

DiCE can be used for work which focuses on community wellbeing and community empowerment, at policy, programme or project level. It is appropriate to people who work in public sector paid positions, volunteers, community activists and those working in the voluntary and community sector.

# changes news

## DiCE: Dimensions of Community Empowerment

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

DiCE can help you work with communities:

Increasing skills, knowledge and confidence

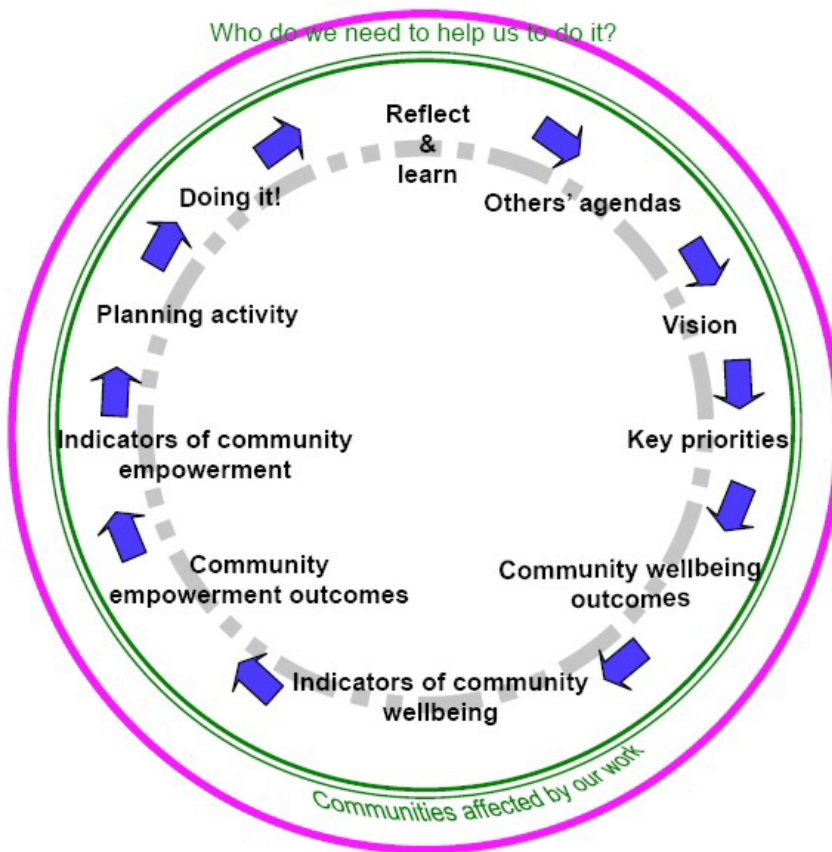
Promoting equality and inclusion

Bringing people together around common issues and concerns

Building positive relationships across communities and groups and enabling co-operative working

Encouraging and enabling communities to influence decision making in public services

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



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

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

**Confident**  
**Inclusive**  
**Organised**  
**Cooperative**

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

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

# Community Empowerment Dimensions

“What is Community Empowerment?” - is a ‘handy guide’ developed by changes and CDX in April 2008. It is designed to help Local Authority officers get to grips with what is meant by community empowerment and to show how community empowerment can be integrated into their work.

It presents ‘community empowerment’ as consisting of 5 ‘dimensions’ which build on decades of theory and practice - illustrated in DiCE - and which have grown from the application of frameworks such as ABCD (Achieving Better Community Development, CDF 2000) and DCD (Doing Community Development, changes 2006).

This guide is available [here](#) or at:  
[cdx.org.uk/files/u1/what\\_is\\_community\\_empowerment.pdf](http://cdx.org.uk/files/u1/what_is_community_empowerment.pdf)



## Women Take Part

Contracted by the Government Equalities Office, [changes](#) has undertaken a piece of research looking at the participation of women, in particular under-represented women, in governance and decision making, in both community and public life

The research looked at two sides of the story:

- ‘what works’ in terms of approaches, initiatives and learning models that encourage different groups of women to become more involved, and
- ‘what needs to happen’ so that structures, policies and organisations work in ways that encourage the recruitment and support of more women.

For more information, go to .... [www.changesuk.net](http://www.changesuk.net) and click on the ‘Women Take Part’ tab.

## TWO axes of influence

‘VOICE’ is a tool designed specifically for community groups and networks to use, to assess and improve their influence on public agencies and partnerships.

VOICE is receiving great feedback where people use words like:

Inspiring                      motivational                      fantastic

A handy guide has been published by [CDX](#) and made available on their website

[cdx.org.uk/files/u1/axis\\_of\\_influence.pdf](http://cdx.org.uk/files/u1/axis_of_influence.pdf)

For more information about the axes of influence .. contact [admin@changesuk.net](mailto:admin@changesuk.net) (01743 350198) or visit [www.changesuk.net](http://www.changesuk.net)

## ‘ECHO’

- is the flipside of the coin. It is a framework for public agencies to assess and improve their openness to influence. It reflects the understanding that community networks cannot influence if agencies are not receptive, structured, prepared and in a position to be influenced - and came about because of work done on ‘VOICE’ which recognised this.

This framework plots an agency’s openness to influence against their ability to respond in the light of rules, regulations and restrictions on their activity.

## Coming up ... Training in Birmingham, £120 + VAT

[Community empowerment - active citizenship](#) - (23rd September) - what do we mean by 'active citizenship', why is it important to policy makers and communities and how does it link with community engagement? This course considers how we can encourage people to become active citizens and how we can move to a more energised, authentic and democratic society.

[Community empowerment - community engagement](#) - (7th October) - what is the context for community engagement, what does it mean, what are the issues and challenges, ways forward to address these and what are the different approaches to community engagement?