



# Vision, Commitment and Action Workshops

The Hunger Project.

UNITED KINGDOM

## Introduction

The Vision, Commitment, and Action (VCA) workshop is the cornerstone of THP's methodology. The workshop is designed to transform mindsets of resignation into the belief that any individual can change his/her own life. THP hosts VCAs continuously, which can be large or small gatherings, covering general themes or sector-specific topics.

## Objectives:

1. To change the mindset of communities and create a common purpose and commitment to work together for the end of hunger and poverty
2. To restore a sense of pride and dignity
3. To eliminate resignation by creating a spirit of partnership, ownership, participation and self-reliance of the people through actions taken in the community

## Description:

VCAs are the first workshops done in a community, and these are delivered by THP staff. All members of the community, traditional local leaders and local government officials are all invited to the first workshop. After this workshop all other VCAs are led by the Programme Officer or similar staff member. But, once VCA animators have been trained, they should conduct the workshops in their communities until the communities reach self-reliance.

The VCA workshops combine leadership training (which enables a community to create its own vision for the future) with a public commitment to realise that vision and the identification of a clear set of actions to achieve it. Each participant is asked to develop an action plan for a project that will be achieved within the next few months using her or his initiative, skills and resources.

VCA trainings are crucial at the beginning of the implementation work, but should continue throughout the life of the programme, so that new members of the community are engaged and the vision for the community is further developed and new openings for action identified. As the epicentre continues to move into the different phases to achieve Self-Reliance, thematic VCAs (i.e maternal nutrition, agriculture, youth) can be delivered in order to target specific population groups and tackle priority topics.

General VCA workshops given to larger groups should last no more than 2 hours, and at the beginning they are held once a week, and then transition to 2 trainings per month. Trainings conducted by animators tend to last only 1 hour. The VCA Animator Training lasts for two days, with the second day being a practical day, where animators conduct a mock workshop in a nearby village. They are observed by their peers and the trainer, who then provide feedback.

## Why does THP do Vision Commitment & Action workshops?

One of the fundamental elements of The Hunger Project's work is to mobilise communities for self-reliant actions. THP believes mobilisation is a process that shifts the underlying mindset- awakening people to possibilities. VCAs are key to building confidence and creating a community-held vision for a new future beyond hunger. They also generate commitment and action at the individual and community levels. VCAs are the first step of empowered, self-reliant communities.

# Key Activities:

The following activities are key to achieving success in this programme:

## Activity

## Description

### Mobilisation

*THP mobilises community members to engage them and encourage them to be active participants in activities and workshops. Proper and well organised mobilisation activities will mark a successful project launch and continuation.*

### Local Partnerships

*Strong partnerships with local leaders will improve and build good relationships in the communities. These relationships improve the chances of the community members feeling and being more engaged. These are also key to sustainability.*

### VCA Animator Training

*Animators are mobilised volunteer community members, that show interest in increasing their knowledge, and have leadership potential. VCA animators are essential to getting all other trainings off the ground.*

## Metrics

The Hunger Project measures each community's progress in all the goals. With the indicators, the community is able to know their progress towards Self-Reliance and also is able to reflect on their achievements and set new targets each year.

### Indicators that demonstrate capacity development & community mobilisation include:

1. Number of trainees in VCA Workshops
2. Number of animators in VCA Workshops

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## Known Challenges

### Mobilising the community:

The Hunger Project mobilises communities and does not give handouts when inviting or hosting a workshop or training. Communities are not used to this approach, creating difficulties at the beginning of the mobilisation process. After many years of experience, The Hunger Project has developed country specific techniques to increase mobilisation results.

### Trained staff:

VCA's are key to THP's approach and having the staff with the right skill set to deliver VCA's can be a challenge. A lot of the knowledge around these trainings has been built over time and techniques vary by country. It is important to connect new staff members not only with other peers in their country, but also with other THP staff in different countries.

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