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The **Toolkit for Linking** is available at the

UKOWLA (United Kingdom One World Linking Association) website: www.ukowla.org.uk

BUILD (Building Understanding through International Links for Development) website: www.build-online.org.uk

Copies of the Toolkit for Linking are available from the UKOWLA office for £15.00 plus 20% postage and packing.

For further information on how to obtain a copy of the Toolkit contact:

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The **Toolkit for Linking: Opportunities and Challenges** draws on the wealth of existing materials on linking published by UKOWLA and other organisations. A full list of resources is available on the UKOWLA website.

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UKOWLA is a charity formed in 1984 to support community-based organisations around the UK that have international partnership links in other parts of the world particularly in Africa, Asia, Caribbean and Latin America. UKOWLA acts as the secretariat to BUILD. www.ukowla.org.uk

BUILD is a coalition of 50 international, mainly UK-based organisations and advocates at national and international level e.g. through Government, Commonwealth and UN, on behalf of international cross-cultural partnerships. BUILD promotes good practice and develops its spread of influence across all sectors of society. www.build-online.org.uk

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Introduction to Toolkit on Linking

What is linking?

Linking is the process by which communities across the world form sustained partnerships. These may be at many different levels from twinned towns and cities to youth groups, health institutions, colleges and schools.

An ideal community link is a link between the people at the grassroots in communities in one country with another country.

Linking ideally involves people to people contact, leading to equal, mutually beneficial relationships across cultures, with the aim of understanding the reality of each others' lives, and thereby contributing to changes in both of their societies.

There are common activities involved in starting a link, whatever the size of the organisation, and there are a number of issues which affect all links at some stage. Whatever the similarities or differences in the size and nature of the communities involved it is generally small networks of people that sustain the link.

Linking should be guided by the principles of equality, mutuality, reciprocity, honesty, critical thinking and reflection.

Linking is a rewarding activity, but it is a complex process which demands a substantial commitment of energy, time, patience and resources to be successful.

Toolkit for Linking Opportunities and Challenges

There are community groups, institutions of every kind and local authorities, who have heard what a link with another, probably culturally different community can achieve. They may also have heard how such a link brings considerable benefits to both sides. *The Toolkit for Linking* is intended to provide guidance for those considering linking as well as to support existing links.

The *Toolkit for Linking: opportunities and challenges* aims to:

- explore the issues involved in linking from different perspectives;
- indicate ways in which linking can increase social cohesion and become more inclusive;
- improve the wider educational value of linking and thus make them more sustainable;
- strengthen and build the capacity of: community groups, schools, local authorities, hospitals, faith based and ethnic minority and other groups involved in links;
- encourage the questioning and review of existing links

Background: This *Toolkit* incorporates advice and comment from many of the linking publications which already exist and benefits from contributions by individuals who have been involved in linking for many years.

Format: The *Toolkit* is made up of a series of core leaflets each with a set format. There is information on the front page, comments relating to the debate and process inside and points for action on the back page. Each leaflet will have a particular relevance at different times in the process. The leaflets pose questions which have arisen out of a large number of discussions and situations among groups which are going through the naturally delicate, complex and often fraught process of establishing and maintaining a link.

Additional leaflets: The *Toolkit* is supplemented by a series of leaflets on several specific interest sectors.

Website: The leaflets can be found on both the UKOWLA (United Kingdom One World Linking Association) and BUILD (Building Understanding through International Links for Development) websites. The leaflets are available as downloads in pdf and word format. Additional information on linking, including examples taken from active links can also be found on the websites.

The *Toolkit* is not intended as the definitive resource on linking, but as a constantly evolving and developing interactive tool.

The Toolkit for Linking: opportunities and challenges is published in an age of easier worldwide communication and at a time when the need for understanding of others' perspectives and views has never been greater. The Toolkit is intended as a resource to be used by communities and individuals around the world who are considering or are already involved in the development of international community-based linking (twinning) partnerships.

There is increasing recognition around the world of the potential for local to local international partnerships to contribute to learning and development, that is creating a global society where everyone can have a say in how their community and the world are run. Increasing awareness of global issues which affect us all can demonstrate that people can and must make a difference and contribute to a more just and sustainable world.

The *Toolkit* is a culmination of a process of review, consultation and collaboration with people across the world and as a result is designed for use by any group anywhere. Although originating in the UK the Toolkit does not come from one viewpoint. It is also designed in such a way so as to be flexible and easily amended in response to suggestions, ideas and reflections. The leaflets are all seen to be of importance at different stages in the development of a partnership anyone of which may be relevant at a particular moment in time.

We hope that you will find it useful and will consider contributing your thoughts and suggestions to its further development.

Margaret Burr
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Toolkit for Linking: Opportunities and Challenges

Introduction to the Toolkit

Core Leaflets

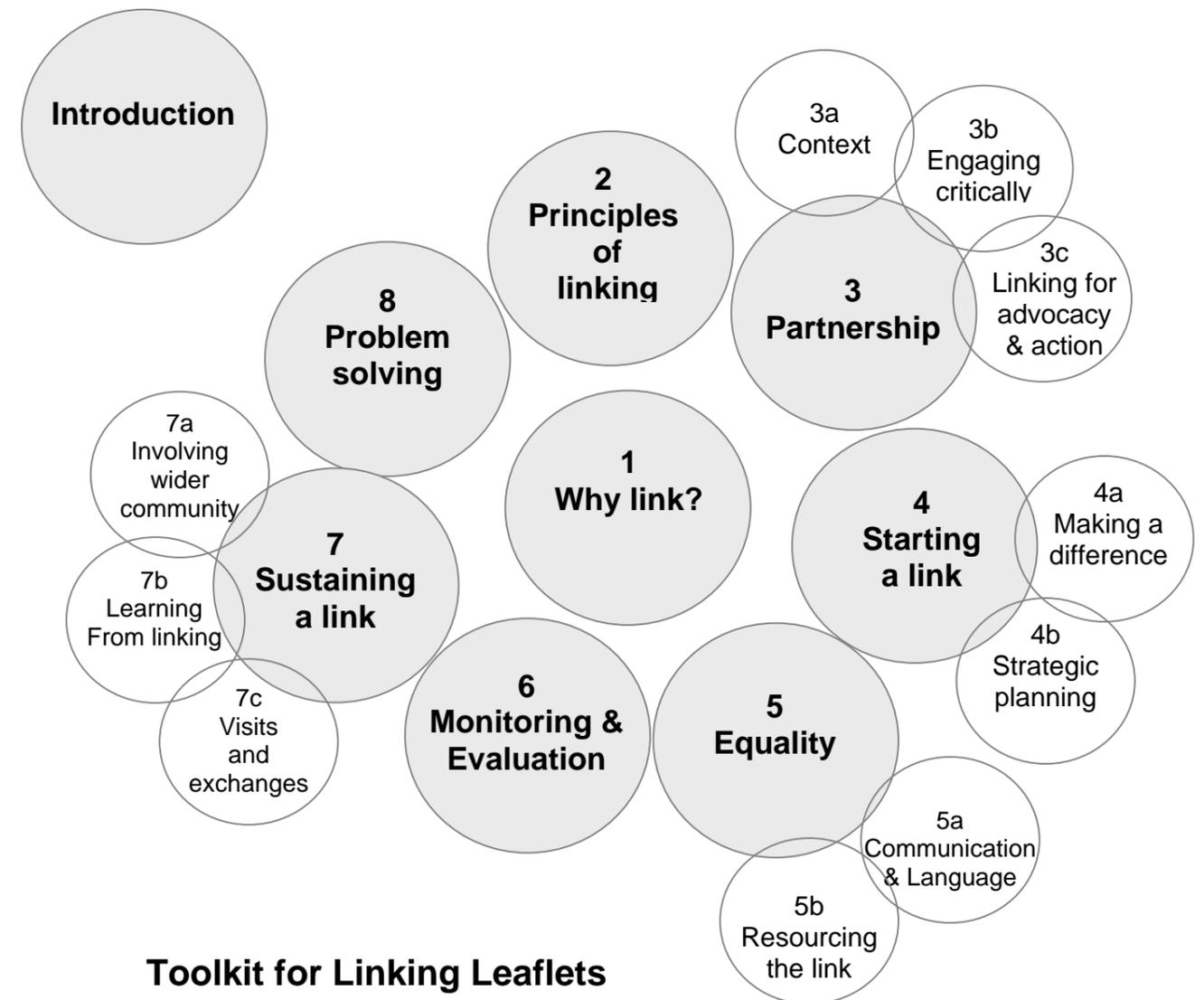
- 1 Why link?
- 2 Principles of linking
- 3 Partnership
 - 3a Context
 - 3b Issues
 - 3c Linking for advocacy & action
- 4 Starting a link
 - 4a Making a difference
 - 4b Strategic planning
- 5 Equality
 - 5a Communication and language
 - 5b Resourcing the link
- 6 Monitoring & Evaluation
- 7 Sustaining a link
 - 7a Involving the wider community
 - 7b Learning from linking
 - 7c Visits and exchanges
- 8 Problem solving

Toolkit for Linking: Opportunities and Challenges

Supplementary sector leaflets

Community
Faith
Health
Local Authority
Schools
Women
Youth

Toolkit for Linking: Opportunities and Challenges



Toolkit for Linking Leaflets

Introduction

Specialist sectors:
Community, Faith,
Health, Local
Authority, Schools,
Women and Youth