

Glossary

Community

"Community" is the web of personal relationships, groups, networks, traditions and patterns of behaviour that exist amongst those who share physical neighborhoods, socio-economic conditions or common understandings and interests. Community tends to exist in three broad categories: locality or territory; a shared experience or interest group such as Black Minority Ethnic groups; and a group composed of people sharing a common condition or problem such as drug and alcohol dependency or cancer.

Community Activists

People who are active on a voluntary basis in the development of their communities.

Community Capacity Building

This supports individuals, groups and organisations to enable them to play a part in the regeneration of communities. It is about building skills and competencies and is increasingly being used amongst policy makers and managers to increase their understanding of communities.

Community Development Learning

This takes place when individuals and groups/organisations come together to share experience, learn from each other, and develop their skills, knowledge and self-confidence. It is a developmental process that is both a collective and individual experience, based on a commitment to equal partnership between all those involved to enable a sharing of skills, awareness, knowledge, and experience in order to bring about sustainable desired outcomes. (Federation of Community Development Learning) www.fcdl.org.uk

Community Development Workers

These people undertake Community Development as their main role. They work in accordance with recognised occupational standards. They may focus on specific issues with communities, e.g. health and wellbeing, and/ or have a neighbourhood brief.

Community Involvement has two components:

1. involvement in community activities in a variety of different ways. Community involvement often starts with agendas and programmes that originate outside the community, for example with Statutory agencies.
2. enabling people to become active partners in the regeneration of communities by contributing and sharing in the decisions that affect their lives. Participation should enable people to have a strong degree of power and control in the processes with which they are involved.

Community Networks and Hubs

Independent community led organisations with multi-purpose functions, which provide a focal point for local communities and community organisations, and for community services. They often own and manage community assets, and support small community organisations to reach out across the community.

Community Sector Organisations

These are also located within communities of geography or interest. They are formally constituted, controlled by their users and can have a small number of paid staff and volunteers. They are often referred to collectively as the community sector. In N Ireland the Community sector has grown over the years due to a relatively supportive funding environment.

Social Exclusion

The government has defined social exclusion as "a shorthand term for what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown." This is a deliberately flexible definition and the problems listed are only examples. The most important characteristic of social exclusion is that these problems are linked and mutually reinforcing, and can combine to create a complex and fast moving vicious cycle. The term includes poverty and low income, but is broader and addresses some of the wider causes and consequences of poverty.

Social Justice

Enabling people to claim their human rights, meet their needs, and have greater control over the decision-making processes which affect their lives.

Stakeholders

Groups and organisations with an interest (stake) in what happens with a project, programme or development.

Voluntary Sector

Organisations whose activities are carried out other than for profit and on a wider geographical area, but which are not public or local authorities. These organisations would normally be formally constituted and employ paid professional and administrative staff. They may or may not use volunteer help.