

WP6: European Frame for The Health Ambassador Training Programme

Introduction

Training of local community health ambassadors depends a lot on the local challenges, local structures and local socio cultural factors. A European training programme for local community health ambassadors therefore has to be flexible, responding to local needs. The partnership behind the Healthy Children project has therefore decided not to develop a complete and harmonised training programme, but to develop a “training tool box” with different training material so that partners can chose among this material according to their specific needs.

The objective of this paper is therefore to describe the overall common and European frame for the training programme within the Healthy Children project and to introduce the overall idea and philosophy with the training in order to ensure the health ambassadors act on the basis of the human engagement, and open minded understanding of health and an empowering attitude that we have decided within the partnership should be fundamental aspects of the provided training.

The themes and objectives in the training programme shall be the same for all partners as well as the overall philosophy with the training shall be the same. But the actual training situation and the material that the partners chose to use will be different, depending on the specific structural and cultural context, the specific group of volunteers and the specific local challenges and needs. The practical planning of the training programme, that is, how many lessons/learning activities shall be allocated to the specific theme and the sequence of themes will be different too.

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Objective of the training

The overall objective of the training programme is to enable voluntary local community health ambassadors to

- 1) Discover risk behaviour and challenges of health within children, young people and their families,
- 2) Initiate health promoting activities for especially children and young people, but which can involve their families if relevant, in close cooperation with other civil and public actors in the local setting and
- 3) Operationalise knowledge of health promotion and processes of change into specific activities, where empowerment and a resource oriented approach are the main issues

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What is really needed in the local communities is “unskilled assistance”, meaning that the health ambassadors should not be trained to become additional health professionals to those that already exist within the official public structures. What is needed on local level – close to the citizens - are health ambassadors that can act as “good people” who likes to do something with and for fellow citizens. Hence, human skills are probably even more important than specific health skills. The health ambassadors need to know how to cope with children, young people and families, being able to ask questions and be curious and last but not least, being able to create trustful relations with children and young people.

Overall philosophy of the training

The overall philosophy of the training program is based on the understanding that the quality, the effect and the sustainability of health promotion activities depend on the degree of participant involvement, empowerment of target groups, development of action competences within the target group, and the creation of an action-oriented knowledge within the target group. Thus, it is very important that besides providing health promotion skills to the health ambassadors, they will also obtain communication skills, coaching skills and relation oriented skills, which are strongly needed in order for the health ambassadors to enter into a fruitful dialogue with the target group, which is build on empathy and inter-cultural and contextual understanding the health ambassadors must improve their own action competence in order to be able to assist others to change and use their resources in a better way.

In order to improve the health ambassadors action competences, training should be as close to practice as possible and based on dialogue between trainers and trainees, and among the health ambassadors in order to build up a networking mentality among the health ambassadors. The practical approach will be obtained through a mixture and use of cases, techniques, trial out periods followed by group work, where the health ambassadors exchange experiences, which will supported by theoretical lessons. As we do not want to train the health ambassadors to become health professionals, the level of these lessons should be “normal” – that is to say, not too sophisticated and not too academic. The content of the theoretical lessons will be focused on the development of the health ambassadors’ understanding of the broad concept of health, empowerment and communication.



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The pedagogical approach

Pedagogical awareness and thinking are important in the learning processes concerning disease prevention and health promotion. Appreciation and appreciative human relations are important and so is knowledge about the target group, especially the resources of the target group, when we are focusing on Sense of Coherence (SOC), which has to be learned and trained in everyday life. SOC has the following three components:

- *Comprehensibility*: a belief that things happen in an orderly and predictable fashion and a sense that you can understand events in your life and reasonably predict what will happen in the future. This demands learning processes based on predictability.
- *Manageability*: a belief that you have the skills or ability, the support, the help, or the resources necessary to take care of things, and that things are manageable and within your control. This demands learning processes based on realistic challenges
- *Meaningfulness*: a belief that things in life are interesting and a source of satisfaction, that things are really worth it and that there is good reason or purpose to care about what happens. This calls for learning processes based on participation (Wikipedia).

A participant-orientated approach to health promotion implies active learning processes orientated towards the challenges of the participants, and where these, the youngsters/ the children/elderly people and who else it may be, are central ,bringing in their visions and wishes ,experiences and relationships. This is necessary increasing empowerment.

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The overall objective of providing training to the health ambassadors is that they should be able to work with health promotion in local communities and especially being able to

- 1) Empower their fellow citizens by increasing their self-confidence and self-understanding in order to increase their ability to change
- 2) Increase the number and dept of good health habits within their fellow citizens.

To reach these objectives:

- The HPHA will receive knowledge about general guidelines for healthy lifestyle and reasons why it is necessary to reach a healthy lifestyle.
- The HPHA will try different health promoting activities, analyze, discuss and identify the main characters of a health promoting activity in practice
- The HPHA will start innovative processes making visions and wishes creating health promoting activities together with the target groups
- The HPHA will act, reflect and eventually change the next step.

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The HCHF Code of Conduct

As mentioned above, the intention with the training programme is to train “unskilled assistance, who of course does have limited professional knowledge, as there are not health professionals, and they should not be seen as such. Hence, in order to ensure and protect the fellow citizens - and the health ambassadors themselves - a “code of conduct” has been formulated. The objective of including the code of conduct in the training is that the health ambassador should *know and act on the basis of the following*:

- Know that their objective and mission is to learn “normal” things, so that they can talk about “normal” health related challenges for children and young people.
- Know how to respect all people’s values and level of knowledge, which is the ideal foundation to be able to change behavior.
- Know their responsibility and limits as “unskilled assistance”, knowing when to say “stop”, referring the children and young people to real health professionals if needed. This is also the reason that knowledge about local health services, systems and possibilities are very important.
- Know how to treat sensitive information, making sure that they understand the importance of confidentiality
- Show attention to the importance of inclusion of vulnerable children and young people.

The local partners will fill in the frame for Code of Conduct in order to ensure flexibility and adapt to local needs.

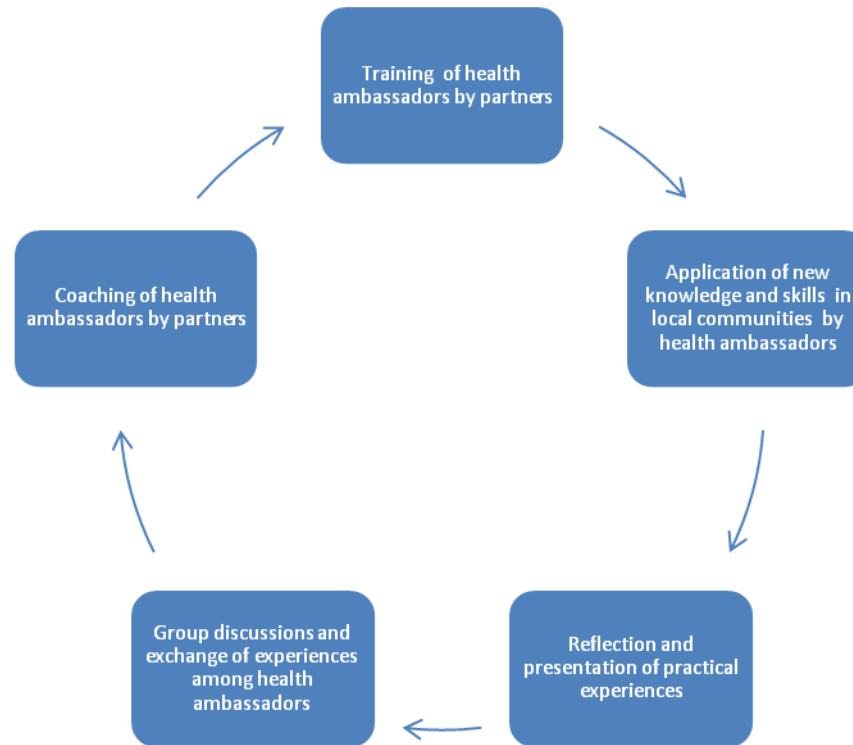
The structure of the training programme

As the objective of the training, is to prepare the health ambassadors to meet the fellow citizens in the best possible way, two basic approaches will be used to structure the planning of the overall training programme:

- It shall contain methods to exchange experiences, where the health ambassadors bring their practical experiences back in the group.
- And the training has to be planned as a mix between theoretical training, practical implementation

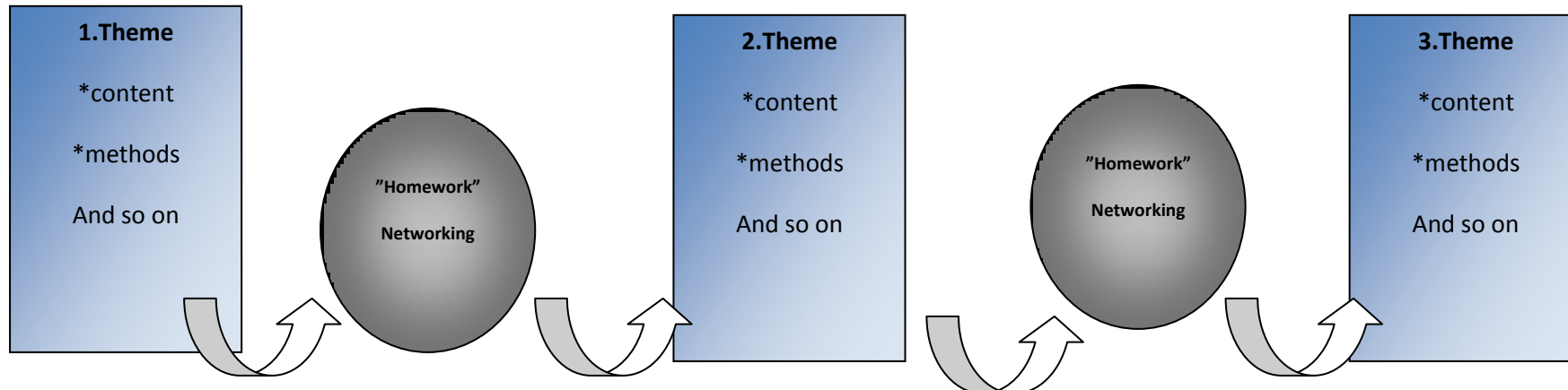
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The training cycle facilitating exchange of experiences looks this way:



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The model for mixing theoretical and practical elements looks this way:



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Planning of the training

The methods of teaching will include presentations, role plays, group work, discussions, case studies with a focus on initiation of health promoting activities organised by the health ambassadors, where they try out different methods to implement health promoting activities. Moreover, the local partners and the health ambassadors will form local networks as a "forum for reflexion", in order to improve the process of sharing and development of knowledge, experiences and methods, as a part of the overall training program. On a regular basis, meetings will be organised in the networks, where the health ambassadors will bring practical experiences from their work to the meeting, which will be discussed and they will receive coaching if necessary from the local partnership. The cohesion between the different methods and their relation to the training theme and objective has to be planned in details, and the following planning tools shall be used for that. We present two planning tools, one for planning the themes and content in the training programme, and one for planning the learning activities carried out by the health ambassadors themselves. This could be planning of homework assignments, various projects the health ambassadors together or alone carry out in the training period.

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Planning tool for the themes

Week:	Theme:			
Day:	Describe the training theme			
Lecturer:	We advise you to make one schedule for each theme			
Locality:				
Main objective	Content	Training methods	Literature	Homework
Describe what the main objective with the training activity is. What kind of knowledge, competences and skills should the trainee obtain through the training	Describe the content of the training activity; i.e. split the theme into detailed sub themes	Describe the training methods you want to use; e.g. Class room training, group work, role play etc Make sure that there is a connection between the methods and the objective	Describe the literature that you want to apply in the training from the HCHF toolbox or other Why have you chosen this literature	Describe what is expected from the trainees to do between the lecture; i.e. working with the citizens, reporting and reflection
Evaluation	Summary of feedback from the trainees, based on the application of the evaluation templates			

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Planning tool for the learning activities

Week:	Learning activity:			
Day:	Describe the training theme that you want to apply the learning activity/activities to			
Lecturer responsible for the activity:	Describe the learning activity			
Locality:				
Main objective	Content	Training methods	Outcome	The role of the lecturer
Describe what the main objective with the learning activity is. What kind of knowledge, competences and skills should the trainee obtain through the training	Describe the content of the learning activity	Describe the method in details; i.e what has the HA to do? How, when and with whom? Make sure that there is a connection between the methods and the objective	Describe what the HA shall present or deliver as the result of the learning activity. (fx Presenting a successful story at the next networkmeeting, or arranging an activity together with fellow HA's)	Describe the lecturers degree of participation. Do the "just" instruct? How do the support and coach the HA?
Evaluation	Summary of feedback from the trainees, based on the application of the evaluation templates			

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Training Themes

The partners have decided that there are 7 obligatory themes that the training programme needs to cover in order to obtain the overall philosophy of the training, namely that the health ambassadors obtain a broad understanding and acceptance of the concept of health, that they know how to listen and empower fellow citizens to make personal changes in life and that they are capable of organizing and implementing health promoting activities which are interesting for their fellow citizens.

Training Theme	Objectives
<p>Basic health knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Definitions of health and various understandings of health - General guidelines for healthy lifestyle e.g. diet, physical activity, alcohol, etc. - Local health system and offers 	<p>HAs need to understand that health can be described and understood in different ways.</p> <p>HAs also need to be able to give basic guidance to those seeking it.</p> <p>HAs need to have an overview of local health system / offers in order to refer citizens towards qualified / professional medical, psychological ect help and assistance if needed</p>
<p>Communication skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Listening - Asking curious questions - Verbal & non-verbal communication - Building rapport 	<p>HAs should be directed by the needs of their clients, so need to be able to listen and use question-asking as a valuable tool, reflect, summarize and empathize.</p> <p>HAs will work with families who may be resistant to receiving support, or may have had negative experiences with other health professionals. Therefore HAs need to be able to show sensitivity when communicating, and utilize both verbal and non-verbal communication skills to build rapport and trust.</p>

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<p>Organisational skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning and execution of local activities - Engaging in network with other HAs 	<p>HA should be able to motivate colleagues or other local actors (citizens or others) to do health oriented activities together and set up common visions and goals.</p> <p>HAs are active in keeping the network going, using it as an important forum in developing their practice as HAs.</p> <p>HAs should be able to conduct plans and hold track of implementation</p>
<p>Empowerment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase client’s self-confidence and self understanding in order to increase their ability to change 	<p>HA should be able to increase client’s feeling of “ownership” and informed understanding of their own health situation in order to create more engagement and involvement from the target group.</p> <p>Empowerment increases the chances of success.</p>
<p>Motivation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helping clients to identify what and how they want to change - Maintaining motivation in the long term 	<p>HAs need to have the ability to increase and maintain clients' motivation to change. HAs should be able to relate to clients' situation and challenges, and work with them to identify realistic strategies for them.</p>
<p>Understanding of ethics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The HCHF code of conduct 	<p>HAs will need to understand the HCHF code of conduct, which will include: limitations of the HA role, respect, confidentiality, and dealing with difficult situations and ensuring inclusivity.</p>
<p>Evaluation skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The HCHF self evaluation criteria 	<p>HA should be able to conduct a simple evaluation of own activities in order to create an internal learning loop and to make sure that their activities make a difference</p>

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Training Toolbox

The partnership behind the Healthy Children project has developed and gathered existing training material in a toolbox.

Training Theme	Training material and literature
<p>Basic health knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Definitions of health and various understandings of health - General guidelines for healthy lifestyle e.g. diet, physical activity, alcohol, etc. - Local health system and offers 	<p>Short description of material and literature: Who has developed it, what has it been used for and in which context.</p> <p>Link to material</p>
<p>Communication skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Listening - Asking curious questions - Verbal & non-verbal communication - Building rapport 	<p>Short description of material and literature: Who has developed it, what has it been used for and in which context.</p> <p>Link to material</p>
<p>Organisational skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning and execution of local activities - Engaging in network with other HAs 	<p>Short description of material and literature: Who has developed it, what has it been used for and in which context.</p> <p>Link to material</p>
<p>Empowerment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase client's self-confidence and 	<p>Short description of material and literature: Who has developed it, what has it been used for and in which context.</p>

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self understanding in order to increase their ability to change	Link to material
<p>Motivation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helping clients to identify what and how they want to change - Maintaining motivation in the long term 	<p>Short description of material and literature: Who has developed it, what has it been used for and in which context.</p> <p>Link to material</p>
<p>Understanding of ethics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The HCHF code of conduct 	<p>Short description of material and literature: Who has developed it, what has it been used for and in which context.</p> <p>Link to material</p>
<p>Evaluation skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The HCHF self evaluation criteria 	<p>Short description of material and literature: Who has developed it, what has it been used for and in which context.</p> <p>Link to material</p>

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Evaluation

In order to evaluate the training programme, the following evaluation scheme has been developed.

Target group	Civil Society Organizations and Health Ambassadors
To be used by	Partners
How to use	a) As an interview guide b) As a way to structure exchange of experiences among the health ambassadors c) As a guiding document to create (digital) storytelling
Period to be used	After first and second training period (early spring 2012 and fall 2012)
Objective	Descriptive and explorative evaluation in order to evaluate and fine-tune the training programme This template should make it possible to evaluate How the training programme have been used and how it has lead to pilot activities with citizens (descriptive) - The impact that the training programme has had on the performance of the health ambassadors in their daily work - The readiness within the CSOs and / or the health ambassadors to work with health promotion (explorative)
Guiding questions	
Descriptive questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are you working in a civil society organization and do you have daily contact to children and young people through your work? - Are you a citizen in the local community participating in this project as a volunteer? - What kind of new competences do you think that you have obtained through the training programme? - Health Promoting Activities 	

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- How many health promoting activities have you developed and carried out within the HCHF project?
- What kind of activities have you developed and carried out?
- Who were the target groups for your activities?

Explorative questions (using the Success Case Method):

If the health ambassador is working in a civil society organization:

- Overall question: To what extend have you used your training in a way that you believe has made a significant difference?
E.g.
 - Has it been possible for you to apply the new competences in your daily work with children, young people and their families? If yes, how? If not, why?
- Questions to draw stories (Impact Model)
 - Can you say something concrete about if and how your performance in your daily work has improved after you have received the health ambassador training?
 - Have you used the training to develop health promoting activities? If yes, how? If not, why?
 - Has the training had any other “spillover effect” in your professional as well as private life
 - Were there any internal or external contextual factors that assisted or prevented you from applying the new competences and improve your performance? (e.g. relations with others, cultural factors, political or strategic issues in the local community)

If the health ambassador is a voluntary citizen:

Overall question: To what extend have you used your training in a way that you believe has made a significant difference? E.g.

- Has it been possible for you to apply the new competences in your local community towards children and young people? If yes, how? If not, why not?
- Questions to draw stories (Impact Model)
 - Have you used the training to develop health promoting activities? If yes, how? If not, why?
 - Has the training had any other “spillover effect” in your professional as well as private life?
 - Were there any internal or external contextual factors that assisted or prevented you from applying the new competences and improve your performance? (e.g. relations with others, cultural factors, political or strategic issues in the local community)