



Gyda'n Gilydd dros Newid – Together for Change

Together for Change

Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) and R&D Online Meeting

7th September 2021

This document is a summary of the discussions held in the TfC R&D Forum meeting in April 2021. The event was attended by 35 people from public and third sector organisations, spanning research, policy and practice. The discussion session focussed on ABCD and addressed the following issues:

- *What constitutes evidence in ABCD?*
- *What are the gaps in our knowledge in ABCD?*
- *How can we work together to fill those gaps?*

For the full event report please see [Does it Count event report](#)

General points

1. ABCD is poorly understood and therefore there is no consensus across the sectors in what constitutes evidence and what a realistic and proportional approach is to generating it.
2. ABCD is dynamic, and concerns experiences and relationships which are difficult to quantify.
3. Given the nature of ABCD and differences between communities, to best understand context and change, it is essential to supplement quantitative with qualitative data.
4. Case studies are a useful tool for sharing practice and reflecting.
5. Quantitative data can be difficult to collect by small rural organisations.
6. Funders should accept flexible evaluation protocols to better fit the dynamic and localised nature of ABCD.
7. Evaluation should be everyone's business and is crucial for funding applications and the sustainability of projects.

8. There is often too much emphasis on summative evaluation.
9. Research and evaluation should be planned for and adequate time allocated for coproduction.

Gaps in Knowledge

1. Theoretical frameworks for ABCD; the meaning of wellbeing; how communities perceive their wellbeing and how it can be improved.
2. Changes due to COVID and their impact on individuals, groups and communities.
3. Unmet needs and how they can be addressed.
4. How to reach people and engage with those that want to participate.
5. Effective ways of giving people a voice, especially those living in deprived communities. Stories are an example.
6. What communities want, which is often not the same as what organisations think they want.
7. Using data, both qualitative and quantitative, effectively.
8. Mapping activity for strategies. A role for Health Boards ?
9. A wellbeing index.
10. Innovative tools for quick feedback on what communities are thinking and feeling.

How we can work together

1. Create stronger inclusive partnerships and collaborative working.
2. Improve communication and share more which needs a less competitive environment for funding.
3. Build more capacity and skills, including in communities.
4. Help communities by demystifying research and evaluation.
5. Invest resources regionally and nationally in the evaluation of projects.
6. Develop a model for evaluation that can be locally applied to demonstrate effectiveness.
7. Create a repository of studies that can be accessed by all.