

Community Development National Occupational Standards

What is community development practice?

Community development enables people to work collectively to bring about positive social change.

This long term process starts from people's own experience and enables communities* to work together to:

- Identify their own needs and actions
- Take collective action using their strengths and resources
- Develop their confidence, skills and knowledge
- Challenge unequal power relationships
- Promote social justice, equality and inclusion

in order to improve the quality of their own lives, the communities in which they live and societies of which they are a part.

What are the Standards?

The National Occupational Standards outline clearly the skills, values and processes required for effective and appropriate community development practice. Community development is undertaken by a wide range of people in different settings and roles. Community development practitioners may be paid (employed workers) or unpaid (community activists and voluntary workers), and all need to be competent in the necessary skills and knowledge and to work with integrity to support communities who may have few recognised resources and limited access to decision makers.

The Standards applied to practice will ensure that community development impacts on poverty, racism and social exclusion in a way that empowers, enables and encourages participation.

Key values

The community development process is underpinned by a set of values on which all practice is based. Community development practitioners need to relate these values to their roles and actions. There are five key values that underpin all community development practice:

- Social justice and equality
- Anti-discrimination
- Community empowerment
- Collective action
- Working and learning together

The National Occupational Standards support:

- Community development workers and community activists
- Individuals and organisations adopting a community development approach in their work
- Employers of community development practitioners
- Community development education and training providers
- Funders of programmes and projects
- Development and delivery of strategic plans
- Evaluation of community development practice

* Communities refer to those that can be defined by geography, identity or interest.

The Reflective Community Development Practitioner

In community development practice the HOW and WHY, the PRACTICE and PROCESS are key to the work. Central to this is the reflective practitioner. The reflective practitioner regularly reviews how the values underpin, inform and are present within their community development practice.



KA = Key Area

* Key Area 1 is core and underpins all community development practice

Key Community Development Values



Social justice and equality

Work for a more just and equal society which recognises environmental, political, cultural and economic issues by:

- Celebrating the strengths, skills and assets in communities
- Acknowledging and challenging inequalities, injustice and imbalances of power
- Promoting human and civil rights and responsibilities

Anti-discrimination

Respect, value, support and promote difference and diversity whilst rejecting and challenging any form of oppression, discrimination and sectarianism.

- Recognise that discrimination works at individual, community, organisational/ institutional and societal levels
- Explore and challenge all forms of discrimination
- Develop anti-oppressive policies and practices which actively support and value diversity

Community empowerment

Enable communities to develop confidence, capacity, skills and relationships to shape collective action and challenge imbalances of power.

- Enable communities to recognise and build on their existing skills, knowledge and expertise

- Promote the rights of communities to define themselves, their priorities and agendas for action
- Provide the space for communities to develop critical, creative, independent and active decision making and participation

Collective action

Promote the active participation of people within communities, using the power of a collective voice and goal.

- Recognise the wealth of creative and positive resources within individuals and communities
- Promote and support diverse communities to agree and take action on their common concerns and interests
- Use the power of the collective voice to plan and take collective action while respecting the rights of others

Working and learning together

Create and encourage opportunities for collective learning through action and shared reflection.

- Learn from shared experiences of working in collaboration
- Understand experiences in the context of wider social, political and economic forces
- Encourage critical reflection on own practice, values and beliefs.

This is a summary document. Go to www.fcld.org.uk to see the full version of the 2015 Community Development national occupational standards. Thanks and acknowledgements to our partners below, all the members of the 4 nations CDNOS Review Implementation Group, and our colleagues at the Joint ETS and National Youth Agency.



Key Areas and Standards for community development practice

The Community Development National Occupational Standards (CD NOS) consist of six key areas that between them contain 25 standards. Key Area 1, Understand and practise community development, underpins all other 5 key areas. The Standards identify the roles that practitioners adopt within the community development process and outline the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to carry out the roles.



Key Area 1: CORE

Understand and practise community development

- S1** Integrate and use the values and process of community development
- S2** Work with the tensions inherent in community development practice
- S3** Relate to different communities
- S4** Develop yourself as a community development practitioner
- S5** Maintain community development practice within own organisation
- S6** Support inclusive and collective working

Key Area 2: Understand and engage with communities

- S7** Get to know a community
- S8** Facilitate community research and consultations
- S9** Analyse and disseminate findings from community research

Key Area 3: Group work and collective action

- S10** Organise community events and activities
- S11** Support communities to effectively manage and address conflict, within and between communities or community groups
- S12** Support communities who want to bring about positive social change
- S13** Facilitate community leadership

Key Area 4: Collaborative and cross-sectoral working

- S14** Promote and support effective relationships between communities and public bodies and other agencies
- S15** Encourage and support public bodies to build effective relationships with communities
- S16** Support collaborative and partnership work
- S17** Strategically co-ordinate networks and partnerships

Key Area 5: Community learning for social change

- S18** Promote opportunities for community development learning
- S19** Facilitate community learning for social and political development

Key Area 6: Governance and organisational development

- S20** Advise on organisational structures to support community development
- S21** Plan and gain resources and funding for sustainability
- S22** Strengthen the organisational development of groups
- S23** Monitor and evaluate community development activities
- S24** Manage internal organisational development and external relationships
- S25** Supervise and support community development practitioners