

*Community Self-Help Education Series no 8*  
**Let's start our own  
Health & Nutrition club**

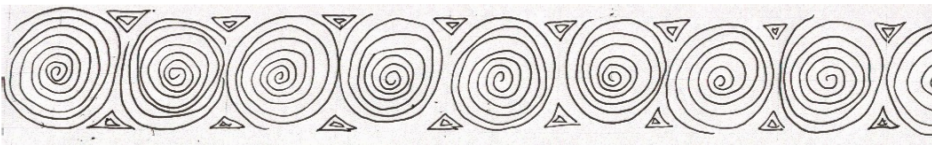


## **Resources Manual**

*'End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition'  
UN Sustainable Development Goals no 2*

By  
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**A Response Network Zambia Ltd Publication**

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## Acknowledgements

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## The rights of mother and child

Pregnant women and mothers with babies are very vulnerable people in the community that need more attention from government departments than

[illegible]



There are many offices, institutions and organisations that have among their objectives an obligation to provide services to health and nutrition development. However, due to insufficient funding and staff training some may not be effective in some districts.

You, as an interested community member will be of great help to these organisations by asking for their assistance so they learn about the real needs around the communities.

### Better Health for Everybody

You have a challenge; - there are too many adults, children and particularly under five children in the community that are malnourished and even dying due to lack of nutritional knowledge and long distances to health facilities and other health and nutrition services where they could get treatment, education and advice.



Therefore many communities have bad health due to ignorance about what to grow to get a balanced and low cost food and simple ways to prepare for better health.

Citizens have the right to protection and service from local government in time of hunger and hardship. This is not a service the district offices will give the community only as a favour or good will but this is a **RIGHT** people have. This right is stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights no (25.1) 'Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well being of himself and his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or lack of

livelihood in circumstances beyond his control' This right will not be given to the community automatically as government resources are scarce so the community must go and ask to have the services mentioned about as their human right.

You may ask: Is it possible to start our own health and nutrition club when we have no money? You may reply that it is impossible without money.

Be aware that the reply is based on the personal experience of how you saw education facilities when you grew up. You see a health and nutrition club keeping in a permanent building where teachers paid by the Government teach the adults using textbooks and having chairs and desks.

On the other hand, how was the health issues dealt with in your grandparents'

**The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations. Zambia has signed the declaration. The following is a selection of some of the articles (shortened) of the human rights:**

*All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. (1)*

*Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security as a person. (3)*

*No one shall be held in slavery or servitude. (4)*

*No one shall be subjected to torture, or inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment. (5)*

*No one shall be subject to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile. (9)*

*Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses. (16.2)*

*Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression (19)*

*Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association. (20.1)*

*Everyone has the right to equal access to public service in his country (21.2)*

*Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitations of working hours and periodic holidays with pay. (24)*

*Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well being of himself and his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control. (25.1)*

*Everyone has the right to education. (26.1)*

*Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible. (29.1)*

For the full text please go to the Internet: <http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>

## **Community Self-help Education Series**

### ***Empowering Communities***

*“Community Self Help Education series”* published by Response Network have available 16 self-help resources manuals for use by community leaders

1. “Let’s start our own community school”
2. “Let’s start our own community sports club”
3. “Let’s start our own community literacy class”
4. “Let’s start our own community skills training”
5. “Let’s start our own women’s group”
6. “Organic Vegetable Growing”
7. “Let’s start our own community HIV/Aids support group”
8. “Let’s start our own community health and nutrition club”
9. “Let’s start our own community ‘Know your rights club”
10. “Let’s start our own community alcohol awareness and support group”
11. “Let’s start our own community mental health club”
12. “Let’s start our own community participation (governance) club”
13. “All included’ Let’s start our own community support group for special needs children”
14. “Let’s start our own Community Women’s Rights Club – Stop the violence”
15. “From team to Inclusive Sports Club”
16. “The Gender Equality in Governance Club”

The manuals supplement each other so you will benefit from combining the resources from two or more manuals to increase the quality of your education project. The organic vegetable growing club together with the HIV/Aids support group can improve the health of HIV positive people and also enhance the work of the health and nutrition club as they supplement each other.

Women’s group, organic vegetable growing, literacy, nutrition and skills training have a lot in common and will increase the quality of life for the women and the families in the community.

days in the village? They also taught children and youth at initiation, about hunting, cultivating the garden, making crafts and transferring traditional culture without any paid teachers, - without any building, - without books. Their emphasis was on teaching skills preparing children for adult life similar to the need in the community today!

Their traditional crops were a variety of legumes, fruits, vegetables, grains and husbandry products that together gave them a balanced diet. This knowledge of how to grow many crops that gave a balanced diet had been handed down to new generations over the centuries.

Who were teaching? Their “teachers” were the able knowledgeable men and women or volunteers in the community. When you served the community by teaching the young, you were shown respect, you were trusted and your status was enhanced in the community because of the service you gave the community.

Learn from the forefathers! Do like them, use what you have available where you live, and build a healthy learning environment and grow many different nutritionally rich crops from your own resources!

They believed in using the resources in their community. Their resource base was sustainable and will be sustainable for you as well. Their ancient experience and knowledge need to be taught again, as their methods and crop variety are needed today as they were more than hundred years ago.

### **The forefathers selected and grew many different crops so their children could eat a balanced diet**

Why were the forefather’s diets better a 100 years ago? Because most modern households have taken to growing cash crops in order to increase the income of the household. Unfortunately, this have tempted people to grow less traditional crops, believing it is better to spend money and labour on cash crop growing. In this process it was forgotten that the forefathers selected and grew a variety of crops carefully so their children should eat a balanced diet every day and grow into strong adults of good health!

As a result of the unbalanced modern diet 40-50% of our children are malnourished and most people have a weakened immune system after eating food poor in essential nutrients that used to be plenty in the traditional village diet. Hence nowadays many people are prone to many diseases that persons with a strong immune system normally would keep away. This is hitting our babies and pregnant women hardest, causing illness and death.

Will it be possible to turn the clock a 100 years back and start eating the same balanced healthy diet as your forefathers did?

The good news is yes; it is very possible and does not need to cost more than the seeds. Furthermore, you can even do better than your forefathers

as we can share with you a bit scientific knowledge that they were not aware of then.

The crops you need to grow to eat well and healthy are already there in most villages, you just need to grow more crops and cultivate larger areas, so you can eat more of varied nutritious foods than you do today.

To eat the same healthy foods are even more important for the babies to keep healthy and grow stronger, similarly the people with HIV/AIDS need this diet so they can respond well to their medication because they need a balanced nutritional diet to benefit from the medication and keep healthier.

***Hence nowadays many people are prone to many diseases that person with a strong immune system normally would keep away***

## The Nutrition Doctor Recommends

The traditional diet had many staple crops, just to mention a few, finger millet and sorghum that can either be eaten as a substitute or in addition to cassava or Maize. In the low rainfall parts of the country growing the traditional crops will kill two birds with one stone; they will prove more resistant to drought and will serve the farmer well giving a nutritious crop as well as a harvest despite poor rainfall.

The supplementary foods are green leaves such as spinach, rape, pumpkin leaves and sweet potato leaves. Cassava leaves are popular but should be avoided unless you are very sure that that particular variety of cassava is not toxic!

Just make sure that you enhance the nutritional value of the leaves by boiling for only 5 minutes, and then you save on fuel and avoid destroying nutrients through over boiling.

Increase the nutritional value of the green leaves by adding pounded groundnuts or a bit of oil if groundnuts are not available. Do not forget the wild leaves that are popular in times of drought.

Vegetables and tubers such as cabbage, potatoes, okra, sweet potatoes, and cassava also have an important place in our diet today.

Furthermore, legumes and fruits such as peas, beans, groundnuts, banana, papaw, guava and mango are important foods. The wild fruits in the bush are also a good source of nutrients. If there are few fruit trees, plant some more. Fruits are an important source of vitamins equally necessary to adults and children.

Then we should not forget that our forefathers had fish and meat in the diet, as the fish in the rivers and wild life was plenty that time. Still we need ani-

## Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AGEH	Germany, Association for Development, Cooperation
CBO	Community based organisation
CNVS	Catholic Network of Volunteer Service
CUSO	The Canadian International development organisation
DEBS	District Education Board Secretary
DHBS	District Health Board Secretary
E-CHANGER	Volunteer exchange organisation in Switzerland
EduSport	is a non-governmental organisation that offers guidance
and	training courses.
FVS	Finland, Finnish Volunteer Service
HACI	Hope for African Children Initiative
HIV	Human Immune Virus
HNC	Health and Nutrition Committee
KAO	Kicking Aids Out network is about sport and HIV sensation
MS	Danish Association for International Cooperation
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NIF	The Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and
	Confederation of Sports
NOWSPAR	is a Zambian organization concerned about women and
sport	
NSCZ	National Sports Council of Zambia
SiA	Sport in Action, is a sport and development organisation
SIDA	Swedish International Development Organisation
SWAAZ	Society for Women and AIDS in Africa Zambia (
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VSO	Volunteer Service Overseas
WCRP	World Conference on Religion and Peace
Zamtel	Zambia telecommunication

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<p><b>You are free to make copies and share the information with anybody that wishes to know more about resources for self help projects. However we appreciate that you share where you found the information.</b></p>
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communities without any cost. Only a few samples of the volunteer organisations are listed below with country first and then the name of the organisation: Ireland, Agency for personal service overseas (APSO), UK, Volunteer Service Overseas (VSO), Finland, Finnish Volunteer Service (FVS), Denmark, Danish Association for International Cooperation (MS), Germany, Association for Development, Cooperation (AGEH), U.S.A., Catholic Network of Volunteer Service (CNVS), U.S.A., Church World Service, Switzerland, E-CHANGER, Netherlands, Cordaid, England, UNAIS, Italy, Centro Laici Italiani per le Isole – Milano, Australia, Australian volunteers International, Austria, Horizont 3000, Belgium, Oxfam-Solidarity, Canada, CUSO.

These volunteer services are sometimes operating under their embassy and sometimes they are non-governmental and independent of the embassy. Any way, the embassy of the home country of the organisation will give you the addresses you need to find the volunteer service's office in Zambia. Chances are good to get support from a volunteer if the health and nutrition club apply and explain convincingly why there is need of a volunteer to assist to build your health and nutrition club into a permanent structure. Food and nutrition skills training improvement might be a cooperation project that volunteer agencies find interesting. The books referred to below have the addresses to most of the organisations above.

### **Donor's world wide**

Donors are looking for partnership with community projects. The book **"MPS Funding Guide"** has more than 300 entries with description of donor organizations that are looking for community projects for co-operation. The price is \$59 and you can buy from Mission Project Service, Web site: [info@missionprojectservice.org](mailto:info@missionprojectservice.org). If a few community projects co-operate and share the cost of purchasing the book, all will benefit when making partnership with foreign donors. The book also explains how to present an application for support in a winning manner.

[www.missionprojectservice.org](http://www.missionprojectservice.org) If a few community projects co-operate and share the cost of purchasing the book, all will benefit when making partnership with foreign donors. The book also explains how to present an application for support in a winning manner.

### **Hope for African Children Initiative (HACI)**

This is a new umbrella organisation comprising Plan Zambia, Family Health Trust, CARE Zambia, World Vision, Society for Women and AIDS in Africa Zambia (SWAAZ), and the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP). HACI provides a conduit for funding that stimulates rapid scale-up of successful care for orphans and vulnerable children. Apply to The HACI Country Programme Council, c/o CARE International- Zambia, P.O.Box 36238, LUSAKA

mal protein but we should not resort to poaching to get meat. Make sure to rear chicken at the household so all family members, particularly babies and pregnant women, can eat some meat, fish and eggs as often as you can afford.

The above foodstuffs can easily be produced in the villages and when eaten in addition to the usual staple cassava or maize, will ensure a balanced nutritious diet.

Since malnutrition is common, make sure to prepare the same food to the babies that are cooked in the household for supplementary food in addition or after weaning the breast milk, by pounding the staple, vegetables, green leaves, fruits, legumes, fruits and meat foods into a paste which must be fresh at every meal.

***Remember that the pregnant and lactating mothers get 50% more food than other adults in the household***

***Baby girls need just as much good food as boys!!***

Make mixtures that the baby enjoys to eat. However, breast milk was the most important food for babies and still is during the first 2 years. Members of the household with HIV need to make sure that the virus count does not get worse and develop from HIV to AIDS and must eat a balanced diet, as they are vulnerable just as the babies and the pregnant women.

### **Good health by food, play and movement, and sleep**

**That we need** a balanced diet with a variety of food stuffs to grow to healthy adults is the main concern of this manual and that malnutrition is very bad for a child's health.

But that active play and movement also are equally important for child health and growth are less common knowledge. This knowledge makes sport at school important, but apart from the necessary health benefit, it even enhances the pupil's learning in class. Then walking and movement are even part of our way to keep healthy throughout our lives until old age. The third pillar of having good health is sleep. When children grow, many parents do not take as much care of the child's need for sleep as providing good food!

In the village after dark, evening meal and talk around the fire, everybody went to sleep and were rested the next morning. However, these days families have TV and children and adults alike enjoy watching the programs, sometimes until late at night. Parents find it difficult to get the children to bed as they want to watch and resist going to sleep. This causes children to get too little sleep and this affects the child's health and growth. Parents and guardians should consider the child's need for sleep equally important as good food. Take the child gently to bed and sing, read or tell stories until they fall asleep. This is not an issue of negotiation and includes even teenage children. These young members in the family must sleep hours more than adults do. Parents have the responsibility to look after their children's



well-being and development. Going to bed early and having 8-10 hours of sleep before going to school can work well under parental supervision. Explain to the children the importance of sleep so they understand that it is not cruelty on your part denying them watching nice TV programs.

## The First Steps

### A community effort

First of all get the community interested in the idea of starting a health and nutrition club in the neighbourhood. There are many ways of doing this, call a meeting, go door to door and inform, brief the teachers in the nearby Government school to tell their pupils, make announcement in the Churches or put up posters. A health and nutrition club can never be a "one woman or man show". You need help to identify people with interest and previous experience whom you can ask to assist. If the parents understand the intentions, then the adults, orphans, boys and girls will get time off from home duties and will be allowed to come to the health and nutrition club and learn, and the community support will be there from the beginning.



### The committee

Conduct elections among community members to form a Health and Nutrition Committee (HNC). Then give the new health and nutrition club a name. The task to organise the health and nutrition club is now with the committee. Just follow the guidance in this book.

### Find your instructors

The health and nutrition club must look for the knowledgeable people in your community. Many skills will be of interest: nursing, cooking, sport, herbal medicine, gardening, fishing, husbandry, home economics and nutrition. Any skilled person, who can agree to teach as a volunteer, will be your first instructor at the health and nutrition club and her skill will be the first skill to be taught.

Now you have a volunteer instructor, which is a good start, - and you do not

### NOWSPAR

NOWSPAR is a Zambian organization established in 2006 to promote the equal engagement of women and girls in sport, physical activity and recreation. NOWSPAR has a membership of about 300, including national sports associations, non-governmental organizations, schools, churches, CBOs and individuals. NOWSPAR operates under the theme 'Every Body Matters' their programs are targeted at bettering the lives of women, youth and children through engagement in sport and recreation. Their activities are advocacy, research, capacity development, networking and HIV/AIDS education. 16 Cedar Road, Woodlands, Lusaka. Email: [nowsparwomen@nowspar.com](mailto:nowsparwomen@nowspar.com). Tel: 0955 450 267.



## Funding opportunities

### Churches

Health and nutrition clubs initiated by churches have a good chance to get support from sister churches both within the country and from abroad, provided the health and nutrition club committee can prove to be accountable and trustworthy.

### Foreign donor agencies and embassies

Many foreign donor agencies and embassies have self- help funds or small-scale funds aiming to support health efforts in the communities. For instance the American Embassy, apply to "The American Ambassador's self

help fund". Look up the addresses in the telephone directory that you can read for free and take notes when visiting Zamtel, DEBS and other Government or private offices. Just to mention a few, look for UNICEF, World Food Programme, SIDA (Sweden), Embassy of European Union, British High Commission, Ireland etc.



### Volunteers from abroad

Some countries provide volunteer services that place volunteers to support local

the skills in the chosen food project.

In Livingstone visit the Response Network office and ask for the “**Organic vegetable growing**” resources manual. This booklet gives ideas on how to use local input only for fertiliser and pest control so you save cost and buy seeds only. Other corners of the country can contact Response Network. See address at the end of this manual.

## Human movement and health

### Sport in Action (SIA)

Sport in Action is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) that offers guidance and training courses. They have many sponsors; among them are UNICEF and The Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports (NIF). They are concerned about training peer coaches in sports leadership and HIV/Aids awareness and other community issues such as development of traditional sports and games. Cell 0977 82 17 97, the address is P. O. Box 50144, Lusaka. E-mail: [sia@zamtel.zm](mailto:sia@zamtel.zm), or [clem-entchileshe@yahoo.com](mailto:clem-entchileshe@yahoo.com) Director C. Chileshe.

### EDUSPORT

“Edusport” is a non-governmental organisation that offers guidance and training courses. The Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports (NIF) fund many of their activities and courses. They are concerned about training young peer coaches in sports leadership and HIV/Aids awareness through sports. Cell no 096 450114, Tel. no. 0211-221919. The Office address is at 58 Malata road, Madras, P.o.box 51334, Lusaka. E-mail: [edusport@yahoo.com](mailto:edusport@yahoo.com), Director Kabanda Mwansa



### NATIONAL SPORTS COUNCIL OF ZAMBIA (NSCZ)

When you need assistance from NSCZ, ask the District Sports Officer or the Provincial Sports Officer to connect you to NSCZ. These officers are now also connected to pro-

grammes like the “Kicking Aids Out” network and community directed sports organisations such as “Edusport”, ‘Nowspar’ and “Sport in Action” (SiA) that all use sport as a vehicle in the Aids awareness campaign. NSCZ will assist you to source training materials from a number of sports disciplines and administrative subjects. If the materials you need are not available in Zambia, they will be able to order from sister organisations abroad. The Office is at the National Sports Development Complex (NASDEC), P. O. Box 33474 Lusaka. Telephone no. 0211 250321, fax no. 0211-250321. E-mail: [nscz@zamtel.zm](mailto:nscz@zamtel.zm)

need to pay her for a start! One way of “paying” the instructor is to urge the students to pay in kind by providing a chicken, some vegetable products from their gardens or provide labour for such tasks as weeding and watering the instructor’s garden, clearing land for his maize field etc. Remember to let the volunteers know regularly how much you appreciate them.

### Find the leader

You also need a leader to run the health and nutrition club. Look around in the community for a retired nurse, teacher, civil servant or any other adult with some health and work experience. The people you need are there. Some may refuse, but you will keep asking until you find one that can agree. After all it is an honour to be asked to take on such an important task for the community.

### Find a place to teach

Then you need a place to teach the members. In the beginning teach under the shade of a big leafy tree. Later you can construct a mud and pole clubroom with a grass roof, made on self-help involving community members. Or the club can meet at the school or the community school or a Church. Look around and you will find something for free.

### Registration

As soon as you have an errand to the district headquarters, see the District Health Board Secretary (DHBS) and tell them about the new health and nutrition club. Bring an application for support to buy posters, teaching aids and books. They might have some materials at the office to give you. Then ask the DHBS to send health and nutrition officers to visit the health and nutrition club at their convenience.



### Congratulations

You have taken the first steps and started your own health and nutrition club at almost no cost! If the committee so wish, do not read any further as the health and nutrition club is a sustainable activity based on self-help.

However, we are aware that most health and nutrition clubs have ambitions to grow, cater for more members, provide better instruction and improve on the teaching and the quality of the club. For those that want to improve the club, we have written the last part of the manual below. You will see the health and nutrition club will soon be the pride of your community!



### Step by step the health and nutrition club will grow

Some people say when seeing half a glass of water: "The glass is half empty", they look at it from a negative point focusing on what is missing, others say "the glass is half full" and focus on the positive that still there is plenty of water!

We are aware that running a health and nutrition club is no easy task, however, we like you to look at the bright side; the glass is half full, - therefore this pamphlet will guide you to look for a lot of opportunities for assistance so the health and nutrition club can be aware of many sources of assistance where you can use your initiative and apply to for help.

### HOW TO PROCEED

Ask for support from well-wishers, it could be individuals, private companies, faith based organizations, non-governmental organizations or the government.

Equip the club with the vast knowledge about Health and Nutrition programs. Request the District Health Board Secretary to be invited for short courses n nutrition, HIV/AIDS



and other health related issues for the volunteers instructors. When you have some money as a club, send some volunteers to be trained or at least to collect literature which may help you to understand health and nutrition from the following institutions:

### NATURAL RESOURCES COLLEGE

Situated along Great East road in Lusaka, they offer courses that can benefit the development of the health and nutrition instructors and text books.

### NATIONAL FOOD AND NUTRITION COMMISSION

Is the national nutrition body and information centre about food and nutrition. Ask them about courses, books, brochures, posters, and magazines. In case they are not able to assist you, ask for advice about where you can get that service. Email: [nfcn@zamtel.zm](mailto:nfcn@zamtel.zm), P.O. Box 32669, Lusaka, Tel. 0211 22 14 26, 22 78 04, 22 10 98, 22 14 26.

### AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT'S (USAID)

Will link you to many agencies they fund such as **Infant & Young Child Nutrition (IYCN)** Project supported the Ministry of Health, and the National Food and Nutrition Commission to strengthen policies, programs, and health systems to improve the nutrition, thereby prolonging the lives of mothers and their children younger than two years of age, including those affected by HIV.

### Health and Nutrition

Health and nutrition has many components, knowledge of a balanced diet, preparing the food to preserve the nutritional values, growing a variety of valuable and affordable foodstuffs for the family meals and keeping the body healthy through exercise or games. Below we will describe organisations that might be helpful to assist your efforts in the health and nutrition club.

Do not forget to ask the **Agricultural Extension Officer** for advice, courses, field days and teaching materials. That office is there to support your



food production in fish farming, orchard, gardening, husbandry and agriculture. All over the country there are agricultural extension services from the provincial level to the district to the camp level. The officers are there for you. Ask them for advice about soils, crops, pests, seed varieties and any question the nutrition club needs to know in order to improve