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ABSTRACT

Communities in Crisis is a British training program for unemployed adults that was developed in response to the needs of community organizations in areas where community programs have few resources. Its underlying philosophy focuses on motivating and encouraging long-term unemployed people to take initiatives and reflect on their progress. The first fully funded program was structured to include 1- or 2-day workshops and residential events. In the second year of funding, dramatic changes in the structure of the program to ensure funding included increasing participant numbers and altering program content. Further structural changes have since occurred. Apart from immediate benefits to individuals and their communities such as improved efficiency through skills development, additional and important wider economic and employment developments occurred. In regard to differences of approach between men and women, no broad generalizations can be made. Some differences did emerge, however; for example, the majority of women chose projects that produced a response to an identified area of unmet need, while the majority of men concentrated on strengthening existing groups and securing further resources. The final methodology adopted by the program included day workshops, residencies, and regular consultation meetings with the development worker. Project work on community issues continued to be the focus of activity for participants. (A list of seven references and a projects catalog are appended.) (YLB)

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PEOPLE, POWER, AND PARTICIPATION.

Julie Batten.

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THE COMMUNITIES IN CRISIS PROGRAMME, 1986-9: AN EVALUATIVE REPORT.

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Finally to the MSC who requested and financed the report. I hope that the contents will be of assistance to the planning of future national adult training and education programmes.

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1. BLACKBURN
   Ewood Neighbourhood Group

2. BOLTON
   Horwich Unemployed Group

3. WARRINGTON
   Birchwood Community Association

4. SALFORD
   a. Central Redevelopment Area Community Association (C.R.A.C.A.)
   b. S.U.D.S. Women's Co-operative Launderette
   c. Women's Creche Co-operative
   e. Higher Broughton Advice Centre

5. TAMESIDE
   a. Hattersley Memory Lane Group
   b. Hattersley Waterside Court Tenant's & Resident's Assocation
   c. Ashton-Under-Lyne Women's Health Group

6. ROCHDALE
   a. Rochdale Tenant's & Resident's Federation Resource Centre
   b. Langley Tenant's & Resident's Assocation
   c. Langley Tower Block Tenant's & Resident's Assocation
   d. Langley Well Women's Centre

7. BURY
   a. Dumers Lane Tenant's & Resident's Assocation
   b. Springs Estate Women's Centre
   c. Chesham Fold Tenant's & Resident's Assocation

WHERE THE GROUPS ARE LOCATED

For details of Projects completed by Groups in these a
see APPENDIX

INTRODUCTION

In May 1985 a circular issued by Manpower Services Commission invited organisations with relevant expertise to sponsor 'Projects with planned activities involving a substantial commitment of time and effort from the unemployed volunteers'.[1] At this stage Voluntary Projects Programme still placed its' emphasis on providing training within the voluntary sector, which offered an attractive and challenging possibility for a funded Communities in Crisis programme. However, it emerged that policy changes within MSC were causing VPP to shift away from this 'softer' approach of motivating unemployed volunteers by encouraging them to participate in activities within their sphere of interest of collective action towards a harder line policy which was to emphasise the importance of individual development and as a route into employment. In the process of developing and pursuing thei proposal for funding, the sponsors considered that in spite of the changes in policy, there was still enough scope within VPP, and that the margin was still broad enough to meet the stated aims of Communities in Crisis; thus allowing the work which had begun with the pilot programme in 1983/84 to continue, but with the additional benefit of a full time paid worker.

By responding to the 1985 VPP circular and proposal to develop a national programme of activity involving a 'substantial commitment of time and effort from unemployed volunteers',[2] the

William Temple Foundation eventually secured money which allowed a Communities in Crisis programme to start in July 1986. Initially the contract agreed was for one year's operation, with the possibility of funding for a further two years, if the project's operation proved to be satisfactory.

The budget of £29,000 allowed the employment of one full-time development worker, one part-time administrator and the purchase of office equipment. It also included a sum of money to cover the expenses of unwaged participants during their involvement in a programme of educational activity.

Communities in Crisis set out to involve unpaid members of community organisations, in a programme of transferrable skills training which would benefit the community and widen their choices and opportunities of 'continuing education, vocational training, enterprise, or employment opportunities'.[3] This evaluative report provides comprehensive and detailed information about the Communities in Crisis programme as it has developed, progressed and operated around Greater Manchester between July 1986 and July 1988.

The report describes the characteristic background of the programme. It also assesses the benefits of the programme to the participants and their 'parent' group and considers positive developments which were achieved within the two years.

By providing the detailed information of the various elements which together made up the Communities in Crisis programme, it is hoped that a reader will gain a clearer and deeper understanding of the benefits that this model of adult learning can offer. By participating, members of groups are able to gain a greater insight into the development of community projects. The levels of individual achievement are high and participants are able to reassess their own worth and to begin to have their confidence and self esteem restored.

By the end of the first six months the programme sponsors were acutely aware of changing policies and priorities within the funding body.

These constant shifts in emphasis inevitably produced some difficulties for the organisation of the programme and modifications were made. However, in general Communities in Crisis succeeded in maintaining its stated aims:-

> *"...to organise a training programme for the unemployed people involved in community organisation. The training to be related to their needs as volunteers and the aims of their organisations".[4]*

At the same time the programme was able to meet the needs of the funders.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Communities in Crisis.

Communities in Crisis is a training programme for unemployed adults. The programme has been developed in response to the needs of community organisations, in areas where community provision is poorly resourced.

The groups who participate in Communities in Crisis are often most active in areas where high unemployment maintains a tight grip; where problems of poverty are severe and where local authority housing is badly managed and poorly maintained.

The title 'Communities in Crisis' reflects the plight of many local community, neighbourhood and self-help groups in the late 1980s, who are striving to maintain or improve the level of service in their community.

This valuable and traditional role of community organisation has now become more complex and difficult as public services and resources have become more and more scarce.

The key workers in these groups have a great deal of experience, commitment and skill but few have had opportunities of training which would equip them to deal more effectively with the growing problems. The Communities in Crisis programme has recognised this

need and has aimed to provide a training programme relevant to the needs of key workers in community groups.

The Pilot Programme.

The Communities in Crisis programme was piloted by the William Temple Foundation and Ruskin College, Oxford in 1983/84. The William Temple Foundation has a history of activity and involvement in adult education and issues of employment and poverty.

> "William Temple Foundation has four main areas of activity and training: urban community work and training, unemployment and the future of work, training for urban and industrial mission, and resourcing the churches in response to unemployment and poverty".[1]

Ruskin College is a residential college for working class students, and it

> "...has a well established reputation for education and applied research...".[2]

Following the pilot programme the two organisations published the first Communities in Crisis Report in 1985. The Report clearly set out the aims of Communities in Crisis:

> "The aim was to develop a response to the needs of and pressure on the potential participants in the programme so that they would have more resources to cope with the growing crisis in inner city and council estate areas".[3]

Funding for the pilot programme did not allow for the involvement

of a full-time paid worker with administrative back-up and relied on the staff of the William Temple Foundation and Ruskin College providing support in addition to their 'normal' work activities.

The Communities in Crisis Report (1985) commented on the shortcomings of running the pilot programme in such an ad-hoc way.

Although the scheme of the programme brought participants and tutors together at two residentials, there were difficulties of maintaining contact for tutor and participants in between the residentials.

This often led to a situation where participants felt isolated and unsupported and as a result, a number 'dropped out' of the programme. These problems disappeared once a source of funding became available to pay a full-time worker.

In spite of the difficulties encountered, participants and tutors alike, agreed that the formula for the programme had succeeded and achieved its aims.

The first Communities in Crisis Report recorded a:

> "...generally positive reaction to the first pilot programme..."[4]

and an agreement in principal, that if and when funding became available, there would be

> "...a stage two of the Communities in Crisis programme".[5]

Accordingly the William Temple Foundation began to develop and submit applications to funding bodies which would provide funding for wages for one full-time development worker, a part-time administrator, and resources for twenty participants in a Communities in Crisis programme which would operate in Greater Manchester.

REFERENCES

1. Ruskin College/William Temple Foundation Joint Funding Proposal, 1982, p3.
2. Communities in Crisis: A resource programme for local organisations and leaders. Ruskin College Oxford & William Temple Foundation, Manchester Business School, 1985, p11.
3. ibid, p11.
4. ibid. p64.
5. ibid, p65.

RELATIONSHIP OF COMMUNITIES IN CRISIS WITH MANPOWER SERVICES COMMISSION AND STATISTICAL REPORTS

The William Temple Foundation's successful application to the MSC provided a welcome opportunity to operate a programme with a full-time worker. It also provided an opportunity to continue and extend the work that had begun in 1983/1984.

The main difficulties which were encountered during the three years 1986-1989 reflected the constantly changing policy of MSC and the pressure to involve a greater number of participants.

The underlying philosophy of Communities in Crisis focusses on motivating and encouraging long-term unemployed people to take initiatives and reflect on their progress. During their participation in the programme the 'core' group members achieved remarkable changes for themselves and their communities. Unfortunately the monthly and quarterly statistical analysis requested by MSC did not allow for an in-depth evaluation of individual achievement or progress. The project work initiated by participants often produced local employment making a substantial contribution to local economies. These details are not reflected in the statistics which have been submitted to VPP. However they are illustrated more fully in the Outcomes section of the report.

The other major difficulties encountered were dealing with the

insensitivity of monitoring visits and the rigid and negative attitude of MSC to childcare provision. This oversight primarily affects women who want to take opportunities of training programmes Again this conflicted with Communities in Crisis philosophy and it was necessary to find alternative sources of funding for child care provision.

In spite of the modifications and the emphasis on statistics, Communities in Crisis maintained a reasonable balance between the needs of MSC (VPP) and the needs of the programme although some quality was lost in the second year of the programme's operation. This was mainly because participants were pressured constantly to meet deadlines. Future programmes will return to the Communities in Crisis philosophy which focusses on the needs of the participants as opposed to the needs of the funding body.

Limitations of Statistical Analysis.

Unfortunately VPP has measured the success and efficiency of the Communities in Crisis programme by the collection of monthly and quarterly statistics which are called 'positive progressions'. This method of collecting data has great limitations and relies purely on figures being placed in boxes.

The project based learning programme they have shared has made available to them wider choices relating to employment opportunities, further training and access to educational

courses. Programme record. and continual contact with participants during the programme's operation suggest that many of them have since moved in and out of work or study. For the majority of the group members, the Communities in Crisis programme is the first training programme which they have found stimulating and provided them with a firm foundation of skills training. Unfortunately as has already been stated, the statistical returns did not allow a reflection of the long-term changes which individuals experienced.

Whilst the aims of the Communities in Crisis programme have been to provide relevant skills training for key members of community organisations, the primary aim of VPP has been to move individuals into employment of any kind and as quickly as possible and to record 'positive progressions'. This philosophy has taken little account of the different and varied needs of individuals, their personal and family circumstances or the level of understanding of the individuals who have taken part in the programme either as 'core' participants or day attenders at local meetings. Communities in Crisis can provide many examples of individual success and achievement of participants:

> "I've signed up for a basic literacy class. Communities in Crisis gave me the confidence to admit I had a problem". (Participant evaluation).[1]

> "I had to chair the meeting - I couldn't have done it a year ago". (Participant evaluation).[2]

"We had to go to the Town Hall and talk about our project to a group of councillors". (Participant evaluation).[3]

The Monitoring Visits and Reports.

Further difficulties of the operation became obvious at the monitoring meetings. At times it appeared that the monitoring officers who were responsible for the project had very little understanding of the Communities in Crisis programme. Their main task was to ensure the accounts were in order, to question the statistics and to check the role and activities of the development worker. Part of the problem of lack of understanding and sensitivity to the activities of Communities in Crisis may relate to the lack of continuity of monitoring officers.

It appears that MSC personnel move posts regularly but within relatively short periods of time. These moves are apparently essential to personal career development and changing structures within the organisation. Monitoring officers have frequently asked to visit the project at short notice and there appears to be an underlying assumption that the sponsor, development worker and other support staff have no particular day-to-day commitments.

In response to a number of requests, monitoring officers were invited to attend workshops and in particular, the Project Presentation Day which would have provided the best evidence of

the successful operation of the programme. No officers ever attended. On one occasion a special meeting was convened to enable an MSC representative to meet with a small group of the participants to have first hand information about their progress and views about the programme. It was a successful and informative meeting and participants provided a positive account of their activities.

For MSC, evidence of the programme's success is provided by the statistical evidence and the positive progressions of participants. For Communities in Crisis it is reflected by the achievements which participants gained both for themselves and their communities through their project work.

Statistical Notes.

During the two years of the programme's operation, July 1986-July 1988, there were three Communities in Crisis programmes. The table shows that the total number of people who participated in the programme numbered 316.

Out of these 102, or 32% went into employment, further training or education, or into government training schemes. These are identified as 'positive progressions'.

It appears from the evaluation process which operated within the programme, that many participants who positively progressed did so

because Communities in Crisis had produced the confidence which had motivated them to reach those decisions.

> "Communities in Crisis has allowed me to decide the direction my future will take by providing advice on courses and education in general". (Communities in Crisis participant, 1986/1987).[4]

> "These activities led to improved self confidence which encouraged me to re-assess my future". (Communities in Crisis participant, 1987/88).[5]

Positive Progressions, July 1986-July 1988

	1986/7 Programme 1.	1987/8 Anticipated Progressions Programme 2/3.	Actual Progressions Programme 2/3.
Employment.	10	30	25
Further Training.	3	23	26
MSC Schemes.	12	25	26
	25	25	77

The figures in the table reflect only the progressions of participants involved in the programme up to July 1988. It can be assumed that others will have progressed into the three categories, since that time.

Total Number of Participants in Programme

Total No. of participants. (day attenders & 'core participants'.	316

Core Group

No.of 'core' participants.	36
No.of women participants.	25
No.of men participants.	11

Definitions

a) *'Core' participants were members of the three main programme groups who took part in all the programme events and completed a project.*

b) *'Day attenders' were those who took part in occasional workshops outside of the 'core' group programme activities.*

REFERENCES.

1-5. Quotes taken from participant evaluation questionnaire.

ROLE OF DEVELOPMENT WORKER.

The role of Development Worker in a programme of adult learning like Communities in Crisis is wide-ranging and demanding, and activities are not confined to 'normal' working hours. The role is primarily one of providing support, encouragement, resources and stimulation to members of the participant group. Support and encouragement of participants are essential ingredients at every stage of the programme, but particularly so at the beginning of the recruitment process, when the role at that time is to draw together a group of participants who will develop bonds with each other. At this stage, potential participants need to be persuaded and convinced that they are capable, have a great deal of valuable experience to share, and that they will be doing something worthwhile for their community. They also need to know that they will receive as much support as they feel necessary throughout their participation in the programme and possibly beyond.

The activities of the Development Worker involve two levels and activity. One within the administration of the project which is office-based and one in an outreach situation, working with participants and their 'parent' groups in their localities.

Office-Based Work and Activities.

In the early weeks of the programme my activities focussed on

setting up the administration which was organised around the emerging structure of the programme's activities. This included building records, publicising the Communities in Crisis programme, identifying venues for meetings, workshops and residentials and purchasing office equipment and materials.

The record building related to the initial activity, making contact with community workers and organisations, and identifying potential participant groups. During this early period a publicity handout was developed which briefly outlined the Communities in Crisis programme. It was distributed widely through the regular mailing lists of larger voluntary organisations, for example Greater Manchester Council for Voluntary Service (GMCVS), Greater Manchester Community Work Training Group (GMCWTG), Salford Council for Voluntary Service (Salford CVS). It was also circulated to other local organisations, for example, Salford Women's Centre, and Eccles Trade Union Centre for the Unemployed.

Outreach and Promoting Communities in Crisis.

Having established an office base and built some contacts, the next stage of the process was to purchase a road map of Greater Manchester and begin to visit the centres of activity and to meet the community workers and groups, and promote Communities in Crisis.

Both these early activities presented some difficulties at the time. First, because I was not familiar with the geography of Greater Manchester and secondly, because the Communities in Crisis programme has a rather abstract concept and its process is difficult to explain to groups who were often sceptical about 'professionals' offering support. This scepticism reflects a common experience of many community organisations and the role which paid workers play in the group's development.

Frequently community workers dominate the decision-making processes, involve themselves in negotiations about community projects. Having secured the project, they then leave the area, often for career development. The groups they have worked with take responsibility for the project and face the likelihood of failing because they do not have the necessary skills training, essential information, or continuing support.

These difficulties were overcome once word of mouth reports about Communities in Crisis travelled through the community network. Participants themselves have also provided a positive source of information about Communities in Crisis. The completed project work has also created a useful tool for promoting the programme.

Extended Relationships With Groups.

Support for groups has continued outside of the workshops and consultation meetings. For example, some groups have asked for

support at open days or evening events to promote their activities which they have organised. On other occasions I have been asked to share the planning of events. At Langley I spent a warm Saturday afternoon in September pruning an overgrown hedge in readiness for the 'Open Day'. On another occasion I was asked to put up some shelves. The 'extra-[illegible]ral' activities are important to the continuing trust building process. Activities outside of normal work provides further opportunities to discuss and sow seeds about further training and educational courses.

I am committed to encouraging others and particularly women, to consider taking opportunities of educational courses which would lead them into areas of employment of interest to them. Many of the women who have participated in Communities in Crisis have been in paid employment at some time, but have usually worked in low paid work where tasks have been demoralising or demeaning, and where they have had little or no opportunity to develop their real skills and abilities.

Experience of working with three groups of participants since July 1986 has shown that many people are unaware of what is possible or available. They also lack the confidence to join courses of training and education. However with the right encouragement over a period of time they can often be persuaded or reassured that they are capable and competent to take part. Most of this discussion takes place outside normal working

ac ivity.

Building the Networks.

Groups are also encouraged to give support to each other and share skills and information. Spring's Women's Group in Bury have suffered from the lack of continuing support for a full-time paid worker. During the last six months they have been involved in several workshops. There have been evening sessions to fit with working patterns of group members. During this time members of other participant groups have been invited to share sessions, for example SUDS (Women's launderette co-operative), Salford Creche Project, and Langley Well Women Group have all participated in these meetings.

Arising from these activities Spring's Women took an initiative and set up a support group. It consists of 'professional' women and centre members from a variety of areas of community work, for example Community Health, Education, Social Work. They planned a week of activities in March 1989 to celebrate International Women's Week and were supported by the other groups who have participated in the Communities in Crisis programme since 1986. Networking and sharing group activities are an important element of Communities in Crisis participant development. Networking between groups allows exchange of ideas and stimulates thought and ideas and makes an important contribution to confidence building and project development.

Workshops and Residential Events.

The organisation and attention to details on this occasion has been an important pat of the role of the Development Worker. Attendance at workshops and residentials frequently involves participants in a great deal of negotiation and organisation. Again this particularly applied to women and especially if children were involved. For these reasons the dates and times of the events were available for participants well in advance of the Introductory Workshop. This early notice allowed them to make arrangements for childcare etc.

On arrival at the Workshops, participants were always welcomed with a hot drink. Equipment, materials, chairs, and the work room were always set up ready to use. These details, together with a prompt start and finish, convey a positive and business-like message to adults in a learning situation, for example that they are important and welcome.

Expenses for travelling and childcare were always paid (against an expenses sheet) on the day of attendance. Non-attendance at the workshops was a rare occurrence. The issue of childcare provision is essential if adults responsible for children are to be persuaded to join any courses which will enhance their prospects of employment. Any tutor working with adult learners must be free to discuss the needs of childcare with the

participating adults. Attention to these needs has also been an integral part of my role.

Developing Materials.

Developing materials and presenting information in an interesting and creative way has become an important part of the Development Worker's role in the Communities in Crisis programme. The Information Pack was developed in response to requests from participants for information from flip-chart notes used during sessions and with the help of funding from REPLAN.

The Newsletter is produced several times a year and is used to update and maintain contact with participants about programme developments and relevant activities, for example, conferences and other meetings. Other materials which have been produced are the Communities in Crisis leaflet, the participant's certificate, and other visual aids used for workshops and residentials. Past participants have also shared in producing the newsletter which has given them opportunities to practise and develop skills, for example, experience in photocopying, graphic design, cutting and pasting, layout etc.

References and Interviews - Job Vacancies.

During the current life of the programme, participants have increasingly felt able to telephone the Development Worker and ask for advice about impending interviews or applications for

employment and also references for would-be employers. This is not only a further outcome but is also a reflection of the changes which participants have experienced and the greater awareness they now have of the importance of planning and thinking through events in advance. These requests also demonstrate the increased confidence and experience which they have gained from their participation in the programme.

Information about job vacancies within the Voluntary Sector have also been circulated to participants on a regular basis.

As the Development Worker during this important period of the Communities in Crisis programme development, I believe that my own experiences poor school, past employment as an engineering draughtsperson, and subsequent redundancy through lack of qualifications; returning to study as a mature student; these together with my education through political activity, both as elected councillor and trade unionist, have all made a valuable contribution to the role which I have been able to play.

Apart from drawing together the group of participants who provide the main ingredient for the Communities in Crisis programme, and providing them with continual support, my role has been part of moulding and shaping a programme. This at times has been difficult and frustrating, at times as the organisation of the programme which is essentially 'participant-led' and aimed at

meeting the needs of its participant, has had to make compromises in order to meet the needs of its funders.

In the first year a major restructuring of the programme and a greater emphasis was placed on preparation for employment took place because MSC (VPP) changed their emphasis on funding policy. In order to maintain the level of support for participants and a continuing high standard and quality of programme support, project staff worked hours beyond their contracts. The changes also involved a greater input by resource staff from the William Temple Foundation, given at 'no cost' to Communities in Crisis. These difficulties reflect the complexities of financial support for projects such as Communities in Crisis and the need to involve funders who can give funding without control and interference.

The continuing contact with participants and their groups after they have completed a programme produced a valuable resource for the future and has drawn participants into the planning of the programme.

THE STRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE FIRST FULLY FUNDED COMMUNITIES IN CRISIS PROGRAMME 1988/1989

The organisation of the first pilot Communities in Crisis programme in 1983/84 was the joint responsibility of staff from the William Temple Foundation and the Applied Social Studies Course at Ruskin College. Planning for a Communities in Crisis programme had begun in 1981. At that stage there was no full-time worker and the pilot programme thus became additional work for the staff involved and was combined with the demands of day-to-day work and other responsibilities and commitments. The programme drew upon members of community groups from two main regional areas - Greater Manchester - the North West, and Oxford and Swindon - the South. The programme was structured to operate for a period of approximately eight to nine months. During that time it was planned that regional participants would come together at locally organised workshops. In addition, the two regional groups would also meet together at the two five day residential events.

The first fully funded programme started in July 1986 and the first organised event was planned to take place in October. The 1986/88 programme was structured similarly to the pilot programme to include one or two day workshops and residential events.

The main difference between the two programmes and the most

significant, was the maintenance of continuity and support which the full time worker was able to give to participants between the planned events.

Recruitment of Participants for the First Programme.

The programme start date in July 1986 was not the ideal time to begin recruiting a group of participants for the Programme, as July generally signifies the beginning of the summer and school holiday activities which naturally applies to many of the key members of community organisations. Many potential participants interviewed were involved in setting up and running summer play schemes, organising group holidays, and concerned with the needs to care for their own children.

July is also the time of the year when the majority of community organisations wind down their formal activities and break for the summer, perhaps not meeting again until September.

During the first four to six weeks of my activity, I spent time developing a list of possible contacts and organisations around Greater Manchester and familiarising myself with the geography of the area.

Apart from the difficulties of timing the programme start, I encountered other difficulties during the early weeks of recruitment:

- working in unfamiliar surroundings;
- limited time available to develop the contact list;
- negative responses of community organisations to 'professionals';
- blocking of access to groups by 'professional' community workers.

These points about recruitment are expanded in the Methodology section.

Initial Contacts.

At the start of the recruiting process many of the initial contacts were gathered from existing mailing lists of other groups based in the Joint Action office, Salford, for example Greater Manchester Community Work Training Group and Salford Employment Conference. I also compiled my own miscellaneous list of local organisation and leading names. Among the names were one or two participants from the pilot programme who were based in Salford Women's Centre.

In addition an introductory information sheet was prepared and circulated through existing community network system, for example Greater Manchester Community Work Training Group, Salford Employment Conference, Salford Council for Voluntary Service and Greater Manchester Council for Voluntary Service.

Developing a Recruitment Strategy.

The strategy which was developed was to make initial contact by telephone with the names on the lists, to arrange a meeting,

and to explain the aims of the programme. I have frequently likened this process to 'cold selling', for example Encyclopaedias or Home Improvement Services process on the doorstep, or over the telephone, which many companies adopt. The process of recruitment produced varied responses reflecting tensions in different power bases. This point is discussed more fully in the section about recruitment.

Towards the First Day Conference - 4 October 1986.

From late July to late September I continued to build a group of potential participants who would be prepared to come to the Introductory Day Conference. The initial meetings were followed by a letter of thanks which reinforced and re-emphasised the aims of the Communities in Crisis programme. The numbers I recruited during that period were intentionally high to allow for an inevitable 'drop out'. Participant drop out can occur at any time during the life of the programme and for a number of reasons. The most common reasons being illness, pregnancy, lack of confidence to continue, family pressures (particularly for women), and opportunity of employment.

Pre-Introductory Day Information.

Two weeks before the Day Conference, a package of information was posted to approximately 40 potential participants who agreed to come to the Day Conference. It included:

- a map;
- a programme and timetable;
- details about travelling expenses and childcare;
- a reply slip was also enclosed;
- a list of typical questions about Communities in Crisis which they might like to raise.

During the period of recruitment activity I would estimate that in order to get a commitment from 40 people to attend the Conference, I had probably spoken to more than twice that number.

Registration for the Introductory Workshop - October 1986.

For many of the group representatives who attended the Conference it was the first time they had ever attended such an event and their high levels of anxiety and nervousness were apparent. The cigarette smoking was almost non-stop. This applied particularly to the women who freely admitted they were nervous because they were not sure what to expect.

As the potential participants registered each was handed a file which contained:

- details of the day's activities, and names of the participants in each workshop;
- A4 note paper;
- a pen;
- details of forthcoming events which they would be expected to attend, ie. dates of the residentials;
- a list of names, addresses, 'parent' organisations of all those in attendance;
- an expenses claim sheet.

Following the Welcome and Introductory Exercise, the participants moved into their workshops which gave them an opportunity to talk

about their involvement in the community activities which particularly interested them.

Payment of Expenses to Participants.

The participants in the programme do so at 'no-cost'. This paragraph describes the administration of the payment. The background to the decision of 'no-cost' participation is dealt with in greater detail in the section of the report which deals with the Methodology.

Participants were given a sheet to complete. I had discussed these details with individuals during the early meetings prior to the Day Conference. Expenses were made available for travel, childcare, telephone calls and postage incurred in connection with Communities in Crisis activities. They were paid against receipts. In general the system, once it had been explained, worked well. If participants needed to spend money on items other than those on the expense sheet they negotiated with me. Occasionally there was a request for a specific book or some photocopying paper. Requests for clearance of film processing or purchase was also occasionally received. All participants were advised to purchase a ring binder file to keep their project papers together.

In general expenses were paid in cash on the day of the event. In general these were for childcare at £10 per day and expenses for

travel. Expenses between meetings had to be sanctioned and agreed, and paid when participants submitted . oices and receipts with the expense sheet claim.

Day Programme and Workshop Allocation.

As far as possible participants were allocated to workshops with others with similar interests. On the first Introductory Day there were five workshops with approximately eight participants in each one. The workshops covered issues which focussed on:

- women issues;
- housing/estate management;
- employment;
- environmental health;
- group organisation.

Resource staff with specific expertise or experience were delegated to facilitate the workshops.

Resources for First Day Conference.

The workshops were resourced by staff from Joint Action, the William Temple Foundation, Ruskin College, and members of community organisations who had participated in the pilot programme 1983/84. Throughout the programme the involvement of past participants has made an extremely valuable contribution to the input and activities of the programme.

The Welcome and Introduction was crucial. As the Development Worker I was extremely sensitive to the fact that I was the only person in attendance who had met all the 'potential'

participants. Therefore I felt it was essential to get everybody to share a common exercise and begin to feel part of a group.

The Introductory warm up game provided an opportunity for the participants to release their anxieties and it provided them with an opportunity to talk to people they did not know. The exercise was designed to be non-threatening and involved participants working in pairs, introducing themselves to each other and then introducing themselves to the whole group. Working in pairs was a significant feature of the exercise, as in a large group situation, care needs to be taken to avoid putting adults 'on the spot' and making them feel embarrassed.

Even though the exercise was handled in a sensitive way it was clear that many of the women still found the exercise particularly nerve-racking.

During the morning session the William Temple Foundation staff and past participants outlined the background history and aims of Communities in Crisis, and explained the organisation and structure of the programme. Participants were given an opportunity to discuss the session in small group exercises and raise questions in a plenary session.

After a short lunch break participants returned to the wo kshops and began to discuss the details of the project work and develop

the first stages of the project organisation. They also identified the first essential tasks which they might consider tackling before they attended the residential event planned for approximately one month later.

The last part of the afternoon was allocated to a collective discussion about arrangements for the residential, and answering any questions and providing information. During the discussion participants were encouraged to consider what information and subject matter they would like to have included in the programme for the residential event in November.

After the first Day Conference, the next time the 'core' group met together again was in November at the residential event at Rydal Hall in the Lake District. During the five days residential, the group 'gelled' and individual participants became obviously more confident.

The group shared exercises designed to develop individual skills, and individual participants spent time discussing and developing project work with the tutors. Following our return from Rydal Hall, my contact with the groups continued on a regular weekly or fortnightly basis. The next meeting scheduled for the whole group was to be in March 1987 when we would travel to Ruskin College in Oxford for the second residential event.

During the regular consultation meetings which took place following the autumn residential, participants wanted to know 'how other groups were getting on'.

In late December I decided that the span between the November and March meetings was too long for the group to be separated. Accordingly I organised the first supplementary day workshop for the first Saturday in February 1987. It was a fruitful occasion and had the effect of 'recharging' the participants batteries. The workshop allowed participants to discuss and share their progress and once more they were able to give each other support and encouragement.

The Day Workshop provided a valuable and positive addition to the programme, and its introduction has proved to be a valuable resource for the two enforced restructured short programmes in the second year of the programme.

Organising the First Residential.

The residential took place approximately one month after the first Day Conference. During the period between the two, I contacted all those who had attended to establish who would be attending the residential. Meanwhile community workers and others I had contacted in the weeks before the Day Conference were asking if places were still available on the programme. Of the 40 people who attended the Day Conference, 18 committed themselves

to attend the residential. The total number of participants who finally attended was 27. Resources staff numbered six. The number increased because some people had been unable to attend the Day Conference because of other commitments or because they had heard about it from local workers too late.

Choice of Residential Venues.

In another part of the report I have described the difficulties of finding a venue for the first residential event because of the July start of the programme.

The First Residential and Travel to Ambleside.

The first residential of the programme was held at Rydal Hall, Ambleside between 6-10 November 1986. Group travel by train and mini-bus was arranged. Eighteen participants met at Manchester Victoria to travel to Ambleside. The remainder of the group travelled in the mini-bus from Salford. The bus was hired to serve as a resource for the weekend and to carry the equipment, that is flip chart and easels, the funding library, etc. The train journey was an enjoyable experience, and group members had an opportunity to renew acquaintances.

The Programme Content.

The content of the programme took into account and was developed around the suggestions that had been made at the Day Conference. Each day began with a programme review and sharing information

about domestic arrangements. In contrast with the pilot programme the timetable was fairly tightly structured, however there was still flexibility in arrangements to allow for requests from participants to be met.

The First Day of the Residential.

The residential was scheduled to begin after lunch on Thursday, 6 November. The first session was a 'catching up' exercise which gave individuals the opportunity to report to ther whole group upon their progress since the first Day Workshop. The group were also encouraged to say what they hoped to gain from the residential. Typical comments were:

- information/knowledge;
- support with projects/help writing/structuring;
- enjoyment/relaxation/time to talk to each other/walking.

Free Time

Group sessions during the residential were intense. The first session usually began at 9.30am and the last session on Friday and Sunday evening ran until 8.45pm. Two periods of free time were built into the timetable and participants who wanted to go were bussed into Ambleside for a few hours, some chose to walk in the countryside.

Optional Sessions.

The optional sessions provided participants with extra time for tutorial work or to use the time for private study. They were

encouraged to 'book' tutorial time in advance. The system worked well. Some participants chose to use 'free time' for tutorials.

Skills Training.

The key areas covered in the sessions during the weekend primarily focussed on 'skills and subjects which were relevant to the methodology and preparation of projects'. However many of the skills which were being developed were transferable. For example communication skills could benefit the participants 'parent' group and could also increase opportunities of employability. The sessions at the residential covered:

- public speaking;
- designing questionnaires and surveys;
- time management;
- the function of groups.

The Final Session.

The main focus of the weekend had been to help participants to understand what 'the project' was and what it involved. This was especially difficult for those who had not attended the first Day Conference. During the weekend participants were given some short written exercises which were intended to help the participants to focus more sharply on their chosen subject. Some found this exercise more difficult than others.

The final session of the residential provided participants with an opportunity to assess their individual project work. They were encouraged to report back to the rest of the group on their

progress during the weekend and say publicly what tasks they expected to complete before the next group meeting, and which would progress their project.

Residential Experience Checklist.

These comments have been taken from an evaluation questionnaire completed by participants at the end of the residential.

Confidence.

"I can now do things, like presentation, which I never thought I could do".

"The most useful learning experience was that you were able to speak out and make things clear without feeling embarrassed and it brought a lot out in you that you didn't know you had".

"Built my confidence up by making oneself take an active part in the residential".

Residential - what did you enjoy most about the residential experience?

"Being able to talk to everyone and learning from them".

"Sharing of experiences and the respect all had for each others views".

"Constructive atmosphere for work but also flexible".

"I liked most the setting out of our agenda'.

Knowledge, Skills, Awareness - what did you find most useful and why?.

> *"Doing public speaking, assertiveness, project planning, because this would help me with my work in the community".*
>
> *"Job applications and interviews".*

Participants who left the programme.

During the immediate weeks following the residential there were a number of participants who left the project. The reasons given were:

- *work - 4;*
- *pregnancy - 1;*
- *prison - 1;*
- *ill health - 2*

In some cases participants whose partner left the programme found replacements. From the group of 27 who attended the residential at Rydal Hall in November, 15 committed themselves to the second residential at Ruskin College in March with the addition of two replacements. Between March and the end of the programme, two more participants left the programme, leaving a 'core' of 15 participants who stayed to the end of the programme.

Introduction of the Presentation Day to the Programme - June 1987.

Another example of the benefit of having a full time worker has been the development of a Presentation Day as a special event. As

I already stated the programme was based on the structure of the earlier pilot programme of 1983/84. The final Review Day that I had witnessed in 1984 was a rather bland and uneventful occasion and seemed rather to undervalue the achievements of those who had completed projects.

As the 1986/87 programme progressed I became more closely involved with the participants and their project work, and was able to appreciate the great commitment and dedication which they showed towards the work they were doing. Following the March 1987 residential event at Ruskin College, I began to formulate a plan for a suitable ending to the programme in June. I felt it was important to provide an opportunity for participants to share their completed work and celebrate the achievement and say goodbye to each other. The Presentation Event also provided an opportunity for participants to put into practice the operation their newly developed skills has made to the programme.

Significance of Presentation Day to the Programme.

The Presentation Day has now become an important feature of the Communities in Crisis programme. It is an occasion when participants are able to practise the skills which they have developed during their involvement with the programme. It is a special occasion and no two Presentation Days have been the same. The differences are not just because participants and the subject matter varies, but more that the participants themselves want to

rise to the occasion. The effort, originality, and organisation, that they are prepared to put into presenting their final product, reflects the increased confidence and the skills they had developed together with the restored self esteem which they now demonstrated.

Participants often produce surprises and frequently those participants who had previously been reticent about speaking out in a large group are now prepared to engage a large group of people for 15 minutes and impart information about their project in a creative fashion, and then inviting questions in a 'professional' manner.

The subsequent presentation days were enhanced by the support of participants from the three previous programmes. Participants were encouraged to plan and develop materials in advance of the day and the public speaking sessions which they had shared at the workshops became particularly relevant. On both occasions participants presented their project work to a substantial number of visitors. Apart from past participants, the group included local government officials and officials from other statutory agencies, immediate family, and members of their community group. The certificates were presented by participants who had taken part in the previous Communities in Crisis programmes.

Presentation Day - 1986/87.

The event was held at the Frank Taylor Centre in Manchester. A local community group was invited to provide refreshments. The participants were encouraged to invite friends and relatives, and anyone who they felt had helped and supported them in developing their project.

The participants were briefed some weeks beforehand and asked to set up displays relevant to their project work; speak for ten minutes about their project and then to invite questions from the audience.

Certificates.

It was important that participants completing projects should receive some recognition of their time and commitment to the Communities in Crisis programme. The certificate was designed to include the name of each participant and the title of their project. The certificates were presented by a staff member together with a typed sheet headed TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN. It listed all the activities which participants had taken part in during the year. For example:

- *Public Speaking;*
- *Assertiveness Training;*
- *Time Management, etc.*

I felt that it could be used as a reference to show to an

Communities in Crisis

NORTH WEST -

THIS CERTIFICATE *was presented to* . . . . . .

in *to mark the successful completion of a Community Study*

. . . . . .

It acknowledges the work undertaken as part of the COMMUNITIES IN CRISIS PROGRAMME, as an important contribution to the local community.

. . . . . .
sponsor
'Communities in Crisis'
M.S.C. Voluntary Projects Programme

employer or to support an application for entry to a training course.

The certificates were extremely well received by the participants, and were quite unexpected. Many of whom framed them and hung them proudly in their 'local' office. The certificate contributed to an important year of achievement for the participants and reinforced their improved feelings of self esteem. For some of them it was the first time in their lives that they had ever been received a certificate which acknowledged their skills.

The event has proved to be so popular and successful that it is now an established feature of the programme.

Operation and Structure of Second Year Funded Programme.

Recruitment to First Short Programme.

Following the difficulties experienced in recruiting for the first programme in the summer of 1986, it was assumed that the problems which were created by the pressure of time would not re-occur at the start of the new programme year. During the first twelve months of the programme a substantial number of contacts had been made with community groups and 'professional' workers, thus providing a ready-made source of recruitment. More important perhaps, the participants themselves were becoming recruiting agents.

The problems of recruitment arose because the final confirmation of renewal of the contract with the MSC was not given until the beginning of July 1987. The delay made forward planning difficult, ie. booking accommodation for the residentials, inviting tutors to the workshops, and confirming to potential participants the expected start date. Once more both 'core' groups included last minute joiners who came to the programme through self referral or 'professional' referral and came unprepared. One dropped out immediately before a residential, and two afterwards. The approach to recruiting is an unsatisfactory way to use resources and is unsettling to the group as a whole.

Second Short Programme.

In the second year of funding the structure of the programme was changed dramatically in response to requests from MSC. The changes which MSC requested, were made towards the end of the first year of funding, which made it necessary to accept a compromise if funding was to be made available for a second year. The changes involved making a substantial increase in participant numbers, and altering the programme content.

The diagram at the end of the section illustrates the way in which the changes were achieved.

The framework of the new programme was designed to allow two

'core' groups to complete the programme. The two short programmes were planned to operate between July and December 1987 and January and July 1988. No increase in the budget was to be made.

Each group of participants was allocated six months to research and develop the projects. This shortened programme and the budget allowed only for one residential [illegible] group, and the main support for the 'core' groups was provided by Day Workshops. The programme was structured to allow approximately six weeks between each of the workshops and the residential weekend. Between events, regular contact and support would be maintained by the Development Worker.

In order to ensure that the 'core' participants had a clear understanding o the timescale involved for completing projects, a timetable of events was developed. The work plan was designed to ensure that they would achieve a successful completion of their project work. For example, the first 'core' group plan indicated that in the period December 1987 to February 1988 when the second group were starting up, that their project should be in its final stages of completion and design, ie typing, printing, artwork, photocopying.

Both groups were equally vulnerable at this stage of the operation, ie. the first group nearing completion of their projects and preparing for Presentation Day, and the second group

in the last stages of recruitment and the first Introductory Workshop.

Recent experience of operating a clearly structured programme is important, because it sets a sharply defined agenda for the participants. Participants who have domestic responsibilities find it helpful to know dates of the programme events in advance. This organisation is essential if they are to make arrangements to have children or other dependents cared for. This particularly applied to the three day residential events.

The structural changes and operating the programme within the accelerated timescale has produced both negative and positive reactions. Positive lessons were learnt from the introduction an increase in the number of Day Workshops and the introduction of the Job Search Strategy. Benefits for participants were also gained from the development of work plans. Participants in the shorter programmes still produced the same high standard of achievement and participants in the longer programmes demonstrated a strong commitment to their involvement in the programme.

However the shorter accelerated programme meant that through the tightly structured timetable, participants were being processed in a mechanical way and losing opportunities to reflect on the personal changes they were experiencing. The Workshops which

replaced the loss of one residential were necessarily packed with essential information.

A future Communities in Crisis programme is likely to include more Day Workshops and if possible maintain two residential events per 'core' group.

Finally a flexible approach to changes in the programme structure will always be necessary if Communities in Crisis is to meet its aims of supporting a 'participant led' programme.

The Complexities of Recruiting Participants

Direct Contact with Local Activists

Experience of making direct contact with local leaders or visiting the individuals on their home territory was often met with a negative response and rarely produced a participant. Being introduced to the group by a 'local' person has proved to be more fruitful. From experience, I now know that individuals frequently held the key positions in their group. They often kept information to themselves and by doing so controlled the activities of the group. These key individuals did not want to move to activities outside of the group and certainly would not encourage others to get involved in activities outside of the group.

Blocking by Community Workers.

Making contact through community workers often produced a similar result and some community workers frequently blocked my access and 'spoke' for the local groups. During my initial visit to a centre where a community worker was based, I would gather information about local groups and their activities. Before leaving I would ask the community worker to organise a meeting for me to meet with 6-8 representatives of local groups. I would then follow up this request within seven to ten days for confirmation of a date. The response would be "There is no one here who is interested"! Occasionally I was handed a list of names of local organisations and telephone numbers or addresses for me to contact. This blocking was not unusual.As a result I never met many groups.

My perception of this blocking process and from information which I gather subsequently was that it particularly occurred in some of the more impoverished estates and in areas where groups were less active. Community workers resisted the possibility of outsiders removing their one or two active group members. The likelihood threatened the apparent power which community workers held in their 'local patch'.

The workers in some cases did not appear to be stimulating

activity themselves and perhaps feare hat involvement might extra work. Occasionally I by-passed a reiuctant community worker and did talk to local groups about the programme. If it interested them, they still felt it necessary to 'get approval' from the community worker!

As recruitment progressed, I built up a list of groups and workers who were responsive to the resources which the Communities in Crisis programme offered.

The most productive way of recruiting was through an interested community worker. I found that groups were more receptive if a community worker introduced me to them. This seemed to give me some credibility. "We'll give you a hearing" was a phrase which was actually said to me by members of one group. On this occasion I had been asked to wait outside while they reached their decision.

Two groups in particular who participated in the 1986 programme who were referred to me by community workers, were, the Rochdale Resident's and Tenant's Federation who at that time wanted help with resources to fund a newsletter, and a Tenant's and Resident's Group from Bury who wanted to make the M66 Motorway safer. The workers gave support and encouragement to these participating groups throughout the time when they were developing their research projects.

Recruitment by Referrals.

Recruitment to the programme has also come through 'professional' contacts which I have made during the two years of the programme. It has not been particularly productive. The 'professionals' have contacted me and referred a local person or persons to the programme without explaining to them beforehand what the demands of Communities in Crisis are likely to be.

This form of recruitment has not been a satisfactory process because the participants concerned come unprepared and do not integrate totally with the participants who have been recruited by myself. They are frequently 'clients' with a history of serious domestic personal difficulties. For example, a Social Worker, desperate to help clients progress and get them involved in stimulating activities referred four people to an Introductory Day Workshop. They were 'dry' alcoholics. They contributed well to the workshops, but clearly needed more support than we could offer.

Self Recruitment and Past Participants.

Some participants recruited themselves. Word of mouth from previous participants had encouraged them to telephone and ask if they could join the programme. This should be an ideal process, because past participants totally understand what the programme involves. However, it has also created unsuitable participation, and this category has produced a high drop-out rate. To overcome

the difficulties, past participants have been asked to involve the Development Worker at an early stage.

Recruitment or recommendation to the programme by third persons can be advantageous providing that there is time for the Worker to meet the recruit before the first Introductory Day.

Recruitment Experience - the Lessons Learnt.

Recruitment of participants to a task which requires care and thought if the programme is to use its resources most effectively. Recruitment is time consuming and needs to be so if the most resourceful and committed participant is to be identified and involved in the programme.

From the programme start in July 1986 the time available for recruitment has been unsatisfactory. In 1986 the time allocated to recruitment was limited by the short notice of the programme start. The need to maximise the twelve months of the programme was a priority. The July start again conflicted with the school and summer activities. Recruitment for the second short programme in 1987 was also unsatisfactory because it overlapped with the first short programme. Whilst one programme was winding down, recruitment for another programme was beginning. There was hardly time to get to know one group before another group was beginning a new programme. If it was possible to guarantee secure funding say for three years, then recruitment could be an 'on-going'

exercise. It would then be possible to build up a list of potential participants over a longer period of time. It would also be possible to plan a programme start which would avoid the restrictions which the necessity of recruiting during the disrupted summer period produces.

Finally, guaranteed funding for a rolling programme will allow a more careful selection of participants to take place and ensure a more efficient use of the programme's resources.

Successful recruitment requires a positive first meeting with potential participant groups and the questions which spring to my mind in meeting potential participants for the first time is, "Do we have something in common", for example, a sense of humour and "Are we going to be able to work together"? This formula has generally worked. The recruitment of participants for the first group in the second year of funding was a little less pressured because the contact list was established and had expanded. Groups were also referring potential participants to the programme.

The use of introductory questionnaires has provided information which has given some indication of the commitment of potential participants. For example, length of involvement with their group and activities. This questionnaire has proved to be valuable and more details are shown in the Methodology section of the report.

To summarise, the most fruitful ways to recruit which have emerged for a Communities in Crisis programme are:

1. By the Development Worker who meets potential participants once or twice before the first Day Workshop. This appears to produce a bond between the worker and participant at the earliest stage of the programme.

2. By past participants in liaison with the Development Worker.

3. By community workers who see a benefit of encouraging members of their local groups to participate in activities outside of their area.

The Changes in the Programmes Structure Since 1983.

As the programme was developed the original structure of the programme has been modified. These changes have taken place for a number of reasons. The primary reasons are as follows:

1. Changing MSC policy has demanded a greater throughput of participants and therefore in the second year of operation July 1987-July 1988 a substantial change in the structural framework was necessary.

2. The Development Worker has also gained experience in working with adults and has wanted to introduce new techniques.

3. The experience of working with participants during 1986 had produced information which applied to content and organisation of workshop sessions.

4. The full-time worker has been able to g[illegible]e the needs of participants in a mo[illegible] immediate way, f[illegible]xample consultation with participants identified the need fo[illegible] the 'extra' workshop during the 1986/87 programme.

Structure of Communities in Crisis Programme 1983/1988.

The diagram illustrates the structural changes which have taken place during the development of the Communities in Crisis

INTRO DAY	AUTUMN RESIDENTIAL	SPRING RESIDENTIAL	FINAL REVIEW

PILOT PROGRAMME 1983/84

ILLUSTRATION SHOWING THE CHANGING STRUCTURE OF THE C.I.C. PROGRAMME AND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO YEARS 1986/88. THE CHANGES WERE MADE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF M.S.C.

INTRO DAY	AUTUMN RESIDENTIAL	FEB DAY W/SHOP	SPRING RESIDENTIAL	PRESENT -ATION DAY

FIRST FULLY FUNDED YEAR 1986/87 M.S.C. (V.P.P.) FUNDING

1ST INTRO W/SHOP	2ND DAY W/SHOP	OCTOBER RESIDENTIAL	3RD DAY W/SHOP	4TH DAY W/SHOP	PRESENT- ATION

SECOND FULLY FUNDED YEAR 1987/88 M.S.C (V.P.P.) FUNDING

1ST INTRO DAY	2ND DAY W/SHOP	MARCH RESIDENTIAL	3RD DAY W/SHOP	4TH DAY W/SHOP	PRESENT -ATION DAY

programme.

(1) The Pilot Programme - 1983/84.

The programme was organised and facilitated by staff of the William Temple Foundation and Ruskin College in addition to their 'normal' work. It involved groups from Greater Manchester and Oxford and Swindon. The programme provided:

- introductory regional workshops;
- two five-day residentials;
- a final review day.

In between participants were supported by staff. Some participants felt the need for more support.

(2) First Year Fully Funded Programme 1986/87.

This programme was modelled on the pilot and provided:

- one introductory workshop;
- one five-day residential - November;
- one workshop - February;
- one five-day residential - March.

An additional workshop was added. This facility was easier to provide because the full-time worker responded to the needs of the participants.

(3) Second Year Fully Funded Programme.

For the second year programme the structure was altered because the funding body wanted to involve more participants in the programme. To meet the request, additional Day Workshops were used to supplement the loss of one residential.

- *introductory workshop;*
- *first day workshop;*
- *first four-day residential;*
- *second day workshop;*
- *third day workshop;*
- *fourth day workshop;*
- *presentation day.*

Using this model it is necessary to overlap the activities of the two groups, ie. in the last weeks where the first group are completing their programme time, the second group were meeting for the Introductory Day Conference.

OUTCOMES

Participants in the Communities in Crisis programme have produced many interesting outcomes. This section considers the content and pattern of these developments. Initially there is a whirlpool of activity as participants experience individual growth and change and become more confident through the skills they are developing. Through their project work they identify their own needs for information and skills development. They also learn gain information from other members of the participant group. The whirlpool eventually overflows into a cascade of events and activity as the skills they have developed flow into the 'parent' community organisation and the wider community.

Frequently other members of the 'parent' group (the group which the participants belong to, ie. Cheshamfold Tenants and Residents' Association; Langley Well Women) are encouraged to take part in the Communities in Crisis programme as they recognise that its' relevance and value for those who want to change and improve for their community.

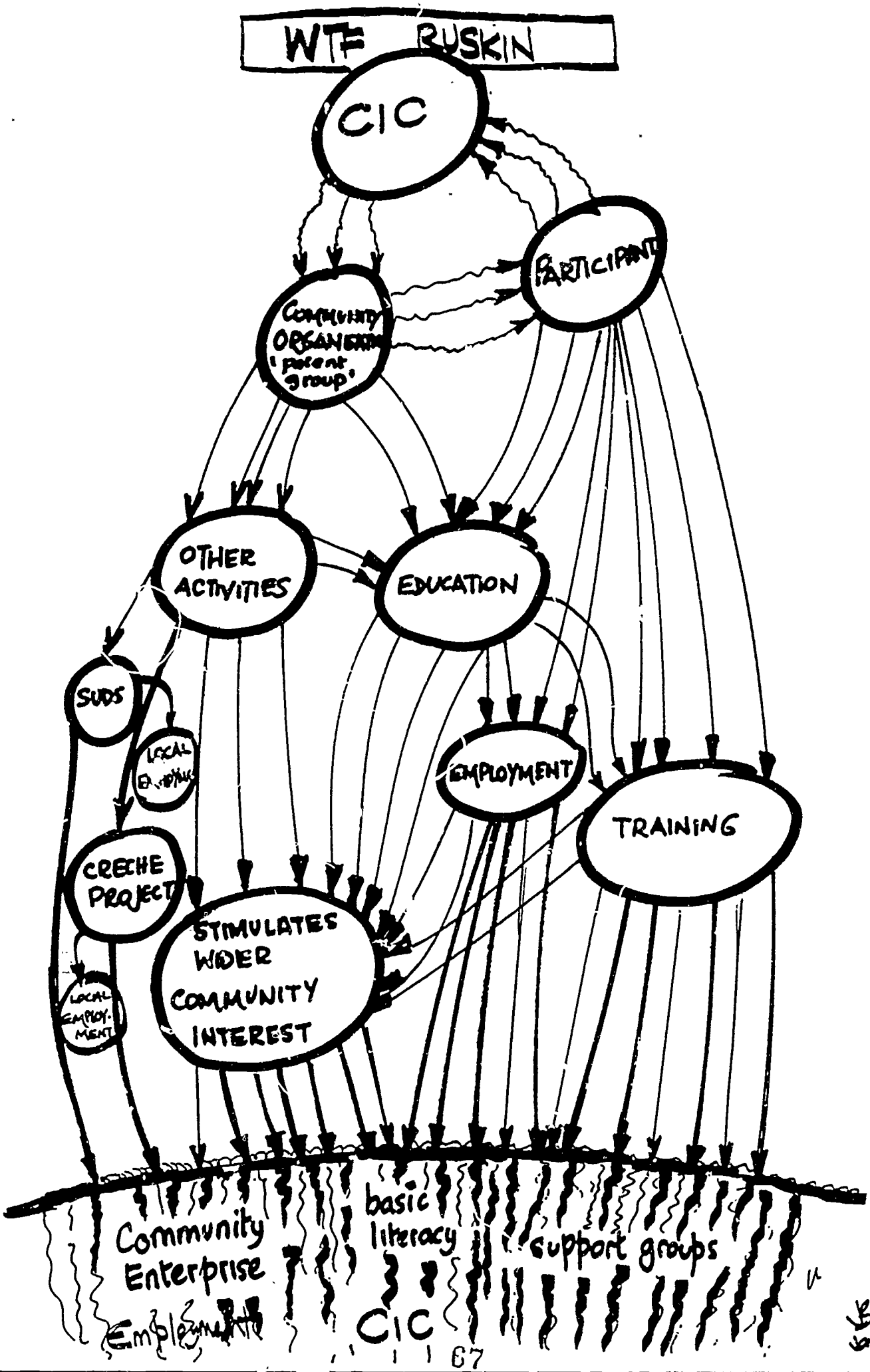
The two short Communities in Crisis programmes included three participants who originated from groups who had previously taken part in earlier programmes, the pilot programme and 1986/87 programme.

Since being involved in the programme, many participants have become involved in other unpaid voluntary work outside of their community groups. Others are in full or part-time paid employment. Some have also begun to consider options of educational study, which they see as a route to better employment opportunities. In some cases the cascade has spilled over into the wider community, and has encouraged and stimulated the development of community enterprise.

For example, the SUDS Women's Co-operative includes women who are users of the Salford Women's Centre. The participation of a member of the SUDS group in the Communities in Crisis programme, demonstrated the value of relevant training to members of the to newly formed Salford members of the Creche Co-operative. Members of the Creche Co-operative participated in the Communities in Crisis programme at the same time as they were developing a business plan with START UP, the Salford Community Enterprise Group.

Another group of local women from Little Hulton learnt of the activities of the SUDS group, were able to discuss with the group and read the account of SUDS development which encouraged them to set up 'BUBBLES', another women's launderette co-operative group.

The realisation of what groups can achieve if provided with relevant information and training together with sympathetic


WTF RUSKIN
CIC
PARTICIPANT
COMMUNITY ORGANISATION (parent group)
OTHER ACTIVITIES
EDUCATION
SUDS
LOCAL
CRECHE PROJECT
EMPLOYMENT
TRAINING
STIMULATES WIDER COMMUNITY INTEREST
LOCAL EMPLOY-MENT
Community Enterprise
basic literacy
support groups
CIC

support is even now rapidly seeping further into the wider community. For example, another group of women in Salford recently registered as 'CLEAN SWEEP', a women's cleaning co-operative. As users of the Salford Women's Centre they were aware of the activity of the women of the SUDS launderette co-operative and the women who set up the Salford Creche Co-operative. It is not possible to prove conclusively, but conversations with the individuals concerned suggest that groups are encouraged by the success they see in others - "If they can do it, so can we".

Economic Spin-Offs.

An analysis of the programmes project work reveals, that apart from the immediate benefits to individuals and their communities, ie. improved efficiency through skills development, there are a number of other additional and important wider economic and employment developments which have occurred. Below are some typical examples:

Bury, M66 Motorway Safety Project - 'Blot on our Landscape' - Chesham Fold Estate.

The Tenant's and Resident's group representatives who pursued and completed the project discussed and negotiated at a high level, with officers of the Department of Transport, Department of the Environment, and the Local Authority on the problems of maintaining safety where the motorway passed through the housing

estate.

By focussing the attention of the participants on the continuing dangers of the motorway, the group achieved substantial expenditure for fencing, walling and landscaping which amounted to £60,000 (approximately). The work involved contractors and a large gang of road workers and a local Community Programme team. It was completed early in 1988.

Additional Information.

The two participants who worked on this project have also progressed as individuals. TH is now in full-time employment in the Housing Department of Bury MBC and has recently moved to live in another estate. PG (an agrophobic insomniac) has been following a course of study and gained a CSE and an 'O' level in the summer of 1988.

Playing Safe in Chesham Fold Project.

The group approached the Local Authority Social Services and Probation. The construction of the two sites was estimated to be £50,000 approximately. The construction of the first site at Goldfinch Drive was carried out by a Community Programme team during 1988.

Remaining Projects.

The three remaining projects have similar potential but the

groups have yet to determine how the next stage of . . project will develop. These examples of positive economic and employment potential clearly demonstrate and provide strong evidence that representatives of groups who participate in the Communities in Crisis programme, have the potential and skills which are not generally accorded the recognition which they deserve.

The determination and commitment of community groups in Bury to bring about change and improvement in the areas they live in, is evident. Communities in Crisis can provide resources and support for groups during their participation in the programme, but the groups need further support when they leave the programme. This would be a role which local authority community workers could be expected to play. Unfortunately Bury MBC provided very limited support for its community and voluntary sector.

Rochdale. Langley Estate Community Garden Project.

Work on the Community Garden Project in Langley Estate originally programmed to begin in July 1988 will now begin in January 1989. The changing policies of the MSC and the demise of the Community Programme has made a major contribution to the delay. The Community Garden Project has attracted £30,000 of Rochdale Inner Areas funding and is likely to employ six to twelve workers over a period of nine to twelve months.

Langley and Middleton Well Women Centre.

Through their involvement in the Communities in Crisis programme, the Well Women's group felt more able to approach the local authority and subsequently made an application to the local authority for the acquisition of a four bedroomed house which has provided a centre for their activities.

The initial application to Rochdale MBC for Inner Areas Funding produced a substantial budget of £9,000. They also received £350 from the Community Health Council.

The group have now submitted a funding application to Opportunities for Volunteering for £25,000. If they are successful the money will provide wages for a full-time worker and a part-time administrator. Currently the group are setting up Women and Health Courses which will begin in January 1989.

Bury

A) Chesham Fold T & R Association.

Dept.of Transport. M66 Motorway Safety.	*£ 60,000*
Play Area Project.	
Site 1.	*£ 6,900*
Site 2. (inc.running track & permanent bonfire site).	*£ 44,000*

Community Task Force, 12 workers x 2 years. (2 past participants now in paid employment).

B) Spring's Women's Group.

Premises for Women's Centre and running costs provided by local authority. £ 9,000 pa.

Training sessions - health and EFL. (2 past participants now in full-time paid employment).

The two members who participated in the programme are now in employment. One is now employed in a full-time capacity at Project Full-Employ, Manchester; one is working part-time and studying for 'A' levels.

Blackburn.

a) Neighbourhood Centre. £215,000
Plus additional funding for wages of:
full time manager and centre cleaner;
3 occasional workers;
2 play leaders;

'Sports for Women' grant: £ 800
1 participant is now in full time employment;
1 working voluntarily in the Centre and has joined an Adult Literacy Course.

Bolton.

a) Funding for Tool Library and running costs: £ 21 500

Salford.

a) Aid and Information Centre Project.

Mainstream funding for 3 years from local authority: £ 66,000
This participant is now in full time employment and works for Salford Urban Mission. She is currently involved in setting up Credit Unions.

b) Salford Creche Project.

Starter Grant. £ 1,000
Participant is currently finalising details of the co-operative venture registering the Creche Project as a Co-operative. The Co-operative will employ a large number of women on a part-time basis.

c) Higher Broughton Advice Centre.

Constitution Project. Grant from Telethon. £ 4,650
plus more donations/volunteers.

Pending: funding applications to:
Opps for Vols for
1 full-time worker
2 part-time workers

d) *SUDS Co-op Launderette Project.*

Grant and 1 year running costs *£ 15,000*
plus work for 5 women.

At the end of the first year of operation the launderette had created a financial surplus. The money was used to purchase a holiday caravan. The caravan is used by the women for family holidays. They hope to extend the use to regular users of the launderette.

Rochdale.

Middleton.

a) *Langley Well-Women Centre.*

plus other applications. *£ 8,600*

Funding pending: application to
Opps for Vols for
1 full-time worker plus
2 part-time workers.

WEA Women and Health Courses.

b) *Community Garden Project.*

Grant for development of Open Space: *£ 31,000*
(Inner Areas funding).
plus 9-12 months work for Community Task Force.

Collaborative Work with Other Organisations.

START UP - A Community Enterprise Organisation.

START UP supports and encourages local community initiatives. Personnel from START UP reported that members of groups who had taken part in the Communities in Crisis Programm had developed skills which had 'quickened up' the process of creating and establishing a business.

The skills which were particularly referred to were writing and clear thinking which were associated with organisation and planning actions.

They compared the progress of two groups they worked with and who had simultaneously articipated in the Communities in Crisis programme, with one group who had not. The two groups who had participated appeared to have gained an advantage because they had become more confident.

This was related to their participation in the Communities in Crisis programme which was a period in which their skills had been improved, developed and practised in a practical and stimulating exe se. The groups who had not participated required longer term support because they lacked the same confidence and were less able in writing and organisation skills.

Other Outcomes.

SUDS Womens Co-operative Launderette Project.

The group had already begun to plan and develop the launderette project when their representative joined the Communities in Crisis programme. The group were already beginning to negotiate funding, and had just started developing a business plan with the Community Enterprise Group, START UP.

Communities in Crisis was able to provide space for the SUDS

participant to explore ideas and gather information about similar ventures. For example, another group who were considering a similar venture invited the SUDS women to visit them for an exchange of information. Because of her involvement in Communities in Crisis, the SUDS participant felt more able to ask for more in-depth information of the local authority and was able to develop different strategies to help overcome problems which were being encountered in dealing with local authority officers. The additional support, training, learning she gained from the Communities in Crisis programme complemented the business planning and development work which the group were learning with START UP.

Salford Creche Project.

Communities in Crisis also supplemented START UP's work with this group. The participant was also able to gain space to develop ideas and used Communities in Crisis resources to ensure that the project was going to have a firm foundation on which the group would be able to build the business. In particular funding sources were researched. The project work itself was beneficial in clarifying the development of the Creche Project over a number of years as a voluntary informal organisation.

The Creche Project organisers aim to provide full-time paid work for themselves and generate part-time employment for a substantial pool of women. All creche workers will undergo

statutory training which is organised by the local Social Services Department. This may well contribute to further positive outcomes in the long term for women's employment in the area.

Individual Outcomes.

Analysis of 'Core Groups' and individual participant activity (survey at March 1989).

Past participants who are involved in voluntary work, paid employment, or study:

Group I. July 1986-87.

Paid Employment	-	7
Voluntary	-	2
Study	-	1

Group II. July 1987-February 1988.

Paid Employment	-	3
Voluntary	-	2
Study	-	2

Group III. January 1988-July 1989.

Paid Employment	-	1
Voluntary	-	4
Study	-	2

The majority of those in paid employment have continued their voluntary involvement with community organisations.

Below are examples of the way people gather experience, choose different routes, and decide on their own pace to reach goals. The studies relate to women who took part in the 1983/84 Communities in Crisis pilot programmes. The information was gathered from a follow-up questionnaire which was circulated in June 1987.

Experience of Two Women who Participated in the 1983/84 Pilot Programme.

A. "Since working on my project, I now have a better understanding of wider issues.

I have gained confidence from working on my project.

Previously I was a very shy person and reserved, I am now involved in setting up a Women's Cleaning Co-operative called CLEANSWEEP.

I am on the management of two local organisations, CRACA - Aid and Information Centre, and START UP Community Enterprise Agency. I am also chair of Salford Women's Centre (1987/88) and I have visited Spring's Women's Group and offered information about setting up a Women's Centre. The Co-operative is now operational and has created full-time work for five women on a regular basis". (Participant 1983/84 programme).

B. "Communities in Crisis gave me the tools to help myself and others. Through my involvement I have been able to give information to a number of local groups, for example, SUDS, CLEANSWEEP. Both are women's co-operatives formed by women who are Centre users.

After I finished my project, I continued my local activities and became involved in a group who were trying to set up a SKILLS TRAINING CENTRE FOR WOMEN. We were unable to find the premises before the deadline, and so lost the chance of the MSC funding on that occasion.

Meanwhile the focus on the needs of women led to a campaign for a Women's Centre in the area. I was involved in carrying out a survey, making the funding application and negotiating for the use of an empty maisonette. . In 1986 I was appointed first Co-ordinato-

of Salford Women's Centre. Communities in Crisis unlocked some doors for me and I feel that I have a lot more I want to learn and pass on to others. I do not feel I have yet reached my full potential, and have a lot of experience to draw on.

When my children are older I would like the opportunity to take up full-time study. In particular I would like to study at Ruskin College.

I visited Nicaragua in late 1987 with a women's study group from Manchester and have recently been employed on a short contract as a Community Development Worker for Salford Social Services Race Relations Unit". (Participant 1983/84 programme).

It would be unwise to make any generalisations or assumptions about the differences and approaches to the topics which men and women chose to research during their time in the Communities in Crisis programme. However a simple analysis of completed projects, related to gender, has produced some interesting differences.

The majority of women chose projects which indicate a determination to produce a response to an identified area of unmet need. In most cases the process required innovative negotiations with statutory bodies and a number of them can clearly be associated with health care and the needs of children.

The majority of projects developed by the men in the group concentrated on strengthening existing groups and securing further resources.

The differences in choice may be a reflection of the difference in gender roles and life experiences related to activities at work or in the home.

The list below includes examples of projects completed by men and women. A more detailed examination of the individual projects may produce a more significant analysis although it would be wrong to make bold generalisations about the differences in topics.

Analysis of Male/Female Project Choice.

The majority of women chose projects which would initiate change:

- *Baby Weighing Clinic - negotiated.*
- *Play areas - negotiated.*
- *Women's Centres - negotiated.*
- *Community Garden - negotiated.*
- *Neighbourhood Centre - negotiated.*
- *Women's Co-operative Launderette - negotiated.*

The majority of male projects tended to be reports which concentrated on strengthening existing groups:

- *History of Welfare Rights Stall - funding application.*
- *History of Horwich Unemployed Group - funding application.*
- *Dealing with Drugs - Information Pack.*
- *The Elderly in Salford: Survey of Local Authority Provision - Survey of existing provision.*
- *Leaving Care - Information Pack.*
- *Improving Security of Tower Blocks - Report and Survey.*

The diagram illustrates the likely cascade of developments which will occur as a result of adults becoming involved in learning activities which relate to their daily experiences. The flow of activity often occurs because 'people see others who succeed' and

recognise that what is being offered is relevant to their experience and situation. Kevin Ward, writing about Pioneer Work in Leeds and Bradford suggests that the demand for courses in areas of high unemployment illustrates the need for radical approach to providing education or training for adults.

Not all Communities in Crisis participants have gained full time paid employment, but a closer examination of their development will reveal they have significantly gained new skills and confidence.

> "I feel it might enhance my prospects of getting a job because of the valuable skills and experience I have gained". (Participant Evaluation Questionnaire).

The evidence for this observation can be supported with information gathered from a series of evaluation questionnaires. Communities in Crisis specifically sets out to involve participants with commitment and initiative, and those who have been disadvantaged by schooling and erratic employment opportunities. The programme aims to provide resources which will enable both participants and their 'parent' group to make choices and decisions about issues which affect them and will also help them to gain access to appropriate training courses.

Finally the 1986/87 programme confirmed that there is a substantial need for training opportunities involving unemployed volunteers who are being forced to assume more and more

responsibility for the well-being of their communities. The unpaid work which these members of the community undertake is in many cases a valuable asset for a local authority. For example, a group in Bury took the initiative to carry out an extensive survey of their estate which provided local authority officers with a clear picture about outstanding repairs and the operation of the emergency repair service. It is unlikely that paid officials in the local estate office would have been able to carry out the survey within the same timescale.

Many local politicians also use the groups for information gathering. This is particularly noticeable in the lead-up to local elections. That may be the only time that some groups have contact with the local elected representative. Other groups have developed a working relationship with their local councillor in order to ensure that he represents them. Frequently volunteers feel daunted by the thought of having to meet councillors and officers from statutory organisations. They often feel uncomfortable about approaching officials and are reluctant to argue their case strongly. Women in particular often find themselves being patronised by local officials and elected representatives.

As unpaid volunteers, community organisation representatives frequently find themselves working alongside paid 'professionals' in a negotiating situation.

"Communities in Crisis has given me more confidence when dealing with people in authority". (Participant Evaluation Questionnaire).

THE METHODOLOGY - HOW THE PROGRAMME WORKED.

The methodology which the programme has adopted is primarily designed to provide time, space and resources for the participants. This is achieved through the use of day workshops, residentials and regular consultation meetings with the Development Worker. There is 'no cost' involved for participants on the programme, and they are be involved as far as possible in planning and ev luating the programme at every stage of its development.

Since 1986 as the programme has progressed and developed, the content and inclusion of the One Day Workshops has beccme more vital. The workshops have provided back-up, skills training, discussion and exchange which participants need to progress their project work. The first year of the funded programme was modelled on the 1983/4 pilot programme, ie. One Introductory Day Workshop, two Residentials, and a Final Review Day.

In the second year of funding the programme was redesigned. In response to the request of MSC (VPP) to increase the number of participants in the programme, more workshops were introduced. Because of the way the programme was redesigned, ie. two short programmes each to include 20 participants, the reduced time factor and reduced budget, made it possible to provide one residential per 'core' group.

Methods and Approaches included in the Programme.

Project Based Learning.

> *"Research projects present teachers and students with a great challenge... they provide an opportunity for students to select an interesting and relevant area of study... learn a wide range of new and useful skills, and produce a valuable end product of which they can be justifiably proud".[1]*

The Communities in Crisis model for project based learning has clear aims and objectives. It provides relevant skills training to meet the needs of a specific group of adults ie. those who are unpaid but actively involved in community organisations.

The project work is the main focus of activity for participants in the programme. Although participants are encouraged to consider a variety of creative ways which to produce their completed project, eg.

- *video;*
- *photographic display;*
- *press cuttings;*
- *scrapbook.*

most choose the written word. The subject matter of the project is

> *"defined within the framework of the needs of the local organisations rather than as an exercise in self discovery".[2]*

The chosen projects focus on community issues and involves participants in search techniques; in report writing; analysis of

problems; development of case studies; interviews; surveys; public speaking and developing funding applications. The skills are also transferable, and can also benefit the 'parent group' for example, organising skills, group skills, informati gathering.

Unlike many other project based learning programmes, the project is developed as an integral part of the Communities in Crisis programme and participants are supported at every stage of their work by the Development Worker, other members of the Group, and the Staff Group. Many other project based programmes place the project at the end as an additional piece of work.

Another important aspect of the project work is that it is designed to be 'a tangible and useable resource' which represents a measure of achievement for those who have produced it. Projects are also an important source of information of reference for other groups facing similar issues. For example, the SUDS women's co-operative launderette group have received requests for their booklet from as far away as the USA and West Germany. Other projects have been used to provide evidence of need for amenities, for example the Ewood Neighbourhood Centre used their booklet to support applications for funding. The booklet has also been circulated to other community organisations.

Through the project based learning process, there is evidence to

suggest that participants have experienced considerable growth in their own personal development. They have gained more confidence and have begun to consider what other choices are available.

> *"The course helped to build the inner confidence needed in seeking paid employment in the community or seeking future education courses". (Participant evaluation).*

> *"Together with my partner, through the project I have initiated actions which I feel confident, will succeed in changing the situation".[3] (Participant evaluation).*

What is a Project?

Defining the Project and Organising the First Stages of Development.

The Introductory Workshop provides the first opportunity for participating groups to discuss their ideas and to develop a realistic approach to the problem they have identified. The underlying philosophy of the programme combines personal development with group development. The project work plays an important role in this progress. It is therefore imperative that the aims of the groups are realistic and can be achieved by clear thoughtful planning. Having discussed thoroughly 'the issue' they want to tackle with resource staff, participants frequently change their ideas as other information emerges. Early ideas about issues may also change by the end of the first or second workshop, as participants enter into a deeper exploration and examination of the topic they have chosen.

A typical example, is of a group who wanted 'to do something' about the motorway that had been constructed and literally divided their housing estate into two halves. The real issue that emerged during the workshop discussion was that they were concerned about the safety aspects of the motorway which had caused the deaths of three children. The accidents occurred because the side wall of the motorway was only 4-5 feet high making the motorway easily accessible for children to climb up it to cross the motorway.

> "It is this section we are concerned about as children have been cutting across, instead of using the subways. Some children have been playing 'chicken' and also climbing on to the motorway to retrieve footballs". (Blot On Our Landscape, p1).[4]

In addition, the underpass which pedestrians would normally expect to use was frequently flooded. This particular group left at the end of the day with a much clearer idea about what they wanted 'to do' about the motorway. By defining the issue it is then possible to plan the next steps of the project's progress.

Each participating pair leave the first workshop with at least three manageable and achievable tasks which they undertake to complete before the second group workshop. The tasks worked out in the small discussion groups, together with the subject of the topic, are shared with the rest of the group in the final session. Examples of tasks may be:

- Contact your local councillor and...
- Write a letter to ... for example Social Services, Housing Department etc.
- Get a plan of the estate.

At the subsequent workshops the participants will have an opportunity to report back to the rest of the group in a 'catching-up' exercise. As the strength and the support which participants derive from the group becomes evident, they solve problems through information exchange. Time for a project work update is always included as part of a day workshop. Further discussions take place in small groups and more tasks are agreed.

Relevance of Project Based Learning to Adult Education.

Through the use of project based study, the Communities in Crisis programme blends adult education with the development of community work skills which are relevant to community activists. They are relevant because they build on everyday experiences in the home or the community.

The Communities in Crisis programme was developed in response to the needs of unpaid volunteers. Most adult education and training programmes tend to focus on the needs of 'professional' community workers and increasingly focus on vocational and employment training.[5]

The Communities in Crisis programme meets the needs of those who would normally be deterred from taking part in courses which

often bear little relevance to their experience. It provides a tailor-made programme for each participant group. Experience of working with community activists in the programme suggests that they welcome opportunities to develop skills which will help them and their 'parent' group to bring about improvement and change for the community as a whole.

The methodological framework of the project based programme is constructed with this in mind and participants are involved at every stage of the programme's planning and development. This approach identifies the programme as one which is 'student led, an essential ingredient of any adult education programme.

This involvement is stimulated through the use of regular written and verbal evaluation exercises and consultation meetings with the development worker which takes place at regular intervals between the workshops. The development of the project is closely linked to the activities and sessions which participants share at the day workshops and during the residential events. In general the content of the workshop sessions is determined by the participant group.

Since 1986, there have been three Communities in Crisis programmes and 36 participants have completed approximately 24 projects. During this time some common themes have emerged and in general, participants have demonstrated that they have similar

needs for skills development. The main categories under which requests for skills training have fallen are:

- communication skills (written and verbal, assertiveness training);
- organisational skills (community activities, campaigning, issues of race and gender);
- research skills (information gathering, designing questionnaires, problem solving);
- financial skills (managing buildings and staff, setting up book-keeping systems).

"It has helped me to understand that the problems my own group is suffering from, is shared by other groups".(Participant evaluation).

The participants frequently admit surprise when they realise that their own individual needs are often similar to those of other members of the group. This in itself promotes a feeling of greater confidence and begins to break down the feelings of isolation which active members of community groups often experience.

The project work is also progressed and developed through the interaction processes which takes place within the group at the workshops. The workshops provide an opportunity for the whole group to share each individual group's progress. Participants also give an update on the progress of their project and elaborate on the achievements and anxieties which the work has produced for them. This interactive exercise is an essential element of the programme and stimulates thoughts and ideas. It also provides an exercise in which participants gathe. vital

information from each other. For example one group may verbalise a problem which they have experienced and which has created a barrier to the progress of their project. For example, perhaps they were unable to find a local contact name, ie. someone who can advise about funding; or there may be a need for information about housing repairs or road safety. It is inevitable that at least one or two other members of the group will have experienced and dealt with a similar problem and will be able to provide relevant information.

> "By talking with other participants it has given me an insight into other projects I would not have known about". (Participant evaluation).[6]

The workshops also bring participants together to plan the next stages of a project. Before leaving any of the workshops, participants set themselves tasks which they plan to complete before the next workshop. The workshops take place at intervals of approximately six weeks. In between, much of their project work will be self directed as they build on the information and tasks that emerged from the workshops and generally become more confident and enthusiastic about the project they are researching.

Beth Humphries, writing in Critical Social Policy suggests that although self directed learning through project based activities makes an important contribution to the provision of a radical education programme, it is only a first step. She rightly

argues:

> *"A progressive radical education, like any other education model, is a tool, a means to an end".[7]*

She is concerned that programmes such as Communities in Crisis should not operate within a 'social and political vacuum'. Funding sponsors will inevitably have some influence on the programme content and organisers have to learn creative ways in which to overcome limitations. For example group work or negotiating skills might include sessions on issues of race and gender. As I stated in the introduction, that it is only through the feeling of greater self confidence and a belief that what they are doing is worthwhile that adults move to another stage of development. This is particularly applicable to the participants in the Communities in Crisis programme who have been disadvantaged by schooling and unemployment.

The Communities in Crisis model for project based learning can claim to offer a radical approach to adult education because it involves its participants at every stage. The model also contrasts with other traditional models of adult education, which place a great emphasis on individual achievement. The Communities in Crisis programme

> *"...encourages participants to improve and develop skills for collective goals".[8]*

The project work is dealt with in more detail in the Outcomes

section of the report.

The 'No Cost' Participation Policy of the Programme.

An important element of the programme is that participation is offered at 'no cost'. This is an attempt to ensure that potential participants are not inhibited from taking part from financial constraints. Because Communities in Crisis does offer a rare opportunity for community organisations to take part in a programme which particularly involves long-term unemployed adults, it is important to remove an obvious barrier of cost. The budget is designed to cover expenses for

- *travel to and from workshops;*
- *residential accommodation;*
- *cost incurred in preparing and producing the project;*
- *contribution to childcare.*

The administration of expenses has been made as simple as possible and participants are asked to keep a record of expenditure, eg. bus tickets, post office receipts for stamps, invoices of any agreed purchases such as books or photographic film.

Childcare Provision and MSC Policy.

Childcare Payments.

Childcare provision is essential for any adult learning training programme particularly if women are to be involved. The cash allowance of £10 per day has given some bargaining power to those with responsibility for children and who live in low income

households. Many public and voluntary organisations now acknowledge and make creche facilities available., For example trade unions, local authorities, education institutions. For a programme like Communities in Crisis which is seriously intent on involving men and women from a wide range of community experience the issue of making some provision for childcare was a priority. To meet the commitment it was necessary for Communities in Crisis to find other sources of funding for childcare.

MSC Policy.

MSC have] consistently placed serious limitations on childcare which has effectively excluded many women from training schemes. On 13th March 1986, VPP circulated a notice, REF:SMB26 - CHILDCARE FACILITIES ON VPP. The notice clearly set out the MSC policy for childcare provisions as follows:

a. *MSC will fund a project which offers childcare/creche facilities where "participants have the opportunity to acquire child minding skills".[9]*

This policy conflicts immediately with the aims of the Communities in Crisis programme which encourages and allows participants to define their own aims and identify their own needs. The programme attracts a predominance of women mainly because they are 'the backbone of most groups' and they are looking for opportunities for training or education programmes which are sympathetic to their circumstances ie. child-rearing,

part-time work and other domestic commitments. It is therefore unlikely that the majority of women attracted to the Communities in Crisis programme will need or want to acquire child minding skills.

b. MSC <u>will not fund</u> child minders or childcare facilities located off the project premises.[10]

This paragraph particularly affected the preferences of Communities in Crisis participants. Participants who had children were consulted about provision of childcare. In general women who normally expect to take the main responsibility for children. preferred to accept a daily payment for childcare as opposed to creche provision. In fact there was no suitable accommodation in the project premises for regular creche provision.

The reason which women gave for their preference reflected the same feelings they had about residentials, ie. that the Communities in Crisis Workshops provided an opportunity for a complete break from their family responsibilities - an opportunity which they rarely experienced. Payment for full-time childcare is after all, a long established tradition for some groups in our society, for example nannies, au pairs, boarding schools. The cash payment also made it easier for participants to negotiate care with neighbours, friends, that they knew and trusted.

A limited creche facility was made available by the Salford Women's Creche Project on the third Presentation Day because participants wanted to invite their partners, neighbours, friends to celebrate the end of their project, sharing with the people who normally cared for their children.

The lessons which can be learnt from supporting participants with childcare needs is that in the knowledge that their children are safe with trusted relatives or friends, anxieties are removed allowing freedom of thought and individual growth to be stimulated and developed.

Day Workshops.

In the second year of the programmes operation, the increasing number of Day Workshops which had replaced the residential provide a crucial source for collective discussion and information exchange. The workshop sessions were rightly structured and the content was developed and planned with the general consent of the participants. The workshops normally started at 10am and finished at 4pm. Participants brought their own sandwiches. The short break which was allocated for lunch was usually spent working. During the break, participants used the time to arrange meetings and visits with each other, have discussions with members of the staff group and complete expenses claims.

The workshops applied a variety of interactive techniques relevant to adult education.

Seminars	-	*regular meetings or small groups to exchange information.*
Tutorials	-	*individual or small group discussion.*
Role Play	-	*construction of a simulation exercise, eg. practice for an interview.*
Brainstorming	-	*small group exercise, use single words and short sentences to generate ideas about specific topic.*
Buzz groups	-	*very brief exercise in which 2 or 3 group members pool single words about a specific topic.*
Discussion	-	*exploratory conversation.*
Handouts	-	*sheets of information for reference.*

These methods were supplemented by the work of the students themselves who shared experiences, made visits to libraries and to other groups and organised meetings with statutory and voluntary organisations. The workshops focussed on project work and on the practical skills of problem-solving which allowed participants to apply knowledge based on their life experience.

> *"the emphasis for adults in education is on immediacy of application of knowledge, rather than postponed application of knowledge, therefore educational activities should be problem centred and not subject centred".[11]*

Residentials.

The residentials strengthened the group and made a valuable contribution to the personal development of all the participants.

Women in particular gained confidence from residential events. Away from labels of housewife and mother, they found space and identity.

The residential events also make a substantial contribution to the progress of the project work and provide an opportunity for a lengthy and careful review of the participant's project work.

For many participants, the residential is the first and only time they have been away on their own since they married. In answer to a question:

> *"What was different about the residential experience compared to your group sessions or working on your own at home?"*

one woman with four children replied:

> *"I had space to pursue time and space for myself, to pursue my own interests".*

Another woman wrote:

> *"...because everything is so intensive you could really concentrate on your project because there were no outside interferences".*

Because of the extended time they provide, residentials allow more flexibility and variety within the programme. Therefore it is easier to respond to the immediate needs of the participants. It is also easier to organise more concentrated workshop sessions

and experiment with different teaching methods.

The decision to include residential events in the Communities in Crisis programme is based on the knowledge that accelerated learning often takes place in a residential context and that bonding of groups working on a common task is significantly strengthened.

Contact With Groups In Between Workshops.

Consultation meetings to discuss project work with the Development Worker between workshops takes place as frequently as participants request.

My contact with the individual participating groups was fortnightly on average, some groups I met with weekly. Sometimes we met in cold uncomfortable Estate Offices or Community Shops, where a constant stream of people came and went. I also met them in their homes together with neighbours and children. What I do remember particularly was the meetings rarely happened without interruptions and as a non-smoker, I was conscious that the majority of participants smoked. However, we generally managed to work through the difficulties of structure, mental blocks about writing, (there was also a constant need to give reassurance) together with all the other problems which adults experience when they are asked to put their ideas on paper. There was also a need to give reassurance constantly. The completed projects provide

the evidence of this work which I shared with them.

Evaluation Exercises and Feedback.

Participants share planning of programme content through evaluation questionnaires completed at every event and during the discussions within the workshops. The information is used to develop the schemes of work in future workshops.

Planning and Development Group.

This group meets bi-monthly and the agenda includes items affecting the programmes development, for example funding, MSC visits, programme forward plans. The group encourages past participants of the programme to join the group.

Materials.

Handouts and flip chart sheets have produced the greatest source of materials for participants.

Information Pack.

The information pack was developed from the flip chart sheets which have been used in the sessions at the Day Workshops and Residentials. It is packaged in a ring binder which allows for updating and for additional sheets to be inserted.

Newsletter.

The newsletter provides a broad-cast of information and is

produced quarterly. Participants have shared in the production of the Newsletter. It allows them to familiarise themselves with cutting and sticking techniques and with photocopying and using other equipment associated with graphic production.

Presentation Day.

Presentation Day represents a celebration of achievement and the completion of an important project. The certificates have proved to be a valuable item and many participants have framed them and hung them up in the premises where they and their groups meet. They have also used them to show would-be employers.

Staff Resources.

For the Day Workshops held in Salford, the main staff resources for supporting participants and presenting workshop sessions have been drawn from the William Temple Foundation. At residentials the William Temple Foundation again provide the greatest resource but additional support is drawn in from Ruskin College and other relevant resources such as Greater Manchester Community Work Training Group, past participants, the Accreditation Unit etc.

Schemes of Work.

These were handouts which became particularly important in the second year of the programme. The scheme focussed on the timescale of the programme, that is 26 weeks. The dates of workshops and the residential were highlighted and the diagrams suggested deadlines for progressing the project work, for example researching, drafting, artwork, printing, presentation etc.

The Use of an Introductory Questionnaire for Potential Participants.

Following the experience of the early problems of recruitment, for the first programme in 1986, participants were subsequently asked to complete a simple questionnaire.

The questionnaire was in two parts and covered Community Activity and Employment. It was designed to provide an insight into participants community involvement and to give an indication and establish the strength of their commitment to their group. The questions also focussed on previous/present work experience, period of employment, what specific areas of skills learning the Communities in Crisis programme could provide and how these skills might be beneficial to employment prospects or further training.

The questions completed by 'core' participants, that is those who completed projects showed that:

	LENGTH OF MEMBERSHIP OF GROUP. (Shown in years)	LENGTH OF TIME UNEMPLOYED. (Shown in years).
A.	4	4
B.	1	4
C.	4	over 1 year
D.	3	over 1 year
E.	1	6
F.	1.5	5
G.	4	over 1 year
H.	3	5 (ill health)
I.	1.6	7 (ill health)
J.	1.6	6
K.	5	9
L.	1	6
M.	3	family commitments
N.	1.5	family commitments
O.	2	7.5
P.	1	5 (ill health)
Q.	3	over 1 year
R.	1	1
S.	2.5	3.5

<u>What the Participants Wanted From the Programme</u>.

In answer to the question: "Are you interested in gaining skills and information which would:

		YES	NO
a)	improve your employment prospects?	14	5
b)	improve your community work skills?	19	
c)	lead to further training?	17	

Of the five who gave a negative response to question (a), three participants had experienced long term medical treatment. The two remaining participants were responsible for young children. One of those has since taken a part-time job. The second of the two is planning to take a study course next September when her

youngest child will be accepted into the local nursery school.

Further information gathered from the questionnaire showed the wide range of commitment which participants shared in their community activities. This also indicates the wide range of skills which participants are using on a day-to-day basis in unpaid voluntary work.

How participants were employed:

Voluntary Work	-	*17*
Community Programme	-	*2*

Where participants were actively involved in the community:

The areas of voluntary work which participants listed in the questionnaire were:

- *Ex-serviceman's organisations: Royal British Legion*
- *Age Concern*
- *Mind*
- *Youth and Unemployed Groups*
- *Welfare Rights*
- *Police Liaison Committee*
- *Lay Advocacy Service*
- *Women's Centres*
- *Playgroups*
- *Gateway*
- *Local Authority Equal Opportunities Commission*

Position which participants held in their voluntary role:

- *Group Secretary*
- *Group Treasurer*
- *Co-ordinator*
- *Executive Committee Member*
- *Assistant Youth Leader*
- *Chair*
- *Advocate and Training Officer*
- *Creche Project Co-ordinator*
- *Counsellor*
- *Teachers Help*
- *Community Helper*

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please will you fill in the following details:

Your name .....
Address .....
.....
.....

1. *What is the name of the group you belong to?* .....

2. *How long have you been a member?* .....

3. *Have you been involved with other groups?* *YES/NO*

   If YES, which groups? .....
   How long? .....
   What posts have you held in any of these groups? .....

4. *What is your special interest? eg:* *Welfare Rights.*
   Housing.
   Estate Improvement.
   Womens Issues.
   Local Employment.

5. *Are you employed?* *YES/NO*

   If YES,
   What kind of work do you do? *CP.*
   Voluntary.
   If NO,
   How long have you been unemployed? .....

6. *Are you interested in gaining skills and information which would:*

   a) *Improve your employment prospects?* *YES/NO*
   b) *Community Work skills?* *YES/NO*
   c) *Lead to further training?* *YES/NO*

PLEASE RETURN WITH YOUR ACCEPTANCE NOTE.

NB: THIS INFORMATION IS CONFIDENTIAL.

Variations in Participant Involvement in Project Work.

Wherever possible participants are recruited and encouraged to work in pairs. However this wasn't always possible and below are some observations about the variations in participant working patterns which occurred during the three programmes.

Working in pairs.

Participants working in pairs generally create mutual support for each other. Two participants working together on a project will strengthen continuity. For example, if one of the partners is faced with a sudden domestic emergency and needs to take time to deal with it, for example, family illness, then the other participant is able to maintain progress and continue supporting the work of the project. If for any reason one half of the pair drops out totally, there is evidence of another member of the same group being prepared to fill the gap. This applied both to the Dumer's Lane and Chesham Fold Estate projects.

The group representatives working in pairs also often have different strengths to bring to the project work. In each pair there will probably be one person who is more confident about using writing skills than the other. In the exercise of sharing all planning activities, participants working in pairs also stimulate each other's creative skills.

'Core' participants working alone.

Each of the three programmes included participants who were working alone. In most cases these were individuals who were leading or trying to build or hold groups together. Within the group as a whole the majority of them were usually fairly dominant personalities.

The evidence produced during the programme seems to suggest that the women developing a project on their own were generally more articulate in the group than the men working alone on projects. One explanation for the difficulty of male participants could be that within all three 'core' groups, there was a majority of women. This could have created some discomfort for male participants. The superiority of female articulateness may also reflect the women participants enthusiasm towards being involved in a learning situation. Other reasons affecting male responses in the group may relate to the experiences both of work, more formal approaches to meetings, for example trade union involvement. Further explanation for the difference of gender performance may be explained in terms of experience of institutionalised employment, ie. traditional areas of employment in which the men would have worked, operate within rigid hierarchical structures. The majority of the male members of the 'core' group had until becoming employed, a record of regular

work over many years. The work environment produces many individual roles which have labels, for example machine minder, charge-hand, foreman, inspector. This suggests that decisions are frequently made and approved by a supervisor on a higher grade and that questions or creative thinking is not encouraged.

At least three main participants in the 'core' group had experienced military service and one other had been active over many years within a trade union. This suggests that the male members of the 'core' group were used to responding to a rule book and being directed or instructed. These experiences suggest they were not normally expected to make creative decisions or to discuss and share ideas with a larger group in an informal way.

In contrast the majority of women in the 'core' group had not experienced institutionalised employment for any length of time. This was because they were bringing up children. In general they were more free thinking, more creative and adventurous, and prepared to take risks. This is probably reflected in the choice of projects which is discussed more fully in the Outcomes section of the report.

Working in three's.

In two of the three programmes, the 'core' group included group representatives who wanted to work in three's. This last category applied to two groups of women working on women's health projects

in Langley Estate, Middleton, and Ashton-under-Lyne, Tameside. This decision reflected the women's early involvement in the formation of the groups.

In conclusion, throughout the MSC funding period, the Methodology has been carefully developed and has varied to meet the aims and objectives of participating groups and the funding body. Every attempt was made to ensure that the overall philosophy and resulting activity was designed to stimulate personal growth around the development of the project work.

CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNT.

The search for suitable funding can be problematic for a programme like Communities in Crisis because the aims of funders and those seeking funding can often conflict. In developing their proposal for funding, the William Temple Foundation had closely examined and considered the aims of the VPP development programme. They recognised and identified some positive strengths within the programme. Conflicts arose as government policies towards unemployed people hardened and MSC modified the aims of it's Development Programme accordingly. During the first year of the Communities in Crisis programme's operation the VPP monitoring officers increasingly emphasised the need for greater individual 'throughput', and 'positive progression'. These terms referred to the MSC VPP monthly statistical returns. The statistics showed how many unemployed individuals were involved in VPP funded projects (see diagram in Introduction section of the Report), who were 'positively progressing' to employment or other types of training.

The increasing pressure to process individual participants through the programme as quickly as possible conflicted severely with the agreed aims of Communities in Crisis which were committed to provide a 6-9 months programme of training which would benefit communities as a whole. Therefore whilst Communities in Crisis focussed its activities around collective

needs, MSC continued to state that too much emphasis was being placed on community work development and not enough on 'individual' development and hence the transition to employment or government training schemes. Accordingly, Communities in Crisis strengthened their existing approach to the employment and training sessions. Although these were alread, built into the programme in a general way, a 'job search strategy' was specifically developed. The sessions included developing CV's, role play interview exercises, letter writing, job search, etc.

A further conflict emerged at the end of the first year of funding when the monitoring officer suggested that funding for a further year would be easier to justify if Communities in Crisis increased its 'thoughput' of participants. After some negotiation a revised programme proposal was submitted and Communities in Crisis agreed to double the originally agreed number of participants. The modifications to the structure of the programme which were eventually agreed are described in detail in the section of the report which deals with Programme Structure.

Conclusions and Lessons Learnt.

During the three years of operation, VP: continually changed its aims and the main point of the conflict hinged on philosophical differences about approaches to motivating long-term unemployed adults. A recurring question emerged for the programme organisers, ie. was the emphasis of the Communities in Crisis

programme on the needs of participants, or was it just another government training scheme processing people through as quickly as possible?

Funders can justifiably be expected to take an interest in the projects which they fund, and from time to time request feedback on the project's progress. However, once a funding proposal has been agreed and its philosophy and aims have been accepted in principle, the organisers should be allowed to work within the agreed aims. The requests and pressures placed upon Communities in Crisis seemed particularly unpalatable at times because they were imposed unilaterally, and reflected a government employment policy insensitive to the disadvantages related to long-term unemployment. The impositions of MSC directives removed much of the sponsor's autonomy over the development of Communities in Crisis and undermined the philosophy of what is essentially a participant-led learning programme. Neither did the impositions take account of the extra pressures on the workers and resources, or the difficulties of managing and administering the revised programme.

However, not all the changes should be viewed negatively. For example, the development and inclusion of a 'Job Search Strategy' was welcomed by the majority of the participants. For most of them it was the first ever opportunity they had experienced to discuss developing a curriculum vitae or to have taken part in

interview and presentation role play exercises.

Finally MSC funding did allow the William Temple Foundation to run a complete fully-funded programme. Out of this experience some valuable lessons were learned.

Any future search for suitable sources of funding will seek out:

- *Funding bodies who are prepared to provide funds for at least a three year rolling programme. This would eliminate the uncertain stop-start pattern which has been the experience of MSC funding. A rolling programme would allow for more secure and longer term support for participants, and would allow Communities in Crisis to make a more regular and effective evaluation of its activities.*

- *Funding bodies who have a substantial and sensitive commitment to the broader aims of community development work which will contrast with the narrow individualistic approach to training adopted by MSC reflected in 'positive progressions'.*

- *Funding bodies who recognise the value of project based learning programme which allows participants to reflect upon their experience in the community.*

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Communities in Crisis

PROJECTS CATALOGUE

'A COMMUNITY UNDER THREAT
(- Inner Cities unite and win)

LILIAN TIMMS

- The Aid and Information Centre is constantly troubled by problems of maintaining funding. The report describes the politics of funding the voluntary sector and the setting up of the Salford Voluntary Sector Ailiance.

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LANGLEY AND MIDDLETON - WELL WOMEN CENTRE

EILEEN LEONARD
KAREN BARLOW

- Following a W.E.A. Women and Health Course in 1985, a small group of women continued to meet regularly. They felt strongly that there was a need for a centre where women could come for advice about Health and Welfare.

  The booklet describes their activities leading up to the acquisition of the premises. They have also included an example of a constitution and questionnaire which may be helpful to other groups.

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SALFORD CRECHE PROGRAMME

ISOBEL MOOR

- The project started as a voluntary service run by women for women who wanted to attend health education courses.

  Since 1983 the demand for the service has increased and in 1988 the project is about to be launched as a co-operative business providing paid employment for local women.

  In the booklet Isobel describes the processes and stages which led to the decision to become a co-operative enterprise.

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REPAIR SYSTEM IN CRISIS

ALAN BARLOW
JACKIE HAWORTH

- The report sets out to examine some aspects of the housing repair service. By providing case studies Alan and Jackie have produced evidence of need for change in the organisation of the repair service. Their aim has been to improve the service which tenant's receive and to persuade the Housing Department to amend the repair section of the Tenant's Handbook.

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THE WAY FORWARD FOR THE FORGOTTEN COMMUNITY

SU HARDMAN
AUDREY SIMCOCK

- Dumer's Lane Estate Tenant's and Resident's Group was set up by a Group of Women who wanted to improve the general amenities on the estate.

The activity of the group focussed on establishing a baby weighing clinic to be set up in the estate office to be set up in the estate office, which would eliminate the difficulties and expense of bus journeys. Audrey and Su describe the process that they made and the plans for the other community activities which they hope will develop in the estate office once the baby weighing clinic is established.

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A GOAL AND HOW TO ACHIEVE IT

RAY QUINN

- Higher Broughton Advice Centre has provided a service for the community since it opened in 1978.

Although it can claim to have dealt with hundreds of cases it has two particular problems.

- the lack of permanent funding
- the need for more volunteers

The booklet explains clearly, the role a constitution plays in a group and its importance for groups who are seeking substantial funding and grant aid from large organisations or local authorities.

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MEETING WOMEN'S NEEDS IN TAMESIDE
(- A Consultative Document)

LILLIAN CRANSWICK
CHRIS CLARKE
JULIA SIMKINS

- The well illustrated booklet focusses on the health needs of a women in Tameside. Information for the Consultative Document has been gathered from a wide spread of women's groups in Tameside. It is intended as a basis for further discussion and to provide evidence of need for a Women's Centre in Ashton Under Lyne.

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'BLOT ON OUR LANDSCAPE'
(Improving the safety of the community)

TERRY HAWORTH
PATRICIA GREEN

- The booklet clearly states the problem. The coloured plan shows the division of the Chesham Fold Estate by the M66 motorway.

Two children have been killed. The wall alongside the motorway which runs through the middle of the housing estate is a mere 5 feet high.

The only barrier in one place is an open wooden fence at the bottom of a grassed embankment. It is easy for children to get on to the motorway. The group initiated action and met with the local authority, Dept. of Environment and Transport. Sixty Six Thousand 66,000.00 was allocated to improve the environment and the group were asked to select the fencing themselves.

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THE WELFARE RIGHTS STALL IN SALFORD MARKET
(A Story of Grass Roots Success)

BOB McCARTHY

- The booklet traces the history of the stall since its birth in 1972. The stall is staffed by volunteers and funded by the local authority. An estimated 100 enquiries are dealt with each week and many of these have produced financial benefits and other improvements for local people.

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THE PLANNING AND ACHIEVEMENT OF A COMMUNITY GARDEN

IRENE EDGE

- The Langley Estate has been described as the largest overspill estate in Europe.

It is densely populated and managed by two different Housing Authorities - Manchester City and Rochdale M.B.C.

The open space around the three storey Tower Blocks was an area where rubbish collected and dogs roamed. The residents decided to ask for some improvements. They put their case and arranged some meetings, studied some landscaping plans and achieved a Community Garden costing 25.000 and created some local employment.

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PROGRESS
BORWICH UNEMPLOYED GROUP

BERNARD GREGSON

- The group formed in 1986 and was pioneered by six people who had suffered redundancy following the closure of the British Rail Workshops. There aim was to create 'an association for the benefit of the unemployed'.

  The booklet describes their search for funding and for a more convenient and and convivial meeting place - an alternative to the 'dank, dirty and dreary' premises which they rented from British Rail.

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DEALING WITH DRUGS

PAUL WATSON

- The use of illegal drugs in inner city housing estates is a growing problem. The Information Pack is an attempt to provide the local community with factual information about drug misuse. It is also intended to help families and local support groups who are having to deal with misuse.

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THE ELDERLY IN SALFORD
A SURVEY OF LOCAL AUTHORITY PROVISION

JOHN NODEN

- It is 40 years approximately since the Blue print for Welfare State was published promising care 'from the cradle to the grave'.

The survey predicts what the needs of the elderly will be 40 years from now in the year 2008. The first part contains many local statistics about existing provision in Salford. The second part is a practical directory for the use of elderly groups. It contains information about Welfare, Housing, Health and Leisure. It has been widely distributed throughout the district.

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PLAYING SAFE IN CHESHAM FOLD

JACKIE HAWORTH
SHEILA BRADSELL

- Chesham Fold is the same estate which experienced the Motorway Hazard.

Mothers on the Estate were concerned that there were no designated play areas on the Estate and successfully negotiated for the provision of two Play Areas. They were involved at every stage of planning and visited other play grounds around Manchester to gather information.

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STARTING OUT

DOREEN MITCHELL
CHRIS CONNELL

- 'Starting Out' is a practical book which provides clear information about organisation. It should be of use to newly formed groups. It considers the difficulties and problems which new groups frequently encounter.

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LEAVING CARE AND LIVING IN LANGLEY

FRANK O'CONNELL

- This is another Information Pack. It is aimed at young people who have been in care. Many young people who have been in the care of Manchester Social Services find themselves housed in Langley Estate. They know no one and nothing about the local areas. The collator of the information has the experience of being in care from 6 weeks to the age of 18 years. The contents were based on his own experience of leaving care.

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SUDS - A WOMEN'S CO-OPERATIVE LAUNDERETTE

LIZ PANTON

- This booklet describes the acquisition of a local authority launderette after it had been closed. A group of Salford Women who wanted to provide the community with a much needed service formed a workers co-operative. They also provide information about Welfare Rights and tea and coffee to the users.

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WOMEN IN NEED

FRANCES ALEXANDER
DIANA WRAY

- This records the struggle of a women's group in the Springs Estate Bury, to obtain premises for a women's centre on the estate. The estate houses many young single parent mothers who feel isolated and the women's group aims to encourage them to use the centre for a drop in initially and then to take advantage of health and literacy courses. The Centre has also become a focus for local residents wanting Welfare Rights Advice.

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IMPROVING THE SECURITY OF TOWER BLOCKS
(A Report and Video)

TONY LOWE

- The well researched report examines the growing problems of maintaining security in the Hattersley Tower Blocks.

Tony travelled to other tenant's organisations to gather information about the methods which were being adopted in other areas.

The report was submitted to the Manchester City Council Housing for their consideration and recommendation.

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RESURRECTING THE TENANT'S AND RESIDENTS FEDERATION

EDITH ABEL
ANN HORROCKS

- Initially Edith and Anne were concerned with the difficulties of producing a regular news letter and were trying to obtain the use of a photocopier and duplicator. They were encouraged to approach the local authority and other organisations and were successful. Having been successful they looked at other problems which the Federation experienced. In particular with the building in which they were housed. They persuaded a local benefactor to let them have accommodation in Champress Hall Rochdale. They approached the local authority for help with rent and decorating materials. They also acquired a word processor and computer. These achievements all occured within 6 months of joining the C.I.C. programme.

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BIRCHWOOD - IT'S PRESENT AND ITS FUTURE

JOSIE MELLOR

- The Development Corporation is winding down and in their booklet Josie draws attention to the difficulties for tenant's when they first move to overspill development areas. They lack communal amenities and meeting places and there is a problem in trying to create the feeling of a community.

  The Community Association was finally formed, but almost as soon as they began to make progress the termination of the Development Corporation was announced.

  Once more residents were known into turmoil and confusion as they wondered who to negotiate with and who would be responsible for services in the future.

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BREAKING DOWN THE ISOLATION IN THE COMMUNITY

CELIA MOODY
KEN WALKER

- The project describes the activies and growth of a reminiscence group in Hattersley.

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