

# **Strengthening Scotland's Communities**

## **Community capacity building practice development programme report**

June 2008



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## Executive Summary

The Strengthening Scotland's Communities programme was delivered by the Scottish Community Development Centre on behalf of Learning Connections to over 200 participants with an interest in, or responsibility for community capacity building. Participants within the series of learning events comprised senior managers, CCB practitioners, and community activists from across Scotland and across sectors. A number of issues emerged from discussions which will be useful in considering how CCB practice can be further supported and developed in Scotland.

One of the primary purposes of the programme was to promote the national CCB Resource Guide and signpost participants to a range of over forty relevant materials, tools and frameworks to support and develop CCB practice. However, although the Resource Guide to CCB published by Learning Connections has been widely welcomed, there remain calls for a Scottish CCB resource that would set out a clear understanding of the components of effective community capacity, and the actions required at policy, management and practice levels to lead to improved outcomes.

There is no national CCB strategy in contrast to national strategies being in place for youth work and lifelong learning. Some participants felt this may have contributed to a lack of understanding and subsequent value being placed on CCB. The importance of having a recognised national CCB agency was also identified as important to promote CCB and support practice development.

The programme incorporated a range of exercises based on key resources contained within the Resource Guide. Participants expressed value in using these resources to develop practice and that there should be continued investment in supporting use of recognised frameworks and tools, such as LEAP, National Standards for Community Engagement, Delivering Change.

Participants generally acknowledged that more attention and priority should be given to developing and strengthening CCB practice and welcomed the opportunity to discuss CCB practice and policy issues with other colleagues. An extension of the workshop programme and provision of other peer support activities should be considered by government and other national organisations.

The definitions of and links between CCB, community engagement and community empowerment were explored and participants identified the importance of key decision makers recognising and understanding how CCB contributes to local and national priorities and outcomes. The development of a core CCB framework which relates to current Scottish policy such as the national performance framework, the Concordat and Single Outcome Agreements would increase recognition and understanding among key

stakeholders and may have positive effects on resource allocation, strategic development and general support for CCB.

There was acknowledgement of the need to work with elected members to enhance their understanding of how CCB works and what the role of the CCB practitioner is – to support community organisations. This could facilitate better working relationships and ultimately result in better outcomes for communities and community organisations as they seek to influence decision makers.

Participants understanding of CCB and their practice abilities varied quite considerably, ranging from those with extensive skills, knowledge and experience, to those with little exposure to CCB theory and practice. The development of a common practice framework would contribute to CCB skills development and potentially a more consistent approach to CCB across a range of sectors.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 In September 2007, the Scottish Community Development Centre was awarded a grant by Learning Connections to deliver a national Community Capacity Building Development Programme in 2007-08. Learning Connections is part of the Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate General of the Scottish Government. It carries responsibility for supporting the development and implementation of policy and practice in relation to Community Learning and Development (CLD). The Strengthening Scotland's Communities programme was designed to improve understanding of and practice in building community capacity as one of the three national priorities for Community Learning and Development (CLD).
- 1.2 The purpose of the report is to provide details on the programme delivery and to highlight the key issues and developments for community capacity building as identified by those participating in the programme. It will also include supplementary materials and references from the 'Supporting Outcome Focused Practice in CLD Support Programme'<sup>1</sup> as it relates to key issues for community capacity building.
- 1.3 The report is intended to stimulate further discussion with Learning Connections and other key stakeholders in Community Learning and Development as to how this area of practice can be further supported and strengthened in Scotland. The report will be disseminated to programme participants for their information and is available on the Learning Connections and SCDC websites [learningconnections@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:learningconnections@scotland.gsi.gov.uk) [www.scdc.org.uk](http://www.scdc.org.uk)

## 2. Background

- 2.1 In January 2004 the Scottish Executive published Working and Learning Together to Build Stronger Communities (WALT)<sup>2</sup>. The WALT guidance defines achievement through community capacity building as *'building community capacity and influence by enabling individuals, groups and communities to develop the confidence, understanding and skills required to influence decision making and service delivery. This could include enabling communities to provide and manage services to meet community needs.'* It also states *'community learning and development has an essential role to play in giving communities the confidence and skills they need to engage effectively with community planning. This will enable communities to have a real influence over the planning, delivery and quality of mainstream services, as well as specific initiatives such as those aimed at achieving community regeneration and social inclusion.'* This clearly established a need for communities with capacity to organise and

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<sup>1</sup> Supporting Outcome Focused Practice in CLD Report SCDC May 2008

<sup>2</sup> Working and Learning Together to Build Stronger Communities, Scottish Executive Guidance for Community Learning and Development Scottish Executive 2004

to participate in community planning and engagement processes, and a role for CLD in building this capacity.

2.2 In 2005 Learning Connections commissioned research to investigate current issues within community capacity building.<sup>3</sup> The report contained over 30 recommendations including:

- The relevance of existing toolkits for community capacity building to be assessed
- That if necessary a new toolkit is developed and published to address any gaps identified in the above exercise.
- That a national programme is developed to support community capacity building practitioners in the use of published toolkits.
- That a national network of community capacity building practitioners is convened and an agenda to support skills development is facilitated.

Learning Connections published its response to the research in the form of a Development Plan<sup>4</sup>. In relation to the points above Learning Connections agreed to 'take forward work to identify relevant resource materials, develop means to improve awareness of these and their accessibility, and obtain feedback on their usefulness'.

2.3 As a result the Scottish Community Development Centre reviewed resource material relevant to community capacity building in practice, leading to its online publication by the Scottish Government as 'Building Community Capacity: Resources for Community Learning and Development Practice'. The subsequent Strengthening Scotland's Communities programme was designed to promote the guide among practitioners and community organisations through a series of events which would also provide a basis for discussion on key issues for community capacity building.

### 3. The context

3.1 CCB was identified by the Senior Chief HMIE at Learning Connections 2007 conference as the area of CLD needing most attention. These concerns were given further credence in the results of the Learning Connections CLD Work Force Survey (2007). This reported that of 2258 full time equivalent CLD staff just 13.7 % (309 FTE) were described as CCB focused with a further 19.1% described as generic in their practice. Assuming equal division of time between national priorities for generic workers, this would give a maximum total of only 20% of CLD time focused on CCB in 2007. This combined with the earlier research findings indicate that CCB is the weakest of the three national priorities for CLD and the establishment of a national CCB programme is an important step in attempting to address some of the issues relating to CCB policy and practice development.

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<sup>3</sup> Community Capacity Building: a Review of Current Issues for Community Learning and Development – Clear Plan UK 2005

<sup>4</sup> Learning Connections' Building Community Capacity through CLD: Development Plan 2006-07

- 3.2 The practice development programme was devised based on the recognition that:
- Community capacity building (CCB) and community engagement are recognised as necessary features of participatory governance and building strong civil society.
  - Yet commitment to CCB is weak and understanding of it is poor.
  - CCB and community engagement are often confused with one another
  - Effective CCB assists good community engagement but has other equally important outcomes, in particular, strong independent, active and critically aware community organisations
  - Relative to other aspects of CLD, the inherent complexity of CCB, as a task that seeks to address key issues of public policy and practice, needs to be recognised
  - Skills and resources for CCB, both as it relates to community engagement and service delivery and action by communities, needs to be enhanced
- 3.3 Specifically in relation to the research findings, the programme also sought to identify the role and contribution of a practice exchange/practitioners network in supporting CCB practice and development.
- 3.4 The other programmes commissioned by Scottish Government on outcome focused CLD practice and community engagement were recognised as playing a significant part in raising awareness and understanding of CCB and its role within wider processes of community planning and engagement. Issues for CCB raised through the outcomes focused programme are of particular relevance and are highlighted in the key issues and developments section of the report.
- 3.5 The significance of the recent joint Commitment to Community Empowerment from Scottish Government and CoSLA is also noted, in that it affirms the commitment to 'develop an Action Plan in partnership with the community and voluntary sectors over the coming months ...that will cover:
- Highlighting examples of community empowerment;
  - Providing direct capacity building investment to community groups;
  - Investing in an integrated programme to develop skills, learning and networking in relation to community empowerment and engagement;
  - Developing support to help communities own assets;
  - Investing in improved support for community capacity building;
  - Working with Audit Scotland to agree how to assess progress on empowerment.

It is clear that CCB will continue to be an area of importance in relation to public policies for community empowerment and engagement.

- 3.6 Ultimately the programme sought to ensure that those with an interest in CCB are aware of and know how to access a range of materials that may be helpful for them in taking forward their role in building community capacity,

and to provide opportunities for discussion and debate on policy and practice issues.

#### **4. The approach**

4.1 One of the primary purposes of the programme was to introduce and promote the Guide to Community Capacity Resources<sup>5</sup>, an on line CCB guide produced by SCDC on behalf of Learning Connections. The publication contains over forty frameworks, tools and other materials that may be helpful for community learning and development practitioners in taking forward their role in building community capacity. It was developed in response to the findings within the Clear Plan report that there was limited access to CCB resource materials and the guide provides a centrally located point of contact from which to source a wide range of materials on CCB.

4.2 However, whilst recognising the guide is an important resource to support CCB practice, there were other factors to consider in developing a practice development programme. The programme was designed in recognition that CCB operates at both strategic and operational levels, and that 'to have confidence in taking forward community capacity building work, practitioners and managers need to have a sound understanding of the purpose and product of capacity building work, the ability to engage with diverse communities and to work with them, the space, authority and management support to take the work forward, and the ability to prioritise the use of time and energy between competing and possibly conflicting demands' (Strengthening Scotland's Communities briefing paper).

Therefore, there was a need to focus support for three key audiences: strategic managers and senior officers tasked with strategic CCB development; CCB practitioners; and community activists/representatives working within community organisations. Three broad areas of practice were identified which focused on the key audiences; planning a CCB strategy; achieving community change; and effective community organisations. It was in the last two workshops that emphasis was given to attracting community activists/representatives alongside practitioners to ensure both perspectives were considered and represented within the programme.

4.3 In recognising that simply signposting the key audiences identified above to resources was not enough, the programmes designed around the three practice areas concentrated on a series of themes which would stimulate discussion and debate among participants on policy and practice issues. It was important to recognise the existing skills and experience of participants and the potential for cross over to those participants who may be less knowledgeable of policy and practice issues. However, the programmes also included a series of exercises based on key resource materials which would allow participants to 'test out' particular resources.

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<sup>5</sup> Guide to Community Capacity Resource Materials SCDC 2008

- 4.4 The importance of peer support and the exchange of practice between practitioners were recognised and time was created within the workshops for participants to discuss the merits of a learning exchange/practitioners network and what form this would take. This would be of particular relevance to other partner agencies such as the SCDN and CLDMS who have a role in supporting CCB practitioners and managers respectively. The participants' responses to this issue are contained in sections 6 and 7 and will be highlighted to both organisations for their consideration.
- 4.5 The issues involved in CCB and in strengthening CCB practice are varied and can be complex, and whilst the support programme is welcomed, it is anticipated that further work will be required to continue support for this area of practice. As such participants were invited to identify key messages for decision makers/policy makers in taking forward this agenda. These are contained within the key issues arising from the programme section of the report.

## 5. The support programme

5.1 The programme had a number of strands which included:

- A publication: The Guide to Community Capacity Building Resource Materials, which brings together frameworks, tools and other materials that, may be helpful for community learning and development practitioners in taking forward their role in building community capacity. An introductory guide was also produced and distributed to participants.
- A learning resource
- A practice development network
- A conference and workshop programme
- A library (held at SCDC) of the key capacity building resources

5.2 The national guide is split into seven sections and contains details of how to access the resources, costs, key audiences and comments/analysis on uses. The seven sections are:

**Section one** covers the general resources for community capacity building, including both general introductions to and overviews of capacity building and collections of resources that cover a wide field

**Section two: Skills confidence and activity** describes the resources that support people to be confident, skilled and active members of the community.

**Section three: Active and influential communities:** covers the resources that support communities to be active and to have more influence

**Section four: Effective, resourced community organisations:** includes the resources that support community organisations to get access to resources and deliver services effectively

**Section five: Planning, management and assessment:** includes the resources that help community organisations plan, manage and assess their work effectively.

**Section six: Inclusion and involvement:** covers the resources that support community organisations to include a wide range of people in their work.

**Section seven: Networking and sustainability:** includes the resources that support productive networks and relationships.

5.3 Three learning guides were developed for the workshops and formed the basis for the development support offered. They referred to relevant documents in the Resource Guide, and provided summaries, exercises and frameworks designed to assist users with the following:

- *Understanding community capacity building: its purpose, its outcomes and its link to policy*
- *Planning for community organisation development and capacity building*
- *Forming and developing effective community organisations*
- *Accessing and using capacity building support*
- *Achieving change*
- *Sustaining change*
- *Strategic planning, policy and management: issues for CLD agencies*
- *Issues for community groups, organisations and networks*

5.4 All the resources referred to in the Resource Guide are available (by appointment) for reference purposes at SCDC, either in printed or online form. A website area will provide links to the online resources, and will update the resource guide with new references as they become available.

The key resources were available for inspection and reference at each of the events.

5.5 The practice and learning exchange was proposed to participants and promoted discussion on whether this would be desired and worthwhile.

## 6. The conference and workshop programme

6.1 The support programme comprised four related but distinct learning events, each of them offered three times in different venues across Scotland – three national conferences and nine themed workshops. The national conferences were designed for up to 120 participants and the workshops for 30 participants.

The support programme was advertised widely through SCDC, Learning Connections, SCDN and CLDMS networks, and the total number of participants registered for attendance was 332. In the event, a smaller

number attended events (200) and two of the three conferences (Aviemore and Dunfermline) were cancelled due to a low level of interest.

The Glasgow conference had 76 registered participants with 49 attending, and whilst the workshops also fell below the numbers registered, these had a better ratio between those registered and those attending than the conference. This may reflect timing: the conferences were to be held in mid-January, or it may reflect a greater interest in the more practical application of the resources offered at the workshops. The summary of attendance is attached as appendix 2.

6.2 The Glasgow conference entitled 'Strengthening Scotland's Communities' was held on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2008 and aimed to encourage greater attention being given to community capacity building, and to demonstrate how the Resource Guide and Learning framework may be used to improve practice and the impact of practice. The event was designed to:

- Define and describe community capacity building and why it is important
- Introduce the Resource Guide and the Learning resource
- Encourage networking to share information and experience on CCB, approaches, impacts and issues
- Introduce the practice development workshops

6.3 The nine workshops were held between January and April 2008 in the following areas:

16 January 2008	Avimore
23 January 2008	Dunfermline
6 February 2008	Paisley
13 February 2008	Ayr
20 February 2008	Falkirk
27 February 2008	Dundee
5 March 2008	Edinburgh
12 March 2008	Inverness
19 March 2008	Aberdeen

6.4 Additional workshops were also delivered in Glasgow, Dundee, Paisley and Inverness as requested by local managers in these areas due to a higher level of demand. The programmes were altered to focus on the local context for CCB. These comprised:

28 <sup>th</sup> March, 15 <sup>th</sup> April, 13 <sup>th</sup> May	Glasgow
9 <sup>th</sup> /16 <sup>th</sup> /30 <sup>th</sup> May	Dundee
19 <sup>th</sup> Feb, 14 <sup>th</sup> March, 28 <sup>th</sup> May	Paisley
29 <sup>th</sup> May	Inverness

6.5 The three themed workshops were designed for the three key target audiences as follows:

### **Planning a CCB strategy**

This workshop was designed primarily for managers or senior staff in CLD or other sectors responsible for taking forward a capacity building strategy – either at authority-wide level in a community planning context, at organisational level for community/voluntary organisations, or at local level when planning a capacity building plan for a locality or interest area. The workshop covered:

- Assessment of needs and issues in relation to CCB
- Linking capacity building to engagement and community planning
- Identifying capacity building resources and supports
- Reviewing the components of a capacity building strategy

### **Achieving community change**

This practitioner / community organisation workshop focused on the ways communities can best prepare their case for change, build alliances and support, develop strategies for change and sustain change. It was primarily for community organisations and practitioners working with them. Preference was given to 'pairs' of activist and worker. The ground covered included:

- Assessing needs and issues
- Assessing community strengths and weaknesses
- Building alliances
- Researching, preparing and presenting a case
- Advocating and negotiating

### **Effective community organisations**

These practitioner / community organisation workshop started with the question of what makes for an effective and credible community organisation. It looked at issues of leadership, learning, representation, influence, sustainability and impact. Ground covered included the above, and was substantially informed by the National Standards for Community Engagement:

- Maximising community involvement and accountability
- Engaging excluded groups
- Working together and working with others
- Planning and purpose
- Learning lessons and feeding in

- 6.6 An annotated programme for each of the workshops was tailored for the practice areas to be covered and these are available on the SCDC website. These include the programmes, themes to be covered and details of the exercises used with participants. The presentations for each workshop are also available on the website as they correspond with the programme themes

and tasks based on specific resources. They can be sent out on request. Whilst each were different, the following aspects were common:

- Introduction to and purpose of the workshop
- Why a focus on capacity building?
- Workshop outcomes
- Presentation on key policy references and definitions of community capacity building & community engagement
- Use of exercises and group discussions on the themes
- Introducing key resources
- Introducing the resource guide
- Key issues and developments
- Is a practice exchange network desirable?
- What further support is required?

6.7 Following the delivery of the initial workshops, the programmes were amended if necessary to include any emerging issues which could facilitate future discussions, and as there were a number of participants attending more than one workshop, there was a need to reduce any duplication between workshops, particularly within the presentations and exercises used.

6.8 Evaluations were collected for all of the events. Participants were asked to score on a scale of 1 – 5, ranging from 5, excellent to 1, unsatisfactory. The conference and workshops were positively evaluated. The aggregated evaluation data demonstrates the following scores;

<i>Interesting and informative</i>	<b>4</b>
<i>Relevant to my own work or activity</i>	<b>4.2</b>
<i>Likely to make a difference to how things are done locally</i>	<b>3.5</b>
<i>Got the message to the right people</i>	<b>3.5</b>
<i>Well organised</i>	<b>4.1</b>

The lower scores for 'likely to make a difference to how things get done locally' and 'get the message to the right people' may be due to many factors, however based on discussions during the events it may reflect perceptions on how CCB is undervalued and misunderstood among other decision makers not represented at the events themselves. This is congruent with the reasons for the support programme being put in place.

6.9 The breakdown of participants was as follows:

<i>Community learning and development manager</i>	30 (20%)
<i>Community learning and development worker</i>	44 (29%)
<i>Other staff of local authority or public body</i>	45 (30%)
<i>Other staff of voluntary or community group</i>	19 (13%)
<i>Volunteer, activist or community representative</i>	12 (8%)

There was clearly an under representation from community activists which is disappointing, and it may be appropriate to further emphasise the importance of workers facilitating their attendance as 'pairs' at future events. This combined with more targeted publicity materials may result in a greater number attending future events.

It is worthy of note that the largest single grouping was 'other staff of local authority or public body'. This signals that CCB is of concern to a wide range of interests across the public sector, and that this should be acknowledged. It also signifies the importance of those working within a CLD environment to work collaboratively with other professional and departmental colleagues.

Full evaluations with added comments are attached as appendix 4 and commentary on the feedback from evaluations are included in section 7.

## **7. Key issues arising from the support programme**

7.1 Reactions to the workshop and conference programme, noted in discussions during the events and on evaluation forms completed by participants, can be grouped into the following themes.

### **7.2 *Attention to CCB***

Participants have welcomed the attention being given to CCB through the workshop programme. They noted that, despite being one of the three national priorities for community learning and development, less attention had been given to supporting practice in the area, than in the other priority areas of adult learning and work with young people. Similarly, more attention had been given to improving community engagement practice than CCB, despite community engagement being dependent on communities with the capacity to engage if it is to be successful. There was a general acknowledgement that the outcomes of capacity building work to date had not been as impressive compared to the other two CLD priorities, with most community learning and development partnerships having focused attention on other areas of provision. Indeed, the provision of services, rather than supporting the development of communities and groups were seen as having been the primary focus of CLD activity in recent years. Although a significant number of participants in the workshop programme had 'community capacity building' in their job title or remit, few had been on previous training or development activities

### **7.3 *Permission and authority***

Relating to the above point, a number of participants, especially those who had worked in the field for some years, welcomed the workshops in so far as they were felt to give practitioners 'permission' to develop work in the CCB area. Participants were generally of the view that capacity building should be more firmly rooted at the core of CLD activities, and should also underpin work with young people and with adult learners. The workshops gave some

authority to this view and encouragement to managers seeking to shift agency priorities towards the capacity building agenda.

#### **7.4 *Link to engagement***

The relationship between community capacity and community engagement was noted above. At a planning and management level there was some debate about the role of CLD in working to build the capacity of communities to engage effectively and on a more equal footing with other partners in the community planning process. It was noted that community planning structures should be more aware of the importance of building community capacity to engage, and that while CLD may be expected to play a leading role in this, it should be an area of development that a wide range of partners should support and encourage, and not only the business of CLD.

#### **7.5 *Link to empowerment***

As the workshop programme was being delivered, the report on the consultations on community empowerment was published. SCDC built in references to the CoSLA / Scottish Government concordat and the national performance framework into the programme. In relation to both the emerging debate on empowerment, and the outcome that 'we have strong, resilient and supportive communities, where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others', investment in CCB was recognised as essential if such outcomes are to be realised.

#### **7.6 *Link to other approaches and programmes***

Despite the widespread international trawl for resource materials relevant to CCB, SCDC found that in developing the workshop programme we drew most heavily on established frameworks already familiar to a CLD audience. Many of the assessment tools were based on the new LEAP for CLD framework, while the National Standards for Community Engagement formed a reference point, particularly in relation to the 'Effective Community Organisations' workshop. We also drew on findings emerging from the concurrent programme on outcome-focused practice in CLD, which itself had workshop sessions on the status of CCB and the way the relevant outcomes could be achieved. Other materials that were drawn on significantly were the three publications on community capacity building written by Skinner and Wilson and published by CDF. We had to look more widely, in particular to the United States, for useful material on micro-level practice. The difficulty in designing the workshops with a stated intention of drawing on recommended materials was that the context, language and purpose of the relevant material were quite varied and not readily available in one place.

#### **7.7 *A Scottish CCB resource and framework***

The issue identified above led to calls for a single, accessible, Scottish-based framework for CCB to be produced. Such a framework could be rooted in a Scottish policy and practice context, could address the gaps identified in the earlier literature search and review, and achieve a greater consistency in its approach and terminology. It would be more clearly 'owned' by Scottish

interests and could act as a 'hook' to engage a wider range of potential interests in understanding and supporting capacity building efforts. The materials developed through the course of the programme could act as a basis for developing such a framework.

#### **7.8 Practice development and the absence of basic CD capacity**

There was some discussion in the workshops of approaches to providing and managing capacity building practice. It was recognised that a wide range of agencies are in a position to offer capacity building support, either on particular skills or knowledge areas, or in relation to the needs of particular interest groups. A workshop in Paisley identified over 25 agencies that could provide such support locally. However, there was poor information about what was available, on what terms, to whom, and little activity to seek to establish a more strategic and coherent approach between the agencies concerned.

Various approaches to delivery of capacity building support exist, with some CLD agencies having established teams with a focus on CCB work, with others adopting a more generic approach. Much of the service however, appeared to focus on working with established community groups and networks, rather than seeking to support the basic groundwork of community work: contacting people, building awareness of needs and issues and forming groups or networks to take up issues. This absence of basic community work intervention was seen as a significant gap in the approach. Equally, a model of work with established groups and organisations to help them review their progress, address weaknesses and issues, and support further development either at critical stages, or on an annual basis, seemed to be absent. Both these findings suggest that more work could be done to set out practice models and encourage a more consistent application of these.

#### **7.9 Resourcing community capacity**

The programme has been delivered at a time when there was a considerable degree of uncertainty about the future sources of financial and development support to community initiatives. The Community Regeneration Fund (CRF) and Community Voices (CV) funds were drawing to a close, while the new Fairer Scotland Fund was yet to be introduced. The Big Lottery Fund had yet to launch its capacity building fund under the Dynamic Inclusive Communities theme, while the Scottish Community Action Research Fund – which now offers capacity building support as well as grants for community-led research - was closed to new applications. The anomaly of working on CCB issues at a time when some of the significant sources of funding support to communities were vulnerable was noted. It would be helpful if future work on CCB practice could be linked more directly to any available funding streams for this purpose.

## **8. Key issues arising from the 'Supporting outcome focussed practice in CLD programme'**

- 8.1 There were a number of issues raised within this programme related to CCB which are congruent with the issues above and will be useful in considering any future support.
- 8.2 Despite the policy and guidance, there remains a degree of uncertainty about precisely what CCB work is seen as encompassing. Different interpretations exist within and between agencies and between them and communities. Of particular concern were:
- Meanings attached to the term empowerment
  - Differences between approaches to CCB based on deficit versus asset development models
  - A need for CLD practitioners to articulate their understanding of CCB more clearly and confidently
- 8.3 In relation to what we are building capacity for, central to the debate was a concern about the extent which agencies may seek to build community capacity in their own interests rather than for the benefit of communities and their priorities. Whilst capacity for community engagement was seen as important it was feared that it was sometimes seen as the sole focus for CCB. It was noted that CCB was commonly and appropriately related to national outcomes but should not be seen as driven by them.
- 8.4 CCB was recognised as needing to address skills, competence and confidence of community organisations and representatives in relation to conduct all aspects of the cycle of change from need assessment, through outcome identification, programme planning and implementation, to evaluation and review.
- 8.5 CCB like all aspects of CLD needs to be conducted with a commitment to tackling disadvantage and achieving social justice. Further consideration needs to be given to ensuring CCB resources are appropriately targeted.
- 8.6 Further consideration of outcome measurement in relation to CCB needs to take account of the long time scales over which changes resulting from CCB might be observed; the degree to which the outcomes could be determined by factors beyond community control; the subjectivity of judgements about feelings of increased capacity or empowerment that might not be matched by objective evidence of tangible changes in communities.
- 8.7 There was substantial discussion of intermediate and end outcomes of CCB and of the difficulty of assessing cause and effect. It was generally felt that capacity builders should be held to account by measurement of the intermediate outcomes - development of community leaders and their organisations, but that in relation to end outcomes it is the impact of those

leaders and their groups on community needs and aspirations that should be assessed. Triangulation of evidence was seen as important - evidence of increased capacity needed to be corroborated from three perspectives; that of the CCB workers, that of the groups and organisations to whom it was addressed and that of the beneficiaries of the work conducted by them. This approach was seen as the basis for connecting intermediate to end outcomes.

- 8.8 Development of self-evaluation skills in community organisations was seen as an important dimension of building community capacity.
- 8.9 There was concern expressed from CCB practitioners and managers that, in addition to not always having a clear understanding locally of what CCB constitutes, there may be a lack of a consistent understanding nationally.
  - 8.9.1 Those concerned with the theme of CCB strongly welcomed national outcome number 11 *'We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others'*.
  - 8.9.2 It was highlighted that identifiable teams of CCB workers (or community development workers) are now a rare occurrence. Those practitioners concerned with offering a CCB 'service' can be located within several different partner agencies and, in some cases, local authority CCB workers are located within a different department to the staff working on the other CLD themes of adult learning and youth work. This can make the identification of common outcomes, strategy development, action planning and joint practice a complicated process. It can also make the gathering of evidence of impact of CLD activity on larger end outcomes more difficult.

## 9. Conclusions

- 9.1 In many respects the discussion of issues has already indicated appropriate responses. This final section highlights some of the key messages that seem to come from the discussions.
- 9.2 Part of the perceived weakness of CCB seems to be associated with the lack of a national strategic framework and the need for a funded lead agency in this area. Both deserve attention. Though identified as a national priority within WALT the evidence is that CCB is not getting equivalent attention to the other national priorities, yet in terms of the aspirations of government policy to stimulate community empowerment and a more participatory style of democracy, this is an apparent contradiction.
- 9.3 As a starting point in any activity it is essential that the competences of those charged with its delivery are up to the challenge. The discussion of issues suggests that there remains some doubt about whether this is always the case. There is little doubt therefore that greater attention needs to be given to developing and articulating a robust practice theory for CCB in Scotland

and to providing opportunities for development and enhancement of the required skills at qualifying and continuing professional development levels.

- 9.4 In relation to development of the theory of CCB practice, the discussions have highlighted the need to develop a much clearer perspective on the relationship between CCB as a tool for local empowerment and its contribution to national strategic outcomes. There is also a need to better understand the relationship between intermediary and end outcomes of the CCB process. Though there are perceived issues relating to interpretation of the descriptions of CCB outcomes as articulated for example in 'Delivering Change' and 'How Good is Our Community Learning and Development' the more fundamental problem seems to lie not in understanding what CCB is trying to achieve but in appreciating how to do it effectively. In several discussions, for example, attention was drawn to the growing recognition of the potential of asset based, social economy practice as a means of underpinning community capacity. Social enterprises such as community trusts were seen as having the potential to underpin a self sustaining process of community capacity building in which the growing competence residing within communities could be tapped to build wider community capacity. Yet, despite this recognition, there was an apparent lack of confidence that, typically, CLD workers had the skills and knowledge effectively to promote such models of practice. It is in such areas that the development of a more robust and widely understood theory of the practice of CCB is required. This debate also adds a wider dimension to the need to enhance qualifying and post qualifying training opportunities.

## **10. Recommendations**

- 10.1 Within the practice of CCB work the discussions highlight specific areas for attention. These have been categorised below.

### **10.2.1 National policy level**

- developing a national strategy for CCB;
- supporting a national development agency for CCB;

### **10.2.2 Local partnership/policy level (Community Planning Partnerships and Community Learning and Development Partnerships)**

- developing strategic collaboration on CCB between partner agencies
- addressing the place of CCB as an element of community planning and single outcome agreements
- developing the relationship between CCB activity within CLD and the emerging empowering communities agenda of the Scottish Government
- developing better understanding and more effective collaborative working with elected members in relation to CCB

### 10.2.3 Training

- auditing the competences of the training providers to develop effective qualifying and continuing professional development in relation to CCB;
- developing a curriculum framework for CCB training;

### 10.2.4 Focus on CCB outcomes

- developing understanding of the relationship between intermediate and end outcomes of CCB;
- ensuring the focus, conduct and outcomes of CCB are developed in a manner that is compatible with the core values of CLD, in particular its commitment to equalities and social justice;
- finding the appropriate balance between community derived outcomes and those set in national and local policy;
- designing need-led CCB initiatives to respond to the diversity of communities and their aspirations, giving particular attention to excluded and under-represented groups and targeting resources accordingly;
- ensuring that the assessment of the impact of CLD in CCB is based on the benefit that community and voluntary organisations can be shown to have gained from that input in terms of skills, competence and confidence;
- recognising the different stages of change process to which CCB needs to be applied and developing capacity in communities that run through from need assessment, to outcome identification, action planning and implementation, monitoring, review and evaluation;

### 10.2.5 Practice/skills development

- developing a more robust practice theory of CCB in Scotland based on evidence from systematic participatory evaluation;
- developing skills to assess the level and character of CCB intervention that is appropriate;
- investing in training and strategic development that enables CCB practitioners to drawing on tools that have been demonstrated to be beneficial in day to day CCB practice, most notably 'LEAP' and 'Delivering Change';
- increasing attention and developing skills for asset based and social economy approaches to capacity building

### 10.2.6 Resourcing CCB

- adequately resourcing of CCB practice;
- not just supporting established community organisations but building new capacity in unorganised communities;

10.3 From the discussion above, the key considerations to address in taking forward development support for community capacity building should include the following:

- a) At practice / community level
  - a. Extension of the programme of workshops for practitioners and community organisation
  - b. Development of a curriculum / practice framework to set out key issues and options at each stage of the development process
  - c. Events to share learning and support needs across Scotland, either in the form of a learning programme or through existing national organisations such as SCDN or CLDMS
- b) At community planning and service delivery level
  - a. widening the spread to other CLD / CPP partners
  - b. addressing service support strategies
- c) At policy level
  - a. need for a core document or framework to enhance understanding, ownership and practice in CCB across all CLD and CPP stakeholders
  - b. more explicit connection to engagement and empowerment, the national performance framework and Single Outcome Agreements
  - c. enhancing the links between CCB and other policy areas

10.4 The recommendations for the above support will provide a focus for four key audiences: community activists/representatives; CCB practitioners; CPP and CLDPs; and potentially elected members. They represent the range of views and suggestions expressed by participants and build on the previous work to strengthen CCB practice through a variety of programmes. Specifically the development of a core CCB framework which relates to current Scottish policy such as the national performance framework and Concordat would address the issues raised around greater understanding of CCB among a variety of stakeholders, which has an effect on resource allocation, strategic development, and general support for CCB. It would also support the development of skills among practitioners to strengthen practice, recognising that the range of skills among the current CCB workforce can vary enormously and that a common framework would provide a basis for a more consistent approach to CCB.

10.5 In light of the evidence, we believe that there is a need to:

- consolidate and build on the impact of the established frameworks – particularly the National Standards and the recently revised LEAP for CLD
- develop a new resource and practice framework to fill the gaps in CCB identified above.
- Continue to offer a workshop programme to managers, practitioners and community organisations
- Work with CLDPs to assist a more strategic approach to assessing and coordinating agency support to CCB

- I0.6** SCDC has maintained contact with CLDMS over the course of the programme, and will seek to confirm whether these findings are consistent with their continuing work to improve capacity building work in CLD.

**Appendix 1 Strengthening Scotland's Communities – No's of participants (excluding additional events noted in 6.4 except 19 Feb Paisley event)**

Date	Event	Location	Registered Participants	Actual Participants	Evaluations Received
15 January 2008	Strengthening Scotland's Communities Briefing	Aviemore	2	0	0
16 January 2008	Planning a Community Capacity Building Strategy	Aviemore	10	8	8
22 January 2008	Strengthening Scotland's Communities Briefing	Dunfermline	14	0	0
23 January 2008	Planning a Community Capacity Building Strategy	Dunfermline	26	22	18
30 January 2008	Strengthening Scotland's Communities Briefing	Glasgow	76	49	22
06 February 2008	Planning a Community Capacity Building Strategy	Paisley	25	19	17
13 February 2008	Achieving Community Change	Ayr	30	15	15
19 February 2008	Planning a Community Capacity Building Strategy	Paisley	15	6	4
20 February 2008	Effective Community Organisations	Grangemouth	31	22	18
27 February 2008	Achieving Community Change	Dundee	26	20	17
05 March 2008	Effective Community Organisations	Edinburgh	30	10	10
12 March 2008	Achieving Community Change	Inverness	17	15	10
19 March 2008	Effective Community Organisations	Aberdeen	30	16	14
<b>TOTAL</b>			332	200	153

## Appendix 2 Event evaluations

### Strengthening Scotland's Communities Planning a Community Capacity Building Strategy

16 January 2008 – MacDonald Highland Resort, Aviemore  
**Evaluation Form**

8 Evaluations Returned

<b>1. Please rate the following:</b> (5 = excellent, 1 = poor)	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Interesting and informative	2	5	1	0	0	<b>4.2</b>
Relevant to my own work or activity	2	4	2	0	0	<b>4</b>
Likely to help make a difference to how things are done locally	0	5	3	0	0	<b>3.6</b>
Got the message to the right people	1	5	2	0	0	<b>3.9</b>
Well organised	2	6	0	0	0	<b>4.3</b>

**2. How would you describe your own position?** (please tick one):

Community learning / development manager 6  
 Other staff of local authority or public body 1  
 Other staff of voluntary or community group 1

**3. Have you attended any previous events / training relating to the community capacity building?**

Yes 4  
 No 4

- Not within past 10 years
- HICCAP connecting training provided to community groups
- CLDMS Seminar, Glenrothes, May 2007

**4. Please describe one new action that you will try to take as a result of what you have discussed and learnt today**

- Share the resources now aware of with colleagues involved in CCB
- Work with assessing community capacity matrix values (although not necessarily in a matrix format)
- Encourage the CLD Manager to hold CCB training for grassroots staff and partners
- Identify CCB remit workers in NSN, city council to look at assessment

- Look at TP strategy being developed and how points discussed are transferable to housing. Encourage TP national organisations to link with SCR for staff/TPO training
- I will be more confident in speaking about the role of capacity building in general rather than within youth/adult work

**5. Other comments (please continue overleaf if necessary):**

- Useful and enjoyable day
- Could have had better attendance by disseminating the information through other channels other than e-bulletin. Hard mailing to CVS and other organisations would have yielded more people
- More active session after lunch to prevent 'sleepy factor' setting in
- Inverness a more convenient venue for Highland and Moray Councils
- More work / information required on capacity building

## Strengthening Scotland's Communities Planning a Community Capacity Building Strategy

**23 January 2008 – Business Learning & Conference Centre, Dunfermline  
Evaluation Form**

18 Evaluations Returned

<b>1. Please rate the following:</b> (5 = excellent, 1 = poor)	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Interesting and informative	4	14	0	0	0	<b>4.2</b>
Relevant to my own work or activity	10	6	2	0	0	<b>4.4</b>
Likely to help make a difference to how things are done locally	2	9	6	1	0	<b>3.7</b>
Got the message to the right people	2	10	6	0	0	<b>3.8</b>
Well organised	8	10	0	0	0	<b>4.4</b>

**2. How would you describe your own position?** (please tick one):

Community learning / development manager    7  
 Community learning/ development worker    1  
 Other staff of local authority or public body    8  
 Other staff of voluntary or community group    3

**3. Have you attended any previous events / training relating to the community capacity building?**

Yes    11  
 No    7

**4. Please describe one new action that you will try to take as a result of what you have discussed and learnt today**

- Introducing the motivation / capacity / opportunity grid to colleagues
- Use LEAP
- Presentation to senior capacity building workers re: links between community agent and capacity building – visioning outcomes and indicators in community engagement
- Share with CCB colleagues
- Do sample CCB assessment
- Making use of the template to reach a better understanding of involved groups and to identify whether their journey to achieving something requires a range of approaches
- Assessing community not only via SIMD etc
- Assessing community needs matrix to begin to form CCB strategy
- Share it

- Clearer understanding will hopefully feed into various aspects of my work
- Discriminate resources available to colleagues
- Look to develop / commission an agency to develop strategies for Scotland on capacity development
- Grids
- Give more thought to meaningfully engaging people and to producing a plan for the community project being undertaken
- Assessments

**5. Other comments (please continue overleaf if necessary):**

- Opportunity to reflect importance of planning and evaluation, indicators, assess to improve / strengthen practice
- Thought provoking debates and discussions
- Very good overall but less time covering some of the background and more on discussion would have been good
- Room too hot, air conditioning too noisy
- Important content
- Thank you for a good day
- Could lead to a second, more hands on day
- Should have moved the groups around more
- The matrix assessment exercise too complicated and unclear
- Is there scope for “taking CCB to the community”?

## Strengthening Scotland's Communities Strengthening Scotland's Communities Briefing

**30 January 2008 – Teacher Building, Glasgow  
Evaluation Form**

22 Evaluations Returned

<b>1. Please rate the following: (5 = excellent, 1 = poor)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Interesting and informative	2	10	10	0	0	<b>3.6</b>
Relevant to my own work or activity	5	13	4	0	0	<b>4</b>
Likely to help make a difference to how things are done locally	1	6	8	7	0	<b>3</b>
Got the message to the right people	1	8	6	7	0	<b>3.1</b>
Well organised	7	11	4	0	0	<b>4.1</b>

**2. How would you describe your own position?** (please tick one):

Community learning / development manager    3  
 Community learning/ development worker    9  
 Other staff of local authority or public body    9  
 Other staff of voluntary or community group    1

**3. Have you attended any previous events / training relating to the community capacity building?**

Yes    9  
 No    13

- Previous SCDC / SCDN events
- Generally put off by the jargon

**4. Please describe one new action that you will try to take as a result of what you have discussed and learnt today**

- Try and find the time to read more resources on building community capacity
- Disseminate resources information to working with communities staff and students
- Run these events in Glasgow and will consider following those
- Will be meeting locally with community planning to have a discussion about increasing resources for community capacity building work
- Will use some of the resources with a local youth forum and disseminate the link for the resource handbook throughout East Ayrshire CLD
- Discuss strategy with colleagues in Aberdeen

- Use the information with regards to resources that would be useful tools for my organisation
- Get more involved with community activities
- I'm still doing it – never stopped
- Share information with managers, team, CPP, raise profile within area
- Try to take forward some joint training initiatives
- Simplify things for the community e.g. jargon
- This is all new to me, I feel I have learned that there are many resources out there which I could implement in our group
- Greater use of references / research available
- Address capacity building relative to community councils and the Scottish Government's developing agenda for them
- Compile list of relevant resources for distribution to community councils in Glasgow re: capacity building
- Re-examine different elements of capacity building / engagement / empowerment
- Inform my team by feedback from the event
- Hard to say – approaches to coordinating efforts

#### **5. Other comments (please continue overleaf if necessary):**

- Key actions are about how we reinforce the concept of CCB amongst relevant partners in terms of community engagement and wider work also argument needs to be made politically for long-term sustainable resources for CCB
- Very enjoyable day and a good opportunity to discuss community capacity and community work with other professionals and activists – thanks
- 10am – very dry delivery, 10:15am – very dry delivery, sometimes confusing, very woolly, 10:40am – far too short, very little time for discussion, not very productive, 12pm – a look at resources, very dry delivery could have been done in a shorter period of time, Clarity for a Change – very welcome development, long time coming, 1:45pm – effective community organisations, really enjoyed we have more time to share views / ideas. I really do not mean for this to be a negative evaluation and I realise all the effort that has gone into today however, people were actually working out during the morning session which I found rude (very). I know many of the subjects under discussion can be very dry and academic but I feel this is an area that has to be improved if we mean to engage with practitioners in the field. If this had been delivered in the community we could have lost half the audience we are trying to engage with. Sorry about this but I feel I have to be honest
- The session in the morning could have been longer, it finished too soon
- The list of resources could have been given to use in a handout, took too long
- Community development needs to be a department within council in its own right with multi-national forums for workers. There needs to be unity of purpose we seem to be all things to all people – one hymn book

- Good event for networking, often the best bit. Seem to have these debates time and time again. Need to build confidence i.e. belief in what we do – its value / benefits etc
- Good event, just concerns me how we turn task into action that benefits communities
- Very interesting, but still a tad confused. Look forward to the clarity document
- I felt the agenda items could have been covered in a morning session rather than full day conference
- Well presented and informative
- More discussion / debate / information on the topic of outcome evaluation of capacity building activity? One for the (near) future?
- Very worthwhile event – you should do this more often
- Useful ... but disappointed at lack of mention of critical area of measuring monitoring capacity and thus the effectiveness of CCB effort
- I felt that the presentations were too long particularly the resource section, it was boring
- Worth promoting this for NHS managers to give them an understanding and clarity of community capacity building

## Strengthening Scotland's Communities Planning a Community Capacity Building Strategy

**6 February 2008 – The Wynd Centre, Paisley  
Evaluation Form**

17 Evaluations Returned

<b>1. Please rate the following:</b> (5 = excellent, 1 = poor)	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Interesting and informative	3	13	1	0	0	<b>4.1</b>
Relevant to my own work or activity	3	12	2	0	0	<b>4</b>
Likely to help make a difference to how things are done locally	0	9	8	0	0	<b>3.5</b>
Got the message to the right people	2	9	6	0	0	<b>3.8</b>
Well organised	3	13	1	0	0	<b>4.1</b>

**2. How would you describe your own position?** (please tick one):

Community learning / development manager    6  
 Community learning/ development worker    3  
 Other staff of local authority or public body    6  
 Other staff of voluntary or community group    1

**3. Have you attended any previous events / training relating to the community capacity building?**

Yes    10  
 No    7

- If you mean this series of SCDC events – no
- Strengthening Scotland's Communities Briefing
- National conference in Glasgow

**4. Please describe one new action that you will try to take as a result of what you have discussed and learnt today**

- Purchase and read Strengthening Communities, Assessing Community Strengths and Skills in Neighbourhood Work. Then put the theory in practice with local community, team and partners
- Share information with team / managers. Use some of exercises used today e.g. matrix in developing team work plan (includes capacity building)
- Getting more community involved in the process of understanding the meaning of capacity building
- Involve local CLD strategy group
- Order and use the publications discussed

- Find out and meet who the CLD staff are that cover my area. I am part of a new team and haven't had any contact yet
- Find out what community representation there is on the capacity building strategy group for my organisation
- Plan capacity building plan with the community residents on the groups I support
- Purchase resources – available to other agency members
- Compiling "knowledge bank" of resources to distribute to community councils
- Ensure Glasgow CCB action plan has a neighbourhood focus
- Determine the value of preparation of a CCB plan in relation to community council capacity
- Matrix
- A bottom-up approach focus
- Engage with colleague who deals with community research
- I will take the lead in introducing the CCB and CE dialogue into CLD partnership
- Ensure allocate time to reading relevant information / research

**5. Other comments (please continue overleaf if necessary):**

- Well organised and informative training. Good discussion – idea of practice exchange a welcome one
- Locally – CCB Officers have unclear remits – part managing community centre and they do too much for the local management group thus disempowering them. Need to have clearer definition and guidance
- Appreciate the chance to consider theory and practice issues – thanks
- Must have been good as it generates real discussion. For me it was very informative and made me think that I need to think more about CCB
- Well done
- More material to take away would've been useful i.e. LEAP manuals
- Lack of plates for food! Also, not clear what was vegetarian or not
- Few powerpoint presentations
- I found the day helpful and interesting. I do feel however the intended participants were managers and seniors. This was not the case and I wonder whether this influenced the nature of discussion. I would have really enjoyed the chance to talk to other people who have a similar role

## Strengthening Scotland's Communities Achieving Community Change

**13 February 2008 – John Pollock Centre, Ayr  
Evaluation Form**

15 Evaluations Returned

<b>1. Please rate the following:</b> (5 = excellent, 1 = poor)	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Interesting and informative	5	6	3	1	0	<b>4</b>
Relevant to my own work or activity	4	10	1	0	0	<b>4.2</b>
Likely to help make a difference to how things are done locally	2	7	4	2	0	<b>3.6</b>
Got the message to the right people	2	5	3	1	4	<b>3</b>
Well organised	4	5	5	1	0	<b>3.8</b>

**2. How would you describe your own position?** (please tick one):

Community learning / development manager	1
Community learning/ development worker	7
Other staff of local authority or public body	3
Other staff of voluntary or community group	1
Volunteer, activist or community representative	3

**3. Have you attended any previous events / training relating to the community capacity building?**

Yes 5  
No 9

- Two of the other seminars in this series
- CVS and community development team

**4. Please describe one new action that you will try to take as a result of what you have discussed and learnt today**

- Try using one of the tools in the Achieving Community Change booklet
- Utilise some of the tools in own setting – team and with community groups
- Very helpful in providing tools to help me reflect on how I might approach things
- I can bring most of the information to help our organisation
- Support Ashgill TRA to go through planning exercise using some of the available resources
- Networking – build on relationships started today / learn from other people's work

- Use problem analysis worksheet to action plan within partners at compact level
- Implement this in my work with groups
- One thing I would use is tool 4
- Better communication with local community
- All of it was useful
- Use tool 2
- I hope to adopt the tools for assessing needs and taking action within my own practice
- Plan actions to get response from the media

##### **5. Other comments (please continue overleaf if necessary):**

- I feel there would have been few community activists who would have benefited from today, but it was worthwhile for those activists who could keep up and the workers motivated to cascade to respective teams. I certainly benefited from the day, thanks and well done
- Always good to meet other workers and activists from other areas to share ideas and experiences
- National Guidance / Driver re: capacity building as a priority!
- Excellent – thank you
- Thank you
- Task 2: tool 3 – could be made clearer i.e. project / investigation – may help to use a different structure
- Possibly “Training for Trainers” – community member could not get it (one of the tools) – how will this be addressed?
- One-off workshops – what is the outcome and sustainability of this training?
- Really interesting. Highlights a lot of challenges – shines a light
- Cold food? Could have been better – with hot soup etc
- Would like to have seen other departments / agencies that are / should be involved within the community
- You need to bring staff that will be working with communities to these events so they understand where the community is coming from – not development staff
- I felt this session was a bit too academic for community activists in general. Less box-filling and more discussion may have been more beneficial. The session is possibly preaching to the converted in terms of qualified workers. It would be better aimed at partners other than CLD i.e. planning, housing, health board, police etc. In my experience, representatives of these agencies have no idea what a community development approach is, and use terms like capacity building frequently without knowing how to achieve it. There is also too much focus on building the capacity of the community – assuming that every member of every community needs help – and not enough of building the skills of the partners to enable them to engage effectively!

- The tools / models for planning and evaluating provide a very clear checklist but I don't feel the scenario takes into account the time it often takes groups, to form good working relationships within their own community organisations. The working tools provide a good checklist for action but more often than not, encouraging people to create organised and effective groups is a very slow process. I don't think today's training is aimed at 'new activists'

## Strengthening Scotland's Communities Planning a Community Capacity Building Strategy

**19 February 2008 – Abercorn Conference Centre, Paisley  
Evaluation Form**

4 Evaluations Returned

<b>1. Please rate the following:</b> (5 = excellent, 1 = poor)	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Interesting and informative	0	3	1	0	0	<b>3.8</b>
Relevant to my own work or activity	1	3	0	0	0	<b>4.3</b>
Likely to help make a difference to how things are done locally	0	3	1	0	0	<b>3.8</b>
Got the message to the right people	1	2	1	0	0	<b>4</b>
Well organised	1	3	0	0	0	<b>4.3</b>

**2. How would you describe your own position?** (please tick one):

Community learning / development manager    2  
 Community learning/ development worker    1  
 Other staff of voluntary or community group    1

**3. Have you attended any previous events / training relating to the community capacity building?**

Yes    2  
 No    2

**4. Please describe one new action that you will try to take as a result of what you have discussed and learnt today**

- Start to slow down and get groups to reflect more often
- Assessment matrix and clarity for a change
- Focus on capacity building will be explicit in next year's service plan
- Re-read Skinner and Wilson. Use matrix

**5. Other comments (please continue overleaf if necessary):**

- Very enjoyable and relevant discussion
- Enjoyable and useful event

## Strengthening Scotland's Communities Effective Community Organisations

**20 February 2008 – Municipal Chambers, Grangemouth  
Evaluation Form**

18 Evaluations Returned

<b>1. Please rate the following:</b> (5 = excellent, 1 = poor)	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Interesting and informative	5	10	3	0	0	<b>4.1</b>
Relevant to my own work or activity	6	11	0	1	0	<b>4.2</b>
Likely to help make a difference to how things are done locally	2	6	8	1	1	<b>3.4</b>
Got the message to the right people	0	6	9	2	1	<b>3.1</b>
Well organised	5	8	4	1	0	<b>3.9</b>

**2. How would you describe your own position?** (please tick one):

Community learning / development manager	3
Community learning/ development worker	8
Other staff of local authority or public body	3
Other staff of voluntary or community group	2
Volunteer, activist or community representative	2

**3. Have you attended any previous events / training relating to the community capacity building?**

Yes 12  
No 6

- The one in Ayr last week
- Limited within authority
- LEAP and ABCD – deliver for the voluntary sector

**4. Please describe one new action that you will try to take as a result of what you have discussed and learnt today**

- Obtain National Standards for Community Engagement and Setting Up For Success book to show colleagues and community partners
- Look at who needs this and attempt to contract it
- Happy to try using the stakeholder analysis tool
- I am going to map existing local capacity builders and networks. Perhaps even set up local practitioners groups
- I will work to improve our community engagement
- Share practice with colleagues / groups

- Revisit LEAP
- Read the material taken away – share with colleagues
- Become more involved in community development rather than community learning
- Develop some of the LEAP tools – look at the National Standards
- Investigate new tools highlighted – especially Setting Up For Success. Through discussions, have ideas for development day running next week
- Be clear about the purpose of a group and look at the membership
- Link into SCDN – feedback to local networks
- Incorporate content into future policy development
- Focus more on our aims and why we are working for the community in which we represent. Share and pass on our learning skills
- Use of stakeholder analysis in project planning

#### **5. Other comments (please continue overleaf if necessary):**

- Only one volunteer / community participants gave valuable comment in group
- Need to review benefits of some of the workshops and what organisations get out of it. Felt some were very good, others were weak. Almost need to separate courses – one for community sector and other for voluntary sector
- Although I scored you low on getting the message to the right people, it was a brave effort. I'd suggest to better engage service users / community activists, sessions like this be broken down more over a few sessions and have community project showcases so workers / activists can be encouraged from each others successes and practical experiences from them can be related directly to the learning outcomes from this session. Well done and thanks
- Task 2 – unclear and took some time to get starting. Change wording
- Very interesting and informative
- Great opportunity for networking
- Too much information in time given
- I felt the content of the programme looked at many issues involving communities in Scotland. Excellent facilitating. Good resources available. I have learned a lot from today and will use this in my work in the centre
- Course was very good / well organised but pre-course information very poor. Was supposed to attend other event last week, information did not arrive saying I had a place till day after event.

## Strengthening Scotland's Communities Achieving Community Change

**27 February 2008 – West Park Conference Centre, Dundee  
Evaluation Form**

17 Evaluations Returned

<b>1. Please rate the following:</b> (5 = excellent, 1 = poor)	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Interesting and informative	2	11	2	1	0	<b>3.9</b>
Relevant to my own work or activity	5	11	0	0	0	<b>4.3</b>
Likely to help make a difference to how things are done locally	0	10	6	0	1	<b>3.5</b>
Got the message to the right people	1	7	6	1	0	<b>3.5</b>
Well organised	3	8	3	1	0	<b>3.9</b>

**2. How would you describe your own position?** (please tick one):

Community learning / development manager	1
Community learning/ development worker	8
Other staff of local authority or public body	3
Other staff of voluntary or community group	2
Volunteer, activist or community representative	3

**3. Have you attended any previous events / training relating to the community capacity building?**

Yes 12  
No 4

- Grangemouth – effective communities

**4. Please describe one new action that you will try to take as a result of what you have discussed and learnt today**

- Be more focussed in my work with community groups. Much of the discussion today will help with this
- Identify different stakeholders in a project to develop on re-habilitation project with community for drug users
- Problem analysis
- Some of the analysis tools and the investigation plan
- Try to use the investigation plan (in part) to find out how some community groups feel about certain issues
- We will definitely look more closely at the materials and very likely to use parts of it in planning

- Might use the tables practised
- Consult / liaise
- None
- Use investigation plan and analysis in tools 2 and 3
- Think about target, how to reach them and the impact it will have
- Try more paperwork – see the importance
- Use the tools in an aspect of my work – analyse an area of work using methods today
- Be more methodical, remember to communicate
- Use the matrix chart with a group I am working with

**5. Other comments (please continue overleaf if necessary):**

- A really good, useful, practical day – thank you
- A lot to take in over one day but once I have read the resources it will become clear
- I think these seminars have been immensely helpful. I think some die-hard community workers get bogged down, stuck in a rut, with what they usually do – not open minded enough themselves
- It might have been good to keep the representatives / workers / managers mixed in groups so each can hear the different views
- Could have used the groups in a more integrated manner
- All the information given will be useful in my work. It is time that community capacity building had same relevant focus to help train staff and to sharpen work practice. Good opportunity to network

## Strengthening Scotland's Communities Effective Community Organisations

**5 March 2008 – The Melting Pot, Edinburgh  
Evaluation Form**

10 Evaluations Returned

<b>1. Please rate the following:</b> (5 = excellent, 1 = poor)	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Interesting and informative	2	6	2	0	0	<b>4</b>
Relevant to my own work or activity	5	4	1	0	0	<b>4.4</b>
Likely to help make a difference to how things are done locally	2	2	3	3	0	<b>3.3</b>
Got the message to the right people	2	2	4	2	0	<b>3.4</b>
Well organised	4	6	0	0	0	<b>4.4</b>

**2. How would you describe your own position?** (please tick one):

Community learning / development manager	1
Community learning/ development worker	2
Other staff of local authority or public body	3
Other staff of voluntary or community group	3
Volunteer, activist or community representative	1

**3. Have you attended any previous events / training relating to the community capacity building?**

Yes 5  
No 5

**4. Please describe one new action that you will try to take as a result of what you have discussed and learnt today**

- Will reinforce importance of community engagement when working with groups
- Continue to evaluate – keep journal of work
- Report to CPP recommending that work begins on establishing a CCB Improvement Strategy, to sit alongside Community Engagement Strategy
- To use information / learning from today to reflect on community capacity building / community development element of my role and to plan how I will develop this part of my role and who I need to link with etc
- To build in more time for planning and evaluation and using certain tools
- Prioritising evaluation

- Share content with manager, colleagues and with East CLD team colleagues in the process of reorganising CLD provision post organisational review
- Look up some of the references – before today I was unaware of these available resources

**5. Other comments (please continue overleaf if necessary):**

- Practitioners network to share practice – a good idea
- Really informative day
- Very interesting day
- Very full day
- Need to attract more CLD workers and community organisations in localities to advance understanding and make impact at a local level
- I'm not sure today would have been of benefit to activists as it was very practitioner-orientated. Maybe there should be an event specifically aimed at activists

## Strengthening Scotland's Communities Achieving Community Change

**12 March 2008 – Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Inverness  
Evaluation Form**

10 Evaluations Returned

<b>1. Please rate the following:</b> (5 = excellent, 1 = poor)	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Interesting and informative	0	10	0	0	0	<b>4</b>
Relevant to my own work or activity	3	4	3	0	0	<b>4</b>
Likely to help make a difference to how things are done locally	2	5	3	0	0	<b>3.9</b>
Got the message to the right people	0	8	2	0	0	<b>3.8</b>
Well organised	0	8	2	0	0	<b>3.8</b>

**2. How would you describe your own position?** (please tick one):

Community learning / development manager	1
Community learning/ development worker	1
Other staff of local authority or public body	4
Other staff of voluntary or community group	2
Volunteer, activist or community representative	2

**3. Have you attended any previous events / training relating to the community capacity building?**

Yes 2  
No 8

**4. Please describe one new action that you will try to take as a result of what you have discussed and learnt today**

- Adapt resources to use with community groups
- Toolkits to research and apply to work
- Find out about SCARF for our environmental education neighbourhood investigation of learning needs
- Use tools to plan work
- The toolkit will be going into use right away with the check list as an evaluation tool
- Building up the community we live in
- Discuss with the forum I work with about doing action research with SCARF
- Information sharing within the projects I work with
- I intend to use a variety of tools suggested i.e. 'issue-based' to promote change and develop community working in my local area

**5. Other comments (please continue overleaf if necessary):**

- Well paced, good mix of organisations
- Would like more on how to work with the community on a practical level
- Many thanks for a very enjoyable session – lots to think about
- A good useful event. Sorry I couldn't stay right to the end. Very useful for me to focus on community development rather than community learning. Difficult to book onto
- Representation from youth work groups would be beneficial
- I would have been interested in using other 'real' examples of community work i.e. one that worked and why, one that didn't work and why? Perhaps if people had prepared an example that was real – we have used this example called 'action learning' in other groups

## Strengthening Scotland's Communities Effective Community Organisations

**19 March 2008 – Aberdeen Foyer, Aberdeen  
Evaluation Form**

14 Evaluations Returned

<b>1. Please rate the following:</b> (5 = excellent, 1 = poor)	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Interesting and informative	3	11	0	0	0	<b>4.2</b>
Relevant to my own work or activity	2	12	0	0	0	<b>4.1</b>
Likely to help make a difference to how things are done locally	0	8	5	0	0	<b>3.6</b>
Got the message to the right people	0	6	6	1	0	<b>3.4</b>
Well organised	4	10	0	0	0	<b>4.3</b>

**2. How would you describe your own position?** (please tick one):

Community learning / development manager	2
Community learning/ development worker	4
Other staff of local authority or public body	5
Other staff of voluntary or community group	2
Volunteer, activist or community representative	1

**3. Have you attended any previous events / training relating to the community capacity building?**

Yes 6  
No 5

- Achieving community change
- Standards for Community Engagement
- Some years ago – helpful to look at this again

**4. Please describe one new action that you will try to take as a result of what you have discussed and learnt today**

- Use LEAP
- Definitely look at online resources
- Discuss the training with colleagues
- Help research 'issues' before jumping into LEAP
- Looking further into the online resources and investigating how I can use them in my own practice
- As a new member of staff I shall check out the website for other information
- Using stakeholders assessment matrix

- Keep plugging away to support individuals and community groups to make a real difference in the things that affect them – helping communities to have a more effective voice
- Will use stakeholders analysis tool
- I have been made more aware of processes
- Reflect on the planning process when working with groups
- Too look at pieces of my work and apply stakeholder analysis

**5. Other comments (please continue overleaf if necessary):**

- Groups should be mixed and rotated for each task to also enable networking
- I found the first task useful as an introduction to what CCB is
- Valuable to keep drawing distinction between community engagement, CCB and community development
- Very informative and enjoyable
- Excellent venue
- To provide training opportunities for lead/chief officers in the major agencies on the same topics. Involve grassroot workers and community members e.g. presenting good practice and joining in the discussion – could be fun
  - To push for appropriate evidence capture e.g. learning
  - Next community planning conference to be lead and facilitated by community
- Venue very good
- Very well facilitated
- Very useful, stimulating
- Good to network with workers from areas I don't normally meet up with
- More suitable for professionals – a bit too technical for a lot of volunteers so needs to be made more user-friendly for them
- The session was very relevant to me as a worker however, I wonder if volunteers were comfortable with all the jargon and references to policies. Maybe it is worth having a session for volunteers that takes a bit more time to check understanding of jargon and also looks at what volunteers feel would best support their groups. Today practitioners were engaging verbally within this workshop but some said nothing – were they overwhelmed volunteers?
- Useful sharing experience



- Good to meet others from different areas and find out a bit more of what and how they are delivering community work. A lot to get through in one day but was interesting and useful
- Limited networking / information sharing opportunities due to small numbers in attendance

## Strengthening Scotland's Communities Overall Programme

159 Evaluations Returned

<b>1. Please rate the following:</b> (5 = excellent, 1 = poor)	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Interesting and informative	34	101	24	2	0	<b>4</b>
Relevant to my own work or activity	50	92	15	1	0	<b>4.2</b>
Likely to help make a difference to how things are done locally	12	74	58	14	2	<b>3.5</b>
Got the message to the right people	13	72	51	15	5	<b>3.5</b>
Well organised	44	93	19	3	0	<b>4.1</b>

**2. How would you describe your own position?** (please tick one):

Community learning / development manager	32
Community learning/ development worker	48
Other staff of local authority or public body	45
Other staff of voluntary or community group	19
Volunteer, activist or community representative	12

## **Appendix 3 Briefing paper from 'Supporting outcomes focused practice in CLD support programme**

### **DISCUSSION PAPER**

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#### **Community Capacity Building**

#### **A Scottish Government Discussion Paper Resulting from a Programme Supporting Outcome-Focused Practice in Community Learning and Development**

Learning Connections is part of the Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate of the Scottish Government. It carries responsibility for supporting the development and implementation of policy and practice in relation to Community Learning and Development (CLD).

This discussion paper is one of three separate papers written as part of the supporting outcome-focused practice support programme funded by the Scottish Government and delivered to Community Learning and Development Partnerships (CLDPs) from November 2008 to May 2009. The support programme was instigated by Learning Connections in the recognition that, against a backdrop of a national context for outcome based practice, some CLDPs still face challenges in embedding an outcomes focus into their work and that effective outcome-focused practice in CLD is inconsistent across Scotland.

The programme was delivered by a consortium of YouthLink Scotland, Linked Work And Training Trust (LWTT) and Avanté Consulting, led by the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC).

The discussion papers concentrate on each of the three themes of community learning and development – achievement through learning for adults, achievement through learning for young people and community capacity building. Each paper sets out the current context for each area of work, the key challenges and issues facing strategists, managers and practitioners and recommendations for developing effective outcome-focused practice.

The content of the discussion papers reflects the dialogue between participants at the workshops held throughout the support programme as part of the regional seminars and as part of the local support programme. The recommendations contain some additional reflective commentary by the support agencies - the Scottish Community Development Centre, YouthLink Scotland, Linked Work and Training Trust and Avanté Consulting.

The papers are intended to be used by strategic managers and champions of CLD to reflect on practice, facilitate continued dialogue at a local level and to develop a strategic approach to supporting outcome-focused practice in CLD.

## **1.0 Current Climate/Context**

- 1.1 Achievement of change through building community capacity is one of the three national priorities for community learning and development identified in the 'Working and Learning Together to Build Stronger Communities' (WALT 2004) guidance from the Scottish Executive. Compared to the other national priorities; achievement through learning for adults and achievement through learning for young people, community capacity building (CCB) has been seen as less well developed.
- 1.2 CCB was identified by the Senior Chief HMIE at Learning Connections 2007 conference as the area of CLD needing most attention. This observation reflected particular weakness identified in this aspect of practice in 'Improving Scottish Education 2002-05' (HMIE) which expressed concern about 'the effectiveness of processes to evaluate the impact of community capacity building'.
- 1.3 These concerns were given further credence in the results of the Learning Connections CLD Work Force Survey (2007). This reported that of 2258 full time equivalent CLD staff just 13.7 % (309 FTE) were described as CCB focused with a further 19.1% described as generic in their practice. Assuming equal division of time between national priorities for generic workers, this would give a maximum total of only 20% of CLD time focused on CCB in 2007. This combined with the earlier research findings indicate that CCB is the weakest of the three national priorities for CLD and the establishment of a national CCB programme is an important step in attempting to address some of the issues relating to CCB policy and practice development.
- 1.4 In February 2008 the Scottish Government and COSLA established a Concordat setting out the terms of a new relationship between local authorities and Scottish Government. A central proposal was the creation of a Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) between each Council and the Scottish Government, based on 15 key national outcomes agreed in the Concordat. The national outcomes reflect the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework. One of the 15 national outcomes is 'We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.' This outcome relates directly to community capacity building and presents an opportunity for developing local capacity buildings outcomes in response.
- 1.5 In tandem with the development of the new Concordat, the Scottish Government carried out a national consultation on ways in which to empower communities. The results of the community empowerment consultation have now been published and Scottish Government representatives summarising findings have noted that; 'Empowerment processes should be led by the community and communities must want to empower themselves ... but supporting communities is critical'. A national working group has been set up between the Scottish Government and COSLA to take forward the community empowerment agenda. This

juxtaposition of the importance of community control but the need, simultaneously, for capacity building support suggests that CCB is set to remain an important aspect of public policy and the practices of community learning and development.

- 1.6 Community capacity building remains one of the three national priorities for CLD and, as community capacity, community engagement and community empowerment are emergent and interdependent national priorities, it is particularly important that the level of priority given to CCB is maintained and enhanced through the work of CLDPs.

## **2.0 Definition of Community Capacity Building (CCB)**

- 2.1 In describing the three national CLD priorities the WALT guidance presents CCB as national priority three in the following manner:

*'Achievement through building community capacity: Building community capacity and influence by enabling individuals, groups and communities to develop the confidence, understanding and skills required to influence decision making and service delivery. This could include enabling communities to provide and manage services to meet community needs.'*

- 2.2 Later the WALT document notes:

“Community learning and development has an essential role to play in giving communities the confidence and skills they need to engage effectively with community planning. This will enable communities to have a real influence over the planning, delivery and quality of mainstream services, as well as specific initiatives such as those aimed at achieving community regeneration and social inclusion.”

- 2.3 The two quotations above indicate that CCB has a range of purposes. It relates both to the ability of communities to develop services for themselves and to influence public policy and practice that affects community interests. This is equally reflected in the observation in the HMIE report 'Improving Scottish Education 2002-05' which observes: 'Community capacity building normally involves programmes of training information and support to enable local people to engage with local and wider issues and to deliver services.'

CCB is therefore associated both with the capacity of communities to become involved effectively in community engagement opportunities and with independent capacity to respond to their own needs and, where necessary, campaign on issues that affect community well-being. CCB is both a functional element of participatory governance and an essential component of developing and sustaining strong social capital.

2.4 It is also clear that the government views CLD as an activity targeted at closing the inequalities gap in Scottish society and that CCB is geared to this broad outcome. Hence WALT also states:

‘We see community learning and development as a key tool in delivering our commitment to social justice. We want Community Planning Partnerships to target their CLD capacity to support strategies and activities aimed at closing the opportunity gap, achieving social justice and encouraging community regeneration.’

2.5 The following definition of community capacity building is adopted as part of the Glossary of Terms in ‘Delivering Change – understanding the outcomes of community learning and development’ (Learning Connections 2007). CCB is: “Development work that strengthens the ability of community organisations and groups to build their structures, systems, people and skills so that they are better able to define and achieve their objectives and engage in consultation and planning, manage community projects and take part in partnerships and community enterprises. It includes aspects of training, organisational and personal development and resource building, organised and planned in a self-conscious manner, reflecting the principles of empowerment and equality.”  
(Skinner S: ‘Building Community Strengths’ CDF 1997)

2.6 The outcomes headings of CCB identified in ‘Delivering Change – Understanding Outcomes of CLD’ (Learning Connections 2007) are:

- ‘CLD supports people to be confident, skilled and active community members.
- CLD supports communities to be active and have more influence.
- CLD supports community organisations to access resources and to deliver services effectively.
- CLD helps community organisations to plan, manage and assess their work effectively
- CLD support community organisations to include a wide range of people in their work
- CLD supports productive networks and relationships’

2.7 These statements are consistent with the expectations of CCB set by HMIE.

2.8 Delivering Change and HGIOCLD2 set out clear guidance on the range of outcomes for Community Capacity Building through the work of CLDPs which demonstrate clear linkages with the national outcome concerned with creating ‘strong, resilient and supportive communities’. Both frameworks provide an important resource for supporting outcome-focussed practice in community capacity building through CLD and for locating local CCB work within a national context.

### 3.0 Cross cutting issues

Although there are some policy and practice issues pertinent only to community capacity building, youth work and adult learning it was evidenced that there are some issues which cut across all three themes.

#### 3.1 *Confusion about terminology and ability to measure outcomes*

Participants felt that there is now an 'outcome industry' (not just within CLD) which makes outcome-based practice more complicated and confusing than necessary. Outcomes/outputs/milestones/impact: just some of the myriad of terms which are often used interchangeably but with different meanings in different contexts. A lack of consistency is apparent in how outcomes are measured. This is partly due to a range of stakeholders such as HMle, CLD Partnerships and funders asking for different information

#### 3.2 *Working within an 'output' culture*

Within the majority of organisations there is still a culture of focusing on outputs and not outcomes. Many staff are working to output driven work plans through the process of Best Value Reviews and are under pressure from elected members for quantifiable results.

#### 3.3 *Capacity*

The issue of capacity was raised frequently – capacity in terms of numbers of staff and capacity in terms of skills and resources. It was noted that pre and post qualifying training does not equip CLD staff to enter into practice with a developed understanding and/or ability to engage in outcome-focussed practice. The make-up of the Youth Work profession being mostly volunteers and sessional staff at delivery level, makes outcome based practice a particular challenge. Within the theme of capacity building it was highlighted that there is a need to 'Build the capacity of the capacity builders'.

#### 3.4 *Working within new national and local outcomes frameworks*

Participants generally welcomed the establishment of the national performance framework and the Concordat between Scottish Government and local authorities and viewed this as positive for CLD in terms of being able to identify and set strategic local outcomes more effectively. Community Capacity Builders, Youth Workers and Adult Literacy and Numeracy practitioners could identify clear links to one or more of the national outcomes but Community Based Adult Learning (CBAL) staff were concerned that CBAL did not fit directly with any of the 15 national outcomes. It was agreed that CLDPs should continue to work strategically as key members of Community Planning Partnerships, promoting the place of CLD outcomes as key elements of community planning and contributors to single outcome agreements.

#### 3.5 *The core values of CLD*

It was highlighted throughout the support programme that CLDPs should ensure that the focus, conduct and outcomes of CLD are developed in a

manner that is compatible its core values, in particular its commitment to equalities and social justice.

#### **4.0 Community Capacity Building**

The issues pertinent to the theme of community capacity building are outlined as follows:

##### **4.1 Interpretation of the meaning of community capacity building**

- 4.1.1 The lack of a common interpretation of CCB is a fundamental issue – without clear interpretation of the purpose and nature of CCB it is difficult to enter into participatory practice in identifying and articulating meaningful outcomes which are understood by all stakeholders and relevant to all stakeholders.
- 4.1.2 Despite the guidance set out within the supporting frameworks of Delivering Change and HGIOCLD2 there are still some diverse interpretations of what CCB constitutes both within CLD and amongst its partner organisations. This was evidenced by the discussions taking place within the support programme around concerns about the interpretation of the language of CCB. The same language was seen as potentially meaning different things to different stakeholders and partners, e.g. the term empowerment. On one hand empowerment could be interpreted as supporting independent community action but on the other it could be interpreted as encouraging community involvement within prescribed parameters.
- 4.1.3 Another significant concern related to differences of approaches to CCB. Some CCB support is orientated in a deficit perspective, i.e. providing support and services to compensate for an identified lack and some CCB support is focused on an asset based approach, i.e. as a means of enhancing community competencies and building community strengths. There was strong preference for an asset based approach but an anxiety that this was not always shared by colleagues or partners.
- 4.1.4 It was in the context of these debates that the question was raised: 'Are we explicit enough about what "we" mean by CCB?' The "we" in question was CLD practitioners and the view was expressed that there is a need to have more confidence in promoting and acting on the *values and competences* of CLD that are given endorsement and legitimacy in policy.

##### **4.2 Community capacity building and community engagement**

- 4.2.1 An area of debate within the support programme was the degree to which CCB was seen primarily as directed towards building community skills to engage with public agencies on agency's terms and in relation to agency priorities. One discussion recorded a concern about 'focusing effort on building community representation on formal groups and structures for the purposes of community engagement to the detriment of building and strengthening the community's own organisations and structures'.

Participants in the support programme more broadly debated whether CCB is about building capacity to engage with agencies or about building capacity to participate more widely.

- 4.2.2 There was broad agreement that community engagement and community capacity building are not mutually exclusive - there was a commonly expressed view that CCB should build strengths to engage with national and local policy debate so long as that debate related directly to matters that were of importance to communities themselves. It was identified however that related *outcomes* for CCB in community engagement require to be clearly articulated and that those process (or intermediate) outcomes should be clearly linked to wider local and national outcomes on strong supportive communities.

### **4.3 Whose outcomes?**

- 4.3.1 A subtle but important distinction was made between 'directing the activities of community groups to the achievement of particular national targets' and 'supporting communities that seek outcomes that are compatible with national priorities'. Central to the debate was the question: 'should CLD assert the independence of communities and empower people and communities on their own terms?' Generally speaking the answer to this was yes, but that was not seen as meaning that communities would not want to engage with government in relation to national or local priorities.
- 4.3.2 The task of CLD was not seen as colonising or manipulating community groups but enabling them to pursue their goals, recognising that these are frequently compatible with the wider policy frameworks and national outcome priorities. In this context CCB was commonly related to national outcomes but not seen as driven by them.

### **4.4 Complexities within community capacity building**

- 4.4.1 A further debate about what we are building community capacity for related to the stage of the development of communities and community organisations. It was recognised that capacity needs to be in place to conduct all aspects of the cycle of change from need assessment, through to outcome identification, programme planning and implementation, to evaluation and review.
- 4.4.2 There was some concern that there could be greater CCB strengths at particular parts of the cycle and that appropriate outcomes need to be set for each stage, e.g. if the community is to participate fully as a key stakeholder within the process of needs assessment then outcomes require to be set that will directly relate to identification, interpretation and articulation of need.

4.4.3 At the other end of the scale, there was, for example, some concern about competencies to address business and management skills for service delivery within the growing commitment to social economy approaches.

4.4.4 It was recognised that communities are inherently complex in terms of physicality, demographics, degrees of deprivation, community politics and degrees and complexity of needs of groups and individuals within communities. The complexity of the task of developing meaningful and relevant community capacity building outcomes relates directly to the complexity of the specific community context and therefore there needs to be recognition that those different settings present challenges in setting outcomes and indicators for CCB.

#### **4.5 Community capacity building – setting priorities**

4.5.1 A common issue for participants concerned the determination of priorities for capacity building. The commitment of CLD to social justice and closing the opportunity gap was clearly reflected in the discussion but challenges in selecting priorities remained.

4.5.2 The key question was posed in the following way; ‘How do we target support - to demand or need; to the already able and represented or those not yet involved?’

These dilemmas are not peculiar to CCB practice but they remain a cause for concern. Measured by the added value of the input, it will frequently be the case that CCB support to those who are already well motivated and focused may be much more cost efficient and effective than working with those who are not, yet it is likely that the latter will be more disadvantaged. In this climate particular concern was expressed that currently CCB does not give enough attention to ‘unorganised communities’; to ‘young people’; to ‘equalities groups’. Such groups were seen as particularly excluded from local democracy.

4.5.3 It was recognised that neighbourhood work in unorganised communities is a reducing area of work which requires attention at both strategic and practice levels. In relation to this, discussions around priority setting also focused on resourcing, both in financial and staffing terms. Participants reflected that ‘We need the capacity building resources to be available to build the organisation of communities from scratch but are seeing reduction in direct community work services in areas and for groups that are not already organised’.

4.5.4 A direct consequence of this rationing of resources was reflected in the comment; ‘The time involved and the pace of groups and communities doesn’t fit external deadlines’. As a result there may be a tendency to focus CCB outcomes on those with already developed competences and whose interests are known to coincide with those of agencies, for example those

developing services like breakfast clubs that add value to national priorities in areas like child care.

- 4.5.5 It was generally agreed that the focusing of CCB activities on 'unorganised communities' requires concentration on a different set of outcomes compared to those outcomes relevant to increasing the capacity of an existing organisation or community structure.

#### **4.6 Measuring community capacity building**

- 4.6.1 The discussions around the complexities of CCB and the need for clear priorities highlighted issues around measurement of outcomes. Clarity about the purposes and character of CCB is an essential prerequisite for effective performance measurement. Different interpretations lead to different measurement criteria. Hence the frequent question; 'what evidence are we seeking to gather?'
- 4.6.2 The debate on measurement generated several different but compatible responses. In one discussion the following question was posed; 'are we measuring impact of community led work on agencies agendas or the other way round?' It was argued that it was appropriate for CCB to be measured in terms of what it delivers for both communities and for agencies. It was suggested that; 'we need to be able address the relationship between the micro level outcomes of CCB in particular communities and their aggregation into evidence of impact at the macro level'.
- 4.6.3 A common concern was that 'identifying CCB outcomes can be difficult'. This was felt to be a reflection of several factors: the long time scales over which changes resulting from CCB might be observed; the degree to which the outcomes could be determined by factors beyond community control; the subjectivity of judgements about feelings of increased capacity or empowerment that might not be matched by objective evidence of tangible changes in communities. Reflection on such factors engendered extensive discussion about the importance of considering what 'Delivering Change' has described as intermediate versus end outcomes.
- 4.6.4 Within the discussions of intermediate and end outcomes a clear distinction was drawn between measurement of the competences, skills and confidence of individual community leaders and their organisations and measurement of the impact that such individuals and organisations have in tackling specific community problems or achieving community aspirations. The former were defined as intermediate outcomes and the latter as end outcomes.
- 4.6.5 Participants in one discussion a group stated that; 'The end outcomes for communities relate to the work of the community groups but the measurement of progress of CCB relates to the skills, competences, confidence of the group which are intermediate outcomes. i.e. a key

evaluation task is to measure capacity outcomes that can be directly traced to the input of the capacity builders’.

- 4.6.6 Another group argued that as there will be a range of variables that can impact on whether end outcomes are achieved; ‘Capacity builders should not be held to account for variables beyond their influence’. However, some participants took that view that; ‘Nonetheless, there is a need to show a connection between capacity outcomes and wider results and to demonstrate that the capacity that is built leads to changes that are compatible with and enhance the national outcomes framework i.e. the process of CCB can be shown to contribute to nationally agreed outcomes as well as local outcomes and those of particular communities’. It was widely recognised that there was a need to; ‘Clearly appreciate the relationship between intermediate and end outcomes’.
- 4.6.7 In the context of an exploration of sources of evidence for the impact of CCB it was noted in one discussion that: ‘we need to recognise that it is often other people than the capacity builders who hold data that indicates the wider impacts of CCB processes and this information needs to be accessed’. This discussion reinforced the importance of CCB being conducted in a partnership context that could enable access to relevant performance data.
- 4.6.8 Finally, in the context of measuring CCB, attention was given to the need to; ‘help groups develop skills to measure their own performance’. In part this discussion reflected the view that the end outcomes of CCB might not be achieved in short time frames and that it was necessary for communities to take responsibility for evaluation of events occurring beyond the reach and knowledge of the capacity builders. However, it also reflected a common view that a culture of evaluation based learning for action is itself a key capacity that should be built in community organisations.

#### **4.7 Community capacity building skills**

- 4.7.1 Participants observed that the complexities of CCB were, in their view, greater than those of adult learning or youth work but that this was not recognised in training. There was a commonly held view that there was a need to ‘build the capacity of the capacity builders’ and it was felt to need significant attention at qualifying and post-qualifying levels.
- 4.7.2 It was observed that CCB sometimes seemed longer on theory than action, thus any skills development programme needs to give attention to ensuring outcomes that directly build community strengths.
- 4.7.3 There was speculation that the apparent lack of commitment to resourcing CCB in financial and skills terms might be a reflection of the absence of a national strategy in this area compared with those developed for adult learning and youth work. It suggested that there needed to be a national strategy and that there also needed to be a recognised and funded ‘national CD/CCB’ agency to support developing outcome-focussed practice.

#### **4.8 Community capacity building and partnership working**

- 4.8.1 CCB is now a clear priority for a range of CLD partners but there was recognition that there are differentials in perspectives and competences amongst managers and practitioners. Identifiable teams of CCB workers are increasingly rare as, in the current climate, workers with a CCB focus and remit are located within several different agencies and local authority departments. Observations were made about the need for integrated cross agency CCB strategies; in particular for attention to this in the context of collaboration through community planning.
- 4.8.2 The question of partnership based CCB practice often addressed the overlapping roles that different agencies played in relation to common policies. Of particular interest here was the place that CCB and CCB outcomes would have in Single Outcome Agreements.
- 4.8.3 In several discussions attention was given to the particular relationship of CCB to elected members. In a 'best case scenario' this was seen as being a partnership relationship but in practice there was frequent concern about the quality of the relationship and understanding among elected members of the role of CCB.
- 4.8.4 CCB was often viewed as inevitably 'political' in nature and hence liable at times to be seen as leading to tensions between community and elected member priorities. The debate recognised the huge potential for enhancing local democracy and positive relationships with elected representatives, but it also noted the potential for challenge and dispute.

#### **5.0 Responding to the Issues**

This final section highlights some of the key messages that come from the discussions. The responsibility for responding to the issues lies with strategists and managers at both national and local levels.

##### **5.1 Recommended actions for Community Learning and Development Partnerships**

- 5.1.1 CLDPs need to continue to develop strategic collaboration on CCB between partner agencies and to maximise the skills, knowledge and experience of all key stakeholders at a local level. Strategic collaboration will result in a common understanding of the task of building community capacity, the identification and articulation of common outcomes, the avoidance of silos of activity and the prioritisation of gaps to be addressed.
- 5.1.2 CLDPs should seek to develop a clear understanding, on behalf of all partners, of the relationship between the intermediate and end outcomes of CCB and should seek to clearly articulate and link CLD activity within a local intermediate and end outcomes framework.

- 5.1.3 In order to reach a better understanding of the impact on CLD on shared outcomes CLDPs should seek to adopt a continuous learning cycle through the use of practice frameworks such as LEAP. Greater attention to performance evaluation and measurement and sharing of the lessons drawn from it will result in more effective practice. Sharing such evidence is a key to learning and therefore CLDPs should be prepared to work with colleagues across Scotland on highlighting areas and examples of good practice.
- 5.1.4 Although there are a number of national policy directives, research findings and statistical data in place on the needs of groups and individuals in Scottish society, greater attention needs to be given to the process of assessing needs at a local community level, engaging in participatory practice with the community as a key stakeholder in the needs assessment process.
- 5.1.5 CLDPs need to work closely to design need-led CCB initiatives and develop associated outcomes that respond to the diversity of their communities and their aspirations, giving particular attention to excluded and under-represented groups and targeting resources accordingly; not just supporting established community organisations but building new capacity in unorganised communities. CLDPs need to find the appropriate balance between community derived outcomes and those set in national and local policy.
- 5.1.6 When developing an outcome-focussed approach to CCB, CLDPs should recognise the different stages of the process of change to which CCB needs to be applied and develop capacity in communities that runs through from need assessment, to outcome identification, action planning and implementation, monitoring, review and evaluation.
- 5.1.7 CLDPs should ensure that the focus, conduct and outcomes of CCB are developed in a manner that is compatible with the core values of CLD, in particular its commitment to equalities and social justice.
- 5.1.8 CLDPs should continue to work strategically as a key member of the Community Planning Partnership promoting the place of CCB outcomes as key elements of community planning and contributors to single outcome agreements.

## **5.2 Recommended actions for CLD Managers**

- 5.2.1 CLD Managers should invest in training and strategic development that enables CCB practitioners to draw on tools that have been demonstrated to be beneficial in day to day CCB practice, most notably 'LEAP' and 'Delivering Change'.
- 5.2.2 They should encourage the continuous development of an outcome-focussed culture by embedding a robust system for participatory outcome-focussed planning within CLD teams, activities and projects.

- 5.2.3 A commitment to the importance of embedding a participatory outcome-focussed culture should be underpinned by allowing time and resources to be allocated to the planning process.
- 5.2.4 CLD Managers should invest in developing their awareness of valuable approaches to outcome-focussed practice adopted elsewhere in Scotland and beyond and filter this knowledge through CLD teams and partnerships.
- 5.2.5 CLD Managers should seek to develop enhanced understanding and more effective collaborative working practices with elected members in relation to CCB through structured dialogue.
- 5.2.6 Increasing attention should be given to developing skills within CLD teams for asset based social economy approaches to capacity building.

### **5.3 Recommended Actions for Policy Makers**

- 5.3.1 CCB is identified as a national priority within WALT but does not have equivalent resourcing, support or staffing to adult learning or youth work. In terms of the aspirations of government policy to stimulate community empowerment and a more participatory style of democracy, this is an apparent contradiction. If local CCB outcomes are to contribute effectively and impact significantly on the stated national outcome for strong, resilient and supportive communities, CCB should be resourced and supported in equal terms at both national and local levels to the other two priorities of adult learning and youth work.
- 5.3.2 Part of the perceived weakness of CCB seems to be associated with the lack of a national strategic framework and the need for a funded lead agency in this area. Both deserve attention. If a strategic framework for CCB practice was in place it would provide practitioners, managers and CLDPs with a tangible locus for CCB activity within a national framework and would provide evidence to partner organisations and communities that CCB activity is given credence in terms of its relationship to supporting the achievement of national outcomes. Discussions on the establishment of a strategic framework should be progressed at a national level through Scottish Government working alongside Community Learning and Development Managers Scotland (CLDMS) and the Community Development Alliance Scotland (CDAS).
- 5.3.3 Given the widespread debate on the different characteristics and complexities of CCB, greater attention needs to be given to developing and articulating a robust practice theory for CCB in Scotland and to providing opportunities for development and enhancement of the required skills at qualifying and continuing professional development levels.
- 5.3.4 In relation to skills development there is a perceived challenge for the CLD Standards Council as it becomes established and for training and support

agencies. An audit of the competences of trainers in the field of CCB may be needed. Discussion in the support programme revealed an apparent lack of confidence that mainstream CLD qualifying training agencies are delivering appropriate curricula. At present, newly qualifying workers are not equipped to enter into dialogue with communities on the subject of needs assessment and the setting of appropriate outcomes and indicators. There is a case in relation to CCB for an equivalent initiative to 'Better Community Engagement' on a curriculum for community capacity building to be developed.

## **6.0 Further Information on the support programme**

6.1 The support programme took the form of six regional events with an allocation of places for each CLDP weighted according to the size of the partnership area. The events were followed up with the offer of an allocation of support days for each area.

6.2 The outcomes of the support programme were identified as follows;

*To have identified and supported influential champions of outcome focused practice*

*To have established shared understanding of the dimension of the issues to be tackled*

*To have established connections between champions that will enable those people to continue to network with one another and promote learning exchange*

*Where local actions are already being undertaken, to have added value to these initiatives by supporting critical reflection and providing further ideas and information.*

*Where local actions are not being taken to have motivated commitment to a process of local activity that seeks to enhance understanding and competence*

6.3 It was acknowledged that the factors underlying the need for a support programme present challenges that require to be addressed over a longer timescale and that the support programme for 2007/8 would establish a baseline for further development.

6.4 The focus for the regional seminars was not to deal directly with the issues affecting outcome based practice but to engage in dialogue about the dimensions of the issues and how they might best be tackled with key leaders and practitioners.

6.5 The follow up support provided the opportunity to address the issues on a practical level by providing training and facilitated discussion.

For further information on the support programme please contact Suzanne Rennie at Learning Connections.