



# Delivering

# Change

Understanding the outcomes of community learning and development

Ensuring decent housing and  
strong communities across Scotland





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Words in **bold** are included in the glossary on page 26.



## What does this document aim to do?

‘Working and Learning Together to Build Stronger Communities’, the Scottish Executive’s guidance on **community learning and development** (CLD), said that we wanted to be ‘able to assess more thoroughly the contribution of CLD to achieving **outcomes**.’

In other words, we want to be able to say more about the difference that CLD makes in the lives of individuals, groups and communities.

This document aims to help us to do that by setting out for the first time the range of outcomes that we expect CLD to bring about or contribute to.

As a result, this document is mainly aimed at being a useful resource for people who work in this field. We think that it can:

- provide a tool that can help those involved in CLD to explain to others (for example, **community planning** partnerships) what their work achieves;
- help CLD providers and those people that use their services (for example, learners or **community activists**) to discuss what the outcomes of their work together should be; and
- provide a solid basis from which we can use our improved understanding of outcomes to develop better ways of identifying and recording them, where this is appropriate.

The document presents these outcomes as a framework. It focuses on the kind of outcomes that practitioners, managers and – perhaps most importantly – the people who take part might expect to see arising more or less directly from CLD activities.

We developed the first draft of this framework from a range of existing documents, and with the help of people who work in CLD or have an interest in it. We then consulted other groups about the draft, including CLD providers and people who use the services (a full list of everyone involved is on page 28).

So these outcomes haven’t come from nowhere. They’re based on what a whole range of people who really know about this work think.

And, importantly, we need to finally say what this document does not aim to do. The framework is meant to be a tool to help people – it is not meant to tell people what to do. Instead, it presents a menu of possible outcomes of CLD, from which people can choose the most appropriate ones for their work and their situation.

We should never forget that all CLD is built on the principle that learners and communities are at the heart of this work – it is their aims that the work focuses on. We can’t talk about outcomes in this field without recognising that it’s the outcomes that people who take part want to achieve that are most important.

## A guide to the document

This document aims to promote a better shared understanding of what we mean by **outcomes** in CLD.

First of all, it answers the question, what are outcomes? It sets out what we mean by outcomes and explains that we can often see changes come about both more quickly and over the long-term (we call these outcomes **intermediate** and **end outcomes**).

Secondly, the document sets out to explain what the outcomes in CLD are. Taking as its starting point the general description from the first section, it gives details of how the ideas of intermediate outcomes and end outcomes apply in CLD.

Next, the document gives examples of the wider outcomes of community learning and development. It explains that though CLD mainly aims to achieve or contribute to end outcomes (and so improve quality of life for individuals and communities), this can be difficult to identify and record. However, the document gives examples of a range of areas where we know, from research and experience, that CLD can achieve or contribute to end outcomes.

The most important part of the document deals with the framework of outcomes for community learning and development. This sets out the intermediate outcomes of CLD – those that practitioners, managers and people who take part are most likely to be able to see and value. The framework sets out the outcomes of CLD in two sections – those related to personal development (for both adults and young people) and those related to **building community capacity**.

Finally, the document asks what next? It explains how the framework links to other tools which are used in CLD – in particular *How Good is our Community Learning & Development?* and the Learning Evaluation and Planning (LEAP) process – and how we will continue to develop work in this area.

## What are outcomes?

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Outcomes are the changes that come about as a result of us taking action.

When we decide something needs to happen, we set aside resources to do it (these are called the **inputs**), we apply different methods to be able to do it (the **processes**), and achieve things, like an activity we have delivered or something we have produced (the **outputs**). The outcomes are the changes that happen as a result of that chain of events.

In any activity, some of the outcomes may happen fairly quickly and as a direct result of the action we have taken. However, we know that sometimes the results of what we do are seen in the longer-term, and might be the result of various factors – our action might be only one of these.

We can think of this range of outcomes as the ‘ripples’ on a pond when a stone is dropped in. Outcomes that come about straight away tend to be closer to the action we originally took.

But the further we move away from the action we originally took, the more difficult it is to identify and measure the outcomes. In the example of the stone being thrown in the pond, we know that, as the ripples move outwards, they’ll be more and more affected by other things – like the effect of the wind.

In this document we’ve used two terms to highlight the difference between these two kinds of outcomes. We’ve called these intermediate outcomes and end outcomes.

We see being able to focus on outcomes as a priority – we want to know about what has actually changed as a result of our actions. If we focus just on the processes or the outputs then we have no way of knowing if they are effective or not.

## What are outcomes in CLD?

The general statements about **outcomes** on the previous page apply to CLD. Outcomes in CLD are simply the changes that come about as the result of any kind of CLD activities.

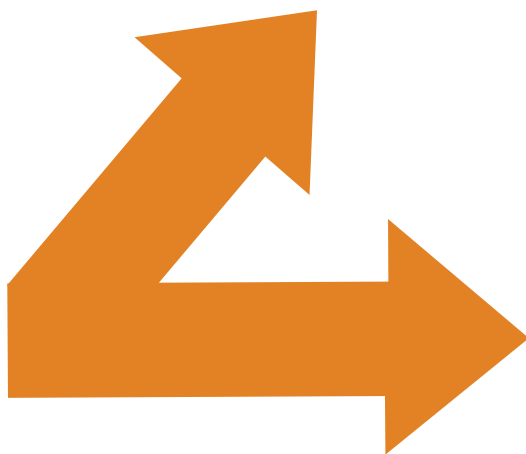
People who work in CLD will very clearly understand that their work with people and groups is likely to be over the long-term. It can often take a long time to work with people to build their skills and confidence, particularly when they have had a bad experience with education, or they've not had their views listened to before.

Because of this, it's very important that we understand that there are **intermediate outcomes** and **end outcomes** in CLD too.

The intermediate outcomes of CLD will be more closely linked to the CLD itself. For example:

- adult learners taking part in a numeracy group may become more confident (and, hopefully, better at understanding and using numbers);
- young people campaigning for a local skate park may become better at working together; or
- a network of community groups in a local area might take action together on the issues that are important to them.

These achievements are very important but they also lay the foundation for wider changes over the long-term.



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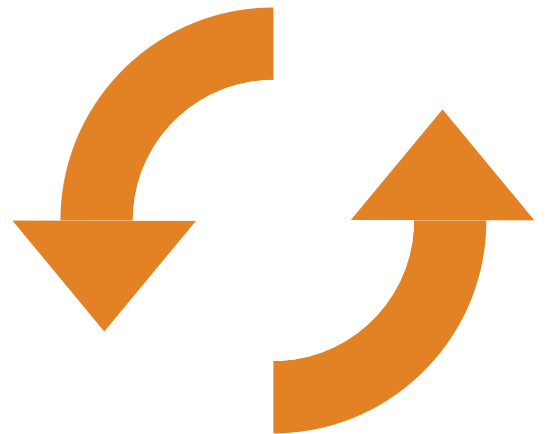
In CLD we would expect that these **outcomes** will then cause further ‘ripples’, and that wider outcomes will come about which improve the quality of life of individuals and the wider communities in which they live. These end outcomes of CLD will be longer-term and more difficult to identify and measure.

However, they will be the outcomes that people – including communities themselves – will be most interested in. For example:

- an adult learner who gained confidence gets more involved in their child’s education, which leads to their child achieving more at school, college or university;
- a young person who can work well with other people will be more likely to get a job; or
- community groups which work together can use their influence on the local council to improve services in their area.

The most important part of this document is the framework starting on page 11, which focuses on the intermediate outcomes of CLD. These outcomes are those that we would expect to see arising more or less directly from CLD activities.

The diagram on page 25 sets out how we see the process of delivering outcomes in CLD.



## Wider outcomes of CLD

The purpose of CLD work is to improve the quality of life for individuals and communities – what we call in this document **end outcomes**.

These end outcomes – particularly when relevant to CLD – should be related to the aims of communities themselves. In other words, they should be related to the changes that people want to see in their lives and the lives of those around them.

The end outcomes will also be of interest to organisations and partnerships that are trying to achieve significant changes across whole areas and communities – like **community planning partnerships**.

We would suggest that in most cases it is not reasonable for people working in CLD to be totally responsible for end outcomes. It is difficult to ask people who provide CLD services or activities to provide evidence that they directly cause these effects.

Larger organisations and increasingly partnerships are more able to focus on end outcomes. But even for these organisations, it will often be very difficult to link these wider **outcomes** with CLD activities. It is more reasonable to look for end outcomes as the overall result of a whole range of activities – for example, at the level of community planning partnership structures.

Highlighted on the next page are some examples of areas where we might expect CLD to contribute to end outcomes that are particularly important to the Scottish Executive. This is not meant to be a full list and obviously there may be other outcomes that communities themselves would want to see.

How directly CLD **intermediate outcomes** link to these end outcomes depends on the type of work involved. In some specific cases there might be a very clear link, but in others there will be a more general contribution. Let's take improved health as an example.

A community health development project might have a direct outcome by improving people's health within the population the project is aimed at. The project would aim to measure this outcome.

Research shows that someone who takes part in learning is more likely to have improved health. We can assume that, because of this, a community-based adult learning project will therefore make a contribution to this outcome – though it would not be sensible to aim to measure this at this level.

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However, it is vital that all those people involved understand and are able to talk about the contribution that CLD can and does make to end outcomes. This will help us to:

- work with communities to understand how support and opportunities through CLD can contribute to achieving their aims; and
- make the links between CLD and wider outcomes for communities set in strategic documents like community plans and **regeneration outcome agreements**.

### **Outcomes related to the economy and employment**

These might include:

- improving employability (that is, developing people's skills so they have a better chance of getting a job);
- higher levels of employment;
- improving labour-market position (for example, getting a better paid or more skilled job);
- higher levels of activity in the **social economy**; and
- improving people's attitudes toward setting up businesses and being enterprising (for example, towards being creative and taking appropriate risks).

### **Outcomes related to learning and education**

These might include:

- improving children's performance at school;
- lower levels of children playing truant and getting excluded from school; and
- getting more people to take part and progress in lifelong learning, including further and higher education.

### **Outcomes related to getting involved in democracy**

These might include:

- getting more people to take part in democratic processes (for example, standing and voting in elections, or lobbying local politicians); and
- more consultation between democratic representatives (for example, local councillors, or members of the UK or Scottish parliaments) and communities.

### Outcomes related to health

These might include:

- improving health;
- higher levels of physical activity; and
- providing better support to members of the community.

### Other wider outcomes of CLD

There are other areas where the end outcomes of CLD can also be important. These include the following.

- Outcomes related to community safety, such as reduced crime or fear of crime (including antisocial behaviour).
- Outcomes related to building more integrated communities, such as less discrimination and celebrating people's identities and differences.
- Outcomes related to taking part in arts, sports and culture.
- Outcomes related to the physical and natural environment.



## The framework of outcomes for CLD

Achieving the **end outcomes** set out in the previous section might be mainly why CLD services are provided but it can be very difficult to identify and measure the contribution that CLD makes to them.

We are suggesting that in most cases CLD providers and people who take part will find it more helpful to concentrate on the **intermediate outcomes** of their work. As a result, this framework of **outcomes** for CLD focuses on those outcomes. They are the changes that **practitioners**, managers and those people taking part will be most likely to be able to identify and to record, where this is appropriate.

### Principles and values of the framework

Before setting out the framework, it's important to make an overall statement that supports it. You can't define CLD just in terms of the outcomes that are produced – it's also about how the **process** happens.

In particular, this framework is based on the understanding that there's a common definition of **community learning and development** in 'Working and Learning Together', which is supported by common principles and approaches. The principles of CLD set out in 'Working and Learning Together' are as follows.

- 'Empowerment' – encouraging people to take control of, or have a say in, decisions that affect them.
- 'Participation' – giving people every opportunity to get involved in learning and acting with others.
- 'Inclusion, equality of opportunity and anti-discrimination' – giving everyone a chance to be involved, whatever their background or abilities, and actively challenging discrimination.
- 'Self-determination' – allowing people to make their own choices about what they do.
- 'Partnership' – achieving more by encouraging everyone with an interest to work together.

These principles also support the framework, and the outcomes set out in it.

## Personal development and building community capacity

There are two aspects to the framework, focussing on:

- personal development; and
- **building community capacity.**

However, much – if not all – CLD practice will cut across these two areas. In other words, for any particular piece of CLD work, you might be able to identify **outcomes** from across these areas – and we would very strongly encourage you to do so.

## Three national priorities for CLD

Similarly, it's tempting to see the personal development outcomes relating more closely to work from the first two national priorities for CLD:

- Achievement through learning for adults.
- Achievement through learning for young people.

And the second part of the framework clearly relates most closely to work on the third national priority for CLD which is:

- Achievement through building community capacity.

However, we want to recognise and encourage thinking across these boundaries. In any kind of CLD work it may be perfectly appropriate to choose any of the outcomes in any part of the framework.

CLD is about personal development  
page 14 >

## CLD is about personal development

### **CLD supports people to become confident individuals.**

Through being involved in CLD, adults and young people:

- are more confident;
- feel better about themselves;
- expect to achieve more;
- are more able to do things for themselves;
- are more able to take responsibility for themselves and their actions;
- are more able to understand and discuss their own values and beliefs; and
- are more able to understand and discuss their needs and aims.

### **CLD supports people to become effective contributors.**

Through being involved in CLD, adults and young people are more able to:

- communicate with other people;
- solve problems and make decisions;
- work with other people;
- form and develop good relationships; and
- use their skills and experience to support and lead others.



## CLD is about personal development

### **CLD supports people to become responsible citizens.**

Through being involved in CLD, adults and young people are:

- more able to discuss and understand complicated issues that affect their community, society and the wider world;
- more able to plan and take action on issues for their community, society and the wider world;
- more able to make sure that their views and opinions are heard and taken on board;
- more aware and understanding of different people's experiences, abilities, backgrounds and beliefs; and
- better able to get on with people who have different experiences, abilities, backgrounds and beliefs.

### **CLD supports people to become successful learners.**

Through being involved in CLD, adults and young people:

- have more belief in their ability to learn;
- are more motivated to learn;
- are more able to identify and understand what they need and want to learn;
- understand different ways to learn;
- are more able to choose ways of learning that suit them in different situations;
- are more able to take control of how and what they learn;
- are more able to share their learning with others;
- are more able to use what they have learned in different situations in their lives;
- are more able to use information and communications technology (such as computers); and
- are more able to use their skills with numbers.

CLD is about building community capacity  
page 17 >

## CLD is about building community capacity

### **CLD supports people to be confident, skilled and active members of the community.**

Through being involved in CLD, adults and young people:

- are more confident about working with other people in their community;
- have more skills and knowledge they can use in their community;
- are more able to use what they have learned in different situations in their community; and
- are more able to see how things in their community can change for the better.

### **CLD supports communities to be active and have more influence.**

Through being involved in CLD, adults and young people are more able to:

- make links with other people in their community and build working relationships with them; and
- take action together on the issues that are important to them.

Through support from CLD, community organisations:

- have more influence on the issues that are important to them.

### **CLD supports community organisations to get access to resources and to deliver services effectively.**

Through support from CLD, community organisations are more able to:

- access resources (like meeting places, equipment and money) that allow them to work on the issues they think are important;
- control assets (such as buildings and equipment) that allow them to work on the issues they think are important; and
- deliver services, where this is the most appropriate way of dealing with an issue they think is important.

## CLD is about building community capacity

### **CLD helps community organisations plan, manage and assess their work effectively.**

Through support from CLD, community organisations are more able to:

- find out about and understand issues for the community;
- develop a plan of action on issues the community has identified;
- manage themselves well; and
- learn lessons from what they do and act on them.

### **CLD supports community organisations to include a wide range of people in their work.**

Through support from CLD, community organisations:

- are more aware of different cultures, backgrounds and beliefs within their community;
- value and use the positive contributions of people who have a wide range of experiences, abilities, backgrounds and beliefs; and
- are more able to work well with other organisations which represent people who have different experiences, abilities, backgrounds and beliefs.

### **CLD supports productive networks and relationships.**

Through support from CLD, community organisations are more able to:

- make links with organisations from other communities and build working relationships with them; and
- develop and keep working relationships with other organisations and services in their area.

## Core skills

Some of the **outcomes** highlighted on pages 14 and 15 are related to **core skills**. These include being able to:

- communicate with other people;
- solve problems and make decisions;
- work with others;
- use ICT (such as computers); and
- use skills with numbers.

Where it's useful, we can be more specific about the outcomes we might expect which are relevant to these skills.

Through being involved in CLD, adult learners and young people are more able to:

communicate with other people by:

- listening and observing effectively;
- speaking so others can understand;
- reading and understanding what they are reading; and
- expressing information, ideas and feelings in writing.

solve problems and make decisions by:

- finding out about things for themselves;
- thinking about a range of possible solutions in a particular situation; and
- deciding on the best solution or action to take in a particular situation.

work with other people by:

- negotiating with other people;
- sorting out disagreements;
- co-operating with other people; and
- reflecting and learning from experience.

use ICT (such as computers) by:

- using ICT to manage information; and
- using ICT to learn and practise skills.

use their skills with numbers by:

- understanding and using their skills with numbers;
- applying their skills with numbers to solve problems;
- understanding information which is presented as numbers; and
- presenting information as numbers.

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### Specific learning outcomes

Personal development through CLD can also include developing skills and knowledge in specific areas. Usually this will be the main topic that a learning opportunity sets out to cover or will relate to the particular issue that a community group wants to take action on.

Because these are so varied – from skills for being involved in a management group or committee, to local history, to healthy eating, to political awareness, to local planning law – it's not possible to list them all here. However, these are also important **outcomes** that can be identified and valued.

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) is a useful tool if you are designing learning with specific learning outcomes. It can help you focus on what you want learners to be able to do.

## What next?

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Improving understanding of the outcomes of **community learning and development** is important but it's just a first step. We also need to be able to provide evidence that those outcomes are actually taking place.

This is partly important because we have to provide evidence to policy makers and those who provide funding that investing in CLD work brings about real change.

However, a far more important reason is that we have to be able to support those individuals and groups we're working with to identify and appreciate the outcomes they are achieving, whether that's increased confidence, new skills, or a greater say over the decisions that affect them.

That means that focusing on outcomes must be one of the most important parts of CLD.

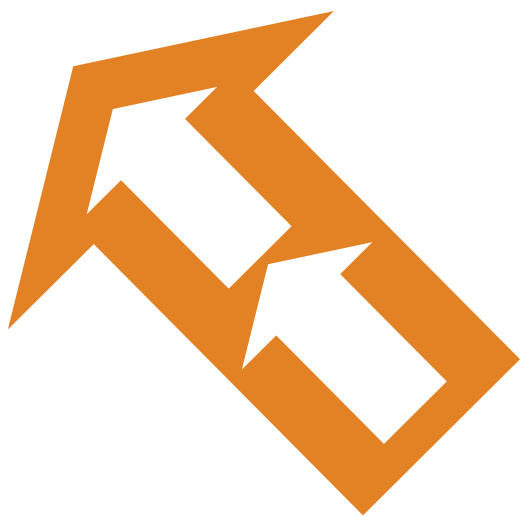
We are committed to making sure this happens. In particular, we're working with others to make sure that this framework links to the other tools that are available to help people plan and assess the effect of their work.

## Links with Learning Evaluation and Planning (LEAP)

At the heart of LEAP is a process for planning, the first stage of which involves identifying what we want to change (desired **outcomes**) and how we will know that it has happened.

To help people to do this, LEAP offers a series of indicator development tables. These tables offer some suggestions of what outcomes might result from CLD work. Our framework aims to set out those outcomes in more detail. This would give someone who is using LEAP a quick and easy list of possible outcomes.

We are currently working with the Scottish Community Development Centre to develop an updated version of LEAP – taking into account the framework of outcomes and the revised *How Good is our Community Learning & Development?*. This is to make sure that it continues to be an important resource for planning that focuses on outcomes and the needs and aims of people who take part.



## Links with ‘How Good Is Our Community Learning & Development?’

*How Good Is Our Community Learning & Development?* provides a framework to help practitioners and managers assess the CLD they provide (we call this **self-evaluation**). The information gained from this self-evaluation can be used to improve services.

That means CLD providers need to know about the outcomes they are bringing about – because if they don’t, how can they know they’re successful?

Because of this, *How Good is our Community Learning & Development?* says that an important way to know if you are delivering a good-quality service is if you can show that you’re having an effect. This is highlighted in particular in quality indicator 2.1, which focuses on the ‘Impact of the learning experience on individual participants (young people and adults)’ and quality indicator 4.1, which focuses on the ‘Impact of capacity building on the local community’.

Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) have used a number of headings in quality indicators 2.1 and 4.1 to help people to think about the themes in which they should be looking for impact. HMIE have used the term ‘impact’ in the same sense as we have used **intermediate outcome** in this document.

In quality indicator 2.1, ‘Impact of the learning experience on individual participants (young people and adults)’, the headings used which relate to this framework are:

- Successful learners
- Confident individuals
- Responsible citizens
- Effective contributors

In quality indicator 4.1, ‘Impact of capacity building on the local community’, the headings used which relate to this framework are that community groups should have:

- ‘confident, skilled and active community members;
- active and influential roles in local and wider decision making;
- developed local services, where appropriate, in response to priority needs;
- effective planning, management and evaluation arrangements;
- ensured that they are inclusive and value social and cultural diversity;
- productive networks and relationships with other agencies and organisations’.

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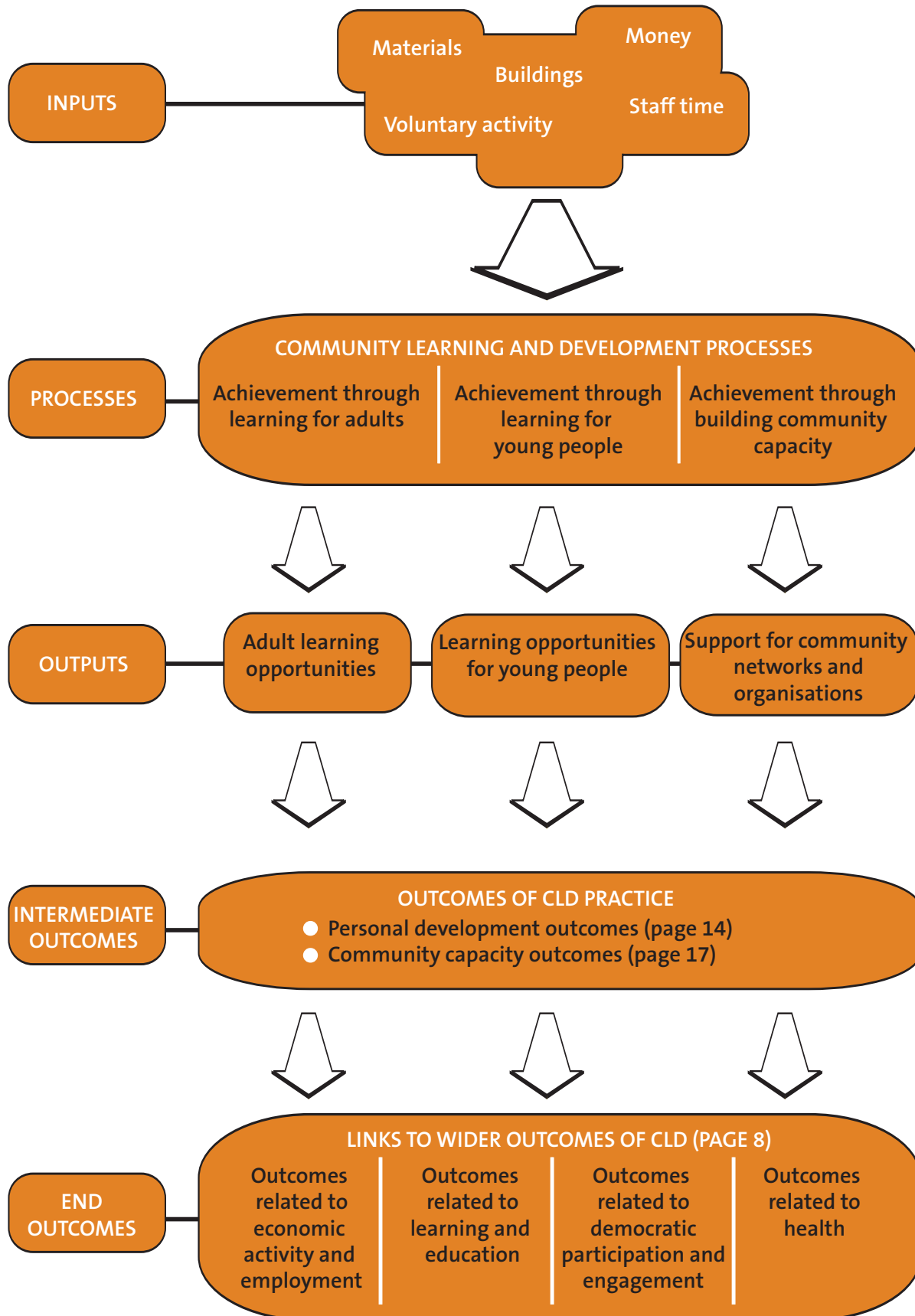
These headings have also been used for this framework to make it easier to make links with *How Good is our Community Learning & Development?*

Put simply, this means that organisations can use the framework to explore in more detail what kinds of **outcomes** they want to achieve, and work towards meeting the expectations set out in *How Good is our Community Learning & Development?*

We are currently working with HMIE to develop a resource that helps people to develop a system to look at the effects of their work. This will build on quality indicators 2.1 and 4.1 and link to the outcomes identified in this framework.



## Delivering outcomes in CLD



Plain English Campaign's Crystal Mark does not apply to this flow chart.

## Glossary

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### **Building community capacity**

Work that strengthens the ability of community organisations and groups (for example, by building their structures, systems, people and skills) so that they are better able to set out and achieve their aims. This can include supporting them to be better at being involved in consultation and planning, managing community projects and taking part in partnerships and community enterprises. – Adapted from Steve Skinner, *Building Community Strengths* (Community Development Foundation, 1997).

### **Community activist**

A member of a community who is voluntarily working with others from that community to achieve common aims.

### **Community learning and development**

Defined in 'Working and Learning Together' as 'learning and social development work with individuals and groups in their communities using a range of formal and informal methods. A common defining feature is that programmes and activities are developed in dialogue with communities and participants.' It is 'a way of working with communities to increase the skills, confidence, networks and resources they need to tackle problems and grasp opportunities.'

### **Community planning**

How service providers work in partnership with communities to improve how they plan and co-ordinate services. The overall aim is to make sure that services promote the wellbeing of the communities that they serve. Service providers include the public, private and voluntary sectors.

### **Core skills**

The Scottish Qualifications Authority defines these as the abilities people need if they are to play a full part in society – for example, in work, education or community life.

### **End outcomes**

Outcomes which take longer to develop and are less easy to put down to the particular activities of any one organisation (that is, we can only say that they have contributed to a particular outcome). End outcomes will have a wider effect on the quality of life of an individual, group or community.

### **Inputs**

The resources used to plan or bring about a programme, policy or project. They include, for example, staff time, budgets, equipment, buildings and policies.

### **Intermediate outcomes**

Outcomes which can be more obviously linked to the activities (that is, it's easier to say that they have caused a particular outcome). These outcomes might generally be seen

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as part of achieving another aim over the long-term. Some people might also call these ‘process outcomes’.

**Outcomes**

The changes or results that come about through an organisation’s activities. Outcomes are normally what an organisation is trying to achieve but some outcomes are not planned.

**Outputs**

The specific products of a programme or project. These will be quantifiable (easily counted) things such as the number of people taking part or number of training programmes delivered.

**Practitioners**

People who work (or practise) in a particular field – in this case, community learning and development.

**Processes**

The ways or methods by which the inputs are used to achieve the planned outputs (in other words, what we do with the resources). In CLD, this will mainly include CLD activities such as youth work, adult learning programmes and building community capacity.

**Quality of life**

A broad term used to describe the overall wellbeing of an individual, group or community. It includes aspects such as quality of health, housing, educational achievements, employment and the environment.

**Regeneration outcome agreements**

Regeneration outcome agreements were approved by Scottish Ministers and set out how Scotland’s 32 Community Planning Partnerships intend to use the Scottish Executive’s £318 million three-year community regeneration fund.

**Self-evaluation**

A critical assessment of the quality and standards of a service by those who deliver it, which helps identify strengths and areas for improvement. In CLD this will always need evidence from those who take part in, or benefit from, services.

**Social economy**

Social economy organisations are set up to provide social, community or environmental benefits. They make some of their income through trading activities. Any funds left over are mainly reinvested to meet their social or environmental aims.

## Acknowledgments

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We would like to thank the following people who contributed to the workgroups which developed the framework.

### **Achievement through learning for adults**

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LGBT Youth Scotland youth council  
The Corner, Dundee  
Community council and regeneration partnership members from the Stirling Council area  
Buchan Development Partnership  
REACH community health project, Glasgow

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**Written responses from organisations**

Aberdeenshire Community Learning Partnership  
Angus Council  
City of Edinburgh Council  
Dundee City Council  
East Ayrshire Council  
East Renfrewshire Council  
Evaluation Support Scotland  
EverybodyOnline  
Glasgow Community Learning Partnership  
LEAD Scotland  
Learning Link Scotland  
South Ayrshire Council  
YMCA Scotland  
Youth Scotland

**Written responses from individuals**

Angus Whyte  
Amanda Clark  
Steven Dowling  
One anonymous response



