SETSCoP

Third meeting of the Community Capacity Building sub-group

Videoconference – 1 April 2021

On 1 April, SETSCoP held its third meeting for members of the Community Capacity Building (CCB) sub-group.

Community Capacity Building and Client Services

Attendees discussed how they differentiate SETS CCB from Client Services (CS). While some attendees noted some cross-over between CCB and CS in their program, many saw the services delivered as two separate but complementary programs. Meeting participants shared that CCB focuses on whole of community, while CS focuses on the settlement of individuals. Further that CS helps providers identify key trends and issues, which can be addressed at the community level through CCB.

Using feedback gained from the last CCB meeting, a template infographic to scope CCB and community leadership has been created and is available for SETSCoP members on the Business Hub.

Sharing of Community Capacity Building Models

Attendees shared their models of delivery for community capacity building.

Some attendees noted that their approach to CCB would commence with the identification of grassroots issues or trends identified by internal staff, communities or external stakeholders. While others noted that relationships and connections were the first step to delivering CCB. Some focus on building connections with community leaders, local councils, religious leaders, businesses, other NGOs, mainstream services and community, or an interplay of all; following which areas to address are identified.

Some CCB models focused on the co-design of initiatives and coaching of small community organisations and their leaders. While others, looked more at fostering a broader sense of community and belonging with a focus on enhancing connectedness within and across communities.

Despite the fact that CCB is varied and delivered differently across the sector, there was general consensus on some key aspects. These include:

- The establishment relationships with community associations and networks is crucial to develop programs.
- Projects need to be responsive to community needs.
- Projects need to be delivered in collaboration with community as a whole and/or community leaders.

Participants emphasised that CCB can take many different forms but should strive to empower and give agency to communities. Further that CCB initiatives should address systemic issues for clients and communities, and build social cohesion.

Community Capacity Building and Social Cohesion

Attendees expressed that social cohesion and CCB are strongly interlinked, with social cohesion at the essence of CCB. Participants acknowledged that the purpose of CCB projects is to empower communities to fully participate and contribute to Australian society by developing a sense of belonging and connection. Service providers mentioned that CCB initiatives help people better understand and experience different cultures and communities in Australia. CCB provides opportunity for newer communities to engage with the broader community through local initiatives and events such as Harmony Day.

Participants noted the differences between regional and metropolitan areas in the delivery of CCB projects and its impact on social cohesion. Communities in regional areas are often limited with resources and this at times impacts their ability to collaborate and co-design projects. They have smaller networks which can sometimes be a barrier to CCB but also an opportunity to develop stronger relationships and enhance community consultations and engagement. Regional settlement providers and communities manage to work with what is available, often developing creative initiatives to overcome place-based challenges.

The role of other organisations in CCB

Participants recognised the role that sporting clubs, places of worship and community organisations play in fostering a sense of belonging for SETS Clients. There are several roles that these organisations can play, such as:

- Place for socialisation with other cultures
- Space where people can come together despite differences
- Help create mutual understanding, meaningful connections and activities
- Place where networks and connections can be formed

Resources Shared

[Template infographic on the scope of CCB and community leadership (SETSCoP Business Hub)](#)

[Registration for the SETSCoP Business Hub](#)

[Book sharing the stories of clients - Wyndham Community and Education Council](#)