



DiCE is a planning and evaluation framework, developed by community development specialists, to enable organisations to carry out effective community empowerment

- Increasing skills, knowledge and confidence
- Promoting equality and inclusion
- Bringing people together around common issues and concerns
- Building positive relationships across communities and groups and enabling co-operative working
- Encouraging and enabling communities to influence decision making in public services

DiCE takes the form of a planning and evaluation circle, incorporating the essential aspects of community wellbeing and community empowerment



DiCE operates from the basis that community empowerment doesn't just happen - there are specific things that need to be considered and done to achieve the greater outcomes that community empowerment can offer - for individuals, communities, agencies and wider society.

In DiCE, 'community empowerment' is described through 5 distinct but inter-related 'dimensions'. It helps our understanding of community empowerment to recognise that empowered communities, whether geographic, of identity or of interest are:

Confident
Inclusive
Organised
Cooperative
Influential

In brief – these five dimensions are about the way in which you work and what happens as a result so, for example, you work in a way which:

- increases skills, knowledge, confidence and a belief that people can make a difference – this leads to **'confident'** communities
- recognises that discrimination exists, promotes equality of opportunity and good relations between groups and challenges inequality and exclusion – this leads to **'inclusive'** communities
- brings people together around common issues and concerns in organisations and groups that are open, democratic and accountable – this leads to **'organised'** communities
- builds positive relationships across groups, identifies common messages, develops and maintains links to national bodies and promotes partnership working – this leads to **'cooperative'** communities
- encourages and equips communities to take part and influence decisions, services and activities – this leads to **'influential'** communities

A brief explanation of the different sections of the circle



Stakeholders in the community

This section acknowledges that, in order to travel towards your outcomes, you need to consider WHO is the focus of your actions - and who will benefit. It is situated around the outside of the circle, indicating that these stakeholders may be involved at any – or all – points of the work.

Stakeholders in delivery

This section recognises that we rarely work alone – and if we do we are unlikely to realise our potential. Different people and different organisations have a whole variety of skills, knowledge, experience, resources and approaches to offer and you can benefit from identifying and communicating with your allies! You might also need to communicate with, and bring on board, people with different agendas. Again, it is situated around the outside of the circle because different people will be involved at different times for different reasons.

Reflect and learn

Here, you are encouraged to reflect on and analyse the current situation, considering what has gone before, what has been learned and what you are building on. This section of the circle is about making sure that you are working from ‘where you are at’ rather than going over old ground, duplicating or starting at a point that has no connection with what has gone before.

Others’ agendas

Your work is likely to be linked, in some way, to a bigger, wider agenda so this section of the planning circle is about giving you the opportunity to think about what that might be. It is about finding out what the motivation for the piece of work is and the broader context that it sits in.

Vision

What do you – and your stakeholders – want to achieve? Here you are encouraged to identify your joint vision – one that is ‘owned’ by your stakeholders. If you have different visions then you will be pulling against each other – you need the same end goal in sight!

Key priorities

From the vision - you need to identify your KEY PRIORITIES. Your key priorities will be about some aspect of community wellbeing - the quality of life experienced within the community - and will relate to current social or policy themes. They are also likely to incorporate some of the specific interests of your stakeholders.

Community wellbeing outcomes

This section is about identifying what you want to happen as a result of the different aspects of your work – the things that will keep you on track to meet your key priorities and contribute to achieving your vision.

Indicators of community wellbeing

This section helps you to ‘hit the target without missing the point’ – it challenges the notion that, for example, 150 people attending a training course means that those people have acquired particular skills. It doesn’t, of course, it just means they attended the training – what might tell you that they actually acquired any skills? Here, it is helpful to consider the question “how will you know you have achieved your outcomes”?

Community empowerment outcomes

Here, the planning circle encourages you to think about how you will undertake the work in a way which is ‘empowering’ for all. Where people feel – and are – empowered! Community empowerment is described through the 5 distinct but inter-related dimensions, each one suggesting a particular way of working which cumulatively ensure that communities are confident, inclusive, organised, cooperative and influential.

Community empowerment indicators

It is one thing identifying how you will work, it is another to keep track of whether you are doing it – and what it is achieving. This section ensures that you have identified ways of knowing you are on track for each of the 5 community empowerment dimensions.

Putting it into action

In this section you are planning the specific activities that will contribute towards your vision and outcomes. It is about considering what you are doing already and what else you need to be doing. Many people start at this point – ‘putting it into action’ ... but you need to identify your outcomes first!

Doing it

This is about actually doing the work and all your planning should put you in a strong position to deliver activities in an empowering way which achieves community empowerment – communities which are: confident; inclusive; organised; cooperative and influential.

Reflect and learn

This section is about revisiting your vision and community wellbeing outcomes and feeding back to your stakeholders – in the community and in delivery.

This is a very brief run-down ... changes offers training sessions and support to use the DiCE framework!