**EXERCISE 14.1: RECAP AND INTRODUCTION TO UNIT 14**

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| **Activities: 120 mins** |
| Before this unit starts, change the seating arrangement. If you have usually met in a circle, arrange seats in small rows with your chair at the front or in little groups with you as part of one. If you have been sitting in a circle of easy chairs, put class-room type chairs round a table if you have them. The point is to change the physical atmosphere in some way. Don’t remark on this when people come in. If they try to change it, just say you want to keep it like that for this unit (you will refer to it later).  Give out the session notes from the last unit and recap briefly on what was covered.  Give participants an outline of the programme for the session. This unit will look at some of the aspects of working in groups. Community development work happens collectively, so learning more about groups will be very useful.  Remind people of the discussion in Unit 1 when we looked at the basic characteristics of groups. We looked at how groups are complicated because they are two things at the same time:   * They are a collection of individuals, all with their own ideas, hopes and fears. * They also have their own collective identity, which is different from other groups.   Ask people if they remember the other exercise we did in Unit 1 about our hopes and concerns about doing this course? This was done at the beginning to help all members to have a go at expressing themselves as individuals and for the entire group to see what everyone felt.  If the individual bit had been missed out and we had gone straight into asking the whole group for their opinions, what might have happened?  It is likely that the more confident people would have spoken up and others might simply have agreed with them.  Some people might have felt their ideas were silly or not as good as someone else’s or been swayed by someone else. Either way, we wouldn’t have heard all the different ideas which made for such a rich discussion. Sometimes it’s good to let each member have a chance to write down their own thoughts and then share them, as they have done in a lot of exercises on this course.  This is why groups are complex and why such passions and emotions can exist in groups.  All kinds of things have an effect on how groups function. For example, the layout of the room where the group is meeting. Ask people how they felt about the arrangement of the chairs today. Why do these things matter? How can we arrange the room so that it feels better? A circle enables everyone to see and hear each other and includes everyone equally. |

**EXERCISE 14.2: TASK AND PROCESS**

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| **Activities: 60 mins** |
| Ask people to think about groups they have been in - any kind of group e.g. parent and toddlers, night class, family holiday, work etc. Think of the kinds of things which made it a good experience and those that made it a bad experience. Take 5-10 minutes to make some notes.  Using a flipchart, write up the bad experiences first and then on another sheet, the good ones. Put the two sheets side by side and ask the group to see if there are opposites - for example, being listened to and not being listened to. In this way the group can work out the most important features of what makes a group work well.  If you feel comfortable doing this, you could ask how people have found this group? Have there been times when someone has felt left out or frustrated or stupid? Stress that we all feel like this sometimes - it’s not that everyone is confident and comfortable. Some sharing of feelings helps to reduce people’s anxieties, talking about it makes us feel more like others and therefore a bit closer.  So far we’ve talked about how we feel in groups. This is the crucial bit and it usually lies below the surface of most groups. If people are not comfortable together it’s very hard to get things done. This aspect of a group is sometimes called the ‘group process’ - the way feelings emerge and are dealt with, how people feel about each other and about what the group is doing.  Usually, unless a group is about group relationships, it has come together for a purpose. People want to achieve something or get something done. Getting things done is sometimes called ‘the task’ of the group.  If the ‘process’ of the group is not attended to, it can affect the way the group works. Think of groups you have been in, where it seemed impossible to make a decision or it drifted into people chatting or drinking. Or perhaps there was a lot of fighting and conflict between people that was not really addressed.  Unless people want to meet purely socially, there has to be some thought about how the group can achieve its aims. People need to feel that the outcome is worth the effort and can gain some satisfaction from seeing this happen.  Look again at the flipchart of good and bad experience of groups. How many of these were process things and how many were tasks? |

**EXERCISE 14.3: ROLE PLAY EXERCISE – TASK AND PROCESS**

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| **Activities: 75 mins** |
| Outline to the group that the next exercise will involve them in a role play exercise that should demonstrate not only the tension between task and process but also the different functions take on by different group members.  Ask for 2 volunteers to act as observers. Give them each a copy of H14.3A – Group Work Tasks and spend 5 minutes briefing them on what they should be looking out for using the elements indicated on the handout. All the elements on the handout are positive or constructive – observers should also look out for anyone being negative or destructive within the group.  Now give out H14.3B to all group members and allow them a couple of minutes to take on board what is expected of them. Check with everyone that they understand what is required and tell them that they have 30 minutes to complete the task. During the exercise the observers should try and move round so they can see people’s faces and any non-verbal communication that’s going on!  Stop the exercise after 30 minutes whether or not they’ve completed it. Allow all the participants 2 or 3 minutes to come out of ‘role’ – a group hug is often a good way of doing this!  Give out H14.3A to all the role players. Ask the observers firstly to feedback what they saw, how the group functioned, what roles did different people take on, how did the task affect the process and vice versa. Note up key points on the flipchart.  Now ask group members how they felt during the exercise. Did they perceive themselves as taking on roles? Were there any frustrations for them? Did the task take over everything? Or were they more concerned about the process?  Conflict can arise in groups, often when the balance between task and process is not right, or when there are particular differences of opinion/ clashes of personality between group members. It is important to realise that conflict need not always be destructive; sometimes it can be a catalyst for positive change. Early recognition of conflict or potential conflict is important – as this can help the group to sort things out, address problems and make positive changes before the conflict builds into something that is destructive and cannot be resolved.  Are there any experiences that group members can think of where conflict wasn’t dealt with appropriately and this led to even bigger problems for the group? What kind of action could have been taken to deal with the situation?  Point out that the ‘tension’ between task and process is crucial to groups. Groups need to have tasks to complete and goals to aim for but they also need to be worthwhile and enjoyable. Getting the balance right is what makes for a good group. |

**EXERCISE 14.4: ASSESSING COMMUNITY GROUP STRENGTHS**

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| **Activities: 60 mins** |
| The purpose of this exercise is to get course members to think about what makes a strong effective community group and a chance to consider how their group, if they are a member of one, could be more effective.  If participants aren’t part of any other group they may wish to use the Course Group as their example. The basis of this exercise is from the SCORE framework developed by the Scottish Community Development Centre (2009). You may want, for your own reference, to look at the Community Strengths section of this framework before delivering this exercise.   1. Split the group into two and ask them to come up with their view of the following question (15 minutes)   What would the characteristics of a strong community group be? Get them to write answers on post its  Use two flipchart pages to split responses between: internal factors which relate solely to the groups internal functioning and its relationship with their specific community and external factors which would be about the relationship it has with other organisations both voluntary and statutory. Facilitate discussion around the different factors identified and agree a final list of what the most important factors are.   1. Now ask the group to consider how they would rate their group against the factors identified. On a scale of 1-6 (with 1 being weak and 6 being very strong) they should try and score how well their own group does against all these factors. It’s important to emphasise that most groups are somewhere in the middle e.g. a group may have a strong committee who express their views very forcefully, but they may be less good at involving a wide range of people in what they do. Give out Handout C and ask the group to compare these factors with the list they have identified. (25 minutes) 2. Finally, ask them to critically consider what the strengths and weaknesses of their group are and if there are weaknesses, how could they be addressed. (20 minutes). |

**EXERCISE 14.5: COMMUNITY RESEARCH PROJECT - UPDATE**

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| **Activities: 30 mins** |
| Ask each Community Research Group to spend a few minutes updating on progress with their projects.  Once this has been done decide on next steps, what still needs to be done and timescales for completion of the remaining tasks. It might be useful to use a timeline for this particularly if there is still a fair bit of work to be done on some of the Projects. You also need to look at the timing of Unit 15 (if you’ve not already done so) and set a date that will allow everyone to have their projects complete and their presentations ready. |

**EXERCISE 14.6: RECAP AND SUMMARY**

**(15 mins)**

Spend a few minutes recapping on the main points covered today referring to the flipcharts if necessary:

• Task and Process

• Dealing with Conflict

• Assessing community group strengths

Give out the Learning Log 14 and allow participants time to fill this in before they leave.