



## **NOS COMMENTARY FROM ESB RESEARCH FOR CDNOS STEERING GROUP**

### **NOT FOR EXTERNAL USE**

#### **Introduction/ Background**

During 2020 ESB ran an on-line consultation on the relevance of the existing NOS, and its key purpose, values, and the detailed standards. The overall response was that rather than a major revision of the NOS being required, what was needed was a way of updating and a means of reinforcing their applicability to developments both over the last 7 years and into the future. ESB continue to consider how best to use the NOS to support endorsement and recognition of programmes. The relevance of the UN sustainability goals and international IACD standards were also included in our questions as we considered adopting their use as a replacement for the NOS as part of our deliberations. Further separate information is available on those areas if developments make it appropriate.

The information here does not comprise ESB's definitive position on the NOS review, it is shared as part of our contribution to the work of the CD NOS review steering group.

#### **Summary of the comments from the updating the NOS consultation**

##### **The key purpose.**

There was general agreement that it worked as a summary, with suggestions for amending the wording a little to

- Emphasis putting on place collaborative and cooperative structures and initiatives – such a social enterprises that are sustainable, offering real wealth creation, organisations firmly connected with people and neighbourhoods
- Include on-line/social media
- Can appear outdated and patronising so avoid the word develop and use an alternative that focuses the emphasis on releasing existing skills and capacity
- Replace 'identify own needs and actions' with 'become aware of needs, aspirations and actions'..a nod to Friearian and appreciative approaches
- It outlines a bottom up approach and reflects the asset based approach which could be strengthened

##### **The values**

Generally seen to be still relevant with some suggestions about changing the language

- Each value would benefit from reassessment and being relaunched so they are more clearly connected to current realities
- Look at the language and make it more accessible; stress on community empowerment and unity
- Add in about sustainability, climate change, climate/ environmental justice, mitigating global warming, and economic justice
- Make anti-discrimination stronger as we are often working against oppression or worse
- Add cooperative to collective action, or in the sub text

### **Summary of responses to Q2 about how community development practice links to the UN sustainability goals**

We obtained a series of responses about how community development practice links to the UN sustainability goals. I have not included that information in this document, but should discussions and responses move in that direction then the outcomes of our research are available. I suspect that current political developments may have raised the importance of UN sustainability goals amongst CD practitioner practice.

### **Which of the existing standards are most used.**

Although it varied with each person's job, overall the results were very uniform; The two standards in Key area 5 about promoting learning were slightly lower than the others and the two more strategic standards 17 (strategically co-ordinate partnerships / networks) and 24 (supervision) had less people involved as might be expected.

There was a general feeling that the Standards were still relevant even though the situation has changed quite a bit since this set of Standards was compiled.

There were comments about the changing nature of people involved in community development, of people taking that approach to a whole range of jobs rather than there being dedicated CD practitioners. Many people are expected to lead on campaigns, have targets and outcomes to meet which means it is hard to start with a community lead agenda.

There were some areas where people felt the Standards should be strengthened

- Making the link between local and global actions, to help build movement for positive social change
- Be more specific about diversity that encourages people to be proactive in their work than just 'support inclusive working'; being able to identify dimensions of inequality and discrimination/bias, and to take action to address these
- How to promote the value and impact of CD to a wide range of stakeholders
- More on recruiting and supporting volunteers who are often doing work that previously people were paid to do, including managing boundaries, burn-out and expectations.
- Understanding the basic history of CD, locally and globally
- More on the skills needed for reflective practice and participative appraisal.

- A major area of concern currently lies in practitioner burn out – recognition of this as an aspect of the sector would be much appreciated.

Additionally, All the standards need to be reviewed for language used. Use of caveats within statements do not help with clarity in meanings. A plain English approach would benefit users.