



# Edu Circles Kit



for **Learner  
Stakeholders**  
in Education  
in Namibia

**Facilitator  
Guide**



Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture  
REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA  
2019



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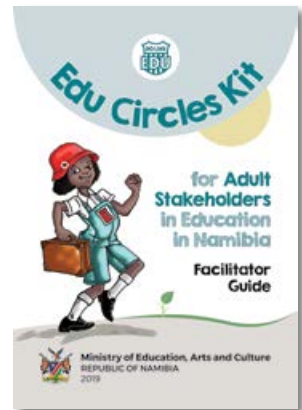
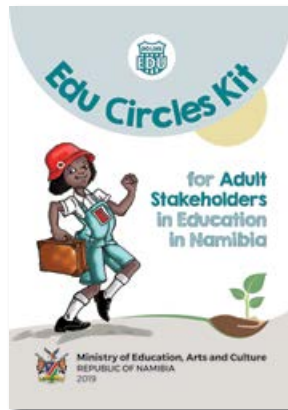
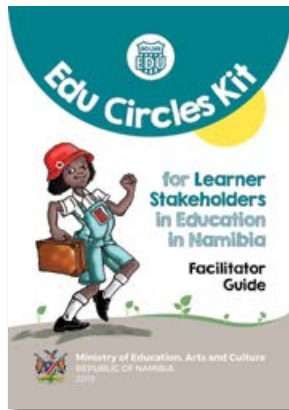
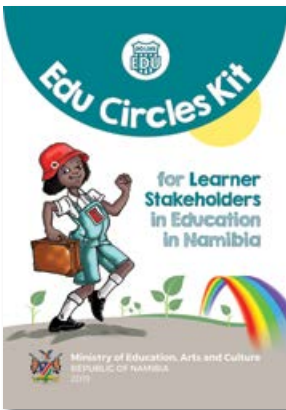
# Edu Circles Kit

for **Learner Stakeholders**  
 in Education in Namibia



**Facilitator**  
**Guide**

**There are 4 SEPARATE EDU CIRCLE KITS - 1 for Learners, 1 for Adults, 2 for Facilitators**



Digital versions (PDFs) are available on the websites of the MoEAC and UNICEF Namibia: [www.moe.gov.na](http://www.moe.gov.na) and [www.unicef.org/namibia](http://www.unicef.org/namibia)

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**Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture**  
 Directorate of Planning and Development  
 Government Office Park, Luther Street, Windhoek  
 Private Bag 13186, Windhoek, Namibia  
 Telephone (+264) (0)61-2933111 (main switchboard)

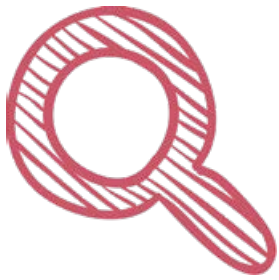
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 Government Office Park, Luther Street, Windhoek • Telephone 061-2933004 • Website [www.moe.gov.na](http://www.moe.gov.na)





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# Introduction

The session should open with the “Edu” video clips to arouse the learners’ interest and draw their attention to the context of the training.

## Duration: half day to one day

The training facilitator should determine the training duration based on the realities of the learners. You are unlikely to do justice to all the themes in half a day; you might need a whole day or even more time.

## Proposed agenda for the day (purely a guide)

Time (minutes)	Activity
20	Introductory activity: Icebreaker
30	Introduction to Edu Circles slides
20	Difference between Edu Circle and Learner Representative Council (LRC)
50	Stakeholder mapping exercise
30	Process of setting up an Edu Circle with Charter
25	Election process
60	Needs assessment for your school and priorities
30	Communicating with Edu Circles in other schools and getting their support
30	Conclusion and way forward

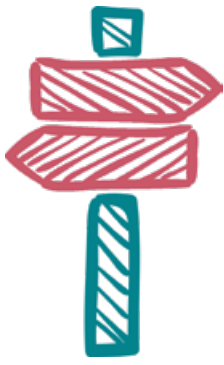
## The Kit (information for the facilitator)

This kit is designed for the training of learners who have been elected to their school’s Edu Circle, as well as the learners in the Learner Representative Council (LRC) and the prefects.

The “Edu Circles Kit for Learners” and “Edu Circles Kit for Stakeholders” are similar. The kit for learners is written in a way that is more accessible for learners, and does not include many of the elements included in the kit for stakeholders. For instance, it does not include the elements focusing on: Conducting a Stakeholder Analysis; Training the Edu Circle Learners; Guiding and Administering Your School’s Edu Circle; and Monitoring and Evaluating Edu Circles.

The training methodology should be interactive, and set at the correct level for the learners involved. It also has to be interesting and fast-paced. The Kit for Learners should be used together with this facilitator manual.

**Remember that keeping the learners engaged is key if you want them to be excited about the Edu Circle concept. If you feel that something is not working well and you are losing their interest, take a break, adapt, and try a new method.**



# The training

It is a good idea to start with a simple ice-breaker. This might help the learners (who are from different grades and may not know each other) to get to know who the other members of the Edu Circle are. They will be working closely together, so it is important that they get to know each other quickly.

## Ice-breaker

Facilitators could use an ice-breaker they know, or one of these:

Tell the participants to note down two things that everyone knows about them and one that no one knows about them. So, the facilitator will introduce her/himself:

*“Hello, my name is John Simon. I am 42 years old and have 4 children,” and “I like reading detective novels.”*

The first three facts will be known, but the last fact is not known. Going around the room, have them introduce themselves in this way:

*“Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am a Grade 6 learner at \_\_\_\_\_ School. I am the youngest of 4 children. My father and mother are both teachers. Something no one knows about me is that I like reading novels.”*

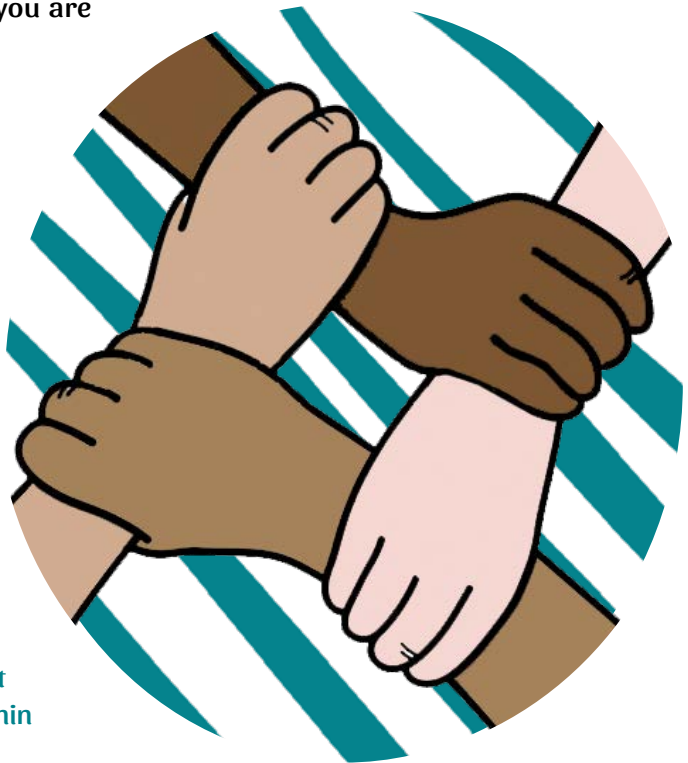
It is easiest if you lead by telling them who you are and what thing no one knows about you.

It is a quick and amusing way of introducing everyone to each other.

If you want to get the participants more engaged later in the day, you can use an **energiser**. There are many online. Here is one that you could try:

### **Common Ground:**

Ask the learners to break up into small groups of 4 per group. The groups have 5 minutes to find out what things all 4 members have in common, e.g. they all have the same colour eyes and all have a sister named Sarah. The winning team is the one that discovers the most things in common within 5 minutes.



# PHYSICAL ACTIVITY 1

## Trust-building ice-breaker

Try this fun ‘trust-building’ walk-about activity. Arrange the learners in pairs, ideally a boy and a girl, of different ages, in different grades and from different schools (if the training involves more than one Edu Circle). One learner should pretend to be blind and the other a guide. You may blind-fold the ‘blind’ learners if you suspect that they would be tempted to open their eyes during the activity. The ‘blind learner’ should put his/her hands on the shoulders of the guide. Once all are ready, the guides should lead the walk, perhaps to the courtyard of the training venue, giving proper instructions to the blind learner about the terrain, physical structures and safe passages, and alerting the blind learner to any obstruction along the way. The guide **MUST** be 100% honest and **MUST NOT** mislead the blind learner. When you are satisfied that all pairs have completed the route, have them swap roles, i.e. the blind learner becomes the guide and leads the other learner, now blind-folded, back to the venue, but *using a different route*.

**NB:** The blind learner must depend wholly on the guide.

Once they are settled back in the training venue, ask the learners to share their experience of relying on someone they don’t really know, and how they felt being trusted by someone they don’t really know. It is important that the facilitator also participates in this activity and shares his/her experience. The facilitator can either be the first to speak or let learners describe their experience first. Facilitators should try to contextualise the learners’ responses by linking them to real-life contexts through probing with leading questions.

**NB:** This activity can also be done in the venue/classroom using desks, chairs and other items as obstructions to be avoided. The guides would navigate the blind between the obstructions, making sure that the blind are safe.

# PHYSICAL ACTIVITY 2

## “Saima says ...”

Get the learners into a space where they have some room to move. Tell them to do something. If you begin with the words “*Saima says ...*”, they **MUST DO** the action. If you begin without saying “*Saima says ...*”, they **MUST NOT DO** it. Some examples of simple actions that you could use for this activity:

- “*Saima says jump in the air.*” (Learners **MUST DO** this.)
- “*Shake the hand of the person next to you.*” (Learners **MUST NOT DO** this – because the instruction does not begin with “*Saima says ...*”.)
- “*Hop on your left foot.*” (Learners **MUST NOT DO** this.)
- “*Saima says shout as loud as you can.*” (Learners **MUST DO** this.)

The learners should do the first and last of these actions, but not the middle two.

**You can make this game competitive:** If a learner does something that Saima has **NOT** said to do (e.g. hops when told to, but without “*Saima says ...*”), that learner can be asked to sit out, and so on until only one learner is left. You can also make the game harder by speeding up the instructions.

## Group organisation

Arrange the learners into groups of 3–4, depending on the number of learners present.

Distribute copies of the “Edu Circles Kit for Learners”, and instruct everyone to open their copy. Lead the group through the “Learner Agency” and “Definition of Terms”, and explain why it is important to understand these. Emphasise the “Terms” section, and that they might need to constantly refer to that section when dealing with the relevant themes. This ideally should be made into a game where the groups are asked who knows what each term means, and the group that gets the most correct wins.



Alternatively, this could take the form of a quiz, where the learners are asked to match terminologies with descriptions. For this quiz, hand out copies bearing at least five terms and descriptions in each. The order of descriptions should not correspond with that of the terms, as it is the responsibility of learners to match them. You may choose to split them into five or six quizzes across the groups to minimise time wastage and to have the teams report back quickly at the end.

### ACTIVITY I

## Brainstorming the ‘barriers to learning’ as understood by participants

1. Present a slide, **SLIDE 1**, saying: “BARRIERS TO LEARNING”.

To focus the activity on the objectives of the activity, the facilitator may give at least three examples of barriers.

*Examples of barriers could include:*

- *bullying;*
- *lack of access for disabled learners (e.g. no signers for deaf children; no Braille machines for blind children; no ramps for children in wheelchairs);*
- *lack of money for lunch or school uniform;*
- *no teachers trained to identify dyslexia in children;*
- *corporal punishment;*
- *drugs;*
- *noise from shebeens;*
- *home chores.*

2. Ask the participants to think of any word associated with the expression BARRIERS TO LEARNING.

3. Ask each participant to give feedback (one or two words), without repeating any word/phrase already mentioned by another participant.

4. Note and record all the words (on a mind map or by listing them).

5. The responses will be grouped/categorised according to prevalence in the school and outside the school.

## ACTIVITY 2

### Contextualising 'barriers to learning'

Ask the following questions:

1. **What BARRIERS TO LEARNING do learners in your school face?** Ensure that the learners have a sound understanding of what is meant by this. Simplifying if necessary, as follows:
  - *What can make it hard for you to do well at school?*
  - *What can make it hard for you to study?*
  - *What upsets you at school?*
  - *What issues at home make it difficult to do well at school?*
2. **What are the main causes of these BARRIERS TO LEARNING?** You may prompt by asking some of the following:
  - *Do learners fight at school?*
  - *Do you go to school without food?*
  - *Does the school give you food?*
  - *Are your toilets clean?*
  - *Do teachers beat you?*
  - *Do shebeens sell alcohol to learners and play loud music?*
  - *Do older boys take money from younger ones?*
3. **What is being done to reduce BARRIERS TO LEARNING in your school?**
4. **Why do you think BARRIERS TO LEARNING continue despite all the laws and campaigns to stop them?**





# Background to Edu Circles



The learners do not need to know much about the background to the Edu Circles. The main things they need to know are the following 7 points. Go through them with the learners at the start of the training.

1. The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture (MoEAC) is committed to learner involvement in the governance of the schools they attend.
2. Learner agency in governance processes is part of the Social Accountability and School Governance (SASG) Programme.
3. The broad aim of the SASG is to increase parental and community and private sector engagement to help improve education in Namibian schools.
4. Through engagement in school activities under the motto “*Do Like Edu*”, learners are encouraged to participate in school governance and in solving school-based problems which prevent learners reaching their full potential.
5. ‘Edu’ is an animated character who encourages learners to establish Edu Circles and promotes the “*Do Like Edu*” platform for learners to live happier lives and do better at school (see Figure 1, next page). *Edu* is also online: <http://dolikeedu.mobi/>.
6. Schools where learners are empowered have learners who:
  - are more disciplined and time bound;
  - work harder and are more committed to their school and their future;
  - are more target-driven;
  - take ownership and value their school more;
  - enjoy the process of learning and improving; and
  - have a sense of pride in themselves and their school.
7. Doing like Edu is *!nxa!* Everything Edu does is *!nxa!* *!Nxa* means ‘cool’, and doing like Edu means being cool!



Put the picture of Edu on a slide – i.e. **SLIDE 2** – or print it out and show it to the learners. Have them go through the **10 things that Edu says the Edu Circle and learners need to do**. You could entertain them by replaying the “Edu” video clips. For each of the 10 things, ask the learners to answer the following questions:

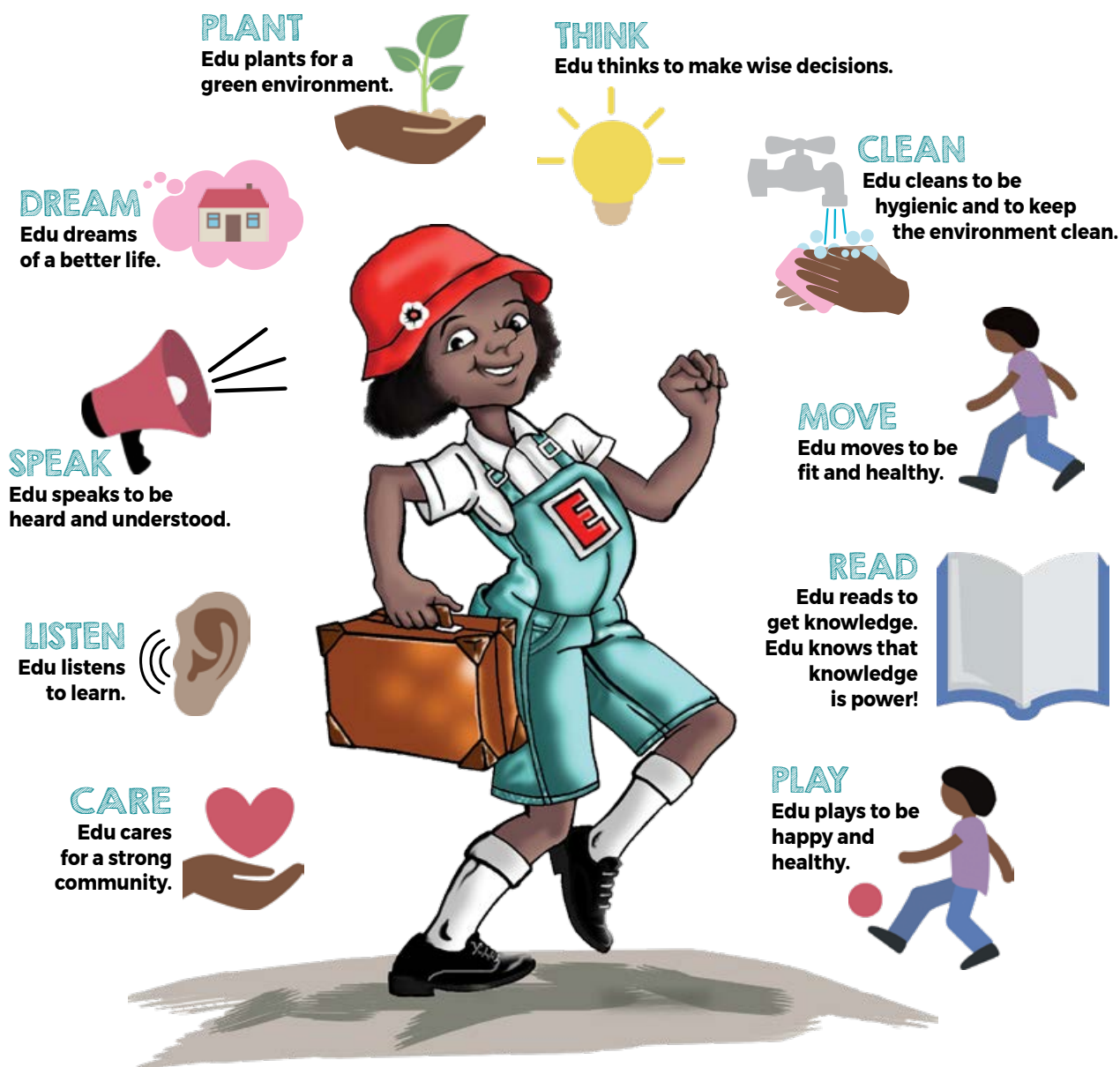
(i) What does Edu say? Go over all 10 points.

(ii) What does Edu mean? So, you would ask:

- Edu 'plants'. What does that mean and why is it important?
- Edu 'plays'. What does that mean and why is it important?

Ask the same for all 10 points.

(iii) Ask the learners to debate which of the 10 points they think is the *most* important and why.



An Edu Circle is a group of learners who meet once every two weeks to discuss issues that might affect their ability to learn and participate in school.

Learners are encouraged by Edu to do 10 things that Edu does – i.e to dream, think, read, listen, speak, care, plant, move, clean and play. In so doing, Edu helps learners to grow in confidence and to assume an active role in creating a healthier and happier schooling environment for themselves and others.

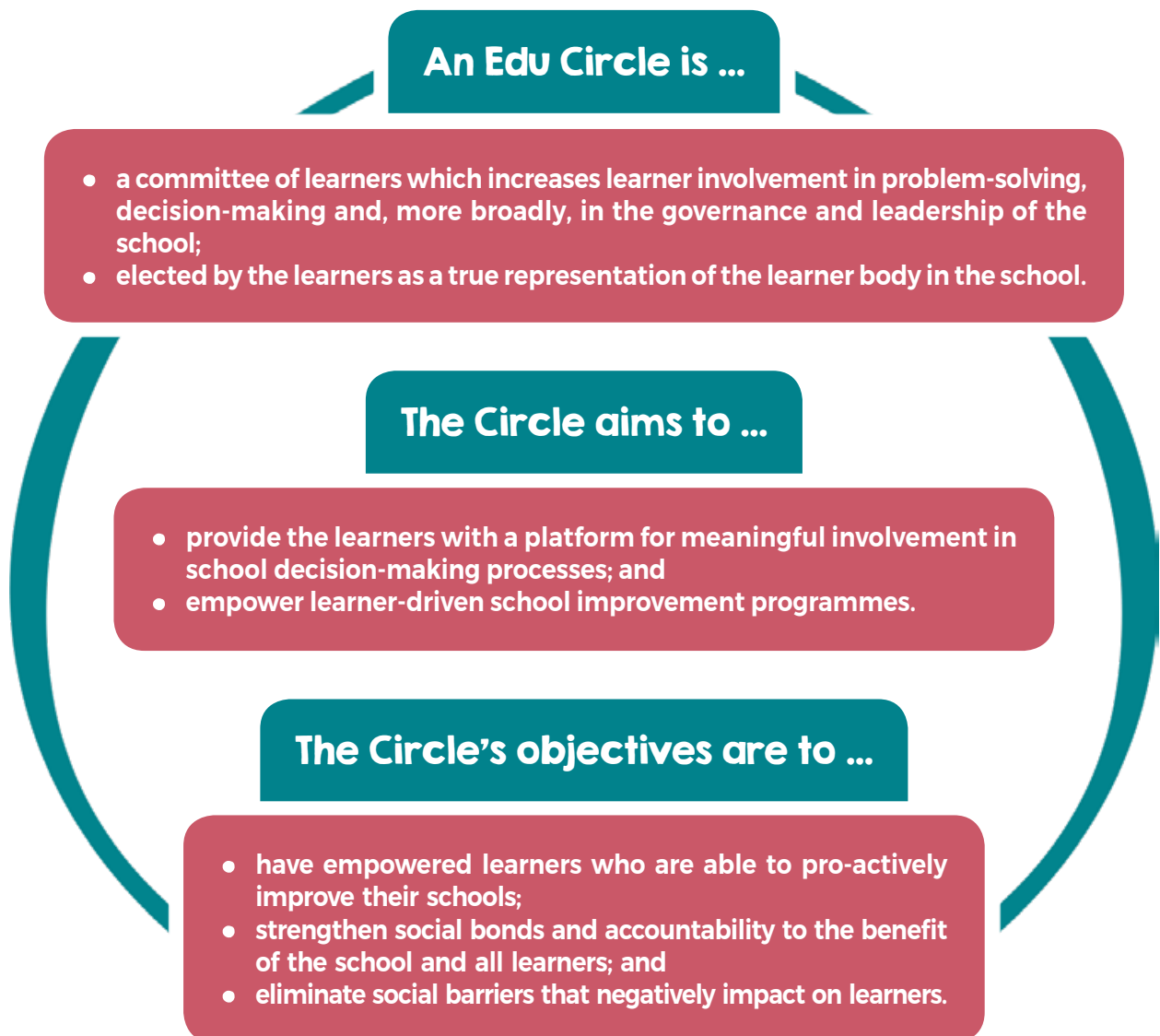


# What is an Edu Circle?

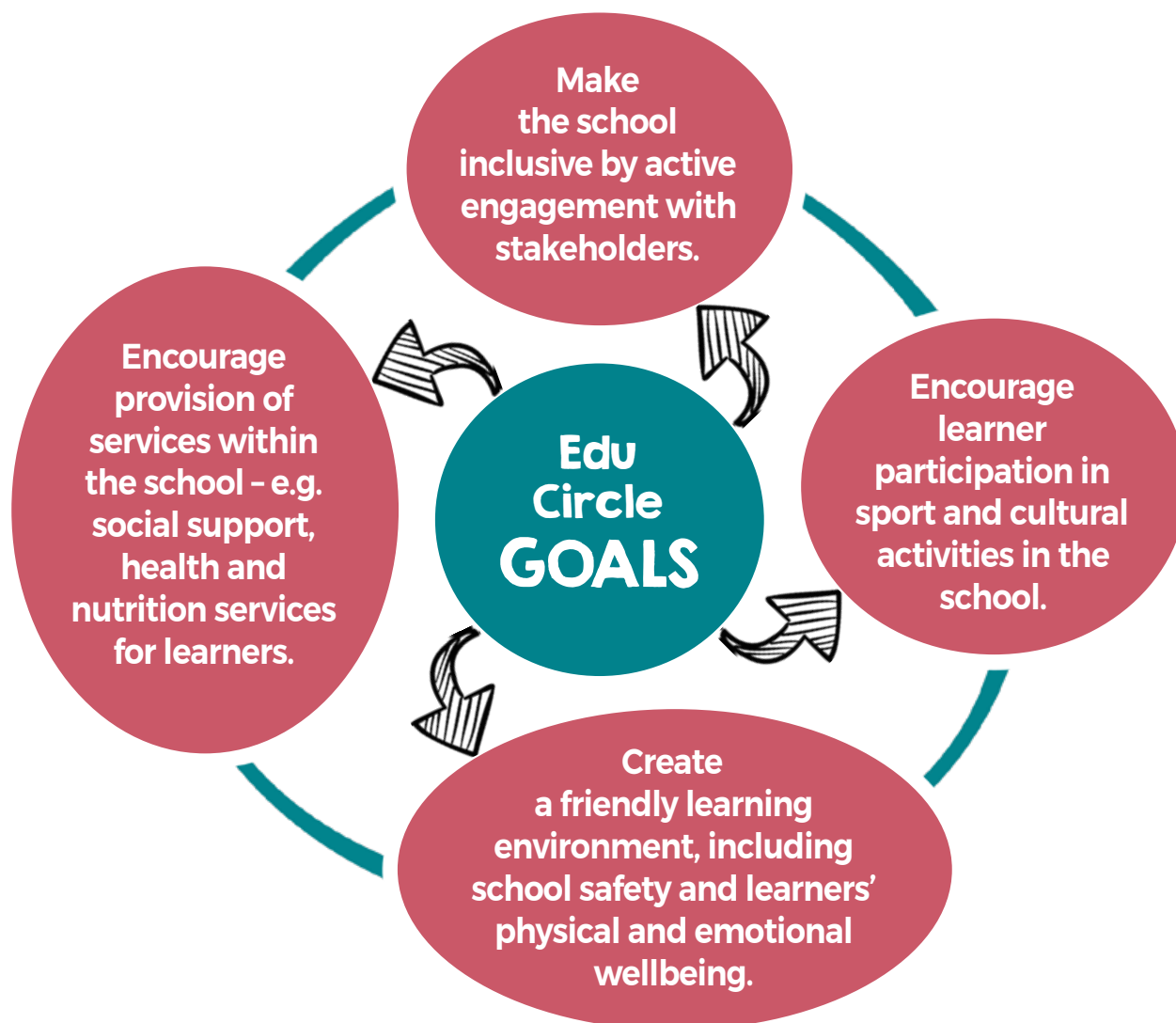
## Now, what is an edu circle?

Put the following diagrams on 4 slides or print them out. Show them in turn to the learners and go through each one, making sure that the learners understand what each slide is saying.

### SLIDE 3



## SLIDE 4



## SLIDE 5

It is important that the learners are clear about what the Edu Circle is, and what it is not. You only use this slide if you are training a school which has a Learner Representative Council (LRC).

### What the Edu Circle is, and what it is not

#### The Edu Circle **IS**:

- a group of learners who are elected by and accountable to the learners in the school;
- a structure through which learners can find a voice in the school; and
- a way to solve a problem.

#### The Edu Circle **IS NOT**:

- in competition with the LRC, prefects or School Board - it supports and adds to the work of these structures; or
- a structure that can be used to upset the principal or teachers, or School Board or LRC.

# Categories of Edu Circle ACTIVITIES



## QUICK QUIZ

Ask the Edu Circle members as well as the LRC members and prefects present to do a quick quiz. Ask them orally the following questions, and ask them to write the answers on a piece of paper in their groups. The group with the most correct answers wins.

1. How many members do/will you have in your Edu Circle?

**Answer:**

The number of grades between 4 and 12 in the school x 2 (1 boy and 1 girl per grade)

OR

in a junior or senior secondary school, the number of grades x 4 (2 boys and 2 girls per grade).

2. What are the main responsibilities of an Edu Circle?

**Answer:** To solve problems that the learners are facing.

3. Are you, as members of your school's Edu Circle, accountable to the teachers, the principal or the learners?

**Answer:** The learners.

4. Name 4 of the methods that your Edu Circle can use to achieve its aims.

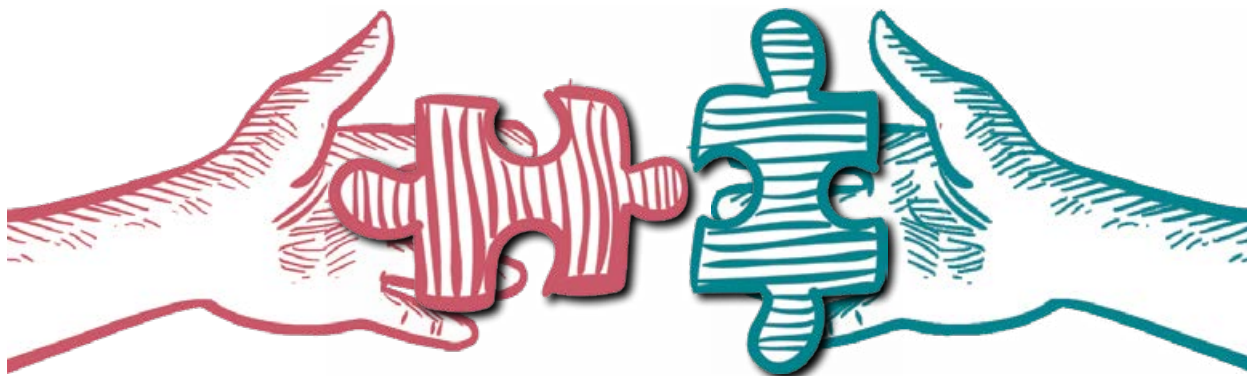
**Answers:**

- Identify problems and seek solutions.
- Work with local communities to solve problems.
- Work with clubs in the school.
- Raise funds to solve problems.
- Bring in speakers (like youth role models) to talk to the learners.
- Talk to the learners at assembly.
- Write and perform plays and other drama that helps get the message across.
- Organise after-school activities at the school, in agreement with the principal and teachers.

Provide examples in cases where there are no quick responses.

5. Is the Edu Circle meant to compete with the LRC?

**Answer:** No.





# Role of Edu Circle compared to role of LRC

It is important in schools where there is already an LRC that everyone is clear about the different roles of the LRC and the Edu Circle.

If training LRC members with other learners, hand out prepared copies of a table with two columns headed “Role of LRC” and “Role of Edu Circle”. Ask the participants to list the roles of the LRC as they know them, and then those of the Edu Circle, in the appropriate columns.

Role of LRC	Role of Edu Circle

You must reassure the participants that all their views are very important, and that the aim of this exercise is to enable the facilitator to assess the extent to which learners understand the role of LRC, and what learners think are the roles of the Edu Circle. Each group should briefly report on its lists, without repeating what any other group has reported. You must summarise the learners’ inputs. Then, explain that some activities will be the same or similar for both the LRC and the Edu Circle – for example, both “*provide sport, cultural and social activities for learners*”. Also give examples of the roles that are completely different – for example, the LRC “*does tasks that the principal wants it to do, while the Edu Circle does tasks in the interest of learners*”.

Thereafter, put up on the wall or hand out a printed version of **Slide 7** (see next page), and ask the learners to compare their lists to the lists on the slide. You must record the learners’ feedback, and assure them that their inputs are very important and will be added to the current lists on the slide. Explain that overlapping functions do not mean competition, but rather they are opportunities for the LRC and Edu Circle to plan and carry out functions together.

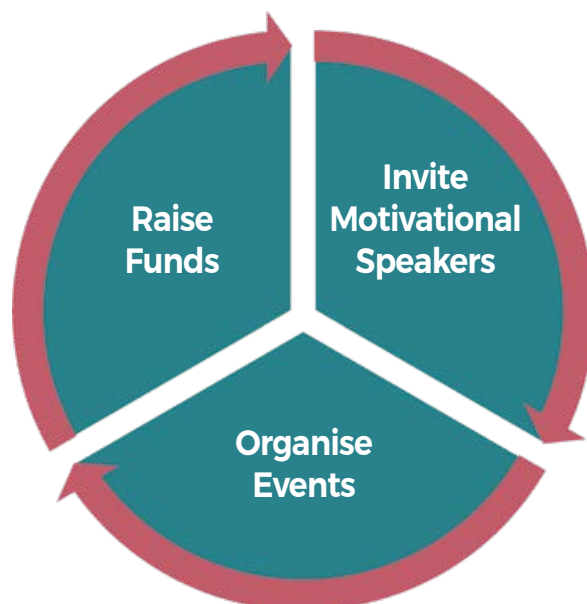
**NB:** If you are training in a school that has no LRC, then you can leave out this section and move on to Section 3.

## SLIDE 7

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE LRC AND THE EDU CIRCLE	
Role of LRC	Role of Edu Circle
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Serve the best interest of both school and learners.</li> <li>● Be the bond between learners and school management.</li> <li>● Help enforce school rules.</li> <li>● Provide sport, cultural and social activities for learners.</li> <li>● Improve learners' health and welfare.</li> <li>● Perform tasks that the principal asks it to perform.</li> <li>● Establish and give tasks to sub-committees led by LRC members.</li> <li>● Improve and maintain the school environment and facilities.</li> <li>● Promote school-cleaning campaigns.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Make sure that learners enjoy their rights.</li> <li>● "Do Like Edu" by identifying problems that affect learners, both at school and in the community - e.g. an unclean environment, bullying, learning spaces and resources.</li> <li>● Establish learners' clubs like study groups and groups for debates, cultural activities and campaigns.</li> <li>● Campaign for projects that deal with the needs of learners.</li> <li>● Speak to the school stakeholders in the interest of learners.</li> <li>● Help to improve and maintain the school environment and facilities.</li> <li>● Provide sport, cultural and social activities for the learners.</li> <li>● Improve learners' health and welfare.</li> <li>● Help learners to understand and follow school rules.</li> </ul>

Then put up **Slide 8**, and introduce the broad activities that the Edu Circle is expected to perform, which include fundraising, organising school events, and inviting local role models to come to the school and speak to learners.

## SLIDE 8



After the brief summary, put up **Slide 9**, and explain why the Edu Circle must develop a **Calendar of Activities** similar to the one on the slide. Emphasise that the Edu Circle should not attempt to do everything, but should rather prioritise activities which they will be able to do during their term of office. For example, they could prioritise "**World Environmental Day**" on the Calendar to clean the school and community. Also, tell the learners that each Edu Circle may decide to do activities which might not be included in Slide 9.

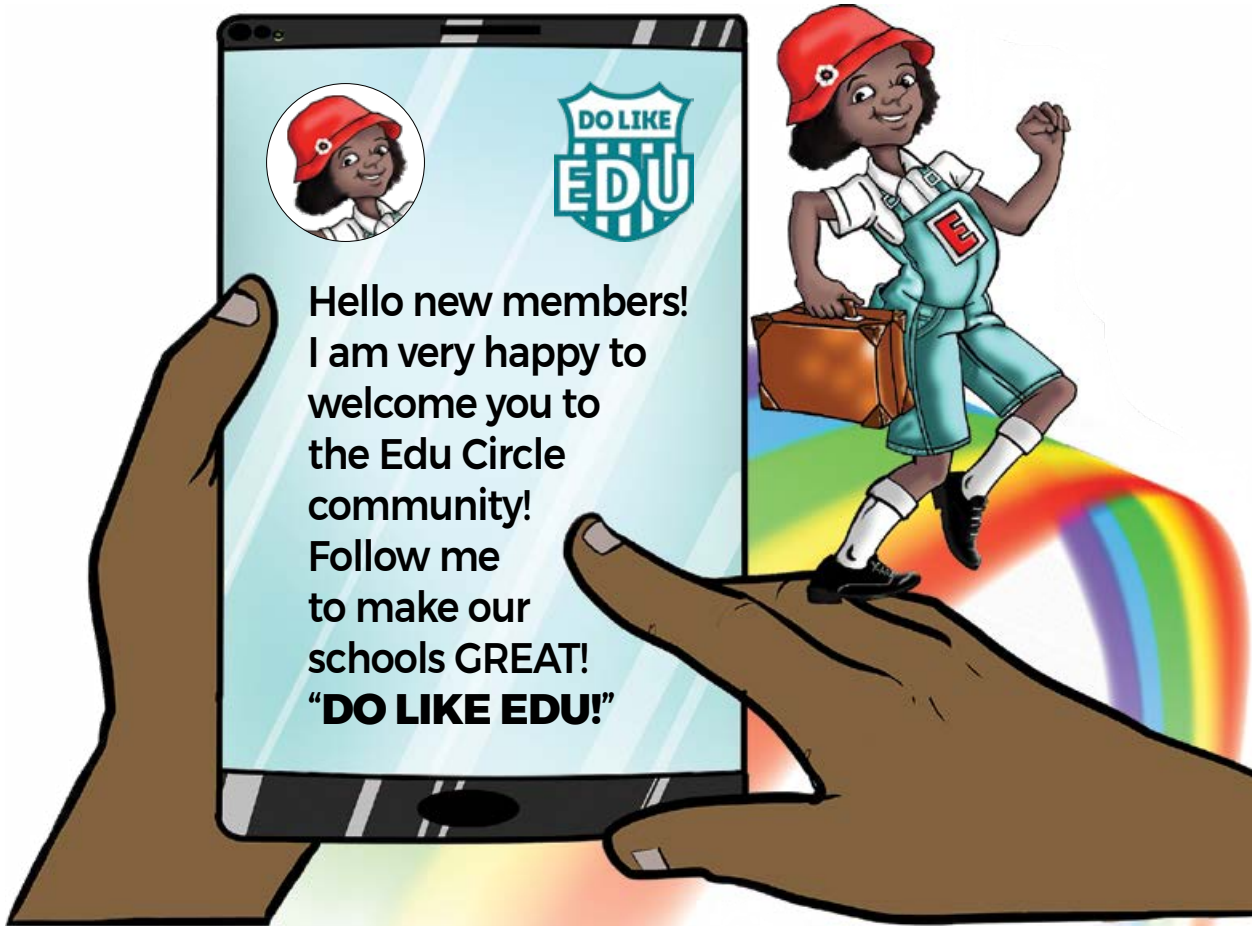


## SLIDE 9

EDU CIRCLE CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES		
Event	Date	Activity
<b>Valentine's Day</b>	14 February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Get learners to write valentine cards to their teachers, peers, members of the family and any other person they care about.</li> <li>● Organise competitions for the most beautiful cards. Some of the cards may be sold during events that involve fundraising.</li> <li>● Organise meetings and invite social workers, NGOs or people recognised in the community to come and talk about child-friendly schools, caring communities, responsible sexual relationships, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Independence Day</b>	21 March	Mobilise learners to make national flags and distribute to locals as a symbol of national civic duty. On the flags, they can write messages about the rights of children
<b>World Water Day</b>	22 March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure that there is a talk on the importance of water during the school assembly</li> <li>● Mobilise learners to sign a 'declaration' to use water sparingly</li> </ul>
<b>World Health Day</b>	7 April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Organise health talks in schools: invite health professionals or NGOs to come and talk about sexual health, substance abuse, hygiene, nutrition and environmental health.</li> <li>● Ask the local clinic and businesses to donate and distribute sanitary towels for girls.</li> </ul>
<b>Africa Month Africa Day</b>	1-31 May 25 May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Organise performance arts and creative arts exhibitions and encourage learners to wear traditional costumes.</li> <li>● Organise movies that tell Africa's stories, for showing in the afternoons after school. You could charge a small fee for learners to watch.</li> </ul>
<b>World Environment Day</b>	5 June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Organise a cleaning campaign in the school and community.</li> <li>● Show videos about environmental problems such as pollution, single-use plastic waste, degradation and desertification.</li> </ul>
<b>International Day of the African Child</b>	16 June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Organise movies that tell stories about African children.</li> <li>● Organise art exhibitions.</li> <li>● Organise story-telling and debating events or competitions.</li> </ul>
<b>Arbour Week</b>	1-7 September	Start an "Each Learner Plants a Tree Campaign." This could involve the school planting a number of trees, or encouraging every learner to plant at least one tree at home with their family.
<b>Global Handwashing Day</b>	15 October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Mobilise learners to wash their hands using soap.</li> <li>● Create posters that would promote handwashing at their school.</li> </ul>
<b>World Aids Day</b>	1 December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Invite NGO/local health professionals to advise learners and to provide promotional materials such as posters.</li> <li>● Encourage learners to write postcards bearing AIDS messages.</li> </ul>
<b>International Human Rights Day</b>	10 December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Show videos of historical tragedies such as the massacre of Herero and Nama people between 1904 and 1908, and videos of the liberation war.</li> <li>● Show videos about child rights, child soldiers and slavery.</li> <li>● Organise story-telling sessions.</li> </ul>



Explain that the Edu Circle can be attached to the LRC. This could be **formal**, with the Edu Circle set up as a sub-committee of the LRC. This would mean that members of the LRC would have membership of the Edu Circle, in addition to the elected members. Or it could be **informal**, with the Edu Circle separate from the LRC but the two bodies meeting regularly to help each other solve the challenges they face. Tell the Edu Circle and LRC members that *“You and your school’s management should decide what works for you.”*





# Setting up your school's Edu Circle

The facilitator should put up **SLIDE 10** and take the learners through the process. This requires a lot of explanation and clarity, and the facilitator must take time to respond to all queries.

## SLIDE 10

### STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS FOR ESTABLISHING AN EDU CIRCLE



## STEP 1. Briefing the stakeholders

The **regional office and school managers** must brief all stakeholders about the programme before setting it up, to get the support of all members of the school community, who need to understand what it is for. It is important that this briefing focuses on the central purpose of Edu Circles – ***giving a voice to learners*** – and emphasises that there are different approaches that the school’s Edu Circle can implement. There is a need to explore any existing structures that might be doing some of the work planned for Edu Circles. If structures such as the LRC are already doing some of the things that the Edu Circle will be doing, then you must decide how the two will work together, or split tasks between them to avoid confusion. Stakeholders can and should shape the way that an Edu Circle is established in the school.

## STEP 2. Developing and adopting an ‘Edu Circle Charter’

Each school should consider having an Edu Circle Charter which sets out the process for establishing an Edu Circle. In developing your Charter, you will be assisted by the Edu Circle trainer. The contents of the Charter should be democratic, from the beginning to the end. The Charter should be supported by posters and leaflets, and any other materials that the school might want to develop and use. You can be quite flexible in what you decide is in your school’s Edu Circle Charter.

The only things that cannot be changed are the following:

- Members of the Edu Circle must be elected and not selected.
- No teacher or non-learner has a vote in determining who will be in the Edu Circle.
- When any learner leaves the Edu Circle, his/her place must be filled by a learner from the same grade and of the same sex as quickly as possible.
- The Edu Circle must meet at least twice every month.
- The Edu Circle must focus on challenges (classroom and other) facing learners in their schooling.

**The Charter should explain the structure and election of Edu Circles.** (The Edu Circle Mentor should clarify the nomination and election procedure before the Charter-drafting process starts.)

- **Structure of an Edu Circle**

In secondary schools, an Edu Circle ideally has 8 members, with each of the 4 grades (Grades 8-11) represented by two learners – a boy and a girl. However, with the new curriculum, junior secondary schools (Grades 8 and 9) and senior secondary schools (Grades 10 and 11) will have to configure the Edu Circle so that it makes sense in the context of the size of the school. This could mean having 4 members (2 boys, 2 girls) of the Edu Circle per grade, which makes an Edu Circle of 8 members. Primary schools could consider having two learners (a boy and a girl) from each grade from Grades 4 to 7, which makes an Edu Circle of 8 members. Combined schools could go for different options. They could have two Edu Circles, one for the primary grades (4-7) and one for the secondary grades (8-10), or just one Edu Circle for the whole school from Grades 4 to 10.

- **Eligibility for membership of an Edu Circle**

Whatever the type of school, all learners in Grades 4 to 12, including the LRC members, should be eligible for election to the Edu Circle. The members of the outgoing Edu Circle should also be eligible, and should participate in the election in the same way as the rest of the candidates do. Although normally the term of office should be limited to two terms, to allow other learners a

chance, if the learners insist on re-electing the same person for multiple years, and that person is performing, we would advise the school authorities to not interfere. The core principle is one of learners making their own choice – a bottom-up approach.

- **Term of office of Edu Circle members**

Members should be elected every year, at the start of the school year.

## STEP 3. Election procedure

### Nominating and volunteering

Your school must determine the number of nominees per classroom or grade, with due consideration of the total number of classes and number of learners per class. For example, in larger classes learners may nominate up to 8 candidates (4 boys, 4 girls) per classroom. Nominees may accept or decline the nomination. For smaller classes there may be fewer nominees. In the event that all nominees decline, at least 4 interested learners may be invited to volunteer by a show of hands. Then the grade chooses between these volunteers. If this doesn't work, the school may consider other forms of democratic process which suit their context. The one golden rule is that the *members of the Edu Circle must NOT be selected by teachers or the principal.*

### Voting

#### Round 1: Voting for candidates (per class)

Learners will vote for 2 members (1 boy, 1 girl) per class. The Edu Circle Mentor should quickly and transparently count the votes and announce the results. The top male and female candidates automatically qualify for grade-level candidature. This voting process involves candidates from different classes of the same grade. Your school may opt for another logistical approach that is convenient and fits your context. For example, the school could conduct one election involving all classes of the same grade at the same time.

#### Round 2: Voting for grade representatives (in the Edu Circle)

- All representatives of classes will convene to elect the two grade representatives. The successful candidates will discuss among themselves and propose two representatives (boy and girl) to represent the grade in the Edu Circle.
- In the event that there is only one classroom per grade, no Round 2 voting may be conducted. The two successful candidates in Round 1 automatically become members of the Edu Circle.

### Election of chairperson and deputy

The Mentor should help the learners who have been elected to the Edu Circle to convene a meeting immediately. In this meeting the members should elect the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson. They could nominate at least 4 members to contest for these positions. *Your school may consider a different number of nominees.* Secret voting will then commence. The nominees for the two positions should be eligible to vote. The candidates who obtain the highest and second-highest numbers of votes become the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson respectively. The LRC members elected to the Edu Circle are also eligible to vote, but *LRC members cannot occupy either of these two positions.*

## Introduction of the Edu Circle to stakeholders

The newly elected Edu Circle will be introduced to your school community by the school management. Schools should consider various ways of exposing this new structure within the school, including at assemblies and through newsletters and other communication channels within the school. This should be done in a way that clearly shows that the school management will be supporting the Edu Circle, which will help to strengthen the newly formed Circle.

## Replacing members of the Edu Circle

In the event that a member resigns from the Edu Circle or leaves the school, or is justly considered no longer able to hold office due to illness and/or other causes, a bi-election should be held. The school may determine in its Edu Circle Charter a process and procedure for filling vacancies. However, you should make sure that you replace like with like. For example, if the Grade 5 girl leaves the school, then her replacement must be a democratically elected Grade 5 girl (not a boy or a learner from another grade).

At the end of the school year, all members of the Edu Circle must be re-elected. The Mentor has to organise new elections early in the new year to replace the outgoing members.





# Identifying an Edu Circle Teacher-Mentor in your school

**T**he facilitator should explain how best to select a Mentor for the Edu Circle. This person will be a teacher in the school.

## Explanation

Explain that Edu Circles have the right to choose their own Mentor. You **MUST** clarify the main things that the Mentor will do, to ensure that the members are better informed before they choose the teacher. You should get the members to understand that the teacher they choose is under no obligation to agree to being selected. In the event the teacher suggested by learners is not available for the task, management would have to take a lead.

Ideally, the school's management team should ask teachers to volunteer for the role. That is, they should not be forced to 'volunteer'. They should be truly interested and committed. One requirement for being an Edu Circle Mentor is that the teacher should demonstrate a commitment to the learner voice and learner roles in the school. While not necessary, it is often better to consider younger teachers with whom you can more easily communicate and relate.

The proposed term of the Mentor is a maximum of two years or when the Mentor leaves the school, if that is after less than two years, after which the process should be re-done.

The criteria for the Mentor could include:

- patience;
- respect for children's views; and
- passion for learner agency.



**NB:** The proposed criteria are only a guide. They should be explained, negotiated and accepted by the Edu Circle so that the preferred Mentor is chosen. At this stage, the facilitator is dealing with a new Edu Circle, so it is important to clarify how it was established by the school and its stakeholders. It is important to note that before the Edu Circle was established, the LRC or Head Boy, Head Girl and prefects were the only legitimate entities that could act on behalf of learners, and as such, were the point of contact on matters requiring the direct involvement of learners. Once an Edu Circle is established, the Edu Circle takes the place of the LRC, Head Boy and Head Girl in all activities relating to the Edu Circle, including the appointment of the Mentor.



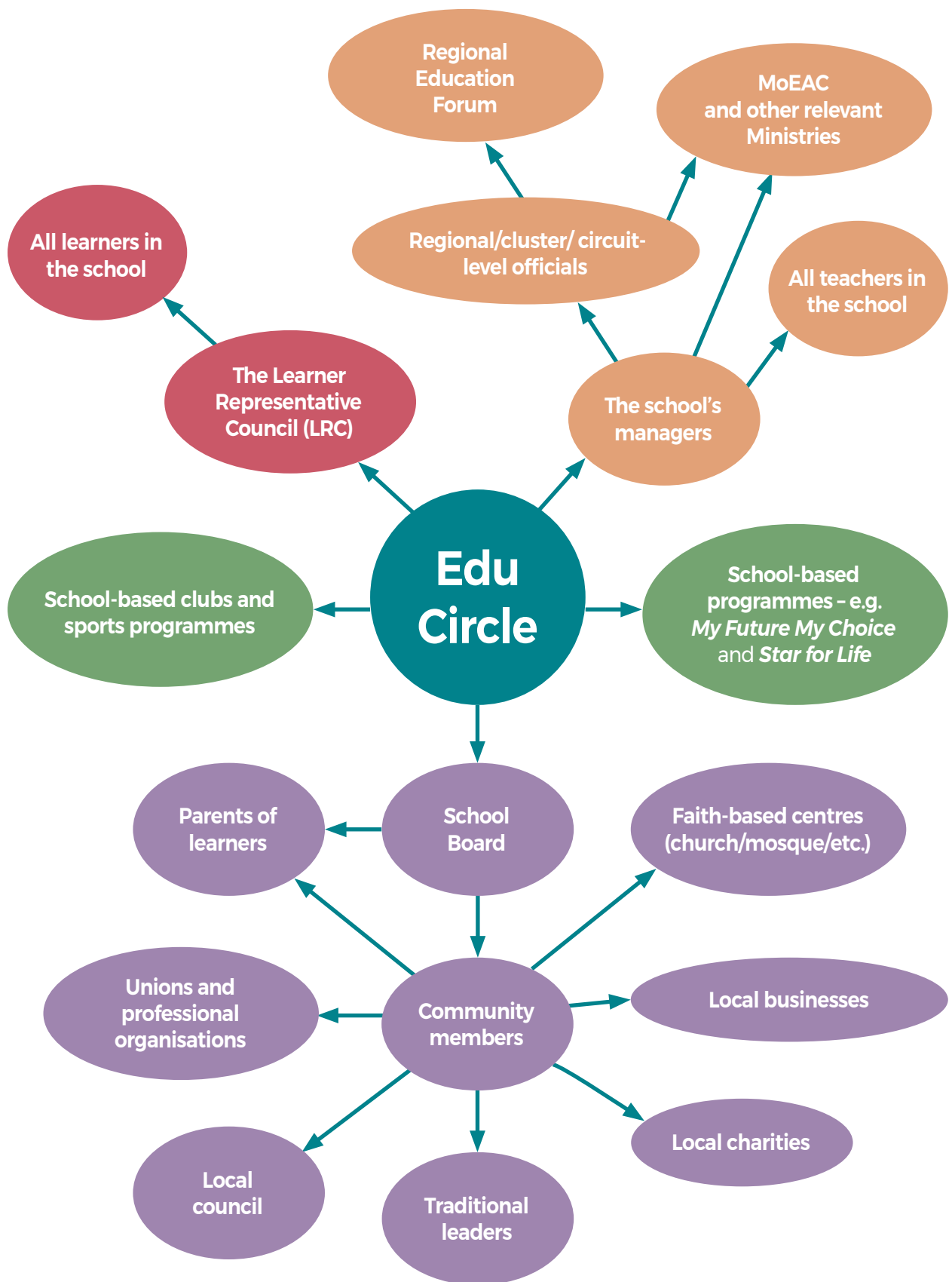
# Conducting a stakeholder analysis: Who are the Edu Circle stakeholders in the school?

Once established, the Edu Circle needs to find out who it can partner with and who will help it. This 'stakeholder analysis' will help the members of the Edu Circle to map out and understand which community members can help and are interested in the school and in what the Edu Circle is doing. There are different ways to conduct this analysis. One way is to make a **mind map**, and another is to use a table. For the mind map, the Edu Circle members should place the Edu Circle in the centre and then draw lines outwards to the other stakeholders. The result might look something like the example on the right.





# Edu Circle Stakeholder Mind Map



## Edu Circle Stakeholder Table

The facilitator may choose to use a table, instead of or in addition to the mind map, to help the Edu Circle members to understand who their stakeholders are. You should put up a flip chart or a slide with a table (see the sample below), and explain to the learners how to use it as a guide or template for categorising people or partners with whom they could work. You should emphasise that this is a practice exercise, and that individual schools may have different stakeholders (in case the training involves Edu Circles from different schools). You will need to use the sample table below to do the Witsand School Case Study exercise that follows.

CATEGORIES AND LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS	GOVERNMENT	SCHOOL	COMMUNITY	PROGRAMMES
	Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture	School Board	Local Businesses	<i>Star for Life</i> <i>My Future My Choice</i> etc.
	Regional Officials	LRC	Local Charities	
	Cluster-level	School Manager	Local church/mosque	Sports
	Regional Education Forum	Teachers	Local Council	Clubs
	Other Ministries	Clubs	Traditional Leaders	
Unions				
Professional Associations				
Parents				
		Youth organisations		

## EXERCISE: Stakeholder analysis

Carefully read the case study of the **Witsand Combined School** in the following box. The facilitator must read and explain the contents of the case study for ease of learner understanding. For this exercise, the facilitator should choose to use either the mind map or the table, rather than both. In doing the exercise, the learners can use the sample mind map or table provided above for ideas.

### CASE STUDY: WITSAND COMBINED SCHOOL

Witsand Combined School is situated in a rural area. Most learners come from subsistence farming and fishing communities. The school has boarding facilities, but many learners struggle to afford them and the basics they need for learning, such as books and pens. As a result, some learners live in the local community in rented rooms, with no parental guidance.

The school performs reasonably well in exams, but individual learners struggle. Alcohol and drug use has been increasing, and each year over 30 children drop out of the school for various reasons. The school also has a high level of pregnancy among learners.

The local community is proud of the school, but does not engage with the school much, and so the school gets little benefit from the community. The School Board struggles to get a quorum for its meetings. This means that fewer than half of the members come to meetings, and so the meetings cannot go ahead.

The school's principal is well-liked and respected by the learners and teachers, because she is hard-working and dedicated to improving the school. She has agreed that the school should set up an Edu Circle with two members from each grade from Grades 4 to 10.

A new teacher of English has been appointed, and she has volunteered to be the Mentor for the Edu Circle. The teachers were pleased that she volunteered, as she is young, hard-working, already popular with learners and teachers, and well known for using social media effectively.

## Using the Stakeholder Mind Map

Get the learners to develop a stakeholder mind map for Witsand Combined School. Have them divide into groups, and give each group a large sheet of paper and a pen/marker. The groups should write "Edu Circle" in the centre of the paper, and then draw lines out to the stakeholders at Witsand.

You should lead this exercise to ensure that the learners understand what they are meant to do. It should take the groups about 15 minutes to complete their maps. Then have each group present its map. The first group should present its whole map, and the others should present only elements not covered in the first group's map.

## Using the Stakeholder Table

On a flip chart or slide, put up a table with lead examples of Edu Circle stakeholders, such as those in the sample table on the previous page. Have the learners divide into groups, and give each group a sheet of paper (large or small) and a pen/marker. Ask the groups to make their own tables listing the key Witsand stakeholders per category in the table. You should lead this exercise to ensure that the learners understand what they are meant to do. It should take the groups about 15 minutes to complete their tables. Then have each group present its table. The first group should present its whole table, and the others should present only elements not covered by the first group.

To conclude the Witsand exercise, tell the learners that they will be expected to do the same exercise – i.e. *"conduct a stakeholder analysis"* – in their school, based on the reality of their school and community.

## The local community - a crucial stakeholder

After the stakeholder analysis exercise, run through the two diagrams on the next page, impressing on the learners how important it is for the Edu Circle to engage with the local community. Draw their attention to the sections of their "Learner Kit" covering meeting agendas and recording processes. You might need to explain what a quorate/quorum is. This is where committees require a certain number of office holders to come to the meeting or the meeting cannot be held. Normally it is 50%, which is what it should be for the Edu Circle. This means that if under half of the members come to a meeting, the meeting cannot take place. You should also make sure that the boys do not assume that the girls will be the scribes and recorders in meetings. These tasks should be shared.

## Ways to engage with Edu Circle stakeholders

### Learners

All learners in the school have the right to approach members of the Edu Circle to help resolve issues which are stopping them studying properly. This could be for many reasons, such as lack of textbooks, being the victim of bullying, a particular teacher appears to be victimising certain learners, or some problem outside the school, such as noise from the shebeen or drug pushers at the school gates.

### LRC Members

In secondary schools, the Edu Circle needs to define its role in relation to the LRC, so that they support each other and don't duplicate activities or fight! The Edu Circle could even become a sub-committee of the LRC to reduce conflict or overlap.

### School Management

The principal and other school managers should create space for the Edu Circle to be elected freely and operate freely. They can advise it and ask for support, but they cannot try to control its work.

### Teachers

All teachers have the right to know about the school Edu Circle, and all should know which learners were elected to the Edu Circle. Teachers DO NOT have the right to control or influence the elections for the Edu Circle. Once elected, the teachers can approach the Edu Circle with concerns about the barriers they face in their teaching and barriers that their learners face. The Edu Circle should try to solve these problems with the school authorities.

### School Board

The members should be made aware of the Edu Circle, the responsibilities it has and how they can help it. They should be ready to assist the Edu Circle to solve problems it has identified, when an Edu Circle member or school management ask them to help. The Edu Circle should meet with the learner representatives on the School Board (in secondary schools), and make use of this representative to take issues to the Board.

### Community Members

The community in which the school is situated should be aware of the Edu Circle and its responsibilities. This should include the parents of the learners as well as local business. Community members should be ready to assist the Edu Circle to solve problems it has identified, when an Edu Circle member asks them to help. School management should introduce Edu Circles to the community members through parent meetings and school events.

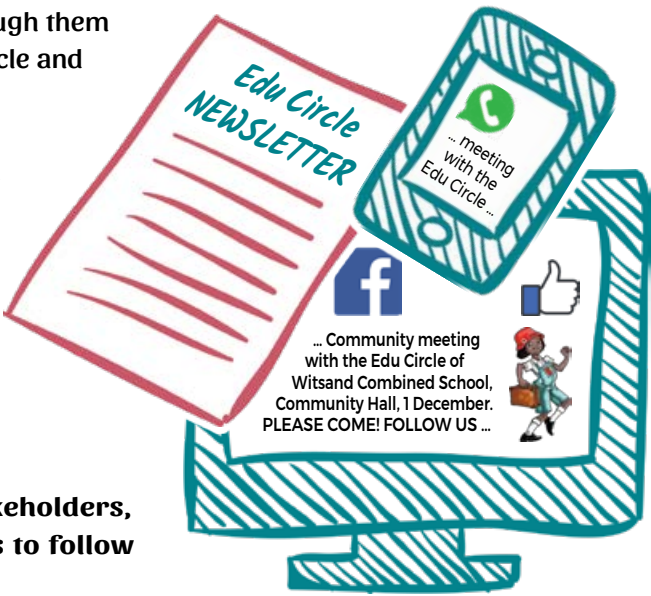
All of the stakeholders in this “Ways to engage” infographic must be informed about the Edu Circle and what their responsibilities are as stakeholders. This can be done by any of the following means:

1. Holding a meeting with the parents and the community members, in which members of the Edu Circle can be introduced. This is often best done as part of a bigger meeting between the school and the parents and community members. In this meeting, the parents and community members must also be informed about the rights and responsibilities of the Edu Circle.
2. A newsletter informing the parents, and through them other community members, about the Edu Circle and what it is designed to do.
3. A WhatsApp or similar social media platform group.



## Consulting Edu Circle stakeholders

When consulting stakeholders, your Edu Circle needs to follow these steps:



## Role-playing community meetings

Explain to the learners that a role play is an act in which the players pretend to be other people – in this case members of the community and members of the Edu Circle. In this role play, the players will be in a meeting, conversing as would the people they are pretending to be. This is called being ‘in character’.

Learners are likely to find it difficult to approach community members. One way to help them prepare for this task is a role play, which enables them to practise what they would say. This is easily done.

Ask the group to choose two learners to be members of the community. (These two can choose who they want to be – e.g. a shopkeeper, religious leader, nurse or doctor, member of the local council, or the local headman and an adviser). Another two learners will be the members of the Edu Circle who are meeting with the community members.

The meeting will take the form of an interview, with the Edu Circle members asking the community members questions about how they can assist the Edu Circle.

Both pairs of players (community members and Edu Circle members) have 3 minutes to plan their approach to the meeting.

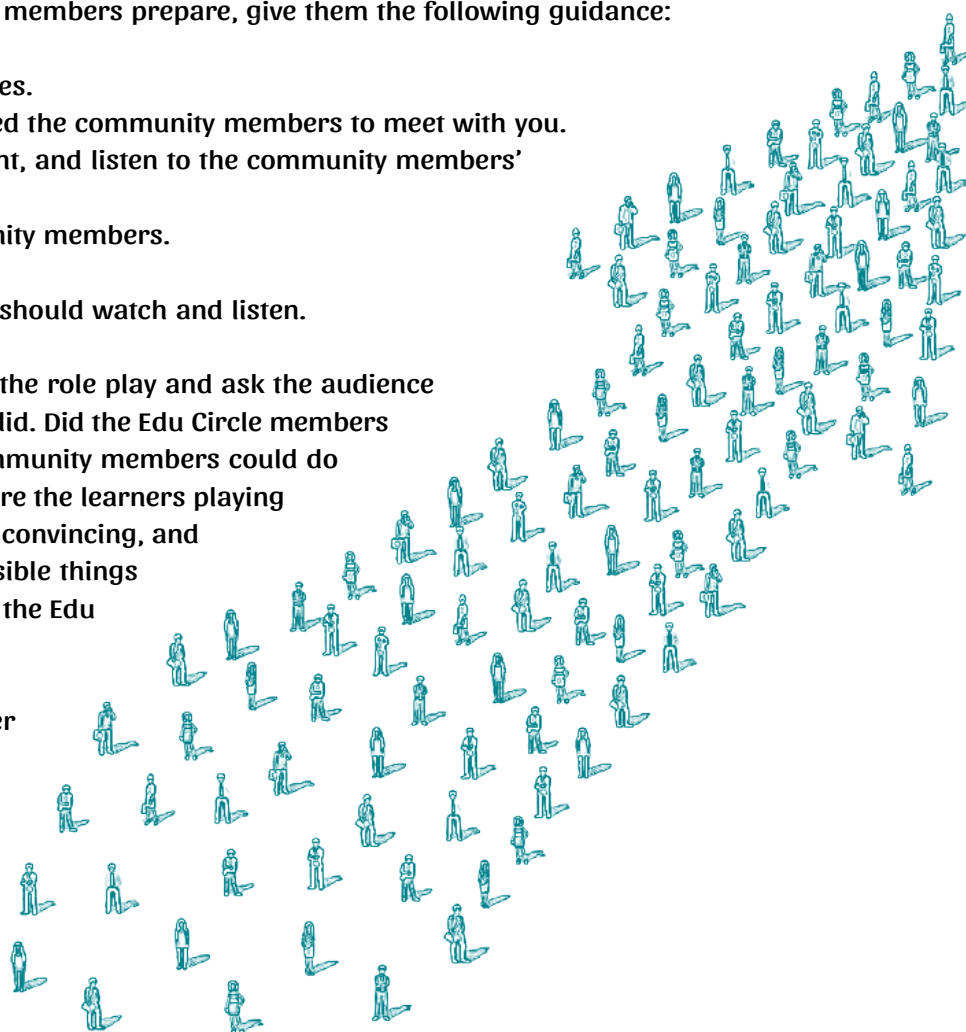
To help the Edu Circle members prepare, give them the following guidance:

- Introduce yourselves.
- State why you asked the community members to meet with you.
- State what you want, and listen to the community members’ responses.
- Thank the community members.

The rest of the group should watch and listen.

After 5 minutes, stop the role play and ask the audience how the role players did. Did the Edu Circle members find out what the community members could do for the Edu Circle? Were the learners playing community members convincing, and did they propose sensible things that they could do for the Edu Circle?

If you have time, other learners can play the Edu Circle members and others the community members.





# What does your Edu Circle want to do?

The Edu Circle is meant to assist learners to solve the problems and challenges that prevent them from gaining the full benefits of schooling, and prevent them from learning. It is also meant to undertake a number of activities that improve the school experience for the learners in that school. Therefore, the Edu Circle members have to work out what activities they can undertake. This is called a 'needs analysis'. The members must have ways to collect information and ideas as well as to analyse those ideas, to ensure that they identify the challenges to learning and also find solutions to those challenges. This needs analysis can be done through a single process of identifying and analysing, or by separating the identification and analysis into two activities. Here are ideas:



## SUGGESTION BOX

Place a box where it is accessible to all learners. Make sure its top is closed, with just enough space for the learners to put pieces of paper into it, but too small to pull the papers out, so that the suggestions put into the box cannot be removed, except by the Edu Circle members. The learners should be told about the box at assembly, and should be encouraged to post suggestions of things that they want the Edu Circle to assist with. Learners should be told that when they ask the Edu Circle to do something, they must explain how this problem is stopping them working properly. It is a good idea to provide an example when presenting this. You could say, "One problem could be lack of a maths teacher for Grade 8s, the effect of which is that Grade 8s will fall behind in their maths," or "bullying of younger learners by older learners leads to the younger learners being afraid to come to school and being unable to concentrate in school."



## BRAINSTORM

The Edu Circle (and if possible the LRC) should meet, and list on paper all the challenges that they know learners face in attending and doing well at the school. Once all the challenges have been listed, their impacts should be written alongside them. It is best to do this as a diagram on flip-chart paper, if possible. Give everyone in the Edu Circle (and LRC) a chance to have their ideas heard. Note all the ideas, discuss each one, and then note down the ones you agree are the challenges that learners in your school experience.

## EXERCISE: Mapping Challenges

Tell the learners to use the case study of Witsand Combined School to develop a needs assessment for the school using a BRAINSTORMING exercise. This should be done on flip-chart paper. Then each group should put the challenges they have identified on a copy of “**Mapping Challenges – Form 1**” (see below). The groups should list as many challenges as they can find, and then fill in the second, third and fourth columns for just the first challenge they have identified.

When they have filled in Form 1 for Witsand School, each group should choose two of the challenges they want to prioritise, and then fill in “**Mapping Challenges – Form 2**” for those priorities. In this template they should fill in just the first, second and last columns for the two challenges.

Then link this exercise to what the Edu Circle members must do back in their own school.

Stress that in its first meeting, each Edu Circle should identify and list all forms of challenges facing learners within their schools, and the role played by different stakeholders. This should enable each school to develop a suitable Edu Circle programme and approach. The school may use a different approach to mapping the challenges, or may use this template with changed headings. The learners should add as many challenges as necessary. After identifying all challenges, they should pick two or three priorities to focus on during their year, so that the impact of the Edu Circle is not diluted by too many focuses. These priorities can be selected based on the resources available and the skills of the Edu Circle learners.

For this exercise, have the learners divide into groups. The challenge facing them is that their school has children who come from poor backgrounds and have no winter clothes. The groups have to fill in **Mapping Challenges Forms 1 and 2**. Give each group copies of the forms with nothing filled in except the headings. They should produce something like the following:

### Mapping Challenges - Form 1

Challenge	How does it affect learners?	What can be done to solve the problem?	What is the role of the Edu Circle?	What is the way forward?
<b>Lack of winter clothes</b>	Learners arrive late at school, don't concentrate, and are often sick with flu and absent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask for donations.</li> <li>Contribute clothes.</li> <li>Change school lesson times so that lessons start later when the air is warmer.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify potential contributors.</li> <li>Talk to school authorities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write letters to local business and leadership authorities asking for donations.</li> <li>Organise fund-raising events.</li> </ul>

### Mapping Challenges - Form 2

Challenge	Actions required to solve problem	Responsible member of Edu Circle	Date for completion of action	Resources required	Stakeholders who can assist
<b>Lack of winter clothes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write letters for donations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deputy Chairperson</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15 June</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transportation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local shops</li> <li>Local NGOs</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organise a charity event.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Member (volunteer)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>30 June</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Venue</li> <li>ICT platforms</li> <li>etc.</li> </ul>	School authorities and LRC



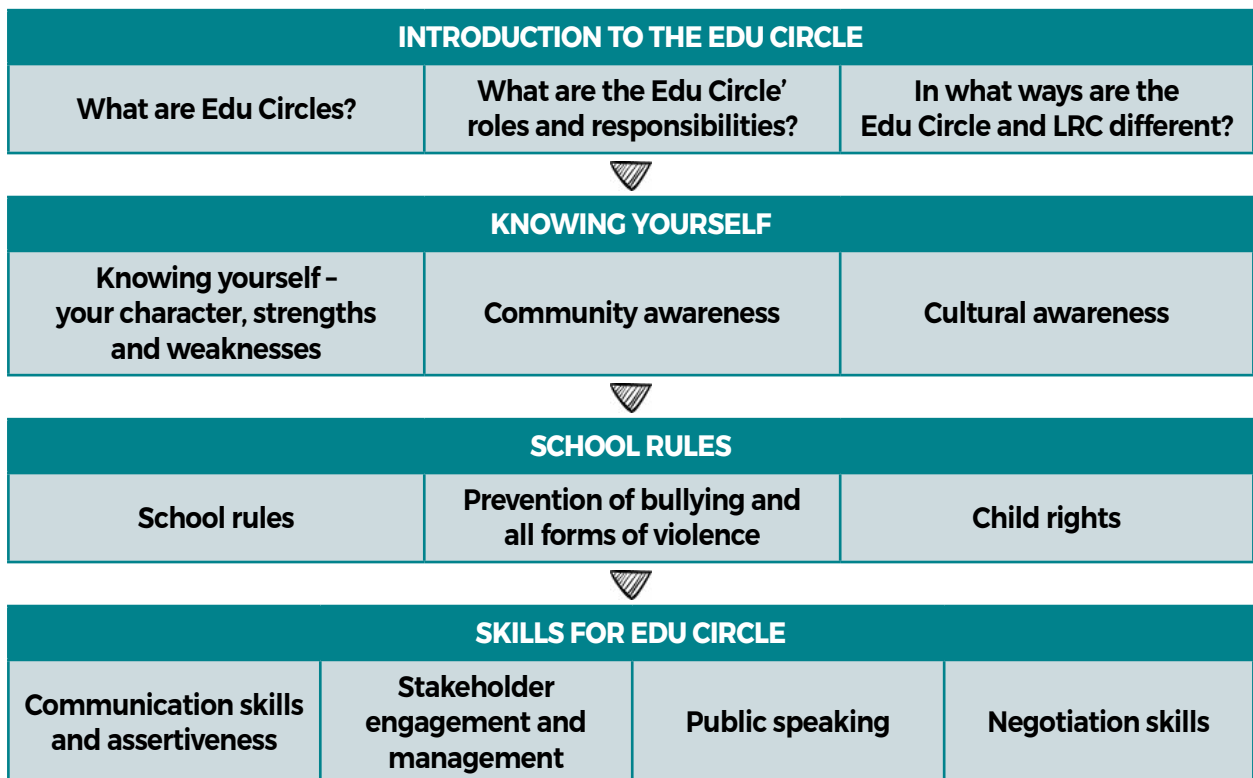


# Training of Edu Circle members

The facilitator must explain the **bottom-up approach** for the implementation of Edu Circles. This means that the training of each Edu Circle should focus on specific issues that characterise the particular school and community. The facilitator and Edu Circle Mentor must work with each Edu Circle and stakeholders to understand the specific context, culture and tradition of the school, the local community and the stakeholders of the Edu Circle. In other words, the training offered to Edu Circle members must be informed by their specific needs and challenges. This is what we mean by a 'bottom-up approach'. However, as made clear in all four parts of the "Edu Circles Kit", there are generic topics that must be covered in all training sessions for the Edu Circle members.

As facilitator, you need to be innovative, including limiting the paperwork and presentations. You need to make the training as practical and as exciting as possible. Visual and graphic materials are always stimulating and exciting. All Edu Circle members being trained should understand what the facilitator is trying to achieve when training the members of the Edu Circle.

## Elements required in training programmes for Edu Circle members



With the members of the Edu Circle, run through the generic elements on the preceding chart. These are the things that all Edu Circle members should be trained on. We now take two of these and show how you could train on them.

## EXERCISE: Know Yourself

For this exercise, the facilitator should do the following:

1. Distribute a copy of the table on knowing yourself (below) to each Edu Circle member.
2. Explain to the members that the exercise is meant to help them to profile their personalities and to promote their awareness about themselves, their community and their culture.
3. Explain that each learner must individually indicate what action/behaviour/practice they like or dislike by ticking the relevant box, and point out that they cannot tick both “LIKE” and “DISLIKE” in the same row.
4. Explain that they can leave a box blank if they neither “LIKE” nor “DISLIKE” something, or do not consider something to be either a “STRENGTH” or a ‘WEAKNESS’, but that they should fill in as many as they can.
5. Remind the learners to add items to the table if they wish to, but all new items should be related to the ‘personality test’ idea of this exercise.
6. Tell the learners that they have 5 minutes to tick all the boxes.
7. When they are finished, divide the groups into pairs for the partners to compare their answers, and tell the pairs that they have 5 minutes to compare and discuss their answers.
8. Ask two volunteers (boy and girl) to read out their own and their partner’s ‘likes’ and ‘dislikes’. This should not take more than 5 minutes, but you can determine the time based on what you deem reasonable.
9. Explain that knowing yourself and your Edu Circle friends is important for building an Edu Circle team and determining who has what strength.

	ACTION / BEHAVIOUR / PRACTICE	LIKE / STRENGTH	DISLIKE / WEAKNESS
SELF-AWARENESS	Coming to school every day		
	Arriving at school on time		
	Doing all my homework		
	Meeting new people		
	Listening to other people		
	Helping other people		
	Telling people stories		
	Helping people who are sick		
	Sharing my food with other learners		
	Being with my family		
Eating in class			
COMMUNITY AWARENESS	The community is kept clean		
	Parents help to clean the school		
	People going to church/mosque		
	Teenagers are allowed in shebeens		
	Children do chores at home after school		
	Parents help their children do their homework		
CULTURAL AWARENESS	Girls clean and wash dishes at home		
	Boys look after cattle and goats		
	Parents give more money to girls		
	Parents give more money to boys		
	Pregnant girls are allowed to go to school		

## EXERCISE: School Rules

For this exercise, the facilitator should do the following:

1. Arrange the learners in small groups of 5, or fewer or more, depending on the size of the full group being trained.
2. Distribute copies of the table on school rules (below).
3. Explain that this exercise is meant to help Edu Circle members to understand the importance of school rules and what they can do to promote their rights and a child-friendly learning environment.
4. Each group must tick either "AGREE" or "DISAGREE", and where possible, elaborate under "WHY?".
5. Tell the learners that this is an example which doesn't necessarily say exactly what their school rules are.
6. Tell them that they will have approximately 10 minutes to complete this exercise.
7. After the allocated time, invite two volunteers (boy and girl) to report on the work of their respective groups. Not all groups should report.
8. When the two learners have finished reporting, ask the plenary to say what rules the two groups have in common. (Answer: They allow people to get along with each other and not irritate each other, and they often protect the weak.)
9. To conclude the exercise, you could point out that rules are normally put in place when you have a lot of people working together in a limited space.

SCHOOL RULES	AGREE	DISAGREE	WHY?
Homework must be done every day when set.			
Girls are allowed to wear make-up.			
All children must wear the school uniform.			
Learners can drink and eat in the classroom.			
Learners must not destroy school property.			
Learners must be on time for classes and school activities.			
Learners can use their cellphones in class.			
Learners must not disrespect any person at school.			
Teachers and learners can smoke in school.			
Older children can take food from young ones.			
Teachers can beat children who don't do their homework.			

The facilitator should use this exercise to explain that each Edu Circle will do some things which are generic (meaning things that all Edu Circles are doing) and some which are specific to that school.

Now that you have looked at the generic training that all schools are required to provide for their Edu Circle members, we move on to looking at how you make sure that each school's Edu Circle responds to the particular needs of its school and community.

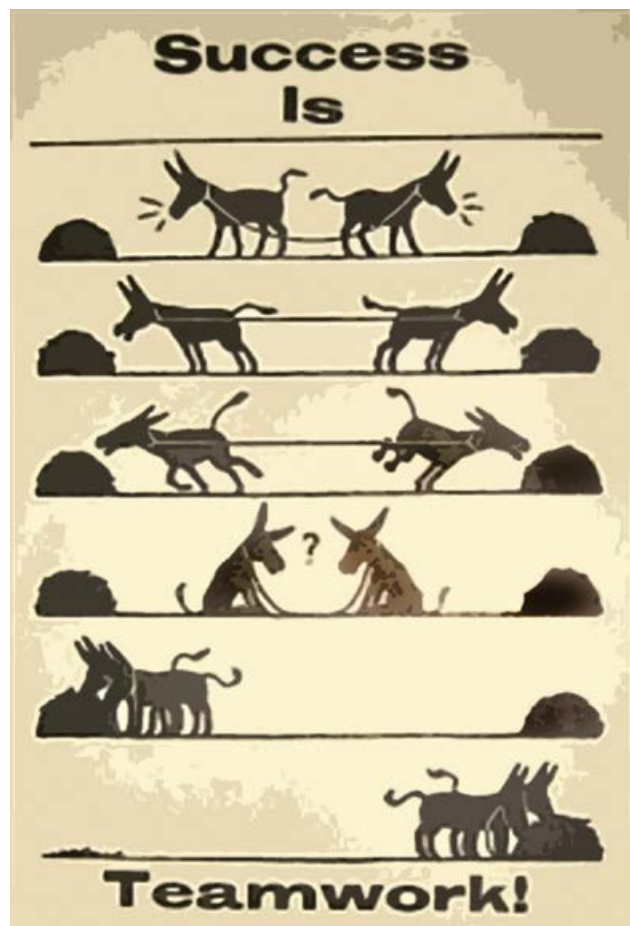
## How to fit the training to a particular school

The Edu Circle training should be preceded by the needs analysis covered under **Section 6** headed “**What Does your Edu Circle want to do?**” If, for instance, a school community has a particular challenge with drugs, this is likely to become the main priority of the Edu Circle in that school, while other schools might prioritise issues such as anti-bullying or the need for a library as a centre for learner study. The needs analysis enables Edu Circle trainers to customise their training approach and to tailor-make the content to fit a particular school and its Edu Circle. The Edu Circle Mentor, supported by the training provider, will oversee and be involved in the training-customisation process.

Where possible and costs allow, all training should be done at each school. However, where schools are small, it will be necessary to centralise the training. When training Edu Circle members, it is important to make the sessions short and focused. Use many energisers, such as the following two examples, and lead the learners through linked guided questions.

### ENERGISER EXAMPLE 1

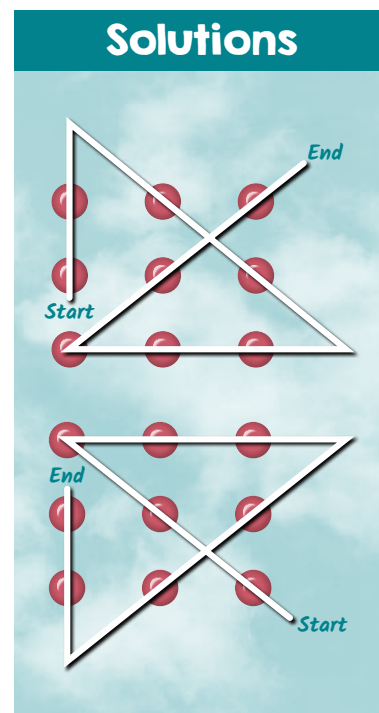
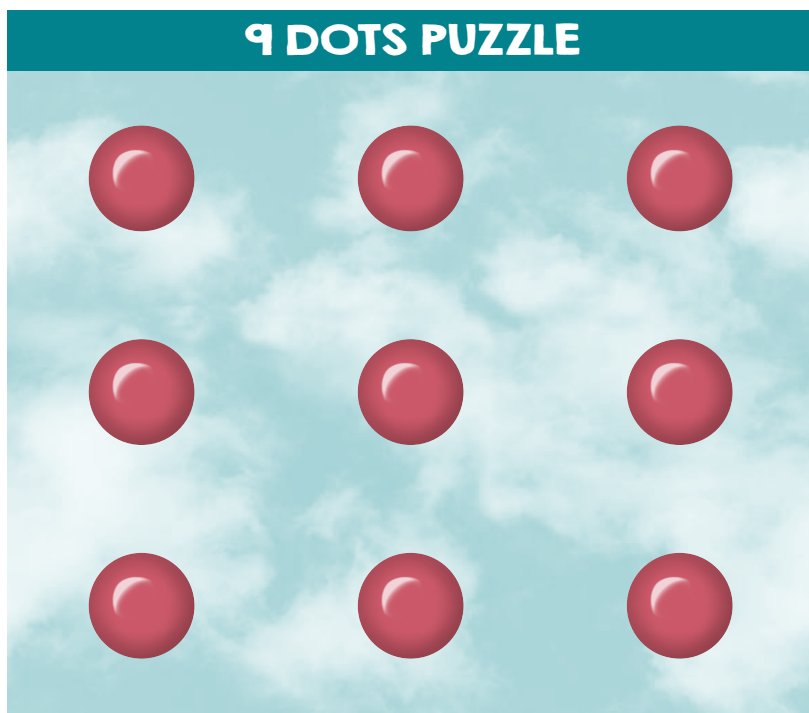
For this energiser, pre-prepare copies or a slide of the picture on the right. Arrange the trainees in groups of 5 (or fewer or more per group, depending on the total number of learners present). Ask the groups to discuss what they see in the picture. Then, each group should describe one real-life experience or scenario related to this picture. This could be a situation where people did different things to solve a common problem without success, or where people worked as a team to achieve a common goal. This exercise should not take more than 5 minutes.



### ENERGISER EXAMPLE 2

For this exercise, each learner should have a sheet of paper, a pencil and an eraser. Draw or project the “**9 Dots Puzzle**” (top of next page), and then explain the exercise: “*There are 9 dots arranged in 3 rows, and the challenge is to draw 4 straight lines through the middle of all 9 dots without lifting the pencil off the paper.*” If you like, you can give them a hint by adding that “*There are different ways to do this, starting in different places.*” This exercise is ideal for group members to do individually and then to compare drawings.

**Solution:** After 5 minutes, draw at least one of the solutions on the flip chart, or on a transparency for projecting, and give the learners some time to compare their drawings with the solution(s). Then explain that the purpose of this exercise was to get the Edu Circle members to ‘think out of the box’. Conclude the exercise by pointing out that, *to solve this puzzle, the pencil had to go outside the box of dots!*



More energisers can be found online – see, for example, [https://www.excellerate.co.nz/blog/free\\_energisers\\_and\\_group\\_games.html](https://www.excellerate.co.nz/blog/free_energisers_and_group_games.html) and [http://www.zakelijk.net/media/Extra\\_trainersmateriaal/Ice.pdf](http://www.zakelijk.net/media/Extra_trainersmateriaal/Ice.pdf). Make the training sessions as enjoyable as possible. The atmosphere should be relaxed, and the learners should feel free to ask questions and present ideas. End each session with a discussion in which you create space for the learners to ask questions and make comments. The aim in training the learners is to empower them to take action over challenges, and to take on agency, which means building their confidence. The rest of the school community, particularly the school’s management and teachers, must understand the implications of this training. The Edu Circles will not be effective under intimidating circumstances. This is why teachers have to be involved in the training of Edu Circle stakeholders, or similar training – so that they know what to expect.

When training an Edu Circle, the facilitator should check that all trainees understand everything taught to them. Rather than asking, “Do you understand?”, throw questions at the group throughout the session, and also ask specific learners to answer a question, particularly learners who you think may not be fully concentrating. Such questions could include the following:

- *How many learners represent each grade/class in the Edu Circle?*
- *Can the Edu Circle be a sub-committee of the LRC?*
- *What is the title given to the teacher who assists the Edu Circle?*
- *How often should the Edu Circle meet?*
- *What is the main purpose of the Edu Circle?*
- *How are the members of the Edu Circle chosen?*

When an answer is wrong, ask another learner the same question, until the correct answer is given. Do not demotivate learners by telling them they are wrong or shouting at them. It is better to allow them to correct each other. Once the correct answer has been given, move on to the next question.

The facilitator should also brief the learners on the basic tenets of **child online protection**, and give them the contact numbers of all child protection hotlines.



# Communication and interactive ICT platforms

The facilitator should point out that running your own school's Edu Circle without linking to other learners doing the same thing in other schools can be lonely. Communication is at the heart of everything we do, and this is true for you and your Edu Circle. Ask the following questions and get feedback from the plenary orally:

- *How can you communicate with members of Edu Circles in other schools?*
- *How can you ask the Regional Education Office for assistance if you need it?*
- *How can your Mentor get assistance with an Edu Circle challenge which she/he cannot solve?*

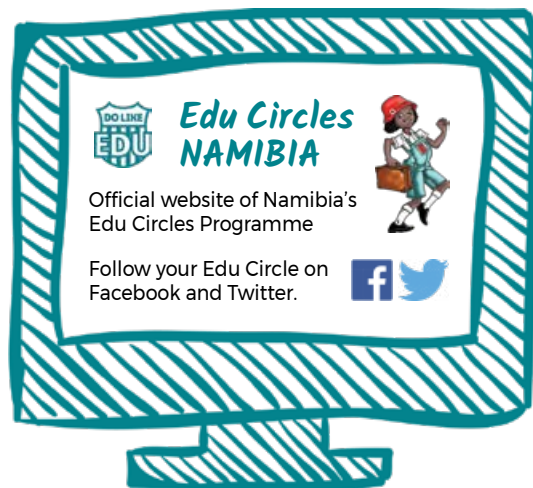
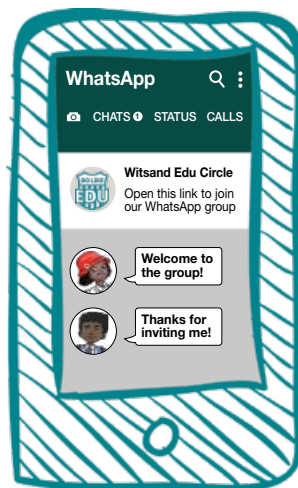
Then ask about what ICT or social network platforms the Edu Circles can use. Stress that they have many options – see the infographic on the next page. Edu Circles can use these platforms to share solutions to problems as well as experiences and ideas, and to build a network of activism across participating schools.

Should ICT resources be a challenge, work with your Mentor to find solutions that work for you and the school.

## Setting up a WhatsApp Group

You should demonstrate practically how to set up an Edu Circle WhatsApp Group. Each group in the venue MUST have at least a smart phone or any phone that has WhatsApp installed. You should provide minimum data bundles for each phone for the purpose of this exercise. (It is assumed that some learners will have a phone with WhatsApp installed, and you can rearrange groups to ensure that each group has a learner with such a phone). Ask each group to give you number of the phone they are using, so that you can set up a DEMO WhatsApp Group. Then explain how a WhatsApp Group works. (If you do not know how a WhatsApp Group works or how to set one up, find out from colleagues beforehand). Then invite members (using the phone numbers you've been given). Once the DEMO WhatsApp Group is in place, write a message about one of the challenges facing girls in the WhatsApp Group. For example, *"Many pregnant girls are no longer coming to school."* To get the discussion going, follow up with guiding questions. For example: *"Do pregnant girls come to school every day?"; "Does your school expel pregnant girls?"; "Do you want pregnant girls in your school?"; "How can we help pregnant girls stay in school?"* Facilitators must encourage the learners to actively participate in the WhatsApp Group activities. Also explain that this exercise is a DEMO, so there are no right or wrong answers, as long as they highlight the challenges and how these can be solved.

Finally, you should ask those learners who have phones to share their numbers for inclusion in the official Edu Circle WhatsApp Group to be set up.



### Newsletter

Does your school have a newsletter? If so, cover Edu Circle activities in the newsletter regularly. The newsletter should be circulated electronically to parents, community organisations, development partners and the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture (MoEAC). If your school doesn't have a newsletter, then why not set one up for the Edu Circle? It is sure to get other learners and your parents talking about what you are doing!

### Email

You should set up your own Edu Circle email address which can be used by your school's learners to express their concerns for the Edu Circle to consider and for you to spread your voice and reach your stakeholders.

### WhatsApp Group

If you have cellphones, you should set up a social network on whatever platform you like using most. A WhatsApp Group would work well. The WhatsApp Group could include Mentors in the region and the relevant regional MoEAC officials. The WhatsApp Group will facilitate communication between various Mentors and the regional officials. If you don't have access to cellphones, get your Mentor to link with other Edu Circles.

### Facebook and Twitter accounts

The Regional Edu Circle Coordinator can open and manage a Facebook account and Twitter account. Interested learners should be encouraged to participate in these networks.

### Website

The MoEAC might consider setting up an independent Edu Circle website, linked to relevant websites which can be accessed by all stakeholders, including learners. This can be linked to "Technology 4 Development" activities and the "Do Like Edu" online platform.



# Conclusion and way forward

**T**he facilitator should close the training session by getting everyone in the group to express their commitment to taking the Edu Circle process forward in their school.

Once you have this commitment from all participants, probe them as to how they will kick-start the process in their school. The main purpose of this exercise is to gauge the level of excitement and enthusiasm in the group – bearing in mind that the establishment of an Edu Circle is a collective effort involving *all* stakeholders, not only the Edu Circle members.

The final step in the training session is for the group to reach agreement on the time frame for kick-starting the process in their school. To help them figure this out, give them the guidance provided in the Facilitator Guide for Stakeholders (page ??).







# School Edu Circle Charter

Following is a **SAMPLE** Charter that Edu Circle stakeholders can use for drawing up their own Charter to suit the specific realities of their community.

## EDU CIRCLE CHARTER

**NAME OF SCHOOL:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NAME OF CIRCUIT:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NAME OF REGION:** \_\_\_\_\_

### INTRODUCTION

We have adopted this Charter as a guide for the establishment and operation of an Edu Circle in our school. More importantly, this Charter provides a step-by-step roadmap for the election of our Edu Circle members, and the principles underpinning the procedure and process that we have adopted. Stakeholders involved in the development and adoption of this Charter have demonstrated huge interest in, and commitment to, the welfare of our children. All agree that this Charter brings us together to work as a collective towards the realisation of our goals.

This Charter is neither a policy nor a law, but rather it is a framework, which owes its conception to programmes being implemented by government, namely the Social Accountability and School Governance (SASG) Programme and the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP). This Charter provides a framework which is intended to support not only the Edu Circle but also the existing systems and processes in our school.

This Charter is not cast in stone, and shall be reviewed by all stakeholders annually to ensure that it remains relevant to the contextual realities of our community. This document has been contextualised so that it is correct for our school.

## UNDERSTANDING OUR EDU CIRCLE

<p><b>An Edu Circle is ...</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a committee of learners which increases learner involvement in problem-solving, decision-making and, more broadly, in the school governance and leadership;</li> <li>• elected by the learners as a true representation of the learner body in the school.</li> </ul>
<p><b>The Edu Circle aims to ...</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide the learners with a platform for meaningful learner involvement in school decision-making processes; and</li> <li>• empower learner-driven school improvement programmes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>The Edu Circle's objectives are ...</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have empowered learners who are able to pro-actively improve their schools;</li> <li>• strengthen social bonds and accountability to the benefit of the school and all learners; and</li> <li>• eliminate social barriers that negatively impact on learners.</li> </ul>

## EDU CIRCLE GOALS

Our Edu Circle has four main goals:

1. To actively engage learners in the school and with stakeholders to advance learner interests and solve learner concerns.
2. To generate a friendly learning environment in which learners are safe and where their physical and emotional wellbeing are secure, so that they can achieve to the best of their abilities.
3. To provide, as part of the SASG, services within the school for the learners, such as health, nutrition and social support services.
4. To increase learner participation in sports and cultural activities in our school.

## STRUCTURE OF THE EDU CIRCLE AT OUR SCHOOL

<p><b>Composition</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Edu Circle is composed of learners from Grades __ to __. Each Grade elects two representatives – a boy and a girl.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Election of Edu Circle members</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All members are elected by their peers without any external influence by the school authorities. The process is open and transparent, and all learners are encouraged to participate.</li> <li>• Our school elects its Edu Circle annually, at the beginning of each school year.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Supervision and Support</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Edu Circle is supervised by our Edu Circle Mentor – a teacher at the school who has volunteered his/her time and is supported by other teachers and management.</li> <li>• All of our school's stakeholders are receptive to the ideas presented by our Edu Circle and support the Edu Circle's activities.</li> </ul>

## OUR EDU CIRCLE STAKEHOLDERS

All of our local stakeholders have expressed their commitment to supporting activities of our Edu Circle. We are fully receptive to the stakeholders' ideas, and will act on them to ensure that they achieve the agreed goals. Our main stakeholders are ... (please compile your own list of stakeholders - even naming the people concerned if you want):

<b>Local government and education governance structures</b>	This includes the Regional Council, the Mayor, the Regional Governor and the Traditional Authorities.
<b>Community structures</b>	Businesses, individual professionals, faith-based organisations and faith-based centres (churches, mosques, etc.), NGOs, CBOs, charities, caregivers, ... <i>(school to add relevant ones).</i>
<b>School-based stakeholders</b>	Learners, LRC, Parents, Teachers, School Board, School Managers and Regional Education Forum (REF).
<b>Government ministries</b>	<b>MoEAC:</b> Head Office, Regional Education Directorate, School Inspectorate. <b>Other ministries:</b> Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) and Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW).

## ELECTING OUR EDU CIRCLE

<b>Step 1</b>	Through established procedures at our school, the management will brief the stakeholders on what an Edu Circle is and the reasons for having an Edu Circle in our school. Briefing will continue throughout the term of office of our Edu Circle.
<b>Step 2</b>	Adoption of the Charter by the school stakeholders. This will also apply during the review of this Charter. This Charter will at all times be accessible to all stakeholders, including all learners in the school.
<b>Step 3</b>	Election of Edu Circle members via classroom nominations and voting. Our school is committed to respecting the learners' right to elect their representatives without being influenced by teachers. The election of Edu Circle members will be held every year at the beginning of the year.
<b>Step 4</b>	Announcement of election results by our Edu Circle Mentor. We are committed to observing a transparent, free and fair process. Stakeholders will be informed of the results at assembly and through communications with parents and the School Board.
<b>Step 5</b>	Election of the Edu Circle Chairperson by all members of the Edu Circle. We observe the learners' right to elect their Chairperson and Deputy without external influence.
<b>Step 6</b>	Introduction of Edu Circle to learners, School Board, LRC, school management and school community. The school embraces the Edu Circle as one of our stakeholders. We support each other towards attaining our goals of learner happiness and success.

## ELEMENTS UNDERPINNING OUR EDU CIRCLE

Here at our school, we believe the following:

- Learners are aware of the challenges that negatively impact on their educational, health and social wellbeing.
- With proper supervision and support of all key stakeholders, learners have the capacity to resolve them through our Edu Circle.
- Community and stakeholder involvement in the design and operation of our Edu Circle is crucial, and their support of the Circle's work is essential.
- Authorities must not hand-pick members of our Edu Circle.
- Learners have the right to choose their own representatives.
- Teachers or non-learners must refrain from determining Edu Circle membership and activities.
- The school is committed to providing ongoing support and in-service training for our Edu Circle.

### ADOPTED AND SIGNED BY:

School Board Chairperson: ..... Date: .....

LRC President / Head Boy & Head Girl: ..... Date: .....

School Principal: ..... Date: .....

Edu Circle Chairperson: ..... Date: .....

### WITNESSES:

NAME: .....

Constituency: ..... Signature: ..... Date: .....

NAME: .....

Constituency: ..... Signature: ..... Date: .....

NAME: .....

Constituency: ..... Signature: ..... Date: .....

# Get resources to inform and inspire!



Facilitators, Mentors and the Edu Circles themselves will need sources of information and inspiration for their activities. Many materials of all kinds are available on the websites of the MoEAC, MGEWC, MoHSS and many stakeholder organisations, and from the MoEAC National Resource Centre.

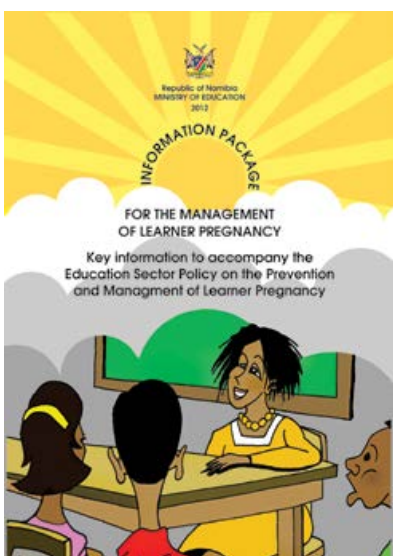
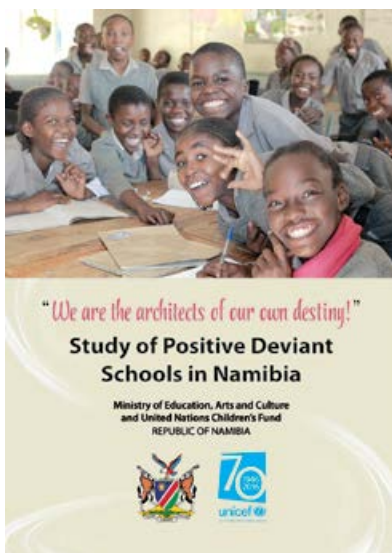
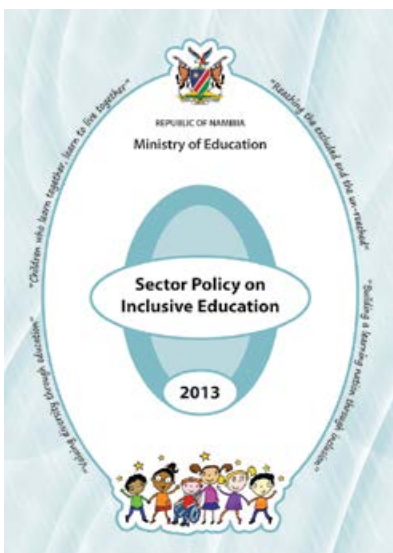
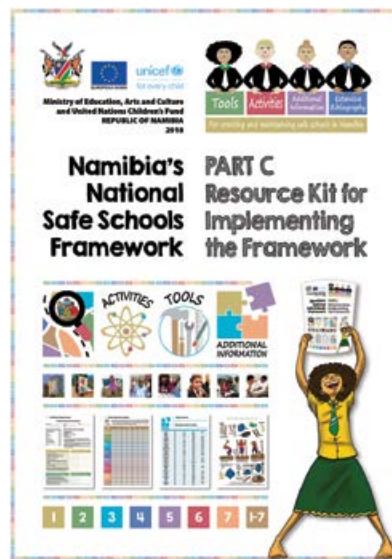
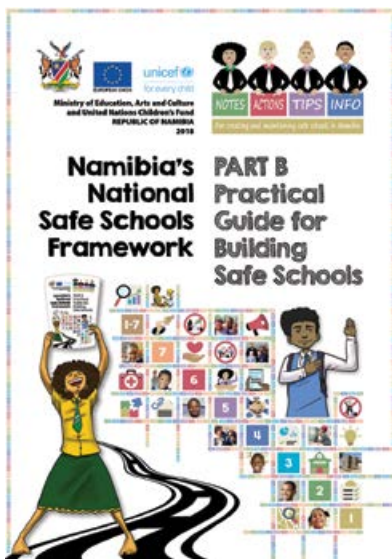
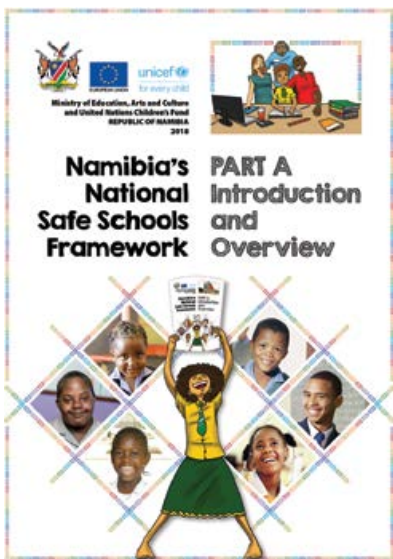
The Edu Circle members should be guided to relevant resources that could help them in conducting a particular activity.

## For example, ANTI-BULLYING POSTERS (2017) – set of 5 posters



**Selected materials produced by Edu Circles can be added to the national collection!**

**A FEW RECOMMENDED RESOURCES FOR EDU CIRCLE MEMBERS AND MENTORS**



Set of 4 comics and 3 posters on "taking responsibility for your school"

You can find all of these resources and many more on the MoEAC and UNICEF websites: [www.moe.gov.na](http://www.moe.gov.na) and [www.unicef.org/namibia](http://www.unicef.org/namibia)

As highlighted in UNESCO's Happy Schools Framework, a conducive school environment leads to the results described below.

## The Happy Schools Criteria



### People

-  Friendships and Relationships in the School Community
-  Positive Teacher Attitudes and Attributes
-  Respect for Diversity and Differences
-  Positive and Collaborative Values and Practices
-  Teacher Working Conditions and Well-being
-  Teacher Skills and Competencies



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



### Process

-  Reasonable and Fair Workload
-  Teamwork and Collaborative Spirit
-  Fun and Engaging Teaching and Learning Approaches
-  Learner Freedom, Creativity and Engagement
-  Sense of Achievement and Accomplishment
-  Extracurricular Activities and School Events
-  Learning as a Team Between Students and Teachers
-  Useful, Relevant and Engaging Learning Content
-  Mental Well-being and Stress-Management



### Place

-  Warm and Friendly Learning Environment
-  Secure Environment Free from Bullying
-  Open and Green Learning and Playing Spaces
-  School Vision and Leadership
-  Positive Discipline
-  Good Health, Sanitation and Nutrition
-  Democratic School Management

Source:  
United Nations Educational, Scientific  
and Cultural Organization (UNESCO),  
"Happy Schools Framework",  
Bangkok, 2016, p. xiii.

- Learners, staff members and parents are safe, included and accepted.
- All members of the school community demonstrate respect, fairness and kindness in their interactions, and build healthy relationships, free from discrimination and harassment.
- Learners are encouraged and given support to be positive leaders and role models in their school community – for example by speaking up about issues such as bullying.
- Learners, principals, staff members, parents and community members engage openly and actively in ongoing dialogue.
- Principles of equity and inclusive education and strategies for learners and staff related to prevention, intervention and awareness-raising on bullying are reinforced across the curriculum.
- The learning environment, instructional materials and teaching and assessment strategies reflect the diversity of learners.
- There is a sense of pride in the school, and of being a member of the school.
- Education is valued and the role of the school is respected.
- Every learner is inspired and given support to succeed in an environment of high expectations.



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA  
Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

**EDU CIRCLE KIT**  
for Learner  
Stakeholders  
in Education  
in Namibia

**Facilitator  
Guide**



unicef   
for every child