

I am delighted to introduce this collection of papers that capture the essence of community development work across Europe. It marks more than 25 years of networking and collaboration through the Combined European Bureau for Social Development, and now the European Community Development Network.

The examples range from responses to major displacements and crisis – in particular the paper from Ukraine on resettlement of displaced people following the Chernobyl disaster, through to long-term work in a neighbourhood of Oslo to make sustainable development a local reality, through a community development process.

In between, there are papers

- that discuss the importance of building alliance and networking;
- that discuss the issues of dealing with the impact of migration on both migrants and the neighbourhoods in which they settle
- that explain how human rights can be respected and advanced
- that highlight the advantages of co-operation between communities and government

In the papers community development is shown to work with disadvantaged groups including domestic workers, travelling people and Roma, homeless people, unemployed people, as well as all the people in a declining neighbourhood or settlement.

An important distinction is made between the achievements of communities themselves, and the role of community workers, educators and others who often play a critical role in mobilising people around shared concerns or ambitions, helping analyse situations and formulate plans for action, and providing practical, collective and personal support in the process of change – which can be challenging and demanding. Often the achievements of communities themselves are, rightly, celebrated and publicised, less often is the behind-the-scenes work of the worker acknowledged or understood. In these papers we aim to look at both.

Good community development helps people to recognise and develop their ability and potential and organise themselves to respond to the problems and needs they share. It encourages the establishment of strong communities that promote social justice and help improve the quality of community life. It also enables community and public agencies to work better together.

Community development has a set of core values and principles covering human rights, social inclusion, equality and respect for diversity; and has a well-developed skills and knowledge base. As such, it is ultimately a way of strengthening civil society by prioritising the actions and perspectives of communities in the development of social, economic and environmental policy.

It is widely accepted across Europe that public and community involvement in the design and delivery of public services is a good thing; and that communities, in particular those experiencing disadvantage and stress, need support to participate effectively.

All the papers demonstrate that community development:

- Confronts the consequences of poverty and exclusion
- Tackles inequalities in health, wealth and power and works for social and environmental justice
- Works on the priorities identified by community members
- Uses methods that involve and engage community members
- Works within a value base that promotes empowerment, equality, social justice and human rights
- Provides a collective voice
- Advocates community leadership and governance.

In the next decade there are five key interrelated challenges that Europe must address energetically and about which community development workers have something really important to say. These are:

- first, the persistence of poverty, social exclusion and growing inequality and the need to build more inclusive societies;
- second, the migration crisis and the need to ensure effective policies and programmes for integration and empowerment for migrants and refugees;
- third, the growth of racism and xenophobia and the need to more effectively ensure equality for all people and diverse groups in our societies and to recognise and celebrate difference and diversity;
- fourth, the democratic deficit at the heart of Europe where by those affected by issues feel they have no say in the policies and programmes that affect them; and
- fifth, the environmental crisis and the need to connect environmental and social justice in building a sustainable and fair future.

There is also a sixth challenge, which is to secure the future of community development itself through investment in training, development and policy.

Our stories show that community development can evidence a great track record on each of these challenges, and that community development is well-placed to respond to the same challenges in future, provided that it is properly resourced and supported.

On poverty, exclusion and inequality:

Austerity has a multiple effect on our most deprived communities: far less money coming in to families from wages and benefits; cutbacks in needed public services as municipalities have to find savings and cuts in grants and other developmental supports to communities. People working in community development have a significant role in working to establish initiatives to ameliorate the worst effects of these threats and realities.

Papers 1, 2 and 3 illustrate different responses to austerity and decline. The story from Poland shows how local people got together in a neighbourhood of decline and

disadvantage. The Swedish story describes an approach to tackling poverty and destitution by emphasizing learning, prevention and independence from the State, but which influenced government thinking and reduced the pressure on state services. The work of Community Futures in Scotland also focuses on run-down post-industrial areas, and works to build confidence and capacity, creating community plans that have attracted new investment.

On the integration and empowerment of migrants and refugees:

Many communities are diverse, with different population groups, sometimes in conflict with each other. Communities with a high turnover of people often have weak infrastructures, a weak voice, and are consequently an adverse environment in which to live. Building community networks, celebrating different cultures, and engaging actively with excluded people and groups are important elements of local level community development work.

Migrants and refugees usually find housing, contacts and supports in neighbourhoods that have traditionally operated as landing stages due to the availability of cheap housing and existing networks. It is in the interests of both the incoming community and the receiving community to make these transitions as positive as they can be, and community development can have an important role in facilitating this.

Papers 4, 5 and 6 show differing ways in which migrants can overcome isolation and prejudice, developing their own ways to engage with a new situation. In Antwerp migrants from Morocco got together to improve their housing situation, while in Scotland Roma have been supported to establish relationship with other groups and to build confidence. In Ukraine the Novy Kohorod village established a community-based form of local governance and development, where residents had been resettled from the Chernobyl disaster without attention having been paid to their needs.

On racism and xenophobia:

Papers 7, 8 and 9 also illustrate how collective action can assert and affirm human rights and overcome prejudice. Domestic workers in Ireland were isolated and exploited until they joined together to achieve recognition. The 'Dream Job' project in West Flanders, Belgium demonstrates with personal stories, how very vulnerable people who faced insurmountable barriers to finding work, were supported to challenge the prejudices of employers and wider public opinion against the unemployed. Also in Ireland, the Galway Travellers Movement notably achieved official and legal recognition as a minority ethnic group.

On democratic deficit:

At the same time as powers have drifted to the centre, governments at all levels appear to have dis-invested in supporting communities to learn and develop. Despite the interest in localism, participatory budgeting and community engagement, more robust and sustainable democratic structures are needed at more local levels if the encouragement of participation is to lead to a renewal of democracy and greater community empowerment. Community development is an effective way to start the process of building local connections and competence, so that localism is to the benefit of both the localities and their governments. A

healthy democracy has a wide range of groups, networks and organisations, both formal and informal, that link people together, provide opportunities and support, bring about change and contribute to a good quality of community life. It is an important part of community development to initiate, nurture and sustain civil society, especially in areas where there is a weak community infrastructure.

Papers 10, 11 and 12 show different ways in which community organisations and networks can achieve a clearer voice in policy and decisions. The example from Scotland is about individual projects establishing an alliance to work with government to shape decisions on community health. In Norway, participatory budgeting gives local people a real voice in local decisions and priorities, while in Romania, the Village Life project established competent organisations of Roma people, capable of improving housing conditions and rights.

On environmental and social justice

Recent years have seen the emergence of community organisations active in developing and providing needed community services and supports, running projects and activities and representing community needs and issues. Such ‘anchor’ organisations can campaign for change, set up social and community enterprises, and collaborate with public services in a way that engages and benefits their communities directly. It is an important part of the community development task to support the emergence and work of such organisations, while ensuring that they act for the benefit of the whole community and are accountable for what they do.

It has been convincingly established in the fields of public health and health improvement that communities with a good infrastructure play a critical role in people’s feeling of wellbeing and resilience, that they can control important parts of their lives and that they are not simply dependent on unreliable or inadequate public services. This ‘sense of coherence’ is important to people’s mental and physical health and recent to approaches to health improvement and tackling health inequalities are based on this thinking.

Papers 13, 14 and 15 illustrate in different ways how a focus of social and environmental justice can bring people together in creative and enjoyable ways, bringing wider benefits to their community. The example from Trondheim in Norway shows how what began with a conflict between residents and developers became a model of local democracy based on sound ecological and sustainable principles, while also in Norway a high priority is being given to adult education for sustainable development. Vegetables may not at first sight be the most obvious starting point, but the story from Zelik in Belgium shows how a focus on one thing can lead to a much wider network of activity and progress.

The final two papers, 16 and 17 concern the prospects for community development itself. The paper from Scotland explores the vulnerability to funding cuts of, in this case, a well-established organisation that had provided high quality and training and support to community activists. The final paper reminds us of the investment, resources and support that are needed if community development is to grow and consolidate. It remains a core purpose of EuCDN to advocate for this change.

All the papers demonstrate the importance of community development work in improving the conditions and opportunities for excluded or 'left behind' people. They show the advantages of citizen participation in public services in the fields of regeneration, sustainability and social justice. They help build solidarity and understanding between diverse groups, thereby contributing to security and wellbeing. They demonstrate the importance of community development in working towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals. They show that people acting together can challenge the isolationist, populist and negative views often portrayed in the media and can propose an inclusive and participative approach to achieving social justice in Europe.

The Common European Framework for Community Development established by EuCDN provides a statement of the core purpose, the values and processes, the methods, and the outcomes of community development work for both public policy and communities themselves. The papers in this collection evidence the way the framework underpins practice across Europe, and the framework includes a further eleven examples of Community development across Europe.

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Aim – community mobilization

This paper describes a process aimed at mobilizing the residents of the Leopoldowo housing estate in Włocławek to undertake activities to improve the living conditions in their local community.

The Municipal Family Assistance Center MOPR in Włocławek has been carrying out long-term and systemic work to activate the local community since 2009 through its local community organizers. The aim of the activities was to identify local leaders who, with their demeanor and commitment, influence others, engaging them to solve the most important problems of their local community. In addition, it was important to build a support network of institutional partners and change the image of Leopoldowo.

The forgotten community of Leopoldowo

Włocławek is a city of about 113 000 inhabitants. It is an area struggling with serious problems of unemployment and poverty. In the past 10 years, the largest factories in Włocławek have closed (e.g. Nobiles, Ceramika Stołowa, Fajans, Celuloza and many other smaller ones), and now “Drumet” is threatened with closure, among others. Unemployment triggers the process of impoverishment of the city’s residents, increasing the number of families with unpaid rent arrears, who are then evicted to flats of much lower housing standards. In this way, the city has created several neighborhoods that can be called “enclaves of poverty.” The residents of communities established in this way are at risk of social exclusion. One such “enclave of poverty” is the residential complex “Leopoldowo”, popularly known from its street name as “the Turn”.

The housing estate is situated on the outskirts of Włocławek, quite far from the city center – about 11 kilometers away. Most of this distance is made up of a band of forest and industrial buildings. The area does not have extensive infrastructure. The housing estate has a private grocery store, a meals distribution center of the city's canteen and an active Prevention and Education Center “Zacisze” for children from 7-14 years of age. Only one bus line connects residents with the city, the buses run relatively rarely, with no trips at all for some hours of the day. The nearest bus stop is about two kilometers away, to get there requires a walk through the woods. The residents make up a relatively small community. There are four buildings of flats at the estate, with a population of 534 people in 181 families, of which 143 (or 448 persons) receive social welfare support. This constitutes 84% of the total population.

Activation, integration, education

The first initiative launched by the local community organizers together with the residents was the “*Rainbow Housing*” project, targeted to the most devastated areas at the housing estate – damaged stairwells, common bathrooms and toilets, whose appearance scared people. The “*Rainbow Housing*” project of 2009-2011 allowed the organizers to get to know the residents, to establish relationships based on partnership.

They also were able to learn how the residents interacted with each other, find out who among them is a leader, who can be trusted, and who needs to be strengthened. On the basis of this systematically collected information, the next activities could be better planned to more effectively meet the needs of the community. Thanks to the cooperation and mobilization at the Leopoldowo housing estate, all of the stairwells and hallways were painted by the residents. City Hall supplied the paint and equipment, and the rest was done by the residents through their own work.



Young people followed the example of the adults. With their project, “*Everything to realize our dreams*”, they renovated the center serving children and built a court for beach volleyball. Thanks to the support of partners, paint and sand for the court were provided, but the youth did all the work themselves.

Activities were conducted for the youngest children, called “*The Library under the Oak*”. The public library worked with the local community, providing books and materials for crafts. Mothers, residents of the housing estate, conducted the activities and games with the children. “*Classes for little kids*” was a continuation of “*The Library under the Oak*” – meetings with small children twice a week led by a volunteer, a resident of the community (one of the mothers), where children spent their time having fun but also learning.

An important role is played by regular monthly meetings with representatives of individual buildings. These meetings have great significance for people who want to improve the living conditions of their community. They are an opportunity to attain new skills, to exchange experiences, provide mutual support, but above all, to set common goals and tasks for each month. They provide a sense of empowerment and ability to impact the surrounding reality. This is the group that organizes the festivities for Children's Day or tree planting actions. They are responsible for the improved cleanliness of the stairwells.

The residents' meetings are held at the branch office of the KIS Social Integration Club operating at the housing estate, which since September 2011, has been a strong supporter of the activities in the community. It is at KIS that classes are regularly held at the housing estate in various areas aimed at developing individuals. The residents can avail themselves of the services of: a psychologist, a therapist for persons with addictions, a family assistant for families with alcohol problems, and a pedagogue.

As part of KIS, "*Personal Development Training*" is provided. Depending on the need, specialists can provide assistance in solving a variety of everyday problems. Specialists from KIS also conduct the "*Parenting School*" to improve the competencies needed to raise children. The support that individuals are receiving is evidently translating into greater activity in society. It is also important to emphasize the primarily educational meetings, such as "*How to tame the dragon of life in the era of HIV and AIDS*" or meetings with a lawyer for all residents of the estate. One of the residents has organized a "*reference library*" at KIS, which has books acquired from collections. The library includes books for school assignments, fairy tales for children, but also some light reading for both women and men. Something interesting for everyone.

Each year, the residents of Leopoldowo organize several integration picnics for the entire community. The development of this group is most evident during the organization of these picnics, because then you can see the growing independence of the residents. Each time, the picnics are enriched with new activities thought up and implemented by the residents (trampoline, bouncy castle, pony rides, etc.). Since 2014, the local community of the housing estate with MOPR and the "*Zacisze*" Center organize a bonfire for the children and youth, and the "*Boy's holiday and baked potato*" have become a tradition.



Also, since February 2014, a youth football team exists, which represents the community in various games and tournaments. To date, the team has won three cups.

Christmas meetings have become a tradition at the housing estate, with social workers joining the residents. At a table laden with holiday food, best wishes are exchanged in the

spirit of the season. It was these meetings that inspired the organization of “*Christmas Eve at the Turn*”, which first took place in 2015. The children present an outdoor Nativity play, which they prepared earlier, and then everyone partakes in a traditional holiday meal that the residents brought.

It is important to note the fact that the activities undertaken by the residents have also improved their relations with the housing estate administration, which has begun making more serious repairs in the estate. In addition, cooperation has strengthened with a representative of the police – a community officer, as well as with representatives of other institutions, who, when they joined in the organized activities, have co-established ties, which are become more reminiscent of relationships based on partnership.



In the direction of dialogue with local city authorities

The community organizers working with residents in carrying out the planned activities are in continual dialogue with them: “*What else would you like to do, what else would you like to change, what do you need?*” From these discussions emerged the important issue of establishing a cooperative relationship with City Hall.

The priority was to organize a meeting with community residents and city authorities, and to prepare its participants for mutual dialogue. A number of meetings were held with residents to refine the details of each element of the meeting, which from the beginning to the end had to be led by the residents themselves. They started together by preparing the invitation and defining the main topics that they wanted to discuss with the Mayor. Then, much time was spent on clarifying the expectations of the residents in relation to the city authorities. After much debate, a leaflet was written with specific requests. The material developed was consulted with the community, the leaflet was posted in the stairwells. On September 22, 2015, a meeting was held at the “*Leopoldowo*” housing estate between residents and representatives of the city

authorities. To the surprise of the residents, the Mayor of Włocławek was accompanied by all of the deputy mayors, the directors of several departments, as well as representatives of the Police, the Municipal Guard and several municipal companies, including the Housing Resource Administration.

The meeting was conducted in a very cordial atmosphere. The guests were very impressed with the outcomes of the work conducted by the residents up to that time. Then, on the basis of the requests presented by the residents, with a simultaneous declaration of becoming actively involved in any work, a discussion was held, which touched upon the

various themes of defining the principles of cooperation. It was nice to hear the opinions of the municipal guard representatives, that the way residents converse with them is now completely different and that there are a lot fewer interventions in the community. The residents were very satisfied with the meeting, it was the first time they felt like partners in a dialogue. They don't expect any big changes, because no specific declarations were made. However, they have the impression that the meeting opened a door that was once closed to ways of working together. The results of this meeting influenced the subsequent decision of several housing estate leaders, namely that in 2016, they applied for funds for the first time from the 2017 Participation Budget of the City of Włocławek. This was the first practical experience in fundraising for the leaders of this community.

In addition, at the end of 2015, the community of Leopoldowo received its first warm words and complementary opinions from Włocławek residents in internet forums.

The process of change is ongoing...

The activities initiated and carried out by the local community organizers and MOPR were systematic actions directed to the entire community of Leopoldowo. The encouragement and inspiration for further activities can be seen in the increasing coherence of the residents, reflected in their sense of belonging to their neighborhood, mutual respect, solidarity and self-help relationships. It is also demonstrated in their sensitivity and sense of responsibility towards other people. During the

activities, representatives of the community discover their strengths, which is evidence of their growing sense of subjectivity. Regular meetings with representatives of the buildings, planned and implemented activities provide a sense of being able to change a negative situation, and at the same time increase the involvement of residents in social issues. During these meetings, we can also see the development of relationships and the communication among the tenants, as well as a change of attitude towards problems, treating issues from the perspective of "our" instead of "mine."

Also significant is the growth of trust, support and mutual assistance, and this actually is evidence of having acquired the ability to work together in a group, which is extremely important in the process of local community development.

At this time, the housing estate residents are in the process of organizing an association that will represent the interests of its community. MOPR Włocławek and local community organizers have been constantly supported by Local Activity Support Center CAL.





EKSAM is a non-profit organization (NGO) for economic cooperation in Örebro, directed to citizens in Örebro in need of financial advice and / or assistance with their personal finances.

Most of the visitors have very large debts to both “*The Enforcement*” (Kronofogden), various debt collection companies, and often very high credits. Many of EKSAMs visitors belong to especially vulnerable groups. Though they often already have a contact with another NGO, it can be experienced less daunting to make contact with EKSAM than with the municipal organizations. A bad experience of meeting with municipal organizations is another reason for NGOs as an alternative.

The organization has as its main purpose to fight poverty and work towards social inclusion, primarily at a local level, by identifying and counteracting factors and social conditions that contribute to the creation of poverty and social exclusion. EKSAM has also been able to raise issues at a national level.

Challenges

EKSAM encounter daily challenges and problem areas which are common to the majority of the visitors. Many of those who visit EKSAM often have a very complex problem set and many individuals and families find themselves in very difficult economic and social conditions. The economic problems often derive from other social problems such as mental and/or physical illness, lack of social networks, trauma, alcohol- and drug abuse, crime, etc. The reverse is also not unusual, that is; that the economic problems bring with them considerable emotional and psychosocial problems. There are many people who do not have any other social problems but as a result of changes in the individual's life situation experience problems with their finances. For example divorce, closely related deaths, sickness and unemployment can be devastating for households with already strained economy and could eventually lead to over-indebtedness.

It is not uncommon that people come to us with more than one unpaid rent and not infrequently an eviction notice in their hand after a hospital stay or a similar absence from the daily grind. First and foremost, this regards people with lack of social networks, but also those who, because of guilt and shame are not able or willing to ask for help from friends or family. Lack of knowledge regarding personal finance and consumer rights is not uncommon, leading to unfavorable priorities and is another reason why people fall behind with rent and utility bills.

A life under poor economic conditions imply a limitation of peoples' own space and are often linked to other social problems such as poor health, lack of self-esteem and exclusion from the social context. In the long run this could mean that you end up outside in the community, which in turn leads to even lower self-esteem. Children that grow up in a family that has severe financial problems not only have a worse standard of living than their peers, but also an increased risk of having financial problems in adulthood. Living in a family with weak economy not only means not be able to participate in activities together with the classmates, but also a childhood marked by much concern and often psychological problems in the wake of the economic problems. In cases where the family is granted financial support from the community for their children's clothes and recreational activities many times feel designated as "poor". These families would much rather be able to pay for those things themselves. This means that EKSAM are working to provide these parents with tools and contacts that will allow them to utilize their own resources in a better way.

Housing problems are at present a very acute problem in Örebro as in Sweden as a whole, and at EKSAM visitors with housing related problems has increased. If you once slipped out of the housing market, it's almost impossible to get back. Vulnerable women are also a group of visitors that has increased. EKSAM meet women who, in spite of destructive relationships, are not able to leave their partner because they know that they will find it difficult to cope financially on their own. In terms of self-sufficiency, it is a big problem in cases where spouses are financially responsible for each other. The women will then have no means of livelihood when her partner is considered financially responsible for her, but he refuses. We can see that the situation for many women begin to resemble the situation of women in the 1950s when men were responsible for the supply and the women were housewives.

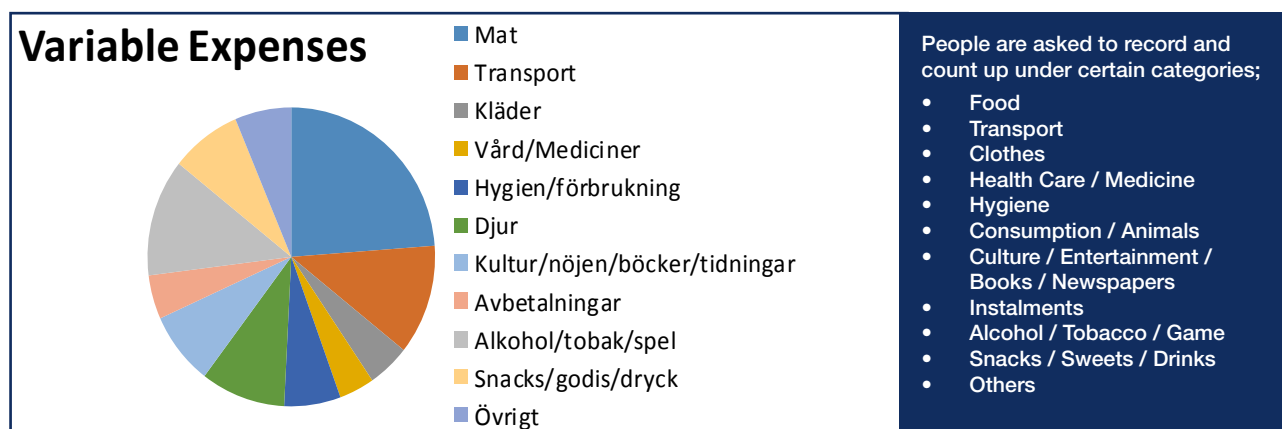
What is innovative?

One of the things that are innovative with EKSAM is that professional social work is performed by the non-profit sector with contributions from the municipality. Close cooperation between the municipal organizations and EKSAM has shown to be very rewarding for those in need of assistance. EKSAM is meant to serve as a complement to the public organizations and have thus worked beyond expectations.

Based on the different assistance needs that visitors have EKSAM adapt methods and practices to fit the individual. Collaboration is created in several different networks with the municipality, housing companies, County Council and NGOs. By working with the individual's entire system the opportunity is given to change on several levels simultaneously.

Methodology

EKSAM work with knowledge development by producing work methods aimed at preventing people from ending up in difficult economic conditions. We also create networks with



The pie chart illustrates a typical personal expense record.

operators in the public-, private- and non-profit sectors to work together with these issues. Furthermore, we try to support and make children and young people living in economically disadvantaged families visible. Work is based on empowerment and systems theory.

The daily work is based on democratic values. All people are equal, regardless of background. Children and adolescents, diversity and equality are important starting points for EKSAMs work. It is important to highlight the resources of each person. In this way, each person can take charge of his or her own life and own finances. It is important to note that we believe that it is all about building up people's self-esteem and confidence in order to help them improve their lives. Our role as a counselor is not to take over responsibility from the individual, but to offer a form of *"helping people help themselves"* that can work in both the short and long term. A prerequisite for this approach is that the visitor comes to EKSAM completely voluntarily. The whole process is controlled by the individual in collaboration with EKSAM.

We aim to prevent people from falling into an unsustainable financial position, and to provide knowledge and techniques so that people can attend to their own personal finances. For

this reason, in addition to individual support, EKSAM offer workshops, study circles and lectures in economic issues. EKSAM are also aiming to be a place for collaborative actors and regularly hold joint meetings with non-profit, public and private actors. There are many aspects that are important to take into consideration when it comes to developing methods for economic education. One example is that, in a playful way, involve the kids in family financial planning which could act as a breeding ground for future entrepreneurship among these young people. By teaching the parents how they can plan their own finances, they can serve as good role models for their children regarding their future financial situation.

EKSAM do not provide any contribution in the form of money or food / clothes though we work exclusively with advice and support and offer help to self-help. For this reason, the preventive part of our work is hugely important. People do not want handouts they want their own economy to rely on.

Transmittable

Because of the inquiry that is going on around indebtedness the Swedish EU minister wanted to take note of our knowledge and experience, which shows that EKSAM and the good cooperation with the municipality of Örebro is unique in many ways. The Budget and debt counseling of Örebro has no queue anymore and income support payments have decreased. Of course it depends on various factors but we strongly believe that EKSAM is a part of it. EKSAM met several people with the same problems and when we raise issues on the national level, we can seek to eliminate system errors. Our knowledge is growing as we face so many visitors and we can generalize and then we have the opportunity to discuss this at the national level. When EKSAM participate in many different contexts throughout the country the compound will be able to make it's visitors' voices heard.

Despite all the challenges and many times frustrating aspects EKSAM can see a lot of positive changes since its inception in 2010. Many visitors are now debt-free, people who were considered to lack the capacity to work have a job or college place today, while many visitors who were threatened with eviction are now catching up with their rent payments.

This is possible to achieve with the right support and co-operation between different agencies in a municipality. The example shows that the cooperation between the public sector and NGOs can be fruitful in many ways. Work has been successful for over three years and we hope to be able to continue helping people with personal financial issues, even if our goal always is to get people to be able to manage personal finances on their own.



Community Futures is an approach to local community planning and sustainable community development that aims to encourage active citizenship and build local democracy. It is a programme of support in target areas that enables the Coalfields Regeneration Trust (CRT) to deliver integrated capacity building support to former coalfield communities in Scotland.

Community Futures is focused on four coalfield areas spread across thirteen Community Planning Partnerships.

The Coal Legacy

Thirty years after the decline of the coal industry in Scotland, there is a continuing legacy of poverty and deprivation within former coalfield communities which must be addressed.

There is still a stark gap in deprivation between former coalfield and non-coalfield areas, with the coalfield communities in a relatively worse and somewhat worsening position over the last six years.



Some former coalfield communities experience particularly acute and multiple forms of deprivation, on par with traditional highly deprived urban estates in Glasgow.

Close analysis of the seven “domains” that make up the overall SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) ranking shows instances of both improvement and decline across the coalfields.

As in other areas, the Scottish coalfield communities continue to suffer the effects of the economic downturn in UK, with a more stagnant employment base than elsewhere and high and rising unemployment.

Former coalfield communities have fragile economies: the first to suffer from an economic downturn and the last to recover.

Former coalfield communities are still characterised by;

- **Worklessness** – Ongoing issues of high unemployment within former coalfield areas. The analysis of unemployment data indicates that there are more jobseekers and people dependent on state benefits in coalfield areas than in non-coalfield areas.
- **Low Incomes** – Poverty and deprivation is a major issue within coalfield areas. This is due to the high levels of people dependent on benefits combined with those in low paid employment.
- **Poor Health** – Poor health and wellbeing is a major issue. The legacy of industrial illness and disease now experienced by older ex-miners, alongside the ill-health impacts on the younger generation as a result of poverty and social deprivation.
- **Inadequate Access To Services** – Access to services is reported as a major issue. This tends to be due to the isolated nature of many of the communities and issues relating to public transport.
- **Lack of an Enterprise Culture** – Due to the dependency on the former coal mining industry, it is recognised that further work and support is required to promote entrepreneurship and enterprise culture within many communities.
- **Demographic Changes** – Within many former coalfield communities the number of young people is increasing. This factor, alongside the wider issue of an ageing population, is a major challenge to coalfield communities.

Coalfields Community Futures

CRT recognised that some communities have found it difficult to secure a fair share of the funding that has been channelled through it and other grantmakers during the last 14



years. In these 'cold spots', community leadership, participation, structures, networks and group activity is relatively weak.

The Community Futures programme therefore involved identifying 5 or 6 multiply deprived ex-mining communities that had not benefited substantially from external funding from the Trust and partner funders, where community infrastructure, leadership and activism is weak, where relationships with service providers and other agencies is poor and where local people express feelings of 'powerlessness'.

In these areas through Community Futures CRT has;

- Built on existing processes of community action research to identify local needs and priorities, using residents as co-researchers;
- Worked with local residents and groups to develop a common sense of purpose and a deliverable community action plan;
- Made use of a small fund of £25k for each area, which through a participatory budgeting process was allocated by residents to initiate small-scale improvements;
- Provided tailored capacity building support, working with local residents and groups to establish skills/structures and secure external funding for agreed projects;
- Where possible supported the development of a new community 'anchor' organisations to provide a focus or hub for continued community regeneration;
- Helped organisations to 'make the right connections' by facilitating them to develop relationships with other successful organisations to encourage learning, pooling of resources and ongoing mentoring and support.

The Process

The process has encouraged widespread participation of local people in preparing a Community Action Plan for their community. The Community Action Plans contain:

- A vision for the future of the community
- Views on the community now
- The identification of the main strategies for community development
- Priorities for action

The Coalfields Community Futures programme has to date resulted in 21 five year action plans being prepared following an extensive participatory process in communities which included:

- Stakeholder focus group interviews
- Community Views Household Surveys
- Preparation of a Community Profile
- Convening of a Community Futures Workshop

In each of the areas the process has been managed by a local Steering Group that brought together representatives from a cross-section of the community. Community action plans are being finalised in a further 6 communities and 6 more are just starting.

A particular aspect of the Community Futures programme is the participatory budget, a sum of £20,000 - £25,000 to be awarded in small grants to groups and projects in each area. The community representatives on the steering group decide on who receives awards and how much and it kick starts the implementation of each plan with priority given to those contributing to actions identified in each plan. Local groups prepare their bids and the whole community is invited to a fun day event where the groups present their projects and everyone gets to vote for those they would like to see happen and record comments on the action plan priorities.

To date 21 communities have produced plans. Survey returns are very good. Events are well attended. The process works with both small (700 population) and larger (15,000) communities.

What impact has this had?

- For every £1 invested through the participatory budget £5 of additional funding has been attracted.
- In some areas (Fife and Midlothian) we are seeing the participatory budget being doubled by local councils and in most local councils are paying for the printing of the local community action plans.
- In 2 communities the £1 through the participatory budget attracted an additional £12.
- The 2012 communities have completed in the best case 96% of all the actions in their plan and are preparing another and the least case 72%.
- All 2013 communities have completed 25 – 55% of all the actions in their plan.
- The 2014 communities are all reporting progress on their actions.
- 19 community anchor organisations have been established / supported from the members of the Community Futures steering groups.

“There is a stronger feeling of trust, friendliness and people willing to help each other in the village now.”

“The launch day for our plan was amazing. It was the first time for many years that so many people had got together and reminded me of my childhood in the village when this was a regular occurrence. It motivated me to stop moaning and get involved and also led me to become a member of the community council.”

Local people

That Community Futures has been a process bringing about positive change is underlined by a survey which was taken by 2 activists in each of the communities where the programme has been completed. Among other questions they were asked to score whether the community is better / stronger as a result of the Community Futures process. Thirty five said yes, only 1 said no and 1 felt it was too early to tell. Those who said yes were then asked to rate it before on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being very weak and 5 being very strong and then repeat this by scoring it once the programme was finished. The average score before was 2.2. The average score after was 3.8.

	Year of production	Approximate Population	Surveys returned	Workshop attendance	Participatory Budget grants	Additional funding GBP
Dalmellington,	2012	1,407	41%	212	8	240,000
Mayfield and Easthouses, Mid Lothian	2012	9,000	21%	100	11	50,000
Moodiesburn, North Lanarkshire	2012	6,614	60%	350	23	126,000
Bo'ness and Blackness, Falkirk	2013	15,000	45%	480	12	86,000
Benarty, Fife	2013	5,700	22.7%	300	11	240,000
Cardenden, Fife	2013	5,700	51.4%	200	7	56,000
Kincardine, Fife	2014	3,000	40%	550	15	70,000
Kirkconnel, Dumfries and Galloway	2014	2,172	20.8%	200	10	40,000
Oakley and Comrie, Fife	2014	4,123	27.5%	250	19	15,000
Shotts, North Lanarkshire	2014	9,000	36.5%	250	12	240,000
Tranent, East Lothian	2014	12,582	30%	300	10	30,000
West Calder & Hareburn, West Lothian	2014	4,000	30%	100	11	50,000
Whitecross, Falkirk	2014	780	31.8%	200	7	30,000
Macmerry, East Lothian	2015	1,113	11.1%	150	8	Plan delivery just started
Gorebridge, Midlothian	2015	6,500	15.8%	150	12	
Allanton and Hartwood, North Lanarkshire	2015	1,251	11%	140	10	
Kinglassie, Fife	2015	1,956	14.1%	100	4	
Clackmannan, Clackmannanshire	2015	3,450	11.8%	150	8	
Crossgates and Mossgreen, Fife	2015	2,659	10.4%	200	11	
Carron and Carronshore, Falkirk	2015	2,996	11.4%	70	-	

4 An Immediate Solution to the Antwerp Housing Crisis

Geert Schuermans

Belgium



Arm in Arm, the Belgium-Moroccan Society against poverty, wants to offer a solution to the Antwerp housing crisis using temporary social housing and the Collectief Goed project.

The Housing problem

The prices of apartments and houses in Antwerp have doubled in the last ten years. Obviously, the purchasing power of families has not increased by the same amount. The number of people who find it extremely difficult to purchase a property continues to increase. At the same time, the pool of available social housing is much too limited. This forces the most vulnerable families to rent poor quality housing in the private rental market.

Arm in arm

The Housing work group of the Belgian-Moroccan Society against poverty “*Arm in Arm*” wants to make this idea a reality. The group members discuss the current housing problems in their bi-weekly meeting. All of them are on the waiting list for social housing. As of now, some have had to exercise patience for eight years. This means that they are forced to use the private rental market. The problems are countless.

“Before we started the temporary occupations with the Institute for Community Development, I was only able to afford a small apartment above a bar,” Hossain recalls. “It was cold, damp and it was really difficult for us to sleep because of the noise downstairs.” Mimoun also mentioned the cold and damp. “We lived for seven years in a rental apartment where the rain just ran in unhindered. The heating came from a 37 years old boiler with all kinds of defects that you would expect from something so old. The owner promised us in the beginning that

the necessary work would be done, but nothing ever came of it. When we complained about it, he suddenly needed the house for his son and we had to leave.”

Starting in 2009, the Arm in Arm group has worked on housing entitlement. This often involves fathers with large families on a low income. This means that many of these families are forced into the worst segments of the rental market. *“We come here to find some hope.” “We like to come here,”* Ali concurred. *“For us, it’s a form of integration. We learn here how the system works. What our rights are as well as our obligations.”*

But the Society against poverty wants to do more. All participants at the table emphasise that housing is an important civil right that everyone should enjoy. *“A good place to live is a form of recognition. That’s why we’re telling our side. Not just to improve our situation, but also that of other people who aren’t at table here. We can only do it together. With only one hand, you can’t make a lot of noise.”* To achieve this goal, the Arm in Arm group formulates proposals that they are going to use to defend the policy.

Temporary occupations

They did not rest on their laurels with just talk. Together with the professionals of the city of Antwerp’s Institute for Community Development, the fathers started an intensive search a few years ago to find quality and affordable housing in the private market. *“We provided the families with very intensive support for three months,”* Vogels recalls. *“This involved going through newspaper ads, calling estate agents and going with them to see the landlords.”*

The result was disappointing. *“We didn’t find anything for even one of our eleven families. On one occasion no children were allowed. On another occasion, the lack of fluency in Dutch was a problem. And on other occasions, they didn’t want tenants who received replacement income. We compiled a dossier on this and complained to the authorities, but of course that did not solve our immediate problems. We noticed that more and more children were becoming ill due to the deplorable living conditions. Something had to be done quickly.”*

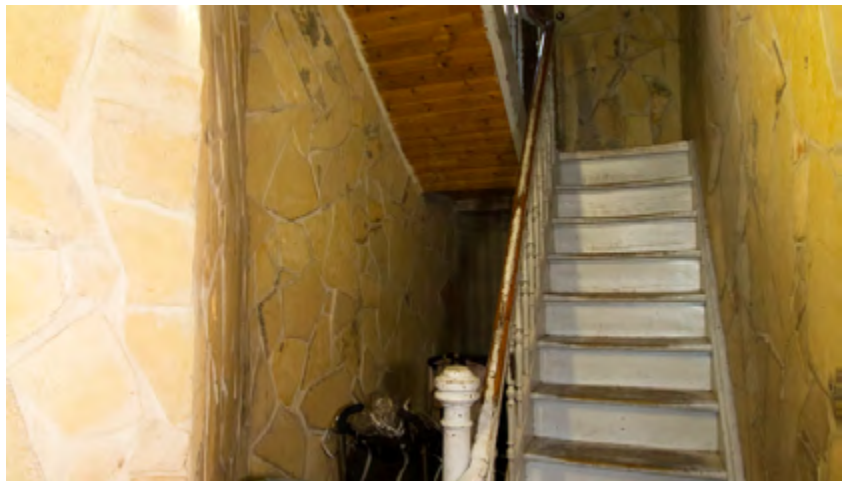
This was when the Institute for Community Development met with city officials. The discussions revealed that a project already existed where the city was renting housing from the social housing corporation De Ideale Woning to resettle squatters. Those squatters were not renting this housing, but did have an occupancy contract. *“The housing corporation was willing to use the same procedure for our families,”* recalled Lief Vogels. *“We started with five families in two housing blocks. As the families were quite large, each family occupied two social houses. When the new management team took office in 2013, the Institute for Community Development took over the payment of the housing blocks from the city. Moreover, the housing corporation made accommodation available for another four families.”*



This means that the project found a solution for nine large families. However, they do not live there for free. They pay a substantial occupancy fee. This is 175 euros per apartment and 230 euros if the house has double glazing. As the families occupy two houses each, the total amounts are respectively 350 and 460 euros per family. *“We gave the apartments a thorough facelift,” Hassan explained. “With the support of the city and the Institute for Community Development, we painted, made minor repairs and installed earthings. Although quite a few of the fathers have to make do on a replacement income, some in the group do have professional knowledge. Painting, installing electrics, plastering, plumbing, tiling and so on. You can contact us for all of these skills.”*

The positive effect of the temporary occupation was felt immediately. Previously, Mammam lived with his family of five in a house with one bedroom and a very small kitchen. It was so bad that he had to take his daughter to the doctor almost every week. *“She is much better now,”* he said. Mimoun made a similar comment, *“I felt like a different person after moving to the new place.*

Previously, we bled ourselves dry paying for a hovel. Now, we are paying a fair price for a good home. This makes it a lot less stressful for me because we now have more breathing room with our finances. I feel much healthier. Ali indicated the positive impact that the move has had on his children. “They’re doing much better in school. Which makes sense. They finally have the necessary space to study in quiet. It is mainly for them that I hope we can continue to stay here after 2017.”



The collective good cooperative

Just the mention of the year 2017 makes you feel an almost physical wave of unrest pass through the group. In principle, the occupancy contracts end at that time. For the time being, extending the contracts does not seem possible. This means that the families would once again be out on the streets. The city of Antwerp’s Institute for Community Development did not want this to occur and set out on a search for a solution. The institute bundled its forces together with House Services and the Antwerp Centre for General Social Work in the cooperative Collectief Goed (i.e. Collective Good). Collectief Goed is a cooperative alternative that invests in affordable quality housing for vulnerable families. *“In practical terms, this means that De Ideale Woning housing corporation has provided us with leasehold housing for 30 years,”* explained Vogels. *“The Merksem properties urgently need renovation, but that was too expensive for the housing corporation. Collectief Goed will now carry out the necessary work and then rent the homes to the Arm in Arm families.”*

The annual amount that the cooperative must pay is limited because the ground is the property of housing corporation. This provided enough leeway to finance the renovation.

In addition to the support in the form of funds and grants, the cooperative handles most of the financing itself. This is carried out using a loan from a regular bank. The regular loan payments are paid with the rent that the residents pay each month. In addition, Collectief Goed is counting on gifts, but provides private sympathisers with the option to become shareholders in the project.

It is not just the funding that is creative. Collectief Goed also dares to go off the beaten path when it comes to renovation. *“We are always looking for ways to reduce the price of the work without compromising quality,”* explains community worker Ellen Baert. *“For example, we were able to use people on community service to carry out the demolition work. They have removed all of the wood and plaster down to the building shell. Students from a technical school will carry out their internships with us in the next phase of the work. This approach means that we must continuously work closely with other organisations, such as the city of Antwerp, the Weerwerk community interest company or the Don Bosco technical college.”*

The project will occasionally face problems despite all good intentions. *“It seems the fathers in our group were not allowed to work on their future homes despite all of their professional knowledge,”* said Hassan. *“Most of them receive replacement income and the Board of Labour forbids them from helping. They risk being suspended if they did help. The houses are held leasehold by Collectief Goed. A rental agreement does not yet exist as the houses are not yet habitable. From a strictly legal perspective, this means that our men are not linked in any way to the housing and thus may not work on them.”* Hassan and the Collectief Goed people seemed reconciled to it. Nevertheless, it is a quite Kafkaesque paradox: society says that people must be made active, yet in practice they forbid them from helping in a meaningful project.

However, even though people may not work jointly on their own accommodation, it does not mean that Collectief Goed is not a participatory project. *“We take every step of the way together with the tenants,”* Baert emphasised. *“The people are also shareholders of the cooperative. This meant that the fathers and of course the mothers were the first to see the building plans. They decided together what was still needed and what must change. Moreover, the group decided how high the rent would be. The starting point was that the rent would be a maximum of one-third of the household income. But what income is that? After a long discussion, we decided that it is replacement income plus the rent premium. We left out child benefits because the fathers believed that this must be specifically spent on the children.”*

The discussion about the rental prices generated admiration for the way in which the fathers decided which families could relocate to the Merksem houses and which could not. *“In addition to the families in the temporary occupations, two other families in the Arm in Arm group became eligible,”* explained Hassan. *“We only had nine homes, so two families had nowhere to relocate to. Nevertheless, we got through it together and those who could not be part of the Collectief Goed still join us at the table.”*

“Once the families have moved into their homes, we want to further develop the participatory element,” Bird explained. *“We want to work with tenants groups that meet monthly and have*

a delegation in the executive board of Collectief Goed. They would also be responsible for housing management and joint purchases of tools and household appliances. But that's for the future."

De Ideale Woning housing corporation has already announced that it intends to make similar properties available in the future. The men at the table thought this was great news. At the same time, they indicated that Collectief Goed is primarily an experiment. *"It certainly can't be used as an excuse to not invest in social housing,"* Hassan emphasised. *"The solution to the housing crisis should be more affordable quality housing for vulnerable people. Obviously, this doesn't change the fact that initiatives like Collectief Goed are an excellent complement to the solution."*

5 Crossroads and work with the Roma community

Stuart Hashagen

Scotland



Crossroads Youth and Community Association developed from the pioneering work of the Gorbals Group, which was formed in 1957 in the Gorbals area of South Glasgow with the intention of sharing the problems of the local area and joining with local residents in attempting to reach solutions.

Since then, the focus of the work has extended to Govanhill, a neighbouring area in South Glasgow, and the nature of the work has expanded to address the very varied and different needs of what is now one of the most culturally diverse communities in Scotland.

As the name reflects, Crossroads is involved in a range of youth and community development work activities in the Gorbals and Govanhill areas of South Glasgow. The Youth Work Team provides a range of creative programmes of learning through youth work activities in a maintained, safe and fun environment. It aims to provide learning opportunities for staff and young people from 'where they are at' rather than 'where they should be'

Aim and approach

The overarching aim which drives the work of the Community Work Team is the provision of opportunities for the integration of the communities in Govanhill. This is done in a number of ways - by working with groups, providing safe places where people from different backgrounds can come together and participate in community and awareness raising activities; by providing intensive one-to-one support to people who are more vulnerable; through structured streetwork and centre-based consultation sessions; and by holding community awareness raising events for national and international celebrations such as International Women's Day, International Roma Day, Refugee Week, and 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence.

All of this work is underpinned by the organisation's value base and ethos, which is:

- To encourage and enable people to exercise their rights and to achieve a proper balance between their rights and responsibilities.
- To enable local people to participate in decisions which affect them.
- To use an approach that will promote social confidence and awareness of others.
- To avoid discrimination on any grounds; to offer its facilities and services to as wide a range of people as possible; and to ensure that their views are fully represented.
- To work in partnership with any individual or organisation operating in the same field and sharing the same aims and values.

Roma work

From the outset, this initiative has always set out to combat racism, discrimination and prejudice against local Roma residents, and the range of community engagement, research, awareness raising, community education advocacy and community development approaches has yielded many tangible impacts in this respect.

Awareness raising among non-Roma communities has been a key feature of the initiative, and the community work team has both formally and informally raised awareness in the local community, among other voluntary or third sector organisations, among statutory organisations/institutions and in local schools. It has also hosted numerous field visits, aimed at a broad range of local and international delegates. In recent years, the team has strived to create a more positive image and acceptance of Roma in the media, locally, nationally and internationally.

The mutual acknowledgement, understanding and respect of Roma and other cultures has been a cornerstone of the work that the team has undertaken for this initiative. It has approached this from many different angles, ranging from engagement and programme delivery in local schools to a Roma and Scottish Heritage and Music Project to European Exchange Programmes such as Grundtvig.

The team has worked tirelessly to promote and facilitate the social inclusion of Roma in the wider local community, and to nurture and develop Roma empowerment and participation in all aspects of Scottish civil society. Numerous projects have been developed to progress this aspect of the work, including a weekly Drop-In, weekly streetwork, weekly centre-based consultation hours, and a Roma and Scottish Heritage and Music Project.

Crossroads has consistently been involved in raising awareness, exchanging information and spreading best practices on the integration and inclusion of the Roma communities into wider society. It has done this locally by leading on and facilitating a Slovak and Czech Workers Group. At an international level, this was facilitated through Grundtvig Exchange Programmes in the past, as well as currently being a member organisation of Roma Net.

Crossroads has also offered practical support and advice to local Roma people to support them to overcome practical obstacles and difficulties relating to education, employment, healthcare and housing. This was offered predominantly through the Advocacy Service that

was run from 2007 to 2012, and continues to be offered in more recent times through clinics at the weekly Drop-In, as well as the centre-based Consultation Hours.

As an organisation which uses the principles of community development to support people, Crossroads aims to improve the quality of life for individuals and communities through capacity building, participation, collectivity and empowerment. Although the outcomes of the work are of prime importance, the community work team places equal emphasis on the process of how those outcomes are achieved – so in this respect, the process is just as important as the task itself. This is the case with the body of work that Crossroads have done with the Roma community over the last seven years.

Govanhill

The work in Govanhill happened between Spring 2007 and Summer 2014. In 2007 a considerable number of Slovak and Czech Roma had migrated to Govanhill. The arrival of this new migrant population created suspicion, fear and a type of moral panic amongst the existing population. In response, Crossroads collaborated with National Health Service Health Visitors to offer practical help and support to Roma people, and to find out more about these new migrants. This service offered clothes, food and one-to-one support to those in need and it was quickly overwhelmed by demand. After a few months, it became evident that this ad-hoc approach to support was insufficient, and although the direct provision of food and clothes was invaluable, a more structured and formalised one-to-one support system was needed.

This led to employing two Slovak speaking staff who provided an intensive support service to Slovak and Czech Roma individuals and families. This project was hugely successful, and the first of its kind in Glasgow. This direct service provision was crucial in terms of making Roma people's migration socially and economically sustainable.

In 2010, Crossroads developed a migrational and cultural awareness programme, called Understanding Each Other. This programme was rolled out in primary schools locally, with the aim of the project to raise awareness and develop an appreciation of migrational history and cultural diversity among the pupils. Given the fact that there are over 3,000 Roma people living in Govanhill, and that Govanhill is the most culturally diverse community in Scotland, the impact of this programme in terms of awareness raising and the facilitation of knowledge between Roma and other cultures has been considerable. This project continues to run, and extended geographically due to demand from schools.



In 2013, Crossroads embarked on a new collaboration with the Ministry of the Interior, Slovakia. This collaboration focuses on the issue of human trafficking from Slovakia to the UK, a phenomenon which affects many Roma people from Slovakia. Staff have been involved in both desk-based and local research on the topic, and this research has made a significant contribution in terms of raising awareness of the issue and educating people on the signs of human trafficking. This research culminated in a report for the Slovakian Government, which will hopefully shape future policy development on the issue.

In May 2014, Crossroads started work on a collaborative piece of work to establish a Roma Heritage and Music Project locally. This piece of work is now at the implementation stage, and it is hoped that it will culminate in the hosting of four shows in Glasgow in November 2014 which will create an awareness of Roma and Scottish Heritage through the medium of music.

Conclusion

Crossroads has exemplified a true community development approach to working with people, changing and adapting to meet the ever-changing needs of its Roma service-users over the last seven years. It has supported the Roma community in Govanhill through processes such as community engagement, community education and awareness raising, direct service provision and community development and empowerment. Each of these processes represent a component part of the jigsaw, which when put together improve the social and economic inclusion of the Roma communities in wider society and affords them the opportunity to actively participate in all aspects of Scottish civic life.



GURT Resource Centre since 1995 has been actively involved in developing local communities in Ukraine through fostering civic activism and strengthening local self-governance.

Beginnings

Between 2011 and 2014, GURT implemented a number of projects aimed at making change in communities of Kyiv oblast: ‘New opportunities for marginalized rural communities in Chernobyl-affected areas of Ukraine’, ‘Equal Opportunities for National Minorities and Disadvantaged Groups in Realizing Culture Rights: Richness in Diversity’. These projects aimed to ensure inclusive governance within rural communities by involving community members, including vulnerable people, into participation in community development. Within these projects, GURT continued to implement inclusive governance models and practices in Ukrainian rural communities. Novy Kohorod community was one of the target groups for these projects.

Novy Kohorod village in Kyiv oblast was founded in 1986 as a settlement for people who were forced to leave their homes due to the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. ‘The displaced persons had difficulties in adapting to a new situation’, said Olha Mykhaliova, Novy Korogod village major. Disruption of familiar social environments caused social, financial and psychological problems. Little state support was insufficient to turn the situation around. Local budgets were formed primarily on the basis of subsidies, so it could not finance any community development initiatives. Moreover, the dependence of people on all sorts of benefits led to a paternalistic type behavior.

The Model

During 2011-2014 GURT facilitated a complex transformation process of the Novy Korogod community that included key components of GURT's community development know-how:

- Capacity building activities for local authorities, representatives of different community-based institutions and CSOs that was integrated on all stages of the intervention and made possible ongoing support for community leaders, while working on improvement of local governance procedures and structures;
- Mobilizing community members to participate in community governance and local planning helped to overcome the key challenges, in particular an overwhelming reluctance of community representatives to participate in community life;
- Documentation of local governance procedures and achieved results established a transparent system of local decision-making.

During 2011-2014 the community had drafted a community development plan that shaped the future of the community. Based on this plan concrete initiatives have been designed and implemented. These initiatives were focused on the provision of social, economic, and cultural rights of members of the community.

In the framework of the Project 'Equal Opportunities for National Minorities and Disadvantaged Groups in Realizing Culture Rights: Richness in Diversity' Novy Kogorod community received a grant to establish a recreation park 'Novy Kogorod Vernissage'.

And the Results

The project provided an opportunity to unite the community. A climate of distrust prevailed in the village until the first results emerged. Creation of a sports and entertainment area in the community was the project of common interest for several generations fostering activism of the community. 'Our actions 'spread the passion' among those who initially doubted the capability of pioneer activists,' – comments Olha Mykhaliova, Novy Korogod village major.

While developing the recreation park 'Novy Kogorod Vernissage', we have established our community-based NGO 'Prolisok', which continues to function effectively after the project completion. The project implementation was accompanied with increased community activism. While the initial average age of the active population was 40-50 years, later the



project engaged more young people. GURT succeed in uniting local community leaders, authorities, entrepreneurs and villagers to solve community problems. 'It is to note that more than 70 people were involved in creating children's playground, which is, of course, a significant index for the settlement with population of about 500 people,' – says Paraskevia Kyrpel, head of 'Prolisok' NGO.

After having created sports and entertainment villagers organized a dance study circle, built a mini boiler-room at the school and reorganized the heating system in the premises of the medical center. A community museum was created by active community members showing collections of historical and ethnographic monuments of the region in the school building. Moreover, due to the efforts of community members a new kindergarten has been set up, which allowed local people to become employed outside Novy Korogod. The community has managed to organize a garbage removal system that is a successful practice inaccessible for most small rural communities in Ukraine. Community members continue to make efforts to make the recreation park 'Novy Kogorod Vernissage' a real community center.

Becoming aware of the possibility of change, the community members began to hold regular meetings. The village mayor believes that due to the everyday gradual and seemingly small actions the community achieved significant results.

Building Community Cohesion

The plans for the community for further development include creating an out-door theatre, solving the problem of improving the quality of potable water and the development of micro- and small-business in the village.

Successful implementation of projects supported by GURT contributed to community cohesion. It was proved by the results of village major elections in which a community leader and one of the initiators to intensify the civic activism within a village Olha Mykhaliyova got the support of 94% of the villagers.

Despite many external destructive factors, Novy Korogod community achieved a high level of civic engagement and effectiveness of local self-governance. The community experience was successfully disseminated to other Ukrainian rural communities in through study tours 'Models of the rural communities development', implemented within the project 'Promoting the development of social infrastructure' with the financial support of the Ukrainian Social Investment Fund.



“The DWAG supports women who often have very little power to take a stand and fight for rights not only for ourselves as individual women but for all employed as carers and in the private home. I am amazed at what we have managed to achieve over the past few years.”

Hilda Regaspi, DWAG Core Group member

Context

The Migrant Rights Centre Ireland (MRCI) is a national organisation working to promote justice, empowerment and equality for migrant workers and their families. For ten years, MRCI has taken a stand with migrants to tackle the root causes of inequality. They use a community work approach with a focus on participation, leadership and empowerment, and have a strong track record in securing policy changes e.g. Bridging Visa for undocumented migrants; reversal of work permit changes; protections for domestic and agriculture workers; reversing the minimum wage cut. Their community work is ‘consciously, actively and specifically focused on bringing about social change in favour of the most marginalised or excluded in society and enabling them to address the social, political and economic causes of this marginalisation’.

Rooted in a form of community work practice developed in Ireland in the past half century, the work of the MRCI is based on the core values of equality, anti-discrimination and social justice.

Purpose

For domestic workers their work in private homes as live-in carers, child minders and housekeepers has contributed to them being exploited and isolated. One of MRCI's first initiatives was to establish an action and campaign group which has successfully forged alliances to achieve key policy reforms.

Values and processes

The MRCI firstly established a support group for domestic workers through a monthly social gathering. The evolution from support group to an action campaign group took several years of painstaking community work, the slow pace of progress reflecting the extent to which domestic workers were in vulnerable and isolated situations.

As community work practice emphasises the importance of “*starting where people are at*” and bringing them along with you, we initially did little more than host monthly get-togethers, providing workers with a secure and welcoming environment to allow them to get to know and trust each other, as well as us.

In order to move beyond participation to the empowerment stage, we introduced creative projects aimed at encouraging the women to collectively identify and critically examine the problems they faced in their workplaces.

Today, the Domestic Workers Action Group – it changed its name from a support group to an action group in 2008 to reflect its campaigning remit – is at the forefront of the fight for the rights and dignity of workers employed in private homes throughout Ireland.

DWAG's 270 members, mostly women, have summoned the courage to highlight exploitative work practices on the streets and in the media. They have won high profile labour cases. They have lobbied politicians up and down the country. They have forged key alliances with employer groups and trade unions, nationally and internationally.

Through our careful community work with domestic workers, these women are no longer invisible victims of an unfair regime. DWAG's loyal and active members are speaking out, presenting a strong critical analysis and making clear demands from politicians, policy makers and society at large.

Collective action was critical in this campaign as a necessary and important engagement with power built upon a process of consciousness-raising in turn aiming to bring about transformational change for communities.



The focus on relationship building and sustainability shows how community work practice values process as much as outcomes; not only why we do things, but how we do things.

Peer support and solidarity remain an important feature of the group.

Methods and tools

Participation is actively supported by overcoming barriers – for example, by holding meetings on Sundays which is commonly a day off for domestic workers

Consciousness-raising was supported through the quilt project, with 45 women who designed and made a hand-stitched textile quilt with a series of panels highlighting the blurred boundaries between work and time off in their largely unregulated sector, where employers often expected them to be available around the clock.

The quilt, which took 12 months to complete, was displayed during a national exhibition and was part of a broader campaign for protections for domestic workers.

Much time is invested in empowering the women by linking their lived experiences with an analysis of power inequalities which require structural changes. A powerful way to do this is through creative projects such as drama, art and film.

Outcomes

Campaigned, along with the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, for the introduction in 2007 of a Code of Practice outlining domestic workers' rights and protections, as well as employers' obligations. The code sets out terms and conditions of employment in private homes, an important recognition that domestic workers have legally enforceable rights.

Succeeded in convincing the National Employment Rights Authority to undertake inspections into employment conditions for workers in private homes.

As the history of DWAG shows, community work practice requires patience, commitment and a steady focus on the endgame.

For further information see www.mrci.ie

8 An employment project with a sense of reality

Gerard Hautekeur

Belgium



“The unemployed are weak, maladjusted slackers who take advantage of our social system.” With only a slight exaggeration, this is a public opinion about the unemployed that is also held many politicians. Project Dream Job wants to rid the world of such prejudices.

Dream Job, or “*Droomjob*” in Dutch, is a project that the West Flanders Regional Institute for Community Development launched in collaboration with a Society against poverty. The objective is to provide new opportunities for vulnerable people who have become far removed from the labour market. To succeed, Dream Job initiated an integrated approach and an intensive collaboration with many organisations in Bruges that are active at the intersection between work and welfare. Community worker Fred Boone and Marianne Tyttens of the local job centre told us more about this initiative. André and Alain sat at table to relate their personal experiences about being a participant in the Dream Job project.

An integrated approach

In fact, the phase that Dream Job just concluded was the second part of the project. The initial priority was primarily to recruit participants from the wider society against poverty. Fred and his colleague Pascale are now performing a much wider search. *“We asked key partners such as the local job centre, the Public Social Welfare Centre, the unions and the North West Flanders regional Centre for General Welfare to send us people who were motivated to find*

work but who always encountered a wall when trying the usual channels,” recalled Fred. “We specifically wanted to work with the most vulnerable for a period of two years. In the first part of the project, we learned that some people are really stuck in a quagmire. They’re not going to get out of it by themselves. You can impose obligations on them and demand that they do their best, but it just doesn’t work. The standard intervention is no good. A tailored approach is needed.”

This is how Alain came to the Dream Job project via the unemployed programme of the Belgian General Federation of Labour. He had taken numerous courses, including German, Spanish and information technology. This provided him with a terrific CV, but he always slipped through the net at interviews. His appearance and demeanour played a crucial role. “Over time, you quickly realise in an interview that nothing is going to come of it. You just feel hopeless over and over again. It’s so frustrating! I really just want a chance to prove myself in the workplace.”

For Alain, Dream Job was a place where he could let off steam. With official agencies, it was difficult for him to talk about his anger. Marianne nodded. “This is a familiar story. I often saw this when I was branch manager at a Bruges job centre. I’m enjoying my retirement right now, but I’ve always defended Dream Job as the missing link in the work methods of the Flemish Employment and Training Service. Some people are struggling with so many problems that it makes no sense at all to get them employed as quickly as possible. You must first examine all other areas of their life. The Flemish Employment and Training Service is trying this with the W² projects, but the integrated approach of the Dream Job project is of a much different order.”



André’s experience proves that the causes of problems in the labour market often occur elsewhere. “I was in a homeless shelter when the Centre for General Welfare suggested Dream Job to me. Employers recognise the shelter address, which made it very difficult to apply for work because it was always the same tune, “You live at Willemijnendreef 16... Isn’t that a homeless shelter? Oh, okay. We’ll call you back later this week.” Obviously, they never did. It was the same situation with the Flemish Employment and Training Service. I was able to begin a course on construction and renovation. Everything was going smoothly on the first day, but in an interview I honestly admitted that I lived at a shelter. The mood took an immediate turn for the worse. “Are you able to do this? Are you motivated enough?” I was so taken aback and disillusioned that I could not finish the course. It affected me really deeply. Fortunately, in a little under two years, I have crept out of the bottom of the pit thanks to Dream Job. I’m almost completely on my way now.”

The client consultation

André succeeded in getting out of a men's shelter thanks to Dream Job. *“The contacts in the project enabled me to obtain the caretaker's flat in a Public Social Welfare Centre building where people with a mental disability live. I'm a night watchman and support the night shift when needed. Now that I've moved, it's taken a huge burden off my shoulders. I'm a lot less tense. At the same time, I'm very aware that I couldn't have done this alone. Thanks to Dream Job, I have a network of social workers and colleagues who are in the same situation.”*

Fred explains how the project was carried out. *“Each participant was assigned a work-welfare coach for ongoing support. But client consultation was just as crucial. In close consultation and with the consent of those involved, we brought together a group of workers and people from their network. Together, we drew up a milestone plan. An employee of the province of West Flanders attended the consultations as an objective third party (at most, once per year). These consultations made the participant feel that he had an entire team backing him up. As a matter of fact, an important side effect was that the different social workers were introduced to each other. So, they weren't just out on their own.”*

The participants received plenty of individual support. At the same time, Dream Job as a true community work project also

resolutely engaged in group work. Alain acknowledged that he got a lot out of the meetings. *“You meet your peers and it makes you stronger listening to their experiences because you realise you're not alone and even that your problems are not the worst.”* Several shared collective experiences came to the fore during the meetings. *“We responded here by offering training,”* recalled Fred. *“These were about communication and appearance. I got the impression that*



this was immediately successful.” André nodded. *“The training really gave me an enormous boost. I didn't learn much from the content, but that in itself opened a whole world for me. I realised that I already knew and could do all those things. The silly fact that I received confirmation was really, really good for my crumbling self-confidence. I didn't seem to be so useless as people had made me believe during all those years.”*

The freedom to deviate

Meanwhile, Fred pointed out another trump card held by Dream Job. *“Perhaps our greatest strength was the fact that we were a test bed and are financially independent. We could try things out! It's only through this freedom that we could discover what the driving forces and barriers are so that we could guide vulnerable people to a job.”*

Marianne agreed. *“The large institutional players do not always have the freedom to adapt themselves to the needs of vulnerable people. This is not intended to blame anyone. Often,*

the government does not provide them with the means to do so. Nevertheless, you must be realistic and dare to say that an approach that is the same for everyone just does not work. I will give an example. At Dream Job, we had a participant with a troubled past and a difficult home situation. He had to take care of his younger sister and his mother, who suffered from mental health problems. He passed various preliminary selections and eventually took an ICT course offered by the Flemish Employment and Training Service. To do so, he had to travel across the entire province. This meant he had to get up every morning at 5 am and not get home until late in the evening. If he could have left the course five minutes early, it would have saved him an hour and a half each day. But that was not allowed. The result was predictable. He lasted barely two months and he fell into a downward spiral. Eventually, he even disappeared from the radar.”

“The argument that’s constantly thrown at you is that employers expect job candidates to just do it,” said Fred shaking his head. “But that attitude is completely counterproductive. If you sincerely want to enable our target group, you need to introduce some intermediate steps. If you ignore these then you will not see any results. You end up with the umpteenth failure that leaves people deeply disillusioned and embittered. It creates a crisis of confidence and you end up believing that you are no longer capable of anything. This is exactly why the policy makers must free up resources and in particular demonstrate understanding. That is not a sign of weakness, but rather a sense of reality.”

50 shades of grey

In the public debate, is the sense of reality often far from the truth? The media and politicians too frequently depict the unemployed as taking advantage of the social security system. In their eyes, a merciless and strict approach is the only road to success. Yet it is clear that Dream Job participants experience this public debate as extremely hurtful. *“When I hear the idiotic statements made by politicians, it boils my blood,”* admitted Alain in all honesty. *“I try to remain calm, but it creates a huge stigma.”* André tries to handle it philosophically. *“It’s typical that people have prejudices, right? Apparently, if you’ve never been a long time without work, it’s difficult to imagine what it’s like in our situation. You actually think that everyone who really wants to work will get a job.”*

Right from the beginning, Dream Job saw it as a duty to rid the world of such prejudices. This is why the project launched an awareness campaign together with transportation company, De Lijn. In June of 2015, buses in Bruges ran with the slogan *“Everyone thinks 50 shades of grey is terrific. Unemployed people are seen in black and white”* displayed on the sides of the vehicles in large letters.

Confronting politicians

The politicians in Bruges were not forgotten, especially the two godfathers of the project: the chairman of the Public Social Welfare Centre and the Alderman of Work. Both were guests of honour at the two events held by Dream Job. Although Alain and Andre had hoped that the two officials would champion their cause more, Fred was still satisfied. *“We and the group made elaborate preparations for the events. The participants read out a letter to them and everyone got the chance to introduce themselves and explain what challenges they*

encountered. It may have been a formality for the politicians, but don't forget that it wasn't easy for them to meet our people. In fact, they couldn't put a positive spin on it because their standpoint is to take a strict approach towards the unemployed. The confrontation with our people couldn't do anything but affect them."

Moreover, Marianne feels that the policy filtered some things out from the Dream Job project. *"For example, we had a participant who suffered from chronic dental infections. That caused great difficulties in talking and was also unsightly. There wasn't any doubt that this greatly jeopardised his chances of getting a job. This is why we decided to pay for his dental prosthesis. The Public Social Welfare Centre is now taking this measure itself. In addition, in the future, the city wants to keep jobs for working students free for the low-skilled. That was one of our ideas. These are just two intelligent measures that we dare to say we gave a boost to."*

And the future?

Now that the second phase of Dream Job has been completed, the project is publishing *"Connecting. Collaborating for work in Bruges."* The book describes the progress that the participants and the core partners of Dream Job have seen over the past two years.



Fred does not know whether Dream Job will be started up again. *"It has everything to do with resources. The integrated approach that we champion means that social workers and community workers receive enough time in their assignment to implement this approach in practice. This is not a task that you just take on. Currently, this is not obvious for social organisations. Each has their own mission, long-term plans, etc. At a time when policy changes course due to politics, you must stay focused."*

"This policy has also opted to work with tenders when allocating resources," added Marianne. "This virtually guarantees that small local initiatives won't get off the ground. It's the big players that win the tenders. And, honestly, I have to wonder whether they always give the social aspect the highest priority. We really need to ask urgent questions about the current policy choices. Politicians cut back when it comes to initiatives that help vulnerable people. Yet, at the same time, they still expect them to find a job just like that. It's not at all rational."

In the meantime, Alain continues his search for work. Dream Job helped him widen his focus on other jobs such as driving. *"I especially keep in mind that I mustn't give up. I have to keep asking people about work. And thanks to this project, I am at the top of the waiting list for special W² support, which offers even more tailored assistance. I hope it works because I'm convinced that once I'm able show what I can do on the work floor, I'll be off and running."*

Thanks to Dream Job, André was able to work at the parks department of the city of Bruges. Sadly, his temporary Article 60 contract ended a few days before we met. *“The first thing I’m going to do now is get my driver’s licence. With the experience I have gained, I would really like to stay in the horticultural sector. To do so, it’s essential that I can drive. Thanks to Dream Job, I have already completed the theory and practical lessons. I now have got to pass my practical exam. The problem is that I could practice with the city’s car as long as I worked for the city. I now have to find a solution with my own resources. You can get past this if you have a large network or enough savings. But if you don’t have these you’re plain out of luck. Previously, this would be a huge blow, but thanks to Dream Job I’ve enough self-confidence to believe that I can master this problem.”*



Galway Traveller Movement (GTM) is an independent organisation situated in the West of Ireland. It was established in 1994 by Travellers and settled people in Galway with the ultimate aim to achieve equality and self-determination for the Traveller community in Galway city.

From those beginnings it has been a force in creating positive social change for Travellers with a strong emphasis on mobilising Travellers to work collectively to challenge discrimination in all its forms. Management and staff were clear about what GTM was aiming to achieve and were committed to using a community development approach to achieve these aims.

GTM is committed to the principles of community work, such as active participation, collective action, lobbying and campaigning to bring about positive social change for Travellers. There is also pro-active mobilisation to be part of a movement at a local, regional and national level to bring about this positive change.

Travellers

The Traveller community are Ireland's largest minority ethnic group with a unique long shared history, traditions, language, culture and customs, based on a nomadic lifestyle. There are an estimated 25,000 Travellers, making up more than 4,485 families.

For generations Travellers, as individuals and as a group have experienced high levels of racism, prejudice, marginalisation and exclusion in Irish society. Discrimination and its effects are a daily feature of Travellers lives, occurring at individual, interpersonal and institutional levels. This has resulted in the Traveller community living in and suffering extreme levels of poverty and inequality.

Aims

Galway Traveller Movement seeks to achieve full equality with and for Travellers and to accomplish their full participation in social, economic, political and cultural life. Seeking to address both the causes and consequences of poverty and inequality the organisation works at a local level with Travellers to involve them in identifying and influencing the changes they see necessary to improve their collective lives.

GTM works with people whose spirits have been dampened and feel there is no hope energising them to be agents of change. Supporting Travellers collectively to become empowered, to change their realities, to combat unequal treatment and discrimination in which they face, GTM seeks to ensure that nobody gets left behind and that everyone's voice is heard and included in creating the conditions for a more equal and inclusive society.



Methods

- Their main working methods include Initiating consciousness raising processes whereby Travellers can recognise their oppression, realise their rights, know how and where to bring about change.
- Ensuring that Travellers are represented in key decision-making roles in the organisation Use a human rights based approach as a campaigning tool at a local level to demand greater transparency and accountability from national, local government and all public and private services.
- Putting Traveller voices and issues on the agenda and lobbying policy makers at local, regional and national levels.
- Gathering evidence and use legal means and media connections when appropriate to highlight and achieve identified change.
- Networking with other organisations that seek to achieve a broader social justice and human rights perspective- supporting other organisations that face similar challenges and working together in solidarity to bring about social change.

Achievements

GTM have campaigned against the inequality travellers face when trying to access accommodation, on violence against women, on healthcare, particularly mental health given the shockingly high rate of suicide among travellers. They have given a voice to LGBT travellers helping them tell their stories. They run classes on fitness and health, Mother and Daughter Zumba Classes, cookery classes on healthy eating, indoor football for men and run a confidential counselling service.

The accommodation campaign is still being fought but perhaps the greatest success so far came on 1st March 2017. After a very long campaign involving public meetings, street protests, demonstrations, collecting evidence and traveller's stories, using the press and media, countless meetings with politicians and others, the Taoiseach Enda Kenny enacted through a Dail statement recognised formally and legally traveller ethnicity. It came in the same week a decision on traveller housing in the city was deferred.

Recognising travellers as a minority ethnic group is not a panacea and will not address all of the challenges faced by the traveller community but GTM will use it as a stepping stone in its continued call for full equality for the community.

GTM promoted and celebrated traveller ethnicity at events over the following months starting with Traveller participation in the Galway City St Patricks Day Parade. The movement also organised local Traveller action groups across Galway city and county to discuss Traveller ethnicity, its importance and the next steps for action.





Scottish Communities for Health and Wellbeing (SCHW) (formerly Scottish Healthy Living Centre Alliance) was formed in 2008 and is an active alliance of community led health and wellbeing improvement organisations and wholly managed by volunteers. It is dedicated to promoting and delivering health improvement and reducing health inequalities in many of Scotland’s communities in most need.

SCHW is made up of 74 community-led organisations operating and delivering health and wellbeing improvement services and activities day-in, day-out to individuals and groups from early years to senior citizens. They deliver, in creative and responsive ways, to over 300,000 people who are experiencing difficulties that give rise to serious health and wellbeing challenges and who want to bring about major improvements in their lives. Member organisations are embedded in their communities, have established trust and respect and are governed by boards of local people in their community. Altogether, they employ over 500 staff, engage over 3,000 volunteers and reach over 300,000 Scottish people every year. The central coordination of Scottish Communities for Health and Wellbeing involves minimal overheads and bureaucracy. There are no staff and no offices. The overriding focus is on delivering outcomes for people in communities.

Many SCHW member organisations work in partnership with public health agencies that are facing a range of major health and wellbeing problems. These are well described in the recent review¹ of public health in Scotland. There are six major health epidemics across Scotland - obesity, self-harming and suicide, drug and alcohol misuse, prescription drug addition, poor mental wellbeing and isolation and loneliness across all age groups. These conditions are exacerbated by the growing social and economic inequalities characteristic of many areas of Scotland. The review argues that in order to address modern phenomena

1 2015 Review of Public Health in Scotland” Scottish Government, Feb 2016.

and epidemics a radically different approach is needed. It is likely *“to be characterised by enabling government, greater interdependence and cooperation across sectors and geographies and involvement of the public more individually and personally”*. Community led approaches to health and wellbeing improvement already deliver on these characteristics in many of Scotland’s poorest communities. However they require central long-term investment to maximise their contribution to tackling these major health problems. Community-led approaches and the organisations that use them need to become an integral part of an emerging, coherent national public health strategy with clear priorities.

Healthy n’ Happy Community Development Trust (HnH) is one of the 74 organisations which make up Scottish Communities for Health and Wellbeing. This community-led organisation achieves health and wellbeing improvements through the effective use of local assets, imagination, innovation, flexibility, responsiveness, integrity and transparency. The approach makes visible and values the skills, knowledge, connections and potential in a community. They promote capacity, connectedness and social capital. Community-led organisations have at their heart *“the potential to enhance both the quality and longevity of life through focussing on the resources that promote the self-esteem and coping abilities of individuals and communities”*.² They,

- Make individual issues community ones
- Build on and mobilise personal, local assets and resources
- Use local knowledge, experience and community energy to influence change,
- Engage people in decision making and local governance
- Empower people, changing the relationships between users and providers of services and resources
- Focus on facilitating, enabling and empowering as well as delivering
- Lever in and join up activities, investments and resources from outside communities

In this way the third sector organisations see people in a holistic way and give a voice to people who are hard to hear and to reach, and work with the grain of people’s relationships. They undertake regeneration work and community development and through *“doing the right thing” ease the pressure on statutory health and social services and save money!*³

Healthy n’ Happy Community Development Trust helps to save lives, improve lives and aims to make the communities in which it operates, Cambuslang and Rutherglen, the healthiest and happiest places to live in Scotland. With a turnover in 2003/2004 of £67,000 to over twenty times that amount forecast for 2015/16. HnH is characterised by an independent, energetic spirit and by effective, responsive delivery.

This vision cannot be realised by Healthy n’ Happy alone and requires collective action with the community and stakeholders and behaviour change at an individual level. This is a ‘strategic period’ for Healthy n’ Happy as a Community Development Trust with the implied focus on economic development and health. The strategy deployed by Healthy n’ Happy reflects this complex environment and gives appropriate focus on enabling others and establishing the conditions for success. Healthy n’ Happy is recognised as a model for

2 Putting Asset based approaches into practice, Glasgow Centre for Population Health, July 2012

3 “Saving Money by Doing the Right Thing”, Locality, March 2014

community development. As with all community led organisations it has unique features that reflect its context. These are reflected in the combination of the following:

Healthy n' Happy Community Development Trust,

- demonstrates enterprise, innovation and excellent management on a day-to-day basis, year in year out.
- is truly community-led with an active Board of local people and a strong commitment to engaging local people in shaping and delivering activities and services.
- continuously reviews the impact of its services and is one of 15 organisations across Scotland chosen to participate in the Scottish Government/Big Lottery Fund's "*Better by Design*" programme.
- has a Research and Development group which identifies trends and developments locally and nationally.
- operates a full time FM Radio Station, Camglen Radio, the only one in South Lanarkshire.
- has international links which support the exchange of good practice and provide opportunities for joint funding of projects
- contributes to many Government and national agency publications on good practice in the third sector.
- brings partners together for major projects, for example the current bid to site Scotland's first National Centre for Road Cycle Training in Rutherglen.
- responds to the challenges in ensuring sustainability, for example it has currently a planning application to site a wind turbine in the Cambuslang area to generate future funding.
 - » has a range of social enterprises to help ensure future funding:
 - » "*The Smoothie Bike Hire*" and its off-shoot to design to make smoothie bikes;
 - » Camglen radio training and setting up radio stations in schools;
 - » Bike Town refurbishment and sale of bikes;
 - » '*Number 18*' - transformation of a church hall into a community hub.
- has a strong performance and impact framework which supports sound quality management and very effective governance. This is illustrated in the following table (See table below)

HnH is acknowledged by local partners, national partners and international partners as an excellent organisation. It has provided many examples of excellent practice for Scottish Government and other national publications. It is a focus for colleges and universities to include as an example/visit in a range of courses. It attracts funding from major funders as they recognise its high standards and its excellent ability to deliver on outcomes.

HnH is a highly enterprising organisation, This is evident in the ways it has grown and developed, the challenges it overcomes with innovative and imaginative solutions, the ways in which it responds to change and in its ambitious projects and mission. In the true sense of the word 'enterprising' HnH is marked by an independent energetic spirit and by readiness to undertake and experiment.

To make Cambuslang and Rutherglen the healthiest and happiest places to live in Scotland

So that Local people will be resilient and healthy – socially, physically, emotionally and mentally

We will generate health and wellbeing by

<p>Building Personal Capacity/ Capability:</p> <p>Building personal understanding of your own strengths and capabilities and having the power to use them</p>	<p>Fostering Connectivity & Collaboration:</p> <p>Promoting and building the collective power of people by connecting people and fostering collaboration</p>	<p>Facilitating Leadership, Decision Making and Influence:</p> <p>Communities influence decisions that affect them</p>
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So that

<p>Local people have the skills, resources and confidence they need to achieve their personal goals</p>	<p>Local people & communities access support, services and facilities that enable healthy living</p>	<p>Local people & communities lead and use their influence to build vibrant communities where citizens are actively involved</p>
<p>Local people have strong social connections, family relationships and are confident parents</p>	<p>Local people & communities work together so their local services and facilities reflect their priorities</p>	<p>Local people & communities say their neighbourhoods are better places to live, work and play</p>

We will know this because

<p>People have increased their confidence and self esteem</p> <p>People have developed a proactive outlook, are able to better manage stress and/or feel in control of their health</p> <p>People have increased their skills/learnt new skills and are enabled to achieve their goals and aspirations</p>	<p>People know more about opportunities within the community and how they can participate</p> <p>People have increased knowledge and understanding of health issues and healthy living options*</p> <p>People choose positive activities that generate positive health, wellbeing and quality of life</p> <p>People who have mental health or other similar issues will increase their participation in activities that support recovery</p> <p>People have increased their level of physical activity through cycling and other activities (Tai Chi, walking etc)</p>	<p>People are engaged in a leadership role in their neighbourhood/area</p> <p>People and communities are responsible for affecting change in their neighbourhood</p> <p>Collective action is taken by people and communities</p> <p>Outcomes are achieved through collective action (high level specifics – listed)</p>
<p>People had the opportunity to increase/improve their social networks</p> <p>People have enhanced bonds and relationships with family members/ care givers</p> <p>People have increased structure and quality time in their family life</p> <p>Parents have increased parenting knowledge and skills</p> <p>CYP report increased self-esteem and improved social skills and relationships</p>	<p>People volunteer and contribute their time to local activities and groups</p> <p>Increase in range and diversity of community led activities and initiatives</p> <p>People and communities identify local priorities about their area</p> <p>Action is taken on identified priorities (high level specifics – listed)</p>	<p>People have a sense of place, feel like they belong and are proud to live in their community</p> <p>£are generated/brought into communities and utilised by communities</p> <p>There are positive developments in local infrastructure</p> <p>People celebrate together</p> <p>People have the opportunity to make friends in their community</p> <p>People want to stay and raise a family in their community</p> <p>People feel safe in their community</p>



The scope of Participatory Budgeting (PB) in Norway

There are no cases about the implementation of a full-scale and comprehensive model for PB in Norway. What we see is more small-scale examples; but even if small some of them are quite influential when it comes to the improvement of citizen's participation and a strengthened understanding and dialogue between local authorities and citizens/the civil sector. The argument for using PB as an approach is to focus on the development and the efficiency of the local democracy.

Several municipalities in Norway are delegating responsibility for the decision making on spending certain amounts of the public budget for local projects and initiatives to bodies like local community committees and youth councils. These cases have elements of PB without the label PB. The following presents three examples of using PB from Fredrikstad.

The community model in Fredrikstad – a long-term and continuous PB process

Among Norwegian municipalities Fredrikstad is highlighted as the best example when it comes to PB. The City has 78,159 inhabitants. It has a longstanding record and history in working with sustainable community development and citizen's participation. It is famous for a well-developed and structured model for local democracy comprising a network of 21 local community committees. The work with this community model has been going on for almost 18 years and Fredrikstad municipality explicitly articulates that the community model is an example of participatory budgeting which is continuous and long term.

The origin and objective of the model

The origin of the community model goes back to a municipal reform in 1998 where Fredrikstad merged with 4 other smaller municipalities; not without conflicts and concern about both the local democracy and the sense of belonging by being a much bigger city/municipality. In order to accommodate this concern among the citizens and local organizations the council decided to divide into smaller areas following the school districts and establish for each district a community committee. A comprehensive location analysis was carried out investigating the history and development of the district, the composition of the population and followed up with action plans. The members of the committees are elected directly from the local citizens through formal annual meetings arranged by the local community. The candidates standing for elections are representatives from local clubs, organizations, volunteer groups and single persons. Few criteria are set by the municipality, such as balance in gender, age, social groups, minorities, etc. The objective of the local community model is to:

- Create meeting arenas for citizens committed to develop their own locality
- To do preventive work
- To involve and have an ongoing contact and communication between the civil sector and the local authorities concerning organizing of tasks and local planning

(Quoted from the Municipal Plan, the societal part 2006 – 2017)

The implementation, maintenance and development of the model

The committees are organized as volunteer organizations and are supported with an annual operating grant - between NOK 30.000 (approx. 3100 Euro) and NOK 80.000 (approx. 8350 Euro) depending of the population. Approximately 10 % of the grant covers expenditures for administration and meetings, 90 % are distributed to local projects and initiatives by the committee. Volunteer hours add up (1 volunteer hour is validated approx. 10 Euro). Examples of meeting arenas and projects are a local café for elderly citizens, local driven leisure clubs, establishing of playgrounds, canoe renting, annual hikes to explore the local nature and culture, activities for disabled people, maintenance of pathways, playgrounds etc. Preventive approach in the local activities and projects especially relates to public health issue, such as creating paths for walking and bicycle lanes etc. to encourage to outdoor life activity.

The committees have the sole and exclusive control over the money. Sometimes the committees have used some money to pay lawyers to assist the committee in development issues where the citizens disagreed with the municipal plans. The only criteria set by the municipality that spending the grant should not break Norwegian Law.

The establishment of a permanent structure for the contact and dialogue between the municipality and the committees sustains the cooperation and leads to predictability. The committees develop own local projects, arrangements and they are as well always consulted when it comes to all municipal plans. Annual meetings are arranged between the leaders of the committees and all the political parties represented in the City Council as well with the administration. These meetings are arranged as dialogue meetings where the partners discuss matters of concerns and ideas reciprocally.

A social networking digital platform has been developed where the community committees, different organizations, individual citizens and the municipality share information. Two fulltime and one 80% local community coordinators have the task to administrate and develop this digital platform, to follow up and support the local committees; in addition to manage local projects such as PB-processes as the two examples described below. They are employed in the Municipal Department for Sustainable Community Development, since the responsibility for citizen's participation in democratic processes belongs to this department. This "*local community model*" has been evaluated regularly and is still improved demonstrating a willingness to learn from both successes and obstacles.

PB in the project *We want, We can, We decide*

In the year of 2009 Fredrikstad completed a comprehensive youth project named We want, we can, we decide. The project was the main activity in the Interreg project Meeting arena Citizens where Fredrikstad partnered with Uddevalla municipality in Sweden with the theme citizens participation, PB and other participatory methods.

The Process: Thanks to the Interreg project 200 000 NOK (20860 Euro) was allocated to the youth project. Through intensive information period in autumn 2009, youth at the age between 13 and 19 year was invited to bring forward ideas of how the life for youth in the city could be improved. 11 ideas/suggestions were received.

In the next phase those that brought forward the suggestions were invited to a workshop where they learned how to go from an idea to a project. The 11 ideas turned into 5 different project ideas. The workshop was arranged with assistance from Youth Entrepreneurship (a nationwide ideal guiding organization/NGO aiming at developing the creativity of youth and children strengthening joy by creating and supporting self-esteem.)

The Project Selection: All students in the secondary schools and the high schools were invited to vote between the five suggested projects. By using a variety of communication tools such as Facebook, direct information face-to-face in the classes, emails and information through the local media, 62% of all students in the city joined the voting procedure. In some of the schools even 86 % voted. The result was considered as a great success.

The voting period went on for a week and was organized by the student council representatives at each school. The winner project named FredrikstadLAN got 62 % of the votes – a 3 days Video Game-event combined with competitions, film screenings, concerts and entertainments where youth makes new friends and share common interests.

Implementation: The first FredrikstadLAN-event took place in 2010 and has been held annually since. The organizers of the first event were a group of the student council representatives that were active in the voting procedure. In order to keep the event going they formed an NGO with the same name running this annual event that each year gathers around 600 participants.

Renewal of a square through a PB-process

Based on the lessons learned from this first experiment with PB as one of many methods for citizen's involvement PB has been used several times in Fredrikstad; most recently in connection with the renewal of a local public space **Trosvik Square**, located in an area with a low score on the so-called "*living conditions survey*".

The process: In the municipal budget for 2014 1 mill NOK (approx. 104000 Euro) was allocated to a renewal of the square including a PB-process (200 000 NOK was allocated for the PB-process, 800 000 was allocated for the physical renewal of the square).

The PB-process comprised the following steps:

1. During one week in November 2014 a big circus tent was set up in the middle of the square including benches, tables and equipment for workshops. During the weekend warm food and drinks were served and information about the PB-process was given. All the local citizens were invited to meet neighbours and encouraged to draw, plan and discuss different plans and visions on how the square could look like in the future. On the following Tuesday all the local kindergartens were invited to a workshop, drawing and envisioning the future square. The next day elderly people were invited and finally again an open day for everyone to look at the drafts that had been produced so far and with the possibility to add new ideas. Over 260 people at all ages participated during the workshop days. The Local Community Committee in the district was an active part in the managing and preparing of the process.



2. From mid-December 2014 until February 2015 a group of city planners and other civil servants together with some of the citizens made proposals based on the comprehensive material from the “Circus-tent-workshops”.

Of 11 different proposals, 3 projects were brought forward to the voting process based on the criteria that it should be possible to renew the square within a budget of 800 000 NOK (approx. 83500 Euro).

The project selection: The voting took place in the town hall during a weekend in March combined with an exhibition presenting the 3 project proposals and a documentation of the process so far. Even the 5 year old citizens were given the right to vote. The voting event was combined with a public arrangement with entertainment at the town hall square. The following Wednesday the winner was announced by the Mayor.

The implementation: The square was build according to the winner project. The 27th of June the Major and the Norwegian Minister of Local Government and Modernizations opened the new Tosvik Square. A big celebration feast was arranged with local citizens in all ages.

Local community coordinator, Camilla Sørensen Eidsvoll summarizes: *“I had to go several rounds with the Technical Department responsible for the building procedure. In the beginning there was a lot of resistance from the main person in charge. She thought that the PB-method was something worse nonsense, just tiresome and a waste of time. Today she is one on the best ambassadors for the PB-method. She totally changed her mind during the process. In the end she clearly stated that the planners and architects would never have been able to design the square in the way that became the final result. The children had for example insisted in getting a cableway at the square – and now it is there. If we compare how it was before the PB-process today there is no sign at all in vandalism. We see new and different groups that are using the square and get socialized.”* A

Somalian family father had told her that he never had felt comfortable with public meetings but the way of coming together in the circus-tent with food and dinner combined with the ideas development for the square was something he was much more familiar with from his own country.



Methods for public involvement and consultation

The evaluation of the use of PB was described with the following respectively success factors and pitfalls.

Success factors	Pitfalls
Political will and annual follow-up	Irrelevant themes and priorities
Feedback to the citizens	Use of methods which leads to passivity
Establishing the priorities of resources	When lobby groups get too much influence
A continuous process that becomes a natural part of the management system	When PB leads to additional expenses
Clear, well organized and professional process	Long decision-making processes creates discontent
Dialogue which gives the possibility to argue and present viewpoints and to listen to others	When the citizen' suggestions and priorities are not based on facts and holistic view
Apply different methods for dialogue to reach different groups	
Courage to experiment	
Evaluation of the process and result	
Continuous development	
Must be included in a context where it becomes meaningful for the citizens to participate	

Summarized Fredrikstad has been using a variety of methods. As a part of the above mentioned Interreg project Fredrikstad and Uddevalla produced a handbook for the administration and employees in the municipality describing different methods for citizen's involvement. The Citizen's participation is seen as a task for more than the local democracy coordinator. In addition to PB the following methods are used:

- Environment supervisors
- Art as a method for communication
- The local community model
- Space analyses
- Structured hikes with local citizens in local neighborhoods to analyze the environmental and safety conditions
- Future City Game
- E-petitions
- Matchmaking
- Different tools for information



The “*At Home in Your Community*” Project, was funded under the Swiss-Romanian Cooperation Program, which ran from July 15, 2013 to February 14, 2016, through a partnership of three organizations with complementary expertise. The three partners that implemented the project are the PACT Foundation, the main partner with expertise in community development, Habitat for Humanity Romania with housing expertise, and the Village Life Association with expertise in sustainable development and promoting and capitalizing on the traditional, authentic aspects of life.

Why Housing is important for Roma Communities in Romania

Housing is one of the most important areas when it comes to social inclusion and combating poverty. Access to housing is a basic condition for the social integration of citizens belonging to any vulnerable group and the lack of adequate housing is the primary way of exclusion from society and a prerequisite to remain captives of extreme poverty.

In addition to the stereotypes that have been passed on from generation to generation and which contribute substantially to the phenomenon of Roma rejection and isolation, the multiple shortcomings and poverty that the Roma have faced for generations and who have

grown over the last 20 years, the lack of participation to education, the fact that their access to public services is very difficult compared to other citizens' access - often, sewerage, drinking water and sometimes electricity supply stops far away from the areas where the Roma live - all these have led to the deterioration of their inhabited areas, to the worsening of their lives in general, which is often reflected in the physical appearance or their attitudes, sometimes violent, harassing, most of the times humiliated, distrustful, scared.

Here are some more specific statistical data on housing conditions and the poverty level of Roma ethnics in Romania which prove once again the need to develop and plan projects that propose an holistic approach as a way to solve the problem, in a context in which a real political desire to support the access of this population to well-being is mandatory:

- 44% of the homes in Romania are in rural areas
- 1.2% of the homes in Romania are considered unfit and insubstantial; from these 48% are inhabited by Roma
- In a household (sometimes one room) live 4.8 Roma ethnics
- 75% of the Roma homes are built on the periphery of the localities
- Roma housing with utilities: 15% have gas, 87% electricity, 26% water 19% sewerage

The project took place in 10 Roma communities from 5 Counties in the South of Romania: Valea Corbului - Argeş County, Spaţov and Dorobanţu - Călăraşi County, Vizureşti - Dâmboviţa County, Găujani – Giurgiu County, Şimian, Eşelniţa and Burila Mică – Mehedinţi County, Dăeşti and Frânceşti – Vâlcea County.

Methodology and role of the partners, in short:

The key methods of community intervention used in the integrated methodology that the three partners implemented within the project were community facilitation and consultancy, adapted step by step to the particularities of each of the ten Roma communities selected in the project.

In each of the 10 communities, starting in February, March 2014, the partners undertook a complex community development process with several stages:

- Identifying the key people who could form the core of a community initiative group and who would develop their skills, step by step, through the next stages
- Participative needs and resources analyze in the community in the field of housing
- Selecting priority housing issues according to criteria specific to each community, taking into account the urgency of the problems and the opportunities and resources that exist or which can be mobilized
- Planning a community project to improve the common use habitat of the locality or aspects that relate to life in a good neighborhood in the community
- Mobilizing resources for the Community project implementation
- Housing problems have also been tackled in each community; the initiative groups identified the families with the most severe housing problems, from which they selected 5 families to participate in the housing rehabilitation program.

The external community facilitation, which was provided by four facilitators contracted by the PACT Foundation, was the central method of intervention in this community development process. Community facilitators have assisted the initiative groups at all stages of the project with the aim of building teams able to mobilize and empower citizens to tackle housing problems. In addition, community facilitators have acted as resource staff for Village Life consultants or Habitat for Humanity Romania, who each in its area of expertise at one stage or another intervened in communities with specialized advice for members of the initiative groups and for the community members.

“Village Life” Association has contributed in each stage of the project to various types of workshops in the community. The themes of the consultancy sessions were set by the initiative group in each community together with the project team, taking into account the participative needs and resources analyzes and the specificities of each community. Thus, at the beginning of the community development process, after attending the participative need identification stage, Village Life consultants organized resource



identification and resource analysis workshops, project ideas generation, creative writing workshops, forum theater workshops and innovative methods of working with children. At a more advanced stage of the community development process, when community project ideas were already outlined, Village Life provided specialized advice on various areas of community development, for example organizing workshops where they debated the opportunity of doing small social businesses (Community garden with permaculture techniques, lavender culture) or lucrative workshops for creative production of lavender culture (lavender sweets, decorative objects, etc.) were offered to the community for the establishment and production of agricultural crops.

Habitat for Humanity Romania has mainly approached the individual housing component, providing the members of the initiative groups with relevant information on housing, adapted working tools for the selection of families who wanted to enter the housing rehabilitation program and for assessing the need for materials for rehabilitation. In addition, two consultants contracted by Habitat for Humanity Romania, one for counties in the southwest of the country and the other for counties in the south, advised members of the initiative groups to mobilize the resources needed to rehabilitate individual housing in the community.

Partners' agenda of change

The partners proposed that, as a result of community-based interventions in the framework of “At Home in Your Community” project, in each of the 10 communities involved in the project will remain a core of active people concerned with community housing issues, with the

knowledge and skills to initiate community actions to solve these problems, in coordination with other members of the community. This is the partners' agenda of change:

- To form and consolidate groups of active citizens concerned with housing issues in their community;
- To make community members aware of their role in planning and building the shared living space, in shaping and preserving local identity, neighborhood abundance, respect among community members;
- To develop the capacity of the groups to work with the community in the development of projects for the benefit of the community;
- To raise awareness of as many community members as possible about the situation of families in the community facing the greatest housing problems;
- To do their best to go a little further than political correctness in the fight against discrimination
- To support initiative groups to organize small advocacy campaigns on housing issues
- To promote living together in a respectful, with solidarity and inclusive way

By developing and applying a participatory methodology for the purpose of setting up and rehabilitating living spaces in Roma Communities, community members learned to perceive space as a self-sustaining resource, have been assisted to find creative solutions to use it, cultivated for their own consumption or arranged for various utilities. In addition, members of initiative groups and other community volunteers have taken responsibility for the proper maintenance and operation of these spaces.

In addition to the concrete changes in the living space of the communities involved, the project aimed to change as much as possible the approach to material, social, economic and political issues in the community. The positive experiences gained through the participation in the project we believe will stimulate and develop the capacity of the community members to get involved in the future in achieving the desired social, economic and political changes.

At the same time, the partners became aware of the efforts they must undertake to bring the area of housing as a priority on the public agenda, since community-led interventions, initiated by civil society, even if successful, can not decisively change the serious situation in which Roma communities find themselves, especially with regard to housing.

“At Home in Your Community” project continues to be a challenge for the three partners

It has provoked us to understand the condition of our peers who feel that they can not come out of the tight circle of poverty, doubled and potentiated by discrimination; to adapt our technical and mobilizing discourse to the reality of particular people who often have to choose between daily bread and bus tickets to the center of the commune, because they have to attend the Local Council meeting to try to make the decision of those who decide for the public good; to always have a plan B prepared in response to the decisions of the people we work with, that sometimes, in the middle of the process, they choose to follow their acquaintances and relatives on other lands, with the hope of a decent gain; to adapt our

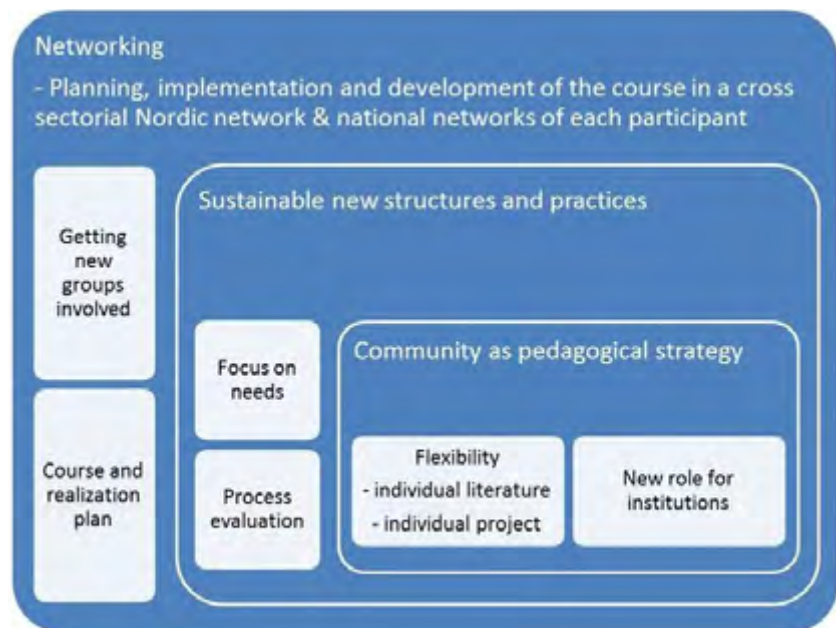
techniques of intervention in the community to every particular situation that has a life fact as background, a most tragic reality. It has determined us to find out that the latent energy of these people is huge and moreover, having the right context and support, they can achieve things that seem impossible, demonstrating that the change they want in their communities stays in their power!

It challenges us to continue with what we have learned and, above all, to challenge those who can cause major changes in the lives of these communities - political decision-makers.

Tove Holm, Caitlin Wilson, Kirsten Paaby, Ellen Stavlund

Nordic cross-sectorial further adult education for sustainable development

Adult education has a central role for sustainable development because adults further educate leaders for all labor markets. Since 2006 the Nordic Network for Adult Learning (NVL) has had education for sustainable development on the agenda.



A Nordic cross-sectorial group has discussed what kind of approach is necessary to get changes in our mindsets and behavior. The result is the development of a Nordic cross-sectorial, post-qualifying education which the Nordic Council of Ministers decided to support as one of several projects under the program “*Green Growth the Nordic Way*” during the academic year 2014-2015.

The pilot emphasizes learning geared towards action competence, an approach involving a high level of knowledge combined with practical action. The aim of the pilot is to build bridges between formal educational institutions, local administrations and civil society organizations, assisting both formal and informal learning arenas to learn from inspiring local examples. The target group is pedagogues engaged in sustainable development and adult learning.

Education for sustainable development in adult education

Adult education has a central role for sustainable development because adults further educate leaders for all labor markets. Adult learners also represent an important part of communities as they are the workforce, voters, consumers, leaders, parents and teachers. Therefore, adult education is a critical forum for education for sustainable development (ESD) to take place, but it presents several unique challenges. Adult learners tend to be more receptive to instrumental knowledge, which is more goal- or behavior-oriented, because they

see its use and relevance more easily for their work, but communicative knowledge, which involves dialogue and inspires intentional action and supports action competence in ESD. So, effective adult ESD involves navigating the variety of settings and styles in which adults learn, and managing their expectations for the learning process.

ESD is also characterized by systemic and holistic thinking, which are needed in order for all sustainability aspects to be taken into account. Competencies aimed for include self-learning, problem-solving, and creative as well as critical thinking. ESD requires cooperation among disciplines and transdisciplinary education. Transdisciplinary education differs from multi- and interdisciplinary education in that the cooperation goes beyond the disciplines and involves also users, problem owners and stakeholders. According to Lozano (2011)¹ creativity is recognized as a key skill for sustainability. It is also crucial that individuals who are working for sustainable development share their knowledge and engage in collaboration with different sectors of society.

ESD has been developing for the past several decades all over the world. With roots in the environmental movement of the 1960s and the emergence of sustainable development in the 1980s, ESD is defined by UNESCO as: a process of learning how to make decisions that consider the long-term future of the economy, ecology and equity of all communities...This represents a new vision of education, a vision that helps people of all ages better understand the world in which they live, addressing the complexity and interconnectedness of problems such as poverty, wasteful consumption, environmental degradation, urban decay, population growth, health, conflict and the violation of human rights that threaten our future. This vision of education emphasises a holistic, interdisciplinary approach to developing the knowledge and skills needed for a sustainable future as well as changes in values, behavior, and lifestyles².

The UN has focused on enhancing ESD during the UN Decade for Education for Sustainable Development from 2005-2014. At the UNESCO World Conference on ESD in November 2014, the implementation of the decade was presented. Suggested actions for non-formal education include initiatives to increase public awareness, strengthening the involvement of media, increased attention on different roles of government and civil society, delivery of appropriate training and material to respond to the capacity gap of educators, and use of music, arts and other means for communication. The decade was considered the most successful of all decades that UNESCO has conducted.

Nordic further adult education for sustainable development

Since 2006, the Nordic Network for Adult Learning (NVL) has had ESD on the agenda addressing how the global sustainability challenges can be worked with at the local level by identifying the possibilities of making the changes needed – both individually and in community.

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- 1 Lozano, R., 2011. Creativity and organizational learning as means to foster sustainability. Sustainable development.
 - 2 UNESCO, 2003. The decade of Education for Sustainable Development: Framework for a draft international implementation scheme. Paris: UNESCO.

NVL arranged a series of Nordic seminars with participants from a big variety of Nordic non-formal and formal educational organisations, in cooperation with from the Norwegian Association for Adult Learning (NAAL) and the Ideas Bank. Thematically the seminars focused on the connection between civic formation, democracy and sustainable development. In addition to the seminars a serie of best practices in ESD at the civic formation level were published at the NVL website. Based on these seminars NAAL and the Ideas Bank studied the possibilities for adults in the Nordic countries to learn about both the challenges for sustainable development and how to act and obtain competence for action. This was done in cooperation with NVL on behalf of the Nordic Council of Ministers. It was found that in spite of clear policy documents on ESD the implementation and practical follow up were missing at the civic society level. Local sustainability is more than just planning. It is about everyday attitudes and actions, and about outcomes that can be enabled, but not produced, by planning. Competence must be broad based. There is a necessity for civic mobilisation because change occurs through social and technical innovation – in the hands of individuals and groups. In this way, public action is at once a supplement to political governance, and a prerequisite for good local governance. To strengthen the civic mobilization there is a need for integrating a broader thematical perspective in further education by including innovative arenas and methods for learning in the spirit of the UN Decade for ESD. The result of all this is the development of a Nordic cross-sectorial, post-qualifying education which the Nordic Council of Ministers decided to support as one of several projects under the program “*Green Growth the Nordic Way*” during the academic year 2014-2015.

The pilot emphasizes learning geared towards a high level of knowledge combined with practical action. Several concepts at the core of sustainability education are incorporated into the pilot: action competence, future orientation, active participation, transdisciplinary learning, learner agency and empowerment. The aim is to build bridges between formal educational institutions, local administrations and civil society organizations, assisting both formal and informal learning arenas to learn from inspiring local examples. The target group is pedagogues engaged in sustainable development and adult learning.

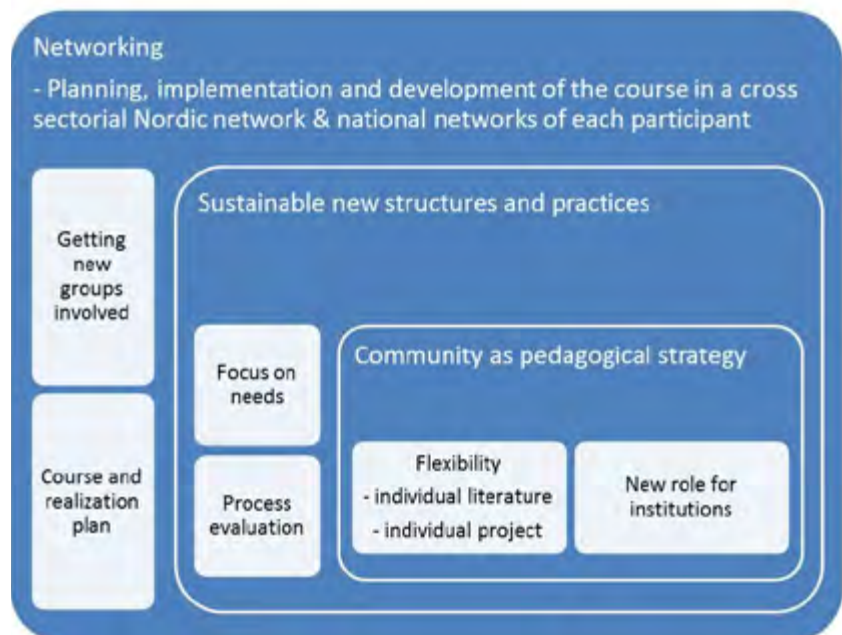
Quality assurance

Manninen et al.³ have studied characteristics for successful educational projects conducted in the Nordic countries. Based on their findings, they published a handbook with recommendations on how to prepare and carry out educational projects designed to help individuals, groups or society to meet challenges which align with the goals for ESD. They found eight success factors, which are: 1) networking, 2) getting new groups involved, 3) sustainable new structures and practices, 4) focus on needs, 5) process evaluation, 6) community as pedagogical strategy, 7) flexibility, and 8) new role for institutions.

3 Manninen, J., Árnason, H., Liveng, A., Green, I., 2012. Analysis of Nordic educational projects designed to meet challenges in society. Defining the success factors. NVL, Nordiskt Nätverk för Vuxnas Lärande. Retrieved August 20, 2014, from http://www.nordvux.net/Portals/0/_dokumenter/2013/competence_report_final.pdf

In the pilot course we aim at facing these factors by –

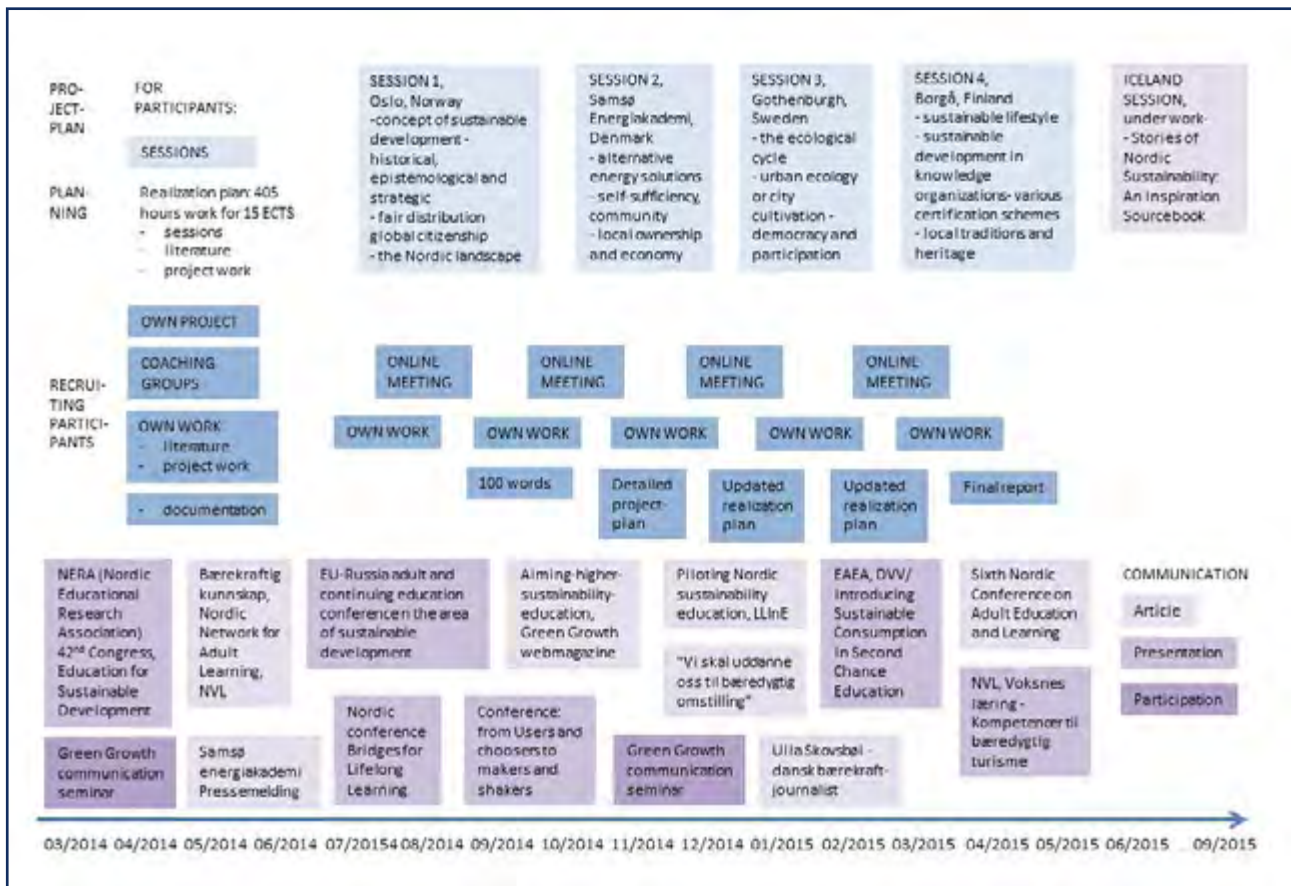
1. planning, realizing and further developing the course in a cross-sectorial Nordic network. The participants of the course also have a regional and/or national network that supports them during the course. Coaching groups were formed through an Open Space process.



Quality Assurance of the pilot Nordic cross-sectorial further adult education in ESD, adapted from Manninen et al., 2012

2. The target group of the course is adult educators who see a potential in involving new groups at their institution, by taking into account sustainability aspects. The extent (ECTS), language of instruction, time and place for the sessions, number of participants, prerequisites, admission criteria and priorities in admission, competences that the students will build, content and working methods, form of examination and criteria for assessment and responsible course coordinator are documented in a realization plan.
3. The aim is to develop sustainable new practices and structures at the institutions where the participants are working.
4. The practical projects are based on new needs that the participants and/or their institutions have identified.
5. Both the course and the work of the participants are evaluated during the course and when finalized. The evaluation is based on action research because as this is a pilot, the only way to study it was to make it happen.
6. The participants learn together from each other by presenting and discussing their practical projects that they work on.
7. The education is based on the participants' needs; that is, they can themselves choose the practical project they are working on and choose literature that is useful for their project and learning.
8. Through the practical projects the institutions in which the participants are working can find new roles.

The pilot in action



Activities for participants and communication of the pilot course during 2014-2015

The activities for the participants of the course are presented above. This also shows a summary of how the project group has disseminated the results during 2014-2015. Here is one example from the second session: the Circle on Samsø Energiakademí. Project manager Malene Anniki Lundén introduced the circle to the participants: which is a method to form a strong and cohesive community, from aim to action. One of the circle's learning platforms is about examination of the democratic processes that works in groups. One important aim is to investigate and train what leadership is, what it means in practice to be able to speak from an intention and finally be able to listen. By that the circle challenges us to train ourselves continuously on being curious..

Language as a challenge

A part of the learning in the course is working with and in the Nordic Landscape. During the first two sessions of four we have noticed that the main challenge that we have identified is the lack of a common Nordic language. We have tried to address it at the learning platform instead of making it a problem. In the second session at Samsø we included time-outs – and raised the question how is it with the language and understanding now? When people were exhausted after a long day we sometimes agreed to change into English. In the third session in Gothenburg we will pay specially attention again to the language and we will initiate the production at place of a Nordic dictionary with the most essential words and concepts in

the field of sustainable development that we have problems by understanding. This is one example of how we are practicing “*community as a pedagogical strategy*”.

One student’s reflection about her experience of the course: “What has impressed me most is the diversity of places and ways in which we, the participants in the course, work. And how the course has facilitated our sharing of experiences, not least through the visits to examples in the field we have together during the course. I feel like I understand how the others have dealt with the challenges of trying to promote sustainability in our different situations, without having been there myself. Like I have had a vicarious experience and gained perspective through my fellow students. This has directly fed back into my own work, informing my practice and widening my worldview. I can refer to the work of my colleagues. This has enriched my professional experience.

The other remarkable thing that has happened is somehow through the course this incredible solidarity has grown. We have become brothers and sisters in arms in education for sustainable development. A special trust has developed. I know I can rely on these colleagues for collaboration in years to come. We are already planning our future work together after the course. To me this is something special, something I haven’t experienced in other networks, and is due to the way the course is run.”

Conclusions

We have found that learning geared towards theoretical knowledge combined with practical action is a way to educate for sustainable development. Building bridges between formal education institutions, local administrations and civil society organizations in a transdisciplinary fashion has engendered a sense of collective efficacy, reinforced by the inspiring local examples. The added value of this multinational course compared to a national one is that the participants work across cultures, and benefit from practical and pedagogical examples from different regions, as evidenced by student testimony. The course is also an important part of the Nordic sustainable development strategy, since it enhances the goals for education and cooperation in that.

Questions that this work has raised: How can adult education answer the needs for Nordic green growth? What competencies do communities need? How can we raise the awareness of politicians and policymakers to the importance of the sustainable, small steps like cooperation and actions within local communities? How do we make the bridges we’ve built sustainable themselves; that is, how do we ensure the cross-sectorial collaboration carries on after the course is over? What can we learn about collective efficacy from the pilot?



Sagene – Democracy Not Only for the Initiated

The urban district of Sagene in Oslo provides an innovative example of cooperation between local authority and civil society. It demonstrates how action spanning across sectors and interest groups leads to creative thinking. With the local community centre as one of several activity hubs, the municipality together with local interest groups has shown the importance of public arenas that foster both wellbeing and dialogue.

Sagene community centre is the hub for Local Agenda 21 activities; the district has been particularly active in LA-21. One main aim of the democracy work has been to reach and involve those groups who are seldom heard. The work has been methodical, using various techniques and approaches that have a preventive effect and foster inclusive participation. Sagene also illustrated the difficulty of maintaining creative community-building efforts and

services in times of major budget cuts when these types of non-mandatory activities are often the first to be cut. Sagene is one of Oslo's 15 urban districts. Each is governed by an elected District Council. Comprising 33,000 inhabitants within an area of just over three square kilometres, Sagene is one of the most densely populated districts in Norway. It is changing rapidly, with population influx as well as fairly high population mobility. It also has the highest proportion of municipally owned housing in Oslo. This typifies former industrial worker areas that are transforming into modern, multicultural urban environments.

The community centre was opened in 1979, but received a new lease of life in 2001 when the district decided to make it the hub for LA-21 and for new, local democratic processes to supplement the existing representative democracy institutions. The district council wished to explore new roles and more active civic participation. This political goal was partly fostered by the fact that Sagene for various reasons has many poor people, often living side by side with new, high cost housing. The process was initially part of a ten year project, the main objectives being: improved housing conditions, a better environment for growing up, good public spaces and security, support for drug addicts, those needing psychiatric care and the homeless, environmental quality, public transport and strengthening of local volunteer activities¹.

To achieve this the employees at the community centre had to abandon the traditional sectoral approach and think outside the box about their roles as service providers and enablers. Today, there is a section for sustainable development comprising four persons; 40 percent of this work is dedicated to running the centre so as to reach all segments of the local population, and 60 percent to maintaining and developing local parks and outdoor spaces so that they can be accessible to all and used for outdoor activities all year round. It is the stated policy of this section to develop multi-professional projects and networks and methods to reach the most marginalised groups in the social housing. The section also has the task of developing methods for integrating culture, environment and local democracy; a sustainable community is seen as one that builds health.

“Our fundamental working approach is what the Dalai Lama calls ‘a policy of kindness’ and a focus on collective values,” says section leader Susan M. Guerra, or I am because we are. “Our methodological foundation is that of ‘community development,’ which I have worked with for many years both in Texas and in Oslo. It’s not easy to translate the word ‘community’ since it has several shades of meaning, including the local society as a whole, togetherness, shared interests, and groupings that lie outside the main body of society or the institutional establishment. We aim to create a ‘living tissue’ that connects all these different aspects of ‘community.’ We attempt an anthropological approach by making ourselves available, by listening and by being analytical. I have many person-to-person conversations; I move around in the district meeting people where they are, talking about how their living conditions are, what issues they feel are important, and what they might like to contribute with. We want to bring forth their narratives. These have been documented in several ways

1 For an evaluation of the programme, see Holm, A., Nærmiljøsetting og levekår. Evaluering – Handlingsprogram Oslo indre øst [Local environment and living condition. Evaluation – Program of Development for Oslo's East-Central Districts], NIBR report no. 12/2006 (Oslo: Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research, 2006).

including photo exhibitions and storytelling evenings. It's all about doing simple things in ways that are close to them. When the centre became the hub for LA-21, what we did both figuratively and literally was to open doors, draw back curtains and build a stage for dialogue", says Guerra².

One of the very first events was a Future Scenario Workshop³ where the majority of participants were individual citizens and representatives of various local groupings, and an "Open House" event with the local politicians. Since then various dialogue methods have been applied, including face-to-face conversations and public meetings employing creative approaches including café dialogues and art projects.

Guerra relates enthusiastically how the plan for developing the local area started: "*We generated interest for a public meeting by distributing a 'future newspaper' based on the results of the workshop. It described in words and pictures what the area around the centre could look like in future, before inviting everyone to the meeting. Then talk really started! People thought it was a real newspaper. 150 turned up at the meeting and participated actively including in follow-up. Many of their ideas were adopted, including development of the nearby square and the Wall Art project.*"⁴

"*The parks and town squares are peoples gardens*" was the idea behind the development of local open spaces as meeting places and democratic arenas. Based on inputs from the public meetings, concrete plans were developed for the public space and park in front of the community centre. The State Housing Bank provided part funding. These funds were administered by the LA-21 Forum⁵, on which the council is also represented, but the council was deliberately not given a leading role. "*We must dare to take a hands-off approach*", said the then council leader Tone Tellevik Dahl. "*The aim was to provide resources and administrative support for local initiative to flourish as decision maker and participant in complex, sectorised and time-consuming processes of change*".⁶ The park, which had been bare and often vandalised, and which many felt to be unsafe, has been transformed into a lively meeting place where there is seating, skating, table tennis, an occasional market, exchange markets and many other activities as well as attractive plantations.

One important partner, the organisation Change the World, provided a creative input in the form of perma-culture sculptures. Inspired by a visit to an eco-village, they led a team of young people in constructing pyramids, spirals and horseshoe shaped plant beds with a

2 Paaby, K., "Demokrati ikke bare for de innvidde" [Democracy – not only for the initiated], in: Ideas Bank Year Book 2006 (Oslo: Ideas Bank, 2006), p. 88.

3 The Future Scenario Workshop is a method aimed at generating practical, collective ideas about the future. Participants can be thought of as "social architects", shaping their future through concrete images and plans of action. The method was originally developed by futures researcher and journalist Robert Jungk in the 1960s; see Jungk, R., and Müllert N., Future workshops: How to create desirable futures (London: Institute for Social Inventions, 1987); Paaby, K., "The future scenario workshop – learning for democracy", in: The Ideas Bank, Signals. Local action – success stories in sustainability (Oslo: Ideas Bank, 2011), pp. 72-76.

4 Paaby 2006, p. 89

5 Following the Local Agenda 21, many cities in Norway created such arenas co-operation between the politicians and elected officials, public administration, citizens and civil society, and the private sector.

6 From the input by Tone Tellevik Dahl on "Democratic improvement. From local practice to implementation in the national policy", Ideas Bank seminar "Refurbishing Democracy", 27 October 2005.

variety of vegetables, flowers, medicinal plants, herbs and berry bushes. Recycled materials including car tyres, construction waste and organic waste were used. These innovative and ecological concepts helped to show how barren urban areas can be transformed into more attractive, sociable and productive spaces.

The work attracted a lot of attention and many interesting conversations between the young people, passers-by and inquisitive residents. Many wanted to copy the idea, others offered to water and maintain the plants, even more when they were told that they could collect flowers and herbs themselves. *“It’s a kind of hands-on civil education activity that has inspired us and has been applied elsewhere since”*, says Guerra.⁷

Whilst developing the community centre, Guerra and her co-workers have been particularly attentive to issues of communication. *“We are continually seeking new ways to communicate: can we find forms of expression that can express the commonality of interests amongst all the varied opinions and views of the users of the community centre? This led to the idea of the Wall Art project – a signal that “You can come in!” The idea was inspired by the mural artists in Mexico City in the 1930’s, who used public spaces to give a voice to population groups who had not previously been heard.”*

The LA-21 forum invited some of the nearby housing associations to six workshops over the course of a year. After showing them the work of the Mexican muralistas, they were asked: *“What makes a good and safe neighbourhood?” “What does Sagene mean to you?” “What is art?”* Participants then produced sketches expressing how they felt about the neighbourhood, their experiences and their wishes for the future. Participants represented many different ages and backgrounds. At times it was a challenge to avoid individuals trying to control the process; one person left because he felt he was an *“expert”* on art who should be listened to by the others!

After the first three workshops participants became impatient to realise their project, so a local architect and an artist were found who volunteered to lead the process of expressing all the ideas that the workshops had produced. They produced 12 suggestions as to how the wall could be painted. This led to discussions and a process of elimination, in a consensus building process and thence to the final result as it is today.

An environmental element was included through re-use of old cups and ceramics from a local tile supplier. The LA-21 forum wished to engage as many people as possible in the project and arranged an open workshop at the annual Sagene Environment Day, where 100 white tiles were painted with individual contributions. The event attracted quite a crowd with enthusiastic suggestions from all sides.

Because the early phases of the project had external financing, it was a challenge to identify a sustainable model for ongoing upkeep and operation given tight local budgets. There were efforts several times to wind down the projects. Local political processes and keen user involvement have, however, led the local council to maintain its support. This has in turn fostered awareness of the importance of local democratic development based on integrated

7 31 Interview with Susan Guerra, Sagene Community Centre in Oslo, 25 August 2011.

thinking and connections between different sectors of activity.

A form of co-ownership has now been set up, with interesting economic models enabling cooperation between public services, commerce and civil society organisations. The social capital becomes an important resource. Interest in the community centre is rising steadily, as witnessed by increasing numbers of users, visitors and volunteer hours.

Susan Guerra concludes: *“This has been a process of identity building. We have generated local leadership, good alliances, and support to local initiatives from the people. Not least, the Wall Art project is a publicly supported display of participation and local narrative. The challenge has been to be aware of our role, which is not to control or be the experts but to enable, assist and use our professional skills in a constructive way. We have seen how qualitative processes need time. And new challenges keep arising where we wish to increase local learning and democracy. We are also planning a course on democracy now; on how the political system functions and how citizens can influence it. This is something each new generation really has to learn anew. Hence it is important to have concrete, practical and enjoyable results to point to as well”*.



Community Worker Griet Van Dessel of the Flemish-Brabant Regional Institute for Community Development jointly sowed the seeds to bring about the allotment garden in Zellik. For community work, the time is ripe for handing the project over to the newly established collaboration between market gardeners, social organisations and municipal government. Three gardeners Zozan, Monique and Pascal along with Griet and Reej (local Velt branch) weigh up after four years. The most noticeable conclusion is that the participants collective gardening has made them much more effective. Their hopes are now pinned on the redevelopment of the site with funding from the Flemish government.

Allotment garden

Monique Zozan and Pascal are among the core group of ten people that meet weekly on Saturday afternoon on the allotment with a supervisor from the Association for Ecological Lifestyles and Gardening (abbreviated VELT in Belgium). Reej Masschelein of the local Velt branch (Zellik-Asse) also works with the group. After all, he was the foundation for the allotment and continues to have a pivotal role in the continuity of the project.

The three gardeners have totally different backgrounds, but do share an interest in gardening. Pascal had a garden in Portugal, his country of birth. He knows how to get things done and people look to him for among other things the heavier manual work. Gardening was completely new for Monique and Zozan who live in an apartment. In the early days, even Zozan's daughters were present along with other children. They enthusiastically took part in the gardening. However, as their peers started dropping out, they lost their motivation and stayed away.

"We now have a taste for fresh, organic vegetables," was the unanimous remark. *"The garden supervisors learned about and how to prepare our new vegetables, such as parsnips, Jerusalem artichokes, kohlrabi, broad beans, chard and Indian lettuce. In the course, we were given an explanation on how to ferment vegetables to preserve them better."* During the interview, Zozan, Monique and Pascal repeatedly pointed out the pleasant group atmosphere and mutual trust. This is the glue that binds the group. In addition to the ten core members, other participants occasionally help out. Their other activities prevent them attending regularly. Others quickly dropped out for family reasons or because of work.

Peripheral activities

The core members campaign by word of mouth and are the best ambassadors for the garden project. Community worker Griet attaches a lot of importance to the so-called peripheral activities that act as a marketing campaign for the project. *"We were at the annual fair in Zellik with soup made from vegetables from our garden. And, on the Day Against Poverty, our group prepared vegetarian sandwich spread using all kinds of seasonal vegetables."* A delegation of ten took part in the Zellik Gardening Together meeting day that was organised by Velt in Antwerp. *"We presented how we work and got acquainted with other allotments."*

"That meeting day showed that our allotment is quite different from many other allotment projects in Flanders," said Griet Van Dessel. *"The preferred norm of the gardeners in Zellik is to garden together."* Given their limited experience and knowledge, they prefer to take a communal approach, rather than each gardener individually working their own plot. This season they have started to introduce a system of godparents, where a duo is responsible or takes the lead for a specific plot.

"Gardening together" concept

"We were surprised that in some of the other Flemish municipalities, 40 to 50 volunteers are active on the allotment. Several municipalities have not only made a site available, but provide ready-made garden plots."

However, in Zellik, the start up group had a piece of undeveloped land where rubbish was sometimes dumped. The gardeners and their supervisors had to start from complete scratch. If you stand on the Brusselsesteenweg in Zellik and look at the neglected area containing the allotment, you would be completely discouraged. But once you enter the allotment itself, you immediately notice that a lot of preparatory work has been completed. Eight to nine plots are ready for the new season. Paths have been laid and there is a shed

where the group can safely store their gardening equipment. Moreover, there is still a lot of room to expand the allotment, which will be part of a broader plan for land use. This is an initiative of the Flemish Land Agency (abbreviated VLM in Belgium) in collaboration with the municipality of Asse.

Land development project

Reej indicated that the key objective of the land development plan was to valorise the area outside Zellik, both ecologically and recreationally. The local Velt branches and Natuurpunt association were involved in the redevelopment of the area around the village centre at the Brusselsesteenweg. The Velt and Natuurpunt organisations proposed that a permanent location be created as a meeting place for hikers, cyclists and other recreational activities and allotments. The meeting place and nature recreation will take a leading place in the redevelopment. The public space should encourage people to go outside, hike or take their children out to play or for a picnic.

The architect has already drawn up a plan for the building that will be integrated into the landscape. It will serve as a meeting place. It also has a distinct function within the allotment project. The house will have a green roof with a herb garden and sustainable ecological greenhouse for sowing and growing plants. In the meantime, the Flemish Land Agency has gradually acquired the land for the realisation of the project. An agreement has been entered into with the municipality. The construction and development will start in 2016 with funding from the Flemish government (VLM).



Right from the beginning, Velt and Natuurpunt participated in the concept of the land development plan, which already provided space for the construction of allotments starting in 2012. According to Reej, this made it

pointless to wait until 2016 to start working on the allotments. The preference was to grow together with the interested parties and to gradually allow them to support the initiative.

We also wanted to provide an assurance that the allotment would not just be directed towards Flemish residents, but also to newcomers who are not a part of the traditional social life or those people who were unaware of the initiatives within the municipality because they could not read the municipal information sheet due to their lack of fluency in the Dutch language.

Action research

“To get an earlier start on the allotment, we submitted a dossier to the Flemish minister via the then environmental alderman Etienne Keymolen who was responsible for the outskirts around

Brussels”, said Reej. Minister Bourgeois provided funding for an action research focusing on the integration of newcomers and the acquisition of the Dutch language. The outskirts project was approved by the municipal council. This allowed the municipality to allocate money from the Flemish government to the allotment project in Zellik. The VLM provided a piece of land of size 2 acres at the beginning, which was just enough to be a practice area for novice gardeners.

“With the goal of stimulating the Dutch language, we decided to start off with a mixed language group. We had Dutch speakers and other prospective participants who were not completely fluent, but had enough of the basics to understand the garden coaches,” clarified Reej. *“But how do you make people enthusiastic about the garden project and then recruit them? You must know that the highly urbanised outskirts of Brussels is a typical dormitory community. Many residents commute to work in Brussels during the day and then just stay here at night. For many newcomers, this is just a transitory stopover. They rent a place for a short period and then relocate. Others live in high-rise buildings and have little or no contact with their neighbours. Moreover, Zellik has more than 100 different nationalities.”*

Community work

Given this background, recruiting prospective gardeners of both native and foreign origin was an almost impossible task for Velt and Natuurpunt volunteers. *“This is why we chose a community work type of approach,”* said Reej. The grants from the outskirts project allowed use to engage a half-time community worker for three years.

Griet Van Dessel of Flemish Brabant RISO (Regional Institute for Community Development) is the outskirts project coordinator handling integration and language promotion. This is reflected in her central role in the policy group in which the municipal government, the VLM and Velt are represented. The coordinating task occurs simultaneously via the steering group that the regional organisations are part of. These organisations also notify vulnerable people about to the garden project and direct them to it.



Griet is present at many of the allotment gardener meetings. Of those present, she is the least likely to roll up her sleeves. Nevertheless, she is a reassuring figure and approachable by everyone in the group, including on personal matters. For example, gardeners who have difficulty understanding their gas, water or electricity bills can come to her. She encourages informal group meetings. Coffee breaks get people talking, not just about gardening, but also about things that bother them. This is how Griet was alerted about rubbish issues in the high-rise complex in the Breughelpark or the absence of an area where dogs can be allowed off the leash. She passes such issues on to the relevant government departments.

As a community worker, Griet encourages the gardeners' participation, both in the planning and implementation of activities. The allotment rules were also drawn up together with the participants. At the start of a new season, we go over the agreements that were made and the group adjusts these as needed.

Partners for the future

The community worker is also a liaison to other organisations and also extends the collaboration with other organisations, such as the municipal integration service, Archeduc Adult Education Centre and the Public Social Welfare Centre (abbreviated OCMW in Belgium). Another important partner is the Centre for General Social Work (abbreviated CAW in Belgium) and in particular the manager of the CAW walk-in office. Some gardeners take part in activities organised by the walk-in office and some visitors to the walk-in office are also gardeners.

“These partner organisations are important with respect to attracting new candidates for the allotment. For example, the OCMW and the Provincial Integration Centre (PRIC) have already referred people to the allotment. But it continues to be difficult,” said Griet and Reej. *“The OCMW social service is enthusiastic about promoting the self reliance of their clients by participating in the allotment. However, in practice, it is slow going in particular when dealing with disadvantaged people with many problems.”*



Different schools in the area have already shown interest. They introduce the topic in the classroom or have their own vegetable garden. Youth work monitors also cooperate with the allotment. The Zellik allotment project always opens its door wide for schools that want to garden or experiment. It is also easier to reach parents via the children.

Informal learning and integration

We collaborate with the Archeduc Adult Education Centre on the educational front, in particular with how the allotment project is an informal learning environment for improving in the Dutch language. Participants at the allotment see a positive evolution with respect to Dutch fluency. They express themselves more easily in Dutch.

The same words and phrases are often used during the course and the activities. Griet relates the anecdote about the Syrian Saliba who acquired Reej's speaking style. She now uses commonly abbreviated words. Just like Reej, Saliba talks about planting tatoes, veggies and so on. In the meantime, Saliba learned sufficient Dutch during the project to be eligible for work in a social economy project. It is difficult to find a clearer illustration of successful integration.

Working together

The main strength of the allotment as a method is the fact that people participate because they have the same interest, gardening. This occurs regardless of their background, resources, knowledge and belief. In Zellik, the gardeners click. They understand each other. Dividing the harvested vegetables never causes problems. The few people who only show up at the allotment when the vegetables are harvested are taken to task by the group. The responsibility for the allotment lies more strongly with the group. Gardeners pay a contribution and manage the project's community greenhouse.

The cohesion of the group has a positive effects on the members, even outside the garden. Anyone who has an urgent question can contact someone in the group. Not only is language fluency increased, but social skills are also improved. The gardeners emphasise that the gardens have made them stronger: *"Our group is our strength!"*

16 The rise and fall of Linked Work Training Trust

Alex Downie

Scotland



Linked Work and Training Trust (LWTT) based in Grangemouth was established as an independent voluntary organisation with charitable status. It was incorporated as a Company Limited by Guarantee in April 1999.

It was best known for its innovative work-based professional training programme, which offered people the opportunity to work in their local community, and at the same time, to train to degree level in community learning and community development. Through this three-year apprenticeship programme of education and work-based learning, local people worked towards a Bachelor Degree in Community Learning and Development awarded by the University of Glasgow and endorsed by the Standards Council for Community Learning and Development in Scotland.

This course combined paid employment in community development posts with academic study and is a blend of theory, practice and experience. Most of the students had community development experience either as a volunteer or as an activist but few if any formal academic qualifications. It is primarily funded through a range of funding sourced by LWTT to be able to offer this programme on a widening participation basis for communities of disadvantage.

The key distinctive characteristics of the programme were;

- an access route to professional education and training, which leads to professional levels of employment, for people who would not otherwise be able to attain them
- a degree programme which creates jobs and encourages employer involvement
- an approach to learning and teaching which employs methods to ensure that practice and theory are inter-woven
- a curriculum which involves a high level of student involvement for the organisation and negotiation of their course

- additional student support, beyond conventional access approaches
- workplace supervision which is an essential contributor to the learning process
- capacity building opportunities within the communities as a result of the projects and organisations in which the students work and with which they undertake development
- flexibility and adaptability of the model which enables different approaches to be taken based on the needs of the community.

The rise of LWTT

From its beginnings to 2013 LWTT ran 4 degree courses typically with 9 to 12 students on each. Of the 43 only 2 failed to get beyond the first year, 3 exited at the end of second year with Diplomas in Community Development and 38 graduated with their degrees. All gained employment in community development posts in the public and private sectors, most have moved on to promoted posts and 7 now head organisations or are consultants.

The students spent 1 day per week over the 3 years on academic study and the remainder was spent working in local communities for their respective employers. Tracking the outputs and outcomes of this work was the responsibility of the employer, was patchy to say the least and passing this information to LWTT on request, did not seem to have any priority. Consequently, all that can be said with any certainty is that over 140 new community groups, projects and initiatives were established and supported across the Central Belt of Scotland. For its work in relation to this, LWTT has received a range of regeneration awards. The first one was awarded by the British Urban Regeneration Association in 2003. The awards are made annually to projects that have made an outstanding contribution to the development of regeneration practice in the UK. The awarding panel said;

'The Trust doesn't have shiny new buildings...instead, it has a specialist, focused education and training programme that is connected directly to the needs of a community. It's actually delivering degree level qualifications, giving communities a capacity to develop their own programme for regeneration. This shows that a small programme can deliver a multiplier effect'.

'The LWTT model is an outstanding example of a project that builds the capacity of excluded communities to develop and harness their own skills, commitment, experience and confidence to contribute to sustained local economic and social regeneration, and demonstrates best practice'.

LWTT widened its activities through more targeted courses. It delivered training and learning to enable unqualified, black and ethnic minority employees in white led organisations to progress into management and senior positions in the voluntary sector by enabling them to study for and achieve the degree in Community Learning and Development adapting the LWTT model. Of the 9 students on the course 7 graduated with the degree and 4 are in senior positions with 2 now directors of their employing organisations. LWTT also ran the 1st year of the degree course for 4 unqualified community support workers employed through the Coalfield Regeneration Trust. All completed the course with a Higher National Certificate in Working with Communities.

And the fall

Consultancy work had always featured in a small way in LWTT's business strategy. LWTT started out wholly reliant on grant aid from Government, Trusts and Europe. It was recognized in 2004 that this is not a sustainable income strategy so it began to both sell services and to generate small amounts through consultancy. The benefits were seen;

- **Financially:** the consultancy income could subsidise the training.
- **Curriculum development:** the consultancy work fed into keeping the course content relevant and topical
- **CD training:** by focusing on consultancy work on developing CD policy and practice on training and learning for CD, producing learning materials and resources, evaluating learning courses and programmes for others, the organization is making a contribution to the development of CD training nationally in Scotland.

This strategy held good until 2009. The effects of the global economic recession of 2008 began to bite deep in Scotland from 2009. The impact of the reductions in public spending meant re-structuring and job losses. The Independent Budget Review group set up by the Scottish Government to consider future options, forecast in July 2010 that up to 60,000 public sector workers would lose their jobs in the next few years¹. By October of that year Price Waterhouse Cooper were warning the figure could be 100,000². The LWTT model was dependent on paid jobs being available or LWTT being able to find the finance to create those jobs. This became increasingly difficult and so more and more consultancy work was taken on to subsidise the training costs. From 2008 to 2010 the organization undertook 29 separate consultancy contracts for 18 different clients. The client base ranged across the voluntary and public sectors from small projects like Tullibody Healthy Living and the Muslim Women's Resource Centre, through local authorities and Health Boards to Scottish Government and Lifelong Learning UK. Income from consultancy become the most significant source of finance and while some work stayed true to the aim of focusing on training and learning contracts increasingly LWTT was becoming a CD consultancy agency.



To mitigate against this LWTT added Scottish Qualifications Agency approved learning centre status to its partnership with the University of Glasgow. This allowed the delivery of Professional Development Awards in Youth Work, and Volunteer Awards and brought on stream fee income from each student. Six youth work courses were run in one year for 62

1 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-10794298>

2 [arning-cuts-could-lead-to.6579063.jp](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-10794298)

students and while this contributed to the financial stability of LWTT it still did not generate enough income to be able to run a further degree level apprenticeship course. Increasingly the organization relied on consultancy and being paid to deliver training out with the core purpose of why LWTT was set up - delivering training to local people who because of their lack of formal educational qualifications could not access traditional qualifying training in CD.

That is not to say the work at this stage did not serve a purpose. LWTT led the consortium of organisations who refreshed the competences for community learning and development in Scotland, undertook a research study into the transitions from community based adult learning to Further Education for those from disadvantaged communities, researched the pathways into community learning and development training, trained over 200 community learning and development workers in leadership and management and 98 workers from a national Housing Association also in leadership and management. It was that last contract which ran alarm bells!

It was 2 years since LWTT completed their last degree level apprenticeship course in CD and they were training housing managers and staff in leadership and management. Allied to that more and more consultancy work was becoming focused on CD work generally and less on training and learning. LWTT's raison d'être was not to compete with other CD consultancy agencies for contracts, it was to provide a pathway for community activists and leaders into a career in CD and to generate change through CD in disadvantaged communities through its apprentices.

The Board and staff jointly agreed that in the economic climate LWTT could survive on consultancy but that with the 2 professional staff and 1½ admin and finance staff that would almost certainly be at the expense of training activity. The Board deferred the final decision to staff who in terms of their values and principles agreed LWTT should be wound up.

And rise?

LWTT demonstrably evidenced that activists with appropriate training can become very good CD workers and that trainees and apprentices working in our communities can have significant impacts in improving the quality of people's lives in those communities. All the LWTT students brought qualities; enthusiasm, energy, life experience and a strong set of values and beliefs which is sometimes lacking from those who enter the profession straight from a school, college route.

It cannot be argued that the apprenticeship / work experience model is cheaper than the conventional college / university approach. It is more expensive because students require more one to one learning opportunities and when they come from disadvantaged communities may need more guidance and pastoral care. They do however make good workers and for many it is a career option which is not otherwise open. We need both college / university and apprenticeship approaches to grow a strong workforce and in the future, re-visiting the apprenticeship approach will I am sure bring positive outcomes.

17 Challenges for community development in Europe

Gerard Hautekeur



More than a decade ago I sketched out some challenges for community development in Europe. This was partly based on a literature review and on a survey¹ which I carried out, in 2003, among the eleven members of the Combined European Bureau for Social Development (CEBSD), now called the European Community Development Network (EuCDN).

In the meantime new members have joined the network and others have left. Moreover, the socio-economic and political context has changed and as a consequence also the position of community development in various European countries. But I find it relevant to look back and to reflect on those challenges.

Before I get to the challenges let me summarize some of the interesting findings from the survey about 10 years ago which are, in my opinion, still valid today.

1 Gerard Hautekeur (2003): VIBOSO-CEBSD questionnaire community development in Europe.

High Profile

Taking into account the government recognition and financial support, the degree of professionalization of community development workers, the priority areas of work, it is obvious that within Europe there are undoubtedly differences in the profile and position of community development. These are, among other things, determined not only by the national and regional context in Europe but also by political and cultural differences within the countries.

Despite the differing national or regional contexts, the member organisations of the EuCDN have achieved a high degree of agreement with regard to the basic principles of community development. The following key concepts were highlighted in the definition of at least two or more members of the European network. Community development:

- delivers professional and independent support to groups of people;
- identifies, together with local people, community problems;
- increases the empowerment of local people so that they can organise themselves in order to solve problems;
- turns its attention primarily to people struggling with social deprivation and exclusion;
- contributes to a sustainable community based on mutual respect and social justice;
- challenges power structures which hinder people's participation;
- contributes to the socio-cultural development of the neighbourhood by the local people themselves.

A common guideline in that practice is a bottom-up process, in which common problems are approached collectively in a participatory manner. Empowerment of the target group and structural transformation are central to this.

The responses to the survey carried out among the members pointed to a growing consensus with regard to the concepts and the content of Community development in Europe. The survey showed that community development practice develops under different political and cultural contexts, but whether or not it goes forward depends on a combination of factors:

- the recognition of autonomous community development organisations and/or of a separate discipline;
- a substantial financial support by the government;
- an openness towards interactive or participative decision-making processes;
- a greater awareness among policy-makers of the added value of community development;
- a core community development curriculum in (non-)university education;
- a qualitative training and solid research for community development practitioners;
- horizontal learning by bringing groups together, exchanging and disseminating good practice in Community development;
- inter-regional and international links between community development organisations within a European framework.

The EuCDN is indeed a small European network that brings together organisations which are committed to supporting community development. But it has most certainly found its place in the European welfare scene and in many European countries it is obtaining a higher profile.

Challenges

For years, community development has striven for recognition within society. This has not been without a certain success. Government and many other kinds of agencies increasingly call upon community development. It plays a role in the plans for activating the local economy, in national and European programmes with regard to the living environment and the upgrading of local communities and cities. It is certainly positive that community development is recognised as a partner. However, a number of dangers lurk within this growing functional involvement. In regeneration programmes, the emphasis is principally on economic development and physical action in the local community, but much less so on the social dimension of this regeneration. Much energy is given to networks and this happens sometimes at the expense of working with the local community in the neighbourhood. It would seem that the programmes are set up *for* rather *than* with the local people.

Duyvendak² deals with the transformation of a vocation in which community development workers themselves played a major role. In it he analyses the co-operation with the police, education, health and housing societies. He does not doubt that community development workers are still there to stand up for the weakest groups, but they lay greater emphasis on consultation, consensus and social harmony. As a result there is a more limited concern for problems related to social inequalities, conflicts of interest and societal conflict.

It is apparent, therefore, that community development workers are in danger of becoming the extension of bureaucracy and of becoming caught up in official procedures. Moreover, community development is involved in short-term projects, characterised by objectives which, in the short term, must bear fruit.

Difficult social questions such as the duality in society and all possible forms of discrimination and racism, as a result, find it difficult to make their way onto the political agenda. Community development is faced with the challenge of creating processes of empowerment within the ethnic and cultural communities and of providing support to new forms of leadership, so that communities of minority groups can have a say in policy. Campfens, who in his study involved six countries from various regions in the world, notes also that inter-ethnic tensions with racist overtones have been rising in Western countries as urban societies become increasingly multicultural.³ In his opinion, those countries did not until recently emphasise community development as a means of bringing about integration. Policies of achieving group integration, acknowledging cultural differences, have been largely neglected.

Campfens, however, stresses that community development has moved away from its narrow focus on localities and group development toward an increased concern for social justice and human rights within a local, regional and international context.

2 Jan-Willem Duyvendak (2003): *Transformatie van een professie- het opbouwwerk en de grote overgang*

3 Hubert Campfens (1997): *Community development around the world*, p. 448-449

“The challenge for the new community development is to forge circles of mutuality and solidarity around the globe that will lead to the emergence of an active ‘worldwide civil society’, and reinforce development and human rights work done at the local, regional and national levels.”

(Campfens, 1997, p. 466)

However, the recent crisis in Europe has shown that many Europeans have become increasingly hostile toward newly arrived immigrants and asylum seekers. The growing resentment toward immigrants has encouraged the rise of anti-immigrant parties on the extreme right, who enjoy widespread popular support. Religious intolerance continues to flare up across Europe, despite its talk about inclusivity and diversity.

Conclusion

Community development has found its place in the European welfare scene and in many European countries it is obtaining a higher profile. Not only in those countries with a longer tradition in the field, but also in countries such as Bulgaria, Romania and the Czech Republic.

An increasing number of local authorities promote interactive management in which citizens are involved in the early stages of decision-making. Over the years it has become obvious that community development has to engage with policy makers. It is necessary to make policy makers, civil servants and related organisations within civil society more aware of the added value of community development. However, too great a degree of functional involvement in governmental programmes endangers the identity of community development. Community development organisations need to address the challenges mentioned above. More exchange and reflection among members of the EuCDN should provide a sharper profile of community development across borders.

Gerard Hautekeur

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