

LEARNING BY DOING

COMMUNITY-LED CHANGE IN AOTEAROA NZ

2013



A follow up to What we are Learning about Community-led Development

ISBN 978-0-473-24420-0 (digital)

Citation

This document should be cited as “Learning by Doing: community-led change in Aotearoa NZ. Author: Inspiring Communities. Publisher: Inspiring Communities Trust, New Zealand. 2013”

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Community Alchemy – Releasing the transformative power of communities

“I suspect there is a moment in all of our journeys when we realise that we don’t know everything we need to know to achieve what is right and just for those around us. This is not a failure of intellect but a necessary training of our insight. It teaches us humility and for any successful community-led development to flourish humility is a necessary component. Everybody has the power to act in favour of the common good, but the temptation to impose resource where it is not needed or cleverness where it is not wanted is ever present.

When something works, when that magnificent alchemy of insider/ outsider interchange electrifies and magnifies the potential for good, it is then the transformative capacity of communities, empowering themselves, becomes manifest. This is not a linear process. Rather it is life experience shared, permeated with the capacity to surprise. We are at our best when we are in service of those with whom we share joy.”

Pat Snedden
Company Director
Aotearoa
March 2013

*Titiro atu ki nga taumata o te moana
Look beyond the horizon to a transfigured future 50 years from now
(Te Ruki Kawiti, 1854)*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What we are learning about creating positive change in communities through community-led development



Learning by Doing marks another important milestone in Aotearoa's community-led development (CLD) journey and there is much to celebrate! We are learning that if we want things to be different, we have to do things differently. Inspiring Communities believes that CLD is a key ingredient in the positive community change making mix. CLD is about working together in place to create and achieve locally owned visions and goals. It's a 'learning by doing' approach that focuses on five core principles:

1. Planning and action that's driven by local visions.
2. Local people leading in strengths-based ways.
3. Many sectors working together to unlock creativity and resources.
4. Intentionally growing local leadership capacity.
5. Concurrent and adaptive planning, action and reflection of outcomes against intent.

CLD has multiple potential start points and will look different in every place. CLD is achieving visible results in communities, and transforming relationships, culture and structures at the same time. Research is showing that the potential for change is maximised when action is both collectively agreed and linked to shared visions. It is not however, a cut-price or 'quick fix' option. While hugely rewarding to be part of, CLD requires patience, persistence and a critical mass of people with the right skillsets who are prepared to work collaboratively and innovatively for a long time.

Learning by Doing, builds on advice from *What we are learning 2010* and focuses again on key messages in identified theme areas:

WORKING TOGETHER IN PLACE:

- Place is at the heart of CLD. When relationships and networks are mobilised, 'place' is a very useful organising platform as those who live, work, play, care, invest or connect to a particular place often have a

shared vested interest in making things even better.

- Critical foundations for successful working together in place include respectful and trusting relationships, a documented common focus and a sense of cohesion, proactive engagement strategies and effective processes for talking, working, and learning together.
- An understanding of different kinds of 'power' and where it sits in both in the community and in collaborative processes is vital. Rebalancing power dynamics is a critical part of CLD change.
- Well-developed group work, dialogue and facilitation skills are essential for CLD practitioners, and for fostering multiple parties to work together in place.
- CLD is filled with both tensions, paradoxes and uncertainty and hope, possibility and potential. It's from these 'uncomfortable' places that new thinking and



(From left to right:) At Victory Primary School transience has dropped from 65% to 10%.
(Photo: Fairfax Nelson Mail).

60 Mātaura families are fed from produce grown in the town's community garden.

The lives and financial wellbeing of 80+ low income Porirua families have been transformed following the Good Cents course.

creative solutions are often generated.

- Collaboration progress is assisted by naming what's working well and what isn't, so that strengths can be built on, celebrated and blocking factors proactively addressed.

COMMUNITY BUILDING:

- Successful CLD relies on active involvement of local citizens in decisions and action related to 'their place'. All communities have strengths and assets on which foundations for successful CLD can be built – especially when existing resources are used differently.
- Some communities have experience and capacity to lead together, others require some support to strengthen connections, gather local voices and catalyse action at local street and neighbourhood levels.
- Strategies for building community resilience are useful

in times of crisis and in responding to everyday opportunities and challenges and for gearing communities for change yet to come.

- Community building approaches focus on growing social capital by intentionally encouraging participation in projects and events that in turn builds community cohesion and senses of identity, connection, pride and place.
- Fun activities such as informal doorstep conversations, events in parks, street clean ups, treasure hunts, and Facebook are effective ways to engage and connect neighbourhoods.
- Who leads in neighbourhoods matters, with successful neighbourhood strengthening reliant on aspirations, motivation and energy coming from within. Being an effective neighbourhood broker requires focused listening, 'light touch' support and an approach that works 'with' rather than 'for' local residents.

- Local community hubs are providing new ways for people to gather, connect, initiate activities and access services. Success relies on integrating a resident-centred empowerment philosophy into everything that happens so locals understand the hub as 'their place.'
- Schools can play a key role in strengthening communities. When learning and community development approaches are integrated 'in place', better outcomes for students, families and communities can be achieved.
- A sense of both 'giving back' and being able to make a difference are often key drivers for local residents to 'step up' and take more active leadership roles in their communities.
- Neighbours Day Aotearoa is becoming a key catalyst and umbrella for neighbourhood strengthening activities across Aotearoa.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What we are learning about creating positive change in communities through community-led development

LEADING IN AND LEADERFUL COMMUNITIES:

- There is a leader in everyone. Leaderful communities are those where power is distributed, shared and where leadership comes from many corners of the community.
- Both leaders 'out front' and 'leaderful' leaders are needed to inspire participation, action and embed community-led change efforts.
- Leaderful practitioners bring out the best in others by building trusted relationships. They are skilled at intentionally redistributing power in how they engage, encourage and lead. They are also skilled at knowing when to step up, step back, walk alongside and/or walk away which enables those that follow to 'join in' and lead themselves.
- Leading in CLD spaces calls for a strong focus on co-creation. The 'how' and 'who' – the processes, structures, systems and frameworks that help CLD stakeholders work collabo-

ratively towards shared local visions and goals are as important as 'what' and 'why'.

- Different styles and types of leadership are required at different stages of CLD journeys. It pays to anticipate and plan for the leadership skills required next, knowing that the best ways to grow and strengthen leadership capacity will be different for each community.

CREATING AND SUSTAINING MOMENTUM:

- Like nature, expect constant change in CLD and be prepared to proactively adapt and change.
- Use helpful frameworks like the 'eco cycle' of collaboration to understand the different phases of CLD. See where you are now and what resources, approaches, evaluation and leadership will likely be needed next.
- There is no right place to start in CLD. Begin from where you, your organisation or community is and weave CLD principles and practice into everything that happens – be bold, humble

and ensure that local residents and/or those with 'lived experience' are actively part of what happens. Have fun!

- Locally led action can be catalysed through use of visual images, stories, and timelines to re-kindle memories and focus/renew a shared sense of direction and progress.
- Creating and revisiting community asset maps helps identify, build on and catalyse community strengths to celebrate positive steps forward.
- Regular communication is a vital part of keeping everyone connected and growing CLD supporter bases.
- Encourage and create local or sub-regional peer learning and support networks for CLD practitioners to ensure people are supported, inspired and able to have fun through learning and sharing together.

NOTICING THE DIFFERENCE CLD MAKES:

Nine CLD initiatives, almost 22,000 people and 800 alliances with thousands of hours leveraged through CLD! From 2010-12 Inspiring Communities worked with nine diverse CLD initiatives as part of a 'core learning cluster.' By reflecting on a regular basis, we can see that:

- CLD makes the most immediate tangible difference at the smaller town, suburb or neighbourhood level. These are the scales at which 'daily life' happens and at which people can see their individual contribution to an achievement that could only have come about by working with others in that place.
- Positive outcomes can also influence systems change in key stakeholders engaged in CLD efforts – for example funding practice and contracting.
- Prototypes are emerging around particular themes and activities. For example, the Good Cents initiative in Porirua, community action research approaches in Glen Innes, and the Massey Matters community projects

fund all offer clear frameworks with results that can be adapted for use elsewhere.

- There is considerable value in connecting beyond the 'very local'. Working collaboratively with outside partners can bring in additional ideas, resources and connections – recognising that some things, such as large-scale economic development, can only be done by engaging with specific partners.
- Many activities contribute to CLD changes. In evaluation there is a continual search for a direct cause and effect link, but in CLD where there are many interconnected networks and actions, we have found it more useful to focus more on contribution than attribution.²
- Behaviour changes in those involved in CLD are an outcome of CLD, with new thinking influencing what comes next and how it's undertaken. In this way, one outcome leads to several more.
- The ability to notice positive community-led change is assisted when:

- there is an overall collective vision to guide action;
- there is agreement on both when and how collective movement towards shared goals (as well as the changes, deviations and achievements that happen too!) will be measured;
- outputs and how they have directly and indirectly contributed to outcomes are named and widely shared; and
- regular reflective practice is proactively resourced and built into CLD programmes. This helps to reveal links between practice, intent and outcomes. When learnings are documented they can be woven into an initiative's development in real time, for maximum impact and effect.

² Contribution is where the initiative helped to achieve the outcomes; the outcomes happened as a result of many factors working together. Attribution is where the initiative caused the observed outcomes; the outcomes are a direct result of this initiative, intended or not.

INTRODUCTION

Nā tō rourou, nā taku rourou kō ora ai te iwi

With your food basket and my food basket the people will thrive

1.1 ABOUT THIS BOOK

Learning by Doing is aimed at those interested or involved in CLD. It's a very diverse audience! For example there are people working in policy, in environmental restoration, in funding, academia, management, residents organising within their street or community, politicians, iwi leaders, community groups, school principals, social service agencies, church leaders, community funders, local business owners and of course, communities themselves.

Based on your feedback from our inaugural *What we are Learning* handbook we have continued with a mix of CLD frameworks, inspiring stories and practical tips, resources and tools to use in your everyday practice.

Chapter 1 outlines Inspiring Communities' understanding of community-led development

and the practical difference that CLD is making in many communities. It scans the current challenges and opportunities facing CLD in Aotearoa New Zealand and notes the important role that 'learning by doing' plays in CLD.

Chapters 2-5 expand on the four CLD themes identified in *What we are Learning 2010*:³

- **Working together in place** – collaboration between those who live, work, care, play and invest in place-based communities is essential to achieve locally determined visions. This work is by nature messy and challenging, with much that can only be learned from 'doing together'.
- **Community building** – local residents are at the heart of CLD. This means local residents being encouraged and empowered to actively

participate in place-based visioning, decision making and action that enhances quality of life in 'their' place.

- **Leading in and 'leaderful communities'** – how communities can be strengthened when leadership from all corners of the community is intentionally valued, acknowledged, promoted and joined up. Collaborative leaders with integrity are key to successful CLD.
- **Creating and sustaining momentum** – the 'right' pathways to achieving CLD goals and visions are inherently unpredictable. This means that CLD journeys are by nature filled with ups and downs, and trial and error, to find what works and why. Consciously integrating reflective learning processes into CLD

³In 2010 Inspiring Communities brought together observations and thinking about community-led development from across the country to create *What we are learning about community-led development* - see <http://inspiringcommunities.org.nz/learning-tools/what-we-are-learning-2010>. This book has been used widely by CLD supporters, students, practitioners and communities both in New Zealand and beyond. Our first report identified four key themes from the emerging CLD experience and learning. Both *What we are Learning* and *Learning by Doing* should be seen as complementary and read together as a learning and practice package.

practice helps manage the bumpy road and ensure momentum continues.

Chapter 6 focuses on noticing the positive difference that CLD makes to community change efforts. It is a summary of results and reflective learnings from the nine CLD initiatives, which joined with Inspiring Communities to form a shared community of practice from 2010-12.

At the end of the document we've also included a list of useful links and learning resources to explore CLD further.

1.1.1 BUILDING NEW CLD UNDERSTANDINGS FROM MULTIPLE LEARNING PATHWAYS

Learning by Doing includes key ideas and learnings gathered from a variety of places and experiences. Inspiring Communities acknowledges the contribution from four key sources:

- Inspiring Communities Core Learning Cluster – supported by both Lotteries Community Research and

the Tindall Foundation, this three year 'learnings and outcomes' project involving 9 initiatives⁴ has worked with CLD frameworks, principles and practices to better understand why, for what, and how community-led change happens, as well as noticing the difference it makes.

- Regional CLD Learning Networks both in Auckland and the Bay of Plenty⁵ – in these regions Inspiring Communities is funded to connect CLD supporters and communities and support CLD thinking and practice. Workshops and gatherings are always well attended. Reciprocal sharing and learning from 'ground up' experience is energetic and highly valued.
- Civil Society Leadership Learning Co-Inquiry – in 2011 the Inspiring Communities Development Team (and some Board members) worked with Margy Jean Malcolm in a co-inquiry process⁶ as part of her PhD research on civil society leadership learning⁷. We reflected on our own leadership practice, and

collectively explored what we were noticing from CLD initiatives around Aotearoa, and from an Inspiring Communities organisational perspective.

- Visiting Thought Leaders—in 2011 Inspiring Communities hosted Tamarack Associate, Mark Cabaj, who presented to a range of interagency workshops on complex issues and on using adaptive frameworks and evaluation approaches in collaborative community-led development. In 2012, we hosted Jim Diers from Seattle twice. Incorporating a strong ABCD⁸ lens in his work, Jim's passion is neighbourhood-led development and community organising. We also worked with community builder Peter Kenyon from the Bank of Ideas in Australia to co-host regional ABCD workshops in the Bay of Plenty.

1.2 WHAT IS COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT

CLD provides a framework for acting on what matters locally in ways that empower local

⁴ Including Great Start Taita, Good Cents Porirua, Rakiura/Stewart Island, Ōpōtiki, Waitara Alive, Massey Matters and Back2Back Massey-Ranui, Ka Mau te Wero (Tāmaki) and Mataura.

⁵ For more see <http://inspiringcommunities.org.nz/community-led-development-regional-networks/regional-networks>

⁶ Key learning from this process has influenced content developed in chapters 2, 4, and 5 especially.

⁷ Anticipated publication date for this PhD thesis is the end of 2013.

⁸ Asset Based Community Development – see <http://www.abcdinstitute.org/>

people to work collectively both with one another, and with other groups and organisations that have a stake or role in that place. A CLD approach encourages the mobilisation of local community action and effort. It can also be an effective lens

for agencies, governments and communities tackling complex community issues like family violence, high debt levels, and vulnerable children. CLD however is not a silver bullet for fixing things, neither is it an approach that stands alone. Rather, CLD is one of a number

of complementary strategies⁹ that can assist the process of community transformation and problem solving.

The essence of CLD is working together in place to create and achieve locally-owned visions and goals. It's a place-based

CLD PRINCIPLES	THIS MEANS...
Shared visions for 'place' driving action and change	<p><i>Building visions and priorities with those who live, work, care, play, and invest in that place – the principle of ahi kaa.¹⁰</i></p> <p><i>Tailor-making solutions from the 'ground up' and reflecting local aspirations, needs and conditions.</i></p> <p><i>Growing a shared sense of optimism and collective caring for people, place and the future ahead.</i></p>
Local people actively involved in planning, decision making and doing	<p><i>Acknowledging everyone has a contribution to make – with attention to involve groups often ignored.</i></p> <p><i>Valuing local people as 'experts' in their place.</i></p> <p><i>Proactively engaging local voices and ideas.</i></p> <p><i>Building action plans on existing community strengths, assets and resources.</i></p> <p><i>Encouraging and supporting local people with energy to do things, and connecting them up with others who can help.</i></p>
Many sectors working together	<p><i>Involving all those who have a stake in creating visions and aspirations, plans and activities and working/ doing together.</i></p> <p><i>Fostering new connections between diverse people, organisations and sectors to unlock resources and enable new thinking.</i></p> <p><i>Creating strong local relationships and linkages – at street/ neighbourhood level, between local groups, agencies, businesses and also with organisations based outside the local area.</i></p>
Proactively building local leadership and ownership of change	<p><i>Intentionally strengthening, growing and joining up local leadership.</i></p> <p><i>Recognising and celebrating local leadership and achievements.</i></p> <p><i>Making change visible and communicating progress within communities.</i></p>
Learning from doing	<p><i>Holding an intentional vision/ goal with a flexible 'doing' framework.</i></p> <p><i>Not waiting for the 'perfect' plan or 'complete' analysis – they don't exist.</i></p> <p><i>Being prepared to take action, acknowledging uncertainty and adapting as things progress.</i></p> <p><i>Proactively sharing experiences, learnings, and results within and across communities.</i></p> <p><i>Understanding that ongoing small steps collectively contribute to larger transformational change.</i></p> <p><i>Making links and encouraging systems changes (policy, funding, practice etc) for lasting impact within communities.</i></p>

⁹For example integrated services, local economic development, social development, environmental restoration.

¹⁰Ahi Kaa is a fundamental traditional Māori cultural concept meaning 'site of burning fires'. In contemporary times, Ahi Kaa is used to refer to people who uphold a particular purpose within the community. That is, they are the 'keepers of the home fires' be that at home, on the marae (traditional settlements) or within a particular organisation or movement.

developmental approach with a principles-based framework as outlined on the previous page.

CLD is practical and aspirational. Both are important. Implementing all CLD principles at once is sometimes simply not possible - especially in establishment phases. What matters is starting from where you, your organisation and/or community are, and then applying a CLD framework to guide how things develop from there. While the starting point for CLD may be a local crisis or problem, it could equally be around creating opportunities:

- a community visioning process;
- local people working together on a joint project;
- an agency seeking to redesign how their services are delivered;
- a fund to catalyse and support local initiative and action; or
- a process to join up local efforts and energy to achieve shared goals.

The concept of CLD can mean different things to different people. It involves overlaps with other terms and aligned

IT'S THE PRINCIPLES THAT COUNT

"CLD is common sense yet elusive. It's hard to describe and capture because it never looks the same in two places. But it's not what's on the surface that counts - it's what's underneath that's the most important."

*Inspiring Communities
Think Piece Contributor*

2012:11

movements like community development¹¹, social innovation, and community economic development. We've been reluctant to pin things down too tightly. Over time we expect that this overlap will change, but in the interests of inclusion and evolution we are embracing and accepting the 'messiness' around CLD language.

1.3 NOTICING THE DIFFERENCE THAT CLD MAKES

Inspiring Communities can see how CLD contributes to the outcomes desired by communities, the ways in which people work together and the resulting planned and unexpected benefits. This is based on our research and

observations of CLD activity over the last four years.


Many activities contribute to making positive changes in communities. CLD makes particular contributions that grow community capital¹² and achieve visible and tangible differences - such as more viable local businesses in Mātaura, graffiti reduction in Ōpōtiki, upgraded community facilities on Rakiura/Stewart Island and improved road safety in Waitara. Changes are often initially at the smaller town, suburb or neighbourhood level, and then sometimes influence shifts at a wider scale - for example systems changes within local government.

CLD changes are most often achieved where action is intentional and collectively agreed by a wide range of place-based stakeholders. This helps redirect existing skills and resources, alongside new resources. Together they grow the capacity to assist positive local change. By taking a projects focus, we have seen that visible change helps grow momentum and brings others and their ideas on board - seeing is believing! Very soon, one thing leads to another and new projects and people are involved. Brokers become

¹¹The key differences between CLD and community development is CLD's focus on communities of place, cross-sectoral collaboration and inclusion of system change focus.

¹²Community capital is the natural, human, social, and built capital from which a community receives benefits and on which the community relies for continued existence. For more see: <http://www.sustainablemeasures.com/node/32>

CLD - EXAMPLES OF THE 'VALUE ADD' FOR NZ

COMMUNITIES FACE COMPLEX CHALLENGES:	CLD BRINGS TANGIBLE RESULTS Some examples:
Small towns in decline	 <p>Mataura - children's readiness for school increased from 20% - 80% in 3 years, community events engaging 85% of local people, 60 families now fed from community garden.</p>
Failing schools and disconnected communities	 <p>Victory Village, Nelson - school roll turn over dropped from 65% to 10%, student achievement increased from 50% - 90%, vibrant community hub hosts 2500 participants per month in community of 6000.</p>
Breaking poverty cycles	 <p>Good Cents Porirua - 80+ low income individuals/ families now experiencing a significant paradigm shift around their money and futures, and leading their own change and transformation.</p>
Recovering from crises	 <p>Lyttelton - 435 member time bank has strongly assisted earthquake recovery efforts, community recently purchased their grocery store to ensure local food security.</p>
Transforming a local economy and community	 <p>Ōpōtikī - integrated planning led by iwi and local government to enable community transformation supported through aquaculture and tourism.</p>

as important as leaders, and having a declared intention and shared goals helps to focus new activity, and/or to highlight that new goals are now needed.

There are many positive signs of CLD-based progress and change in communities to acknowledge, celebrate and learn from. While not a quick fix or cut price option, incorporating a CLD approach into New Zealand's 'business as usual' often provides a significant 'value add' for communities, regions and the country as a whole. In all of the examples below, change has been possible because people have committed to think and work differently together. They have built new relationships and alliances and make the most of everything their community has to offer.

As people experience and understand the power of working together towards shared goals, CLD ways of working become 'the norm'. This is leading to more understanding about how to build a sense of community that is based on locally derived shared purpose and intent, and how being of service to each other can sit alongside 'developing and delivering services'. There is

growing understanding that the 'standard recipe' (services focused on fixing deficits/people and on narrowly defined outputs) has not made significant inroads to solving complex issues. There are promising results when issues are reframed, e.g. from a narrow 'people with problems' mode to consciously seeing people as residents, citizens and communities and then actively engaging with them to co-design possible solutions. This dovetailing of service delivery and CLD approaches can bring positive gains.¹³

CLD leads individuals to value and nurture relationships. Stronger connections become an outcome in themselves, while at the same time creating new initiatives. Alongside these, communities come to expect to be involved in decisions that affect them as equals to those with official or delegated powers. New structures also begin to emerge, and local cultures of 'how we do things around here' shift towards more collaborative, strengths-based systems. By involving many people and combining expertise and experience, synergies allow the 'end product' to be much greater than the sum of the parts. In these ways, CLD helps

build community resilience and sustainability.

1.4 THE CURRENT CONTEXT FOR COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

In July 2012, Inspiring Communities published a think piece¹⁴, which reflected on changes in the broader CLD environment and factors that were currently helping or hindering CLD. The Think Piece, which brought together contributions from 22 thought leaders in Aotearoa, identified many positive small steps forward for CLD including:

- increased awareness, interest in and uptake of CLD by many stakeholders and communities across Aotearoa and globally;
- growing national recognition that leadership and active participation by local communities matters;
- iwi-led development and CLD being viewed by many as complementary and aligned approaches;
- a growing understanding that community services and CLD are very different;

¹³To learn about a community-led approach to reducing family violence in Highbury in Palmerston North see <http://www.tearohanoa.org.nz/user/file/24/Violence%20Free%20Community%20Project.pdf>

¹⁴Download Inspiring Communities' 2012 Think Piece from <http://inspiringcommunities.org.nz/think-piece-july-2012>

- business, government, iwi and Māori, funders, community organisations and communities all looking for more effective ways of doing things with the resources available.

Interestingly, significant devastating events like the Christchurch earthquakes, global financial crises, and the national debt burden were seen as having triggered positive shifts in CLD thinking and action in New Zealand. Some contributors were however more sceptical of the current ‘hype’ around CLD, reflecting that use of CLD language doesn’t always equate to an understanding or commitment to working differently in practice. Concerns were expressed about potential ‘government capture’ of CLD and the approach being used as a vehicle for government devolution of responsibility to communities without accompanying resources or the decision-making power necessary to facilitate meaningful change.

Letting go of ‘old’ ways of working,¹⁵ having a critical mass of people with the ‘right’ CLD skillsets, and changing entrenched systems were highlighted as ongoing challenges for embedding

CLD both at national and local levels. Also key to enhancing CLD practice and outcomes were:

- improved access to, and uptake of, collaboration training and support to strengthen local partnering cultures;
- growing more ‘active’ citizens and more active citizenship, with local people enabled to lead / contribute to the difference they would like to see;
- having respected bodies who can advocate, connect communities and gather robust evidence about CLD driven change;
- ensuring local government is actively involved in and supporting CLD; and
- developing mutually supportive business-community relationships that go beyond sponsorship / asking for money.

1.5 ABOUT INSPIRING COMMUNITIES

Inspiring Communities’ mission is creating change through effective community-led development (CLD). We are a small, virtual organisation¹⁶ committed

to catalysing, promoting, and using the application of CLD principles to create flourishing Kiwi communities with healthy people, economies and environments.

1.5.1 INSPIRING COMMUNITIES’ ROLE IN LEARNING AND PRACTICE

Despite many communities in Aotearoa actively demonstrating what’s possible when communities are empowered and supported to lead their own development, CLD demands patience, persistence, ongoing collective dialogue, and real-time developmental analysis of practice and results. CLD is a long term game, and one where rules, models and evidence only take us so far. CLD also involves both ‘heads and hearts’, and we are constantly reminded that not everything that counts can be easily measured. It’s therefore important that we embrace a ‘learning by doing’ approach in order to better understand what works, what doesn’t and why. This applied and adaptive learning remains at the heart of both CLD and New Zealand’s evolving CLD movement.

A key purpose of creating Inspiring Communities was to grow an intentional collective

¹⁵ For example working in ways that may be top down, controlling, uncollaborative, and non participatory.

¹⁶ For more about Inspiring Communities, our team and activities see Appendix 1.

CLD ‘doing’ and ‘learning’ community. As an organisation we are committed to supporting practical community action for positive outcomes and gathering and sharing information, insights and knowledge gained from this work. In this we claim no ownership for ourselves. The stories and learnings we share belong to communities and CLD initiatives themselves. The role of Inspiring Communities is to capture, connect, and catalyse emerging ideas, wisdom and knowledge so that everyone benefits. We are fortunate to be connected with multiple learning partners both here in Aotearoa and beyond. While we have much to gain from overseas thinking and CLD learnings, there is also much to share from our experience here in Aotearoa New Zealand. Attached at Appendix 2 is a summary of key CLD learnings and advice offered in our 2010 publication. From this we developed our top ten for CLD practitioners – which are as relevant today as they were two years ago!

The image shows the cover of a publication titled "What we are learning about community-led development in Aotearoa New Zealand". At the top left is the Inspiring Communities logo. The title is in a large, bold font. Below the title, it says "Our Top Ten Tips". A list of ten tips is provided, numbered 1 to 10. At the bottom of the list, there is a yellow banner with the website address "www.inspiringcommunities.org.nz".

What we are learning
about community-led development
in Aotearoa New Zealand

Our Top Ten Tips

1. Start with identifying the assets, strengths and what works well in each community.
2. Be intentional, be clear on your vision but be flexible in how you might get there.
3. Understand the nature of the problems/issues you're dealing with - simple solutions will not address complex problems.
4. Know that it's not what you do but how you do it that matters most - build CLD thinking and action into everything that happens.
5. Go where the energy is - invest in people and their passion.
6. Anticipate 'mess', uncertainty and things to be hard.
7. Grow people and collaboration infrastructure don't just focus on 'projects'.
8. Make progress visible to local people - seeing is believing.
9. Grow a local culture of learning and reflection.
10. Be kind to yourself - this work is about us and not about us, celebrate each small step!

www.inspiringcommunities.org.nz

Inspiring Communities is able to provide training workshops to further explore the learnings, tips and tools included in this publication. In 2013 we will be also expanding our range of learning products, consultancies and support. For more information please contact us on exchange@inspiringcommunities.org.nz.

LEARNING BY DOING MĀTAURANGA COMMUNITY

“I see this rich wealth of learning emerging from community-led development practice around Aotearoa that’s captured in Learning by Doing as Mātauranga¹⁷ Community.”

Colleen Tuuta
Inspiring Communities Trustee 2009-12
and friend of Inspiring Communities

¹⁷ Mātauranga Māori can be defined as ‘the knowledge, comprehension, or understanding of everything visible and invisible existing in the universe’, and is often used synonymously with wisdom. In the contemporary world, the definition is usually extended to include present-day, historic, local, and traditional knowledge; systems of knowledge transfer and storage; and the goals, aspirations and issues from an indigenous perspective. <http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/about/sustainability/voices/matauranga-maori/what-is-matauranga-maori>



Top left, above: Mihi Angel's dream was to bring Kelston's older residents together. Mihi and the Kelston Hub crew now meet regularly to share cups of tea and memories about life in Kelston.



Left, bottom left: At West Spreydon School in Christchurch, parent coffee mornings are held at the school each Friday, with around 20 families regularly attending. This is one of a number of initiatives actively strengthening school-family-community links.



APPENDIX 1

ABOUT INSPIRING COMMUNITIES

Collective community 'doing and learning', and promoting CLD philosophy and practice lie at the heart of Inspiring Communities. The Inspiring Communities Trust was created in 2008 to help support and strengthen the emerging community-led development movement in Aotearoa New Zealand. Our launch was enabled by a four-year establishment grant from The Tindall Foundation, with a broad range of other funders and supporters¹⁸³ also co-investing in our work.

WHAT WE DO

To support and strengthen the emerging community-led development movement in Aotearoa we focus on:

- Promoting and catalysing: the understanding and practice of CLD, and influencing systems to change public policies at all levels.
- Connecting: people, projects and places, to share and showcase CLD ideas, knowledge, learnings and experience.
- Learning: more about CLD, about how positive change is created, noticed and effectively captured, and sharing this to build capacity and capability that strengthens wellbeing outcomes in local communities.
- Building: a sustainable and vital

organisation, with a mixed-source funding and earning base.

For the 2008-2012 period, our initial efforts focused on:

- engaging, linking and reaching out to community-led development supporters and bright spots in Aotearoa, sharing news, learnings and resources by publishing regular newsletters, establishing a website, and meeting with interested communities, agencies and aligned networks to communicate and promote CLD;
- bringing together a small cluster of communities from across the country to initiatives from across the country to begin a process of supported reflective learning to notice and better understand how and why community-led change happens, and the difference it makes;
- engaging part time brokers to enable more 'hands on' support and learning about transformational CLD efforts then underway in Tāmaki through the Tāmaki Transformation Project, and in Ōpōtiki by Whakatōhea iwi and the Ōpōtiki District Council;
- connecting CLD supporters and communities – and their stories and experiences – through convening regional networks in Auckland and the Bay of Plenty,¹⁸⁴ and supporting/

participating in CLD learning events in Wellington, Southland, and Taranaki;

- partnering with others on national CLD initiatives - for example Neighbours Day Aotearoa and family centred, community-led development;¹⁸⁵
- facilitating CLD learning opportunities by hosting international experts such as Jim Diers, Mark Cabaj and Michael Quinn Patton; and
- undertaking CLD consultancy, mentoring, facilitation, and support.

¹⁸³ Including ASB Community Trust, Auckland Council, COGs, Bay Trust, Community Trust of Southland, Families Commission, Ideas Shop, JR McKenzie Trust, Todd Foundation, Lotteries Community and Lotteries Community Research Fund, Rotorua Trust, Slingshot/Call Plus, TSB Community Trust and many others.

¹⁸⁴ To learn more about networking and learning activities in both Auckland and the Bay of Plenty see <http://inspiringcommunities.org.nz/regional-forum-reports>

¹⁸⁵ For more see <http://inspiringcommunities.org.nz/community-led-development/projects-initiatives>

OUR PEOPLE

With team members currently based in Auckland, Rotorua, Wellington and Nelson, Inspiring Communities is a small 'virtual' organisation of 2.5 full time equivalents.



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Inspiring Communities is also supported by a Board comprising CLD passionate people from a diverse range of places, interests and sectors. To learn about our Board members see <http://inspiringcommunities.org.nz/about/meet-board>



David Hanna



Alison Broad



Mary-Jane Rivers



Robyn Scott



Anna Kominik



Vaughan Payne

INSPIRING COMMUNITIES: OUR WAY OF WORKING

- CLD principles underpin everything we do.
- We are committed to upholding the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and enabling iwi-led development.
- We build capacity, skills and knowledge wherever we go to help support both the national CLD movement and the achievement of local aspirations.
- We work 'with' others, not on our own. We model active listening, collaboration and building trusting and respectful relationships.
- We are responsive, adaptive and committed to reflecting and learning from all we do.
- We share what we know.
- We are prepared to take risks and creatively model innovative and effective responses to address complex opportunities and challenges.
- We use our connections, networks and knowledge for greater gain of the CLD movement.

APPENDIX 2

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF 2010

KEY OBSERVATIONS AND LEARNING FROM OUR FOUR CENTRAL THEMES:

WORKING TOGETHER IN PLACE

- Having a strong, uniting community vision that frames local action plans. This enables development of effective processes for measuring, reflecting on, and learning how change happens. It is also a touchstone in difficult times.
- Resisting the urge to jump straight into projects or solutions without first having spent time clarifying the bigger questions confronting communities and getting a feel for the real drivers behind key local issues and concerns.
- Being intentional - knowing where you want to go and utilising flexible pathways and action plans to get there. Responding to opportunities, and purposefully learning from what works and what doesn't as you progress.
- Assisting momentum towards a community vision by starting with a few projects that are practical, high impact, participatory and can visibly demonstrate change and success. For many, 'seeing is believing' and visible projects build interest in the community change journey ahead.
- Working in community-led development ways is chal-

lenging for all and requires everyone to accept the challenge of adopting new ways of working. Encouraging creative and enabling roles by all - funders, local and central government, business, iwi, community groups, residents - sets the scene for diverse partners to work together, and co-invest effort and resources to achieve locally determined goals and visions.

- Persevering when the going gets tough - because it will. Learning, both internationally and here in Aotearoa, suggests an establishment phase of 2-3 years and more than ten years for really transformative change.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

- Supporting communities to identify, celebrate and leverage off their existing strengths and assets. This can help un-leash new resources and inspire confidence, participation and hope that a better future is possible.
- Local community events are a great way to bring people together and keep them connected. Neighbourhoods and communities that meet, talk and work together have a stronger sense of identity, pride, optimism and place. Events can also be a key capacity building tool if local people are intentionally part of event planning, decision making and 'doing' on the day.

LEADING IN, AND LEADERFUL, COMMUNITIES

Actively growing and strengthening community leadership is increasingly being recognised as important for local community futures. There is a conscious call to:

- Encourage a more 'leaderful' community approach by looking for leaders and leadership in a whole range of new places in communities.
- Proactively involve more local residents in leadership and decision making roles, and strengthen connections between and across leaders in communities. People nurture what they care about, and through civic engagement will strengthen their communities.
- Proactively build more opportunities for resident leadership. Foster integrity and authenticity in leaders, valuing 'character' as much as achievements. Leaders who are highly valued actively build bridges within and across communities, empower and inspire participation, make room for multiple voices at decision making tables, and honour others.

CREATING AND SUSTAINING MOMENTUM

- Effective transition planning for changes in local leadership is essential. Helpful strategies include buddying and shadowing, documenting personal

What we are learning about community-led development in Aotearoa New Zealand

insights on the 'hows and whys' of the community's change journey to date, personally handing over key relationships and leaving a forward plan of key 'next' steps to take.

- Value time and processes for noticing and reflection, and proactively build them into work programmes and planning, so that a local culture of 'community learning' can be empowered and supported. Useful tools to assist learning and help demonstrate change and success are target setting, community stories and discussion groups, indicators, and pictures.



This take-out of Learning by Doing by Inspiring Communities includes the book's Executive Summary and Introductory Chapter. There are 5 other focused CLD learning and story-filled chapters in this handbook over some 180 pages.

If you would like to purchase a hard copy for \$39.95 plus \$6 p&p, please go to <http://inspiringcommunities.org.nz/tools-resources-inspiring-communities-publications/learning-doing>

Or if you'd prefer to wait, Inspiring Communities will be releasing individual chapters free online over the course of 2013.

For further information about Learning by Doing Workshops which will be held in many parts of Aotearoa during 2013 see <http://inspiringcommunities.org.nz/events>

If you'd like to talk to one of the Inspiring Communities team about tailored training workshops for your community or organisation, please contact exchange@inspiringcommunities.org.nz

By purchasing a copy of Learning by Doing, you're helping Inspiring Communities support and strengthen community-led development in Aotearoa New Zealand.

