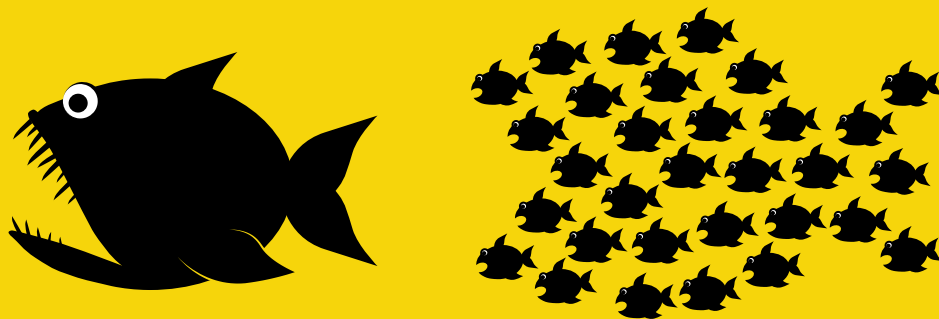
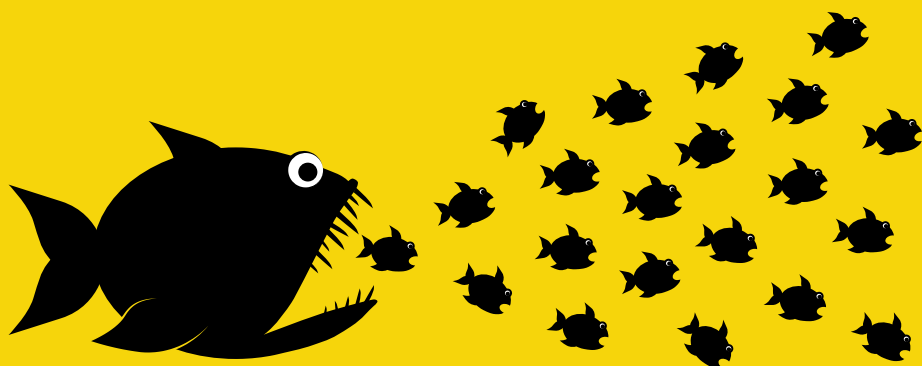


# MAKING SOCIAL CHANGES IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

basic handbook for community organisers





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and National Association of Resource  
Teachers (Bulgaria)**

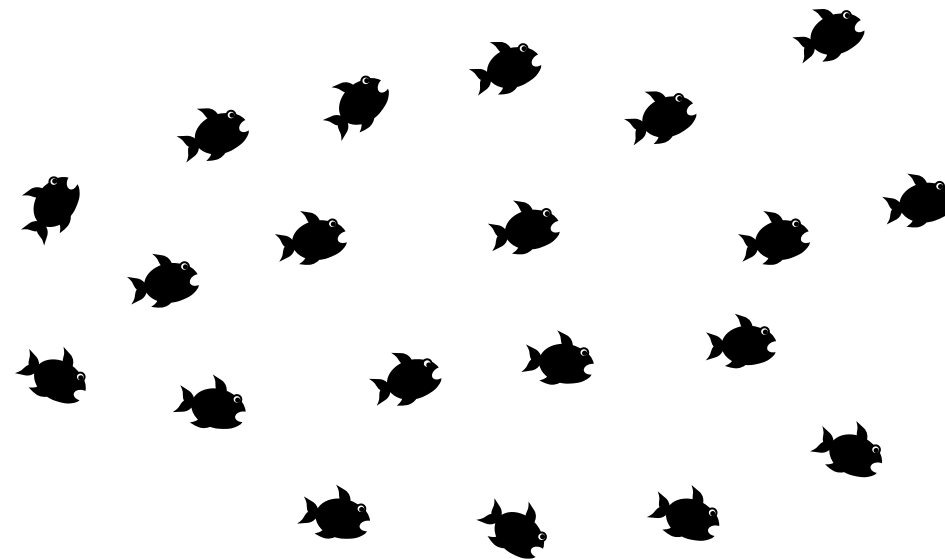
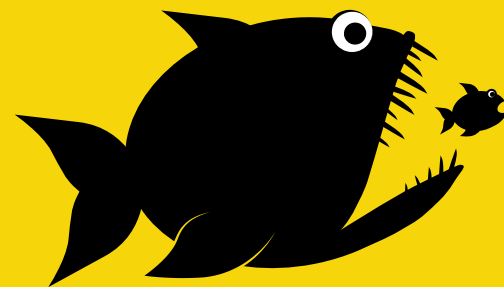
# Table of contents

<b>1. Preface</b>	<b>7</b>		
<b>2. What is Community Organising?</b>	<b>8</b>		
<b>3. The Basic Steps of Community Organising</b>	<b>10</b>		
<b>3.1. LISTENING PROCESS (ONE-ON-ONE)</b>	<b>11</b>		
• Are You Ready to Start Organising? So What to Do First?	11		
• What is Self – Interest and How to Find it?	13		
• How to Start and Maintain Conversation?	14		
• The Power of Storytelling	16		
<b>3.2. FIRST MEETING</b>	<b>20</b>		
• What do You Need to Know about Organising First Meeting?	20		
• Key Items for Successful First Meeting	22		
<b>3.3. REGULAR MEETINGS</b>	<b>24</b>		
• Meeting Evaluation	26		
• Work Plan for the Meeting	28		
		<b>3.4. CONDUCTING SOCIAL CAMPAIGNS</b>	<b>30</b>
		3.4.1. CHOOSING AN ISSUE	30
		<b>3.4.2. RESEARCH THE ISSUE AND THE TARGET</b>	<b>32</b>
		• The Power of Power Analysis	35
		• How to Do a Good Power Analysis?	36
		<b>3.4.3 GETTING STRONGER - BUILDING COALITIONS</b>	<b>41</b>
		<b>3.4.4 ACTION</b>	<b>42</b>
		<b>3.4.5 EVALUATION AND CELEBRATION</b>	<b>49</b>
		<b>3.5 BUILDING A COMMUNITY GROUP/ ORGANISATION</b>	<b>51</b>
		<b>4. Work with Media</b>	<b>58</b>
		• Giving an Interview	63
		• Being Interviewed on TV	64
		• Making Good Press Release	64
		• Holding a Press Conference	65
		Appendix A - Community Organising Dictionary	69
		Appendix B - References	77

# 1. Preface

The handbook for community organisers is a result of common work of five organisations involved in the project “European Community Organising School”: Bona Fides Civic Activity Association (Poland), Centre for Community Organising (Slovakia), Hungarian Anti-Poverty Network (Hungary), Civil College (Hungary) and National Association of Resource Teachers (Bulgaria).

The major aim of the project was to prepare community organisers to work with local communities through series of trainings and educational tools. Originally the project was aimed at staff, but as times are changing, it also came to involve local leaders active in their communities. Therefore this handbook is targeted both at staff - paid community organisers and local activists who make social changes in their environment voluntarily.



## 2. What is Community Organising?

The United States is the cradle of community organising. The method was initiated there by Saul Alinsky in 1938. It took a long road to bring this method to Europe, but nowadays number of organisations, initiatives and non-formal groups from Eastern Central and Western European countries implement it with success in their work with local communities. It should be highlighted that community organising is not innovative method in itself, but it differs from other forms of civic engagement, such as advocacy, social work or community development.

Community organising is about empowering people and making their voices heard and about achieving long-term and sustainable changes in the community. Regardless of the location (a housing estate, a village or a city) and issue (increasing number of bins, renovating old playground, blocking the building of a transmitter tower or enhancing public transport connections in a city), it allows to show ordinary citizens that they can have impact on their surroundings and be active actors in the public space.

“

*Community organising for me is the nicest way of being radical. A method that only by its rules recreates a better democracy for all that are in it and for all affected by it. A method that makes those who are involved critical, open minded, capable of sharing knowledge, experiences, thinking and acting as a group. A method that builds communities”.*

**Fanni, Hungary**

# 3. The Basic Steps of Community Organising

In this part we would like to offer explanation of fundamental basic steps that can be distinguished in the process of organising in a neighbourhood, institution or a congregation.

- 1. Listening process (one-on-one):** Systematically listening to dozens of people in the community in order to select issues that people care about and want to resolve.
- 2. First meeting:** Bringing people together where they prioritize the list of issues that have been reported during individual interviews (one-on-one).
- 3. Regular meetings:** Bringing people together regularly to work on specific issues, make research and plan a strategy for campaign.
- 4. Research:** Identifying potential solutions, and target groups, including decision-makers and institutions, which have the power to make these solutions possible.
- 5. Action:** Taking different actions to solve issues by engaging decision-makers and institutions through negotiation, confrontation or other methods.
- 6. Building the group/organisation:** Building sustainable and democratic group of leaders or organisation, which will be addressing numerous local needs in their community.

What is worth underlining is that the community organising method is like a circle. Once the group wins a campaign, they focus on another issue and then start listening process again.

## 3.1. Listening Process (one-on-one)



*A good community organiser should have passion, patience and time. Everything else is a question of details”.*

**Fanni, Hungary**

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### ARE YOU READY TO START ORGANISING? SO WHAT TO DO FIRST?

The very first step in organising is to think about a specific area (for example one of the poorest and most problematic neighbourhood in your city), which you would like to activate and involve in social change. You can also choose specific group of people that in your opinion may need support, for example a group of young mothers, the Roma community. It may also happen that you are invited to a place or community by a local leader or group of inhabitants who have the potential, but no experience in taking actions. However, you should keep in mind that the choice of community should be preceded by thorough local diagnosis that will help you make the right decision about where to start organising. Such a diagnosis should include among others: reading available reports and research, at least a dozen or so individual interviews (one-on-one) with inhabitants and representatives of institutions operating in the given location, such as a school principal, priest etc., as well as your own observations obtained while visiting the place. Thanks to that you will get full picture of the environment or the group of people whom you want to organise.



It must be underlined that the listening process is one of the most difficult and time consuming steps of organising. It lasts around 2-3 months and involves approximately 40-120 one-on-ones with members of the given community. During this process you look for persons who are interested in improving their surroundings or situation. Your task is to find out what community cares about, what they want to change or improve in their neighbourhood, what makes them angry etc. You should be aware that in the course of this step you may encounter different reactions, such as:

- fear – of change, uncertainty, job loss, repression in the community etc.
- I.C.M.A.D. – I can't make a difference
- later, not now – denial - if I put it off, it will go away
- lack of information or knowledge about the rights that you are entitled to, for example as a citizen, member of housing cooperative etc.

- someone else will solve that for me
- bad experience of local activity about the issue/ community in the past
- divisions due to racism, sexism, or elitism, or sense of inferiority
- family or personal problems, illness, lack of transportation or childcare

If you listen carefully to a person, you can understand why she is apathetic or afraid and can provide support in overcoming the problem that is holding her back.

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## WHAT IS SELF – INTEREST AND HOW TO FIND IT?

Keep in mind that people are driven by their self-interest. They want primarily to fulfil their personal needs: to change something for themselves or for their families. In fact everyone asks on number of occasion the question: How will this - decision, event, action etc.- have impact on me, my family, my community? For an organiser, understanding what is a person's self interest – as they themselves see it – helps engage and involve the leaders.

You can discern the self-interest of a person by listening to stories, experiences and priorities that she shares in individual conversation. Asking these sample questions could be helpful:

- *What makes you get out of bed in the morning?*
- *What is the most important thing in life for you and why?*
- *What motivates you?*
- *What are you passionate about?*
- *What makes you angry?*
- *What do you like most in the community you live in?*

Once you find what is important to an individual (what matters to me), then you can try to connect it with the collective interest (what matters to us, our organisation, or a city). It should be emphasised that in organising while each member in a group can have very different self-interest, this doesn't affect their ability to work towards a common cause.

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## HOW TO START AND MAINTAIN CONVERSATION?

If you door knock, you have around 30 seconds to get one's interest. During this time introduce yourself, state your goal, and convince the person to spend a bit more time with you for longer conversation.



*When I started working as a community organiser, I was afraid of door to door knocking, talking to people, if I will be able to attract people for the group work and the field work”.*

**Luba, Slovakia**

## GOOD PRACTICE:

*Hello! My name is Anna Kowalski. I am a community organiser and I work with Kokociniec Housing Estate Initiative of Inhabitants. We are talking to people in the neighbourhood in order to find out how your surroundings can be improved. Could you please tell me what you like/dislike the most in the place you live in? or What things bother you most about your community? or If you could improve one thing in your neighbourhood, what would it be?*

**Let's say that your interlocutor will respond by providing general answers, such as:**

I like everything in my neighbourhood!

I am concerned with poor condition of the housing in my neighbourhood.

I would like to have better educational opportunities for my children.

**Your role is then to turn this general response to something more concrete. But how to do that? How to find an issue?**

You can simply ask:

What do you mean by poor condition of the housing in your neighbourhood?

Can you specify which part of the neighbourhood you are referring to?



---

## FINDING AN ISSUE

When you think that something appears to be an issue, ask yourself three questions:

1. **Is it specific?**
2. **Can people be mobilised around that?**
3. **Can something be done to solve this situation?**

If your answer for any of these question is NO, then it means that it is not an issue, but a problem! In community organising there is a huge difference between an issue and a problem. A problem is a very broad area of concern, whereas an issue is a solution or partial solution to a problem. And you can only do something with the issues, not problems.

You will find more detailed information about this topic in the chapter devoted to conducting social campaigns.

You can also start a conversation by bringing up a specific issue that was raised by one of the neighbours during one-on-one.

### GOOD PRACTICE:

*Hello! My name is Jan Poniowski. I am a community organiser and I am talking to people in the neighbourhood in order to find out how your surroundings can be improved. One of the neighbours from 3rd floor told me that your housing estate lacks recycle bins. Does this issue bother you too? If it does, next Thursday at 7.00 pm. we are actually having a meeting at local school to think about what we can do together to resolve this matter. Will you be willing to come?*

**For longer one-on-one reserve around 30-45 minutes. Do remember a few things here:**

1. Listen carefully to a person, ask both general and more detailed questions, such as: What do you like/dislike the most in the district you live in? What bothers you the most in your community? If you could improve one thing in your neighbourhood, what would it be? How does this issue affect you and your family?
2. It is you who carry out the conversation, so do not permit the person to seize it, but at the same time do not focus too much time on yourself and do not bring up your own agenda.
3. You are an intruder into the life of the person behind the door, so do not push her to talk to you!
4. It is not a chit-chat. You are there to learn what is the person's self-interest and to identify the issue she cares about.
5. Ask for something specific – will you come to the meeting, during which we will discuss the issue you are concerned about? Will you sign the petition for...? Will you fund our neighbourhood picnic? etc.
6. Have some visual materials with you – a card, a leaflet about the group/organisation, invitation to the meeting with detailed information, such as date, address, purpose of the meeting etc.
7. Close the conversation with a specific next step – this might be a public meeting with more people interested in this issue, invitation to a neighbourhood day etc.
8. Make a follow-up. After one-on-one follow up with a thank you note or a call.

## THE POWER OF STORYTELLING

A powerful story can move hearts, change opinions and inspire action. It is widely used in community organising, during one-on-one, public campaigns (then we call it testimony) or when speaking with media.

We use storytelling to build strong relationship, to persuade and to be remembered.

First we start with a small talk, then we ask some questions about the person, after that talk about yourself (tell your story), then talk about why you talk to the neighbours and ask the person to join, donate or/and support.

In a story it is important to talk first about yourself – your background, then about us – what connects you to the community/a person and about the now – what do you do – what can we do together.

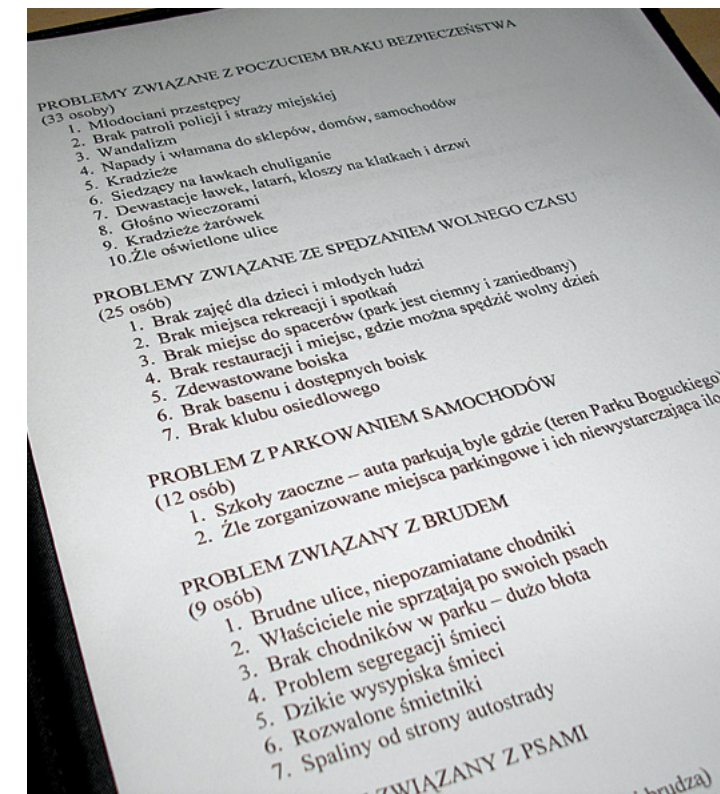
### STRUCTURE OF THE STORY OF SELF:

- **Background** – where do you come from, what is your background, family, original profession? etc.
- **Decision/moment** – talk about a few pivotal moments that changed your life and turned you towards working as an organiser / being active in the community / fighting for social justice etc.
- **Action** – what did you do after that, how did you start taking action?
- **Outcome** – what happened, what was the experience you gained, what do you do now?

Storytelling is a powerful tool to make emotional connection, therefore you do not need to use a lot of rational arguments. You use HEART arguments more than HEAD arguments.

## SO WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP AFTER THE LISTENING PROCESS?

Once you have conducted dozens of one-on-ones, sit down, prepare list of issues that have been brought up during conversations and plan the meeting, which will be attended by all the persons interested in acting for their local community or concerned about a specific issue.



- After listening process in Ścigaty Housing Estate community organiser prepared list of issues brought up by inhabitants during one-on-ones and presented it during meeting with inhabitants, 17.11.2011.

## 3.2. First Meeting

### WHAT DO YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ORGANISING FIRST MEETING?

After identifying issues that are of importance to a group/ community/institution/congregation etc., the next step is to organise a first meeting. It will allow you to bring together all people with whom you had one-on-one - inhabitants, leaders, representatives of the institutions relevant in a given area etc. – who are concerned about their neighbourhood as such or about a specific issue, to build connection between them, and eventually to start a group/organisation. The goal of the first meeting is to prioritise the list of issues that were brought up during individual interviews and choose a maximum of 2 or 3 (depending on the number of gathered people) that are the most pressing for them to be solved. It is a very crucial moment when a group of people who know nothing or little about each other are starting to building their own history and identity!



■ *First meeting with inhabitants of Ścigaly Housing Estate, Katowice, 2013*

### SET UP GOOD TIME, DATE AND PLACE

First of all set a good date and time, which should be determined by the hour and day most likely to attract good turnout. Select an adequate place, which is neutral and accessible by as many people as possible (it can be classroom in a school, someone's house or garden) and phone the persons you had talked to in the community.

### DISTRIBUTE INFORMATION ABOUT THE MEETING AND/OR IDENTIFY POTENTIAL LEADERS WHO WILL HELP YOU BRING MORE PEOPLE

You can also distribute posters in the community, informing about the meeting, but be aware that choosing that option can result in the presence of persons who have no idea what the meeting is about and can simply destroy it. Another suggestion is to ask a few persons who seem to be the most involved/upset by the issue to help you bring more people to the meeting. Always remember that people who come to the first meeting should represent the constituency, so that the strategy they will develop can be acceptable to that constituency.

Usually the first meeting is attended by around 10-20 people, out of whom 5-7 will show their willingness to make further steps and work on the issues, so do not get discouraged!

### DEVELOP THE AGENDA

Prepare clear and concise agenda, which should naturally follow the stated goals of the meeting. You can develop the programme together with a leader from the chosen community or a core member of the group. Do not forget to create a sign-up sheet, which includes such information as name, address, phone number, email address.

## FACILITATE THE MEETING

Given the fact that a meeting is usually attended by persons who do not know each other well, or have little experience in community activity, your role is to moderate the discussion, encourage participation, so that everyone will have space to tell their story and what matters to them, and you will be able to end the meeting with a certain outcome (selecting the issue/issues you are going to work on, setting date, time and location for the next meeting).

## KEY ITEMS FOR SUCCESSFUL FIRST MEETING

### 1. BEFORE THE MEETING

- prepare list of issues reported during one-on-one
- define the goals of the meeting
- develop a list of open-ended questions and issues to start a group discussion
- prepare the following in advance:
  - the venue: seating, audio visual equipment, lighting etc.
  - agenda with time frames
  - sign up sheet
  - refreshments, childcare etc.

### 2. DURING THE MEETING

- start on time
- provide space for everyone to introduce themselves
- state clearly the aim/s of the meeting
- follow the agenda to accomplish the desired purpose
- make sure that everyone participates
- stimulate and facilitate the discussion

- take notes on a flipchart
- assign small tasks to everyone if possible, for example designing a poster for next meeting, writing an official request for a venue, which will serve you as a regular point for meetings etc.

### 3. AFTER THE MEETING

- prepare the minutes and send them to all participants
- evaluate the meeting by calling everyone

## CASE STUDY:

### From One Leader to a Successful Group

#### KUKUCZKI HOUSING ESTATE INITIATIVE

After having conducted approximately 120 one-on-ones in the Kukuczki housing estate in Katowice, Poland, the community organiser was preparing the first big meeting in the neighbourhood. She invited 20 people from the estate - leaders and inhabitants, with whom she had talked to, but eventually only one person appeared. The meeting was held anyway and the community organiser analysed with the leader why had such a situation occurred. They decided to organise another group meeting, for which the leader who attended the first one had to ask her neighbours face-to-face to come. The second meeting turned out to be successful and was attended by 10 interested persons who soon established the Kukuczki Housing Estate Initiative, which is very active in the community. This year the Initiative celebrates the fifth anniversary of their existence!

### 3.3. Regular Meetings

Regular meetings are crucial step in community organising process. During that phase members of the newly established group or organisation work together on a specific issue or issues to be solved, for example increasing the number of parking places, renovating an old playground or improving housing conditions in Roma community. They can meet more often, from a monthly basis to a weekly basis, depending on how urgent the issue is and in which phase of the process the group is. Regular meetings also serve as a space to work on group development, such as introduction of group structure, strengthening of group identity by creating a logo, creating a Facebook profile, determining decision-making mechanism etc.

#### THE “GOOD MEETING”

Usually lasts no more than two hours, starts and ends on time, has written and timed agenda.

Its purpose is to decide on one major action/issue, make a detailed plan, distribute the tasks and define the roles of each member of the group/organisation. The good meeting is followed by an evaluation.

■ Meeting at the office of Centrum komunitného organizovania in Banská Bystrica, during which, a new campaign “Not in our town” was introduced.



## MEETING EVALUATION

### 1. Feeling

- One word from everyone, emphasize “feeling” (“exciting,” “depressing,” “angry,” “scared,” “tense,” “motivated”) rather than a heady or intellectual word (e.g., “interesting,” “informative”)

### 2. Performance

- How leaders performed their tasks, turnout, agenda, logistics, active participation

### 3. Outcomes

- What did the group learn ...(it depends on what kind of meeting/event/action they had)

### 4. Community

- How is power in community defined and distributed?
- What is the role of the group in community?

### 5. Achievements

- Did the group achieve their goal to have xxx number of people at the meeting?
- Did the group achieve the goal of the meeting?
- How was the meeting? Did the group follow the agenda? Did they “get lost” in the agenda?
- What was good?

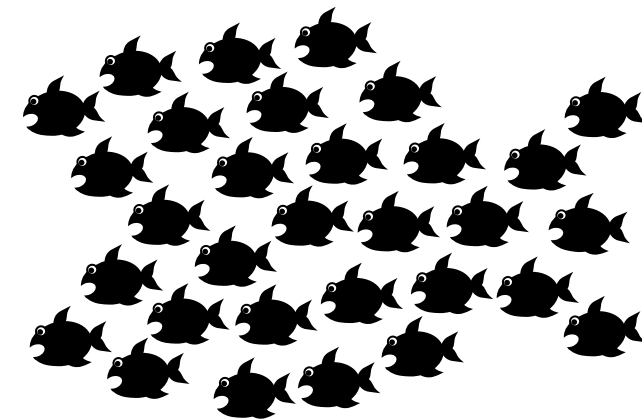
### 6. Follow up

- What should be improved next time?
- Follow up calls or thanks to people who came to the meeting

From time to time a group/organisation you work with can organise a community meeting, which provides a reflective and listening space for all members of the community. It also provides an opportunity to discuss what is working, what is not working so well, highlight needs and analyse the issues. It can help generate ideas, structure the group and identify the roles, make a common plan, and also build understanding and a sense of trust among the members of the group. The overall goal of the community meeting is to support citizens’ participation and their real interest about public and other decisions that affect them.

When organising a community meeting, the following should be taken into account:

- **What is the purpose and structure?**
- **Who should chair/facilitate?**
- **How to get people there?**
- **How to maintain interest and motivation in people?**
- **How to work with leaders?**



**WORK PLAN FOR THE MEETING**

TIME LINE	TEAM	AUDIENCE	PLACE	MEDIA
	Meet with the team to begin planning	Identify people and groups interested in the event	Check potential meeting places	Plan how to attract media
	Initial planning	Plan how many people will be at the meeting	Secure location	List of media
	Set schedule	List of people who will invite other people, groups	Equipment	Choose contact person for media
	Facilitator	Flyers to advertise meeting	Refreshments	First contact with media
	Speakers	Distribute hand-outs, flyers in the community	Prepare materials to bring to the meeting place	Use partners to contact media they cooperate with
	Date and place	Media appearances	Assign people to help transport materials, equipment to the meeting place and back	Message for media, press release
	Identifying potential partners	Additional flyers	Sign-up sheet	Communication with media

TIME LINE	TEAM	AUDIENCE	PLACE	MEDIA
	Contact and meet partners	Invitations for other organizations	Arrive early to ensure the room is OK	Own recording of the meeting
	Media	Follow up with organizations you invited	Make sure set up is OK	Media appearance
	Think about visual materials	Assign people to greet people at the event	Name tags	Assign person to greet media
	Agenda – discuss agenda within the group and with partner	Reconfirm everything with everyone	Materials, hand- outs	Follow up calls
	Assign roles for people during event		Test equipment	Pre-meeting media appearance
	Ongoing check			Confirm media
	Clarify and check everything			
	Relax			
	Good luck!			
	Evaluate			

*Continued on page 29*

## 3.4. Conducting Social Campaigns

The main goal of community organising is to create social change by putting people into action. It is not enough to gather people and the issues that they have to solve. When you already have the group who is angry and committed to change their situation, you need a detailed plan on how they are going to reach it. The group starts a long process, in which they have to have a clear picture of the route that they will have to take. They have to analyse thoroughly the chosen issue, develop a strategy, create various scenarios, analyse potential risk, define time frames, share tasks and responsibilities and stay together in every moment. The campaign is the chain of actions that leads to winning an issue.

### 3.4.1. Choosing an Issue

**Before starting a campaign, a group has to gain clear understanding of the issue itself:**

- How does this issue connect to their overall goals?
- What is really the change that has to be made - is it just the decision of a person, or a whole team of legislators?
- Who else is affected by the issue and how are they connected to group?

---

### BUT WHAT IS AN ISSUE?

Most organizations identify a long term mission, and some problems that they feel are important and that connect them. These are usually big and rather general, like – fighting poverty, making a neighbourhood more child friendly or stopping global warming. While we are rightly eager to solve these problems, it is frustrating and overwhelming when we see how big they are and we do not know from where to start. Issues are smaller and more specific. To make a neighbourhood more child friendly, the group should start with something small, like having water and nappy changing facilities at the playground. In this case, they can identify precisely how many people need this change, which playground should be changed first, how much money this will cost, and the most important thing, who is responsible for making the decision and providing permission and possibly money to reach this goal.



- *Members of Our Ścigaty Housing Estate Initiative choose issue to be solved in the district - lack of parking lot in one of the streets.*





*Just because you think it is an issue, does not make it an issue. Just because you think it is not an issue, does not mean it is not an issue”.*

**Shel Trapp**

An issue is specific, when you solve it, it makes real change in some people’s life, and it deeply affects them so for them it is worth to fight for. By solving the issue they can really feel their power – the possibility to create change, and through this to alter the existing power relations. It is easy to understand and solve, it is winnable, and you can feel the support of many other people (it isn’t divisive). It has a clear target, who is responsible for resolving it, and you can foresee the time frame (not too long) in which you can reach a solution.

### 3.4.2. Research the Issue and the Target

As we said before, once the group starts working on an issue, it is very important to analyse it.

**Why does this issue exist, who is affected by it, who is responsible for resolving it, how can it be changed, what actions have to be taken to solve it?**

To get answers for all these questions the following tools can be used:

**One-on-one** – members of the group talk to people who are affected by the issue. These are people who they already know. Individual conversations allow to deepen the knowledge about a given issue.

**Reaching out to new people**- the group should reach out to even more people who are affected by the issue and who can help in understanding it. It can be done with different tools, such as one-on-one or making interviews in a team with the help of questionnaires.

**Making an online questionnaire or poll**- it allows to reach out to lots of people who are affected by an issue. Although using this tool does not build relations t it can show that the issue has an effect on dozens of people.

**Collecting data** - there might already exist large volumes of data that can describe the issue and its effect.

**Making interviews with professionals** - the group may be able to find some people in the administration who can be their allies and provide them with some information for analysing the issue. Also there might be some researchers who are interested in it, or have knowledge about similar cases.

**Organising a planning meeting** – the group can invite people from their constituency and also possible allies to make a common analysis of the issue and to start creating a plan. This can also help see what information is missing. A planning meeting may result in finding people willing to form a working group and deal with the issue.



■ Inhabitants of Załęże district were invited within participatory budgeting to indicate, which issues are the most pressing for them.

**The members of the group should also ask themselves several questions:**

**WHAT DO WE WANT TO WIN?** – what are our short term goals, and how are they connected to our long term goals and mission? What are the steps we have to make? Are there partial victories, compromises that we can take on the way? What is the minimum and what is the maximum goal? When can we say we won and how much change would it give to people?

**WHO IS THE TARGET?** - who can give us what we want? Who is the person/institution responsible for the situation, and who can take the decision to change it? How can we reach them?

**IN WHOSE INTEREST ARE WE ACTING?** - who are the people that want this change and who will be affected by it? How many of them are already connected with us and how many can we get involved? Are they organised in other groups, where we can reach them? How much risk do they take when they act in public?

**WHO ARE THE PEOPLE WITH SIMILAR AND DIFFERENT INTEREST?** - who will support us, and who can be our ally? Are there any opponents we have to face on our way? Who has different interests and would oppose what we want? How much power do they have and how could they stop us?

**HOW MUCH POWER DO WE HAVE AND HOW MUCH DO WE HAVE TO GAIN TO WIN?** - how many people and resources do we have right now? How much money and how many people and other resources will we need during the campaign?

**WHAT DO WE HAVE TO DO?** - after having a clear picture of the target and our organisation, what should be the tools and tactics, which we will use in the campaign to win? How do they fit our organisation? Do they fit the leaders and are they interesting to them? Are they interesting to the wider public and the media?

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## THE POWER OF POWER ANALYSIS

The main aim of a community organising campaign is to change the existing power relations. The group has to have a clear picture of how much power they have and how much power their target has, as well as how they can channel that power to grow their organisations capacities and strength in the meantime.

Power analysis is a tool to identify who holds the power and therefore who to target during campaign activities in order to win an issue. A power map, done properly, can reveal the relationships and power dynamics and help design a winning strategy for the campaign.

- *Who is the target?*
- *What are their interests?*
- *Who helps and supports them?*
- *Who are the opponents that would be actively opposing the group?*
- *Is there anyone who can influence the target, and if yes, how?*
- *What is at stake for the target when it comes to the issue?*
- *Is there anything else they can lose when the group is publicly confronting them?*

Preferably a power analysis should be done in a core group to get a more comprehensive picture and to make sure that each member of the group will understand the outcome.

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## HOW TO DO A GOOD POWER ANALYSIS?

**The following steps can be undertaken when making a detailed power analysis:**

### **Step 1: Defining issue to be analysed**

As described earlier, the group has to clearly identify the issue, on which they will be working, and to see who is influenced by it.

### **Step 2: Defining the agenda and the opposition's agenda**

***What are we talking about?*** It should be made clear what are the key topics, points of the group's agenda that will be presented in public? How is it connected to the actual issue that they identified?

***What are they talking about?*** What is the agenda of the target and the opponents? What are the key elements of the arguments that they present in public, in relation to the group issue?

### **Step 3: Plotting the major battles & campaigns**

Analysis of the news! What are the public battles, policy debates, cases that are connected to the group's issue?

### **Step 4: Plotting major decision makers**

Who are the individuals, entities responsible for making decisions on group issues? How much power each of them has? Who are they connected to? What are the things they like, and what are the things they fear? Do they have anything in their life connected to group issues? How can the group put pressure on them?

### **Step 5: Plotting organised and active opposition groups**

Who are the groups of people, and most importantly the organised people, who are opposing the group agenda and can actively do something in support of the target, influence the target, or just confront the group publicly during the campaign?

### **Step 6: Plotting group, allies and supporters**

How much power, capacities, tools do the group have? Who is going to support them? Who can give them extra power by forming a coalition or alliance? These should be organised groups – other groups of people, non-governmental organisations, unions etc.

### **Step 7: Plotting unorganised constituencies**

Who are the people affected by the issue that the group did not reach out to yet? Where and how they can be found? How can they be involved into the work, campaigns, and actions of the group?

### **Step 8: Analysing picture and refining campaign strategy**

Now the group has a map of all „stakeholders” - people who are connected to the issue from both sides. Thanks to that they can see how much power each group or individual has. By seeing it they can make a decision whether to start a campaign on the issue or not. Is it possible to win it or not? What are the changes they want to make, and are they able to do it? If yes how? What are the strengths, weaknesses, and challenges they have to face? Where do they have to put more energy? Who can be their partners? Which decision-makers should they focus on weakening? And how can they do it? What are the risks? All these questions involve a lot of in-group discussions.



## CASE STUDY:

### **From Dangerous Ruins to a New Park**

#### **LET'S ACT TOGETHER FOR MÁTRAVEREBÉLY**

The members of the group *Let's Act Together for Mátraverebély* are mainly Roma people who live in the segregated part of the village Mátraverebély, in the north of Hungary. Their goal is to get better living conditions, a stronger community and to reduce distance between the Roma and non-Roma inhabitants, proving that all of them can be useful residents of their village. With this they also want to improve the perception of Mátraverebély.

The village is divided by Route 21. Most of the infrastructure is situated on the one side, and the other side is poorer, run-down, with bad infrastructure, mainly inhabited by the Roma community. In the middle of this segregated part, there is a square and the ruins of a former shop and a cinema. It is ugly, sad and dangerous. The group united to end this situation and put pressure on the owner to remove the ruins from the square and clean up the whole space.

But the work had to start with finding out: who is the owner and who is responsible to change the situation? The group collected 400 signatures and presented them to the Mayor, who told them that he supported them, but had no contact with the owner of the building. They turned to the regional Land Registry Office, where they were informed that the owner is a private company. In the course of research, it turned out that the company is registered in Budapest, and is owned by the Hungarian Catholic Church. The group started writing letters to the priest responsible for administration buildings, and calling him, but he did not react for a while. Then they contacted a local Bishop who helped contacting and putting pressure on the priest.

The Church proposed to pay for the transportation of the trash if the group voluntarily collects it. They realized it is not the solution they wanted, so they refused. As there was a hazard of infection at the building, they wrote a letter to the Sanitary Office of the county, that went on to make an investigation. Together with the Building Authority they agree that the owner should clean up the area, otherwise they will be fined.



In the meantime the group organised a public event at the neighbouring square, during which people could express how they would like to see the area. The children could make a drawing of an imagined park. They also invited a member of the parliament who represents the county, and informed the local media about the whole issue and process.

Finally, in fear of fines, the Church sold the land for 1 HUF to the town, and a member of parliament made an announcement that 90 million HUF are going to be dedicated by the government to revitalize the square, demolish the building and create a park, which will be built in spring 2018. This was a great victory for the group *Let's Act Together for Mátraverebély!*

### 3.4.3 Getting Stronger - Building Coalitions

Power analysis allows to map different individuals, groups, institutions who have similar interests, and who might work with the group to join forces in winning the issue. They might have different general interests and goals, and also different history of conducting campaigns. Working together within a coalition needs a lot of discussions, joint planning and most of all, clear agreements on what to do together and how.

**A coalition** is an alliance of individuals and/or organizations working together to achieve a common goal.

#### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF WORKING IN A COALITION?

- joining the capacities and above all, the power that each partner has
- better access to different resources
- increased level of legitimacy. The more people and groups join a coalition, the wider the range of the population, which they represent is
- getting higher visibility
- chance to grow and to learn. Each member of the group gets new roles and tasks, they learn how to talk about the issues and goals, how to organise their work in time and space, and how to cooperate with others
- if it is successful, it allows to build long lasting connection.

In the coalition it has to be clear from the beginning how much resources each partner has, and how much collectively they need to gather. It is also important to agree on the publicity: how to communicate their common work, who represents the coalition, what are the statements that will be sent to the public. And a common strategy is needed.

**Tools to make coalition more effective:**

- a well-written mission statement that members sign when joining
- an agreed upon set of official operating principles on tactics, communication within and communication outside the coalition

**What makes easier to reach goals within a coalition:**

- publicity
- regular meetings
- open and reliable reporting mechanisms among members
- funding

### 3.4.4 Action

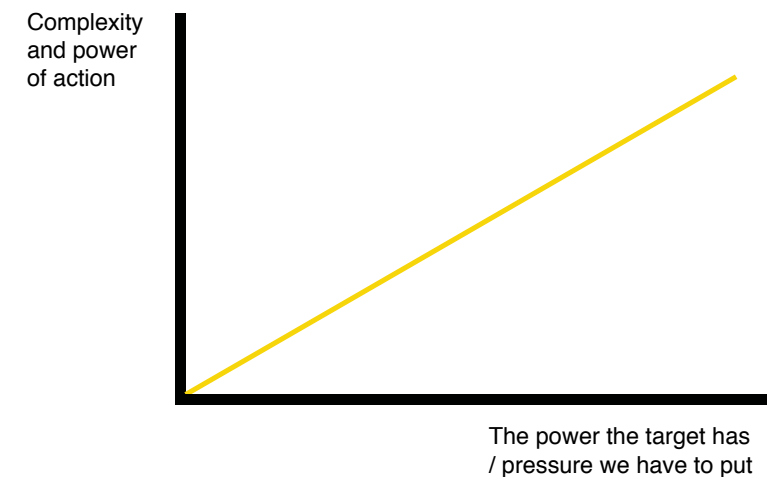
When organising communities, your goal as a community organiser is to have more and more people who are able to make moves, take action and do something for their own and/or common interest. That is why the most exciting and at the same time the most challenging element of a campaign is when people take action. Different types of activities and tools can be used in order to reach the goals.

The main aim of an action is to put pressure on a target - a person or institution who has the power and can give the group what they want. Once again, the purpose of taking action is to change the power relations. To give more power to those who have less and make them stronger, and to take power from those who have a lot and are in some way oppressing those that lack power.

The actions that a group chooses will be different, depending on the power of the target and the power, capacity and knowledge of the group, as well as number of people whom the group can mobilize. The more pressure they can assert, the more powerful they will look. In such a case they have to take more and more complex actions.



■ Special campaign organised in one of the local school in Bulgaria to raise awareness about the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue. The initiative involved also exhibition of children's' paintings.





■ Workfare Movement for the future group in Hungary.

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## EXAMPLES OF TOOLS, WHICH CAN BE USED IN COMMUNITY ORGANISING CAMPAIGNS:

### SOCIAL

- writing letters
- gathering signatures for a petition
- making phone calls
- sending emails or letters to policy makers - this can be mass mailing or a phone campaign, in which the group asks 40, 100 or even more people to call the legislator with the same question. This can cause a lot of pain to the bureaucratic system
- using the media: writing press releases, reports or giving interviews to the media (persuading the media to cover events or to publish stories that highlight particular issues or embarrass politicians and others in power who refuse to do what is right)
- organising an action, happening or a flash mob
- organising demonstrations, rallies and marches. The “classic” social actions often involve petitions, speeches, entertainment, and/or elements of street theatre
- organising a boycott, a picket or a strike
- organising a sit-in or occupying a public space - in a sit-in as an act of civil disobedience a group is occupying place in a public space, for example the office of an official who has impact on the issue the group fights for, a courtyard or a particular building or a park. The act becomes civil disobedience if the group is trespassing on somebody’s property

## LEGAL

- getting legal advice
- request public information from public institutions
- starting a legal case

## POLITICAL

- organising a public meeting with a decision maker
- attending a public hearing or a public meeting (or disrupting, depending on group's philosophy and the circumstances)
- mobilising people to vote and get involved in politics around elections. This can even mean going door to door discussing the issues, which drives voters to the polls, or distributing materials to inform them



■ Protest against fascism in Slovakia, Banská Bystrica 4.10.2017.

## CASE STUDY:

### **Big Success of Roma Community in Banská Bystrica**

This case study elaborates on local communities that are socially, economically and geographically isolated and consist mostly of Roma people living in the area nearby Banská Bystrica called Cementarenska. CKO had one paid organiser at the area for almost 4 years.

In 2013 a community organiser started to work in Cementarenska community. She already had some contacts and relations with a few women from that community, which she gained throughout her work in children clubs.

At Cementarenska there are two types of housing. Two one-floor apartment houses, which are owned by the Municipality of Banská Bystrica. Both of them are in poor condition, but one is in a catastrophic state and the municipality has refrained from doing something about it for three years already. The second type of housing belongs to the Municipal Housing Estate.

It is under a hill, a semi-detached house, which citizens bought for the symbolic 1 euro. The land is owned by various people. Here a big success was achieved when a meeting was attended by a mayor who declared the housing to be under protection in order to prevent a risk of sudden evictions of families living there.



Two major issues were identified in the Cementarenska area:

1. Housing – water leaking into the building where 15 families of around 52 members live together. The issue is that the roof is full of holes and this has not been solved for over 20 years.
2. A spike of infections in the community. It was determined that the number of restrooms (outdoor toilets) that the community was using decreased from five to one. It was due to the fact that a private owner of the field where the rest four toilets were placed, had fenced his property off and inhibited the access of the families in the community. As a result, everyone was using only one toilet, which caused an increase of infections and illnesses in the community.

The community started to work on the issue of housing together. They engaged a mayor who after an invitation visited Cementarenska for the first time ever and promised to cooperate and find an appropriate solution for the families living in the property. On the second issue, the community asked some health assistants for support. They recommended to use a collecting vessel. Another option was a bricked building connected to the public sanitary sewer. After some time, a big meeting was organised, which gathered dozens of inhabitants from the community. They were motivated and committed to build the building by using their own skills (a sanitary engineer and a few skilled workmen lived there). This was in May and at the end of June they started building. Nowadays the work is done and the outhouse toilets are in use.

In September 2016 there were seven toilets ready for seven households, five of them were newly built and in operation, one was almost finished and the last one was the one that remained from before.

The issue of housing is still being resolved.

## 3.4.5 Evaluation and Celebration

### WHY EVALUATE?

When the group is in the process of conducting campaign, it is important to regularly stop for a moment and reflect on what has been done up to that point and how. This evaluation involves assessment of every element of the campaign. Elements that can be evaluated are the actions of the members, the actions of the whole group, the cooperation within the coalition (if applicable), the impact on a new constituency, allies, opponents and targets etc. During that stage the members of the group should ask themselves the following questions:

1. *How did we perform?*
2. *What did we learn?*
3. *Did we manage to reach our goals?*
4. *How did we use the resources we had?*
5. *How much new members, supporters, contacts did we recruit?*
6. *Did we choose the right tools and tactics?*
7. *What partnership did we manage to build and how are we going to maintain and use them in the future?*
8. *How much money did we use and how much did we collect?*
9. *What is the way forward: if we had not solved the issue yet, what other tactics can we use next? What did we learn about our target and opponents? Can we see opportunities for convincing/weakening them? How did they react to our tactics?*

Evaluation is a crucial, but very often neglected element of the community organising method. It shows the group the way forward and allows them to change the plan or develop completely new strategy. It must be stressed that evaluation should not only be conducted during campaigns, but also in other steps of community organising process!

### CELEBRATION!

What is also very important is to stop for a few minutes after the group achieved a success, even a very small one and celebrate! Celebrating when the group wins an issue and also celebrating when they believe they have made a big step forward. This gives the opportunity to provide extra energy to the group and make the cohesion of the group stronger. Your role as a community organiser is to give your attention and positive feedback to those who made the effort to act and work for the issue and the group itself, reward them in some way for their involvement and determination.



## 3.5 Building a Community Group/Organisation

One of the important goals of community organising is to turn informal groups into sustainable and self-sufficient community organisations. Of course there is a number of cases when non-formal initiatives of inhabitants are successful in undertaking actions in their community, but your role as a community organiser is to provide at some point a good space for discussion around that topic with members of the group.

*Community organisation refers to a group usually involved in series of activities at the community level aimed at bringing about desired improvement in the social well-being of individuals, groups and neighbourhoods.*

Community-based organisations operate as civil society non-profit organizations, and also as communities defined by geographical location, shared work space, and/or shared experience or concerns. Within community-based organisations, there are many variations in terms of size and organizational structure. Some are formally incorporated, with a written bylaw and a board of directors while others are much smaller and more informal and can identify more with initiatives or groups of inhabitants.

Before you start building a community organisation your role as community organiser is firstly to engage the right people, secondly, to set goals, structure and clear and transparent methods for the organisation, and third, to develop good relations, and set long term goals.

## **BASIC STEPS: AN OVERVIEW**

These basic steps can be used to start a new community organisation or an initiative or to strengthen one that already exists.

### **1. Idea**

You or your community think that something needs fixing.

Sometimes an issue or new situation in your world confronts you and you have to do something about it. You have an idea of what needs improvement and know you cannot do it alone.

### **2. Develop a vision**

Where you or your community eventually want to go, how you would like the world to be.

### **3. Motivation**

Tell your story. Understand why you or your community are doing this. Think over what can motivate others.

### **4. Listen to others**

Who do you have to listen in order to develop your idea?  
Are others concerned by this issue and share your ideas?  
Can you get their support and involvement?

### **5. Plan**

Put your idea in writing: What is an issue? What is a solution?  
A written vision can be broadcast widely and clearly.  
It also adds legitimacy to your idea.

### **6. Core group**

Get the support and commitments of others.

### **7. Bring together a core group**

You or your community will need from seven to fifteen people who share your vision and will do the work to get the organisation off the ground.

### **8. Mission, goals and objectives**

Clarify what you or your community want to accomplish.

### **9. Structure**

It is critical that you build your organisation with the right foundation and framework, so that it can last over time. Think about strengthening group identity by introducing its name, creating its own profile on Facebook or webpage, as well as visual materials such as logo, a leaflet etc.

### **10. Your power**

What will it take to accomplish what you or your community want? Power comes from organised money, organised people who have strong relationships with one another, good information about the details of what your group wants to accomplish, and, most important, the ability to move people to action and to ask for what you want. Power requires that you mobilize resources. Recruit people, develop leaders, gather information, and raise money as to accomplish what you want.

### **11. Strategy**

Strategy is your overall path. It helps understand the general plan you are following and the assumptions behind it.

### **12. Action, evaluation and reflection**

Good things come to those who act, negotiate, evaluate, reflect, learn from their actions, and keep acting.

CASE STUDY:

**Kukuczki Housing Estate Initiative**

This case elaborates on the story of a non-formal group of inhabitants who have been changing their estate with successes for 5 years!

The group was established in March 2013 by a paid community organiser who conducted around 120 one-on-ones in Kukuczki housing estate, both with inhabitants and representatives of different institutions working in the area. In the beginning the initiative consisted of five active members, and now there are approximately ten persons involved in regular activities. The first issue the group decided to focus on was the poor number of parking places in one of the streets. Due to that cars were parking everywhere - on pavements, green areas and even places designated for emergency services. It was believed that this issue will be solved soon, but it took almost 4 years of regular actions to have this resolved.

In the meantime, upon community organiser's recommendation, a group engaged in renovating a small square. They took part in a competition organised by Western Bank Foundation and won it.

Thanks to a grant initiative they replaced an old and broken bench and planted lots of different plants. It was the first success they achieved, and in fact was a pivotal moment in the group's life. The members of the group felt that together they can make greater changes in their neighbourhood.



■ Members of Kukuczki Housing Estate Initiative are changing their local square, Katowice, 02.07.2014.



■ Finally after 4 years of campaign, inhabitants of one of the streets in Kukuczki Housing Estate can park in normal conditions.

Apart from further involvement in the campaign dedicated to increasing the number of parking places and the constant work on improving living conditions in the estate, the members were concentrating on strengthening the group itself. On a number of occasions (during one-on-one with members from the core group, and the monthly meetings of the whole initiative) the community organiser discussed with them the need for building a structure and enhancing the group's visibility by choosing a name, creating a logo, business cards and other visual materials as well as setting up a Facebook profile. After a year of existence, the initiative was ready to introduce a structure. They decided to have one leader chosen for a six-month term in office and whose role is to lead the group and the 3 working groups that deal with the different issues: the first takes care of the parking issue, the second of the green area management and the third of promoting the initiative.

Each working group has its own coordinator who informs the leader about the progress of their work. They also appointed a minutes keeper, a treasurer, a fundraiser and a spokesperson.

Additionally the group agreed on monthly membership fee, which allows them to fund some actions by themselves, such as sending letters to institutions, buy refreshments for neighbourhood day or celebrate their anniversary in a caffè. Step by step the group became more independent and self-sufficient, and after three years of regular support, it was decided that they will work without the community organiser. Nowadays, Kukuczki Housing Estate Initiative is very active and well-known in the community. This year they celebrate the fifth anniversary of their existence!

■ *Leader from Kukuczki Housing Estate Initiative officially thanks to everyone involved in a campaign aimed at increasing the number of parking places in Lubuska street, Katowice, 20.07.2017.*



# 4. Work with Media

Journalists are invaluable allies in getting the cause of the group across to the public. Good media relations can be the key to any successful action in the field of community organising.

The media provides opportunities for the public to better understand and be informed both about the issues and solutions. It also gives the group a bigger leverage to influence policy makers and other relevant stakeholders, and to hold them accountable for their actions and commitments.

In the work with media community the same framework can be used as with working with any other community. In this case the same logic should be followed: listening – inspiring – building a community!

## 1. LISTENING

The group should pay attention to the media environment. At the national level they should look for journalists and outlets that readily publish materials related to their field.

At the local level they should gather information on the available newspapers, websites, TV and radio stations that are targeted on specific regions. They should target their communications carefully. Being familiar with the works of specific journalists and their publications or reports goes a long way, especially at the local level.

Timing is very important in work with the media because deadlines ruled the day. It must be kept in mind that the deadlines of the local outlets might be very different of those used by the nationwide media.

Another crucial thing to be remembered is to keep and archive groups' mentions in various media outlets. They should include the type of the publication, where, when and by whom it was published and if available a link to it online.

## 2. INSPIRING

First of all a clear and consistent message is needed that should be present in all media exposures. In order to get that message published it has to engage the journalists' attention. A good way of achieving this is to make the materials, for example press releases as relevant and topical as possible. Community organising provides a variety of human stories, which are very sought by the press.

As a rule journalists are not experts, thus it is better not to assume that they can understand us correctly – we have got to make sure that they do. Avoiding clichés and jargon should be one of the rules here.

Other good 'bait' that might be used is to get the support of celebrities or other influential people who come from the local area and might get involved in an event pro bono or just voice their support publicly.

The media loves a spectacle. Irrespectively of whether holding a rally, protesting or having any other event, it is crucial to be creative. Designing original signs that people will share on social media, using dancing or singing, staging a protest in the form of performance art are among possible good examples.

### 3. BUILDING A COMMUNITY

It will take time and effort to build a good relationships with the local and regional media, but this will be well invested resources. Here are several rules to be followed:

- be a valuable and reliable partner to the media. Journalists are often overworked. If you do some of their work for them you are already on the advantage
- information provided in interviews, press releases, press conferences etc. should always include quotes, photos, and other resources – background information, statistics, international context or experience, additional sources of information, etc.
- respond to journalists quickly
- there should always be someone available and ready for an interview
- avoid engagement in self-promotion as that might make them wary of your group in general
- offer journalists access to your network, refer them to experts and sources, give them ideas for materials even if they are not directly related to the cause. Use resource of the community to help them expand and shape stories
- do not use lies or distort information as this may discredit the efforts of people engaged in the campaign. Honesty is the best policy!
- reply to journalists with additional information in case something is not clear or known. They will appreciate it.

In the long run this is a better strategy that will eventually attract more journalists to the group's network.

#### CASE STUDY:

#### **Fighting for Better Public Transport in Mátészalka**

##### **MÁTÉSZALKA LEAKS GROUP**

Mátészalka has extremely poor public transport links: trains are slow, it takes them 108 minutes to cover the 58 km distance between Mátészalka and Nyíregyháza, and bus and train connections are scarce. In 2016 on Saturdays, people could only get home from the counties major city through a detour, which costed three times as much time and money.

A community organiser and his group made over 300 one-on-ones with local residents. The first big issue they chose, was the Saturday night transport services. There was no direct bus service between Mátészalka and Nyíregyháza on Saturday nights. It was inconvenient for university students, and people visiting their relatives in the Nyíregyháza hospital. While a direct bus or train ride would have cost HUF 840 with the detour they had to make the ticket cost more than HUF 2500.

In a campaign, the group used publicity of their blog [mateszalkaleaks.blog.hu](http://mateszalkaleaks.blog.hu), they spoke on a public hearing about transport problems and asked the Mayor and the representatives to intervene. With their constant activities, they caught the attention of the national media and talked on News TV (Hír TV) about how hard it is to travel between these two cities. They named in this broadcast the National Development Minister, Miklós Seszták who has ties with the County of Szabolcs, and asked him to find a remedy to the public transport related problems of the people from Mátészalka and the surrounding area. They also said that in case their request was not met, a demonstration would be organised in the spring.

The Mayor was trying to diminish the issue, by saying it is only a problem of some youth, wanting to party on the weekend. This made people angry. They started writing letters to the authorities in large numbers. They filed several requests for public data, to the bus and train companies and examined their timetable. Requested data revealed that Mátészalka was the only town in Hungary, which was in such dire situation in terms of Saturday night transport; in the comparison with other county capitals and their second most populous cities, it finished in last place. Nationwide, in most county capitals and the second most populous cities in their districts, public transport is provided even late at night. The group created memes to stir discontent, that were seen by hundreds of thousands of people. In one they personally asked the National Development Minister, Miklós Seszták to put an end to the unfavourable conditions, reached the Minister himself as well. He then requested that they send him a detailed description of the specific issue via email.

In January 2016 the issue entered another phase. As a result of the civic pressure, the mayor of Mátészalka, together with the North Hungarian Transport Agency Ltd., initiated the reduction of intervals between bus services between Mátészalka and Nyíregyháza by introducing new rotations on late Friday afternoons as well as on Saturdays and Sundays in the early morning, late afternoon, and evening periods.

The issue was finally resolved on March 2016, when due to the pressure from the group and the media, the Minister of National Development approved a direct bus service between Nyíregyháza and Mátészalka for Saturday nights, while also reducing intervals between buses by introducing 8 new services. They also accepted the group's suggestion to have the buses approach Nyíregyháza on the highway. This victory has affected the life of about 250,000 people, including patients at the Jósa András County Hospital and the students of the University of Nyíregyháza.

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## GIVING AN INTERVIEW

Sooner or later you or the group may give an interview. In such a case the following advices might be useful.

- you should know your topic in depth. This means that you will be able to answer more questions and do so in a smooth and consistent way. You should avoid academic and in-group language. Have plenty of examples to use when necessary
- you can prepare with mock interviews but it is often better to just gradually amend your way of speaking by getting familiar with the topic and getting rid of parasite words and expressions
- journalists often look for conflict. This may work when you talk about protests, civil disobedience and so on, but it may also hurt your goals and message
- you can use notes during radio and newspaper interviews, but not on TV



■ One of the leaders from Our Ścigaly Housing Estate Initiative presents to local radio their campaign, which aim is to build a parking lot in the estate.



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## BEING INTERVIEWED ON TV

- you should not look into the camera, but the interviewer
- you should not wear stripes, checkered or border tartan clothes, and avoid green and shiny fabrics
- you should not wear too many jewels or too pronounced make-up as it may be distracting
- you should respond briefly and keep their answers within 15-30 seconds
- when a journalist calls you for a telephone interview, it is good to inquire for its topic and ask him to call back in some time in order to research the media, and prepare yourself.
- if you do not know something, you should admit it and promise the journalist to call him back with additional information. Journalists will appreciate it.

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## MAKING GOOD PRESS RELEASE

Press releases are the simplest form of communicating with media. It is basically a short text that will serve as the foundation of the future journalistic material.

Press releases should meet the following requirements:

- it should say something new
- if it is related to an event, it should be released within an hour of its end
- it should be compact - no longer than one page and a half

- It should provide answer to the questions who?, what?, when?, why? (preferably in the first paragraph)
- it should contain at least one quote from a leader, if applicable
- it should have short, but informative headline
- it should provide contact information so that a journalist can get in touch.

Once the press release is sent out, it might be useful to follow up with a call to a journalist to make sure it didn't get lost in the flood of emails. However, calls should be made reasonably or they might backfire.

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## HOLDING A PRESS CONFERENCE

Press conferences are time, labour and money consuming endeavours so you should be sure that it is they needed one before organising oneit.

There are two reasons to hold a press conference:

1. There is really important event or issue that the group would like to announce and that will certainly draw media interest.
2. The group is already faced with pressing media interest and they would like to address all questions at once instead of constantly answering calls.

When holding a press conference, the following tips can be of help:

#### PREPARATION:

1. The venue and the time
  - the venue depends on available funds – the group might also improvise one in a public space if appropriate or use a venue for free if it manages to arrange it
  - the best time for a press conference is between 10 am. and 12 pm. (noon) - if it is done earlier, there is a risk of delay due to people being late because of rush hours. If it is conducted later, there is a risk of missing deadlines for the prime-time news and the newspapers.
2. Duration and agenda. Both depend on the topic at hand. Nevertheless it should fit within an hour with 30 minutes at most for topic presentation and the rest for questions
3. Preparing a list of journalists and media outlets to be invited
4. Deciding who is going to lead the press conference
5. Sending out a press release that provides information on the time, place and the agenda. Depending on the specific case the group might want to announce or withhold certain information until the press conference itself
6. Preparing technical equipment, including audio and video recording
7. Preparing the so called media-kits – it might be a folder containing the press release and other relevant information or materials
8. Rehearsal
9. Calling invited journalists a day or two before the event to remind them about it
10. Making a list of journalists who might like to make interviews after the press conference

#### PRESS CONFERENCE

1. Keeping an attendance list of journalists
2. Introducing the group, agenda and their announcement, if there is one
3. Keeping the introduction and presentation as short as possible so that there will be more time for questions
4. Time for questions, the journalists present themselves and their outlet and then ask a question. Aim for one question at a time and if there is time the group can allow more questions. There should be a chosen moderator who will be in charge of conducting the discussion – he can interrupt journalists if they are taking up too much time
5. After questions have ended, the role of moderator is to summarize the discussion and close the event
6. Recording everything on audio and video

#### AFTERMATH

1. Issuing a press release regarding the event.
2. Giving journalists who have not attended the event access to materials

The main problem related to working with modern day journalists is paradoxically that most of them are both overworked and spoiled by the constant bombardment with information. This means that the initiative in the relationship with them will almost always be on the group's side. Journalists want quality information, reliable sources and personal stories, not generic updates on the progress of the group. Good relationships with the media require time and resources for communication and it is adequate to discuss that issue within the group. In order to stand out they should be ready to invest in relations with media.

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## APPENDIX A

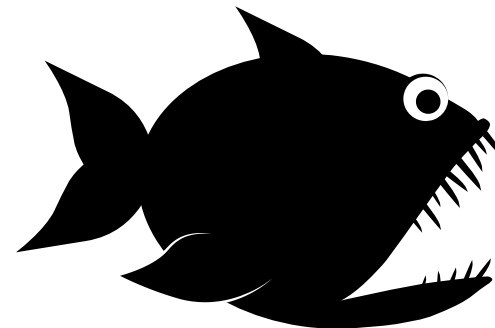
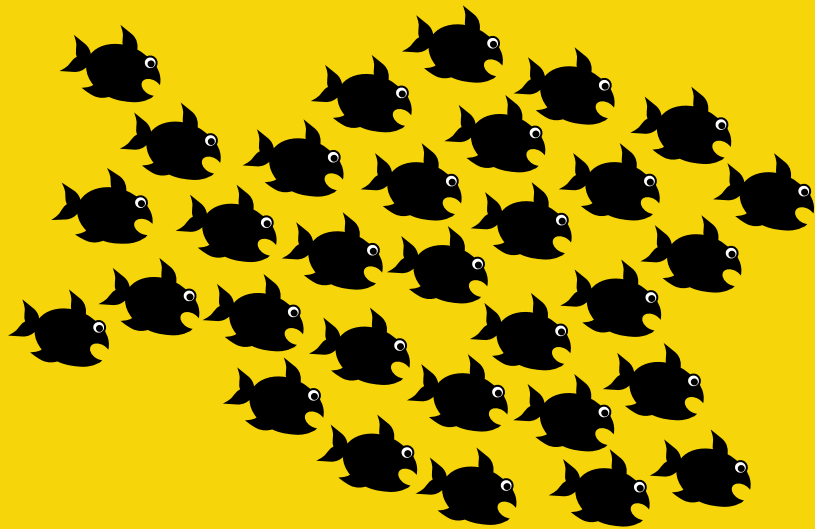
### COMMUNITY ORGANISING DICTIONARY

**COMMUNITY ORGANISING** is a long-term approach where people affected by an issue are supported in identifying issues and taking action to achieve collective solutions. It changes the balance of power and creates new power base. European Community Organising Network, where all partners of European Community Organising School project are members, identified 4 steps of community organising: listening, research, action, building an organisation.

**Following:** "Community Organising:  
People Power from the Grassroots"  
By Dave Beckwith, with Cristina Lopez  
Center for Community Change

#### CORE GROUP

In community organising a core group is a group of the most active people that develop the organisation and lead campaign processes. Most often it is a group of 3 to 15 people. Members of the core group take a lead in conflict solving, participate in most of the meetings, play important role in the group (like treasurer, person responsible for promotion in the group, group leader etc.), focus on group development and coalition building etc. Community organiser focuses on recruiting more new people to the core group.



**COMMUNITY ORGANISER** is a person that conducts community organising process in the community. Organiser is not a leader of the group but his/her goal is to find and support group leaders. What organisers do:

1. Organisers build organisations that maximize the power and participation of their members.
2. Organisers listen to their members (by doing one-on-one)
3. Organisers are responsible for sharing information and raising questions, options, alternatives and problems that affect the collective power the group can wield.
4. Organisers identify and develop a diverse group of members who agree to serve as the organisation's public voice on a variety of issues.
5. Organisers develop sound organising strategies based on power analysis.
6. Organisers recruit and develop leaders and group members.
7. An organiser role is to build public relationships.
8. Work with people to define problems and issues, and help them think through the strategies and tactics necessary to act with confidence and win.
9. Assist with fundraising, and integrate fundraising into every aspect of their organising work.
10. Organisers facilitate training and strategy sessions when needed
11. Organisers strive to be accountable and hold others accountable in every aspect of their job.

Following: <http://www.worc.org>

## CONFLICT

In community organising we think about conflict in two ways:

1. Inside the group: an active disagreement between people with opposing opinions or principles
2. Outside the group: a conflict is fighting between two or more parties or groups of people.

Following: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org>

1. Conflict is a natural element of group dynamic and can be an element of the important development of the group. Role of organiser is to show that conflict is happening in the group and help members to find best and constructive solution.
2. Conflict with authority to change balance of power. Conflict is sometimes necessary element of giving power to the people and winning the case. Using conflict and putting pressure on authorities in Central and Eastern Europe is often uncomfortable approach for group members. The role of the organiser is to help the group to find the way to collaborate and to have a constructive dialogue but also show members that in some cases conflict might be the only and most effective solution.

## EVALUATION

A process of measuring what changed. It is a very important element of community organising. Role of community organiser is to introduce this process as soon as possible to help the group and individual members to learn from victories and mistakes. Good practice is to evaluate every activity like a group meeting, action and individual task. Evaluation might be in the form of talking with a member or the whole group.

## **GROUP DYNAMIC**

The interactions that influence the attitudes and behavior of people when they are grouped with others through either choice or accidental circumstances.

**Following:** <http://www.dictionary.com>

When you think about community organising process, you can refer to the group dynamic theory of psychologist Bruce Tuckman who first came up with the phrase “forming, storming, norming, and performing” in his 1965 article, “Developmental Sequence in Small Groups.” He used it to describe the path that most groups follow on their way to high performance.

### **Forming**

In this stage, most group members are positive and polite. Some are anxious, as they haven't fully understood what work the team will do. Others are simply excited about the task ahead. Community organiser plays a dominant role at this stage, because roles and responsibilities in the group aren't clear as well as the role of the organiser and the community organising process. This stage can last for some time, as people start to work together, and as they make an effort to get to know each other.

### **Storming**

Next, the group moves into the storming phase, where people start to push against the boundaries established in the forming stage. This is the stage where many groups fail. Storming often starts where there is a conflict between team members natural working styles. People may work in different ways for all sorts of reasons but, if differing working styles cause unforeseen problems, they may become frustrated. Storming can also happen in other situations. For example, group members may challenge community organiser authority, or jockey for position as their roles are clarified.

Or people may feel overwhelmed by their workload, or they could be uncomfortable with the approach of community organising. Some may question the worth of the group's goal, and they may resist taking on tasks. Group members who stick with the task at hand may experience stress, particularly as they don't have the support of established processes or strong relationships with their colleagues. Role of organiser in this stage is to show that storming is happening and explain that this is a hard but natural and necessary process. His/her role is to find the best solution for situation that will build stronger group.

### **Norming**

Gradually, the group moves into the norming stage. This is when people start to resolve their differences, appreciate colleagues' strengths, and respect authority of leaders and community organiser. Now that group members know one another better, they may socialize together, and they are able to ask one another for help and provide constructive feedback. People develop a stronger commitment to the goal, and start to see good progress towards it. There is often a prolonged overlap between storming and norming, because, as new tasks come up, the group may lapse back into behavior from the storming stage. The role of community organiser is to be sensitive to the sign of conflict and make sure that if something like this happens it is discussed not swept under the rug.

### **Performing**

The group reaches the performing stage, when hard work leads, without friction, to the achievement of the group's goal. The structures and processes that community organisers have set up support this well. Organiser should focus on delegating much of the work and on developing group members. It feels easy to be part of the group at this stage, and people who join or leave won't disrupt performance.

**Following:** <https://www.mindtools.com>

## **LEADER**

A person that holds a dominant or superior position in a group, and is able to exercise a high degree of control or influence over others.

**Following:** <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/leader.html>

The theory of group dynamic most often says that there is one or two leaders in every group and that a leader appears based on the process of group dynamic and personal predispositions.

In community organising method we say that leaders are members of the core group so not one or two persons but the group of people that are most committed and active.

## **LISTENING PROCESS**

Systematically listen to dozens of people in the community in order to select issues and visions and to scout for people for the new group/organisation.

**Following:** <https://www.minorityrightscourse.org>

Community organiser conducts from 40 to 120 interviews with members of community he wants to organise. Organiser asks people, "What makes you angry?", "What would you like to see changed in your community?", "What is your vision about social change?", "Have you tried anything so far to realize change?" and based on answers build a list of issues important for that community. Listening process also aims to find potential community leaders and build relationship with them and with other members.

## **ONE-ON-ONE**

One-on-ones are a community organising tool for the purpose of establishing a relationship through conversation and sharing stories.

During one-on-one community organiser or leader is trying to find out where interests of the person lie, and how to engage him/her in the work of the group.

## **ORGANISATION**

In community organising, organisation is a group of people that work together and has strong base. Organisation is a group that is sustainable and long term. To accomplish that, community organiser works with the group with the focus on strategy, mission, roles, rules, structure and fundraising. If a community organiser says that he/she builds organisation it doesn't necessarily mean that she/he builds formal and registered one.

## **POWER**

Ability to act. The main goal of community organising is to give power to people in order to make sure that public decisions are the best of interest of people. The role of an organiser is to make people able to act effectively to win an issue.

## **RESEARCH**

Identify potential solutions, and the decision-makers and the institutions which have the power to make these solutions possible.

**Following:** <https://www.minorityrightscourse.org>

## **SOCIAL CAMPAIGN (ACTION)**

A campaign is a planned set of activities that people carry out over a period of time in order to achieve something such as social or political change.

**Following:** <https://www.collinsdictionary.com>

In community organising action is a very important part of the process. It gives people energy and motivates them. Campaign is a main tool to change power balance and give people feeling of control over their lives.

## **STRATEGY**

A plan of action designed to achieve a long-term or overall aim. Building a strategy is necessary to conduct successful campaign and for the development of the group. Following Midwest Academy Strategy Chart, during the process of building a campaign strategy we focus on:

1. goals (long term and short term),
2. organisational considerations (like resources needed),
3. constituencies, allies and opponents,
4. targets,
5. tactics

## **TACTIC**

Tools of a campaign that are used by a group to achieve the campaign's goals. Using the specific tactic in the campaign depends on strategy, issue and group decision. There are hundreds of tactics described but the most popular are: protest, march, picket, letter writing, petition, meeting with authority, accountability session, participatory budgeting, boycott, civil disobedience etc.

## **TARGET**

Person that community group is trying to influence.

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## **APPENDIX B REFERENCES**

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Borup T. (2011) The Creative Community Builder's Handbook, How to Transform Communities Using Local Assets, Arts, and Culture, Fieldstone Alliance, New York

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Rules for Radicals: A Pragmatic Primer for Realistic Radicals, Saul Alinsky, Vintage Books Edition, 1971

Dynamics of Organising: Building Power by Developing the Human Spirit, Shel Trapp, [satrapp@earthlink.net](mailto:satrapp@earthlink.net), 2007

## WEBSITES IN ENGLISH

[www.glc-teachdemocracy2.org](http://www.glc-teachdemocracy2.org) - The Professional Fellows Program

[www.scopela.org](http://www.scopela.org) - Strategic Concepts in Organising and Policy Education (SCOPE) builds grassroots power to create social and economic justice for low-income, female, immigrant, black, and brown communities in Los Angeles

<https://ctb.ku.edu/en> – Community Tool Box, a public service of the University of Kansas

<https://www.communitycatalyst.org/> - Community Catalyst, national non-profit advocacy organization working to build the consumer and community leadership that is required to transform the American health system.

[www.econnet.eu](http://www.econnet.eu) - European Community Organising Network gathering organisations from different parts of Europe, which use community organising method.

<http://ecos-project.eu/> - website dedicated to European Community Organising School project

<http://comm-org.wisc.edu/> - COMM-ORG: The Community Organising Website

<https://peoplesaction.org/> - National People's Action, organisation from Chicago fighting for democracy and economic fairness

<https://communitychange.org/> - Center for Community Change, which mission is to build the power and capacity of low-income people, especially low-income people of color

<https://virginia-organizing.org/> - Virginia Organising a non-partisan statewide grassroots organization dedicated to challenging injustice by empowering people in local communities to address issues that affect the quality of their lives

<http://www.chicagohomeless.org/> - Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, which mission is to organise and advocate to prevent and end homelessness

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Bútorová Z., Bútor M., Strečanský B. (2012) Aktívne občianstvo a mimovládny sektor na Slovensku: Trendy a perspektívy, Včelí dom, Bratislava

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