specific issue that has arisen in the community. Typically, these sessions last about half a day and have no budget allocated.

1.4 Village-Based Workshops

Village-Based Workshops (VBWs)⁶ are primarily led by Animators and delivered to the members of their community at the village level. Animators conduct VBWs to mobilize their communities and pass on the training they have received. Unlike the formal training courses, which last several days, VBWs should last for a maximum of two hours and aim to cover only one topic at a time. Experience has found that it does not work well for animators to attempt to cover all aspects of a training in one go when conducting the VBWs.

Process of Conducting a VBW

The relevant traditional leader for the village⁷ where the workshop is to take place should be informed in advance for each workshop. This allows them to inform and mobilize the villagers to attend the workshop. Animators may also be required to go from door to door notifying villagers of the workshop too.

The workshops take place within the individual villages at a communal location, this should be somewhere with minimal distraction. It is recommended to have a fixed venue and time or date of the month – for example: *“every 1st Tuesday of the month at 2:00pm at the village headman’s house”* for the community workshops, so that the villagers know where and when to meet. Animators should keep a record of participant attendance.

DLOs or EPOs meet with Animators and go over their plan for conducting the VBW, to ensure they are covering the correct topics and sessions have been scheduled sensibly. DLOs/EPOs also hold feedback meetings, where the Animators share their experiences and lesson learned for the future. Animators should also ask the local traditional leader whether he/she can assist in facilitating the planning process if appropriate.

In terms of materials requirements, the Animators should be given pens and signing sheets to allow them to record attendance. Animators should also be given copies (in the local language) of the training manuals that are used to train them in the respective Animator Training Course, to use for reference when they then conduct VBWs on the same topics.

An example timetable for an Animator-led VBW is given below:

⁶ The term VBW is used to cover all training sessions that happen at the village level, so at times SSs, EPOs or external facilitators may conduct VBWs, alone or in partnership with the village animator

⁷ In Malawi for example, this would be the Village Headman

Figure 7: Example of Animator-led Village-based Workshop Agenda

No.	Agenda Item	Duration (Mins)	Notes
1	Opening remarks and workshop agenda	10	
2	Introducing Participants	10	Complete participant registration sheet
3	Summary of previous workshop	5	
4	Course Content	30	Refer to relevant manual provided from Animator Training
5	Group Discussion	30	Use questions from relevant manual provided
6	Activity	15	Use suggestions from relevant manual provided
7	Plan for next workshop and closing	5	Set expectations and encourage participation

2 General Guidance for Training Courses

The following are general guidelines that should be applied to all Epicenter Strategy Training Courses, whether internally and externally facilitated.

2.1 Budget

- The Implementing Officer responsible for the training should set a budget in advance of the training and submit a budget request through the appropriate channels for approval
- Based on the number of days the training will take place and number of participants, estimate the cost of providing; food for lunch each day if within the community, lunch allowance if training is taking place outside the community, allowances for facilitators (and drivers if appropriate), stationary required, printing, travel and accommodation for facilitators, communication (airtime) and any relevant other costs.
- The budget request should have an annex showing detailed training schedule and time table for the entire training
- An example of the budget request template used in Malawi is included in [Annex A](#)

“The training courses differ so there is a different budget written for each one. The external facilitators are expensive, as they are often engaged for three months and may have to relocate to the area.”

Sector Specialist

2.2 Venue

- Most training takes place at the Epicenter in the community hall, if it has been built. If not yet constructed, the training will take place in a central community building, such as a church or school classroom, or under a large tree.
- The hall is open to use by anyone in the community, so should be booked in advance. The EPO is responsible for organizing / booking the venue.
- A small number of training sessions may occur outside the community, possibly at another Epicenter if part of a knowledge sharing visit.⁸
- It may also be necessary to conduct a training away from the community if there is an event such as funeral happening. In which case they take place at a space to be hired/used in a nearby town/trading center.
- Most training sessions have participants sat in rows, but able to break into small groups in circles during group activities and discussions, thus flexible seating is required

⁸ Implementing staff should take note however that some animators may feel disappointed if others are frequently taken on trips outside the community and they are not. Training courses or visits outside the community should be shared equally among programs as far as is practical and not done without good reason.

2.3 Resource Requirements

- Training courses require the following materials; Notebooks and pens for participants to make notes; flipchart paper and markers for the facilitator to note responses, draw diagrams etc. and masking tape to stick flipchart paper or other visual aids (on paper) to the walls if held in a hall.
- Copies of the manual should also be brought for the facilitator and co-facilitator. Copies (in the local language) may also be provided for participants if appropriate.
- Facilitators should have their own copies of manuals they use, which can be annotated with facilitator notes or additional activities they use at various stages. It is also good practice to note down good questions from participants asked during sessions to ensure the same points can be covered next time the training is delivered.
- Certain courses may require additional specific materials. These are listed under each specific training below.

2.4 Translation

- In many cases, the training manual or course content is written in English.
- Teaching material must be translated into the vernacular of the participants and facilitators must ensure they are prepared to explain concepts in terms that participants will understand.
- Facilitators should prepare ‘operational definitions’ of some concepts alongside the theoretical definitions to ensure participants have understood
- This must be done in advance as detailed preparation and careful thought is required in order to tailor the translation of the content to the needs of the audience.
- An external consultant may be required to assist with translation.

“The aim is to replicate ourselves in their communities (through animators). So the training material must be made user friendly to the animators so they can use it in their community.”

Sector Specialist

2.5 Preparation

- Ensure all teaching aids are prepared in advance and refresh yourself with the manual content.
- Print copies of the manual to give to animators when conducting Animator Trainings.
- Plan a rough timetable for the different activities to be covered in the training. Leave some room for flexibility to allow for faster/slower groups.

2.6 Notifying Participants

- For training involving animators, SSs will inform DLOs or EPOs of the planned training with at least four days advanced notice.

- The EPOs will then in turn inform the chairperson of the thematic area committee, who is then responsible for notifying the other animators for that thematic area with three days advanced notice.

“Give the animators at least three days’ notice, this is normally enough for them. Notify the EPO a day prior to this to give time to tell all the animators.”

Sector Specialist

- Local traditional leaders should also be notified (by EPOs) when a training will take place.
- When inviting animators for the first time, the DLO / EPO write letters to the animators, inviting them to the training, or may approach the local traditional leader and request that they announce the training and mobilize the animators.
- For training sessions involving the wider community (VBWs), the DLO or EPO write a letter to the local traditional leader, who calls the people of the village together for the training to take place.
- Animators who do not attend more than two training sessions they are invited to in their thematic area should be replaced by another person from the same village.

2.7 Daily Timetable

- At the start of every training, participants should discuss and agree the daily timetable in terms of when and how often they will take breaks, what time lunch will be and what time the day’s session must conclude by.
- The timetable should take into account the distances that participants have to travel to reach the training venue. The day’s session should end in good time for all participants to be able to walk home before dark.
- Facilitators must arrive in good time each day, at least 10 minutes before participants are due to arrive

“I leave it (the daily timetable) flexible depending on how fast the group grasps the concepts. Group work exercises last typically last 15-20 minute and I might skip some parts of the manual if they are not needed for that group.”

Sector Specialist

2.8 Lunch & Refreshments

- Lunch is provided at all training sessions by the implementing organization, though not at informal sessions. This is cooked by members of the community with food provided for the training budget. The cooks provide their labor voluntarily.
- Implementing Officers present should ensure food provided for lunch is prepared in a hygienic way, that all utensils are clean, and everyone washes their hands thoroughly before eating.
- The budget will also provide for refreshments for participants at break times, such as bottle of soda or water.

2.9 Ratios

- The idea size for a formal training group is 20-30 participants.
- Training sessions should not have more than 40 participants. Courses should be split into two if more than 40 participants require training.
- As well as being limited by venue capacity, having too many participants can make it difficult for sessions to be participatory and are likely to resemble a lecture, which is not an effective method of teaching adults.
- There will be typically be two facilitators present in each training, at least one of which will be a member of staff from the implementing organization (a SS, EPO or DLO).
- Training sessions should not have less than around 10 participants, otherwise the time, effort and money involved in preparing and delivering the training may not be being well spent.

2.10 Behavioral Standards and Climate Setting

- Behavior standards should be set by the participants themselves.
- At the start of every training, the participants should discuss and agree the behavioral standards they expect of each other, such as not speaking over each other, not taking phone calls in session, etc.
- A group leader may be elected from participants to be responsible maintaining behavioral standards. Groups may also want to elect a time-keeper, someone in charge of welfare etc.
- At the same time, it should be reiterated that participants will not receive handouts for attending the training sessions, though they will be provided with lunch. Attendees must be fully committed to the training itself, not only attending in the hope of receiving a reward.
- It is a good idea to run one to two ice breaker activities at this point to get the group talking freely and ready to discuss the topics to be covered.

2.11 Facilitator Requirements

- Facilitators must have excellent knowledge of the subject matter in theory and in practice.
- They must have a clear understanding of the terms used in English and how they to communicate these in the vernacular using terms and examples that participants will understand in their contexts.

“Facilitators must be experts in the issues with skills to facilitate a training in the vernacular as most animators are not fluent in English.”

Sector Specialist

- Facilitators must have the ability to assess participants understanding and adjust their teaching speed and methods accordingly.
- They must have good group management skills, be a good listener, confident public speaker and be familiar with adult teaching and learning methodologies.

“Be confident public speaker and keep eye contact, thank people for contributions and questions, be a good listener and interactive.”

Epicenter Project Officer

2.12 Teaching Ethos and Methodology:

- Epicenter training courses involve teaching adults and should be participatory in nature.
- At the start of each training, participants should discuss and take note of their learning expectations from the training.
- The content should be delivered in an interactive manner, with question and answer sessions that establish what the group already know about the topic, with follow up questions to dig deeper and encourage peer learning. The Training Manuals themselves contain instructions on the appropriate teaching methodology to use for each topic.

“Think of practical examples that help challenge the negative beliefs of the community. Keep the participants engaged by getting them to focus on what they want then can explain how the (Epicenter) programs will help them get these things.”

District Liaison Officer

- All responses and opinions should be respected by the facilitator, whose role is to provide expert knowledge to help guide the group if some answers are factually incorrect.
- Facilitators should also make use of group discussions followed by presentation and feedback, activities, group songs, diagrams/graphics and drama.
- Long monologues from the facilitator should be avoided.

“Within the training there will be times when we can see that energy is lacking, then we do something new like a song or a change of location. We encourage them to make their own song about the course matter.”

Sector Specialist

- When Animators are being trained with messaged to take back to their communities, practical sessions should be part of the training. Animators should practice preparing and delivering VBWs on the material they are learning in a nearby village as part of their formal training. Their peers and the facilitator can then provide them with feedback and guidance for when they come to deliver VBW in their own communities. This typically happens on the last day of an Animator Training Course.

2.13 Review of Course Material

- Course material may need to be reviewed an updated at times. This may be due to new knowledge or theories on a subject, new policy or focus from the Government and other development partners, changing external environments, social attitudes and tastes.
- Facilitators should be experts in their subject matter and aware of these changes.

- The course material they use should be reviewed and updated on a needs-basis, dictated by changes in the environment, rather than according to a set schedule.

“I adjust the training course depending on what the Government is doing in my area, to complement their efforts. I also make sure the content is up to date in terms of current thinking. The manuals I used are regularly added to.”

Sector Specialist

2.14 Evaluation

- At the end of each training, participants should be asked to compare what they have learned to the expectations they set at the beginning of the training.
- As an instant feedback mechanism, at the end the training all participants are encouraged to share what their take-home point has been for the session, what they will do differently as a result and whether their expectations for the session have been met.
- Some training courses may develop a formal written questionnaire to capture this information.
- Even if this is used, it will be beneficial to receive this feedback verbally, so that any issues raised can be discussed immediately.
- DLOs and EPOs also monitor the actions of the participants that result from the training, which indicates whether or not the training has had the desired effect on behavior.⁹

“I evaluate my training in two ways; at the end of the training I ask the participants some evaluation questions they feedback to me, either through writing on a flipchart or on their own bit of paper. Secondly I evaluate what the impact of the training is on the ground since I am there every day and can see what they do.”

Epicenter Project Officer

- The M&E committee check that Animators are implementing what they have learned. The committee have monthly coordination meetings where animators from different thematic areas present what they have done and upcoming objectives
- In the event that a training has not been successful, the facilitator should organize a refresher training for the topics that were not well understood. Participants should be consulted as to why the actions from the training are not being successful implemented
- An attendance register should be kept each day of participants
- A training registration form should be completed for each training (an example from Malawi is included in [Annex B](#)).

⁹ For example, HIV animators have been successful in sensitizing people about the benefits of knowing their HIV status if lots of people from their village go to get tested.

2.15 Action Plans

- At end of each Animators training, participants should prepare an action plan for the next six months, as well as a monthly workplan of how the lessons learned during the training will be communicated in their communities (through VBWs).
- The EPO work with the Animators on their action plans, assisting them to achieve it and monitoring progress
- EPOs can also arrange for an external expert to attend the VBWs with the animators to back-stop their message and provide coaching and mentoring
- An example from Malawi is included in [Annex C](#).

2.16 Managing External Facilitators

- External facilitators should be sourced on a needs basis. Implementing staff, in partnership with the communities of the Epicenter, should identify the training needs of the community and source the appropriate facilitator based on this need.
- Where local Government staff will be facilitating the training, it is important inform them of the planned program of the training course in good time.
- External facilitators should be asked to provide a timetable and the training manual or content material they intend to use with the Epicenter community ahead of time, to be checked by the SS, DLO or EPO. This is to ensure that the topics to be covered are relevant to the needs of the community as identified and to allow implementing officers to check that the actual content delivered is in line with the tuition material.
- The relevant SS should ensure they have met in person with the external facilitator before the training takes place to communicate to them the philosophy behind the Epicenter Strategy and to agree on expectations and objectives.
- All training courses run by Government staff (or external consultants) will be attended by either the SS, DLO or EPO

“Supervise the external facilitator by being there during the training and make sure you interact with them before the training. The aim of this meeting is to get our philosophy across to them and to agree expectations.”

Sector Specialist

- It is recommended that the SS responsible read the course content or training manual in advance. This may help them guide the external facilitators on what areas to focus on. It also assists in checking the quality and accuracy of the message being delivered.
- The Implementing Officer in attendance should also be mindful of the nature of the facilitators methods and ensure they are actively engaging the participants.
- If possible, the facilitator should supply Animators with copies of the training manual they use so they have a reference for the VBWs in the following weeks and months.

“It’s also important to understand the program and the content yourself to some extent by pre-reading the manual and getting them (the external facilitator) to tell you what they will be doing. Then develop the program together.”

Sector Specialist

- Any instances of external facilitators not showing up for agreed training session should be reported and followed up with their superiors and the fee withheld.

3 Specific Guidance by Program

This section contains information on the training courses conducted as part of the Epicenter Strategy in Malawi, mainly focused on the Animator Training Courses. The training courses conducted in each Epicenter may vary between countries and regions with the varying needs of the local population, however the bulk of training courses should be consistent across all Epicenters. The general guidance given above should be applied to all the training courses covered below.

The specific elements of each Animator training, where not already covered in the general guidance above, are given in this section in a standardized format, by program area. For each Animator Training Course delivered by an Implementing Officer, this section captures:

1. Topics Covered
2. Objective(s)
3. Facilitator(s)
4. Target Participants
5. Resource Requirements
6. Preparation
7. Duration
8. Course Content (Referenced Link)
9. Evaluation
10. Action Plans

Externally facilitated courses are covered with limited details.

3.1 Community Mobilization

Training Courses:

VCA Mass Workshops, VCA Animator Training, Epicenter Committee Training, Strategic Management

3.1.1 VCA Mass Workshops

Film clip link: [VCA Workshops](#)



Topics Covered:

The five principles of ending hunger and poverty, namely; change of mindset, good leadership, vision, commitment and action. Initial VCA workshops teach the five principles in a general sense and can typically take the form of a motivational speech.

After the initial round of general workshops, VCA workshops with a focus on a specific thematic area are held. For example, a VCA workshop may be held with a focus on HIV, showing how knowing your HIV status can help to end hunger and poverty and linking HIV awareness to each of the five principles.

Objective(s):

To change the mindset of the community to believe that they themselves possess the solution to ending hunger and poverty in their communities. This is achieved through teaching the 'five principles of ending hunger and poverty'.

Facilitator(s)

All SAs conduct mass VCA workshops in the first weeks of a new Epicenter being established. EPOs continue to conduct the workshops after this time.

Then, once VCA animators have been trained, they conduct the workshops themselves in their communities until the Epicenter reaches self-reliance.

Target Participants:

The first VCA workshops delivered by Implementing Officers are attended by all members of the community as well as traditional local leaders and local Government officials. Community wide VCA workshops continue throughout the life of the Epicenter so that new members of the community are engaged, the vision for the community is further developed and new openings for action are identified.

Later VCA workshops, including those delivered by trained VCA animators, may target certain communities or people groups, depending on the focus of the workshop. For example, a VCA workshop with a focus on maternal nutrition may be targeted at women.

Resource Requirements:

Implementing Officers should bring a copy of the VCA workshop manual and pens and paper for recording attendance.

Copies of the manual should be given to animators (in the local language) to use for reference when conducting their own VCA workshops. Animators should also be given pens and signing sheets to allow them to record attendance.

Preparation:

Revision of the VCA workshop manual. When conducting an issue based VCA workshop, the facilitator should think in advance about how the issue they intend to cover links into each of the five principles and can contribute towards ending hunger and poverty.

As with all VBWs, the VH of the village where the workshop is to take place should be informed in advance for each workshop. This allows them to inform and mobilize the villagers to attend the workshop.

Duration:

Mass VCA workshops should last for no more than two hours. SSs will conduct VCA workshops every day in the first week of implementation. Thereafter EPOs aim to conduct a minimum of two VCA workshops per month.

Those conducted by animators typically last for no more than an hour. VCA animators aim to conduct one workshop per week in the Epicenter between them.

Course Content:

VCA) VISION, COMMITMENT AND ACTION WORKSHOP MANUAL

Training Evaluation:

EPOs based permanently in the community continually monitor the commitment of local people to the Epicenter activities and gauge the need for further VCA workshops to be conducted.

“The animators conduct the village-based workshops, so we (the DLOs or EPOs) go over their plan with them to ensure they have thought of everything. We also have feedback meetings where the animators share their experiences and lessons learnt so they can do better next time.”

District Liaison Officer

Action Plans:

Participants are asked to make a public commitment to achieve (its stated vision) and the identification of a set of actions necessary to achieve the vision. Participants are asked to develop specific action plans for a community project that they will achieve independently in the next three months using their own initiative, skills and resources.

3.1.2 VCA Animator Training

Topics Covered:

The five principles of ending hunger and poverty are covered in depth as well as group facilitation and workshop planning skills.

Objective(s):

To train VCA animators in how to effectively conduct VCA workshops with their communities.

Facilitator(s)

All experienced SSs and EPOs.

Target Participants:

The most active and engaged animators from each of the thematic areas are selected to also become VCA animators and attend this training.

Resource Requirements:

As per general guidance.

Preparation:

As per general guidance.

Duration:

The VCA Animator Training lasts for two days, with the second day being a practical day, where animators conduct a mock workshop in a nearby village. They are observed by their peers and the trainer, who then provide feedback back in the classroom.

Refresher courses are held with animators once a year.

Course Content:

VCA) VISION, COMMITMENT AND ACTION WORKSHOP MANUAL

The same manual is used for the Training of Trainers Workshop as for the actual workshops themselves. Alongside this, the content is essentially the experience and skills of the SS and EPO in conducting VCA workshops being passed on to the animators, so in this sense can be seen more as coaching rather than pure training exercise.

Evaluation:

EPOs attend the VCA workshops that animators conduct at village level to act as a backstop and to monitor their progress. This allows them to evaluate the effectiveness of the training first hand and provide coaching and mentoring if required.

Action Plans:

Trained VCA animators make an action plan for the next six months for the VCA workshops they plan to conduct within their villages. They discuss their plans with the EPO on an on-going basis.

3.1.3 Epicenter Committee Training

Waiting on submission of manual from THP on Leadership component

Topics Covered:

- An in-depth briefing on the Epicenter Strategy.
- The roles and responsibilities of the Committee.
- Leadership training
- Report writing

Objective(s):

To instruct the Epicenter Committee how to manage the Epicenter, including allocating roles and responsibilities, how to manage volunteers and finances, identifying and prioritizing issues in their village and how to write proposals for funding to meet these needs.

To instruct the Epicenter Committee on good leadership and governance.

To give the Epicenter Committee a comprehensive briefing on the Epicenter Strategy.

Facilitator(s)

Experienced SSs and EPOs. An external consultant may deliver the leadership component.

Target Participants:

The Epicenter Committee Members

Resource Requirements:

As per general guidance

Preparation:

As per general guidance

Duration:

TBC

Course Content:

Waiting on submission of manual from THP on Leadership component

Evaluation:

As per general guidance

Action Plans

The Epicenter Committee have a meeting on the 25th of the month each month. At this meeting the committee receive reports from each of the thematic areas to compile a report for the EPO.

3.1.4 Strategic Management

Waiting on submission of manual from THP

Topics Covered:

TBC

Objective(s):

TBC

Facilitator(s)

SSs

Target Participants:

The Executive Committee Members, made up of committed Animators

Resource Requirements:

TBC

Preparation:

TBC

Duration

TBC

Course Content:

Waiting on submission of manual from THP

Evaluation:

TBC

Action Plans:

May include a learning visit to an already self-reliant Epicenter

3.2 Food Security

Training Courses:

Farm Input Revolving Fund Management, *Good Agricultural Practices, Livestock Management and Pass-on Program, Fisheries Management**

**Courses delivered by an external facilitator are given in italic*

3.2.1 Farm Input Revolving Fund Management

Waiting on submission of manual from THP

Topics Covered:

TBC

Objective(s):

TBC

Facilitator(s)

Food Security SS and/or EPOs

Target Participants:

Animators are chosen from each village to be managers of the Food Bank.

Resource Requirements:

TBC

Preparation:

TBC

Duration:

TBC

Course Content:

Waiting on submission of manual from THP

Evaluation:

TBC

Action Plans:

TBC

3.2.2 Other Externally Facilitated Training

Government Agriculture Extension Officers deliver training sessions on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP). This delivered both the lead farmers (also known as Food Security Animators), who in turn pass on the knowledge to farmers in their community, and directly to famers themselves (VBWs), including using the demonstration plot at the Epicenter.

“We start by conducting a survey on why farmers have low yields, and this dictates what the objectives of the training courses will be. Some are based on what the extension officers believe are the key issues in the area at the time. We promote agricultural and crop diversification.”

Sector Specialist

The topics covered under GAP in Malawi for example include; Crop Rotation, Optimal Plant Spacing, Raised Beds, Mulch Application, Pest Management, Crop Association, Seedling and Nursery Management, Soil Erosion Prevention, Crop Storage, Improved/Hybrid Seeds, Post-Harvest Management, Fertilizer Application, Irrigation and Water Use and Row Planting.

Separate training courses may be conducted on Livestock Management and Pass-on and Fisheries.

3.3 Microfinance and Livelihoods

Training Courses:

Microfinance Program Animator Training, *Microfinance Basics*, *Cooperative Management*, *SACCO Management*, *VSLA Management*, *Skills Development*

Film clip link: [Edina & Fredson Talking on Microfinance and Training in general](#)



Note: THPM has run two microfinance programs in its Epicenters. Initially, the first 8 Epicenters in Malawi adopted a Direct Credit Program, where THP provided group loans to community members. These groups increased and formed SACCOS. Later Epicenters formed VSLA groups. Training that animators and group management received varied according to what concept was being run at the particular Epicenter.

3.3.1 Microfinance Animator Training

Topics Covered:

- The Epicenter Strategy
- Roles and responsibilities of Microfinance Animators
- Microfinance Program policies and procedures
- Business management, Marketing and Entrepreneurship
- Microfinance concepts including: Group Dynamics, Savings, Credit, Clubs, Financial Management, Default Management, Credit Management
- Leadership

Objective(s):

To be able to explain to the community the benefits of being part of VSLA or SACCO. To understand how to manage microfinance groups in a sustainable way, including management of defaults. To understand how to work well as a group and understand group dynamics and how to have effective rules for the group and ensure they are followed. To understand the key policies and procedures involved in running a SACCO or VSLA.

Facilitator(s)

Microfinance SS when Direct Credit concept is running as a forerunner to SACCOS.

Target Participants:

Microfinance Program Animators. There should be two microfinance animators per village.

As well as the animators, later in the program selected members of the SACCO and VSLA management committees are also trained. Since a large number of people are involved in the

microfinance program, more trainers are required to be trained to effectively pass on the key messages on microfinance at VBWs.

Resource Requirements:

Make copies of the manual to give to animators for reference.

Preparation:

Go through the manual and select the modules that the group will be trained on. Ensure you are familiar with how the concepts are communicated in the local language.

Duration:

The course runs over five full consecutive days. The manual gives a guideline on timings for each activity, but the facilitator should be flexible and adjust times based on how well different groups understand different topics.

Course Content:

MICROFINANCE TRAINING MANUAL

THE HUNGER PROJECT MICROFINANCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

“The policies and procedures manual is the standard operating procedures for all Hunger Project African countries. It is for me to read and understand so I can make sure it is being followed. Most policies and procedures are developed locally at the SACCO level. The SACCOs send them to us and they are reviewed and compared to our own THP and the standard MUSSCO policies to ensure compliance.”

Sector Specialist

Evaluation:

As per general guidance.

Action Plans:

Animators plan VCA workshops with their communities to explain the concept of microfinance and encourage people to form groups and start saving or taking credit. They assist groups to form and to register and screen candidates.

Animators also plan to conduct VBW with groups that form to educate them on the basics of microfinance programs.

3.3.2 Other Externally Facilitated Training

When the Direct Credit / SACCO concept is being used, at the point where around 200 people are participating in the program, they are ready to be grouped together into a cooperative. At this point training in cooperative management is delivered by local government officers to group leaders. Once they have been trained and become a licensed SACCO, MUSCCO provides training for the elected SACCO board members. This training course takes place at an external venue away from the Epicenter building, so per diems and accommodation will need to be provided. The SS for microfinance will be present for all these trainings. The SACCO board will also receive refresher training from MUSCCO after each new board election.

When the VSLA concept is running, VSLA management training is delivered by local Government officers to the committed individuals in their management committees. Again, the Microfinance SS is present at these trainings and may act as a co-facilitator.

Skills development courses are organized by the SS in response to needs identified by the community. The SS will recruit a specialist trainer in the skill(s) the community would like to acquire and the implementing organization will fund the courses.

“We engage specialist for certain skills for the skills development element of the program, for examples expert tailors found to train in tailoring. We work with the trainees to work out what they think they should learn. It’s a conversation between THP, trainers and trainees as to what would be most beneficial in the community, we want it to be demand driven.”

Sector Specialist

3.4 Health

Training Courses:

Malaria Prevention and Control Animator Training, Vaccines, Clinic services, Male circumcision, Maternal Health, Child/Infant Health, Sexual Health

3.4.1 Malaria Prevention and Control Animator Training

Topics Covered:

Part I of the manual addresses general aspects of organizing and planning the community workshops. Part II presents the topics for discussion in the community workshops. Topics include:

- Vision and commitment on malaria and participatory evaluation
- Malaria transmission, symptoms, diagnosis, treatment, prevention and vulnerable groups
- Mosquito biting behavior, life-cycle and breeding and recognition
- Risks of the malaria parasite
- Bed net hang-up, distribution, use and maintenance
- Severe malaria, community health systems and mother and infant care
- Community wide malaria control, problem analysis, action planning, songs/drama

Objective(s):

To provide villagers with optimal education on malaria prevention and control. The ultimate goal of the malaria educational activities is to increase participation and adoption of malaria prevention and control interventions by household members of the targeted communities, thereby facilitating collective action against malaria at village level. Health animators are also trained in this course on how to conduct community workshops on malaria themselves.

Facilitator(s):

Health SS and/or EPOs

Target Participants:

Health Animators

Resource Requirements:

- Visual material showing the transmission cycle (Visual 1)
- Malaria Rapid Diagnostic Test kit
- Pricker, glass slides
- Visual on Rapid Diagnostic Test showing test lines (Visual 2)
- Example of LA medication (blister)
- Visuals on house screening and bed nets (Visual 3)
- Sample of fansidar (SP)
- Visual of malaria mosquito and nuisance mosquito (Visual 4)
- Sample of blood-fed female malaria mosquito inside plastic tube of bottle
- Visual of mosquito life-cycle (Visual 5)
- Plastic container with water and mosquito larvae (malaria and/or nuisance mosquitoes)
- Visual of malaria mosquito and nuisance mosquito (Visual 6)
- Dried or live specimens in vials
- Hammer, nail, hooks, strings, bed net
- An example bed net should be hung-up over a bed, for demonstration purposes.
- Example of a torn bed net, with several holes
- Example of a repaired bed net, with several mended holes
- Locally available objects for use in drama on malaria (bed net; other relevant objects)

Preparation:

Prior to the relevant day of the course, survey for a larval breeding site near the meeting location; this should be used for a field visit.

Try-out the hanging of the bed net in the demonstration site prior to the workshop.

Duration:

7 days - 2 days of general training in skills for community engagement processes and 5 days of malaria training.

Course Content:

TRAINING MANUAL FOR HEALTH ANIMATORS ON MALARIA PREVENTION AND CONTROL

Evaluation:

As per general guidance.

Action Plans:

As per general guidance.

3.4.2 Other Externally Facilitated Training

Local Government officers conduct Animator Training Courses on; Vaccines, Clinic services, Male circumcision, Maternal Health, Child/Infant Health and Sexual Health

3.5 HIV / AIDS

Training Courses:

HIV/AIDS and Gender Equality Animator Training

3.5.1 HIV/AIDS and Gender Equality Animator Training

Topics Covered:

- Facts about HIV and AIDS
- Male and female condoms
- Gender and HIV/AIDS
- Gender roles, stereotypes and equality

Objective(s):

The objective is to train HIV animators as 'trainers of trainers' for HIV community workshops. The training equips animators with facilitation skills and knowledge to articulate various HIV issues as they facilitate community workshops.

Facilitator(s):

HIV/AIDS SS and/or EPOs

Planned in partnership with local Government officers.

Target Participants:

HIV Animators.

Resource Requirements:

- One condom for every participant
- A rod or banana (or any other thing object that can be used to practice putting on male condom) One is needed for every two participants
- Eight sheets of paper with one instruction on each paper. (see instructions on page 6 of manual)
- Poster showing instructions for how to put on a male condom
- Female condom

Preparation:

The training is planned in partnership with local Government officers responsible for HIV/AIDS awareness, so these people must be engaged before the training can happen. The program officer must plan together with local Government officers on which topics will be facilitated by whom and on which days.

Duration:

Initial training takes five days, with a three-day refresher

Course Content:

HIV/AIDS AND GENDER EQUALITY MANUAL

Evaluation:

The Training Manual contains a call for participants to commit themselves to tackling HIV/AIDS and gender inequality in their communities. Those who agree are asked to make a public vow, using words given in the manual.

Participants answer a set of questions to confirm their understanding of the course material.

Action Plans:

As per general guidance.

3.6 Nutrition

Training Courses:

First 1,000 Days Initiative Health & Nutrition Animator Training, *Dietary Diversity/Food Groups, Kitchen Gardens, Nutritional Behaviors, Child/Infant Weight/Height Monitoring, Food Preservation, Use of (cooking) Equipment, Food Processing*

3.6.1 First 1,000 Days Initiative Health & Nutrition Animator Training

Topics Covered:

- Nutrition
- Maternal Health and Nutrition
- Infant Nutrition
- Hygiene and Water

Objective(s):

Establish effective nutrition programs at epicenter level by educating animators on the following topics and how to effectively communicate them to their communities:

- What is Nutrition? What are Nutrients (including the different types of nutrients)?
- Food Groups & Balanced Diet
- The importance of good nutrition, in general and for maternal and infant health
- Basic science of maternal nutrition
- The importance of exclusive breastfeeding & basics of weaning children off breastmilk
- Food for children of specific ages
- The importance of potable water
- The different methods of purifying water
- The importance of handwashing

Facilitator(s)

Nutrition SS and/or EPO

Target Participants:

Nutrition Animators.

Resource Requirements:

- Print-outs of the pictures and diagrams contained in the Training Manual - cut out to shape if required
- Tape for sticking the cut-outs to the flipchart paper
- Handmade signs with the name of each food group written on it
- Water from each purification method prepared as explained in the session
- Cups
- Copy of water purification methods handouts
- Label for bottles of water
- Empty plastic bottle, scissors and string

Preparation:

The training is planned in partnership with local Government nutrition officers, so these must be engaged before the training can happen. The program officer must plan together with local Government officers on which topics will be facilitated by whom and on which days.

The facilitator must also re-read the relevant training manual prior to the training to ensure the material is fresh in their minds.

Activities in the training require pictures and diagrams from the Training Manual to be printed out, and in some cases cut to shape, in advance of the session.

Duration:

Initial training takes five days, with a three-day refresher.

Course Content:

1,000 DAYS INITIATIVE HEALTH AND NUTRITION PROGRAM MANUAL

Evaluation:

As per general guidance.

Action Plans:

As per general guidance.

3.6.2 Other Externally Facilitated Training

Local Government officers conduct Animator Training Courses on; Dietary Diversity/Food Groups, Kitchen Gardens, Nutritional Behaviors, Child/Infant Weight/Height Monitoring, Food Preservation, Use of (cooking) Equipment and Food Processing

3.7 Women’s Empowerment Program (WEP)

Training Courses:
WEP Animator Training

3.7.1 WEP Animator Training

Topics Covered:

- Legal rights of women, children and men
- Property inheritance and wills
- Gender stereotypes and Gender Based Violence
- Leadership and Teamwork Skills
- Managing Groups and Community Mobilization
- Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

Objective(s):

The training is broken down into three modules with the following objectives under each:

Module 1: Legal Rights Education

- To develop self-confident women leaders, equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out educational and other empowerment activities in their communities.

- To increase rural women’s knowledge of Legal and Civic Rights.

Module 2: Rights Education and Leadership Skills

- To build the confidence level of participants to carry out their educational and leadership roles without any fear.
- To sharpen their organizational skills in their quest to mobilize their fellow women and men in their communities towards development.
- To equip participants with group decision-making and group problem solving skills for the communities.

Module 3: Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights Education

- To equip the animators with the requisite skills to counsel their people, especially women, on basic sexual and reproductive health education and the various health opportunities available to them.

Facilitator(s)

Women’s Empowerment SS and/or EPOs

Target Participants:

Women’s Empowerment Program Animators

Resource Requirements:

- 15 pieces of paper cut into various shapes to form five squares for group problem solving activity
- Print outs of worksheets and pre/post test sheets contained within the Training Manual
- Male and female condoms (and possibly other birth control methods) for demonstration

Preparation:

The training is planned in partnership with local Government gender officers, so these must be engaged before the training can happen. The program officer must plan together with local Government officers on which topics will be facilitated by whom and on which days.

Once the plan is ready, the program officer should communicate through EPO and VHs in advance when the training will occur and ask them to invite animators to the training.

The facilitator must also re-read the relevant training manual prior to the training to ensure the material is fresh in their minds.

Duration:

- Module 1: 3 days
- Module 2: 1 day
- Module 3: 2 days – Training Manual contained detailed breakdown of time required for each topic covered and activity included under this module only.

Course Content:

MANUAL FOR TRAINING WOMEN EMPOWERMENT ANIMATORS IN MALAWI

Evaluation:

For Module 3 only, the Training Manual contains a multiple-choice test for participants to take before and after the training to see how their knowledge has improved as a result

Action Plans:

The Training Manual contains example action plan for WEP animators to use when scheduling VBWs and other activities to be performed following the workshop.

3.7.2 Other Externally Facilitated Training

External consultants may be recruited to provide general leadership training in addition to leadership component of the animator training mentioned above.

THP also supports Epicenters to get involved in national and international campaigns like International Women's Day, National Campaigns Against GBV, etc. THP funds animators to attend local, regional or national launches of these campaigns, so they can take information they receive back to their communities in and share it through village-based workshops.

3.8 WASH

Training Courses:

Hygiene, Sanitation, Improved Water & Treatment, Rehabilitation & Construction of Water Sources, Rehabilitation & Construction of Latrines, Collection & Disposal of Waste, Household Water Storage and Water Harvesting, Water Treatment, Water Source (Borehole) Management,

WASH animators are trained by local Government staff. In Malawi for example, this involves training by government officers from the Water, Health and Community Development Departments. The training lasts for five consecutive days.

Epicenters with a borehole also establish a borehole management committee, who are trained by Government staff in borehole management for five days.

The topics that participants are trained on are determined by the local Government and relate to what the pertinent local issues in WASH are in the area at that time.

3.9 Environment

Training Courses:

Forestry Management and Tree Planting

Environment animators are trained by local Government officers. In Malawi, these come principally from the Forestry department to educate the community on issues of deforestation. The training lasts for five consecutive days.

The topics that participants are trained on are determined by the local Government and relate to what the pertinent local issues in the Environment are in the area at that time.

3.10 Literacy and Education

Training Courses:

Literacy and Education Animator Training, Adult Literacy Instructor Course, Nursery Caretaker Course

Literacy and education Animator training courses are delivered by Government staff. The Animators are trained in basic adult literacy teaching skills to allow them to monitor the classes that take place at the Epicenter. Literacy animators are selected from people living close to the Epicenter building to make it possible for them to carry out their monitoring role. They are taught to conduct VBWs on the importance being able to read and write and the benefits of sending children to pre-school and school. The training last for four consecutive days.

Adult literacy instructors receive initial training from Government staff for 10 days, with a four-day refresher course held a few months later.

Pre-school caretakers receive initial training from Government staff for 14 days, with a five-day refresher course held a few months later.

3.11 Youth Engagement

This program was under development at the time of writing.

3.12 Monitoring and Evaluation

Training Courses:

M&E Animator Training (may include training on iForm Builder Survey's, Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions), M&E Training for Epicenter Committees and Sub-Committees

Film clip link: M&E Content



3.12.1 M&E Animator Training

Topics Covered:

- Background to the Epicenter Strategy
- Concepts of Monitoring and Evaluation
- Why M&E is useful and important
- Participatory M&E
- Roles and Expectations of M&E Animators
- Key concepts in M&E
- Challenges of good data
- iForm Survey Builder Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)
- as a separate session if required

Objective(s):

To ensure M&E animators understand the meaning of M&E and have the basic skills needed to be able to collect data relating to appropriate indicators and to produce a monthly and quarterly reports for their thematic area.

To understand how to use the iForm Builder to create and administer surveys.

To explain to M&E animators the purpose and methods of conducting KIIs and FGDs in their communities as part of their M&E activities.

Facilitator(s):

M&E SS

Target Participants:

M&E Animators.

This course may also be used to train EPOs, who will in turn train M&E Animators

Resource Requirements:

Data collection forms for the animators to be trained in and practice using.

Country Theory of Change (ToC) model

iForm builder survey and tablets with survey loaded on, if applicable

Preparation:

Before the training session, be sure to prepare material for Module Four of the Training Manual on animator roles and expectations – this content is country and possibly Epicenter specific.

Review the content on ToC before the workshop and prepare your talking points for this section of Module Five.

If applicable, prepare a short sample survey in iForm Builder before the workshop and upload it onto the devices you are bringing to the session.

Duration:

For the main M&E animator training material, allow for three full days, four hours in the morning and three in the afternoon. The training typically takes two days, but a third should be provided for, as the speed of the training needs to be adjusted to reflect the ability of participants to understand the material. There is not a breakdown of time by activity, to allow for flexibility in the delivery according to the speed of the participants in grasping the concepts. The group work exercises given in the training manual should take 15-20 minutes.

The separate training course that covers using the iForm Builder, KIIs and FGDs lasts for four days. The first three are classroom-based session and the fourth is a practical session testing the tools.

Course Content:

M&E ANIMATORS TRAINING MANUAL

USING TECHNOLOGY IN THE OUTCOME EVALUATION PILOT PROJECT MANUAL

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Evaluation:

The first evidence of whether or not the training has been successful will be the first quarterly report, which will show if the animators trained are able to collect the data needed in the right ways. If the data collection form is being used incorrectly, then a follow-up training session should be arranged to cover the specific problems encountered.

Action Plans:

As per general guidance.

Note: M&E Training for Epicenter Committees & Sub-committees

This is a separate training course delivered by the M&E SS and EPOs when facilitating capacity building workshops on participatory monitoring and evaluation for Epicenter Committees and different thematic area subcommittees, as well as the committee for traditional leaders. The content and delivery of this training is similar to the Animator training describe above. The content includes:

- Basic principles of M&E - definition of Monitoring and Evaluation;
- Importance of M&E
- Participatory M&E - who should do M&E and why
- Indicators - how to track progress for an indicator; how to use the data tools to collect data
- Compiling an Epicenter progress report for an indicator

At the time of writing the Training Manual for this course was only available in Chichewa (Malawi's Official Language), with the English version still under development.

4 Schedule of Training Courses

4.1 Mobilization Phase

1. VCA workshops conducted by SSs and EPOs
2. Identification and training of VCA animators
3. VCA workshops conducted by EPOs and VCA animators
4. Identification and training of the Epicenter Committee
5. Identification and training of Animators for each thematic area - except M&E
6. Election of committees for each thematic area from among trained animators
7. Adult Literacy Instructors trained

4.2 Construction Phase

1. VCA workshops continue, conducted by EPOs and VCA animators
2. Identification and training of M&E animators
3. Refresher courses for animators in other thematic areas
4. Training in GAP begins for lead farmers and wider community
5. Animators begin to conduct VBWs
6. Once Epicenter is constructed, Nursery caretaker trained
7. Credit and VSLA group leaders trained

4.3 Program Implementation Phase

1. VCA workshops continue, conducted by EPOs and VCA animators
2. Refresher courses for animators in all thematic area training courses
3. Identification and training of IGA Committee
4. GAP training continues
5. VBWs continue in all thematic areas
6. Local Government officer trains credit group leaders in cooperative management
7. MUSCCO trains SACCO Board members once formed

4.4 Transition to Self-Reliance Phase

1. Identification of the Executive Committee to manage the transition phase.
2. Executive Committee Receive training in 'Strategic Management'
3. GAP training continues

4.5 Notes to the Schedule

A workplan¹⁰ is developed annually by the Implementing Officers in partnership with the community, which details all activities to be undertaken at Epicenters in the coming year, including training courses. This includes both training to be conducted by internal and external facilitators. SSs are responsible for ensuring the plan is enacted, both by their own staff and Government staff.

¹⁰ Note: Additional detail on the development of annual workplans, including participants, process and content is contained **INSERT NAME HERE FOR SEPARATE M&E DOCUMENT.**

Many of the training sessions that happen are dynamic and reactive. The agenda for training in many of the programs is decided in partnership with the Government. Therefore, it is not possible to provide a detailed year-by-year schedule of all training session that will apply to all Epicenters, since they will vary in different places and at different times depending on the needs of the community and the changeable Government agenda.

It should also be noted that over the eight years of implementation, animators may no longer be willing or able to complete their duties and drop out of the program. This means the process of recruiting and training and re-training animators is continuous. Some shown may need to be repeated in full, rather than having a refresher course, if there is a significant turnover of animators in a given year.

Annexure

- A. Training Budget Request Form Example
- B. Training Registration Form Example
- C. Action Plan Form Example

A. Training Budget Request Form Example

BUDGET REQUEST					
TO	:	Country Director			
THROUGH	:	Finance Officer			
FROM	:	Sector Specialist			
DATE	:	DD/MM/YYYY			
RE	:	REQUEST FOR FUNDS FOR 'NAME OF TRAINING'			
Purpose, objectives and details of the training					
Item		Qty	Freq	Unit Cost	Total
Allowance					
<i>Add Items here</i>	X	X	XXX.XX	XXX.XX	
Subtotal					Total
Stationery					
<i>Add Items here</i>	X	X	XXX.XX	XXX.XX	
Subtotal					Total
Food					
<i>Add Items here</i>	X	X	XXX.XX	XXX.XX	
Subtotal					Total
Grand Total					Total
Requested By: Name of Sector Specialist					
Recommended By: Name of Head of Programs					
Checked BY: Name of Finance Manager					
Approved By: Name of Country Director					
Payment Instructions					
<i>Budget Line: Specify</i>					

B. Training Registration Form Example

THP-Malawi | TRAINING REGISTRATION FORM

EPICENTER NAME: _____ LOCATION: Epicenter Village DATE (DD/MM/YYYY): _____

ATTENDED: # Women _____ # Men _____ Total Youth: # Male _____ #Female _____ TOTAL DISABLED: # _____

ACTIVITY Training Meeting Training of Trainers (ToT) Village-based W/Shop Other: _____

TRAINER NAME: _____ Staff-Led Animator-Led Government-Led Other: _____

AREA	INDICATOR	SUBJECT(S)
COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION	<input type="checkbox"/> General Animator Trainings	<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership <input type="checkbox"/> ToT VCA, , <input type="checkbox"/> General Animator Meeting, <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FOOD SECURITY & AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> Food Security & Agriculture Animator WS	<input type="checkbox"/> Livestock management <input type="checkbox"/> Fisheries <input type="checkbox"/> Crop Rotation <input type="checkbox"/> Optimal Plant Spacing <input type="checkbox"/> Raised Beds <input type="checkbox"/> Mulch application <input type="checkbox"/> pest management <input type="checkbox"/> crop association <input type="checkbox"/> Seedling and nursery management <input type="checkbox"/> soil erosion prevention <input type="checkbox"/> Crop Storage <input type="checkbox"/> improved/hybrid seeds <input type="checkbox"/> Post-harvest management <input type="checkbox"/> Fertilizer Application <input type="checkbox"/> irrigation and water use <input type="checkbox"/> row planting
<input type="checkbox"/> HEALTH	<input type="checkbox"/> Animator Health WS <input type="checkbox"/> Animator HIV/AIDs WS	<input type="checkbox"/> Vaccines <input type="checkbox"/> Malaria Prevention <input type="checkbox"/> Clinic services <input type="checkbox"/> Male circumcision <input type="checkbox"/> Maternal Health <input type="checkbox"/> Child/Infant Health <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Prevention <input type="checkbox"/> Transmission <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Health <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<input type="checkbox"/> LIVELIHOODS & MICROFINANCE	<input type="checkbox"/> Animator Income Generating/Livelihood Activities WS <input type="checkbox"/> Animator Microfinance WS	<input type="checkbox"/> business planning & management <input type="checkbox"/> accounting <input type="checkbox"/> record keeping <input type="checkbox"/> sewing <input type="checkbox"/> handicrafts <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Savings <input type="checkbox"/> Loans <input type="checkbox"/> Animator Meetings, <input type="checkbox"/> Partner Meetings <input type="checkbox"/> ToT MFP, <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<input type="checkbox"/> M&E	<input type="checkbox"/> Animator training	<input type="checkbox"/> General Assembly <input type="checkbox"/> Outcome Evaluation Feedback Session <input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<input type="checkbox"/> NUTRITION	<input type="checkbox"/> Animator Nutrition WS <input type="checkbox"/> Animator Food processing techniques WS	<input type="checkbox"/> Dietary Diversity/Food Groups <input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen Gardens <input type="checkbox"/> Nutritional Behaviours <input type="checkbox"/> Child/Infant Weight/Height Monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

		<input type="checkbox"/> Food Preservation <input type="checkbox"/> Use of equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Food Processing Group meeting, <input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input type="checkbox"/> WASH	<input type="checkbox"/> Animator WASH WS	<input type="checkbox"/> Hygiene <input type="checkbox"/> Sanitation <input type="checkbox"/> Improved Water & Treatment <input type="checkbox"/> Rehabilitation & construction of Water Sources <input type="checkbox"/> Rehabilitation & construction of Latrines <input type="checkbox"/> Collection & Disposal of Waste, <input type="checkbox"/> Household water storage and water harvesting <input type="checkbox"/> ToT Wash, <input type="checkbox"/> Water Treatment
<input type="checkbox"/> WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> Animator WEP WS	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual & Reproductive Health <input type="checkbox"/> rights and family law <input type="checkbox"/> leadership, <input type="checkbox"/> household responsibilities, <input type="checkbox"/> leadership, <input type="checkbox"/> ToT WEP

ACTIVITY EVALUTION

How would you rate this workshop? Good Medium Poor

Workshop summary/notes:

	LAST NAME(S)	OTHER NAME(S)	SEX	Village/Phone #	Any Disability	AGE	SIGN
01			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	
02			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	
03			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	
04			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	
05			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	
06			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	
07			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	
08			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	
09			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	
10			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	
11			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	
12			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	
13			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	
14			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	
15			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	
16			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	

17			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	
18			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	
19			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	
20			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	
21			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	
22			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	
23			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	
24			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	
25			Male <input type="checkbox"/> Fem <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 - 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 - 34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35 - 44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45 and above	

C. Action Plan Example

The following example is for the Women's Empowerment Program, however the same template can be used for other thematic areas

Name of Community

Name of Epicenter

Name of Animators

Objectives:

Activity	Audience	Target	When	Who	Resources
Counselling	Adolescents and parents	80 people	Jan. 10th	WEP Animators	Models and Pictures
Role play	Youth and Adults	50 people	Feb. 20th	WEP Animators	Financial
Distribute condoms	Youth and Adults	150 people	March 15th	WEP & HIV Animators	Condoms, Penis models, Financial
Etc.	Etc.	Etc.	Etc.	Etc.	Etc.