



COMMUNITY CHANGE AND SOCIAL ACTIVISM

A CURRICULUM MODULE
FOR THE CUNY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

Prepared by

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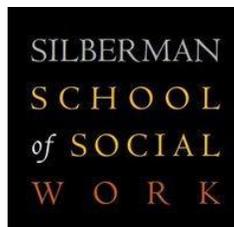
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Dear Faculty or Organization Leader:

The Educational Module presented here is the result of a CUNY Workforce Development Initiative (WDI) grant received by the Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College in 2012-2014. Its aim is to promote educational

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and career paths in Community Change and Social Activism (CC/SA) in New York City. Working together with several CUNY colleges, it seeks to stimulate the interest in and opportunities for students and faculty within CUNY to consider careers in social change, as well as to become more engaged residents in their own communities.

This CC/SA Module was developed in order to incorporate community organizing content into course curriculum at the associate's and bachelor's level and also to be used in training and staff development by community-based organizations, human service agencies and advocacy groups. It was prepared by the WDI team: Stephanie Yazgi, WDI Coordinator; Professor Terry Mizrahi, WDI Director; Elizabeth Rossi and Jozi Zwerdling, Program Associates. The Module was piloted in 2012-2013 in 28 courses or special programs with the assistance of faculty and staff from the collaborating colleges- Queens College, LaGuardia College, Medgar Evers College, and Borough of Manhattan Community College. It was further revised and refined in 2013-2014 as a result of additional input.

This CC/SA Module is designed to provide you with a specific curriculum to support your teaching of this content using a combination of didactic and experiential methods. We would recommend that you read the module in its entirety before facilitating for your class. It provides the script, exercises, materials, and resources for a 1-2 hour learning session which could be expanded with additional content as you desire. It is laid out with questions to stimulate participant discussion.

The Module includes the following sections:

- What is Community** - This section presents an overview of different types of community that are useful to understand for change agents.
- Video** - A 15 minute video "Taking Action, Making Change" to show how four different people have made community organizing a career path in Chicago. DVD has been provided to your organization or it can be viewed on YouTube link <http://youtu.be/fUI5CAn5zMo>.
- Community Change** – This section reviews the differences between charity, direct service (micro) and community organizing (macro) approaches to change, showing the importance of each, and how direct service can transition to community organizing and systemic change.
- Power** – This section defines different types of power, and the importance of analyzing and utilizing power to produce positive community change. The diagram of "the fish" and the "fish metaphor" concretize this concept.
- Campaign Activity** - The module ends with a campaign exercise for participants to practice the different principles they have learned.
- Evaluation** – There is a template of an evaluation form to use with students or participants which can be expanded to a before and after (pre and post) assessment.

The Appendices include a Glossary with commonly used community organizing vocabulary, an example of how to do the campaign activity, a list of books and other resources for further exploration. We have also added a one-page facilitator overview of the WDI CC/SA Module to be used as an easy-to-read reference for facilitators who are familiar the Module and no longer need the full script.

This Module is part of the larger WDI project which also linked students and faculty in existing organizations already working on community change projects, especially to improve the lives of people of color and low income groups, and to improve the social conditions of various communities. Another goal of the WDI has been to expose students to the opportunities for advanced knowledge and skills in a variety of graduate education programs including social work, public health, and urban affairs and planning. Finally, it has facilitated the interaction between professional community organizers and community based organizations and CUNY students in these four colleges.

The WDI is very interested in your feedback and suggestions as you employ it in your own settings. Please send comments to Professor Terry Mizrahi, Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College tmizrahi@hunter.cuny.edu.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE MODULE

Goal:	The purpose of this module is to promote community change and social activism as a career path for students in CUNY by introducing students to the theory and practice of making change. This will be done by discussing community, power and access; giving examples of community organizing as a profession; and having participants apply concepts and practice skills using a campaign exercise. The intention of this 1-2 hour session is to demonstrate to students, particularly those in the human services and social sciences, which values of social justice can be realized through acquiring knowledge and skills need to make change at a macro level.
Time:	Approximately 5 minutes
Materials for the Module:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video “Taking Action Making Change” (Will need projector, screen, and computer to show the DVD) • Materials for Module (see appendices): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social Identity Pie Handout ○ Fish Visual ○ Circle Diagram ○ Changing Power Over Handout ○ Campaign Activity Worksheet ○ Evaluation Form ○ Resource Handout • Materials for Facilitation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ TV or Projector, screen, and computer for video (and visuals if needed) ○ Board and chalk or marker to write notes

NOTES TO FACILITATOR: This workshop is designed to be from one to two hours depending on the allotted time and goals for your class or event. We have listed alternative options for discussions and exercises that could shorten or lengthen the session. Each section has a specific facilitator script for you to use or adapt. It includes key bolded questions. At these points, you should allow time for responses from participants, and if you wish, to write their answers on a board. Also, we have included common community organizing vocabulary within the module. Some of these terms are defined. There is also a glossary in the appendices that defines all key terms for your use or to distribute to the participants if you wish. It is recommended that you read this module in its entirety before you facilitate. To begin, you should introduce yourself and the purpose of the module.

FACILITATOR SCRIPT: (Introduce yourself to the group if you are not their instructor, and give brief explanation of professional experience.) *“Today we are providing you with some information on community organizing and change careers to gauge your level of awareness and interest, and provide some specific learning opportunities related to community change and social activism, sometimes identified as community organizing. First, let us start with the question: **What do you think when you hear community organizing?**”*

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NOTES TO FACILITATOR: This discussion should be short. Allow a few different responses. Highlight the key words or terms they use. The goal here is to stimulate the thinking of the participants on community organizing before they watch the video, which will give examples of career community organizing in action. After a few minutes, transition to the next section by asking – “Let’s start. First, what is a community?”

“WHAT IS COMMUNITY?”

Goal:	This intention of this section is to have participants understand that there are different types of communities (geographical and identificational). The participants themselves may belong to many communities, which can be seen on the Social Identity Pie Handout. These are also the different communities within which change agents work.
Time:	Approximately 10 minutes
Materials:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social Identity Pie Handout

NOTES TO FACILITATOR: Here you should shift the conversation to talk about communities. When you ask participants “What is community?” many times the first responses from a group will be a “**geographical**” **community**, such as a neighborhood. You could then lead this discussion to also include identificational communities. There are other ways to conceptualize community by thinking through the many identities we have which are our “**identificational**” **communities**, for example based on gender, racial or ethnicity, and religion; as well as our issue based or interest communities e.g. political, health status, etc. Ask participants to name examples of identificational and interest communities. (*Suggestion: Consider going around the room in order to get broader participation rather than call on only on those who raise their hands.*)

FACILITATOR SCRIPT: *“Now that we have a general idea about what a community organizer does, let’s take a step back and think about **“What is community?”** Often times when we think about community the first thing that comes to mind is the neighborhood we live or work in. That is a **geographical community**. **What other types of communities can we belong to?**”*

(Remember to allow time for participants to respond to each of these questions).

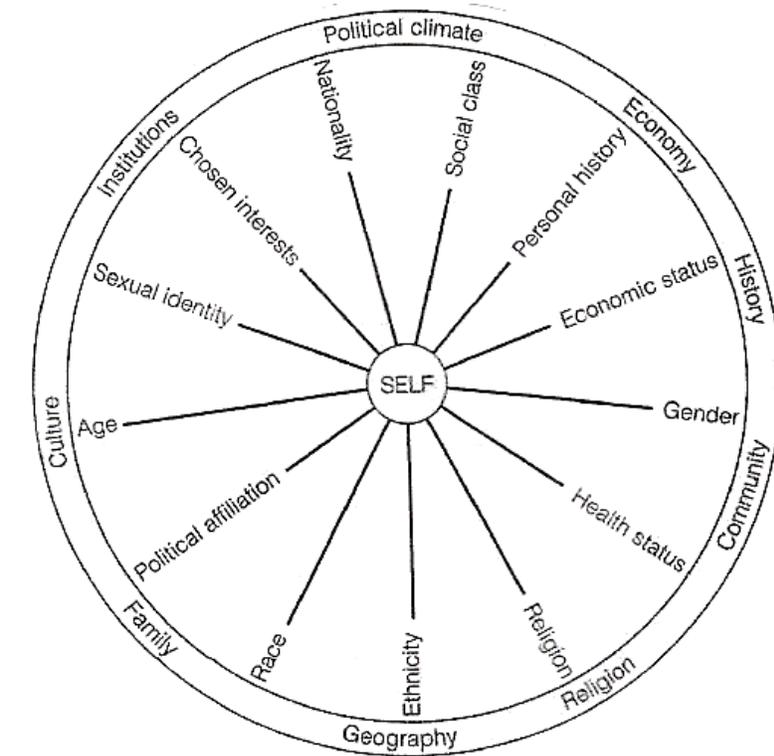
*“People also belong to **identificational communities**, where they share a common experience, beliefs, or identity. Examples are ethnic or racial identity (example: Native American), sexual identity (example: LGBTQ), religion (example: Jewish), political (example: Republican).*

Even within identificational communities there is great diversity; it should not be assumed that people within these groups have the same exact beliefs or experiences. We are all a part of both geographical and identificational communities. These can be both small and large, ranging from the neighborhood in which you live to your country of origin or the country in which you were born.

*“**What communities are you a part of?** Now I would like everyone to take out the Social Identity Pie and write down the different types of community of which you are a part.”*

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NOTES TO FACILITATOR: Here you could introduce the [Social Identity Pie](#) Handout to participants and give a few moments to allow them to look it over. Ask them to select ones they belong to or identify with, and whether there are any communities that they would like to add or are missing.



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Social Identity Handout

After you have given time for participants to fill out the handout, have a participants discuss their responses.

FACILITATOR SCRIPT: “Now that you have had time to fill out the Social Identity Handout, *what communities do you belong to? Was there anything you found surprising about filling out this chart? What does this chart show us about communities?*” “The one community you all have in common here is the CUNY student community and your identity as students.”

NOTES TO FACILITATOR: At this point you can begin to discuss the work of community organizers. Within all communities, there are **assets** and **challenges**. The work of **community organizers** and **change agents** is based on the core concept that people with the problem or issue, or the population affected, should be centrally involved in influencing the change process or setting the agenda. Often times in working directly with people informally or in a service organization/social agency, we think of doing work “for or on behalf of” a person or group rather than making change by partnering “with” our clients (Note: Also known as residents, members, and consumers).

For Further Discussion: Every community has both assets and deficits, no matter how much that community may prosper or struggle. A neighborhood may have a good public education system, but struggle with foreclosures. A church may support its membership but struggle with issues of homophobia. With time, participants could be asked to begin to think about the assets and deficits that exist within one of the communities they have named.

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FACILITATOR SCRIPT: *“Now that we have identified some of the communities of which we are part: **What are some assets of your community?**(List answers on board). “Now let’s look at what may be missing: **What are some challenges in your community?**” (List answers on board).*

“TAKING ACTION, MAKING CHANGE” VIDEO

Goal:	The purpose of the video is to give participants an idea of the profession of community organizing by showing examples of four paid/professional community organizers. It provides a sense of what community change agents may do as a job or long term career. We recommend that you watch the video once before you show it so you can get a better sense of how to guide the discussion.
Time:	Approximately 25 minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video 15 minutes • Discussion 10 minutes
Materials:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Taking Action, Making Change” DVD provided to your organization or view on YouTube link http://youtu.be/fUJ5CAn5zMo • Projector, screen, and computer OR DVD player and TV

Introduce and Watch Video

NOTES TO FACILITATOR: First, introduce the video **“Taking Action, Making Change.”** This video will give participants an idea of the profession of community organizing by showing examples of four paid/professional community organizers. It provides a sense of what community change agents do day to day in their jobs. The video introduces the students to the idea of community organizing as a career path.

FACILITATOR SCRIPT: *“Now we will be watching the video “Taking Action, Making Change” so that we all can see the type of work community organizers do. While you are watching I would like you to pay attention to the different kinds of communities that you see in the video, and some of the issues they are working on.”*

Post- Video: Reactions From Group

NOTES TO FACILITATOR: After you have shown the video, take time to get reactions from the group and have a discussion about the themes that came up. Acknowledge that while it’s slightly dated, the concepts, issues and movements are still very much relevant. To start, we would suggest that you go around the room and get one-word reactions from participants. Then begin the discussion building on of the earlier discussion about communities. The discussion could center on the work of different community organizers by highlighting the different communities, issues, and change agents—e.g. what was similar and different about them. Be sure to allow time for students to discuss and answer each question below before going on to the next.

FACILITATOR SCRIPT: *“I would like to go around the room and get a one-word reaction about what the video brought up for people. The video is a little dated but the issues that were brought up are still relevant to what communities are experiencing today. **What are people’s first reactions to the video? What can we see in the video that is still relevant? What are some communities that were present in the video?”***

Additional Suggested Discussion Questions:

- What communities did you see in the video?

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(church, immigrants, low-wage workers, faith based)

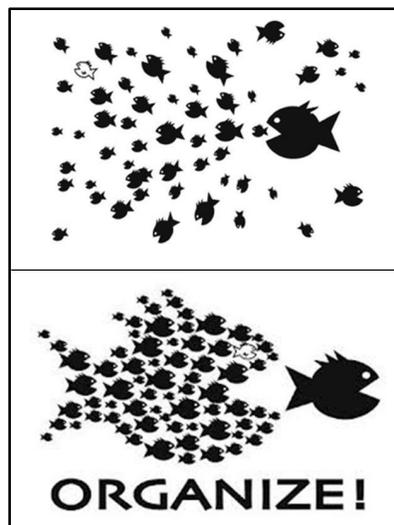
- What were some key terms raised in the video?
(rights, democracy, power, inequality justice, fairness)
- Around which issues were they organizing?
(day care, living wage, garbage, jobs, affordable housing, gentrification, homelessness)
- What were some problems in these communities? What were some assets?
(Struggles: poverty, Assets: Networks, people willing to engage)
- What did the organizers have in common?
(passion, values)
- What were their differences?
(race, gender, nationality, communities they worked with)
- What techniques and strategies did you see in the video?
(demonstrations, rallies, door-to- door, campaigns)
- *What were some of the important points the narrator made?*
(Organizing takes grassroots “ordinary people,” not just the visible leaders.
Fighting injustice and inequality. Persistence, passion, courage.)

ORGANIZE! FISH VISUAL

Goal:	The goal of this section is to have a discussion about collective power and how that can be accomplished through community organizing.
Time:	Approximately 10 minutes
Materials:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize! Fish Visual Handout (or projected on screen)

NOTES TO FACILITATOR: Now you can introduce the [Organize! Fish Visual](#) and get reactions from group on how they interpret its meaning. Go around the room and get feedback. Allow for multiple interpretations before you interject or move on. You should have group first respond to the first image and then second image separately. Afterwards, ask group what they think the images mean together. If possible, bring the image up on a large projector that you used to screen the video so all can view at the same time. If this is not possible, all participants can refer to their handout, which includes all images.

FACILITATOR SCRIPT: *“Here we see an image of a lot of fish. Can someone tell me what they think the image means? Compare the first and second diagram.”*



Organize Fish! Visual

NOTES TO FACILITATOR:

First diagram: there are lots of little fish—but they are not organized and the big fish appears to be chasing or eating them. Perhaps they are running away from the big fish or believe that the big fish is overpowering them. Here, the bigger fish is the one with more power and is controlling the actions of the little fish because it is bigger. The other fish are also smaller, scattered, and not unified.

Second diagram: In the second image the little fish have organized themselves so that they become formed in the shape of a bigger fish. They have mobilized and are moving in the same direction in order to pursue a particular goal or to re-organize the power in their community. However, there can be various interpretations: 1) The organized are attempting to catch up to the big fish in order to engage the fish, 2) the organized fish want to overpower the big fish, and 3) the organized fish are following the big fish (In past sessions, a very few interpreted it the last way.) [The key

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here is that it shows the power of collective action, be sure to include “**COLLECTIVE ACTION**” which denotes, organization, power, etc. It’s a loaded phrase we should pepper throughout this curriculum.

LEARNING POINTS: One point of the image is that when many people organize they may be able to build enough power to “fight” or take on an opponent or a system that may be oppressing or ignoring them. Depending on the issue—they may organize in order to influence the big fish or they may have to overcome the fish, meaning get other bigger fish to support them and oppose the oppressing fish. You could mention: The organizer’s role is to get everyone to agree on a goal and strategy. Each little fish may have its own perspective. Sometimes it is easy to agree on the goal, for example what the collective want—short term and long term goals. Sometimes there are differences within the community/group being organized. This may mean there needs to be a process to get to consensus or to make a decision which an organizer usually facilitates. **COLLECTIVE ACTION!**

Using the participants’ responses, you could focus the discussion to the next topic of “Power.” The image is about power. How to use organized collective action to push those who hold power to change: the system or change policies, obtain additional or better services, receive additional resources, and stop something from happening (e.g. closing of hospital or school). It is important to note to participants that once power is built, it needs to be maintained and leadership must be cultivated. This way power can be tapped to create whatever changes “the community” wants.

FISH ANALOGY (Optional)

Goal:	The purpose of this section is to have participants reframe their thinking and move to a social justice perspective by using a commonly known analogy. It follows from having just used the fish diagram in the former section in a political and symbolic way. You could explore the common saying: <i>When you give a person a fish they will eat for a day; if you teach them how to fish, they will eat for a lifetime.</i> One goal is to raise consciousness about the complexity of organizing, and the levels at which people can and need to organize (Individual, community, societal).
Time:	Approximately 5 minutes
Materials:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (none)

NOTES TO FACILITATOR: After you have introduced the proverb, ask the group if they agree with the proverb and why. You could start with the first part and have the class vocalize the second part: “If you give people a fish they can eat for a day...” Allow for several responses.

Mention that the first part of the analogy: that “giving a fish” also has value. Giving a fish is charity. Ask why and when charity might be important.

Then ask them what is missing from the full statement, particularly from a social justice perspective. There may be very few answers because the proverb is so commonly agreed upon as ending on the teaching phase. Ask participants what else they might need to complete the fishing example “if you want to teach someone how to fish you will need...?” Write some answers on the board before summing up.

FACILITATOR SCRIPT: *“How many people have heard the proverb: ‘When you give a person a fish they will eat for a day; if you teach them how to fish, they will eat for a lifetime.’ **Do we agree with this?** We can agree that this proverb makes sense, but if we were going to see this from a social justice perspective, **What is missing from this proverb?**”*

*“There is usually an assumption that teaching a person how to fish is enough. However, if we are using a social justice perspective as community organizers we also have to question the issue of **resources, access, and power.**”*

On a mezzo level: Does he/she have a fishing pole or material to make one; do they have bait for the fish and where would it come from? Who are the teachers/trainers and where do they come from/who do they work for?

And on a macro/societal/structural level: Do they have access to water? Do they have to travel long distances to get to water? Who controls access to the water? How will they get to the water? From an environmental perspective, is there clean water? Enough water? Who may be polluting or diverting it? Do they have family to bring water to? Do they have to pay a fee they can afford? Do they all fish for themselves? How do we organize fishing for the community? Is there distribution of the fish? What else do they need to do to sustain the fishing?

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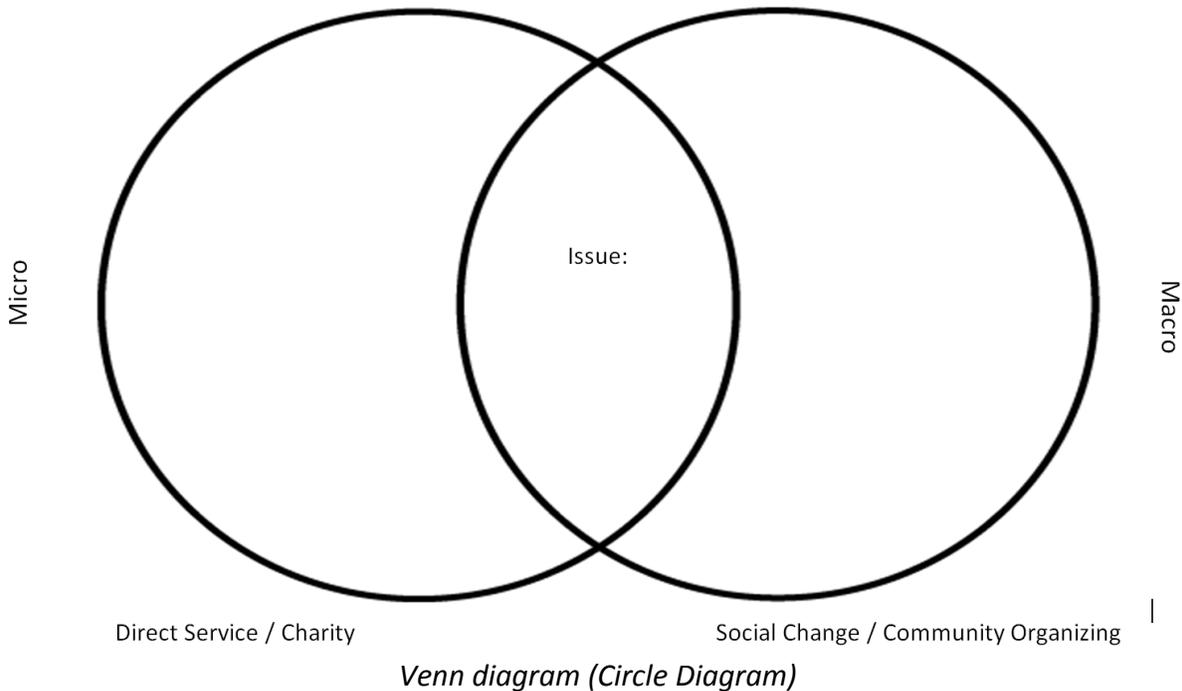
(TRANSITION TO COMMUNITY CHANGE BY REFERRING TO THE CIRCLE DIAGRAM IN COMMUNITY CHANGE SECTION)

“Let’s look at this Venn Diagram using what we have just discussed about the fish proverb.”

COMMUNITY CHANGE

Goal:	The purpose of this section is to bring together the themes discussed already as a foundation for the topic of community change. By the end of this section, participants should have an understanding on the difference between a <i>problem and an issue, charity, direct service vs. community change</i> , as well as the advantages and limitations for each.
Time:	Approximately 20 minutes
Materials:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venn Diagram (Provide as handout or <i>draw on a board</i>)

NOTES TO FACILITATOR: In this section you will be expanding on the Fish Organize! Visual and Proverb to have a deeper discussion about the differences between charity, direct service (micro) and social change (macro). After identifying the differences and overlaps among them, you could use the example of hunger and a Venn diagram (which you will draw on board) to show examples of both. This could lead into a discussion of the advantages and limitations of each and the relationships among them.



FACILITATOR SCRIPT: “There’s a difference between a **problem** that an individual faces and the **bigger issue or the underlying root cause** of the problem that affects many people. As seen in the video, community organizers worked in organizations dealing with issues such as underemployment. If one person loses his/her job he/she may need individual services in order to assist this person in finding a

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job. Or he/she may need food from a donor (charity) or food pantry or soup kitchen (charity moves to service). This is an example of a 'problem'.

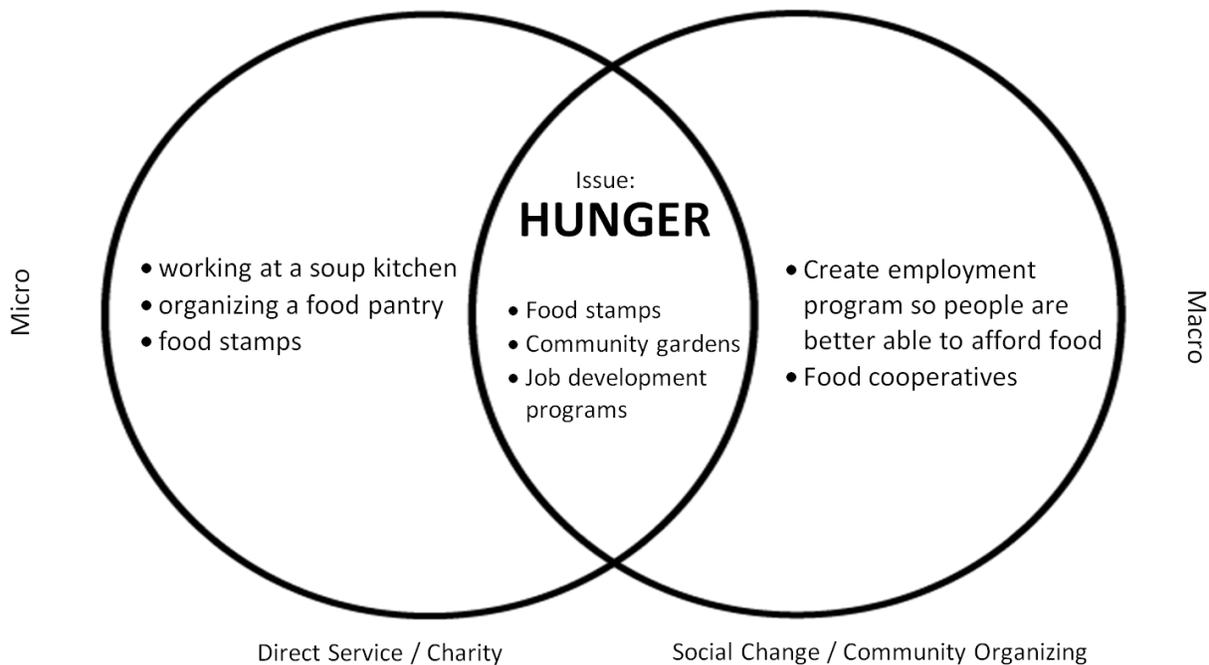
If large numbers of people have lost their jobs, for instance what has happened in the recent recession, then it becomes an 'issue'. We respond to a problem with charity and direct services (e.g. providing job training, or information about where the existing jobs are), and we respond to an issue with social justice values and collective action. If there is no or little service, then organizers are often in creating or strengthening them as well.

*“One way to think about the difference between charity, services and making community change through social justice endeavors is by exploring that difference between a problem and an issue. Using the example of hunger, **can someone tell me how to respond to the problem of hunger using direct service? How would we respond to the issue of hunger from a social change/social justice perspective?**”*

NOTES TO FACILITATOR: Here you could draw a Venn Diagram on the board and write “hunger” in middle where the two circles intersect. On the left side write direct service/charity and on the right side write community change. As participants give examples of each, write down their answers within the circle of the Venn Diagram. Below is a more detailed diagram for you to use as a reference.

Here are some brief explanations of the differences:

- **Charity (Micro):** provides one-time or immediate aid to people in need. It could be tangible in-kind/material assistance (e.g. food; clothing) or individual volunteer help (e.g. escorting a senior to the doctor). It gives the helper much satisfaction, but is limited and does not lift people from dependent positions. One role can be to help people negotiate and navigate a system, which provides services and benefits such as food stamps.
- **Direct Service:** Service includes organizing a system to provide resources, skills and/or programs. It allows a steady source of the needed benefit or service but also may keep people dependent on the public or private system. It emphasizes case advocacy by focusing on the individual or family.
- **Community Change / Social justice (Macro):** uses Community Organizing and Community Change by bringing people together collectively to help themselves and/or others in need with the goal of seeking to end the problem; that is, reducing the need in the first place.



NOTES TO FACILITATOR: All three (charity/direct service, and social change) have an important place in addressing the needs of the communities. First, without doing direct service work and addressing community members’ immediate needs (micro level) it is difficult to involve them in community change (macro level). In other words, you cannot organize someone who is hungry, but it is not an either/or situation. Sometimes by getting a person involved in a clothing drive, a route is open to discussions of why we need to give out clothes or organize a second-hand store in the first place. Next level of organizing a service could be to ask someone who has been helped to then help others (e.g. organize a “peer” level of helping and support).

After you have discussed the example of hunger, have students give quick examples of how to approach an issue from a direct service perspective vs. social justice perspective on different issues. Possible examples are: Youth violence (developing an after-school program vs. advocacy more city-wide funding to have after-school programs), or housing (help someone fill out a housing application vs. organizing to change criteria around housing applications). Then transition into identifying the advantages and disadvantages of each perspective.

FACILITATOR SCRIPT: *“Now that we have looked at the example of hunger, Can you give an example of charity/direct service vs. community change for another issue?”*

“Now that we have a clear understanding of the difference between how to address the same issue through direct service and community change, let’s talk about the advantages and disadvantages of each. What are the advantages and cons of direct service? What are the advantages and cons of community change?”

Direct Service

Advantages: People receive the services they need immediately. It makes the person doing it feel good—they are doing something helpful for someone else.

Limitations: Does not address the root causes of the problem. It keeps a level of inequality between the helper and the helped. There are not enough resources for everyone. People receiving services are often made to feel powerless. Givers have to deal with rationing or prioritizing among needy groups, which could engender burn out.

Community Change

Advantages: Addresses the long-term situation that keeps people from needing charity. It raises consciousness about which people control access to resources and services and why we don't have adequate income for all. People learn about different sectors of the community.

Limitations: Making system change often takes a long time. A campaign to address a large issue is complex and can divert from interest of the constituency. Interim victories and short-term wins are needed in order to keep energy of campaign going and to sustain involvement.

FACILITATOR SCRIPT: *“Many times people may see either direct service or community organizing as more important. But both serve an important place in community life. People need their immediate needs taken care of before you can organize with them. You cannot organize a person who is hungry.*

(SEGUE TO POWER SECTION)

People can still provide direct services using a social justice perspective. By understanding community, systems, and power, a person can become a community change agent. Community organizers seek to eradicate or minimize the root causes of problems at many levels—by influencing people, organizations, and structures that hold the power or by accumulating power themselves.”

WHAT IS POWER?

Goal:	The goal of this section is to provide a definition of power; discuss the importance of power; establish that it is neither good nor bad; identify sources of power, and identify how it can be used to obtain the goal(s) of the campaign or constituents.
Time:	Approximately 5-10 minutes
Materials:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing Power Over Handout (optional)

NOTES TO FACILITATOR: One of the most misunderstood components of community organizing is power. Because power is associated with oppression, it is often seen as negative and something to be avoided. However, power is neither good nor bad. It is a tool for community change to be strategically used by community organizers with their constituency.

Community organizing is about *shifting power* or amassing enough power to attain your goal, create a program, or change a policy. A simple definition of power is the ability to change, act, or influence. When discussing whether power is good or bad, participants tend to have varying answers from yes, no; to “it depends.” Here, the goal is to establish that power is neither good nor bad, but rather it depends on how it is used, who is using it and for what ends. Within this broad concept, understand there is a difference between **power over** vs. **power with**. **Power over** is the ability to impose your will on another person and make them do something they may not want to do, sometimes by coercion. **Power with** is working collectively for a common purpose, understanding, or goal. It is not a zero-sum game; power can be shared and expanded.

FACILITATOR SCRIPT: *“We have briefly discussed power already, but now let’s talk about it more explicitly, **“What is power? Is power good or bad?”***

*“Power can be either good or bad depending on the way that it is used. There is a difference between **power over** vs. **power with**. ‘Power over’ is when one person or group makes decisions that affect another group without their input, voice, or best interests at the forefront. Here, power with no accountability can easily become corrupt. ‘Power with’ is when decisions are made with the input by affected members and interested parties in a community.*

“It is also important to understand that power serves a function. In order to accomplish tasks, there is someone (or group) who is responsible for making sure that it is completed, which may mean they need to make decisions and delegate tasks. It is the manner in which this is done that defines whether this is ‘power over’ or ‘power with.’

*“Now that we have talked about power, **Can someone give me examples of power? Who holds power? On what basis does someone hold power?”***

NOTES TO FACILITATOR: In response to these questions, many times people may give examples such as the Mayor of New York City or the President of United States. It is important to note that there are different types of power and to distinguish between **authority** and **influence**. A president is an example of legitimate (or legitimized) power. A body (the Constitution) gave the person who holds that office the *authority* to make many decisions. But there are other

types of power. A person may have societal power because they are part of a privileged group. The other arm of power is *influence*, the ability to effect change when one does not have the authority. Persons can have influence because they are associated with an important person, organization, authority, or privilege. A person may have influence because they have a particular skill set or income, or because they control a resource (e.g. education; the media).

Power is also relational depending on the situation; a person may have power in one situation and not in another. For example, a person may have power in a specific department within that organization due to relationships they have built, but not have the power to affect policies within an organization. Power is also sometimes restricted. In a democratic structure, the power of any individual or sector is limited with a system of checks and balances.

It is important to understand that as community change agents, the organizer and his/her constituencies need to be able to influence people, circumstances and events. Types of power include legitimate (or legitimized), economic, skill, knowledge-based, information, societal privilege, or access (to people, information, or resources).

FACILITATOR SCRIPT: “When talking about community organizing we need to understand different types of power because it will help us to strategize about ways to increase our constituents’ power. The president of an agency or the mayor of a city is an example of legitimate power, it is power that has been institutionalized or legitimized by a sector or “the people” as a whole.

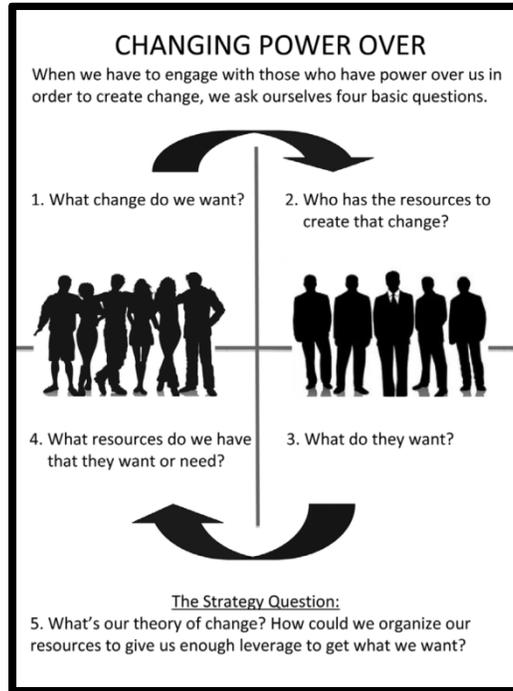
There are many types of power. Access to resources or a person is a source of power. A person who has a particular skill set is another source of power. A person who is charismatic and can motivate people to engage in community change is also another form of power.

“Many times communities will not have access to legitimate power or resources like funding. However communities always have power through their ability to influence others by organized collective activities (education, persuasion, incentives, threats, resistance, non-violent conflict tactics, etc.).

*This is where the work of a community organizer becomes most important. By accumulating and exercising power a group or constituency can consciously attain its goal. **Now that we have talked about different types of power, what are examples of power within communities? Who holds power in one of your communities you identified earlier?**”*

NOTES TO FACILITATOR: Though communities may not always obtain legitimate power (authority), they do have other sources of power. Communities always have people power and the ability to organize. They also have resources such as faith-based institutions, their elected officials, health agencies, advocacy organizations, and a range of local leaders—educators, business people, clergy, etc. It requires analyzing and strategizing about how to build power.

You can also use the [Changing Power Over Handout](#) in order to help participants understand how to identify power.



Additional Suggested Questions for Further Discussion:

- What are ways to that we can identify who has power in a community/organization:
 - Who has the power to make decisions?
 - Who has power to make the change you want?
 - Who has the resources to support your effort?
 - Who has access to people in authority?

- Why do people who have potential power fail to make change?
 - Ignorance about the issue or incorrect information.
 - Bias based on their perspective.
 - Ideologically a person may fundamentally disagree with an issue.
 - Not enough funding to support an issue.

- What are ways we can influence power to make change?
 - Political Action: Legislative and Policy / Public Advocacy
 - Mass Mobilization: Social Action and Protest Tactics
 - Consciousness Raising: Community Development
 - Social Work/Social Service: Community Programming and Planning
 - Coalition Building: Creating an Organization of Organizations

NOTES TO FACILITATOR: Here, you will begin to transition into the Campaign Activity Section using an example, here or one that was brought up by the participants. You would ask participants to identify the problem, target, and possible tactics as a way to have them start thinking about how the issue would be turned into a campaign. For example, if someone brought up the inadequacies of the minimum wage, a target would be a person who has the power to make a decision on raising the minimum wage, such as a legislative body like the City Council, state

legislature, or Congress. One tactic would be meeting with targeted legislatures to educate them on the issue and persuade them to their vote in the campaign's favor. The following section will have more details on targets and tactics.

FACILITATOR SCRIPT: *“What are the major issues around which you know people/groups organize?” Then, “Who has power to make decisions on this issue?” When identifying who has power on a particular issue, we identify these people as potential targets.*

***Targets** are people who have power, access, and/or resources to grant your demands. For example, if you had a problem with your payment for tuition not being processed and your **goal** was to fix that problem so that you do not get dropped out of classes, you would go to the registrar of your department or school.*

To begin with, your target would be an authorized person at the registrar's office. Once you have determined the goal and target, you will need to develop a strategy and tactics in order to achieve that goal.

*A **tactic** is an action taken in order to achieve your goal. Your first tactic, as noted, may be to go to the registrar's Office to speak to a representative. If that does not work your next tactic may be to set up a meeting with an administrator in the office. An ally could be a faculty member or staff person in your department/ program.*

Ultimately, if many students have had the same experience, as a group you would meet with the head of finances, and ultimately if needed the department chair or higher to the president. If you don't get a meeting, or get a negative response, you may need to petition or in extreme circumstances to advocacy organization or legislator. ”

CAMPAIGN ACTIVITY

Goal:	The purpose of this exercise is to give participants the opportunity to practice what they have learned about community change. At this point you have discussed many components of community change and given examples of what community organizing looks like as a profession. Participants will be asked to think through an issue campaign and identify key concepts in small groups.
Time:	Approximately 25 minutes
Materials:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaign Activity Worksheet

NOTES TO FACILITATOR: In the next and last part of the Module, participants will practice what they have learned using a campaign activity. In this activity, you will ask participants to divide into small groups or pairs and ask them to choose an issue in their community around which they would organize a campaign. Give out the [**Campaign Activity Worksheet**](#) (Handout) and apply it to the components of their campaign. *(NOTE: As one alternative, if there is limited time this exercise can be done in one large group under your facilitation, although it is preferable to add the small group element. Another alternative is to divide participants into small groups with all of them working on the same issue. In this way different approaches can be compared.)*

As noted on the worksheet, have groups identify the:

- 1) **Issue:** It should be tangible (example: the issue should not be to eliminate homelessness, but to open a food kitchen three nights a week, the more specific the better).
- 2) **Goals:** They should be specific and realistic. There are short terms goals and long term goals. Short term goals are always building towards your long terms goals (example: short term: open food kitchen one day a week at local faith-based institution, long term: open up permanent food kitchen that is open daily with its own staff).
- 3) **Target:** is a specific person or group with the power to either grant your demands or provide access to demands. This must be a specific person or persons (example: leader within faith-based institution who will allow you to use space one day a week).
- 4) **Base / Allies:** The campaign's base are its core members or constituencies who can be counted on; allies are supporters who may be natural ones based on shared interests or strategic partners for a particular campaign (example: base – someone who is currently or formally experienced homelessness, ally – friend who works at shelter for homelessness who will recommend clients to your food kitchen).
- 5) **Strategy:** An overall approach to achieving goals or objectives (based on theories of change eg. educational/consensus; to adversarial/conflict based).
- 6) **Tactics:** Are actions by a campaign in order to achieve its goals, in line with its strategy (example: setting meetings and building relationships with faith-based institution in order to obtain access to space).
- 7) **Anticipated Obstacles / Opponents:** Obstacles are anticipated barriers e.g. lack of resources or support, or limited access to the target that stand in the way of achieving the goal. Opponents are adversaries may be permanent or limited to this campaign only (e.g. the business community may be an opponent or an ally depending on the issue). Each opponent, even within the same campaign, may require different tactics in order to shift power and accomplish your goals (example: having enough food available in the food kitchen, having volunteers to serve food, and being in compliance with local laws regarding giving away food).

8) **Measures of Success:** How will the campaign be evaluated? There can and should be multiple definitions of what would be considered a “victory.” Gaining recognition from the target that you are a legitimate voice on the issue, can be considered success, at least in short term (example: access to space once a week).

It is important to instruct the groups to choose a campaign that is realistic and attainable so that they can complete the activity. For example, if they select poverty as the issue, the goal should not be “to end poverty.” Instead, it should be more specific. For example, a more realistic goal would be to raise minimum wage to a living wage, or even more specifically to target one business to raise their wages or provide benefits. The more specific the goal is, the more they will be able to complete the exercise and develop viable solutions. For your reference, there is a detailed example of this worksheet in the appendices.

FACILITATOR SCRIPT: *“Now we will practice what we have learned today by doing a campaign activity. Please divide into small groups and identify a specific issue. Then using the **Campaign Activity Sheet** identify different components for a campaign based on the issue you have chosen. The goal that you identify must be achievable and tangible. Do not pick a goal like “to end hunger” or “eliminate racism,” but instead focus on a specific issue that affects a particular community or constituency.*

Let us stay with the tuition example that we used before. If you cannot pay your tuition bill, that is a problem. But if every student cannot pay their tuition bill due to tuition hikes or debt as a result of high interest loans, it then becomes an issue. Using this sheet, what is a realistic goal to achieve to address this issue? Who would be the target(s)? What tactic(s) would you use? What are possible obstacles? Who would be your allies?

(Use guidelines on previous page to assist you with defining terms for participants.)

You will have approximately 10 minutes to do this activity. Then all groups will present on what they have produced. I will visit your group to see if you have any questions.”

NOTES TO FACILITATOR: It is important to move around to different groups and check on their process and answer any questions. We have found that there are varying responses to this exercise, particularly in the beginning. Many students do not feel that they are capable of doing this exercise due to lack of information or skill. Remind them that this is fine. The importance of the exercise is to think through a campaign would be run from a community organizing perspective with others and understand concepts such as power and collectivity. Almost all groups will have some information related to their own personal experience or previous activities that will assist them in finishing this exercise in a timely fashion.

Remind not to remain too long on any one question. Our experience is that most groups can complete it in the allotted time. They will most likely accomplish enough to practice the concepts learned and understand the complexities of making decisions and developing to plan the campaign for community change.

DEBRIEFING, After 10 minutes or so stop the exercise. (You can allot a longer time period if you wish but our experience is that 10-15 is adequate.) The debriefing can be in three phases: **First**, depending on the number of small groups and time constraints have each group present one or more of the steps in the Campaign Activity. You could also provide feedback and suggestions based on your observations. **Second**, the groups could discuss the process of completing the activity (e.g. Who took leadership? How did they make decisions? Were there differences? Did everyone contribute?). **Third**, have participants identify “take-aways /learning points;” that is what they learned from the exercise, how they felt about it, and specifically, what they learned from their own group and the other groups, about themselves and others.

FACILITATOR SCRIPT: “*Now that we have heard from all of the groups, **What are some of your observations? What were the similarities and differences among the groups? How did you feel about this activity? How could you use this experience in other aspects of your community or work?***”

CLOSING

Goal:	Here transition from campaign activity back to the topic of community organizing as a career choice. With time, the goal would be for each student to identify one new point of learning for themselves. The other goal of this final section is to have students evaluate the session. If you are continuing with the participants in the following days or weeks, then there is time for them reflect on learning in writing another time or come back to discuss the module in a subsequent session. At this point, please give out the Evaluation and Resource Guide.
Time:	Approximately 10 minutes
Materials:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation Form • Resource Guide

NOTES TO FACILITATOR: After asking participants their overall impression of the session, you should pass out the [Evaluation Form](#), as well as the [Resource Guide](#). The resource guide is an informational sheet for participants to take with them.

The evaluation form will take approximately 5-10 minutes for participants to complete.

Remind students when completing the form:

- It is important for them to look at the direction scale from 1 – 5 so that they do an accurate rating.
- They should check *all* answers in the social activism scale ‘yes’ or ‘no’; do not leave any blanks.

FACILITATOR SCRIPT: *“I want to thank everyone for participating today. I hope that what you have learned today will encourage you to consider community organizing as a career choice and seek opportunities for additional learning. Now, I would like to ask everyone to fill out this evaluation form. Please fill out the entire form and answer all of the questions. Do not put your name on the form so the form will be anonymous.”*

When you are filling out the questions that have the 1-5 scales, make sure take note that “1” is low level of interest and “5” is high level of interest. Please answer yes or no to all questions on the Social Activism scale. Also, there is a resource guide for you to use. If you have any additional questions feel free to speak to me after.”

Appendices

GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN COMMUNITY ORGANIZING AND SOCIAL CHANGE

The following are some definitions and concepts used in community practice. They have been taken or adapted from various sources and are intended only for use for educational purposes.

*Compiled by the Workforce Development Initiative for Careers in Social Activism and Community Change.
Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College.*

Advocacy: An organized effort to represent a position and influence outcomes with those who have the power to make the change.

Community Organizing: Bringing people and groups together to collectively address a need, problem-solve or improve a social condition on a macro level.

Coalition: An organization of organizations formed for a common purpose or social agenda, while each maintains its own autonomy. Coalitions have a series of inherent dynamic tensions that need to be balanced: cooperation and conflict, unity and diversity, mixed loyalties, and accountability and autonomy.

Collective Action: A public demonstration of an organization's capacity to mobilize constituencies with whom they work, such as a march, lobbying elected officials, a press briefing.

Community Practice: The generic term for social work intervention at the community level around a common issue or a shared identity. It includes various foci or components—community building, organizing, development and planning.

Constituency: A term for the group with whom or about which you are organizing. It is a generic term for different roles including clients, consumers, residents, members, parents, students, service recipients, patients, etc.

Community: A group of people who have a common history, geography or common social, economic, or political interest (Examples: neighborhood, church, school, LGBTQ, lawyers).

Community Organizer: (a change agent) Person who identifies assets and mobilizes various parts of community in order to create change, usually for the purpose of improving the conditions for and with the people in that community.

Empowerment: A process that enables individuals or groups to participate fully in the decisions and processes that shape their lives.

Power: the ability to effect change or to impose your will on some individual or system; based on two means: authority or influence. Authority is the legitimized/sanctioned ability to decide; Influence includes other ways to assert power when you don't have the authority to make the decision. Additional concepts:

- *Power Over:* This power involves an either/or relationship of domination/subordination. Assumes power is finite.
- *Power With/ Among:* This power involves people organizing with a common purpose or common understanding to achieve collective goals. Assumes power is infinite—can expand and be shared.

Issue Campaign: An organized effort to educate and organize the public in general or specific constituencies around an issue and to mobilize them to identify a goal and develop and evaluate strategies to meet the goal.

Goal: A statement of what you want to "win" in the campaign. Goals may be short, intermediate or long-term.

Oppression: to dominate, persecute, or suppress by unjust and cruel power.

Internalized Oppression: the process by which an oppressed person accepts the definition of him/herself that the oppressive system has created, treatment of oppressed people by other oppressed people similar to treatment accorded by oppressors.

Social Services: A set of organized programs established to meet the direct needs of a constituency, often developed and implemented by social workers.

Strategy: An overall approach to achieving goals or objectives (Examples: consensus, conflict)

Tactics: Actions or steps that help to carry out a strategy that in turn moves an issue campaign forward. These put pressure on a target, rally the constituency, inform and involve the public. (Examples: media events, letter writing, creative actions, petitions, phone banks, etc.)

Target: Decision-makers with the authority/power to make change or grant request for your goal or constituency.

Social Identity Handout

SAMPLE Social Identity Pie



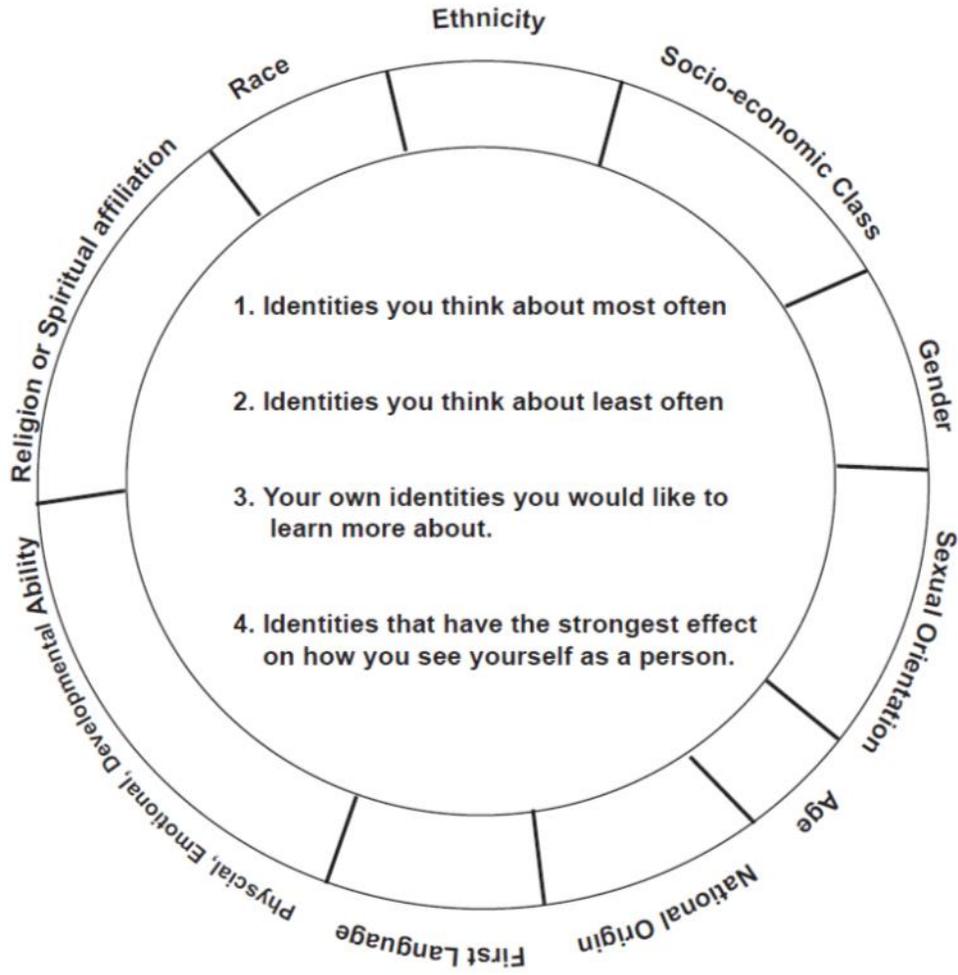
-From "Racism in the United States"

ON YOUR OWN:

Draw your own social identity pie to show which aspects of yourself you consider big or small parts of who you are and how you identify as part of different communities.

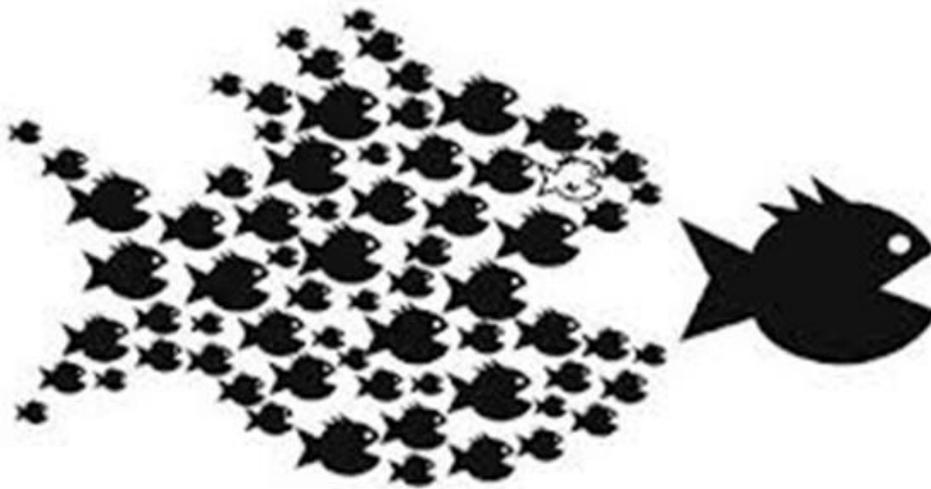
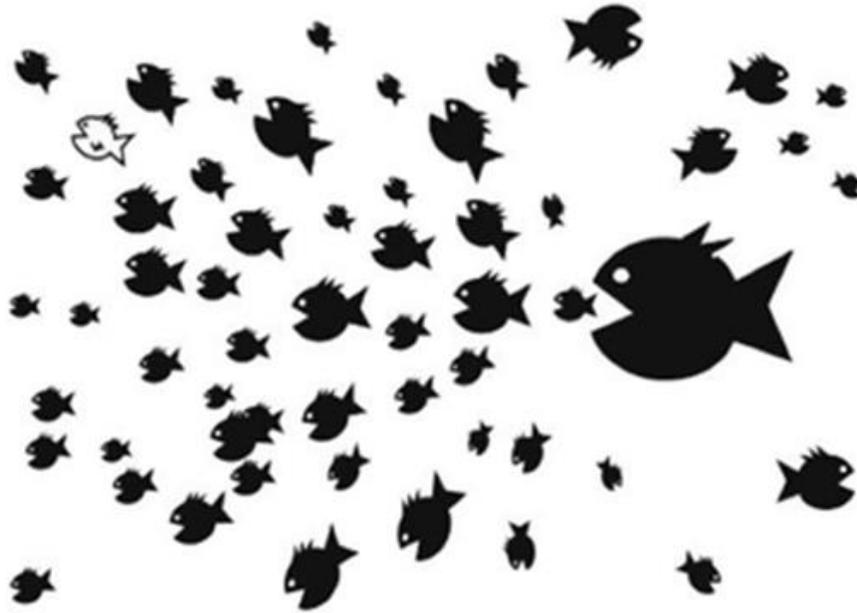
Draw it in whatever shape with whatever contents or proportions to best describe you.

Social Identity Handout (Alternative)



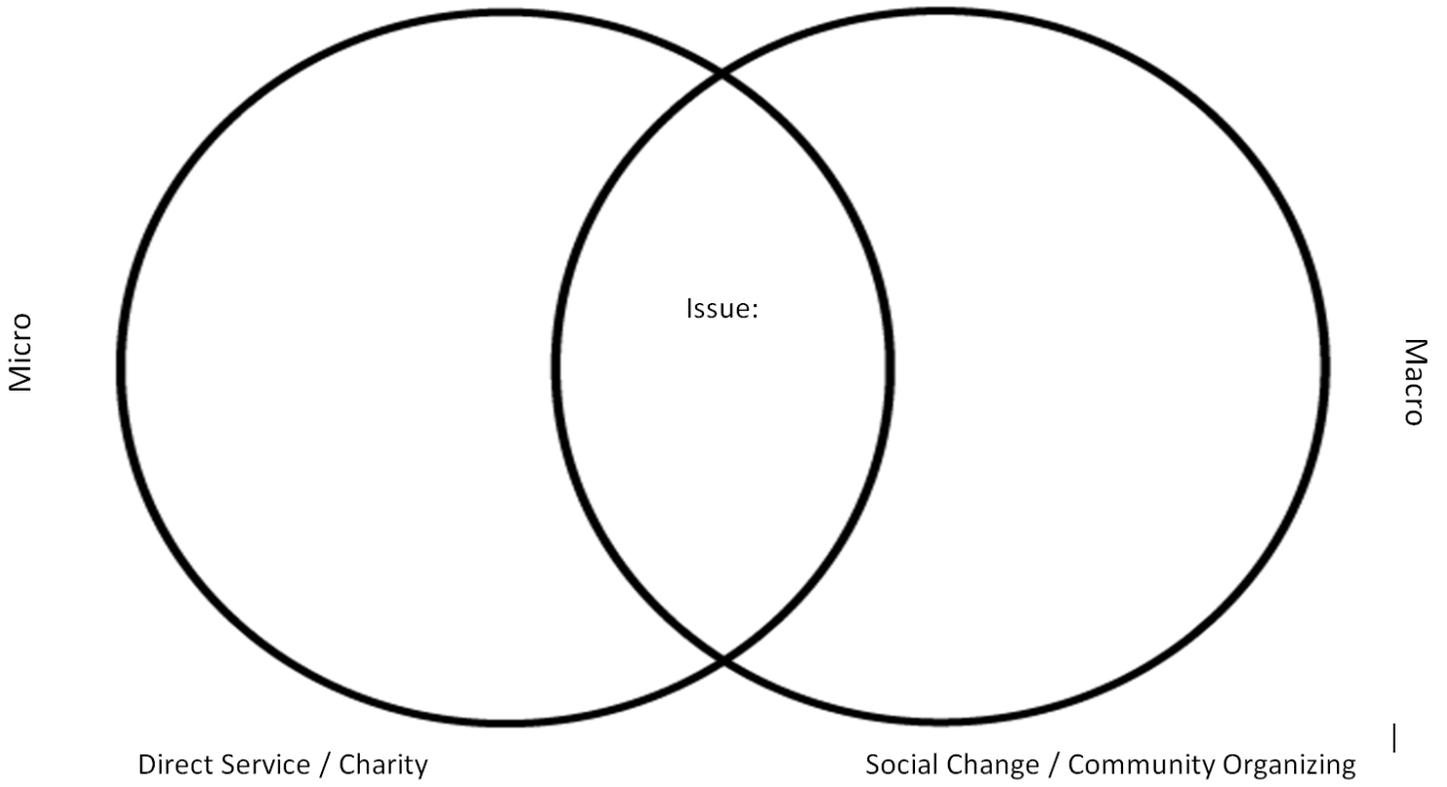
(SOURCE UNKNOWN)

Organize Fish! Visual



ORGANIZE!

Circle Diagram (Venn Diagram)



CHANGING POWER OVER

When we have to engage with those who have power over us in order to create change, we ask ourselves four basic questions.

1. What change do we want?

2. Who has the resources to create that change?

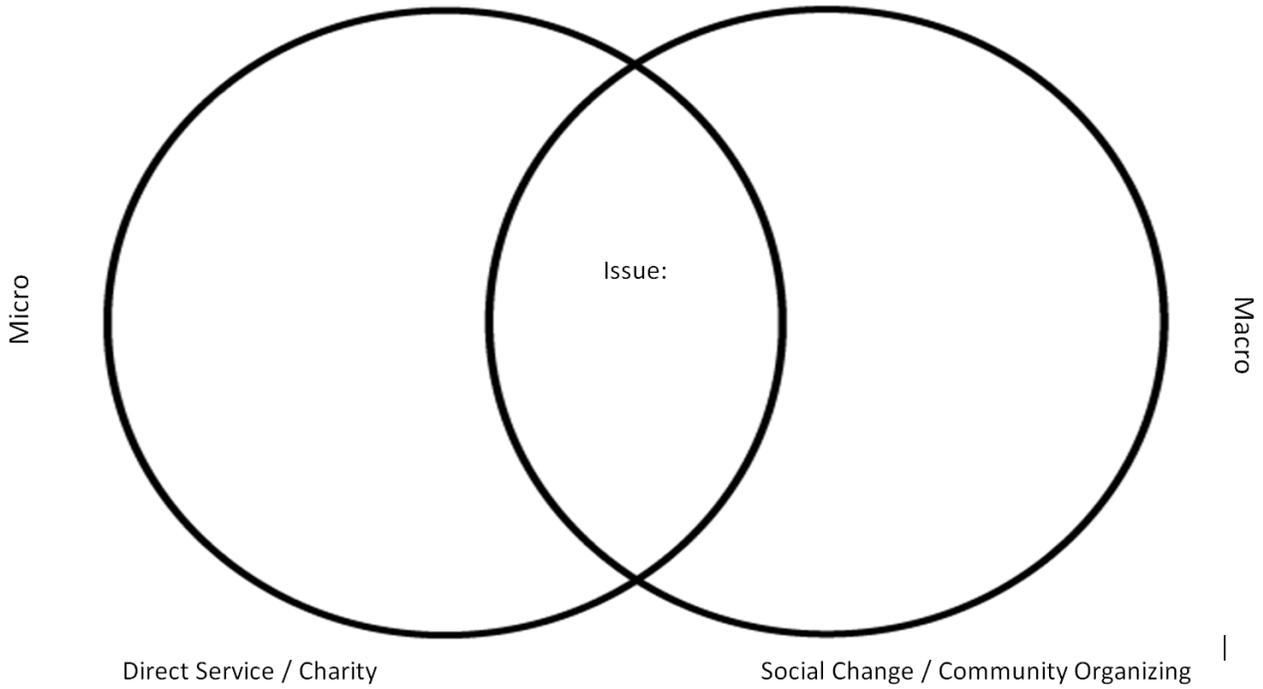


4. What resources do we have that they want or need?

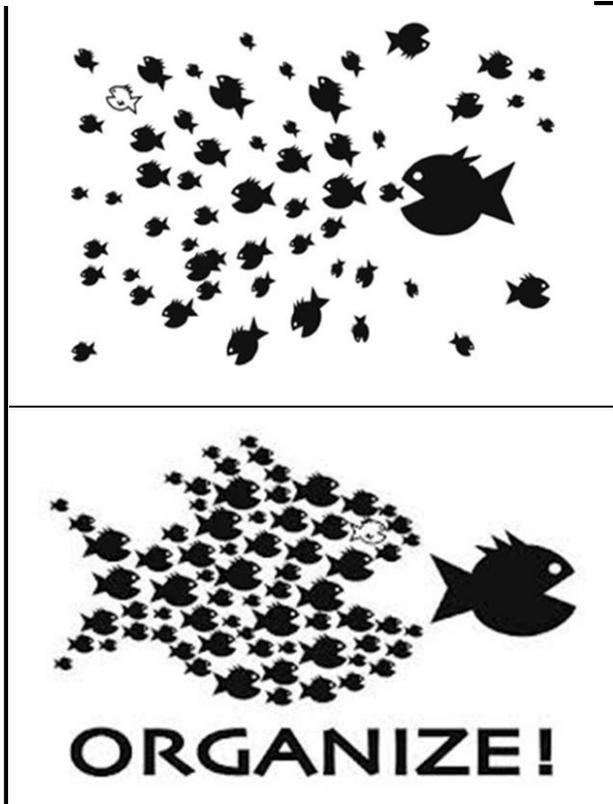
3. What do they want?

The Strategy Question:

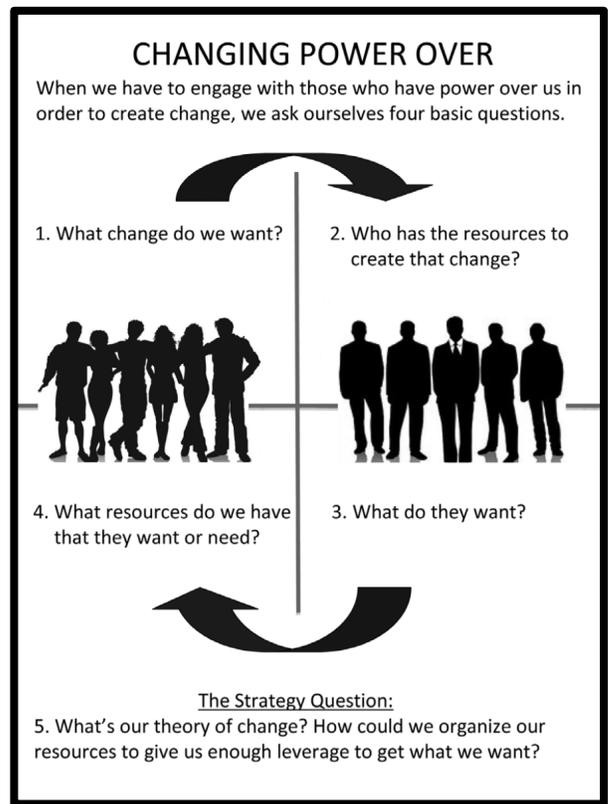
5. What's our theory of change? How could we organize our resources to give us enough leverage to get what we want?



ORGANIZE! Fish Visual



Changing Power Over Visual



CAMPAIGN WORKSHEET:

1) Issue: _____

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2) Goal(s):

3) Target (Person(s) who can bring about the change you want):

4) Base/ Allies (Constituencies/ Organizations/ Leaders):

5) Tactics to create change (Protests, Lobbying, Education, Coalition Building, etc.):

6) Anticipated Obstacles/Opposition:

7) Measure(s) of a successful campaign:

NOTES:

CAMPAIGN WORKSHEET:

1) Issue: Youth center is at risk of shutting down due to potential loss of funding in city budget

2) Goal(s):

Keep youth center open.

3) Target (Person(s) who can bring about the change you want):

City council.

4) Base/ Allies (Constituencies/ Organizations/ Leaders):

Youth in centers, families of youth, local schools, specific city council members who already agree with you issue, clergy, police.

5) Tactics to create change (Protests, Lobbying, Education, Coalition Building, etc.):

Meeting with city council members to inform about issues and ensure their vote, for those who will not support the issue provide information and pressure through additional tactics such as having youth speak to them directly, having parents who are voters threaten to withdraw their support of the council member. Host an event with youth and invite local news station to cover issue. Organize protest for city council members who will not change their vote. Organize youth and parents to write letters, and speak out at public forums.

6) Anticipated Obstacles/Opposition:

Other budget items take priority over funding for youth centers.
Competition from other social service agencies.

7) Measure(s) of a successful campaign:

Base and allies in campaign.
Votes from city council members.
Full funding by city council.
Partial funding will temporarily keep doors open.

NOTES:

Glossary For Campaign Activity

1) **Issue:** It should be tangible (example: the issue should not be to eliminate homelessness, but to open a food kitchen three nights a week, the more specific the better).

2) **Goals:** They should be specific and realistic. There are short terms goals and long term goals. Short term goals are always building towards your long terms goals (example: short term: open food kitchen one day a week at local faith-based institution, long term: open up permanent food kitchen that is open daily with its own staff).

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- 8) **Measures of Success:** How will the campaign be evaluated? There can and should be multiple definitions of what would be considered a “victory.” Gaining recognition from the target that you are a legitimate voice on the issue, can be considered success, at least in short term (example: access to space once a week).

SELECTED REFERENCES AND RESOURCES RELATED TO COMMUNITY CHANGE AND SOCIAL ACTIVISM

- Bobo, K., Kendall, J., & Max, S. (2009). *Organizing for social change: Midwest academy manual for activists*, 4th ed. Santa Ana, CA: Seven Locks Press.
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Community Organizing Toolbox at ctb.ku.edu. This wonderful resource provides concrete tools that an organizer may choose to use as one's strategy unfolds and as tactical choices are made.

Journal of Community Practice (Haworth Press) sponsored by ACOSA www.acosa.org

This is the link to resources, videos, and a one hour power point and audio lecture called: “Community Organizing For a Change.” <http://sssw.hunter.cuny.edu/programs/methods/community-organization-planning-development/>

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9-15

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE COMMUNITY CHANGE /SOCIAL ACTIVISM MODULE OVERVIEW
SILBERMAN SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK/ CONTACT: TERRY MIZRAHI, tmizrahi@hunter.cuny.edu

Introduction to Module (5 minutes)

Introduce self and WDI Module.

Ice Breaker Question: “Why do you think community organizing is important?” (or) “What kinds of organizing have you done”?

What is Community? (10 minutes) – Resource: Social Identity Handout

Question: “What is community?” Types: (Geographical / Identificational (gender, race, religion) / Interest (political, health status)

Have participants fill out Social Identity Handout.

Discussion Questions:

1. What communities do you belong to? What are your feelings towards the communities you identified?
2. What are assets (or strengths) and challenges within a community that you identified?
3. How does the handout relate to social justice for you as a community organizer or social worker?

Notes: Highlight identity, power, and privilege in community in connection to being better social change agents.

“Taking Action, Making Change” Video (25 minutes with discussion)

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Ask participants to take note of:

- Communities represented in video and key terms that were raised.
- Issues that were being organized around.
- Assets and challenges in community.

Discussion Questions:

1. What were your reactions to the video?
2. What did organizers have in common/ what were some of their differences?
3. What techniques and strategies did you see organizers use in the video?
4. What did this video bring up for you as either a social worker or future community organizer?

Organize! Fish Visual (10 minutes) – Resource: Fish Image

Discussion Questions:

1. What do we think this image means?
2. How does this relate to community organizing?

Notes: Themes are collective action and power.

Fish Proverb (5 minutes)

“Give a person a fish they will eat for a day, teach a person to fish they will eat for the rest of their lives.”

Question: “Do we agree with this proverb? What is missing? How can we see it from social justice perspective?”

- Mezzo Level – Does the person have a fishing pole or the ability to make one? Do they need bait?
- Macro Level – Is there access to water? Do they need to travel long distance? Is the water polluted? Can they afford water?

Community Change – Direct Service vs. Community Organizing (20 minutes)

Venn Diagram – Example: Hunger (Micro- Food Pantry, Mezzo – Food Stamps, Macro – Employment Policy)

Problem vs. Issue (individual has no job vs. recession)

- Charity – one time immediate response when needed, individual volunteer, cannot be sustained, some people left out.
- Direct Service – organizing a system to provide resources, skills, or programs. Keeps person dependent on program.
- Community Organizing – bringing people together to collectively help themselves/others with goal to end problem

Question: “What are the pros and cons of each?”

- DS- people receive services immediately, however does not address root issue and not enough resources for all, people may feel powerless.
- CO – Addresses long-term issue and keeps people from needing charity, people learn about community – however, often takes a long time.
- All levels are important – you cannot organize someone who is hungry.

What is Power? (5-10 minutes)

Discussion Questions:

1. What is power? Is it good or bad? (neither- depends on how it is used – power over vs power with)
2. What are examples of power? Who holds power? On what basis? (“legitimate” vs influence – privilege, access to someone)
3. How can we identify power? (Who makes decision, has resources to support effort, or has access to people in authority?)

Campaign Activity? (25 minutes) - Resource: Campaign Worksheet and Glossary of Terms

Participants break into groups. Choose a topic or facilitator identifies one.

Overview Key Terms: Issue, Goal, Target, Base/Allies, Strategy, Tactics, Anticipated Obstacles / Opponents, Measures of Success

Closing /Evaluation; Resource: Brief Questionnaire (5 minutes)