

## Section 4 Developing Guidelines

### 4.1 First Steps on Guidelines

39 representatives from 17 countries produced the guidance and points of reference in this report at a Seminar organized as part of a Grundtvig 4 programme on Training and Learning for Community Development by partner-organisations from Hungary, United Kingdom, Belgium, Sweden, Denmark, Rumania, the Netherlands, Italy and Ireland. The Hungarian Association for Community Development hosted the Seminar at Buda Castle, Magyar Kultúra Alapítvány (Foundation For Hungarian Culture), 1014 Budapest, Szentháromság tér 6., phone 36 1 355-0122. from 30<sup>th</sup> March - 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2006. Participants came from 17 countries and from a mix of disciplines –teachers, trainers, community workers/ developers, social workers, advisers/consultants and managers (see Appendix 1 for the conference booklet which gives the programme and descriptions of the organisations represented).

The majority were from non-governmental organisations, which share the view that Community Development has a potentially unique contribution to make to the field of lifelong learning. The work was based on definitions of Community Development, developed by practitioners in Community Development in a European Union funded project on Good Practice. (See Appendix 2) Participants also explored ideas, methodologies and themes for future networking on training and learning for Community Development, which would engage the two fields of Adult Education and Community Development. They made proposals for future work on conflict mediation, professional exchange and public participation.

On the basis of their experience of working in diverse communities, participants identified common elements of good practice in training and learning for Community Development as a first step to developing European Guidelines. They emphasised that, whilst there is no simple recipe that can be applied to every situation, there are commonalities of experience that can be used as points of reference or 'illuminators' of practice. There was a general consensus that any training programme on Community Development should take the context of the training into account in its design and delivery and the training or learning should be related to practice in real situations. European Guidelines should be flexible enough to be adapted to the specific situation. The guidelines may be useful as an indication of the potential for links between the one local situation and another. It is the responsibility of the body at the lowest local point to set the points of common interest in the local context and make the connections to provision for training and learning for community development at a national and regional level.

It is useful at the outset to point explicitly to the distinction between **informal and formal learning** both for professionals and (target) groups. Informal learning takes place in informal settings and refers amongst others to learning by doing things together, whereas formal learning in a formalised setting, focuses more on enhancing specific skills, qualifications. Both formal and informal learning can be issue oriented, for example social exclusion in the housing market; both can also have similar aims for example promoting active citizenship or improving the organisation of Community Development.

It is also emerged in the course of the project that it would be helpful to make a distinction between a policy focus and an activities focus. In other words, a set of guidelines for training and learning that focus on training and learning **policy** of community development organisations on the one hand would be different from a set of guidelines that are designed for training and learning **activities** on the other hand. In this limited one-year project, it proved difficult to separate the different elements

sufficiently to apply these distinctions at this point. The 'guidelines' or 'illuminators' that have been shared do however offer some insight into the highest points of consensus in the field. Discussion was focussed on the following categories and these are reproduced here in deference to the work of the 39 participants from 17 countries who produced them.

- Target Groups
- Content
- Format
- Organisation

Participants also choose priority themes for discussion. Points from these exchanges are summarised under the following headings: Shared challenges.

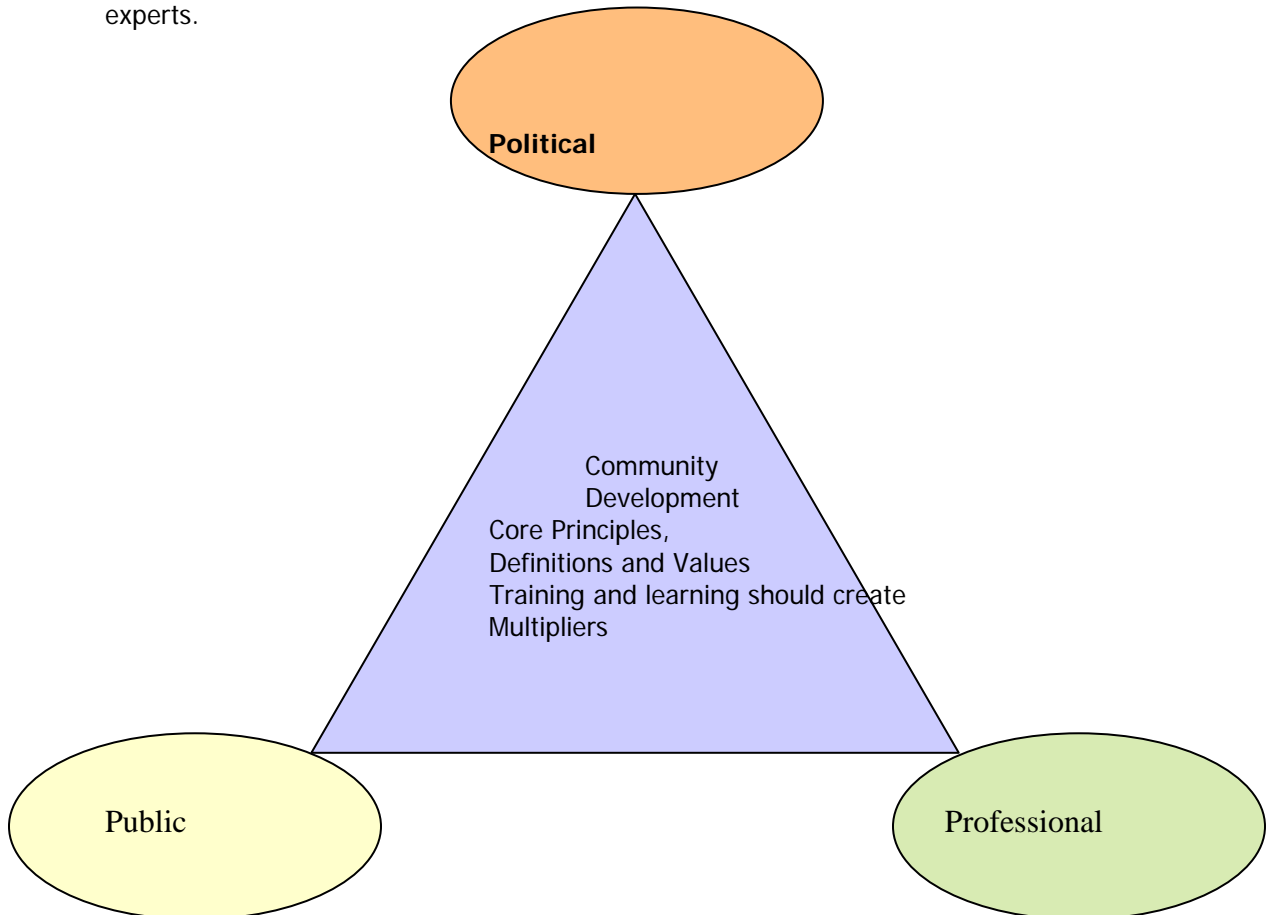
Participants found the experience stimulating but are keen to acknowledge the immensity of the task and see the output from the Thematic Seminar as a contribution to increasing and enriching dialogue between those responsible for design of community-based training.

#### **4.2. Target Groups of Training and Learning for Community Development**

Diagram 1 represents the diversity of the target group with division into three categories of Public, Political and Professional. Each category should be seen at 3 levels. Sometimes it is appropriate to have participants from the 3 categories together on a training programme but not always.

- Street
- Local
- National

The category of public includes civil society groups and 'silent' groups. Professionals include NGOs, Community Development Workers, schools, businesses, institutions, and experts.



## Notes on categories Political, Public and Professional

<p><b>The category "Political includes Policy makers, civil servants and authorities in general with a focus on specific groups for specific objectives, for example:</b> elected representatives, people who design curricula, and people in charge of funding</p>	
<p><b>Public</b> is understood as the local community (all citizens) and also: specific target groups, which includes Voluntary organisations, Business people/organisations/ Minority groups, Artists etc</p>	<p><b>Professional</b> is understood as those who are in paid work including:          Professionals in NGOs          Community Workers/Community Development Workers in NGOs or statutory bodies.          Professionals in centres of education and schools          Health professionals          Experts</p>

**Training Multipliers.** All target groups including professionals, community leaders and activists are seen as potential multipliers of community development principles and practices through the development of skills and capacities. Groups in the three categories – political, public and professional are sometimes opponents instead of partners and networkers. Training can help develop co-operation.

### Professionals in Civic Associations and Organisations and in the Public Sector.

CD training should increase competencies and develop extra competencies with a focus on empowerment and on skills and capacities that the workers need to achieve their goals in community development. The training is founded in a group/collective approach and will include content on socio-political rights. It is aimed at staff working in municipalities, associations/non-governmental organisations such as Housing Associations, Social/Leisure Groups and Civil Society Groups where their work relates to Community Development as defined in Appendix 2. It should include those who want to become professionals.

### Training of Public/Citizens/Users (Mainly in organised groups)

The focus should be on empowerment and on skills and capacities that the community-based group, neighbourhood organisations or local action groups need to achieve their goals in community development. The target is groups of Citizens who want to achieve change in their community.

- Rural groups
- Unemployed
- Urban planning groups
- Mediators
- Women
- Self-organised minority groups

The community-based groups could include several individuals not yet organised as a group but who are seeking a group solution to a specific problem. It could include groups informally organised or unstructured groups of unattached or unorganised individuals with a common goal, new voices and/ or a grassroots group organised around a specific theme or common interest.

**Some individuals may move into the 'professional' training category.**

Some unresolved tensions should also be given consideration. The aims of professional Community Workers may be set by statutory or non-statutory bodies. Community work may involve a number of different target groups. Community workers have to be conscious about their role and position. They have to reflect on whether Community Development organisations are focused on support to elected council members/policy makers or whether their principal concern is support to and empowerment of local community groups. Is it the aim to strengthen

target groups (empowerment) in the light of the desired societal transformations or do community workers seek a better communicative social planning whereby community workers act as mediator among various stakeholders?

### **4.3 Content of Training and Learning for Community Development**

The content should include elements designed for both individual and collective development, political rights and should have an orientation towards specific problems and identifying solutions. In addition to training in empowerment, skills and capacities, groups should be offered useful knowledge Expertise and experience on the following themes was useful in the practice of participants at the Seminar.

- Migration
- Racism
- Divided Communities
- Intercultural Mediation
- Participation
- Community Action

#### **Suggested, "Clusters" of content:**

##### **a) Attitude and ethics**

- Initiative (Someone has to do the first step and not to wait things to be done)
- Attitude: Who am I? Analyses of society
- Identities
- Motivation for volunteering
- Inclusion (everyone has to participate)
- Personal development such as building confidence, being assertive, dealing with conflicts.

Further work on the distinctions between norms/values, ethical issues and deontology would be helpful in this cluster.

##### **b) Methods and working tools**

- Needs of community groups – policy – organisational local, regional, national
- Need Assessment, the main problems in the community
- Practical skills such as how to obtain funds, project manage, partnership working
- Relevant Adult education and lifelong learning initiatives
- Engagement and commitment
- Using practice as a basis for learning
- Monitoring progression and the changes
- Understanding 'process' i.e. steps in community development, consistency between principles, values, methodology and practice.
- Awareness of 'learning by doing'

##### **c) Conflict and cohesion, people, communities and organisations**

- Conflict- development – conflict management
- How to cope with conflicts
- To tackle racism and sexism
- Cohesion
- Co-operation across cultures
- Partnership and dialogue – joint action
- Better understanding of different communities

d) **Governance and democracy**

- ❑ Internal democracy of organisations
- ❑ Analysis of society
- ❑ Self government, decentralisation
- ❑ Democracy and empowerment
- ❑ Understanding how government, local and national) run + how to influence/change what + how they do it
- ❑ External democracy and how to influence policy and services
- ❑ Who must be involved, (formal and informal leaders)

e) **Activating Participation**

- ❑ Citizen participation decision making /local actors involvement
- ❑ Participatory planning (how to involve community members in the actions)
- ❑ Empowerment and participation methods in practice
- ❑ Different theories and 'levels' of participation e.g. ladder of participation
- ❑ Tools and methods to increase participation

f) **Openness to new ideas and innovation**

**4.4 Format of Training and Learning for Community Development**

a) **Training and learning process**

There should be an interlinking of themes and topics in the form chosen for delivery of training and learning for Community Development and it should be diverse because people are diverse. (See section on organisation for meeting diversity). Training can be organised at a local/national or 'community' level. Community-based training may be formal or informal but formal training is more likely to be concerned with 'results' whereas informal training is more likely to be organised from the 'bottom-up' and put emphasis on the process. The group discussed how learning and connecting in the process can in itself be a 'product' as it produces learning. The distinction between process and product is a false distinction but is made because outcomes from process (e.g. increased awareness, confidence, development of social skills) are difficult to measure. The process is more important than quantifiable results. The format of the training changes according to the changes in the process and the depth of the process. Independence is needed in designing the form or format so that it can be adapted to the context and to ensure that participants gain skills and abilities to change and shape their own context.

b) **Needs Assessment**

Needs Assessment should show responsibility to individuals. Ownership of the process of the training is the key to success – ownership of a community development package by local government, politicians and other key players. There has to be dynamism in the on-going process to make the links between

- Standards
- Structure
- Strategic Development
- Participants
- Organisation

The group used the metaphor of finding a path through the different contexts and emphasised the process of "seduction" into learning. You cannot impose learning or training on participants. It depends on:

- ❑ Motivation
- ❑ Publicity

- ❑ Former participants
- ❑ Relevance to their own lives
- ❑ Value to them
- ❑ Link to daily reality
- ❑ Shared reality
- ❑ Flexibility and adaptability to changing needs.
- ❑ Responsiveness
- ❑ Follow-up
- ❑ Goals of learner -- informal versus qualifications

**c) Process-led format**

To make the learning sustainable and to motivate people towards lifelong learning, people have to own the process of learning. The process is very important and the key to sustaining motivation.

- The process should be adjusted to the communities and situations where the training is to take place and should be practice-led.
- There should be room for 'learning by doing' not just as in an academic format.
- The ownership of the learning processes and the reflection or feedback should be shared
- The form should be determined by the 'Market needs'.
- The form should envisage that the learning process is long-term and continuous.
- Sometimes it is appropriate to invite experts who can link theory and practice and who have an open rather than closed approach
- Different professionals can be involved in providing the training. They should be careful not to force their agenda onto the group but to help people realise their own agenda.
- Community –based and sustainable.
- There are diverse target groups so the design of the training should be adjusted to this diversity.
- The form of the training should be determined by values and the content by the needs of practice.
- There should be time to reflect on the learning process – What did you learn?
- There should be an awareness of learning – you need to know you are learning.
- The process also needs to be more creative to open windows and open space for external views. Experts should be encouraged to participate in order to share their expertise but without manipulation.
- Additional and external knowledge should be available
- We should be careful not to recycle ignorance
- We should be open to developing new knowledge
- We should also remind people of their own expertise and what they know themselves.
- Different perspectives on knowledge are needed and the development of critical consciousness is part of the learning process.

**d) On-going Assessment of progress and results is important**

Follow-up includes on the one hand an on-going assessment of the **process**, **product** and **procedure** (three p's) and on the other transfer of results. Different forms of assessment are possible. It may be formal but should not be too formal:

- Progress reports
- Journals
- Self-Assessment

- Different forms of feedback

#### **4.5. Organisation of Training and Learning for Community Development**

##### **a) Context**

Community Development Training is not just about increasing skills and completing programmes. Training is learning to be and to adjust to the given context and to develop skills and capacities that enable participants in training to change the context. Training which would empower people needs to have a level of awareness on certain issues. Empowering people means presenting as big a challenge as possible and with as little support as possible. The art of Community Development Training is to convert/translate from top-down programmes into bottom-up initiatives – often using Government funding. Where there are favourable top-down policies or programmes these need to be translated into bottom-up practice and vice versa, where there is good bottom-up practice this needs to be translated into policies or programmes which favour empowerment.

##### **b) Design of Programmes**

It is advisable to set up a meeting among the 3 'p's – public, professionals and policy makers and decide together the aims of the community development training in the given context. The following should be involved in planning training for Community Development, depending on the context:

- Formal Training Institutions
- Former Students and their feedback
- Similar institutions or organisations to that offering the training
- Informal sources
  - Community workers
  - Social animators
- Trainers and Training Assistants
- Beneficiaries of training course

The second phase would be to design training to meet the different aims for the different groups, as the public are likely to have different aims from the politicians and/or professionals. There should be means identified to keep the different groups within the overall community development process. There should be openness to innovation, new themes and new ideas.

##### **c) Planning**

- Motivation and the joy of learning should be paramount in designing your initiative
- Made the selection competitive to promote motivation
- Involve people, who work in the same institution but who have different perspectives on the same issue (e.g. Politicians and 'clerks' i.e. elected representatives and civil servants)
- Select people/organisations based on their background
- Use an interdisciplinary approach
- Use diversity
- Look at each participant as someone who contributes
- Use field visits/ study visits and ways of learning from each other's experiences

##### **c) "Made-to-measure"**

The commitment to core principles of equality in Community Development should underpin training and learning opportunities and should be reflected in the trainers and in participants. We need to see trained Community Workers and other professionals from a range of backgrounds, identities and cultures represented in the mainstream of training

and learning for Community Development. When that is not the case, we should ask why they are not there and take steps to consult, inform and involve those who face discrimination and exclusion. Training and learning opportunities should also identify and take into account of differences in background/ age/ duration of involvement in community work/ function in the organisation/ time/ locations. This attention to diversity when carried out well, will improve the quality of the training and learning offered for all. It should apply to

- Design and application of training
- Conversation on intake
- Consideration of differences and inequalities including those between managers and staff
- Other opinions to challenge mono-cultural approaches.
- Promotional activities among excluded groups
- Neighbourhood social Diagnosis
- Groups that are 'safe' from discrimination.
- Recognition of expertise based on personal experience
- Outreach and follow-up
- Action should be taken to enrich the training and learning opportunities with diversity.
- Create, introduce and use difference
- Involve people with different perspectives
- Find the right people to participate
- Develop and work on spirit and energy in preparation to get people into training
- Try to get engagement on transfer of learning in starting phase of the course

**d) Criteria for participation in training for Community Development should be as follows:**

- Experience in the field
- Involvement in community projects (Community Development Processes)
- Willingness to Participate
- Educational background or learning skills/ language skills
- Motivation to apply the knowledge acquired in their future work

**e) Facilitation of participation**

- Define the challenges/ the agenda together
- Define a common responsibility
- Define challenges, which need co-work
  - (Environment
- Consider civil welfare (Health
  - (Loneliness/ social networks
  - (Neighbourhood renewal
- Show results of good practice
- Engage in Democratic Dialogue
- Methods for training and learning with a critical aspect

**f) Communication with Target Groups**

Communication is important and should be adapted to needs and to distance, should have oral forms included and take account of potential alienation.

- Communication should be both hi-tech and hi-touch
- Mass media: newsletters, journals, TV, radio
- Website and e-mail
- Brochure
- Telephone contact
- Now

- Mouth to mouth/ face to face/...
- Key persons (community leaders etc.)
- Overviews (both electronic and printed)
- By art (e.g. theatre)
- See learners as multipliers

#### **h) Support offered to participants?**

- Logistical support but not payment for attendance
- -Feedback – learn to learn
- (Vocational) counselling with trusted person
- training and learning skills
- post-implementation support
- high quality trainers
- awareness and creation of a supporting environment
- case studies
- good leaders/champions
- advocates

#### **i) Stimulating the commitment of Participants**

- Start from small things
- Develop pride in more competences e.g. certification
- Celebrate after reaching certain steps
- Offer consultancy/support after training for further steps
- Relate training to participants' reality (e.g. case studies where training finds solutions)
- Learn techniques and methods that they can use themselves after training
- Create situations for applying the knowledge

#### **j) What contribution – financial or otherwise- should you ask from your participants?**

- It depends on capacity and budget
- Training of NGO and its members: the minimum should be some form of transfer of know-how
- Become member of association of trainers
- Network
- Share experiences/expertise
- 'Teach'/facilitate parts of training
- Clear time commitment
- Use of premises/ location
- Examples of case studies

### **4.6. Common Issues**

#### **a) Diversity**

One of the barriers to equality is that there is a paper commitment but this is not reflected in the reality. One group identified some bad practice in this field. For example, Government and non-government organisations, Community Workers and trainers may invite those that they felt comfortable with not people who would challenge them. Sometimes a minority representative is 'chosen' by the majority because they can rely on that person to express majority opinion and the 'chosen' one is not connected to the minority community.

Many Community Development programmes have immigrants or Rom for example, as their target group but there is no representation of trainers or Community Development

workers from these groups in the design or implementation of the training. Minorities are often seen as the target for training only. Trainers and professionals who have also experienced discrimination are overlooked when there are opportunities to contribute to mainstream practice. Greater awareness and more 'intercultural' skills are needed at all levels.

## **b) Using Conflict in Community Development,**

There was a consensus in the group that conflict weighs heavily on Community Development workers. Community Development means changing society, which leads to conflict. It was agreed that Community Developers should have the skills to resolve conflicts as we are causing them! Three types of conflict were explored from experience:

- Behaviour
- Values
- Identities

There is often a hidden agenda in conflicts so it may be difficult to identify which type of conflict it is. Different conflicts are solved in different ways and resolution of conflict has to go through different stages. Conflicting parties may not be evenly matched leading to "Asymmetric Conflict" where one party is stronger than another and may not even recognise the power imbalance. Community Development may have to make a stand on the side of the power imbalance. To resolve a conflict it may be necessary to start another conflict. Conflict management is needed in Community Development and participants see and added value in working at a European level as there are often cultural differences behind conflict and you need multi-cultural and intercultural competences which you are more likely to find in a European context.

A number of case studies were explored including from the Swedish minority in Finland and the Border area in Ireland. The group found that they empathised with each other on the points raised and made the following recommendations:

- This is an issue that affects all our work
- It needs to be further explored and given priority
- Our skills need to be increased in this respect
- We need to disseminate the learning from our experiences
- We understand the pressure on resources in the Grundtvig 4 project

### **We propose as a practical step**

We would wish for a dedicated page on the CEBSD website devoted to the topic of "Conflict Resolution from a Community Development Perspective" On this web page we would like to see: -

- Examples of practice case studies
- Methodologies and tools used
- Contact details of organisations working in this arena

### **Themes**

- Racism
- Sectarianism
- Powerlessness
- Civil unrest
- Local micro issues

It is worth considering whether conflict and community development could be a subject for a future project.

**c) Relationship between Vocational education and Community Adult Education**

The group identified some bridges between the two fields of vocational education and Community Adult Education and also some dimensions of tension under the following headings:

<b>Vocational education</b>		<b>Community Adult Education</b>
	Bridges and Gaps	
	Dimensions of Tension	
Specialism	-----	General
Becoming a 'Profession	----- ----	Empowerment
Being professional	-----	Volunteering
Tools	-----	Reflection

The group also discussed the Social Context from the specifics of the experience of the participants in the group. Their experience reflected the spectrum from informal participation in the process of lifelong learning to involvement in vocational training. (Vocational training was defined as training to become a professional.) The different emphases of their practice were in response to the different needs on the spectrum. The attached model (See Appendix 3) has been offered to synthesise the differences in the following form with Vocational Training and Lifelong Learning adding a dimension of external tension.

Community Development workers make the links between the different groups. There are tensions between the different dimensions and different experiences. All of the dimensions represented relate to the neighbourhood/ sozial raum or social context and it is in this central part that Community Development professionals have to work. The two circles of policy and administration and the demands of local industry or business (including social enterprises) relate to vocational training. Here there is an emphasis on techniques, and direct involvement in area targeted policies, projects or programmes. The other circles of ngos and community groups/community leaders relate more to lifelong learning to personal development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employability

The group identified a need to structure the diversity of experience to help identify ways of dealing with the tensions that exist between vocational training and the more diffuse field of community education and the shared European aspirations for lifelong learning reflected in the Grundtvig Programme.

**d) Role of 'experienced'/'older' Community Workers in training and learning**

**Analysis**

This group explored the role of experienced community workers and their influence on the field of community work training. Do they have too much influence on it? Some younger community workers find that the 'older' generation of community workers have a lot of experience but they can also be too institutionalised and can block the motivation and enthusiasm of new community workers by emphasising how difficult the work is or how bad the situation is. Some of the younger community workers are impatient with this and they say – just give me the tools and let me get on with the job. They see their work as professional while many of the older generation of community workers have been politically engaged and see their work as a statement.

On the positive side, many of them still have a lot of energy left and the group asked what could we do to harness this energy?

The group recommended:

- ❑ Training for experienced 'older' community workers so that they could become role models or mentors and make positive use of their experience.
- ❑ Confront 'older' workers more
- ❑ Younger workers should ask 'older' workers about their experience
- ❑ There should be better mixing of older and younger community workers so that they are in positions of equality not of uneven influence. Younger community workers could ask them about their experience and learn from it.
- ❑ Confront 'older' workers more with the fact that they are becoming older, but let them work together with other colleagues in the team without making them responsible person
- ❑ Develop a dialogue between experienced and young, so that they can share more, although age is not necessarily the criterion

#### **4.7 Some Challenges**

The following were identified as shared challenges where more exchange is needed before appropriate guidance can be given.

- a) Sustainability of training and learning programmes**
- b) Recognition of learning in Community Development**
- c) How to improve legislation for public participation**

##### **a) Sustainability of training and learning programmes**

The context of training and learning opportunities is key to whether learning is sustainable and applied to the specific situation or community. The relationship between non-governmental organisations and the municipality is a key to this context. The exchange of experience during the Grundtvig programme brought some surprises. Representatives from countries in Central and Eastern Europe were surprised that Scandinavian countries experienced some tension between municipalities and non-governmental organisations in establishing partnerships with regard to sustainable training and learning opportunities. More work is needed on the role of government, non-government and private sectors.

There was also shared experience that government agencies at all levels are increasing their co-work with private organisations and this form of co-working follows the rules of the open market, which are determined by results achieved and do not take account of the processes. Non-governmental organisations are also expected to follow market rules and funding is often determined by results that can be quantified in a short time. Community Development processes often take longer than a year or two to show results. In spite of the problems, the group shared some pointers to successful relationships between NGO's and the Local Municipality that could also lead to greater sustainability. The most important of these was to define challenges together so that there is a sense of a common responsibility between the Local Authority and the NGO. Another was that the NGO could take on the first steps to establish a successful model of working, which could then be adopted in the mainstream by the Local Authority. An example of co-operation between the NGO and the local municipality was given. A Non-governmental organisation in Bulgaria provided transport to take Roma Children to school in order to establish patterns of attendance and then handed over this responsibility for the local authority to carry on.

## **b) Recognition of learning in Community Development**

This group agreed that recognition of learning in Community Development is an important issue. It can have a role in making sure that practitioners have the skills to be effective community developers and in improving the wider profile and understanding of why community development is important. The recognition or validation of training and learning does not necessarily imply a process of accreditation. However accreditation is one important means of formal recognition that needs further reflection.

There are a number of issues to be clarified and resolved. If recognition of learning is to be useful in a community development context, it needs to be based on linking theory and practice – not just a piece of paper recognising an academic qualification; and recognition of learning should not happen just as a response to pressure from funders. Are there ways of including community voices in the process of recognition? A system of recognition needs to be supported by methods for evaluating the quality of community development work (Process as well as product).

The main form of action recommended by the group who gave this issue priority is to share information and to explore further what the role of recognition of learning in community development should be, what the methods should be, and how we take account of the different contexts.

## **c) How to improve legislation for public participation**

The most interest in this topic during the Seminar in Budapest came from Hungary and the Czech Republic so it became more like a bilateral exchange. There was consensus that public participation is necessary for Community Development to succeed and if Community Development takes place without public participation it is bad Community Development. At present, the Municipality can choose whether to invite the public to participate or not and that weakens the case for public participation. The group discussed some of the different forms of encouragement for public participation for example the Aarhus Convention. The shortcoming of this convention is that it is only recommended that you inform citizens and that is not public participation.

The group decided that a research project would be useful to compare the legislation of the Czech Republic and Hungary in the first instance to find out if there are by-laws that exist which show a real commitment to engaging public participation. It would also be interesting to extend this to other countries. The group proposed to set up its own e-group to explore the aim of developing a research project. Roman also shared information on a conference on Public Participation to be held in Prague in December 2006.