

Practice Insights



People, Place and Power:
the soul of community
development

Dundee Edition



About IACD

IACD is the only global network for professional community development practitioners. We support development agencies and practitioners to build the capacity of communities to realise greater social and economic equality, environmental protection and political democracy.

What do we do?

IACD links people to each other. We facilitate learning and practice exchange, both virtually and face-to-face. We work with partners to deliver regional, national and international events, study visits and conferences. We document the work that our members are doing around the world by collecting case studies, tools and materials on community development, and sharing these through our website, publications and ebulletins. We carry out research projects, drawing on international experience.

IACD aims to give its members a voice at the global level, advocating for community development principles and practice in international forums and consultations. IACD has consultative status with the UN and its agencies.

Contributing articles

Our international *Practice Insights* publications are issued three times a year, each one focusing on a particular theme of relevance to community development. If you would like further information or to contribute to future editions, please contact membership@iacdglobal.org. Alternatively, IACD members are welcome at any time to contribute news items, research, case studies or other materials to our members' Facebook site and to the IACD website.

Join us

For full details and to join, go to www.iacdglobal.org/join-us.

Benefits of membership include:

- Daily Facebook News posts about community and international development;
- Access to the Global Community Development Exchange resource bank on the IACD website;
- Opportunities to participate in Practice Exchange study visits;
- Discounted rates at IACD conferences;
- Discounted subscriptions to the Community Development Journal;
- Opportunities to share your work and experiences with a global audience, through our website, Facebook sites and other publications;
- Members also have the opportunity to nominate to serve on the IACD Board of Directors. Our next Annual General Meeting will take place in June 2021 in Kenya.

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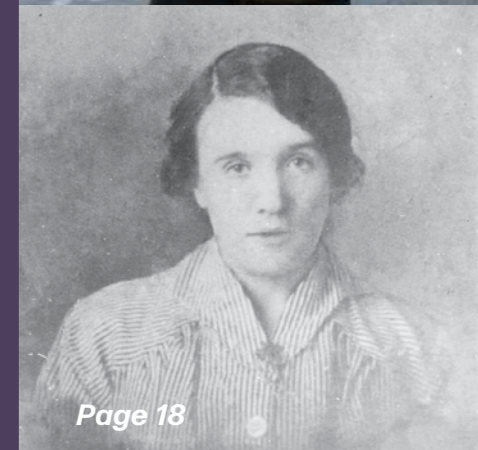
The views expressed in this publication are primarily those of the respective authors and not necessarily those of IACD.

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WCDC2019 Editorial

Editor: Dr Victoria Jupp Kina; Assistant Editor: Mere Greta



Dr Victoria Jupp Kina



Meredith Greta

We are delighted to bring you this special issue of Practice Insights. The creation of this issue has provided us with the delightful opportunity to relive WCDC2019 not only in our memories (no doubt fogged by the task of organising over 500 delegates!), but through the lenses of our delegates.

This issue is a celebration of collaboration and creativity. When the planning committee began thinking about the conference in early 2018, we were a group of strangers navigating group dynamics and looking to one another to try to locate ourselves in a group with no clear roles. From the outset, Clare's excitement was palpable. Her pride of her city and delight at the thought of bringing an international conference to celebrate her lifelong passion – community development – to her home town was infectious. We laughed. Meetings were energising and exciting. We grew to trust and respect one another, feeling able to admit when we had no clue what we were doing, and feeling free to run with ideas when we did. It was a beautiful and rare example of collaborative leadership.

It was through the openness of our discussions that we were able to gain the confidence to create our own rules. We knew we wanted to embed the principles of community development in the structure of the conference – we wanted a conference that nurtured and actively invited new voices. We wanted a conference that shifted the normal and disrupted traditional dynamics. Simply, we wanted to ensure that the already-amplified voices did not dominate.

It was a beautiful and rare example of collaborative leadership.

We wanted dialogue rather than monologue. We not only wanted to welcome delegates to our city, we also wanted to welcome their experiences into our lecture halls and seminar rooms. As a committee, we shared our own experiences of feeling isolated, unheard and ignored – and we designed a programme that addressed these experiences. We prioritised dialogue, so we limited presentations to seven minutes – and together we rode through the waves of academic resistance. We prioritised creativity, so we embedded music, performance, poetry and film. We prioritised grassroots work, so we invited activists and practitioners to be keynote speakers. We prioritised connection, so we created spaces for continuing dialogue outside of the formal conference setting. We recognised that our programme would inevitably be incomplete and have missing voices, so we created unconference spaces to enable delegates to regain some control.

We are proud of what we achieved, but we recognise that there is still more to do. We did not create a truly inclusive event. As a majority female committee, we worked hard to overcome gender inequalities however our committee was entirely white and the final programme reflected this. As eloquently described by Anthony Cook in this issue, systemic inequality is rooted in histories of explicit subjugation of outcast groups and we did not interrogate ourselves sufficiently to overcome this history. This realisation came too late, and this is not acceptable. We have learnt some lessons and would do quite a lot differently if we were to do it all over again. So, as well as highlighting some of the things that worked well, this issue also explores areas that need to be improved. As Mário Montez highlights, despite the initial resistance, feedback on the seven-minute presentations was overwhelmingly positive and we would urge future conferences to continue this approach. The unconference spaces were welcomed and used constructively to fill in the gaps in the programme and continue unfinished conversations – but as Cissy Rock notes, if we are to stand true to our community development values, we need to give such spaces equal value and ensure that inclusion is viewed as a design issue in conference

We wanted a conference that shifted the normal and disrupted traditional dynamics.

programming. Claire Garabedian highlights the power of music in creating moments of spontaneous connection, and feedback on the performance from Vox Liminis during the closing plenary reinforced the power of music to reimagine and instigate change. We would urge future conferences to place creativity centrally in programming.

As introverts, we are also proud of creating an event that provided spaces for the quieter people among us. As Christian Hanser so powerfully described in his article in this issue, we need to ensure that we listen to the silences of disengagement and enable people to 'retreat towards society'. Similarly, Rosalind Harris and Ron Hustedde beautifully describe the need to embrace those of us with alternative epistemologies and take care of the shared pain that can occupy the 'pulsing-storied silence' we carry with us. The changes from events like this do not emerge only from the loudest voices; they happen through the moments of connection in spaces like the Welcome Hut. It is through actively seeking to create spaces that embrace the fullness of our individual experiences as humans that we believe facilitated the sense of belonging that emerged during our three (or eight, if you went on the Practice Exchanges!) days together. As Tanita Addaro notes, one of her most valued memories is the sense of belonging to an international community. The feeling of belonging is not simply a fluffy emotion. Belonging is, as Margaret Ledwith powerfully articulates in her article in this issue, a counternarrative to the inhumanity of neoliberalism. By nurturing our connections, we are building

Collectively, we resisted and transformed the sense of other to a sense of together. Our moral obligation to belonging is the preparedness to engage directly in political decisions.

We hope that you enjoy reading this issue as much as we enjoyed creating it. As we look towards a global future in which the only certainty is that the current system must fundamentally change, we end with the words of our in-house spoken word poetry performer, Dr Erin Farley: 'The things they lived are not finished.' Our fight continues, and by nurturing our collective souls we will overcome.

Meredith Greta was WCDC2019 Operational Manager. She is IACD Administrator and can be contacted at membership@iacdglobal.org

Dr Victoria Jupp Kina was WCDC2019 Academic Director. She is an independent researcher and educator and can be contacted at victoria@socialresearchreimagined.com



our collective strength. Through strength, we build resistance. In this issue, Daniel Muia reflects on his experience of having his visa to attend the conference refused – and the deeply political fight to have his and five other visa refusals overturned. Thanks to Clare's leadership, we were successful in overturning three. Collectively, we resisted and transformed the sense of other to a sense of together. As organisers of an international conference, our moral obligation to belonging is the preparedness to engage directly in political decisions that could be viewed as beyond our control. After all it is, as Virginia Brás-Gomez highlights in this issue, citizen power that drives change.

Cllr John Alexander

Leader of Dundee City Council



A thank you from the Leader of Dundee City Council

Dundee was honoured to host the World Community Development Conference (WCDC) in 2019. It was a vibrant celebration of our communities and the positive legacy of community development in the city.



The transformation in the city over the last decade has been led by a deep-rooted desire to embed community engagement in the decision-making process. Our city has been built upon a strong sense of community and community activism and we are richer for that. From major projects such as the Waterfront Development and V&A Dundee, which were agreed following a city-wide public dialogue, to the £1.2 million participatory budgeting process which allocated funding to every community in the city and gathered 11,000+ public votes, our communities have been at the heart of the decisions.

The WCDC2019 helped reinvigorate and energise our communities, challenged politicians like me to strive for better and allowed us to celebrate the contributions of so many citizens over a considerable number of years.

'People, Place and Power: the soul of community development' Reflecting on a disruptive conference

Clare MacGillivray



As Chair of the World Community Development Conference 2019 in Dundee, Scotland it is my pleasure on behalf of our conference planning team to introduce the Practice Insights: Dundee Edition.



We deliberately took risks in the way we imagined and delivered the conference. We challenged accepted academic norms with 7-minute presentations, and built in flexibility through unconference sessions; we wanted to conference to be free-flowing enough to enable self-organisation and create space enough to enable delegates to reflect and connect.

In June 2019 over 500 delegates from 37 countries came to Dundee. The Conference theme People, Place and Power: The Soul of Community Development is beautifully explored and continued in this edition with inspiring reflections from global contributors.

My immense thanks must go to the Guest Editors of this Dundee Edition, Dr Victoria Jupp Kina, Academic Director for WCDC2019 and Meredith Greta who led on operations for the Conference. I think you'll agree that they, along with all our contributors, have created a magnificent edition that brilliantly showcases the spirit of WCDC2019.



Be bold, be brave, be yourself. And rise up with confidence to shift boundaries with radical thinking and practice.

As Conference organisers #TeamDundee wanted delegates to feel warmly welcomed in friendship, solidarity, and love to our city.

We really wanted this conference to be different. We wanted to create a disruptive conference. Our intent was to shake power, shift thinking and unleash creativity. We wanted to celebrate culture, embrace the power of the arts and build connections in order to find ways to explore the soul of community development.

We deliberately took risks in the way we imagined and delivered the conference. We challenged accepted academic norms with 7-minute presentations, and built in flexibility through unconference sessions; we wanted to conference to be free-flowing enough to enable self-organisation and create space enough to enable delegates to reflect and connect. We integrated music, art, storytelling, film, photography, walking tours, community visits, spiritual opportunities and dance throughout the programme. Crucially, these were just as integral ingredients to the eight-day learning experience as the presentations, workshops and keynote speakers.

This was intentionally not a traditional academic conference. Instead, we wanted to create an event where thinking, theory and practice could intertwine. Where culture could be celebrated and created in a collective exploration of the soul of community development.

Dundee is the perfect setting for a conference whose theme was People, Place and Power. Our place has a rich history of social change, community activism and community arts. Dundee is a city of feisty women. A post-industrial working city. A city steeped in social history and bold enough to reimagine a bright future through culture, community, tech and innovation.

We hoped to honour the disruptive tradition of our city in our inclusive programme with a conscious gender balance that purposefully celebrated the history of Dundee's women and continued their history through a focus on equality and human rights.

The opening song for the conference rooted us in the soul of Dundee. The Jute Mill Song performed by Sheena Wellington and Claire Garabedien was written by Mary Brooksbank, a Dundee weaver, socialist, Trade Unionist, songwriter and inspiration to many:

Oh dear me, the world is ill-divided, Them that work the hardest are aye the least provided.

These words catch my heart. My grannies who worked in the Dundee jute mills often sang this to me as a bairn as they engulfed me in warmth and love. Their singing told the powerful stories of working women in my home town, and of the power of the collective. As highlighted by Erin Farley in this Issue, Mary Brooksbank gives us a call to action. A reminder that injustice exists as the prevalent norm, and it is people and communities who will transform the turbulent times we live in.

Community development thinking and practice assists us to challenge power as we globally face crises: a viral pandemic, injustice, poverty, human rights abuses, environmental catastrophes, forced migration, neo-liberalism and the rise of right-wing populism.

I hope as you read about the conference that the spirit of what we all achieved in Dundee will ignite renewed action for change in you and in your community development work.

Be bold, be brave, be yourself. And rise up with confidence to shift boundaries with radical thinking and practice.

My personal thanks go to #TeamDundee - my friends and colleagues on the WCDC2019 Planning Group for their joyful energy, creativity and vision that enabled an explosion of ideas to become a reality. In particular I'd like to thank the work of Marie Dailly, whose creativity enabled over 40 local practitioners and volunteers to join our global community. I would also like to say a huge thank you to Debbie Ree from Dundee and Angus Convention Bureau whose organisational skills are only outweighed by her patience!

The soul of Dundee rooted us in an incredible cohesion that I've rarely experienced in a collective. And the power of our collective I hope you will agree delivered a truly magnificent World Community Development Conference.

I would like to thank to our sponsors for their financial contributions to make this conference happen.

Thanks too, to Alyssa Faulkner our Volunteer Coordinator, and our student volunteers for their support and guidance throughout the conference. Their hard work and commitment gave our guests a fantastic delegate experience.

And immense thanks to you for reading our reflections and allowing the spirit of Dundee into your hearts.

As you read this Practice Insights let the words of Professor Margaret Ledwith ring loud in your ears, "Now is the time to take the ideas from the conference forward, to tell a different story and change the course of history!"

Clare MacGillivray, Chair of WCDC2019
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On Belonging to an International Community: the experience of our conference volunteers



Alyssa:

Alyssa addressing delegates at the Youth Forum

I have been involved with IACD since the beginning of 2018 when I became one of the first Youth Representatives for the charity. I knew I had to get involved with the World Community Development Conference (WCDC) when I found out it was coming to Dundee, the city in which I live and study. I had previously attended the conference in Maynooth with the help of several charities who covered my fees and expenses. Although I had a wonderful experience, it was rather inaccessible to practitioners and students who may not have had the means to attend an expensive conference but would gain a myriad of skills and knowledge if they did so. I felt it was hypocritical for a Community Learning and Development (CLD) conference, which is based upon values such as inclusion, to be exclusive and I thought it was important to include those doing work on the ground and future CLD practitioners.

As the Volunteer Coordinator for WCDC, I knew I had to ensure that as many students studying community development who wanted to come to the conference as a volunteer, could. This was to make sure that the WCDC in Dundee would not be tailored for academics who had the means and privilege to access it. We ended up with 22 diverse student volunteers from the CLD cohort at the University of Dundee, ranging from incoming undergraduate to

postgraduate students, and including a social work student wanting to volunteer and learn about community development too.

During the conference, I interacted with individuals from all over the world. As someone studying community learning and development, many of those I met are experienced and well regarded as those who have paved the way for future generations. I met Margaret Ledwith: professor and writer of Community Development and Social Justice; Davie Donaldson: a Scottish Traveller and Social Justice Advocate; and Jacky Close: Development Coordinator for Faith in Community. My highlight was listening to songs by Vox Liminis, who perform songs written in collaboration with prisoners in Scotland. Being able to host people in Scotland, teach them about the culture and the amazing work going on here, and share knowledge that could shape the future of community development was an absolute pleasure.

Being on the organising committee, I felt that I had to do something to include those who wanted to learn but could not access the resources. I organised a youth forum that brought over some of the main speakers from the conference and held a free event one afternoon to ensure that more knowledge was shared. In the

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conference, there was something called the 'unconference afternoon' which had tours of Dundee, country correspondent meetings, and included the youth forum. These forums brought something unique to the conference, allowing for more than the average drone of talks and workshops. My hope is that the legacy of Dundee, of the youth forum and the 'unconference afternoon,' will be carried forward to the next WCDC.

Another positive of the conference was getting to know the wonderful volunteers that I did not have the pleasure of meeting beforehand. Meeting the volunteers and seeing them flourish and learn during this once in a lifetime conference was a highlight for me. One of the volunteers, Tanita, offered to contribute to this reflection on what she felt she gained from the conference, and why getting involved was so beneficial.

Alyssa Faulkner, BA (Hons), Volunteer Coordinator, WCDC2019 - Alyssaf1998@gmail.com

About to begin MSc Social Justice and Community Action at the University of Edinburgh



Tanita:

When I heard that the WCDC was coming to Dundee, Scotland, I could not believe my luck! What a fantastic opportunity to welcome CLD colleagues from all over the world, embrace them with a warm showing of Scottish hospitality and share a 'wee dram or two'! As a student in the CLD distance-learning course at the University of Dundee, and as an associate member of the CLD Standards Council in Scotland, I thought what better way to learn from CLD practitioners than to put myself forward as a volunteer at the conference. Having had experience of volunteering at events in my local community, I knew that although you give up your time, you get back so much more in return. I was also aware of the considerable work that goes on behind the scenes to ensure the smooth running of large-scale events such as this, and therefore wanted to be able to help in some small way. I was interested in volunteering so that I could find out more about how community development practitioners, academics, policy-makers, students and activists can tackle challenges such as climate change, loneliness and isolation and increasing mental health problems in our communities. Complex issues such as these demand collective reflection and discussion from many different perspectives. The prospect of being able to assist at the conference while also being able to learn new things sounded like a great idea!

As a volunteer at the conference, I really enjoyed meeting and getting to know my fellow volunteers. Two of my fellow classmates also volunteered, so we spent our lunch breaks reflecting on what we had learnt and comparing the content of the sessions we had been helping with. I volunteered alongside Theresa Lynn, Community Artist and member of the University of Dundee staff, who gave delegates a chance to explore their creativity and provide an artistic response to the WCDC. It was a simple yet fun idea - ask people to take something they were going to throw away such as a

sweetie wrapper or bus ticket and make it into a small piece of art. I observed and reflected on the way that individual delegates' contribution culminated in a final artwork that was made up of the sum of all their efforts. This was very interesting, and I enjoyed volunteering alongside Theresa; I learnt a lot from her. Highlights also included listening to Darren 'Loki' McGarvey - the author of Poverty Safari: Understanding the Anger of Britain's Underclass; and Davie Donaldson - a Scottish Traveller Activist and campaigner for equality and inclusion. Both speakers spoke passionately and drew upon their own experiences. I felt inspired to find out more and use my reflections in my practice and studies. As well as the conference programme itself, there was also a cultural programme which involved fantastic Scottish music and food - a fun end to each day of volunteering!

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As a result of being a volunteer at the conference, I gained confidence, knowledge and a sense of belonging to an international CLD community. On the final day and at the end of the conference, delegates thanked all the volunteers with a round of applause - it felt good to be appreciated and acknowledged in this way. I was also fortunate to be able to present a poster on my community development practice and work with the community group, VictoriArt in Torry in Aberdeen. I was given time in my volunteer schedule to speak to CLD practitioners from around the world about

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community arts and community activism in Aberdeen. It also meant that when I was helping in the auditorium or with the smaller group sessions, my poster was on show and able to be read by practitioners in their own time without me being present. After meeting Alyssa for the first time at the conference, I invited her to contribute to a CLD staff development session in Aberdeen alongside another student and I. This would not have been possible without the opportunity to meet at the conference and finding out about the work Alyssa does in improving knowledge, understanding and support for young people living with Type 1 Diabetes.

I would recommend volunteering at a conference such as the World Community Development Conference to others - you will have a chance to meet new people, make friends, learn new things, feel part of a wider community and have fun!

Dr Tanita Louise Addario, MA, MSc, PhD, AFHEA, FRSA

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I am currently studying my PG Diploma in Community, Learning and Development (CLD) at the University of Dundee.

Children's Parliament: giving ideas a voice

Katie Reid



As detailed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the most widely ratified international treaty, children have the right to participate in matters that affect them, to be listened to and to be taken seriously. In Scotland, as in many cultures, societal attitudes towards children's competencies and capabilities continue to act as barriers to the realisation of children's participatory rights outlined in the UNCRC. Long-held views range from perceiving children as 'innocent,' 'vulnerable,' 'cute,' 'naughty,' and 'unruly,' to lacking in knowledge, rationality or experience, and all too often result in children's contributions to society being trivialised, devalued or completely overlooked.

I work for the Children's Parliament, which recognises and aims to amplify the pivotal role children across Scotland – and globally – play in shaping the world around us. We do this by supporting children to share their views, experiences and ideas in decision-making processes, and by bringing children and adults together to demonstrate the power of a children's human rights-based approach. Last June, Members of Children's Parliament (MCPs) aged 12 and 13 years old from Tranent in the southeast of Scotland participated in the World Community Development Conference in Dundee and led a workshop for delegates on taking a children's human rights-based approach to community development.

The children's creative, participatory workshop was based on their own experiences as MCPs and child human

rights defenders in their local community. This journey had begun in 2016 through the StreetsAhead Tranent project which explored children's views and experiences of their local community and built environment; examining how these factors impact children's rights and wellbeing. Following workshops with 250 children from five primary schools, 16 children engaged in an intensive, participatory arts-based process creating a 36' x 4' mural of the past, present, and future of their town, Tranent. The significant role children played in Tranent's community development was locally, nationally, and internationally recognised, and laid the foundations of Tranent becoming a town with human rights at its heart. This led to a further project, 'Children as Human Rights Defenders', in which 12 children aged 12 – 13 came together to develop and demonstrate a children's human rights-

based approach across Tranent. In light of the 20th anniversary of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders and UN Committee on the Rights of the Child's Day of General Discussion in 2018, this project also contributed to global and national conversations about protecting and empowering child human rights defenders.

The following reflections are from a recent conversation with Faith and Megan, two of the MCPs who led the facilitation of the workshop at the WCDC. As the youngest participants at the conference, I began by asking the children what they took from the experience. Both Megan and Faith spoke fondly about delivering the workshop and having the chance to meet new people from so many different parts of the world.

"I enjoyed the conference because it wasn't just sitting down and listening to people talk. I was quite nervous at the beginning of the workshop because I was one of the first people to go up and start talking. I was so nervous and kept thinking 'how am I supposed to do this!?' But, once I started, I realised that people wouldn't judge me so, I just talked! I think people listened and took us seriously. They were focused on what we were saying, not going to the side on their phones. They were concentrating and taking in what we were saying." Megan, aged 14

"I enjoyed meeting people from all over the world! I felt quite nervous delivering a workshop at first because I'd never done it before but after I got the hang of it I thought 'oh, it's easy!' I think more children should have the opportunity to take part in conferences. They get to learn about different parts of the worlds they've never seen before or heard about." Faith, aged 14



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Faith, aged 14

Children's Parliament
giving ideas a voice

During the final part of their workshop at the conference, the children invited the adult participants to re-imagine their work from the perspective of an Unfeartie – a term coined by Children's Parliament to describe an adult who stands up for and alongside children and defends their rights. Participants pledged to become Unfearties – which you, too, can do using the link here: <https://www.childrensparliament.org.uk/about-us/unfearties/become-an-unfeartie/>

Unfearties are individuals who are courageous in discussing children's issues, are making a difference in children's lives, and who are willing to speak up for, and stand alongside, children.

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and who are willing to speak up for, and stand alongside, children.

As we near one year since the conference, I was curious to reconnect with some of the Unfearties we welcomed that day to hear their reflections on the children's workshop, and to learn about how they have since realised their pledge as an Unfeartie in their personal life and/or professional practice. Over email, I caught up with Hilde Wierda-Boer from the HAN_ University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands. It was wonderful to hear about Hilde's commitment to amplifying the voices and experiences of children in her research, work and personal life:

"I have good memories of the workshop, I really enjoyed it. It definitely was an energizer. A very recent example of me being an Unfeartie: today I was writing a research report for a community. The policy of the community is that playgrounds are centralized (so small ones disappear, and there will be only one big playground in the village, a place where people of all generations could meet). In interviews on the livability of the village, people mention that there is need for more playgrounds

and more equipment. From a previous study I know that one central playground may cause difficulties with regard to independent playground visits (children mentioned that they were too far away so that they could not go there alone or were facing dangerous crossings). So I advised the community to find out, together with parents AND children, whether this is the case and what solutions could be found."

As I write this, the world is a very different place to this time last year when we looked forward to the WCDC. Speaking via video-call from our homes during the nationwide coronavirus lockdown, my conversation with the children culminated in a discussion about their experiences of the coronavirus pandemic. Both Megan and Faith highlighted the importance of feeling included and playing an active role in their local community, particularly in times of heightened social isolation for all generations.

"To me, my community is my second family. Tranent, our town, is quite small – basically everyone knows everyone. There are misunderstandings about children and



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Megan, aged 14



Children's Parliament
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"Being a Human Rights Defender means that you stand up for people and what's right in the world. So we're there if anybody needs us or is need of help."

Faith

teenagers. Teenagers are known for being quite reckless, nasty and all round bad. As Human Rights Defenders, we've proven that we're not that." Megan

"Being a Human Rights Defender means that you stand up for people and what's right in the world. So we're there if anybody needs us or is need of help." Faith

Globally, the importance of human rights, social justice, community and kindness

has been amplified as we navigate the coronavirus pandemic. We invite you to join us as Unfearties to ensure children's human rights are at the heart of community, national and global responses to the pandemic.

Katie Reid is the Children's Voices Project Worker for the Children's Parliament, Scotland. She can be contacted at katie@childrensparliament.org.uk



Join a global network

The International Association for Community Development (IACD) is the only global network for professional community development practitioners. We support development agencies and practitioners to build the capacity of communities, to realise greater social and economic equality, environmental protection and political democracy. We are a non-governmental organisation accredited with the UN.

There are many ways that you can become involved in IACD. If you are a development agency manager, funder, fieldwork practitioner, academic, student or volunteer community activist, IACD can help you through our international practice exchanges, events and publications. If you have a passion for effective community development, then please make contact with us – we welcome your participation!



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Human Rights and Development: two sides of the same coin?

Virgínia Brás Gomes



The WCDC2019 Conference theme - people, place and power brought together at the core of community development - is perfectly located in a wider context of human rights and development in which people are at the centre in all places, and power comes from meaningful participation of rights holders and transparency and accountability of duty bearers. My points of departure are the International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), that covers all fields of economic, social and cultural development, and Sustainable Development in its broadest sense.

It is often said that economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR) are everyday rights for everyday people that need to have the conditions to live with dignity. Dignity is no doubt an intrinsic characteristic of the human spirit that cannot be given nor taken away. But for individuals to live in dignity, States need to comply with their core obligations to guarantee the minimum essential level of rights as a survival kit for everyone living under their jurisdiction. Developed countries often argue that compliance with core obligations does not apply to them any longer. This is not true because even in the richest countries where economic growth and social development have contributed to the improvement of living conditions, pockets of poverty persist at unacceptable levels and many structural constraints hinder upward economic and social mobility. In fact, poverty is a consequence of the violation of a number of ESCR

because it is the result of various unfulfilled needs and shortcomings at the economic, social, cultural and behavioural levels.

States also have immediate obligations to eliminate discrimination and ensure equality. In spite of some progress in dealing with direct discrimination, significant gaps remain, the most obvious being the lack of integrated measures to combat intersectional discrimination and the particularly negative and long lasting effects they have on women and persons belonging to vulnerable groups. There is also a lack of recognition by States of systemic discrimination based on deeply rooted societal prejudices that require a huge change in mindsets. Governments are reluctant to recognize such discrimination because it amounts to the failure of the measures they have taken to combat discrimination without really addressing

its root causes. We only need to look at discrimination against the poor, or minority groups such as Roma people, or ethnic minorities, to know this is true.

It is important to reiterate the obligation of progressive realization. In other words, States must take deliberate, concrete and targeted steps to progressively realize ESCR using maximum available domestic resources as well as international cooperation and assistance.

States must take deliberate, concrete and targeted steps to progressively realize ESCR using maximum available domestic resources as well as international cooperation and assistance.

States have not complied with progressive realization obligations. As I write this contribution for the IACD Practice Insights Magazine, we are in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic with health systems struggling to combat the virus and prevent deaths, in particular of the older members of our communities. The fact that health professionals remain true to their oath of saving people even in the most adverse circumstances and endangering their own lives, does not compensate for the huge deficits in underfunded and understaffed National Health Services as a consequence of severe cuts in social spending over the last years.

Coming from a public policy background, to me law only becomes real through

policies and programmes to guarantee human rights and access to justice in case of violation of these rights. This is particularly true for ESCR, often considered vague and non-enforceable.

There are a number of challenges that have a major impact on the enjoyment of rights on the ground. Let me mention just two of them.

First, the unemployment-related challenge. Youth unemployment, long-term unemployment, underemployment, low rates of participation in the labour market and an increasing complexity of non-standard forms of employment - often catalogued as flexible work arrangements that are no more than a hidden informalization of work with all the corresponding gaps in labour regulations and social protection - have pushed the less qualified out of the labour market and considerably increased the number of the working poor.

Secondly, the the lowering of welfare protection. Due to the growing difficulties of the more disadvantaged in accessing goods and services, the on-going debate on the Welfare State, the Welfare Society and the Welfare Mix that has decentralization and privatization as its main features, permeate the entire rights discussion.

Taking the provision of social services as an example, issues of the subsidiarity and complementarity of social services have come very much to the foreground due to the changes in the role of the public sector. It is assumed that these services can, in most cases, be delivered most effectively and efficiently by entities closest to local communities and who are therefore more aware of their needs. If, on the one hand, the State is no longer the sole provider of social services but rather the regulator and the enabler of an overall favourable environment for social development, it also has an increased responsibility for ensuring equitable delivery of and access to quality social services through an effective legal and fiscal framework.

Non-discrimination, participation and accountability are human rights principles that are especially relevant for community development in its various forms. Let me reiterate what we all know but needs to be reaffirmed every time we have an opportunity to do so.

The meaningful participation of rights holders is essential for sound and sustainable community development. Particularly in times of adversity, inclusive democratic processes that reinforce substantive participation and empowerment help people deal with the consequences of powerlessness. Open, participatory and meaningful dialogue with the rights holders is not only a means to ensure their voices are heard and their



At the Conference, conceptual thinking, the human rights-based approach and real life came together.

rights respected, but also an important policy tool that can offer a range of practical measures to prevent conflict and build more cohesive societies.

We all have experienced, as citizens and professionals, the differences between non-participation, token participation and real citizen power. Citizen power drives change and demands accountability of duty bearers at all levels and the need to exercise their decision-making powers in an accessible, transparent and effective manner.

In every community, the problems individuals and families face may be different, but they all have the common root cause of the lack of policy articulation and coordination that allows them to fall through the cracks of sectorial policies. The multiplicity and territorial nature of the causes that lie at the heart of poverty and social exclusion have not yet been fully translated into a rights-based approach that calls for integrated inclusion policies, individual support benefits and services, and local development that brings about economic and social change. Human rights principles and obligations are the best tools to bring about the shift from needs to rights. They are also indispensable for community development as a framework that promotes a collective awareness of social problems and the establishment of a network of partners at the territorial level. It is through these mechanisms that it becomes possible to avoid the risk

of haphazard measures that lack global coherence and systemic intervention that prevent medium- and long-term change.

Participating in the Conference was an enormous privilege. Outreach work with local communities at the beginning of my professional life grounded me in reality and helped shape my understanding of human rights. At the Conference, conceptual thinking, the human rights-based approach and real life came together. They all make relevant specific contributions but only together can they unleash a greater potential for everyday people.

The enthusiasm and creativity put into drafting the very rich and diversified Conference Programme led to one unwanted consequence - I could not attend all the sessions I wanted to!

I was very glad to have been invited to the Young Practitioner's Forum to speak about what excites me in community development and struggles I faced in my career. It was a lively exchange. Being in the company of young professionals eager to learn and ready to challenge is always so gratifying!

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Reflections on WCDC2019 from COVID-19 lockdown!

Margaret Ledwith



“Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the action of human beings.” (Mandela, 2005)

Life is a paradox! Each day we are faced with contradictions that are often so taken-for-granted they become normalised. We don't notice! What am I picturing in my mind as I say this? One vivid image I have is the way people in the rich countries of the West walk past shop doorways made home by people who have no roof, dehumanised and reduced to begging for survival, without stopping to question how that can possibly happen in rich countries. Another is the way that child poverty in rich countries has become accepted, poor children going to school hungry, without dignity and care. In lockdown, I see images of teachers mobilised to feed pupils who do not get free school dinners because schools are shut... At the same time, I see people rediscovering an innate kindness, a soul connection for one another and for the Earth as life slows down and gives us time to reflect. Many people are enjoying less pressure and slower lives. But, underneath this lurks the shadowlands where the most vulnerable are hit hardest by COVID-19 and the government ineptitude to provide protection. This is the political context in the UK less than a year after the world conference in Dundee.

The WCDC in Dundee 2019 brought us together in mutual respect from all over the globe to explore people, place and power. It provided a critical public space for engaging with the thorny issues that

interconnect local lives with bigger political contexts, and which also interlink social justice with environmental justice. In this sense, we are all interconnected with each other and with the planet, but local lives cannot be understood without a critical analysis of neoliberalism and how its ideology has become globalised.

Neoliberalism is a threat to world poverty, and this pandemic shines a light on its inhumanity.

Hayek first came up with this rather strange idea that we should all be governed by the market and that profit is the driving force, more important than people or the planet. He shared this idea with a carefully selected group of men in the little Swiss village of Mont Pelerin in 1947. The popular belief was that society ruled the market, so it was not likely to be easy to convince people of the opposite. That is until he found a champion in Margaret Thatcher, who became prime minister of the UK in 1979 and started to put Hayek's ideas into practice. Before long, Ronald Reagan joined her as a running partner on a mission to sell

this odd idea to the world – and they pulled it off, it globalised! Thatcher and Reagan changed the face of world politics in this extreme right-wing movement.

In the UK, poverty escalated as the rich became richer and the poor poorer, justified by stigmatising the poor as feckless welfare scroungers. Now, after ten years of suffering from vicious 'austerity' measures, the poor have become targeted again. The welfare state was hard won by generations of people fighting for the common good. It brought free education, a free national health service, good quality public housing, social security in times of need and decent employment conditions. Now, it is being siphoned out of public ownership by privatising welfare provision and by selling off these hard-won assets that have benefited all. But, if we explore the idea of the welfare commons, we come up with new ways of seeing this, the commons belong to the people, they are not for sale! (Tyler, 2020; Sayer, 2016). Exploring ideas like this that challenge power was a focus of the world conference. But ideas are no good if they stay in the conference space and don't get taken home and applied in practice.

Now, less than a year after the conference, this coronavirus pandemic is an opportunity for change! We need to pick up the threads of the conference and take ideas for change forward. A rather large crack in neoliberal politics has opened up. First, it is vital to understand the ways in which neoliberal ideology took hold. How did we allow ourselves to agree to such a bad idea? At the conference and there was much debate about the way that the global banking crisis of 2007-8 was used to justify austerity programmes that have been used as a smokescreen for the neoliberal project. In the UK, the extensive public sector provision that looked after the wellbeing of our society was dismantled, destroyed or privatised:

“The programme of austerity that began in 2010 was characterised by the rapid closure of local hospitals and clinics, public

libraries, local museums, post offices, children's nurseries, community and youth centres, day-centres and residential care homes of disabled people and pensioners, and the enclosure of common land, including parks and playing fields. The amount of services, facilities, building and land once held in common by local communities, now sold by cash-strapped local authorities to developers, or simply abandoned to decay, is staggering' (Tyler, 2020:170).

The results have been disastrous. In 2018, Philip Alston, the UN Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, visited communities in the UK and shamed the government saying that the evidence is 'obvious to anyone who opens their eyes to see the immense growth in food banks and the queues waiting outside them, the people sleeping rough in the streets, the growth of homelessness, the sense of deep despair that led even the government to appoint a minister for suicide prevention...' (cited in Ledwith, 2020:6). He accused the government of adopting policies that are damaging the very fabric of society and breaking community roots. This, remember, is the world's fifth-largest economy with levels of child poverty predicted to rise to 47% by 2022. Two years later, in coronavirus lockdown, Alston is shaming governments for shutting down entire countries without making efforts to protect the most vulnerable saying that this yet again prioritises the rich at the expense of the rest (Alston in Booth, 2020). Neoliberalism is a threat to world poverty, and this pandemic shines a light on its inhumanity.

The conference provided a critical space for sharing stories about people's lives in local communities around the world, a reciprocal, trusting space vital for questioning the bigger political contexts that adopt discriminatory policies that reach into communities from places of power. But, as well as critique, we need compelling counternarratives based on values that most people hold dear: community, connection, compassion,

caring, friendship, the values that most people say they want to live by (Barrett and Clothier, 2016). People have an innate need for connection, cooperation and kindness, and this was experienced at the conference, across gender, class, identities, cultures, nation states, ethnicities, abilities, all faiths and none.

I believe that the COVID-19 pandemic offers a crack where the light gets in. That light is shining in the murky crevices of neoliberalism to reveal its inhumanity and its disregard for the planet. My hope is that from the critiques the conference offered we can now concentrate on a counternarrative of belonging. Lockdown has demonstrated that immediate change is easy, it can be achieved overnight. But Bregman describes us as being in a coma. He tells us to 'talk differently, think differently, and... describe the problem differently' (Bregman, 2018:47).

But we cannot dismantle the dominant story without another to replace it, and a counternarrative of belonging starts with the values that are at its heart (Monbiot, 2017). What kind of world do we want to live in? What does it look like? What is a good society? What do people care about? What are our responsibilities to one another? A counternarrative needs to be a story that is inspired by imagination and positive proposals that bring hope and possibility. Imagine how we could end world poverty overnight by giving everyone the right to a universal basic income. This would be cheaper than bureaucratic means-tested welfare, is being trialled around the world, and is found to restore dignity and endeavour – it really works! (Lowrey, 2018). Being kind is a way of life that extends from family to the entire human family. Kindness 'is the "glue" of cooperation' (Ballatt, et al, 2020:16). It is a radical, transformative concept. It is a lens on the world framed by compassion, caring, reciprocity, mutuality, equality... Imagine how the world would be if everyone applied this in practice, at every level from grassroots to policy to parliament.

'If we want to change the world, we need to be unrealistic, unreasonable and impossible' (Bregman, 2018: 263-4).

We have failed to create a coherent, compelling counternarrative, but our collective story is now possible, one that puts people, not profit, at its heart, where the rights of all are central to the whole. Where we live with respect for each other and the planet that provides our home. Now is the time to take the ideas from the conference forward, to tell a different story and change the course of history!

“Sometimes it falls upon a generation to be great. You can be that great generation.” (Mandela, 2005)

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The World is Ill-Divided: Reflections on public history in Dundee

Dr Erin Farley



Come with me on a Victorian history walking tour of buildings built in the 1970s. Here are where there used to be mills, where there used to be houses, pubs, coffee shops, printers. It is now, in Dundee, probably a shopping centre, maybe a hotel in recent years. It's no surprise that Dundee has not traditionally been at the centre of the Scottish walking tour industry. Waves of demolition and re-building, from the 1870s right up until the unauthorised demolition of the listed Halley's Mill last May, have transformed Dundee's cityscape until there seem like few physical landmarks on which to hang our local history.



All history is local history, as the great folklorist Henry Glassie wrote, but we have always focused on the local histories of whoever happens to be the regional elite. History as we know it becomes a greatest hits parade of the powerful, ticking off anniversaries and centenaries. What we remember shapes what we think is possible. As unlucky as we have been with our built heritage as a city, we are lucky, then, in Dundee to have a remarkably strong surviving literary tradition of poems, songs and stories inextricably linked to the lived experience of workers in the city. The voices represented there exist in the same space as official commemorations, the statues and street names, but are outside of the unified story these present. They hint at conversations, performances

History as we know it becomes a greatest hits parade of the powerful, ticking off anniversaries and centenaries. What we remember shapes what we think is possible.

and protests, they talk to and across one another. I am lucky to work closely with many of these in Dundee Libraries' Local History Centre, where the collections include hundreds of local books, pamphlets, broadsides and manuscripts. Other collections, like those at Dundee



University Archives and the Dundee City Archives, also hold material full of these voices.

There is no consensus among voices from an archive. It is a clamour and it often makes no sense, or not the sense I might want it to make. It would be impossible to tell a unified story of Dundee's people, even of, say, Dundee's women or Dundee's working people. And I must be clear that there is no escaping the gatekeeping of history even in these collections. There are still huge gaps even when you dig deeper. Although there is much evidence of a strong, female-led oral tradition around strikes in the nineteenth century – newspapers report their dread at the sound of the women's strike songs –

they did not print the words of them. Not only would the city be familiar with the sound soon enough, it could have been read as encouragement. The voices of Black, Asian and other minority communities in Dundee have also been silenced.

We do not, and will probably never will know the birthplace or real name of the young man known as Joseph Knight. Re-named after his slave ship captain and sold to John Wedderburn of Ballindean who brought him home from Jamaica to the Carse of Gowrie, Knight transformed Scottish history by refusing to accept that he could be legally owned. This led to a landmark case at Edinburgh's Court of Session which found in his favour, only to then slip back out of the historic record. Hopefully he found a life of peace. Wedderburn, of course, has an ornate tomb in Dundee's historic Howff burial ground, marking his family out as those who shaped our past.

Across from the Howff sits the only woman, as a person rather than a collective entity, depicted in a statue in Dundee: Queen Victoria, pride of place in Albert Square, named after her husband. The pair of them still hold pride of place in current redevelopments. At the waterfront, the Victoria & Albert Design Museum overlooks the Tay. On its opening weekend, protestors – objecting to the idea the new museum would save Dundee from itself – bedecked the Albert Square statue with the name 'Famine Queen', and displayed directions to the nearest foodbanks.

Then as now: The world is ill divided

This phrase is now well known from the final chorus of Mary Brooksbank's Jute Mill Song, for many people synonymous with Dundee's industrial past.

Oh dear me, the world's ill-divided

Them that work the hardest are aye wi least provided.

It is a phrase that leaps in and out of nineteenth-century workers' poetry, usually as reported speech. Adam Wilson, who wrote as 'The Factory Muse' and defended women strikers in his poems, quotes it in his song The Brotherhood of Man.

'The world is ill divided' – we have often heard it said –

Where luxury reclines at ease, the poor cry out for bread.

Tho' the land belongs the people toiling, weary, weak, and wan,

There's no universal fellowship or brotherhood of man...

In the Dundee neighbourhood of Lochee, a statue combines the figures of a woman and child millworker with the lyrics of Mary Brooksbank's Jute Mill Song. They fairly mak ye work for yer ten and nine... 'They' are all of the workers, a testament to every woman and child who rose in the dark, lost fingers, coughed up coarse fibres or who just kept going, day after day, to feed and clothe their bairnies, parents, partners, selves. Some days I think there should be a statue of Mary herself, unmistakable, with her fiddle in hand, but then remember her statement – "I have never had any personal ambitions. I have but one: to make

The things they lived are not finished – poverty, racism, colonialism, workplace exploitation, they all haunt our city today, in new buildings as well as old.



my contribution to destroy the capitalist system." Would she want us to focus on her legacy as an individual, or to sing her songs and keep working for change? We are in no position to stand back and celebrate.

But we must keep singing about it. This is why we need to remember people like Mary Brooksbank, like Adam Wilson, like Joseph Knight and the others whose names we do not have. The things they lived are not finished – poverty, racism, colonialism, workplace exploitation, they all haunt our city today, in new buildings as well as old. They cannot be 'heritage' in the way we know it, because their legacies cannot be made safe and observed from a distance. But they are tradition.

History, creativity and activism come together in folklore and tradition. These are all fundamentally shared activities, and this is at odds with how creativity is often portrayed in media, galleries, education. The image of the lone genius, creating something utterly original, is now our go-to image of creation – but our lives, and our places, are shaped by the process of communities remembering and creating anew. Widening the set of voices we allow to be heard from history is necessary, but does not go far enough. We need to adjust the way we see history as part of public life: not something finished and removed but something ongoing, demanding us to face ghosts head on.

Dr Erin Farley is the Local History officer at Dundee Libraries, and she is interested in the power of creative histories and traditional storytelling within the city's communities. She can be contacted at erin.farley@leisureandculturedundee.com

A Victory for Ubuntu: bringing community development practice to the battle for UK visas

Daniel Muia



Securing a visa for some delegates turned out to be... a political engagement which in the end could only be characterised as the triumph of Ubuntu.



Going forward, any WCDC organiser will be best advised to anticipate the likelihood of delegates' visas being denied and the work required to challenge these decisions.

The World Community Development Conference 2019 held from 23rd to 30th June 2019 in Dundee, Scotland was a great success and celebration for community development. Hosting more than 500 delegates from 37 countries and having over 200 contributors sharing their experiences, expertise and joy over a richly diverse programme that contained presentations, workshops, film, forums, cultural contributions, art installations, practice exchanges and walking tours – it was all any worthy conference delegate could ask for.

Nevertheless, while for the majority of delegates all it took attend this great conference was to have their abstracts accepted and then make travel arrangements – waiting for the day of travel and finding themselves warmly welcomed by the “brigades in tangerine” – a few of the delegates, including myself, had some challenges to overcome. Securing a visa for some delegates turned out to be not just a technical process of submitting the requisite documents to UK Immigration and waiting the promised fourteen or so days for verdict – but a political engagement which in the end could only be characterised as the triumph of Ubuntu.

With all due respect and without prejudice to the right of British authorities to control entry into their territory, as a delegate it was heart breaking when my visa application was denied. Having previously travelled to other European countries and submitting more or less similar documents, I had every hope I would have no challenges in securing the UK visa. Eventually I learnt that it was not just I alone whose visa had been denied but that there were several other delegates who have

been refused a visa, including a delegate from Ghana and another from Ethiopia, both of whom I eventually met in Dundee. It took the intervention of Clare MacGillivray, Chair of WCDC2019 as well as the political leadership of local politicians to petition UK authorities to get the initial refusals overturned.

For Kenyans, British visas are processed in Pretoria, South Africa. This meant that once the petition was considered, I was asked to resubmit my passport back to Pretoria. Eventually I was called to pick my passport on Friday 21st June 2019, this time with the Visa granted – two days before the start of the conference. I had to purchase whatever ticket I could get in readiness for travel the following day. I finally arrived in Dundee on the afternoon of Sunday 23rd June 2019 – eventually participating in WCDC2019 and having an experience that was worth all the fight.

Overtaking of the visa refusals took mobilising and calling for Ubuntu – “showing of humanity toward others” – to the few of us who possibly did not look like everyone else or did not come from similar backgrounds as most of the other delegates. I do not know. I can only appreciate the efforts, sacrifice, empathy, and love that were shown by so many people many of whom I will never meet. I will always remain in debt to you all.

The visa refusal and the eventual victory had a further silver lining. That same UK visa eventually enabled me to travel to Ureki, Georgia in September 2019 for the Inclusive Practices Festival alongside Anna Clarke, IACD President and courtesy of Anastasia

Matvievskaya, IACD European Director. As fate would have it, I travelled to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to get a visa, but the Embassy of Georgia in Ethiopia had their visa machine broken down at the time and so the Consular Officer on examining my passport advised I use the UK Visa, which was still valid, to enter Georgia!

Going forward, any WCDC organiser will be best advised to anticipate the likelihood of delegates' visas being denied and the work required to challenge these decisions. One means to do this would be to actively engage with the authorities in advance so that they become partners rather than gatekeepers. This would be a service to Ubuntu and ensure that we continue to bring sound community development practice to our international conferences.

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A Tale of Two Cities: Community Development and Systemic Inequality

Anthony Cook



As a professor at Georgetown University's Law school, located a few short blocks from the nation's capital, I have found community development in Washington D.C. to be a Tale of Two Cities: rich and poor, Black and white, east and west. It's a common tale: two cities, two nations, two worlds divided by growing inequalities in income, wealth, health and quality of life.

Inequality is not distributed equally or randomly. Its distribution is shaped by race, place, age, gender and more. WCDC2019 brought these themes together to create an opportunity for collective reflection on the interrelationships between People, Place and Power. This article reflects on a Justice-as-Ownership approach to community development, one better equipped than conventional models to challenge the manifestation of these interrelationships through systemic inequality in under and disinvested communities.

Understanding Systemic Inequality

Understanding the interrelationships between people, place and power is essential to understanding systemic inequality as an integrated set of laws, policies, business and social practices functioning to extract wealth out of low-income communities to develop the wealth of other communities. Systemic

Inequality is not distributed equally or randomly. Its distribution is shaped by race, place, age, gender and more.

inequality is typically rooted in histories of explicit subjugation of outcast groups. For instance, Black Americans were either enslaved or segregated by law for nearly 350 years in America through an integrated set of laws, policies and customs designed to extract and transfer wealth from their bodies and communities to develop white bodies and communities. It is no accident that the median white family wealth in Washington, DC is 81 times that of median Black family wealth. This is not due to white luck, intelligence or industriousness. It is a designed byproduct of systemic racism.

Poverty is not widely dispersed over Washington D.C.'s modest footprint of 68 square miles and approximately 700,000 residents. It is concentrated in pockets, and along racial lines. Ward 8, for instance, is located east of the Anacostia river – a river dividing the majority Black and disproportionately low-income Wards 7 and 8 from the majority white and disproportionately high-income Wards 1 through 6. Ward 8's population is 89 percent Black, with a poverty rate of 34.2 percent, the highest in the city. It has a median household income of \$34,000. By contrast, Ward 3, the richest in the city, has a population that is 72 percent white, with a poverty rate of only 8 percent and a median household income of \$126,000 – 25 percent higher than the median household income of the metropolitan region.

Systemic inequality exacts its pound of flesh. Life expectancy in Ward 3's Woodley Park is 89.4 years, while only

70.2 years in Ward 8's Historic Anacostia – a nearly twenty-year difference for residents living less than nine miles apart.

Most community practitioners know, after decades of working in and with under and disinvested communities, that rising tides do not lift all boats, and when waves of economic growth crash back to shore, vulnerable communities are hit hardest. Most know neo-liberal tax incentives to the rich seldom trickle down to the poor, and capacity-building at the neighborhood level is no substitute for comprehensive and sustained national policies to redistribute wealth, income and opportunity to correct histories of disinvestment through systemic racism and other systemic inequalities.

A Justice-As-Ownership Model of Community Development

WCDC2019 did a much better job than most conferences in addressing how community development work can disrupt the relationship between people, place and power to build alternative visions of community based on equality, empathy and human flourishing. Justice-as-ownership builds on participatory, asset and strengths-based approaches to community development, expanding them to more directly address systemic inequality. Our practice and conferences should do the same. The approach has several distinguishing features. First, it embraces the five core principles of Good Practice established by the oldest community development organization in America, the Community Development

Society (CDS), but it amends the second principle to read as follows (changes highlighted):

“Engage community members in learning about and understanding **the impact of systemic inequalities on their communities, and** the economic, social, environmental, political, psychological, and other impacts associated with alternative courses of action.”

...rising tides do not lift all boats, and when waves of economic growth crash back to shore, vulnerable communities are hit hardest.

First, given the discussion of systemic inequality above, it is essential we develop the critical capacity to integrate lessons from history into our practice. Subordination patterns reproducing systemic inequalities take on different forms in different eras. The added language signals the need to develop communities as intentional spaces to reverse the under and disinvestment histories at the core of inequalities in low-income communities.

Second, under and disinvested communities must create a relationship to capitalism that better positions them to build community wealth and resist extractive practices that further marginalize and subordinate them.

Justice-as-ownership urges the development and proliferation of community cooperatives owned by workers, producers, member-consumers or housing residents in low-income communities. The core values of cooperatives are more aligned with the egalitarian and capacity-building orientation of a participatory, asset and strengths-based community development. Justice-as-ownership contends that local residents should not only own the intangible processes of planning and deliberation but also the tangible assets of the cooperative enterprises designed to create community wealth.

The cooperative is the form of business enterprise most consistent with the core principles of community development, particularly a justice-as-ownership model. Cooperatives are democratically operated and redirect profits back to workers and communities, rather than extract them through exorbitant executive compensation, share dividends and buybacks, and a banking and finance system building wealth for other communities. Cooperatives tend to displace fewer workers in a down market, and they register higher worker satisfaction and civic engagement rates compared to workers in conventional businesses. Typically, cooperatives train and employ low income residents at higher rates, provide them more sustainable incomes and build launchpads for private entrepreneurs who tend to stay in low income communities longer.

The third and final distinguishing characteristic of the model focuses on innovative ways to finance cooperatives, nonprofits, social enterprises and other initiatives needed in sustainable communities. Under and disinvested communities are precisely that – under and disinvested, for all the reasons discussed earlier. Presently, the funding for community development work is too dependent on the shifting priorities of foundations and policy priorities of local and federal governments. Nonprofits and community development corporations compete intensely over limited and insufficient funding. This competition Balkanises community development and makes competitors of those who should be collaborators in an all-hands-on-deck war against poverty and systemic inequality.

Dr. King called for a guaranteed basic income as the chief vehicle for ending poverty. A justice-as-ownership model supports some version of a guaranteed income, but is mindful that the problem of systemic inequality is not merely a problem of unequal income. Guaranteed Basic Incomes to low-income populations may still end up in bank accounts outside the community if there are no infrastructures to capture and recycle that income in a community wealth-building system.

If we value place-based community development, it is important to figure out how to fund enterprises and initiatives operating in under and disinvested communities that train and employ low-income residents. One possibility is to provide individuals and businesses tax deductions and/or credits for contributing to capital funds that finance the land acquisition, construction and startup costs of cooperatives operating in qualified low-income communities and employing qualified low-income residents. Another approach might create a federal programme to insure long-term loans to cooperatives – with higher than conventional government bond rates of return. This would capitalize a national cooperative loan fund, perhaps administered by a locally operated version of the already existing

National Cooperative Bank. Funds would be loaned to qualifying cooperatives on a long term, low interest basis, repaid out of revenues generated from the cooperative's business.

Under both the tax incentives and cooperative bank approaches, the funding intermediaries would be organized as democratically accountable member cooperatives composed of the cooperatives they fund. The intermediary



The realization of justice-as-ownership requires a community development practice that sees itself as a movement and not merely a collection of isolated projects.

cooperatives would vet, fund, and provide technical assistance to qualifying cooperatives. Whatever approach is ultimately taken, it should be supplemented with a guaranteed income targeted to lift those in poverty out of poverty. A portion of that guaranteed income might be allocated in the form of digital cooperative (co-op) dollars, a digital currency that can only be used to

purchase goods and services from qualifying cooperatives. Cooperatives would compete for those co-op dollars, as well as traditional dollars in the marketplace.

Conclusion

WCDC2019 was an excellent point of departure for understanding the power of people to reclaim place as home for human flourishing. But more is required.

The justice-as-ownership vision requires us to explicitly challenge the extractive colonial and neo-colonial practices in under and disinvested communities. Without this, we cannot fully appreciate the limits imposed on our work as community practitioners and what is needed to disrupt and remake those limits.

The realisation of justice-as-ownership requires a level of mobilisation at the community level that aligns with other community mobilisations across cities, regions and nations – a national union of cooperatives. It requires a community development practice that sees itself as a movement and not merely a collection of isolated projects. This is the only way a Tale of Two Cities – rich and poor, Black and white, east and west – can have a different ending than the all too familiar one we see repeatedly lived out in under and disinvested communities around the nation.

While this vision may seem idealistic; community development is idealistic.

We are architects and builders, after all, struggling to see things not as they are, but as they might be. In the words of the poet Robert Browning: our reach should always exceed our grasp, Or what's a heaven for?

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WCDC2019 did a better job than most conferences in addressing how community development work can disrupt the relationship between people, place and power to build alternative visions of community based on equality, empathy and human flourishing.





Awakening to Love and Soul in Community Development

Rosalind Harris and Ron Hustedde



The tension is palpable as we sit around the table in this partially hidden section of this struggling, multicultural-centered bookstore in the heart of historically disenfranchised Lexington, Kentucky. The “we” sitting around the table are black, brown and white community residents who have been working to provide fresh produce to this fresh-food insecure part of Lexington. Also present are white members of the non-profit that initiated the fresh food movement. As conflict mediators, we are also there because we have worked with this fresh food movement from its beginnings and meshed as fresh-food share-holders, volunteers and, when asked, as leadership coaches and neutral facilitators.

We relish those who have inspired us: Paulo Friere, Fals Bardo, Rosa Parks, Fannie Lou Hamer and others. We struggle with neoliberalism’s aggressive dismantling and disfiguring of communities by negotiating Lao Tzu’s wisdom path:

Go to the people. Live with them. Love them. Work with them. Learn from them. Start from where they are. Build on what they have.

**When the work is done
The people will say
“We have done it ourselves”**

This is not the fantastical, seemingly unburdened, transactional love modernity churns. It is the love reflected in blood memory that holds healing-ancestral-memory-energies that affirm alternative forms of community and the embrace of tender mercies, rituals and conviviality even in the face of egregious forms of denial and erasure.

The agreements guiding this divisive meeting have been set, and in preparation for the mediation we’ve met separately with community residents and non-profit members to get a better

understanding of their respective concerns. In preparing for these meetings the two of us have also talked deeply, as we have over the years, about the heart teachings from our respective spiritual/faith traditions that we have often kept hidden in the closets of our hearts. We, like many community development practitioners, have lived bifurcated lives because our secular institutions don’t seem to value our alternative epistemologies. However, increasingly the lifeworld – joy, pain, confusion and loss has taken us more profoundly into our own hearts through the journeys we make in communion with our community partners. They have helped us through our often-muddled mutual brokenness to trust our own deepest experience as wounded healers. Using the energies liberated from such a process has helped us both in healing the divide within and without.

This is so because a shared pain is no longer paralyzing but mobilizing, When understood as a way to liberation. When we become aware that

We do not have to escape our pains, but that we can mobilize them into a common search for life, those very pains are transformed from expressions of despair into signs of hope. (Henri Nouwen, 1979:93)

As the mediation proceeds, deep feelings emerge from community members about the non-profit’s failure to deliver on agreed upon plans for the community itself to run the markets. Implementing this plan would mean that community members would not only facilitate the distribution of fresh produce, but develop self-sustaining processes and skill sets for strengthening the community’s capacity to wrestle with the myriad consequences of historical-structural inequalities.

Members of the non-profit maintain that community members are still not ready to take on the responsibilities as planned, even though it has been five years. This resonates for us in the vibrant-incisive language of Black Geographies as confusions on the part of the non-profit that “naturalize ... poor and black agony and distress” (McKittrick and Woods, 2007:2). We reflect, within ourselves, that these confusions/misunderstandings/implicit biases work to deny the intended liberatory journey of the community. However, we resolve to stay neutral, steady and silent. Listening, as the silence deepens, for unexpressed fears, pain, confusion, exhaustion, clarity, resolution. We have been in this place of pulsing-storied silence often. We experience this within ourselves, and within community circles such as this.

Somewhere we know that without silence words lose their meaning. That without listening speaking no longer heals. (Henri Nouwen, 2010:21)

As broken and confused as this process may feel to you, we offer it as an experience, one of many, that we have had with the awakening of love and soul in community. The members of the community that circled at the bookstore showed up knowing that most, if not all

of us were coming as wounded souls. But, nevertheless, we showed up for each other. Some of us were actually heart-broken. Some of us had hearts that were broken-open. Broken-open meaning so processed by the experience of pain that understanding, wisdom and healing were already transforming us. The hidden wholeness in our communities that allows for this kind of coming together and processing we call love. This is not the fantastical, seemingly unburdened, transactional love modernity churns. It is the love reflected in blood memory that holds healing-ancestral-memory-energies that affirm alternative forms of community and the embrace of tender mercies, rituals and conviviality even in the face of egregious forms of denial and erasure. It is the open, unconditioned space for the magical confluence of vulnerability, pathos, generativity and grace. It awakens especially during times of struggle and unease because this is the work that we are to be about as humans. And it asks during these times that we place our fearful hearts and minds within its embrace.

Through this work it became clear to us that we cannot remain silent about the immanence of love and soul in community.

We repeatedly see how love and soul dance together as unabashed partners within the invisible web of relationship that holds us all and reflects our deep humanity back to each other as we negotiate our respective paths. Soul invites us moment to moment to an awareness of our vastness, our basic goodness, our ability to think and to grow beyond dualities as we hold these dualities in tension in doing so (Moore, 1995).

Our awareness of this invisible web, and our work towards awakening this awareness for our work in community is captured beautifully by Patricia Wilson’s

(2019) vibrant concept called ensemble awareness. She intuits this as the essence of choral singing. Connecting this with work in community, Wilson views our deepest work as attuning to an awareness of the overall patterns and rhythms within community and as this awareness expands and deepens so does our harmonizing “to foster the emergent potential of the community” (p. 1.) During the mediation, through questions and stories shared, we all became more aware of the depth of love and kindness that we had for community beneath the tensions and conflicts. This awareness carried us through the storms of subsequent mediations and negotiations around power, place and agency.

Through this work it became clear to us that we cannot remain silent about the immanence of love and soul in community. They imbue the essence of patterns and rhythms in community. As wounded healers attuning to this awareness, it is time to more fully awaken to love and soul in community development.

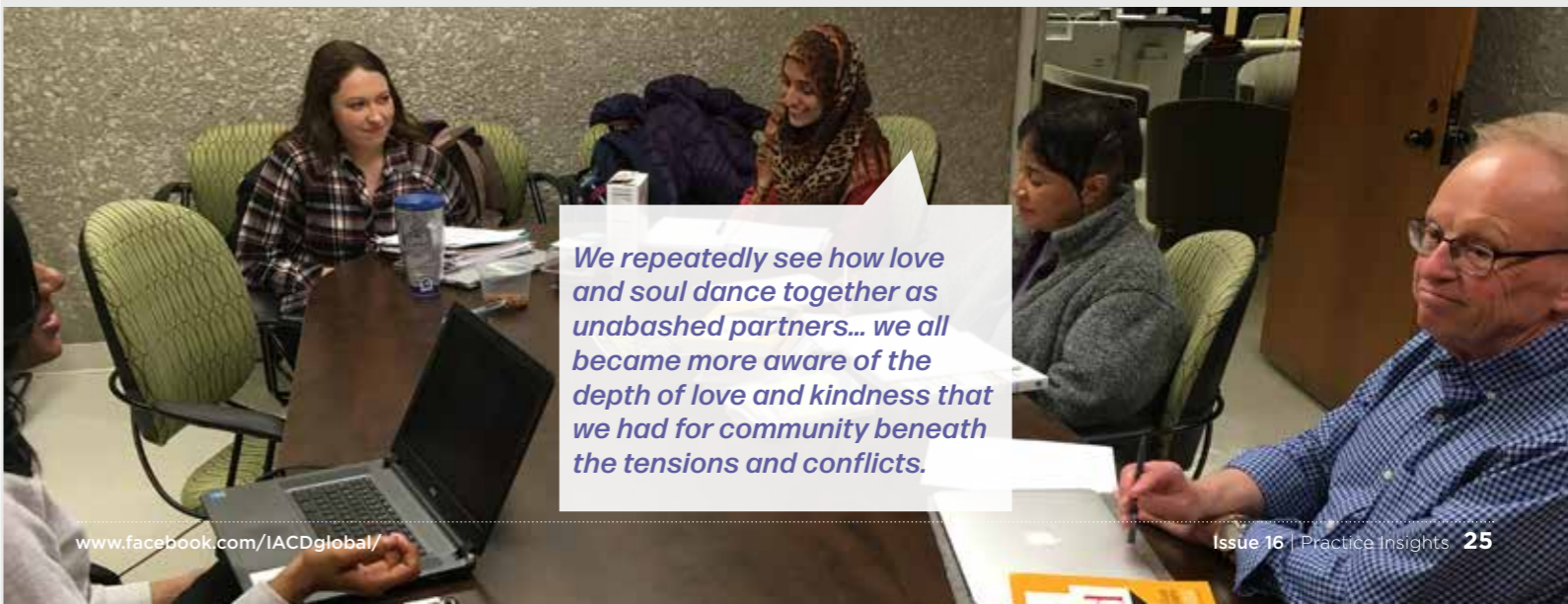
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We repeatedly see how love and soul dance together as unabashed partners... we all became more aware of the depth of love and kindness that we had for community beneath the tensions and conflicts.



Storytelling around the wood fire stove of a mobile 'tiny house': experiencing the civic sanctuary of the Welcome Hut

Christian H Hanser



A tiny hut at a major event

During WCDC 2019, the campus of the University of Dundee hosted the Welcome Hut, a mobile encounter space for storytelling and daydreaming. In a packed conference venue where a lot of the inspiration circulated indoors, this outdoor extension to the event was deliberately not placed in front of the main entrance. It was necessary to go through the back entrance to notice the presence of the shepherd's hut. The Welcome Hut pop-up site usually opts for making a discreet contribution to a local public setting. The wooden caravan can be installed in parks, in front of public libraries, at art festivals, rural markets or with long-term urban regeneration projects. The unusual presence of the wooden cabin with its smell of the wood fire creates a very visible disruption, but its objective is not to be a short-lived curiosity. The aim of this initiative is to provide a space for silent reflection, introvert conviviality and decelerated socialising. As a small-scale experimental format, civic engagement can be meaningful irrespective of the

number of participants. While the itinerant mode of functioning implies to travel across countries, sectors and institutional landscapes, the actual activity zooms in on its visitors' intrinsic hopes and dreams.

An experiential 'dream tank' in a world of busy think tanks

The mobile caravan can be invited by local organisations to offer a temporary gesture of hospitality in neighbourhoods where anonymity, isolation or divisions define the routines of the public sphere. The setting of the hut invites people to interact through improvisation with many playful, multisensory artefacts and makes reference to the private sphere. Installed in outdoor locations beyond institutional walls, the cosy, protective walls of the tiny house provide an intimate hideout. A visitor can sit down in the hut, as if it was a miniature of their own living room. The hut is less than 6 square metres in size and can shelter up to 10 visitors at the same time. A small, spontaneously composed group of people can quickly gather. They can be strangers sitting together

It celebrates the arts of retreating towards society, not withdrawing away from the world.

for the first time. In this public hideaway, community action is first and foremost co-constructed by the visitors themselves and not by a predefined change agenda. More importantly, transformation, empowerment and societal change are not thought out through cognitive efforts. No think tanks have to provide expert knowledge. Future narratives for the local neighbourhood, for the country or the planet move beyond analysis, are narrated in this 'dream tank' shed. Intrinsic imagination as well as collective storytelling practice are combined for more-than-cognitive forms of knowing and being in the world.

A bubble beyond walls

By entering into an outdoor refuge, participants are invited into a 'bubble' beyond walls. The shepherd's hut is not an individualistic dungeon, but an introspective gateway. It celebrates the arts of retreating towards society, not withdrawing away from the world. In community development, the largely collective narratives around social justice could also embrace those ecosystems that are enabling healthy forms of retreat. Practitioners can be more explicitly invited to perceive shelter, retreat and sanctuary beyond value judgments and to acknowledge introvert hubs as forms of civic action rather than suspicious phenomena allegedly void of societal concerns. Historically, community development seeks to propose alternatives to tendencies of withdrawal and individualism. This



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Silence speaks – the setting of a civic sanctuary

narrative, if pushed to extremes, can run the risk to portray society to be 'cured' from individualism. Sometimes fuelled by this anti-individualism, commercial and consumerist self-care sells a vision of society where salvation can be found in the privatised domains of neoliberalism. The success of private products also reveals how community development does not necessarily reach those who are 'passively' installed at home in consumerism by polarising and even playing the civic out against the self-centred, individual longing. A non-consumerist form of self-care that is connected to the world would provide an activist stance and at the same time allow more agency through breathing spaces in what is frequently experienced

by individuals as an uninviting, destabilising and incoherent world.

Existential and psychosocial crises are not new in 2020, but they have been aggravated and revealed more explicitly in recent months due to Covid-19. One element frequently discussed in the media in this context is the unequally distributed right to retreat in contemporary society. In an extreme situation such as the large-scale lockdown, not every individual, family and community could preserve a physical safe space, a form of sanctuary. Massive gaps in the availability and provision of safe space exist between those who can live a long-term confinement in inspiring solitude and those whose public access to already scarce occasions of personal retreat (in parks, playgrounds, public squares etc.) have been radically suspended.

There is also a massive imbalance in the provision of existential sanctuary, which is a less tangible yet crucial dimension for meaningful belonging beyond the own private sphere: existential sanctuary relates to the possibility of having a personal space where one can continue to carve out the seeds of personal meaning in the face of overwhelming threat. Many digitally literate individuals turn to Twitter, Zoom, or

move personal coaching sessions online to explore the deeper meaning of the crisis. Others simply do not have the space to be such pioneers, as they neither have inspirational interactions with the outside world nor personal space for internal, intrapersonal dialogues. Since 2010, the Welcome Hut project has been installing community hubs as internal-external gateways which allow in-groups and invisible out-groups to come together in an open access format. The bubble becomes a 'safe space hub'.

Listening to the silences of disengagement

More important than banning the private dimension from activist discourses is the capacity to listen to people with life trajectories that might not have given them sufficient reasons to 'become engaged'. In the hut, no one is pushed to open up. This in turn inspires quite a few visitors not to stay closed for very long. Withdrawal tendencies are symptoms of deeper structural forms of non-belonging. Failing to give space for singular and complex life worlds can lead to even more individualistic 'hiding' into one's own flat. Caution is necessary when we classify social participation along binary lines of 'active' or

In the hut, no one is pushed to open up. This in turn inspires quite a few visitors not to stay closed for very long. Withdrawal tendencies are symptoms of deeper structural forms of non-belonging.

'passive' presence. The mobile shepherd's hut is a vagabond community initiative which listens but does not belong or judge. Civic engagement, as seen from the lens of the hut, starts with the arts of listening, not with the tools of speaking or making people speak. This is a deeply activist stance: one that listens to the silences of disengagement rather than screaming ideologies of the 'right' path to activism. The hut project is guided by asking the following questions:

- What would motivate a person to go to a community meeting despite having a tendency to avoid socialising in this particular setting?
- How would a socially anxious, highly sensitive, autistic or introverted person find a safe haven within an overstimulating, over-crowded community event designed by extroverts?
- Which stakeholders and partners are willing to learn the languages of silence, waiting and wandering rather than impose pre-established narratives of impact and spectacular change?

Trust and humility

Slowly building up the Welcome Hut project has taught me how to deal with my own privileged positions of belonging and the need to unlearn my own codes and comforts of these reassuring, yet potentially exclusionary

A safe hideout for sheltered engagement

Hierarchies of values, languages and literacies need to be constantly challenged in order to learn to listen rather than preach to the converted.

networks. If activism (as defined by the in-group of activist networks) was the dominant vocabulary, participants without previously acquired activist literacy might feel disconnected and prefer their private television. If academic literacy (as defined by the peer-supported jargon of researcher-activists) was the 'mother tongue' of the Welcome Hut, it would only take about 5 minutes until half of the hut visitors will walk out, and the other half start an engaged but also selective, intellectualised debate. Hierarchies of values, languages and literacies need to be constantly challenged in order to learn to listen rather than preach to the converted. The hut project works at its best when members of vocal groups of society can sit with more silenced 'others' inside the small storytelling venue and realise that they need to tune down their own volume in order to perceive the ways the others struggle to make meaning in their own lives. This is a form of experiential learning advancing epistemic humility.

The languages and stories that will emerge in the hut are never defined in advance. When individuals disappear into the hut, they disappear from the radar of public visibility and activist accountability. The challenge: to trust that people will find their own useful ways of making sense of an unoccupied, unaudited, unclaimed and unclaimable utopian space. This trust is the scarce resource that one can harvest when roaming freely in-between the polarised spheres of publicised citizen engagement and the many invisible trajectories of withdrawal.

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Facilitation for Empowerment and Social Transformation (FEST):

A case of process-led approach to community development in Nepal

Ammar Bahadur Air



Introduction

The 2019 World Community Development Conference - with its focus on People, Place and Power - illuminated the different traditions and approaches to community development, and importantly allowed us to show-case an endogenous approach emergent from Nepal: Facilitation for Empowerment and Social Transformation (FEST). FEST is a new innovation built on the Freirean tradition of Community Development work and popular education, along with the principles of Carl Rogers' Person-Centred Approach, which has been developed and implemented by our

organisation, Sahakarmi Samaj, in Western Nepal. The Conference was particularly significant in broadening our horizons and our perspectives on the unique work that we are doing to facilitate the empowerment and transformation of the marginalized communities. It also provided us with the opportunity to be linked with international forums and organizations that work in the different sections of the world, which foster a culture of exchanging international learning. We felt a part of an international community committed to best development practices in the world

and were encouraged that the FEST approach is one of the practices that can contribute to participatory people-led development.

Background

The modernization approach to development has failed to minimize the division between the 'haves' and 'have nots'. A just, secure, sustainable and peaceful world is possible only when the people lead their development through their own analysis of the situation and take an active role and participate in the process to influence the overall development outcomes. The approach



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has been developed and proven by application in Nepal since the early 1990s. There was a concern that rather than offering them sustainable solutions, the dominant development approach in Nepal may be contributing to the problems that they faced. It was recognised that the top-down approach to development where the agenda for change was controlled by seemingly all-powerful donors and technocrats had undermined marginalised people's confidence and motivation to seek change on their own behalf. This left them in passive dependency on somewhat unpredictable external actors. It also left them blind to the simple fact that many development challenges can only be successfully addressed through collaboratively planned action at the local level.

The principal innovation of FEST was to educate and develop skilled group facilitators, and then deploy them to catalyse and support locally led development through a carefully constructed process of change.

This approach, termed as 'FEST', was originally developed by the Surkhet Project Awareness Raising Cycle (SPARC) in Western Nepal starting in 1992, and then it was taken forward by former members of SPARC who established the NGO Sahakarmi Samaj (www.sahakarmisamaj.org) in 1997. FEST draws on non-directive, empowerment-focused methods that aim to put people in the driving seat of their development, without providing a blueprint to be directly replicated. Instead, it suggests a

range of understandings, values, and principles that must be respected during programme design and implementation to bring about empowerment of the marginalized and a wider transformation in society. *The principal innovation of FEST was to educate and develop skilled group facilitators, and then deploy them to catalyse and support locally led development through a carefully constructed process of change.*

Overview of the FEST approach:

1. Issue identification through listening and observation: This step takes 6 months. The field staff (a team of community educators – CE) reside in each target area where they conduct meetings with local government authorities for the programme's process introduction and to secure official invitations from local levels. They conduct Community Screening Process meetings in different parts of each ward of the selected targeted areas and use participatory exercises to identify the most marginalized communities with the realistic reasons for them being most marginalized. Based on information collected, the team reflects on and analyses the situation of the respective communities and identifies the key issues. Simultaneously, based on the information collected during this first stage, they select possible marginalised communities to work with.

Then the team conducts visits to every household in the selected communities to establish contact; they explain the aims of the organisation and document the details of these visits including identifying factors and critical issues affecting marginalized individual families. Familiarizing themselves in this way with the locality and its people, they perform a social analysis to identify the most marginalized communities or groups. Further visits are then made to these

marginalized communities/groups to strengthen the connection and build rapport. Their actual interests and concerns (known, in Freirean terms, as 'generative themes') are identified using the 'listening survey' technique.

2. Community group formation:

This step takes 2-3 months, and brings together community members in one forum to provide encouragement and reassurance to the people who are the most marginalized. During this stage, the Community Educators present the programme approach and ask the community members for their full participation over the course of the programme. This is followed by the use of participatory tools to facilitate discussion on group concept, community vision, seasonal calendar, development trend analysis of past years, and resource analysis over a period of 6-7 meetings. It is only at this point that the Community Educators facilitate the group to develop a 'group contract', which includes the basic guidelines for effective group interaction and behaviour, and then they provide ongoing feedback to the group on behaviour, with reference to the contract.

3. A cycle of planning and action:

Community Educators conduct weekly meetings in the selected community, where they address different concerns (generative themes) using a problem-posing tool known as a 'code' (It may be a play, mime, role-play, picture, photo, or anything which brings out only the problem into sharp focus), without providing any solutions. This is conducted as following steps described by Paulo Freire:

1. **Description of the code (What did you see? What happened then....?)**
2. **First analysis (Why do you think he/she behaved in that way?)**
3. **Real life (Does that ever happen here?)**



Do you have any experience of this?)

4. Related problems (What happened to his family...? How does that affect the community?)

5. Root causes (Yes,... but why?... I see, but why? ... But why does that happen?)

6. Action (What can we do about it? How could we change that ?)

Through the entire process, group members are encouraged to think about and analyse the problem and its possible solutions. This stage is of variable duration, depending on the nature of the problem to be addressed. In the first instance, Community Educators encourage groups to address a small-scale problem, using only locally available skills and resources. More ambitious projects may be initiated once the group is familiar and confident with the process, although the emphasis remains throughout on the creative utilisation of local skills and resources.

Initially, the group decides on a goal for its action, and Community Educators help them out using 'force-field analysis' if the problem to be addressed is very complex or abstract. Strategies are then identified by 'brainstorming' and group discussion. Lack of information, skills or resources in the community can be recognised at this stage where the root problem is redefined and a new goal is set to solve the identified problem. They then help the group to enhance knowledge through use of appropriate participatory research methods.

Once they are skilled, Community Educators help the group to determine objectives in relation to its chosen strategy. As many group members are illiterate, pictures are generally used to represent the group's objectives. They help the group to formulate an action plan and develop a strategy to be carried out. Pictures or agreed symbols are used to represent tasks on the group action plan and incorporate 'monitoring' as its most important tool.

Later on, Community Educators help the group members to conduct an evaluation, reflecting on the outcome of their actions and drawing out the lessons



learned from their experience. Depending on the outcome, group members may decide to define a new goal in relation to the unresolved problem or to tackle a completely different problem. The action and reflection cycle goes on as a regular schedule of community. Once they have completed at least four action plans using their own local resources, the Community Educators will ask the group if they require external resources to fulfil their needs. The Community Educator then facilitates them to review their demands and provides a list of external resources that they can use to respond to their identified need.

4. The development of self-managed organisations and networks:

A series of trainings that focuses on leadership, management, facilitation, institutional, participation, planning, networking, decision making, resource acquisition and liaison with external agencies are then offered to help each group to develop its internal capacity to be able to operate effectively in the absence of an external facilitator.

FEST process also includes facilitating workshops for local governments to raise awareness amongst them regarding marginality, injustice, good governance and democratic accountability. Alongside this, interactive meetings between local government and the groups, known at this stage as Community Based Organisations, are conducted to carry out the effective service delivery process. At the end of the fourth year, the field team conduct a participatory assessment of the capacity of each Community Based Organisation before exiting from the field. After this, regular capacity assessments through participatory self-assessment tools continue to be undertaken to monitor progress.

Following the exit of the field team, regular coaching and feedback is provided to the Community Based Organisations which enables the creation of linkages and opportunity with wider audiences for regular learning and sharing. The formation of a national level federation, or network, then gives an avenue for the representatives of



Community Based Organisations to share and learn with like-minded groups and organisations.

Through these Community Based Organisations and networks, marginalized communities have been able to bring about sustained significant changes, drawing appropriately on local and external resources and partnering effectively with Nepal's new local and regional government institutions.

FEST has shown that skilled facilitation of a clear change process can put people in the driving seat of their development.

Conclusion

Empowerment is a powerful concept within development discourse. However, the tendency of development to disempower is often inadequately recognised and the need for a different approach is therefore often inadequately acknowledged. FEST has shown that skilled facilitation of a clear change process can put people in the driving seat of their development and it is for that reason that we want it to be more widely understood. The 2019 WDC Conference was an important step for us in doing this.

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A generative theme is issue, which strongly people feel and is willing to take some action about.

Code is a term used for problem reflection on community generative themes to interact towards problem solving among the group members

Kurt Lewin, Force Field Analysis - https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED_06.htm



Community Development Workshop: Native Lands, Native People, Native Rights

Participatory practice in the intersections of community strategic planning, data sovereignty, and cultural identity in Taos

Holly Scheib



In the workshop, Native Lands, Native People, Native Rights: Participatory practice in the intersections of community strategic planning, data sovereignty, and cultural identity in Taos Pueblo, 20 attendees participated in an illustration of the exercises undertaken in a dialogic relationship-building practice with the Taos Pueblo Native American community. The goals of this workshop were twofold: to demonstrate an aspect of the practice and to gain the perspective of community development professionals and academics as the Taos Pueblo tribe establishes best practices between outside partners and First Nation communities. Taos Pueblo village, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is the oldest continuously inhabited homestead in North America.

This workshop engaged participants in collaborative exercises that explore the nature of relationships between external entities (community workers, researchers, program partners, etc.) and First Nation communities. For community development support, New Mexico indigenous communities engage with external agencies that practice hierarchical models of implementation, with rather limited success. In direct reaction to that history, the techniques used in this data-gathering process allow for locally-led innovation, enhancing capacity in the mechanics of assessment and needs prioritization, as well



Building capacity of participants in the steps of priority planning and strategic development is an explicit goal in this work.

as program development, implementation, and evaluation. Building capacity of participants in the steps of priority planning and strategic development is an explicit goal in this work. This goal shapes the manner in which data gathering and analysis techniques are chosen and conducted.

The background of the project partnership that led to this data-gathering process was shared in a video created by Taos Pueblo leadership specifically for the WCDC audience: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kpBdV4N3OI>. In the video, Taos Pueblo leaders describe how external forces have created a need for long-term planning and how these processes work in contrast to the yearly traditional systems used by the tribe for millennia. Tribal leaders knew they needed data to inform this long-term planning, and they wanted to gather it in a way that is meaningful and productive within their tribal systems. They describe seeking technical support in the planning on four priorities: education, housing, economic development, and community health. They reached out to Dr. Holly Scheib of Sage Consulting (a research and evaluation organization) and Po Chen of Youth Heartline (a child protection organization), who work together with Native communities to build culturally appropriate policies and programs. This partnership proved quite fruitful.

The techniques showcased in this workshop were integrated into the Tribal

Priority Strategic Planning Process, where engagement with tribal leadership shaped each step to local realities, forming a community development process unique to Taos Pueblo. The enthusiasm from participants in these techniques grew the priority process into a long-term partnership. Ultimately, the outcomes of the priority process are providing the foundation for increased data sovereignty for the tribe. This data sovereignty process aims to utilize the sciences of Sage Consulting to build leadership continuity, data-driven programming, and comprehensive data assessment and analysis through a tribally-run census.

For this workshop, very basic techniques from the process were introduced to participants with the goal of exploring a specific question. Members of Taos Pueblo First Nation Peoples posed this question to WCDC attendees: "What are the ideal outcomes that result from relationships between research entities and First Nation communities?" Participants self-divided into groups, were supplied with verbal and written instructions, and were supported by facilitators through each step.

Due to time constraints, only three types of exercises – collective drawing, word association, and collective storytelling – were modeled. In the full community science context of this work, these techniques are positioned with other



dialogic exercises and structured analysis within established themes. Iterative data analytic processes allow for those themes to be collectively constructed and deconstructed while building individual and group skills. Repetitive layering of these exercises facilitates exploration of the depth and nuance of sociopolitical, cultural, structural contexts and how they influence the themes from the perspective of the individual and/or the community (for examples of this, see Lykes & Scheib, 2015).

Each of the chosen exercises were completed, although they had to be completed with some time pressure. A normal workshop experience would be much longer, with opportunities for deeper exploration and analysis of the topics that emerge from the research question. This process can be used repeatedly to draw important data from a sample of participants, much like a survey can, but with added steps of group analysis, categorization, and prioritization.

The three exercises were conducted in a layering fashion where groups traded generated data with each other and were then asked to perform analytic tasks on that data. These analytic tasks identified core values most relevant to the research question, and then combined those values in narrative form to come up with a statement to answer the question. Upon completion of these narrative "Collective Stories," each group presented the stories to each other. The following are the Collective Stories generated in this process in response to the research question: "What are the ideal outcomes that result from relationships between research entities and First Nation communities?"

Collective Response 1:

Everyone is listened to and has a contribution to make through the opportunity to listen and communicate, by supporting mechanisms to identify and realize dreams and aspirations.

Collective Response 2:

Work to change the balance of power, in measurable steps with informed data as the new process to be adopted.

Collective Response 3:

The ideal outcome is a process of listening and hearing each other in a continuous cycle of exchange and dialogue, through an embedded process that leads to a flow and transfer of energy and power without an overpowering outer influence, ultimately leading to enlightenment and indigenous will.

Collective Response 4:

The drawing shows a family-centered relationship with a research entity in a kind and compassionate environment with trust and respect that leads to a pathway of enlightenment and empowerment.

Collective Response 5:

Ideal Outcomes:

- Balanced relationships built on trust
- Equal and meaningful dialogue
- Increased clarity for community researchers
- Acknowledgment of past wrongs and increased sense of justice

After presenting, participants were eager to discuss their impressions of the work, which included participant anxiety in the process of drawing, uncertainty in committing both drawing and words to a page, and then comfort and validation in the shared discoveries within and across groups. Once completed, the impact and potential for this process became clear to participants. Participants recognized the value of the process in eliciting their own individual and collective responses as data, as well as the opportunity to interpret the work collectively. End of session conversations included discussion of how this process links to formalized data collection and analysis (surveys and researcher-focused analysis), instead opening up the process and building capacity in doing so. With more time, these statements could be further refined through similar exercises – themes could be identified and separately explored, a singular mission defined, or other areas explored for clarification and definition. After working through this process, participants could see how these types of exercises may be building blocks to larger data gathering and analysis.

It is possible to build a science of community that works in conjunction with traditional practices, is respectful of local culture, and identifies and utilizes local knowledge and strengths.

This methodology is not only appropriate, but perhaps essential in indigenous communities, as it recognizes that science and data are not limited to formal, Western, interpretations. The humility of researchers, the willingness for outsiders to know themselves and operate with great self-reflection, and the challenging of who is an "expert" are essential to this process. It is possible to build a science of community that works in conjunction with traditional practices, is respectful of local culture, and identifies and utilizes local knowledge and strengths. The importance of allowing communities to self-identify themes, self-generate data, and self-analyze that data speaks to a larger conceptual argument for community-led



data sovereignty – processes by which communities can self-organize to produce and control the knowledge generated to support their goals. The methods in this workshop illustrated the use of science in a manner that is deliberately and explicitly anti-colonial, building participants' "critical bifocality," a term used by Weis and Fine (2012) to define a subject having both a critical stance on social systems and structures that impact their lives while also participating in and resisting those systems of marginalization, exclusion, and/or privilege. In these ways, this workshop gave insight into how partners may better reflect local needs within communities where historical legacies of oppression still influence daily life.

Photos from the process, including a group photo taken for the purposes of sharing it with Taos Pueblo, are included in this publication. The group responses and photos were shared with tribal leadership in July 2019. The comments are being included in considerations for a tribal standard for external partnership.

Holly Scheib, PhD MPH MSW, has more than two decades of experience in public health, social work, human rights, development, disaster, and advocacy. Specializing in transformative practices that adapt scientific methodologies to fit the needs of communities, her work has reached more than 40 organizations across 5 continents. Dr Scheib is President of Sage Consulting, Incorporated, and can be contacted at holly@sagecons.com

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The Factors Influencing Power and Politics for Women in Liberia: My Personal and Work Experience

Dorothy Kwennah Toomann



Many people acknowledge that organizing and contesting against men is an uphill battle. In the upcoming 2020 mid-term election in Liberia, the men who are contesting are already in powerful governance positions (Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, Senator and others), have easy access to public resources, and are backed by major political parties. For me, coming from a civil society background, the hill is even steeper. But I refuse to be deterred by those forces of power.

Rather, I am encouraged and convinced that my decades of people-to-people engagements through community development work with marginalized people (women, youth, children, the physically challenged, local media and rural communities) for the common good will enable me to engage with and garner people's support. This is combined with my ability to be with and connect with the local people, to initiate and forge new relationships, my record in peace-building, advocacy and networking, and my approach to transparency and accountability. I believe these skills and experiences will enable me to continue to pave my way to becoming an elected official in the Liberian Parliament. My ambition is to discover and explore new ways to link the platforms of parliament and community development for social change and contribute meaningfully to the changing relationship between people, place and power.

As a child in rural Liberia, unlike many girls in the country and beyond, my education was prioritised by my parents. Though I had to learn domestic work as expected within my culture, I didn't wish to limit my capacity to domestic activities – they simply were not interesting and attractive. Instead, I was interested in the work my father did as a hunter, builder, and pastor. Despite my parents' support for my education, I was

reminded constantly by them and others that such work was not for a girl. However, from a young age, it was clear that I refused to accept these boundaries. I enjoyed being with and supporting my father on the rooves of buildings. I climbed trees, played soccer with my brothers and organised girls' soccer games.

My ambition is to discover and explore new ways to link the platforms of parliament and community development for social change and contribute meaningfully to the changing relationship between people, place and power.

I married a pastor and had three children during the civil war. Obviously, the expectations were that I focus on my family and church matters. I did these, but I also engaged in nonviolent actions for peace with other Liberian women to end the civil war. I engaged in educational initiatives for my personal development and to enable the empowerment of other rural women to increase our space in public life. Initially, I conducted adult literacy, micro-finance, women's development, leadership and

gender training programs with the Development Education Network-Liberia (DEN-L). DEN-L is a national grassroots organisation established during the civil war to contribute to a Liberia at peace with itself and its neighbours. Grounded in the conscientisation approach of Paulo Freire and other approaches that contribute to social justice and sustainable environment, we work in a way that enables people to discover themselves. We respect and value our contribution and those of others, and we advocate for a more just world including better interconnectedness between people and their environment.

Liberia is situated in West Africa with a population of about 4.5 million people. Originally, the place known as Liberia was a collection of chiefdoms led by local chiefs. However, after the 1800s, the area became controlled by a one-party centralised system led by male dominated elite Americo-Liberians (free slaves) from the United States of America. This structure then remained for more than a century.

In 1989, the country experienced a 14-year-long brutal civil war. During the civil war, women were victims of all types of violence; however, they also contributed greatly to ending the war, and influenced the election of Africa's first female President, Madam Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. Still today, the



grievances that caused the civil war remain unresolved for the nation and its people. Many people, mainly women, are living with the scars of wounds and pain of violence they sustained during the war. What has changed is how women view their roles and place in society. Women remain home makers and domestics workers, but these no longer stop them from engaging in initiatives that have the potential to change their place in society.

Despite efforts to strengthen the place of Liberian women in public life, multi-dimensional factors that limit women's roles remain. Women are challenged to face the reality of poor governance, the reality that decision-making remains under the control of men in society, and the realities of high poverty rates, corruption, negative cultural practices, high financial costs of political participation, increased human rights abuses, high illiteracy rates, and extremely high maternal morbidity and mortality rates – 1072 deaths per 100,000 live births. Alongside all this, in political parties, women are pushed to the margins with weak opportunities for them to increase their involvement in local and national politics.

These challenges and many others already confront me as a development

Women remain home makers and domestics workers, but these no longer stop them from engaging in initiatives that have the potential to change their place in society.

activist. As I explore my new identity as a political candidate with a desire to play more strategic decision-making role, these are more pronounced. I consider community engagement and connection as the best option for understanding local people's situation, and these are essential for my political campaign. This approach to political campaigning is difficult; however, it is based on my experience in working with marginalized and oppressed women. Throughout my campaign, I have been able to engage with single mothers, widows, women involved in petty trade, victims of abuse including sexual abuse, disadvantaged children and youth, substance users, health and education under-paid workers working in difficult situations, and food insecure communities. Engaging local people from diverse backgrounds in their own communities and work settings affords me the opportunity not only to share my

aspirations and platform but to listen to their concerns and identify potential strengths for collaboration to influence local, national and global dynamics. This is different from the approach used by mainstream male dominated politicians who send their fold-runners to communities to raise awareness and mobilize them to attend centralized meetings; rather than engaging on the ground, they make donations to attract votes.

I am convinced that community engagement with connection has the potential to go beyond supporting political candidates. Nevertheless, the size and population of Bong County – an estimated population of nearly 350,000, spread over nearly 3,500 square miles, with 12 districts, 42 clans with a township, 39 health facilities, including 3 hospitals, 367 schools, including 14 high schools, a university and a technical college, more than 10 community radios, etc – community engagement becomes challenging especially when faced with limited resources.

In June 2019, I transitioned from eight months of community consultation to public awareness about my political ambition. I have made progress but more needs to be done to enable me to secure space in the Liberian parliament. I have



My roots as a community development practitioner fostered have enabled me to develop a means of mobilising, even when far away from home.

organised a core team to manage my campaign; set up teams of community volunteers in each of the 12 districts to support the setting up of clans and community volunteers; conducted community engagement meetings in at least 15 communities in each district, attended major events such as religious conferences, school and community programmes, and organized small groups meeting with people from diverse sectors. I continue to ensure my campaign is organized from the grassroots. The challenge however is finding ways to deal with the misinformation and propaganda from my opponents.

The level of propaganda is astonishing. However, the process is fascinating; it enables me to understand the nature of political campaigning and identify great opportunities – to see and grapple with the situations of people, to listen to their hopes and aspirations about politics with enriched learning. In all these, I have come to realize that the challenges and hopes of the local people are increasingly confirmed from one community to the other. The priorities for the communities are: access to improved health care, quality education, safe drinking water, shelter, and recreational facilities. Addressing

problems associated with the centralized economy with poor local investment and exploitation of natural resources is also a priority. Communities are asking to address bad governance practices: corruption, the unfair and slow justice system, and food insecurity. Interestingly, there are also signs of local people's willingness to improve their well-being. This is one of the motivating factors in my political journey. However, the reality is these situations cannot be changed through localized effort alone, and neither will they change if community development professionals are only comfortable at the margins of local and global decision making. Social change requires engagement with political decision-making, and I believe that as community development professionals, we need to consider our engagement with mainstream politics.

In Liberia, and perhaps in many developing countries, the link between community development and politics is

not clear. Often, politicians think they are doing favours for local people when they make allocations in national budgets for community projects – schools, agricultural inputs, clinics, etc. Politics in these situations benefits the privileged few, a situation which is not only difficult to sustain but also undermines the efforts of community development agents and increases the vulnerability of local people and their communities. In this political process, my hope is through direct engagement and connection with local people, my political platform will be strengthened to influence social change.

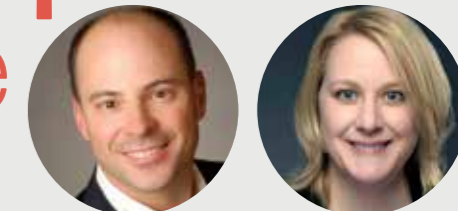
I find myself here in the United States of America, where I traveled to attend meetings including the 64th Session of the United Nations Convention on the Status of Women in New York, while the Coronavirus pandemic has reached Liberia. Considering Liberia's fragile health and other systems, I am deeply concerned. I find myself caught in the travel restrictions and unable to return home. So, I am exploring ways to remain engaged with the local people and contribute to COVID-19 response process. Networking with people in the diaspora and those at home with internet support, I have mobilized and developed COVID-19 awareness materials in five local dialects and these are being aired in Liberia. Currently, I am mobilizing similar awareness messages in the sixteen dialects of Liberia for national awareness. While my political campaign remains strong, my roots as a community development practitioner and the connections I have fostered have enabled me to develop a means of mobilising, even when far away from home. More than anything else, this demonstrates the power of genuine community-led political engagement.

I believe that social change can become a reality for local people in Bong County and beyond. To achieve this, community development agents need to consciously support direct a connection between the sector and politics, and they need to be represented on political decision-making platforms at all levels. Politics can achieve far more when drawing on the skills and knowledge of community development; I hope my new path will find ways to build a bridge across this divide.

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LGBTQ+ Rights and Community Development: A Global Roundtable

Paul Lachapelle and Deborah Albin



The WCDC in Dundee presented a unique opportunity to engage friends, colleagues, practitioners and youth from around the world on the topic of LGBTQ+ rights from a community development perspective.



The LGBTQ+ community has made significant progress in terms of rights and recognition over the past few years (note: the term LGBTQ+ is used throughout this article; no offense is meant by excluding anyone from its use). Examples of progress include the legal status of same-sex marriage in 28 countries, various policy discussions and platforms for LGBTQ+ rights at the United Nations, and the election and celebration of openly gay politicians. Yet, significant challenges remain and the LGBTQ+ community still face widespread stigmatization and persecution. There are over 70 nations where homosexual activity between consenting adults is illegal with some resulting in prison; there are still six countries that effectively impose the death penalty on consensual same-sex sexual acts. Globally, individuals face violence, arbitrary arrest, imprisonment and torture because of their sexual orientation.

experiences from our other participants from their own perspectives. **We wanted the event to be youth-led and youth-focused and our colleagues from LGBT Youth Scotland provided just that.** They began the session by sharing self-introductions that included brief overviews from Scotland of their own experiences and the programming offered by the organization. We then went around the circle to others sharing their experiences from their home communities and countries. Discussion focused on key contextual themes of current legal

Our WCDC session was meant to offer a safe space for discussion and be an open and supportive opportunity to explore critical community development from an LGBTQ+ perspective.

session, we also recently offered our first annual Virtual Rainbows Summit for Youth, Families, Allies and Professionals (<http://msucommunitydevelopment.org/rainbows.html>) with 3-days of on-line learning and information sharing content on a wide-variety of topics. The goal, as was our WCDC session, was to increase networking and build community.

Our WCDC session was meant to offer a safe space for discussion and be an open and supportive opportunity to explore critical community development from an LGBTQ+ perspective. The overall goal of the session was to create new global networks and enhance creative and productive partnerships between community development practitioners and those involved in the LGBTQ+ community. It is our hope that the IACD will continue to play a role in facilitating opportunities for learning, sharing and building community, and that together we can and will continue to make a difference in the lives of ALL individuals, regardless of their colour of the rainbow.

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Photo courtesy of LGBT Youth Scotland, used with permission

The WCDC in Dundee presented a unique opportunity to engage friends, colleagues, practitioners and youth from around the world on the topic of LGBTQ+ rights from a community development perspective. The authors of this article, in close collaboration with Cari Patterson of Horizons Community Development Associates (Canada), Cara Spence of LGBT Youth Scotland (UK), and Jeff Myers of Del-Myr Associates (US) planned an open roundtable workshop format for the conference where we could engage with local LGBTQ+ organizations in Dundee and Scotland and others globally to facilitate learning and information sharing.

Our intent was to have the local LGBTQ+ organizations provide us with the context and content for learning about their local LGBTQ+ rights issues and then share the

rights, cultural conditions, and planned and established community development programs. The conversation was lively, spirited, emotional, but most importantly, enlightening and informative for those who attended. As a result, in the United States, the authors created a new website to offer educational content to constituents not only in our home state of Montana, but available to anyone interested in learning more on a variety of LGBTQ+ topics (www.montana.edu/communitydevelopment/lgbtq.html). The website is currently being populated with material and will go live soon. With the inspiration of the WCDC

Unconferenced: The Unchampioned Views

Delight Sunday-Anicho



In this piece, conference delegate Delight Sunday-Anicho reflects on the difficulties of challenging dominant views and voices in the unconference sessions. Delight works outside of the field of community development and attended the conference to learn more about community development practices.

Following my participation at the conference in Dundee, I was asked by the editors to reflect on my experience at the 2019 Conference in writing. It took a while to get around to it as a result of the Covid-19 Pandemic, which re-arranged our lives.

The Conference Theme:

Themed, "People, Place, and Power," the IACD conference in 2019 took place in Dundee, Scotland. Dundee is a beautiful city. I enjoyed my stay, met some of my compatriots, acquired a new friend. The attendees were from different countries, nationalities, races, and creed. That, for me, was a high point.

The organization was very professional. The young volunteers that ensured everything went well deserves our praise for a job well done.

The spacing of sessions with good timing appeared perfect. The unplanned session was a good innovation in that it provided opportunities for other ideas to be put out in the public domain. Still, even these unstructured sessions that were meant to challenge dominant views fell short of their remit.

Unconference Sessions

The concept of community in Europe is different from what we consider community development in Africa. We are looking for the fastest, simplified and workable technology to develop

our communities since we are in a catch-up race with the rest of the world. This perspective was not necessarily represented in the conference programme, but I had the privilege of chairing an unconference session where I presented how my employer is developing critical infrastructure in Nigeria through Social Investment Projects. Through these Social Investments, hospitals, schools, skills acquisition centers, solar boreholes, roads, and electricity have been provided not only in our areas of operations, but throughout the country – from Lagos to Maiduguri, projects constructed by the company dot the landscape.

Criticism – People, Place, and Power?

The main drawback I observed was the inability of the various conference settings to accommodate opposing ideas. An example is the discussion on the Palestinian-Israeli situation during a 7-minute presentation. One speaker made his presentation on the situation, but he went quite a bit over his allotted time and thus only one view in a complex situation was given oxygen. Spaces must be created to allow for people to ask questions and challenge dominant views.

A further example came up during an unconference session where a delegate brought up the issue of killer herdsmen in

Nigeria. There was only one viewpoint in that conversation that was given oxygen. In both examples, the conversations would have benefitted from more structure, but balancing the need to champion unheard voices with making sure every voice is heard remains a challenge.

Lessons for Organisers – Next Steps

During the conference, Delight came up with an idea for an environmental project to establish a conservation center to restore lost biodiversity due to oil exploration. Upon returning home, Delight's plan was approved by her employer.

As organisers, this demonstrates to us the benefits of including delegates from non-community development backgrounds. We believe that the annual conference provides a mechanism by which we can bring together diverse viewpoints and reach out to people who may not consider themselves to be community development practitioners. This enables us to identify opportunities for new collaborations, extend our reach as a field, deepen our dialogues and push ourselves to further improve our practice.

Delight is Head of Partnership Development at Corporate Social Responsibility, Total E&P Nigeria Limited



Seven minutes to share, an eternity to learn: Building and deepening common grounds

Mário Montez



Dundee (WCDC2019)

For me, Scotland has been a brilliant school on community development. Since my first time in Glasgow for the IACD 2014 Conference 'Community is the Answer,' I have connected with organizations and with several dedicated and friendly community development practitioners, with whom I became close during later work visits to this country. These experiences enabled me to enrich my learning on community development animation and to share experiences and thoughts on this field. It also brought inputs to my work and to the school where I teach (ESEC-IPC: School of Education of the Polytechnic Institute of Coimbra), in Portugal, leading to student practices and recent staff study visits under the Erasmus+ mobility programme, with other projects still to come.

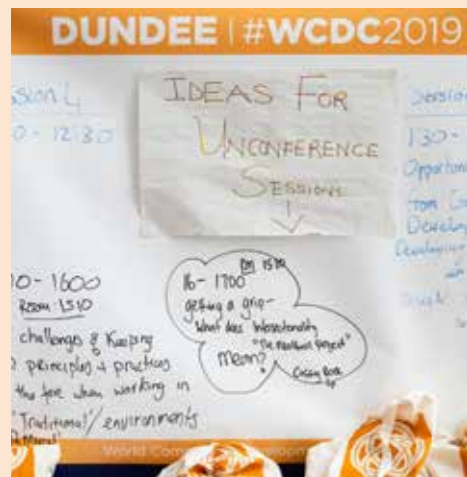
WCDC 2019 in Dundee was therefore an opportunity to revisit Scotland, this time with another colleague who is leading the Portuguese association for Local Development – ANIMAR, with whom I spent the last few years talking about IACD, and the Scottish practices of community development. Finally, we were

a group of four Portuguese colleagues at the conference, plus the key-note speaker Virginia Bras Gomes, who I was later able to welcome as an invited speaker at a lecture in my school. The Dundee conference provided the opportunity to "matar saudades," as we say in Portuguese. This means: to reconnect and chat with my Scottish friends.

The conference had several creative features and a wonderful atmosphere. I outline the courageous, and somehow misunderstood, 7 minutes presentation time as one of the original characteristics of the WCDC2019 conference. This strategy allowed delegates to share the core topics of each presentation and to debate properly the specific or common issues, afterward. It was not an easy feature to understand, and the short time for presentation received several critiques when compared to conventional presentations of 15 to 20 minutes. I did react similarly at first, before I recognized the potentiality of this approach. Thus, I tested the model in one of the classes I run on Education and Community Intervention, in January, before the conference. At first, I received several negative reactions – but then, the

students all realised that each group was able to present the core of their project in the given time; and that all other groups paid full attention, all in an adequate time of 21 minutes of possible concentration. Finally, we had about 60 minutes of debate and sharing which brought new perspectives for each group, and an enriching collaboration among the class. What I received from this previous experience was precisely what we experienced in Dundee. The fact that we can easily follow three presentations while we can manage to be concentrated without great effort, was very positive for me as an audience member. I recall that English is not the native language for many participants, therefore, presentations may be harder to follow. The following time for debate was suitable to explore more details according to the concerns and interests of the audience.

In my case, it was an interesting exercise to condense my presentation to the time limit of 7 minutes. It was a challenge, but after rehearsing it I believe the message got through. And there, I had the chance to share my knowledge on the process that I created to deliver a participatory





video experience with groups. The COMVEX (Community Video Experience) process has been undertaken with young people and higher education students and allows them to express themselves and to reflect on the topics and issues that affect them, using video as a tool. The questions and comments following the presentation encouraged me to deeply explore, in the coming future, the potentialities of the use of technology for community development. But even more, it ignited within me the need to educate young people on the use of technological devices. As strange as it can seem, many young people do not know how to properly use technological devices such as smart phones. For example, they record thousands of images with their mobiles, not knowing in which folder they will be stocked. In my experiences with this process, I have witnessed participants searching for the files of the footage they had just shot, among hundreds of video and photo files in their mobile phones. Meanwhile, they are exposing private images, for instance, intimate pictures.

Learning from sharing was one of the major features of the WCDC2019, powered by several activities such as: presentations, workshops, a poetry tour, and cultural and convivial moments, in a very well-organized conference with an amazing atmosphere. Each day the opening panel was composed by a few speakers who complemented the subject brought by the key-note speaker, in a very suitable time frame and with very enriching insights. I underline the lunch time as a major opportunity to connect with delegates or conference speakers, while grabbing a piece of tasty finger food and moving around.

The extension programme to the region of Fife, under the theme of Environmental Regeneration – Community Action, was an interesting chance to learn about the old coal mines

of Lochore Meadows, through hearing the words of a former worker and community activist. The country park created after the community action to regenerate the place is amazing and it is worth a future visit with my family. But I could not avoid emotions when learning about the hard work and life of miners. Specially, I became emotional when I listened my local colleagues sharing stories of their miner grandfathers the evening before; and one of them told us about an episode happened in Lochore Meadows which took the life of a family member. Indeed, the history of people and communities is alive as long as somebody tells the stories.

In Dundee, I was able to deepen my understanding about the complexity of communities, discovering different realities in a chat with African colleagues or in a poetry walk around the city.

The same visit took us to the small town of Blairhall and to the ancient town of Dunfermline, once capital of Scotland and the place of rest of Robert the Bruce. The historical site is worth the visit and the history class we had. In Blairhall, we witnessed the vibrant and dedicated work done by community development practitioners and local women volunteers at a regenerated community centre and tasted their delicious cakes. At a certain moment we asked them what they had learned from this experience of revitalizing the community. Their answer, “That community brings people together”, sounded rather a cliché for us. But they explained: “This is real. There are old people living in the higher area of the town who didn’t see their friends who live in the lower part of the town, for

ages! Now they gather here once a week because we created that time and space. This is the only time they see each other, but they have those moments.” Many times, words said by local people are true local knowledge; and those are the times when experts and professional practitioners shall bow and learn.

The WCDC2019 was the perfect setting to connect my Portuguese fellows with the practitioners I know and the friends I made along this last five years since the conference in Glasgow. The city of Dundee, with its historical heritage, the North Sea breeze, seagulls’ squawking, tasty fish and fine whiskey, was the perfect venue to gather and to get to know new people from around the world, who share the same passion for community development. The IACD events I attended are not common conferences. They are gatherings of people from around the world who share the values of human rights, with which they underpin their professional and militant actions in the contexts of their communities, of their research work or of the organisations were they work.

In Dundee, I was able to deepen my understanding about the complexity of communities, discovering different realities in a chat with African colleagues or in a poetry walk around the city. I was able to extend debates with colleagues I had met before or that I met at the time. I had a chance to introduce my countrymates to other practitioners and organisations in the IACD network, hoping for a future partnership. Therefore, we committed ourselves to translate the IACD standards into Portuguese. I experienced a new model for sharing our experiences in a short time frame, and I adapted to use in my professional context. I was able to know more about the Activate programme (development education delivered by the University of Glasgow along with local communities); and later, me and a couple of colleagues had the opportunity to visit the programme on site and we are working to adapt it to the Portuguese reality. I believe that connecting people is the best way to learn, enlarge our horizons, improve our practices and policies, and to build a common ground for human development and global peace. The IACD and the World Community Development Conferences bring these possibilities closer.

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Cissy Rock

Reflections on World Community Development Conference Dundee 2019

To bring such a massive number of community developers together is a real feat. I came from Aotearoa New Zealand on the opposite end of the earth from Scotland to attend, full of anticipation and looking for opportunities. I was glad I went to the international reception the night before opening as a way to integrate on a small scale.

It took me a while to work out that there were two streams each with offers that totaled over 11 options. These included some “unconference sessions” and sessions for unfinished conversations as a nod to the open space concept.

The most amazing keynotes packed into plenary sessions left me wanting more. For example, in her keynote address, Margaret Ledwith, whose book *Community Development – A Critical Approach* has been a big influence in my practice, spoke on reclaiming the radical agenda, introducing the idea that intersectionality is a neoliberal project. Immediately I wanted to understand more about what she meant – I wanted to engage with her and others thinking critically about this. This was the stimulus for an “unconference session” I initiated. I followed the process for registering the session and told a few people what I wanted to explore. A handful of people came and without Margaret I guess we were never going to be able to fully understand, but it was a good feeling to be with others that had the same interest. It was one of the few times during the conference I felt truly connected and had a sense of belonging.

The “unconference sessions” and lunchtime sessions were wonderful alternatives providing real gems.

The HIIC Women’s Group lunchtime performance stays with me as a powerful expression of community development. It was a short play written and performed by those affected by the issue; the process itself healing and the product hard hitting. But I was one of only 5 people out of the 500 conference registrants who attended that session.

The conference structure was typical of most conferences – like a buffet with so much on offer that there is the inevitable degree of dissatisfaction because there are always treats you miss out on having filled up on the chocolate cake before you saw the lemon meringue pie.

The major criticism I have is that in the conference design, the naming, scheduling and publicising of the conference “unconference sessions” and lunchtime sessions relegated them to be added extras, alternative choices positioned outside the “real” conference offering. As community developers we are guided by principles of inclusion, participation, contribution and empowerment. Considering these principles as key conference design issues would have enhanced the conference experience for me.

The conference vision said, “Come together as activists and build alliances

behind our traditional boundaries.” I liked the promise of the vision statement and would have appreciated more purposeful attention being given to connecting delegates throughout the conference. Examples may be establishing “learning pods” where we could join up as small groups to reflect and share experiences, structuring invitations to talk to a stranger over morning tea, or organising or encouraging people to sit and chat at long tables over lunch.

In conclusion, I applaud the notion of including impromptu sessions, creating time and space for registrants to make connections that might build alliances, and having a forum to integrate what has been presented in a keynote address. Rather than have these as “unconference sessions” or fitting them into lunchtime conference breaks, I regard them as mainstays for building communities. My hope is that for future conferences, such sessions are included as essential elements of the conference design where their value and potential can be realised.

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Teaching and Learning in Community Development: The Role of Praxis

Catherine Forde



Fun and learning at the “Loadsaweenlaughin’: You Can’t Be Serious” storytelling workshop for women

As a community development worker and lecturer in community development, I am constantly thinking about how to teach community development practice to my students. As a dynamic activity, community development is always evolving and being shaped by different factors including societal change and government policy. This presents a challenge for teaching and learning.

Two sessions that I participated in at the WCDC conference gave me a renewed sense of what community development is and how it should be taught in the classroom. The first session was facilitated by Cissy Rock from the Community Think creative collective and explored through role-play the power dynamics of community decision-making. Everyone in the group was asked to play roles of different community members; I started the session as a member of a local community council and then became one of a group of villagers who were challenging a decision of the council. Cissy’s expert facilitation led us to the realisation that all members of a community have a measure of power and that often power can be most effectively used through collective action. Crucially, the session also

As a dynamic activity, community development is always evolving and being shaped by different factors including societal change and government policy.

reminded me that teaching community development practice can be very effectively done through the use of action and reflection in action. Rather than just telling students about community development or talking about it, there is often greater learning in encouraging them to model community development in practice, through activities such as role-play, story-telling or Theatre of the Oppressed. Learning

by ‘doing’ is a powerful way of demonstrating the intricacies and dilemmas of community development practice and of getting practitioners to think about the issues that affect communities and how they may be addressed.

The second session I attended reinforced the power of learning by ‘doing’. I participated in the “Loadsaweenlaughin’: You Can’t Be Serious” storytelling workshop for women, facilitated by Clare MacGillivray, Corinne McGinley and Jo Ross. The aim of the workshop was simply to get women talking to each other and to tell each other stories of their own choosing. The participants were from all over the world, including Asia, Latin America, the United States, Australia and Europe. I was a little nervous going into the



Exploring the dilemmas of community power dynamics at the ‘The complexity of community decision making - who has the power?’ workshop with Cissy Rock, Community Think.

Crucially, the session also reminded me that teaching community development practice can be very effectively done through the use of action and reflection in action.

workshop because I had limited experience of story-telling as a form of practice, but I quickly realised the power of this approach. We started by introducing ourselves and where we were from, and then we moved quickly into discussions about our community development practice and the issues and challenges that confront it. What was amazing was the ease with which these stories emerged, the parallels between practice in very different contexts and some of the differences. One of the members of our group was a community development practitioner from the United States, and her dilemma was how to

What was amazing was the ease with which these stories emerged, the parallels between practice in very different contexts and some of the differences.

effectively spend several million dollars which had been granted to her agency by a corporation. How different from the Irish context where much of the community development funding comes from the state and where the funding is rarely enough! The conversation moved organically to other stories, including those about family, cultural differences and children and young people.

One woman told us about her experience of taking a Scottish youth group to London in 2017 and their proximity to London Bridge during the terrorist attacks. She talked about the darkly humorous experience of hearing one of the young people, who had Aspergers, crying ‘bomb’ at intervals on the train journey home. This made us laugh but also reflect on lots of things, including the changing and often frightening world in which we live, the impact of violence on children and young people, and the way in which humanity can (sometimes) be found in unlikely and negative situations. The session was fun, informative and enlightening and led to connections between women who may not have otherwise had the opportunity to meet or talk.

In a neo-liberal context in which reports, documentation and evaluation predominate, we can sometimes forget that community development is a unique approach that is about creativity, ingenuity, relationships between people and, as Margaret Ledwith would say,

We can sometimes forget that community development is a unique approach that is about creativity, ingenuity, relationships between people and, as Margaret Ledwith would say, love.

love. These are important characteristics to cling to in an increasingly challenging world, and especially important during this enforced period of physical separation during the Covid-19 pandemic. They are also characteristics that should be conveyed to students of community development, whether in formal or informal learning situations. As we teach remotely, we need to find imaginative ways to transmit these ideas to students online, while encouraging them to think about their communities and how they might contribute to maintaining community in the current situation when it is most needed. At a time when we are most challenged, community development practice can help us to recover and hold on to our humanity and find ways to work together for a better future.

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"Conference programme was outstanding. Innovative, creative and high impact. I liked that there was space for activists, practitioners and academics in equal measure, and at an equal level - there was no priority given to academic content for example. The keynotes were brilliant - well constructed and conference flow was strong. Volunteers were excellent at showing delegates around and creating a welcome."



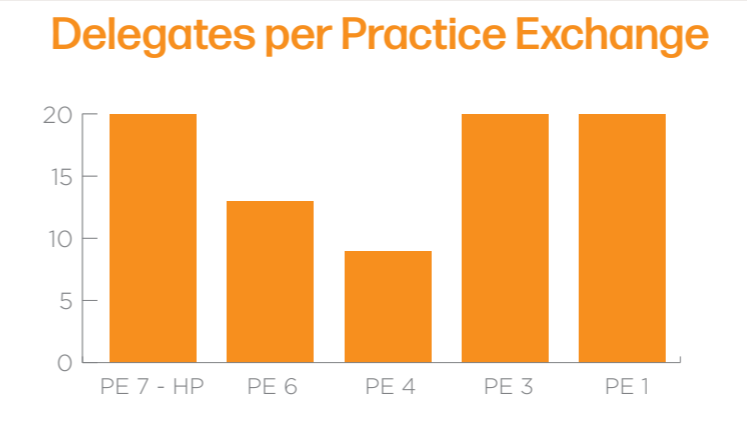
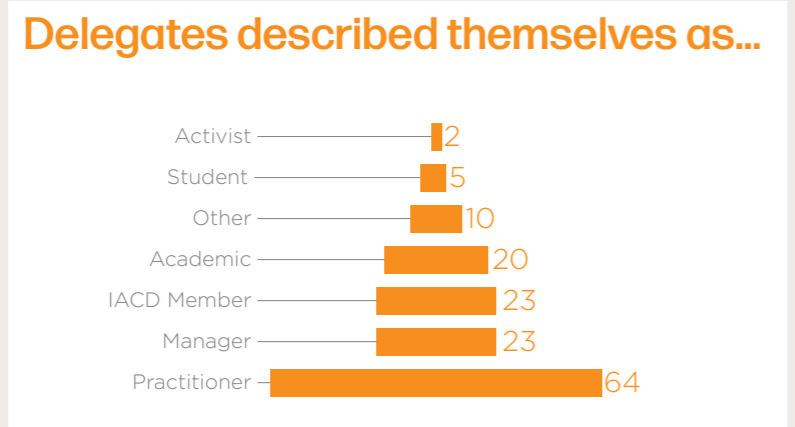
WORLD COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE 2019 INSIGHTS



"The unconference space was really useful to enable informal conversations to carry on where time was tight. I liked the unstructured nature of these organic opportunities for learning."

"I represent a national Government perspective and it was useful and interesting to hear the discussions around the role of community development and its importance in society."

"The focus on the power of music throughout, but particularly during the last session on the last day, was brilliant and allowed time to relax and reflect on the whole learning experience."



"As a local I was so proud that we could welcome and look after so many peers from so many countries and the planning committee created a programme that would be hard to beat anywhere."



"There was space to connect in social events, over lunchtimes and breaks and in unconference sessions. The pace of the conference was, although packed - not too hurried as to preclude connection time."



"I wondered if my position as a non academic or professional would make my voice not heard. However, I was welcomed by everybody I spoke to and it felt great to be included."





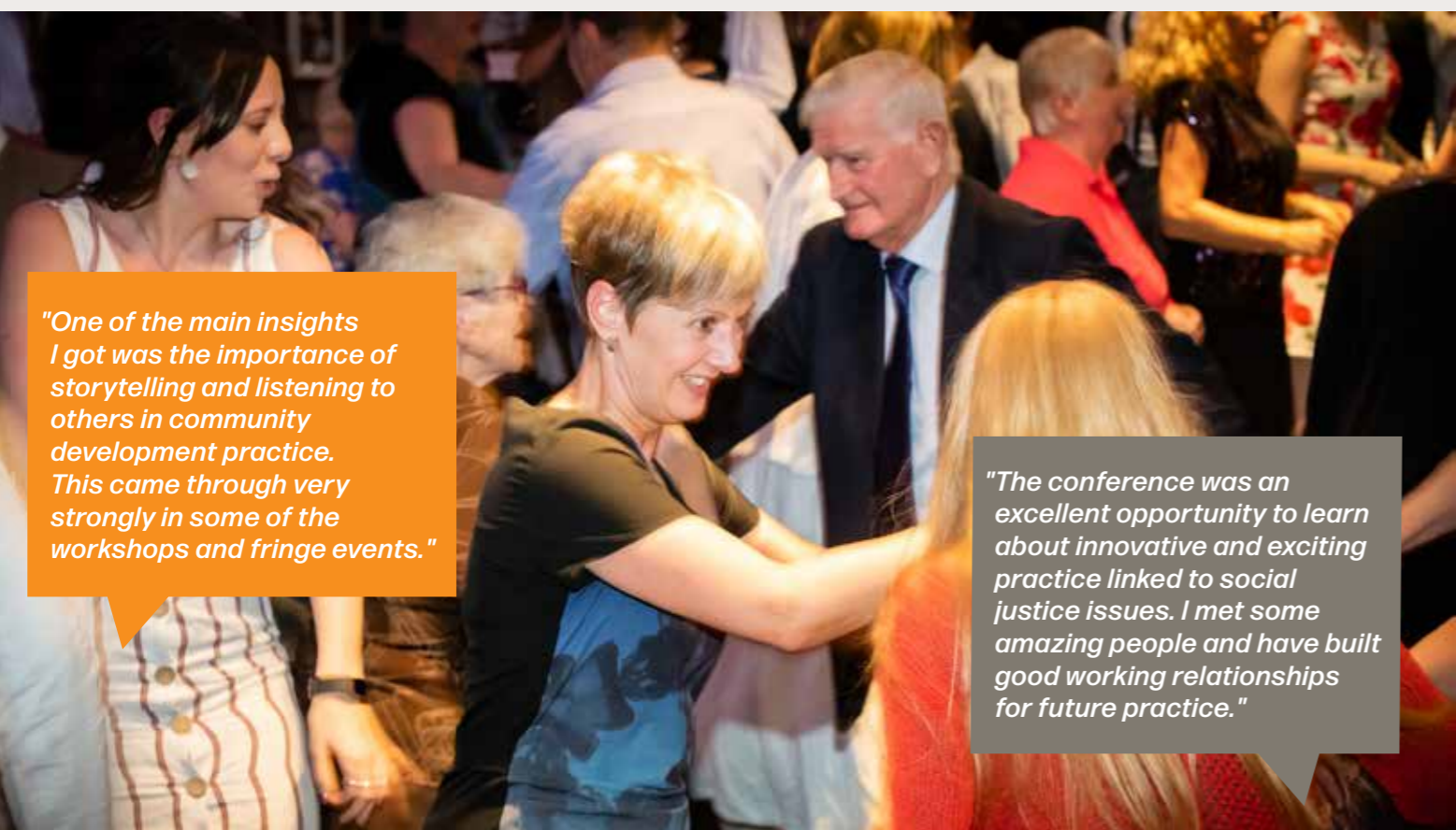
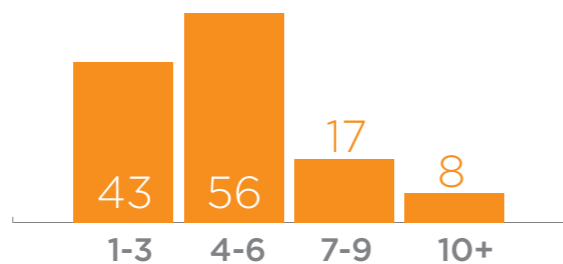
WORLD
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"I feel it reaffirmed for me what's important: building of relationships in local communities, mapping/identifying issues & then opportunities for people to progress towards their or community goals however small they may be."



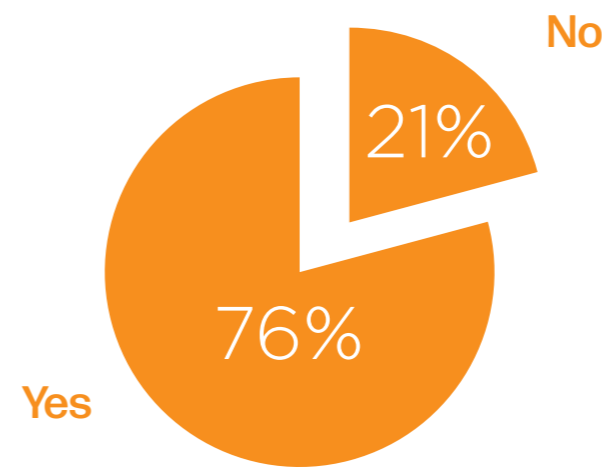
How many new connections did our delegates make?



"One of the main insights I got was the importance of storytelling and listening to others in community development practice. This came through very strongly in some of the workshops and fringe events."

"The conference was an excellent opportunity to learn about innovative and exciting practice linked to social justice issues. I met some amazing people and have built good working relationships for future practice."

Delegates were asked if they would collaborate with someone new they met at the conference, they responded:



My experience as the spontaneous minstrel for Dundee WCDC 2019

Dr Claire Garabedian



Some months after having fortuitously met Clare at a Burns Night Supper (where I had spoken and played cello), she contacted me to ask if I would open the conference by playing cello alongside the venerable Dundee icon traditional Scottish singer and composer, Sheena Wellington – this was no small ask for me, being a United States incomer and classically trained! Sheena kindly sent me solo recordings of her singing three lovely and well-loved tunes of hers and I proceeded to have a really fun time working up cello accompaniments... little did I know that there'd be some 500 people attending this event AND we'd have NO time to rehearse, much less properly meet each other before we opened the conference! Sadly, I have no clue how well this actually sounded as regrettably it turns out that no official recording has ever materialised (IF ANY reader out there happens to have recorded Sheena and I performing, PLEASE let Clare or Vic know as I would be very grateful to get to hear how we actually sounded together!)

What I do know, is that on the back of this wee bit of playing, many delegates spoke to Clare and Vic, requesting that music start the following two days of the conference. Sheena was unable to return, but as I was attending the rest of the conference anyway, I was happy to give it a go. What transpired over the next two mornings was that, while unavoidably inevitable technological issues were being sorted, I enjoyed spontaneously facilitating connection and engagement with the full house of delegates. I played some tunes on the cello; I encouraged everyone to get up and sing familiar songs (and to help their neighbour if the song was not part of their culture); and I spoke a bit about my passion and my work – using music to sonically create a 'haven' connection and community are fostered. What I mean by this, is that sharing the simple act of receptively listening to music creates a

sonic space or 'haven' wherein all those involved are sonically 'transported' away from their individual cares/realities – making room for the music to 'refurbish' this cleared space with a new experience, in the moment; a shared experience and connection – regardless of whatever real-life differences (e.g. physical/cognitive abilities; race; income) may exist. It is important to note that these morning music sessions were wholly unscheduled and unplanned. In retrospect, these sessions can be seen as an overt act of (positive) disruption; I went in to the room with my cello, much as I do when approaching the room of a person with dementia or nearing the end of life – committed to being open to the person/s present and willing to respond to their expressed mood and nonverbal (as well as verbal) cues. Thus, no one present – including me, actually knew what was going to happen next!

In truth, I cannot even remember exactly what occurred during these morning sessions: I likely began by playing something lively (or gentle?) in order to signal to the delegates that the conference day was indeed beginning. If I played something lively, this was my responding and matching (or 'entraining') with the lively anticipatory excitement in the room. If I chose to begin with a gentler tune, this would likely have been for one of two reasons: as a means of creating a different sort of disruption – as this would likely have felt at odds with the excitement in the room, or I may have been responding to a sense of people still waking up from their previous action-packed day(s)/night(s) – matching this drowsy feeling, followed by my gradually picking-up the pace of the music to move us all into a more energetic space (this is another example of using a powerful tool known as 'entrainment'). Having (hopefully) captured everyone's attention, I bade everyone a good morning, introduced myself (some delegates were only

present for one day of the conference) and then asked everyone to turn to a neighbour (ideally someone they had not yet met) and chat for a few moments about a music-related question (e.g. 'what type of music did you used to dislike that you now enjoy?' or 'What sort of music do you listen to when you are sad – why?' or 'What's the first piece of music you remember hearing?'). These simple questions nearly always elicit animated chat – whether or not the people who are interacting know each other or not. This comes about because the music they have already collectively shared has sonically created a 'haven' in which their defences are diminished, allowing all involved to be more open to being their authentic selves – even with a stranger who is also sharing this space/experience.

I next urged those who were able, to rise up and join-in singing along while I played a well-known Scottish tune, (e.g. 'My Bonnie' or 'Loch Lomond'). I suggested that those who were familiar with the tune help their neighbours who were not. When we sang 'My Bonnie', I encouraged the Scots in the audience to demonstrate the movements they all will have learned as young children (people are always astonished to discover that although they likely have not sang a once loved/familiar song for many years – and certainly not with its associated motions, it all returns. This phenomenon is known as 'embodied memory/knowledge'; a critical aspect of our human-ness that is particularly important to be aware of when working with people who are cognitively impaired/have dementia). This was an especially wonderful moment – as the Scottish delegates proudly demonstrated to their colleagues from all parts of the globe this well-known/loved childhood song with its accompanying physical motions! By now most everyone was energised and smiling – and the technology was ready to go, so my job was done. I believe that

the disruptive spontaneous nature of these morning sessions afforded everyone the opportunity to let their guard down a bit more than perhaps a more scheduled event would have done, as we tend to bring our expectations, apprehensions, and pre-judgements along as baggage to more structured events. I am also hopeful that the delegates taking part in these spontaneous morning music sessions took away a greater appreciation and curiosity regarding how music can be called upon to foster connection within all communities.

I also enjoyed presenting a workshop specifically looking at using music for fostering connection and community. It


was a small, interesting and engaging group, with whom we more deeply explored how simply sharing the activity of receptively listening to a familiar or new piece of music; of teaching someone a favourite song or learning a new tune together; of asking someone a simple question related to music, can engender engagement and connections – regardless of the cognitive or physical state; the ethnic background; the cultural background; the financial background; the educational background of those who are involved.

This was a wonderful three-plus days. So many interesting people from all over the world (sitting in my Edinburgh flat during this awful pandemic, I ponder

when this will be able to happen again...) – witnessing the drive and determination of all these wonderful people doing such amazing work to help bring us all together was incredibly inspiring. Thank you, Clare and Vic for allowing music to connect me with such a unique and memorable experience.

If you would like to know more about my work with music and connection, please contact me: <https://drclairegarabedian.com/>

Dr Claire Garabedian is a professional cellist, therapeutic musician, educator and researcher focusing on using music to foster connection – especially with people who are living with dementia.



I believe that the disruptive spontaneous nature of these morning sessions afforded everyone the opportunity to let their guard down a bit more than perhaps a more scheduled event would have done, as we tend to bring our expectations, apprehensions, and pre-judgements along as baggage to more structured events.

A Year On: Thoughts and Reflections from Dundee's Practitioners

Stuart Fairweather



This time last year a number of Dundee's community workers were giving thought to their planned contributions to an international event that the city was about to host.

A year on things feel a bit different. Given the global pandemic, asking people to reflect on an event, even one as ambitious and multi-faceted as the World Community Development Conference (WCDC), caused me a degree of trepidation when researching for this article. However, in spite of the personal and professional stresses associated with Covid-19, a number of those contacted still had things to say. These participants added their thoughts to a broader consideration of this significant event, one that tried to take into account Dundee's relationship to the conference themes of People, Place and Power.

Accommodating eight days of learning and culture for 500 delegates from around the world is no minor undertaking. Bringing people together from countries and communities around the globe does however offer major opportunities. Ensuring that these learning opportunities were taken advantage of, and indeed built upon, was important for Dundee, its community workers, its communities, and its citizens. The conference organisers set out to support this process.

Doing this would require going beyond the 'fanfares and bagpipes' that the formality of hosting perhaps dictates. The aspiration was to create a conference that went beyond traditional formats to develop a community of learning. This was assisted by the addition of film, practice visits, walking tours and dance as well as more traditional formal presentations. A wide range of techniques were employed to support discussion and dialogue. Music, song – and indeed bagpiping – were used not just as added extras but as integral parts of the event.

Attempts were also made to involve community representatives, activists and workers. Aware of the barriers of high

conference fees – even for local practitioners and organisations – the organising committee set about identifying ways to maximise accessibility and, while far from facilitating access to all, over 40 local practitioners and community volunteers were able to attend some or all of the conference. For these participants there was the dynamic of simultaneously being hosts and taking part in the event. Highlighting what is good about Dundee whilst acknowledging the challenges it and its communities face was an interesting balancing act. Some aspects of this dynamic can be detected in what is shared below.

Sheena Wellington is a renowned singer and scholar of the Scottish folk tradition, although she is too modest to go out of her way to point this out. Sheena explained that "my involvement in the World Community Development Conference was brief but enjoyable. I was also very proud to see my home city hosting this important international event. The pleasure of meeting and performing with the distinguished cello player Dr Claire Garabedian was an added bonus. Team Dundee proved its mettle then and is proving it again now!"

Sheena's reference to 'proving it again now' speaks to the response from community groups and others in addressing food poverty and isolation, exacerbated by the pandemic. WCDC 2019 gave Sheena the opportunity to collaborate musically but the event more broadly located participants in a community of activism. One that can 'organically' mobilise when required. The reference to Team Dundee suggests something about pride in people and place – two of the conference themes.

Erin Farley contributed through her poetry performance and supporting historical walking tours and, again modestly, described her involvement in

the conference as tangential. However, she felt that the panels she attended "were excellent, and it was brilliant to see activist groups like the Brazilian Landless Movement represented." Erin added that "I think representation of community activist groups and connecting visiting speakers with local groups with similar aims" was very positive. Importantly Erin also felt that the conference took this seriously and that things like knowledge exchange could be developed even further in future.

Erin was not the only one inspired by Kelli Mafort from the Brazilian Landless Workers Movement. Mark McDonald, a Dundee based community worker with a youth work background, found that Kelli's contribution acted as a resource. More broadly, Mark added that: "As someone who had begun a new role working in a different field of Community Learning & Development, I found the conference to be an invaluable learning experience for me. It was extremely refreshing for me to be able to speak to and hear from lots of practitioners from across the world speak about the challenges and successes of Community work in their own communities. The conference enabled me to become a more reflective practitioner."

Liz Allardice, an Adult Learning Worker and conference delegate, explained that she particularly found Scottish Traveller Activist Davie Donaldson's presentation really inspiring. Liz highlighted the impact of Davie's keynote in which he celebrated his heritage and highlighted the injustices his community continue to experience.

The consideration of land and of its ownership or other forms of relationship to land and ownership has a distinct Scottish dimension. In addition to the contribution alluded to above, delegates heard about the Scottish Government's



Practice visit

This opportunity for exchange proved to be a powerful aspect to the conference for local Dundonians, widening the impact of the conference and enabling learning to extend beyond the formal spaces of conference lecture halls.

Community Empowerment Act. The five-day post-conference Practice Exchange further reinforced this, with discussion about the possibilities and limitations of local community planning and visits to local community growing sites. These visits were important in allowing space for Dundonians to tell their own stories of community to an international audience. This opportunity for exchange proved to be a powerful aspect to the conference for local Dundonians, widening the impact of the conference and enabling learning to extend beyond the formal spaces of conference lecture halls.

Another theme running throughout the event that chimed with People, Place and Power was that of environmental justice. Kate Treharne, a local community development practitioner, said that, "I was deeply impressed by the frequency with which the Climate Emergency was discussed, addressed and solutions presented. It was clear that global heating and CO2 emissions are a central issue for community development the world over and this was reassuring to me." Kate added that "In Dundee it can sometimes feel like you are the only one who remembers or cares that the planet is hurtling towards ecological disaster, with impacts disproportionately and unfairly affecting disadvantaged people who have virtually zero emissions. Talk after talk put

the climate emergency front and centre of professional practice in CLD (Community Learning and Development) and discussions outwith the formal sessions reinforced this impression."

In terms of the lasting impact this conference discussion had on the City, Kate lamented that "Dundee City Council made their own declaration of climate and ecological emergency while the conference was happening and this felt like it would result in a shift in practice with service reviews across the council to reduce emissions and adopt more climate-friendly practices. The relief that this had happened while surrounded by the positive attitudes of worldwide CLD practitioners was emotional."

"I was deeply impressed by the frequency with which the Climate Emergency was discussed, addressed and solutions presented. It was clear that global heating and CO2 emissions are a central issue for community development the world over and this was reassuring to me."

However, Kate reported a year on: "sadly, it did not result in any meaningful action and DCC continue with business as usual despite the unanimous declaration." This feeling of there being unfinished business was not unique to this delegate's experience. Progressing a curriculum

that questions austerity as a political choice is difficult in the context of that austerity's attack on the redistributive capacity of the local state. This complex relationship to power was acknowledged in the conference vision and addressing this unfinished business in practice can be difficult unless we learn to be the reflective practitioners mentioned by Mark above. The conference played a big part in encouraging us to embark on, or to reconnect with, that learning journey. If there was one limitation with the WCDC events it was that, despite the ingenuity of the organisers in finding ways to maximise accessibility, more Dundonian community workers and that more Dundonians could not attend.

So what now? The conference delegate documentation stated that, "The city of Dundee has a rich history of social change, community activism and community arts and it is through celebrating the achievements of the city's past that we will build spaces for engaged, practice-led dialogue that poses questions about the identity, purpose and practices of community development."

Often during the conference Dundonian delegates were humbled by the contributions being made by others, particularly in parts of the world where the context was overcoming crisis or disaster. What is happening now builds a live connection, however small, to that humbling experience. By connecting with Dundee's history and contemporary experience of activism and social change we can contribute to the educational and social purpose of community development: Community development that questions why the world is so ill divided.

Stuart Fairweather is a Dundee based community education worker who works for Dundee City Council as a Communities Officer in the Maryfield Ward. stuart.fairweather@dundeecity.gov.uk

Contributors:

Sheena Wellington – Folk Singer
Erin Farley – Library and Information Officer, Leisure and Culture Dundee
Mark MacDonald – Communities Officer – Strathmartine, Dundee City Council
Liz Allardice – Senior Community Learning and Development Worker, Dundee City Council
Kate Treharne – Community Allotments Officer, Dundee City Council

Realising the Dream: identifying unexamined privilege as a path to equality in the field of community development

Meredith Greta, Victoria Jupp Kina
& Holly Scheib



In the March 2020 Women in Community Development Special Issue of Practice Insights, the three of us co-authored a piece disclosing our experiences and observations of challenges to women in our Community Development practice. We articulated our frustrations at the irony of working in a field dedicated to identifying and challenging hierarchical power structures while seeing our own careers and those of our female colleagues being moulded by these same dynamics. After publication, we had conversations with other women who strongly associated with the sentiment in the article. Women recognised their own experiences in our words. And they did so powerfully, immediately, and profoundly.

What we have identified in our discussions stemming from both the Dundee conference and the March article is the way in which cultural, racial, social, and political inequalities are reinforced through authoritative practices in our field. The perpetuation of inequalities in power is clearly not consistent with the values of community development. We define power inequalities as interpersonal expressions of hierarchies and structures that are created by cultural, racial, social, and political inequalities. These expressions are embodied, continual and dynamic. In processing our experiences with responses from the article, we kept returning to the idea of how critical it is to find ways to identify and deconstruct our experiences of our field. It became clear to us that the power dynamics that limit or control or belittle us are not presented in grand gestures but in tiny moments – moments that are

individually difficult to encapsulate yet we all, implicitly, understand. What our conversations have revealed to us is the necessity to actively create spaces and moments where we seek to reveal the interpersonal expressions that structure our field. If we are truly working towards social justice, we need to understand the multitude of ways that we are subject to and perpetuate these dynamics in our daily interactions.

Being a professional in community development demands us to constantly and consciously look for our own unexamined privileges.

Our everyday actions are inherently shaped by privilege. Acting in community development values means that we must identify our privileged behaviours and seek to change them. Being a professional in community development demands us to constantly and consciously look for our own unexamined privileges. If we want to reach the dreams that we laid out in that March article, we have to consciously create spaces where it is possible to examine privilege. We need spaces for dialogues where individual experiences can be shared, processed and identified. In these dialogues, we must invite constructive examination of our privilege and consciously seek to grow personally and professionally. Crucially, this process of examination can only occur when we are ready to hear about how we,

ourselves, participate in other people's negative experiences. We need to be open to hearing how we perpetuate structural processes that are not consistent with the anti-racist, anti-colonialist, equality-driven values in community development. We need to find ways to ensure that conscious spaces are built into our ways of working in order for us to identify where we are going astray, why it is not consistent with our goals, and how we need to change to improve. Current spaces are not facilitating this examination. It is through inviting uncomfortable dialogues that we can hope to identify the ways that we perpetuate the systems we claim to be trying to dismantle.

To that end, we have asked ourselves to imagine leadership based on the values of community development. And, as leaders ourselves, we have talked about our responsibilities in achieving these changes. We realise that learning new ways to interact is deeply challenging. Yet it is only through the process of identifying, clarifying, and naming our practices of hierarchical behaviour that we can train ourselves to behave consistently in the community development values we seek to emulate.

We believe that IACD can lead the way in understanding how inequalities in community development operate through our power hierarchies. We believe that our IACD spaces should be safe for the equal and overt examination of our privileges. They should provide space for conscious reflection of how inequalities manifest through the microaggressions embedded in everyday interactions. Through opening

We need to be open to hearing how we perpetuate structural processes that are not consistent with the anti-racist, anti-colonialist, equality-driven values in community development.

up concrete spaces for thoughtful dialogue, IACD can begin to welcome the challenging conversations that emerge out of honest sharing of experience – and do so in a structured, deliberate manner aimed at behavioural change. This is a different process than internalised activities of self-care, moving beyond these individualised processes towards the idea of collective care. It is embracing the healing process of sharing to enable us to speak out about areas where we, as individuals, as an organisation and as a field can improve.

We see the complexity of this task. Every conversation we have about the ways power structures and hierarchical behaviour influence our work will change depending on who is in the room, how safe those inside that room feel, and the ability of each of us to be honest. Our own professional relationships with people that we care about and respect are not exempt from the privilege behaviours that we are trying to change. We recognise that the burden and risks of these conversations is not shared equally. We therefore need to accept that change requires us to turn towards and be open to perceptions of our behaviour that we may find painful.

The pathway for moving from our current space of inequalities and privilege in our field to a space that is more equitable and aware is not clear. No single answer emerged through our conversations, but what did come through is the need for clarity about the issues we continue to face in our practice and the depth of questions that these experiences raise. We continue to dream of new structures that welcome open dialogue. Some ideas that we have discussed to realising this dream include:

- Sharing experiences in order to process, organise, and define the behaviour, which in turn can neutralise the situation through focusing on naming the behaviour rather than the feeling generated as a result of the behaviour (e.g.: we now use the word 'mansplaining' to describe a behaviour,



The Fish conveys a well-oiled machine, working together, making room for all in a common environment

eliminating the need to describe the experience of what it feels like, purposefully or non-purposefully, to be patronised).

We need to be comfortable with the idea that we have things we need to change to be better.

- Identifying a term for when people do not understand, and seem to deliberately or intentionally not understand something important, for the interest of promoting or supporting their own privilege and/or dominance, and where it becomes your responsibility to explain this to the oppressive or privileged voice in the room.

- Realising that we may need to develop multiple terms to further define and understand white fragility, white privilege, cisgender behaviour, sexist behaviour, heteronormative behaviour, neuronormative behaviour, colonialist behaviours, and anyone trying to assert power over another via "otherising." Situations we encounter will benefit from having actions and feelings called out and named. Community development leaders have a responsibility to ensure that our language constantly evolves to address these ever-changing power dynamics.
- Intentionally creating spaces for groups to discuss microaggressions and experiences that are safe, protected, and built for the purposes of sharing and validating. This includes ensuring that these spaces are embedded in events, such as academic conferences, to enable people to address – through



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Portrait speaks of optimism and vision, taking a stand, a firm stand, and commitment

the political act of sharing – microaggressions in real-time.

- Realising and accepting without defensiveness that we will get it wrong. We need to be comfortable with the idea that we have things we need to change to be better. The dominance of the current models of hierarchical leadership means we revert back to the power dynamics we know. By becoming aware of the practices that perpetuate these dynamics we can find new models for community development leadership.
- Striving to articulate and reflect the values of community development by conceptualising a new model for leadership and collaboration.

embrace the challenge of breaking out of this mould. The work of self-examination, shared experiences, and behaviour change is difficult, yet will provide us with the awareness and tools we need to push ourselves and our field into the professionals and the organisation we know we can be. Our intention is that this article provides a starting point from which we can actively seek a new model for community development leadership. We believe that this work can push us to align our values with our practice and bring us closer to realising the dream of equality in community development.

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The work of self-examination, shared experiences, and behaviour change is difficult, yet will provide us with the awareness and tools we need to push ourselves and our field into the professionals and the organisation we know we can be.

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Community Supported Enterprises as a Local Development Option

Norman Walzer



Demographic changes including aging of the Post WWII Baby Boom population and migration from rural areas to larger centers challenge local decisionmakers around the world to find ways to keep rural areas vibrant places to live and work. These issues are prominent in the People, Places, and Power theme of the 2019 International Association of Community Development conference held in Dundee, Scotland. Residents must become more directly engaged in local decisions about places and must take action that shapes the future viability of where they live.

This article, based on the WCDC 2019 conference presentation, reports on research regarding increased use of community-supported or owned enterprises in England and the United States. Residents in both countries invest money and time to retain long-serving local businesses about to close. Many such businesses face closure because of retiring owners without local heirs or others interested in managing them. These businesses provide access to goods and services essential to social capital and the viability of communities, such as groceries or restaurants. This article describes several examples of local efforts so readers can see how rural residents are directly engaged in revitalizing their communities. Examples in England and the United States are presented to illustrate approaches used and results obtained, but similar activities are available in many other places.

Local development agencies in large cities often provide tax relief, low interest loans, land donations, and other forms of subsidies to large businesses. However, small businesses about to close due to retirements may not have access to these incentives. Thus, faced with loss of an essential business, residents in small communities pool their funds to purchase and manage them. These actions involve several approaches and legal structures, such as cooperatives or nonprofits. They all involve investments by residents in a business venture with a social purpose, such as improving quality of life. They are commonly termed Community Supported or Community Owned Enterprises but should not be confused with philanthropic groups that

operate business ventures as part of their social missions with donations raised by the parent organization.

Community-owned or supported enterprises described in this article are economically sustainable and provide opportunities for residents to invest both money and time to make them succeed. Residents are engaged in financing and managing the operations. Building social capital is a critical part of the effort. Investors often do not expect a financial return but want to enhance quality of life in the community by supporting community interests with access to essential services.

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Creative Uses of Community Supported Enterprises

Strategic approaches used to start community supported enterprises differ depending on local conditions and desired outcomes. For instance, long-term concerns about rural isolation and loneliness led the Plunkett Foundation to help organize local groups in areas of rural England to save community pubs that were closing due to shrinking markets (Plunkett Foundation 2019a). Population

declines and loss of business activities in general had left the pubs as one of last social gathering places in some towns. (Plunkett Foundation 2019b).

The Plunkett Foundation organizes local groups, provides educational materials, and helps convert pubs into social centers with a wide range of services. These efforts have expanded to community shops that serve elderly and other groups in places where these services would not otherwise exist. The shops are managed by local groups and provide opportunities for both elderly residents and youth to engage in community activities as described in annual reports by the Plunkett Foundation (Plunkett Foundation, 2019b).

Based on surveys of those engaged in these efforts, representatives of community shops are optimistic about future operations with 66 percent reporting confidence in their prospects for 2019. Indeed, 16 new shops and 11 community pubs opened in 2018 with a 100 percent survival rate demonstrating the success (Plunkett Foundation, 2019b p.2). Community shops are most common in Southwest, Southern, and Central England and Wales. Interest was shown by 17 places in Scotland based on inquiries in 2018 to the Plunkett Foundation (Plunkett Foundation, 2019b, p.6).

The Plunkett Foundation also works with rural churches facing dwindling attendance, making it difficult to maintain old buildings that are important landmarks in the community (Plunkett Foundation, 2017). Financially, these

churches are no longer able to meet the needs of elderly or other needy populations with few other resources in remote rural places. Thus, Plunkett uses a similar approach in supporting local groups to help churches add part-time compatible commercial activities such as food pantries, low-cost clothing outlets, working spaces, and other options to their activities. Revenues generated help finance other church sponsored activities plus build social capital that strengthens the long-term prosperity of the rural places.

Somewhat different approaches have been tried elsewhere. Traditional businesses, such as grocery stores or restaurants, in small towns have succeeded in the U.S. A survey of more than 40 such efforts in the U.S. by Norman Walzer and Jessica Sandoval documented key elements in these successes (Walzer and Sandoval, 2016). Vermont has led these efforts with a state-local government initiative, the Vermont Preservation Trust that organizes and guides local groups interested in reopening essential businesses that have closed, some because of retiring business owners.

Two success stories from Vermont are discussed next to illustrate different issues and how they were initiated. In the case of Shrewsbury Cooperative, Pierce's Grove Store (<http://www.piercesstore.com>), a family had operated a general store in a rural town with 1,056 residents. When the last family member could no longer manage the store, it closed. The family left a bequest for another group to continue this type of activity. The Preservation Trust, a state agency in Vermont, organized a request for proposals (RFP) and a local group organized to reopen the general store as a cooperative.

The organizing group raised nearly \$125,000 from interested residents and now has a part-time manager with a small staff. Volunteers do much of the work and members of the Coop receive a discount on purchases but no dividends from revenues. Recent customer evaluations gave high marks and the specialty grocery store continues to succeed. It sells both basic grocery items and crafts – artisan works from local producers which builds strong local bonds and social capital.

Another approach was used by the Hinesburgh Public House (HPH), also in rural Vermont (<http://hinesburghpublichouse.com>). It was organized as a Social Benefit

Corporation to provide residents in nine struggling communities with high quality food at affordable prices plus offers quality jobs at competitive wages with benefits. HPH shares profits from a monthly community supper co-sponsored with local non-profit organizations that promote the event. HPH also supports the local economy by purchasing inputs from local sources when possible which builds further support.

Lessons Learned

After reviews of more than 40 community supported enterprises in the U.S. and limited contacts in Western Europe, the author identified several key elements in ventures that are economically sustainable and continue to generate active public participation. These findings are useful in considering similar ventures around the globe:

- A clearly recognized and agreed-upon need for the enterprise in the community;
- A local person or group with credibility who believes in and champions the cause;
- Progress on the project is communicated regularly with the public, especially in the early stages to build an awareness and successes;
- Goods and services provided must meet market needs and be economically viable for local market conditions; and
- The enterprise must follow a sustainable business model without additional investments from the public on a regular basis.

Rural communities around the world will continue to decline in population in the foreseeable future due to changing demographics. Innovative ways to finance essential services are being explored by local leaders. This article

contributes to these developments through providing several examples in rural England and the U.S. on how to build social capital and make small rural communities more attractive to current and prospective residents.

Further Research Opportunity

Variations of the community owned financing model described above are used around the world to address unique local needs. While specific financing methods vary, they all involve a community supported business venture with a common social purpose. Based on the IACD conferences in Scotland and Ireland, the author is compiling information and analyses of successful practices in other countries. This data will be included in an edited research volume that will help local practitioners learn about and adopt promising practices. Potential authors of chapters analysing these practices should contact Norman Walzer at nwalzer@niu.edu at their earliest convenience.

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The Cultural Journey of a City

Stewart Murdoch



As part of the WCDC2019 'unconference' programme on Tuesday afternoon, a walking tour of the cultural agencies in the centre of Dundee was organised by Stewart Murdoch, IACD Global Ambassador and Dundee City Council's Director for Leisure and Culture. Here, Stewart reflects on the role the city of Dundee played in bringing the cultural aspects of Scottish community development to life at an international conference.

The city

Dundee has a number of claims to fame, but perhaps the one we should shout loudest about is that it is one of very few cities to have sustained a commitment to 'culture led regeneration' while at the same time actively investing in and developing its approach to 'community led regeneration'.

This dual approach to Dundee's development is far from an untrodden avenue for this city. In fact, Dundee's deliberate two-pronged approach goes back well over thirty years. This thoughtful approach to celebrating culture has helped to re-image a post-industrial city in the eyes of its citizens and visitors. Although the city's method benefits from strong cross-party support, the challenge for this city as it moves into the future is how it will continue to sustain both aspects of this approach in the face of current economic circumstances.

The walking journey

On an unusually sunny Tuesday afternoon, delegates gathered at the Dalhousie Conference Centre for what was expected to be a one-and-a-half-hour walk. If you are familiar with Gilligan's Island, you might see where this is heading.

The scope of this play was enormous - not only was there a cast of hundreds, the play actually required the audience to be bussed around the city to a range of site-specific venues.

Each group was led by both a representative of the cultural sector and a community representative. The groups were to visit the same organisations - each of which had agreed to a brief visit.

The plan was that each group would walk in different directions around the circuit to avoid arriving at the same venue at the same time. Well, that was the theory! In the wonderful chaos that is reality, groups bumped into each other, people defected from one group to another, overstayed their allotted time and got lost.

Highlights from selected journey locations

Location 1: Dundee REP and Scottish Dance Theatre

Our first stop was possibly the longest established cultural agency on the tour, with strong community roots in the city and community outreach in its DNA. It achieved international recognition for the community play 'Witches Blood', first produced in 1987 and then repeated in 1989. The scope of this play was enormous - not only was there a cast of hundreds, the play actually required the audience to be bussed around the city to a range of site-specific venues. Audiences heard the tragic story of the last witch to be hanged in the city and the combining the play with audience interaction with different locations in the city enabled them to understand better their city's history.

Location 2: Dundee Contemporary Arts (DCA)

Next on the tour was a visit to the DCA. Opened in 1999 it had been conceived and developed at the time of an earlier economic crisis in local government finance and in the face of not inconsiderable political opposition. How could a city facing a housing crisis justify investment in what was the largest new contemporary art gallery in Scotland? Twenty years later the DCA's impact on the city is immeasurable. In addition to the art galleries, foyer and social facilities, it has two cinemas showing an



incredibly diverse range of films, the Dundee Print Studio, a young person's studio, the Visual Research Centre (run by the University of Dundee) and a shop. It has become the centre of the city's cultural renaissance and has hosted a portfolio of international exhibitions.

Location 4: Dundee Heritage Trust (DHT)

The tour then moved onwards to explore the heart of the Waterfront regeneration project, in which lies the Discovery visitor centre. Built in 1901, the RRS Discovery was the first ship to be designed specifically to conduct scientific research. After harnessing the expertise of the Dundee whaling industry to design a ship able to withstand the conditions of the Antarctic, Captain Scott sailed the RRS Discovery for her three-year exploration of the Antarctic. The DHT fits well with a city whose economy today is based on higher education, bio-medical research, computer games and design. Indeed, it shows a quite different side to Dundee from the heavy engineering and textile manufacture of the past.

Location 5: V&A Dundee

Our next stop was the newest and by far the grandest of the city's cultural attractions: the V&A Museum of Design. Opened in 2018, the striking building was designed by Japanese architect Kengo Kuma. It projects out into the river Tay and was inspired by the cliffs and sea arches of the north east of Scotland. For many visitors the building also reflects the ice cliffs against which RRS Discovery was berthed in Antarctica. The opening of an internationally acclaimed national museum on the shores of the Tay is symbolic of our changing city.

Location 7: Slessor Gardens

We were then able to walk through the

newly formed 'green square' opposite the V&A which provides a vista from the city centre to the river. To reinforce links with the city's past, bronze plaques commemorating those who achieved medical, botanical, scientific, mechanical, astronomical and social change are embedded around the gardens. These have been privately sponsored and are another artist-led regeneration project.

Location 8: The Caird Hall and City Square

Moving towards the city centre, we took full advantage of Dundee being one of the first cities in Scotland to pedestrianise its city centre and to invest in a significant programme of public art. The legacy of this is evidenced across the city, but it is truly most visible in the city centre - bronze statues of some of the many comic characters to come out of the DC Thomson publishing business decorate the square to truly celebrate our city's colourful history.

Location 9: McManus Art Galleries and Museum

The location of the International Reception, and voted Dundee's most popular building, the city's art gallery and museum has just celebrated its 150th anniversary. A stunning building housing eight galleries, including royal collections, we were able to gain a deeper insight into Dundee and her people.

Location 10: Verdant Works

Completing the circuit of cultural agencies, the Verdant Works is owned and operated by the Dundee Heritage Trust. It is based in one of the last surviving jute mills in the city. It tells the story of how Dundee became a veritable Jutopolis with a global market. The unique circumstances which created this monopoly, the wealth it generated, and the exploitative conditions under which

this wealth was created are all highlighted.

This was a fitting location to end our tour - the history of Dundee's jute mills highlights how our city got its first taste of globalisation early. Over a period of fifty years, Dundee's mills closed one after another and the machinery was shipped to India and Bangladesh. The local workforce, comprising half of all jobs in the city, were progressively made redundant and for many families the legacy of these closures remains three or four generations later.

There was a shared sense of social purpose and collaborative support for Dundee's approach which it would be very hard to replicate.

Summary

Dundee's citizens have a great pride in its history and its renaissance. Delegates could not help but be impressed by the passion of those they met in the different cultural agencies. There was a shared sense of social purpose and collaborative support for Dundee's approach which it would be very hard to replicate. Dundee's approach evolved over many decades - but it could be wiped out if the civic commitment to nurturing the sector and recognising its contribution is not given the priority it deserves.

Stewart Murdoch is the IACD Global Ambassador and was Dundee City Council's Director for Leisure and Culture. He began his much-deserved retirement at the start of 2020.





Last year together with my colleagues I attended the World Community Development Conference (WCDC), on behalf of Malta's Foundation for Social Welfare Services. Throughout the conference we got to mingle and network with people involved in all aspects of community development from research to project planning and implementation, and from participants to initiative managers. After the conference, we also participated in three practice exchanges held in collaboration with a organisations based around Dundee and in the highland area of Perthshire. Understanding how diverse and creative community development work can be, is what stuck with me most. Getting the opportunity to immerse myself in the community development projects we observed and living the Scottish highland culture, was for me the highlight of this enriching experience.

Elaine Attard





Visualising People and Place: embedding design-thinking in Dundee's development

Annie Marrs



Dundee is a UNESCO City of Design, a designation awarded in 2014 that acknowledges the role that design industries like textiles, electronics, print and others have played in the development of the city and highlights the city's commitment to using design to improve the city and the lives of the people who live here.

Our UNESCO status demonstrates that Dundee is on a journey, and that it is committed to using creativity as part of that journey. This creativity was reflected throughout the programme in WCDC2019. Taking place in one of the 180 UNESCO Creative Cities, the conference enabled us to bring delegates from other Creative Cities together to begin a dialogue about hosting a creative design festival here in Dundee. While the current pandemic may have diverted our focus to the immediate challenges facing our city, the depth of the challenge we now face has

only deepened our commitment to championing the role creativity and design play in the development of people and place. But what does using design to improve lives actually look like?

The Poster Playground: a tool for citizen engagement

In May 2019, we opened our annual Dundee Design Festival in The Keiller Centre, a typical 70s shopping centre hidden behind the city-centre high street. Although in recent years it has become somewhat overlooked, it still generates significant footfall and holds

deep emotional connections for many local people.

The producers of the 2019 festival, Dundee-based design business Agency of None, had selected the broad theme of 'Liveable / Loveable Cities.' Over 8 days, and through the festival's many design interventions, exhibitions, workshops and events, we explored how Dundonians felt about their city. The Poster Playground was at the core of the festival, a design tool that supported citizens to explore the way they feel about their city and their place in it. Unlike regular surveys, the Poster

Playground was a value-led exploration: there were no choices to make. Through three different design tools – dirty mono-printmaking with wooden blocks, clean colourful building blocks, and a digital version hosted on the Design Festival website – the Poster Playground simply asked one thing of the participants: to 'Say Something About Your City'. Through using a series of tools to play with and use, the public were able to explore their thinking and visualise their statements. Through the design tools, people were able to personalise and add further meaning to their statements.

The joy of Poster Playground was this visualisation of people's statements. Participants were encouraged to leave the A4-sized posters with us, and at the end of each day these posters were pasted up on hoardings at Slessor Gardens, the newly developed open space next to the V&A Museum. The posters created an evolving wall of comments, thoughts and feelings about Dundee.

This proved to be a powerful tool. It strengthened people's messages, extending the mechanisms by which a wider range of views can influence the perceptions and understanding of key decision makers. People were able to see that their experiences are shared and valued across the city. They are able to see that the way they feel, or the values they hold close, are not only respected but also held by others. Through this, we are able to identify and amplify what is most important to the people of Dundee. We are able to create a collective voice. During the last year, we've continued to explore uses for this set of tools. Poster Playground became a mobile workshop which visited local schools. It became a tool for delegates to engage with a conference programme in the Include

Conference in Detroit, USA. Watching the way that people engaged the tools in different contexts helped designers Ryan Mcleod and Lyall Bruce gain insight into exactly why this tool works so well.

Building Back Better: adapting design processes to respond to Covid-19

The Poster Playground has demonstrated its power to engage with the public in creative ways. But I'm not writing this article to tell you about

people who live there think. We experience survey after survey asking question after question, looking to get the answers to what people want to happen locally. More green space? Less dog fouling? Better street lighting? These surveys are often binary in their approach – choice focused rather than value led.

In early 2020 we were in the throes of planning the 2021 festival and had been thinking through taking Poster

Playground on the road to engage people in the themes for the 2021 design festival. Then, Covid-19 hit and we found ourselves within a global pandemic unlike anything we've ever experienced.

What will our city look like on the other side of lockdown, in an environment where physical distancing restricts our most basic desire – to come together? There was the quick realisation that places needed to think through creating and implementing recovery plans. What is also clear is that those recovery

plans will be led by council officers. We need to ensure that the voice of Dundee's citizens is at the heart of our city's recovery plan. And, due to our work preparing for the 2021 festival, we had a digital platform (almost) ready to take on this role.

We knew that we needed to develop an understanding of how people have been feeling during the pandemic. This is where the magic of the way our city works comes together. Partnership working and collaborations have always been at the heart of what happens in Dundee, and by working in partnership with Creative Dundee we were able to adapt our work preparing for the festival and get this up and running under the banner of 'We Dundee'.



Places, or rather the people who run places, are desperate to know what the people who live there think.

something that happened a year ago. Rather, I want to share with you how the central concept of the Design Festival – using design as a communication tool for citizen engagement – has influenced our city-wide response to the Covid-19 crisis.

Places, or rather the people who run places, are desperate to know what the

In 2013, 'We Dundee' was part of Dundee's bid to become UK City of Culture. This was a citizen engagement process which crowdsourced thousands of thoughts, opinions and ideas about Dundee. The power of that platform and its ability to amplify the voices of citizens resulted in a legacy in which, despite Dundee not being awarded the title of City of Culture, many of those ideas have since been delivered.

Collective solutions: design-thinking as a bridge to bring together people, place and power

By combining 'We Dundee' and Poster Playground, we've been able to respond immediately to the questions raised by the pandemic and develop a mass citizen engagement platform to collect the values, experiences and stories of people during this time. During the Covid-19 crisis, we've heard many of the

This proved to be a powerful tool. It strengthened people's messages, extending the mechanisms by which a wider range of views can influence the perceptions and understanding of key decision makers. People were able to see that their experiences are shared and valued across the city.

phrases like 'build back better' and 'new normal'. But if we are going to achieve that, we need to change the way that we generate ideas, and change the way we engage with citizens. In short, to achieve the goal of building back better, we need to ensure that people are more than just a group of people to survey.

As a UNESCO Creative City, embedding creativity is at the heart of all urban development plans. It is paradoxical therefore to think that a few decision makers are best placed to solve the problems we collectively face. We face them together, therefore we need to solve them together. As we begin to look towards ways to recover from this pandemic, this is the moment to genuinely ensure that power in our place – in our city – is in the hands of Dundonians. Through 'We Dundee', we intend to achieve exactly that.

You can access 'We Dundee' at: www.wedundee.com

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DigiShakti: Digital Empowerment of Urban and Rural Women in Maharashtra, India

Sonia Garcha



"If digital is the way forward for India, then women must use digital technology with ease."

Nirmala Panand, an "Anganwadi" preschool teacher from Shindethackerwasti, a tribal village about 40 kilometres from Pune City, also works as a community worker in the Women's Empowerment program. Nirmala's experience of attending a local tribal wedding in her village was a practice of 'DigShakti' – Digital Empowerment in social transformation. In her village riddled with blind beliefs, no priest was ready to perform wedding rites for the tribal couple. Digitally Empowered Nirmala rose to the occasion and downloaded the wedding rites recited by a priest on her smart phone. The couple got married listening to the online chanting of the wedding rites. This IOT (Internet of things) used in rural India and how a woman's ability to access information paved the way solve community problems.

Initially, Nirmala used a feature phone only for making phone calls. After attending the digital empowerment training, she gained the confidence to use a smartphone. A smartphone was given by the Indian Government to all preschool teachers for monitoring daily attendance of school children, and it became her device in doing community work. Nirmala is now a master trainer and trains other teachers! During the COVID-19 pandemic in April 2020, she became the point of contact in the community to conduct a needs assessment for providing food kits to the migrant workers family in her village.

A mix of economic, social and cultural factors placed against the backdrop of a



Training session

deeply patriarchal setup in India has resulted in reduced access to digital technology amongst women. Low literacy levels and lack of digital awareness led to women developing a fear for using digital technology which has led to an increased dependency on the menfolk, children or local agents for simple tasks like tracking bank accounts, booking bus/train tickets, etc.

"DigiShakti", the Digital Empowerment of women, is a process to overcome the digital gender gap, provide an opportunity to the women to access financial services and information, and use digital technology to improve their daily lives. It also empowers them to know "what not to do with digital technology" and stay safe online and on social media.

WCDC2019 provided an opportunity for sharing and learning best practices across varied contexts from community practitioners across the globe and to learn how the relationship between people, place and power is changing

and empowering communities. Sharing one of the analogies at the conference that one of my co-presenters drew, "You may have a Porsche parked in your garage but what use is it if you cannot drive it" could be a remark on the importance of DigiShakti to equip grassroots communities for adaptation of digital technology leading to digital empowerment.

The future in India is digital and through "DigiShakti," women are empowered through increased awareness and independence in use of digital technology to enable them to contribute towards socio-economic development.

Changing Indian Scene

The number of 'Nirmalas' in Indian cities and villages is growing. The low cost of using the internet has led to fast growth in acquiring smart phones, which are affordable across all social strata. Indian consumers use an average of "1GB of Mobile Broadband data" every day costing under Rs. 3 (0.40 USD). In 2017, the cost of 1GB in India was just 1.53% of

per capita income and was the cheapest among the world's 61 low-and-middle-income countries. According to the UN, the Internet is 'affordable' in a country if it costs 2% or lower than per capita income.

India has gone digital in a big way. Over 90% of Indian households have access to mobile phones and close to 40% of the Indian population now has internet access. Another major development is 99% of adults have a digital identity and 100% of households have bank accounts. This access has allowed innovative interlinking of mobile phones and the development of government schemes like Jan Dhan, Aadhaar. Jan Dhan Yojana is the financial inclusion program of the Government of India that aims to expand and provide affordable access to financial services such as bank accounts, remittances, credit, insurance and pensions. Aadhaar is a 12-digit individual identification number issued by the Unique Identification Authority of India and serves as a proof of identity and address. The government and private players now are able to reach out to a majority of the unreached rural and urban population across the length and breadth of the nation through SMS and voice calls.

India's approach to financial inclusion through the use of mobile technology helped provide access to basic financial products – a basic bank account, an affordable need-based credit card, remittance, insurance and pension services. The first step of Financial Inclusion led to the introduction of women to the banking sector by opening bank accounts, and the second step was to empower them to access the financial services for their socio-economic development. The lack of Financial and Digital Literacy amongst the women and limited access to mobile technology became major challenges. So instead of fast-tracking financial inclusion for everyone, digitisation in reality has widened the divide between men and women. This issue is not unique to India, but is spread across South Asia.

The Covid-19 pandemic made digital access essential to share information about emergency welfare measures provided by the government. More critical was how to access existing schemes in both urban and rural communities. During the Covid-19 pandemic, Whatsapp is being widely used to broadcast information about the relief measures being announced by the Government. The Government has been using bulk messaging with links for schemes to reach out to population without smart phones.

Why did DST initiate DigiShakti?

A study conducted by Development Support Team (DST), a Pune based NGO in urban communities of Pune City, revealed several interesting aspects of women's use of mobile phones. More than 70% of the women who had access to technology and Internet through their smart phones fear using digital technology, which has led them to an increased dependency on menfolk/children for even ordinary daily life activities like booking cooking gas cylinders or paying for services like electricity bills. Another challenge was exploitation through agents in the community charging women exorbitant fees for information access. Ironically, the move towards mass use of digital platforms to complete even everyday tasks meant that women had begun to rely heavily on men even for routine activities like accessing children's school results, online school admission processes, online gas cylinder bookings, etc.

Digitisation in reality has widened the divide between men and women.

For DST, this study showed that digital literacy training was another essential dimension in the process of empowering community women. DST has been working for over three decades with urban and rural women of Maharashtra through the promotion and strengthening of community-based, community-owned institutions – Self Help Groups and Federations. It focuses on strengthening the organisational structure of the weaker sections of the society and practices people's participation in self-development. DST identified that digital empowerment, or "DigiShakti" as it was named, would enhance women's active participation and involvement in the community development processes. DST therefore decided to roll out tailor-made Digital Literacy programs to equip the community women for the new digital environment.

'DigiShakti' - Digital Empowerment program

While DST was working on DigiShakti, the Development Sector too was deliberating over the question, "What do we mean by Digital Empowerment and how do we do it?" At the same time, implementation of laws on 'Corporate Social Responsibility'

involved the Corporate sector in developing a framework for Digital Literacy for community women with basic literacy. These shifts resulted in the implementation of training programs across a range of urban communities. However, arriving at a standard training module suited for urban communities with various socio-economic backgrounds became illusive for most organizations working in the field of Digital Literacy. DST thus developed a framework for "Digital Literacy for Community Women" training packages that provide participants with basic digital knowledge which covers advantages and disadvantages digital technology, including: communication and social media; accessing digital information and services; opportunities for women entrepreneurs in digital space; and staying safe online and on social media.

Impact

This framework was implemented for a mix of urban and rural communities and initially more than 2000 women were trained through on-site digital training programs. Some of them, like Nirmala, are now proficient in using this new-found knowledge for their community work. The most significant impact of the Digital Empowerment program is the increased participation of community women in community development programs both in the urban and rural communities. As a next step, sessions on opportunities in the digital space were conducted for 300+ entrepreneurs. A Digital Literacy workshop on Cyber Crime and Trolling and how to be safe on social media was conducted for Civil Society Organizations.

A further significant impact is the increase in women using smart phones and accessing online services. For instance, they register mobile numbers for tracking the banking transactions, electricity/water bills, book tickets, book their Ola/Uber cabs or auto-rickshaws. Women from rural Self Help Groups who have to walk 10-15kilometres to the bank, a trip which previously resulted in a day's wage loss whenever they needed to go to the bank, proudly share that now they track their bank transactions on their smart phones and thereby save time, money and physical energy.

These digitally empowered women have also learnt about the disadvantages of social media through understanding how their personal photos and information could be misused. They now pass on this knowledge on to other women in their communities. Similarly, they know about the health hazards caused by overuse and addiction to digital technology. Mothers of



Nirmala graduating the training programme

young and adolescent children are now aware of the various apps and are therefore in a stronger position to be able to protect them from the risks associated with digital technologies. Mothers have also registered their mobile numbers with their schools to receive messages about the children.

A further impact is specific to women entrepreneurs like vegetable vendors and owners of small grocery stores. After participating in the program, they have started to use Paytm and other online payment modes, which has strengthened their businesses and increased their turnover.

Digishakti Impact during COVID-19 pandemic

Digishakti gained even more relevance during COVID-19 to share relevant schemes, needs assessment and more importantly, a tool to stay connected with the communities we work with. Locally, we have learned that panic due to fake WhatsApp messages/videos and emails impersonating various organisations, including WHO, is common. Increasing numbers of Covid-19 cases and the announcement of the lockdown in India has created panic and uncertainty, and particularly impacted the urban poor – especially the daily wage earners and small businesses. As of 1st May 2020, in India had 34,934 cases, 1% of the global confirmed cases with 10,498 cases in Maharashtra.

The Government announced a number of welfare packages including additional distribution of free wheat, rice and pulses through the Public Distribution System, cash transfers, advance payments for pensions, and the quick start of public schemes for generating employment. Since a large number of informal sector workers lack awareness, digital capacities



Covid-19 relief efforts

and access to such service providers and schemes was a challenge.

It was important that these messages reach urban and rural community women so that they are able to take full advantage of these benefits. These messages along with the guidelines were translated in Marathi (a local language) and shared through calls, text messages and WhatsApp.

They now have access to information that was previously unavailable, resulting in women being able to save time and money as well as increase their independence and reduce potential risks for them and their children.

Access to digital technology enabled our "Digitally Empowered Community Workers" who used digital technology to overcome the challenges of a strict lockdown and social distancing. The technology enabled women to:

- Communicate with the organization staff on the status in the communities
- Conduct the needs assessment and identify vulnerable families
- Distribute food kits and share lists of beneficiaries through WhatsApp
- Share various government schemes with the women in the community through calls, SMS and WhatsApp

Further benefits during the pandemic include Community Women, who are employed as domestic workers, housekeeping staff, etc, shared that they were able to track their wages for the

month of March as these payments had been transferred online by their employers and also identify when the Rs. 500 had been deposited by the government. Crucially, they were also able to use digital payment methods to buy groceries as they were unable to go to the bank to withdraw cash.

The "digitally empowered women entrepreneurs" have been able to leverage increased business turnover by using digital technology to take orders through Whatsapp and also adopt Digital payment options like Paytm and GooglePay facilitate home delivery options.

Our work demonstrates the social, economic and political impact of digitally empowering women. Through enabling access to training, women have overcome their fear of technology and developed a comfort and ease in using digital technology in personal, social and economic spheres of life. They now have access to information that was previously unavailable, resulting in women being able to save time and money as well as increase their independence and reduce potential risks for them and their children. Going ahead, these empowered women can transform challenges into opportunities, accelerating socio-economic development through active participation in the Digital India revolution!

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Earth as Community: putting nature, communities and community development at the heart of tackling climate change, biodiversity loss and social justice

Helena Kettleborough



To tackle the climate emergency, biodiversity loss and social justice, it is necessary to put nature, communities and community development together at the heart of our approaches. This can be summed up by the lovely phrase Earth as Community.



Between the mountains and the sea, human communities and our planet together - copyright Phil Barton

As I finalise this article, Covid-19 has stopped society in its tracks and opened the door to new directions and an end to business as usual. At the WCDC 2019, the Climate Justice Panel considered four oral presentations mapping out such new futures: green urbanism in the USA, the Anthropocene in Dundee, water and sanitation in the Amazon and, from myself, exploring Earth as Community.

To tackle the climate emergency, biodiversity loss and social justice, it is necessary to put nature, communities and community development together at the heart of our approaches. This can be summed up by the lovely phrase Earth as Community; the bringing together of the human and more-than-human communities, not in a monetary relationship or a relationship of resources, but a joining of the heart. Such an idea represents a total shift in mind set or paradigm, encouraging us to think at one and the same time of nature

and humans and their mutual interdependence.

In these challenging lockdown times, how can we understand the concept of Earth as Community as something meaningful which might lead to action? Three key factors influenced my thinking in the development of this concept.

The first element of understanding Earth as Community is through my experience as a community activist and bringing up my children on a diverse street in inner

city Manchester. Here, people from four continents and eighteen countries live together in peace and harmony. In the book *Stories of a Manchester Street*, neighbours talk of caring for each other, organising litter picks, neighbourhood days, planting trees and holding carbon literacy training (Barton and Bishop, 2019). Through such participation I learnt the power of communities working together to make a difference.

The second influence on my thinking is my career in community development as

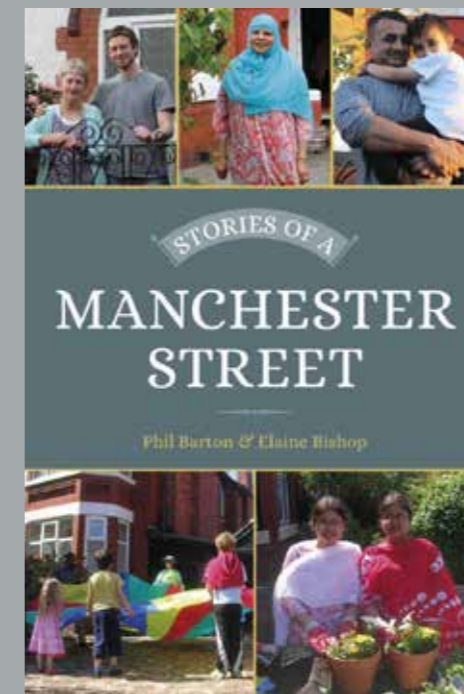
a women's officer, youth worker with girls, urban regeneration co-ordinator and head of a social inclusion unit. The regional partnership North West Together We Can worked to deliver empowerment training and learning for communities and public sector workers in the Northwest of England. I learnt that communities can achieve real and lasting changes working together if they are given the support and resources they need: workers, funding, space to meet and opportunities for learning.

The third and final strand of my journey to Earth as Community is learning about what humanity is doing to the planet. For over two decades, I have collected newspaper cuttings on biodiversity loss, climate change and social justice (Kettleborough, 2019). From the early warnings from the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment in 2005, to where we are now, with the planet burning from the Amazon rainforest, to California, Indonesia and Australia. The glaciers are retreating and all over the world the ice caps are melting. There is flooding in Mozambique, Wales and Venice. As Prince Ea recounts, all the big animals of our childhood and our children's books are threatened with extinction (2015).

Research now indicates that Covid-19 may have arisen from the damage humanity is inflicting on nature (Carrington, 2020). Humanity is caught in an economic system that is making billions of people very poor and creating a tiny percentage of very rich people and destroying our natural life support systems. We have only a short time to make a difference.

In these challenging lockdown times, how can we understand the concept of Earth as Community as something meaningful which might lead to action?

Over the last two decades, I have come to see that we need a new story for our work with communities to join these different strands together. How might we get a positive story that can unify us all? The beginnings of such a new story emerged on Christmas Eve 1968, when three human astronauts saw the earth rising over the moon, seeing Earth as the bright and shimmering jewel in the splendid blackness of the cosmos. This is a feeling since echoed by the five



Examples of living together: *Stories of a Manchester Street* - photos copyright Phil Barton, copyright Phil Barton and Elaine Bishop, published by the Manchester

hundred astronauts and cosmonauts who have seen planet Earth from space reflecting on her beauty and her fragility (Jackson, 2017).

This journey to Earth as Community relates closely to the themes of the Dundee 2019 World Community Development Conference of People, Place and Power. People are the human and more-than-human together. Place is work from the street, to the ward, to the city, to the bioregion, to the nation state, continent and the planet. Power is the power of the human over the more-than-human, the power expressed in the social justice issues of today and the power of humans to make changes when working together in communities.

Nearly a year after Dundee 2019, with Covid-19 dominating the headlines, how can we start to put nature, communities and community development at the heart of our practical and strategic work for social justice and the climate emergency? For philosopher Satish Kumar, we all have the power to make change. Satish suggests that we can all become "artists, creators, makers, musicians, singers, managers and doers in daily life" (Kumar, 2017). As we spend time at home and come to appreciate nature more, we might glimpse where we actually live, not in our homes and streets but between the mountains and the sea, between the land and the sky, between ourselves and the planet herself.

We already have a number of directions forward. There are the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030 (SDGs) which offer guidelines for holistic action. We have a range of thinkers and dreamers who see that we live on our planet, in 'communion with the Earth' as Thomas Berry expresses it (1988, 1999). We have others who have created the Earth Charter which gives the planet and nature rights (2000).

How might we start with community development? Studies suggest that communities and indigenous communities are crucial to the struggle to get climate justice and a zero-carbon world, most recently a report from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem services (IPBES, 2019, Banning-Lover, 2017). Other studies suggest that the involvement of everyone is crucial to making change happen (Harley & Scandrett, 2019). In community development, we know how to work with people, to bring people together, to identify and solve problems and to take action.

Communities and indigenous communities are crucial to the struggle to get climate justice and a zero-carbon world.

A way forward could be to work together on Creating a Roadmap for Earth as Community as part of the International Association of Community Development. Such a map might consider:

- Can we learn together to see Earth as Community as a new map for us all, acknowledging and honouring our work to date?
- Whenever we talk about communities needing resources, we also talk about the resources nature needs as well.
- Creating debates about our definitions of community development; can we include Earth?
- In talking about the future, rather than telling stories of how bad it is, we create and share stories of how we made the difference: how we became carbon neutral, how we saved our precious swallows, our daddy long legs and our orangutans.
- Ensuring we keep systemic and holistic approaches alongside working locally, using the UN SDGs, and stories about inspirational cities and communities

which are going carbon neutral and biodiversity friendly.

- Using our skills and knowledge in community development to prevent the sense of paralysis generated by looking at the scale of the problems. Through starting with the small and the local to support people to incrementally create wins and feel hope.

This is a call to become community development workers and activists not just for our human communities, but for our animal, bird, insect and climate communities as well. We can take heart and inspiration from movements around the world, like the Green Belt Movement in Kenya. Under the leadership of Nobel Prize Winner Professor Wangari Matthai, this movement brought together women, local communities, nature and trees to create a movement which has planted an inspiring 52 million trees.

What might be the immediate steps in this time of reflection created by Covid-19? There is welcome news, confirmed by President Anna Clarke, of IACD moving towards a strategic and values-based approach to climate justice. The author suggests community development practitioners might create roadmaps with communities to explore the ideas inherent in the concept of

Earth as Community. These roadmaps could then be shared with others, including the IACD and policy makers as a determined response to the pandemic and a way to move towards ecologically and socially just futures.

With thanks to Phil Barton, Elaine Bishop and Victoria Jupp Kina for their contribution. The author welcomes any feedback and Roadmaps!

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Notes

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Earth Rising: a first view of planet earth as a whole - copyright NASA

Notes

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