

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & SOCIAL HOUSING FRAMEWORK



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LIST OF ACRONYMS

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CD	Community Development (in this document)
eKhaya	eKhaya Neighbourhood Programme
HDA	Housing Development Agency
JHC	Johannesburg Housing Company
MAM	Makhulong a Matala
MHA	Madulammoho Housing Association
NASHO	National Association of Social Housing Organisations
SHF	Social Housing Foundation (Government Agency, closed June 2010)
SHI	Social Housing Institution
SHRA	Social Housing Regulatory Authority



1. INTENT

This document is intended to help Social Housing Institutions (SHIs) not presently formally engaging in community development to understand why they should and how they can go about it. It can also help those already undertaking community development activities to further develop their initiatives by learning what others are doing.

2. INTRODUCTION

In a number of SHIs in South Africa, community development has become an important function closely linked to the overall social housing programme. In others it plays little or no part at all. Where it is happening, it is making important positive contributions not only to the social housing environment and its tenants, but also to broader neighbourhoods within which social housing is functioning.

This framework is intended to examine:

- what community development is in a social housing context;
- how it is linked to core social housing management functions;
- how it is organised;
- what activities are involved, and
- what potential impact it can have on the social housing environment

The framework arises primarily from the NASHO – HDA sponsored Social Housing Community Development Workshop, held in April 2012 as well as the HDA assessment of its sponsored eKhaya neighbourhood project, its close link with SHIs in the area, and previous work on this issue by the SHF.

Is 'Neighbourhood Development' the same as 'Community Development'?

These terms are often used synonymously and on occasion they are confused. There is a very close relationship between the two but they are not exactly the same. Community development can involve the development of primary target communities that might or might not be existing within a small spatial area. So it is possible to have community development, for instance, targeted at particular socio-economic groups across a wider geographical area than a neighbourhood.

Neighbourhood development refers to 'community development' activities that target specific local neighbourhoods across a range of issues to improve the quality of lives of different people living in that neighbourhood. So 'neighbourhood development' is one form of community development. It is likely to be the predominant form in community development linked to social housing. However, it is possible to have community development activities that are not specifically neighbourhood targeted, run through an SHI.

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3. WHAT IS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL HOUSING?

Community development in social housing involves the engagement of the tenants, their families and people from the surrounding neighbourhoods in collective actions that help to enhance the quality of their lives.

WHAT IS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT'S RELATIONSHIP TO SOCIAL HOUSING?

The core functions of social housing are the efficient and effective management of rental housing stock for the long-term benefit of existing and future tenants and the engagement of tenants in assisting to do this.

Within its core functions social housing is responsible for the engagement and the involvement of its tenants in this. However, an SHI does not have core responsibility to initiate activities that enhance the general quality of the lives of its tenants or the surrounding neighbourhood beyond the provision and management of quality and affordable rental housing.

'Social Housing is more than building and managing houses and apartments. SHIs distinguish themselves from private landlords not only by offering an affordable product but also by building communities.'

There is another perspective that social housing has additional responsibility to pro actively engage in organised activities, beyond housing provision, that enhances the quality of life of its tenants and in the neighbourhood where they hold stock. This approach, to a certain extent, considers that the quality of a social housing unit is determined by the quality of the neighbourhood in which it is situated.

Where this second perspective prevails it requires that the SHI pro actively undertakes the planning and implementation of such community activities while also concentrating on its core housing development and management functions. Where an SHI decides to follow this route it needs to understand what its community development activities should be and how these interact with its other functions.



'This holistic service is the absolute basis in managing deprived communities. It provides the balance between changing the environment where people live, and developing the people who live in that environment.'

4. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & SOCIAL HOUSING LEGISLATION & REGULATIONS

'Community Development' is not specifically mentioned either in South Africa's social housing legislation or its regulations. However, both make clear the social housing institution's responsibility for the development of the broader areas in which they function.

The Social Housing Act stipulates in clause 14 (1 c) that amongst others (...) '*Social housing institutions must— (c) promote the creation of quality living environments for low income residents;*'

This is taken further in the requirements for accreditation:

In order to comply with the criteria of effective tenant/ membership management, the applicant must have '... a community engagement and neighbourhood involvement plan in place'.

STAATSKOERANT, 26 JANUARIE 2012 No. 349709 REGULATIONS, qualifying criteria for accreditation of social housing institutions.

The details of such a plan are not specified. However, it does imply the necessity for broader involvement of its tenants but also linkage to the surrounding neighbourhood.

Is Community Development 'tenant involvement'?

There is often confusion about this or a conflation of tenant involvement and community development.

Tenant involvement is an essential part of the core responsibility of SHIs. It is specified in the social housing policy framework and in the regulations. Its intent is the involvement of tenants in contributing to the improvement in the quality and success of the social housing service i.e. the efficient and effective management of stock and tenancies.

The nature of this relates directly to tenant engagement around the stock and their lives within it. Although it sometimes overlaps with community development activities and contributes to these activities it is not specifically community development but part of the core social housing management responsibilities.

Separating these while understanding that they can build on each other is important. The aspect of tenant involvement in social housing is the subject of a separate framework document.

'The main message that comes through is that tenant management and community development are, to a certain extent, part of the same system. This was captured in the slogan 'every staff member is a community developer'. It is the task of senior management to ensure that integration of the various aspects of the SHIs business takes place and every department and staff member contributes to community development.'

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5. WHAT IS THE VALUE-ADD OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN SOCIAL HOUSING?

Efficient and effective SHIs calculate that the value of community development is not merely about better communities but also has great practical advantages to their core business, including:

- contributes to tenant retention
- creates conditions to strengthen likelihood of rental payments
- reduces vandalism and damage to social housing properties
- enhances customer service and customer perception

'Investments in affordable housing and community development represents an engine of economic and social wealth. For every dollar spent on affordable housing at least 10 are returned to community development in the form of increased equity for job creation, increased independence, stability or more engaged citizens' - Ken Wade

'Your most important assets are the people living in the stock and the area, not the stock itself, although it sits on your Balance Sheet. Without SHIs will the activity still continue? Still a landlord as bottom line.'

6. KEY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES LINKED TO SOCIAL HOUSING

6.1 THE ACTIVITIES

An analysis of the existing community development initiatives linked to SHIs shows a range of different targets, outputs and activities. These are often organised into specific projects or programmes to ensure sustainable impact.

In the first instance it is possible to categorise in accordance with the broader beneficiary group:

- specifically for tenants of an SHI
- for broader community in which social housing is functioning

They can then also be categorised in terms of activities that benefit:

- individuals or families
- broader community as a group

The table below outlines some of the focus areas and types of activities presently run by community development programmes in SHIs in South Africa.

FOCUS AREAS	ACTIVITIES
Education	Pre school activities
	Education support
	Adult education
	Homework sessions
	Childcare
	Parenting Support
Technology	Access to electronic technology
	Training in electronic technology
	Radio station
Neighbourhood Development	Tackling crime and grime
	Developing social cohesion
	Adult and childrens activities
	Lobbying
	Food gardens
	Material relief
Economic Development	Employment support
	Training
	Small enterprise development
	Financial services
Environment	Tree planting
	Recycling
	Awareness raising
	Energy saving
Sport and Recreation	Sports activities
	Children's holiday clubs
	Use of common spaces
Youth work	Education
	Recreation
Organisational	Events organising
	Participatory budgeting
	Volunteer management
	Publicity
Health	Health awareness
	Support groups
Social cohesion	Diversity training
Space provision	Community centres
	Learning centres
	Sports fields
	Meeting rooms
	External common spaces

6.2 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IS MORE THAN JUST THE ACTIVITIES

Although many of the outputs and planning of CD and its planning are linked to specific activities, CD is also about broader outcomes reached through these activities. These include developing leadership, improving skills, strengthening organisations, developing partnerships. All these help to ensure the sustainability of community initiatives and that each generates further positive community activity.

7. HOW IS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRUCTURED IN RELATIONSHIP TO SOCIAL HOUSING?

The organisational form has varied and is largely a consequence of the nature of the activities, the strength of the programmes and the organisational base from which it is initiated. It is also something that does evolve over time. Most initiatives are likely to start within the SHI itself but as they develop their organisational form they might evolve to meet its developing programme. There are three organisational forms of which there are specific examples in South Africa.

7.1 AS A DEPARTMENT OR SECTION OF AN SHI

Here the community development work, while separate from the core social housing functions, is organised within the governance and management structures of the SHI. There is also a strong overlap in roles of the frontline officials and the mixing of community development and social housing core functions. Its greatest potential for success links to decentralised social housing management services.

EXAMPLE : COMMUNICARE (Cape Town)

Communicare has a separate unit with a Manager who is responsible for its CD Unit. The Unit is within the line management structure of the Executive Director for Social Housing. The Manager, while responsible for the overall CD programme, works closely with the Social Housing Area Managers and their Social Housing Management staff. The staff has an element of the CD function written into their job descriptions. Most of the CD activities happen using the local office as the base.



7.2 AS A SUBSIDIARY OF AN SHI

In this instance the community development work is done from a subsidiary company of the SHI. It has its own board and management structure but close links back to the SHI that owns it. There is also a sharing of key support services e.g. finance. While running a programme that is organisationally separated from the core social housing functions, there is close co-operation between the staff of the SHI and those undertaking community development work.



7.3 AS AN INDEPENDENT ENTITY WITH A FORMAL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH AN SHI

This is where the community development work is carried out by a separate community development organisation, either on the basis of a formal partnership with the SHI or through a contracted arrangement. Within this, the programme is separated from the core social housing functions and often from the staff of the SHI, but there is joint planning of the targeting and roll out and systems for referral and support from the frontline officials. The SHI has no formal management control of the community development programme other than through a formal or informal contractual agreement.

EXAMPLE : JHC & MAM (Johannesburg)

Initially the CD work linked to JHC started within the structures of the existing company. As the activities grew JHC decided to structure its CD work into a separate company. It did this for the following reasons:

- to identify specific costs for programmes in order to ensure long term sustainability
- to take advantage of tax incentives available to donor funders
- opportunity to raise funds for the activities

JHC maintained close links and interdependency through holding MAM as a subsidiary. MAM now functions with its own board although with overlapping board members as well as its own director and staff. It maintains a strong day-to-day link with the work of the social housing mother company and works generally in the same geographical areas as JHC has its stock.

This CD initiative has helped spur a completely separate community organisation 'eKhaya' that runs an independent neighbourhood programme under the governance of a number of landlords and community organisations in the Hillbrow area of Johannesburg.

EXAMPLE : MHA & MES (Johannesburg)

MHA developed as an SHI out of the CD work of MES. It was separated as an independent company to deal with the housing issues in the area. However, it continues a strong relationship with MES who undertakes much of the community and social development initiatives in the area. There is also an agreement between MHA and MES that MHA will only start operations in other geographical areas when a MES office is also established in these new areas. The housing managers in the MHA developments help to inform the direction of some of the MES projects and also make referrals of tenants and families to social development projects run by MES.

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8. WHO DOES THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORK?

8.1 CD DEVELOPMENT EMPLOYEES

SHs with linked community development programmes always have someone with designated responsibility to manage this function. Most often it is a full time management position. In some instances, at start up, SHs have designated an officer(s) from their existing housing management staff to undertake the initiation work. Where this happens it requires proper designation of this responsibility by the organisation and the provision of the time for this person to do this work. The more developed programmes also have other project and administration staff to take on the key aspects of the community development work.

8.2 SH MANAGEMENT STAFF

Within a community development programme it is also possible to engage and involve front line and support staff, with broader responsibilities in the organisation, in community development activities. Where this is so, the person's responsibilities should be included in their job description as well as in any designed work programme. The time and resources for them to do these functions must be available.

8.3 PART TIME PROJECT EMPLOYEES

In some instances people might be employed on a part time basis, either on a permanent or temporary basis, to run or support particular projects. Usually this happens when there is specific project funding linked to a set time period.

8.4 VOLUNTEERS

These are people who give their time for free to undertake various different community development activities. Volunteers can take on a range of different activities including administrative and programme support, through to provision of a direct service e.g. tutoring. The use of volunteers also helps to build greater community commitment to the projects and programmes and can sometimes be an activity in itself that builds social prestige and growth. Volunteers can come from within the area where the activities are happening or from outside.

Volunteering also provides people with the opportunity to gain transferable skills and experience, aiding them to be successful in the workforce.

This is a key form of human resource involvement in community development.

9. THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTNERSHIPS

An important part of the success of community development in social housing is dependent upon the quality of the partnerships that are developed. The SHI or their community development unit cannot do it all nor does it want to. Successful community development work is about building strong partnerships between organisations and groups which share at least some common objectives.

These partnerships are built on trust and a common commitment. They also need clarity between the partners on who does what and how they work together. As such partnerships strengthen, they can help extend the activities but also build stronger community organisations.

Partnership can be either long term, permanent relationships or for shorter periods, built around single or multiple objectives. Such partnerships can involve many different organisational forms e.g. government, NGO's, community groups, schools, resident associations.

Building, sustaining and extending such partnerships is an important skill of leaders in community development initiatives.

EXAMPLE : COMMUNICARE (Cape Town)

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

When Communicare started its learning centres in local neighbourhoods it developed a number of new partnerships to assist. It first developed strong partnerships with the local schools. It also developed a funding partnership with the development agency linked to the casino in the area. It further brought together Communicare tenants with residents from the surrounding neighbourhood.



10. HOW IS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUNDED?

Various different forms of financing have developed, serving different functions and different projects. In setting up and developing community development programmes it is important to ensure that there is clarity on the funding sources. This applies to both:

- core company costs
- project costs

It is also important to find the means of financing that ensures effective projects that for cost reasons do not exclude key potential beneficiary groups. Usually the financial viability of a community development programme requires the mixing of financing from a number of sources.

So what are the different sources of financing?

10.1 FROM TENANTS RENTALS

This is when an additional element of rent is charged to cover the costs of the community development activity. An example of this is the eKhaya neighbourhood development project where landlords involved pay a monthly fee per unit. The landlord in turn adds this fee to the rentals. The fees collected go to pay for the core costs of the company plus some project related costs e.g. security services.

10.2 USER PAYS

This applies when there is a charge made on the users for all or part of the cost of using a particular community or social development activity. Here the user carries some of the cost for their own involvement. An example is in Communicare: Users are asked to contribute an amount for the use of internet and computers at the local learning centres. Usually such charges are far lower than the cost of the service itself with the outstanding cost covered by another

form of financing. The critical question is the level of such payments and whether they act as an 'excluder' for key groups.

10.3 GRANT FINANCE

Some projects and programmes are financed through grants from government, the donor sector or private companies. This is an important part of making community development activities affordable and not placing too heavy a financial burden on low and moderate income households.

10.4 OWN EQUITY

Some SHIs might have activities that generate profits that are then re-invested in their activities. Where this happens an element of this might go into properly targeted and well-run community development initiatives. An example is Communicare: Some profits from their commercial activities are used to finance parts of the community development programme.

10.5 SELF RUN FUND RAISING ACTIVITIES

Sometimes community development programmes and projects use their participants and supporters to raise income for particular projects through fund raising activities e.g. sponsored walks, cake sales. While this is an important mobilising activity and makes a contribution, it generally only contributes a small amount to the total financing.

10.6 USE OF VOLUNTEERS

This is a significant way of keeping costs down and therefore indirectly helping to finance community development activities.

Should tenants have to pay for community development services?

This is sometimes a controversial issue. It implies that tenants already on low or moderate incomes must pay for community initiatives in their areas that some may argue are the responsibility of government. Added to this is that collecting money for community development initiatives through rentals can also threaten rental affordability levels acting against the principles of 'rental housing for low income households'. These issues require close attention before deciding to place such charges into rentals. Perhaps an important consideration around the level and charges into rentals. Perhaps an important consideration around the level and affordability of such extra charges are to what extent does the use of this money contribute to the improvement in the quality of life of the majority of people paying it.

11. WHAT CAN YOUR SHI DO TO FORWARD COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT?

Step 1 – Organisational Intent

You must decide as an SHI that community development is a mandate of your organisation. This must involve discussion within the SHI and then formal agreement through the Board of Directors that this is a function that the SHI wishes to pursue. Your SHI must then make a commitment to financing the feasibility work required to set up a community development programme and designate who should do this.

Step 2 – Consultation Process

This involves discussions with staff of the SHI as well as tenants and other key local stakeholders about the intent and potential form and type of community development initiatives and projects.

Step 3 – Plan for Structuring and Financing the Community Development Programme

Based on Steps 1 and 2 it is necessary to formulate a community development strategy and initial business plan for the organisation. This would not only define the resources required but also their sourcing and organising. This includes the direct resources for

community development as well as the use and interaction with the resources available for housing and tenancy management. This provides the initial plan that guides the start of the community development programme linked to your SHI.

Step 4 – Institutional Structuring of the Community Development Programme

This involves your organisation ensuring that the resources are in place. Whether staff, finances, capacity development, office amenities, contracts etc. and that these are ready and available to start the delivery of the community development programme as planned in Step 4 above.

Step 5 – Implementing the Community Development Programme

This involves direct engagement in delivering on the community development projects in the initial plan. The very nature of community development is that once started it will continue to provide new opportunities for development of projects and activities that might not be in the initial plan. The 'community development programme' must

therefore provide the space to introduce and develop new directions and projects that can help deliver on the intent. Thus the programme is continually evolving and developing.

Step 6 - Reporting and Reviewing

As part of the delivery of the programme there must be in place a system for reporting and reviewing the community development programme to ensure the effective use of available resources as well as finding additional ways of achieving the objectives. Such reporting and reviewing must happen through governance structures e.g. the Board of Directors as well as through staff, tenant and other stakeholder structures. This system not only ensures accountability but also dynamic ways of extending the nature and effect of the programme.

In undertaking these six interlinking steps your organisation can facilitate activities jointly with a range of other stakeholders that qualitatively improve the quality of lives of tenants and neighbourhoods, beyond the mere provision of well managed housing stock.

12. FURTHER RESOURCES TO ASSIST YOU

This framework provides an initial understanding and some direction. If you need further information and advice you can also check the following resources:

- Community Development and Social Housing: Report Back of the NASHO/HDA Workshop Johannesburg, 18 and 19th April 2012
- 'Regenerating a neighbourhood: useful lessons from eKhaya' case study series published by the HDA (2012)
- Relationship Between the Landlord and its Tenants and Community Development, Report Back from the SHF Best Practices Workshop, 12 and 13 August 2008
- Toronto Community Housing Company: 'Jamestown Diary, Lessons from the Portable', an overview of the social development of the Jamestown Community (Thistleton 1 and 2) in Rexdale, North Etobicoke from 2002 to 2012
- Google 'Community Development and Social Housing Organisations' and you get some nice hits, at least one Canadian document; not so much new stuff from South Africa.

