



Gauteng CAN

(Community Action Network)

The Covid19 Crises

- The lockdown is necessary to stop the spread of the virus.
- This has brought society and the economy to a standstill.
- Provincial Govt. currently sees to the needs of 240 000 people, but this will increase.
- Ordinary South Africans are being asked to assist in ensuring food security.
- This initiative encourages people to link up with structures already established.
- Volunteers are given a platform to support or initiate localised work under lockdown.



What is a Community Action Network (CAN)?

- It is community-based network; needs are identified and action is initiated to address them.
- The network can also serve inter-community interests by pairing up with other CANs.
- CANs can be a small neighbourhood group, or area-wide committees.
- The Purpose of a CAN:
 - Identification of the need and distribution of essential food and hygiene
 - To pair up with surrounding communities' to support food security initiatives
 - Ensuring support mechanisms are in place for those self-isolating
 - To spread correct information at a localised level
 - To identify area based needs and address them



In essence...

- CANs are localised, so that they can be operational during the lockdown.
- Community responses will look different in each neighbourhood depending on its needs.
- A CAN can be formed from scratch, or be a part/collaborate with existing groups.
- CAN's should try to connect with committees in other communities to draw on collective experiences.



Establishing a committee

- Identify people who want to volunteer their time to be part of a CAN and allocate roles.
- Register the CAN on the website.
- Identifying roles:
 - Administrator
 - Communications team
 - Treasurer
 - Organiser
 - Safety officer



Principles

- 1. Facts are stronger than fear:** It is very important that your community has a good understanding of the coronavirus.
- 2. No one is safe unless we are all safe:** It is so important to work together and support each other to protect the whole community.
- 3. Self-sufficiency:** You understand your community's needs and strengths best. By drawing on the resources already in your community, you can help each other stay safe.
- 4. Social solidarity:** Support other CANs wherever and whenever you can.



Strategies

Being action-oriented:

- Pick one thing that is achievable and GET IT DONE.

Being collaborative:

- Focus on filling the gaps in your community so as to not duplicate efforts.
- Work with all local structures.



Safety mechanisms for group

Basic principles to follow include:

- Follow official guidance and lockdown regulations.
- Meet online rather than in person.
- Members should have access to masks, hand wash stations or hand sanitisers.
- Members should monitor their own health closely.
- If you feel unwell, remove yourself immediately from activities and let your members know.

First steps

- ***Communication under lockdown:***
 - Map neighbourhood into smaller units.
 - Assign a street leader for each street.
 - The street leader should try to make contact via telephonic messaging with as many households as possible.
 - Spread reliable national and area specific information using the database you develop.

- ***Mapping your community:***
 - Map your community's strengths, resources and vulnerabilities, as well as its vulnerable people.
 - Include groups of people with existing relationships like community groups, religious organisations, NGOs, sports clubs etc.
 - Identify people who have resources like vans, photocopiers, large pots, pans,
 - Identify and use community venues like churches, schools, parks etc.
 - Think about what makes your community vulnerable to Covid-19 so as to help focus on your community action response.



Work

- Identifying needs within a community.
- Ensuring food security within a community.
- Supporting existing structures.
- Sourcing, packaging and distribution of food hampers in a sanitary environment.
- Identifying those self-isolating in a community and getting food/ groceries and water to them.
- Doing grocery shopping for the elderly.
- Supporting CANs in less resourced areas and coordinating joint action
- Collecting and usage of funds/ resources for food security work.
- If the crisis deepens, action network groups can help with identifying potential quarantine sites and work with govt. with essentials like food, masks, etc.
- Extended activism- mobilisation for support of more water tankers, creating support networks for victims of gender

based violence, ensuring evictions are halted, reporting price inflation and monitoring human rights abuses

- Sharing of accurate information in ways that are accessible to community.





Benefits of CAN network

- No one organisation, network or government structure will have the capacity to deal with the immense need on the ground as the situation intensifies.
- Existing organisations doing work on the ground already can register as a CAN.
- Churches, mosques, cultural groups etc. can register as CANs.
- The CAN network allows for mapping out and analysis of where work is being done in Gauteng and in which areas there are serious gaps.
- • It allows your organisation to be put in touch with a wider base of organisations, which you could collaborate with.
- By working collaboratively, CANS from one area may be able to help under resourced CANs with some of their projects.
- If you are doing work in your community, and a CAN starts up, you can ask CAN volunteers to help support your own projects.
- CAN volunteers can support disaster management efforts and CPF work.
- CAN networks will look at best practices and draw learning experiences from this – to be replicated elsewhere.
- Inter-provincial connectivity.