

# **Engage with local government departments and community structures**

## **Level 2**

### **- Learner Manual -**

#### **The development practice project**

These learning materials were generated by the Development Practice project, hosted by the [Sustainability Institute](#) and in partnership with [Community Connections](#), [AIDS Consortium](#) and [Keystone](#). This project generated a set of competence standards with development practitioners in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban, between 2005 and 2009. This manual is part of a set of materials consisting of a competence standard, learner's manual, facilitator's guide and an assessment tool. More information on this project is available on the [Development Practice](#) website.



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Questions and queries on the project and materials can be forwarded to [info@developmentpractice.org.za](mailto:info@developmentpractice.org.za).



# LICENSING

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## OVERVIEW

Welcome to this manual - ***Engage with local government departments and community structures.***

This learner manual, accompanied by a facilitated programme of activities, should be followed up by practical 'on-the-job' experience and practise (supported by a mentor if possible). Once you have read through this learner manual, done all the exercises, implemented the learnings in your organisation, you will be ready to have your competence assessed, if you choose.

Below follows the Specific Outcomes and Assessment Criteria that this learner manual is based on. This means that at the end of your learning period, you will be able to practice all the points listed below. During the learning period you will be reminded to keep and file proof of your work. This is called a Portfolio of Evidence. It is a collection of evidence to show what was learnt during the course and from past experience, including all other training courses attended. Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is when all your learning is taken into account and acknowledged when assessed for a specific standard. Outcomes are the result of your learning. At the end of each section there is a symbol for you to check your understanding.

Please read the competency standard below carefully.







## SPECIFIC OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Specific outcomes	Assessment criteria
<i>Competence in this standard means that the learner has clearly shown that s/he is able to...</i>	<i>Tasks and activities completed by the learner contain the following evidence of competence...</i>
SO1: Describe the main features of local and provincial community development policies and how these affect the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General knowledge of the structure and functions of government at provincial and local level is demonstrated.</li> <li>• A policy that affects the communities is described and analysed.</li> <li>• Areas of possible government support for organisation's programmes are identified</li> </ul>
SO2: Demonstrate an understanding of the rights of citizens to services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government's responsibility to citizens are explained</li> <li>• An understanding of the bill of rights and how it applies to this community is demonstrated</li> </ul>
SO3: Explain the role of CBO's in relation to government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The role of CBOs in relation to government is explained</li> <li>• A relevant developmental issue that they would like to engage government about is identified</li> </ul>
SO4: Identify relevant government departments and the officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant local officials are identified and contact details established</li> <li>• Ways of approaching officials are suggested.</li> </ul>
SO5: Describe possible working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible opportunities for working relationships are explored</li> </ul>

relationships with relevant government officials or departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appropriate ways of engaging government on a specific issue are recommended and justified. (From partnerships to confrontation)</li></ul>
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**Note:** Tasks may be presented for an actual or hypothetical organisation but must be learner's original work and not copied from existing documents. Learners should be able to explain and justify their statements.

## ACTIVITIES

There are a number of activities in the manual. These activities are an important part of the learning approach and you are encouraged to complete them as part of your learning process. They will become part of your own “toolkit” to help you operate more effectively. Some of these activities can also be used as part of your portfolio of evidence (PoE), which you need to compile if you wish to be assessed for competence in this standard.



## Symbols used in this workbook



### Important thought

This sign shows an important thought or idea for you to take note of.



### Definition

When you see this sign, a term is explained here.



### Self-test

This designates a self-test section - this is an opportunity for you to check your understanding and if you are unclear, to discuss with your trainer.



### Case study/Example

Case studies or examples will tell you about a practical application of something that has been discussed or covered in the course.



### Individual activity

This sign marks an activity – either during the class or as homework. These activities are important to complete – both for your understanding but also as they can be included as part of your Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) for assessment.



### Group activity

This sign means that this activity is a group work activity.

## INTRODUCTION

Working with different government departments is a very important part of what all CBOs do, to ensure that they are able to provide comprehensive services to their communities. One therefore needs to know how government works and how to talk with them to ensure a good working relationship. In this manual we will look at government structures (their departments), their policies and how they help and influence the work of CBOs as well as the ways in which we can work with government.

Sometimes working with government also means forming partnerships with them on specific issues or projects. You will have an opportunity to identify the issues that you would like to bring to the attention of the government officials that you work with.





# STRUCTURES AND FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNMENT

## DEPARTMENTS

We need to first identify the different levels of government and begin to understand how they work. In South Africa we have a democracy that works on a three-tier system of government. This means that we have a national, provincial and local government. We will be focussing on the provincial and local government in this section.

### Provincial government

South Africa has nine provinces:

- Eastern Cape
- Free State
- Gauteng
- KwaZulu-Natal,
- Limpopo Province
- Mpumalanga
- Northern Cape
- North West
- Western Cape

Each province has its own provincial government, with legislative power i.e. the power to make laws and executive power i.e. the power of implementing or carrying out the laws, through a provincial premier with the other members of a provincial executive council. The provincial legislature has between 30 and 80 members elected for a five-year term based on the number of voters in the



province. The number of seats allowed to each political party is in proportion to the outcome of the provincial election. Provincial elections are held at the same time as the national elections, every five years.

The provincial legislature has the power to pass laws within its areas.

The premier is elected by the legislature and the term of office of the premier is limited to two five-year periods. The premier appoints the other members of the executive council (MECs), which functions as a cabinet at provincial level.

In order to strengthen the links between national and provincial government, a province's permanent delegates to the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) may attend and speak in the provincial legislature and committees, but may not vote.

### **Local government**

Municipalities, serve a four-year term, and run local affairs subject to national and provincial legislation (laws). Provincial legislation may not bargain with or block a municipality's right to exercise its powers or perform its functions.

In line with the principles of co-operative government, national and provincial government must support and strengthen municipalities' capacity to manage their own affairs.

South Africa has 284 municipalities, divided into three categories.

- Metropolitan municipalities

Metropolitan municipalities, also known as Unicitys, have exclusive municipal executive and legislative authority in their areas. There are six of these: Cape Town,





Durban, East Rand, Johannesburg, Pretoria and Port Elizabeth. They have a choice of two types of executive systems: the mayoral executive system, and the collective executive committee.

- District and local councils

District and local councils are interdependent and involve a division of powers. A district council has municipal executive and legislative authority over a large area, its primary responsibility being district-wide planning and capacity-building. Within a district council's area are individual local councils which share their municipal authority with the district council under which they fall.



### Group activity

Divide into 2 smaller groups and look at the provincial and local government - their structure and function. Each group can work on one of the levels and give feedback to the bigger group.

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## Self-test

You should be able to:

- Demonstrate a general knowledge of the structure and functions of government at provincial and local levels

Please ask your facilitator if you are unsure of any of the above.

# **POLICIES THAT AFFECT THE COMMUNITY THAT WE WORK IN**

Now that we have looked at how government works, let's look at the - policies that guide them and also affect CBOs.

There are a number of policies that guide the way in which services are provided to communities. The two most important of these are the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The different departments in government like, Social Services and Health also have policies that guide their work.

Let's look at the Constitution and the Bill of Rights first.

## **The Constitution of South Africa**

South Africa's Constitution is widely regarded as the most progressive constitution in the world, with a Bill of Rights second to none.

Human rights are given clear prominence in the Constitution. The Constitution has the following founding principles:

- Non-racialism and non-sexism.
- Supremacy of the Constitution and the rule of law.
- The provision that lays down the country's democratic philosophy by stipulating "universal adult suffrage, a national common voters' roll,



regular elections and a multi-party system of democratic government, to ensure accountability, responsiveness and openness".

The Constitution also provides for 11 official languages.

## Bill of Rights

The Bill of Rights applies to all law and binds not only all state institutions, but also all people in the country. The Bill of Rights is found in Chapter 2 of the Constitution and is the cornerstone of democracy in South Africa. The Bill of Rights ensures the values of human dignity, equality and freedom. Government has the responsibility to respect, promote, protect and fulfil all the rights as stated in the Bill of Rights.

One of the most important rights contained in the Bill of Rights is the right to **equality**. In terms of the Bill of Rights all people are equal before the law and have equal protection and benefit of the law. Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms.

The other rights that are mentioned in the Bill of Rights are, the right to:

- Human dignity
- Life
- Freedom and security of person
- Not be subjected to slavery, servitude and forced labour
- Privacy
- Freedom of religion, belief and opinion
- Freedom of expression
- Assembly, demonstrations, pickets and petitions
- Freedom of association



- Make political choices
- Not be deprived of citizenship
- Freedom of movement and residence
- Freedom of trade, occupation and profession
- Fair labour relations
- An environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being and to have the environment protected for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable laws
- Have their property protected
- Health care, food, water and social security
- Education
- Their language and culture
- Access to information
- Access to the courts

There are also special rights for children and those people who have been arrested, detained or accused of crimes. The Bill of Rights deal with issues of when the government can call a State of Emergency.

If you would like more information about the Bill of Rights you can look on the following websites: [www.southafrica.info](http://www.southafrica.info) or [www.constitutionalcourt.org.za](http://www.constitutionalcourt.org.za)





## Group activity

Think of your communities and your organisation. Discuss in the group how you could make use of The Bill of Rights to help you or your clients with specific issues. Allow for different people and organisations to give their input here.

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Let's now look at the specific departments and how their policies can support the work that we as CBOs do.

## **Social services and poverty alleviation**

The Department of Social Services plays an important role in all communities as they are involved with the welfare of the people. One of the most important tasks of the department is the provision of grants.



### **Definition**

A social grant is a cash transfer from the government to people who are unable to provide for themselves. It is given to poor people to provide for basic necessities, and have a basic quality of life in sustaining a minimum livelihood.

### **Various types of grants**

- Grant for the aged – old age pension
- Disability grant
- Foster child grant
- Care dependency grant
- Child support grant
- War veteran’s grant

### **Documentation needed when applying for grants**

- Bar-coded ID document



- Birth certificate of child (if for Foster care, Care dependency or Child support grant)
- Proof of assets and income
- Last three months bank statement
- Discharge papers (War veteran's grant)
- Medical certificate (Disability and care dependency grant)
- Marriage certificate (if married)
- Death certificate of husband or wife (if deceased)
- School attendance certificate (Foster care grant)
- Court order / extension order (Foster care grant)



## Group activity

In your group please discuss the following issues:

- 1) Which grants do people make use of in your community?
- 2) Do you assist people in accessing grants?
- 3) How can you and your organisations help people to know more about the grants that are available and how to access them?





Many CBOs work in the health sector and often work very closely with different government structures and officials linked to health e.g. at the local clinic. When it comes to health services and policies, government has put the following in place:

- Free health care at all government clinics and hospitals
- Clinic services for children e.g. immunisations; formula milk for HIV-positive mothers
- HIV&AIDS services e.g. free HIV-testing and counselling; anti-retroviral treatment for people living with HIV&AIDS; support groups
- Home-based care programmes sponsored by Department of Health
- DOTS – volunteers who support TB patients
- Community Health committees - Health committees were set up to work in partnership with the Health Department and municipal health authorities, to support and be involved in activities and programmes aimed at improving the quality of life of all the people in all communities. Health Committees should have broad representation from the health sector, and particularly CBOs and NGOs, and community forums.



### **Group activity**

Discuss in your group how you and your organisation can help your community access information (e.g. grants) and services (e.g. HIV services) better from the Department of Social Development and The Department of Health.

## **Education**

Education is one of the basic rights of all people in South Africa according to the Bill of Rights. This means that the Department of Education also needs policies in place to ensure that this right is met. CBOs that work with youth may have to engage with government on educational issues.

By law, no child can be excluded from a state school if his or her parents can't afford to pay the fees. If both parents' annual earnings (before tax) are less than 10 times the annual school fees, the child qualifies for a full fee exemption. Partial exemptions can also be made for parents with financial problems. You should apply to your school governing body for fee exemption. If your application is rejected, you can lodge an appeal with your provincial education department.



### **Self-test**

You should be able to:

- Describe a policy that affects the community;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the Bill of Rights and how it applies to your community.

Please ask your facilitator if you are unsure of any of the above.



## GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR THE WORK OF OUR ORGANISATIONS

All these policies and structures of government help us to know how we can seek support from government for the work that we do.



### Individual activity

Think of your own organisation and the work that you do. What areas of government support for your programmes can you identify?

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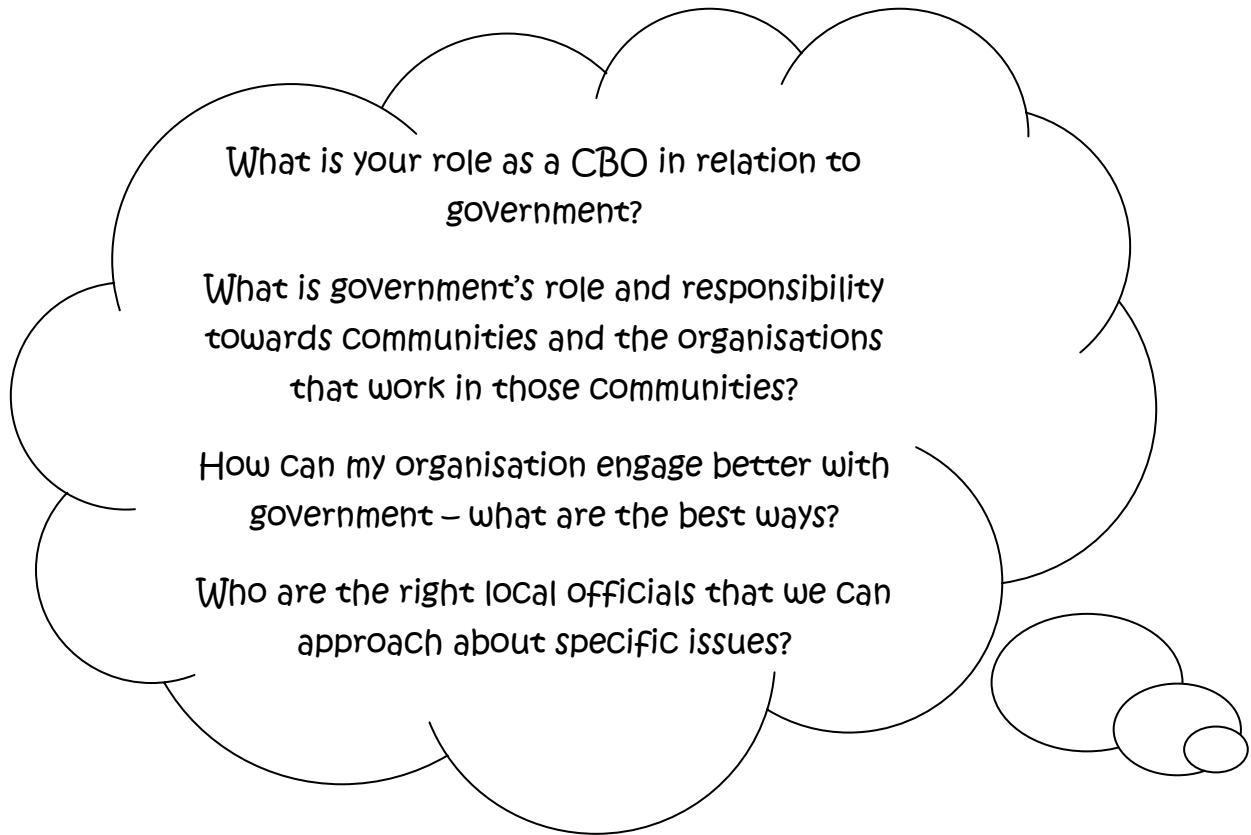
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In order for us to get better support from government we need to answer a few important questions:



Let's look at answers to these questions.

## The Role of CBOs in relation to government

The relationship between government and CBO's is often born out of the need of the CBO to receive funding for its projects from government departments. This often means that government then prescribes to the CBO how such programmes should be run. On the other hand CBO's have started projects and programmes in their communities because of a lack of relevant services by government.

CBO's can also play an important role in putting pressure on government to:

- Make resources available
- Focus on key development issues in communities



## Group activity

Look at your own organisations. How would you describe your role in relation to government? Discuss it with the rest of the group.

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## Government's responsibility towards communities

Government has a responsibility to communities to provide services and the CBO has a responsibility to assist communities. This responsibility is set out in the Constitution. It is especially the responsibilities of **local government** that are important. Knowing what your local government and municipality is responsible for, can help you to engage with them on the relevant issues that affect your community and clients.



Areas that local government is responsible for include:

- Air pollution
- Building regulations
- Child care facilities
- Electricity and gas reticulation
- Fire fighting services
- Local tourism
- Municipal airports
- Municipal planning
- Municipal health services
- Municipal public transport
- Municipal public works
- Pontoons, ferries, jetties, piers and harbours, excluding the regulation of international and national shipping and matters related thereto
- Storm water management systems in built-up areas
- Trading regulations
- Water and sanitation services limited to potable water supply systems and domestic wastewater and sewage disposal systems
- Beaches and amusement facilities
- Billboards and the display of advertisements in public places
- Cemeteries, funeral parlours and crematoria
- Cleansing
- Control of public nuisances
- Control of undertakings that sell liquor to the public
- Facilities for the accommodation, care and burial of animals
- Fencing and fences
- Licensing of dogs
- Licensing and control of undertakings that sell food to the public
- Local amenities
- Local sport facilities
- Markets
- Municipal abattoirs
- Municipal parks and recreation
- Municipal roads





- Noise pollution
- Pounds
- Public places
- Refuse removal, refuse dumps and solid waste disposal
- Street trading
- Street lighting
- Traffic and parking

## How can we engage government on a specific issue?

Knowing what your role is as a CBO and the responsibilities that government has towards its communities, leads us to ask how we then engage with government on these important issues. There are two things we need to look at here:

- 1) Who are the right people to talk to?
- 2) How can we build good relationships with these people?

There are a number of government officials at local level that CBOs work with. These officials may come from the following government departments:

- Cultural Affairs and Sport
- Education
- Environmental Affairs and Tourism
- Health
- Labour
- Safety and Security
- Social Development





## Individual activity

Make a list of the government departments that your organisation works with. Identify the specific officials that you work with, their contact details and their functions – what are they responsible for. Complete the table below with the information.

Government Department	Official	Function and role	Contact information

You need to build good relationships with these people that you work with. There are some skills that you can use to develop these relationships:

- Good communication skills
- Good conflict management skills
- Good decision-making skills
- Ability to work with people from different backgrounds
- Trust
- Similar interests - wanting what is best for the community
- Mutual respect
- Patience



## Group activity

Discuss in the group how you think you can improve your relationship with the government officials that you work with. Share these ideas with the big group.

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One of the ways to strengthen our relationship with government is also to form partnerships with them.



## Definition

A partnership is a special kind of relationship in which people or organisations combine their resources to carry out a specific set of activities. Partners work together for a common purpose and for mutual benefit

When working in partnership with government it is easier to engage with them on specific issues and get their support for the work that you do.

The case study below is a good example of how a partnership with government can work in a positive way.



## Case study

In 2001 Yabonga, an organisation working with HIV-positive women and their children decided to start support centres at the various clinics that their clients attended. These support centres would consist of a container that would be set up at the clinic. Each support centre would be staffed by the women trained by Yabonga as peer educators. They would provide counselling and education services to the patients visiting the clinic. The clinic would also be able to refer new HIV-positive mothers and their children to them.

In order to make this project work, they needed to form partnerships with different government departments and the municipality. The first step was to form a partnership with the Department of Health and the local municipalities that were responsible for the clinics. This was necessary to get permission to put up the container. They also had to work very closely with the clinic staff for referrals and support. Through this partnership 10 support centres were established in the greater Cape Town area. The partnership with the Department of Health also made it possible for the women from Yabonga to be trained as lay counsellors for VCT and adherence counsellors for ARV's by ATICC – a Department of Health project. The partnership with Department of Health and the municipality also made funding available, to pay stipends to the women working as peer educators and counsellors in the support centres.

Yabonga was also able to employ a nurse who could do VCT at one of their centres in Wynberg through the partnership with the municipality who provided them with the tests for VCT. They became one of the non-clinical VCT sites in Cape Town.

The partnership was later extended to also include the Department of Social Services when they started with a project for Orphans and Vulnerable children (OVC). The department provided funding for the project as well as access to social workers who could assist with issues such as grants. Yabonga also worked with the department to look at their policies and now also run programmes for Men, in line with the policies of the department to include services for all.

This partnership shows just how much one can achieve if one works with the different departments on a project.





## Individual activity

This is a home work assignment that you can complete with the help of other people in your organisation.

- 1) Make a list of government departments that you work with and the names of specific officials that you deal with.
- 2) Make a list of the partnerships that you have with any of these departments or officials.
- 3) Discuss ways in which your organisation can use the information from this manual to improve your work with government regarding the services that you provide to your community. These may include:
  - Identifying specific policies that we can use to strengthen our work
  - Identifying a specific development issue that is linked to this policy that we could engage with government
  - Creating opportunities where we can build our relationship with government.



## Self-test

You should be able to:

- Identify possible government support for your organisation's programmes;
- Explain the role of the CBO in relation to government;
- Explain government's responsibility to its citizens;
- Identify relevant local officials and their contact details;
- Explore possible opportunities for working relationships and
- Recommend appropriate ways of engaging with government on specific issues.

Please ask your facilitator if you are unsure of any of the above.





## USEFUL WORDS

Bill of Rights

Is in Chapter 2 of The Constitution and forms the cornerstone of democracy in South Africa.

Constitution

South Africa's Constitution is widely regarded as the most progressive constitution in the world, with a Bill of Rights second to none.

District council

District and local councils are interdependent and involve a division of powers. A district council has municipal executive and legislative authority over a large area, its primary responsibility being district-wide planning and capacity-building. Within a district council's area are individual local councils which share their municipal authority with the district council under which they fall.

Grants

A social grant is a cash transfer from the government to people who are unable to



	<p>provide for themselves. It is paid to poor people to provide for basic necessities</p>
Local council	<p>Each district council has individual local councils which share their municipal boundaries authority.</p>
Means test	<p>is a formula that is used to work out how much a person should receive when applying for a social grant.</p>
Municipality	<p>forms the local government under each provincial government. South Africa has 284 municipalities, divided into three categories, namely metropolitan municipalities, district and local councils.</p>
National Council of Provinces	<p>Also participating in the law making process is the National Council of Provinces (NCOP), a body created to achieve good governance and participatory democracy. It is through this body that national and provincial interests are aligned to national legislation that affects the provinces. The NCOP consists</p>

of 54 permanent members and 36 special delegates.

### Parliament

is a Law making authority, which is situated in Cape Town and consists of two houses, the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces. Parliament is bound by the Constitution and must act within its limits.

### Partnerships

A partnership is a special kind of relationship in which people or organisations combine their resources to carry out a specific set of activities. Partners work together for a common purpose and for mutual benefit

### Provincial legislature

has between 30 and 80 members elected for a five-year term based on the province's portion of the national common voters' roll. The number of seats awarded to each political party is in proportion to the outcome of the provincial election.

