Some international approaches to community grant funding

March 2011
Contents

Executive Summary 3
Introduction 4
Trends and common themes 4
Community development approach / relationship model 4
Strategic Planning / investment approach 10
Simplicity of process / reduced compliance costs 11
Cooperative effort 11
Sustainability 11

Country reviews:

Australia 13
Introduction 13
Part I: Commonwealth Government’s Social Inclusion Agenda 13
Part II State approaches 16
Part III Indigenous community grants 20

United Kingdom 23
General 23
What activities/ approaches are funded? 23
How is funding administered and managed? 24
Example: BIG Lottery 25
Scotland 28

North America 29
Canada 29
  Federal Government funding arrangements for indigenous communities 29
  Vibrant Communities 33
United States 33
  Comprehensive Community Initiatives (CCIs) 33
Executive Summary

1. This paper provides an overview of approaches to grant-making for community development in selected countries. It presents a high-level picture aimed to inform the development of a new funding framework for the Department’s Crown funded schemes. The selected countries are Australia, the United Kingdom, and North America (Canada and the USA).

2. Some trends and key findings are drawn out from the country studies which follow:
   - A community development approach to funding schemes is emphasised, in which communities are able to decide on their needs and priorities and lead development initiatives.
   - An “investment” approach to community development in a number of countries has the advantage of encouraging a long-term strategic approach to community development.
   - The value of organisations making links and working together is recognised in many countries.
   - Funding is best when it is flexible, responsive and long term.
   - Another common trend is the call from communities and response from some governments to simplify the management and administration of grant funding.
   - Sustainability of community goals beyond initial funding period is an increasing focus, and can be helped by developing funding partnerships.

3. In Australia, most State government funding programmes for communities are framed in the context of the Commonwealth government’s Social Inclusion Agenda. Several elements of the social inclusion approach are equivalent to features we would identify with community development. These similarities include: a focus on grass roots engagement, identifying shared goals and outcomes, building local resources and networks, and projects being community owned and driven.

4. Indigenous approaches are also discussed, in particular the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA). Its Development Plan describes long-term investment in communities which acknowledges that community development takes time. The TSRA has consulted with every community in its jurisdiction and incorporated their aspirations and needs; and checked back with the communities to ensure it has got its planning right and results are being achieved.

5. A range of funding schemes in the United Kingdom is discussed, in particular the Big Lottery Fund, which is the largest organisation distributing lottery funds. It applies an ‘intelligent funder’ approach: strategic, rather than demand-led, but also responsive to the needs of communities.

6. The Fair Share Trust provides financial and other support for up to 10 years for selected neighbourhoods in the United Kingdom (selected because they are relatively deprived and do not get their ‘fair share’ of funding of other Lottery sources). The Trust reiterates the importance of a community development approach being well integrated in the funding programme, influencing its design from the outset.

7. The Canadian section discusses the role of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) – a Federal agency; and also a discussion of the Vibrant Communities initiatives.

8. ‘Comprehensive community initiatives’ (CCIs) is a term used in North America and elsewhere to describe targeted community revitalisation strategies. CCIs adopted a comprehensive approach to neighbourhood change and worked according to
community-building principles that value resident engagement and community capacity building.

**Introduction**

9. This paper is part of the Department of Internal Affairs’ (The Department) first principles review of Crown funded schemes. It provides an overview of some approaches to government grant-making for community development in selected countries. It presents a high-level picture aimed to inform the development of a new funding framework for the Department's Crown funded schemes.

10. The paper begins by drawing out the themes and approaches common to the sample countries, including drawing on some comparative material from Europe. The selected countries were Australia, the United Kingdom, and North America (Canada and the USA) and this largely descriptive material is presented after the themes. There is a vast amount of material to choose from, and the paper is not intended to be a comprehensive study of government-funded community grant schemes around the world. Rather, it aims to provide examples of key features of different government grant funding that will inform the development of a new funding framework for the Department's Crown funded schemes.

11. The information sources for the paper are mainly web sources and publications. In some cases it is not possible to determine from the literature whether the information refers to grants funding or all government funding to the sector, which may include contracts for service. Where information refers to general principles of funding by government for the community it is included because while it may not specifically refer to grants, it may still provide some insight into government approaches.

12. Most of the work was undertaken in 2010, using evaluations that were available until about September 2010.

**Trends and common themes**

13. This section draws out some of the themes that are apparent from our country reviews.

**Community development approach / relationship model**

14. A common theme is the importance placed on community development approaches. This varies across countries and appears to depend on how the sector arose in that country and its consequent relationship with government.

15. A good example is the United Kingdom. A significant player in the management of government grants in the United Kingdom is the Community Development Foundation (CDF), which manages grant funding for several government agencies. It uses the values and principles of a community development approach, while at the same time ensuring that the government policy the grant arose from is met. This means that all stages of the grant process, from design to sustainability of the project or organisation, are based on these values and principles. Communities are able to decide on their needs and priorities, they gain skills and confidence, and necessary resources, they work together and they learn and adapt through the process.

16. CDF identifies several key features that characterise this community development approach to grant-making:

- The whole approach of the grant programme is about meeting the needs of the community involved. Therefore it could mean funding projects or core
costs such as salaries or rents if this meant the organisation could meet the identified needs of a community.

- During all stages of the grant process emphasis is given to ensuring openness, transparency and fairness, and facilitating access to grants by all groups.
- Support is provided at all stages, from the application stage on. During implementation, the group can discuss additional support needed with the funder; monitoring is designed to be simple to use and requires information that is useful for both funder and funded group.
- Support provided contributes to capacity building; ideally the funding is long term so provides a basis for long-term activity and future planning.
- The funder is flexible and focuses on outcomes rather than worrying about specific activities and outputs.
- Encouragement is given to community groups making links with each other.
- There is a learning approach within the grant programme. Funded groups are encouraged to learn from their work and from others and from the programme as a whole.

17. The United Kingdom Fair Share Trust (responsible for distributing Lottery funds to areas that do not get their ‘fair share’) reiterates the importance of a community development approach being well integrated in the funding programme, influencing its design from the outset – “community development is much more than an add-on to grants assessment work”.¹

- In the most successful case study areas the programme has funded a range of projects that work with each other and with the community towards clear strategic benefits.
- The key factor has been to allow the programme to develop flexibly in each area rather than requiring quick spending or a prescriptive approach.
- Fair Share Trust has built capacity in individuals, groups, panels and others.
- Panels are becoming increasingly strategic – commissioning projects that respond to specific needs rather than relying on open application processes and the priorities of others.
- Fair Share can offer many useful and practical examples of implementing approaches to ‘community empowerment’ or ‘localism’. These include identifying challenges and finding ways of resolving them, as well as accepting that different stakeholders within and beyond communities may well have different priorities that can nevertheless be accommodated.

18. The approach is more expensive because extra time is invested at all stages as higher levels of support are offered to applicants and funded groups. This is balanced out by the advantages: the project funded is more likely to be successful, and the support will strengthen not only the group involved but the sector as a whole. CDF believes that it is more challenging for funding organisations to work within an outcomes approach because, again, more support for community groups is needed and assessing the difference that a project has made is more complex than assessing outputs.

19. ASB Trust has carried out a review of international literature; while this related to philanthropic trusts, the findings are of interest to this report. Many of ASB’s findings reflect those of the CDF that there is a growing emphasis on funders

working in a relationship-based way with their recipients. Its findings from the international literature review include:

- Funders need to ensure projects match their mission. They also need to allow time for extensive consultation and be prepared to compromise.
- Some funders, recognising that organisations cannot be effective if core operating costs are not met, are increasingly funding general operating costs rather than individual projects.
- Applications from indigenous organisations and funding for indigenous community projects can be increased through capacity building.
- There needs to be smarter use of technology. Standardised online application and report formats, for example, can make life easier for fundseekers and funders (although the specifics need to be carefully thought through).
- Multi-year funding gives organisations more flexibility and facilitates longer-term planning.
- Funders can improve the clarity and ease of application and accountability processes, assist with organisational capacity building and increase efficiency by working more collaboratively with one another and with fundseekers.

20. Most government funding for communities in Australia appears to be framed in terms of the Commonwealth’s Social Inclusion Agenda. As such it is targeted at the dual objectives of both reducing inequalities and improving social cohesion and participation. There is some emphasis on civic engagement and capacity building.

21. While very little funding is framed in terms of community development, several elements of the social inclusion approach are equivalent to features we would identify with community development. For example, the principles underpinning how the social inclusion agenda will be achieved are:

- building on individual and community strengths
- building partnerships with key stakeholders
- developing tailored services
- giving high priority to early intervention and prevention
- building joined-up services and all-of-government solutions
- using evidence and integrated data to inform policy
- using location-based approaches
- planning for sustainability.

22. These features are common to many of the community development approaches reviewed in this paper – whether they went by that name or not.

23. An example of addressing inequalities for indigenous people is the work undertaken by the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) working in partnership with other government agencies and widely consulting its communities to achieve long-term goals.

24. The Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area Regional Plan 2009–2029 is the key foundation for the region’s approach to removing the disadvantage of its indigenous people. It has a twenty-year timeframe.

25. The Regional Plan and the Development Plan have several features of a community development approach. The plans were developed from extensive consultations with every community in the Torres Strait Region and reflect their

---

identified aspirations and priorities. They are seen as the communities’ plans and there are annual reviews by the TSRA to ensure they are on track and the plans are still relevant. These reviews take the form of regular visits, meetings and community feedback throughout the region. In addition, the plans focus on long-term sustainable development; on ensuring that indigenous people in the region are "strong, supported and respected".

Lessons learned from American Comprehensive Community Initiatives

26. In America, funders, policy-makers and programme designers have been exploring a range of approaches to revitalising distressed communities and to tackling other complex problems, such as unemployment and poverty. This has become known in the field as ‘comprehensive community initiatives’ (CCIs).³

27. The Aspen Institute has reviewed these, and in its most recent evaluation, of 20 years of CCIs, draws several lessons to improve the design and implementation of community change efforts.⁴ These have useful implications for community funding interventions here.

Lesson 1: Be as clear as possible about goals, definition of success, and theory of change

28. The most fundamental question about community change efforts – what would “success” look like? – has been one of the hardest to answer:

Too often, the goals sought by community change interventions are poorly specified at the outset and defined only at a broad or abstract level. What exactly do we mean by neighborhood revitalization, poverty alleviation, increased capacity, sustainability, or even something as seemingly straightforward as improved outcomes for children?

29. They do not suggest that everything must be decided up front, but there must be enough to get started and to know if progress is occurring. It also means that there must be deliberate, structured, and ongoing discussion about expectations for community change among partners.

Lesson 2: Having defined goals clearly, invest in intentional strategies for achieving them

30. The review emphasises the need for intentionality at all times and on every front. Even interventions that aim to increase a less-tangible outcome, such as social capital, must act intentionally and not simply hope the outcome will be a by-product of other strategies. This lesson is more relevant to the community change field than to traditional programme interventions. Comprehensive community building approaches can invite such broad thinking that they lose focus and, perhaps, even rigour: “The challenge for community builders is to be more focused, strategic, and intentional in their actions.” (p.123)

Lesson 3: Have a clear theory of scale, and make sure investments are proportional to the type and scale of desired outcomes

31. Planners, leaders, and funders of community change must identify types of investments that will unleash a series of events that will build on each other to create the momentum needed for widespread improvements in well-being. In this

---

theory of change, a great deal of effort is expended thinking through interconnections and causal pathways to find precise, catalytic entry points.

**Lesson 4: Focus on effective implementation, be willing to invest in capacity building, and make sure capacities and objectives are aligned**

32. The lesson here is that goals must be assessed in light of capacity to implement, and if capacity is weak, there are two options: scale back the goals or invest in building capacity to do the work. Misalignment between goals and capacities seriously undermines the work.

**Lesson 5: Comprehensiveness is even more elusive than previously thought: treat it as a principle, not a goal**

33. Comprehensiveness is a *lens* that should guide all work but it is impractical to try to do everything simultaneously. They categorise the best-known place-based change efforts by whether their orientation is toward children and family services, physical and economic development, or community organising. The difficulty of integrating the three domains of work is compounded by the fact that each tends to look to its own sector for funding, infrastructure, expertise, and leadership.

**Lesson 6: Embrace community building as both a guiding principle and a deliberate set of actions**

34. In community change efforts today, the role and purpose of “community building” are still contested and unresolved. The lack of consensus is not about whether community building should be a core element of community change efforts; the disagreement revolves around community building’s place in the overall theory of change guiding community interventions. Is it a means, an end, or both? Is it a principle that should guide the work or a definable set of actions? How much community building is needed?

Several big questions about investments in community building remain unanswered: Do increases in individual and community capacities and connections lead to longer-term impacts such as community resiliency or improvements in socioeconomic well-being for poor communities and their residents? Do they lead to fundamental, transformative shifts in power relations between the community and outside political and economic resources? We need to keep looking for ways to test these questions and build evidence about the links between community building and improvements in individual and community outcomes. (p. 131)

**Lesson 7: Expand the definition and purpose of evaluation to assist in planning, managing, and learning**

35. Evaluation serves many purposes beyond summative assessment. Evaluators are brought in at the early stages of planning to bring discipline and rigour to the process of developing and articulating the theory of change. Evaluation is often the vehicle through which community data are gathered and then used for planning, community mobilisation, and advocacy on the neighbourhood’s behalf. Evaluation attempts to provide real-time feedback for management decisions and midcourse corrections. And evaluation is working to track the community building dimensions of the work.

**The limitations of community**

36. Although not couched in terms of a ‘lesson’, the authors also note that both community practitioners and policy makers can fall prey to thinking that a mobilised community can tackle the problems it faces entirely on its own. While communities do, indeed, have tools at their disposal for countering poverty and other serious challenges, there are also structural dimensions to these problems that
communities cannot resolve. In addition to fully developing their ability to affect whatever changes are within their own control, communities must be able to:

use interactions with structures, resources and other influences beyond their boundaries to the maximum advantage of the community. This means that community-change efforts must develop more sophisticated analyses of political, economic and social dynamics and find better ways to tap into them, benefit from them, make demands on them, and improve their operations in distressed communities.\(^5\)

37. Another way of saying this is that structures beyond communities, notably governments and business, need to understand the strengths and limitations of local process, and take appropriate steps to complement these efforts.\(^6\)

**Some lessons from the Vibrant Communities (Canada) projects**

38. Vibrant Communities is a pan-Canadian initiative through which 13 communities have experimented with new and innovative approaches to poverty reduction. These approaches emphasise collaboration across sectors, comprehensive thinking and action, building on community assets, and a long-term process of learning and change. Funding has come from a range of sources, including philanthropy, local and federal governments and community sources. The few ‘lessons’ below are taken from the recent evaluation by Tamarack Institute.\(^7\)

**No ‘one size fits all’ approach**

39. Local realities should determine the types of responses that can be pursued effectively. Some communities, for instance, have a well developed infrastructure for addressing social issues, a strong culture of collaboration, and a policy environment that tends to support progressive action. Other communities, meanwhile, need to build and nurture such conditions.

**Multi-dimensional approaches**

40. Effective strategies work simultaneously across multiple dimensions (e.g. housing, training, and employment) and levels of action (e.g. individual, family, neighbourhood, local organisations, and various levels of government). On the face of it, this appears to differ from lesson five of the CCIs evaluation – that comprehensiveness can be elusive.

**Characteristics of effective projects**

41. The initiatives that were most effective in achieving results share some characteristics:

- The Vibrant Communities entities are firmly established in the community with a high degree of credibility and legitimacy.
- They are able to articulate the purpose of their work and their overall approach in a compelling way – often presented as a framework for change.
- The convening organization(s) are strong and overall the initiative does not face competition from other convening initiatives in the community.
- The overall leadership of the initiative includes all sectors, and the effort is able to attract influential members.
- A high degree of resident mobilisation is present in the work.

---


\(^6\) Torjman & Leviten-Reid, March 2003.

These groups tend to have ambitious poverty reduction goals. This high aspiration orients them toward policy and systems interventions, and they tend to emphasise strategies that encourage and contribute to specific initiatives led by others rather than create and manage projects in-house.

The core team involved is effective in both pragmatic and high level thinking and has made strong use of research to inform their work. The effort is well supported by very capable staff and volunteer contributions to the work.

**Strategic planning / investment approach**

42. Some countries emphasised strategic planning as a framework for community grants. In Finland, local groups called Local Action Groups, which are independent development associations, carry out development work based on a six-year development plan that defines the aims and priorities of the area. Projects typically include renovation of community halls, environmental improvements, support to rural tourism enterprises and new enterprises in a variety of fields. An important element is supporting and creating different kinds of networks and co-operation between different partners who have not been traditionally working together.

43. In Victoria, Australia, an action plan has been developed that sets out the priorities and goals of the State Government over the next 10 years. The action plan has two objectives.\(^8\)

- to ensure that government interaction with the sector is straightforward, easy to navigate and designed to optimise value to the community
- to create an environment for community organisations to also invest in their own capabilities and long-term sustainability.

44. It is also working on ensuring efficiencies in managing and administering discretionary grants such as using standard financial and accounting terms across all government agencies providing grants.

45. In the UK, Local Strategic Partnerships are formed among public, private, community and voluntary sectors to agree on and implement community strategies and Local Area Agreements.

46. The BIG Lottery fund in the UK in its strategic direction adopts the theme of being an intelligent funder, involving a shift away from being simply a distributor of funds towards promoting analysis of grant-making and providing this analysis to policymakers. The importance of this analysis is to target funding where it is needed within the parameters of the BIG mandate. A key strategic direction for BIG that came out of the 2009 Intelligent Funding Forum was the ‘More than Money’ paper; a discussion paper about what it means for funders to work collaboratively across the sector and to provide assistance and analysis to both groups and policymakers, as well as to share information. Big Lottery Fund also has established a commitment to identifying and sharing leading practice as one of the tenets of its ‘intelligent funding approach’.

47. In Canada, all federal departments and agencies are required under the Auditor General Act to prepare a Sustainable Development Strategy, which provides a tool for departments to systematically consider the implementation of sustainable development in their policies, programmes, legislation and operations. The Sustainable Development Strategy of the Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) is its primary vehicle for setting out the department’s vision and initiatives for sustainable indigenous communities, and related funding programmes.

---

48. INAC has established two strategic directions: “Supporting Sustainable Communities” focused on INAC community programmes, and “Building a Culture of Sustainability” focused on INAC internal operations.

**An investment approach**

49. An investment approach is characterised by an enduring relationship between the funder and those funded and both parties see themselves as equal partners contributing different resources to achieve the long-term development goals.

50. While the Torres Strait Regional Authority does not use this language, there are parallels with an investment approach. The TSRA sees itself, as the overarching government agency in the region, as a partner in the development process rather than the driver of change and as being on an equal footing with the communities it seeks to serve.

51. For the TSRA being an “investment funder” means that the investment of funds takes place over a longer period of time and that various mechanisms are used to achieve the long-term goals. This may include grants, training, skills development, mentoring, monitoring and evaluation and where necessary, reprioritisation. This contrasts with being merely a distributor of grants, where grants are themselves seen as the main means of achieving community development.

**Simplicity of process / reduced compliance costs**

52. Another noticeable common feature is the call from communities and response from some governments to simplify the management and administration of grant funding.

53. In the United Kingdom, where grants to the community are mostly made at local government level, some local governments are introducing one-stop application processes for all government agencies. The CDF, which manages grant funds for several government agencies emphasises ensuring the application process is as straightforward as possible using jargon-free language.

54. In Canada, the Independent Blue Ribbon Panel on Grants and Contributions (2006) made recommendations to make the delivery of grant and contribution programmes more efficient and simpler, while ensuring greater accountability. The 2010 Budget in Canada indicates that attention will be given to the processes surrounding grants and contributions.

**Cooperative effort / partnerships**

55. The value of organisations making links and working together is recognised in many countries. This refers to both collaboration within communities, and also collaboration between different funders. The CDF in the UK sees this as an important component of its community development approach. One of the biggest recent developments in the UK has been the emphasis on working in partnerships made up of the local voluntary, community, public and private sectors.

56. The ASB’s international review showed that if funders work more collaboratively with one another and with fund-seekers efficiency can be improved.

**Sustainability**

57. There is increasing emphasis on the sustainability of projects or community goals once initial funding ends. Building funding partnerships may be an important aspect of this.
58. A study by Big Lottery on the sustainability of projects identified the factors that appeared to enhance the likelihood of sustainability as falling within the following broad groupings:

- planning – before, during and after the funding period
- delivery – capturing and using knowledge, building capacity and managing performance
- interaction with the external environment – achieving a good fit with local and national strategies and partnership working.

59. Further, Big Lottery notes that:

Sustainability is often thought of as ‘continuation funding’ but the evidence we have so far points to a range of elements that may be sustained, such as ways of working, partnerships, networks and good practice. As an outcomes funder, our interest in what change is achieved should not stop with the end of the grant. We are keen to understand the longer-term effects, despite the difficulties in attribution and identifying cause and effect. BIG’s funding is but one element in a complex ecology and there are challenges in isolating our impact.9

---

Country reviews

Australia

Introduction

60. This section is in three parts
   - Part I describes the Commonwealth government’s approach to social inclusion. The State government approaches and underlying philosophy stem from this approach.
   - Part II describes some state initiatives that are framed as community engagement, community inclusion or community strengthening. Each of these community approaches appears to be consistent with elements required to develop strong sustainable communities. Some specific grant-funding examples are included.
   - Part III describes some indigenous community grant approaches.

Part I: Commonwealth Government’s Social Inclusion Agenda

Background

61. Most of the State government funding programmes for communities are framed in the context of the Commonwealth government’s Social Inclusion Agenda (described below). A socially inclusive society is defined as one where “all Australians feel valued and have the opportunity to participate fully”.

62. The States’ manifestations of this include South Australia’s Social Inclusion Initiative, a Fairer Victoria, the Canberra Social Action Plan and Tasmania’s Social Inclusion Strategy. In some states special social inclusion units have been established, typically in the respective Department of Premier and Cabinet (as in South Australia). In Victoria a new Department of Planning and Community Development was established. The philosophy underpinning these strategies follows similar approaches developed in Europe over the past ten years. Notably, Ireland has established an Office for Social Inclusion with a National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007–2016 which identifies a range of all-of-government targets and interventions.

63. Across Australia there are numerous government-funded programmes to support social inclusion. These programmes have similar features to community development funding used here. There is an emphasis on grassroots engagement, capacity building, and supporting communities to make their own decisions and to undertake activities aimed towards self-reliance.

64. The type of support provided in response to community-identified needs may vary enormously and includes providing advice and funding to build community capacity and capability, develop sustainable community resources, enable learning and skills transfer, develop self-reliance and build community networks. These community development interventions typically provide the foundations for strong, sustainable communities, which is an implicit goal in the various Australian models.

**The Social Inclusion Agenda**

65. Most of the government funding programmes are framed to address both social cohesion and socio-economic disadvantage as a way to increase community participation and well-being.

66. The Commonwealth government’s Social Inclusion Agenda takes an all-of-government approach to providing Australians with opportunities to participate in their local community and Australian society. It recognises the importance of all Australians having the opportunity to work, to access the services they need, to connect with their family and friends, to become involved in their local community, to have the skills to deal with crises when these might arise, and to have the chance to make their voices heard. It also recognises there are barriers that prevent participation (including discrimination).

67. The principles underpinning the Agenda are to:
   - reduce disadvantage
   - increase social, civic and economic participation
   - develop a greater (community) voice, combined with greater responsibility.

68. The social inclusion model emphasises an integrated cross-government approach. Both the delivery of services to address social inequalities and the relationship between government, non-profits and the wider community are important. A key feature is the focus on new partnerships and new ways of working together, to target and tailor ways to meet the needs of disadvantaged groups and places. This approach involves:
   - working across portfolios and Commonwealth agencies, and in partnerships with State and Local Governments, the non-profit and private sectors
   - the recently developed National Compact for the Third Sector. This recognises the critical role and valuable contribution of volunteers and non-profits. There is also funding to support volunteering (described in Part III below)
   - seeking input from, and partnerships with, communities, business and non-profit organisations
   - supporting effective, community-driven solutions to local problems.

69. The approach targets building and strengthening communities’ capacity to contribute and participate economically and socially by focusing on:
   - inequalities in areas such as employment, family and child/youth services, education, health and housing
   - groups at risk of social exclusion or long-term disadvantage, such as child, youth, family, women, people with disabilities, indigenous and ethnic communities.

70. While most of the funding is targeted to reduce inequalities, some funding is framed as supporting community inclusion, participation or engagement (including support of multiculturalism). Of interest is the focus on particular locations, neighbourhoods and communities.

71. It is worth noting that there are some critics who consider the evidence for benefits to communities from this focus on community-driven interventions is not clear cut and the claims cannot be justified. For example, Emeritus Professor Martin Mowbray from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, using the example of a 2005 Victorian community-building scheme, suggests because of the restrictions imposed on government support it does not effectively empower local communities.
as claimed. He argues, often it is not possible to isolate cause and effect due to the complex combination of factors that can affect the outcomes of any specific intervention.\textsuperscript{12}

**The social inclusion approach in practice – an example**

72. We can look at Tasmania as an example. In 2009 the Tasmanian Commissioner for Social Inclusion published a *Social Inclusion Strategy for Tasmania*.\textsuperscript{13} Central to the strategy is the importance of shifting emphasis from a deficit to an assets model for people and places by:

- promoting enterprise solutions to build capacity and sustainability for groups and places
- devolving responsibility locally as much as possible through a focus on place management
- supporting families in communities to have greater choice and responsibility over their futures
- changing the way government works.

73. Accompanying the strategy was a literature review on social inclusion. It found that people tend to experience social *exclusion* when there are no effective mechanisms through which they can have a say on issues that matter to them. To effectively overcome social exclusion it proposes all parties (governments, service providers, community groups, families, and individuals) work together to find community-driven solutions that give people opportunities for economic, social and civic participation.

**Tasmanian Government response**

74. While the strategy itself is not state government policy it significantly influenced the government response provided in late 2009.\textsuperscript{14} This response included a strong emphasis on community-based grants to:

- support individuals, including access to microfinance
- increase the capacity of individuals and organisations through micro-credit and the development of social enterprise in Tasmania
- build supportive networks and community capacity through social infrastructure community grants.

75. This funding included a new Community Development Finance Fund\textsuperscript{15} for social lending, including $3 million social enterprise loan fund to support the development of organisations that focus on community development and will reinvest profits into the local community. There was also further support provided:

- $1 million for Community Capacity Building Grants for projects that progress one or more of the strategies in the *Social Inclusion Strategy for Tasmania* (the grants are described in Part II below)
- $750,000 to establish 11 Social Inclusion Community Liaison Officers.


\textsuperscript{14} ibid.

\textsuperscript{15} http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/siu/grants/community_development_finance_fund
Community feedback

76. Although the social inclusion programme is relatively new, feedback from community consultation in 2010 shows stakeholder responses to the strategy are positive. They recognise the state government’s moves to build strong community relationships and improve its response to local priorities. Nevertheless they identified further opportunities to build community capacity and decrease reliance on government, strengthen local governance and link up organisations to better use existing networks, resources, infrastructure and programmes.

Part II State approaches

77. Much of the Federal and State funding is delivered in a way that funds non-profits to provide services in areas that will achieve the vision for social inclusion. Most states have a social inclusion strategy, for example the Tasmanian approach as described above.

78. While the main focus is on delivering services to address disadvantage, there are some elements that focus on community development. Some examples are described below.

South Australia

79. In 2007 a South Australian Strategic Plan was developed to foster sustainable, inclusive and involved communities. In particular, the Plan aims to increase civic and political participation, build social networks and foster leadership. A key feature of this approach is a commitment to community strengthening; defined as “a sustained effort to increase involvement and partnership among members of a community to achieve common objectives”.

80. The South Australian Department for Families and Communities (DFC) administers grant funding for community organisations and service partners. Grants are available for a wide range of purposes, from skills development to infrastructure projects.

81. A community strengthening approach is not new, but there is a renewed emphasis on all stakeholders working together strategically to achieve agreed outcomes. The approach:

- involves local people, community organisations, government, business and philanthropic organisations working together to achieve agreed outcomes
- works by listening to what local people say could improve their community and sharing ideas about how these changes can happen
- mobilises community skills, energy and resources to achieve social change
- aims to create stronger social institutions, improved well-being and increased social and economic opportunities.

82. The philosophy is one of promoting civic engagement. Communities that encourage their citizens to participate in all areas will have a better quality of life, be healthier, resilient, vibrant and confident. Strong communities are inclusive,

---

16 Social Inclusion Community Consultation: Community priorities for a social inclusion strategy for Tasmania 2010 Social Inclusion Unit, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Tasmania; Community Inclusion Advocates The Business of Building Community Inclusion May 2010

17 http://www.dfc.sa.gov.au/Pub/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=%2bNxgR%2fl6NJM%3d&tabid=811

18 This example is from South Australia but there are links to all states. http://www.dfc.sa.gov.au/pub/tabld/246/itemld/2789/moduleid/909/Community-strengthening.aspx

19 The DFC is responsible for setting strategic priorities, policy development and administration of public and community housing, child protection, ageing, community care and disability services.
embrace cultural diversity, have good networks between people, good facilities and infrastructure.

83. Since 2006 the DFC has provided most of its grant funding to non-profits through a combination of Master and Service agreements. The Master Agreement is the primary document used by the DFC. It provides the opportunity to pre-agree all the standard terms and conditions that a community organisation must meet before entering into a Service Agreement. The Service agreement contains all the matters relevant to providing a specific service funded by DFC.

South Australia example – Onkaparinga Community Connections Project

84. The Onkaparinga Community Connections Project (OCCP) provided targeted support to high needs families in a socio-economically disadvantaged region of rural South Australia. While the focus is service delivery to families and individuals, the example below also uses community development principles to strengthen families and communities.

85. An independent evaluation in 2007 showed that within 12 months the OCCP had achieved significant outcomes in five key areas.

- **Better access by parents to school and services**
  For example, parents saw their schools as somewhere they *could* go to for help, and that this view had grown stronger since OCCP had been running.

- **Empowered parents and partnerships**
  There was a significant increase in parents’ levels of trust in the school in the first 12 months of the project. Staff of both schools reported increased confidence of parents. Also, some parents had enrolled in further learning courses and they had sourced funding from 10 different grants to support the project.

- **Better linkages with local agencies**
  The principal interagency partners considered the project had consolidated their collaborative relationships. They reported that, as a group, they worked well together, maintained good communication and shared similar values and commitment to the OCCP.

- **Better relationships and sense of community ownership**
  The success of adult learning activities at both schools and anti-poverty week activities and community gardening work is testament to the ability of local families to establish and maintain local programmes.

- **Sustainability**
  As funding was drawing to a close in May 2008, stakeholders strongly advocated for extra funding to keep the project worker position. Without any guarantee of extra funds each school committed to sustain the project as far practical. In June 2008, the Commonwealth Government announced that it would fund the project for a further 12 months.

---

ACT (Canberra)

Community engagement and inclusion

86. The 2004 Canberra Social Plan used the term ‘community inclusion’ to address the twin objectives of supporting social cohesion and overcoming disadvantage. The principles underpinning this approach are:
   - it begins with communities feeling they belong and are valued
   - it is driven by the grassroots efforts of communities
   - government takes a leadership role to create the right environment, policies and programmes
   - it simultaneously promotes social cohesion and addresses disadvantage and negative stereotypes.

87. Central to community inclusion is the government commitment to community engagement, defined as any activity that enables the government to:
   - respond to issues raised by the community
   - inform the community about proposed government policies and actions
   - provide the opportunity for the community to voice an opinion on proposed government policies and proposals
   - invite the community to submit proposals for government consideration or
   - work more closely with the community to shape policy options and priorities.

88. In this context, community engagement is usually initiated by government, but is essentially a two-way flow of information on issues that affect the community. It is seen as providing valuable information and input to government decision making.

Evidence for community inclusion and engagement

89. The Canberra Social Plan is reviewed every two years. The 2009 report showed that between the first social plan in 2004 and 2008 there were improvements in all the indicators of progress, participation and well-being.

90. Recent Canberra community forums have noted that community inclusion brings together and supports citizens’ participation in decision making, and provides resources and opportunities for people to participate in the life of the community. The forums noted that businesses were an important partner in building an inclusive community, although it was more than just creating jobs. Social enterprises provide opportunities for people to enter the labour market, but with support can generate their own momentum and income. They also create communities through their operations, which include cafes, child care centres and restaurant suppliers.

91. The forums concluded that there was a strong shared investment in the social cohesion of Canberra and a desire to build community. There was also agreement that this could lead to innovative and forward-looking partnerships and new ways of working that have sustainable and social outcomes.

---

Victoria
92. The Victoria State Government provides around $2.3 billion per annum funding to community organisations. It has produced an action plan that sets out its priorities and goals over the next 10 years. The action plan has two objectives:

- to ensure government interaction with the sector is straightforward, easy to navigate and designed to optimise value to the community
- to create an environment for community organisations to also invest in their own capabilities and long-term sustainability.

Community Support Fund
93. The Community Support Fund uses a portion of the profits from Victorian hotel gaming machines for worthwhile community projects. Grants from it:

- are available to not-for-profit organisations and Victorian Councils
- can be for community building or infrastructure, from $30,000 up to $500,000 (up to $1 million for infrastructure)
- require input from the organisation/council applicant in a range of ratios between $1 and $4 for every $1 the applicant can source or contribute to the project. The input required can be money or in-kind. It clearly indicates that projects are not eligible for funding where State or federal funding is provided or where it is the responsibility of another government programme.

94. Any asset created by the project is to be owned by a government agency at any level or by a community organisation and any created or upgraded asset should provide benefits to the specific community for a minimum of 10 years. The timeframe depends on the nature of the grant – for project planning: 1 year; for Building Stronger Communities and Infrastructure, up to 3 years.

Tasmania
Community Capacity Building Grants Programme
95. The Tasmanian Community Capacity Building (CCB) Grants is a new initiative for 2010/11 to support its social inclusion strategy (described in Part I). The grants aim to build individual and community capacity to participate in all aspects of their community. They recognise the important role that local government, not-for-profit community organisations and community groups play in delivering initiatives that support Tasmanian communities.

96. The CCB grants operate through two tiers. Tier one is for grants up to and including $2,000; whereas Tier two is for grants over $2,000, and prioritises initiatives that:

- develop skills and opportunities for individuals and families to overcome barriers to participation in economic activities, sport and recreation, arts and culture
- provide innovative ways to assist community members ease cost of living pressures
- foster leadership opportunities for a diverse range of individuals and groups throughout the community
- address social isolation of community members by developing sustainable support networks and connections with the broader community, including actions that seek to prevent homelessness


New South Wales
Local Partnership Grants

97. As the leading government agency supporting multicultural communities in New South Wales, the Community Relations Commission (the CRC) is responsible for building strong relationships with ethnic community groups and encouraging extensive networks throughout these various communities.

98. The CRC provides three types of Community Development Grants: general grants, sponsorship grants and local partnership grants.

99. The local partnership grants allow the Commission to work in partnership with local government councils to address the needs of (typically) newly arrived and emerging communities. The Commission pays for the salary of a community worker to work with identified communities in an identified local government area and the local council provides office space and related administrative support. Typical grants are $20,000 for a part-time or $60,000 for a full-time worker and agreements would be for up to three years.

100. The CRC will fund projects that address priorities including: improving relations between communities; support to develop community networks and structures, and projects that address critical issues relating to cultural diversity at a local level. Projects may include the promotion of cultural expression, the enhancement of community development and minor capital purchases.

Part III Indigenous community grants

Closing the gap strategy

101. In 2008, the “Closing the Gap” strategy was agreed through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), an intergovernmental forum made up of federal, state, territory and local governments. The strategy is a national, integrated approach to reduce the gap in indigenous disadvantage – in life expectancy and opportunities between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. This strategy was driven by the Close the Gap Campaign, a coalition of more than forty indigenous and non-indigenous organisations and many individuals throughout the country, whose aim is to close the life expectancy gap between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians within a generation.

102. Governments at all levels in Australia also committed to find new ways of working with indigenous people so that programmes were no longer delivered to indigenous communities (often by non-indigenous people) but focus would be given to a partnership approach to build on the ideas, strengths and leadership of indigenous people.27

103. Commitment has been made to ensure indigenous people are engaged in identifying their needs and in design and delivery of services and programmes. “The aim is to build responsibility and capacity at the personal and community level and lay the basis for lasting change.” Underpinning this approach is the

---

commitment by COAG to build respectful and collaborative relationships with indigenous people, with “open dialogue and mutual respect and responsibility.”

**The Torres Strait: An example**

104. The “Closing the Gap” strategy is being implemented in the islands of the Torres Strait region. The region is administered by the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) an organisation made up primarily of people from indigenous communities. The TSRA is charged with improving the lifestyle and well-being of the Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal people living in the Torres Strait region.

105. When the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed in 2007 to partnering over the goal of removing the gap in indigenous disadvantage, it set specific, time-bound targets. Underpinning these targets is the understanding that overcoming indigenous disadvantage requires long-term commitment. Efforts are directed at seven specific “building blocks” which are intended to be inter-related. These building blocks are: early childhood, schooling, health, economic participation, healthy homes, safe communities and governance and leadership.

106. The TSRA responded to the “Closing the Gap” principles by bringing together key government agencies to work in a partnership approach and work toward integrated planning and to coordinate services. Acting then as one, the government agencies engaged in extensive consultations with each community in the Torres Strait region. Consultation topics were based on the COAG seven building blocks, State and Local Government targets as well as regional issues unique to the Torres Strait region. The purpose of consulting widely was to ensure the resulting regional development plan was owned by the communities of the region.

107. The results of the consultations were combined into a draft Regional Plan, which was shared with communities for their feedback. The final version was an incorporated regional vision and set of goals described within the “Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area Regional Plan 2009–2029”. The Plan outlines an all-of-government approach to planning and programme delivery and guides all government agencies in the region. The Plan has a twenty-year timeframe, which expresses the understanding that many of the region’s development needs will require long-term initiatives. The Plan is to be reviewed each year.

108. The TSRA has devised a four-year development plan to contribute to the Regional Plan. There is a clear determination in the plan to ensure closer, improved respectful relationships between government and the indigenous people of the region.

**Examples of the Development Plan in Action**

109. One programme within the TSRA’s four-year Development Plan involves governance and leadership. This programme recognises the need to “secure a future pool of leaders and begin to invest in them now so that they understand the responsibilities of leadership and are well prepared to assume such responsibilities”. The programme aims to involve indigenous leaders in integrated service delivery and strengthen leadership within communities, develop future leaders, improve communication and information networks, and encourage women’s participation. Indigenous leaders will be involved in legislative processes, policies and priorities and help set the direction for planning and service delivery.
They will also be involved in monitoring progress towards the agreed goals and outcomes.

110. Another example is the Environment Management Programme, which has many components, including fisheries, biodiversity conservation, climate change and coastal erosion. The processes for implementing these initiatives include community level benchmark studies of biodiversity; enhancement of community skills, knowledge and engagement; community-based land and sea management; and traditional knowledge recording. Long-term benefits include greater community self-sufficiency in food production and increased community-based approaches to sustainable fisheries and management of other natural resources in partnership with Government.

Grant Schemes

111. There are five grant schemes operating through the TSRA, with one application form for all schemes. Applicants must be incorporated societies but individuals and non-incorporated groups may still apply under the auspices of an incorporated group. The application form is straight forward and less information is required for projects under $5000. It is not clear who makes the decisions on grants. The schemes are summarised in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of scheme</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010/12 Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) Programme Funding</td>
<td>To assist unemployed indigenous people – help them find and keep jobs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TSRA Economic Development Grants</td>
<td>Projects that will contribute to the economic growth of communities by supporting the development of income generating projects with social, cultural and economic benefits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TSRA Culture, Art and Heritage Grants</td>
<td>Arts Development grants Cultural Maintenance grants. Quick Response Grants - up to $5,000 for the support of costs associated with the development and / or maintenance of culture including the visual arts, dance, music, cultural practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TSRA Safe Communities Program Grants</td>
<td>Social services initiatives including: Indigenous women, men and children social development and support programmes Child and family safety programmes Safe and accessible community initiatives, including: Safe communities infrastructure and equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TSRA Healthy Communities Program Grants</td>
<td>Healthy Homes initiatives (including health promotion/education); Healthy Lifestyles initiatives and minor infrastructure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

112. The Economic Development Grant Programme, for example, has three sub programmes:
- Business funding scheme
- Home ownership
- Community economic initiatives scheme.
113. The Community Economic Initiatives is a grants scheme in which the TSRA provides grants to Torres Islander and Aboriginal organisations to establish or develop commercial income-generating activities. A five-year business plan is required (help is provided to prepare this) and additional non-monetary support is provided such as assistance with tendering, mentoring and other business skills inputs.

114. The grants schemes can be linked to other grant programmes, which allows work carried out under the auspices of one scheme to be reinforced by work under another. This linking is encouraged and is seen as a strength as it is more likely for an undertaking to be sustainable.

**United Kingdom**

**General**

115. Grant funding in the United Kingdom operates at both national and local levels. In addition, the European Union provides very large amounts of funding for social and economic development, some of which is in the form of community grants through the European Social Fund.

116. Most central government departments have funding programmes for community organisations that have a national focus or that are involved in initiatives of national significance. Grants schemes therefore fit the aims and objectives of each agency. According to the Directory of Social Change, there is little uniformity among government agencies in terms of design of funds, quality of administration and so on.

117. The Cabinet Office houses the Office of the Third Sector. The Cabinet Office uses independent grant administrators to manage grant funding to the sector. For example, the Capacity Builders Agency was set up by the Government in 2005, to manage the ChangeUp programme at arms length from the Government. The agency manages a range of grant funds that contribute to the ChangeUp programme. A few funds are still managed directly by central government, usually as pilots or to target specific issues. For example, the Home Office and the Cabinet Office have grant schemes that target deprived areas.

118. Government policy has been to devolve much of government funding – regional government is seen as allowing greater involvement and control by local people and organisations. Government funding is currently directed to Regional Development Agencies and Government Offices for the Regions, although the latter has more recently transferred any direct role in grant funding to other agencies. Regional agencies in turn often channel funds through local authorities or local partnerships. Some European funding is directed regionally as are some Lottery schemes. Regional organisations are a small source of grant funds for the sector.

119. Nearly all local governments make grants to the sector. Each agency within local government such as Social Services has its own funds for distribution to the community although there is a move to introduce one-stop application forms in some local governments. In the last ten years there has been a shift from grant funding to contracts and service agreements particularly in health and social services.

---

31 ChangeUp aims to meet the support and development needs of the voluntary sector by 2014.
32 This refers to the Labour Government. The new Conservative Government has yet to fully confirm its approach to the sector.
120. Local Area Agreements\(^3^3\) are three-year agreements with local government agencies and central government. Partners, including the sector, are brought together under the Local Strategic Partnerships. The Partnerships agree a vision of the future of the area and are intended to be the mechanism through which community strategies are developed and implemented.

**What activities/ approaches are funded?**

121. Support is provided for a wide range of areas depending on the fund – typically for building community cohesion, strength and independence of community groups, organisations and networks, building equity, inclusiveness, participation and cohesion amongst people and their groups and organisations; empowering people and their organisations where appropriate to influence and help transform public policies and services and other factors affecting the conditions of their lives.

122. Examples of funds are:

- The Big Lottery Fund is the largest organisation distributing lottery funds\(^3^4\). It distributes grants to community organisations. (Discussed further below.)
- Fair Share is another of the programmes supported by the Big Lottery Fund. This aims to ensure equitable funding from Lotteries across the country. Local award panels are recruited to make decisions on applications. Funds support building links between local groups, developing networks and improving cohesion and co-operation within the voluntary and community sector.
- The Community Champions Fund is a Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) programme that provides small grants, of up to £2000 to support individuals to develop community projects and pass on their expertise to others. The fund increases capabilities, confidence and self esteem through ‘learning by doing’\(^3^5\).
- The Local Network Fund supports small voluntary and community groups to improve outcomes for children and young people. It works with small grassroots organisations in the poorest communities. It is another DCSF programme that works in partnership with community foundations, rural community councils, and grant-making trusts to provide an experienced grant administrator in each area\(^3^6\).

**How is funding administered and managed?**

123. The government makes many of its funds available through community foundations throughout the United Kingdom to support community groups and these organisations are increasingly being used to distribute government funding, for example, the Community Development Foundation (CDF)\(^3^7\). The CDF works with government departments, including the Office of the Third Sector, the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Department of Health, and Home Office. Its partnerships include those in the community development field, the community sector, and public sector membership bodies.

---

\(^3^3\) So far implemented only in England.
\(^3^4\) See [www.biglotteryfund.org.uk](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk)
\(^3^6\) Ibid, p. 54.
\(^3^7\) The CDF is the leading source of community development expertise and delivery in the UK. It is described as a public body and a charity that bridges government, communities and the voluntary sector. [www.cdf.org.uk](http://www.cdf.org.uk)
The government also provides funds directly to community groups for specific programmes and projects through contestable processes.

Thomson and Caulier-Grice consider that while there are many positive features of the United Kingdom programmes there is a lot of emphasis on outcome measurement. This tends to favour short-term activities that can show simple and immediate outcomes and organisations that are dealing with long-term problems can be overlooked. They found that there is a need for support to organisations in the funding process itself, particularly for smaller organisations.

**Example: Big Lottery**

The National Lottery Big Lottery Fund, or BIG, was established on 1 December 2006 by an administrative merger of the Community Fund and New Opportunities Fund. Currently BIG receives 50.02 per cent of the entire National Lottery distribution (16.66 per cent goes to arts, heritage and sport).

BIG also administers some non-Lottery funding through CommunityAssets on behalf of the Office for the Third Sector and through Myplace, a programme to build and renovate youth centres, on behalf of the DCSF. This funding is administered and accounted for separately to the Lottery money and these programmes are promoted in a way that differentiates where the funding goes to.

The funding allocation is distributed by independent committees appointed by the English and Scottish Parliaments, the Welsh National Assembly and the Representatives of Northern Ireland. There are 29 specific funds, including Fair Share, which will be discussed further below.

**Strategic Focus**

The strategic focus of BIG has changed from the fund’s inception in 2006. Initially, BIG took its strategic focus from the funds that were amalgamated to form it. The overarching principle stated in their 2006–2009 Strategic Framework was that they were to become an intelligent funder; strategic, rather than demand-led, but also responsive to the needs of communities.

The emphasis for BIG was infrastructure; developing third sector capacity. While this did not exclusively refer to capital works projects, it did tend to refer to large-scale projects that were intended to run for a long time.

Right from inception BIG was an outcomes funder; grant applicants were asked to determine the outcomes they were trying to achieve and to assess the achievement of these outcomes at milestone points in the project or upon completion of the project.

The 2006–2009 strategic focus was very much towards financial assistance to projects, either in collaboration with other funders or as sole funder. Emphasis was placed on pre-application support, and evaluation of the success of the project after completion. The 2010–2015 strategic direction outlines a shift away from being simply a distributor of funds towards promoting analysis of grant-making and providing this analysis to policy-makers. The importance of this analysis is to target funding where it is needed within the parameters of the BIG mandate.

**Championing equalities and sustainable development**

---

39 The Apportionment of Money in the National Lottery Distribution Fund Order 2010, Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 2010, DCMS 002
40 Department of Culture Media and Sport, Lottery Grants Information, www.lottery.culture.gov.uk, 2002
133. BIG aims to direct funding at communities most in need; using an ‘equalities framework’ designed in line with the Equalities Commission’s Equalities Framework. BIG also has a commitment to minimising impact on the environment; both themselves and the projects they fund.

Outcomes and Evaluation

134. Grant applicants to all BIG funds are asked to outline what the proposed outcomes of their project will be and to report on the progress made to achieve these outcomes.

135. Depending on the type of project, BIG asks its applicants to seek information from the community that the project serves to help assess whether the project has achieved, or is achieving, its stated outcome goals. The aim is for a quantitative analysis of the community outcomes at the beginning and the end of the project and the difference is the move towards achieving the outcome (assuming there is a difference.)

136. Other types of project, specifically capital works projects, ask for self-assessment of specific third parties to assess the achievement of outcomes. They are asked to do this at milestone intervals depending on the size and length of the project.

137. Right from the start of BIG, it was identified that there was a need to explain to applicants what was meant by funding for outcomes. BIG published a guide called ‘Explaining the Difference Your Project Makes’ in 2006, to help explain to applicants how to determine outcome goals and how to assess performance against them. In 2007 a stakeholder survey run by BIG showed that 88 per cent of stakeholders surveyed stated the outcomes approach taken by BIG was important to the sector.

138. The information submitted to BIG is used to determine the success of individual grants, but also to help create a picture of the sector; and this is the information that is found so useful to other funders in the sector. The organisation aspires to use its learning, as a significant grant funder, to inform the development and practice of public policy across the United Kingdom.41

Criticisms of the BIG Model

Tension between funding for outcomes and access to funding

139. One of the key aims of BIG was to increase access to funding for groups that normally had difficulty accessing funding. This was of concern to the Fair Share fund, established in 2001. While the fund is a success, one of the key issues identified by applicants was difficulty measuring outcomes. This may be due to language barriers within communities, making local stakeholder interviews difficult. The high level of outcomes reporting required by BIG can be seen as an impediment – that it is mainly to help outside analyses with little benefit to those running the project.

Dependence on Lottery funding

140. One of the criticisms of BIG is grant applicants become dependent entirely on lottery funding and cannot survive once this funding is removed. From its inception BIG has aimed to be a provider of both funding and support to community projects for up to five years. However, Department of Culture, Media and Sport reporting found that, of projects designed to run for longer than the term of the grant, 23 per

cent failed. Given that one of the strategic aims of BIG is building capacity, this is a concerning statistic.

Low uptake in deprived communities and deprived regions

141. One of the strategic goals of BIG is to champion equality and diversity. In order to do this BIG recognises a good deal of funding and support needs to be targeted at deprived parts of the United Kingdom. Fair Share, which was highly devolved funding (funding administered by governance structures within the communities that the funding was allocated to) was targeted at these geographical areas. While the programme is considered a success, one of the key concerns is that the money simply is not being applied for or uplifted. Whereas other forms of Lottery funding are oversubscribed, the funding targeted in these areas is undersubscribed.

142. One of the reasons could be the difficulty with outcomes reporting, but another key reason outlined in the 2008 evaluation report, was the difficulty the panels in the areas charged with distributing the grant money had in meeting some of the requirements of BIG to scope a strategic direction and assess applications to it.

Fair Share Trust (BIG Lottery)

143. The Fair Share Trust (FST) is a £50 million trust providing sustained funding in Fair Share Areas until 2013 (2009 in Scotland). Grants range from £5,000 to £250,000.

144. The Trust provides financial and other support for up to 10 years for selected neighbourhoods in the United Kingdom (selected on the basis that they are relatively deprived and do not get their ‘fair share’ of funding of other Lottery sources). The Fair Share Trust programme aims to:

- **Build capacity and sustainability** – by involving local communities in decision-making about lottery funding.
- **Build social capital** – by building links within and between communities to promote trust and participation.
- **Improve liveability** – by improving the living environment for communities.

145. The programme’s most important features are:

- It is a devolved programme. BIG has put the Fair Share budget of £50 million into an independent Trust fund, administered and developed by the Community Foundation Network (CFN). In its turn, CFN has delegated delivery at the local level to local agents.
- It responds to aspirations in the voluntary and community sector (VCS) for longer-term funding by operating over a period of 10 years.
- In many locations, it is targeting very small neighbourhoods.
- For programme beneficiaries, there is a ring-fenced local ‘pot’ of money. Decisions on how the money is to be spent are made locally, with the involvement of local people.
- It is a ‘process’ programme. Processes used to identify projects for funding and to ensure appropriate delivery are as important as the projects themselves. Both processes and projects have outcomes of value to the FST programme.

146. An evaluation of the first five years of the programme concluded that:

The Fair Share Trust approach works. The Fair Share Trust combines its focus on learning with support, use of a local panel [for decision-making] and flexible approaches to identified and developing projects...It has given communities

---

42 National Lottery Assessment of Objectives, Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 2007
and local groups a sense of ownership of and responsibility for a pot of money, and it has allowed time for all involved to plan approaches, to learn and to build confidence.43

Investing in Communities Fund (Scotland)

147. Another of the BIG Lottery funds is the Investing in Communities Fund (Scotland), which offers funding for up to five years for community development projects in four distinct areas: Life Transitions, Supporting 21st Century Life, Growing Community Assets and Dynamic Inclusive Communities. The third annual review concluded that their ability to reach and support communities has been most consistently successful within Growing Community Assets: “This investment has enabled natural local communities of place to come together, to build their collective capacity, to open up access to under-developed assets, services and facilities”. But projects need access to appropriate technical, sector knowledge and capital expertise at a very early stage. On the Dynamic Inclusive Communities component, the review stated:

We recognise that there are real challenges and issues facing organisations without an existing shared history of partnership, who we then ask to collaborate. These relationships have the potential to make a significant and positive impact but building them takes time, resources and trust.44

Scotland

148. In March 2009, the Scottish government launched its Community Empowerment Action Plan.45 It identified the existence of locally owned, community-led organisations which often act as ‘anchors’ for the process of empowerment as, often, a critical characteristic of communities which are empowered. These organisations, which may be the local housing association, church group, community association, development trust, community council or any combination of these, often have a range of characteristics that enable them to provide a local leadership role and a focal point for other local services and groups. Some of these characteristics include: that they are multi-purpose, usually operate from a physical hub, and will often own or manage other community assets.

149. Community capacity building can be a critical step in laying the foundations for community empowerment. Partners need to invest time, money and skills into work that supports community capacity building, if they are serious about community empowerment. In Scotland, work to build community capacity building is often developed under the umbrella of community learning and development.

150. There are many different community funding streams, but one example is the Community Empowerment, Highlands and Islands Enterprise grant (which contains approximately £12M). It is focused on community groups, social enterprises, or other community ‘anchor organisations’. Activities include: capacity building, asset-based community development (predominantly acquisition and management of land, buildings and renewable energy production), developing social enterprises, community account management, development based on the Gaelic language and the distinctive arts and cultural heritage of the Highland and Islands Enterprise (HIE) area.

45 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/03/20155113/0
North America

Canada

151. In Canada, the federal, state and local governments are supporting communities. Of the funding coming from government, almost two-thirds is in the form of grants and contributions (31 per cent of total revenues for non-profit and voluntary organisations). Most community-based organisations rely on volunteers and nearly two-thirds have revenues of under US$100,000. These smaller community-based organisations derive just over a third of their income from government sources, made up of around one-fifth in grants and contributions and 15 per cent as contracts for service provision. Constitutional responsibility for the sector lies with the provincial governments and forty per cent of all funding for the sector comes from provincial governments.

152. Government funds support mainly health, education, and social welfare and are primarily for service provision. Thomson & Caulier-Grice identify Quebec province as having a particularly cohesive strategy for community action. It has defined the scope of the sector and specified government funding practices. It provides funding for training and professional development in the sector and more than half of the funding provided covers operational activities and core costs.

Federal Government funding arrangements for indigenous communities

153. The Canadian Constitution recognises aboriginal self-government as an inherent right, committing the federal government to developing practical agreements with aboriginal peoples for implementing self-government structures.

154. The federal government is responsible for fulfilling treaty and fiduciary responsibilities to aboriginal peoples — lawful obligations that arise from treaties, the Indian Act, and other legislation. It is also responsible for delivering to aboriginal communities social and economic programmes that can directly improve the lives of the people living there. The Treasury Board Secretariat reports that 34 federal organisations fund 360 programmes and services directed to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities. Many of these programmes parallel those delivered by provinces and municipalities in non-aboriginal communities. These include programmes focused on education, health care, social assistance, and community infrastructure such as roads. Programme delivery is sometimes challenging given that, according to Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) data, about 60 per cent of First Nations communities have fewer than 500 residents, just under 40 per cent of the Status Indian population is under the age of 20, and just over 45 per cent of Status Indians live in rural areas and almost 21 per cent live in special access zones or remote zones.

155. According to the Treasury Board Secretariat, the federal government spent almost $8.2 billion in 2004–05 on the programmes and services targeted to aboriginal peoples. Much of this funding—almost $5.1 billion at the time (now $6.3 billion)—

---

46 Thomson & Caulier-Grice for the Young Foundation, op. cit. 2007
48 “Aboriginal peoples” is a collective name for the original peoples of North America and their descendants. The Canadian constitution recognizes three groups of Aboriginal people: Indians (commonly referred to as First Nations), Métis and Inuit. These are three distinct peoples with unique histories, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs. The 2006 Census data show that the number of people who identified themselves as an Aboriginal person exceeds one million.
49 The material for this section is sourced primarily from the website of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada: http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/index-eng.asp For example, Canada’s Relationship with Inuit: A History of Policy and Program Development, Sarah Bonesteel, June 2006. www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ai/rs/pubs/sh4_1-eng.asp
was administered by INAC. Health Canada spent about $1.7 billion on health benefits for First Nations people living on and off reserves and for Inuit. Other federal organisations collectively spent over $1.4 billion.

Role of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC)

156. INAC is one of 34 federal departments and agencies involved in Aboriginal and northern programming. The department is responsible for two mandates: Indian and Inuit Affairs, and Northern Development, which together support Aboriginal people (First Nations, Inuit and Métis) and Northerners in their efforts to:

- improve social well-being and economic prosperity
- develop healthier, more sustainable communities
- participate more fully in Canada’s political, social and economic development – for the benefit of all Canadians.

157. INAC is the lead federal department for two-fifths of Canada’s land mass, with a direct role in the political and economic development of the territories, and significant responsibilities for resource, land and environmental management. In the North, the territorial governments generally provide the majority of programmes and services to all Northerners, including Aboriginal people.

Community development: Strategic settings

158. INAC’s conceptual framework is depicted in the following diagram:

159. At the centre of the diagram is its strategic direction: Supporting Sustainable Communities. To support this strategic direction, four long-term commitment areas of focus were established for the 2007–2010 period: long-term planning, socio-
economic development, sustainable infrastructure, and responsible environmental stewardship.

160. To achieve the strategic outcomes through INAC's own programmes, the department has identified the need to pursue the following:

- innovation in priority areas like education and housing
- renovation of core programme authorities to improve responsiveness to changing conditions and needs
- development of legislative frameworks that will empower Aboriginal Canadians and Northerners to make their own decisions, manage their own resources and support their community's development
- special attention to ensuring that those Aboriginal people who are most vulnerable are protected and empowered.

161. The bulk of the department's programmes are delivered through partnerships with Aboriginal communities, federal–provincial or federal–territorial agreements, or formal bilateral or multilateral negotiating processes. Over 60 per cent of departmental spending (of approximately $6.3 billion per annum) is committed to basic services, such as education, social services and community infrastructure to provide access to provincial-type services.

Community development: programmes and funding models

162. INAC's flagship programme for sustainable First Nation communities is the Comprehensive Community Planning framework (CCP). INAC describes CCP in the following way:

   Comprehensive community planning is a holistic process undertaken with broad community participation. A comprehensive approach:

   - enables the community to establish a vision for its future and implement projects to achieve this vision
   - helps to ensure that community projects and programs are thought through, make sense and are the best use of resources
   - integrates and links all other plans the community has produced.

   … the comprehensive community planning process is inclusive and represents the perspectives of all members, whether they reside within or outside the community.

163. A comprehensive community plan addresses key planning areas: governance, land and resources, health, infrastructure development, culture, social issues, and the economy. The scope of comprehensive community planning may vary greatly depending on where the community's interests are in relation to matters such as treaty negotiations, approach to governance, and the extent to which it is addressing land and resource issues within its traditional territories.

164. Five First Nations partnered with INAC in pilot projects in 2004 to develop CCPs using a “learning by doing” approach, and the lessons from those projects are now available as a resource for other communities. These communities contained small population numbers but wide geographical spread. According to INAC data, about 60 per cent of First Nations communities have fewer than 500 residents.
165. Communities are required to research funding options as part of developing a CCP. INAC has five sources of funding available as a contribution to the development and implementation of CCPs. These are:

(1) First Nations Infrastructure Fund
The objective of the First Nations Infrastructure Fund is to improve the quality of life and the environment for First Nation communities by assisting First Nations in the provinces to improve and increase public infrastructure

(2) British Columbia Capacity Initiative
The objective of the British Columbia Capacity Initiative is to enhance the capacity and expertise of First Nations, who have asserted Aboriginal title, to prepare to negotiate and implement land and resource components of their Aboriginal claims settlements.

(3) Professional and Institutional Development Program
The objective of the programme is to develop the capacity of First Nations and Inuit communities to perform core functions of government, by funding governance-related projects at the community and institutional levels.

(4) Community Economic Opportunities Program
The Community Economic Opportunities Program provides project-based support to those First Nation and Inuit communities that have the best opportunities for public services in economic development.

Funded activities may include:
- employment of community members
- community-owned and community-member business development
- development of land and resources under community control
- access to opportunities originating with land and resources beyond community control
- promotion of the community as a place to invest
- research and advocacy.

(5) Aboriginal Business Canada
Working with clients and partners, INAC provides a range of services and support to promote the growth of a strong Aboriginal business sector in Canada. Support varies depending upon the needs of the client, the availability and sources of funding, the eligibility of costs, the economic benefits, and the reasonableness and timing of financial returns on investment.

Criticisms
166. Most of the identified criticism of grant and contribution programmes in the Canadian literature is not about the strategic objectives or outcomes sought from those programmes, but of the procedures by which programmes are designed, administered and evaluated. INAC has featured in adverse reports from the Auditor General of Canada for some years for making unsatisfactory progress on the need to streamline internal procedures, remove redundant monitoring and reporting requirements, and improve the timeliness of funding decisions.50

167. Similarly, the Independent Blue Ribbon Panel on Grants and Contributions made many recommendations for change to administrative practices across the 800 grant

and contribution programmes operated by more than 50 federal departments and agencies in Canada.\textsuperscript{51}

168. A frequently expressed concern for all categories of grant recipients interviewed by the Panel, and Aboriginal communities in particular, is the bureaucracy involved in having to deal with a multiplicity of federal and provincial grant providers for the funding/ monitoring/ evaluation of one project. The Auditor General endorses this concern.

**Vibrant Communities**

169. Launched in 2002, Vibrant Communities (VC) built on learning generated by an earlier project that showed how communities can expand their capacity for strategic poverty reduction work. VC was established through the partnership of three national sponsors – Tamarack: An Institute for Community Engagement, the Caledon Institute of Social Policy, and the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation – and a series of local communities across the country. As it evolved, VC gained the support of a number of other funding partners, including private foundations, and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.\textsuperscript{52}

170. The initiatives (called Trail Builders) began by (a) establishing a new collaborative entity in the community to stimulate and support change based on VC principles and (b) developing a community plan including a specific poverty reduction target. The initiatives were not driven by a single organisation but were multi-sectoral collaborations. Many different players contributed to the outcomes that were produced and their roles varied in nature.

171. Partnerships have proven to be critical ingredients of the Vibrant Communities work. Collaborative planning processes were at the core of Trail Builder efforts to develop, pursue, and periodically adjust community plans.

172. According to the Tamarack evaluation, Trail Builders achieved substantial results, including:

- A high number of individuals and households have benefited from poverty reduction efforts in the 13 Trail Builder communities.
- Communities are expanding the range of supports available, offering intensive and integrated supports to individuals through comprehensive initiatives, and responding strategically to community needs by addressing gaps to complement existing services.
- Initiatives have in various ways found new mechanisms that facilitate multi-partner collaboration in delivery of programmes and services.
- While they have focused primarily on their local communities, they have also developed linkages into poverty reduction efforts at provincial and federal levels. Almost all the communities that have generated a large number of benefits for low-income residents have been active and successful in realising government policy change.

**United States**

**Comprehensive Community Initiatives (CCIs)**


\textsuperscript{52} Jamie Gamble, Evaluating Vibrant Communities 2002–2010, Ontario, Canada: Tamarack Institute, \url{http://tamarackcommunity.ca/downloads/vc/VC_Evaluation.pdf}
173. ‘Comprehensive community initiatives’ (CCIs) is a term used in North America and elsewhere to describe targeted community revitalisation strategies. It incorporates the concepts of ‘community development’, ‘community change’, and ‘comprehensive place-based change’ also used in the literature.

174. In the 1990s, comprehensive community initiatives (CCIs) arose in the United States as an ambitious strategy to address the needs of residents of poor communities. They were designed to go beyond the achievements of existing community-based organisations, notably social service agencies and community development corporations, by concentrating resources and combining the best of what had been learned from social, economic, physical and civic development in order to catalyse transformation of distressed neighbourhoods. In contrast to other community initiatives that focussed on one intervention at a time, CCIs adopted a comprehensive approach to neighbourhood change and worked according to community-building principles that value resident engagement and community capacity building.

175. More recently, the Obama Administration has explicitly endorsed place-based policy, and has launched an evaluation of existing federal place-based policies in an effort to identify areas of overlap and the potential for interagency cooperation. All federal agencies have been directed to formally articulate how place matters. Additionally, several new programmes in the proposed 2011 Budget, including Choice Neighbourhoods, and Sustainable Communities, are representative of this commitment to integrate and align federal investments.53

The Concept

176. CCIs typically are multi-year enterprises located in poor urban or rural communities where physical and economic decline, social isolation, and political disempowerment are the norm. Their leaders and participants have sought to improve neighbourhood conditions and the well-being of individuals and families by applying two principles:

- Comprehensiveness – an attempt to maximise the likelihood of achieving positive results by simultaneously addressing the social, economic, and physical conditions of a neighbourhood
- Community building – an emphasis on participatory processes that develop leadership, enhance “social capital” and personal networks, and strengthen a community’s capacity for improvement.54

177. At the neighbourhood or community level, CCIs force residents to think hard about what holds them together as a community. Community-based organisations, municipal governments, social service providers, residents, and business owners are among those who join together to share resources and coordinate efforts in these initiatives.55

178. These initiatives draw on the “accumulating evidence that services meant to improve the life prospects of the poor were often proving ineffective – at least in part because they were so fragmented”.56 CCIs endorse the idea that the multiple and interrelated problems of poor communities require multiple and interrelated solutions. “[I]ts proponents] insist on combining physical and economic development with service

---

54 See http://www.aspeninstitute.org/sites/default/files/content/upload/rccfinalcrosscuttingreport.pdf for further information on community building.
and education reform, and all of these with a commitment to building community institutions and social networks".\textsuperscript{57}

179. Instead of addressing single issues, CCIs attempt to foster a fundamental transformation of poor communities and a process of sustained improvement in the circumstances and opportunities of individuals and families in those communities. They set out to promote change at three levels: the individual or family, the neighbourhood/community and the broader, or system-level, context.

180. Additionally, CCIs operate on the principle that community building is a necessary component of the process of transforming distressed neighbourhoods. Community building includes, for example, strengthening institutional capacity at the local level, enhancing social capital and personal networks, and developing local leadership capacity.

181. In the United States, these types of initiatives have been taking place since the early 1990s, largely through the support of private foundations. Evaluations of more recent Canadian experiences with CCIs, for example by the Wellesley Institute (for Tamarack), are consistent with evaluations done in the US by the Aspen Institute, and draw on that material.\textsuperscript{58}

\textbf{Key Features}

182. There are several key features that distinguish comprehensive community initiatives from other types of community efforts that focus on a single issue or are undertaken by a single organisation. CCIs are comprehensive. They are holistic, developmental and long-term. They are multi-sectoral and seek to be inclusive. They are concerned with both process and outcomes.

\textbf{Comprehensive}

183. Comprehensive community initiatives are just that. They seek to be broad in scope and address a range of areas rather than a single concern. They usually select an ‘umbrella’ issue, theme or population as their broad focus. They then determine, in collaboration with key players in the community, the wide set of interconnected projects and efforts that fall within the domain of that overarching issue, theme or population.

184. Many communities are concerned, for example, with enhancing quality of life. Other initiatives focus more explicitly upon the reduction of poverty. Still other efforts select a population and its issues, such as children and families, seniors or indigenous people.

185. CCIs typically move beyond the provision of services, amenities or supports to individuals or households. They also seek to create new or improve existing assets in a neighbourhood or community to help build its physical and/or social infrastructure. The efforts may focus, for example, upon improving the stock of decent affordable housing, setting up new educational or training programmes, and creating or expanding recreational or cultural programmes. In all cases, these amenities enhance the quality of the neighbourhood or community.

186. CCIs are also concerned with fostering a neighbourhood or community’s capacity to solve its problems – such as high rates of child abuse, crime or unemployment. They seek to build this problem-solving capacity by creating or sustaining networks (or social capital) that serve as an important base for making local decisions.

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid, p. 319.

\textsuperscript{58} Wellesley Institute (for Tamarack) \textit{Comprehensive Community Initiatives: Lessons Learned, Potential and Opportunities Moving Forward}, May 2010. \url{http://tamarackcommunity.ca/downloads/index/SD_Wellesley_Comp_Community_Initiatives.pdf}
Multi-sectoral

187. CCIs encourage partnering and collaborative work arrangements. They recognise the value of contributions from diverse backgrounds, networks and areas of expertise. Collaborative relationships create new value by bringing additional resources, insights and expertise to the table.

188. Typically, CCIs are governed by a coordinating mechanism in the form of a leadership roundtable or steering group. The coordinating body is at least multi-organisational and, at best, multi-sectoral in composition. It assumes responsibility for acting as champion of the issue, convening key players, setting out a clear vision for the effort and associated strategic plan, and acting as the liaison between the broader community (including the media) and the initiative.

189. When the first CCIs were created more than two decades ago, one hope was that community change efforts could break down the silos of funding streams and integrate services across different sectors. According to recent evaluations done by the Aspen Institute, experience to date shows that community-based efforts partially compensated for, but did not solve, the problems of siloed public and private funding. In many cases, organisations engaged in place-based work must still contend with a complicated matrix of funding sources and agencies.59

Long-term

190. It takes time to establish relationships among the various sectors and work effectively in a collaborative fashion. Governments typically operate within limited and narrow timeframes that cannot be met if a true process of community development is followed, especially those efforts that address complex and multifaceted issues like poverty reduction, unemployment, affordable housing, food security, crime prevention and ecological sustainability. For example, the Core Neighbourhood Development Council in Saskatoon has initiated a community planning process that is setting its sights 20 years into the future.

Developmental

191. A major principle that underlies CCIs is that they aim to build the capacity of the community in decision-making and resilience. Decision-making capacity is important in that it can apply to a wide range of issues and not just the one area that has been identified as the focus of the work. Resilience is crucial because it helps the community withstand the stresses and strains that inevitably arise from economic, social, environmental or political pressures.

192. According to research by the Aspen Institute, the CCIs of the last two decades have generally undertaken four types of community building investments:

- developing individual leadership
- increasing organisational capacity
- increasing social capital and a sense of community among residents
- increasing civic capacity and voice.

193. Virtually all of the efforts reviewed by the Aspen Institute can point to accomplishments on the community building front. CCIs demonstrated increased community capacity in the form of stronger leadership, networks or organisations, and/or improved connections between the community and external entities in the public, private and non-profit sectors. However, what cannot be demonstrated is that increases in community capacity lead to improved outcomes at the individual,

http://www.aspeninstitute.org/sites/default/files/content/docs/pubs/VoicesIII_FINAL_0.pdf
family, or community level. But such evidence would require sophisticated research and this has not been attempted or funded to date.\textsuperscript{60}

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid, p. vii.


**Inclusive**

194. CCIs typically include diverse sectors as well as groups, such as people living in poverty, youth, indigenous communities and members of racial minorities. There are two distinct challenges associated with creating a broad-based inclusive community response to poverty. One involves engaging the diverse sectors of the community that can make a contribution to poverty reduction. The other entails building relationships among these ‘partners’, many of whom may not have worked together closely in the past and may even have a history of conflict and distrust.

195. In both cases, local convenors play a crucial role in mobilising the community. Convenors must have a good understanding of the issues to be addressed, such as poverty and a commitment to poverty reduction, credibility in the eyes of diverse segments of the community and a capacity to speak to the perspectives and concerns of different participants. Convenors must be conscious of this diversity and attentive to which of the many voices are being heard and which are not.

**Process and outcomes**

196. CCIs must have a sense of what they are seeking to achieve. They must set clear goals, carefully track their work and try to the best of their ability to reach their designated targets. But the process by which these goals are reached is equally important. They can establish effective structures that help build the capacity of the community to solve problems and take concrete steps toward improving its economic, social and environmental well-being.

197. Recent evaluations by the Aspen Institute note that capacity building is often one of the purposes of community change efforts, but often it is focussed on helping an organisation build the capacity to implement a particular initiative. They recommend that future work should move beyond this narrow definition of capacity and instead focus on a broader mission of building the capacity of a community more generally to set agendas, gain access to resources, and respond to community needs.61

**Overall accomplishments**

198. Kubisch et al stated:

The short answer on what community change efforts have accomplished is this: Most can show improvements in the well-being of individual residents who participated in programs in their target neighborhoods. Some produced physical change in their neighborhoods through housing production and rehabilitation, some reduced crime, and a few also sparked commercial development. Most can demonstrate increased neighborhood capacity in the form of stronger leadership, networks, or organizations, or in improved connections between the neighbourhood and external entities in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. A few can point to accomplishments in policy and systems reform. While these are important, tangible outcomes, most of the interventions have not produced the degree of community transformation envisioned by their designers. For example, few (if any) have been able to demonstrate population level changes in child and family well-being or rates of poverty. Where significant community-wide change occurred, it was the result of changes in the population of the neighborhood due to mobility caused by regional economic dynamics or major physical revitalization that often meant displacement of significant numbers of the original residents.62

---


62 Voices from the field III, 2010, pp. 15-16