

The Influence of Local Government and Its Impacts on Social Cohesion

Professor Roberta Ryan
Director of UTS:IPPG and UTS:CLG

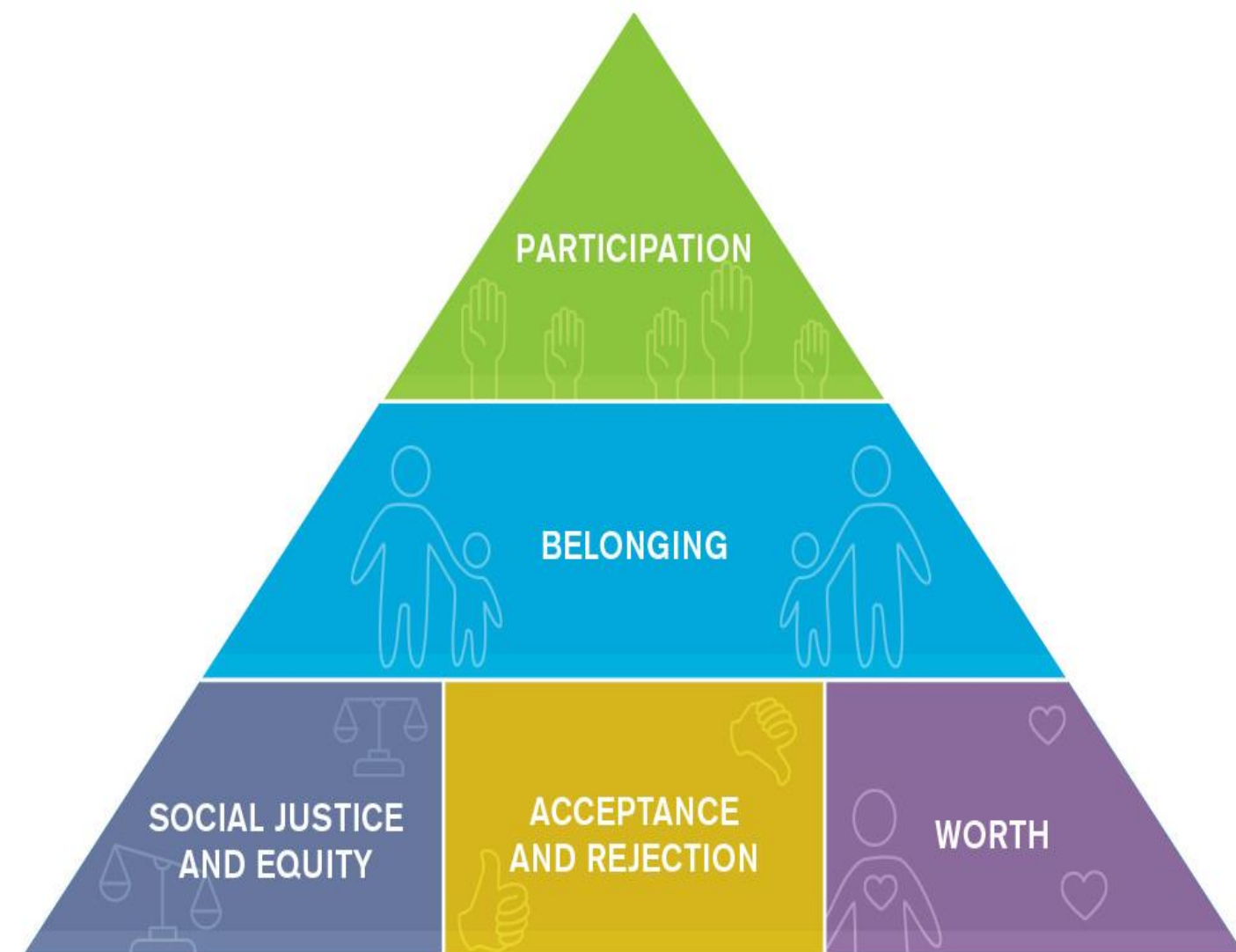
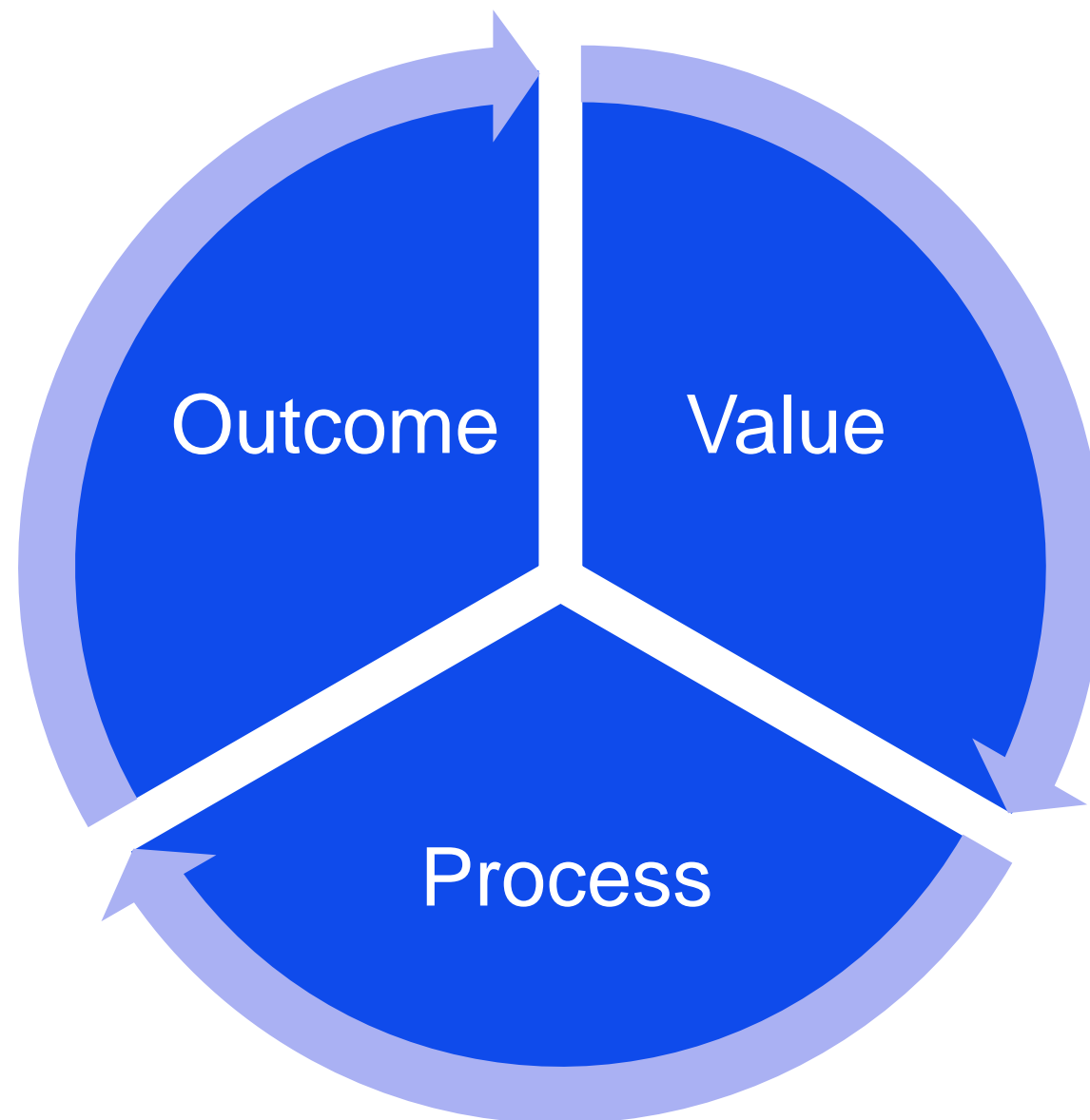


Setting the context

- Rise in populist politics
- Asylum seekers and refugees
- Muslim immigration
- Citizenship debates
- Revisiting multiculturalism

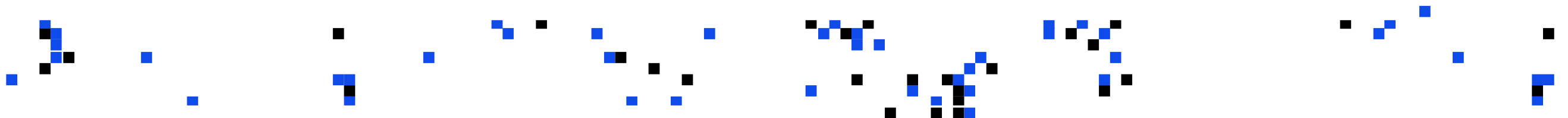


Social Cohesion

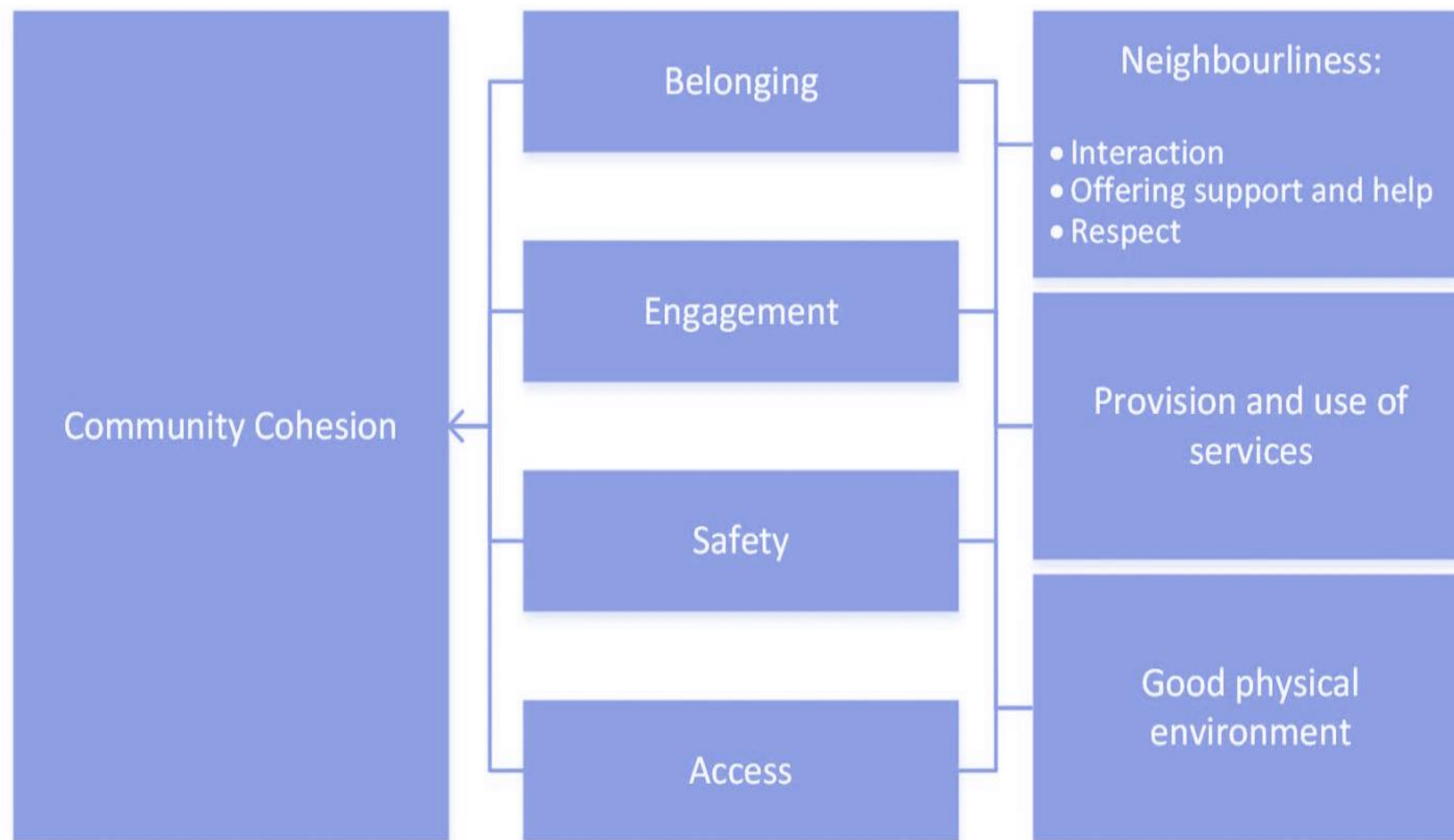


Drivers for social cohesion, division and conflict

- The recognition of Indigenous Australian cultures and history
- Equality of access to resources
- Ignorance and stereotyping
- Real and perceived cultural differences
- Intercultural contact
- Community activities and social spaces
- A whole-of-government- and-community approach

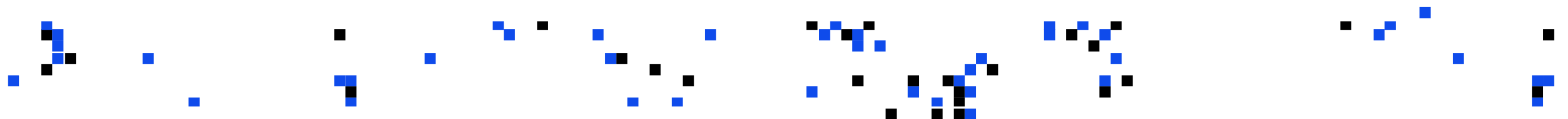
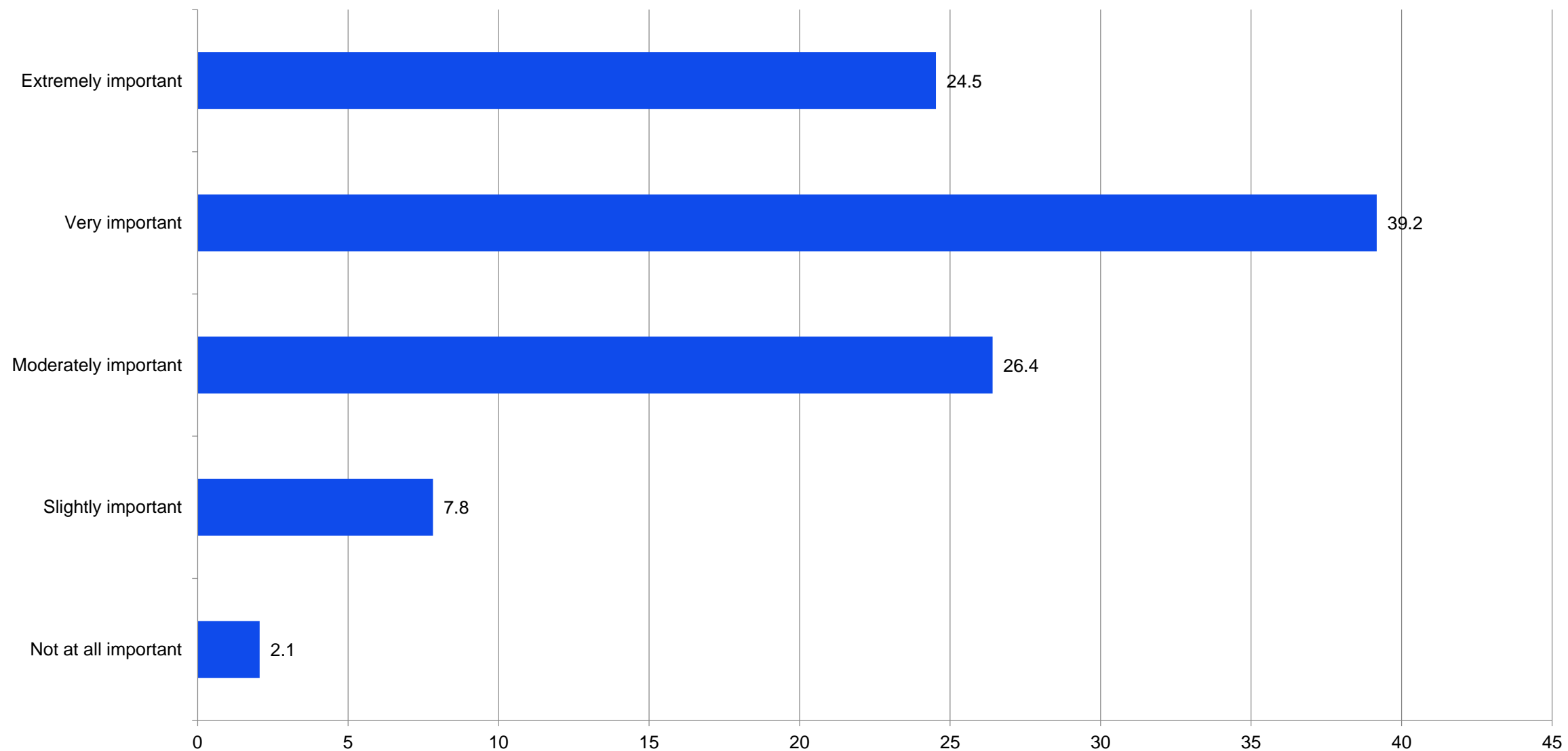


Thinking about the role of government

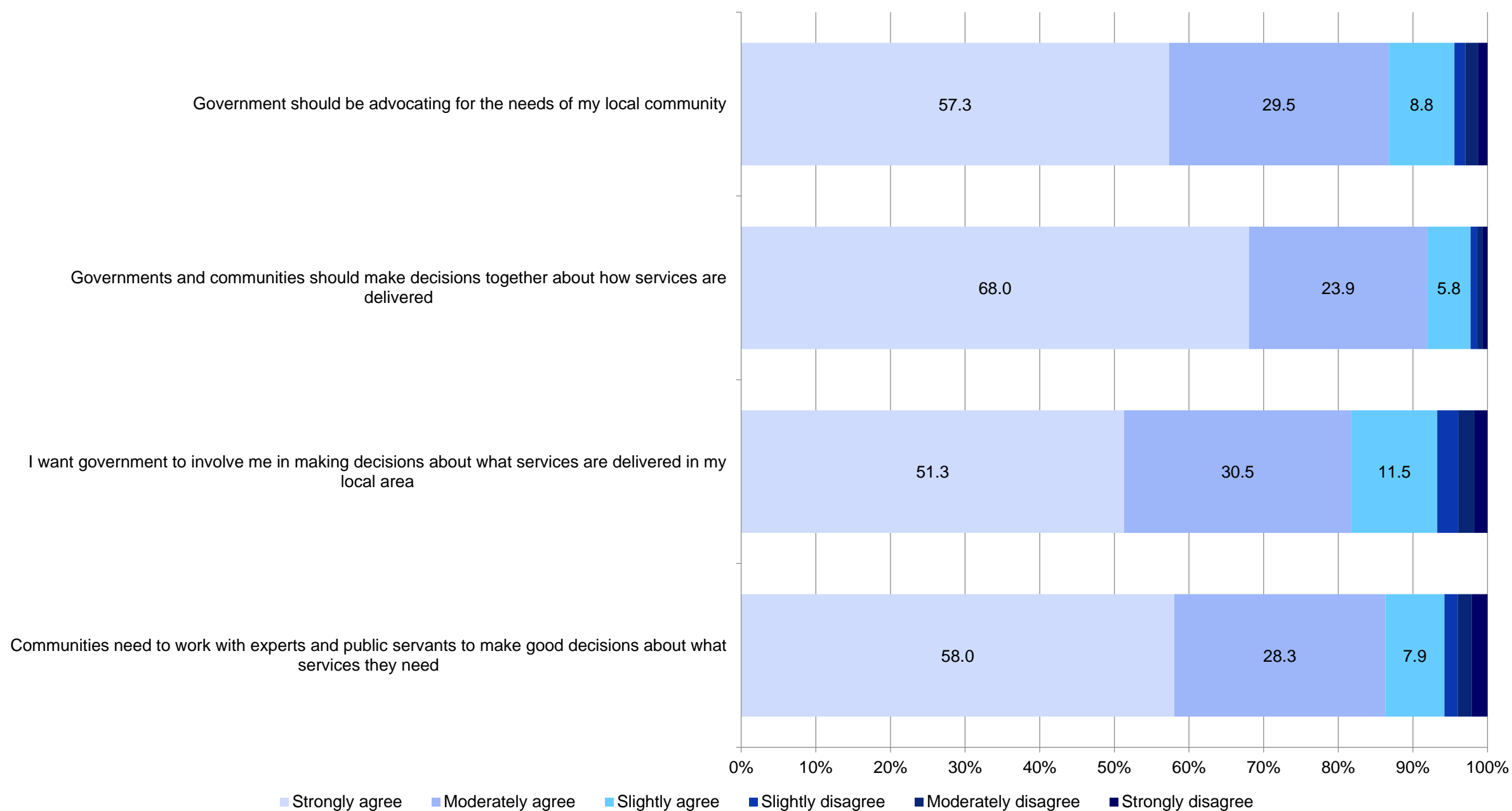


Why does local government matter?

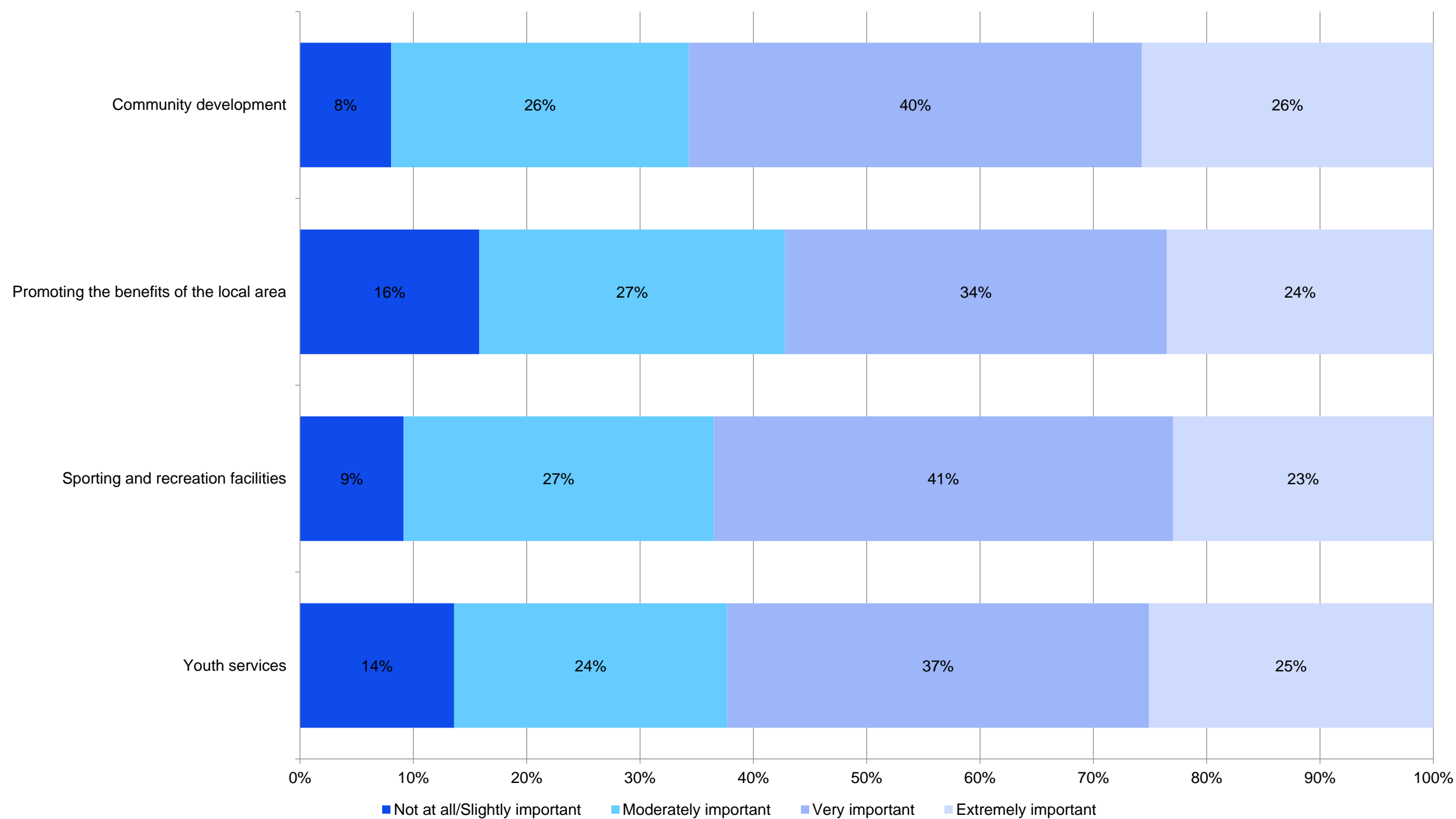
Do respondents value social cohesion in their local area?



Advocating for the needs of the community and involvement in decision making



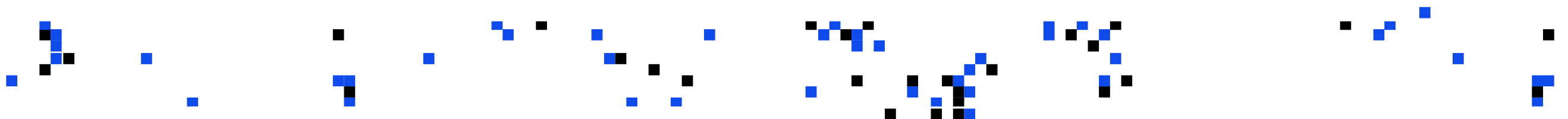
Provision of services that support social cohesion



Local government and social cohesion

Social cohesion refers to positive social relationships – it is the bond or ‘glue’ that binds people.

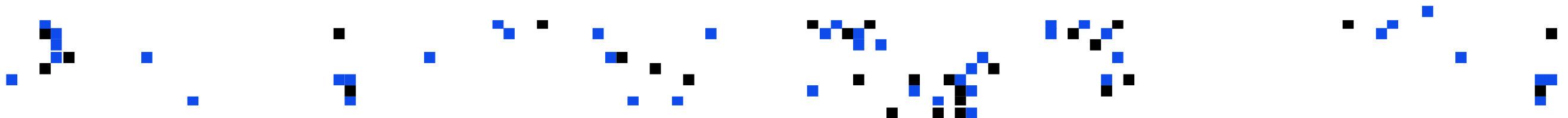
- Local government can build strong, socially cohesive communities by:
 - Understanding their communities and measure their strengths and weaknesses
 - Engaging their communities and build partnerships between key stakeholders
 - Preventing and responding to incidents of racism or conflict between groups if they arise
 - Strategically planning for the needs of their communities now and into the future
 - Monitoring, evaluating and sharing outcomes



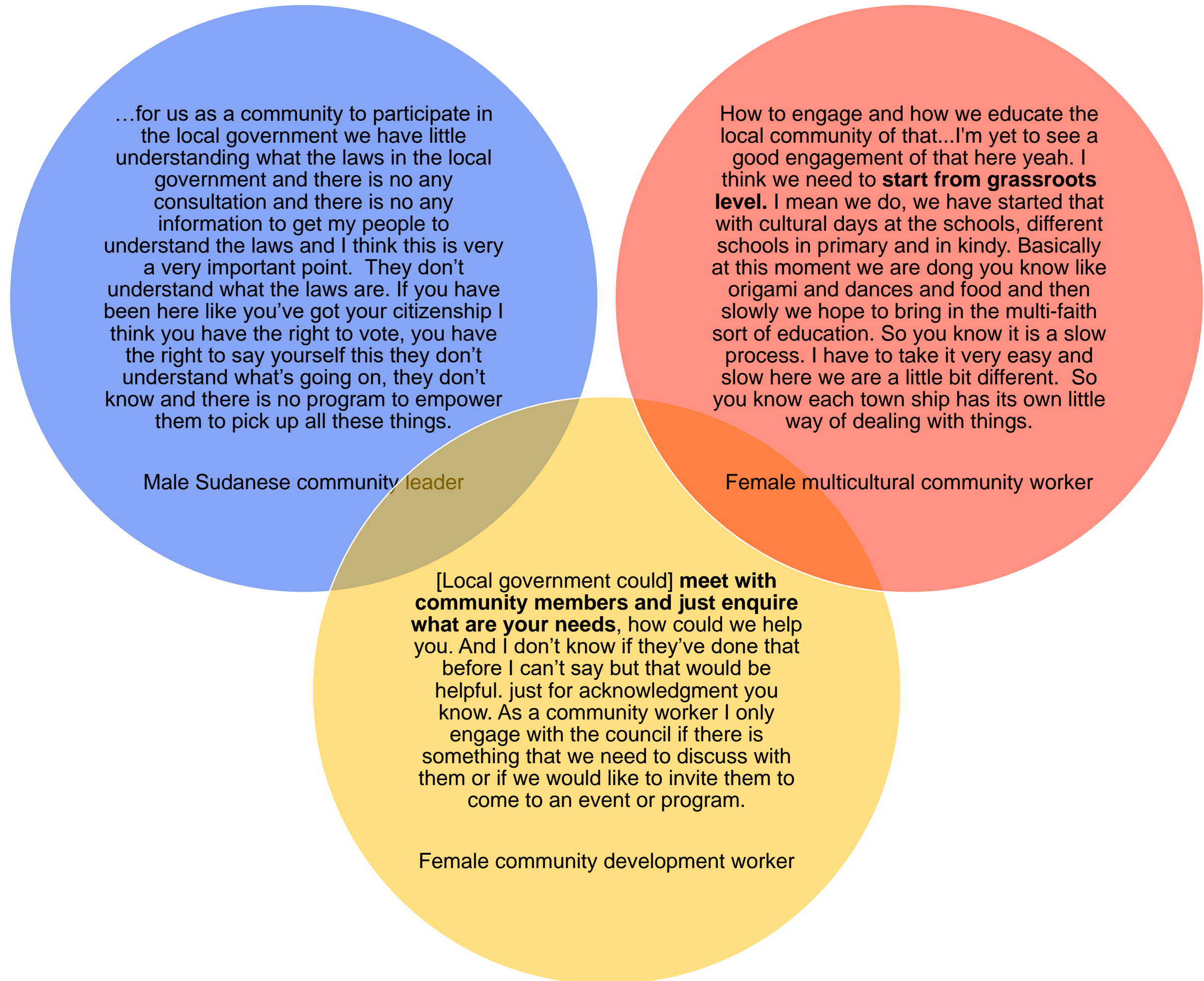
Local government and social cohesion

Why local government matters looks at the different services that local government can provide that may help build social cohesion.

- This includes:
 - Involvement of the community in decision making
 - Advocating the needs of the local community
 - Community development and promoting the benefits of the local community
 - Targeted services including sports and recreation facilities, and youth services.
- Respondents place a high level of importance on the services and functions of local government that can help build social cohesion.
- Residents from non- metro areas are more likely to place extreme importance on the kinds of services that may help build community cohesion.



Research with Muslim African Migrants



Building Social Cohesion in our Communities

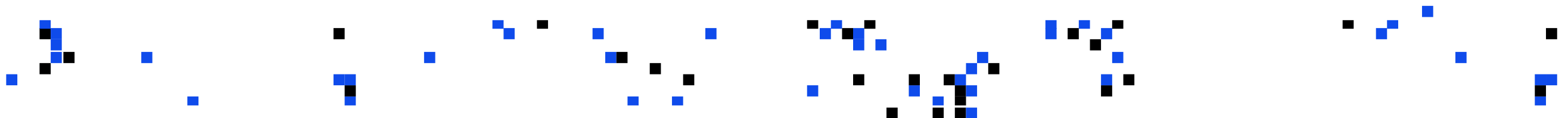
Online Resource

- First sector-specific resource to focus on social cohesion
- Supported by a strong evidence-base of current, validated research and local government case studies.
- It aims to help local governments to:
 - Understand their communities and measure social cohesion
 - Engage their communities and build partnerships between key stakeholders
 - Prevent and respond to incidents of racism or conflict between groups
 - Strategically plan for the needs of their communities now and into the future
 - Monitor, evaluate and share outcomes.



Conclusion

- Social cohesion is complex
- It requires a range of actors but...
- Think of local government first



Thank
you

Institute for
Public Policy
and Governance

