

SETSCoP Meeting Summary Communique

Community Capacity Building Subgroup – 7 November 2024

Secretariat: The Social Policy Group (SPG)

SETSCoP Community Capacity Building (CCB) Subgroup

- The CCB subgroup has been a long-running subgroup within the SETS Community of Practice. The previous SETS program (2019 – 2024) had 20 funded providers. The current SETS program (2024 – 2027) has opened CCB up to any provider that wishes to implement CCB activities.

1. Major discussion points

General Settlement CCB discussion points

- Many SETS providers were conducting CCB under the previous SETS program (2019-2024) even when they were not formally funded to do so. CCB was crucial for effective settlement. Now that those organisations are funded for CCB, they are continuing their activities.
- Some SETS providers are initiating CCB for the first time – including new providers. Others are resuming it after not conducting it in the previous SETS program.
- Where CCB intersects with youth, some SETS providers are ramping up activities ahead of the new school year starting in January 2025
- SETS providers are working with Pasifika communities in response to the new eligibility of community members. This includes working with Pacific Island community groups.
- SETS providers are waiting to see further confirmation of Palestinian inclusion in SETS eligibility before expanding CCB activities for Palestinian communities.
- One program works with social microenterprise projects.

Working with mainstream service providers

- A discussion on working with mainstream service providers, especially relating to their cultural responsiveness, including through training. Very often have mainstream organisations thinking “this is a multicultural organisation issue.” Rather than multicultural business being *everyone’s* business.

DEX

- CCB reporting in DEX has been problematic. SETS CCB practitioners will request further guidance, training, and responses on how to best report on CCB in DEX.
- There is a desire for consistency in DEX reporting across different SETS providers. Having a standard approach for DEX reports will be beneficial. It’s not just a ‘technical’ issue with DEX inputs, it’s also a ‘process’ issue on how it is actually done by SETS providers.

Good practice on community-led activities

- Good practice note: SETS providers base CCB programs on what the community or the community organisation wants and needs. It is not a one-size fit all approach.

- Good practice note: The Community Development arc: What issues are identified by community? Then the work of bringing leaders together in collective forums. Often see that leaders think they are tackling unique issues but then find in the collective forums that they are facing shared challenges that cut across different communities, and there can be collective solutions that can be worked on.

Addressing tensions and changing dynamics in communities

- It is important to manage expectations of communities, rather than immediately leaping in and saying “SETSCoP CCB is here”. There has to be ongoing dialogue around what CCB means for communities.
 - This includes managing expectations with many CCB practitioners having lived experience or being part of the communities which they are working with.
- SETSCoP providers observe a strong sense of competition between community organisations / communities (both from different and same communities) in grant applications. There is also frustration about how the grant system works: It is usually short-term funding and very competitive. This can be stressful for community organisations and cause sustainability issues over the long-term.
- There can be tensions or disputes in communities that SETSCoP providers need to be aware of. Some communities see a range of people working to start their own organisations, which can cause divisions within the community, especially regarding funding of some organisations and not others, allegations of organisations not working for the community, etcetera.
- CCB practitioners need to critically ask: Who are the clients? The representatives? Community leaders? Are they ethno-specific or smaller organisations? With some communities, leaders can be biased. For example, LGBTQIA+ community members face barriers when approaching certain leaders.
- In some community organisations, same people stay on leadership positions for 10-20 years without passing it to others.

Collaboration requires investment and time

- There are gaps in collaboration among community organisations, and often competition between groups. Collaboration takes a lot of facilitation to make sure everyone is on the same page. However, community organisations are often run on a voluntary basis and do not have capacity to take on facilitation of collaboration. Some SETSCoP providers are conducting projects to promote collaboration between community-led organisations, as this requires a lot of support.

Settlement CCB is advanced work, with needed investment in practitioner skills and competencies

- CCB is advanced work. Ethno-specific or refugee-led organisations may have very knowledgeable people already. Some community leaders used to be Ministers or experienced politicians in their countries of origin. They might need corporate capacity. Frontline settlement staff may only be experienced in case management. There needs to be work done to enhance existing staff skills to be able to do CCB effectively. So they can confidently help community organisations.

Building capacity of community groups/organisations

- There are major skills needed for settlement groups or organisations: Governance, project management, records keeping.

- Registered organisations are facing ‘traps’ around compliance. It’s not as simple as registering an organisation and applying for grant funding. Organisations are needing a lot of support in acquittal reporting, understanding their obligations, the obligation of the group committee. Making the decision to register or not (incorporate or not) is tricky.
- Many available grants might be too large for very small groups: Sometimes \$2,000 - \$5,000 is what is needed and manageable for certain activities or events, rather than \$40,000 and above which brings a host of compliance and management issues.
- In principle, SETS practitioners can provide grant writing training for organisations so they can learn the skills and do that themselves. But in practice, it is not that easy. Grant applications require lots of time and understanding of the area. Every grant is a bit different, so organisations must adjust to apply. And community organisations often do not have a dedicated person for grant application writing. Therefore, much of this will often fall back on SETS provider staff to support organisations in their grant writing, to meet the objectives of settlement CCB.
- Ongoing issue of public liability insurance costs for smaller groups. One solution: Auspice arrangements.
- Some SETS providers are now working with longer-established or more-established community groups, instead of just focussing on new groups.
- Good practice note: CCB is *not* just client services group work.
- Good practice note: Community organising and capacity building often works well when it centres on a concrete event or project.
- Good practice note: An auspice arrangement can often be an effective way to support emerging groups until they find their feet.
- Good practice note: CCB practitioners are constantly looking to introduce other partners, other funding streams, and other collaborators.
- There is a lot of work in supporting organisations run effective events but also manage politics, civic understanding, and effective communications. For example, the decisions on having politicians speak at events, and seeing groups have a high number of politicians speaking at events (including politicians who may not be as relevant for the group or event), to the detriment of the event. SETS providers are also working with community around understanding how government works, elections, and the media. There is training for young people on the media, for example, if invited to speak on a TVC channel, what is your pitch, key messages, and being wary of saying things that can be taken out of context.
 - Much of the work around civics, communications, and politics is to support policies: What are the issues your community are facing and how can that be elevated?
- Good practice note: Much of the work of CCB is “planting the seeds and letting it grow”.

Future SETSCoP CCB Meetings

- Discussion in the CCB meetings have been very helpful. Especially for providers initiating CCB.
- It would be good to continue to hear from SETS practitioners who have run CCB programs in the past, to share strengths and learnings.

Subgroup Co-developed Outcomes

1. **Settlement CCB Framework with Outcomes Measurements**
2. **CCB Workforce Competencies**
3. **Toolkit on effectively supporting generational transitions in community leadership**
4. **Settlement CCB Showcase (video)**

Attendees (50 Participants / 35 SETS Organisations):

Nick Ross (SPG – SETSCoP Secretariat)

1. **Amadu** (ADSI NSW)
2. **Amanda** (Intereach NSW/VIC)
3. **Anne** (Armenian Resource Centre NSW)
4. **Atem** (STARTTS NSW)
5. **Bridget** (MCS Central Australia NT)
6. **Carla** (SECL VIC)
7. **Carmen** (Assyrian Resource Centre NSW)
8. **Chelsea** (CMY VIC)
9. **Christine** (ECC NSW)
10. **Deborah** (MCS)
11. **Farhad Arian** (CORE NSW)
12. **Farida** (CatholicCare)
13. **Gebreselasie** (Spectrum VIC)
14. **Grace** (Many Coloured Sky VIC)
15. **Hafiz** (VAAN VIC)
16. **Helen** (MiCare VIC)
17. **Hiyah** (Whittlesea CC VIC)
18. **Ian** (Many Coloured Sky VIC)
19. **Ira** (Centacare FNQ QLD)
20. **Jasmeen** (SSI QLD)
21. **Javier** (Centacare FNQ QLD)
22. **Jaweria** (AMWCHR VIC)
23. **Jawid** (CatholicCare VIC)
24. **Jenny** (GyMEA NSW)
25. **Julia** (GSMS Albany WA)
26. **Kalpana** (54 Reasons)
27. **Kaya** (MiCare VIC)
28. **Keirnan** (Multicultural Australia QLD)
29. **Kenny** (SSI QLD)
30. **Kerrie** (Multicultural Australia QLD)
31. **Kumi** (Centacare FNQ QLD)
32. **Loan** (STARTTS NSW)
33. **Maggie** (Bundaberg QLD)
34. **Maesie** (Wyndham CEC)
35. **Marian Manuel** (54 Reasons)
36. **Maree** (SSI QLD)
37. **Matt** (North Coast Settlement NSW)
38. **Michelle** (Arabic Welfare VIC)
39. **Mo'ath** (Communicare WA)
40. **Rachel** (MiCare VIC)
41. **Rain** (Sydney MCS NSW)
42. **Rallian** (Wyndham CEC VIC)
43. **Renata** (MFO QLD)
44. **Richard** (AWECC NSW/VIC)
45. **Sabita** (Metro Assist NSW)
46. **Sammi** (Intereach NSW/VIC)
47. **Sandra** (LocalKind CNB NSW)
48. **Suheir** (MCC Gold Coast QLD)
49. **Thom** (MC Wagga Wagga NSW)
50. **Victoria** (Pilbara CLS WA)