



COMMUNITY VOICES: POVERTY AND POLICY

Annual Conference *Having Your Say* Programme

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE
eradication of poverty



 **Combat Poverty**
Agency *working for a*
poverty-free Ireland

UN DAY FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY
Tuesday, 17th October 2006
CROKE PARK CONFERENCE CENTRE

“PEOPLE DON’T TALK ABOUT BEING IN POVERTY BECAUSE THEY FEEL ASHAMED. THE 17TH OCTOBER GIVES YOU A LOT OF SUPPORT, TO SEE THAT YOU’RE NOT THE ONLY ONE GOING THROUGH IT. IT GIVES YOU STRENGTH TO DO SOMETHING, TO TRY AND MAKE A STAND TO CHANGE THE FUTURE, AND NOT JUST TO THINK THAT THAT’S THE WAY IT IS.”

Voices from the Annual Commemoration of UN Day for the Eradication of Poverty (17th October) at the Famine Memorial on Custom House Quay, Dublin

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Session 1

- 9.30 a.m. Registration and Refreshments
- 10.00 a.m. **Opening remarks and welcome,**
Brian Duncan, Chair of the Combat Poverty Agency
- 10.10 a.m. **UN Day for the Eradication of Poverty¹,**
Presentation by Damien Peelo of the Irish Traveller Movement
on behalf of the 17th October Group
- 10.20 a.m. **‘Squaring the Circle: Can people in poverty influence how public policy is delivered? The experience and implications of current innovations in the UK.’**
*Gabriel Chanan, Co-Director of Policy and Research,
Community Development Foundation, UK and Civil Renewal Unit,
Department of Communities and Local Government*
- 10.40 a.m. **Gap Analysis – An overview of current policy activity within Community Development, Family Resource Centres Programmes, and the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme**
*Siobhan Airey, Independent Consultant,
Joan O’Flynn, Having your Say, Combat Poverty Agency*
- 11.00 a.m. Roundtable Discussion and Questions
- 11.25 a.m. Coffee Break

¹ **In 2000, the Irish Traveller Movement, EAPN, the Acorn Empowerment Group and ATD Fourth World were involved in setting up a formal commemoration to highlight the 17th October (Un Day for the Eradication of Poverty). In recent years, the “17th October Group”, comprising twenty five community and voluntary groups, has been responsible not only for preparing the Dublin commemoration but also for encouraging and supporting efforts to mark the day around the country. The Dublin commemoration at the Famine Memorial on Custom House Quay highlights particularly the daily efforts made by people in poverty to improve their lives and the lives of those around them, in Ireland and around the world.*

Session 2

11.40 a.m. Morning Workshops

1. Working with the political system (Fergus Finlay, CEO Barnardos)
2. Integrating policy into work planning (Siobhan Lynam, Independent Consultant)
3. The National Agreement and new National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion – new opportunities for communities? (The Office for Social Inclusion, Dept of Social and Family Affairs)
4. Communities using a 'rights based approach' for policy change (Tom Redmond, Project worker, Inner City Renewal Group)
5. Policy learning opportunities in community development education (Dr Pauline Conroy, Helen O Leary, Rahaleen, Ltd.)
6. Gap Analysis – An overview of current policy activity within community development programmes (Siobhan Airey, Independent Consultant)
7. Community Development: Current Issues and Challenges (Anna Lee, Manager Tallaght Partnership)

1.00 p.m. Lunch in Croke Park, Conference Centre

Session 3

2.00 p.m. Chair for the afternoon session

Ms Mary Davis, Chair of the Task Force on Active Citizenship

2.20 p.m. Report back from 17th October event at the Famine Memorial on Custom House Quay, Dublin

Session 4

2.45 p.m. Afternoon Workshops

1. Working with the political system (Donall Geoghegan, General Secretary, Green Party)
2. Integrating policy into work planning (Siobhan Lynam, Independent Consultant)
3. The National Agreement and new National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion – new opportunities for communities? (The Office for Social Inclusion, Dept. of Social and Family Affairs)
4. Communities using a 'rights-based approach' for policy change (Tom Redmond, Project Worker, Inner City Renewal Group)
5. Policy learning opportunities in community development education (Dr Pauline Conroy, Helen O'Leary, Rahaleen, Ltd.)
6. Community Development : Current Issues and Challenges (Anna Lee, Manager, Tallaght Partnership)

4.00 p.m. Report back from Conference Rapporteur, Carmel Corrigan

4.30 p.m. Conference Evaluation and Conclusion



Address of Brian Duncan
Chair of the Combat Poverty Agency
at the
2nd Annual Conference of the
***Having your Say* Programme**
Community Voices: Poverty and Policy
on
17 October 2006
(UN Day for the Eradication of Poverty)
Croke Park
Dublin

1. Good morning everyone

- ◆ This morning we are very pleased to welcome you here from all parts of Ireland to the second annual conference of the ***Having Your Say*** Programme called Community Voices: Poverty and Policy.
- ◆ Today is also United Nations Day for the Eradication of Poverty. Our conference will demonstrate solidarity with people and communities living in poverty both world wide and in Ireland. We will do this specifically by linking our conference with the annual solidarity event in Dublin at the Famine Memorial in the Financial Services Centre and you will hear more about that shortly.
- ◆ Hopefully today's conference will be both interesting and useful and will provide an opportunity to hear about the practice and experience of being involved in policy work to reduce and eliminate poverty in Ireland. Today's programme has a strong emphasis on policy 'know-how' and learning at community and policy levels. It also reflects what you have said would be useful to you in your work.
- ◆ We are delighted with the interest in the event. There are over 200 people in attendance. This morning I would like to concentrate on three key issues.
- ◆ Firstly, I want to explain why Combat Poverty has a Having your Say Programme
- ◆ Secondly I want to talk about active citizenship and its relevance to poverty and
- ◆ Finally, I will launch several new resources as part of the Having Your Say Programme

2. Why Combat Poverty has a Having Your Say Programme

First, I want to remind you about Combat Poverty itself.

- Combat Poverty was established in 1986 as an independent statutory agency. As a state advisory agency we develop and promote evidence-based proposals and measures to combat poverty in Ireland, We do this in a number of ways by the provision of policy advice, project support and innovation, research and public education.
- Combat Poverty has always considered that policies intended to tackle poverty are more likely to work if the people and the communities they are designed for are involved in their planning and implementation. It also recognizes that poverty can make it difficult to act and work for change when the struggle of day to day living on low incomes can drain people's available energy and resources.

The Having Your Say Programme is a three-year programme with a national, regional and local focus which aims to:

1. Support community voices in policy
2. Support people and communities to understand and find their way around the policy system in Ireland
3. Work with policy-makers
4. Promote the 'right' to participate in public. .

Increasingly national strategies which, include the Review of the National Anti-Poverty Strategy and the forthcoming NAP/inclusion, refer to the importance of 'social participation' and both highlight the need to strengthen supports to volunteering, and participation of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion in the formulation of policies and measures affecting them.

However people and communities have very different starting points in policy engagement. People and groups at risk of poverty need different levels of support to make worthwhile contributions to policy. The *Having Your Say Programme* is designed to provide skills and training which will enable the groups mentioned to engage in a more meaningful way in future policy opportunities.

Combat Poverty welcomes the Task Force on Active Citizenship and sees the *Having Your Say Programme* as a vehicle which can support people to become more active citizens.

An Active citizen is one who feels that she/he has a stake in the community or society they live in and are confident, able and willing to take advantage of a range of opportunities on offer in Ireland for themselves and their families.. Often people with little formal education, limited financial resources and experiencing poor health and stress face many barriers and blocks to being active citizens. Voting can often be seen as irrelevant.

Having a say in decisions that affect us; having a sense of belonging in society and people doing things for themselves and in partnership with relevant public bodies are all dimensions of active citizenship.

Amongst areas and groups experiencing poverty, community groups create networks for people to participate in identifying local needs and working to improve local living conditions and quality of life.

There must be ongoing support to consolidate and build on community development in disadvantaged areas to ensure that active citizenship extends to all in society and not just to those who are the most powerful or the best resourced.

The Having your Say programme works in practical ways to support communities and groups experiencing poverty to find their way around the policy system and to understanding and influence policy more effectively.

Today I am delighted to launch a range of new resources to support communities and those that work with them.

These include: Series of Online 'How to' policy resources

www.combatpoverty.ie/havingyoursay

- *Community Development: Issues and Challenges, Author: Anna Lee Tallaght Partnership*
- *The Role of Community Development in Tackling Poverty, Author: Brian Motherway*
- *Community Development and Public Policy: Author Siobhan Lynam*
- *Integrating Policy into work planning: Author: Siobhan Lynam*
- *Finding Your Way around Local Government, Author: Hilary Curley*
- *Assessing policy learning opportunities in Community Development Courses in the Third level education*

In conclusion I would like to thank you all for coming, these new publications will form the basis for training and other initiatives in 2007. Additional material will also be produced in 2007 such as Finding Your Way around the Budget, Community Development and Health etc. I hope you find the conference useful and relevant. I thank you all for your strong commitment to working for a poverty-free Ireland.

How can people in poverty influence policy delivery?

Innovations in the UK

Gabriel Chanan

Community Development Foundation /
Department of Communities and Local
Government
UK

Distinguish:

- (a) National - high level policy aims eg eradicate child poverty by 2020
- (b) National to individuals - taxes/ benefits/ entitlements
- (c) National to localities - policy instruments for local delivery eg Local Strategic Partnerships / Health Trusts/ Policing
- (d) Local - the content of a specific local LSP/ health strategy/ police strategy
- (e) Local - the quality of delivery of (d)

Participation opportunities are mainly c /d /e

Contextual factors in the UK

- Local authorities are large and administer large public service budgets
- LAS are mostly seen as honest and accountable but bureaucratic and inert
- Control of public service aims and targets is highly centralised
- From 2000, local governance moved to a cabinet + scrutiny + partnership model

Shifts in approach 1996-2006

Poverty moved from being seen as:

- Anomalous local pockets in a prosperous society, 'lagging'
to
- New local polarities generated by economic change
to
- Having multiple causes including: poor public services; ethnic/ religious ghettos; disengagement from formal democracy

Government response to the shifting perceptions

Initially:

- Local government and public service reform
- Proliferation of innovative funding streams
- Tighter targets and micromanagement

Subsequently:

- From area-based to more universal
- Pooling funding streams under thematic headings (Local Area Agreements)
- Hands-off management but control through mandatory indicators
- Pressure to devolve some services to VCS
- Pressure for empowerment / involvement/ engagement
- Pressure for cohesion and inclusion

Empowerment: what's happening?

- Community representation on LSPs/ area forums
- Non-cabinet councillors to train as neighbourhood champions
- Encouragement of 'pressure from below' on public services
- Community development / capacity building to be better coordinated across localities
- National/regional 'Together We Can' network to support participation
- VCS funding to be more consistent + asset transfer
- Mandatory empowerment indicators embedded in the system

Obstacles

- Tension between councillors and other community representatives
- Disadvantaged people can't see themselves as governing the systems that govern them
- Population churn in big cities
- Local issues can't always be settled locally
- Community development facing culture change in its own methods

Examples of success

1. Blyth Valley district near Newcastle

Industrial decline, low population morale, low housing demand turned round by:

- Cultural change in authority's attitude to community initiative and control
- Major investment in CD workers across key services and liaising with other agencies
- Doubled number of community groups and volunteers
- Invested in community centres and amenities run economically by groups
- Reinvested improved housing receipts in further amenities

Examples of success

2. Tameside, near Manchester

Area of ex Coal Board housing revitalised /crime reduced by:

- 'Alley-gating' and renovating decrepit land between housing blocks
- Mobilising residents to take control over access and usage of the reclaimed land
- Using the land for leisure, children's activities, environmental improvement
- New tenants' and residents' associations set up/ big increase in resident interaction.

Examples of success

3. Haringey London Borough

Area of high population churn, 'super-diversity' and crime partly stabilised by:

- Proactive outgoing support to growth of VCS
- Landlords' forums to enlist support of absentee landlords
- 10-language access points for council services
- Drive for school improvement to retain young families

The changing agenda for community development

- From scattered projects to locality-wide strategies
- From utopian aims to measured advances
- From 'process not product' to 'product through process'
- From adjunct to services to facilitating engagement between service and users
- From adversarialism to helping institutions become more transparent and responsive

 **Combat Poverty Agency**
working for the prevention and elimination of poverty

Community based policy activity

Joan O'Flynn
Having Your Say Conference 2006

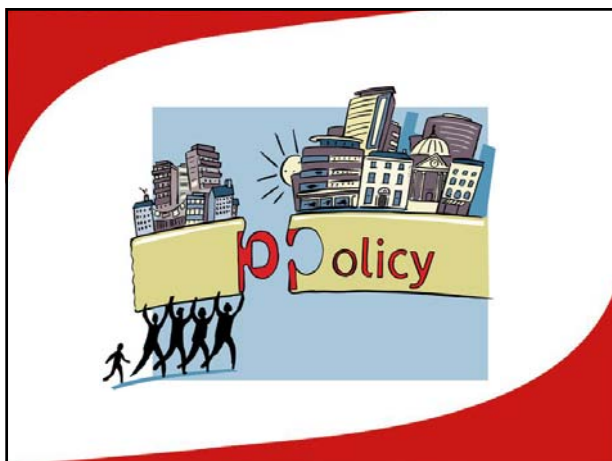


What's the Having Your Say Programme?

Three year programme 2005-07

Aim

- To strengthen the policy voices and practices of people and communities living in poverty



4 objectives

- Promoting the right of people in poverty to participate in public policy decisions that affect them;
- 1. Supporting the policy skills and capacities of groups of people experiencing poverty, their representatives or organisations supporting them;
- 2. Work in partnership with policy-makers to increase their understanding of the issues related to, and implications of, involving people in poverty in policy making; and
- 3. Strengthening the integration of anti-poverty practice by community and voluntary organisations into the policy advice role of Combat Poverty.

Some supporting frameworks

- Combat Poverty Act 1986 – CD as means of overcoming poverty
- NAP/inclusion
- White Paper Supporting Voluntary Activity
- Towards 2016 National Agreement
- Reaching Out Guidelines for Consultation by Public Bodies
- Local government reform process

(NAP/inclusion) 2006

Objective (f): that social inclusion policies are well-coordinated and involve all levels of government and relevant actors, including people experiencing poverty

Mobilisation and involvement of actors

Government Departments are committed to consulting with the social partners on policy proposals and the design of implementation arrangements.

A Steering Group, chaired by the Secretary General of the Department of the Taoiseach (Prime Minister) and representing the Government and each of the Social Partner Pillars, will have overall responsibility for managing implementation of the ten-year framework agreement *Towards 2016*.

This Steering Group will periodically review progress in implementing and further developing the key strategies including, in particular, the National Spatial Strategy (NSS), the National Reform Programme under the Lisbon Strategy, the National Development Plan (NDP), the NSSPI and the **National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (NAP inclusion)**.

White Paper Supporting Voluntary Activity 2000

The framework governing the relationship between the State and the community and voluntary sector. It states

....The sector has a specific role in ensuring that the experience and interests of marginalized communities and groups are articulated and heard when decisions that affect them are being made

Towards 2016 National Agreement

- 34.1 The Government commits to implementing the NESAC proposal of maximising the contribution of the C&V sector by deepening the partnership between statutory bodies and voluntary and community organisations

Task Force on Active Citizenship

- Asked to recommend measures which could be taken as part of public policy to facilitate and encourage a greater degree of engagement by citizens in all aspects of life and the growth and development of voluntary organisations as part of a strong civic culture

Reaching out guidelines

One of the principles of the Government's White Paper Better Regulation is transparency.

The White Paper committed the Government to develop guidelines to promote better quality consultation across the Public Service.

The Government recognises that understanding the variety of perspectives on different areas of economic and social life can improve the quality of its policy and decision-making and of service delivery.

www.betterregulation.ie

Local government/development

- County/City Development Boards
- Community Fora
- Strategic Policy Committee
- County Childcare Committees
- Traveller Accommodation Committees
- Task Forces
- Regeneration – RAPID/CLAR
- Local development - Partnerships

5 key questions

1. What kind of policy engagement is being undertaken by the CDPs, FRCs and in the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme?
2. What policy learning supports are available to groups in the three Programmes?
3. Are there policy learning needs *within* and *across* the three Programmes?
4. Are there gaps in policy inputs from the projects into anti-poverty policy making spaces?
5. What might be appropriate responses to policy learning needs?

Steering Group

- Combat Poverty
- Family Support Agency
- Department of Community, Rural, Gaeltacht Affairs
- Pobal
- CDP
- National Forum of Family Resource Centres
- OPEN

Next steps

- Presentation of findings by Siobhan Airey
- Roundtable dialogue and workshop today
- Further dialogue opportunities
- Dialogue with three 'parent' bodies
- Build on existing actions

The thigh bone's connected ...

Time to be cynical?

- Are you consulting them – or are they consulting you?
- Consultation initiated by Government is almost never real
- If you're good, they'll try to buy you (in preference to your issue)
- Are you willing to be co-opted?

Who's really in charge?

- Fifteen against the world
- Tactics, strategy, vision
- Squeaking wheels get grease
- So do problem-solvers

From the top down

- Taoiseach
- Cabinet
- Cabinet secretariat
- Finance
- The rest (and that includes 13 other members of Government, Opposition, the Dail, Senate, Government backbenchers ...)

Decision-making points

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| • The Proposal | • Announcement |
| • The memo | • Debate |
| • The obs | • Passage |
| • The decision | • Implementation |

Intercession

- Making the case
- Why should they listen?
- Choosing the audience
- Anticipating the reaction
- When to shut up

Power and Influence

- The big lobbies
- The pesky lobbies
- The opposition
- The patsies

The four keys

- Profile
- Quality of your case
 - Research; human interest; solutions
- Relationships
- Seriousness

Finally...

- They don't have to like you, but they must respect you
- You've got to know what you want (what you really really want)



Integrating Policy into Work Planning

Author: Siobhan Lynam

Presented by
Sharon Cosgrove, Head of Projects,
Combat Poverty Agency

17th October 2006

Overview

- Background to *Integrating Policy into Work Planning*
- Introduction to Publication
- 14 key tasks to integrate policy into work planning

Having your Say Programme

- 3-year funded Programme (2005-2007)
- 4 Objectives
- To promote the right of people in poverty to participate in, and influence public policy decisions
 - To develop policy skills
 - Work in partnership with policy makers
 - To examine the voices of those excluded are incorporated into the policy advice role of Combat Poverty

Integrating Policy into Work Planning (Managing Better series)

- Introduction and purpose of guide
- The Place of Community Development in Policy Work
- How is Public Policy made?
- How to Integrate Policy into Work Planning (14 key tasks)

The Place of Policy work in Community Development

- Essential element of community development practice
- Focus on empowerment and participation
- A **collective** rather than an individual approach to issues
- A **social analysis** and understanding of the causes of poverty

How is Public Policy made?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministers• Key Civil Servants• Politicians• Diverse interests groups, e.g. local or regional interests, corporate interests, NGOs, small and big business, cultural and religious interests | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complex,• Not always clear-cut,• Long term• Influencing decision-making involves working with one, more or several |
|--|---|

Introducing: Integrating Policy into Work Planning

- Managing Better series (Author, Siobhan Lynam)
- It is a Community Development Approach to Integrating Policy into Work Planning
- The Role of Community Development in Tackling Poverty (Brian Motherway)
- Community Development, key issues and Challenges (Anna Lee)
- Supporting Public Officials to understand the C/V sector
- Online series of 'How to do Policy' www.combatpoverty.com say

One of several new resources:

- Community Development and Public Policy (Siobhan Lynam)
- Community Development and Health,
- Finding Your Way around: Local Government, Health Services, The Budget (Hilary Curley)

Integrating Policy into Work Planning 14 Tasks

Task 1

- Get Agreement of Management Group to engage in policy work
- Explain importance of policy work
- Staff time needed
- Setting a policy agenda
- (What change do we want and who can deliver it?)

Planning Tip

- Consider policy work when annual work plan or strategic plan is being reviewed or developed

Integrating Policy into Work Planning

Task 2

- Put policy influencing role into mission statement
- Put into goals of organisation
- Use Annual Report

Task 3

- Decide on key issues
- Social Analysis helps find the root causes of problems
- Find prioritise (you can't follow everything)

Integrating Policy into Work Planning

Task 4

- Develop an understanding of how policy is made?
- Responding to draft plans, engage in consultations, e.g. National Drugs Strategy
- Develop a set of positions you want to advance with your organisation and agree them

Planning Tips

- Establish links with national organisations
- Mailing lists and newsletters
- Attend policy-orientated conferences and seminars
- Feed-in information from local projects
- Keep local community informed

Integrating Policy into Work Planning

Task 5

- Research
- Data
- Documenting local experiences
- Focus on Solutions

Planning Tip

- Be clear about the purpose of research

Task 6

- Objectives must be:
- Realistic, Clear
- Specific, Time bound
- As concrete as possible
- Measurable
- Achievable

Planning Tip

- Time must be put aside to decide the objectives

Integrating Policy into Work Planning

Task 7

Deciding on a strategy! Is it?

- Engaging in social partnership arrangements
- Low-key discussion, e.g. key officials in local authorities
- Policy submissions
- Advocacy campaigns
- Political Lobbying
- Media Campaigns
- Protests and Demonstrations

Task 8

What resources will be needed to/for?

- Support management & Staff development
- Local consultations
- Research
- Preparation of policy submissions
- Admin costs
- Attendance at seminars and conferences

Integrating Policy into Work Planning

Task 9

- How will the organisation support policy work?

Task 10

- Define and Agree programme of policy work

Task 11

- Measure progress! What was achieved?
- Indicators necessary

Task 12

- Review, evaluate and learn, document what happens as a result of policy work

Integrating Policy into Work Planning

Task 13

- Staff need to be supported to:
- Understand the policy environment
- Confidence to adhere to community development principles
- Persistence, Patience, Develop range of skills; negotiating, advocacy, facilitation etc
- Research and information gathering skills etc

Task 14

- Put Policy work firmly into the Annual Plan

Planning Tip

- Consideration should be given to those skills when employing staff

Having Your Say Programme

Workshop 3 The National Agreement and the new National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion – new opportunities for communities?

Eamonn Moran
Office for Social Inclusion
17 October 2006

www.socialinclusion.ie



Outline of Presentation

- The Office for Social Inclusion
- Framework for social inclusion strategies
- Lifecycle approach
- NAP/inclusion consultation
- Local level participation

www.socialinclusion.ie



Office for Social Inclusion (OSI)

- Established under revised National Anti-Poverty Strategy 2002 - located Department of Social and Family Affairs.
- Functions:
 - Overseeing NAP/inclusion implementation
 - Monitoring & Evaluation
 - Facilitating and co-ordinate policy development
 - Developing data and research strategies
 - Awareness raising/communications
 - Enhancing Poverty Proofing process
 - Develop next NAPinclusion

www.socialinclusion.ie



OSI Institutional Structures

- Cabinet Committee on Social Inclusion
- Management Group of Assistant Secretaries*
- Senior Officials Group on Social Inclusion
- Social Inclusion Consultative Group (social partners)*
- Social Inclusion Units/Liaison Officers in Depts.
- Technical Advisory Group.

www.socialinclusion.ie



OSI WEBSITE www.socialinclusion.ie



www.socialinclusion.ie



Framework for National Social Inclusion Strategies

- National Social Partnership Agreement, 'Towards 2016'
 - Lifecycle Framework (building policies around people)
- National Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2006 – 2008 (NSSPI)
 - Themes covering social inclusion; pensions and health and long-term care
- National Development Plan 2007 – 2013
 - Will include new chapter on social inclusion
- National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (NAPinclusion)

www.socialinclusion.ie



Lifecycle Approach

- Children, Working Age, Older People, People with Disabilities
- Offers a significant framework for driving the social inclusion process forward across all policy areas
 - Streamlined
 - Cross-cutting
 - Visible
 - Linked to other strategies
 - Minimise duplication

www.socialinclusion.ie



Lifecycle approach - OSI Role

- Co-ordinate an annual Social Inclusion Report which will monitor and review progress at each stage of the Lifecycle in the context of
 - T16;
 - The NAP inclusion; and
 - NDP 2007 -2013 (social inclusion elements)
- Present report to Steering Group representing Government and Social Partner Pillars

www.socialinclusion.ie



Lifecycle approach - Role of the C&V Sector - "Towards 2016"

- *Implementing proposal to maximise contribution of the C&V Sector*
- *Task Force on Active Citizenship*
- *Regulation of the C&V Sector*
- *Funding the C&V sector*
 - Community Services Programme increased investment of €30m by 2009;
 - Increased funding of €5m p/a for volunteering;
 - Increased funding of €10m p/a to support C&V sector
- Overall role of the Steering Group

www.socialinclusion.ie



NAP/inclusion consultation

- Written Consultation (Sept/Oct 2005)
- OSI National & Regional seminars (Nov/Dec 2005)
- CPA Seminars (Jan/Feb 2006)
- Social Inclusion Forum (Feb 2006)
- Local Authorities seminar (March 2006)
- Reports on all consultation stages

www.socialinclusion.ie



Consultation - Participants

- People affected by poverty and social exclusion
- Community and voluntary organisations
- National and local elected representatives
- Social partners at local and national level
- Local statutory and voluntary service providers
- State agencies
- Members of the public
- Departmental staff

www.socialinclusion.ie



Consultation - Key issues

- Ensure all actors and stakeholders work more closely together
- Ensure plan's actions are embedded more concretely in local communities
- Strengthen the contribution of C&V sector and support and resource their work
- Address regional imbalances

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Local Authority Consultation

- NAP/inclusion Consultation seminar held in March 2006 for Local Authority staff.
 - Opportunity to discuss issues for inclusion in the 2006-2008 NAP/inclusion and ways to improve linkages between national and local structures.
- Consultative processes at local level have improved through new structures (e.g., CDBs, SIM groups, SPC, Community Forum, Traveller Accommodation Committees).
- Local Government Anti-Poverty Learning Network



www.socialinclusion.ie

Local Level Participation

- Local Authorities
 - *Directors of Community and Enterprise*
 - *Social Inclusion Units*
 - *County/ City Development Boards*
 - *Social Inclusion Measures Groups*
 - *Others - HSE, Departmental regional offices, FAS, VEC, City and County childcare committees.*
- Area-based Partnerships
-



www.socialinclusion.ie

Issues and Challenges for OSI?

What can OSI do to ensure that communities are most effective getting heard?



www.socialinclusion.ie

Having Your Say programme

Workshop 3
The National Agreement and the new National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion – new opportunities for communities?

Eamonn Moran
Office for Social Inclusion
17 October 2006



www.socialinclusion.ie



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Community Voices: Poverty and Policy
Annual Conference *Having Your Say* Programme, Combat Poverty

Tuesday 17th October 2006

Workshop
Policy learning opportunities in community development education

based on the results of a study
*Assessing Student Learning Opportunities in Community Development in
Ireland, June 2006*

Dr Pauline Conroy and Helen O'Leary
Ralaheen Ltd

Themes for Discussion

- Loose meaning attributed to term *Community Development*
- Large number of courses available
- Accreditation of Community Development courses
- Recommendations to develop policy content

Community Development : Current issues and challenges

CPA conference
17 October 2006



Community development

- Empowerment
- Changing context
- Capacity to develop a voice for the voiceless



CPA Conference 17th October 2006

Current context

- Right to participate generally uncontested
- Underpinning:
 - area – based partnerships
 - RAPID
 - Local government reform
- Influential at national level:
 - partnership agreements
 - NESF
 - NAPS



CPA Conference 17th October 2006

In terms of social policy, community development occupies a previously unheard-of position of importance (Powell and Geoghegan, 2004).



CPA Conference 17th October 2006

Limits of influence

- Examples of significant change?
- Evidence of sharing of power?



CPA Conference 17th October 2006

Issues and challenges

- Shift towards partnership and consensus building models
- Emphasis on the local level
- Programme approach
- Short termism
- Reliance on public funding
- 'managerialism'



CPA Conference 17th October 2006

What to do?

- Emphasis the collective
- Invest in the acquisition of skills
- Certainty re mandate
- Develop 'authentic' and representative voice



CPA Conference 17th October 2006



What to do (cont.)

- Build relationships with the political system
- Balance political action and service delivery
- Application of empowerment



CPA Conference 17th October 2006



Working with the Political System

Workshop 1 @ 'Community Voices: Poverty & Policy'

Dónall Geoghegan

17th October 2006

Overview

- Decisions & Policy Arenas
- How are decisions influenced?
- Preparing and Acting
- Strategies for Influencing
- 2 Approaches
- Do's and Don'ts
- It's a good time to influence. . .

17th October 2006 Workshop 1: 'Working with the Political System' 2

Decisions and Policy Arenas

Decisions	Policy Arenas
○ Elections & Referenda	○ Oireachtas Committees
○ Government (Cabinet)	○ Social Partnership Structures
○ Oireachtas	○ Interdepartmental Committees
○ Civil Service	○ Advisory Groups / Working Groups
○ EU	○ Local Level Initiatives, SPCs, etc.
○ Local Government	○ EU, CoE
○ Statutory Agencies	
○ Political Parties	

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How are decisions influenced?

○ Submissions	○ Pilot Programmes
○ Green Papers	○ Policy Papers
○ Conferences	○ Political Lobbying
○ Research	○ Public Pressure
○ Academic Discourse	○ The Media
○ Reports	

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Preparing & Acting

- Examine your work and what you can contribute
- Prioritise & decide on issues to pursue
- Research the area well
- Develop your messages
- Develop clear strategies
- Act

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Preparing and Acting

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Strategies for Influencing

Who to target?

- Government Ministers
- Government Backbenchers
- Opposition Spokespersons & Backbenchers
- Political Staff
- Advisors
- Civil Servants
- Others, e.g. County Manager, Health Board Official
- General Public

Where, When & How?

- Meetings
- Launches
- Consultative Processes
- Submissions
- Media
- Political Lobbying
- Conferences
- Submissions

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Approach 1

- "It's wrong, disaster looms, something should be done"
- Provide Lots of Written Materials
- Contact Everyone
- Put pressure on them
- Make one big push
- Keep it in the 'big picture'
- Assume they'll deliver
- Blame them when they don't!

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Approach 2

- "Here's the problem, let's solve it"
- Provide short, clear documents
- Target possible 'Champions'
- Build Relationships
- Persuade
- Be respectful and reasonable
- Reinforce
- Use the media
- Keep in the 'now'
- Link to local level and personal experience
- Give credit

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Do . . .

- Follow up initial contacts
- Be consistent, e.g. lobbying, media
- Build alliances & relationships
- Involve and feedback to your 'constituency'
- Review and evolve strategy
- Be strong, but flexible
- Commit resources

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Don't . . .

- Fall into 'narrow interest group' trap
- Lose your roots, ethos, independence
- Give up!

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It's a good time to influence . . .

- Election time
- Economic prospects
- Well established relationships & systems @ local & national levels
- Wealth of Experience
- The problems haven't gone away!

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Combat Poverty Agency

2nd Annual

HAVING YOUR SAY

National Conference

Community Voices: Poverty and Policy

Croke Park, Monday 17th October 2006

Workshops Report

Prepared by
Carmel Corrigan

1. The *Having Your Say* Programme

1.1 **Introduction**

The *Having your Say Programme: Strengthening the Policy Voices and Practices of People in Poverty* was launched by the Combat Poverty Agency (hereafter referred to as Combat Poverty) in 2005. This 3-year Programme supports two of the six principles on which the Agency's current strategic plan 2005 -2007 is based:

Partnership: proactively building strong partnerships with all levels of government, the social partners, those experiencing poverty and those working on poverty issues is essential to maximising support and action to tackle poverty.

Participation and Empowerment: involving and empowering individuals and communities affected by poverty are necessary to tackle poverty effectively. (Combat Poverty Agency, 2005, *Strategic Plan 2005-2007, Working for a Poverty Free Ireland*, p. 10)

The programme is operating within a policy context that includes the National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion (NAP/incl), the EU's Open Method of Co-ordination, The White Paper on Supporting Voluntary Action, The United Nation's Declaration on the Right to Development 1986, the promotion of partnership and addressing poverty and peace building. (For more details on these see Combat Poverty Agency, 2005, *Having your Say: Strengthening the Policy Voices and Practices of People in Poverty, A Three year Programme 2005-2007*, www.combatpoverty.ie/havingyoursay) People and communities experiencing poverty and community and voluntary groups engage with these processes at national and local level through a range of structures. In addition, since last year's conference, the new National Agreement *Towards 2016*, and the Task Force on Active Citizenship have added to the policy arena.

The *Having Your Say* programme aims to address a number of key issues that arose from a series of consultations with a wide range of statutory and community and voluntary organisations with relevant staff teams within Combat Poverty. These key issues are: (i) limited knowledge among the community and voluntary organisations of the key personnel, mechanisms and processes through which policy is made and a lack of opportunity to engage and reflect on this issue, (ii) the need for a number of key supports to help them understand the policy making process and how they can influence and participate in it, and (iii) the need to develop the understanding of policy makers with regard to the Community and voluntary sector.

1.3 **Aims and Objectives of the Programme**

The overall aim of the *Having Your Say* programme is

'...to strengthen the voices and practices of people and communities living in poverty'

(Combat Poverty Agency, 2005, *Having your Say: Strengthening the Policy Voices and Practices of People in Poverty, A Three year Programme 2005-2007*).

The four objectives of the Programme are

- (i) To promote the right of people in poverty to influence and participate in public policy decisions that affect them.
- (ii) To initiate and support work that enables people experiencing poverty, their representatives or organisations that support them to engage in the policy system.
- (iii) To work with policy-makers to support effective participation of excluded groups in policy-making.
- (iv) To strengthen the integration of anti-poverty practice by community and voluntary organisations into the advice role of the Agency.

2. The *Having Your Say* Conference, 17th October 2006

Hosting an annual conference is one of the key actions of the *Having Your Say* programme. This conference aims to examine and discuss issues relating to the participation of people in poverty in policy processes and to demonstrate effective models of policy participation by people and groups experiencing poverty and exclusion. The first conference took place in Dublin Castle on 28th November 2005 (see www.combatpoverty.ie/havingyoursay for a report of this conference).

The second conference was held on 17th October 2006, and coincided with the United Nations International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. The aims of this conference were:

- To share experiences and learning of how communities (both geographical and issue-based) have engaged with the policy system in Ireland at local and national level.
- To explore how community development approaches can influence public and social policy in Ireland.
- To share practical skills and the 'how to' of policy work.
- To introduce new resources designed to support communities in the policy making process through increasing their understanding and ability to navigate the Irish policy system and to make policy an integral part of work planning.

This conference was opened by Mr. Brian Duncan, Chairperson of Combat Poverty who, in addition to introducing the conference and the *Having Your Say* Programme, also launched a number of resources produced by the programme in the past year. These include

- A series of online 'How to' policy resources (see www.combatpoverty.ie/havingyoursay)

- *Community Development: Issues and Challenges*, by Anna Lee, Tallaght Partnership
- *The Role of Community Development in Tackling Poverty*, by Brian Motherway
- *Community Development and Public Policy*, by Siobhan Lynam
- *Integrating Policy into work planning*, also by Siobhan Lynam
- *Finding Your Way around Local Government*, by Hilary Curley
- *Assessing policy learning opportunities in Community Development Courses in the third level sector* by Ralaheen Research
- *Communities, Voices and Change* by Siobhan Airey

These publications were made available to all conference participants on the day.

The conference was linked to the UN Day for the Eradication of Poverty by means of an introduction to the day by Paul Ginnell (EAPN) who represented the Irish 17th October Group. Three delegates from the conference attended the 17th October morning commemoration at the Famine Memorial on Customs House Quay on behalf of all conference participants. The conference keynote paper, *How can people in poverty influence policy delivery? Innovations in the UK*, was provided by Gabriel Channan, Co-Director of Policy and Research, Community Development Foundation, UK and Civil renewal Unit, Department of Communities and Local Government. Joan O' Flynn of Combat Poverty provided an overview of the *Having Your Say* Programme and outlined some of the key policy documents and structures that provide the current context for the Programme. The inputs provided by these speakers are available on the Combat Poverty website at www.combatpoverty.ie/havingyoursay.

Siobhan Airey, independent consultant, outlined the results of a survey of the policy work undertaken by a sample of Community Development Projects in the Community Development Programme, Family Resource Centres in the Family and Community Services Resource Centres Programme and the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme. This research looked at the policy learning supports available to groups in the three programmes, the policy learning needs within and across the three Programmes, gaps in policy inputs from the projects into anti-poverty policy making spaces, and possible responses to policy learning needs with identification of roles and responsibilities of stakeholders. This research report, *Building Communities, Strengthening Voices, Creating Change* is also available from Combat Poverty papers are available at www.combatpoverty.ie/havingyoursay.

The majority of time at the conference was devoted to workshops that addressed a number of key themes. These themes reflected the work of the *Having Your Say* Programme over the past year and the resources being launched at the conference. This body of work in turn reflects key issues in creating and optimising opportunities and mechanisms for people in poverty and their representatives to engage with and influence

policy and decision makers. These issues have been identified by Combat Poverty through specific consultation events, previous conferences, including the 2005 *Having Your Say* Conference, research and experience.

Each workshop was initiated by a presentation from an organisation or expert working in the relevant area. These presentations are also available at www.combatpoverty.ie/havingyoursay. A facilitator and note-taker also participated in each workshop in order to guide the workshop around a number of key questions and record the workshop discussions.

Workshops

Community Voices: Poverty and Policy

- Workshop 1: Working with the political system
- Workshop 2: Integrating policy into work planning
- Workshop 3: The National Agreement and the new National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion – new opportunities for communities?
- Workshop 4: Communities using a ‘rights based approach’ for policy change
- Workshop 5: Policy learning opportunities in community development education
- Workshop 6: Gap analysis – An overview of current policy activity within community development programmes (*held in the morning only*)
- Workshop 7: Community Development – current issues and challenges

The workshops addressed individual questions, such as how can community organisations integrate policy into work planning, could a rights based approach be applied to community development, and what are the current challenges and issues facing community development in Ireland currently. Each workshop also asked what the *Having Your Say* Programme can do to support the policy work of community organisations in each specific area. This report focuses on providing an overview of the issues raised in the discussions that took place in these workshops.

3. Report of the Workshops

3.1 Key Issues Emerging

- 3.1.1 ***Acknowledging the policy work already being done:*** many conference participants stated that all stakeholders – community and voluntary organisations, policy-makers and politicians, Combat Poverty

and support agencies – must recognise the amount and nature of policy work already being undertaken by community groups. In some cases, this may not be called policy work, but remains so nonetheless. Some organisations not only carry out policy work on their own behalf but also assist others in this area through capacity building, identifying strategic policy roles etc.

3.1.2 *Recognising policy as a core organisational activity:* if policy work is to be integrated into work planning and carried out successfully, then it needs to be recognised as a core activity of the organisation rather than an add-on to people's work. This requires that organisations themselves, funders and policy-makers change their perception of the role of community organisations and recognise activities such as lobbying and advocacy as a key aspect of their work. Sufficient time, staff, funding and resources need to be allotted to policy work, and additional training for existing staff on how to influence policy is needed. With specific regard to funding bodies, it is necessary that they allow for policy activities when making funding decisions and allocating budgets.

3.1.3 *Perceived lack of respect and responsiveness among policy-makers:* a number of workshops reported that participants felt that they were not respected as equals in the policy process. This was the case even where the sector has been invited by the Government to be a part of policy structures, and where they have been nominated by their peers to act as community representatives, such as on the County Development Boards and in social partnership. In addition, many participants pointed out that despite years of policy work, lobbying and advocacy work, many policy-makers and politicians remain unresponsive and unwilling to listen to local communities. This was seen to be reflected in the 'professionalisation' of policy work and analysis, where policy is seen to be the remit and within the capacity of professionals only. In addition, the lack of feedback to organisations and communities on their policy submissions or consultation exercises further illustrates this lack of respect and recognition.

3.1.4 *The need for the Community and Voluntary Sector to organise:* a number of participants raised the issue of the untapped potential of the sector to influence policy, particularly if organisations network and organize more strategically. For example, it was noted that there are 180 CDPs funded under the Community Development Programme. If these 180 projects were to act as one lobby, then their potential to effect change increases dramatically. If they could also work collectively with the Partnerships and the Family Resource Centre, then their capacity would be further increased. This type of networking and organisation needs to be supported, however, and recognised as a core activity of community and voluntary organisations. In organising in this way the sector can not only increase their policy influencing capacity but also learn from each other on different ways of approaching difficulties and barriers.

- 3.1.5 *Knowing who to influence:*** having the capacity and information to carry out policy work is seen as only one part of the overall picture. Knowing who to influence, who to address your concerns to and who precisely the key policy and decision-makers is vital. While in many instances this will be politicians, both at local and national level, it is often civil and public servants or those in the employ of the political parties. Community and voluntary organisations need to be well informed in this area and to keep themselves, or be kept, up-to-date.
- 3.1.6 *The need for greater education opportunities in community development:*** although research carried out for the *Having Your Say* Programme indicates that there are a growing number of community development courses on offer, a number of issues arise with these. In particular, there are few places reserved for people from marginalised backgrounds and little ongoing support for those who do participate. Education institutions providing community development courses need to liaise and develop networks between them, and to facilitate networking, building relationships and sharing of resources among institutions, staff and students. These ways of working co-operatively are core aspects of community development work and should be reflected in how courses and institutions operate. Courses should provide knowledge on the policy system and how it operates, and support students to bring this back to local communities and groups so that the links between the two are made clear. Course content and approaches should be transparent and based on community development principles. University staff should be linked into local communities. Other professionals, such as those involved in Primary Care Teams (including GPs and PHNs) should be encouraged to become involved in community development education. Better educational resources, flexible and recognised accreditation that allows for the valuing of experience, and standards across community development education are all needed.
- 3.1.7 *Retaining policy workers in the Community and Voluntary Sector:*** a number of very good policy workers in the sector have been recruited and 'poached' by the statutory sector and political parties. Community and voluntary organisations frequently cannot retain these workers as they are not in a position to offer similar salaries and benefits. This depletes the policy capacity of the community and voluntary sector. In addition, even if such workers are not actually recruited by the state sector, they are brought into the policy arena as advisors and experts etc. This can serve to weaken their objectivity and is often misinterpreted as personal or organisational support for Government positions and policy. Many trained community development workers do not go on to work or stay in community development, and the educational investment is therefore lost.
- 3.1.8 *Focussing policy work:*** organisations should not spread themselves too thin by trying to address too many policy areas or bodies. It is

better to focus on a small number of key areas, to know the policy and policy environment around these well, to target a small number of organisations or individuals to influence, and to have properly supported, worked out policy positions. To further improve these efforts, policy work should be a considered exercise and not a knee-jerk reaction and should be as solution focussed as possible. Realistic costings should also be part of these policy efforts where relevant.

3.1.9 National versus local policy: many of the workshops discussed the need for a greater focus on the local aspects of policy and policy work. At present, most policy and major policy documents focus only on the national level, including both the new national agreement *Towards 2016*, and the National Action Plan against Social Exclusion. While both of these documents have strong points – including the recognition of the community and voluntary sector, the presentation of a national framework for poverty impact assessment and the inclusion of a children as a target group – they are essentially national plans that are difficult to implement and monitor at the local level. Many achievements have been made at the local level but are often overlooked and it is assumed that community and voluntary organisations do little or no policy work. Case studies that highlight these successes and how they were achieved would be a useful learning tool for others.

3.1.10 Lack of innovation and flexibility in policy: two of the Government's key policy documents - the new national agreement *Towards 2016*, and the National Action Plan against Social Exclusion – illustrate the lack of new and innovative policy responses as they largely reflect existing policy commitments. In addition, where new policy approaches are used, such as the Lifecycle Approach that views the policy needs of people over the various stages of their lives from childhood to old age, are often adopted in a rigid fashion to the detriment of other approaches. For example, for many rural dwellers it is their location rather than their age which is the most important factor in determining the policy responses required to meet their needs.

3.1.11 Adopting a rights-based approach: many participants felt that a rights-based approach could be adopted in community development work as both have a lot of elements in common. Community development already supports people to use their civil and political rights and works to empower them to exercise and secure these rights, as well as documenting instances where rights are being violated. However, a number of issues remain unclear and further debate is needed on the issue of needs versus rights, and universal application of rights versus targeted interventions, and competing rights. There is a need for local development and rights to be more closely married and local communities and organisations will need support to achieve this.

3.1.12 Partnership working: although the term partnership working has been used for a while now, there is a need for a clear definition of and

guidance on what this means, particularly when it comes to policy work. The balance of power in partnership working has to be clear and appropriately managed, and the position of the CDPs and advocacy work under the new charities legislation needs to be clarified.

3.1.13 The role of Combat Poverty:

A number of potential roles were identified for Combat Poverty and the *Having Your Say* Programme in all of the conference workshops. However, a number of specific recommendations were made in the workshop on the research on the policy work and needs of the CDPs, the Family Resource Centres and the LDSIP projects.

- Combat Poverty should take a lead role in the recommended code of practice, based on its unique role, statutory remit and capacity to influence the state and to support the community and voluntary sector.
- Combat Poverty should collect and synthesise information so as to develop the recommended clear and precise anti-poverty messages that would be a collective reflection of the voice of many and target these at specific government officials and departments. In this way Combat Poverty would be playing to its strengths of good research, funding and creating a space for reflection.
- A timeframe for the achievement of the research recommendations should be set.
- Combat Poverty should organise regional as well as national events based on this research, identify and make known the resources that they have available to support communities in relation to policy influencing and participation work and facilitate a discussion around networking and structures.

3.2 Challenges and Barriers to be Addressed

3.2.1 *Getting policy-makers 'on the ground'*: policy makers remain detached from local communities and it remains difficult to get them to engage with local communities and their representative organisations. In addition, there is the further difficulty of having physical access to politicians and policy-makers if you live outside Dublin, due to the centralised nature of the political system. While this was not such a problem in the past, many of the powers of local officials have now been transferred to central Government and their administration. In addition, a paternalistic attitude of 'we know best' is evident among some policy-makers and politicians and is unhelpful.

3.2.2 *The issue of language*: language poses a barrier to effective policy work in a number of ways. First, there is the use of 'jargon' and specialised language by experts, researchers, policy-makers etc., which makes communication between them and local communities

difficult and intimidating for many local people. Second, the workers in the community and voluntary sector appear to use a different language to the policy-makers, who do not seem to grasp the essential messages that organisations are trying to communicate. This needs to be addressed through the development of a 'common language' for all those involved in policy making. Third, the language used in policy making changes all the time, for example, the adoption of the 'Lifecycle Approach' to policy has resulted in the use of new and different terms. The community and voluntary sector have to adapt to this new language with few or no supports. Finally, the adoption of a rights-based approach requires that the language of this is learned by everyone, community and voluntary organisations, statutory bodies, researchers, etc. if this approach is to be successfully used.

3.2.3 *The constantly changing policy map:* the policy arena changes at a very quick pace in a number of ways. Policies are reviewed and changed, funding lines change, language changes, structures come and go and personnel move around the civil and public service. If organisations are involved in a number of issues or areas of policy work, maintaining an up-to-date knowledge of this overall policy landscape can be challenging and costly in terms of wasted resources.

3.2.4 *Lack of time and resources:* the issue of adequate time and resources to undertake policy work arose as a barrier to yet be addressed satisfactorily. With regard to funding, a number of specific issues were raised, including the need for multi-annual funding and for greater flexibility in the use of funding to respond to issues as they emerge in communities. While embedding policy as a core organisational activity is important, in the absence of additional staff resources and secure and long-term funding policy will remain a secondary concern to dealing with the delivery of services, supports and projects, thereby limiting the time available to dedicate to it.

3.2.5 *The need to monitor progress:* there is little monitoring or impact assessment carried out on the policy work undertaken by organisations. Progress is therefore often unrecognised, undocumented or simply unknown. To facilitate this process, organisations need to set themselves key targets and indicators, while policy-makers need to provide more feedback on the impact that the policy submissions, lobbying, advocacy, representations or other policy related work has had. This is relevant not only at national but also at local level and it was suggested that ongoing engagement with the community and voluntary sector be a key progress indicator for statutory bodies at all levels.

3.2.6 *Lack of appropriate training opportunities:* outside of formal education, the lack of practical, short-term training for community organisations and local community representatives who are taking up policy roles remains a barrier to effective policy work. There is a lack of community-based basic or foundation level training in community

development. Such training would help to prepare people for their involvement in further education in community development. This lack of basic training further hinders the participation of people from disadvantaged communities in higher level community development education and training. In addition, the lack of involvement of other professionals, such as those from the medical professions, in community development education results in the discipline and approach being undervalued by them.

3.2.7 The lack of a national co-ordinating structure for CDPs and others: although the CDPs have called for national co-ordinating structure for some time, no such structure has been put in place. This makes networking and the exchange and documentation of good practice more difficult. This extends to other bodies in the community and voluntary sector as well and inhibits their capacity to network and form alliances.

3.3 Suggested Solutions and Supports Required

3.3.1 Addressing the language barrier: development of a common language that is used by all involved in policy work would solve many of the problem related to language. In addition, it was stressed that some of the language used at the conference and in Combat Poverty's own research was overly technical and a plain English language of the research was needed.

3.3.2 Developing a policy map: the need for a guide to the policy arena that is constantly up-dated was stressed in a number of workshops and it was felt that this was something that the *Having Your Say* Programme could usefully provide.

3.3.3 Developing practical 'how-to' tools: while the resources launched on the day were welcomed, many participants stressed the need for further practical resources and tools. Those mentioned included 'how to' policy templates and the use of case studies to illustrate good and successful policy work undertaken at local and national level by community and voluntary organisations.

3.3.4 Training: This training could take a number of formats such as the production of training courses and materials designed by Combat Poverty and/or with others, or the shadowing of out-going members of committees by incoming members. Specific training is required in the area of adopting a human rights-based approach as the language and legal issues involved are often new and complex.

3.3.5 Measures targeted at policy makers: while many of the suggested solutions referred to building the policy influencing capacity of the community and voluntary sector, a number of suggestions were made relating to developing the statutory sector. These included building the

capacity of policy-makers and politicians to listen to and understand the community and voluntary sector, increasing their understanding of the role of the sector in policy structures and processes in order to increase their awareness of and respect for community representatives, improving feedback from the statutory sector to the community and voluntary sector, and increasing the State sector's awareness of their commitments under various international and European conventions. It was also stressed that Combat Poverty should help the State sector should realise that people from local communities and local groups need financial and other supports to participate in consultative and policy processes and structures at local and national level.

4 Overarching Issues and the Potential Role of the *Having Your Say* Programme

From the discussions that took place in the workshops, it is possible to identify a small number of overarching issues that arose at the *Having Your Say* conference. This section highlights these issues and outlines the potential of the *Having Your Say* Programme to respond to these.

4.1 A tale of two sectors: the Community and Voluntary Sector and the State Sector: despite many years of policy work, the discussions at the conference indicate that both the community and voluntary sector organizations and the State sector remain unclear about the position and role of the community and voluntary sector in the policy arena and how they should carry this role out. Community and voluntary representatives believe that their position is not seen to be equal to that of the representatives of other sectors and that their issues are often misunderstood or in some cases simply ignored by policy-makers at both local and national level. Community and voluntary bodies are cautious of being seen to be 'bought' by the State and are forced to walk a very fine line between a positive relationship with the State as funder, while trying to address key policy issues and taking a stand that may not be supportive of Government policy.

On the other hand, policy-makers have to be seen to be addressing the issues of all sectors equally, but do not necessarily understand the role of the community and voluntary organizations and representative. They are distant from many of the local communities on which their policy, particularly social policy and social spending, will have most impact. The constant changes in personnel who deal with policy issues in the public sector and the constantly changing language of policy discourse pose particular problems for the community and voluntary sector. In essence, this sector is expected to constantly keep up-to-date with the policy environment and to repeatedly contribute to it. However, there is little or no such expectation of the policy-makers to maintain their knowledge of what happens at community level, to be knowledgeable of the language of community development or to engage at the local level.

These issues were manifest at the *Having Your Say* conference through community and voluntary participant's comments on the lack of acknowledgement and respect for their position and policy work, their concern about being less objective and independent due to short-term funding relationships with the State, the lack of recognition of policy work as a core activity of community-based organizations and the lack of responsiveness by the State to community and voluntary inputs to policy.

The potential of the Having Your Say Programme:

The *Having Your Say* Programme already contributes to a better understanding between the sectors by providing an annual conference in which both sectors get to have their say, express their concerns and exchange experience, successes and frustrations.

However, there are a number of additional ways in which the *Having Your Say* Programme could help to address these issues. In the first instance, and as suggested by participants at the conference, the *Having Your Say* Programme could seek to work more closely with the statutory sector and policy-makers in increasing their awareness and understanding of the policy work and roles of the community and voluntary sector. This work could take the form of intensive awareness raising actions such as one-to-one meetings or small group information and awareness raising sessions, in addition to the resources already developed and planned by the Programme. This work could build on Combat Poverty's statutory remit to advise policy-makers. In order to strengthen this work, the *Having Your Say* programme could link it into other programmes of Combat Poverty, such as those relating to health and local authorities, to ensure that a number of key policy arenas and structures are addressed and to consolidate the resources and work of Combat Poverty.

In meeting its remit to support the community and voluntary sector, the *Having Your Say* Programme could also undertake a number of actions to address these issues. These primarily relate to long-standing issues such as the changing policy landscape, the policy-making processes and the specific language sometimes used in policy-making. These issues are not new and the *Having Your Say* Programme has indeed already started to address these issues through the production of resources such as *Finding your way around Local Government* and *Community Development and Public Policy*.

With regard to the issue of language, the *Having Your Say* Programme could draw on and add to the 'jargon-busters' developed for the Combat Poverty publication *Action on Poverty Today*. This could be extended to include additional key policy terms and be easily updated on the publication of key policy reports and documents. The creation of an online policy map that would set out the key functions of the key Government Departments and agencies, as well as local government,

would be a more time consuming and ambitious, but potentially very significant exercise. This policy map should be updated on an ongoing basis as personnel and structures in key areas change, and calls for policy submissions and consultative events occur. If the creation of such a central policy map were to be pursued, it is recommended here that the *Having Your Say Programme* should lead on this, but create it in conjunction with the relevant Departments and agencies, including local and health authorities.

4.2 *The Need for Training*

Many participants at the conference raised the need for training in a wide range of areas. Most centrally, these included training on the nature of the policy-making process and political system, how to build capacity of community and voluntary organizations to influence policy and, of course, how to go about effecting policy change. Other specific areas in which participants felt training would be useful was in how to adopt a rights-based approach to their work and the legal issues that surround this. However, reflecting the issues raised in 4.1 above, it was clear that training was also required for the statutory sector, primarily in how to listen to and engage with local communities and community and voluntary organizations, and in understanding the basic premises and working methods of community development.

The potential of the Having Your Say Programme:

Although a number of participants at the conference called for the *Having Your Say Programme* to provide training in a number of areas, it should be remembered that neither the Programme nor Combat Poverty have a brief relating to the delivery of training across CDPs, Family Resource Centres and LDCIP projects. Nor are they training providers. However, this does not mean that the *Having Your Say Programme* can not have a role in the design, development and management of training for both the community and voluntary sector and the State sector.

It is recommended here that the *Having Your Say Programme* lead on a number of training related actions. These could include a needs-analysis of the specific areas in which both sectors require training, the design and development of training materials and the co-ordination of training delivery. In this, the *Having Your Say Programme* should work closely with other relevant organizations, including Pobal, the Family Support Agency, and the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, as well as training deliverers.

5 Conclusion

The second *Having Your Say* conference itself provides a forum for the discussion of issues that have dogged both sectors in their voluntary or required struggle to work together in the fight against poverty. Many of the issues that arose at the conference are not new: lack of mutual understanding, the need for more resources, or the inability of the State

sector to engage in a manner that is appropriate in community development terms. There are no easy solutions to these problems, but the *Having Your Say* Programme has made strides in attempting to address some of these through the production of a range of resources and providing a forum in which non-statutory and statutory organisations can meet and discuss their concerns and successes.

A number of recommendations have been made in section 4 above regarding potential actions that the *Having Your Say* Programme should pursue to meet the concerns and needs expressed by conference participants. Two broader but related recommendations are made here.

First, in moving forward, the *Having Your Say* Programme should address itself as much to working with policy-makers as to the community and voluntary sector. This may be considerably easier said than done in some policy fields. However, if the perception and/or reality that the community and voluntary sector must always step up to the public sector policy mark, while the statutory actors are seen to do little to reciprocate remains, then the balance of power in policy-making will retain its current unequal status.

Second, there is a clear need to highlight and disseminate the work and successes of the community and voluntary sector in effecting policy change at local and national level. Many participants provided an insight into the difficulties of achieving recognition of work done, and of the need to have a reason and evidence to believe that local action can and has successfully brought about change. This could be the basis of further 'how to' resources of the *Having Your Say* Programme. In addition to providing practical learning, such 'how to' case studies may also provide the motivation for groups to continue to pursue the light at the end of the policy tunnel.

The Wishing Tree

At the opening of the conference, participants were each provided with a luggage tag. They were invited to write on these their wishes, hopes or aspirations for social policy or society more generally and to hang them on a wishing tree or place them in a basket. The wishes expressed by the participants are given below. Emphases are those of the wishes composers.

Education should be free. Eliminate hidden costs.

Change the social welfare system to discourage dependency and encourage empowerment.

Hope that Local Authorities would work closely with us in communities who are working on the ground.

To have genuine community participation a performance indicators that counts in financial terms for statutory agencies own budgets.

Develop closer work relationship with all groups in the area.

Strive to eliminate apathy.

To end child poverty in Ireland so that lone parents and all families can live in dignity rather than just exist.

That every child can access cost-free pre-school education for one year.

I wish for Quality Standards in public services (transparent ones, set with/by people, consumers and communities).

That Agencies would stop paying lip service to the C&V sector and that sanctions would be put in place for their non-participation in Local Government structures for the C&V sector (SIM, SIM sub-groups, CDB etc).

To get a new building for all the supports we need in Oughterard.

To develop greater Community Development in Oughterard.

Everybody to embrace all types of family diversity. End family poverty.

Getting everybody out voting at election time (it will help keep all politicians focused on all issues).

I would like to see society in general becoming aware of responsibility as well as rights, as rights cannot exist without responsibility for our actions.

Rights to life with dignity. Equality of opportunity. Right to education, Right to employment. Right to quality housing. Right to childhood. Right to adulthood. Right to determine our own future.

Embrace all types of family and end child poverty (and adult poverty) in Ireland.

Funding for non-formal education, recognizing the many volunteers involved and therefore reducing the paper work associated with funding applications.

'Knowledge is power'. Encourage participation by using clean, plain understandable language. Is social policy for the people or by the people.

Disabled people are members of the community, so please help them to participate. If equality is for all we are all for equality.

Stop developers making so much profit on housing that so many people can't afford to live in.

I hope the people who can make a difference care enough to make a difference.

That people will reach out in support and encouragement to one another, in openness and solidarity. That in being made aware we will be moved to action to be a positive presence in our local and global communities.

That the barrier of exclusive language be taken down and plain language used to include everyone in development work.

Clearer and more direct way of having our needs and wants heard and acted upon at local and national level.

*That there is an eventual realization that for people to have a say **THEY NEED TO BE HEARD.***

Real policy change in a timely fashion that addresses root cause issues.

Secure, adequate and continuous funding for community anti-poverty projects.

Grant O Lord that I treat all those with whom I meet in my work to combat poverty with dignity.

Respect and recognition of each other's voices and views. Partnership and joint actions. Understanding. More funding to VCS.

Childcare to be provided to adults returning to college as mature students.

**EVALUATION FEEDBACK:
HAVING YOUR SAY 2006 CONFERENCE
'COMMUNITY VOICES: POVERTY & POLICY'**

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1. Introduction

Over 177 people attended the 2006 conference. Of these, 34 completed evaluation forms. The feedback from these forms is presented below.

2. Workshops Attended by Respondents

Thirty-three respondents had attended the morning workshops and 24 attended the afternoon sessions. Table 1 sets out the number of respondents attending the various workshops. Two people attended two of the morning workshops, while the rest selected just one.

Table 1: Workshop Attended by Respondents

<i>Morning Workshops</i>	<i>Number Attended Morning</i>	<i>Numbers Attended Afternoon</i>
Working with the political system (AM: Fergus Finlay, Barnados PM: Donall Geoghegan, Green Party)	7	3
Integrating policy into work planning (Siobhan Lynam, Consultant)	4	7
The National Agreement and National Action Plan against Poverty & Social Exclusion (Eamon Moran, OSI)	5	7
Using a 'Rights Based Approach' for policy change (Tom Redmond, Inner City Renewal Group)	4	1
Policy learning opportunities in community development education (Pauline Conroy & Helen O' Leary, Rahaleen Ltd.)	3	1
Gap analysis – an overview of current policy activity within community development programmes (AM only: Siobhan Airey, Consultant)	6	-
Community development – current issues & challenges (Anna Lee, Tallaght Partnership)	6	5

3. Satisfaction with Workshops

In general, the workshops were rated as 'very good' or 'good' (see Table 2) with 33 respondents rating the workshops they attended as 'very good', 18 rating them as 'good', one rating them as 'fair' and two rating them as 'poor'.

Table 2: Rating of Workshops by Respondents

Workshop	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	No Rating Given
Working with the political system	7	2	-	-	1
Integrating policy into work planning	6	2	1	-	1
The National Agreement and NAPSincl	5	5	-	-	2
Using a rights based approach for policy change	4	1	-	-	-
Policy learning opportunities in community development	2	2	-	-	-
Gap analysis – an overview of current policy activity within community development programmes	2	2	-	2	-
Community development – current issues and challenges	7	3	-	-	1

Positive and negative comments regarding the workshops are set out in Table 3. Positive comments related to the quality of the speakers and presentations, the practical 'how to' aspect of the presentations, the opportunity for discussion and debate. Negative comments centred mainly around inadequate discussion time, poor quality slides or handouts (specifically regarding the gaps analysis workshop) and some of the material being pitched too high.

Time-keeping was an issue raised by respondents in various places on the feedback sheets. There was a sense that too much time had been devoted to lectures, particularly in the morning, or presentations in workshops and not enough time was devoted to discussion, debate and sharing of experiences. Positive feedback was given regarding the talk by Chanan but comments were also made about the talk being too long and academic and there being insufficient time for questions and answers after this session. Delegates indicated that they would have liked more time to delve more deeply into issues discussed in the workshops, to go beyond 'preaching to the converted'. The evaluator attended four of the afternoon workshops and the numbers attending each appeared to have some bearing on the level of discussion and debate taking place – the better attended workshops appeared to be more animated and discursive. A number of delegates commented that they would have liked to receive handouts for all of the workshops.

The most useful aspects of the conference named by respondents were as follows:

- Specific workshops attended by respondents (16)
- Opportunity to debate and discuss issues (8)
- Resource materials – handouts, reports (6)
- Talk by Chanan on the UK experience (6)
- Opportunity to network (4)

Table 3: Summary of Comments on Workshops

Workshop	Positive Feedback	Negative Feedback
Working with the political system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liked discussion oriented Q&A session • Practical, down to earth, straight talking • Professionally and honestly delivered • Excellent presentation generating worthwhile comment • Resulted in better understanding of political system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needed more time for discussion (2) • Afternoon session pitched too low
Integrating policy into work planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good resource material for application • Practical step by step help (2) • Good discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having document in advance would be helpful and resulted in more productive discussion • Less rigid adherence to the workshop questions might have been better
The National Agreement and NAPSincl	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well focused and to the point • Resulted in a greater understanding of role of OSI • Well informed speakers who interacted with the audience • Very interesting • Important bridge between both speakers and delegates • Good additional information and discussion • Good setting of context for national agreement and NAPS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough people had read the documents beforehand limiting discussion • No time for discussion
Using a rights based approach for policy change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear practical experiences of rights based Proactive and challenging. • Excellent input discussion and chairing. • Good discussion • Great 'food for thought' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough time to delve into in-depth approaches and specifics
Policy learning opportunities in community development education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good workshop • Interesting review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion was monopolised by one or two people • Workshop went 'over my head' (2) • Not enough time
Gap analysis – an overview of current policy activity within community development programmes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too much time spent on presentation (2) • Workshop too rushed (2) • Presentation repetitive • Poor quality slides and handouts • Not enough time for discussion
Community development – current issues and challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Really interesting inputs from speaker and delegates • A good 'talk shop among the converted' • Interesting and passionate speaker • Excellent analysis and discussion of key issues 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experienced speaker • Well facilitated, good presentation, good opportunity to speak, good worthwhile discussion 	
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4. What Attracted Delegates to the Conference

Thirty-one respondents indicated what attracted them to the conference.

Their responses fall into the following main categories:

- Desire to increase knowledge and understanding, especially of policy (10)
- Relevance to their work (8)
- Learning – something new or from the experience and ideas of others (6)
- Networking (5)
- Giving a voice to those working in social inclusion/community sector (2)
- Format of the conference – speakers, workshops (2)

5. Extent to Which the Conference Met Objectives

Respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they believed the conference had met its objectives. The results are presented in Tables 4 to 7 below. In general, the majority of respondents indicated that objectives regarding sharing of experiences and learning, exploring how community development approaches can influence policy and sharing of practical 'how to' knowledge were met to a 'certain extent'. Insufficient time and opportunity for discussion was a major factor for these ratings. The objective on introducing new support resource material was considered to have been met to a 'great extent' due to the range of new publications made available by Combat Poverty at the conference.

Table 4: Extent to which Conference helped to share experiences and learning of how communities (both geographical and issue-based) engaged with the policy system in Ireland at local and national level

Rating	Number of Responses	Reasons for Responses
To a great extent	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publications & speakers all add to our knowledge. • I had a very poor understanding & experience before. • Learned from the workshop.
To a certain extent	22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needed more time for discussion. • Would have liked more small group discussions so that I could feel comfortable asking Qs and stating comments. • Not a lot of practical case studies. • Some info at the workshop about the role of voluntary members on CDB. • Not sufficient discussion. • Airey's research. • Communities need recognition of their work, existence and to be taken seriously at policy level. • Very general. • Too many lectures not enough participation to share experiences. • Through meeting in the workshops and networking.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not certain where our views are going. • Chance to promote organisation through networking. • It will open the debate.
Not at all	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confined by constraints of workshops and lack of time. • No time for discussion among delegates. • Apart from the UK example there was no sharing of experiences
No response	3	

Table 5: Extent to which Conference has helped to explore how community development approaches can influence public and social policy in Ireland

Rating	Number of Responses	Reasons for Responses
To a great extent	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helped me become much more aware of the system, the hopes, the disparities, etc. Now I hope to do something positive with that info. • Very comprehensive range of presentations and workshops
To a certain extent	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need more time for discussion. • The afternoon workshop on work planning was very practical. • I don't think we are much further on. • Input in workshop on community development. • More examples of successful policy initiatives would have been helpful. • Workshop discussion touched on community development activity. • The community development approach needs to be more influencing on local policy • Feel that community development courses delivered by VECs level needs to be addressed. • Could have had more guided discussion. • C&V groups are consulted but submissions are not reflected enough in policy. • Interesting speakers from Ireland and UK. • Helped to ground me again as to the reason I'm involved in community work. • It puts policy development back on the agenda of CDPs. • Needs more time to tease out approaches
Not at all	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The conference ran overtime and no round table discussion, led to frustration. • Community development is about communities having a say in how policy and decision making affects individuals. Community development is generic – don't think this was reflected
No response	3	

Table 6: Extent to which the Conference has encouraged participants to share practical skills and the 'how to' of policy work

Rating	Number of Responses	Reasons for Responses
To a great extent	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to follow up ideas, people & resources. • Was very encouraging. • Active participation & sharing during workshops & free time. • Workshops were 'how to'.
To a certain extent	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would be good to have the perspective of policy makers also. • Not a lot of scope at conference. • Not sufficient discussion to allow for a sharing of skills. • Very little sharing. • Documents could have included case studies, UK examples were good. • Too many lectures not enough participation to share experiences.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through meeting in workshops and networking. • Whole set up – sharing and networking.
Not at all	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too much time on presentations, workshops too rushed, too many people. • Not enough time to engage and discuss. • No time to discuss among delegates. • Didn't feel that was what workshop was about. • The fact that the conference ran on overtime did not allow for round table discussion, led to frustration. • Good work done today but needs more emphasis. • Conference was not well organised and time keeping was bad so that there was not enough time available.
No response	5	

Table 7: Extent to which the Conference has introduced new resources designed to support communities in the policy making process

Rating	Number of Responses	Reasons for Responses
To a great extent	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent – will be used. • Wonderful – now to read them. • CPA has produced and provided a very good range of new resources • Publications. • Availability of new CPA documents. • Good pack. • Resources in conference pack are excellent. • Wide variety of interesting publications. • Research findings can be used as a tool to further policy development. • Publications freely available.
To a certain extent	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was a start. I like to see more fruit that hopefully will come out of this conference. • The afternoon workshop (work planning) has given practical help. • The material handed out has some value/. • Not aware of any but presume conference did produce them.
Not at all	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing new. • Too much jargon not enough practice. • Nothing new emerged, e.g. in workshop issue of language came up – but how long have we been hearing this for. • Same old same old
No response	6	

Conference Participants

Kate Morgan	2nd Chance Education for Women
Therese Roche	Access 2000
Josephine Stroker	Acorn Community Development Ltd
Siobhán Noctor	Aonad Family Resource Centre
Mary O'Keeffe	Aonad Family Resource Centre
Mary O'Malley	Aonad Family Resource Centre
Geraldine Brennan	ASESP Ltd
Imelda Gormally	Ballybane CDP
Marie Lawless	Ballymun Local Drugs Task Force
Nichola Whelan	Ballymun Partnership
Fergus Finlay	Barnardos
Jane Tinsley	Barnardos
Iris Lyle	Blanchardstown Area Partnership
Margaret Laffan	Bluebell Community Development Project
Colette Nulty	Border Action
Eileen Byrnes	Bray Partnership
James O'Brien	Bray Travellers CDP
Martin Kelly	Bridge Community Development Project
Sarah Dixon	Centre for Independent Living
Brian Duncan	Chair of Combat Poverty Agency
Geraldine Bresnihan	Clann Resource Centre
Anne O'Shaughnessy	Clann Resource Centre
Tony O'Brien	Clare County Council
John Crowe	Clare County Council
Pat McMahon	Clare County Council
Jean Clifford	Clondalkin Womens Network
Jenny Murphy	Clondalkin Womens Network
Elaine Byrne	Combat Poverty Agency
Bevin Cody	Combat Poverty Agency
Vanessa Coffey	Combat Poverty Agency
Sharon Cosgrove	Combat Poverty Agency
Paula Fitzpatrick	Combat Poverty Agency
Elaine Houlihan	Combat Poverty Agency
Fidelma Joyce	Combat Poverty Agency
Sharon Keane	Combat Poverty Agency

Tony Lane	Combat Poverty Agency
Izabela Litewska	Combat Poverty Agency
Danielle McGarry	Combat Poverty Agency
Ann Moore	Combat Poverty Agency
Joan O'Flynn	Combat Poverty Agency
Margaret O'Gorman	Combat Poverty Agency
Julie Smyth	Combat Poverty Agency
Barbara Walshe	Combat Poverty Agency
Davin Roche	Comhairle
Maura White	Community Action Network
Emma Freeman	Community Action Programme
Gabriel Chanan	Community Development Foundation U.K.
Gabriel Foley	Community Forum
Stephanie Birk	Community Worker
Séamas Devine	Community Workers Co-Op
Sean Regan	Community Workers Co-op
Carmel Corrigan	Conference Rapporteur
Kate Ennals	Consultant
Gráinne Boyle	Co-Operation Fingal
Julie White	County Limerick VEC
Peter McArdle	County Monaghan Partnership
Julia Alexander	Croí Ráth Naoi CDP
Eleanor Hughes	Croom Family Resource Centre
Anna Dangerfield	Crosscare
Marie Keegan	Crosscare Community Education Programme
Catherine Byrne	Dept of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
Seán McLaughlin	Dept of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
Aidan O'Reilly	Dept of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
Breege Fitzsimons	Dept of Environment, Heritage and Local Government
Des Moore	Dept. of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
Eileen Carroll	Disability Equality Specialist Support Agency
Ann Conaghan	Downstrands Family Resource Centre

John Davis	Dráiocht Community Development and Training Org Ltd
Lara Gallagher	Dublin Aids Alliance
Erin Nugent	Dublin Aids Alliance
Sonia Lavelle	Dublin City Council
Jude McHugh	Dublin City Council
Declan Hayden	Dublin City Council
Mary Hamlin	Dublin City Council
Mick Cowman	Dundalk IT
Paul Gunnell	EAPN
Robin Hanan	EAPN
Ann Clarke	Eustace Patterson Ltd
Anne Eustace	Eustace Patterson Ltd
Amanda Wicker	FAB CDP
Pat Bennett	Family Support Agency
Mary Cahill Kennedy	Fine Gael
Ann Mulligan	Fingal County Council
Ann Osbourne	Greater Blanchardstown CDP
Nuala Kane	Greater Blanchardstown CDP
Donall Geoghegan	Green Party
Ger McCormack	Health Service Executive Dundalk
Helen McCormack	HSE Health Promotion
Denis Cahalane	HSE Louth
Siobhan Airey	Independent Consultant
Liz Chaloner	Independent Consultant
Tom Redmond	Inner City Renewal Group
Mary Frances O'Connell	Institute of Public Administration
Elaine Grehen	Irish Deaf Society
Kevin Stanley	Irish Deaf Society
Mary Ruddy	Irish Human Rights Commission
Kathleen McAuliffe	Kerryhead/Ballyheigue Family Resource Centre
Anne Kelly	Kildare Network of People with Disabilities
Sara Bourke	Knocanrawley RC
Leonda Kelleher	Laptop Initiative
Cathy Moore	Laptop Initiative

Miriam Cregan	Limerick County Community and Voluntary Forum
Maria Gorman	Listowel Town Council
Monica O'Malley	Longford Community Resources Ltd
Áine Deely	Loughrea Family Resource Centre
Nichola Coffey	Meath Partnership
Orla Drew	Meath Partnership
Cecil Smith	Merchants Quay Ireland
Veronica Bon	Mid West Community Development Support Agency
John Murphy	Mohill Family Support Centre
Mary McKinney	Moville Family Resource Centre
May Ryan	Muintir Na Tire
Margaret O'Doherty	Muintir Na Tire
Packie Kelly	Mullaghmatt Cortolvin FRC
Donna Shackelford	Multnomah County Dept of Human Services (USA)
Jeanne Moore	National Economic and Social Forum
Orla O'Connor	National Womens Council
Jennifer Wallace	NCCRI
John Carroll	North Tipperary County Council
Maurice Devlin	NUI Maynooth
Hilary Tierney	NUI Maynooth
Eamonn Moran	Office for Social Inclusion
Christine O'Kelly	Older Womens Network
Candy Murphy	One Family
Breda Dunne	One Parent Exchange Network
Nuala McGinnity	One Parent Exchange Network
Bernie Moore	One Parent Exchange Network
Maeve Ní Liatháin	Participation and practice of rights
Karen O'Donnell O'Connor	Paul Partnership
Christine O'Kelly	Policy Learning
Pauline Conroy	Ralaheen Ltd
Helen O'Leary	Ralaheen Ltd
Ann Swords	Rialto Community Network
Sean Beirne	Roscommon County Council
David Kinsman	Roscommon Partnership

Linda Sice	Roscommon Partnership
Marcello Cosey	Shannon Family Resouce Centre
Michael Mernagh	SICCDA
Sinéad O'Connor	Sliabh Luachra Local Development
Sean McManus	Sligo County Council
Paul O'Raw	South Kerry Development Partnership
Sharon Kennedy	South West Wexford CDP
Wendy Goggin	Southill Community Development Project
Nuala Rennison	Southill Community Development Project
Jim Prior	Southill Family Resource Centre
Richard Hickey	St Brigids FRC
Áine Lyne	St. Munchin's Family Resource Centre
Seamus Hunt	St. Vincent de Paul
Patricia Hegarty	Strabane and Lifford Womens Centre
Katherine Harford	Tallaght Partnership
Anna Lee	Tallaght Partnership
Mary Davis	Task Force on Active Citizenship
Angela Foley	Templeshannon CDP
Helen Lowry	The Migrant Rights Centre Ireland
Siobhan O'Donoghue	The Migrant Rights Centre Ireland
Ivan Cooper	The Wheel
Sharon Browne	Tralee CDP
Mary Collins	Travact
Winnie Joyce	Travact
Assumpta Kelly	Triskele Community Training and
Development	
Mahin Sefidvash	Unifem Ireland
Chiara Magini	Volunteering Ireland
Sally Campbell	Warrenpoint Community Education
	Development Centre
Heather Kiely	Waterford Area Partnership Ltd
Breda Murphy	Waterford Women's Centre
Catherine Nolan	Waterford Women's Court
Deirdre Barrett	West Limerick CDP Ltd
Morgan Mee	West Training and Development
Fiona English	Wexford Area Partnership
Angela Hogan	Wexford Area Partnership

Fran Ryan

Wexford Area Partnership

Laurie Whelehan

Wicklow Working Together

Marian Flannery

Women of the North West

Martin Kelly

Felicia Barnes

Mary Dermody

Alan Maher