3: Community-led Development

Introduction

These good practice guidelines support communities to create and achieve locally owned visions and goals. Drawing on sector resources and research, they have been developed by the Centre for Social Impact for Rātā Foundation and Foundation North.

Indicators of Good Practice

Indicator #1: **Shared community goals and vision**	Good-practice community-led development initiatives show that the community has shared goals and a shared vision. The vision is built on the knowledge, wisdom, history and aspirations of the community and should include and support those of local whānau, iwi and hapū. The community – whether place-based or a community of interest – should be empowered to help shape the vision and goals and develop solutions that are unique to and owned by that community. Through good-practice community-led development, community members feel they can influence the realisation of their collective aspirations.
Indicator #2: **Effective community engagement**	Strong community engagement is essential to developing and achieving a shared community vision. It is important to develop a proactive community engagement strategy, and it is good practice to either involve the community in doing this or co-design it with key community representatives. This process can help communities to develop the 'know-how' they need to mobilise and organise themselves and others, and lead processes for working and learning together. Good-practice community engagement also seeks to give a 'voice' to those in the community whose views might not otherwise be heard. These include young people, minority groups and 'hard to reach' families who for some reason are not involved in their communities. This approach recognises the importance and strength of diverse voices and provides an opportunity to build relationships that cross community boundaries.
Indicator #3: **Activating and strengthening community leadership**	Good-practice community-led development involves identifying and nurturing emergent community leaders from diverse backgrounds throughout the community. High-quality, effective leaders have the ability to: • engage with others to create visions and identify community aspirations • create a community belief that change is possible

- understand and organise responses to local issues.

Good practice includes identifying ways to grow local leadership by, for example by:

- connecting people who are already active leaders and energising others who want to be more effective leaders

- investing time and resources in developing local leaders' skills and capacity.

Indicator #4: **Cross-community networks**	Good practice community-led development supports connections between groups who are motivated to work together towards a shared vision. Local leaders can help to facilitate these connections for groups that may have different resources, skills, assets and ideas but a common vision for change. Community-led development can be activated through: - networking and collaborating with partners in the community - building links with similar initiatives regionally or nationally - sharing insights and lessons learned to help local groups increase their chances of success.
Indicator #5: **Strengths-based approach**	A strengths-based approach is one of the keys to successful community-led development. It involves recognising and developing the strengths, skills, resources and assets of community members, leaders, groups, organisations and the community as a whole. A strengths-based approach starts with identifying what is working and where the community is strong, successful, passionate and able to contribute. Good practice builds these strengths, ensuring that local people are valued for their knowledge of their community or communities of interest.
Indicator #6: **Learning**	Good-practice community-led development requires a commitment to adapt to changing community dynamics and new opportunities that might emerge along the way. This acknowledges that while there is an overall vision, the path to achieving it may not be as expected. It is important to collect data and make time for community partners and other stakeholders to come together, reflect on progress and see the successes achieved. This: - enables all stakeholders to see and comment on what is working and what could be improved - helps the whole community to learn how the process works - helps to engage and mobilise the community - provides a source of feedback to funders and other stakeholders. No matter the size of the activity, it is good practice to identify and communicate changes and unexpected results; even small changes can have significant impacts on communities.

Demonstrating Good Practice

When seeking funding for community-led development initiatives, organisations should describe how their proposed initiatives align with the six indicators of good practice. Many funders expect to see evidence of:

- how the organisation has worked with its community and identified a shared vision and goals

- how tangata whenua, Pacific communities, young people and other diverse groups have helped to shape the initiative, and whether their perspectives are reflected in the shared vision and collaboration

- how the initiative incorporates a strengths-based approach and builds on community skills, resources and assets

- how community leaders will be identified and involved, and local leadership and ownership supported

- whether the organisation as systems and processes to ensure the initiative's ongoing improvement and to assess and communicate its impacts.

Key Questions:
Can We Strengthen our Community-Led Development Practice?

- > Have diverse members of our community contributed to our vision and goals?

- > Have we developed our community engagement plan in collaboration with key community leaders and groups?

- > Has our community development initiative responded to and supported the aspirations of whānau, iwi and hapū?

- > Are we enabling young people to participate?

- > Do we have a clear understanding of the local skills, resources and assets that can be used and strengthened?

- > Do we have a plan to support the development of local leaders?

- > Do we have systems to reflect on progress, understand what is working and continue to improve our approach?

Key Resources for More Information

1   **Community-led Development Tools and Resources** (Community Matters)

www.communitymatters.govt.nz/community-led-development-tools-and-resources-2/

2   **What is Community-led Development?** (Inspiring Communities)

www.inspiringcommunities.org.nz/ic_resource/what-is-community-led-development/

www.youtube.com/watch?v=QehteJJPMLA

3   **Community-led Development Think Piece** (Inspiring Communities, 2012)

www.inspiringcommunities.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/CLD-Think-Piece-July-2012.pdf

4   **Take Action – Resources** (Inspiring Communities)

www.inspiringcommunities.org.nz/resources/take-action/

Community-led Development: Good Practice Case Study

Massey Matters is a community development organisation in Massey, West Auckland – a youthful, diverse community with a population of more than 27,000.

Massey Matters focuses on community-led development, with a mission to "create opportunities through connections and partnerships between residents, tangata whenua, community, groups, organisations and agencies".

Massey Matters enables residents to work alongside local and central government. It was developed from a community forum where community leaders identified Massey's strengths, assets and aspirations for the future.

Massey Matters demonstrates good practice through:

- a shared local vision that responds to local aspirations and builds on community strengths, assets, energy and passion

- using local expertise and knowledge that are gathered continually through formal and informal channels

- the strong relationships between local residents and key local stakeholders, including Auckland Council

- its connections with another neighbourhood development initiatives in nearby Rānui via a 'Back2Back' project.

For more information on Massey Matters, visit masseymatters.org.nz

This good practice resource was developed in 2019 by:

References and Resources

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