

## COMMUNITY VOTING NOTES

### Contents:

- ❖ What is Community Voting and when is it used?
- ❖ What equipment is needed for Voting?
- ❖ How to do Community Voting?
- ❖ Examples of questions that can be asked to assess degrees of accountability

### What is Community Voting and when is it used?

A simple means of (almost) anonymous voting on any number of programme-related issues. Community voting can be used to solicit feedback in a non-threatening and often fun way and can also be used as a preliminary activity to stimulate focus group discussions or community meetings. It can assist in reviews of work and in planning new projects.

### What equipment is needed for Voting?

- space in which to stick flipcharts on wall and gather people for discussion
- flipchart paper
- sticky tape, scissors, marker pen
- voting tokens – small pieces of coloured card (one colour for each question the community will vote on and one piece of every colour for each person who will vote).
- 3 voting boxes to put the voting tokens in – cardboard box, paper pocket etc. – one each with a happy / neutral / and angry face

### How to do Community Voting?

- First explain the objective of the session, and why, to the community group eg. To find out how successful OGB's Health Education Project has been and to use the information to help make a decision about continuing it.
- Decide on a few significant questions to be used; this can be done beforehand or together with the community. The questions need to be relatively simple eg. Did the Health Education project target the right people?
- Explain the voting system and then get the community to vote: a question will be read out, and depending on how the people feel about the response they should put their voting token for that question in either the happy / neutral/ or angry voting box.
- Read out each question and discuss it if necessary before the vote takes place. Eg. Do you feel you have been treated with respect by Oxfam GB staff? Those who agree completely will place their card in the 'happy' box and so on.
- Be sure that it is clear which colour should be used for which question and that this is noted.
- When the voting is completed, open the boxes and analyse the results. This process must be carried out together with the community as well. Use the results to plan ongoing work. Put the results onto flipchart paper and put them on a wall so everybody can see them.
- This method can be used with small to medium-sized groups (max 30) (if they are too large it takes too long and people will get bored) but be sure that all groups in the community are represented in the voting sample.
- Always thank the community for their participation in such activities.

**Examples of questions that can be asked to assess degrees of accountability**

- i. Did you get enough information from Oxfam/partner about the project?
- ii. Did you know what to do if you had complaints about the project or Oxfam or the partner?
- iii. How involved did you feel with the project?
- iv. How respectful do you think Oxfam was to you and members of your community?
- v. How useful do you think the feedback sessions were?
- vi. Did non-beneficiaries understand why they were not included in the project?
- vii. How happy/satisfied are you with Oxfam GB?
- viii. How much attention do you think Oxfam GB paid to your needs and your ideas?