

## Empowering

### Community empowerment

The power of local residents within your community should not be overlooked. There are many ways in which local people can have a greater effect on the problem or need than you realise. There can be immense power when a group of people with similar interests come together to work towards the same goal.

Before planning an activity think about:

- Who you want to be involved and who are the beneficiaries.
- Could your community control a budget and whether to devolve financial decision-making.
- What the possible (legal) consequences are of decisions made/monies spent.
- Can your local District Councillor or Parish Councillor help you.

You may want to:

- Look at good practice models and learn from the experiences of others.
- Manage people's expectations by making clear the parameters of their decision-making role.
- Follow up on community activity - what were the benefits of such an approach, what are the expected outcomes and is it sustainable?

### Projects and capacity building

Community projects strengthen communities by building relationships within a neighbourhood as well as helping to build confidence, develop skills and empower residents.

To do this you need to think about:

- The type of project you want to do and why.
- What you want to achieve, is this behavioural change or self-help?
- Who your project will be aimed at and how you will make contact with them?
- Whether you will need facilitators for training or capacity building.
- What budget you will need.

Before undertaking this work remember to:

- Make sure that your project is focused and responsive to a particular need.
- Be clear about the benefits to people of getting involved and manage expectations.
- Be clear at the start of the project if it will be short-term or long-term and the costs involved.
- Set up clear lines of communication but be flexible and listen to everyone involved.