

Beyond 2015: Shaping the future of equality, human rights and social justice (12 and 13 February 2015)

Session 6: How do we get there? How adequate are existing frameworks for analysing inequality?

Discussion notes

In plenary discussion after speaker presentations, the following points were made and issues addressed:

- The future of UK society is about acknowledging and learning from the differences that exist within the four nations. For example in Scotland, we have many good examples and many bad examples from which we can learn.
- We should consider what it is that influences behaviour and how do we appeal to people's core sense of values.
- The NGO sector is fragmented with various insider and outsider groups. Insider groups have greater access to financial resources and publicity in the media which is at the expense of the more marginalised outsider groups. The sector needs to have a difficult conversation about privilege and the advantages which are limited to some.
- You need both insider and outsider roles. You need people who are on the inside but you also need people kicking up a fuss, and people whose funding is under threat can't afford to be critical, but others can. You need to have an explicit conversation about that recognising we all have different roles and that all of those are equally important.
- There is a huge amount of scope for this sector to look at values theory and all the evidence that is out there on how values work. There is a huge gap in the sector and it would be good to see more work on this.
- We should be focusing on the actual practices that we implement. People can talk the talk, but they don't necessarily follow through when getting down to business.
- Values inspire us; they make us see things in a different way. We don't always operate on the basis of our values. We should think about how to build popular traction for solidarity, democracy, freedom and dignity and to draw them out
- Maybe we spend too much time trying to influence 'important' people!
- Experiencing multiple forms of discrimination can have an absolutely catastrophic effect on your mental health and affect people's psychological wellbeing.
- We should develop a new model which puts people at the centre, rather than what we are doing now which is more top down and technical.
- We need to mobilise the people who think everything is fine to help combat a hostile environment.
- We need to be bold about what we do want, rather than only fighting to protect what we have got.