

Overview

This standard is about dealing with conflict:

- within communities
- between communities
- within community groups
- between community groups

This standard recognises the similarities in dealing with all conflicts and the skills required to analyse the context and respond in ways which are inclusive, solution focussed and working for positive social change. The standard also recognises that conflict may create costs and benefits, acknowledges the causes and effects of conflict and notes there are different strategies to deal with conflicts in communities and those within and between organisations.

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 Three.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. identify the nature, causes and effects of conflict within and between communities and community groups
2. respond to conflicts to de-escalate tensions within or between communities in ways which are sensitive
3. work to reduce the fear and upset generated by community conflict
4. support people to identify areas of potential conflict, common ground and shared interest
5. support community members to develop knowledge, skills and confidence to deal with conflict
6. identify and find ways to remove blocks to communication and mutual understanding within or between communities
7. promote the values, perspectives, rights and responsibilities of all involved in the conflict when seeking resolution
8. identify the potential for and sources of mediation to address conflict in communities or community groups
9. mediate within and between groups to overcome conflict where possible
10. document areas of agreement and disagreement for future reference
11. support collective-led strategies to deal with continuing conflict
12. support communities to make use of their legal rights

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. the impact of power relationships upon individuals and communities
2. the benefits of recognising and valuing diversity, inclusive and anti-discriminatory practice
3. barriers to involvement in collective activities and ways to overcome them
4. the negative and positive aspects of conflict
5. the causes, effects and consequences of community based conflicts
6. different, timely and creative approaches to conflict analysis and resolution
7. how to facilitate collective approaches to conflict resolution
8. sources of mediation support available to individuals, communities and practitioners
9. methods of responding sensitively to de-escalate tensions and overcome communities' fears
10. how to develop the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes of others to deal with conflict
11. how to support communities to develop their knowledge of relevant law and legal remedies

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. power relationships and their effects are openly acknowledged within conflict situations
2. conflict is addressed from a position of mutual respect between all parties
3. constructive ways of challenging ensure sources of conflict are 'depersonalised'
4. all those affected by the conflict are encouraged to contribute to the generation of ideas and solutions
5. individuals and groups reflect on, learn from and progress from conflict situations

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 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.

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.

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

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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Support communities to effectively manage and address conflict within and between communities or community groups



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