

# **Lessons for Community Capacity Building: A Summary of Research Evidence**

by

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## Key Findings

- ◆ Community involvement is an integral part of the regeneration process and creating strong, sustainable and cohesive communities implies that the 'community voice' needs to be at the very centre of decision-making processes. Community capacity building supports individuals, community groups and community organisations through the development of skills, knowledge and expertise to manage and continue the development process.
- ◆ Community capacity building empowers communities to gain a sense of ownership and control over the processes that influence their day-to-day lives. Capacity building involves all regeneration stakeholders including individual residents, community-based organisations, public agencies, the voluntary sector and the private sector.
- ◆ Community capacity building can be a risky business. In some cases, projects do fail and there are no guarantees that joined-up solutions will successfully deliver the desired results. Well-planned, integrated and holistic solutions reflecting local needs and circumstances are essential. Community capacity building does take time and requires investment of both financial and non-financial resources.
- ◆ Capacity building activities do not function in a policy vacuum. Recent Government initiatives on Social Justice, Active Citizenship, the Modernisation of Local Government, Life Long Learning, Community Education and Community Planning are important to this debate.
- ◆ At the local level, regeneration partnerships support and fund capacity building activities. Key sources of additional funding are available but gaps do exist particularly before the bidding process for regeneration challenge funding and at the end of the programmes to ensure the continuation of community involvement. Allowing communities to manage and control their own assets is one way to address this issue.
- ◆ The literature highlights the importance of 'Social Capital' to community development. If undertaken in a systematic and structured way, capacity building activity not only improves the regeneration process and the long-term sustainability of an area or neighbourhood but acts as a catalyst to engender stronger social ties, trust and responsibility, while enhancing the whole social fabric of the community.
- ◆ The roles of intermediary organisations, community regeneration organisations, the social economy or third sector and the voluntary sector are important for capacity building and supporting community development in the long-term.

- ◆ The review highlights specific ways to enhance the ability of individuals and communities to promote sustainable regeneration:
  - building the capacity of individuals;
  - training;
  - supporting community leaders;
  - identifying information needs and testing community opinion;
  - networking;
  - building the capacity of partner organisations;
  - identifying training needs of partner organisations;
  - supporting intermediary organisations; and
  - creating a financial framework for community capacity building.
- ◆ The following recommendations for supporting community capacity building arise from the review:
- ◆ the identification of the processes, outcomes and impacts of different policy interventions in terms of the success or failure of the various capacity building measures;
- ◆ the identification of best practice and how this might be applied in regeneration partnerships across Scotland;
- ◆ the development of a framework to enable capacity building to be monitored and evaluated throughout the lifetime of partnerships;
- ◆ development of advice for undertaking community participation audits and local training and information needs analyses. A key element should be the involvement of communities as researchers, analysing their own needs and developing their own strategies;
- ◆ analysis of the training needs of regeneration stakeholders and professionals working with communities, including benchmarking of current training provision offered by professional bodies, supplemented by a good practice note on building the capacity of professionals in community regeneration;
- ◆ a review of models of neighbourhood management and structures to enhance resident participation in decision-making, local service delivery and community ownership;
- ◆ analysis of the role of community leaders in the regeneration process, highlighting particular cultural, structural and organisational barriers to participation; and
- ◆ an appraisal of alternative models of community ownership and asset management, and of options for housing associations acting as potential community investment agencies.



# 1 Introduction

## Aims and Objectives

1.1 The aim of this report is to provide a review of the research evidence of activity undertaken to build the capacity of communities with a view to creating communities which are participatory, empowered and, as a result, sustainable. The report identifies examples of good practice stemming from the literature and research undertaken to date and involves an assessment of capacity building activities occurring during the regeneration process. It comments on their effectiveness and outlines reasons for success and failure.

1.2 Under provisions of the Housing Bill, Scottish Homes will convert from a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDBP) to an Executive Agency of the Scottish Executive – a delivery arm of Government – reporting directly to Scottish Ministers and accountable to the Scottish Parliament in November 2001. It is planned that the new Executive Agency would combine the roles of Scottish Homes and the Scottish Executive to set a new national framework for neighbourhood renewal within which local authorities, Social Inclusion Partnerships (SIPs) and Community Planning partners can take forward action at the council and neighbourhood level. In a statement issued by the Scottish Executive (2001), Ministers give a high priority to neighbourhood renewal, community empowerment and support for the social economy. It is expected that the new Executive Agency will reflect these priorities in the Agency's framework document and in the proposed neighbourhood renewal strategy. In this context, knowledge of what works and why a review of the evidence base on community capacity building will be of interest to Scottish Homes and the new Executive Agency.

1.3 A key aim of the review was to investigate the approaches and roles of key organisations and individuals involved in community capacity building, including the organisational structures, sources of funding and regulatory frameworks under which they operate. Key organisations may be operating at the national, regional or local levels and may be acting in a direct or intermediary capacity.

1.4 The report concludes by making recommendations on future action to support a continuing process of development in community capacity building.

## Definitions

1.5 The term community is often "shifting and slippery" as people use it in different ways to suit their own purposes (Bennett et al, 2000). Definitions of a community are made by Government departments charged with funding regeneration activity, by individuals involved in the delivery of community development programmes, by people who work in the community sector and by the local community itself. As a result, the concept of community is often contested causing confusion for policy makers when considering who benefits from community capacity building.

1.6 Communities are rarely, if ever, homogeneous entities. As Brown notes:

*"The term 'community' should not be idealised, as communities, especially geographically bounded communities, are by their nature conflicted, composed of people with diverse interests, skills, abilities, political views, and goals."*  
(Brown, 2000:27)

1.7 Communities are comprised of a range of people with different needs, interests and perspectives (Yorkshire Forward, 2000). The term community can have a specific geographical meaning with a clearly defined spatial boundary - an area, a neighbourhood or an estate. The term community can also refer to groups of people with a common interest, or "communities of interest", in describing groups which are vulnerable or prone to experiencing social exclusion. In the Scottish context, communities of interest include young people, young carers, ethnic minorities, the disabled, drug users, ex-offenders and prostitutes. Difficulties can arise in reconciling the needs and priorities of communities of interest with geographical communities, and such issues need to be handled with sensitivity. Community capacity building has to address the needs of all individuals. Structures are required to engage communities of interest in wider participation and empowerment strategies.

1.8 Capacity building activities make use of a variety of methods to empower local communities. The Alana Albee Consultants in their review of rural community capacity building activity argue that capacity building should enable:

*" local people to move from the status of objects manipulated by external forces and victims of social processes, to the status of subjects and active agents of change"* (Alana Albee 1995)

1.9 Duncan and Thomas (2000) stress that different people can use community capacity building to describe different activities. In their study of resourcing community involvement in neighbourhood regeneration, they define local community capacity building as follows:

*"Community capacity building is development work which strengthens the ability of community-based organisations and groups to build their structures, systems and skills. This enables them to better define and achieve their objectives and engage in consultation, planning and development and management. It also helps them to take an active and equal role in the partnerships with other organisations and agencies. Capacity building includes aspects of training, consultancy, organisational and personal development, mentoring and peer group support, organised in a planned manner and based on the principles of empowerment and equality."* (Duncan and Thomas, 2000:6)

1.10 A different interpretation of community capacity building is provided by the London Regeneration Network in the publication *Capacity Building: The Way Forward* (1999), which adopts a broader definition of capacity building referring to an ongoing process of community empowerment. This suggests a holistic view of capacity building involving individuals, groups, support agencies, businesses and partnerships as a whole:

*"Capacity building in this context will refer to the empowerment of whole communities, where all partners will learn to work together effectively to add*



*value to their own activities. Without capacity building at all these levels, the concept of joined-up thinking and joined-up action will be meaningless.*" (London Regeneration Network, 1999)

1.11 Due to the variations of terminology in this field, the following definitions are used for the purposes of this report:

*Community:* a term often associated with existing formal and informal community networks and local community organisations. It applies to both geographical communities and communities of interest. The notion of community does not necessarily imply homogeneity and there are likely to be competing and conflicting interests.

*Community Involvement:* includes all activities designed to inform the community or to involve it in decision-making processes and covers a range of activities from informing people through to the delegation of responsibility to community-based organisations.

*Community Participation:* the mechanism for active community involvement in partnership working, decision-making, project delivery and representation on formal partnership structures.

*Community Empowerment:* the processes by which individuals and communities gain control and have a say over the decisions which influence their day-to-day lives and the communities in which they live, and implies the transfer of skills, knowledge and resources to individuals and communities.

*Community Capacity Building:* the term used to describe the process by which the capability of the community is strengthened in order that it can play a more active role in the economic and social regeneration of their area through long- term ownership of the regeneration process.

## Context for this Review

1.12 Research evidence suggests that active involvement of local communities in the regeneration process has now become the accepted norm (Anastacio et al, 2000; Chelliah, 1997; DETR 1998c; Geddes, 1995; Hastings et al, 1996; Scottish Office, 1998; Scottish Social Inclusion Network, 1999a; Taylor and Roe, 1996).

1.13 Previous evaluations of partnership working suggest that communities should be involved in the regeneration process from the very outset, in the design of programmes, setting out of priorities, contributing to the management of services and the control of local budgets (Carley et al, 2000; Chapman et al, 2000). Creating strong and vibrant communities needs a powerful and knowledgeable community voice at the very centre of the decision-making process. Influence over decision-making helps communities achieve a sense of ownership of regeneration outcomes and helps gain a sense of influence over resources and assets to sustain cohesive and balanced neighbourhoods (Chanan et al, 1999; Scottish Executive, 2000e).

1.14 Involving communities in a committed and non-tokenistic way can bring a range of benefits to the regeneration process. Community involvement is not a 'bolt-on' or 'cosmetic' activity. Successful regeneration can only occur when local people are involved in the process and are equipped with the skills they

need to have an impact (Wood, 2000). According to the Action Report *Inclusive Communities*, prepared by the Scottish Social Inclusion Network (1999a), the benefits of community involvement are as follows:

- communities have a direct perspective on issues facing them;
- community involvement helps to deliver programmes which more accurately meet their needs;
- projects are more acceptable to the community with improvements lasting longer because communities own them;
- it helps to build community organisational skills making it easier to develop strong successor skills; and
- community involvement helps to revitalise local democracy.

1.15 To maximise the benefits of community involvement, communities will require the right balance of support to help them gain the knowledge, skills and expertise to put them on an equal footing with other regeneration professionals (Duncan and Thomas, 2000; Chapman et al, 2000). For this reason, emphasis is now being placed on 'community capacity building' as a process to develop the abilities of individuals, community groups and community-based organisations to manage and revitalise their own neighbourhoods (Duncan and Thomas, 2000; Channan et al, 1999).

1.16 Research undertaken by the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) for the Urban Exchange Initiative (1998b) stresses the need for regeneration partnerships to make resources available for community capacity building:

*"Involving the community takes effort and a substantial commitment of time if it is taken seriously. It will frequently entail committing resources to assist the development of training of community organisations and individuals such that they have the skills needed to continue the development process started by the regeneration programme. These activities are collectively known as capacity building."* (DETR, 1998b)

1.17 Wood (2000) makes the important point that the term community capacity building has to be used with care by regeneration professionals. Local people may find the assumption that they need to increase their "capacity" insulting and patronising. Regeneration professionals often believe that providing training and capacity building will automatically strengthen community participation. However, such an approach often neglects the wealth of knowledge, skills and expertise that already exists within a community. This expertise needs to be 'tapped' and utilised in a constructive way. Over the long term, community capacity building is a process that seeks to ensure that communities gain influence, control and ownership over the regeneration processes. Evidence from the experience of a regeneration programme, City Challenge in England, supports this view:

*"Unless communities feel a sense of ownership and control, benefits tend to be short-lived. Involving tenants and other residents throughout the lifetime of a project was both time consuming and resource intensive. But their involvement, based where necessary on providing tailored training and other support to those wanting to contribute to the process of regeneration, was critical."* (DETR, 1999)

1.18 According to Wood (2000) community capacity building acknowledges

the real power relationships that exist between regeneration professionals and residents and the need to ensure that local people are in a position to take as much control as they wish and are capable of doing so. This is not a straightforward process because some individuals in a community will have more experience of community action than others or certain groups in the community have been excluded due to institutional racism and/or discrimination on the basis of gender. The review of City Challenge in England also highlights this issue:

*"Not all people want to be involved and care must be taken to ensure that active individuals, who may not be representative, do not over-dominate. It is also important that community expectations are not raised unrealistically."* (DETR, 1999)

1.19 If communities are to make a full and effective contribution to the strategic management of regeneration initiatives then partnership procedures should assist and not hinder community participation. Evidence from the experience of regeneration partnerships in England indicates that community engagement was simply seen as a consequence of the bidding process rather than an actual strategy for community empowerment (Harvey and Shaw, 1998). Regeneration initiatives have a far greater chance of being sustainable if the community has the knowledge and skills to manage and control that process with minimal external assistance (DETR, 1998a). All too often, community involvement has played a narrow and functional role concerned with achieving pre-determined partnership objectives and outcomes. To overcome past failures, concerted effort is now required to ensure that benefits are sustained once the regeneration programme has ended. In some instances, this may lead to the creation of independent community-based development organisations or other bridging or intermediary regeneration organisations, which link the community with other public sector agencies (DETR, 1998b). As recent guidance on community participation in regeneration partnerships states:

*"When the regeneration scheme ends, many of its initiatives will be at risk of disappearing with it. A scheme that has built up community involvement is more likely to be able to hand some of its components on to be maintained by viable, independent local organisations. Also, if the community has been widely involved, it will be in a better position to help devise new programmes and press the local authority to keep up the momentum of development."* (Chanan et al, 1999:8)

1.20 There is a common misconception that capacity building is just another way to describe community training and skills development programmes. Capacity building takes on a wider meaning than just training and skills development of individuals and regeneration stakeholders. The long-term aim of capacity building is to allow communities to take control and ownership of the regeneration process as Jupp describes:

*"Real capacity building involves giving groups the independence to manage resources. Not just training them in how to work on committees. Training is often helpful, but it is not sufficient in its own right."* (Jupp, 2000:44)

1.21 Community capacity building, according to Jupp, is part of a wider policy agenda supporting civic participation, decentralisation and local service delivery, the modernisation of local government structures and community

planning frameworks. Research evidence now links capacity building and community development to the concept of 'social capital' and how networks of trust, belonging and community participation provide a powerful force in the regeneration of disadvantaged communities (Taylor, 2000; Anastacio et al, 2000).

1.22 Given the importance of capacity building activities, regeneration programmes need to plan and budget for community capacity building from the outset. Capacity building is a bottom-up process reflecting local circumstances and local needs and the community itself has a role to play in defining and prioritising these needs.

1.23 By its very nature, community capacity building is a risky process. In the lifetime of a regeneration initiative, some measures will succeed while others will fail. Innovation in community development can be stifled because capacity building activities do not neatly lie within quantifiable measures of success such as the number of jobs created, number of training places taken up, the number of houses built, etc. However, there is a growing recognition that regeneration programmes should look to alternative means of identifying success and neighbourhood effects, to include wider social impacts (New Economics Foundation, 2000).

1.24 In terms of organisational structures supporting the process of community capacity building, community-based regeneration organisations, the social economy and the voluntary sector are now recognised as key players in supporting community involvement and empowerment. More recently, attention has focused on the ability of these organisations to create new forms of community ownership at the local level thereby providing the means by which communities and community development activities can become self-sustaining (Carley et al, 2001; Campbell, 1999: Development Trust Association, 1997; Leadbetter, 1997).

1.25 Duncan and Thomas (2000) believe that the most significant factors of community capacity building have yet to emerge fully:

*"It is now recognised that capacity building is central to achieving sustainable changes that will have a lasting impact, although what this means in practice is less clear. There is a danger that regeneration programmes will develop and institute a range of capacity building projects in an ad hoc and unstrategic way. This may reduce their individual and combined impact on the area, lead to disenchantment among communities and waste valuable social and financial resources."* (Duncan and Thomas, 2000:7)

1.26 In summary, community capacity building requires a shift in power relations away from traditional leaders and other professional stakeholders in favour of local communities (Purdue et al, 2000). While this goal is still some way off, Duncan and Thomas (2000) argue that there is a strong case for supporting and encouraging the development of a community-based approach to regeneration, which is often debated but rarely delivered.

## Structure of the Report

1.27 Following the introduction, the report is structured into the subsequent chapters:

Chapter 2	Policy Connections
Chapter 3	Communities and Social Capital
Chapter 4	The Capacity Building Process
Chapter 5	The Role of Intermediary Organisations
Chapter 6	A Financial Framework for Community Capacity Building
Chapter 7	Gaps in Knowledge



## 2 Policy Connections

### Introduction

2.1 The aim of this Chapter is to review the importance of capacity building activities within a broader policy context. It is often the case that regeneration professionals and communities are narrowly focused and neglect to recognise that capacity building activities do not function in a policy vacuum. Guidance on involving communities in the Government's Single Regeneration Budget Round 6 (SRB6) in England makes the point that:

*"The importance of community involvement is not limited to regeneration areas. The government is seeking to ensure consultation and engagement with local communities in all areas as part of developing 'Best Value' in public services. The principles and experience of developing community involvement in regeneration schemes can act not only as a technique to assist disadvantaged areas but also as a frontier of new development relevant to contemporary life at large."* (Channan et al, 1999:31)

2.2 In the current policy environment, we identify the following policy drivers that support community capacity building at the local level, including initiatives designed to:

- alleviate poverty and address social exclusion;
- create an equal and just society;
- contribute to the modernisation of local government and achieving Best Value;
- help establish balanced, stable and cohesive communities;
- promote effective partnership working and joint-working;
- improve local service delivery; and
- support community-based regeneration activity.

2.3 While there are clear advantages in engaging with communities (Hastings et al, 1996), there are real dangers that increased calls on communities to participate in a range of new programmes and initiatives will result in participation fatigue. If left unchecked, partnership fatigue can result in an overall reduction of community involvement and effectiveness. Pressure on communities to be involved can, in certain circumstances, lead to frustration and cynicism within the community as expectations are raised in the short-term but partnerships fail to deliver meaningful results to the community over the medium to longer-term. To avoid over burdening the community with constant calls for participation, all public agencies and regeneration stakeholders need to co-operate at the strategic level and share information. More can be done to minimise consultation processes given the amount of information already available. Often public sector agencies and other regeneration stakeholders will undertake consultation without reviewing what has been done before (Chapman et al, 2000).

2.4 Communities face a raft of Government guidance, policy initiatives and programmes designed to promote a more inclusive and participatory society.

Communities can experience difficulties in keeping up-to-date with often complicated and jargon filled policy developments. Keeping communities informed is a task often left to public sector agencies like local authorities, but there are gaps in information provision. It is important that well-constructed routes, which enable communities to engage with and contribute to wider policy frameworks, are established to promote joint-working and effective partnership working (Chapman, 1988).

## Active Communities

2.5 For regeneration stakeholders, engaging constructively with communities in a meaningful way is not an easy task. The process is beset with difficulties and obstacles. Much depends on previous experiences as communities often feel isolated and let down by policy makers. No one neighbourhood or community is like another and each requires its own strategy to promote involvement. Where communities have benefited from investment in community development, benefits have been forthcoming. However, the community development process is an ongoing one requiring continuous support (Henderson, 1997). Communities that have had little or no community development will require regeneration practitioners to establish a clear link with the community. This entails developing an appropriate framework for involvement and, in consultation with the local community partnerships, undertaking the necessary capacity building to ensure everyone who wants to is involved in the process, including key groups like young people and ethnic minorities.

2.6 Community participation and empowerment is central to a range of partnership arrangements across Scotland including the Social Inclusion Partnerships (SIPs) and Working for Communities Pathfinder<sup>1</sup>, Rural Partnerships and Initiative at the Edge, New Deal Partnerships and Employment Zones, Healthy Living Centres, New Housing Partnerships and Community Planning Partnerships.

2.7 Community involvement is a key feature of regeneration programmes outwith Scotland including the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) Challenge Fund and New Deal for Communities (NDC) in England<sup>2</sup> (Smith, 1999; DETR, 2000). In addition, a series of area-based initiatives, intended to combat social exclusion in deprived areas (Education, Employment and Health Action Zones, New Start, Sure Start, Community Legal Service Partnerships and Crime Reduction Programme), support innovative crosscutting approaches while encouraging strong local involvement.

1 The Scottish Executive supports 48 Social Inclusion Partnerships (SIPs) in urban and rural areas. Core funding of £147 million is supported by contributions from other regeneration stakeholders including local authorities, health boards, local enterprise companies, Scottish Homes and voluntary organisations to deliver locally agreed plans. Working for Communities Partnerships are designed to test out new and innovative ways in local service delivery in 13 pathfinders.

2 The Single Regeneration Budget provides support for local partnership schemes to address a range of social, economic and environmental aspects of regeneration in an integrated way. The SRB programme is managed by the Regional Development Agencies, except in London. New Deal for Communities aims to tackle multiple-deprivation and social exclusion in disadvantaged areas, and provide a model for innovative practice in neighbourhood regeneration. Seventeen community-based partnerships are preparing Delivery Plans under a Pathfinder programme.



2.8 Given the range and propensity for partnership working across Scotland and the rest of the UK, what have been the key lessons learnt to date? Harvey and Shaw (1998) reviewing early rounds of the SRB bidding process noted that community groups and regeneration professionals were highly critical of the short timescales involved in developing bids, as the pressure to meet tight deadlines often went against achieving real community consultation. Another key issue confronting partnerships concerns sustainability. What happens when the revenue funding runs out for projects after six or seven years? Uncertainty regarding a forward strategy and securing replacement funding leaves a funding and capacity gap (Fordham, 1995). Partnerships can be reluctant to discuss continuation strategies at an early stage in the life of the programme but it is vital that all partners, including the local community, consider appropriate actions at the earliest opportunity. Where SRB schemes have managed to develop and build upon the knowledge and experience of previous programmes such as City Challenge, this helps to create sustainable structures and maintain community participation (Robinson, 1997).

2.9 To understand the impacts of regeneration policy at the local level, the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) has commissioned an in depth two-year study of area-based initiatives. To date, the research has indicated that community involvement in area-based initiatives has been patchy. In situations where community interests should dominate, as in the case of SRB and New Deal for Communities, tensions exist over the position of the community and the voluntary sector in the partnership. Much is often promised to the community but there remains a large gap between the perceptions of regeneration stakeholders on what community empowerment actually means and what communities need (DETR, 2000). This lack of understanding and knowledge of the importance of community capacity building is a view supported by other research studies (Carley et al, 2000; Hastings, 1996).

### The Wider Policy Context

2.10 The Social Justice Report – *A Scotland where Everyone Matters* (Scottish Executive, 1999), outlines a long-term strategy to tackle poverty and injustice in Scotland. Driving this agenda forward requires strong and thriving communities. To achieve this goal, the Scottish Executive has placed renewed emphasis on community empowerment as a means to listen to what communities need, to provide communities with the means to be heard and to devolve decision-making for services right down to the people who want them (Scottish Executive, 2000e). In developing the Social Justice agenda, the Scottish Executive is committed to:

- ◆ empowering communities to make decisions and influence others;
- ◆ building skills and confidence;
- ◆ getting high quality and affordable services to communities;
- ◆ closing the digital divide; and
- ◆ developing community control of assets, of organisations and of enterprise.

2.11 Support for *Active Citizenship* and *Active Communities* is recognised in the report of the Scottish Active Communities Working Group (2000d). The report identifies the need for a coherent strategy for volunteering and

community action. Volunteering and citizenship are part of a wider process to engage the untapped resources of communities. The Scottish Executive seeks to increase the number of people from all communities taking part in voluntary activities by promoting the *Millennium Volunteers* initiative, encouraging young people to undertake 200 hours of voluntary work that will support self-development and be of benefit to communities (Scottish Executive, 2000b).

2.12 Local government as a key partner in the regeneration process has an important role in supporting community capacity building. Changes to the way that local councils undertake their core functions through the decentralisation of services have far reaching implications for effective community involvement. Guidance produced by the Scottish Office (1996) identifies the range of positive outcomes arising from local government decentralisation. These include:

- ◆ enhancing local democracy and accountability;
- ◆ promoting closer communication;
- ◆ encouraging public participation and joint ownership of problems and solutions;
- ◆ enhancing the role of the elected representative; and
- ◆ generally promoting/encouraging improved effectiveness and efficiency in service delivery and council functioning.

2.13 Drawing on the experience of local councils involved in the decentralisation process, COSLA (1996), identify three dimensions to this process, namely political, managerial and physical decentralisation. Evidence suggests that a few councils have focused on physical decentralisation alone, while others have focused on the provision of information and advice or enhancing community participation. Only a minority of local councils decided to implement schemes that incorporate all three aspects of decentralisation. The COSLA review demonstrates that those councils that have attempted to incorporate effective community participation in their decentralisation schemes are best placed to encourage and support community involvement in partnership structures.

2.14 Modernising local government (DETR, 1998d) is a policy agenda mirrored across the whole of the UK. Governments in Whitehall and Holyrood believe that public participation is a critical driver in modernising the way that local councils undertake their day-to-day activities. Best Value and Neighbourhood Management are examples of the types of initiatives that require councils to involve people in the shaping of local policies and services (Social Exclusion Unit, 2001). One aspect of this process of continuous improvement in service delivery involves greater attention to the involvement of groups often excluded from local democratic processes. The ethos of the modernising agenda highlights a strong commitment to the renewal of the democratic credentials of local government through the implementation of new forms of dialogue and communication between councils and communities.

2.15 Community Planning (COSLA/ Scottish Office, 1998) acknowledges the leadership role of local councils in establishing a long-term vision for the council area and its neighbourhoods. The Community Planning process seeks to ensure that key service providers are brought together in partnerships to

develop a Community Plan. A key element to the Community Planning Framework is to identify the needs and views of individuals and communities and how those needs are best met and views expressed. Community Planning encourages councils and other partner organisations to seek new ways of community involvement and participation (for example, through the use of citizens' panels and citizens' juries) and to consider new methods of joint working and co-operation. If community capacity building is to develop systematically across regeneration partnerships then the sharing of information regarding local government decentralisation, neighbourhood management and Community Planning is required.

2.16 Government sees Life Long Learning as a continuing process and one that reflects the value of ongoing community self-development and improvement. Of equal importance to the debate on capacity building is the recognition that technological, social, economic and environmental change requires the promotion of new skills and greater capacity for understanding, thereby providing the means by which individuals can adapt to change. Life Long Learning is important in :

- ◆ assisting the employability of individuals and meeting the needs of the labour market and the national economy;
- ◆ providing a source of personal fulfilment, achievement and self-realisation; and
- ◆ acting as a basis for building strong communities.

2.17 Community capacity building is enhanced through access to education and training for community participants through the establishment of Local Learning Partnerships (LLPs). Community Learning Strategies (CLS) promote the development of comprehensive strategies for community education and learning and, more specifically, the implementation of local Community Learning Plans. Public service partners need to adopt Community Learning Strategies and Community Learning Plans that are of direct relevance to wider community capacity building processes and the integration of training and education packages for community representatives.

### **Support Agencies**

2.18 There are numerous agencies and regeneration partners who work directly and indirectly to support community involvement and capacity building at the local level. Agencies are represented on individual partnership boards, for example, SIPs, Rural Partnerships and Working for Community Pathfinders. Partnerships themselves will fund and support capacity building activities but funding can be accessed from a range of sources in addition to partnership commitments. Sources of funding include the Scottish Executive, local councils, the Scottish Enterprise Network, Scottish Homes, The National Lottery, European funding and in certain circumstances individual charitable trusts.

2.19 In England, New Commitment to Regeneration and the advent of Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP) provide new models for local authority leadership in neighbourhood renewal. In Scotland, the Scottish Executive has announced the introduction of the Better Neighbourhood Services Fund as part of the Spending Review 2000. The Better Neighbourhood Services Fund allocates an additional £90 million over the next three years to twelve councils across

Scotland to improve the quality of neighbourhood services and to encourage greater community involvement in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

2.20 Scottish Homes, with an annual budget of £200 million, works with a range of partners and communities in developing integrated programmes to improve the economic and social conditions of Scotland's most disadvantaged communities (Scottish Executive, 2000e). The role of Scottish Homes as a regeneration stakeholder is all the more significant in the context of the Housing Bill (Scottish Executive, 2000h). The new Executive Agency will promote community-based regeneration in co-operation with local councils, the Scottish Enterprise Network, the private sector and other regeneration partners. In particular, the new Agency seeks to encourage Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to develop a wider role in their communities. Scottish Homes has created a dedicated fund to support the development of a wider role for RSLs, including support for capacity building projects. Support amounts to £2 million in 2000/01 with provision for an increasing sum in each of the following two years. It is estimated that approximately £10 million will be provided over the next three years. Scottish Homes has recently produced a Framework for Reviewing and Planning Wider Role Activity to assist RSLs to measure the effectiveness of their wider role work, validate activities undertaken and develop future action (Scottish Homes, 2001).

2.21 Scottish Enterprise (SE) and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) have embraced economic, social and environmental remits. Scottish Enterprise spends a quarter of its budget, about £100 million per year, ensuring that people, regardless of background, have a chance to take full advantage of access to economic opportunities and benefit from increased skills and capacity. HIE with an annual budget of around £70 million addresses social exclusion issues in rural and remote areas (Scottish Executive, 2000e).

2.22 The National Lottery Charities Board (NLCB) is one of the six distribution bodies established to allocate funds raised by the National Lottery. It is a Non-Departmental Public Body and is sponsored at the UK level by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. The NLCB is a national UK organisation with devolved grant-making Committees in each individual country. The NLCB Scotland has an annual budget of around £30 million and operates a system of continuous grant making. There are two grant programmes under which applications can be made: Community Involvement and Poverty and Disadvantage. The Community Involvement programme aims to support work that strengthens local communities and encourages people to become more involved in community activities. Key areas for support include:

- ◆ community organisations and community initiatives;
- ◆ volunteering and community action; and
- ◆ strengthening the voluntary and community sector.

2.23 The Poverty and Disadvantage programme aims to improve the quality of life of people and communities experiencing the effects of poverty and disadvantage. Projects at the national or local level include those that aim to:

- ◆ support those specially disadvantaged by poverty;
- ◆ prevent or minimise future poverty;

- ◆ address the needs of whole communities disadvantaged by poverty; and
- ◆ tackle poverty and disadvantage in rural areas.

2.24 To assist communities to access funding, the Scottish Executive has launched the KickStart programme. The programme will fund eight development workers until March 2001 across the 34 area-based SIPs (Scottish Executive, 2000f). Working with community groups, the development workers will help communities gain the skills needed to:

- ◆ develop local projects;
- ◆ identify funding strategies and deal with application procedures;
- ◆ effectively manage any funds awarded; and
- ◆ make better use of existing expertise by forging links with Councils for Voluntary Service and Scottish Business in the Community.

2.25 The New Opportunities Fund (NOF), established by the National Lottery, supports activities in the following areas: out-of-school learning activities; out-of-school childcare places; healthy living centres and information technology training. Although NOF is administered on a UK-wide basis, Scotland receives a set proportion of the funds for each of the priority areas. NOF recently launched a multi-million pound programme to tackle the information age divide by bringing learning through information and communication technologies (ICT) within the grasp of all communities across Scotland.

2.26 Further and Higher Education equips people with the necessary life long skills to move into and sustain employment. This sector has a wider sphere of influence in terms of education and training and is a potential resource for supporting community capacity building. Government policy towards community education focuses attention upon supporting citizen action to tackle social exclusion and enhancing public participation in planning and decision-making generally (Community Learning Scotland, 2001).

2.27 A previous failing of regeneration policy has been the limited extent of private sector involvement in partnership working. The private sector has a range of expertise and knowledge that, harnessed effectively at the local level, can make an effective contribution to community development. One successful approach to joint working between the community and the private sector is the example of a recent initiative developed between the Bank of Scotland and the Wester Hailes Representative Council. A key concern for the community of Wester Hailes has been the issue of financial exclusion in the estate. A partnership approach with the private sector and the community-based organisation resulted in co-funded research with the Scottish Executive to investigate the provision of local financial services in the estate and how financial products could be delivered at the neighbourhood level (Scottish Executive, 2000a). Working through the West Edinburgh Pathfinder, the partnership has resulted in the signing of Europe's first Community Banking Agreement (CBA), which outlines a formal commitment between the Wester Hailes Representative Council and the Bank of Scotland to tackle financial inclusion in the estate.

## Summary

2.28 The following key observations can be made:

- ◆ community capacity building does not happen in isolation from wider strategic policy developments;
- ◆ pressure on communities to be consulted on a range of new initiatives and programmes can result in communities suffering from participation fatigue;
- ◆ building upon previous partnership structures and activities promotes continuity and helps to sustain the regeneration effort;
- ◆ encouraging active citizenship is consistent with efforts to empower local communities and to encourage participation in the regeneration process;
- ◆ community involvement does not replace local governance structures but enhances the scope for people to be involved in the development of their own communities;
- ◆ public sector agencies support community capacity building through membership of partnership boards but funding is also available from a variety of sources including the Scottish Executive, local authorities, the Scottish Enterprise Network, Scottish Homes, The National Lottery, European funding and in certain circumstances, charitable trusts; and
- ◆ the private sector has a vital role to play in supporting community-based organisations in developing their own capacity and skills.

## 3 Communities and Social Capital

### Introduction

3.1 The term “social capital” is increasingly used in conjunction with community-based regeneration (Taylor, 2000; Hibbitt et al, 2001). According to Anastacio et al, (2000), regeneration structures create new forms of resource allocation and new modes of community participation in structures of governance. These new forms of community participation have been advocated for their contribution to specific regeneration initiatives and to the development of what is termed social capital (Social Exclusion Unit, 1999a; 1999b; 1999c).

3.2 There is a growing literature on the concept of social capital (Wilson, 1997; Fukuyama, 1995; Coleman, 1988 and 1990; Putnam, 1993), which identifies how the accumulation of networks, skills, expertise, resources and confidence collectively facilitates the process of empowering communities. In the regeneration context, Duncan and Thomas define social capital as:

*“The intangible web of relationships and widespread participation in communities and community organisations that holds them together. It is essentially goodwill, sympathy, empathy and neighbourliness among the individuals and households who make up social units. These may be communities defined by geography and/or interest. Social capital can be created, extended and maintained by such activities as street parties, community picnics, community arts activities, carnivals and a variety of other community gatherings.”* (Duncan and Thomas, 2000)

3.3 Social capital is concerned with relationships between people, team-building within a community, developing strong networks to allow ideas to be spread and shared and for exchange relations to be managed on the basis of trust (New Economics Foundation, 2000; Fukuyama, 1995). Strengthening social capital promotes a more civil society, promotes economic development, enhances the health of people in communities and is an essential ingredient in the community development process (Bullen and Onyx, 1999).

### Key Themes

3.4 Bullen and Onyx (1999), in their review of Family Support Services and Neighbourhood and Community Centres in New South Wales, Australia, provide a synopsis of the core themes within the social capital literature.

#### Participation in networks

3.5 A key concept of social capital is the notion of more or less dense interlocking networks of relationships between individuals and groups. People engage with others through a variety of lateral associations. These associations must be both voluntary and equal. Individuals acting on their own cannot generate social capital. Instead, social capital depends upon a propensity for sociability and a capacity to form new associations and networks.

## Reciprocity

3.6 Social capital does not imply the immediate and formally accounted exchange of legal or business contract but a combination of short-term altruism and long-term self-interest. The individual provides a service to others, or acts for the benefit of others, at a personal cost. They do this in the general expectation that this kindness will be returned at some undefined time in the future. In a community where reciprocity is strong, people care for each others' interests.

## Trust

3.7 Trust entails a willingness to take risks in a social context. Fukuyama defines trust as:

*"The expectation that arises within a community of regular, honest and co-operative behaviour, based on commonly shared norms, on the part of other members of that community." (1995:26)*

3.8 Fukuyama notes how a substitute set of formal rules and regulations can compensate for a general lack of trust, to allow individuals to work together and to create organisations that will work for a common purpose. While joint working can occur without trust, it is not a perfect situation as trust is a key principle of effective partnership working (Chapman, 1998). Often, in the absence of trust, regeneration partnerships require rules of engagement and codes of conduct to function, which can create structural and functional barriers to community involvement. Fukuyama believes that effective organisations are those based on communities of shared ethical values:

*"These communities do not require extensive contract and legal regulation of their relationships because prior moral consensus gives members of the group a basis for mutual trust." (1995:26)*

## Social norms

3.9 Social norms provide a form of informal social control that remove the need for more formal, institutional legal sanctions. Social norms are generally unwritten but commonly understood within a community and between individuals. These social norms can determine what patterns of behaviour are expected in a given social context and define what forms of behaviour are valued or seen to be socially approved.

## The commons

3.10 The combined effect of trust, networks, norms and reciprocity creates a strong community with shared ownership of resources known as "the commons". So long as the community is strong, it removes the problem of the opportunist who would use the community resource without contributing to it. The commons refers to the creation of pooled community resources, owned by no one individual but used by all. Only where there is a strong ethos of trust, mutuality and effective, informal social sanctions against free riders can the commons be maintained indefinitely and to the mutual advantage of all (Putnam, 1993). Creating "public goods" within a community can be a powerful policy tool to encourage community participation and tackle social exclusion.



## Proactivity

3.11 Implicit in the above are ideas of a sense of personal and collective efficacy. The development of social capital requires the active and willing engagement of citizens within a participative community. Social capital refers to people as creators, not as victims. Changing people's perceptions of themselves (*'I can achieve this', 'I want to be involved'*) and the neighbourhoods they live in (*'This is a good place to live', 'I want to improve the estate for my family'*) helps promote a sense of common ownership and belief that community action will work.

## Social Capital and Community Development

3.12 Social capital acts as the glue that binds individuals in work for the common good of the community. In terms of community development activity, a useful distinction can be made between social capital and community capital. Community capital describes the formation of organisations and collectives with the potential to mediate between individual, associational behaviour and formal local politics and governance (Kearns and Flint, 2000). At the neighbourhood level, social capital is re-enforced by community capital. A range of community-based organisations can help to engender community capital, for example, tenant management organisations (TMOs), housing associations, schools and churches. These organisations provide the invisible informal networks which strengthen community participation and are central to the mobilisation of social capital for the benefit of the neighbourhood as a whole (Kearns and Flint, 2000).

3.13 Drawing on work by Robert Putnam, Kearns and Flint (2000) make the distinction between what is termed "bonding capital" and "bridging capital". Anastacio et al, (2000), in their study on the community perspectives of area regeneration programmes, see social capital as being defined and valued by these two definitions. Bonding capital refers to the networks and relationships of trust within communities. Bridging capital refers to the networks and inter-relationships between communities and external organisations and agencies, including those with power and resources. Kearns and Flint (2000) make the point that these distinctions are common to those made in the social support literature when describing social relations which assist with "getting by" and those which promote "getting on". In terms of activities to promote social inclusion at the neighbourhood level, social relations which help individuals and organisations develop confidence, acquire skills to move forward and to take control over and influence their own circumstances are preferable to those that only foster an environment of getting by.

3.14 Drawing upon case study evidence, Anastacio et al, (2000) make the following observations. First, the impact of social capital on communities has to be set in the context of specific historical and geographical understanding of the development of community and third sector networks in an area. Strengths and weaknesses of such networks relate to strengths and weaknesses of community participation in the regeneration programmes. Secondly, over time, individuals and community groups clearly learn from their experiences of community participation providing opportunities for formal learning and skills development activities. Finally, community participation can have negative as well as positive impacts on the community sector. Community organisations with the knowledge and resources to negotiate and deal with the procedures of regeneration programmes tend to win out over smaller or less experienced groups. If social capital is developed unevenly across a range of community groups, strengthening some groups to the exclusion of others may have long-term implications for the viability and sustainability of the whole community sector.

3.15 Bullen and Onyx (1999) argue that where high levels of social capital do exist, people are more likely to:

- ◆ feel they are part of the community;
- ◆ feel useful and able to make a real contribution to the community;
- ◆ participate in local community networks and organisations;
- ◆ come together in times of crisis;
- ◆ welcome strangers; and
- ◆ participate as a group.

3.16 In cases where communities lack social capital and community capital is weak between groups, neighbourhood organisations and the wider community, there are limited prospects for people to come together and work for the common good of that community. Often this is caused by a number of interrelated factors:

- ◆ the lack of core building blocks – self-esteem, trust and communications skills;
- ◆ inadequate material well-being in the community;
- ◆ inadequate physical infrastructure such as places to meet, public spaces and access to basic equipment and resources like telephones and newspapers;
- ◆ the lack of opportunities to develop networks between people in a safe environment; and
- ◆ fear of discrimination.

3.17 To overcome the lack of social capital, Bullen and Onyx (1999) argue that those agencies involved in the community development process should seek to address the following issues:

- ◆ undertake activities that develop the essential human capital prerequisites such as self-esteem and communications skills;
- ◆ increase the material well-being in the community;
- ◆ ensure access for the community through the provision of designated meeting rooms and public spaces; and
- ◆ promote activities through which people can make interconnection with each other in a safe environment.

3.18 Kearns and Flint (2000) identify a range of specific activities undertaken by housing associations to support social capital. These include:

- ◆ empowering local people and encouraging them to participate in decision-making about their own priorities and needs;

- ◆ supporting networks and associational activity through community events, community websites and newsletters, promoting community involvement in housing design projects and supporting partnership working;
- ◆ creating collective norms and values shared by the community; and
- ◆ increasing levels of trust, safety and belonging in the community.

3.19 While housing associations are undertaking positive activities in relation to the development of social capital in neighbourhoods, more could be done. In particular, the role of housing associations in community development and empowerment needs to be clearly and consistently stated:

*"If housing associations are to adopt the role of a community enabler and civic leadership in a sustained manner, then this fact needs to be widely broadcast and effectively monitored."* (Kearns and Flint, 2000:23)

3.20 Linking social capital to community capacity building is a logical and progressive step but it has to be remembered that promoting social capital and individual empowerment can, in the long-term, be counter-productive to the community regeneration process. The strengthening of networks and associations can create exclusion as the most able and dynamic organisations prosper while the less experienced and under-resourced tend to lose out. Regeneration partnerships, while believing in the need to invest in social capital can in fact hinder the community empowerment process as regeneration activity can and does empower some at the expense of others.

3.21 Building social capital at the community level can be severely disrupted by the partnership process. Short programming periods and funding time-scales often act as a barrier to the development of trust amongst partners. The New Economics Foundation (2000) argue that efforts to develop human capital (investment in the skills and knowledge of individuals) and invest in social capital do not necessarily work together. Quoting an example from a local regeneration project, it was found that in the local community, those people with the most "get up and go" found themselves jobs in the project office. Through this experience, they developed new skills and contacts or their human capital increased. They then used these new skills and contacts to leave the partnership area, the end result being that while individual human capital was developed, the loss of good local people from the partnership meant that social capital declined within the community (New Economics Foundation, 2000:20). Increasing social and community capital in a neighbourhood is not as straightforward as one would think. Identifying the contributions of individuals and organisations performing "fuzzy" tasks of creating trust, shared responsibility, belonging, mutual identity and useful participation, requires regeneration partnerships to think more innovatively about how to monitor and evaluate frameworks capable of incorporating such a broad range of activity.

3.22 Where local people come together to initiate a project for the overall good of the community, lasting and real benefits do arise. The Arts Factory in the Rhondda Valley, South Wales is a good example (Development Trust Association, 1997). The Arts Factory was initiated in 1990 by a group of local people who came together to increase the range of work opportunities for people with learning difficulties. In 1993, the group recognised that others in

the community shared problems of exclusion similar to those faced by this group. The project, therefore, extended its remit to develop opportunities for all local people to participate in the regeneration process. The project involves over 70 trainees and volunteers per week in 5 community enterprise teams – environment, art, pottery, a garden centre and two woodcraft workshops. The teams make and sell high quality products and services and also deliver accredited training to local people. The group was also involved in restoring a grade 2 listed chapel to house, among other things, a cinema, youth facility, video production workshop, graphic design bureau, community dances/raves and a place of worship. The Arts Factory exemplifies the way in which community organisations, in this case a development trust, can involve and empower members of the community who typically are not directly involved in the regeneration process. The Arts Factory demonstrates how a local project can build both bonding and bridging capital as part of the regeneration process.

3.23 Taylor (2000) argues that if new forms of governance are to be developed through a variety of partnership arrangements then social capital requires investment to develop multiple networks across what Taylor sees as divisions and empty spaces within excluded communities. Neighbourhoods in which community investment has occurred, and effective dialogue and participation with local voluntary and community organisations and local authorities has arisen, are more likely to be successful at joint working and collaboration than neighbourhoods or areas which have not received such investment. Duncan and Thomas (2000) raise the concern that, if this is the case, the existence of variations between and within local councils in their commitment to community involvement can be a barrier to the regeneration process. If social capital is important to the longer-term regeneration of disadvantaged neighbourhoods, not only has community participation to be supported and encouraged, the lessons and experiences learnt need to be communicated across communities by communities themselves. All regeneration stakeholders should consider their collective roles and responsibilities, not only in the way that they work with communities, but in how they themselves actively promote the development of social capital in these communities.

### Summary and Key Policy Questions

3.24 The Social Exclusion Unit (1999e) recognised the importance of social capital to community development in the following ways:

- ◆ as the sum stock of relationships within a community, social capital supports the efficiency of joined-up working;
- ◆ through the establishment of social networks, creating a climate for a local voice, making communities more forceful in self-organisation in formulating demands on local and national political systems, and by supporting community empowerment through political action; and
- ◆ strong community capital implies strong ties of kinship and of neighbours, which assures support in time of illness and stress. The strong community acts as health visitor, social worker and housing manager. In redrawing the boundary between state and civil society, social capital represents an alternative provider of neighbourhood services.

3.25 Social capital raises important policy questions for area-based regeneration initiatives. More still needs to be learnt about how social capital impacts, both positively and negatively, on individuals and communities. However, there is consensus in the literature that social capital requires investment if social capital is to be maintained within a community. Social capital is a stock that can be depleted as well as replenished. A question remains whether regeneration partnerships should ring-fence funding and dedicate resources to accumulate social capital at the neighbourhood level. What role do community-based regeneration organisations, like housing associations, have in developing social capital?

3.26 Given the diversity of partnership structures in place in Scotland, can we learn from experience which partnership arrangements effectively promote or hinder the accumulation of social capital in a community? Do regeneration professionals have the ability to identify neighbourhoods of high and low social capital and how can the activities, behaviour and attitudes of partnership stakeholders be influenced to support investment in social capital? Bullen and Onyx (1999) identify the following key points:

- ◆ social capital is a real phenomenon and is an essential ingredient in the community development process;
- ◆ social capital is just as important as economic capital - in deprived neighbourhoods that lack economic capital, the presence of social capital often acts as the main driver to stimulate social and economic activity at the neighbourhood level;
- ◆ community capacity building generates social capital as well as achieving specific community development goals;
- ◆ if communities suffer from low levels of social capital, services are required to build up the stock of social capital as a prerequisite for development; and
- ◆ where individuals or families do not have access to the community's social capital, outreach services must be provided to enable them to become part of the community.



## 4 The Capacity Building Process

### Introduction

4.1 The preceding Chapters of this report have discussed the importance of community capacity building in a wider context surrounding debates on community development, wider policy interests, improved local service delivery, civic engagement and volunteering, community planning and support for the development of social capital at the neighbourhood level. The report will now discuss the processes that support community capacity building.

4.2 This Chapter begins by reviewing what can be done to enhance the capacity of individuals to acquire the level of skills, knowledge and expertise to make an effective contribution to decision-making and community regeneration.

### Building the Capacity of Individuals

4.3 According to the Alana Albee Consultants (1995), individuals' participation in their own development rarely happens spontaneously but involves "social preparation". This is described as a process of supporting people to:

- ◆ gather information about their circumstances and resources;
- ◆ analyse their situation;
- ◆ prioritise actions they wish to pursue;
- ◆ join together into a group or organisation; and
- ◆ work out the means of implementing these actions.

4.4 Capacity building rarely takes place without some form of facilitation – a consultant, project officer or community development worker, facilitator, animator or community agent may perform this role. Each performs a different role and understanding the distinction in outcomes and individual working styles is critical in deciding upon the best option suited to individual communities.

4.5 In their study of the Sustainable Communities pilot projects, Carley and Kirk (1999) found that the role of the project officer was vital in supporting community capacity building around sustainable development issues. The officer's ability to act as a catalyst for local action in co-ordinating necessary support from alternative sources and in making linkages with key agencies was critical to the success of the initiative. The use of animators, development officers or facilitators as intermediaries is also a key feature in the literature on community involvement in rural development. The role of "animators" is highlighted in the evaluation of community involvement in rural policy (Bryden et al, 1997; Fagin, 1997).

4.6 The potential for local activists to perform this role, acting as "community development agents", is also discussed in the rural development literature

(Brown and Downie, 1999). Community agents are self-employed activists who are trained to work with communities to support new and existing initiatives. Such agents may be former activists and have practical leadership skills and experience in tackling local problems. With a limited amount of training, they are then tapped as a resource. The concept draws upon the experience of development organisations in the third world in promoting local people as catalysts. It is claimed that experience has shown where residents are trained and employed as local animators or facilitators for their own community, difficulties and tensions can arise. However, there are potential benefits to be gained in training local people to become trainers in their own right.

4.7 The Dicks Hill Community Horizons Working for Communities Pathfinder, in seeking to counteract cynicism at the failure of previous initiatives to create lasting change, focuses on developing the capacity and opportunities available to local people. The Pathfinder employs community agents, supported by training and development, to interact with the wider community at a local level. These community agents will seek to encourage local participation and recognise and unlock barriers that agencies can unwittingly create.

## Training

4.8 Training is vital to community capacity building but according to Henderson and Mayo (1998), priority given to training and education in area regeneration initiatives is often too little, too late. They highlight the time lag between the decision to launch a regeneration scheme and the realisation that training and community education need to be an integral part of the scheme. They argue that training and skills development should be addressed early on in the life of an initiative, or in year zero where the partnership adopts a one-year lead-in period prior to implementation of the scheme.

4.9 A starting point to address the training and skills development needs of a local community is the use of a local training needs analysis. This process takes stock of existing capacity within the community and identifies gaps in skills and knowledge for both individuals and groups as a whole (Chapman et al, 2000).

4.10 Individual regeneration partnerships have a key role in mapping existing training provision against community needs and training may be required in the following areas:

- ◆ organisational development;
- ◆ group working and training on the roles and responsibilities of officer bearers; and
- ◆ training in effective meetings and managing people, including interpersonal skills and alternative ways of structuring meetings around community issues.

4.11 An example of a community-led approach to the organisation of training courses for community participants is the Wester Hailes Training Unit. The Unit was established through Lottery and Social Inclusion Partnership funding. The aim of the Unit is to build community capacity through access to training. The Community Capacity Building Training Programme comprises a series of organised training sessions. Each session targets local community



representatives, community activists and local residents in the West Edinburgh Working for Communities Pathfinder area. A training audit was undertaken to establish the training needs of the local community and identified gaps in existing provision. The Training Unit monitors training providers to gauge reaction and to assess the level of expertise of the participant audience. Each participant is also asked to evaluate the individual trainers and sessions to provide feedback on the implementation of the programme.

4.12 The wider regeneration benefits of training for residents involved in managing social housing is recognised within a number of housing-focused schemes including the Priority Estates Project's national training programme. Proposals put forward by the Housing Corporation (2000) to make available funding to tenants groups to develop their knowledge and skills is further evidence of a commitment to support capacity building. Scottish Homes (2000) Policy Statement Promoting Community Investment – A Wider Role for Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) also states that it will encourage and support capacity building initiatives in enabling RSLs to undertake wider role activities.

### Supporting Community Leaders

4.13 Support and training are fundamental to helping more people become leaders in their own community:

*"There is widespread agreement that neighbourhood renewal cannot be successful without the active involvement of the community. Yet community leaders and their organisations do not always receive sufficient funding, support and training to play an effective role. If this were forthcoming, the prospects for the success of neighbourhood renewal would be much greater."* (Social Exclusion Unit, 1999d)

4.14 Purdue et al, (2000), in their study of community leadership, identify examples of training requested by community leaders. These include:

- ◆ developing community organisations including choosing appropriate structures, establishing goals and team building;
- ◆ developing business plans through scenario building, bookkeeping, fundraising, cash flows and employing workers;
- ◆ promoting equal opportunities by mobilising diversity, recruiting members and employees and opening organisational culture;
- ◆ training in people skills, such as dealing with change and conflict (including blame from the community and personal attacks) and committee skills (including dealing with dominant personalities who keep control of meetings);
- ◆ providing information technology training in word processing, spreadsheets, e-mail, via voice, video-conferencing and websites.

4.15 Examples of innovative methods in delivering training (Purdue et al., 2000) identified the following:

- ◆ community development training packages in NVQ format for community leaders, as part of capacity building;

- ◆ networking community organisations and forums to share skills, experience, learning, developing new ideas and mutual support;
- ◆ providing peer-group support through mentoring;
- ◆ providing distance learning packages;
- ◆ roving conferences – to see other organisations in their own environment.

4.16 To support the training of community participants in partnerships and potential future community leaders, the Scottish Executive in collaboration with training providers have launched the initiative *Working Together: Learning Together*. This is a training programme to support all the partners involved in SIPs and Working for Communities Pathfinders. It is part of the Scottish Executive Listening to Communities Programme that exists to encourage community capacity building and a shift of culture in public sector bodies towards working with, listening to and empowering communities.

### Information Needs and Testing Community Opinion

4.17 Involving the local community in decision-making and allowing the views of local residents to influence and shape policy at the local level promotes community capacity building. Regeneration partnerships and partner organisations, specifically local authorities, can utilise a range of techniques to improve communication with the local community (Scottish Executive, 2000g). These techniques may include the following:

- ◆ citizens' juries;
- ◆ focus groups;
- ◆ survey panels;
- ◆ citizens' panels;
- ◆ community conferencing and planning for real events;
- ◆ forums - community forums or area-based neighbourhood committees; and
- ◆ user group forums.

4.18 The Scottish Executive has piloted the use of citizens' juries in two SIP areas, the Great Northern Partnership and the East Ayrshire Coalfield Social Inclusion Partnership. Citizens' juries usually contain between 10 and 25 participants selected to provide a representative cross section of the wider population in terms of gender, ethnic mix, age and other factors. They are essentially time limited (i.e. 3-5 days) and meet to deliberate upon specific issues. They also provide the opportunity for the cross-examination of key witnesses. Guidance from the Executive has been published and it plans to invest £450,000 over the next two years to roll out the programme to all partnership areas.

4.19 Citizens' panels are used to test community opinion via a cross section of local residents who are surveyed regularly on issues relevant to that community. Citizens' panels are made up from a group of people who have

agreed to be consulted periodically for their views. Like citizen juries, membership of the panel is intended to be representative of the wider population. Unlike juries, the number of panel participants can range from 750 to 2,000, a proportion of which can be replaced to enhance representativeness. They can be utilised for large-scale surveys or for smaller group discussions, focus groups or other consultation exercises. People's panels are being established in SIPs to allow partnerships access to information, which allows them to track and understand changes in residents' circumstances, attitudes and experiences and so deliver better services. Currently, recruitment to people's panels is underway in 24 SIPs.

4.20 Users' panels are similar to citizens' panels but focus on individuals with certain characteristics (e.g. tenants, carers). They can be time limited or be utilised in conjunction with other participation exercises.

## Networking

4.21 Networking is particularly important for communities and regeneration stakeholders as this allows information and ideas to flow to those directly involved in the regeneration process. Networking also helps to develop a learning culture in Scotland by the dissemination of information about good practice across agencies and organisations (Scottish Social Inclusion Network, 1999b).

4.22 Networking is considered to be particularly crucial for small community-based organisations, which might otherwise lack access to key information. Networking has attracted increasing interest as forming a core process of community development activity more generally (Gilchrist, 1995). Networking can also play a role in training in the exchange of information about training opportunities, trainers and training materials and in facilitating the development of local/regional training partnerships (Henderson and Mayo, 1998).

4.23 Networking between individuals and community organisations can play a key role in building capacity by enabling participants to share information, experience and best practice and by drawing upon the experience of others in similar circumstances. Support organisations have an important role in developing and co-ordinating such networks. Across Scotland, there are a number of independent organisations and agencies involved in supporting community groups. These include the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO), which provides training sessions on a range of issues relevant to community and voluntary sector organisations. Responsibility for developmental work, however, lies with the local Council of Voluntary Service (CVS) network. In addition, several organisations provide consultancy type services to local groups, including Community Enterprise in Strathclyde (CEiS), and provide specialised training courses.

4.24 The networking potential of information and communication technologies (ICT) and the Internet is significant, and is part of a wider process to reduce the digital divide as people without access to the Internet can be disadvantaged. As a measure to close the digital divide, £23 million of Lottery Funding is being used to encourage more people, particularly disadvantaged people and communities, into learning through the use of ICT (Scottish Executive, 2000a).

4.25 However, there is the potential for information overload on communities. A balance is required between information gathering and the ability to analyse

that information. In such circumstances, there is a role for an intermediary body to manage information, in structuring, filtering and packaging information and data to suit participants' needs.

### **Building the Capacity of Partner Organisations**

4.26 Community capacity building becomes critical at all levels of the regeneration process and is not only the preserve of local communities. Duncan and Thomas (2000) argue that to achieve sustainable regeneration, there is a strong argument in favour of developing the institutional capacity of regeneration stakeholders, including local authorities, Government departments, partnership agencies and the private sector to integrate community-based approaches into their organisational and decision-making cultures.

4.27 The principles of joint-working, common purpose and shared responsibilities are essential to the success of multi-agency partnership working (Chapman et al., 2000). Often as not, the local community can be isolated from decision-making within a partnership due to the way that public agencies view collaborative working with the local community. Unequal power relations and the lack of mutual respect can act as significant barriers to community involvement.

4.28 Unlike the local community, service providers and public sector agencies come to the partnership table with substantial financial resources. Without bringing resources to the partnership, the community input is undervalued. As a result, the community can be marginalised and excluded from the decision-making process.

### **Training Needs of Partner Organisations**

4.29 Professionals also need training in how to listen and work with communities. This can help professionals gain the confidence to work in unfamiliar ways (Henderson and Mayo, 1998). A majority of regeneration partnerships do not undertake any initial training with partners (Chapman et al., 2000) and it is evident that there are varying levels of commitment amongst partners to working with communities on equal terms. Partners who are relatively new to working with communities understandably find it difficult and it is all too easy to make the mistake of patronising local communities.

4.30 Work by the Social Exclusion Unit (1999d) has shown that many practitioners feel they do not get enough high-quality training. As part of the production of the Policy Action Team Report, focus groups were organised with regeneration professionals and practitioners to identify the skills that they believed would help them do their job and contribute to effective cross-agency partnerships. These skills included the following:

- ◆ project management;
- ◆ team building, leadership and management;
- ◆ problem solving;
- ◆ finance;
- ◆ risk taking;

- ◆ listening and learning from others;
- ◆ conflict management;
- ◆ accessing knowledge about what works;
- ◆ working with communities; and
- ◆ building skills within community organisations.

4.31 The Policy Action Team Report goes on to say that, while there has been a substantial amount of guidance issued on how to build capacity in local communities, there is very little in the way of guidance on building the capacity of professionals in regeneration partnerships. Wilson (1997) believes that in the future, academia and institutions of higher education will become more proactive in the field of professional training and building social capital for community development. Wilson sees the role of the professional as technical expert, master planner or manager as embedded in the larger role as catalyst, facilitator, communicator and team player (1997). To date, the only real issue that has been emphasised is the need for regeneration professionals to recognise the importance of community capacity building. To resolve this issue, the Policy Action Team made the following recommendations:

- ◆ better initial professional training;
- ◆ broadening the term “capacity building” to include agencies and partners as well as residents and community organisations;
- ◆ creating well-trained, multi-agency teams; and
- ◆ providing incentives for professionals to work in challenging areas.

4.32 Training is one way to counter narrow professional attitudes and to encourage professionals to engage with issues in a more holistic manner. A proposal to develop a national certificate in community development and regeneration by the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) recognises the potential opportunities in training professionals to work with communities.

4.33 One example of how to approach effective joint working between the community and statutory agencies is the Greater Easterhouse Working for Communities Pathfinder’s Community Health Shop. Here, the community identified the development of a Community Health Shop as an appropriate early action initiative as part of the Pathfinder Project. A Community Involvement Working Group was set up to engage residents in the planning and development of the project. A participatory appraisal approach was undertaken to enable local people to analyse and share their life experiences and knowledge of local conditions. Participatory appraisal is one of a group of approaches, methods and behaviours that:

*“Enable people to express and analyse the realities of their lives and condition, plan what action to take and monitor and evaluate results”* (Scottish Executive 2000g:93).

4.34 The community was, therefore, directly involved in the planning, design and implementation of the project. Once a company structure is established,

the plan is to delegate decision-making on management and budgets to a board including a majority of community members. The project represents an integrated approach to service delivery that meets community-identified priorities (Chapman et al, 2000).

4.35 The experience of working on the community health shop brought the community together with the local Health Board. As part of this work, both groups came together to discuss their impressions and lessons learnt from the process. For community participants the key lessons learnt included:

- ◆ the need to delegate authority to make decisions;
- ◆ the need to overcome bureaucracy and delays;
- ◆ the need to share information and decisions;
- ◆ the importance of commitment and communications at all levels;
- ◆ consistent representation from agencies; and
- ◆ the importance of establishing the right community structure.

4.36 For the Health Board, the process encouraged representatives to think outside their own institutional and policy box. It also enabled them:

- ◆ to link roles and responsibilities across departmental structures; and
- ◆ to identify and share constraints within policy processes and reconsider working practices.

4.37 The project's success in changing how services are delivered, funded and evaluated highlights the importance of developing community-based skills. In summary, the project was considered to be successful because:

- ◆ it developed partnership skills;
- ◆ it helped to build mutual trust and understanding; and
- ◆ from the outset, partners had agreed roles and responsibilities.

## 5 The Role of Intermediary Organisations

### Introduction

5.1 This Chapter will review the growing importance of the role of intermediary bodies in supporting community-based regeneration and how these organisations can contribute to community capacity building.

5.2 A strong community will have a high level of voluntary and community activity both independent of, and linked to, agencies operating in that community (Scottish Social Inclusion Network, 1999a). According to the Social Exclusion Unit Report, *Joining it up Locally* (SEU, 1999d), the community and voluntary sector can:

- ◆ fill the gaps between disadvantaged people and service providers;
- ◆ provide services alongside the public and private sector and needs to be taken seriously as a partner agency;
- ◆ respond to expressed needs of the community rather than to the perceived needs or agency agendas of the public sector – making their work more relevant to local communities;
- ◆ reach people and involve those that the public sector have failed to reach;
- ◆ mobilise both human and financial resources which the public sector cannot;
- ◆ carry the trust of local people, because of its independence; and
- ◆ take risks and more easily develop creative ways of working.

5.3 There is also a role which community-based organisations and the voluntary sector can play in the middle ground between top down and bottom up, connecting communities horizontally and communities and institutions vertically (SEU, 1999d: 85).

5.4 For the purposes of this review, we identify three distinct categories of intermediary organisations. These are:

- ◆ community regeneration organisations;
- ◆ third sector or social economy organisations; and
- ◆ voluntary sector organisations.

### Community Regeneration Organisations

5.5 Community involvement lies at the very heart of the work of many community-based regeneration organisations (Community Development Association, 1997; Carley et al, 2001). Community-based organisations are committed to:

- ◆ control by local people;
- ◆ local accountability;
- ◆ empowering local communities; and
- ◆ community ownership.

5.6 Research suggests that the strongest community-based regeneration organisations are those which have been in operation for a long time and have an ethos for effective engagement with the local community (Carley et al, 2001). The North Kensington Amenity Trust in west London is an example of a development trust. Development trusts are community-based organisations working for the sustainable regeneration of their areas through a mixture of economic, environmental, cultural and social activities. They are independent, not-for-profit bodies, often registered charities, which are committed to the involvement of local people in the regeneration process. Over a period of 25 years, the Kensington Amenity Trust has developed a site of 23 acres situated under a motorway flyover. The trust emerged from a community campaign in the late 1960s aimed at persuading the local authority to involve local people in considering what would be developed on this derelict land. Convincing the local authority to support the idea of a community trust has resulted in the trust now managing 150 workspaces including workshops, commercial offices, charity offices, shops and provides a range of community and recreation facilities. The trust plays an active role in community development in helping to establish new projects and giving grants to local people. The main message from the North Kensington Amenity Trust is that over time, the trust has created a sufficient income-generating base to ensure its independence and sustainability (Development Trusts Association, 1997).

5.7 An example of how community involvement can be supported at the local level is provided by Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs). TMOs are community-based organisations, which have developed as a result of taking over the running of council housing estates. As Jupp (2000) describes, TMOs are established when a local authority transfers control of the housing and the management of budgets to a community of tenants elected by all the residents. Because they have an asset base, they are able to form a much more equal partnership with local authorities and because they have a real influence, many more residents want to be involved compared with more traditional tenants' associations.

5.8 One advantage of community-based regeneration organisations is the potential use of community owned assets to maintain and invest in community capacity building. Asset-based development offers real opportunities to sustain community regeneration and to provide future income streams to ensure that the process of community capacity building and empowerment continues (Carley et al, 2001).

5.9 The Royds Community Association (RCA) was set up in 1992 to regenerate three public sector housing estates on the outskirts of the city of Bradford. The community worked with a local housing officer and a private sector individual over a three-year period in developing its plans before submitting a major SRB bid. The bid was successful in attracting £31 million over a seven-year period in SRB funding and over £100 million in total from other sources. The Royds Association has a board of 22 directors of whom 12 are elected locally and acts as the accountable body for SRB purposes. Around £400,000 is spent annually on community capacity building and two new community centres have been built, which are already self-sufficient. A social action programme, launched in 1998, aims to have more than 1000 residents involved in voluntary work on the estate by 2002. RCA owns land transferred from the local authority and plans to invest capital receipts from land sales to make it completely independent of local authority financial support by the end of the SRB programme. A recent proposal by the Royds Association to become a Registered Social Landlord for the three estates is the next step in the process of empowering the local community (Urban Environment Today, 2000).



### Third Sector or Social Economy Organisations

5.10 The contribution of Third Sector or Social Economy to economic and social development was highlighted in the Scottish Enterprise document *Access Review: A Strategy for Economic Inclusion* (1997). The social economy consists of autonomous, non-profit distributing, community-based organisations managed by local people. Social economy organisations provide goods and services not provided by the public or private sectors, they are independently organised and democratically governed and make use of voluntary inputs both financial and human. However, work by Simmonds and Emmerich (1996) suggests that the concept of the social economy is not as fully understood in the UK as in other European countries. The social economy does not only include the voluntary sector. By also including organisations which do not distribute profit, the net is cast much more widely. A generally accepted definition (Wilson, 1995) of the social economy is that it is composed of:

- ◆ co-operatives;
- ◆ mutual and friendly societies (including housing associations);
- ◆ voluntary organisations; and
- ◆ companies limited by guarantee.

5.11 On a practical level, organisations within the social economy are motivated by social purposes rather than by profit. Through the social economy local communities can access training and employment opportunities, as well as services which are not delivered by the private or public sectors. Social economy organisations are a powerful self-help mechanism; their activities help to maintain the social fabric of disadvantaged communities and encourage economic regeneration.

5.12 Social economy organisations can contribute to enhancing community development by:

- ◆ reinventing local economies - responding to local needs, generating employment and developing routes to mainstream employment;
- ◆ employability and training – Intermediate Labour Market Schemes run by social economy organisations are a valuable source of vocational training and personal development;
- ◆ creating social capital – addressing unmet local needs through the use of underused resources;
- ◆ generating new employment opportunities – integrating the excluded back into the economy;
- ◆ asset building - retaining surpluses within communities; and
- ◆ aiding financial sustainability - leveraging in other funds and earning income which will create new jobs and support new services.

5.13 In a European context, the social economy or third sector is recognised as a valuable source of information on local needs. In addition, it is thought to contribute to the development of “*networks, norms and trust that can facilitate co-operation for mutual benefit*” or social capital (Campbell, 1999). Campbell argues that by developing local services to meet local needs, third sector organisations can reduce “leakage” from the local economy, thereby maximising its local impact. Encouraging local economic activity, where more of the wealth created is retained within the local community and where

communities can influence their own futures, is now accepted as an essential part of forward-looking economic development and regeneration strategies. It is within this approach that the real value of the third sector economy is being recognised (Cooper, 1999). Chanan (1999) warns that a social economy agenda that only relies on job creation can be vulnerable in two ways. In the first place, measurement of job creation ignores other forms of value created by the social economy and so underestimates its impact. In the second place, the capacity of employment policy as a whole to solve the problems of social exclusion can be questioned.

5.14 To assess the impacts of the social economy on individual neighbourhoods regeneration partnerships should consider undertaking an audit of the sector to establish a baseline on which to construct a future development strategy and to monitor the sector's impact on the regeneration process.

5.15 The Castlemilk Economic Development Agency (CEDA) is promoting social enterprises through a locally driven Third Sector Project, established with the support of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the local enterprise company, Enterprise Glasgow. The project aims to provide a range of services to develop the strength and diversity of community-based services in Castlemilk. CEDA undertook a survey of community service providers in Castlemilk (CEDA, 2000). The results included the following:

- ◆ community-based organisations in Castlemilk attracted an estimated income of £18.1 million in the last financial year with local housing associations accounting for the bulk of this income;
- ◆ organisations employ 522 people (one fifth of all local jobs) on a full-time, part-time and seasonal basis (only 32% of the jobs are currently held by local people);
- ◆ besides committee input, an estimated 251 volunteer workers contribute 1,798 hours of labour each week. This is conservatively valued at £476,500 per annum to the Castlemilk economy and is equivalent to 51 full-time jobs;
- ◆ overall, local organisations tend to be relatively large with an average income of £235,000, an average workforce of 10 employees and 10 volunteers (where used) and an average of 347 service users each week;
- ◆ organisations have a high degree of community ownership, where 69% of the 352 management committee places are held by local people and in 4 out of 5 organisations at least half of the committee members are Castlemilk residents; and
- ◆ organisations serve a range of target groups, with the bulk of organisations operating in the childcare, housing and social care fields. Most organisations also pursue education and training activities in addition to their main activities.

5.16 Hargreaves (1998) argues in favour of a more consistent approach to supporting the third sector, including recommendations for:

- ◆ a network of 'social capital banks' to assist the third sector to generate investment capital (social banks are for-profit financial service providers or subsidiaries, dedicated to social or environmental objectives. While this sector remains underdeveloped in the UK examples include the Triodos Bank, Ecology Building Society and the Unity Trust Bank);

- ◆ incentives for partnerships to deliver public goods alongside third sector organisations;
- ◆ incentives for volunteering – including allowing individuals to give to voluntary organisations through the tax system; and
- ◆ government incentives to attract endowment and bequests to third sector organisations.

5.17 In recognition of the importance of the social economy in Scotland, the Scottish Executive, in collaboration with key public and private sector partners, have established a new investment fund, Social Investment Scotland. This fund offers loan funding for social economy organisations that either want to set up or expand their services. In particular, it will serve not-for-profit enterprises and community-based organisations in need of facility finance (secured loans for the purchase, refurbishment or new build of property and premises for organisations), operational finance (lending for equipment, working capital and organisational development needs), and bridging finance (to provide gap funding). The fund will operate through local community finance initiatives where possible, and ensure that support and advice is available to social economy organisations thinking about loan finance as an additional means of funding. Market development work and capacity building will take place during the autumn and spring of 2000/01. It is expected that Social Investment Scotland will be launched in the summer of 2001.

### **Voluntary Sector Organisations**

5.18 The voluntary sector is recognised as a significant social and economic force. Voluntary organisations work in areas such as social care, housing, childcare, health, the environment, culture, arts, advice, education, counselling and guidance. Across the UK, voluntary organisations undertake this activity through the work of 485,000 paid staff and approximately 3,000,000 volunteers who provide essential support and services to vulnerable groups such as the elderly, people with disabilities, children and those with mental health problems. In Scotland, there are an estimated 100,000 paid staff in the sector with some 300,000 volunteers in the general charity part of the Scottish voluntary sector (Voluntary Sector NTO, 2000; SCVO, 1999).

5.19 Popple and Redmond (2000), commenting on the role and function of the voluntary sector in the UK, make the point that in the current policy environment voluntary sector organisations can be seen to be more cost efficient than statutory or private sector equivalents.

5.20 Voluntary sector organisations are often locally based and have relationships with users different from those of public sector run services. They are often regarded in a different way by service users because of their style of delivery, accessibility and the impression that the voluntary sector is democratically accountable. However, Popple and Redmond (2000) challenge the view that the voluntary sector has the capacity to replace certain statutory services as envisaged by the Government policy. In certain circumstances, voluntary sector organisations may require support to build their own capacity to work with communities to broaden the base of participation, volunteering and active citizenship.

5.21 At the local level, many voluntary sector organisations do connect with excluded groups and wider communities of interest. Voluntary sector organisations have resources and expertise that help to support community participation. The voluntary sector is recognised as a key player in the regeneration process, and a place is usually reserved for a voluntary sector

representative on partnership boards. However, partnership agencies can overly rely on the voluntary sector to represent the views of all community-based organisations. While it is important that the views of the voluntary sector be considered, partnerships should seek to ensure that all community-based organisations are equally recognised in the partnership process because:

- ◆ there will be many small community groups who are not part of the formalised voluntary sector; and
- ◆ voluntary groups, like any organisation, will have their own agendas, funding targets to achieve and issues to pursue.

5.22 Given the importance of the voluntary sector in regeneration working reality can be somewhat different. Jupp (2000) refers to a survey undertaken by the Charities Aid Foundation on the role of the voluntary and community sectors in regeneration partnerships, which found that only half of the local Councils of Voluntary Service (CVS) thought that the sector was included for its expertise. Nine out of ten said that voluntary organisations were included because they were a funding requirement and the report concluded that the sector is “*profoundly cynical about its involvement in partnerships*”.

5.23 To assist in the development of a strong voluntary sector in Scotland, the Government has introduced the Scottish Compact (Scottish Office, 1998b) an agreement between the Government and the voluntary sector on the principles of working in partnership. It is based on mutual understanding of the distinct values and roles of Government and the voluntary sector. The Scottish Executive Voluntary Issues Unit in consultation with the voluntary sector has produced Good Practice Guides (Scottish Executive, 2000i) on the working relations between Government departments and the sector, noting best practice on working jointly with voluntary organisations, community groups and volunteering interests. Consideration should be given to the following issues:

- ◆ involve the sector at an early stage;
- ◆ identify at the outset the contribution each partner is expected to make;
- ◆ agree suitable methods for ongoing dialogue to facilitate contributions to policy development and implementation;
- ◆ agree clear goals and work toward common objectives;
- ◆ seek to ensure that voluntary, volunteering and community sector personnel are representative and can speak on behalf of their stakeholders and users, or establish the limitations of their representational role;
- ◆ provide a clear timetable for meetings, Executive action and feedback on action;
- ◆ circulate papers well in advance of meetings;
- ◆ clarify whether expenses will be paid to small organisations;
- ◆ respect confidentiality, making sure that organisations know when information is being shared on a confidential basis or that ideas are being shared at a pre-commitment stage;
- ◆ proof changes in policy and practice for their impact on the voluntary sector and on volunteering;
- ◆ identify what happens if agreement cannot be reached and a partner wishes to withdraw; and
- ◆ be aware that effective voluntary sector participation involves costs.

## 6 A Financial Framework for Community Capacity Building

6.1 While regeneration initiatives provide a mechanism to support community capacity building, there still remains a lack of funding to support this type of activity. Research evidence suggests that financial support is critical in the period immediately before the bidding process begins to assist local community organisations to develop a vision and action plan for their neighbourhoods. Small-scale funding of start-up projects is important to help build the confidence of the local community and funding needs to be forthcoming to provide local residents with access to initial training, leadership development and consultancy services (Carley et al, 2000; Duncan and Thomas, 2000).

6.2 A good practice example on how to fund community capacity building within a regeneration partnership is the City Challenge West End Partnership in Newcastle-upon-Tyne (City Challenge West End Partnership, 1998). In this case, a Community Resource Team, set up in 1993, worked with the Community Forum to involve local people in encouraging them to take ownership of both the problems and solutions in their neighbourhood. As part of this process, City Challenge offered community groups two capacity building courses leading to a formally recognised qualification. In addition, a "Community Chest" was established. The Community Chest was intended to be a flexible and responsive fund, provided funding for small-scale projects with grants of up to £30,000. By June 1996, the Community Chest had invested £1.5million in over 400 projects. A summer activities programme, funded by the Community Chest and the City Council, was introduced. The programme sought to ensure high quality leisure activities were available to children and young people and to divert them from potential anti-social behaviour and crime. The availability of funding made a significant impact on improving services and providing amenities by assisting voluntary projects and increasing access for individuals in ways that are often over-looked by mainstream funding. The success of this approach is reflected in the National Strategy Action Plan, A New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal (Social Exclusion Unit, 2001). The Action Plan recognises that while many local residents welcome support to be involved in decision making for others the first steps towards active involvement will come about through participating in community based projects. To support this the Action Plan has earmarked funding of £50 million over the next three years to be channelled through Community Chests allocated to 88 eligible local authority areas in England.

6.3 Funding for community capacity building can be accessed from a variety of sources including charitable trusts, voluntary sector organisations and the private sector. However, to improve local service delivery and co-ordinate the expenditure available, there is a strong argument in favour of resources, especially at the city-wide level, to be integrated strategically to promote capacity building (Carley et al, 2000).

6.4 One city-wide approach is being developed in Hull. A Community Investment Fund is being piloted by the city-wide strategic partnership, Hull City Vision. Funding of up to £25,000 is available to any community/voluntary

sector group with innovative ideas, a defined community base and active support at the local level. An appraisal board, composed mainly of community representatives, has been appointed to consider applications to the fund.

6.5 At the level of individual organisations, community-based housing associations and housing co-operatives have a presence, knowledge and commitment to their neighbourhoods. More importantly, such organisations have already developed the capacity and local infrastructure around which other activities can be developed. Community-based housing organisations have the potential to utilise their spending power in development and maintenance to the benefit of the local economy. A number of such organisations are already involved in "wider role" type initiatives (Carley et al, 2001).

6.6 Taylor (2000b) cites other examples of community regeneration organisations running a pub, a theatre, a supermarket and energy efficiency schemes. Others are developing income from service contracts with the local authority on environmental maintenance, childcare and community care services.

6.7 An important source of funding is the European Union (EU). Under Priority 4 of the European Social Fund the EU makes specific reference to capacity building as follows:

*"An enabling and empowering process that adds value to community development by strengthening the ability of these organisations to reach and deliver to the target and sub target groups. The communities whose capacity is to be enhanced may be communities of place or communities of interest."* (London Regeneration Network, 1999)

6.8 One example of how EU funding has been instrumental in supporting the voluntary sector is provided by the VOLCAAN initiative in England. VOLCAAN (Voluntary and Community Alliance Across Norfolk) is a partnership of 31 voluntary and statutory organisations, managed by Norwich and Norfolk Voluntary Services. Following a bid to the European Social Fund, under its Priority 4 on capacity building, VOLCAAN was awarded £2 million until the end of June 2000 to set up projects which will enable voluntary and community sector organisations to develop their services. To date 23 projects have been funded, each consisting of a specific piece of work to enhance the capacity in the sector. The "Widening Participation" project is a countywide project to forge awareness and co-operation between major training providers in the statutory sector and trainers and training needs in the voluntary sector and communities. In Norwich, funding is being used to help the Council's new network of 12 local residents' forums, established around the city, to develop their local community plans. The funding will provide extra training and officer support to develop community skills and knowledge. VOLCAAN Training Development co-ordinates information on training available to the sector from all sources and analyses organisations' development needs. One of the key elements of the VOLCAAN project relates to tackling long-term unemployment. The project is looking at the value of volunteers' work, training and services for unemployed people, work with hard to reach groups and the potential for creating sustainable jobs to meet community needs. The results of a recent evaluation highlighted the feasibility of a county-wide, whole sector approach to capacity building and indicated that significant investment in capacity building can substantially increase the contribution of the third sector to employability and other policy objectives.

6.9 Research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (1998) concluded that as short-term initiatives draw to a close, a question still remains over the provision of long-term support for community organisations.

6.10 Taylor (2000b) suggests that community regeneration organisations with a community-owned asset base are seen by many as a way to secure sustainable inclusion and integration because they can:

- ◆ give residents the resources to negotiate with other partners from a position of strength rather than dependency;
- ◆ secure an independent income stream and lever in additional monies from new sources;
- ◆ link local people into the wider economy through securing contracts across the locality and region; and
- ◆ provide the foundation on which a greater range of community regeneration activities can be built.





## 7 Gaps in Knowledge

7.1 The review of the literature and research evidence suggests that gaps exist in our understanding of the processes and outcomes of community capacity building. For Scottish Homes, as a key regeneration stakeholder, there is a clear case to be made for the Agency to develop further specific knowledge and expertise in this area.

7.2 The following recommendations are made to Scottish Homes in support of a continuing process of development in community capacity building activity:

- ◆ the identification of the processes, outcomes and impacts of different policy interventions in terms of the success or failure of the various capacity building measures;
- ◆ the identification of best practice and how this might be applied in regeneration partnerships across Scotland;
- ◆ the development of a framework to enable capacity building to be monitored and evaluated throughout the lifetime of partnerships;
- ◆ development of advice for undertaking community participation audits and local training and information needs analyses. A key element should be the involvement of communities as researchers, analysing their own needs and developing their own strategies;
- ◆ analysis of the training needs of regeneration stakeholders and professionals working with communities, including benchmarking of current training provision offered by professional bodies, supplemented by a good practice note on building the capacity of professionals in community regeneration;
- ◆ a review of models of neighbourhood management and structures to enhance resident participation in decision making, local service delivery and community ownership;
- ◆ analysis of the role of community leaders in the regeneration process, highlighting particular cultural, structural and organisational barriers to participation; and
- ◆ an appraisal of alternative models of community ownership and asset management, and of options for housing associations acting as potential community investment agencies.



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