

## Part 4: Building

*In my construction company product is first. Time is money. In this project it's totally different. People are the first priority. We continually have to remind ourselves that this is both a training programme and a renovation.*

**Meg**

### Discussion Points

1. What challenges does the shift from training to building present to the participants? What changes do they go through?
2. What challenges exist in this phase of the project for the staff? How do the participants respond?
3. How could the problems that occurred in this phase of the project have been addressed more effectively?
4. How would you measure the success of this project if you were a participant, a staff member, a sponsor group member, a funder, a neighbour, a woman needing shelter, a tax payer?
5. What crucial players are not heard from in this video? What insight might these players provide?
6. What lessons can be learned from this project? How can this model be adapted for use in community development projects in your community?

### Key Community Development Principles

- ❖ Implement the transition plan.
- ❖ Evaluate the balance between support, training and project completion and make adjustments as necessary.
- ❖ Identify and implement ongoing support, training and work placements for the participants prior to project completion.
- ❖ Evaluate the entire project with participants, residents, partners and other key players.

*"I feel really honoured. That house is going to be there and we're part of it."*

**Karen**

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# Building Futures: Re-Building Our Lives

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

The Downtown Women's Project was designed to:

- ❖ Build a 24 hour women's emergency shelter and resource centre in downtown Victoria.
- ❖ Provide a 10 month Construction Skills Training Programme for women on social assistance who want to work in the trades.
- ❖ Build community partnerships among governments, community workers, the construction industry and women in the street community.



**Building Futures**, the video, is designed to:

- ❖ Initiate discussion about community development.
- ❖ Critically examine the issues, challenges and achievements of unconventional community development.
- ❖ Outline the public process of one community development for use as a model to be adapted and improved upon by other communities.
- ❖ Inspire organizations to embrace bottom-up community development as a solution to community needs.

This discussion guide is divided into the same four sections as the video: Community Process, Partners, Training, and Building. The key to effective community development is flexibility. Adapt these community development principles and discussion points to explore your own project.

## Part 1: Community Process

*I felt really committed from the beginning of this project to making sure that the voices of the women in the street community were the voices that we were listening to when we figured out what it was we needed to do. That was the place to start.*

**Jannit**

### Discussion Points

1. What are the steps involved in identifying the needs of the target community?
2. What barriers can be identified?
3. What opportunities can be identified to overcome the barriers and meet these needs?
4. The overall project is guided by feminist principles. How does feminist process contribute to making this development model unique?

### Key Community Development Principles

- ❖ Identify target group.
- ❖ Work with the target group to identify their needs.
- ❖ Define principles and values to guide the project and re-examine these on a regular basis
- ❖ Design project aims and objectives with the target group.
- ❖ Outline expectations, roles and commitments for the organization, the workers and the target group at different stages of the project.
- ❖ Identify barriers to and opportunities for obtaining funding and resources for the project.
- ❖ Identify training and support needs for target group and workers.

## Part 2: Partners

*It's not always the first person or the most appropriate person who hears and sees the vision. Finding those people sometimes takes a little while. But once you find them, then it is their's too.*

**Jannit**

### Discussion Points

1. What support can be enlisted for the project?
2. How are partnerships developed and what different roles do they play?
3. Partnerships are critical to the success of this project. What issues and challenges does this present?

### Key Community Development Principles

- ❖ Build broad-based community support for the project.
- ❖ Develop neighbourhood support.
- ❖ Identify and develop potential partnerships.
- ❖ Obtain funding/resources.
- ❖ Seek knowledge and support from advisors and mentors.
- ❖ Be accountable to the community.

## Part 3: Training

*Everything you need to know you already know. And its already in there, in you. And you need to develop a belief about yourself.*

**Darcy**

### Discussion Points

1. What barriers exist to full participation by the participants?
2. How are these barriers overcome?
3. What problems arise during the training. How are these dealt with?
4. What aspects of the training are critical to the participants success?
5. How are feminist principles incorporated into the training? What does this mean for the participants, the organizational group and the partners in the project?

### Key Community Development Principles

- ❖ Re-examine guiding principles and ensure they are included in the design of the training.
- ❖ Design training for project participants as well as for staff.
- ❖ Identify trainers and support staff.
- ❖ Implement project training.
- ❖ Re-evaluate training and support needs on an ongoing basis and respond to changing needs.
- ❖ Anticipate needs that may arise moving into the next phase and develop a transitional plan.

*I guess the counselling and life skills that was part of it really struck me. I thought, "Wow. Here's something maybe I can stick with and get some support."*

**Pam**



*We're powerful women. We know what we want and we're going to get there. Every one of us will".*

**Ivy**