Good Practice Guidelines | # 7: Diversity

Introduction

These good practice guidelines support community groups who seek to consider and develop their practice in relation to 'diversity' (in terms of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, religious beliefs and cultural background). 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:
Approaches that enable participation, inclusion and belonging

For community groups and organisations, good practice in diversity is about:

- enabling diverse communities to participate in activities, projects and groups
- removing barriers to participation and inclusion
- creating safe and welcoming spaces that enable diverse communities to engage in ways that support and value all participants' roles and contributions
- supporting participants to engage in ways that value and help affirm their identity.

Through active and equitable community participation, all people can be supported to develop a sense of inclusion and belonging. Equitable participation can also help to strengthen cohesion within and between communities.

Indicator #2:
Community-led approaches

Community-led approaches empower communities to identify their own aspirations and solutions. It is essential to engage diverse communities in these approaches to ensure that:

- their needs and aspirations are considered
- local visions and strategies reflect the local context and its diverse people.

This might include collaborating with local groups/organisations that are led by diverse communities and offering insights and relevant expertise.

Indicator #3:
Approaches that support leadership development

Every community should have local leaders who reflect its social and cultural fabric, as this helps to ensure that local decision-making meets the needs and aspirations of its people. To enable this, diverse communities should have equitable access to leadership roles in local groups, organisations, boards, advisory groups and other networks.

Leaders have a key role in:

- strengthening community advocacy
- empowering diverse voices
- growing diverse representation
- increasing diverse communities' participation in local decision-making.

Community groups and organisations should consider how they can help to ensure diverse participation in leadership roles within their communities. This could include building pathways to leadership for emergent leaders and supporting the development of existing leaders.

Indicator #4: **Community-led advocacy**	Through community-led advocacy people support, and speak on their own behalf about, issues that relate to themselves and the communities with which they identify. Community-led advocacy is critical for minority communities and those that may otherwise face barriers to participation. Good-practice community-led advocacy supports communities to have a voice in and influence on local, regional and national strategy-, policy- and decision-making. It enables diverse communities to be heard and their needs to be met.
Indicator #5: **Organisational diversity practices**	Community groups and organisations should continually strengthen their organisational practices to ensure they are responsive to the needs and aspirations of diverse communities. This could include considering how: - their activities and programmes support diverse communities equitable participation and inclusion - they ensure equitable participation in leadership and decision-making roles - they can strengthen their cultural competence - they understand and meet the diverse needs and aspirations of the people they currently and potentially serve.
Indicator #6: **Whole-person approach**	Organisations wanting to respond effectively to the needs and aspirations of diverse communities must take a 'whole-person' approach. This means recognising that a person's experiences, needs and aspirations are diverse and multi-dimensional. For example, a young person may face barriers to participation in community leadership roles because of their age or because of discrimination related to their gender identity or cultural background. A whole-person approach considers how these experiences intersect, to better support the person's needs and aspirations.
Indicator #7: **Inclusive and participatory evaluation practices**	Good practice includes making time for evaluation and learning, using approaches that: - are inclusive and participatory - enable diverse communities to devise and implement their own culturally appropriate ways of reflecting and learning. For example, community-specific approaches empower communities to tell their own stories of impact – in their own way, with their own voices. They also identify successes and provide feedback to communities to support their continued learning, development, participation and leadership.

Demonstrating Good Practice

When seeking funding for projects and initiatives with diverse communities, organisations should describe how the proposed projects/initiatives align with the seven indicators of good practice. Many funders expect to see evidence of:

- how the organisation supports and enables diverse communities' participation and inclusion

- how diverse communities have identified their needs, aspirations and solutions, and how the organisation plans to respond

- the opportunities that will be provided to support leadership development in diverse communities

- how diverse communities will be empowered to speak on their own behalf and advocate for issues that affect them

- whether the organisation has the skills and knowledge to engage with and support participation by the diverse communities it serves.

Key Questions:
Can We Strengthen our Diversity Practice?

- > Do our organisation's leadership team and board have diverse representation?

- > Have we considered how our activities support equitable participation, inclusion and belonging?

- > How are we helping diverse communities to identify priority issues and progress towards their goals and aspirations?

- > How are we helping to provide pathways to leadership and build leadership capacity in diverse communities?

- > Are there areas in our organisation where we could strengthen our cultural competence?

Key Resources for More Information

1   **Strategic Direction and Intent for the Office of Ethnic Communities 2016 - 2020** (Office of Ethnic Communities 2016-2020)

www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz/about-us/flourishing-ethnic-diversity/

2   **Intercultural Capability E-Learning** (The Office of Ethnic Communities)

www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz/resources-2/intercultural-capability/

3   **Diversity Works NZ**

www.diversityworksnz.org.nz

4   **Diverse Thinking Capability Audit** (Superdiversity Institute, 2018)

www.superdiversity.org/wp-content/uploads/Diverse-Thinking-Capability-Audit-2018.pdf

Diversity:
Good Practice
Case Study

In 2018 the Umma Trust set up a programme to empower young Muslim former refugees to become mentors and role models for other former refugee children and youth in their local community. A Youth Steering Group was established comprising ethnic leaders and key agencies, and they selected 29 youth mentors whose life experiences resonated with their peers.

The youth mentors supported 82 former refugee youth through programmes that included youth sport, academic mentoring, young women leadership activities, and music and poetry. The programme demonstrates good practice because:

- ethnic leaders and key agencies designed and implemented the programme in response to needs and aspirations identified by the local Muslim youth community

- the initiative supported and grew the capacity and capabilities of emerging young leaders from refugee backgrounds

- diverse young leaders were empowered to make decisions and design activities that enabled positive community participation, inclusion and belonging in the Muslim youth community.

For more information, visit www.ummatrust.co.nz

This good practice resource was developed in 2019 by:

References and Resources

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