

Estimated time for Phase One group development is one to three months. The primary focus during Phase One is recruitment of members, basic orientation with AI policies and methodologies, and organizing and holding a public informational meeting. Please review the following for further details.

## Resources for Groups >

### A. Core group recruitment and self-education

Most groups have a core of 3-5 people coordinating the work and organizing the group's meetings, which are attended by anywhere from 5-15 people. It is important to identify a few core members and begin the process of self-education so you can begin to reach out to the larger community to build your group. >

#### > Five Steps

1. Contact the Campaigns Officer in the Dublin office for details at (01) 86 38 300. Receive sign up form and other group set-up materials.
2. The Campaigns and Activism Officer will facilitate contact between you and any other Amnesty members in your area.
3. Recruit core group members.
4. Return the sign up form to the Dublin office.
5. The core group holds a series of meetings to share and discuss Amnesty International information and to familiarize themselves with the following basic Amnesty information:
  - Amnesty's history, along with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and other international human rights treaties and covenants on which Amnesty's work is based
  - Amnesty's mission: See section **About Amnesty International**. Learn about the ways the mission is translated into action and practice explaining the work of the organisation briefly and in terms people will easily understand.
  - Amnesty's structure: understand how Amnesty conducts research, makes decisions and raises money. Become familiar with different programs, resources and action opportunities.
  - How Amnesty works: Learn about different tactics, such as letter writing, working on cases through Urgent Actions, lobbying government officials, and organizing educational events.
  - Understand the types of work local group members are typically involved in, including advocacy work at monthly meetings, organizing educational forums, publicizing AI's human rights concerns, raising funds, etc. Become familiar with work done by other AI groups.
  - Discuss group leadership roles, the types of skills or abilities each role requires, perhaps waiting until the second meeting or subsequent meeting to discuss these in depth.

### B. Member recruitment

You are trying to build a new group of people that are committed to action and change. Involving as many people as possible around the core group who will work and join in actions is what member recruitment is all about. Personal contact is the most likely way to move people to action. Any and all of the following activities are effective recruitment methods. >

#### > Talk to people

- One to one conversations are a great way to recruit new members.
- When you meet individuals who are really interested, get them involved in talking to others. This will allow you to reach out to new contacts (individual or groups) that they know.
- Talk with people at your workplace, local community events and at other places where people gather (e.g. libraries and book stores, grocery stores and shopping centres, etc.)
- Identify people who it is key to involve, such as individuals with skills and or connections that would benefit the group.

#### >Speak to groups

- Address meetings of groups that you belong to and other groups in the community, such as local religious groups.
- Be inclusive
- Don't leave people or groups out because you don't know them or because they're part of a different culture or ethnic group. Diversity brings a wider range of ideas, opinions, talents and connections.

#### >Record keeping

- Carefully track everyone that you speak to. Keep a record of their contact information and make a note about their level of interest, skills, or concerns.
- Follow up
- New volunteers need to be contacted within 24-48 hours. If they request additional information get it to them in a similar timeframe. If you don't have all the information in that time period contact them anyway to make sure they know that you haven't forgotten about their interest or their request.
- Follow up initial phone calls with an email. Don't overuse email - it is a great way to communicate with those who are already active, but it doesn't replace personal contact. –Remember that most people are moved to action through personal contact.

#### >Distribute flyers

- Create a simple informational flyer or handout that is easily copied, and always have extras on hand.
- Use flyers to announce your work and to encourage people to join in. Always include a contact name and phone number, and suggest ways that people can get involved.

#### >Network

- Everyone knows someone whom you don't know. Ask your friends, neighbours, and classmates if they know someone who may want to be involved. Whenever you meet someone new be sure to ask them if they know someone else who may want to be involved.
- Networking is a very effective tool, because people generally respond better to personal interaction.

### C. Hold a public information meeting

Now that you've been talking to people, collecting names of potential members and getting the word out about your new Amnesty group, it's time to hold an

Information Session to solidify the group. As the leader of the group it's up to you to coordinate the involvement of other core members. If your core group has completed the objectives outlined in Phase One and is prepared to present the information learned through the self-education process, you probably have a pretty good idea of the information to convey in your first public meeting.

The Campaigns & Activism Officer can assist the core group in preparing for the first public meeting. In addition they may be able to attend the meeting, perhaps covering one of the topics, or simply being available to answer difficult questions. Below are some guidance notes on how to organise a public information meeting. While your group should tailor the agenda to suit your individual circumstances, there are objectives common to all groups such as making newcomers feel comfortable and welcome.

Whether a few people forming a new group or a larger number of people promoting an existing group organize the meeting, be organized and well prepared so you create a good impression. >

### >Organising a public information meeting

#### Prior to the event:

1. Book a venue (at time of booking venue it is a good idea to provisionally book it for two weeks later so that if there is enough interest in launching the group, a venue is already available for the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting)
2. **Note:** Care must be taken to ensure that the venue has full disability access and that the premises are not party politically affiliated
3. Book a speaker (generally a leader of Amnesty International Irish Section)
4. Book the necessary equipment e.g. Laptop, Projector, Screen.
5. Advertise with posters around the town, flyers in shop windows and on community bulletin boards, email alerts and website adverts and local media coverage (press/radio)
6. Ask the Dublin Office to send a letter of invitation to all existing Amnesty members in the area.

#### On the evening of the meeting:

1. Decorate the meeting room with campaigns materials and posters.
2. Ensure actions are available for participants to sign.
3. Ensure membership leaflets are available for participants to join Amnesty International Irish Section.
4. Provide a sign in sheet in order to capture names and addresses of all those attending.

#### Format of the meeting:

1. Presentation by AI Irish Section staff member
2. Local member leads a discussion of the different possibilities for organising an Amnesty group in the community.

If there is enough interest a date is set for the next meeting (no more than 2 weeks later). The local organiser of the meeting needs to ensure that all those interested in attending have included their contact information on the sign in sheet so they can be contacted with a reminder about the next meeting.