

# ***Principles of Community Development***

Principles of community development are known as the codes of ethics, rules and regulations and lines of action which a community worker has to keep in his/her mind for a balanced and successful progress of the community. These principles of community development are as follows:

## **1) Principle of Acceptance or Recognition of Dignity of Community People:**

As we know that the community where a professional social worker is appointed consists of different types of people e.g. some capitalists, some poor, some rich, some criminals, etc. Therefore, the demand of this principle is that if anyone of them, individual or group of individuals, comes to the worker to seek help, he/she should accept them with all of their potentialities, qualities and deficiencies without any distinction of race, caste, creed, colour, tongue and nature of their profession.

The worker should keep in his/her mind that all the human beings are consisted of flesh, blood and bones. The difference is only that he/she is with a problem. That is why, it is said that the value of community development is deep-rooted in the recognition of the dignity of each individual of the community. It means the community worker must accept the community as it is and should get him/herself accepted by the community too. This can be done by entering the community without any preconceived notion and by meeting various socio-cultural groups and sub-groups of the community through their leaders. Moreover, the community worker should have firm belief in the initiatives and potentialities of the community people to raise the standard of their life through their own efforts.

## **2) Principle of Participation of Local People:**

No doubt a community worker has much knowledge, professional skills and a lot of experience, but he is not much familiar with the changing problem as an individual of the community. While the community people know hundred times better about the such existing problems than any outsider. That is why, this principle puts much stress on the active participation of community people in the programme designed to promote their well-being.

This is so because the problem deals with them and the worker has to work with them not for them. Moreover, this principle ensures achievement of the targets and objectives to a great extent.

## **3) Principle of Self-help:**

Community development rests on the principle of self-help. The underlying assumption is that every community has latent resources and potentialities which can be activated and mobilized for its self-improvement. Because sometimes the problems can be solved by the community people but they do not about the solution of these problems just because they have no proper guidance, interest and knowledge. Therefore, in such situations, the community worker's role should be just to provide them the proper guidance and information about the solution of their problems rather than trying to solve them him/herself. As this

principle of self help believes that if community people began to help themselves they can face any challenge of life at any moment without relying on external aid.

Moreover, this principle is of great importance especially for the developing countries which have limited resources but unlimited problems. These countries are not in a position to visit the problems of individuals door to door. Therefore, they are taken at community level and on self help basis their welfare can be secured easily.

#### **4) Principle of Self Determination:**

Community development believes that community people have the complete right to determine their own course of action for the solution of their problems. Because as we know that the community people know their needs and resources better than any outsider. So the community worker should provide them full freedom in respect of the determination of their needs and problems, and resources and plans of action.

He/she should not impose his/her own views on them. Rather he/she should just create awareness among the people about their problems and about all the proper and possible solutions of these problems. Then after fixing the priorities final decisions should come from the community. As it will create ownership on the part of the community people, they will take part in the process of community development with great enthusiasm and, hence, in this way achievement of their targets will become highly assured.

#### **5) Principle of Felt Needs:**

Community development believes in the principle that the programme should grow out of the felt and expressed needs of the community people. Because a community is much more likely to undertake and carry on a programme which is designed to meet its felt and expressed needs. While the programme which is not according to their needs, has very little chances of being undertaken by them. It is not only democratically desirable but also psychologically sound that people are likely to participate in a programme connected with their life. Therefore, every programme of community welfare should be according to the needs and desires of the community people.

#### **6) Principle of Equal Opportunities for All:**

Community development believes in the democratic principle of providing equal opportunities to all sections of the people, irrespective of any difference of caste, creed, colour, age and sex. Because if any section of the community population is ignored and left behind, balanced development of the community cannot be ensured. Therefore, it is the duty of the community worker to make such plans or programmes which provide a chance to every individual of the community to use these programmes for his/her own welfare.

#### **7) Principle of Participation of Local Leadership:**

A professional community worker should keep in his/her mind that he/she is an outsider or stranger in the community. So without the participation of local leadership i.e. key persons of the community, he/she will not be able to find out different types of needs and problems and sources and resources of that community. Therefore, first of all, he/she will have to conduct a

meeting with the local leadership of the community and convince them of his/her purpose. Only in this way he/she will be able to conduct survey of the community which forms the basis of planning and then execution of his/her plan.

### **8) Principle of Co-ordination:**

Coordination of people working for development is very necessary, otherwise, we cannot get the fruitful results of any effort. Because when balanced development of community is the goal of community then coordinated action is essential. Because if the efforts are scattered, they cannot contribute much to the uplift of local community. Therefore, the people should have integration about the programme of community worker. They should have the bond of coordination to make any decision so that there should be no overlapping or clash of the programme with those already existing in the community.

### **9) Principle of Consistency with Cultural Values:**

Each community has its own specific cultural values which have great importance for the community people. They consider them their glory and do not like to deviate from them. Because of this reason it is said that these values have much to do in the acceptance or rejection of a welfare programme. So if the community worker wants to secure his/her goals with the limited resource and time, he/she should start every programme in accordance with these cultural values, otherwise, it is likely to be rejected by the people of the community where it is to be executed and the community worker will never be able to achieve his/her goals.

### **10) Principle of Integration of Public and Private Efforts:**

Community development aims at facilitating better coordination between public and private efforts. So that there should be no over lapping or clash of services with others already existing in the same community or area.

### **11) Principle of Utilization of Community Resources:**

Community development puts much emphasis on the utilization of available resources of the community. Because its ultimate objective is to promote well-being of the community through proper utilization of all its available resources.