
Overview

This standard is about supporting community groups to carry out their own consultations to determine the concerns and/or priorities within their communities, the feasibility of proposed activities, and gathering the views of community members and groups for organisations about proposed actions or changes to the services they provide. The standard assumes community research is used for positive changes in communities.

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 Two.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. support the contribution of community members to proposals for community research and consultations
2. support individuals and communities to identify and agree the purpose and outcomes of the research/consultation activity
3. facilitate participatory approaches to agree realistic, evidence-based priorities
4. use inclusive and participatory methods to overcome barriers to participation within the research activity
5. plan community research with all relevant people to include roles, actions, resources and review dates
6. use data and information that is valid, accurate, reliable and sufficient to meet the intended purpose of the research
7. develop the skills of community members in community based research through learning activities
8. include the voice and views of marginalised communities in the analysis and dissemination of community research
9. support community researchers to analyse and interpret the gathered information
10. work with groups to review the quality and quantity of the information gathered and identify any gaps
11. inform community researchers about ethical, professional and safe community research, including the legal requirements and procedures for dealing with sensitive and confidential information
12. gather proposals for presenting the findings to different audiences
13. support the communication of the initial findings to the wider community and all relevant organisations for comment
14. review the findings and revise in light of feedback
15. facilitate the development of recommendations from the community and others

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. the effects of structural factors on communities
2. participative planning techniques
3. participatory methods and approaches for use with community members across the research process
4. how to support community members to develop community research skills
5. how to access sources of existing data about communities
6. where to obtain the resources for community led approaches to profiling, consultation and research involving people and organisations
7. how to identify possible partners and assess their potential for collaboration in community consultations and research
8. accepted ways of checking data for accuracy, reliability and validity
9. ethical, safe and legal frameworks for the collection and handling of confidential and sensitive information
10. processes for making recommendations and setting priorities
11. methods for recording and reviewing information
12. techniques for collating and interpreting data and information
13. techniques for encouraging the sensitive exploration of diversity
14. how to involve community members and researchers in dissemination activities
15. methods of feeding back consultation and research results to the wider community and relevant organisations
16. how to facilitate discussions around the choice of relevant dissemination methods and techniques for different audiences and purposes
17. ways to present information for different purposes and audiences
18. approaches and methods to use in evaluating research or consultative processes

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.

6. community research and consultation results highlight inequalities that exist within the community
7. differing views and opinions are acknowledged and shown equal respect within the research/consultation
8. the expertise and knowledge within a community is valued by all agencies
9. community members have collective control and ownership over community research and consultation processes
10. research and consultation processes are monitored and reviewed and the learning is used to inform future planning

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 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

Community groups and organisations

Located within communities of geography, identity or interest. These groups are controlled by their users and are usually small and informal with no paid staff. They are often referred to collectively as the community sector.

Consultation

Activities which seek the views of individuals and communities to gauge opinion, involvement or ideas about issues in order to shape decisions and actions.

Empowerment

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

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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Facilitate, analyse and disseminate results of community research and consultations



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