



**ANGELICAN ALLIANCE**

Development • Relief • Advocacy

# AGENTS OF CHANGE

## Introductory Guide



## WHAT IS IN THIS GUIDE?

Please read this guide carefully before starting the course. It contains essential information for your studies.

In this introductory guide you will find...

- Welcome and words of support from the former Archbishop of Canterbury ...Page 3
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More detailed information about how the course works and what it involves in a "Frequently Asked Questions" section:

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## WELCOME FROM THE FORMER ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

The Agents of Change programme is one of the most exciting innovations from the Anglican Alliance. The modules focus on vital areas of community development, grounded in academic rigour. It is a superb contribution from the Anglican Alliance to strengthen the committed and inspiring work of Anglicans around the world in holistic mission. I hear that participants talk of being themselves transformed as they seek to transform their communities, working together with the poorest and most vulnerable. Through the connections of students with their mentors, bonds of fellowship are developing across the Anglican Communion. Together people are discovering a shared vision and mutual inspiration in responding to God's call to build his Kingdom in the here and now.

I wish the Agents of Change students every success in their studies. I encourage people from all parts of the Anglican Communion to get engaged as students and as mentors, connecting through the Anglican Alliance. I pray that together we can, in Christ, become agents of the change God longs to see in the world.



† Justin Welby  
Former Archbishop of Canterbury

Pictured here with the Anglican Communion Youth Network Executive Council as they embarked on their in-person Agents of Change training, September 2024.





## GREETINGS FROM THE ANGLICAN ALLIANCE TEAM

Welcome from the Anglican Alliance team to the “Agents of Change” course. We are here to support you to make your learning as effective as possible and strengthen your role in transforming your communities.

Grounded in our Christian faith, the Anglican Alliance brings together development, relief and advocacy across the Anglican Communion. Our mandate is to support your work, and these modules are a key part of that task.

Now it's over to you! The Anglican Alliance team includes facilitators in different parts of the world to provide regional support and advice. We welcome your feedback, and will celebrate your success. But only you, through your studies, can realise the potential of these modules to empower Anglicans to be agents of change.

The Anglican Alliance team



Please visit the website to find out more about the Anglican Alliance: <https://www.anglicanalliance.org>

## INTRODUCING AGENTS OF CHANGE – A BRIEF OVERVIEW

### ★ The Anglican Alliance

The Anglican Alliance exists to connect, equip and inspire the worldwide Anglican family to work for a world free of poverty and injustice and to safeguard creation.

The Anglican Alliance was born of the 2008 Lambeth Conference and is an initiative of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Anglican Communion. It is mandated to bring together development, relief and advocacy work across the Anglican Communion.

Our work is grounded in the Anglican Five Marks of Mission, which include responding to human need and caring for the most vulnerable, challenging and changing the unjust structures of the world, and sustaining and renewing the life of the earth. This holistic engagement with the world reflects Jesus' mission to bring good news to the poor, release for the oppressed and fullness of life to all (Luke 4:18; John 10:10), and humanity's role to "tend and keep" the earth (Genesis 2:15).

### ★ What Is Agents Of Change?

Agents of Change is a programme of the Anglican Alliance to help Anglicans anywhere in the world tackle poverty and bring about transformation in their local communities.

The course equips participants with the skills and knowledge needed to set up a development project in their local community. It looks at every stage of the process - from coming up with an idea... to planning... to managing a project... to monitoring it and evaluating it. The course teaches both practical skills (such as how to write a budget and how to do a risk assessment) and values (such as being inclusive and being transparent).

There are 8 modules. For each, there is study material in the course book and activities in the workbook, which participants complete to apply their learning. On successful completion of the course, participants are awarded a certificate in recognition of their work and achievement, but more importantly, they are equipped to become Agents of Change in their communities.

The Agents of Change programme was originally written by the Open University in the UK for the Anglican Alliance. This is the second edition of the course. Most of the core material from the first edition is in this second edition, but we have added to it and made changes in the light of feedback and experience of the first version. We have added a new module (Dreaming Dreams), a Bible study for each module, more case studies and worked examples, and a quiz at the end of each module. The course is now illustrated throughout with beautiful line drawings by Bill Crooks of Mosaic Creative. In addition, the course has been designed as a print resource, so can be studied in hard copy, and the programme is now open to individuals, not just groups.

### ★ Teaching Best Practice

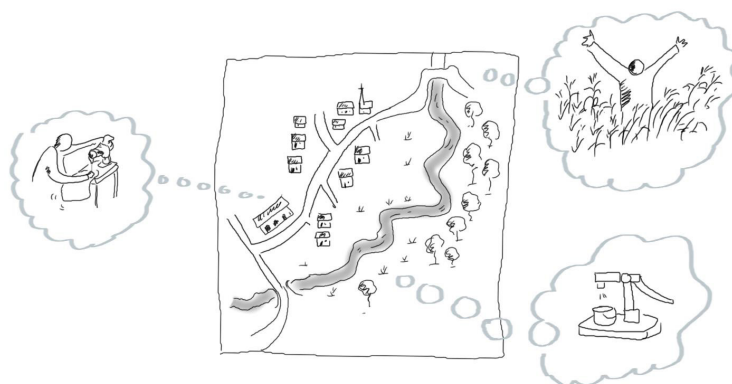
The course modules have been developed to ensure that local community-based programmes provided as part of the Church's mission are designed and delivered in accordance with best development practice, as currently understood. They are all important. The topics covered by the modules have been chosen because experience shows that when projects fail, it is usually because one or more of these areas was not adequately thought about.

## ★ Planning A Project

As you go through the course you will develop a community project plan. This is to focus your learning and bring it to life.

In our in-person training, participants will work in small groups. We will have between 4 and 6 groups of participants working on 2 or 3 particular project ideas (for example, setting up a tree nursery, a youth club or a community garden). This way, we will have two groups working on each project. This will allow the two groups working on, for example, the tree nursery to compare their thinking and learn from each other. Likewise, the two groups working on the youth club project can compare notes. It also means participants can see the development of other project ideas as the different groups share their work. They will see the similarities and differences between different types of projects. This way, we can maximise our learning and the benefits of being together.

After completing the course, you can use the materials to develop a plan for a development project of your own choosing. As you will learn, this is best done in consultation with your community.



## ★ What Do We Mean By A “Development Project”?

When we talk about a development project we simply mean setting up an activity that benefits the whole community, makes life better for people, tackles poverty, transforms lives, demonstrates creation care, empowers people or in some other way expresses God’s love and reflects Jesus’ words, “I have come that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10).



Examples of development projects worked on to date by Agents of Change participants include: a piggery project to generate income for a rural community with high unemployment, a motorbike ambulance project to help people in remote rural areas access health centres, a school leavers’ club to help young people move on to employment, a community beautification scheme, a vegetable garden to provide food and income for a women’s refuge and a tree nursery to help address problems of deforestation.

## ★ An “Assets-Based” Approach

Agents of Change takes an assets-based approach and is designed to be compatible with other assets-based community development approaches such as Umoja, ABCD (Assets-Based Community Development) or CCM (Church and Community Mobilisation). The Anglican Alliance calls this family of approaches Asset Based Church and Community Transformation (ABCCT).

What does “assets-based” mean? Traditional approaches to development have often focused on a “problem”, “need” or “challenge” that a “project” is set up to correct. Often, the “need” is identified by someone from outside of the community and, usually, the project depends on outside (“donor”) funding. This can be very disempowering for the community, even if they benefit from the project itself. This is because such a needs-based approach focuses only on what the community DOES NOT have, rather than balancing this with looking at what the community DOES have – and using it.

Increasingly, the Church is moving towards Asset Based approaches. This is where communities are

the agents of their own change. Together, communities look at both their challenges and their assets (capabilities, resources, skills and experience). Together, communities decide on their priorities for change, come up with project ideas and plans and put them into practice using the community's assets – often without outside help or funding. This assets-based approach is far more empowering and sustainable.



### ★ What Do Participants Say About Agents Of Change?

"It's a tool to get the right knowledge at the right level and on the right focus area into a community, to help change take place in people's livelihoods."

Dennis Kabekabe, Solomon Islands.



"Agents of Change made me realise that the passion I had to save the community can come true. ... Thank you very much for this opportunity to study Agents of Change. This is a very good programme, which can change the way we manage projects in the Church as well as in the communities."

Isaac Ndhlovu, Zambia.

"I have always wanted to be an Agent of Change but never knew how!! This course is important to me because it has equipped me with skills necessary to undertake a project in my community that can change lives. This world is full of disappointments, persons are crying out that the church is not playing its role and if I can be the change I want to see and save lives through the Holy Spirit what better reward can there be? This course has given [me] the motivation and resilience to make change."

Gabriela Kydd, St Vincent, Windward Islands.



## IN MORE DETAIL: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### ★ What Will I Learn?

The Agents of Change programme has been developed to teach best practice in how to set up a community-based project. The 8 modules cover everything from thinking about your community's assets and needs and coming up with an idea for a project, to developing an action plan, working out what resources you will need, writing a budget, creating a project group, keeping people safe, monitoring finances, looking after volunteers... there's a lot of content!

This is how it breaks down across the 8 modules:

#### Module 1: Dreaming dreams

- Thinking about community
- Serving the wider community: the Anglican 5 Marks of Mission
- Looking at your community in more depth: community mapping, assets and challenges
- Identifying your community's assets
- Looking at problems and solutions. Problem and solution (action) trees
- Dreaming dreams
- Coming up with a project idea



#### Module 2: Consultation

- What is consultation?
- Why is consultation so important?
- Who should be consulted?
- What is good consultation? What is bad consultation?
- How should a consultation be carried out and what do you do with the results of consultation?

#### Module 3: Planning

- Defining your project
- Deciding on the limits (scope) of what your project might achieve
- SMART objectives
- Making an action plan
- Working out what resources you will need
- Finding resources and funds for your project: Looking to your own resources; External funding: dangers and practicalities



#### Module 4: Inclusion

- What do we mean by inclusion and exclusion?
- Why is inclusion important?
- Why are certain people often excluded?
- What does exclusion look like?
- Commonly excluded groups.
- Who is excluded in your community?
- How to be sure you know who is in your community – planning a community census
- How to include everyone: participation – participation techniques



## Module 5: Protection

Looks at protection under three headings:

1. Protection of vulnerable groups in the community;
2. Protection of volunteers and staff;
3. Protection of the project itself.
  - What do we mean by “vulnerability” or “at risk”?
  - Hazards and threats
  - The factors that increase or decrease people’s vulnerability to hazards and threats
  - Could your project unintentionally harm vulnerable in your community?
  - Protecting the people who use your project from harm (“safeguarding”)
  - Protecting your staff and volunteers from harm
  - Risks assessments



## Module 6: Governance

- What do we mean by “governance”?
- What is good governance? Why does it matter?
- What does bad governance look like?
- Applying the principles of good governance: involving stakeholders (includes a stakeholder analysis); being aware of power and using it well.
- Putting theory into practice: planning a governance system for your project (the project group).

## Module 7: Finance

- Estimating costs
- Preparing a budget
- Financial accountability: Identifying key stakeholders to whom you are accountable financially. Accountability to the community and other donors
- Patronage and power
- Practical tools for record keeping and monitoring: money in and money out; comparing expenditure against the budget



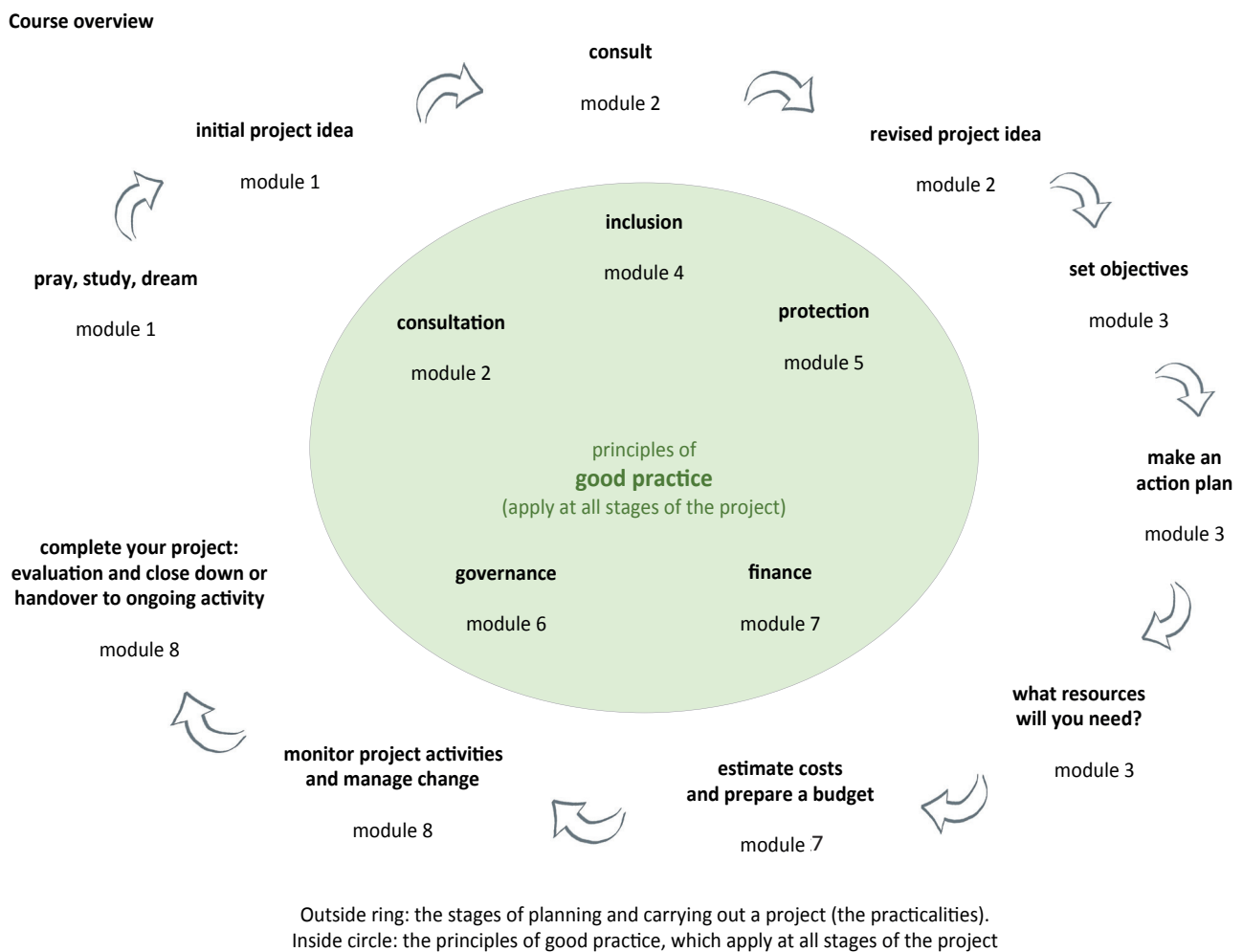
## Module 8: Project Management

- Work monitoring
- Managing change
- Working with volunteers
- Evaluating your project
- Handover / completion of the project
- Self-development

Looking at the details of the content above, you can see that you will learn both the practicalities and principles of setting up a project:

- practicalities - the practical steps you need to take to get a project up and running (things like writing an action plan, budgeting, monitoring progress and setting up a project committee to look after the running of the project)
- principles - the values of good practice (things like consulting and including people, assessing risks, being answerable, fair and open)

This is shown in the following diagram, which we will keep coming back to throughout the course.



The practical stages of setting up and running a project are shown in the outside ring of the diagram. These steps must be followed in order and will look different in different projects.

The principles of good practice that apply at all stages of the life of a project are shown in the inner circle of the diagram. These do not change. They apply to every project.

## ★ How Is Each Module Structured?

Each module has the following structure:

- Title page
- Key ideas and terms used in the module
- Introduction and overview – including a summary of what the participant will learn in the module
- Progress monitor
- Bible study
- Module content arranged in 3, 4 or 5 sections, with a total of around 7 workbook activities including one or two tasks to develop your project plan.

And at the end of each module:

- A quiz to check your understanding and learning from the module.
- An opportunity to reflect on your learning – to write down what you found most interesting, surprising or new in the module.
- A check list to make sure you have completed all the activities for the module.

## ★ Will I be applying my learning to a project idea?

Yes! As we go through the course together, you will apply your learning to a specific example of a development project. It will be your working example, to focus your learning and bring it to life. You will keep applying what you learn in each module to your project idea. In the training we will use a selection of project ideas for participants to work on in groups.

This means that, during the training, groups will develop their project idea into a project plan. The project plan is a blueprint for setting up a project. It will contain the project's purpose, objectives, action plan and much more.

## ★ How Does The Course Work?

For each module, there is study material in the course book and activities in the workbook, which participants complete to apply their learning. We will be working through these together in our training.

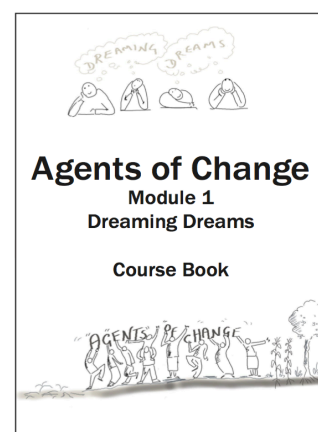
Each participant and/or group will complete their workbook.

If we do not get through all the course materials in our time together, participants will need to complete them afterwards in order to get their certificate.

### Course book

The course book contains all the teaching for the module.

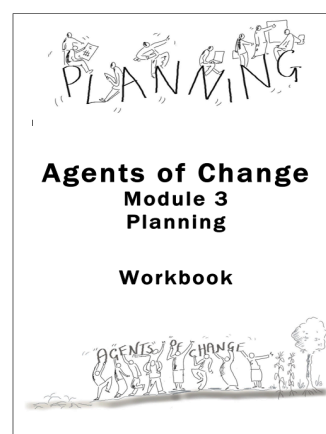
Always start each module by reading the course book. it will guide you to the activities in your workbook. It is essential you do this and do not try to fill in the workbook without studying the course book.



### Workbook

The workbook contains questions and practical exercises, which you complete as you go through the module. These activities will help you think about the knowledge you already have (from your own life experience) and will strengthen your learning from the module by practising the ideas you read about.

The workbook is also where you will work on your project idea, developing it into a project plan as you progress through the modules.



### ★ How Will This Work During The training?

During the training, we will use many of the activities in the workbooks as group work activities. This will greatly help you to complete your personal workbook.



### ★ What Will I Gain From The Course?

The most important thing you will gain from the course is the knowledge of how to set up a community project – and the confidence and inspiration to do so. You will also have a detailed plan for a project idea.

You will receive a Certificate of Satisfactory Completion of the Agents of Change Programme from the Anglican Alliance in recognition of your achievement, which will provide evidence of the subject areas you have covered in the course.

You will be invited to join a fellowship of graduates from the course. You will be able to be in contact with other participants, sharing your experiences.

Participants who show particular flair and enthusiasm will be invited to act as mentors to future participants. You will be given guidance on how to be a mentor.

### ★ What Can I Do With My Learning After The Training?

By the end of the training we will have completed most, if not all, of the Agents of Change course modules. You will have learned a great deal about how to set up a development project in your community and how to do it well. Once you have fully completed the Agents of Change course you will need to think carefully about what to do next. We will cover this in our time together. Some of the possibilities are described on the next page.

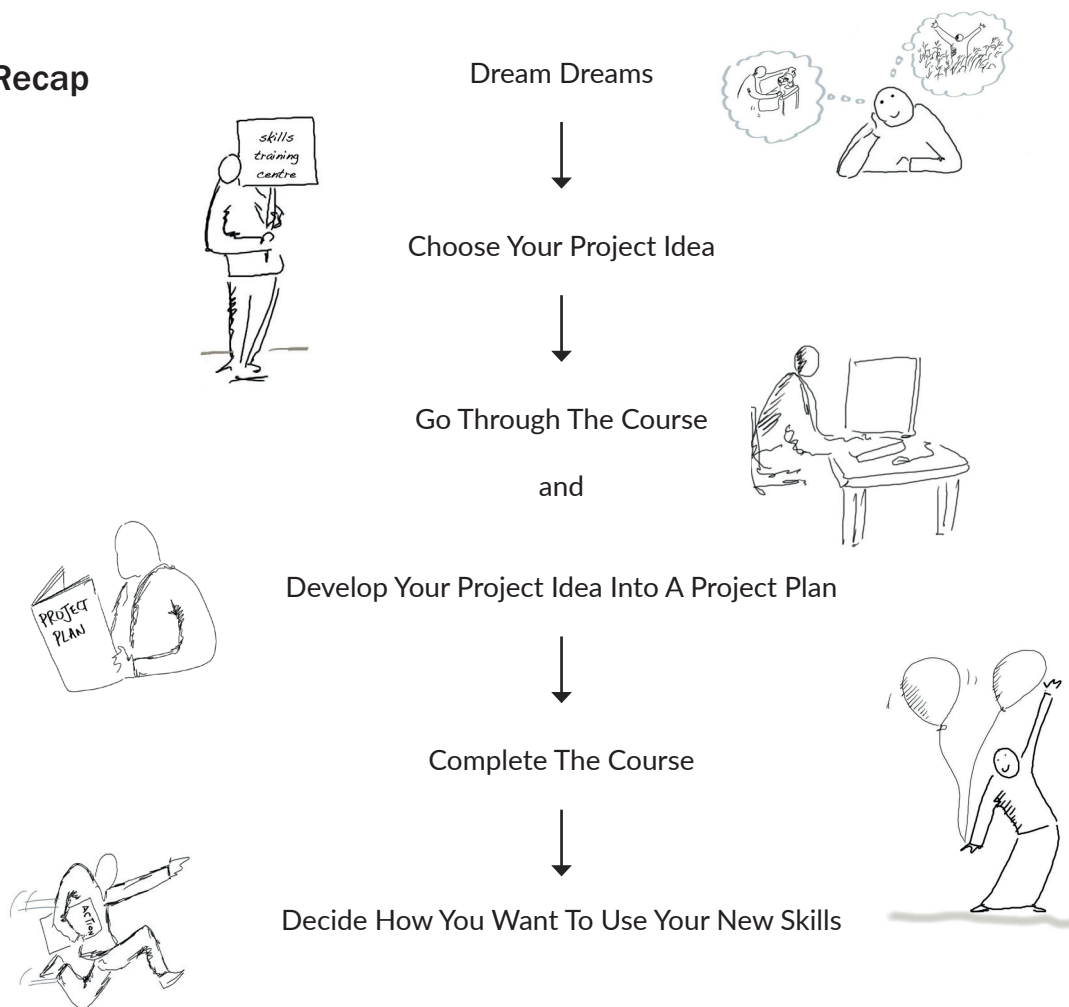
Please note: **You will not actually be setting up the project while you study the course.**



There are different possibilities for what you do with your learning once you have completed the course for yourself. Here are some of the options. You might...

- Put your project plan into action in your community. You might feel that this is what God is calling you to do. (You will still need to consult your community properly).
- Put a different idea into practice - but using all the knowledge and understanding you have gained from the course. You might feel God is calling you to do something right away, but that the project idea you have been working with throughout the course is not the right one, or that you need to work with your community to find out together what the priority is.
- Decide that, for you, the course has just been an academic / learning exercise for now. You might feel that the time isn't right to put a project into action - but you will know how to do it well when the time comes.
- Just use parts of your learning - to improve what you are already doing or help others run projects better.

## Recap



### IMPORTANT NOTE

For the purpose of this course - including in the training - we ask you to work on a project idea which you will test, work with and develop into a project plan as you work through this course.

However, in the real world, it is best practice to go into your community to find out what their priority is. Bible study, reflecting on our calling as Christians to be Agents of Change and dreaming dreams are all best done in the community.

Traditional approaches to development have focused on a “problem”, “need” or “challenge” that a “project” is set up to put right. Often, the “need” is identified by someone (for example an individual or charity) from outside of the community and, usually, the project depends on outside (“donor”) funding. This can be very disempowering for the community, even if they benefit from the project itself. This is because such a “needs-based” approach focuses only on what the community DOES NOT have, rather than balancing this with looking at what the community DOES have – and using it.

Increasingly, the Church is moving towards “Asset-Based Church and Community Transformation”. You might see this shortened to ABCCT. This is where communities are the agents of their own change. Together, communities look at both their challenges and their assets (capabilities, resources, skills and experience). Together, communities decide on their priorities for change, come up with project ideas and plans and put them into practice using the community’s assets – often without outside help or funding.

So another possibility when you finish this course is that you decide that you want to explore such a fully community-based approach, rather than suggest a particular project idea yourself. If you do, the skills you will learn in this course will help you very much. This course takes an assets-based approach. It expects development to come from within communities, with community members fully involved. It teaches important principles and skills for setting up and running a project whether that project idea comes from an individual or the whole community.

If at the end of the course you decide you want to take the fully community-based approach to working, you will find information and links in the ‘next steps’ section at the end of module 8.

### ★ How Is The Course Assessed?

There is no test at the end of the course and you will not be getting marks for your work.

We do want you to receive recognition for what you have put into your learning and unless there are real problems with the material you send in, your mentor will inform the Anglican Alliance that you should receive a Certificate of Satisfactory Completion of the Agents of Change Programme.