

Name of Exercise: Shell Better Britain Campaign

Location: Whole of the United Kingdom

Participation Exercise under which Article? *Capacity Building*

Purpose of Participation Exercise:

The Shell Better Britain Campaign supports a UK-wide network of over 25,000 groups, to encourage more effective local action for sustainable development through partnership and joint working.

Background

The Shell Better Britain Campaign (SBBC) dates back to 1970. It was set up as part of Shell UK's community investment programme. It was originally targeted at supporting physical environmental improvement projects by communities, such as pond creation, tree planting and litter clear-ups. Following the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, SBBC evolved to embrace the broader issue of sustainable development. It now helps communities to understand what this means at local level and supports local action programmes.

Network

A SBBC network has been created with free membership to any individual or group. It is targeted at those who are part of local community groups such as community centre management committees, parent and toddler groups. In addition many people working in community support organisations are also members. To date 25,000 people have applied to join the Network.

The aim of the network is to help connect up groups, to share ideas and experiences and help build capacity at the local level.

Interactive newsletter

A 20 page magazine is circulated to all network members five times a year. It is full of project examples, funding news, issues and articles, many written by network members. It also provides the opportunity for feedback to the Campaign.

Information Sheets

A catalogue of over 150 information sheets is available on issues, processes, ideas for community groups e.g. setting up a community composting scheme; evaluating your project; securing funds. The emphasis is on providing a simple briefing with effective contact details for further information and more detailed briefing.

Project Profiles

These are case study examples of local projects, mainly funded by SBBC. These highlight real examples of what can be achieved by local people in the community. Examples include a set of community based sustainability indicators, village visioning project, a gardening for health programme.

Grant Funds

There are three key funds:

- **Community Projects Fund** invests £150,000 per annum in 150 local projects that demonstrate good practice on community action e.g. setting up a community furniture recycling scheme;
- **Partnership Innovation Fund** invests £70,000 per annum on 10 key projects aimed at bringing organisations together to work on a sustainability issues that will have widespread potential for implementation at the community level; and
- **Interactive Connect** invests £10,000 in bursaries to enable network members to learn from each other's experiences.

Events

SBBC organises, supports and is involved with a range of events designed to encourage contact between Network members. For example, in 1998 a 'Spring into Action' road-show was attended by over 1,000 people at 21 workshops based a projects demonstrating best practice for sustainable development.

Structure

Quest Environmental Development, an independent 'not for profit' company, runs the campaign on behalf of Shell UK. A total of 6 people are engaged full time in delivering the Campaign. The total budget for delivering all aspects of the programme is £600,000 (USD 1,000,000 per year). This is donated by Shell UK.

Commentary

The Campaign is an unusual but powerful example of corporate community investment in sustainable development activity. The success to date of the Campaign is due to:

- an emphasis on capacity building to enable groups to enable themselves to take action;
- free access to information and support;
- grants made as a direct financial investment in local action with the sharing of lessons as the 'pay back';
- the network offers the potential for a rich range of interactions across sectors and issues;
- ability to cover all aspects of the sustainability agenda that reflect community interests, rather than being limited to particular issues such as energy or biodiversity; and
- no requirement to be 'the voice' for Shell on its actions for sustainable development – it is largely independent of Shell.

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