Strategies to Establish SPUs within Community-based Organisations

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Community based organisations play a pivotal role in shaping policies and strategies that contribute to equity and equality for communities and groups across NZ.

A good community strategy is one that relies on both community knowledge and research based knowledge (Steward & Conway, 2000).

Unfortunately, community organisations are rarely consulted during the policy making process.
Community Waitakere Initiatives

- Community Waitakere wishes to establish a Social Policy Unit (SPU) to provide some capacity to speak to the needs of the community.

- This study aims to explore the strategies to establish the SPU at Community Waitakere in particular and for community based organisations in general.
Methods

CBPR

Case Studies

Focus Group
Case studies

- SPU’s structure and activities
- Funding and sustaining strategies
- Impacts so far
Focus Group

- 11 ppl who are social practitioners and community workers in Auckland
- Potential benefits of having the SPU; key activities
- Structure and organisation of the SPU
- Funding and strategies for sustainability
CBPR

- Topic was initiated by Community Waitakere
- Researcher collaborated with CW manager in designing the study and developing research questions
- CW manager conducted interviews in case studies
- Co-facilitated the focus group discussion
RESULTS
Significance of the SPU

- Provide solid research-based evidence for their policy recommendations that is independent of political viewpoint
- A place to hold local and grassroots knowledge
- Help translate policies and inform the community
**Advocacy**
- Local and regional policies
- Submission
- Network

**Communication**
- Policy translation and analysis
- Analyze the implications of national policies at community level

**Research**
- Small scaled research focusing on local perspective
Structure

Steering Committee

- Housing
- DV
- Health
- Research
- Employment
- Advocacy
- Etc.
Funding

- Diversify funding source: donation, foundation, government funding*
- Contribution from organizations in the reference group
Discussion

• Collaboration structure (like coalition) is an effective way for non-profits to organize advocacy activities (Bass et al., 2007; Elliott & Haigh, 2012; Fyall & McGuire, 2015)

• Building relationship and connection with policy makers are the most important thing to facilitate change from within (Fyall & McGuire, 2015; Schmid et al., 2018)

• A combination of both insider and outsider strategies was also emphasised as the most effective way to do advocacy (Fyall & McGuire, 2015; Schmid et al., 2008)

• Collaborate to do research to save cost


THANK YOU!