
Overview

This standard relates to the support that community development practitioners provide when formal or informal groups develop their organisational structures. This can be for many different reasons; to meet funders' demands, the groups may have reached a certain stage in their development, or they may want to take on and manage significant resources, for example a building or staff.

This standard is relevant to all community development practitioners who work directly with community groups and provide advice on organisational structures.

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 Six.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. support groups to review and agree their current purpose, aim, priorities, structure and membership in line with organisational requirements
2. assist groups to evaluate their reasons for considering new forms of organisational structure to determine the most appropriate option
3. signpost groups to relevant sources of information about the different organisational structures that exist
4. evaluate the implications of the different options available to advise community groups
5. facilitate groups to agree an organisational structure which will meet their future needs and be accountable to their members and the wider community
6. support groups to use community development values as the foundation to build an organisational structure suitable for meeting community needs
7. assist groups to access advice and guidance so that the organisational structure complies with governance legislation and current best practice
8. support communities to make use of their legal rights
9. facilitate groups to review and agree their decision making arrangements in line with organisational requirements

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. the distinctiveness of the voluntary and community sectors and how this influences decisions on organisation structure
2. the contribution of autonomous and self-determining organisations to effective community action and engagement
3. models for democratic decision-making processes
4. equality issues to address in the development of participatory organisational structures
5. participatory techniques to assist organisations to review their aims, priorities and practice
6. participatory techniques to assist organisations to plan, allocate roles and develop and use the skills within the organisation
7. organisational systems and procedures
8. approaches to strategic and operational management
9. how to support the management of change and contingencies
10. how to support the long-term sustainability of organisations
11. how to support communities to develop their knowledge of relevant law and legal remedies
12. own limitations in giving legal advice and when to seek specialist support
13. the advantages and disadvantages of organisational and legal structures applicable to community organisations
14. accountability implications for trustees, managers and beneficiaries
15. organisations that provide detailed advice and support on legal requirements of running community groups and organisations; including starting, constituting and closing down
16. the range of plans including business, development, financial resources

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. concepts of social justice and equality are reflected in the organisation's aims
2. decision making is based on democratic and participatory processes
3. proposed constitutional changes are consulted upon widely and supported by clear rationale
4. communities are supported to take a long term strategic view when exploring options for organisational structure
5. feedback is sought on the effectiveness of the organisational structure

Glossary

Accountability

Involves being responsible within and to communities for the actions taken and decisions made; and the opportunities for members of communities to hold to account representatives, decision-makers, groups and individuals working on behalf of communities

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 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.

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).

CLDSCCD21

Advise on organisational structures to support community development



| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Developed by | CLD Standards Council Scotland |
| Version Number | 1 |
| Date Approved | 30 Mar 2023 |
| Indicative Review Date | 30 Mar 2028 |
| Validity | Current |
| Status | Original |
| Originating Organisation | JETS |
| Original URN | JETSCD20 |
| Relevant Occupations | Community Voluntary Workers, Community Activator |
| Suite | Community Development |
| Keywords | community development; community development practitioner; community development practice; community development values; community development research; community development consultation; community development groups; community development methods |
