



This leaflet outlines the Every Action Counts Programme and the key activities being undertaken by the Federation for Community Development Learning (FCDL) and its partners in the Community Sector Coalition who have the responsibility of delivering EAC.

The EAC programme for meeting the environmental challenges facing us today is based on the idea that every community group, whether big or small, rural or urban focused, has a critical role in environmental sustainability.

FCDL has developed training sessions and resources for community workers to enable them to integrate sustainable development into their work and support community groups to address environmental issues and to take action to improve the quality of life in their communities (see [www.fcdl.org.uk](http://www.fcdl.org.uk) for materials and see back page for our current workplan).

**Community Development Work** is a collective approach to bringing about social change and justice by working with communities to identify their own needs, to plan and take actions to meet them, and to learn from experiences.

**Community Development Workers work for social justice** and so the FCDL's approach to working on sustainable development issues is based on recognising the clear link between environmental problems and social injustices – the poorest communities usually have the smallest footprints but suffer from the excessive footprints of the more affluent. In the UK for example, the worst factory pollution is found in the most deprived local authorities, and air pollution from traffic is also worst in these areas.

**FCDL views Environmental Justice** as a crucial part of social justice and sees that environmental justice means that there should be:

- A quality of life for all - everyone should have a safe and healthy place to live, work and play
- Enough resources for all of us now and for future generations

The accepted international definition of sustainable development is:

**'Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'**

*Bruntland 1987*

Over the last 20 years we have realised that we are living beyond our means, and our way of life is placing an increasing burden on the planet. Globally we are not even meeting the needs of the present let alone considering the needs of future generations. If everyone in the world were to consume natural resources at the rate we do in the UK we would need three planets to support us. The concept of One Planet Living was developed by the World Wide Fund for Nature ([www.panda.org](http://www.panda.org)) and is being used by the Government to highlight how the UK (and all other rich countries) use far more than their fair share of the planet's resources. It has been worked out that developed countries use about three planets' worth of resources. The target is to reduce this "global footprint" by two-thirds so that only one planet's worth of resources are used.

The government have identified 5 areas where everyone can make a difference and help achieve the targets:

1. Save Energy
2. Travel Wisely
3. Shop Ethically
4. Save Our Resources
5. Care For Your Area

During 2005-6 several organisations, including FCDL, worked with Defra on the Community Action 2020 programme to explore different ways to motivate the VCS to take action on sustainable development. From the range of ideas generated and the research undertaken the Every Action Counts initiative was born, this is part of 'Together We Can Secure the Future' which provides the over arching aim of the initiative: To ensure that communities and the Government work together to improve quality of life for communities and safeguard the environment now and for future generations.

From 2006-2009 the Community Sector Coalition (composed of national VCS organisations) is delivering a range of initiatives which form Every Action Counts. [www.everyactioncounts.org.uk](http://www.everyactioncounts.org.uk)

Programmes include:

- Recruiting and training community champions [www.btcv.org](http://www.btcv.org)
- Embedding sustainable development into VCS organisations who work nationally, regionally and locally [www.bassac.org.uk](http://www.bassac.org.uk)
- Training/ skilling up community workers – the FCDL is leading on this part [www.fcdl.org.uk](http://www.fcdl.org.uk)
- Promoting good practice [www.capacity.org.uk](http://www.capacity.org.uk)
- Producing on and off line resources [www.bassac.org.uk](http://www.bassac.org.uk)

Through this collective approach many organisations and groups are involved in promoting sustainable development to their members and to the wider communities of locality, interest and identity.



Community Development Work is based on 6 values which are all relevant to the goals of sustainable development:

**Social Justice**  
**Self determination**  
**Working and learning together**  
**Sustainable communities**  
**Participation**  
**Reflective practice**

Tackling local issues through a community development approach can contribute to the goals of sustainable development – for example we know that more children are killed in road accidents in poor communities than in richer ones. Supporting local groups campaigning to reduce access and the speed of vehicles driving through their communities can lead to the provision of more safe play areas, safe routes to school, reduced emissions and fewer cases of asthma. As CD workers we must tackle issues around environmental justice as part of working to achieve greater social justice.

Recent research has shown that CD workers are already involved with sustainable development as part of their work:

- Engaging communities who have not been involved with environment issues before and creating more cohesive communities through environmental projects
- Supporting new social enterprises using waste materials, such as recycling computers
- Addressing traffic problems with communities to improve people's health
- Influencing policy at community and council levels by getting sustainable development issues put into community consultations, parish plans, local action plans, and changing LSP policies

- Supporting local food initiatives which promote access to local and healthy food, creating opportunities to learn how to prepare fresh food, as well as reducing food miles
- Improving the biodiversity of local parks, planting trees and local woodland management projects
- Greening community centres and village halls through environmental audits of buildings and supporting integrated environmental policy for new buildings
- Tackling fuel poverty through providing low energy light bulbs

We want to create sustainable communities which meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, their children and other users, contribute to a high quality of life and provide opportunity and choice. To do this we must make more effective use of natural resources, enhance the environment, promote social cohesion and inclusion and improve the local economy. This will require government and private business to take action as well as individuals and community groups.

FCDL has been funded to deliver a planned programme of work to support Every Action Counts for 2006-9; our activities will include

- Training trainers to deliver a range of courses on sustainable development
- Training community workers to incorporate sustainable development into their everyday work
- Supporting community organisations to practice sustainable development principles
- Developing dedicated training materials ranging from informal sessions and tasters to new resource packs and a new Community Work Skills Manual on sustainable development.

FCDL is the UK-wide network for community development work training. We support the development of communities through promoting community work learning at local, regional and national levels and the creation of appropriate opportunities for training and qualification.

We support a network of individuals, organisations and groups interested in community development learning and training to share information and good training practice.

We develop materials and training resources to support good practice in community work training.

We work at a national level to develop new arrangements for community development work training and qualifications that are accessible and relevant.

## Resources available from FCDL

Sustainable Development Taster session packs - download free of charge from [www.fcdl.org.uk](http://www.fcdl.org.uk).

1. Care for your area
2. Community buildings
3. Climate change
4. Community food projects
5. Sustainable Development and Communities
6. A strategic Approach to Sustainable Development

### Resource Packs for the OCN Community Development Work national awards:

Eleven Resource Packs have been produced as part of a series which are linked to the Open College Network Community Development Programme.

Further details of these and all our other publications can be found on our website, [www.fcdl.org.uk](http://www.fcdl.org.uk), or contact the Federation for an order form.

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## Membership of the Federation

Membership benefits include:

- Being part of the Federation network and helping to shape the future of community development training
- Regular newsletters and information mailings
- Discounts on conferences and events
- Discounts on Federation publications
- Information service and library
- Ubuntu: the opportunity for BME practitioners involved in community development work to network and gain support
- Participating in the work of the Federation through sharing experiences and learning from other members; contributing to ideas for future work