

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALISATION CONCEPT DOCUMENT

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Community Development Professionalisation Concept Paper is to convey information about the Community Development Professionalisation process.

GOALS

The South African government remains firm on its primary objective of improving the quality of life for people of South Africa and is on course to building a caring society. This policy trajectory highlight the centrality of community development as a discipline, to locate itself as a central hub for community engaging with the communities towards building and strengthening of their livelihood capabilities and strategies in order to counter poverty and vulnerabilities through social facilitation and mobilisation. Most certainly, this approach towards development would require a skilled and capable workforce.

The South African government through the department of Social Development has initiated the Community Development Professionalisation process which is aiming at the creation **of a community development system that consists of knowledgeable and well-trained community development practitioners.**

2. Historical Background

2.1. Skills Audit

In 2008, the Department of Social Development identified a need to conduct the Community Development Skills Audit to produce a comprehensive “state of skills” report in the community development practice. The purpose of the Skills Audit was to assess the existing capacity, qualification, skills and competencies of Community Development Practitioners (CDPs) and managers.

The October 2009 workshop provided an opportunity for the department to consult, seek guidance and advice from key role players such as the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA), Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETA) and other Departments on the processes towards the drafting of the skills development plan for CDPs. One of the key issues of the draft skills plan was to develop Community Development Qualifications.

2.2. Community Development QualificationsThe Department of Social Development and SAQA entered into a contract through which three qualifications FETC Community Development NQF level 4, National Certificate: Community Development NQF Level 5 Bachelor of Community Development NQF level 8 were generated and registered. (Annexure A1, A2 and A3).

2.2.1. STAKEHOLDERS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT QUALIFICATIONS CONSULTATION WORKSHOP

On 20-21 July 2011 the Department of Social Development hosted a Stakeholders Community Development Qualifications meeting to engage stakeholders on the implementation of the three Community Development Qualifications. The purpose of the above mentioned meeting was to engage stakeholders from community development organisations so as to initiate the implementation of the developed community development qualifications. The overall aim of the meeting was to popularize and promote community development qualifications so as to ensure that Institutions of Higher Learning initiate the process of placing the standardised Community Development Qualifications in their Institutions' Programme Qualifications Mix and start offering these qualifications by 2014.

An outcome of the July 2011 workshop was a recommendation of the establishment of a Community Development Professionalisation Steering Committee which has the responsibility of overseeing that all the proposed actions are addressed. See the attached Action Plan (Annexure B). The key

members and organisations to be represented in the Steering Committee were identified and include the following: representatives of the DSD, ETDPSETA, HWSETA, South African Higher Education Community Engagement Forum (SAHECEF) and four (4) representatives from the SAQA Task Team.

3. INAUGURAL SUMMIT FOR THE PROFESSIONALISATION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Department of Social Development held an Inaugural Summit for the Professionalisation of Community Development in October 2011. The purpose of the *Inaugural Summit for the Professionalisation of Community Development* was to create awareness within the community development sector about the process towards professionalisation of Community Development which has resulted in the existence of standardised Community Development Qualifications and also to create a platform to consult stakeholders within the community development sector in order to map a process towards the professionalisation of the practice of community development.

The summit also gave a platform to get buy-in from the sector to kick start the process of the establishment of a Community Development Association which will serve as a foundation and also carry the responsibility for establishment of Community Development Professional Body.

The summit covered three thematic areas which were the practice of community development in South Africa, the professionalization process, and lessons learnt from peer professional bodies. During the Summit, expert speakers and practitioners from South Africa and internationally concurred that professionalisation of community development is fundamental towards achieving standardisation of the practice to the benefit of the practitioners in terms of been afforded an international

and national status as well as for the development of communities. Words of encouragement and inputs from peer professional bodies suggested that the process of professionalisation should begin with the establishment of an association for community development, followed by the establishment of a professional body and the establishment of an independent statutory council for community development.

The Department of Social Development which has been at the centre for the professionalization of community development as mandated by stakeholders in initial meetings and consultations that have taken place prior to the summit expressed support of the summit and the establishment of an Association for Community Development as a major milestone for the sector and as a clear recognition of the significance of community development in society. The aforementioned support came out clearly from statements made by political heads including the Hon. Minister and the Hon. Deputy Minister of the National Department of Social Development, and the MEC for the Eastern Cape Department of Social Development and Special Programmes.

INAUGURAL SUMMIT FOR THE PROFESSIONALISATION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RESOLUTIONS

1. Inaugural Summit Outcomes:

- There was a clear mandate from the delegates of the need to form an association for community development, followed by the establishment of a unified professional body and finally the formation of an independent statutory council for community development.
- The Department of Social Development expressed support of the summit as a response to the recognition of the significance of community development. In response to the initiatives of practitioners and stakeholders, the Hon. Deputy

Minister of Social Development formally pronounced the launch of the association for community development.

- The delegates acknowledged the collaborative nature of this summit and committed to fully participating in the process of professionalising the practice of community development.

This has brought about a need to ensure that the profession is adequately managed and regulated. Hence the Community Development Professionalisation Steering Committee has proposed hosting of national workshop and provincial briefing sessions. The purpose of these sessions is to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are adequately informed and mobilized around planned objectives towards the professionalisation process. It is against this background that the department has planned Community Development Professionalisation national and provincial Road Shows.

THE ENVISAGED PROCESS TOWARDS PROFESSIONALIZATION ARE ILLUSTRATED AS FOLLOWS



THE NEED AND PURPOSE FOR THE ROAD SHOWS

The purpose of the Community Development Professionalisation Road Shows is to:

- Create awareness and solicit stakeholder buy-in within the community development sector about of the new Community Development Qualification Frameworks at Levels 4, 5 & 8

- Provide a platform to engage about Community Development Professionalization process (past, present & future) including establishment of an Association for Community Development.
- Engage critical stakeholders on the upcoming Community Development Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Pilot Project.