Participation, Partnerships and Pilots in Community Development Policy

by FLEUR M. TOOGOOD

Article

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ABSTRACT

This paper critically examines the current New Zealand government's policy of promoting local participation and 'partnerships' in community development and the provision of social services with particular consideration of three pilot programmes: 'Community-led Development' (Department of Internal Affairs); 'Social Sector Trials' and 'Make it Happen Te Hiku' (Ministry of Social Development). A review of New Zealand and international literature reveals that further research into the implications of this policy direction is required around the position of power in local leadership; the roles and relationships between local government and local service providers (both government and non-government); and public private partnerships in community development and social service provision. This paper asks how and why central government is directing 'community-led' development and questions government's commitment to building of capacity at a local level, a fundamental requirement of participative models. It also questions the focus on communities defined by place and considers implications of this policy direction for communities of interest and association.

INTRODUCTION

Using a social justice approach and with particular consideration of the effects of the uniquely New Zealand context, this paper considers the New Zealand government's current policy of promoting local participation and partnerships in community development and in the provision of social services. This policy direction has been trialled by government in three pilot programmes: 'Community-led Development' (Department of Internal Affairs); 'Social Sector Trials' and 'Make it Happen Te Hiku' (Ministry of Social Development). Analysis of these programmes raises a number of questions for consideration. While the rhetoric promotes local autonomy, where does the power really reside? What provision has been made for raising the capacity at the local level? With a focus on place based communities, what impacts may this have on communities of association?

In his maiden speech from the throne in 2008, Prime Minister John Key outlined his neoliberal approach:

> in pursuing [the] goal of economic growth my government (sic) will be guided by the principle of individual freedom and a belief in the capacity and right of individuals to shape and improve their own lives... my government (sic) will not seek to involve itself in decisions that are best made by New Zealanders within their own homes and their own communities (Key, 2008).

While the latter part of this quote may have been intended as an allusion to the out-going Clark government, and the rhetoric of the 'Nanny State', it set the scene for his approach, which in many ways though more liberal in focus, represents a continuation of the Third Way politics of the previous government, as defined by Giddens (1998). Key went on to position the role of civil society in the provision of social services:

> in all areas of social policy, my government will establish new relationships with the non-government and voluntary groups that are so important to the functioning of a healthy society.

By working more closely with these groups and turbo-charging their efforts, my government will tap into the resources, ideas and collective goodwill of New Zealand communities (Key, 2008).

Interestingly, with no general statement about social services in the two subsequent speeches from the throne, the role of community activity did not receive any attention (Key, 2011, 2014). However the Social Sector Trials, coupled with the two experimental community programmes Community-led Development and Make it happen Te Hiku, demonstrate central government's policy direction of pushing the provision of community development, and ultimately social service provision, out to civil society through the promotion of the principles of participation, partnership and tapping into the capacity of communities.

This paper follows an analysis of literature, taking a social justice approach, to the consideration of 'Community-Led Development' (CLD) by providing a critique of literature relating to the definition of and academic approaches to 'community', 'development' and the practice of 'community development' with a focus on the USA, the UK and NZ. This analysis led into consideration of literature relating to CLD itself, which was shown to be a very small body of work. A further analysis of literature relating to the UK's 'Big Society' has also provided insight into areas for consideration of the participative and partnership approach for the delivery of social services and community development.

COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT

A four-year pilot programme of Community-Led Development (CLD) in New Zealand began in 2011 following a review of community funding sponsored by the then Minister for Community and Voluntary Sector, Tariana Turia (Turia, 2011). This pilot involved five communities: Whirinaki, South Hokianga; Mt Roskill, Auckland; Mangakino, Waikato; Waitangirua/Cannons Creek, Porirua; and North East Valley, Dunedin. The evaluation report published following the third year of the trial announced that the trial had ceased in Waitangirua/Cannons Creek (DIA, 2015).

In her cabinet paper seeking redirection of $1.5m[1] Community Organisation Grants Scheme (COGS) funding to the pilot communities, Turia (2011a) defined CLD as 'typified by broad community engagement to identify shared issues and concerns, and to generate local solutions. The underpinning philosophy is one of community empowerment, and self determination' (p. 5). The pilot project was conducted 'to enable the [Department of Internal Affairs (DIA)] to assess whether the community-led development approach achieves sustainable outcomes for communities, hapu and iwi' (DIA, 2012, p. 1).

CLD is based on a community development model developed by the Tamarak Institute in Canada and American consultant Jim Diers, known for his work on urban regeneration in Seattle (DIA, 2012), which draws on principles of local leadership, decision making and action with a focus on building capacity and using existing community assets including partnership arrangements with government agencies, non-government organisations (NGOs) and the private sector. In New Zealand CLD is championed by the NGO Inspiring Communities (Torjman and Makhoul, 2012), and while they are involved with communities throughout New Zealand, and have been involved in the training and support of DIA staff involved in the project, they do not have direct involvement with communities in the government led pilot. At the outset of the project DIA staff were trained in the principles of CLD by Diers. Using the principles of action research (action and reflection cycles) DIA staff identified and established local leadership teams in each community and supported them to: identify an established local organisation that could manage the funding provided by the department, consult widely with the local community, identify a community vision and develop a community plan, develop a funding proposal to DIA, and implement the community plan with support from local partners (DIA, 2012).

Inspiring Communities (2010) describes CLD as having seven principles which promote: a focus on community of 'place', empowerment of 'local voice', a cross sectorial approach, strength and asset-based planning, collaborative local leadership, adaptability and demonstrable progress, and 'whole systems change' (p. 4). Highlighting the learning approach of its organisation, Inspiring Communities has produced reports and books and also publishes regular newsletters about the development of its programmes from experience in communities around New Zealand (Inspiring Communities, 2010, 2012, 2014a).

Its most recent, freely-available 'think-piece' (Inspiring Communities, 2012) provided a lead in to its book, *Learning by Doing*, which is promoted as a tool for communities wanting to use the CLD approach (Inspiring Communities, 2014b). This think piece raises some key messages around the positioning of CLD in New Zealand, and

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[1] In addition to the $1.5m approved by cabinet from COGS funding a further $0.4m was redirected from Vote Community and Voluntary Sector 2011/12 (Turia, 2011b) and "in total $6.4m was allocated for community led development over 4 years" (DIA, 2012, p. 5).

what is required for the success of the approach, including system changes and awareness of 'broader political contexts', promotion of 'active citizenship', 'staunch peak bodies', the importance of the role of local government as well as business and skilled practitioners, and a tolerance for 'messy language and framing' (p. 1).

Celebrated outputs from the government-led CLD pilot include the cleaning up and replanting of local waterways and revival of a local Māori dialect; the development of community gardens, a community centre and a community shuttle service; the enhancement of neighbourhood cohesion with street parties; repair of a local marae (tribal meeting place); development of a skate park and an integrated approach to the attraction of tourists (DIA, 2013; 2015). 'Intangible outcomes' also recorded by three communities include 'a greater sense of community, greater community cohesion…and further development of leadership within each community' (DIA, 2015, p. 27).

MAKE IT HAPPEN TE HIKU

This project followed the signing of *Kia Tutahi: The Relationship Accord between the Communities of Aotearoa New Zealand and the Government of New Zealand* (DIA, 2011a), by Far North iwi (tribes) and government agency representatives in Kaitaia in 2011. The accord promotes the principles and commitments of the Treaty of Waitangi, and its tikanga (customs/beliefs) include promotion of inclusion, self-determination, partnership, trust and respect (DIA, 2011a). The principles and process for the Make it Happen programme were similar to that of CLD, however the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and local government agencies had a far greater role in the community consultation, visioning and planning process. The 'Project Action Group' group for the Te Hiku project was made up of 'local service provider representatives' selected by MSD (MSD, 2014a). While not explicit in the online resources available about this programme it appears that, unlike the CLD project, funding for the Te Hiku project remained with MSD and various government agencies in the region. With the consultation and visioning process complete, MSD have developed outcome based plans using the Results Based Accountability (RBA) framework which is 'developed by Mark Friedman and…is being used throughout the United States, and in countries around the world, to produce measurable change in people's lives' (Fiscal Policy Studies Institute, 2015). Each outcome is presented with a list of 'partners' to be engaged in achieving the desired result (MSD, 2014a).

SOCIAL SECTOR TRIALS

MSD is coordinating a set of trials, due for completion in June 2015, in sixteen communities across New Zealand. Initially in six communities (Levin/Horowhenua, Gore District, Tokoroa/South Waikato, Kawerau, Taumaranui, Te Kuiti/Waitomo District) the Trials were extended out to a further ten (Kaikohe, Ranui, Waikato District, Rotorua, Whakatane, Gisborne, South Taranaki District, Wairarapa, Porirua, South Dunedin) in 2013. In these communities either a locally based NGO, or a 'committed individual' (a local civil servant), is coordinating an integrated approach to the delivery of social services to youth within their community: including managing partnership contracts and frontline delivery of services for young people aged between 13 – 18 years (eight of these communities are trialling the approach with a broader age range). A local advisory group, made up of staff from each social service agency in the area, provides support and guidance and ensures the coordination of services. Governance of the Trials is taken up by the Joint Venture Board (JVB) which is made up of Chief Executives from the five partner agencies: Ministries of Social Development, Justice, Health, Education, and Police (MSD, 2015).

An evaluation published in May 2013 (which resulted in the extension of the trial) reported that the trial was running very well in the six start-up communities with action plans in place and positive results reported (MSD, 2013). Action plans are now in place in all sixteen communities and the MSD website reports good progress.

In their discussion of the proposed reforms under the Social Sector Trials Hughes and Smart (2012) noted that while front-line staff seemed open to the changes, some central departmental staff expressed resistance to the changed delivery model. It will be interesting to see how this concern is reported in mid-2015 when the final evaluation takes place.

POPULATION AND COMMUNITY COHESION

The size and existing cohesion of communities in which the Social Sector trials and CLD pilot run must be acknowledged in any discussion of the success of the programmes and in particular in the promotion of a roll out of the approach.

By the end of the second year of the CLD pilot the smaller rural communities Whirinaki (approx. 400 residents), Mangakino (approx. 750 residents and a number of non-resident ratepayers) and North East Valley (approx. 4500 residents) had engaged a broad representation of their communities, created a community plan and were well down the track in various community projects. By the end of the third year all three smaller communities can cite a number of tangible and intangible positive outcomes towards realising the goals in their plans for their communities.

However, the three published formative reports of the implementation, and subsequent two years of the CLD pilot (DIA, 2012, 2013, 2015) tell a story of the difficulties in making progress in the two larger urban communities. Both Mt Roskill (approx. 60,000 residents) and Waitangirua/Cannons Creek (approx. 12,000 residents) were unable to meet DIA deadlines for the development of community plans in the first two years.

By the end of the third year Waitangirua/Cannons Creek had been removed from the pilot and Mt Roskill had just finalised their community plan at their first AGM (DIA, 2013, 2015). Population alone does not account for the lack of success in the Waitangirua/Cannons Creek pilot. Issues around governance and power in both of these larger communities are discussed below.

The difficulties in ensuring they held a broad community mandate were common in the two larger communities. Those involved in the Mt Roskill pilot acknowledged the challenges in keeping up the mostly volunteer steam required for broad community consultation (DIA, 2013, 2015). The year three evaluation highlights the need to provide the leadership group with skills and support to attract interest and engage with the wider community. Access to new approaches to community engagement, and learning through of the experiences of other CLD action in urban environments, may have been valuable for the Mt Roskill leadership team. For example, Diers promotes the idea of throwing community parties rather than holding meetings as the party atmosphere can create a positive environment to identify needs, find solutions and recruit participants for community projects in urban environments (Diers, personal communication 15 November, 2014). The CLD plan developed in Mt Roskill focuses on small scale projects and events to raise the profile of CLD in the community in 'a neighbourhood (or "street-by-street") approach' (DIA, 2015).

The MSD (2013) evaluation of the Social Sector Trials also warned that the successes in the six start up communities may in part be due to the existing networks and relationships between providers in small close-knit communities. It will be interesting to see how the Trials have progressed, what challenges have been faced and what lessons have been learned following the roll out to the urban areas of Gisborne, Porirua, Rotorua, Ranui (Auckland) and Dunedin South.

THE POSITION OF POWER

INVESTMENT APPROACH AND PARTNERSHIPS

The CLD pilot was born out of a review of funding for community organisations. The report *First principles review of Crown funded schemes: review and proposed approach* (DIA, 2011b) outlined the government's main driver for what was developed, over the following year, into the CLD pilot programme. That was, to develop a bulk funding model for the distribution of funds to community organisations in the hope of achieving more for less in community. It was proposed, in the 2011 report, that this could be achieved by adopting a 'community development approach to the *administration* of the Crown funds' and an 'an investment model for the *management* of the Crown funds' (emphasis added, p. 12). 'An investment model is complementary to a community development approach to funding, and offers several advantages including a focus on working collaboratively with a range of stakeholders to maximise the funding impact and use knowledge and other resources' (p. 12). That being said, as outlined above the CLD pilot has had significant government investment, and the latest CLD report confirms that 'in December 2014, it was decided that funding [will] now be available until June 2016' (DIA, 2015, p. 1).

As we have seen with changes to welfare (benefit) provision an 'investment approach' (MSD, 2014b) may be interpreted ultimately as a cut in funding. In the case of the Social Sector Trials and with the focus on the sustainability of CLD in the long run, government indicates a strong reliance on other sectors to increase their participation and funding (see for example DIA, 2011b; MSD, 2014b; DIA, 2015). 'Partnership' arrangements are to be embraced with caution according to critics. As Seddon, Billett and Clemans (2005) highlight, 'From a critical social science perspective there is much to commend the view that social partnerships are neo-liberal instruments of self-governance that assert and institutionalise an individualised political rationality while minimising the public cost of this work' (Power and Whitty, cited in Seddon et al., 2005, p. 568).

However, there is certainly value in the social capital that is created by the promotion of cross agency and cross sector collaboration in community development. In their Australian study Seddon et al. discovered that social partnerships can '[challenge] established practices and generate unconventional solutions to old problems' (p. 325). They also note that social partnerships are often 'oriented to the achievement of specific outcomes' (p. 570); such an orientation is evidenced by the output focus of the social sector trials, CLD pilot and the Te Hiku project (DIA, 2013; MSD, 2013, 2014a, 2014c).

This output focus must also balance the interests of all stakeholders. In her study of New Zealand partnerships between business and community organisations Louise Lee (2014) found that 'some community managers were sceptical of the ability of business-community partnerships to share the benefits equitably. Some

community managers raised questions as to who might be the main beneficiaries of partnership arrangements and challenged what were perceived as inconsistencies in business motives' (p. 33).

Whirinaki, Mangakino and North East Valley are considering how to ensure the sustainability of the CLD programmes to ensure action towards achievement of their community plans can continue. While Whirinaki is considering the development of a community social enterprise, Mangakino and North East Valley are focussing on developing stakeholder and partnership relations (DIA, 2015).

When partnerships and empowerment are promoted hand in hand there must be consideration and recognition of where the power ends up. Drawing on their study of the Haringey community in North London, Dillon and Fanning (2011) present a 'Lesson for the Big Society'. They found that under the previous Blair and Brown governments' New Deal for Communities programme, which was also a participatory based programme, a 'planning elite in the prosperous West of the borough' was more successful in engaging with the local authority and securing funds for development projects of their choosing than in the 'relatively deprived East', and,

> follow up research undertaken just over a decade later found for the most part disparities between the efficacy of community actors from the West and the East remained in place…the East of Haringey still contained some of the most deprived areas in Britain whose communities were still seemingly unable to effectively participate in planning debates (p. 8).

This example suggests that in the UK where under the 'Big Society' approach building development planning decisions are being given to 'communities', groups such as commercial developers may be well positioned to maximise their own interests in communities with low levels of community participation even though, it should be noted, planning decisions must be put out to local referenda (DCLG, 2014).

Individuals who are already marginalised by poverty and powerlessness will be left behind by the Big Society, where everything hangs on how much power is assumed by which groups and businesses, to do what, for whom and how (Coote, cited in Ledwith, 2011, pp. 25 - 26).

A valuable area for further research would be the nature of 'partnerships' in the New Zealand context. The English language rhetoric around the Treaty of Waitangi and the 'partnership' relationship between Māori and the Crown in the modern context, may suggest a unique understanding of the partnership arrangements for the provision of community development and social services in New Zealand.

GOVERNANCE

In all three government initiatives local level decision making, including allocation of funds, has been highlighted as a foundation principle (DIA, 2012; MSD, 2013; MSD, 2014a). However, the adoption of this principle gives rise to a number of areas for consideration around governance and financial accountability.

The 2013 evaluation of the six start up communities in the Social Sector Trials emphasises critical factors for the success of the trials. The position of power at a local level alongside the importance of high level support was a common theme and is highlighted by the connections made between front line staff and the trials' governance body:

> an on-going close and direct link between governance group (Ministers and JVB) and front line operational staff (Trial leads): regular, high quality meetings and information exchange between these two groups was seen as crucial to the operation of the Trials to date. Linked to this is the ability to escalate issues from an operational level to governance level to overcome blockages if they cannot be resolved locally (MSD, 2013, p.28).

Concerns around local service provider competition for resources are evident in the Social Sector Trials 2013 evaluation of those communities trialling the NGO driven model of local leadership. The connection with and influence of the government agency CEOs on the Joint Venture Board appears to have addressed these issues as the trial progressed (MSD, 2013). However, the question remains of how the JVB will cope with a rollout of the scheme to further communities. Or, how communities will succeed in managing these issues of local competition and conflict between service providers without the close connection and support from a central governance body available to engage in operational issues.

In the Year 3 Evaluation Report (DIA, 2015) of the CLD pilot concerns around governance were raised in all of the communities involved. In relation to the North East Valley pilot,

> it was found that the Executive, similar to the other three leadership groups, continue to struggle to understand what their role is as a governance body within the parameters of a CLD approach. Some

issues that have arisen are around the management of paid staff and the approval of projects and subsequent release of funds (p. 20).

Echoing the social sector trial evaluation (MSD, 2013), significant support from DIA staff was valued by the leadership groups in all of the CLD pilot communities (DIA, 2015). Though the CLD model includes local 'fund holders', financial control remains centralised in DIA, with communities required to apply for funding. Comment about frustration at the lack of understanding about the 'criteria used when making finding decisions' (p. 8) and the pace at which funding is approved suggests that bulk funding for CLD projects has not yet been handed to the CLD communities (DIA, 2015).

Concerns about the governance role of the leadership teams in the CLD pilot are explained as a consequence of lack of understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the leadership groups during the implementation phase of the pilot. DIA recommends that in order to ensure success of CLD ongoing training and development of the leadership groups is required (DIA, 2015).

The Year 2 Evaluation Report (DIA, 2013) on the CLD pilot suggested that in Waitangirua/Cannons Creek existing community leaders looked for the opportunity of government funding to address areas in which their organisations were already working. Rather than embracing the CLD processes of community decision making and empowerment, longstanding local politics and competition for resources between local organisations drove the leadership team until DIA stepped in, the majority of the leadership team stepped down, and DIA appointed a local coordinator to facilitate the engagement of the broader community (Inspiring Communities, 2014b; DIA, 2013; DIA, 2015). The year three evaluation of the pilot confirmed that the CLD approach had been abandoned in the Waitangirua/Cannons Creek community and within that community DIA is now 'beginning on developing a range of advisory services outside of CLD' (DIA, 2015, p. 3).

These trials/pilots raise a number of yet unanswered questions. In a modern democracy should an unelected group of 'community leaders' make decisions about government funding on behalf of the wider community? How does such a group show that they have a broad community mandate? Results from the Year 3 Evaluation of the CLD pilot (DIA, 2015) show that all communities struggled to ensure broad community involvement. This was especially true in the large urban communities of Mt Roskill and Waitangirua/Cannons Creek, and was also recognised as problematic in the smallest community involved in the pilot, Whirinaki (DIA, 2015). Following a social justice approach, it would seem that measures of community involvement must demonstrate representation of all sectors of a community.

If these trials or pilot programmes are extended across the country how will governance and financial accountability be managed? As shown above, centralised and high level decision making is sometimes required to facilitate collaboration at the local level. Will a body such as JVB, or at the very least departmental advisors be available to all communities implementing programmes such as the Trials, CLD and Make it Happen?

How successful will implementation be if governance remains centralised? Unless the roll out continues at such a rate that the level of support from the JVB, or the CLD departmental project team, is maintained at the trial levels, there is a risk communities will face similar challenges to do with governance, local competition for resources and potential conflicts of interest in leadership groups as those faced in Mt Roskill and Waitangirua/Cannons Creek in the CLD pilot.

Public money, like charitable funds, must be accounted for and any extension of financial authority to local social service agencies must be managed and audited appropriately. Local governance issues are being worked through in the trial communities. As communicated by several of those involved in the CLD trials definitions of the roles, responsibilities, systems and processes need to be established, communicated and embedded prior to the decentralisation of fund allocation and any roll out of these trial programmes (DIA, 2015).

THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Peter McKinlay (2007) provides valuable insight into the role of the statutory sector in community development. Historically, in New Zealand provision of social services has been the domain of central government. The neoliberal reforms, beginning in the 1980s and continuing today, have seen an increase in partnership arrangements between state service and local providers. However, unlike in Britain, New Zealand local government had very little involvement in local social-service provision or community development. While community worker positions were created within local government structure from the 1970s, without institutional understanding or structural support for community development practice their impact was restricted (Rennie, personal communication, 29 September 2014).

In 2001 the Minister for Local Government Sandra Lee introduced the Local Government bill at the first reading:

> Mr speaker (sic) this bill, above all, is about 'empowerment'. Not as some might imagine, the empowerment of councils to exert greater influence and authority over their electors, but rather, empowering New Zealanders within their local communities to exercise greater control over their lives and over the environments in which they live (Lee 2001, cited in McKinlay, 2007, p. 494).

The Act passed in 2002 and required local governments to promote well-being, broken down into four well-beings: social, economic, environmental and cultural. The Act required processes '"to identify community outcomes". [However] there is little guidance on the nature of the process except that there must be opportunity for public input' (p.494) and council should seek the input of groups and organisations in a position to identify and promote outcomes (p.494). Performance measures for councils were altered to include public accountability measures which promoted a culture of consultation (Chia et al., 2011).

In 2012, at the time of the amalgamation of Auckland's 'supercity', changes to the Local Government Amendement Act altered the 'purpose of local government' to 'meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses' (Local Government Amendment Act, cited in McKinlay, 2013, p.17). McKinlay (2013) discusses the growing international empirical research which suggests that problems such as

> inadequate housing, educational underachievement, family dysfunction (including child abuse), [and] substance abuse as examples - cannot be solved by relying solely on the traditional top-down interventions and strategies of central governments. Instead, there is now a recognition that issues of this type need a partnership approach able to tap into local knowledge, networks and support – resources local government is uniquely placed to provide (p. 12).

Numerous submissions to the select committee at the time of the changes to the Local Government Act opposed the removal of the four well-beings as the purpose of local government (see for example Chisholm, 2012). McKinlay (2013) acknowledges the widespread concern about these changes and highlights the importance of participatory democracy at a local level which requires local government to find new ways of involving local people in decision making. He suggests that 'this will be especially the case as councils inevitably become more involved in facilitating the effective design, targeting and delivery of significant social services' (p. 17).

McKinlay (2013) expresses caution in making an assumption that these legislative changes have removed local governments' requirement to consider community well-beings. That, he says, is a matter for the courts to test. He argues that despite the fact the changes were intended to narrow the scope of council activity, 'the term "local public services" with its implication that these are activities of benefit to the community which would not otherwise be provided, when carefully considered, suggests that community well-being remains part of the purpose of local government' (p. 18).

Loomis (2012) suggests that changes to the Act are 'likely to leave a large vacuum in citizen participation in planning and decision making' with the removal of structured consultation and monitoring requirements. Others have described the four well-beings as replaced by the four R's: Rubbish, rates, roads and rats (Social Development Partners, 2012).

Both North East Valley and Mangakino have received support from their local Council with support for the leadership teams and the provision funding for some of the community projects (DIA, 2015).

It appears that the issue of the position of power is unresolved. On the one hand the success of community driven projects is founded on the empowerment of those communities to identify need, find solutions and make decisions about allocation of resources. On the other hand, some level of government oversight is necessary to ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable are met. While there is little doubt that those working on the front line in community development and social service provision intend to meet the needs of those in their communities, adequate oversight is required and the published evaluations of these programmes suggest that central governance is required to support collaboration at a local level. This however returns us to the dichotomy of how 'community-led' programmes must actually be centrally governed.

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

CLD rhetoric suggests that the empowering of communities through the building of capacity will create an environment in which power can be locally based (Inspiring Communities, 2012; Turia, 2011a). Critics of the Big Society also acknowledge the value of a dialogue around encouraging an increase in community action, volunteerism, social entrepreneurism and social capital (Dillon and Fanning, 2013; Civil Exchange, 2013). As hallmarks of community

development practice (Ife, 2002; Chile, 2007a) the principles of capacity building, participation, community empowerment and self-determination draw on concepts made famous by theorists such as Paulo Freire (Ledwith, 2011) and Amayrta Sen (1999). There is little debate that empowerment of marginalised communities can lead to economic progress and equality (Dillon and Fanning, 2013).

However, the fact that the rhetoric is coupled with a dramatic cut in funding for the social sector results in a belief that those most marginalised will fall further behind (Ledwith, 2011). Community development practitioners promote participatory democracy, while acknowledging the importance of government provision of social services to those in need (Ledwith, 2001; L. Chile, personal communication, 23 October 2014).

'The "small state" is absolving its democratic responsibilities to the poorest in society by making austerity cuts in public services at the same time as making the poorest responsible for their own poverty' (Baird cited in Ledwith, 2011, p. 25).

No evidence was found in the review of government reports and cabinet papers published on departmental websites (DIA, 2012; DIA, 2013; MSD, 2013; MSD, 2014a; MSD, 2014c) that resources have been directed towards building capacity that would enhance broad local participation and contribution to community development activities. In the initial implementation phase of the CLD project a number of training programmes outlining the approach were run throughout the country however the focus was on developing the skills of MSD staff. Following their selection by MSD, the local leadership groups attended one off workshops outlining the CLD approach (DIA, 2012).

The Year Three Report of the CLD Project recognises the need for ongoing training and development for those driving the CLD in the communities, particularly in relation to roles and responsibilities, governance structures, decision making skills and understanding of the principles of CLD across the broader community. One on one interviews between DIA staff and the Mt Roskill leadership group were required to resolve internal communication and governance issues. This resulted in a far more focussed leadership team which recognised the need to continue development of community capacity and a focus on accessing members of the community with existing capabilities that would support the work involved in achieving the community goals as outlined in the long awaited community plan.

In the briefing notes to their incoming minister for the Department of Community and the Voluntary Sector, DIA promote the importance of building local capacity. 'Many community organisations need assistance with such matters as governance, strategic planning, volunteer management and sourcing funds. Considerable support is available to build capability and capacity, but there is no overview of its range or effectiveness' (DIA, 2014, p. 7).

If the CLD programme is rolled out beyond the communities involved in the pilot significant investment needs to be made in building the capacity of community leaders, particularly focusing on skills and techniques to ensure broad community engagement. This may best be done by taking examples from the consultation programme run by MSD and local social service providers in Northland as part of the Make It Happen Te Hiku programme, and the CLD programmes promoted by Inspiring Communities, possibly utilising local council networks and resources.

The literature in support of participative models promoting collaboratively functioning, empowered, self-determined communities is extensive. These approaches consistently place importance on investment in the capacity, and capability, of community members. What is required varies enormously across communities depending on the existing skills and experience within communities. Without resources to empower communities, self-determination cannot occur. It is essential that significant resource be available to communities embarking on CLD to ensure that communities have the skills and the necessary volunteer hours to make the approach work.

Loomis (2012) questions both government's commitment to empowering communities, and whether the CLD pilot will in fact lead to any wider adoption. The new Minister for Voluntary and Community Sector, Jo Goodhew, was briefed on the evaluation of the pilot in mid-December 2014 (DIA, 2014). At that time the decision was made to continue funding through until June 2016 (DIA, 2015). However, there is an indication that some of the CLD funding earmarked for the 2014/15 financial year has in fact been redirected to the recent government recognition of the place of social enterprise in social policy development (DIA, 2014).

PLACE-BASED FOCUS

Classical sociological theorists Marx, Durkheim and Weber discussed the development (or breaking down) of community in relation to place at a time of mass urbanisation and industrialisation (Bruhn, 2011; Bradshaw, 2009). In particular, they considered the differences between rural and urban life against the economic and social structures of the time. Tönnies, a contemporary of Durkheim and Weber, considered the difference between rural Gemeinschaft (community) and urban Gesellschaft (society/association) (Ridings, 2006; Berger, 1998; Bruhn, 2011; Bradshaw, 2009) and from his thinking, community theory followed through to the late twentieth century (Bruhn, 2011; Bradshaw, 2009).

Berger (1998) describes the difference between Tönnies' two concepts: 'Community is tradition; society is change. Community is feeling; society is rationality. Community is female; society is male. Community is warm and wet and intimate; society is cold and dry and formal. Community is love; society is, well, business' (p. 324).

Sociologists have continued to develop theories around modern urban communities in response to the conception of Gesellschaft (Bradshaw, 2008). Bradshaw (2008) considers place-based theory of community in a modern frame whereby communities of place have been replaced by those 'tied together by solidarity' (p. 5), but not in relation to labour like his predecessors. In what he calls a 'post place community' members find the connections described in Gemeinschaft through global networks of like-mindedness and interest.

Definitions of community relevant today, particularly in relation to community development, pay homage to the place-based roots of the study while acknowledging the modern conception of solidarity and sense of belonging found in the shared beliefs of cultural, ideological and political affiliations (Chile, 2007; Ife, 2002). Consideration of community in this way allows for the possibility of belonging to multiple communities (Bruhn, 2011) and finds a place for the modern lexicon of community, for example communities of association such as deaf-, refugee-, LGBT-communities and various online communities of interest.

One of the key principles of CLD is a focus on communities of place (Inspiring Communities, 2012; DIA, 2012). If national community development funding is largely directed to geographical communities, mechanisms must be in place to actively include and meet the needs of the outliers in communities of association. Government funding mechanisms for nationally led communities of association must remain in place to ensure minority communities are not forced to rely solely on charitable funding. This does not, however, mean that the participative and empowerment based approach of community development is not suited to such communities. However, when considering the development of communities of association it is especially important that government have oversight to ensure that New Zealand meets its obligations to the principles of human rights and social justice as outlined in the myriad of international conventions to which New Zealand has signed.

CONCLUSION

There is little doubt that communities are the best master of their own development. For this reason it is encouraging that government is promoting a policy of participative, collaboratively based community development. However, following a literature review this paper reports that very little peer reviewed research has been published on Community-led Development in New Zealand or internationally. Areas for further research and consideration in any roll out of the three trial programmes (CLD, Make it Happen Te Hiku and the Social Sector Trials) must address concerns around the position of power in such programmes, existing community relationships, governance and financial accountability. With a policy focus on communities of place, those communities based around interest, association and need must not be left behind. While promoting community decision making and action, government must provide the necessary resources (time and money) to ensure that whole communities are empowered to achieve self-determination and the best futures for themselves.

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