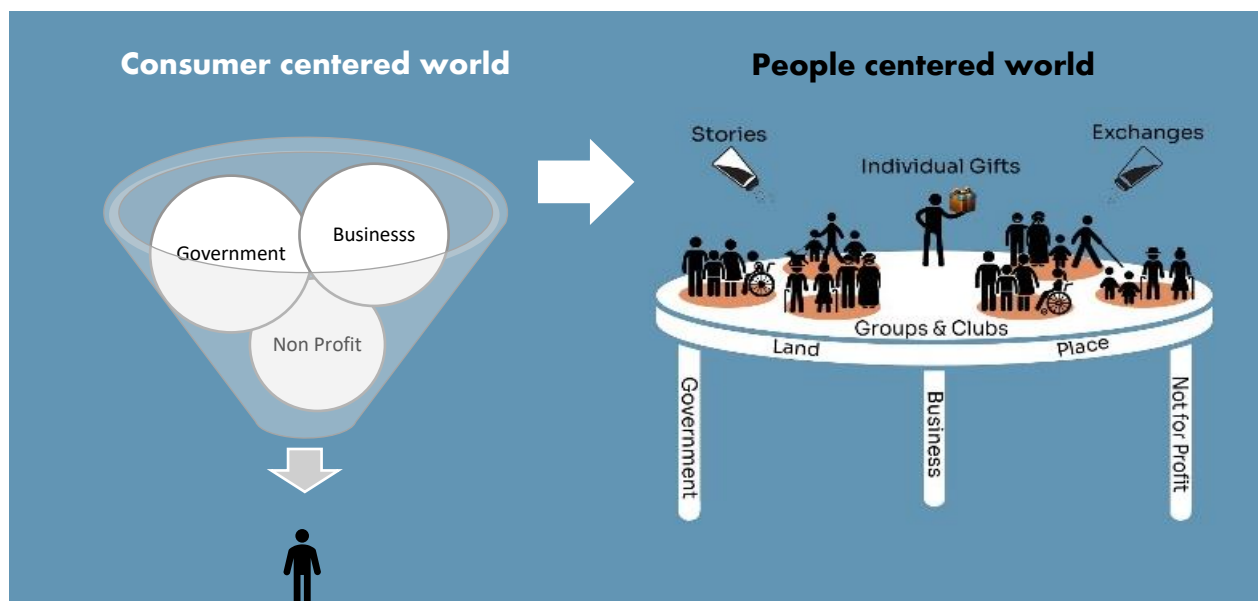


TOOL | ASSET BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AT A GLANCE

WHAT IS ASSET BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT?

The power of “Asset Based Community Development” (ABCD) is in its focus on individual and community assets. It starts by identifying and leveraging people’s gifts and strengths which equip communities with the skills and tools needed to create local opportunities. This allows us to respond to the particular needs and challenges in our neighbourhoods. ABCD goes beyond any individual’s gifts or group’s strengths. Rather, it considers how those gifts and strengths can be combined to create broader changes for the common good within a given community.

A deficit-based approach starts by identifying deficits and needs, whereas ABCD identifies and builds upon community assets and strengths. ABCD empowers individuals and groups to come together, with institutions as support when required, to develop their strengths. This fosters collaboration to build upon the identified assets of all involved, from everyday citizens to community changemakers, to businesses and government bodies.



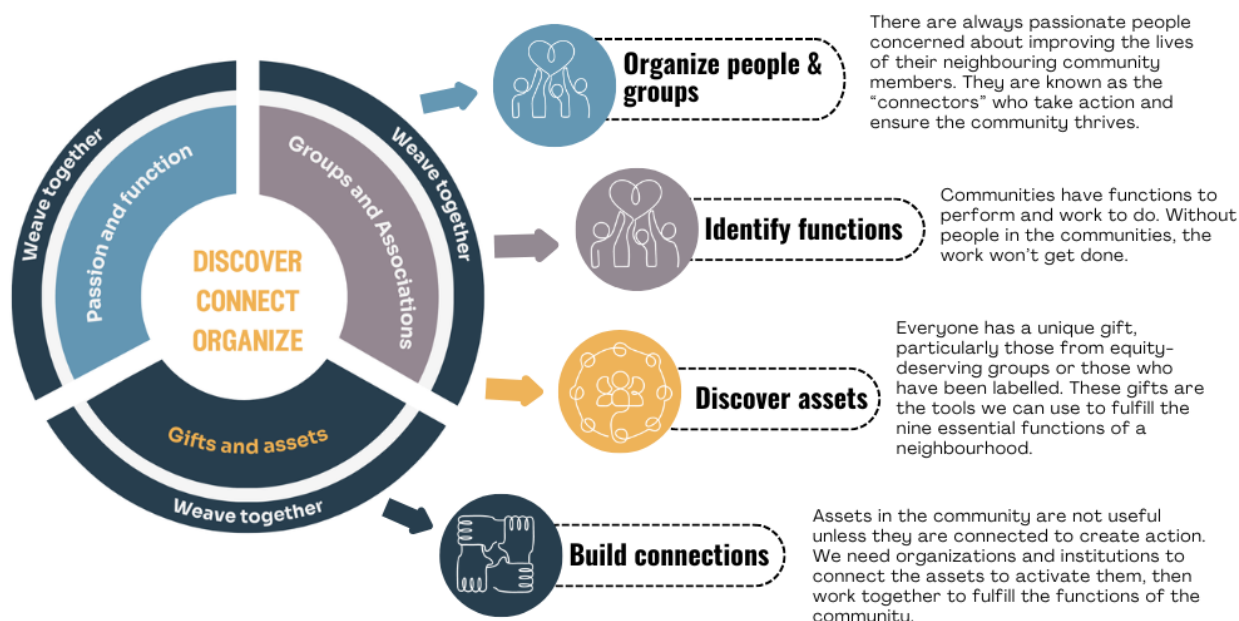
VALUES BEHIND ABCD

- **Starts with gifts:** *Assets and strengths, not deficits and needs.*
- **Nurture community-led action:** When people in a community act together, they demonstrate their own power and leadership and can bring about positive change.
- **Build relationships for mutual support:** ABCD believes that relationships are the core of flourishing communities.
- **Include everyone:** ABCD does not just invite people to the table but builds a new table where everyone has a true place.
- **Lead by stepping back:** ABCD shines a light on residents' power to contribute to and make decisions in their communities.
- **Value small:** ABCD values small, grassroots, resident - driven approaches that use stories as the basis for learning, sharing and acting for change.
- **Believe in possibility:** ABCD is rooted in hope. People in communities, even in extreme situations, can use their gifts to imagine ways to create change.

NINE FUNCTIONS OF A COMMUNITY

- Enabling Health
- Assuring Security
- Stewarding Environment
- Shaping local Economies
- Contributing to local food production
- Raising our Children
- Co creating Care
- Celebration
- Inclusiveness

Four Actions to Build an ABCD World



HOW IS ABCD DIFFERENT FROM OTHER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT METHODS?

| | Deficit-Based | Asset-Based |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| Purpose | Changing community through increased services. | Changing community through citizen involvement. |
| Accountability | Leaders are professionals and staff are accountable to institutional shareholders and supporting partners | Leaders are widening circles of volunteer citizens who are accountable to the community. |
| Role of Assets | Assets are system inputs. Asset mapping is data collection. | Assets are relationships to be discovered and connected. Asset-mapping is self-realization and leadership development. |
| Resources | Money is the key resource. Falls apart without money. | Relationships are the key resource. Falls apart when money becomes the focus. |
| Operating Challenge | How do we get people involved? | How do we channel and build on people participation? |
| System Dynamic | Tends to spread itself thinner over time. | Tends to gain momentum over time. |
| Evaluation | Success is service outcomes, measured mostly by institutional partners and shareholders. | Success is capacity, measured mostly by relationships. |

Source: Dan Duncan, ABCD Institute Faculty

RESOURCES AND ARTICLES TO DIVE DEEPER:

- [ABCD in Canada website](#)
- [ABCD Institute US website](#)
- [Using ABCD to put a community plan together](#)
- [Four actions to build an ABCD world](#)
- [A Citizen-Centred Culture: A tale of Two Neighbourhoods](#)
- [Differentiating the functions of Institutions and Associations: A geometry lesson](#)
- [Principles and Practices of ABCD webinar](#)



The ABCD Planning Process

We ask these questions in order:

1. As neighbours, what can we achieve by using our own assets?
2. What can we achieve with our own assets if we get some outside help?
3. What can't we do with our assets that must be done by outsiders?

Starting with the first question is important! Starting with the second or third questions usually results in residents not being strongly involved and less sustainable initiatives.