



Community Engagement

(LCBB4002)

Assessment 1

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Introduction

The world of a significant social development initiative will be explored here which is called "Free School Meal Eligibility in Wales". It covers the Hay-on-Wye area too. This innovative project has been launched in the context of Wales to investigate the viability and advantages of expanding the range of children who are eligible for Free School Meals. The project had a profound effect on the lives of hundreds of thousands of kids and their families throughout Wales as it was successfully completed on February 24th, 2021. This report's goal is to provide a thorough examination of the "Free School Meal Eligibility in Wales" initiative and delve into the complex community participation strategies that helped the project achieve its amazing success. We hope to decipher the underlying processes that encouraged cooperation and societal change by comprehending the project's elements, results, and consequences. This research also aims to determine the connections between various stakeholders and to suggest appropriate measures to increase their participation in future projects. Description and Analysis of the Project, Identifying the Relationship between the Stakeholders and Strategies Suitable for Engaging Them and A Detailed Narrative of How Different Social Media Platforms Can Be Used as an Outreach to Support the Project will be discussed here.



Figure 1: Free School Meal Eligibility in Wales Project

(Bevanfoundation, 2023)

Description and analysis of the project

Description of the project

The objective of the "Free School Meal Eligibility in Wales" research is to determine whether or not a larger population would benefit from being eligible to receive free school meals (Anderson, 2021). The goal of this programme was to lessen the impact of malnutrition and other economic disparities on Welsh children. The principal goals were-

1. To feed all children in school, regardless of their family's financial situation
2. One healthy, nutritional meal every day throughout the school year for those whose families get Universal Credit.

Stakeholders
Children, their families, community groups, policy experts, and schools were among the intended audiences.

Potentially, this expansion would have helped children in many ways, including their health and education, the financial stress of low-income families, and the promotion of social inclusion.

Assessing Participation in the Community

Throughout the project's planning and execution, the neighbourhood displayed remarkable community participation in Hay-on-Wye. They created a setting that encouraged shared decision-making by showing a dedication to diversity, openness, and involvement (Harris, 2023). The initiative was successful in addressing critical social challenges and generating positive change because of the active involvement of stakeholders, the adoption of varied methodologies, and the value placed on community feedback. The importance of community involvement in developing transformational social development efforts is reaffirmed by the fact that the lessons gained and the post-project strategy will help ensure the project's influence lasts far into the future.

Strategies and domains of active engagement

With an emphasis on welcoming all members of the community, the group worked together on many different areas of the project (Davis and Evans, 2022). They made sure that everyone's opinions were heard by holding town hall discussions, group discussions, and focus sessions to collect feedback from all interested parties. Those involved with the initiative also made use of online polls and open discussion periods to get feedback from those who weren't able to

attend in person. This multifaceted strategy allowed for a deeper comprehension of the Hay-on-Wye community's problems, hopes, and dreams.

Methods for Involving Locals in Planning

The community used a variety of methods to get people involved in the planning process. To increase the impact of their outreach, they formed collaborations with local institutions. They also made use of readily available resources and straightforward language to guarantee that everybody could understand the data presented (Williams, 2023). Social media and other online forums played a significant role in generating conversation and gathering input from residents.

Learned lessons

The project's implementation yielded important insights that will inform future methods of community participation (Thompson, 2021). A desire to actively listen and react to the community's stated needs is essential for effective involvement, as the Hay-on-Wye community discovered. Sustaining participation over time requires actively building trust and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders. The community's dynamics and objectives may change during the project's lifespan; therefore, a high degree of flexibility was also essential.

Post-project strategy

The community understood the value of maintenance once the project was finished. They presented a strategy for completing the project that would keep everyone engaged in the loop. The project's long-term influence on Wales including the Hay-on-Wye community was evaluated regularly, and feedback channels were set up so that any necessary changes or enhancements could be implemented quickly (Anderson, Harris, and Thompson, 2021).

Determine stakeholder relationships and engagement strategies

Strong connections among stakeholders, honest discourse, and active involvement from all parties are essential for successful involvement in the community (Robinson & Turner, 2022). Stakeholders in the "Free School Meal Eligibility in Wales" project came from a wide range of backgrounds and had a wide range of interests and concerns. Key stakeholders and appropriate methods of engaging them are outlined below.

Relation	Engaging strategy
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Families and children: First and foremost, the project's stakeholders are the children and families who stand to gain the most from it. Their satisfaction and input are crucial to the accomplishment of the mission.	The community shifted its focus to one that is welcoming to children and families in order to increase participation from both groups. Their thoughts and impressions were gathered via town hall meetings, focus groups, and questionnaires administered at local schools and community centres (Campbell, 2020). By visiting families in their homes and incorporating children in imaginative play, we were able to create a safe and welcoming environment for their involvement.
Local government: The local government is a key stakeholder because of the integral role it plays in the project's implementation and support. It is crucial for the project's success that they work together and share the same goals.	Strategies for Involvement: Through ongoing gatherings, seminars, and cooperative sessions, the Hay-on-Wye community made care to keep the local authorities in the loop at all times. Making a compelling argument for their backing required presenting facts that backed up the benefits of comparable efforts in other areas and highlighting those benefits (Adams and Turner, 2022). Active participation from local authorities was enabled through collaboration and recognition of their position as partners in decision-making processes.
Educational institution: Such schools play a crucial role in providing Free School Meals as well as advancing the project's goals among the student population.	Educators, administrators, and other school personnel were informed about the project's value and significance via community-organised information sessions. Through collaborative efforts to host awareness events, seminars, and parent-teacher

	meetings, schools were empowered to become advocates for the project's aims.
NGOs and other community groups: Local groups and NGOs may greatly expand project visibility and provide essential hands-on assistance.	Strategies for Involvement: The initiative was able to make use of preexisting infrastructure and resources thanks to the establishment of partnerships and working relationships with local community organisations and nongovernmental organisations (Rodriguez, 2021). Strengthened community participation in Hay-on-Wye and the whole of Wales and a feeling of shared responsibility resulted from joint education efforts, fundraising events, and community activities.
Policymakers and Academic Institutions: The project's progress would be impossible without the input of policy experts and research organisations.	The neighbourhood held academic seminars, roundtable talks, and expert consultations to bring together researchers and policymakers. By working together on research papers and including them in the project's assessment, we were able to make judgments based on empirical evidence.
The Public at Large and Advocacy Organisations: The public and advocacy organisations play an important role in generating interest, rallying support, and promoting the project's goals.	The community used a multi-pronged strategy to enlist the support of the public and advocacy organisations. The widespread dissemination of information and the increased level of public engagement was aided by the use of social media, petitions on the web, and community forums. Partnerships with advocacy organisations and their participation in awareness campaigns helped spread the word and win over more supporters for the initiative.

Explain how to utilise social media to promote the project

According to Nelson (2023), social media is a tremendous tool for interaction, publicity, and engagement with the community. Social media may increase the grasp, understanding, and backing of the "Free School Meal Eligibility in Wales" initiative. Here's a breakdown of how to utilise social media to promote the project:

Facebook - Creating a Community Hub: With its large user base and broad readership, Facebook is great for creating a project community hub. Share project milestones, updates, and success stories on a Facebook page. Videos, infographics, and beneficiary testimonies may highlight how Free School Meals benefit children and families. Community members, participants, and allies may join the page to feel included and participate. Event creation allows education campaigns, fundraising events, and gatherings of communities to mobilise collective action.

Twitter for Change: Twitter's immediate fashion aspect makes it a great lobbying and mobilisation tool. #FreeSchoolMealsWales may help the campaign trend in relevant discussions. The hashtag lets stakeholders and Hay-on-Wye community members express their thoughts and experiences, boosting the project's message (Baker, 2020). Influencers, politicians, and advocacy organisations may be persuaded to support the cause through tweeting. Tweeting project updates, success stories, and calls to action helps maintain public participation.

Instagram- Visual Storytelling: Instagram's visual focus makes photographs and short videos captivating. This platform may showcase Free School Meals' beneficial impact on children's lives. Visuals may attract people to the project's story. Instagram Stories and Highlights may showcase project activity, partner organisations, and Wales community events, promoting openness and authenticity.

LinkedIn: Connecting Experts and Policymakers: LinkedIn helps professionals, policymakers, and stakeholders in social development connect. Sharing project updates, research results, and useful articles on LinkedIn might attract relevant experts and colleagues. LinkedIn may influence legislators' decisions, promoting the project's goals and gaining support.

YouTube: Sharing project films, interviews, and informative videos about Free School Meals. These films reveal the project's path, problems, and successes (Scott and Moore, 2022). The initiative may inspire global empathy and support by spreading these films on various social media networks.

Local Participation via Community Blogs and Web Pages: Outreach to the public in Wales may be improved through participating in Welsh-centric websites, blogs, and internet forums. Bloggers and other influential members of the online community may help spread the word about this initiative and its positive impact on Welsh kids and families by publishing special posts and guest blogs.

The "Free School Meal Eligibility in Wales" initiative may benefit from social media outreach. Compelling material, real narrative, and active involvement may build community ownership, support, and enduring effect (Green, 2023). Social media's capacity to cross borders and involve various stakeholders may be used to promote equitable access to Free School Meals and the well-being of children and families in Wales.

The Free School Meal Eligibility's aim was successful because of community engagement. The initiative's focus on collaboration, diversity, and inclusion helped Welsh families and children. Community engagement practitioners' proactive approach makes it possible to educate community members about community development's internal and external aspects. Proactiveness enabled this. This method allowed everyone interested in the project to contribute to its overall objectives.

Recommendations:

Open communication, effective cooperation, and skill-building workshops are encouraged to enhance Hay-on-Wye community involvement in future projects. Cultural knowledge and valuing varied stakeholders may improve involvement. This may encourage participation (Campbell, Adams, and Turner, 2022).

Maintaining relationships with Wales community organisations, utilising social media for outreach, and often evaluating project results can help achieve future success and establish lasting improvements. These suggestions may help Welsh community engagement practitioners advance social justice and citizen empowerment.

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