
Overview

This standard is about the community development practitioner's role to interpret, use and explain the process and values of community development.

It involves working with others to show what is distinctive about the nature of community development and encourage people, groups and agencies to recognise the contribution community development makes in the process of change.

This standard is relevant to all community development practitioners.

The community development standards are arranged in six key areas:

1. Understand and practise community development
2. Understand and engage with communities
3. Group work and collective action
4. Collaboration and cross-sectoral working
5. Community learning for social change
6. Governance and organisational development

This standard is within Key Area One.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. apply the values and process of community development to own role
2. promote the values of community development to individuals, organisations and communities
3. support communities to use the values and process of community development
4. support communities to challenge local and national policies and decisions that have a negative impact on local communities
5. promote inclusive and empowering collective action in deciding and working on the changes identified by communities
6. support communities to make links between structural factors and their impact on well-being
7. promote the learning and developmental aspects of working with communities
8. enable the evaluation of community development practice's impact on communities
9. support communities and others to understand how policies at different levels impact on communities

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. key purpose, values and process of community development
2. how to explain community development concepts in different contexts, to different audiences and for different purposes
3. value based, solution focussed techniques for reflection and problem solving
4. methods for community engagement and empowerment
5. methods for community led action and change
6. how to work with community conflicts (between groups and between communities)
7. how to evaluate the impact of policies on communities
8. the range of definitions of the concept 'community' reflecting interest, identity and geography
9. perspectives used to explain structural factors and their interconnections
10. how structural factors affect communities
11. ways to challenge inequality, social injustice and discrimination
12. different perspectives on the workings of power
13. techniques for recognising and using power
14. rights to set own agendas and remain independent
15. the contribution that community development can make to current local and national government policies and initiatives
16. how the policy making process works
17. how to use participatory and democratic decision-making processes for community action and change
18. support communities to actively and critically engage in policy formation

Values

Community development is underpinned by a set of values which distinguish it from other, sometimes related, activities in the community. These values are at the core of community development and underpin each of the standards. The values are:

1. Social justice and equality
2. Anti-discrimination
3. Community empowerment
4. Collective action
5. Working and learning together

The following examples illustrate how each of the community development values might inform practice in this standard. These statements are not part of assessment requirements.

1. community development practice contributes to a more equal society where civil and human rights are recognised and respected
2. practices that contribute to inequalities are identified and challenged whenever and wherever they arise
3. all planned interventions and activities within communities address the issues identified by community members and aim to realise their aspirations
4. collective action is actively promoted as effective ways to bring about positive social change
5. reflection on experiences is an integral part of all activity and informs future actions

Glossary

Collective action

Working together with others to achieve a common aim.

Community

The web of personal relationships, groups, networks, traditions and patterns of behaviour that can develop among those who share a geographic area or identity or interest.

Community action

Community-based campaigns and networks concentrating on issues of concern to that

community, eg a campaign to develop a safe and creative play space for children, a campaign against the planned closure of a library, a campaign for empty houses to be made available at affordable rents, the public demonstrations against deportations.

Community conflict

Refers to those differences, competitions, arguments, outbursts and violence that may erupt in community groups, between community groups, in communities and between communities.

Community development practitioner

A person doing community development work as a paid worker, unpaid worker, group member, community activist or volunteer.

Community Engagement

A way to build and sustain relationships within and between communities, community groups or organisations, public sector, third sector and other agencies. It provides a foundation for collaboration helping them to understand and collectively take action on the needs or issues that communities experience.

Empowerment

A process where people gain control (eg confidence, knowledge, skills, resources) to affect decisions impacting on their communities.

Evaluation

Entails an overall assessment of the achievements, effectiveness and impact of work carried out.

Learning

Can be informal, formal and non-formal:

- Informal refers to experiential and personal learning
- Formal learning refers to what we gain from courses, academic studies and continual professional development
- Non-formal education is that which can be informal or formal but occurs in non-traditional settings e.g. in communities.

Organisation

Any collection of people in the community, voluntary, public and private sectors and any hybrid configuration across these sectors. It refers to community groups, charities, community and social enterprises, statutory agencies, businesses.

Resources

This covers any physical or human resource that supports the community development process and could include technical equipment, IT-based resources, buildings, sources of specialist knowledge, local assets

Structural factors

Powerful social processes that impact on people's lives, even before birth, and include: cultural, economic, ecological, social, political and demographic factors that manifest at community, national, international levels; and which are often inter-connected to affect the poorest and most vulnerable in society.

Support

The work a community development practitioner may undertake to ensure the group can pursue its aims. The types of activities may include: providing information, moral and motivational encouragement, researching particular topics, identifying sources of help, listening to group members' ideas and thought processes and reflecting them back, facilitating decision-making, acting as an advocate, coach, mentor, critical friend.

Technology

This refers to both hardware and online tools/apps which can be used in practice and communication (including social media).

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Integrate and use the values and process of community development



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