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**POLICY AND PROGRAMME RESPONSES
TO URBAN SOCIAL EXCLUSION 1990 -
2000: A SELECTIVE EUROPEAN CROSS
COUNTRY COMPARATIVE STUDY**

By

**Caren Gallagher
(BSc)**

**Thesis Submitted to the Dublin Institute of Technology
for the Award of
Mphil**

Submitted - September 2003

**Supervisor: Mr. Joseph Davis: Senior Lecturer, Faculty of the Built
Environment**

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GLOSSARY

ABA	Area Based Allowance
ADM	Area Development Management
BCDA	Brownlow Community Development Association
BCP	Big Cities Policy
BCT	Brownlow Community Trust
BRAG	Ballybough Redevelopment Action Group
CDP	Community Development Project
CoR	Committee of the Regions
CORI	Conference of Religious of Ireland
CTA	Community Technical Aid
DALC	Dublin Adult Learning Centre
DEE	Department of Education and Employment
DETR	Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions
DICP	Dublin Inner City Partnership
DISC	Dublin Inner City Schools Network
DoE	Department of the Environment
E.C	European Community
E.E.C	European Economic Community
EMU	European Monetary Union
ESF	European Social Fund
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
E.U	European Union
EZ	Employment Zone
FAS	Foras Aiseanna Saothair
GLA	Greater London Authority
GLC	Greater London Council
GOR	Government Offices for the Region
ICE	Inner City Enterprise
ICES	Inner City Employment Service
ICON	Inner City Organisations Network
IDA	Industrial Development Authority

IGC	Intergovernmental Conference
IRD	Integrated Rural Development
LDA	London Development Agency
LDDC	London Docklands Development Corporation
NAPS	National Anti-Poverty Strategy
NDC	New Deal for Communities
NESC	National Economic and Social Council
NESF	National Economic and Social Forum
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
N.I	Northern Ireland
NIAPN	Northern Ireland Anti-Poverty Network
NICVA	Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action
NIVT	Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust
Nordubco	North Dublin Development Coalition
NWICN	North West Inner City Network
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OP	Operational Programme
OPLURD	Operational Programme for Local Urban and Rural Development
P2000	Partnership 2000
PANG	Pearse Area Network Group
PESP	Programme for Economic and Social Progress
PCW	Programme for Competitiveness and Work
PNR	Programme for National Recovery
PSI	Promoting Social Inclusion Initiative Primary Schools Initiative
RDA	Regional Development Agency
RING	Ringsend and Irishtown Network Group
SICCDA	South Inner City Community Development Association
SF	Structural Funds
SH & SSB	Southern Health and Social Services Board
SMI	Strategic Management Initiative
SWICN	South West Inner City Network
TAPP	Thamesmeand Anti-Poverty Network

TEC	Training and Enterprise Council
TFSU	Thamesmead Family Service Unit
TNC	Transnational Corporation
TSN	Targeting Social Need
UDC	Urban Development Corporations
U.K	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
U.S	United States
WHO	World Health Organisation
WHAP	Waterfront Health Action Project

ABSTRACT

Historically, poverty has been a deeply embedded reality within society, its nature and extent altering, over time, in response to shifts in socio-economic conditions, political ideology and value systems. Poverty, as part of the human condition, still remains intractable problem in both developed and developing nations and regions. This study is concerned, in particular, with urban poverty in an E.U. context. The overall aim of the research is to consider whether urban social exclusion is amenable to public policy intervention. A comparative study approach is used to explore the various approaches to partnership and anti-poverty policy in the selected countries and, where possible, identify positive, transferable elements of these programmes. The concept of poverty is one which has eluded an accepted definition for many years and the terminological debate looks set to continue. However, the recent introduction of the policy concept of social exclusion has drawn attention to the dynamic processes which are distinct from poverty itself, such as, labour market exclusion and exclusion from services and social relations. Tackling social exclusion has now become a key priority for many governments and, encouraged by the E.U., the last decade has seen a significant increase in the number of anti-poverty programmes which are managed through partnership with the various stakeholders involved. In many countries, particularly Ireland, these partnerships have developed and matured over the years and have had a varied impact on their catchment areas. It is now widely accepted that working in partnership is the most effective method for tackling the multi dimensional nature of the problem of social exclusion.

The study begins with a review of the extensive literature available on the concept of poverty and of social policy in the E.U. It proceeds to examine national anti-poverty policies with particular reference to Ireland, both north and south. It then focuses on a number of diverse initiatives operating in deprived urban communities at the local level in Ireland, the U.K and the Netherlands, with an assessment of the thrust and outcomes of the projects. The primary research phase consisted of a number of in depth interviews both structured and semi-structured, with key players associated with the projects in each region, selected on the basis of their specialist knowledge.

The research findings suggest that although the problems of social exclusion are viewed as a national problem which require a concerted national strategy, the co-ordination of services and resources at local level is a significant factor in increasing the impact of a particular initiative. In this regard, Ireland is particularly disadvantaged by weak local government. The U.K., most notable by the establishment of the Social Exclusion Unit in 1997, has begun to implement many 'joined up' national programmes to tackle the various aspects of social exclusion; however, these are still at a very early stage. The 'Big Cities' policy in the Netherlands represents best practice of national and local integration in its implementation at project level.

The study concludes with evaluations and conclusions derived from the research and makes recommendations for future policy direction in terms of the need to link anti-poverty programmes to national priorities and for the implementation of new management paradigms based on the partnership principle.

Chapter One
Introduction

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Long resigned to underdevelopment, unemployment and continued emigration, Ireland is now one of the most successful economies in Europe, if not in the world, and popularly referred to as the 'Celtic Tiger'.¹ A period of unprecedented economic growth since 1993 has gone beyond the predictions of most forecasters with high levels of employment growth, increasing population², rising standards of living for those in employment and increasing income per head. However, one of the main problems with this growth is that the benefits of the new prosperity are not being distributed evenly and this is where the success story becomes tainted. Ongoing problems include the substantial numbers of people still living in poverty and the high number of long-term unemployed people. The UN Human Development Report (1998) highlighted that in the seventeen leading countries of the developed world, levels of income inequality in Ireland were exceeded only by the U.S. and levels of child poverty were surpassed only by the U.K. (UN, 1998). There is also a continued drop out from second level education in particular geographic areas and the problem of rural exclusion has now become more apparent. There are also major issues to be addressed around the areas of equality, healthcare and disability. In short, social exclusion is still the everyday experience of large numbers of people in Ireland (CORI, 1999).

Sweeney (1998) identified three primary objectives necessary for any successful economy. These were high growth, full employment and an acceptable distribution of

¹ This is a punning reference to the longer established term 'tiger economy', which has been used to describe the more successful small Asian economies

² Net immigration has replaced traditional emigration patterns

income and wealth. It is clear that Ireland has been remarkably successful in reaching this first objective, however with regard to the latter two, progress has been less forthcoming. This research project has come at a time when there is a high level of debate on poverty and poverty policy both at national and E.U. level. It was Jacques Delors who first introduced the phrase 'social exclusion' into the European Community negotiations and this clearly acknowledged that built into the dynamics of achieving an ever-closer union, there are negative effects which are disadvantaging particular groups (Madanipour et al, 1998). It was hoped that the use of the term social exclusion, would encourage the adoption of a multi-dimensional approach when considering the barriers that prevent particular groups fully participating in the economic, political and cultural life of the society in which they live. This new term has become something of a 'buzzword' as concern for maintaining levels of social cohesion within cities has grown. Indeed it has been stated:

'The city is, in many parts of Europe, no longer a desirable place to bring up children, to spend leisure time, or to live. This erosion of the city is perhaps the greatest threat to the European model of development and society and one which needs the widest debate.'

(Green Paper, E.C, 1994:5)

Achieving economic cohesion has been ingrained in European policy since the early treaties and social cohesion entered the agenda with the Maastricht negotiations. This caused a shift of perspective regarding cohesion. The population of the EU is viewed as a whole and thus social exclusion must be addressed wherever it occurs. The 1980s and the 1990s saw a plethora of policies and programmes put in place to ameliorate social

exclusion in particular areas³ which have ranged from upgrading the physical environment to providing education and leisure activities for the target group.

In Ireland there is much interest in social exclusion and poverty. With the huge growth of the economy, there is a distinct challenge to the government to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor and ensure that the benefits are equally distributed for the creation of a fully inclusive society.

1.1 THE RESEARCH QUESTION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

Given the complexity of the concept of social exclusion and the broad range of issues it encapsulates, this project has focused on a small selection of anti-poverty initiatives which are a broad representation of the range of programmes that have been established in recent years. These policy and programme initiatives form part of a continuum. For the purposes of research management and structure, the end point of 2000 was selected on the basis that this marked the end of one millennium and the beginning of the succeeding one. Based on the analysis of the experience of policy and programme implementation in a selection of European cities of varying sizes, the central research questions addressed in this thesis are as follows:

- (i) *To what extent is the condition of urban social exclusion amenable to public policy intervention?*
- (ii) *In terms of successful intervention, are there transferable models of best intervention practice in this field?*

³ Such programmes included the three EU Poverty Programmes

Following an overview from an international perspective of the nature, extent and evolution of understanding of poverty and its causes, consequences and solutions, the six main objectives hoped to be achieved from the research are as follows:

- To define and trace the evolutionary understanding of the nature of poverty and its measurement.
- To review the current situation and emerging trends with regard to urban poverty in Europe within the framework of evolving E.U. social policy.
- To identify the nature and extent of poverty in Ireland with specific attention to urban areas.
- To provide a detailed analysis of policies and programmes implemented to combat urban poverty in a number of areas in Ireland.
- To compare these measures with those employed in selected European cities, highlighting guiding principles for best practice.
- To set an agenda for future policy direction in mitigating social exclusion.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

The present investigation, involving both primary and secondary research, is carried out using a variety of qualitative methods throughout. The techniques adopted for gathering material included:

1.2.1 Structured Interviews

These were carried out with key actors involved in the implementation of anti-poverty strategies and in policy development in this field. All these people are linked in various ways in either researching or being practically engaged in combating social exclusion,

some are paid professionals working in the field and others are volunteers or local residents involved in the rejuvenation of their area.⁴ The interviews were designed in a way that comparisons in key areas could be made between different partnership organisations.⁵

1.2.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were also undertaken to supplement information obtained from the structured interviews and therefore maximise the insights that could be gained. This form of interview was useful in the initial stages of the project when a general overview of issues was required and also at the latter stage of the research when follow-up information was necessary.

1.2.3 Case Studies

Specific anti-poverty projects were selected and analysed through interviews with those working within the initiatives and visits were paid to a number of the projects which were ongoing. These visits were carried out with the purpose of drawing out examples of best practice and highlighting the potential pitfalls which could be avoided. These projects were chosen on the basis of the length of time they had been in operation, the specific aims and focus of the project, the ability to comparatively assess against other chosen case studies and the anticipated information which could be drawn out, particularly examples of best practice. The comparative assessment was carried out on urban poverty programmes in London, U.K. and Amsterdam and Rotterdam in Holland. It was felt,

⁴ Appendix 1 lists the persons interviewed during the course of the research project

⁵ Appendix 2 contains a copy of the interview format used

particularly with regard to the experience of the Netherlands, that the urban poverty solutions in place, (which are generally perceived to be more co-ordinated than in Ireland) would serve as a useful yardstick in evaluating the Irish experience. The fact that these programmes have been in existence longer has meant that they have had the necessary time-span to be efficiently evaluated and assessed. It would be wasteful to neglect any lessons which could be drawn from good and bad practice elsewhere in Europe.

1.2.4 The importance of a comparative assessment

In a shrinking and more interdependent world, Europe's problems are becoming increasingly interconnected. Experiments and innovations to tackle social dilemmas in various countries have excited more debate on finding solutions and new directions based on common experiences (Kane, 1983). The field visits made to the programme areas to observe the anti-poverty initiatives provided the opportunity to gain more information on the social dilemmas in other countries and the methods which are employed to deal with the variety of problems concentrated in the target area.

1.2.5 Framework for analysis

Each case study considers the experience of social exclusion in different urban neighbourhoods in three European countries: the Republic of Ireland, United Kingdom and the Netherlands. By considering eight case studies, the common symptoms of social exclusion can be examined in a variety of different national and local contexts. Through the use of semi-structured interviews with a number of key actors and the use of

secondary sources, a detailed report and assessment of each case study was carried out. The semi-structured nature of the interviews allowed for an open framework whereby not all questions were designed and phrased ahead of time. However, the same format to guide the interview and cover similar issues was applied. The information and observations presented in the assessment of each case study is derived both from analysis of the interviews with the background foundation of a detailed documentary analysis.

A comprehensive analysis of a wide variety of sources was carried out throughout the duration of the research study. A thorough examination of the literature around the theme of social exclusion was undertaken to provide an overarching view of the theoretical debate and the anti-poverty strategies which have been established. This secondary research was a crucial part of the overall research approach as the issues of poverty and social exclusion came to the forefront of a number of policy debates over the research period. Again, this information and the insights are intended to complement the findings obtained from the structured interviews and case studies. The sources consulted are diverse and span a number of fields but remain largely in the area of social studies. The sources used include textbooks, journals, official reports, third sector and private sector, newspapers and computer based material.

1.2.6 Conference Attendance

This was also an integral part of the methodology for this project as the conferences provided the opportunity to gain recent information and participate in workshops and debates with policy makers and workers in the field. The conferences attended (which ranged from political meetings to social awareness and European social policy

conferences) covered the multi-faceted nature of urban poverty and the wide variety of issues it encapsulates.

1.3 WHAT WILL BE ACHIEVED BY THIS RESEARCH?

At a time when the issue of social exclusion is at the centre of many political and social debates both at a European and national level, the debate on how best to tackle this problem has attracted much attention. By examining a number of anti-poverty strategies and by in depth interviewing of the people who are implementing these initiatives on the ground, it is hoped that insights can be gained on the best way to make a constructive impact on the target groups.

The overall aim of the research is to provide an answer to the research question, fulfil the objectives set out in page four and ultimately address oversights and blind spots by critically examining some of the received ideas on tackling social exclusion that may have little theoretical weight and/or pragmatic impact.

1.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

In carrying out a comparative study, there are important differences in the way information is documented using different sources and there are differences in the level of completeness of the information.

One of the problems with relying solely on qualitative research is that it can be difficult to make systematic comparisons using semi- structured and structured interviews. A criticism which could be put forward regarding this study is the lack of a questionnaire survey carried out among the users of particular anti-poverty initiatives. It was felt that it

would not have been feasible to carry out a number of surveys in the different localities. It must also be pointed out that questionnaires are pre-emptive and the people completing them can only respond to what the researcher perceives to be relevant. In an interview situation, there is more room for discussion and debate thus allowing for the coverage of a wide range of issues in detail. It is also important to note the time lag between the collection of the data and the presentation of the thesis.

There were also some problems experienced in gathering information from the Netherlands as many of the required documents were not translated into English. There was also a distinct communication gap caused by the language barrier and this led perhaps to an over-simplified style of interview, limiting the amount of information that could be imparted.

1.5 THESIS STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

This introductory chapter outlines the background from which the thesis has emerged, the overall objectives of the research and the methodology used to reach these objectives. It also highlights the limitations of the study.

Chapter Two examines in detail the literature on the concept of poverty, its definition and measurement and the variations of poverty world-wide. It also looks at the contrast between urban and rural poverty and the inevitable continued growth of urban areas throughout the world.

Chapter Three highlights the European perspective on urban poverty, examining the recent concept of social exclusion and how the processes of urbanisation and migration are affecting cities within Europe. Finally, the chapter highlights the new dynamism to work towards the development of sustainable cities.

Chapter Four provides a comprehensive overview of European social policy. It begins by setting out the context and evolution of E.U. social policy and discusses the three main issues of concern (as agreed on at the 1998 European Social Policy Forum). These are: the future world of work, the promotion of citizenship and participation and the adaptation of social protection to changing needs. Finally, the chapter discusses the interaction of economic and social issues and the importance of civil dialogue.

Chapter Five describes the nature and extent of poverty in Ireland (in both rural and urban areas). The physical, economic and social characteristics of urban deprivation are also examined. This is followed by an outline of the main policy responses to tackle poverty in Ireland, particularly the National Anti Poverty Strategy. The chapter concludes with the needs that should be addressed to develop a policy framework for urban development.

Chapter Six similarly sets out the main national policies to tackle social exclusion which have been implemented in the UK. It also outlines the determinants of change which have lead to inequality in British cities and the impact of Thatcherism. The growing trend towards the use of area regeneration policies is discussed. This chapter also introduces

the London Study which is a unique study of sustainable regeneration within an urban area.

Chapter Seven examines four case studies (three in the Republic of Ireland and one in Northern Ireland). The anti-poverty programmes are evaluated through the use of semi-structured interviews and the main observations are set out in an assessment of each case study.

Chapter Eight similarly examines two case studies in the U.K., again through the use of structured and semi-structured interviews. The two case studies are community-based anti-poverty programmes in London. A third organisation was examined which dealt specifically with homelessness which is perhaps the ultimate manifestation of social exclusion. Again, these case studies are assessed to draw out any innovative methods in dealing with multiple problems in localised areas.

Chapter Nine looks at a variety of programmes which have been implemented in Amsterdam and in Rotterdam. The urban policy within which these programmes exist is also discussed, particularly the Big Cities Policy.

Finally, Chapter Ten presents the evaluations and conclusions derived from the above research with specific reference to Ireland and makes recommendations for the direction of future policy development with regard to urban poverty.

1.6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Ireland is now viewed at E.U. level and by the Organisation for Co-operation and Development (OECD) as an economic success story. However, there are many challenges facing Irish society in terms of those who have not benefited from this newfound prosperity. Over the last decade, there have been many programmes implemented to tackle social exclusion, however, new approaches have been called for particularly with regard to devolving power from national to regional and local level.

This research study examines the concept of poverty and the variety of policies and programmes which have been put in place in recent years to combat the problem and also looks at the policy frameworks within which these programmes operate. To provide an overall solution to localised disadvantage and inequality does not lie within the bounds of this thesis, however, it does attempt to draw out significant, workable elements of successful initiatives which may be pan-applicable.

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Chapter Two
Literature Review

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Poverty is an extremely complex condition which manifests itself in many ways in the social, economic and physical environment in both developed and developing countries of the world. At this stage, it could be taken for granted that researchers, across a broad spectrum, accept the existence of poverty, however the terminological debate continues (Curtin *et al*, 1996). Much discussion surrounds the concept of poverty and what it means to be poor and it is this search for a definition which fills many pages of the literature on poverty.

For many years poverty in advanced industrialized countries has been interpreted differently from poverty in poor countries as many established regimes of power have attempted to play down the existence of this phenomenon (Townsend, 1993). It is common to disregard the plight of the poor in more affluent regions of the world when one is faced with pictures of chronic undernourishment and starvation in certain areas of the third world. To a certain degree this is understandable when one considers the millions of people living in conditions of primary poverty in the developing countries. One must also consider that within the huge divide between the first and third world lie further divisions which stratify the more developed nations creating a very real and enduring situation where, right at the bottom of the class system, large numbers of people exist in conditions of extreme poverty. It is fair to ask whether a definition for the same concept can be employed which incorporates these two different aspects of the problem. There is no doubt that divergent views of the concept of poverty will be reflected in divergent methods of measurement and explanation and consequently who will then be considered poor and who will not. This point highlights the problem of working with a

concept that is so fluid and inconclusive and thus it is no surprise that no one definition has been accepted as defining poverty comprehensively.

Since the nineteenth century when rigorous studies of poverty first began, there has been considerable controversy on the principles which underlie the concept; thus many theories have evolved over the years as a basis for worldwide and comparative work. These alternative approaches are all useful to a certain degree although it has become clear that some ideas are simply enlargements of theories that have gone before. In providing a complete discussion of the main definitions of poverty that have been put forward over the years, one must consider absolute and relative poverty, the basic needs approach, objective and subjective and material and social ideas of poverty. It must be noted though, that the variety of ways in which the concept of poverty has been defined and the practical applications that result from this often change with the social contexts of reference.

2.1 ABSOLUTE POVERTY

Researchers have long argued whether poverty should be measured in absolute or relative terms. The concept of absolute poverty is often expressed as the inability to meet the basic needs to sustain a healthy life. Mc Namara (1973) once described absolute poverty as:

'a condition of life so degraded by disease, illiteracy, malnutrition and squalor as to deny its victim basics necessities.' (McNamara, 1973:54)

Absolute poverty is often called subsistence poverty as it is based on terms of the assessment of 'minimum subsistence requirements' causing those who use such a

measurement to limit poverty to material deprivation. Seebohm Rowntree first initiated the subsistence standard in the United Kingdom when he conducted his noted study of York in 1899 and estimated a poverty line in terms of families whose incomes could not provide even the minimum necessities to maintain physical well-being (Rowntree, 1901). Rowntree's surveys were based on the nutritional needs of families and the amount of income required to sustain them. In order to calculate this he used the relationship:

$$\text{Total Income} - \text{Rent} = \text{Disposable Income}$$

Thus the family was left with a disposable income from which food was purchased and the poor were then believed to be those who could not meet the cost of a nutritional diet which had also been estimated by Rowntree.

This approach involved a judgment on what actually constituted a nutritional diet and following from this on the allowances made for non-food expenditures considered to be desirable. The use of the subsistence or "budget standard approach" was adopted by the United States government in the construction of the US official poverty line. It was employed in both some of the older and more recent studies of poverty in Britain and was also exported to many of the former colonies such as Malaysia and India. It served as the foundation for various development plans and is what most people would have in mind today when they talk about poverty and the poor (Townsend, 1993).

Between the 1950s and the 1960s, Britain saw the adoption of the 'conquest of poverty' idea arising from an expanding post-war economy where the government claimed that these were the years of an affluent society with full employment and a

successful welfare state. The phenomenon of poverty appeared to have vanished from the agenda of the majority of social scientists.⁶

Indeed it was stated in the report on social security compiled by Beveridge (1942) that it was the idea of subsistence that formed the basis of British social welfare at this time. Townsend claims that the reinforcement of the absolute nature of poverty was used by the government to justify low rates of welfare assistance which provided solely for the very basic necessities of the lower strata of society if they were lucky. The limited scope of the concept ensured that there were only limited implications for socio-economic reform.

2.1.1 A critique of the Absolute Poverty concept

In time, people became disillusioned with the supposed conquest of poverty and turned back to re-examine Rowntree's concept which was exposed to heavy criticism from researchers such as Rein (1976) and Townsend (1970). Martin Rein argued that it was based on:

'an unrealistic assumption of a no-waste budget and extensive knowledge in marketing and cooking. An economical budget must be based on knowledge and skill which is least likely to be present in low income groups we are concerned with.' (Rein, 1976:104)

In his study, Rowntree had drawn up a diet sheet outlining what would provide the minimum adequate nutritional intake allowing little or no leeway for inevitable wastage in the family budget. With this in mind, Peter Townsend argued that:

'in relation to the budgets and customs of ordinary people, the make up of

⁶ There are notable exceptions such as Townsend and Orshansky.

the subsistence budget was unbalanced' (Townsend, 1970:162).

It must also be noted that in choosing what they felt were the 'necessaries for a healthy life', Rowntree and his associates automatically coloured their decision with their opinions and have consequently invited criticism on the limited and dubious nature of what they deemed as vital requirements in life.

Bradshaw *et al* (1987) supported the idea that it was going too far to believe that the ordinary person would have a no waste budget and thus based their work on how people *actually* spend their money rather than how experts felt they should spend it. In further criticism of the subsistence idea the main shortcoming for many, it seemed, was that a definition of poverty should also take into account the ability of individuals to participate fully in their society. Lister (1990) saw people as active participants in a complex web of social associations rather than simply buyers of physical goods. Those who are materially poor are more likely to be absent from normal social associations and play no part in the decision-making within their community.

Although there has been much criticism regarding these pioneering investigations, their merit lies in the fact that they facilitated the identification of urban poverty as a new phenomenon that was qualitatively different from the traditional rural kind.

Nowadays, in the developed world there are few that would view the definition of poverty solely on an absolute basis. Indeed, in his later work, Rowntree began to broaden his thinking on what constituted a 'human need' to include socially acceptable elements such as the possession of books, a radio and having a holiday (Haralambos and Holborn, 1995). Despite the rising living standards and the widespread support for the welfare

state, the 1960s and 1970s saw a resurgence of poverty research and a formulation of the concept of 'basic needs'.

2.2 THE BASIC NEEDS APPROACH

This idea was adopted in the 1970s and has been described as simply an enlargement of the subsistence concept (Townsend, 1993). Basic needs were said to include two elements, the first were the certain minimum requirements of a family for private consumption such as adequate food, shelter and clothing. Secondly, the essential services that are provided for and by the community such as safe drinking water, sanitation, public transport etc. The emphasis here is placed on the minimum needs of the community as a whole. However it must be realised that it is extremely difficult to define the needs of local communities solely by reference to the physical needs of individuals and the provisions and services then required by the community.

There were many supporters of this concept as some theorists believed that it identified and reinforced the fact that there must be preconditions for community survival and success in all countries. Those who criticised the basic needs idea felt that it did not provide convincing criteria for the choice and definition of certain elements described as necessary social needs.

Although this concept did move away, albeit not very far, from the subsistence concept, it still failed to place any truly relative indicator on the needs of both the individual and the community as a whole. It was vital, however, in providing the stepping stone which would lead to the more accepted concept of relative poverty.

2.3 RELATIVE POVERTY

The relative nature of the concept of poverty became the fundamental benchmark for most studies of poverty from the 1970s onwards. According to this definition of poverty, people are poor relative to some standard and that standard is partially shaped by the lifestyles of other citizens. Relative poverty, as a universal societal feature, refers to the deprivation of some people in relation to those who have more and the measurement of this level of poverty in terms of standards specific to a particular place at a particular time. In an ever-changing world, this more recent definition based on the relative concept will undoubtedly be up-dated and altered over time. For practical purposes the relative standards can become so fluid that no definition of need, no matter how broad, completely meets the alternating expectations of modern life.

‘Relative Poverty’ can be distinguished from ‘Basic Needs’ in that the relationship between income and need is recognised as being liable to constant change and it is for this reason that the idea of relative poverty has been adopted in much of the discourse on poverty in developed countries.

It was in his research in the 1960s and 1970s that Townsend (1979) made clear the relative nature of the concept and thus, he defined poverty by saying:

‘Individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or at least widely encouraged or approved, in the societies to which they belong. Their resources are so seriously below

those commanded by the average individual or family that they are, in effect, excluded from the ordinary living patterns, customs and activities'
(Townsend, 1979:93)

The basis of this definition stems from three standards of poverty:

(1) The state's standard, on which official statistics are based, calculated using levels of income support. This was often criticised due to the influence of arbitrary judgment from the government often using the idea of subsistence poverty to justify lower welfare and wage rates to the unemployed poor (Curtin *et al*, 1996).

(2) Secondly, Townsend noted the importance of the relative income standard of poverty. This approach sought to specify a level of income per capita in a household below which the basic needs of the family cannot be satisfied. This was identified by Townsend as 50% or less of the average household income; those receiving 80% or less were seen as on the margins of poverty.

Despite the truly relative nature of this definition, there is a number of difficulties, in that it imposes an official or observer's view of necessities. It does not acknowledge variation in costs of similar goods for different consumers and the vital importance of non-market household production and non-monetarized exchanges in poor families is not counted. Townsend himself was very critical of this standard of poverty recognising that it was focusing on the economic aspect of poverty and that simply counting the number of people below an income threshold did not take into account how far below it they fell (Callan *et al*, 1996).

(3) Lastly, Townsend suggested that poverty can only be applied consistently in terms of the concept of relative deprivation (Townsend, 1979). He highlights the deep-seated

influence of society in all aspects of poverty, even the intake of food, as our culture determines what food we should have in our cupboards. The role a person has in society influences the amount of energy expended in a day and consequently the type of diet required to stay healthy and fulfil that role.

2.4 OBJECTIVE AND SUBJECTIVE IDEAS OF POVERTY

In clarifying this concept of relative deprivation, Townsend uses an objective analysis which takes account of the external criteria such as access to differing qualities of clothing, nutrition, housing and transport as judged by a qualified outsider. It was in this way that Townsend devised his deprivation index originally using a total of sixty specific types of deprivation which was then reduced to twelve areas (pertaining to available resources and lifestyles) that he believed could be applied to the whole population. From these he calculated the percentage of the population deprived of them (See Appendix 3). This index has been criticised by writers such as Piachard (1987) as being quite random in selection of indices and very much influenced by Townsend's own personal opinions on what was customary in society. It also ignores the '*subjective position*' which adds yet another perspective to the concept of poverty. Respondents from communities are themselves invited to identify their perceptions of their needs, priorities and requirements for a minimal secure livelihood. This analysis offers better information on the identified demands of the individuals themselves which may be significantly different from those identified by an independent observer or researcher. Other criticisms of the subjective approach are suggestions that the poor may be too resigned or apathetic to appreciate the extent of their poverty and may believe that their self-interest lies in exaggerating their

feeling of poverty since it may generate support. It was also suggested that individual perceptions of poverty or well being might be so elastic as to be meaningless collectively. The contrast between objective and subjective conceptions of poverty allows us to interpret it on yet another level considering the opinions of all directly and indirectly involved.

2.5 MATERIAL AND SOCIAL CONCEPTIONS OF POVERTY

Although there are many methods for measuring poverty, the level of monetary income or consumption remains, for all subjects, the predominant yardstick when measuring the ability to satisfy needs. Ferge (1987) suggested that a distinction should be made between a purely material and social conception of poverty. This has already been discussed to a certain degree but it must be emphasised that although a study of economic deprivation remains a vital element in the study of poverty, if taken as a sole explanation, it is inadequate. It may also be said that income can imply the measurement of status, which is neither need, exclusion nor social marginalisation. For a broad and detailed analysis of poverty, one must also consider the impact of social and political exclusion on the poor and the subsequent powerlessness they feel in trying to control their future. It is this sense of despair which settles over deprived regions like a thick smog and fuels the continuation of the vicious circle of poverty.

As has been outlined above, the concept of poverty over the years has witnessed much debate, the result of which is a wide range of theories and interpretations of the concept. The UN Human Development Report (1997) claims that there is a real need to establish a

specific perspective of poverty which reinforces the human development approach. This draws together in one overall concept the income and basic needs theory as well as the idea that poverty represents the absence of some basic capabilities to function due to social constraints as well as personal circumstances. From this concept, the main objective was to construct an index through which human poverty could be measured, although it was recognised that as a concept, human poverty included many aspects that could not be measured, or indeed are not being measured. This adds a new dimension to the poverty debate in that an index has been constructed and applied internationally encompassing elements of deprivation which have been glossed over in the past.

2.6 THE CULTURE OF POVERTY

In today's world, it is now clear that it is not enough to explain poverty purely in financial terms, poverty is a multi-faceted issue extending across a broad spectrum. Incorporated into this spectrum is the question of the existence of a '*culture of poverty*' which was first introduced in 1959 by Oscar Lewis the leading American anthropologist. He focused his research on the urban poor of Mexico and Puerto Rico and argued that:

'The culture of poverty [was] not just a matter of deprivation or disorganisation, a term signifying absence of something. It is a culture in the traditional anthropological sense in that it provides human beings with a design for living, with a ready made set of solutions for human problems and so serves a significant adaptive function.'

(Lewis, 1959:87)

Lewis tended to apply this idea of a culture of poverty to the poor in colonial societies or those in the early stages of capitalism as in many third world countries. However, other sociologists such as Harrington (1984) feel that it can be extended to most of the poor in advanced industrialised countries. He likens living in poverty to being an internal alien, existing in a culture uniquely different from that which dominates society.

Lewis believed that the poor were internalised within a culture which was characterised on an individual level by powerlessness, on a family level by illegitimacy and a high divorce rate and on a community level by lack of participation and integration into major social institutions. Due to the distinct and inward looking nature of this culture Lewis felt that the effect on the children would encourage the perpetuation of the culture from generation to generation thus creating a vicious circle.

This aspect of the analysis of poverty is one that has been bombarded with sustained criticism since its introduction. Evidence from both developed and developing countries has not supported Lewis' claim, but rather the contention that the poor suffer situational constraints which inhibit their escape from the cycle of poverty rather than following a design for living directed by the culture of poverty. Madge and Brown (1990) stated:

'there is nothing to indicate that the deprivations of the poor, racial minorities or delinquents, to cite but three examples, are due to constraints imposed by culture' (Madge and Brown, 1990:153).

Whether poverty exists as a distinct culture or as a way of life within which some of the population have become entrapped, there is no doubt that the very existence of this poverty has frequent, very negative spin-off effects on the rest of society. It is often

believed that it is only the poor who carry the burden of poverty in society. However, if one looks at poverty in the long-term, the cost of a higher crime rate, illness and unemployment will fuel the steady growth of the social security system which is a cross borne by the whole community and all taxpayers.

2.7 INTERNATIONAL ANALYSIS OF POVERTY

Poverty, as a situation where fundamental human needs are not satisfied, inextricably links people and areas right across the globe. It is important though that one takes into consideration the complex dimensions of poverty which are unique to certain countries, certain areas within that country and certain groups of people in that area.

In this way, one can humanise the assumptions and definitions of poverty on a micro level and thus facilitate the application of a more comprehensive and meaningful anti-poverty strategy. Too often when we discuss poverty, we are exposed to a barrage of facts and figures which often numb our senses to the very real effects of this phenomenon on those at the lower end of the social spectrum. It is necessary, however, to set a framework for this discussion by illustrating the worldwide perspective on the extent of poverty.

2.7.1 Variations of poverty worldwide

As previously mentioned, many argue that it is poverty in the third world which is without a doubt a more pressing issue than poverty in the first world. These richer countries react sympathetically to the plight of those in sub-Sahara Africa and are quite

comfortable in the belief that the poorest in their own countries have enough food and access to a variety of modern facilities with an average standard of living.

To contradict this belief it has been stated that there are nearly 50 million people in the United States who have little more income than the world's average and who have less than large parts of the populations of Sri Lanka, Morocco and the Philippines (Townsend, 1993). Townsend also suggests that the people who espouse the view that first world poverty is qualitatively different are those who ignore the international structural causes of impoverished conditions which are common to both their own countries as well as those of the third world.

With this blinkered attitude there is little opportunity for progress in the national and international arenas. Despite the overall differences in many respects between poverty in the first and third worlds there remains the common aim to transform their respective settings. Both societies are attempting to pursue a path which will eventually lead to a higher income, employment and a better standard of living for the poorest of the population.

It is essential to consider the policies of international agencies and the institutions of the world's economy, as structural changes within these organisations influence every country of the world. In addition to this it is also important to consider conditions which can infiltrate the most ordered and comfortable society and perpetrate conditions of inequality and poverty possibly lasting over long periods of time. Examples include the transformation of the Soviet Union into fifteen republics and the loss of life through war in Somalia.

In considering the powers of international agencies, it follows logically that it is the richer countries, with their links to these agencies and multinational companies, that have the greatest influence in changes taking place in distribution of resources and income within and between various countries of the world.

It is unsettling to reflect that there is quite a number of global corporations which now have resources larger than many nation states of the world (Aghion & Williamson, 1999). The manipulative and unregulated powers of such corporations lend considerable weight to the argument for improved international planning with powers to intervene and control elements of the international market where these have undesirable consequences for society.

2.8 URBAN VERSUS RURAL POVERTY

If poverty is analysed internationally, the wide range of structural factors which underlie the condition in both urban and rural areas of the U.S. and Europe also exist in the most destitute areas of sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. Despite the common features, a distinction must be made in the way poverty manifests itself in a rural area and in an urban area.

Urban - rural health differences have not always favoured urban populations. Today, in both the developed and developing world it is the urban poor who suffer the highest risks to their health. It may sound an extreme statement but poverty kills as rising mortality rates correspond with a rising percentage of a population experiencing conditions of poverty. Lower income and poor living conditions experienced in both urban and rural areas are inextricably linked with poorer health status and increased mortality. Recent

developments point to increased risks in urban areas from pollution and other factors in environmental health, lower public expenditure in the health sector, the emergence of new diseases, especially in the developing countries where, in some areas, poor sanitation encourages the spread of infection. One must also consider the worrying phenomenon of the HIV/AIDS virus which is more prominent in the urban arena.

The main elements of urban poverty which set it apart from that in a rural setting, include the fact that the livelihoods of urban workers depend on access, both social and physical, to jobs and unemployment is often higher as the ability of the urban informal sector to absorb the unemployed is relatively limited. Coupled with this aspect is the fact that the urban poor are more vulnerable to changes in market conditions with possession of few communal assets that could possibly shield them from individual circumstances that result from employer decisions or health conditions. The urban exchange is more monetized, making assets and credit availability more important and generally services tend to be more costly (UN Human Development Report, 2000).

This is not to suggest that there is 'more or less poverty' among urban rather than rural dwellers or create an urban-rural contest. What must be recognised is the fact that poverty arises and is reproduced in urban areas in ways that are distinct from that in rural areas.

2.8.1 The urban transition

The world is in the midst of a massive urban shift unlike that of any other time in history. The need for cities and the inevitability of their continued growth has enormous

implications for human well being and the environment; if anything there is now a vital need for society to rethink its ceaseless pursuit of personal wealth. Rogers (1997) stated:

'Wealth has become an end in itself rather than a means of achieving broader social goals' (Rogers 1997:8).

Historically, cities have been the most powerful financial, commercial, and cultural centres establishing their position as the driving forces in economic and social development. They also account for a disproportionate share of national income with urbanisation directly linked to higher socio-economic status for many. Other less tangible benefits include access to information, creativity, diversity and innovation. Despite this, alongside the advantages of urbanisation, come environmental and social ills of often considerable proportions which cast a dark shadow of poverty over the urban future.

In the past poverty has been more concentrated in rural areas however as the population shifts from a rural to an urban environment so poverty is increasingly becoming an urban phenomenon. Concentrated urban poverty is particularly alarming and is qualitatively different from individual poverty, leading to extreme levels of deprivation, and also a high incidence of lone headship and teenage pregnancy, severe crime rates and extreme levels of labour force non-participation. It is still difficult to assess the nature and seriousness of this urban poverty due to the poorly documented data on conditions of life for the most vulnerable groups and the urgent need for improved indicators for measuring the quality of individual life.

2.8.2 Cities in the Developing world

Some of the worst problems in terms of human suffering occur in the poorest cities of the developing world. These cities are experiencing the most rapid change with urban populations growing at a rate of 3.5 per cent per year as opposed to less than one per cent in the more developed regions. These figures are more accurate than the more alarmist predictions put forward by the UN in the early 1980s, however, the growth rate still gives cause for concern. With fast growing economies in the developing world, new cities are being built at a phenomenal rate and density, often with little thought for future environmental or social impact. More than 55 per cent of the people in Bombay - the richest city in India - now live in slums without safe water, toilets or proper drainage. Policy makers frequently dwell on statistics which show an increase in monetary income but people cannot buy their way out of contaminated water, impure air and industrial pollution (UN Development Report, 2000).

2.8.3 Cities in the Developed world

In North America and industrial Europe, most of the population, and thus most of the poverty has been concentrated in urban areas since the early 1900s. It is the inner cities which provide the key component in the theoretical and policy debate on poverty in the richer countries of the world. The causes of concentrated urban poverty have been the subject of much theoretical research, however, one framework, particularly suited to the U.S. which gained popularity in recent years is that of Wilson (1997). He believed initially that the most important structural developments at the root of this concentration of urban poverty were rapid urbanisation, industrialisation and immigration. In more

recent decades, global structural transformation has led to the demise of manufacturing industries resulting in concentrated unemployment, and a cycle of social dislocations and poverty. As manufacturing jobs are transported to other regions or disappear entirely, few opportunities are left for the inner city poor, who tend to be geographically isolated in the urban core and are often unable to reach jobs which may be situated in the suburbs.

In considering urban disadvantage in towns and cities, there is now a tendency towards growing decay in traditional inner city communities and the development of large housing estates experiencing multiple disadvantage on the urban periphery. This phenomenon although happening throughout Europe is particularly acute in the U.K., Ireland and France (Power, 1997).

2.9 THE MARKET-LED CONSENSUS

What can be seen at a world level is the widespread support for policies the effect of which is to reinforce the divide between those who enjoy an increasingly affluent standard of living and the increasing numbers living in poverty. This general consensus has been described as a consensus for market-led development which is based on the assumption that economic growth is a direct indicator of progress. Prevalent economic wisdom presumes that by continuing on this path, every person, whatever their position in society should be able to access this high consumption lifestyle and 'live the good life' (Healy and Reynolds, 1998).

Many questions have emerged in Irish debate in respect of who are the winners and losers of Ireland's recent prosperity (Nolan et al, 2000). Given the improved economic circumstances there is concern that this change has caused substantial increases in income

inequality. If the poor in Irish society become more marginalised as others prosper, the pattern of economic growth may be unsustainable. Therefore it is important that the Irish government do not let inequality between the rich and poor go unchecked.

Despite continued economic growth around the globe there exists a strong feeling of anxiety which underpins all the apparent benefits of this rapid social change. Indeed it seems naive to accept the vision of the future as attainable when the heavy social costs associated with the world's present economic ways are being ignored thus making escape from poverty impossible for millions.

2.10 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

As was outlined in this discussion, poverty is a concept which has been subject to much debate and discussion over the years. There is still no one definition of poverty which is fully accepted as defining the concept comprehensively. Until quite recently, this debate has centred on the measurement techniques and the terminological questions, however there now an increased focus on the causes, effects and solutions to this problem. At the practical level, both Rowntree and Townsend have directly influenced the construction of useful yardsticks for the definition and implementation of social policies. The way poverty is defined, to a large extent also influences the degree of responsibility taken by the government. Despite Ireland's economic success, poverty, inequality and social exclusion remain persistent and the highly charged nature of these issues have provoked heated debate on how best to lessen the problem.

This research project is primarily concerned with poverty within Europe; it is not about world poverty. While it is essential to recognise the wider international context of this

problem, highlighted in this chapter, it is not possible to do justice to the broad range of issues involved within the confines of this project. Consequently, this chapter provides the background for the chosen European case studies.

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Chapter Three

Urban Poverty: The European Perspective

3.0 INTRODUCTION

In recent years, within Europe, it has been recognised that cities will be the most important economic and political forces in generating wealth within a new European-wide urban economic system. With nearly three-quarters of the inhabitants of the EU living in an urban setting, it is no surprise that the future of urban areas is becoming a central interest of the Union (CEC, 1997). Neither prosperity nor poverty are evenly distributed in space, leading to the co-existence of areas of affluence alongside areas of deprivation in many societies throughout the world. This has been recognised as an increasing phenomenon in Europe.

3.1 CHALLENGES AND THREATS TO THE EUROPEAN CITY

Despite the recognition of its central role, since the 1970s, after experiencing many years of social, economic and environmental degradation, the long-term future and viability of the European city has been seriously questioned (Eurocities, 1996). This period of decline has left many urban areas struggling with urgent problems such as unemployment, particularly long term unemployment, social exclusion, high crime rates which often coalesce in such a way that poverty blackspots develop within the city. It is usually at this stage, when the community becomes isolated, that a vicious circle of poverty and deprivation can set in and be passed from generation to generation. The European Commission (1994) concluded that:

'The City is, in many parts of Europe, no longer a desirable place to bring up children, to spend leisure time, or to live.'

(Green paper, E.C. 1994:5)

There has been a wide range of national and EU policies, programmes and institutions put in place to counter this urban disadvantage. These include the URBAN Community Initiative (1989), the Green Paper on the Urban Environment (1990) and within Ireland, the National Anti-Poverty Strategy (1997), the Combat Poverty Agency established in 1986, and the various partnerships within Dublin and other urban areas. Despite these efforts the viability of such strategies has been questioned in that the projects, more often than not, bring spin off benefits such as stronger community confidence instead of more practical job creation (Donnison *et al.* 1991).

3.2 SOCIAL EXCLUSION

As the commitment to combat poverty within Europe has intensified, the EU, in the late 1980s, made the strategic decision to adopt an alternative way of discussing poverty by extending the concept which is embodied in the term 'social exclusion' (Madanipour *et al.*, 1998). This has been justified by the claim that it allows the debates on poverty to become interlinked, more comprehensively, with issues on the rights of people to equal opportunities and participation in social relations in their community. It must be noted, though, that while the term social exclusion is often used interchangeably with poverty, the two are not identical. One must also consider the political influence which supported the usage of the term social exclusion, in that, many member states which have been described as being poor or in poverty felt discredited at failing to reach the European ideal of social and economic integration. Consequently, the idea of social exclusion is one which is widely used and incorporated into virtually all of the recent, relevant literature from the E.U.

The National Economic and Social Council (NESC) in *Strategy into the 21st century* (1996) identified the central role of unemployment especially long-term unemployment as the driving force behind social exclusion. Recommendations were made to focus policies accordingly in an attempt to counter the process. This reiterated the call from the European Association of Metropolitan Cities (Eurocities, 1996) for the EU to take responsibility to combat the growth of social exclusion. This body felt that it was vital to harness the valuable human potential wasted through long-term unemployment and actively promote social cohesion thus ensuring equal opportunities for all citizens of Europe.

3.3 MIGRATION

Europe's cities play a vital role in developing their surrounding regions and have strategic importance for European integration in that they are the first point of contact for many immigrants and travellers. Recent years have seen a significant increase in immigration from third world and eastern European countries into the majority of Member States (Eurostat, 1997). A large percentage of these migrants move throughout Europe, many looking for work and this move is often a movement to simply occupy the lower strata of society in a different Member State. These immigrants are often drawn into the most derelict inner city housing estates or extensive peripheral estates which endure high rates of unemployment and income inadequacy (Power, 1997). The existence of ethnic minorities in such a lowly position in society can often lead to discrimination and racism, thus accelerating the social segregation tendency. This causes the urban fabric to lose cohesion and problems such as criminality spill over, adversely affecting

the city as a whole (Koser and Lutz, 1998). In a world where immigration and cultural diversity are more common, it is important to create an environment where the benefits of EU economic and social development adequately reach all those who live there permanently.

3.4 URBANISATION

Urbanisation is an ongoing process throughout Europe. This growth manifests itself in different ways according to the individual city with segregation and exclusion largely concentrated in the inner city districts, although there are many examples of peripheral estates in the suburbs with worse problems of lower quality housing with very few amenities. Harding *et al* (1994) identified a clear cycle of urban change from the 1950s in Europe which, despite an important time lag, followed a similar pattern in most European cities. The 1950s saw the beginning of the expansion of urbanisation with the rapid growth of cities. This was followed in the 1960s by a process of suburbanisation whereby central cities declined while the wider metropolitan population grew. The 1970s then saw a process of deurbanisation occur causing loss of population in metropolitan areas, succeeded in the 1980s and 1990s by the trend of reurbanisation and population growth in the cities.

3.4.1 Reurbanisation

The trend of selective reurbanisation affecting many cities in the 1990s has had important social, economic and physical consequences. It has encouraged the physical and cultural renewal of central areas along with the creation of prestigious residential regeneration

schemes which make living in the city a more attractive option for both families and single people. The economic benefits have not been reaped without social cost as developments have caused increases in property prices with many low-income residents being displaced and forced into less desirable areas of the city. However, this trend of reurbanisation seems set to continue adding weight to the argument for the need to address urban issues in a more coherent, effective manner.

3.5 POVERTY IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

The EU encapsulates a wide range of countries each with its own character, history and problems. Under the umbrella of the E.U., there exist both countries which can be described as highly industrialised, such as Germany and those with a more agricultural orientated economy such as Portugal, Ireland and Greece. There are often stark disparities in wealth both between and within countries. This has caused Member states to assess their socio-economic performance in relation to their EU counterparts in order to identify the nature and characteristics of poverty within their borders as a basis for alleviating the problem.

Research on poverty measurement within Europe, by Eurostat, has highlighted trends using both country-specific and community-wide poverty lines. The poor were taken to mean individuals, families and groups whose resources including material, social and cultural, were limited in a way that excluded them from a minimum acceptable way of life. This concept provided a solid foundation on which much poverty research and policy were based including the implementation of the Second Poverty Programme which ran from 1985-1989.

3.5.1 The European Union poverty line

The Community wide definition of poverty is based on 50% of the EU average household expenditure, adjusted for family size. Statistics from Eurostat indicated that 53 million persons were in households having below average equivalent expenditure, but 37% of these lived in the four poorest Member States. This measure of poverty allows for a more comparable analysis of poverty in the E.U. and from the results, definitive hierarchies ranking countries with the highest to the lowest rates of poverty have been published. These results classify those countries which are, or come close, to being the poorest nations of Europe.

3.6 THE NEW EUROPE

The advent of the Single European Market and Monetary Union have affected patterns of poverty and inequality. The competitive pressures which stem from Single Market integration have served to increase substantially international competition among urban regions, thereby stimulating a contest for the survival of the fittest between the economically strong and economically weak urban regions of Europe. Within the setting of European integration and the reassessment of the position of Member States, cities have an indispensable role to play. The Cecchini report (Cecchini, 1988) focused clearly on the benefits which could be reaped by creating a more competitive, free market with widespread consumption and a massive reorganisation of production. Alternatively, it has been argued that this 'New Europe' will bring with it a different strain of poverty which will be notably harder to tackle (Koser and Lutz, 1998). The conditions of Monetary

Union extend to limiting the powers which national governments have over public funds which will cause a direct limitation on adjustments which can be made to any social policies.

The final report on the Second E.C. Poverty Programme (1989) highlighted the high rate of poverty and possible prospects for the future. It stated that there was a considerable possibility of two societies developing within Member States, one well-paid, well-protected with an employment-conditioned structure and the other poor, deprived and devalued by inactivity.

At this stage, the long-term effects of the Single Market and Monetary Union can only be estimated. The predicted net gains for all regions support the argument that with these, there should be, at least in absolute terms, no widespread growth of poverty. However, it has been illustrated in the past that economic gains often increase the gap between rich and poor despite claims that a 'rising tide will lift all boats'.

3.7 THE NEW POVERTY

Like all social conditions poverty evolves and reshapes itself over time depending on the prevailing social trends. It can be said that the poverty experienced in the EU Member States today is quite different than it has been in the past. There are greater numbers affected and these people stem from broader sections of the community in terms of gender, age, skills, class etc (Donnison *et al.* 1990).

Traditional forms of poverty have not ceased to exist however, the employment transformations in the twentieth century⁷ have the potential to enhance the risk of poverty

⁷ These include the increases in the unemployed and the fact that many new jobs in the service sector are insecure, unstable and badly paid.

among a larger variety of people. This factor combined with the numerous societal changes have led to the realisation that even with a relatively stable employment base, the risk of poverty and social exclusion can still be significant.

There is no doubt that this poverty will be altered in the future due to the impact of the further development of the EU, the costs of which are unknown. If societal changes which have shaped poverty are examined this assists in assessing the future evolution of poverty and those it may affect.

Table one contains an important summary of the variety of approaches that have been taken to explain and serve as a policy rationale to alleviate the social problems particularly associated with marginal urban areas. The six theoretical explanations of urban poverty emphasise the point that although many areas can be described as ‘poor’, there are often very different factors in play which ensure that these poor areas remain distinct from one another and therefore require alternative methods to work towards change.

Table 1: Theoretical Approaches to Urban Deprivation

Theoretical model of the problem	Explanation of the problem	Location of the problem	Key Concept	Type of change aimed for	Method of change
Culture of poverty	Problems arising from the internal pathology of the deviant	In the internal dynamics of deviant groups	Poverty	Better adjusted and less deviant people	Social education and social work treatment of groups
Cycle of Deprivation	Problems arising from the individual psychological handicaps and inadequacies transmitted from on generation to the next.	In the relationships between individuals, families and groups	Deprivation	More integrated self supporting families	Compensatory social work, support and self help

Institutional Malfunctioning	Problems arising from failures of planning, management or administration	In the relationship between the 'disadvantaged' and the bureaucracy	Disadvantage	More total and co-ordinated approaches by the bureaucracy	Rational social planning
Misdistribution of Resources and Opportunities	Problems arising from the inadequate distribution of resources	Relationship between the under-privileged and the formal political machine	Underprivileged	Reallocation of resources	Positive discrimination policies
Structural Class Conflict	Problems arising from the divisions necessary to maintain an economic system based on private profit	Relationship between the working class and the political economic structure	Inequality	Redistribution of Power and Control	Changes in political consciousness and organisation
Social Polarisation	Problems arising from marginalisation of 'weak' groups	Relationships between 'marginalised' groups and political economic structure	Exclusion	Inclusion of marginalized groups in political, social and economic decision making processes	Creation of forums and structures to secure involvement of marginalized in decision making processes

Adapted from Mandanipour et al, 1998, p-147

3.8 THE RESTRUCTURING OF EUROPE

The 1970s and 1980s saw a distinctive structural transformation in the labour market with particular reference to the more traditional industries which left many unemployed with skills that were no longer demanded by employers. Increased mechanisation led to higher productivity and decreases in the skilled workforce. The traditional relationship between economic growth and employment had been broken with changing work patterns leading to the emergence of an intermediate range of workers who were in temporary / part-time employment or were self employed (CEC, 1997). These new patterns continued into the 1990s as they are intrinsically interlinked with the still expanding service sector in the economy. Thus the steady increase in low paid, casual employment has been ongoing, alongside the high level of unemployment, particularly long-term unemployment.

These trends coupled with the contraction of the welfare states in many European countries, have worrying consequences for those experiencing poverty. There is concern about the implications of the aging population which is identified as a demographic trend expected to continue. Aside from the payment of pensions to a growing number of the population, many governments are required to supply specialised services which provide a full range of care for the elderly, including leisure, transport and social care. This poses problems, in that, it can be difficult to find a balance in economic and social policy which caters for the differing needs of the young and old. These patterns and the changing household structure, which is moving to a trend of increasing numbers of lone parent families, widens the divide between a securely employed core labour force and those who are unemployed or in poorly paid, casual employment, thus reinforcing the dependence on social security benefits.

These problems cannot be ignored and left to be possibly solved through economic growth. Many Member States are looking to Europe to heal divisions in their society without taking decisive action themselves. However, as Europe itself continues to evolve and embrace countries further east, even the poorest existing Member States will be ahead of the countries of Eastern Europe where the administrative machinery is not as efficient. It is vital to ensure that, building on the Maastricht and Amsterdam treaties, future treaties of the European Union are comprehensive enough to deal with problems of exclusion and poverty, especially in urban areas.

3.9 THE URBAN DEFICIT

Currently, there is a number of tools to influence urban development in the European Community. These include:

- policies to promote economic competitiveness and employment
- policies supporting economic and social cohesion (i.e. Cohesion Funds)
- policies to help the inclusion of cities in trans-European networks (e.g. public transport)
- policies promoting sustainable development and the quality of life in cities.

(Committee of the Regions, Sep. 1997)

European policy development has clear effects on all Member States but it must be noted that urban areas have not been a focal point of this development. The urban dimension of such policies has not been effectively incorporated into E.U. treaties, a deficit which has been strongly criticized by organisations such as Eurocities and the Committee of the Regions. It seems bizarre that on such an urbanised subcontinent the urban frameworks are quite uncoordinated and fragmented.

The text of the Maastricht Treaty does not authorise the E.U. to develop an integral European urban policy, a restriction which remained unchanged by the Treaty of Amsterdam. Consequently, the effects of Community measures which impact on urban development come from an implicit rather than explicit policy at European level.

In recent years there has been renewed attention for and recognition of the needs of urban areas in the E.U. The Intergovernmental Conferences (IGCs) have highlighted the 'urban deficit' and the value of cities in the economic development of the E.U., with renewed focus on cities reflected in Agenda 2000 in relation to the structural funds, and a strong call for a specific urban policy at the European Summit of Regional and Local Authorities in May 1997 in Amsterdam.

The addition of an urban perspective, although just a start, would undoubtedly enhance the development of Europe's cities and go some way to alleviating social exclusion.

Policies need to be effectively filtered down from European to local authority level through the intermediary of the national and regional governments of the Member States whilst still respecting the principle of subsidiarity.

3.10 SUBSIDIARITY

Article 3b of the Treaty on the European Union (1992) clearly sets out the principle of subsidiarity:

'The Community shall take action, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, only if, and in so far as the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States.'

Despite this statement and the setting up of the Committee of the Regions (CoR) in November 1993, the treaties still do not highlight the need for the EU to work closely with local authorities in implementing European policies (Eurocities, 1996). The CoR defended the principle of subsidiarity, recommending that decisions should be taken at the lowest level of authority which can act effectively whilst still recognising the difficulty in identifying the right level of policy implementation to be made (CoR, 1997).

Member States, having most resources at their disposal, play the front line role in tackling problems of cohesion. However, it is also essential to reinforce national regional policies at a Union level in order to prevent increased disparities between regions. The richest Member States can afford to use more public money in improving quality of life and supporting new investment whilst other, poorer regions fall further behind.

In the draft opinion of the CoR on *'Towards an urban agenda in the European Union'* it was stated that the local governments should be the leading actors in the development of

an integrated European urban policy catering as much as possible for local needs. With the support of the E.U. and cross national cooperation, urban problems such as the experience of widespread social exclusion which is not confined to any one urban area can be tackled through an integrated European framework which embraces and coordinates all levels of the decision-making process (CoR, 1997).

3.11 REVITALISING URBAN SOCIETY

The push for a new dynamism to harness the potential of marginalised urban neighbourhoods has led to a new phase of research within the E.U. This is spearheaded by the Urban Policy Commission of the Committee of the Regions which is currently researching sustainability indicators which can be applied and transferred to all E.U. urban areas.

The ideal of a sustainable city encapsulates a wide range of issues which have been categorised into five fields for analysis. These are the socio-economic aspects of urban life, civic involvement, levels of training and education, environment and recreation and culture. It is felt that the quality of life within cities can be measured if a series of indicators are developed which take into account a wide range of issues related to the five fields mentioned above.

To consider the broad area of 'quality of life' is an immense task even for a large research team, in that, issues across a broad spectrum ranging from the quality of air and water in a city to life expectancy at birth have to be considered. It is for this reason that the focus of this thesis will rest upon the concept of social exclusion and the policies and programmes in place to alleviate it.

3.12 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Although they manifest themselves in different ways, common problems of poverty and inequality can be identified throughout the E.U. The existence of these problems consequently facilitates a comparison of the strategies within different nation states which are implemented to respond to the problems.

The fact that the social exclusion factors are set to intensify over the next few years has meant that greater attention is being paid to finding solutions to the problem of poverty. This presents one of the major challenges to Member States both at a local and regional level. It is through examination of the various projects which have been implemented in the past that recommendations for future policy direction can be formulated and the transfer of know-how can be achieved.

There is a clear need for a new approach to prevent and tackle the existing problem of social exclusion in E.U. Member States. This thesis provides a background for those involved in policy review and formulation for urban areas. It is also relevant to those involved in devising new projects for alleviating social exclusion, in that, lessons can be learnt from the analysis of the case studies.

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Chapter Four

European Social Policy: An Overview

4.0 CONTEXT AND EVOLUTION OF E.U. SOCIAL POLICY

European social policy is at a watershed. In the run up to the twenty-first century, the E.U. was finding itself having to face up to a number of challenges from many quarters.

The new demographic trends occurring alongside industrial restructuring, relocation and centralisation as well as technological change are vital factors in a single European market. However, with this, new forms of insecurity are being brought into the workforce, as well as pressures on welfare systems which culminate in the growth of large numbers of people who cannot access the benefits of economic growth, thus increasing poverty and social exclusion across Europe.

The purpose of this chapter is to trace the development of European social policy with specific reference to issues of social exclusion and poverty and to provide an update on these issues as reported on in the European Social Policy Forum held in Brussels in June 1998 (CEC, 1998).

The social arena of the E.U. has attracted much attention from academics and policy analysts over the years. This is due to questions concerning the degree of responsibility that the E.U. should take over social issues whilst at the same time upholding the principle of subsidiarity.

Questions thus arise such as *'Is social policy the essential task of the Union?'* and *'How can missions of the E.U. fit in with shared responsibility?'* It is critical that decisions are taken at the appropriate level and if this is at European level then they must have added value.

The E.U. has come under pressure from NGOs to take concerted action in certain areas, particularly in the social field. However, there are problems with what Europe *has* to do and what Europe *can* do, as a legal basis has to be adopted and put in place before any proposals can be made law.

The European Union began life primarily as an economic union which is reflected in the Treaty signed in 1957 establishing a European Economic Community (E.E.C). This body was concerned mainly with the development and regulation of trade rather than with the harmonization of economic and social policies across member states.

'Social harmonisation was seen as an end product of economic integration rather than a prerequisite' (Hantrais, 1995,p.1).

Since the main objective of the Treaty was the creation of an economic union, perhaps the low priority given to social issues is understandable. The latter part of the twentieth century, though, has seen a fundamental shift in focus with growing emphasis on economic and social planning.

Generally, according to Brewster and Teague (1989), the E.U. has passed through three phases of social policy planning:

Phase 1: 1957-1972: Concerned mainly with market development and the promotion and regulation of labour mobility.

Phase 2: 1973-1983: Concerned with improving employment practices with specific reference to equal pay and the equal treatment of men and women in the workplace.

Phase 3: 1983 onwards: Attempts to be more proactive with regards to establishing community wide standards for both citizens and workers rights through the development of social policy norms and a firm commitment to making the Union matter to all its people.

Despite the fact that Community action programmes to combat social exclusion have been continuously implemented since the mid-1970's, the legislative route has not been used as a policy instrument in the fight against poverty. At best, the least binding forms of secondary legislation, for example, directives, council decisions and communications have been employed to implement anti-poverty initiatives (Hantrais, 1995).

Early E.C. social policies were restricted to legalistic measures to increase labour mobility within the common market, modest health and safety and equal opportunity measures and the establishment of the European Social Fund. During the 1980s, the social aspect became an essential element of the 'big' aim of the European union. Jacques Delors provided much of the vision through his promotion of the concept of 'l'espace sociale' in which the single market would be accompanied by a framework of partnership between employers and trade unions, whose dialogue he hoped would create the broad ideas for E.C. policies. This concept represented a compromise between the dominant opposing opinions. Market optimists on the one hand, who believed a social dimension to be unnecessary or undesirable and on the other hand the regulationists, who saw the need for comprehensive social policy to ensure equal division of benefits and the prevention of social dumping. This return to a focus on a social dimension helped in the furthering of social dialogue between the European social partners and contributed to the 1989 Social Charter. The European Social Charter, considered the counterpart of the European

Convention on Human Rights, protects fundamental social rights. Ireland was among the first states to sign up to the Charter and accept many of its key provisions. In 1996, the Charter was revised in order to update and extend its scope to new categories of rights such as the strengthening of equality between men and women, the right to disabled persons to social integration and the right of protection against poverty. The Charter embraces many issues which have previously been unregulated and has gone far to implement change in many European societies.

4.1 EUROPEAN SOCIAL POLICY ISSUES

The three main areas of concern in creating an effective model of European Social Policy are:

- a) The future world of work.
- b) The promotion of citizenship and participation.
- c) Social protection: adapting to changing needs.

These three areas have sparked widespread debate from people drawn from various backgrounds including the social partners, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), local authorities and representatives at a European level. One of the main endeavours of the EU is to promote the exchange of information and consultation on these issues which will ultimately lead to the design and operation of new initiatives.

4.2 THE FUTURE WORLD OF WORK

European social policy has an essential role to play in creating a more equal society and providing individuals already in employment, the unemployed and those in education,

with the skills required for the changing world of work which is continuously evolving through an era of globalisation and technological change.

Townsend (1993) highlighted the need to rethink the traditional conceptions of work with regard to economy and society. We are now an information society of work, leading to new patterns including multiple contracts with different firms, unprecedented command of advanced technology and world communication, succession of temporary and part-time jobs and the vital contribution of unpaid family service by individuals.

The Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) and the Luxembourg Job Summit (1997) have emphasised the Union's determination to further progress on employment creation and tackling unemployment. Economic growth is the acknowledged pre-condition for employment growth. It has been the stability-orientated policies that have helped sustain European economic growth at around two percent thus providing the opportunity for the EU to turn more attention to addressing social problems.

'Job creation' is the major focus of E.U. Social Policy. Cutting unemployment is one of the main aims of the union. This means creating millions of new jobs, the majority of which will merely prevent unemployment rising as more people come onto the labour market. The challenge now is both to nurture the climate and conditions for job creation and prepare people for changes in their working lives in the hope that the new forms of job creation will have a significant impact on the high level of unemployment (EC, 1996). In meeting this challenge, it is essential to adopt an integrated approach which can be tailored to the needs of each member state. An OECD report (1996) stated:

'Job creation has been insufficient in many countries to stem or reverse the upward trend in unemployment in the last fifteen or so years. Many European countries generate much job turnover, but have not had great success at the level of net job growth' (OECD 1996:16).

This gives sustenance to the perception that the number of wage earners and salaried employees is falling continuously under the influence of the forces of globalisation and information technology (information capitalism) which manifest themselves in relocation and further mechanisation. The overall conclusion being that economies will need fewer workers to produce more (EC, 1995).

4.2.1 Globalisation

Most people are now acutely aware of the pace of change and extraordinary transformation in the world economy which occurred in the last decade. A technological revolution of historic proportions is transforming the fundamental dimensions of human life: time and space. This revolution has been unprecedented, affecting the lives of the entire world population over a relatively short period of time. Globalisation is a complex phenomenon and it is vital that the many forces creating change are understood (Eichengreen,1998). Four categories of globalisation have been identified which directly affect the world of work:

- 1) Technological and informational globalisation, where developments such as the Internet, the information high way and accessibility of computers and telecommunications allow companies with the lee-way to downsize and relocate.
- 2) Financial Globalisation, where international investment is increasing. This is seen as a destabilizing force as the search for profit cannot, by its very nature, be long term, consequently creating a real threat to jobs.
- 3) Trade Globalisation. The further liberalisation of goods markets and collaboration at the WTO to reduce trade barriers provide new opportunities for gains in scale economies increasing investment, growth and employment.
- 4) Corporate globalisation. The annual value of the sales of each of the six largest transnational companies (TNC's), varying between 111 and 126 billion dollars are now exceeded by the GDP's of only twenty one nation states. These TNC's operate on a distinct global agenda basing their operations in terms of profit imperatives without the boundaries imposed from working within nation states (Aghion and Williamson, 1999).

There is no doubt concerning the opportunities that globalisation creates. However, the optimistic projections for the global economy need to be set against a number of major uncertainties such as the future of the international trade system and the ability of nation states to prevent the increased dualism which could erode the benefits of the global economy.

The economic theatre has clearly moved from the national to the global stage, highlighting the need for the nation state to develop a new longer-term strategic view of

events in the global economy. Indeed, the accelerating development of the EU over the last fifteen years has been a direct response to globalisation and goes some way to explain why the fifteen EU member states want to reinforce their common project of creating a social Europe. This widening of the EU to Central and Eastern Europe raises issues of a different nature. While the economies of these countries are relatively under developed at present, the economic gains to be achieved from their successful integration with Western Europe could be substantial in the longer term.

Global structural change is, by its very nature, a transnational process affecting all countries and the challenges it presents must be dealt with carefully. The NGO stance is that globalisation is a force which must be influenced and shaped for the benefit of society as a whole (Comite des Sages, 1996).

4.2.2 Information Technology

The impact of new technologies on the level of employment, the quality of work and organization of labour is at the core of the social debate over the technological revolution. The way in which economic value is created and distributed has been transformed by the introduction of IT in the context of a globalised economy. Previously people sold products i.e. physical entities. However, the new industries that are being created predominantly sell ideas, programmes and technology which can be reproduced millions of times at very little cost eliminating the need for 'transportation' in the traditional sense of the word. This creates a paradox in that, on the one hand, the gains in productivity facilitated by diffusion of this technological revolution could pave the way for economic rejuvenation. On the other hand it is feared that the widespread use of labour-saving

technologies and the changing demand for broader skills and fewer unskilled people, will worsen unemployment (Castells, 1989).

Lawrence (1984) has argued that information technologies have a positive effect on employment in a number of ways by; 1) stimulating production and employment in the capital goods sector; 2) increasing productivity and 3) extending productivity increases to the service sector.

In contrast to his belief that the impact of information technology will not be disruptive to the economy, the European Commission called attention to the potential problems of information technology on social cohesion indirectly affecting the economy by creating a two-tier society:

'People living in isolated rural communities or in deprived inner city areas, people who are not in work or in education are unlikely to encounter, or have access to, new technologies.' (E.C. DGV 1996 pp.26).

The non-complementary processes of informational growth and industrial decline, the downgrading and upgrading of labour and the widening gap between the formal and informal sector are producing a highly differentiated labour market. It is vital that the challenges presented by the forces of the information society are tackled to prevent a growth in mass unemployment which is already a fundamental problem within the E.U.

4.3 LABOUR MARKET TRENDS

The character of our society is changing as a result of flexibilisation. There is a continued growth in society of short-term, part-time work and also more women in the workforce as gender roles have been transformed in the labour market and in society in general. Social changes such as the marked increase in divorce rates have had a profound impact on family structure and parenting roles which must also be considered in terms of the role of men.

The new employment strategy, adopted by the E.U. after the Luxembourg Job Summit in 1997, is based on the four pillars of: 1) Employability; 2) Entrepreneurship; 3) Adaptability; 4) Equal opportunities. There is already evidence that this process, being implemented through mechanisms provided by the member states, is bringing valuable results. Most notable is the fact that there is increased coordination of employment policy at both national and European level.

It must be noted that, in the context of employability, policies which focus on this aspect of the unemployed individual must be complemented by policies to ensure there is demand for the labour of these people. It has been recommended through the social policy workshops that the E.U. should take a pro-active role in exploring and promoting new measures of sustainable economic growth which take account of environmental damage, the use of non-renewable resources, inequality and the quality of life. Employment policy must now be tailored to creating a society in which both work and an adequate income are available to all.

4.4 SOCIAL PROTECTION: ADAPTING TO CHANGING NEEDS

'Social security systems are a driving force in the creation and protection of well-being and prosperity, and in the fight against poverty, insecurity, inequality and exclusion'.

(E.C., 1997:19)

At this stage, it is important to introduce a common definition which encapsulates the broad understanding of social protection. Social protection was described in an E.U. paper as *'all collective transfer systems designed to protect people against social risks'* (E.C., DGV, 1998). It includes the traditional social sectors⁸ and is one of the most important aspects of the European model of social policy. Indeed, listed in Article 2 of the Treaty of the European Union (1992) is a fundamental requirement which states that Member States should maintain a high level of employment and social protection. Ultimately, the fundamental aim of social services and protection is to ensure that no person is left deprived when poor, sick, disabled or in their later years (E.C., DGV, 1997).

4.4.1 The need to adapt social protection systems

Although it is widely accepted that social policy is vital for social cohesion, political stability and economic progress, the rising cost of social protection is an important concern for Europe. Most of the social protection systems existing within Member States have been established for many years, therefore the economic and social conditions they initially operated under have gradually altered over time. Also, the present demographic

⁸ These include old age, health, disability, unemployment, housing, family, maternity etc.

changes and those predicted to take place in the future must be taken into consideration as they will undoubtedly have a notable impact on social protection.

Some of these demographic changes include the marked increase in unemployment from the rates experienced in the early post-war years, the changing family structures and the ageing population which is set to rise dramatically in years to come (E.C., DGV, 1998).

These developments and changes set to come have provoked debate on the problem of financing social protection and have contributed significantly to the generally accepted idea that social protection systems need to be reformed.

Debate at the European Social Policy Forum (1998) revealed that any adaptation or development of social protection requires the recognition of new needs and for these needs to be subsequently addressed by new services and benefits. It also requires a reinforcing of the bonds between civil and social dialogue and greater involvement of employer organisations in the process. There is clearly a new complexity of social issues at work and these present new challenges to the E.U. Member States.

It was also noted at the Forum that although these new challenges need to be addressed beyond the traditional sectors of social protection, the E.U. should not focus its attention solely on these new issues, with the risk of traditional sectors deteriorating.

4.5 PROMOTING PARTICIPATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The aim of this section is to bring together some of the key issues and developments around citizenship and participation in the E.U. and to highlight some of the conclusions reached during the 1998 social policy forum.

European Monetary Union (EMU) and enlargement eastwards are arguably two of the most significant events for the E.U. since its formation. It is essential that the prospect of a union which encompasses even more people, languages and cultures does not negatively affect those who already feel far removed from the decision-making process.

An essential point which was raised by the Comité des Sages in their report to the first European Forum on Social Policy (1996), and reiterated at the second, was that if Europe is not for everyone, it will ultimately be for no-one (Comité des Sages, 1996).

The EU must remember that citizenship and participation are the elements which will form the heart of a cohesive and inclusive Europe. Its citizens must be given the ability to participate in its structures and subsequently influence its policies.

4.5.1 Basic principles

Citizenship is a dynamic process which cannot be restricted to the formal and political rights needed to protect individual freedom. We must move beyond conventional notions of citizenship to see it as a strategic concept that is central in the analysis of identity and difference, participation and inclusiveness, empowerment and exclusion, human rights and the public interest. There is consensus with regard to the classical definition of citizenship which is *'full membership of a democratic community'*. This highlights the commitment to democratic principles such as values of freedom and justice which are inseparable from the citizenship ideal. This has both a formal and substantive content: formally, citizenship is a status that is legally allocated to a certain group of individuals. It works as an identity-creating concept, as it gives a sense of belonging. In considering

those who are excluded, citizenship can be manipulated in various ways, in its formal context, as an instrument of policy for defining simultaneously whom one considers to belong to the group and who does not belong (Hyland *et al*, 1995). The substantive aspect of citizenship refers to the 'contents' of this membership of a political community, defining the content of a specific citizenship. For the individual, the substance of citizenship consists of a series of rights and duties. These rights can be loosely categorised as civil, political and social (Habermas, 1994)

In a perfect world, all citizens would have equal rights, equal access to exercise their rights and equal opportunities to participate in society and make some contribution to decisions on its government. Our society today, through the unequal distribution of power and resources is reinforcing the idea of citizenship as a remote and abstract concept. This, in turn, contributes to the barriers which prevent people from participating in society and the democratic process.

4.5.2 The challenge

Promoting participation and citizenship should enable people to actively engage in every sphere of social life. Maximising the involvement of people in their communities enlarges the sense of belonging and empowers those who would otherwise have been excluded. Government and local authority successes may thus be assessed on the extent to which the citizens believe their opinions have a bearing on what occurs in their community. This involvement filters through to strengthen the democratic process - it increases participation by bringing some responsibilities down to a more local level.

Knowing you have rights and knowing how to use them are vital factors in the promotion of participation and citizenship. Those people experiencing exclusion and discrimination are unlikely to be fully aware of their rights within society and all too often are spoken for by carers who overshadow rights in the name of social protection. Enhancing participation is essential for the E.U., if it intends to create a more equal and inclusive society and bridge the gap between people's lives on ground level and the laws and principles of authority.

4.5.3 Invisible citizens

Highlighted at the European Social Policy Forum (1998) was the concept of social exclusion as a barrier to participation. This is the final outcome of a process affecting many vulnerable groups and rendering them 'invisible citizens'. Examples of some of these groups include:

Disabled people As well as lack of physical access, disabled people can experience difficulty in participation due to the delay in important information in the appropriate format. Attitudinal and discriminatory barriers often exclude the disabled, in that some employers perceive this group as being incapable of making an active contribution in the labour market.

Homeless people In many European countries, a fixed abode is required before services and rights can be accessed. This presents a problem to the homeless who are often denied a variety of rights which are subject to residence which, by their very nature, they do not possess. The homeless are often the voiceless and, as discussed at the Forum,

the NGO's believe that the only way that this marginalised group can truly participate is to allow access to elections at all levels.

Third Country Nationals This group can experience difficulties because participation is so often linked to citizenship or residency. There is a real need for Union-wide legal arrangements to provide more effective protection for the security and rights of third country nationals once they cross external borders into the Union. The main barrier to active participation is that these people who are lawfully within the territory, of a member state experience difficulty crossing internal frontiers of the E.U. and are denied the basic democratic right to vote in elections.

Other groups who are exposed to the risk of becoming 'invisible citizens' (spoken for by others on their behalf) include the illiterate, older people, travellers, children and those residing in institutions. The difficulties are manifested in varying ways depending on the particular circumstances of the person, however, the outcome remains the same where their isolation is maintained and they are disassociated from the wider community.

These are only a few examples and is by no means an exclusive list. This simply provides some idea of the many people who are distinctly lacking a definitive understanding of their rights and responsibilities as European citizens.

4.6 THE MAASTRICHT TREATY AND CITIZENSHIP

On the 1st November, 1993, when the treaty of the European Union came into force, every citizen of a member state of the union also became a citizen of the E.U. This gave all European citizens the right to settle in any of the member countries. However, it could be said that many European citizens remained quite unaware of the significance of this advancement. Habermas (1994) stated that:

'for the citizen this translates into an ever greater gap between being affected by something and participating in changing it. Given that the role of the citizen has hitherto only been institutionalised at the level of the nation state citizens have no effective means of debating European issues and influencing the decision making process' (1994:107).

The existence of such a democratic deficit and the development of European citizenship from the top down implies that the creation of this citizenship happens independently of the general will of supra-national identity. It must also be noted that European citizenship, as indeed social policy, operates in many ways as an accessory of the market-making ideology that drives the E.U. project. It is essential that decision-makers recognise the importance of social progress as a reinforcing factor of economic performance, without this recognition, the obstacles facing a Social Europe are daunting.

The Forum emphasised the importance of the contribution of European Social Policy to the promotion of participation and citizenship. Three key issues that arose were: the new provisions of the Amsterdam Treaty, the role of the Structural Funds and the role of the key actors in 'civil society' i.e. the social partners, the public sector and the NGOs.

4.7 THE AMSTERDAM TREATY

The ratification of the Amsterdam Treaty offers new opportunities and possibilities to relaunch the need for social cohesion right to the top of the European agenda. Encapsulated into the treaty was a number of points which have gone far to better meet the needs of all European citizens.

For example, Article 13 states that the Council of Ministers *'may take appropriate actions to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation'*. The allocation of these powers to the E.U. is an important step in the battle to combat discrimination in that a legislative basis for potential directives will be put in place. Although the scope provided by this measure is broad, one of the main failings is that the enforceable rights do not come directly to the individual, instead the responsibility for these rights lies with the European Parliament.

Along with the promotion of equality between men and women in all policies of the Treaty of the EC there have been developments in allowing for measures to *'improve knowledge, develop exchanges of information and best practices, promote innovative approaches and evaluate experiences in order to combat social exclusion'* (Article 137, EC Treaty 1992).

This step has brought a renewed commitment to the task of developing measures to combat poverty and social exclusion, placing the issue firmly on the Commission's agenda.

It has been argued that one of the main aims of the Amsterdam Treaty, with the greater inclusion of civic and social rights, was to make amends for the deficiencies of the

Maastricht Treaty. It was put in place to help nurture the concept of citizenship thus preventing Europe from being perceived as a bureaucracy constructed by specialist elites far removed from daily concerns.

Much dissatisfaction, particularly within the NGO sphere has been made clear (EC, 1999). Although there was a new declaration in the Treaty which recognised the contribution made by voluntary service activities to developing social solidarity, this has very little legal standing and has enhanced the push to broaden the definition of social partnership at EU level to include the NGOs.

4.8 THE ROLE OF THE STRUCTURAL FUNDS (SFs)

The Structural Funds are the main financial instrument in putting into practice the Community's policy objective of achieving economic and social cohesion. The main aim is to reduce disparities between levels of development of the various regions.

Alongside this spatial dimension to reduce socio-economic disparities there is a social aspect in the objective to promote equality of opportunity among all social groups and citizens of the E.U.

In considering the issues of participation and citizenship the role of the Structural Funds could be viewed at two levels:

(1) the intervention of the Structural Funds in attempting to create equal conditions during the construction of Europe and its internal market. Analysts of the possible effects have concluded that the long-term benefits were likely to be unevenly distributed and that income disparities might even be increased (O'Donnell, 1993).

The Community's structural policies have been designed to minimize the negative aspects of economic integration and in doing this have subsequently supported the promotion of participation and citizenship through:

- the redistribution of resources to the benefit of the poorest Member States and regions (Objective 1 areas)
- the integration of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and the creation of equal opportunities between men and women.
- emphasising greater participation through the strengthening of links between regions and encouraging convergence .
- the improvement of employment opportunities especially through the European Social Fund (ESF).

(2)At the second level, one can look at the community method of implementing the SF. Using the partnership principle, a well established working method is in place at E.U. level that consists of the search for concerted solutions in realising programmes co-financed by the structural funds. This partnership is based on a broad alliance of social partners and representatives of civil society, national and regional governments and E.U. representatives.

This is important in that it creates a public arena which facilitates the exercise of active European citizenship thus it is claimed that it goes some way to overcoming the democratic deficit at E.U. level. It has been argued that it does not go far enough and that there should be more consultation with the NGO's, who can reach the socially excluded,

in the planning process and monitoring of SF intervention (E.C., 1999). This is a simple, concrete and achievable proposal and should be considered in the debate for the reform of the SFs. The EC proposals for this reform include the creation of a new objective 3 and a remodelling of the European Social Forum (ESF). This opportunity should be grasped with both hands to create more active policies which will work for prevention rather than assistance i.e. the 'management of poverty'. Combating social exclusion needs to be written into the text of the SFs perhaps as a specific aim of objective 3. It remains to be seen if the SFs will embrace this concern in the future.

4.9 SOCIAL AND CIVIL DIALOGUE

In recent years, the social partners have played a vital role in the reactivation of European Social policy. The scope of their activities has been extended particularly as regards modernising the organisation of work, adapting terms and conditions of employment to allow for the development of new forms of work and in integrating young people into the world of work.

By the inclusion of the social chapter in the Amsterdam Treaty, the social partners now have a strong capability to negotiate and even legislate on several matters related to social policy. Through social dialogue the partners have undone the deadlock on many issues including the right to parental leave.

This is indeed an important step towards increased participation and involvement in the decision-making process at E.U. level. The social partners are a crucial part of civil

society and their inclusion at this level is an important and long awaited development, however, one must also consider the role of the equally important civil dialogue.

Civil dialogue was first established at the European Social Policy Forum in March 1996 by Commissioner Flynn to complement the social dialogue. He stated that civil dialogue is seen as a complement to the political and social dialogue. Despite this statement and the communication 'Promoting the role of Voluntary Organisations and Foundations in Europe' (June 1997- com97/0241) there remains the absence of a legal base for civil dialogue; instead it is dependent on the political will of the institutions and the NGOs.

There is no doubt that forms of civil dialogue already exist between sectors of NGOs and different parts of the Commission and European Parliament. Over time the Commission has developed and financed many forms of consultation with its institutions and the NGOs, however this has remained on an informal basis which many believe is insufficient in maintaining meaningful civil dialogue. A document published by the platform of European Social NGOs (February 1998) criticized the sectoral nature of consultation at E.U. level. This was reiterated at the March 1998 Social Policy Forum where there was a call to put in place the missing mechanism to implement civil dialogue in the area of social policy. The 1998 Forum heard many suggestions for improving the progression of civil dialogue and unifying this with social dialogue. The main recommendations were:

* A call for the E.C. to draw up a list of NGOs with which the Commission would establish civil dialogue - a process of systematic and structured consultation.

- * The compilation of this list should be accompanied by a discussion on the legal and financial conditions of these consultations.
- * The European Parliament should encourage the Commission in setting up the list and themselves participate in more regular consultation with the European NGOs.
- * The DGV should have formal, perhaps biannual 'Civil dialogue' meetings and include other Directorates-Generals in creating a 'think tank'.
- * There was also discussion on beginning a campaign for a Bill of Rights to reinforce both democratic and social rights.

A particular note of concern was that the Amsterdam Treaty did not mention civil dialogue except in a declaration [38] which is annexed to the treaty '*encouraging the European dimension of voluntary organisation*'. At this stage, it is not enough to simply wait for a review of the treaty and hope for the inclusion of civil dialogue in the future, there is a demand now for a coherent mechanism to organise civil dialogue at European level.

4.10 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The development of European citizen rights presents the internal make up of Union legislation and institutions as providing for more than just a legal dimension of citizenship. The purely legal content of European citizenship rights is evolving into a fuller form including the political, social, cultural and psychological dimensions of citizenship. In Europe today, the problem is not the existence of these rights but rather

their enforcement. To build a truly democratic Union it is essential that those experiencing exclusion and hardship know that they have rights and how to enforce them.

Although social issues arrived later into the debate with respect to economic issues, there is now a creative interaction which has heightened the indivisibility of the social and economic. The Social Policy Forum highlighted the fact that although the social dialogue was significant and useful, there was no meaningful civil dialogue because the mechanism to implement it was missing. It is generally agreed that the creation of wealth together with redistribution are key questions at the root of all topics around social policy. The main problem in Europe is that the redistribution systems worked successfully for a number of years, however they are now not in line with current realities and therefore some adaptations and reforms need to be effected.

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Chapter Five

Social Exclusion and Policy Responses in Ireland

(Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland)

5.0 INTRODUCTION

The unprecedented experience of rapid and high levels of economic growth is transforming the Irish economy with average GNP growth rates of seven per cent, greatly increased spending power, improving educational standards and a decrease in unemployment. However, despite this rapid growth, it has been widely publicised that deep divisions still persist in Irish society irrespective of the growth and development of what has become known as the 'Celtic Tiger' (Sweeney, 1997).

Many puns have been made on this symbol of economic resurgence which has occurred in Ireland in recent years, however the most apt for this particular discussion on anti-poverty strategies, was made by McInerney (1997). He suggested that this symbol was more appropriate than many would care to acknowledge in that, healthy tigers are fit, prosperous and strong but tigers must eat and hunt to survive and they tend to prey on those weaker than themselves. In their will to survive they show little compassion for the right that other creatures have to share in the bounty of the jungle. At what expense will the Celtic Tiger survive?

More recently, as concerns regarding the sustainability of the Tiger economy are raised, other metaphors have been introduced to represent Ireland's economic resurgence. These include the 'Clockwork Mouse' (Fitzgerald, 1999) as an alternative description illustrating the fact that the economic expansion will slow down as time goes on.

Poverty is now an issue which commands a great deal of attention in public discussion in Ireland and the need to build a more inclusive society is a popular refrain articulated by many political parties.

5.1 THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES

Bearing in mind the suggestion of the clockwork mouse, now is the time to utilise the economy as a means to an end rather than rely on it as an end in itself. Key challenges which must be addressed are maintaining a positive economic environment and ensuring that the benefits are shared right across society. As previously mentioned, not everyone has shared equally in Ireland's prosperity, the ESRI identified that one in five households fall below an income poverty line of 50% of average income (Callan et al, 1996). Addressing social exclusion and inequality is one of the major challenges facing Irish society as evidenced by the adoption of the 1997 National Anti-Poverty Strategy.

5.1.1 Labour market trends

The striking growth of the Irish economy has been forecast to continue at approximately 4-5% per annum until 2010 and this undoubtedly provides opportunities for continued real growth in employment and reductions in unemployment. The number of new entrants to the labour market has continued to expand by almost 30,000 per annum, however it is expected that after 2002, there will be a decrease, falling towards 20,000 per annum by 2010 (ESRI, 1997). There is a number of factors that go some way to explain this increase in labour supply, namely: investment in education, demographic change, changing participation and migration (Dublin Employment Pact, 1999).

5.1.2 Investment in education

The first of these, investment in education is significant in that the opportunity to access paid employment is increasingly tied to level of education attained. It is widely accepted that people who leave school without any formal credentials are severely disadvantaged in the labour market. As table two suggests, the early school leavers of today are likely to become the long-term unemployed of tomorrow.

TABLE 2:

Education Level	Employed %	Unemployed %
Primary	14.7	28.6
Junior Secondary	24.4	35.0
Leaving Cert.	32.2	25.4
Third-Level Non-University	15.3	6.8
Third-Level University	10.6	3.5
Total	100.00	100.00

(Adapted from: Healy and Reynolds, 1999. p-35)

It follows that maintaining education as an investment priority and by allocating resources wisely, less money will have to be spent in the future if these initiatives are targeted successfully.

Getting a full education is not simply a passport to a job, it is also of crucial importance for personal development, lifestyle, behaviour and culture (Healy and Reynolds, 1998). The failure to equalise access to, participation in and benefit from education means that much of the talent and ability available in society is under-utilised, and alienation and detachment develops among those who are excluded from participation.

5.1.3 Demographic change

There is a number of factors contributing to the strong performance of the Irish economy and the progress made was achieved against a background of positive demographic

factors. Increased participation in the labour market, particularly by women has enabled the labour force to grow steadily and one must also consider the returning emigrants who left in earlier times of economic disadvantage and are now returning to take advantage of the increased employment opportunities available. Ireland's high birth rate in the 1970s has led to large increases in the working-age population. These demographic factors are all contributing to the increasing number of economically active people who can be incorporated into the labour market and therefore help to drive the economy.

5.1.4 Changing participation

Women are playing a central role in Ireland's economic transformation. It has even been claimed that it is, in effect women who are fuelling the development of the Celtic Tiger (Barry, 1998). The substantial growth in the female labour force over the past twenty-five years has led to a situation where nearly half a million women (41% of all adult women) are now in employment. When compared to growth in male employment, there is a stark contrast: over the period 1971-1996 the numbers of women in paid employment rose by over 200,000 whilst over the same period male employment grew only by 23,000. This considerable shift in female participation has subsequently raised issues relating to gender equality, childcare and equality of access and opportunity at policy level. Changing participation is another driver in the economy as this increases the labour supply and in many households where there are two people working, there are two incomes which can allow for an overall increase in the disposable income of the household.

5.1.5 Migration

As previously mentioned, a major input to the Irish labour market is the return of many emigrants from abroad and the arrival of some highly skilled individuals from EU neighbours to fill gaps in employment requirements. In addition, the increasing numbers of asylum seekers and ethnic minorities are also a significant factor in contributing to the level and range of skills available. Over 40,000 people per annum are coming to live and work in Ireland with 43 per cent of these being generally in the 25-44 age group. This section of the labour market has an important contribution to make in that the knowledge and experience gained elsewhere can be used for the benefit of Ireland's economy (OECD, 1998). A definite influence on the Irish labour market will be the impact of the government decision to establish a formal system of immigration to permit non-EU nationals, holding the relevant qualifications and experience to legally enter the state and secure employment.

5.1.6 Unemployment

Unemployment has often been cited as Europe's number one economic problem. Considering the fact that in 1993, Ireland had one of the highest unemployment rates in the EU, labour market trends are now generally positive. Although Ireland has now one of the lowest unemployment rates in Europe at 4.3%, unemployment, particularly long-term unemployment, remains a problem that undermines the sustainability of Ireland's economic success (ESRI, 1997). Table three illustrates the rate of unemployment (both total and long term) in Ireland since 1988 and also illustrates the rate of increase in unemployment over that period.

Table 3: Employment Trends, 1990-2000

	(000s.) 1990	(000s.) 1995	(000s.) 2000	% change 1990-95	% change 95-2000
Males					
Labour Force	871.6	909.2	1029.3	4.3	13.2
Employed	760.9	798.8	978.8	5.0	22.5
Unemployed	110.7	110.4	49.5	-0.3	-55.2
Not in Labour Force	386.5	427.9	425.6	10.7	-0.5
Unemployment %	12.7	12.1	4.8		
Labour Force Participation %	69.3	68.0	70.7		
Population over 15 years	1258.2	1337.1	1455	6.3	8.8
Females					
Labour Force	454.5	550	702.8	21.0	27.8
Employed	390.7	513.3	670.8	31.4	30.7
Unemployed	63.8	67.1	32	5.2	-52.3
Not in Labour Force	833.4	836.3	800	0.3	-4.3
Unemployment %	14.0	12.2	4.6		
Labour Force Participation %	35.3	39.7	46.8		
Population over 15 years	1287.8	1386.3	1502.8	7.6	8.4
Persons					
Labour Force	1326.2	1459.2	1732.1	10.0	18.7
Employed	1151.7	1281.7	1650.6	11.3	28.8
Unemployed	174.5	177.4	81.5	1.7	-54.1
Not in Labour Force	1219.9	1264.2	1225.7	3.6	-3.0
Unemployment %	13.2	12.2	4.7		
Labour Force Participation %	52.1	53.6	58.6		
Population over 15 years	2546	2723.4	2957.8	7.0	8.6

Source: CSO various years: *Labour Force Surveys* and *Quarterly National Household Surveys* (ILO definition)

The Medium Term Review: 1997-2003, by the ESRI, argued that if Ireland continues on its current growth path, all but long-term unemployment will be eliminated by 2003. From this it could be understood that long-term unemployment is likely to remain unacceptably high for the next few years despite economic growth. A combination of factors has been identified as maintaining this problem:

- * The extreme openness of the Irish labour market
- * The poor educational and skills levels of the long-term unemployed

* The high skill nature of most new employment opportunities means that the long-term unemployed will continue to find it difficult to break into the labour market (Dublin Employment Pact, 1999).

Although there are increases in employment in Ireland,⁹ only approximately 10 – 15% of these new jobs are going to people who are long-term unemployed. This continues a downward trend in this aspect of employment¹⁰ and it must be addressed if the so-called ‘Celtic Tiger’ is to begin to have an impact on the long-term unemployed and the unskilled.

The core issue, therefore, is both to improve the educational and skills level of the long-term unemployed as well as providing work opportunities that are conducive to their needs and skills. It is crucial that the educational and training attainment of those who are unemployed can be improved and to do this, a major shift of emphasis is required in terms of resource allocation as resources currently devoted to this are minimal (Dublin Employment Pact, 1999).

5.2 LOCAL GOVERNANCE

When contrasted with other European countries, the range of functions performed by Irish local authorities is very limited and mainly concerned with the physical environment, their remit confined primarily to planning and development and environmental management and control responsibilities.

⁹ Between 1997 and 1998, 95,000 jobs were created

¹⁰ The percentage of jobs going to people who were long-term unemployed has fallen from 33% in 1996 to 25% in 1997 (Dublin Employment Pact, 1999)

Nevertheless, there has been some significant change in the services delivered by local authorities over the years due to a series of measures implemented by successive governments which has extended the functions of local authorities and their range of discretionary powers. However, the number of local development initiatives, particularly since 1991, has been criticised as undermining the objectives of expanding the role of local government.

Following a number of commissioned reports e.g. the Barrington report (1991), the government published its white paper 'Better Local Government' in 1996. This paper addressed the acknowledged deficiencies in the Irish local government system and gave effect to the white paper proposals. The critical element in this reform was the power given to local authorities to function as multi-faceted social and economic agencies through the representative Strategic Policy Committees. A significant new development is the establishment of County and City Development Boards (CDBs). On these boards local government, local development, the social partners and the relevant state agencies active at a local level will be able to work together to boost the area's economic, social and cultural development.

5.3 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE COMMUNITY

There is a variety of community organisations in Ireland which exemplify a form of representative democracy which has been variously described as 'civil dialogue' and 'social partnership'. In recent years consultation with the state sector has become an increasingly important and onerous part of the work of community organisations. This process which has been described by the community sector as 'time consuming and

under-resourced' is an integral and vital part of partnership between various sectors in Ireland. The community sector has often expressed its frustration with the consultation mechanisms which are in place, largely due to the fact that the huge effort invested into the process often fails to produce the necessary outcomes.¹¹

Many community groups, for example Inner City Organisations Network (ICON), are now addressing the issue of local democracy by launching a drive to encourage people to register to vote and then use this vote for candidates who have records of promoting the cause of struggling communities. This, in itself, is quite a difficult task as people within deprived areas are often immersed in a culture of no hope with no faith in the political system and, therefore, in exercising their franchise to improve their situation.

Encouraging people to become actively involved in their communities can enlarge their affinity to the area and its people and any real success of local government reform undoubtedly depends on the extent to which the citizens believe their opinions have a bearing on what occurs in their community.

One of the strengths of local government is its potential for innovation in relation to local problems and opportunities, to adapt and to respond in a relevant and effective way (Government of Ireland, 1991).

The narrow functional remit of the local authorities in Ireland and their limited financial resources, have seriously limited their scope for effectively tackling the problem of poverty. The local authorities are excluded from any involvement in the provision of those basic public services which constitute the fabric of social life (for example schools,

¹¹ An extensive consultation process had taken place in relation to the NAPS. However there is now considerable dissatisfaction with the progress on the strategy. The state sector felt that the consultation process was comprehensive and satisfactory whilst the community sector felt their involvement was used as a stamp of approval.

hospitals, social welfare, public transport, police). Consequently, they find themselves divorced from having any real relevance to the daily lives of citizens (Curtin *et al*, 1996). The measures to integrate the local government and local development systems provide the opportunity to strengthen the local government system and at the same time build on the lessons learned from the local development innovations such as the partnerships (Government of Ireland, 1996).

Irish local authorities have not generally been regarded as agents of local and community development or facilitators for local community development groups. Against this background of being considered to have a cautionary, reactive style of management they are likely to experience difficulties in adapting fully to the new strategy of local development which involves dealing fully with the community and voluntary sector in a partnership agreement (Curtin *et al*, 1996).

5.4 POVERTY IN IRELAND

Despite having the 'tiger economy' status attributed to it by economists within the mass media, it has been recognised that tackling poverty and social exclusion is one of the main challenges facing Irish society today. This was illustrated in the national agreements between the social partners and more significantly by the establishment of a National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS) in 1997. The existence of poverty in Ireland has been well documented in the late 1980s and reiterated by these same researchers ten years later within the context of economic resurgence (Callan and Nolan, 1988; Callan *et al*, 1996). It is clear that substantial numbers remain below what most people would consider to be

a minimal acceptable standard of living (see table 2) and it is also very clear that simply relying on economic growth to rectify this problem is not a realistic option.

Table 4: Percentage of households and persons below relative income poverty lines 1987/1994/1997

	HOUSEHOLDS			PERSONS		
	1987	1994	1997	1987	1994	1997
40% line	6.2	5.0	7.6	6.8	6.8	10.0
50% line	16.3	18.8	21.9	18.9	20.7	21.7
60% line	28.5	34.6	36.5	29.8	34	35.3

(Source: Derived from Poverty in the 1990s, table 4.9, p-73 cited in CORI: Socio-economic review, 1999)

5.4.1 Defining poverty

The problem of defining poverty has already been highlighted, however, it is necessary to adopt a definition to work with when discussing poverty in Ireland. As the NAPS incorporated a definition which has been officially accepted, it is useful to use this as a baseline to look at poverty in Ireland. This is a relative standard which encompasses the idea that poverty is a multi-dimensional problem:

'People are living in poverty if their income and resources (material, social and cultural) are so inadequate as to preclude them from having an adequate standard of living which would be regarded as acceptable by Irish society generally. As a result of inadequate income and resources people may be excluded and marginalised from participating in activities which are considered the norm for other people in society.'

(National Anti-Poverty Strategy – 1997:6)

In finding a method to implement such a definition in a practical way, the most common approach has been to define a poverty line in terms of income and those with incomes below this line will subsequently be regarded as poor. The relative income poverty line is usually employed from which poverty line incomes are drawn from as fixed proportions of average incomes and this is adjusted for family size and composition. For most research, a cut-off of half-average income is most commonly used, however, alternatives such as 40% and 60% of average incomes are often examined to obtain a more detailed picture and more conclusive data.

In creating policy responses for the alleviation of poverty it is crucial that the types of individuals and households affected are known to ensure that a holistic approach can be put into effect. Ireland has become an increasingly urbanised society in recent decades as more people are moving out of the countryside to urban settlements. Within rural areas themselves, occupations in the industrial and service sectors now surpass farming as the main occupation of rural dwellers (Curtin *et al*, 1996). Much of the rhetoric on decline and disadvantage has concentrated on urban areas. However, when considering the poor in Ireland, the situation in rural areas must also be outlined. People tend to associate conditions of poverty with parts of Dublin and other cities. This perception is largely due to the contrast of the countryside which appears quite wholesome and idyllic to outsiders.

5.5 RURAL POVERTY

The economic growth of the 1990s has impacted on parts of rural Ireland and poses challenges and problems that were undreamed of even a decade ago. Haase and Jackson

(1996) believe that effectively rural poverty is often pushed to the background due to the invisibility of the rural poor. They put forward a number of reasons for this invisibility including the residential pattern in the countryside in Ireland. The tradition of locating residences on the land has resulted in a scattered and isolated population with a number of centres serving a wide, dispersed hinterland. The decline of these immediate social centres and the low population density (the lowest in Europe) has reinforced the invisibility of the rural poor. Haase and Jackson (1996) also emphasise the realities of rural disadvantage such as inadequate housing, inaccessible services and isolation.

In examining the distribution of deprivation there are clear differences in the degree to which disadvantage is clustered in particular areas, both urban and rural. The analysis carried out by Haase (1993) confirms the known areas of Dublin which are deprived. These include the north and south inner city, Ballymun, Ballyfermot, Clondalkin and West Tallaght and outside Dublin other areas of concern are parts of Cork, Waterford, Limerick and Galway. In rural areas, deprivation is most prevalent in Donegal and Mayo and is also widespread in the border counties of Leitrim, Cavan and Monaghan. The poverty map (see appendix 4) highlights just how extensive rural poverty really is throughout the country and challenges the traditional perception of the 'idyllic countryside' in comparison to the depressing nature of the inner city.

5.5.1 Partnership and rural development

Currently, there is a number of models for rural development in operation in Ireland. Nationally, social partnership has been a forum where the farming organisations have

been highly involved since 1987.¹² They have used this as a mechanism for national policy negotiation in agricultural and rural development albeit with much limitation in its direct effects on policy (O'Hara, 1999). Following a number of proposals, the dominant paradigm accepted as the best response to locally based rural disadvantage is the partnership model that espouses the bottom-up approach. The stimulus for this shift came from the E.U. which was moving in a new policy direction which was underpinned by the principles of partnership and participation with an emphasis on area-based local development. Two Operational Programmes for agriculture (1991-1993 and 1994-1999) followed in the footsteps of a pilot programme for Integrated Rural Development (IRD) in 1988–1990. This pilot programme was essentially a test run for the bottom-up approach in rural areas¹³ and led to the implementation of the E.U. LEADER programmes to address the inter-related problems of rural decline.

5.5.2 Rural development in the long term

Generally, most development programmes and partnerships are confined to 5-6 year cycles to maintain administrative efficiency. However, it is widely accepted at both national and EU levels that a 15 year cycle is involved in the process of empowerment of an area and capacity building to the point of self-help and initiative, strategic planning and programme implementation (O'Hara, 1999).

¹² They make up one of the four pillars of the Irish social partnership model – See Table 5

¹³ Although some LEADER groups evolved from existing local development organisations, the majority were formed specifically to participate in the programme.

Programmes such as LEADER require a long-term vision due to the slow cycle of rural development and must support a long-term (10-20 year) planned solution, which is implemented at a pace conducive to the natural cycle of development.

The LEADER programme has been part of a general shift in the orientation of rural development activity towards economic enterprise. However, various initiatives have sought to create a balance between community and social development and enterprise and business development in order to operate a legitimate multisectoral development programme (O'Hara and Commins, 1998).

The current wave of locally based development is built to a considerable extent on voluntary effort and community activity. However, these stakeholders cannot substitute for government provision and can only function with any degree of effectiveness if there is ongoing support and funding. The problems of rural areas need to be understood as a regional issue and responded to in an integrated way. The objective is not to create an urban-rural contest in discussing disadvantage but simply to provide an overview of the situation in Ireland as a whole.

5.6 URBAN POVERTY

In Dublin, short distances separate areas of concentrated affluence and poverty. The gulf between different parts of the inner city and between desirable neighbourhoods and concentrations of public housing characterised by multiple problems of disadvantage is a measure of the wide gap between wealth and poverty in Ireland today. Despite the increased level of regeneration and local participation in development initiatives, for many, the inner cities, and indeed the large estates on the urban periphery, represent the

social antipodes of middle class Ireland. They represent a situation described below which referred to areas housing the working class in England.

'I have never elsewhere seen a concealment of such fine sensitivity of everything that might offend the eyes and ears of the middle-classes.' (Engels, 1969:80)

These urban blackspots are likely to remain an intractable social problem for Ireland as inequality deepens. Within these areas are concentrated the worst housing, the highest unemployment, the greatest density of poor people and the highest crime rates. Yet this is not a unique or peculiar problem, there are scattered pockets of deprivation almost everywhere and many urban areas in Europe are struggling to deal with the problems associated with adjustment to economic change.

Pressure from the EU thrust urban poverty, exclusion and policy issues to the fore in the late 1980s and 1990s. The term social exclusion has featured heavily in policy debates about poverty in Ireland in recent years. However, most of the research work has applied the term to rural settings with relatively little attention being paid to urban areas (Bartley, 1998). The urban component of the Irish population is in excess of 60% and almost 77% of Ireland's unemployed live in towns and cities with a population of ten thousand or over (Bannon and Quinn, 1996). Within the urban mosaic there exists a microcosm of deprivation where issues of poverty and social disintegration are particularly acute.

5.6.1 Causes of urban disadvantage

Many of the explanations of urban problems are based on the assumption that the root of these urban problems lies within the areas itself or the individuals and groups who inhabit it. This understanding can be tied in with the research findings of Oscar Lewis detailed in chapter two in which Lewis claimed that people in particular areas were caught in a vicious circle whereby a culture characterised by unemployment, dysfunctional family structure and a sense of powerlessness was perpetuated from generation to generation.

Other views see the causes of the problems as institutional malfunctioning or political bias which are ideally remedied by suitable corrective action such as rational social planning.

Public policy in Ireland is in the midst of a 'partnership era' and the creation of appropriate fora and structures to secure involvement of the marginalised in decision-making processes is an objective which has been the cornerstone of many anti-poverty strategies, particularly since 1991.¹⁴ These newer area-based responses to local problems can be more flexible in making allowances for the scope and ability of small, independent groups to influence urban change. They have been reviewed favourably by the OECD and recommended as a model which could be transferable to other countries as a basis for best practice (Sabel, 1996).

One major fear expressed by Bartley (1998) is that the myriad of local development initiatives could be creating the impression that something is being done and the real causes of urban deprivation are being alleviated, when, in reality, it could simply be:

¹⁴ This is the year that the area-based partnerships were set up on a pilot basis

'a cosmetic exercise that simply tackles the symptoms of the problems [and] deflects the attention from the macroeconomic policies and the wider forces of global economic development which ultimately produce and compound the processes of social exclusion and marginalisation' (Bartley, 1998:153).

5.6.2 Characteristics of urban deprivation

Urban poverty, by its very nature, encompasses a fine mesh and broad range of causative factors and is often defined in the context of economic, social and physical parameters.

These three elements are interactive strands of a complex and multi-dimensional problem and the interplay of the variety of factors they include intensify the severity of disadvantage in particular urban areas.

Economic

While policy makers investigate solutions for improving the situation of the poor, the impact of technological and economic change bears ever more heavily on the traditional working class areas and they can experience a relentless decline into socio-spatial invisibility.

Ireland has also been exposed to the restructuring of its industry and economy. This began in the early 1980's and has ultimately led to 'deindustrialisation' and a high level of job loss and unemployment in the traditional industries with a sharper segmentation of the labour market and an overall increase in the percentage of those in lower paid and temporary and part-time employment. These factors have altered age and social structure and have fuelled a growing social divide that has reinforced the decay of the inner city

and the growth of large housing estates experiencing multiple deprivation on the urban periphery (Power, 1997). Areas once occupied by industrial and commercial warehousing and derelict buildings are being colonised by affluent households. Industrial decline is thus producing healthier and more sought after residential developments but this does not represent an amelioration of inner city problems. Lower income households in inner city locations face shrinking employment opportunities and a more competitive housing market and this has been particularly prevalent in Dublin (Bartley, 1998).

Social aspects

The impact of lowered status and income is harsh whether you live in Dublin or Donegal. However, the inner city adds its special refinements to this way of life such as the peculiar immobility imposed by the cost and inefficiency of public transport, the unpleasantness of the environment for those forced to live in it, the lack of amenities and the tempting sub-culture of crime. Outside the labour force there have been four social trends:

- * Increases in the expectation of life and therefore in the numbers of old people
- * Increases in the duration of training
- * Increases in early retirement
- * Increases in the number of one-parent families (Donnison *et al*, 1991).

These trends have combined to produce growing numbers who, temporarily or more permanently, are unable to earn their own living. In many countries the growing proportion of women taking up paid work has offset the effect of these factors on the labour market. Changes in social and family structures have had a notable impact on the

composition of those in poverty and one-parent households, whose benefits are generally provided by the state, and who now feature significantly among those excluded from the central core of society (Callan et al, 1996). It has been noted previously that educational attainment is intrinsically interlinked to future prospects for employment and it is also accepted that the children of people with low incomes and a poor education are more likely to fare badly at school. In today's world, educational failure is all too often hereditary, just as success tends to be hereditary; the parents' circumstances provide the environment within which the child grows up and this environment is the key place which defines the social world. The quality of this social world, particularly in the inner city, makes a difference to people's ability to flourish and succeed (Healy, 1998).

Physical aspects

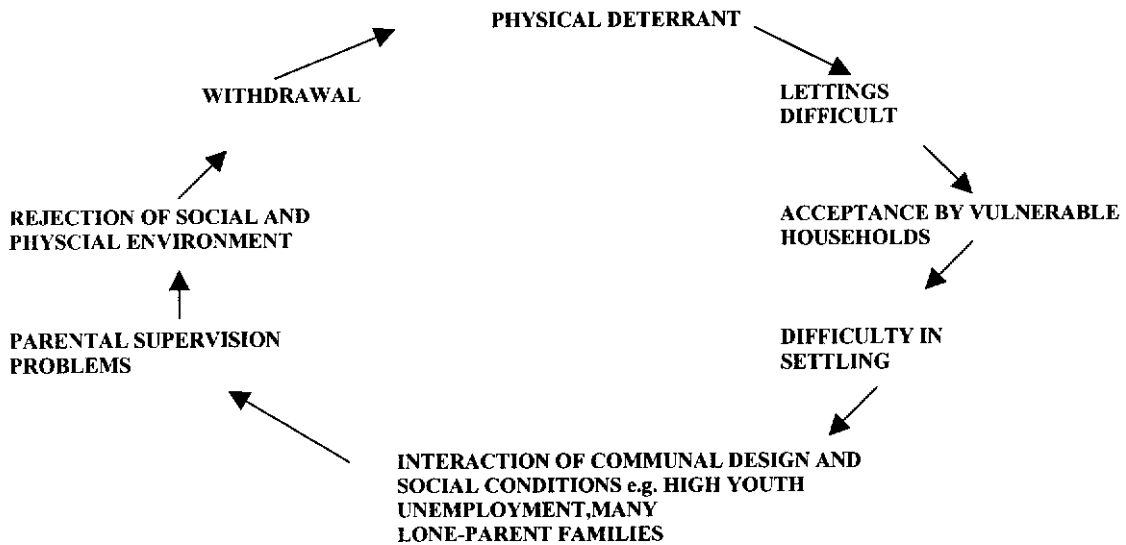
Bannon and Quinn (1996) identify matters such as shelter, access to affordable and adequate housing with wider considerations of household supports, housing amenities and the quality and maintenance of the residential environments in examining the physical cause of poverty in the inner city. In recent years policy analysts and researchers have increasingly shifted attention from the quality of housing provision to overall living conditions and way of life in neighbourhoods (Healy, 1998). It is useful to start from the baseline that these 'living spaces' become social worlds which ultimately shape attitudes and aspirations of the people within them.

The multi-dimensional phenomenon of social exclusion finds spatial manifestation, in its acute forms, in the deprived inner or peripheral urban areas. The inner city tends to draw the disadvantaged in from a wide area and the institution of the estate thus concentrates

the social problems of the inner city in a small and intimate space where they can interact more destructively. The housing system in Ireland is strongly marked by social and spatial segregation and this has resulted in large clusters of socially deprived housing in urban areas. Some of these areas have experienced a marked decline since the 1980s and this, in turn, has put pressure on the physical as well as the social fabric of the estates (Fahey, 1998). Fear of violence and burglary can become part of daily life in these areas and vandalism and graffiti often adds the final touch to compound the unattractiveness of the environment. Vandalism can primarily be the symptom of the deterioration of family discipline and community control but it is also in part a response to the environment. An area which is neglected by the landlord (i.e. the local authority) will retain little respect from its tenants.

A negative reputation of these estates becomes fixed firmly in the minds of the rest of society subsequently reinforcing the alienation of the inhabitants, emphasising a sense of fatalism and ultimately contributing to its inexorable decline. This reputation is often worse than reality and usually has the effect of discouraging those with any hopes for their own future to look elsewhere for accommodation. The 'better' tenants, with higher incomes, savings or skills move out and are frequently replaced by more disadvantaged individuals or families. The culture of silence and of no hope, which permeates the area subsequently makes it harder to form effective community groups or tenant associations thus reinforcing the vicious circle of decline in these estates which is illustrated below.

Figure 1: Vicious circle of decline and social difficulties (Adapted from Power, 1997, p-103)



It is clear that within the inner city and particularly within large flat complexes, that physical conditions fuel social problems and these social problems become compounded as they become more concentrated.

5.7 POLICY RESPONSES

Few would now ascribe to the cliché that a rising tide will lift all boats. It cannot be comfortably assumed and hoped that the benefits of economic growth will eventually trickle down to the poor. Poverty as a political concept does not simply describe a state of affairs, it also implies that some action must be taken to remedy it. The problem of poverty provides a basis for action and as there is disagreement on the definition of

poverty (see chapter one), a shared vision on how to eliminate it remains unclear. Poverty, irrespective of how it is defined tends to be spatially uneven (Pringle, 1996). It is, therefore, important to continually look at the dynamics of poverty, the forces that produce it, and the way in which, in some cases, it is reproduced and established over time or in a particular place (Curtin *et al*, 1996). The distribution of poverty in Ireland, according to Nolan and Callan (1994), is that it is a spatially prevalent phenomenon which affects almost every part of the country. However, they note that there are differences in the degree to which disadvantage will cluster in particular areas, both urban and rural.

This distinct spatial pattern which has been associated with poverty in Ireland and in other countries has pushed the EU and the national government to respond to the problem with social policies based on *positive territorial discrimination*. This involves the identification of smaller areas experiencing acute disadvantage and then channelling additional resources into the area to counter the processes which reinforce the localised nature of poverty in the area. There has been a number of experimental area-based anti-poverty initiatives over the years, examples of which include the 3rd EU poverty programme and the Operational Programme for Local Urban and Rural Development (OPLURD) which incorporates the area-based partnerships.

Ireland was largely untouched by most of the earlier developments, however, the enterprise zones in Britain were mirrored to a certain degree by the designated area scheme in Dublin and other major cities set up by the Department of the Environment (DoE) in 1986. This was followed in 1988 by the Programme for National Recovery (PNR, 1988) which was a unique step in the history of the State, taken at a time when the

country was experiencing a major social and economic crisis. The PNR shifted the economic and social agenda and identified job creation and the right for social welfare recipients to have a decent standard of living as national priorities. Despite its shortcomings this programme was an accepted alternative which helped the economy into a healthier condition. This was succeeded by the Programme for Economic and Social Progress (PESP,1990) spanning from 1990 to 1993. The PESP had a broad agenda and contained comprehensive reform proposals and expenditure commitments in relation to health, education and housing. It was under the PESP that an experimental approach to alleviating long-term unemployment was initiated and piloted. Partnership companies were set up, on a pilot basis, in 12 areas of particular disadvantage (this was later extended to 38), in order to design and implement a more coherent, multi-dimensional approach to social exclusion. These were complemented by the LEADER programme which made additional funding available to rural-based groups. The three year period of PESP saw economic growth in Ireland rise above EU and OECD averages and a fall in inflation. However, these successes were marred by the fact that there was no growth in employment and income remained well below the European average (O'Donovan, 1999). With the PESP due to expire and the prospect of a new programme being put in place, discussions began on implementing a programme which would combine the development of human resources with the need to create more jobs, protect existing jobs and develop programmes for the long-term unemployed. The Programme for Competitiveness and Work (PCW,1993) succeeded in improving living standards to a certain degree through a combination of pay increases, tax relief and measures to maintain low inflation. Under the PCW, important steps were taken in implementing initiatives for the unemployed,

particularly the long-term unemployed, and a net job creation total of 138,000 was achieved over the two year period of the programme (O'Donovan, 1999).

This set the scene for the fourth in the series of national programmes – which was entitled Partnership 2000 (P2000). This marked a major departure from the previous programmes as the partnership behind the programmes was extended to include the community and voluntary sector leading to a renewed energy and vigour in the process particularly in relation to social inclusion. The economic circumstances were also in sharp contrast to previous programmes with record job creation, economic growth of 7% and falling unemployment.

5.8 SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP AT A NATIONAL LEVEL

Much of the success of the Irish economy over the past decade is attributed to the social partnership approach adopted in 1987 and the agreement on economic goals and management associated with this partnership.

The relationship between the social partners and public policy has gone through many phases over the years. However, it has been in the past decade that many important developments have taken place. The evolution of social partnership since 1987 has involved a wide range of economic and political actors in a complex process of negotiation and interaction. This has been reinforced by continued analysis of the partnership process itself as discussed in the report by NESC - Strategy into the 21st century (NESC, 1996). This report contained a comprehensive characterisation of social partnership as it had developed over the previous ten years:

- 1 – The partnership process involves a combination of consultation, negotiation and bargaining.
- 2 – The partnership process is heavily dependent on a shared understanding of the key mechanisms and relationships in any given policy area
- 3 – The government has a unique role in the partnership process. It provides the arena in which the process operates and it shares some of its authority with social partners
- 4 – The process reflects interdependence between the partners.
- 5 – Partnership is characterised by a problem-solving approach designed to produce consensus
- 6 – Partnership involves trade-offs both between and within interest groups
- 7 – The partnership process involves different participants on various agenda items, ranging from national macroeconomic policy to local development. (NESC, 1996)

5.8.1 Who are the social partners?

The social partners are drawn from various strands of society and include representatives from trade unions, community and voluntary organisations, farming organisations and employer and business organisations. The table below sets out the four pillars of this partnership.

Table 5: The Four Pillars of the Irish Social Partnership

(I) Farming Organisations	IFA: Irish Farming Association ICMSA: Irish Creamery and Milk Suppliers Association Macra na Feirme ICOS: Irish Co-operative Society
(II) Trade Unions	ICTU: Irish Congress of Trade Unions

(III) Community and Voluntary Organisations

INOUE: Irish National Organization for the Unemployed
NWCI: National Womens Council of Ireland
NYCI: National Youth Council of Ireland
CORI: Conference of Religious Superiors
Centres for the Unemployed
Society of St. Vincent de Paul
Protestant Aid
Community Platform

(VI) Employer and Business Organisations

IBEC: Irish Business and Employers Confederation
CIF: Construction Industry Federation
CCI: Chambers of Commerce of Ireland
ITIC: Irish Tourist Industry Confederation
IEA: Irish Exporters Association
SFA: Small Firms Association

Adapted from Social Policy in Ireland p-128

Participation of the four pillars has developed unevenly with strand 3 (community and voluntary organisations) only achieving social partnership status in the final months of negotiating Partnership 2000.

Through the negotiation of three successive programmes (PNR, PESP, PCW) the social partners have committed themselves to a consistent and coherent consensus based strategic framework, focused on macro-economic policy, income distribution and structural adjustment.

Increasingly, it has been recognised that the continued effectiveness of this social partnership depends on the maintenance of social cohesion which, in turn, depends on a real commitment to social solidarity and inclusion. There exists widespread acknowledgement that the four social partnership agreements over the past decade in Ireland have contributed to the development of one of the fastest growing economies in

the European Union. There are concerns for the future of social partnership in Ireland that present a challenge for the government and the public service which has been allocated the role of brokers of the process. There are fears that a sense of institutional fatigue has set in whereby participants have become unsettled by routines and procedures that have spanned over twelve years and consequently may feel that their own interests could be better served through alternative arrangements. A particular challenge also arises in that the model of social partnership came together at a time of economic crisis and the problems of crisis are no less complex than problems of success. Will durable economic success weaken the search for consensus? McCarthy (1999) believes that the external and internal challenges of cost competitiveness, product innovation and social cohesion are significant issues that will ensure that the successful model will not expire or become redundant. One of the most important policy developments in the nineties supporting the model of social partnership was the National Anti-Poverty Strategy.

5.9 NATIONAL ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY (NAPS)

Following the UN Social Summit in Copenhagen (1995), the Irish government decided that a National Anti-Poverty Strategy should be developed to set out a cross-departmental strategy, with the overall objective of addressing all aspects of social exclusion in Ireland. This strategy was developed in 1995/6 and was launched on the 23rd April 1997 following a two year intensive consultation process involving the community and voluntary sector. In this respect even the preparatory phase of the NAPS strategy is quite significant but perhaps what is most central to the strategy is the identification of the global poverty reduction target:

“ Over the period 1997-2007, the National Anti-Poverty Strategy will aim at considerably reducing the numbers of those who are consistently poor from 9-15% to less than 5-10% as measured by the ESRI”

(NAPS Strategy Statement, 1997:24)

This is an historic development in that Ireland is the first E.U. member state to adopt such a global poverty target into its political agenda. There is also a number of supplementary targets which have been set for five key areas, namely, educational disadvantage, unemployment, income adequacy, disadvantaged urban areas and rural poverty.

The very fact that the NAPS has thrust the issue of poverty and social exclusion into the centre of the political arena reinforces the importance of this framework in creating and sustaining a climate of change within Irish society. The success of Ireland's economy is conducive to implementing such a strategy and in this regard it is vital that the opportunity is taken to enhance the impact of this initiative as it matures.

5.9.1 The consultation process

The launch of the NAPS came in April 1997 following two years of an extensive process which informed the development of the strategy. At this launch, the level of consultation at the preparatory phase of NAPS and the extent of the involvement of the community and voluntary sector was emphasised as one of the key aspects of the overall strategy. Indeed, as mentioned previously, the involvement of the sector in discussions was significant, however, it is apparent now that there is considerable dissatisfaction and

disappointment with the progress since made on NAPS (McAnerney, 1997). A conflict of interests became clear on the publication of the document where the state sector viewed the consultation process as comprehensive and satisfactory whilst the community and voluntary sector felt that the strategy document did not reflect the inputs they had made into its design. Essentially, the community sector felt that their involvement in the consultation process was effectively used as a stamp of approval as they were excluded from the final decision-making for the strategy.

Major weaknesses with the finalised document were highlighted and will be discussed later in this chapter. As McAnerney (1997) pointed out:

“Consultation is the first step in building greater participation, but consultation which is not seen to be acted upon only impedes further participation” (1997:2)

From this, it is clear that the role of the voluntary and community sector needs to be further developed and clarified in relation to NAPS. Consideration is needed on how to decentralise the strategy and involve those people experiencing poverty and social exclusion and also those working on their behalf to make real changes to peoples lives.

5.9.2 The Implementation of NAPS

For the NAPS to be successful, it was necessary for it to be underpinned with a sound administrative structure which would be in accord with the overall ethos of NAPS which is to encourage co-operation between the different government departments.

A NAPS unit has been set up which is essentially the steering group in place to co-ordinate and oversee the broad implementation of the strategy. This unit is supported by a number of structures which have a variety of functions:

The **Interdepartmental Policy Committee** which is co-chaired by the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Social Welfare continues to oversee NAPS by addressing key issues where a co-ordinated effort is required.

The **Cabinet Sub-Committee on poverty and social exclusion** chaired by the Taoiseach is particularly important in that it ensures that these issues are kept high on the political agenda and that policies are examined to ensure that they do not run counter to the NAPS objectives.

The **Combat Poverty Agency** works on various levels for NAPS. It provides a key advisory and educational role, works closely with the NAPS unit and is also involved in monitoring and evaluating the strategy over time.

Although the NESF and the voluntary and community sector are also heavily involved, it has been recognised that a wider group of actors and key groups should be mobilised and brought in to the NAPS process (Frazer, 1997).

5.10 ANALYSIS OF THE NAPS

A SWOT analysis (i.e. an analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) of NAPS was undertaken by the author and its outcome is as follows:

STRENGTHS

* For the first time, a multi-dimensional strategy has been set out to tackle the underlying causes of poverty and social exclusion in Ireland.

* The development of the initiative involved a wide-ranging two year process of consultation and participation with the community and voluntary sector, the social partners and those directly experiencing the effects of the issues which are at the cornerstone of the strategy i.e. poverty and social exclusion.¹⁵

* For the purpose of the NAPS, a definition has been agreed upon which incorporates the key elements of poverty and disadvantage in Ireland. This, in itself, is a major step forward as traditionally the term 'poverty' has been a concept which has eluded an accepted definition.

* The NAPS has been linked in with related initiatives, for example, Partnership 2000, the Strategic Management Initiative (SMI) and the local area-based partnerships which are very strong support structures with a commitment to the implementation of the strategy.

* The involvement of both the National Economic and Social Forum (NESF) and the Combat Poverty Agency which have key roles in monitoring and evaluating the implementation and progress of the initiative ensures that, to a certain extent, this process can remain outside of and independent of the central administrative and political systems.

* The NAPS is unique in that for the first time the government has set measurable anti-poverty targets. The fact that these targets and the mechanisms to monitor them have been put in place offers a real opportunity to test the progress of this strategy and make notable inroads into the varying dimensions of poverty identified in NAPS.

* There is a clear recognition which underlies the initiative that an increased effort must be made to educate the public on the level and extent of poverty in Ireland and on the role that the NAPS is playing in alleviating the problems.

¹⁵ Nine regional public consultation seminars were held which were attended by over 1000 people.

* The strategy has created a number of cross-departmental mechanisms which have key roles in implementing the strategy. Their existence within the political and administrative machinery emphasises the commitment to ensure that poverty stays at the forefront of the policy-making system.

WEAKNESSES

* It is felt that with the opportunity that NAPS provided, the strategy presented was overly cautious considering the favourable economic outlook that was projected around the time the document was being formulated. It is clear, at this stage, that due to this economic growth some of the targets will be met before ten years, giving weight to the argument that they should be reassessed and possibly reset.

* One worrying aspect is that the NAPS claims that the targets can be met without allocating higher levels of expenditure or redirecting existing resources. This remains to be seen over the period of implementation. However, it is difficult to comprehend how the worst aspects of poverty can be eliminated without allocating more resources to tackling the problem.

* The targets set, whilst being groundbreaking for Ireland, were quite vague and unspecific especially in relation to urban disadvantage and rural poverty. Due to the nature of these targets, these key areas of proposed action are more difficult to monitor and thus true concrete goals have not been identified. In this respect, the targets contribute little to the strategy.

* Despite the fact that there is a recognition of the vital need for public awareness and support for NAPS, there is still a need to engage wider involvement and to educate the public on the initiative.

* NAPS must come down to the regional and local level to make a true impact on the targets that have been set. The institutional mechanisms have now been put in place and to increase the impact of NAPS it is essential to broaden out, decentralise and involve the regional and local authorities in its implementation at their respective levels.

* NAPS can only be truly effective when the exact role of the community and voluntary sector is identified and made concrete. Mechanisms to officially involve this sector in the participation and consultation processes and the actual implementation of the strategy are required to reinforce the long-term commitment to this sector which was disillusioned with the final strategy. It was felt that their input at the consultation stage did not transpire and feed into the NAPS document.

' [The NAPS] lacks real ambition and is a disappointing outcome for groups representing the poor who were consulted on its contents over the past two years.'

(Allen, M. April 1997, Irish Times)

* Many have pointed to the fact that NAPS was introduced by one government and is being implemented by another as an inherent weakness in the overall programme. The slow process of introducing the new policies and actions has raised questions on the political commitment and priority the government has to tackling poverty.

OPPORTUNITIES

* NAPS is a ten year programme, outliving other economic and social initiatives (for example, P2000) thus allowing for a long-term commitment to tackling poverty in Ireland.

* The NAPS initiative has the potential to create and enhance participative democracy especially among the community and voluntary sector. This process needs to allow for both conflict and consensus to achieve positive outcomes on specific issues.

* The development of clear targets and objectives in the five areas provide the potential to create a more inclusive society. Their identification allows for rigorous monitoring and evaluation of these targets which can critically analyse progress being made and also areas of action which need to be improved.

* The potential for the success of NAPS is buoyed up by the fact that the economy is still performing extremely well and, based on the premise that it will continue to do so, the aim to meet the targets set is well within reach.

THREATS

* Despite the fact that the NAPS is a ten year programme and thus provides a significant amount of time for the implementation of the process, it seems that this has left room for complacency. Although not all NAPS targets are the specific subject of the annual budget which has a timeframe of one year, the 1998 budget fell far short of the reform needed. It is in the early years of NAPS that it is especially important to make substantial progress to continue to fuel the momentum which will carry NAPS to 2007.

* There is a distinct conflict between two societal models and it remains to be seen if the state sector, which is operating out of an economic model of development can be

reconciled with the community and voluntary sector which employs a model based on social equity and inclusion. This is a debate which is ongoing at EU level and needs to be resolved in order to maximise the impact of NAPS.

5.11 EVALUATION OF NAPS

The NAPS has provided a critical landmark in the development of both economic and social policy in Ireland (Frazer, 1997). It is commendable that the government decided to tackle issues of poverty and social exclusion and make a firm commitment in the form of targets, policies and actions over a ten-year period. The strategy gives co-ordination to an otherwise disjointed approach and has helped decompartmentalise the civil service and find a focus for an anti-poverty strategy that will channel the available resources to target the right areas and people. The NAPS is continually evolving and an immense amount of time and effort has been invested to create and implement the required institutional structures to run the strategy. Most of these structures are now in place and although it has been stated that it will be a number of years before real results are visible, the time has come to deliver real progress through concrete actions.

The NAPS has now been revised and new themes have been introduced to address those issues which many felt had been overlooked in the original strategy. These included housing, women and children and people with disabilities. Another significant aspect to the 'new' NAPS is the aim to reduce the number of those who are 'consistently poor' to below 2% and to eliminate long-term unemployment not later than 2007.

5.12 NORTHERN IRELAND

It is important to consider the status of Northern Ireland when looking at poverty in Ireland. Although Britain traditionally provided the standard against which policy development in Northern Ireland has been judged, the influence of the Republic of Ireland and also the European Union is becoming increasingly important.

Northern Ireland is unique in that there is a distinctive form of policy making and administration which has been shaped over many years by wide ranging historical, political and constitutional forces. Legacies such as that of direct rule and of devolution have had a notable impact on structures of policy and administration, on patterns of political accountability and also on the extent of policy variation.

Northern Ireland is a political entity where conditions vary substantially from those in Britain; the regionally specific problem of religious discrimination coupled with a relatively higher incidence of poverty and unemployment¹⁶ consequently require different policy prescriptions.

5.13 THE PEACE PROCESS

With the paramilitary cease-fires of 1994 it was generally believed that the attention would move from the political - constitutional question of the border and national identity to social and economic issues. It was hoped that there was a possible prospect that significant resources, estimated at approximately 300 million sterling from the 1994/5 expenditure surveys, could be redirected into other spending programmes. However, understandably, political issues still dominate as major questions regarding power assembly, the British/Irish council, the European Union and decommissioning remain.

Therefore, it will be a longer time before issues such as social exclusion get the undivided attention that perhaps they deserve. The ceasefire in Northern Ireland has brought to the fore other manifestations of poverty and deprivation which were obscured during the worst of the violence. The drug problem has emerged in a way that it did not before, as it was the paramilitaries who controlled the problem through violence. Likewise, racism, particularly against the Chinese community, has sharply increased, punishment beatings continue for political and social reasons, violence, violent crime and gangsterism are all increasing generally as the paramilitaries have loosened their grip on the community. There are symptoms of poverty in Northern Ireland which are definitely intensifying and the benign effects of the peace process in terms of economic investment and a greater willingness to travel around different areas are not impacting on the localities and people that are socially excluded in the North.

5.13.1 The Good Friday Agreement

The Good Friday Agreement included provisions for effective consultation at a number of levels. On the Assembly, it states that

'there will be safeguards to ensure that all sections of the community can participate and work together successfully in the operation of these institutions and that all sectors are protected.'

The Agreement also provided for the establishment of the North/South Council and the British/Irish Council for the development of co-operation on a range of issues of mutual

¹⁶ Northern Ireland is the poorest region in the U.K

interest. The multi-party negotiations also agreed that a consultative Civic Forum should be established and it committed the Government and the other participants in the talks to partnership, equality and mutual respect as the basis of future relationships. A New Targeting Social Need (TSN) initiative was mentioned as one of a range of measures to achieve equality of opportunity.

Political instability is the backcloth against which everything takes place in the North. This can often be far from conducive to any constructive activity although one must also consider the investment opportunities that the Good Friday Agreement has created. The public spending patterns reflect the nature of these political, economic and social problems facing the region. There are three main public expenditure priorities:-

- * Preserving law and order
- * Promoting self sustaining economic growth
- * Targeting social need

5.14 TARGETING SOCIAL NEED

In 1991, the Targeting Social Need (TSN) initiative was launched by the Secretary of State, Peter Brook as a third public expenditure priority which would apply across all departments and programmes. The objective of TSN was to tackle disadvantage by directing resources and efforts to individual groups and areas defined as being of the greatest social need, irrespective of community background. This was to be a long-term programme specifically designed to bring about fundamental change in Northern Irish society in terms of enhancing employment opportunities and employability and healing community divisions.

The need to tackle these issues did not simply arise in the late 1980s but this initiative reconceptualised the idea of social need in the North by recognising the need for religion-specific policies. Economic and social deprivation existed on both sides of the community at this time. It must be noted, however that on all major social and economic indicators Catholics generally experienced greater levels of disadvantage than Protestants and these differential experiences then feed into and sustain feelings of alienation and discrimination which, in turn, influence attitudes to political and security issues. Thus, the TSN's importance lay in the fact that it:

“sought to redress socio-economic inequalities between the two ethno-religious communities”

(Osbourne, 1996:181)

The introduction of TSN indicated the importance attached by the government to ensure the equitable distribution of public spending between the two communities. The initial enthusiasm with which the initiative was greeted soon gave way to criticism as the project progressed. It was particularly felt that there was confusion as to whether the aim of TSN was to tackle social need generally or promote the re-education of Catholic disadvantage in particular. It was generally felt that the initiative had little impact on public spending and departmental policy formulation.

5.14.1 New Targeting Social Need

Subsequently, the Targeting Social Need programme was relaunched under the banner of 'New TSN'. The new government endorsed the rationale and general objectives of TSN

as advocated by its predecessors but it considered that the initiative was not applied with the vigour and effectiveness which the policy warranted. The new TSN initiative was designed to identify greatest need in Northern Irish society, be it people or areas and ensure that government programmes were effective in reducing the need. New TSN formed part of the White Paper of March 1998 entitled 'Partnership for Equality'. This also included the new Promoting Social Inclusion Initiative (PSI) which was a platform for government departments, agencies, public bodies and the voluntary sector to cement their knowledge, pool their imaginations and identify a new agenda for tackling social exclusion in Northern Ireland. Under 'New TSN' government departments were issued with new guidelines to help them target spending more effectively and monitor the results of their programmes. A new unit was also set up, which reports directly to the Secretary of State in the Central Committee relations unit, to oversee the new TSN programme. It remains to be seen whether the newly elected assembly, when it gets its powers of devolution will continue with this thrust or go in a different policy direction. Generally, at the moment, regional policy in Northern Ireland is formulated and implemented within the overall context of macro-level ideological and political changes. The new TSN seeks to establish a consensus on the approach taken to social exclusion in Northern Ireland, to identify key problems on social exclusion, and develop an agenda of issues to be tackled through the PSI initiative.

There has always been a problem of consensus with most issues in Northern Ireland and this does not omit social exclusion. There is a problem between the political and social elements of the debate with a huge void between policy elites and those who are on the ground often feeling that they are operating in an unappreciative climate. There is no

consistency of approach concerning social exclusion and with the absence of a mature debate or real understanding, any degree of consensus will continue to elude policy makers. This lack of assent has often been attributed to the fact that the various sectors, especially the community sector make for an overcrowded arena which subsequently impedes progress on many issues. Frustration with the community sector, in terms of their lack of co-ordination and networks has led to an absence of concrete outcomes with many statutory agencies disregarding their agenda as 'over ambitious'. It can also be said though, that if the community sector is overcrowded, it is for the right reasons. These groups tend to form for reasons of local need and this is an indicator that there are problems, issues and questions to be answered regarding the area and/or its people. Traditionally the community sector has been criticised for not merging, rationalising and building economies of scale however:

'this area is no more crowded than the small business sector and if the same market force analysis is applied then the various community groups should be allowed to occupy their overcrowded arena, if they can get the interest, the return and generally survive in it'

(Interview with Quentin Oliver, Jan.1999)

It could be argued that within the diversity of the community sector lies its strength. However, there still remains the need to develop a focused agenda which may be provided in the proposed Civic Forum. The purpose of the debates at this level is to ensure the fullest possible diversity so as to ensure the fullest possible partnership.

5.15 THE CIVIC FORUM

The Civic Forum was first proposed by the N.I Womans Coalition in the belief that a second chamber would provide an arena for special interest representatives with particular social and economic expertise in Northern Ireland to engage in a consultative process. This was then absorbed into the Good Friday Agreement which stated:

'A consultative Civic Forum will be established. It will comprise representatives of the business, TU and voluntary sectors and other such sectors as agreed by the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. It will act as a consultative mechanism on social, economic and cultural issues. The First Minister and Deputy First Minister will by agreement provide administrative support for the Civic Forum and establish guidelines for the selection of representatives to the Civic Forum'

(The Agreement, 10 Apr 1998)

Although it is part of the constitution, agreed upon in May 1999, the progress made towards its implementation has been slow. The Civic Forum is active and running, however, its relationship with the Assembly has yet to be clarified. Finalising the workings of the Forum has been a lower priority after the higher profile establishment of the other north-south bodies and a motion has yet to be passed that will officially bring the Civic Forum to life (Civic Forum Secretariat, 2001). It is hoped that the submissions being made and reports to the Assembly will push the issue back to a modicum of prominence. Indeed, a reply from the Forum on the draft document from the Executive, entitled 'Programme for Government' has been submitted and the views of the

community and voluntary sector are being considered before this document will be published. Opposition has come mainly from the Unionist quarter which has highlighted the tensions between elected politicians and their electoral democracy and participative processes through citizens democracy.

The fear that this Forum will create a new, unnecessary tier of government has been largely calmed due to the positive role it has embraced.

It is hoped that the Forum will take an informative capacity to ensure that the Assembly comes to difficult decisions, armed with the knowledge and awareness of the needs and views of all sections of society thus adding to the overall quality of decision-making.

It will complement the work of the Assembly and fill the vacuum between the citizen and the state through the inclusion of marginalised groups in democratic structures. It has the capacity, for the first time, to include civic society in a truly transparent manner and provide the opportunity for a credible input into the deliberations of the Assembly that traditionally may have gone unheard.

5.15.1 Mechanism for implementation

As yet, the administrative structure of the Civic Forum has not been agreed upon. However, it is thought that it will have approximately 60 members drawn from businesses, Trade Unions, churches, voluntary groups, sports, arts and culture, youth interests, the disabled, the environment and everyone else who sits on the citizens jury and can advise the Assembly on related issues. The mechanism put forward by the Woman's Coalition suggested that the Civic Forum should be made up of a series of panels. Each panel, composed of twelve representatives with at least 40% of either

gender, would be nominated by eligible organisations that would apply for inclusion on a list of nominating bodies. This issue is pending but whatever the structure, the Civic Forum is an enormous opportunity to resolve tensions and reduce the participative deficit that has been so prominent in Northern Ireland.

5.16 THE CONCEPT OF PARTNERSHIP IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The EU Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (P&R) in conjunction with the District Councils have facilitated the establishment of 26 EU District Partnerships of which 14.9% of the overall budget of the P&R programme has been allocated. Politics in Northern Ireland is practised at many different levels in society and in many different forms. The partnerships allow for a new form of governance which is complementary to, but different from, formal politics. These district partnerships have enlivened and enriched politics by bringing a sense of belonging, inclusiveness and vision to what can be achieved; they transcend most divisions and unite in working towards the same end for the development of specific areas. The work of the 26 partnerships has been described as one of the most encouraging and worthwhile initiatives in recent years. One of the most important examples in Northern Ireland of partnership was that of the Brownlow project¹⁷ funded by the EU Poverty 3 programme. This has been described by one of the leading figures involved in the social exclusion policy arena as follows:

'It was the best example of partnership and multi-agency work I have ever seen'

(Interview with Quentin Oliver, Jan. 1999)

¹⁷ The work of the Brownlow Community Trust is discussed and evaluated in chapter 6.

5.17 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Area based strategies are now a widely accepted element of government policy in place to tackle poverty and social exclusion. Walsh (1999) highlights the spatial dimension of the National Anti Poverty Strategy which seeks to target '*disadvantaged urban areas*' and '*marginalised rural areas*'. Perhaps deriving from E.U. pressure, Ireland, both North and South, has become increasingly aware of the value of engaging with local communities and of implementing initiatives at a regional and local level. Despite this realisation however, the largely centralist structure of the Irish government remains. Indeed, in many areas, local interest has turned to indifference with regard to local government due to the lack of faith in its ability to solve their problems. The weak system of local government in the Republic of Ireland represents a major challenge in offering a complete response to dealing with the problems facing local communities. The wide diversity of experiences of social exclusion even within localised areas demands that the response which would even attempt to meet these varying needs ideally should come from a regional or local authority. However, the limitations of the authorities such as the demands of traditional services and problems with financial resources create obstacles which significantly curtail their ability to fulfil this wider role.

One explanation offered by Bartley (1998) for the inadequacy of social policies in the Republic of Ireland relates to a lack of knowledge regarding the exclusionary processes that lead to poverty and deprivation, particularly in urban areas. There is a distinct lack of knowledge about the actual neighbourhoods which contain the most socially excluded in urban areas and as long as these blackspots remain and inequality deepens, so the

economic miracle that has transformed the Irish economy will continue to be undermined. The challenge is to develop ways of representing social exclusion through a better framework of social indicators and to develop more elaborate and sophisticated responses to social exclusion that address the causes, not just the symptoms.

The conflict and division within society in Northern Ireland has resulted in the debate on poverty and related issues being largely pushed to the side, despite the fact that it is often poverty itself that fuels violence. The voluntary and community organisations in Northern Ireland, as in any region, are particularly well placed to advise and inform larger bodies on the nature and extent of poverty in Northern Ireland. The last decade has seen these organisations become more mobilised behind umbrella organisations, e.g. the Northern Ireland Anti-Poverty network (NIAPN) and Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA), with successful and meaningful campaigns relating to poverty issues.

The Civic Forum is an innovative development which has the potential to nurture the effective governance of Northern Ireland through merging the skills and knowledge of the sectors it represents with those of elected representatives, the public administration and wider society. Indeed, Mr. Gibson, chairperson of the Forum, announced in December 2000, that tackling poverty in Northern Ireland would be a key theme on which the Forum would focus. It mirrors, in a sense, the voluntary and community pillar of the model of social partnership model in the Republic of Ireland which has worked extremely well since its implementation.

The distinct form of policy making in Northern Ireland is notable as it provides clear examples of how consensus can be achieved within the most extreme circumstances of distrust. As the peace process continues and the cross border bodies come into their own,

the links between north and south are becoming more important in terms of shared information and achievement of the fullest possible partnership.

It is often said that *'the poor are always with us'* and it is significant that despite economic growth in the Republic of Ireland and a continuing cease-fire in Northern Ireland, poverty and social exclusion still persist as intractable social problems.

The varying priorities and problems which face each government with regard to poverty and social exclusion has resulted in the need for differing policy prescriptions to address the problems effectively. For example, as previously mentioned, in the Republic of Ireland the very weak system of local government has been identified as a major obstacle in achieving lasting change at a local level. The new forms of local intervention need to be supported within a national policy framework to tackle poverty and thus the impact these smaller-scale initiatives can have is maximised.

The National Anti-Poverty Strategy has been one of the most relevant policy developments in the Republic of Ireland in recent times. This national policy made poverty a central concern of public policy and its introduction during a time of economic growth highlighted the fact that there were significant problems of poverty and social exclusion even within a time of economic success. With the implementation of NAPS, the longer term nature of the aims of the programme create the conditions for potential complacency. Social exclusion is a complex phenomenon which requires an ongoing commitment from both policy makers and those people working in deprived areas. It is naïve to believe that by introducing such policies, although significant, that the many problems of social exclusion will simply fade away.

Northern Ireland, as the poorest region in the U.K has also much to deal with in terms of addressing problems of poverty and social exclusion. Developing policies and programmes to respond to these problems is difficult in any area, however within Northern Ireland, the conflict and divisions complicate the delivery of interventions, hence there has been no real consistency of approach concerning social exclusion. The *'partnership era'* which has been in existence in the Republic of Ireland has developed at a much slower pace in Northern Ireland. With the creation of the Civic Forum, though, it appears that the partnerships and community and voluntary organisations have now been given the chance to have an official voice and input into developments at a national level. It must be noted though that this 'pillar' of the Northern Ireland Assembly may experience the same problems as the community and voluntary sector of the Social Partners in the Republic who still feel undermined by the other groups.

The concept of partnership is one which is still maturing in Northern Ireland but already has become an invaluable aid to local development and has gone far to blur traditional barriers and boundaries.

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Chapter Six

Social exclusion & policy responses in Great Britain

6.0 INTRODUCTION

The development of British cities has been the nearest in Europe to mirror the development of U.S. cities (Atkinson and Moon, 1994). The processes creating this development and the policy responses to this over the years have encouraged greater segregation in many cities throughout Britain. The situation has become one of increased polarisation where many areas have benefited in some way from rising living standards and the poorest neighbourhoods have become more rundown, more prone to crime and more cut off from the labour market. Past government policies have often contributed to this problem through poor housing design and policies on rents and benefits which tended to concentrate the poor and unemployed together in deprived neighbourhoods. From the 1960s onwards, there have been many initiatives implemented which were aimed at tackling the broader problems of these neighbourhoods such as the Urban Development Corporations (UDCs), Task forces and Community Development Projects (CDPs). The present UK government, since its inception in 1997, has taken a strong stance on the issues of social exclusion and along with the EU, is trying to take a holistic approach towards this issue and link together initiatives to produce greater effectiveness. To this end it has made many promises and set numerous targets. Indeed in his victory speech the Prime Minister Tony Blair stated:

'We will extend educational opportunity, not to an elite, but to all our children, modernise our welfare state [and] rebuild our National Health Service as a proper health service to serve the needs of Britain. This is a new Labour Government that remembers that it was a previous Labour Government which formed and fashioned the

welfare state. It was our proudest creation...we will build a united nation with no-one shut out'

Since the election of the Labour Government in May 1997, a number of institutions and frameworks to tackle social exclusion and regeneration, most significantly the social exclusion unit, have been established which give substance to the new rhetoric around these issues. A number of the new policies and schemes will be discussed later in the chapter.

6.1 DETERMINANTS OF CHANGE LEADING TO INEQUALITY IN BRITISH CITIES

Economic restructuring resulting in the move from manufacturing to service sector employment has created instability in the lives of many people. The change in the stability of employment is such that the old concept of a job for life, based on initial training, is rapidly disappearing. The early 1980s saw a distinct increase in the inequalities within and between regions due to the differential impact of heavy job losses in the manufacturing sector. The decline in demand for coal¹⁸ and steel has created many problems for the northern regions as the emphasis on development shifted to southeast England.

Demographic change has a considerable impact on the development of cities. Britain has an aging population with its associated problems. For example, this situation further reduces birth rates, results in the proportion of people of working age falling, increases the need for health care facilities for elderly people and involves higher expenditure on

¹⁸ There are several factors which combine to explain the problems in the coal industry. These include the falling cost of imported oil, environmental concerns over emissions and the downscaling of the coal industry by the British Government (1992-1994)

pensions and other forms of social welfare. Another factor to consider is the change in family structure i.e. the number of lone parents and single people and the level of relationship breakdown in society today. These trends imply a growth in the overall number of households and also the number of households with only one or no wage earner which subsequently puts pressure on the government.

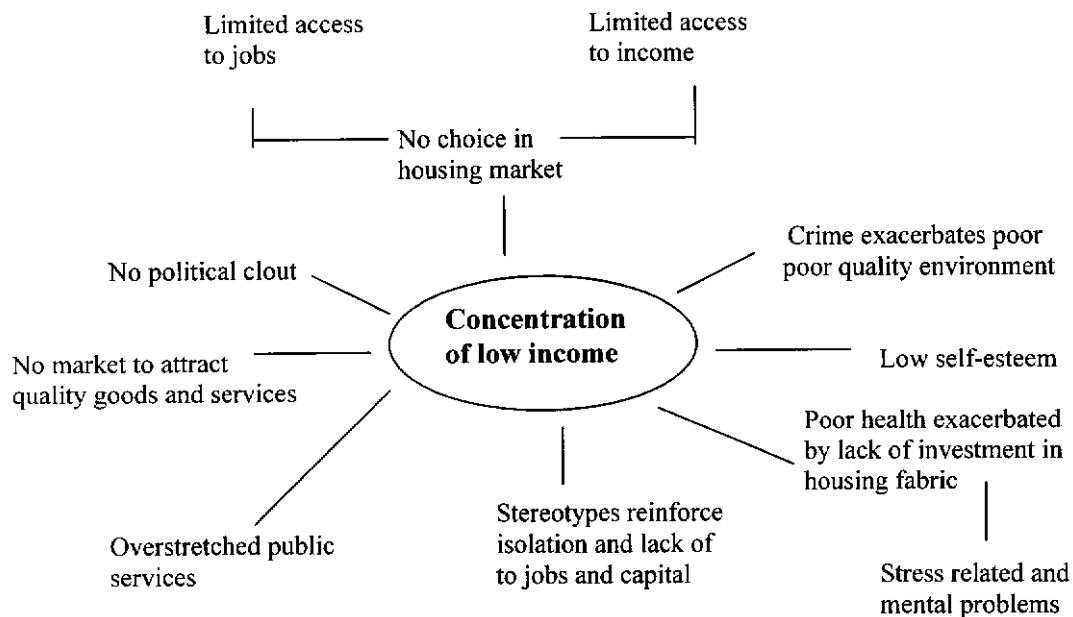
The changing situation of housing markets in Britain has seen a shift away from housing subsidies which encouraged low rents and the shift in housing finance has enhanced divergence between those who can afford to buy and those who cannot. Renting, for many, is now not a viable option and this makes segregation more likely as those who can buy will buy and the others will simply be left behind. Residualisation, differential migration and socio-tenurial polarisation are active processes which continue to reinforce the spatial concentration of inequality in Britain.

6.2 GOVERNMENT POLICIES

The present Labour Government decided that the focus of social exclusion strategies and area regeneration should be targeted on the worst estates in Britain, a stance which has been subject to much criticism. Figure 2 provides a good general representation of the implications of increased spatial inequalities and illustrates the variety of problems which has to be tackled in implementing a holistic approach to social exclusion. The process of differential migration limits the impact policies or targeted schemes can have on an area. Many individuals and families, once their situation and quality of life improves through obtaining work or becoming involved in training, then leave the area to move to a better

neighbourhood if they can. Thus, any benefits for the area through improving and empowering its inhabitants are lost.

Figure 2: Implications of increased spatial inequalities



Adapted from lecture by Alan Murie, 1999

Although this representation makes some generalisations, it highlights many of the important interrelated elements which fuel the vicious circle of deprivation inherent in many neighbourhoods in Britain. The policies related to social exclusion implemented in recent years by the Labour Government show a clear focus on targeting. Indeed, the New Deal for Communities (NDCs) in its first year identified the 17 pilot communities, selected because their problems were the most severe. The debate concerning whether and how targeted initiatives work is ongoing and a number of area initiatives are discussed in this chapter.

6.3 IMPACT OF THATCHERISM

In the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s, Great Britain as a traditional 'smoke stack' industrial economy, became increasingly less competitive in a rapidly expanding global economy. It underwent a difficult and protracted transformation of the economy as the nation inevitably moved in the direction of a service based, information led post-industrial society. Margaret Thatcher held power for the major part of this transformation. Her supporters claim that her encouragement of a market-led approach to techno-economic change not only facilitated the process but made it happen more speedily and restored Britain's competitiveness in the new global economy then rapidly emerging. Her critics (who probably outnumbered her supporters) claim that her combination of neo-classical and monetarist economic policies led to widespread social distress and to the undermining of civil society and the dismantling of social capital and services. Her political philosophy and that of her advisors was, perhaps unfairly, encapsulated in the famous Thatcherite sound bite that there is no such thing as society only individuals (Brindley et al, 1989).

The impact of Thatcherism on the development of inequality in Britain cannot be underestimated. Thatcherism has become associated with a particular form of uneven development, epitomised by the north-south divide. Trade union reforms were crucial to her larger aim of revitalising British capitalism and she portrayed the unions as vehicles of shop steward power, which placed formidable obstacles in the way of industrial modernisation. The Thatcher government funded the southeast with massive capital, for example, Canary Wharf in the London Docklands. The stark north-south divide was created through a variety of measures such as 90% of industrial investment being

channelled into the south east and the removal of subsidies for manufacturing industry in the north which caused 40% of this industry to collapse. The growth of industry and incomes in the south was paralleled by a withdrawal of public services in the north and through the tax cuts of 1988. Mrs. Thatcher, in effect, undertook a major redistribution of income from the poor to the rich. The Thatcherite policies favoured the already buoyant south at the expense of the de-industrialising north. The prosperity of the south was distributed most unevenly among the population thus accelerating levels of inequality which led to severe tensions emerging in the social infrastructure of the regions. The increasing levels of deprivation stemming from the 1980s has led to renewed concern about poverty and social exclusion and the 'New' Labour Government has aligned itself to these issues through high profile debates and commentaries made by senior politicians. This is undoubtedly a strategic move as previous governments were renowned for denying the existence and severity of the problem in Britain.

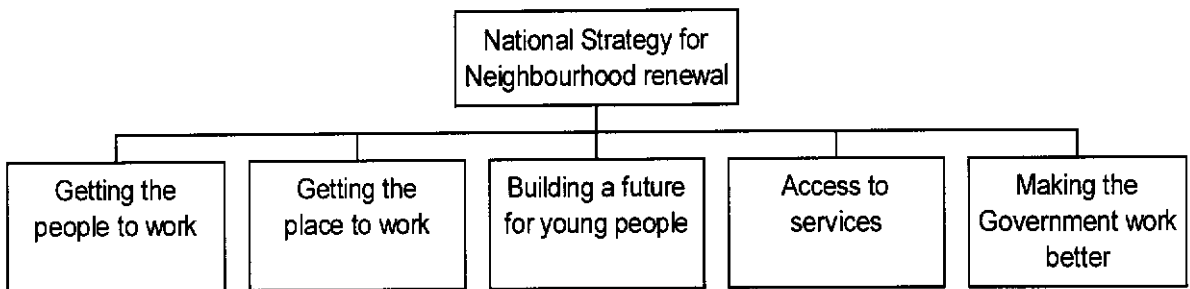
6.4 NATIONAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES TO TACKLE SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Since its election, the government has placed a premium on achieving national policy objectives to eradicate poverty and tackle social exclusion. These address many issues including unemployment, regeneration, education and youth, public health and crime and drugs. Successive governments have been criticised for failing to deal with the structural causes of decline, instead, working with the symptoms and placing too much emphasis on physical renewal. Perhaps one of the most important developments in terms of implementing a holistic approach to social exclusion in Britain has been the Area Regeneration Policy.

6.5 AREA REGENERATION POLICY

One of the crucial problems associated with area regeneration in the past has been the rigid structure of government institutions on a hierarchical, functional basis. The lack of a competent regeneration framework has caused problems in the management of policy on the ground and the new strategy has tackled these organisational weaknesses. The National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal is one such programme of area regeneration. There is a number of broad themes which underpin the whole initiative and provide a general overview of the strategy as shown in figure 3. The process is coordinated by the Social Exclusion Unit and it is hoped that the work carried out through the strategy will feed in to develop policy in this area.

Figure 3: Themes of the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal



These themes encapsulate a wide variety of issues and problems within deprived neighbourhoods and is a distinct move forward in the need to embrace a multi-faceted solution to social exclusion.

6.6 SINGLE REGENERATION BUDGET

To create the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB), 20 separate regeneration programmes were merged and a network of ten integrated Government Offices for the Region (GORs) was also created, each with a single Regional Director. Initially, the SRB was to be

loosely managed fund whereby applications from local partnerships and agencies were judged on a competitive basis. The initial criteria were set and final decisions were taken at the centre, regeneration projects were formulated by local partners, and the administration of the competitive process was devolved to the GORs (Hall and Mawson, 1999).

6.6.1 Problems with the SRB

Although the SRB acted as a useful catalyst in bringing together central and local agencies, there was initially a number of difficulties with the programme. These included:

- The absence of an overall strategic framework and a tendency for bidders to base their prospective regeneration activities on ‘perceived’ government priorities.
- A lack of a clear link between resource allocation and need.
- Some areas and local groups do not have the capacity to compete successfully.
- The limited accountability the partnerships have to their local constituency.
- The resources which were available to address the worst problems in the cities and deprived neighbourhoods were dispersed, lacking a ‘critical mass’ minimising the impact which could be made.

However, the SRB is now working well having surmounted the initial problems. The process has been improved and concentrates on areas of severe need, provides greater support to community development and involvement and links in more effectively with other initiatives such as the New Deal for Communities (NDCs) thus creating a multi-faceted and more flexible resource system for regeneration. The retention of the SRB reflects a recognition of the value of the partnership approach and the potential of a single

targeted budget to act as a mechanism which can facilitate the co-ordination of various agencies and programmes. The focus on a targeted budget has led to the establishment of clearer national and regional criteria and provision to make local partnerships more inclusive.

Placing the SRB within the remit of the Regional Development Agencies requires the RDA staff to have the expertise to promote partnerships and fund community organisations put in place to fulfil its role. To date, this expertise has not reached an adequate level (Hall and Mawson, 1999). The RDAs may also cause problems in the facilitation of a 'joined up' approach as functionally, the SRB process will be separated from the management of other programmes and activities (such as land use, planning, transport) which are significant to regeneration. These activities have remained within the GORs and thus it becomes more difficult to maintain a level of horizontal organisation.

The recent changes that have been made to the management of the SRB have begun to tackle some of its major weaknesses. However a virtuous circle of regeneration has yet to be set in motion, with improvements in jobs, crime, education, health and housing all reinforcing each other. It is hoped that with the altered structure of the SRB and the increased resources¹⁹, this could be achieved.

There is a variety of programmes encapsulated within the national Area Regeneration Policy designed to address issues of social exclusion. Structured interviews with professionals working in the field indicated that the most important consist of the following:

¹⁹ Resources of £1.3 million have been committed to go to support over 500 existing local regeneration schemes, with an additional £700 million to support new activity (Social Exclusion Unit, 1998)

6.7 SURE START

As specified in the broad themes of the neighbourhood strategy, building a future for young people is one of the priorities in the government's efforts to prevent social exclusion. If the improvements in the targeted neighbourhoods are to last, it is important to invest resources and support in the next generation. The Sure Start programme is an innovative strategy whose overall aim is to give the children a better start in life. Extra support in the form of better access to early education, health services, family support and advice on nurturing is provided to improve the life chances of younger children. This cross-departmental strategy is notable as it has shifted the focus away from dealing with the symptoms and towards prevention. With regard to funding, the Government has set aside £540 million (£452 million in England) over three years to deliver the programme and it is anticipated that by the end of 2002, there will be at least 250 local Sure Start programmes across England providing co-ordinated, high quality and accessible services available to children under four and their families in areas of need

From early summer 1999, the first local Sure Start programmes (trailblazers) were set up quite quickly in order to put the theory into practice and also to gather information which would be necessary to develop future programmes. It is hoped that key lessons can be learnt and best practice can be spread and maintained at each locality. The core services which are to be provided by Sure Start in the locally based programmes are set out below:

- The provision of services not already available in the area for example, parent information; parent support groups; books for babies; play facilities; childcare facilities.
- Subsidised crèche facilities for parents using Sure Start services, training or respite.

- Other support including advice and counselling or translation for people whose first language is not English.
- Provision of added value to existing services to address unmet local needs for example, additional health visitor sessions or additional early speech or language therapy sessions in a local early years centre.
- Family literacy sessions and outreach visits and support in the home for families.
- A Sure Start grant cannot be used to replace or make up for a reduction in existing services but can provide resources to expand them or to bring them into the Sure Start area.
- To ensure that parents get clear information about services available to them, building on existing information services and providing new facilities.
- The delivery of extra training for example, helping existing professionals extend their expertise to work across boundaries and meet Sure Start's needs.
- Helping new workers and volunteers provide the additional and expanded services in the Sure Start area to improve joint working and co-ordination between existing service providers (Sure Start, 1999).

Each area has varying problems and requires specific facilities and services to tackle these; therefore to ensure the flexibility of the programme the provision of additional services which respond to particular need is encouraged. The trailblazer approach is designed to speed up the implementation process of Sure Start across Britain.

In this way, a widespread strategy to bring together work and thinking on a variety of issues including health, education, regeneration and family support to help tackle these fundamental issues can be established in a coherent and lasting way.

6.8 EMPLOYMENT ZONES

Another aspect of area regeneration in England is the introduction of Employment Zones (EZs) throughout the country. This is a new approach to support the New Deal programme by providing extra help to people over 25 who have been unemployed for a year or eighteen months. The Employment Zones will be targeted at areas of particular disadvantage, as the persistence of high levels of long-term unemployment will become more acute as people become older. It is hoped that at least twelve zones will be functioning for two years from the year 2000 helping approximately 48,000 long-term unemployed individuals find and keep work.

6.8.1 Features of the Employment Zones

An innovative feature of the scheme is the personal job account which allows more flexibility. The personal job account will contain a subsistence element equivalent to the participants' net benefit entitlement.

The individual can then be given more control over resources attributable to them from a range of different sources including benefits and training funds. The participant then discusses particular activities to make use of the total resources in the personal job account with the EZ personal advisor. The account will ultimately be used to purchase what will help build up the employability of the individual. Funds will be made available to support up to six months activity through the personal job account, preceded by up to a three monthly qualifying period.

The involvement of local partnerships as vital in establishing this new framework has been highlighted. It is believed that these partnerships can provide a fresh approach to

tackling unemployment locally and can support the EZs in their desire to stay as flexible as possible and work in partnership. An important aspect set out in the proposals for the EZs is that potential zones were specifically asked to show maximum flexibility and innovation to meet individuals' needs. Zones therefore have substantial versatility in how they choose to meet agreed objectives.

The Government has been implementing a series of 'Zones' which also deal with new ways of working in education and health, as well as unemployment. Many of these zones are located in deprived areas and many zones also cover the same areas. This is seen as a move forward as it provides the opportunity to pull the programmes together into an over-arching strategy in order to achieve added benefits for these areas. It is hoped that, again, the local partnerships will play a pivotal role in building synergy between the different initiatives.

6.9 NEW DEAL FOR COMMUNITIES

This is one of the main new area regeneration programmes and was one of the first initiatives developed under the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal. A variety of agencies and departments has been involved in the development of the programme including the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, the Social Exclusion Unit and other Whitehall departments. It has received financial support of £800 million over three years which will provide the resources for the intense regeneration of a number of small neighbourhoods.

The initiative supports plans which are drawn up by areas providing a detailed scheme involving key actors representing the interests from a broad spectrum of the community ranging from local people, local authorities to business interests and public agencies.

The intensive local focus ideally will result in schemes to combat problems such as limited job prospects, high levels of crime, environmental degradation and the lack of co-ordination between the neighbourhood and public services. Areas are selected after a bidding process and detailed discussion and planning. To obtain funding, an area must provide a clear statement of:

- Problems in the area and changes required;
- How this change can be achieved, drawing on lessons learnt elsewhere;
- Who will carry out which roles; and
- Who will manage the programme at the local level?

The New Deal for Communities (NDC) initiative has already identified 17 pilot areas which were selected due to the severity of their problems. These 'pathfinder' programmes have been closely monitored and serve as showcases for more innovative solutions to improve deprived neighbourhoods.

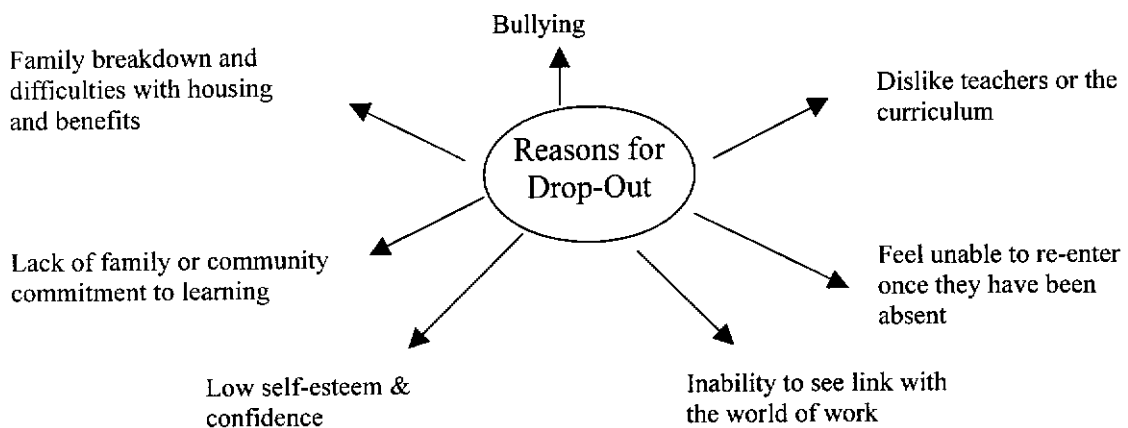
The NDC represents a significant shift in power to neighbourhood level and coupled with the flexible and local nature of the programme, it is hoped that a new method of management for regeneration has been adopted and can be tailored to the needs of every area which requires serious improvement (Social Exclusion Unit, 1998).

6.10 NEW START STRATEGY

This strategy is one of the primary elements of the Government's 'Investing in Young People Strategy' and is ultimately designed to increase the participation and motivation levels of 14-17 year-olds in England. New Start is led by the Department for Education and Employment (DEE) and is being overseen by an Advisory Group comprised of senior public, private and voluntary sector policy-makers and managers.

One of the main concerns regarding the prevention of social exclusion for young people is to prevent drop out from the system in the first place, and to encourage a return as quickly as possible when they do drop out. Figure four below illustrates some of the generally accepted reasons for drop out and also highlights the fact that, considering the range of reasons, only a multi-agency approach will prove to be successful.

Figure 4: General reasons for school dropout



Source: Adapted from text West et al, 1998

New Start has made provision to improve the uniformity and coordination of efforts to tackle discontent among young people and to make efforts to do this at the age of 14, if not earlier.

6.10.1 New Start Partnerships

A key part of the New Start programme has been the establishment of 17 local partnership projects to support the scheme. These partnerships bring together the Careers Service, Schools, Further Education (FE) colleges, Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs), Local authorities, the Youth Service and a number of voluntary service organisations. Having such partnerships in place will enable each area to properly evaluate the most effective methods to retain and attract back the young people of their area. Each member of the partnership will offer a different perspective on the problem, ensuring that only solutions which encompass every aspect will be put in place. It will also be up to the partnership to identify the scale and nature of the challenges in the area, the effectiveness of local learning and potential sources of funding to achieve local aims and objectives.

By employing the support of community and voluntary organisations, it is hoped that New Start will reduce rates of non-participation and innovative, more co-ordinated ways of working will emerge through the new approach.

6.11 LONDON

London has a reputation as being one of the world's most powerful financial, commercial and cultural centres. However since the early 1980s, London has been experiencing severe problems of inner city decline, homelessness and large scale social exclusion which has disillusioned many of its citizens and has forced policy makers into taking action for the new millennium.

6.12 GREATER LONDON COUNCIL (GLC)

London was one of the first cities to create a civic administration which was capable of co-ordinating a complex array of modern urban services which ranged from public transport to housing, from water to education and from parks to museums. Many believed that this authority was the most progressive metropolitan authority of its time. This management of the city survived until 1984 when the Thatcher government passed controversial legislation to abolish the elected Greater London Council (GLC) and the other metropolitan authorities and to replace them with bodies appointed by lower level authorities. Since this time, London has been the only European capital with no elected authority and therefore Londoners have had no elected representation and no direct say in the affairs of their city. Although this situation is changing now with the election of the mayor and Regional Assembly, many areas of London have suffered from a series of urban policies designed to empower the market rather than its citizens.

6.13 LONDON DOCKLANDS

From the early 1980s, the Conservative government, through a variety of legislation effectively excluded participatory planning involving the local community in favour of a market-led approach. As market driven development is profit orientated cheaper out-of-town residential development sites were chosen which led to the longer-term needs for public space and mixed function being overlooked and with it the chance to create sustainable neighbourhoods.

One of the clearest examples of this type of planning was the redevelopment of the docklands on the Isle of Dogs. Central government intervention removed control of the area's development from the local authorities and established in its place the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC). Statutory planning regulations were suspended and tax incentives were established to encourage development which, while leading to the regeneration of the area also resulted in the over-abundance of office space, a random mix of commercial development and areas of housing intermixed with clumps of offices. Consequently, instead of gaining a vibrant new, regenerated borough of mixed uses and classes, London acquired an area of commercial buildings lacking in civic quality in the judgment of Richard Rogers, Britain's most distinguished architect.

Due to this emphasis on office and commercial buildings the Isle of Dogs was hit very badly by the crash in the office market. Had there been a balance of offices, social amenities, homes and shops, it is probable that the area would have been less affected (Rodgers, 1997).

6.14 DEPRIVATION IN LONDON

In Britain, the gap between the rich and poor is the widest in Europe with the richest one per cent owning 18 per cent of the nation's wealth and this is a situation that presents substantial challenges to British society. Following the pattern of most industrialised cities, London's industries have departed, its docks have been abandoned and many of its neighbourhoods have become more deprived. Over the last thirty years, central London has lost approximately one third of its population and 20 per cent of its jobs, which is more than any other major capital in Europe. The inner ring of the city suffers from

severe problems of poverty and disadvantage and although London is one of the richest cities in the world, it has seven of the ten most deprived boroughs in the country, most of them in east London (Rodgers, 1997).

6.15 THE LONDON STUDY

In recent years there has been an increasing focus throughout Europe on renewing urban culture and improving the quality of urban life. These factors, coupled with the disturbing levels of deprivation and unemployment in London's inner city have led to one of the largest urban development research projects ever to be carried out in the context of EU regional policy.

The original purpose of this study is to establish London on the road to sustainable development and implement a strategic plan and targets for the long term i.e. the next twenty years. The two main themes which are focused on and underpin the study are *'the critical need for consensus and partnership within the policy-making framework and an acute awareness of the new generation of pressures facing the largest cities.'*

(Local Futures Group, 1998:35)

This is a unique study of sustainable regeneration which is hoped will offer a transferable model of this regeneration for other European cities.

6.15.1 Main aims of the London study

- To provide a transferable model of the urban economy that is set within a regional context.

- To provide a practical and feasible strategy for the development of London as a sustainable city by the year 2020, incorporating targets and benchmarks.
- To develop an action plan for London to match the strategic priorities for the capital with the most effective mechanisms for the funding and delivery of regeneration initiatives.
- To make recommendations to the UK government and European Commission concerning policy changes which would secure the most effective delivery of action

(Local Futures Group, 1998).

These strategic objectives and priorities for action have provided the impetus for a new approach to economic and social regeneration in an urban environment. The new institutional framework within which these changes will be taking place is also an innovative development.

6.16 GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

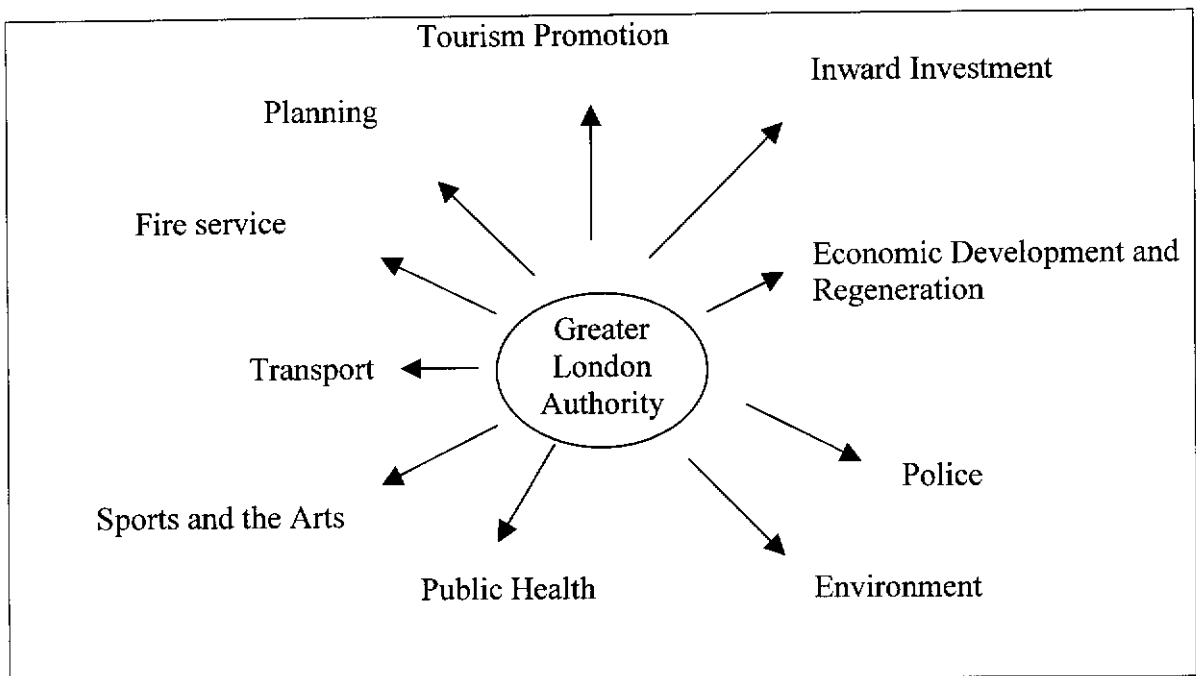
The Greater London Authority will be established to work with a range of executive bodies, including the London Development Agency (LDA)²⁰, and local partners to achieve the main objectives of the mayor's strategy for sustainable development. The London Development Agency will draw up the Economic and Regeneration Strategy which covers regeneration, innovation, skills and competitiveness. The LDA will be a partnership-based agency in terms of strategy and implementation and will be politically accountable to the mayor and the GLA. The GLA has a number of policy functions set out in figure five. Although the London mayor will act as the frontman for new strategies,

²⁰ The London Development Agency (LDA) will not formally be created until the year 2000, therefore in the interim, the government will work with the London Development Partnership (LDP).

partnerships and commitments, the GLA will provide the backing to implement the various plans.

For each of these functions and policy areas, detailed priorities for action have been set out and, perhaps more importantly targets for measuring the success of the new strategy over time have also been set out (Local Futures Group, 1998).

Figure 5: Functions of the Greater London Authority



Adapted from: The London Study, Local Futures Group, 1998

The citywide plan for London has been long awaited and the first five years of the strategy will be crucial to its overall implementation. The targets and indicators which have been identified in the ‘London Study’ will provide the means to measure the progress of the city on the path to sustainable development. Most relevant to this project are the indicators for social cohesion set out in table six which are considered on an equal basis as indicators of economic competitiveness and environmental sustainability.

Table 6: Basic Indicators of Social Performance

E.U.	OECD	Llewelyn-Davis	Local Futures Group Poll
Activity Rates	Youth unemployment	Job availability for residents	Long term unemployment
Long term unemployment	Long term unemployment	Job instability and low wage employment	% single parent household
Youth unemployment	University/non-university educated unemployment	Homelessness/sub-standard housing	Cultural/entertainment facilities and access
	Infant mortality rate	Failure to gain qualifications	Social housing provision
		Spatial concentration of deprivation (ghettos)	Participation in all levels of elections
		Unemployment, especially amongst key groups (ethnic minorities, single parents)	Criminality

Adapted from: The London Study, Local Futures Group. (1998)

6.17 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In the past, policies designed to further effective development of cities in Great Britain have often exacerbated problems of segregation and deprivation. Many critics of the Thatcher government attribute much of the social distress and inequality experienced in Britain in recent years to the monetarist economic policies implemented throughout the 1980s. The present government, in its resolution to tackling social exclusion, has introduced a wide variety of national programmes and policies which have a very clear focus on the ideal of holistic and social regeneration. Even where anti-poverty aims are not made explicit, all of the regeneration programmes have a discernable social dimension.

The majority of these programme have also ensured the involvement of local partnerships which have been identified as the key facilitating organisations which can build synergy

between different initiatives and agencies. This linkage can increase additionality and the overall effectiveness of the programme.

As outlined in this chapter, there are many central government-led urban programmes, however, one of the most important has been the Single Regeneration Budget which has acted as a major catalyst in creating a more integrated approach to economic and social regeneration. It has encouraged local authorities to incorporate aspects of anti-poverty into SRB bids and programmes.

Sure Start is an example of the increasing tendency for initiatives to look also at prevention rather than simply dealing with the symptoms of problems. This method of intervention may have more of an impact when, in the longer term, numbers of school drop-outs or young unemployed in a particular area are reduced.

Although, these programmes, e.g. New Start, highlight the commitment to the improvement of uniformity and co-ordination of efforts, integration between economic and social policy and planning is relatively limited. Increased strategic planning and the development of more long-term strategies for sustainable economic and social regeneration should be considered.

When considering regional policy, the city of London provides a significant example of large-scale social exclusion with severe inner city decline. London has been seriously affected by past market-orientated urban policies and the abolition of the GLC has led to an absence of real strategic planning for the city. Consequently, the London study being carried out is a vital turning point in mapping out a strategic, sustainable long term plan of action for the city. In turn, the elements brought out through the study, should be of

great significance to any agency, working within an area of disadvantage, with the commitment to implementing a long term strategy to reverse the cycle of decline.

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Chapter Seven

Case Studies – Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland

- 7.1 Dublin Inner City Partnership**
- 7.8 South Dublin URBAN Initiative**
- 7.16 North Dublin Development Coalition**
- 7.23 Brownlow Community Trust**

7.0 INTRODUCTION TO CASE STUDIES

Through analysis of the case studies and drawing from the earlier theoretical chapters, the objective of this chapter is to draw out some of the more specific as well as the wider themes which are associated with the concept of partnership and consultation in various anti-poverty programmes in Ireland. The evaluation of something as complex as urban policy has meant that an approach has to be taken which examines not just the outcomes in terms of the numbers of training places provided, jobs created and the number of urban renewal projects undertaken. One also has to consider the processes at national and local level that have encouraged partnership between various key players, the way resources are being accessed and distributed and the extent to which the capacity of local people to have an input into and / or manage projects has been developed.

The case studies, the detail of which is presented in appendices 10 to 18, are presented in a narrative form to clearly explore and explain various aspects of the projects. From detailed, structured interviews, attendance at related conferences and the examination of documentation produced by the organisations, a composite picture is drawn up and from this comparisons and recommendations are made to ensure that a pragmatic and informed response can be made to new opportunities as they arise.

7.1 DUBLIN INNER CITY PARTNERSHIP (DICP)

Partnerships are generally created through a catalytic process of either a top-down or bottom-up process, arising through the mobilisation of different interests in response to a combination of structural factors, government initiatives and local circumstances. Within Ireland, the top-down response was an innovative experiment with social partnership to

mitigate the ingrained problems of stagnation, rising taxes and debt and unemployment. Following the first initiative, the Programme for National Recovery (PNR) 1987-1990, came the Programme for Economic and Social Progress (PESP) 1990-1993, under which partnership companies were established, on a pilot basis, to design and implement a more co-ordinated, multi-dimensional approach to social exclusion. The Dublin Inner City Partnership (DICP) was one such partnership created in 1991 as one of twelve pilot area-based partnerships²¹ which took the form of independent corporations under Irish company law. In 1993, the government launched the National Development Plan within which was an outline of the government's commitment to local development in recognition of the role which local initiatives play in bringing about local, economic, social and environmental development. The details of this commitment were set out in the Operational Programme for Local Urban and Rural Development (OPLURD) which was published and launched in early 1994. Under this programme three components of local development were outlined:

- local enterprise programmes incorporating city and county enterprise boards
- integrated developments in disadvantaged areas (through local development partnership companies)
- urban and village renewal.

It was the second of these three components which allowed for 26 additional independent local partnership companies to be set up and the original twelve to be continued on. Under the PESP, the area-based initiative was perceived as a 'community response' with 'local communities as the primary movers' (Craig, 1994).

Sabel, (1996) saw the overall task of these partnerships as:

²¹ This was later extended to thirty-eight

'to reconsider the problems of un- and under employment within their home jurisdictions and devise effective responses to them that the central government alone could not discover, but to which it may refer in reforming its own administrative structure and, above all, in improving the connection between these structures and local communities.'
(1996:9)

These partnerships were the core element in the overall aim to extend social partnership to the local level and from this, through diverse initiatives and programmes, establish a bottom-up approach within the local context of development.

7.2 DICP AREA

As mentioned previously, all the companies were set up in designated geographic areas of social and economic disadvantage to operate programmes for tackling long-term unemployment and social exclusion. The choice of areas which was made by the government, was based on an assessment of areas involving objective criteria and measurement drawn from local census population figures, feasible operational boundaries and viability in terms of size and economic base. Area sizes in relation to population range from 13,000 to 100,000 people.

The DICP area encompasses the core area of the capital immediately north and south of the river Liffey. It has a residential population of approximately 97,000 living in several identifiable communities such as the Liberties, Smithfield, Ballybough and Stoneybatter. These areas are generally characterised by high unemployment, high welfare dependency, drug abuse and poor housing conditions.

The Inner City Organisation Network (ICON) is the longest community network in existence and is comprised of over eighty different organisations. It is located in the Railway street / Ballybough area and has focused on a wide variety of issues which include developing the anti-drugs campaign, forming and maintaining community and tenants groups and introducing the Social Economy Jobs Initiative in 1996.

The South West Inner City Network (SWICN) is the area representative group for the Liberties and Pimlico area and was a relatively new organisation in 1996. This organisation represents over 30 community and voluntary organisations in the south west inner city. The network facilitated the formation of the local drugs task force for the south inner city and has also been involved in developing a youth service for the area and working groups comprised of member organisations.

Both the North West and South East Inner City Networks have experienced problems in forming a functional network organisation and are therefore at different stages of development. The North West Inner City Network (NWICN) is one of the more recently established networks uniting a core of local groups. A full time co-ordinator was employed in May 1997 and this has been a catalyst for the progress of this network. An Action Plan was produced in 1998 and the main focus of the organisation has been on estate management training and maintaining links with the local drugs task force. The South East Network incorporates two distinct communities in the southeast quadrant. It represents two existing networks, the Pearse Area Network Group (PANG) and the Ringsend and Irishtown Network Group (RING). The South East Network is developing local structures and network activity.

7.2.1 Management structure of the DICP

'The DICP is community driven, Government funded, supported by local business and is managed by a board drawn from these three sectors.' (DICP, 1996:10)

Perhaps the most notable aspect of the management structure of the Partnership is that the board, which consists of 20 representatives, is brought together from the community, employer, trade union and statutory sectors to form a tripartite structure. In this way, the DICP has come to represent a new form of public-private partnership to act as the institutional vehicle to impart change in the area of coverage. The size of the inner city area and the scale of the problems within it make it impractical for the Partnership itself to directly implement the agreed measures (DICP, 1996). Instead, this independent company plays the role of facilitator which provides a professional response through key agencies operating at a local level.

The management expertise of the board is supported by the core staff of the DICP and a central staff of six workers is employed. Each of these workers specialises in various development areas including economic, community, education and organisation. Affiliated to the core staff of the Partnership is a policy formation and research committee which is drawn from Partnership members, academics and individual local activists.

Four general strategies have been agreed which underpin the Action plan and originated from the four local area action plans for each of the city quadrants. Each of the strategies comprises a series of individual measures which, in most cases, are based on successful projects which were implemented during the pilot phase of the Partnership (DICP, 1996). There are over forty community-based organisations directly participating in the

Partnership and various other local initiatives are involved at different levels. This locally based infrastructure delivers the strategies of the Partnership and by incorporating the services of a wide range of organisations, the objective is to ensure that the response is conducive to the needs of the unemployed and that the response can be flexible and innovative.

The organisation has been open to external evaluation from various agencies including the EU and the OECD at different intervals. Through the research and development strategy group, internal monitoring and evaluation is carried out to ensure that the operational objectives of the Action Plan are met. The schematic representation of the management structure appears quite complex, however, this is due to the fact that there are numerous agencies involved in the implementation of the strategies and there is a wide variety of projects within each strategy. The most notable part of the management is the board which co-ordinates the responses within a tripartite, multi-agency structure, a novel approach which has been cited as a transferable example of best practice by Sabel (1996).

7.3 MAIN FEATURES OF THE DICP

Two of the main features of the DICP, and indeed the other area-based partnerships, are that, firstly, it is a targeted programme not solely in terms of a geographical area but also for specific sub groups of people who are identified as socially excluded or at risk of becoming so.

Target groups identified in the DICP Strategic Plan consist of:

- long term unemployed

- single parent families
- early school leavers
- young unemployed
- travellers
- women.

The second main feature is that the structures set up to manage this programme consist of representatives from community, statutory agencies and social partners (employers and trade unions). It was felt that, from the beginning, to co-ordinate the development of the partnership, a commitment from all interests in the area should be secured as the resources and roles required were beyond the scope of any single group acting alone. In this way, by developing intersectoral consensus, the attributes of a particular locality can be promoted and marketed to attract the inward investor by improved access to communications, housing and environmental quality, thus improving the overall quality of life of the residents.

In specific terms the DICP is focused on countering disadvantage through a set of community-led, integrated actions with the overall objectives of:

- creating local enterprise and employment
- supporting the efforts of the long term unemployed and socially excluded communities to gain employment
- to improve the environment and enhance the quality of life for the residents in the inner city

- to create new training, education and work experience opportunities for the long term unemployed
- to provide additional educational supports at both primary and secondary level to those at risk from early school leaving
- to build community cohesion and participation.

See appendix 5 for further information on Dublin Inner City Partnership.

7.4 ASSESSMENT OF DICP

* The DICP consists of community and statutory agencies and social partners (employers and trade unions) thus comprising a local development partnership which, by its very existence, highlights the weaknesses of local government for tackling social exclusion.

* The Partnership was established to act as an advocate for the long-term unemployed in a way that was not being done by state organisations such as FAS and the IDA. In this way it has helped keep the focus on the issues relevant to this group and other target groups.

* The formation of the DICP as an inner city development organisation has made it easier to draw down funds for the relevant concerns. The organisation co-ordinates the variety of groups involved in projects within the target area and can manipulate funds and projects to maximise the amount of resources that can be accessed.

* The DICP has been extremely useful in encouraging communities to look beyond their own boundaries in solving the social problems prevalent in their area. The employment of network co-ordinators across the city has helped these communities break down some of the isolation and by bringing the varying organisations together has increased the strength of this sector.

* Despite the fact that there are now better mechanisms in place within which the community sector can negotiate, it is felt that they are still quite inadequate. (Rafferty, M. 1999) It has been suggested that the community sector has still not been accepted as a legitimate pillar and member of, not only, the national partnership but also the board of the Partnership. This reluctance on the part of some agencies to accept that the community sector has a unique contribution to make subsequently leads to a sense of disillusionment and frustration with the process.

* Inner city Dublin has been target area for many different structures, organisations and initiatives over the years. This has ultimately led to a large and complex community infrastructure across the city which is capable of assisting and facilitating initiatives in a way that they take root in the inner city over the longer term. The DICP, however, has become something of an institution in that it is now perceived as largely a mechanism for funding and managing the community sector. Therefore the full capacity of this community structure to enhance the quality of life in the target areas is not being reached. This is an issue that needs to be researched and addressed.

* The establishment of Strategic Policy Committees has allowed for a greater link between the Partnerships and the Local Authorities. Possibly the greatest flaw of the original structure of the DICP was the fact that it had no statutory authority and therefore the achievements of the various initiatives were limited. The programmes which were implemented, although impacting on certain target groups and areas, are in some ways ineffective if the national policies do not address the problems adequately. The Partnership could not command the statutory agencies to alter their policies although it

has succeeded in making statutory institutions, for example FAS, more amenable to the needs of the long-term unemployed.

* Although moving the partnerships into local authority control has been viewed as a negative move, it may provide the stimulus for the local authorities to change. The notable aspect in this change is that the local authorities already have a statutory obligation to work on projects and tasks that do not come into the remit of other organisations. Therefore, this statutory authority merged with the partnership ethos would be extremely valuable in that the best elements of both structures would be combined.

* Sabel (1996) stated that partnerships in areas that are experiencing similar problems are not working together on the level that they should be and from the structured interviews undertaken by the author this has also been a point of concern. To some degree, each partnership has become quite territorial and insular and is almost in competition with other area-based partnerships in attracting investment and drawing down funds. Although some competition between areas can be beneficial, it can also be detrimental particularly when the areas are disadvantaged. It is vital that the DICP concentrates some of its efforts on maximising the free flow of innovative ideas, best practice and general successes and failures among the many partnership companies.

* The question mark over E.U. funding in the partnerships' lifetime has restricted the recruitment of staff to short term contracts. This has led to an overall sense of job insecurity within the DICP which undoubtedly lowers morale; it is extremely difficult to give total commitment to a job when there is little or no job security.

* Much of the focus is lost due to the representation on various boards that are relevant to the partnership. One example quoted in an interview is of a member of staff sitting on

seven different boards. It is difficult to be split in so many ways and still retain focus and thus the capacity for effective engagement is lessened.

* The promising beginnings of the DICP seem to have amounted to little more than that. This organisation was a novel form of public-private partnership the legitimacy of which is now under threat. The DICP has 'lost teeth and lost its way' (Rafferty, 1999).

* The DICP has facilitated the creation of a wide range of innovative, experimental programmes some of which have been successful, some not. The threat persists though, that this is all the Partnership can amount to if the correct structure is not put into place to sustain the institution in the long term. The Strategic Policy Committees are one way of doing this and now that the 'democratic deficit' has been addressed, the Partnership may be accepted as a legitimate authority to direct funds from state agencies for the benefit of their own programmes.

* The DICP over the years has lost much of the confidence of the community networks e.g ICON and this has caused the group to divorce itself from the work of the Partnership company when they should be working along side one another. The new era of the Partnership should begin with a stable foundation and structure without the precariousness of an E.U. imposed life-span (although it has been suggested that the Partnerships may have lost their way and meandered if this life-span did not exist). Some key actors believe that the impetus of the organisation should not be diluted by the involvement of the local authorities. However, the rationale for the enlargement of the role of local authorities to encompass the activities heretofore undertaken by the partnership companies, is to add status and a democratic legitimacy to such activities.

* The Partnership is limited in the difference it can make with the strategy simply focusing on the target area. It is useful to consider the input which could be made by the more affluent areas which coexist alongside the catchment areas of the Partnership and integrate them as much as possible into any action plan for the area.

* The DICP has been criticised for avoiding the issues of substance abuse, the disabled and homelessness. Although these have been mentioned in the strategic plan, it has been suggested that this was simply to pay lip service as the limited resources which were made available has resulted in a variety of small measures to tackle these issues being implemented. It is important to address these problems effectively as they are integral to the improvement of the target area.

* The Partnerships have received much criticism from the voluntary sector as well as from those involved in the political process. These partnerships receive total financial assistance to carry out a role that has been ongoing within the voluntary sector before many of the partnerships came into existence. It has been a bone of contention for many years for the voluntary sector that they should be given more recognition for the work they do as many feel that this sector is, in many ways, more representative of the more marginalised groups than are the partnerships.

7.5 DICP SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The assessment highlights the continuing problems the DICP has in creating effective interaction between community networks, local residents and the partnership body. The partnership seems to have paid much lip service to improving the interface between these groups, however, it seems there has been little improvement in the overall working

relationship. This area based partnership is experiencing many of the problems associated with spatial interventions at the local level including local resentment, the limited impact of projects, as the problems are not necessarily local in origin, and the failure to address social renewal as effectively as physical renewal. It is important to note, however, the significance of the DICP (since 1991) in bringing a fresh approach to local development to the inner city. Although fraught with problems and pressures, there have been many positive outcomes from a number of initiatives e.g. Inner City Employment Service (ICES) and Inner City Enterprise (ICE), which should not be overlooked. It is necessary, at this point for the DICP to reinvent itself, merge successfully with the Local Authority and gain the support of the community sector.

7.6 SOUTH DUBLIN URBAN INITIATIVE

7.6.1 The European context of URBAN

URBAN is a European-wide programme aimed at improving areas within cities that are experiencing multiple problems associated with lack of economic opportunities such as poor quality environments, a lack of facilities and an acute need for general social and economic revitalisation. The initiative aims to tackle such problems in an integrated way and act as a catalyst in stimulating lasting improvement through supporting business creation, improving infrastructure and the physical environment, providing customised training and implementing actions for equality of opportunities and social amenities (URBAN Action Plan, 1997).

The URBAN Initiative was set up in 1989 at a time when urban issues were steadily moving up the E.U. agenda. The first phase addressed a wide variety of urban problems

through a multi-dimensional approach aimed at maximising physical impact and subsequently creating a knock-on effect in terms of public-private investment. During the period 1990-1996, a total of 33 URBAN pilot projects were initiated and implemented in 11 Member states of the E.U.

7.7 ORIGINS OF THE SOUTH DUBLIN URBAN INITIATIVE

This particular URBAN project has experienced slow progress on project delivery and has taken time to set up the management structure and develop the thematic approach of the co-ordination groups. Following a formal consultation process and the publication of the Operational Programme for URBAN, the URBAN Monitoring committee approved the south Dublin strategy set out in the Action Plan and following this staff were recruited and implementation structures set up. Using the information gathered during the consultation process and the guidelines specified in the OP for URBAN, the Action Plan was submitted to the Department of the Taoiseach by the end of September 1997, three years after the initial submissions.

The URBAN programme itself is intended to be a dynamic scheme from which lessons learned would be transferable and have a noticeable impact on urban management policy makers for the future and in this respect is unique (Mid term review, 1998).

7.7.1 South Dublin URBAN area

Eligible areas for the URBAN Initiative generally include a number of urban areas within cities or urban agglomerations that reach a population of more than 100,000. In Ireland, three projects are currently being funded and are situated in north Cork, south Dublin and

north Dublin. These areas and indeed most of the target areas within the URBAN Initiative are characterised as neighbourhoods that are geographically distinct, identifiable by high levels of unemployment, decayed urban fabric, bad housing conditions and a lack of social amenities.

The case study area encompasses the Tallaght / Clondalkin areas incorporating approximately twelve separate neighbourhoods. This area formed part of that covered by the 1967 'Advisory Plan and Report on the Dublin Region' developed by Myles Wright. This later formed the basis of the Dublin County Development Plan of 1972 which proposed the development of three major new towns to the West of Dublin city which were Tallaght, Lucan / Clondalkin and Blanchardstown.

The underlying concept behind the Development Plan was that these new areas would become self-sufficient satellite towns with a population of 100,000 in low-density housing. The presumption was made that the incoming population would have both employment and have independent means of transport. However, the premise on which the towns were designed was not realised. As multi-tenanted residences in the inner city were demolished to alleviate the process of urban decay, many of the flat dwellers were moved out to these 'new towns'. This led simply to the multi-layered problems associated with city centre housing localities being exported to another housing area and becoming somewhat more intensified as the rapid expansion of population was not accompanied by the required social, economic, physical and cultural infrastructure that would support such a population. To highlight the lack of provision of recreational facilities in the Development Plan, large tracts of open space were left to make the area visually appealing. Instead, this simply added to the feeling of isolation and abandonment with

many children preferring to indulge in various forms of anti-social behaviour on these ‘visually appealing’ tracts of open space. The areas also suffered as no agency was mandated with the necessary power to deal with the various needs of the new towns (URBAN Action Plan, 1997).

7.8 CONSULTATION

The consultation process for URBAN was a comprehensive exercise and took place in four stages. Much time, resources and effort were invested in getting this aspect of the plan right as it was perceived to be one of the unique features of the URBAN programme in South Dublin.

The four stages of the consultation process were:

(1) Initial area based meetings

(2) Thematic meetings

(3) Workshops

(4) Strategic workshops

(1) The initial round of the community consultation strategically took place in different parts of West Tallaght and Clondalkin. This was to ensure that the local people from the various neighbourhoods could be firstly informed about the URBAN programme and could then inform the Steering Group on the current activities of community groups and the most pressing needs locally which linked in with the URBAN development themes. The ultimate objective of these meetings was to find a degree of consensus on how these should be tackled (Nexus, 1996).

(2) In designing the second round of community meetings, it was decided that the most effective follow-up was to bring all the groups together again to agree proposals under five URBAN thematic headings and to build consensus on the basic development objective of the projects.

The four themes on which the meetings were based can be summarised as follows:

- Facilitation and promotion of new local economic activities
- Development and provision of training and educational activities and facilities
- Community, cultural, social, health and sporting infrastructures and activities
- Estate management, energy conservation and environment upgrading (Action Plan, 1997).

(3) The third stage of consultation was a workshop and included representatives from a wide range of statutory agencies. The aim of this meeting was to provide participants with information on the URBAN programme and the consultation process which was taking place. It also provided these service providers with the opportunity to feed in their ideas and possible actions under URBAN. A number of the agencies were contracted to obtain information on their existing plans for the URBAN target area. This was to highlight gaps in current service provision, to ensure that no overlap occurred and that URBAN could complement existing actions (Nexus, 1996).

(4) The final stage in the process, prior to the finalisation of the Action Plan, was a strategic workshop which involved representatives from the community, voluntary and statutory sectors. The purpose of this meeting was an overall review of the results of the

whole consultation process and consideration of how the URBAN programme could be implemented in a way that would support the outcomes of the consultation process.

7.8.1 Outcomes of the consultation process

Throughout the duration of the consultation process, much consensus emerged from the community and statutory sector on the guiding principles which should provide the foundation for the URBAN programme in Tallaght and Clondalkin. (Appendix 6) The Nexus report on the process (Nexus, 1996) also noted the positive role taken by the statutory agencies which supported the principles which emerged from the first stage of the community consultation meetings and added further suggestions which were accepted and endorsed by the community groups in later workshops.

In considering the degree of consensus that was reached, it was felt that this occurred mainly because of the extent and intensity of the consultation process itself. The South Dublin URBAN group pride themselves on this achievement and are committed to maintaining the direction of URBAN that was generally agreed upon through consultation. In order to do this it was felt that the process of consultation should be carried on through to the implementation stage, albeit on a smaller scale due to the already large commitments of community groups in the area. See appendix 7 for further information on the South Dublin URBAN Initiative.

7.9 ASSESSMENT

* In terms of the outcomes of projects, it is important to look at the qualitative impact of activities on the target groups instead of evaluating the success of projects in terms of cost. This is an aspect of evaluation which was identified as lacking in the Mid term

review (June, 1998) and has seemed not to have improved. Much of the emphasis of the URBAN initiative is primarily to affect qualitative change in the lives of individuals and groups resident in particular areas. Therefore, when viewed from a purely quantitative perspective, the impacts appear quite limited. Despite the obvious limitations of this type of analysis, the main focus, in terms of performance indicators, has been on quantitative forms of evaluation. Many of the projects encompassed within the URBAN initiative are geared towards making a qualitative impact and the necessary evaluation must be prioritised in order to learn from the projects and measure the impact and progress made. It is vital that each project is carefully assessed with the appropriate measures and indicators and that the importance of qualitative evaluation is also appreciated.

* Due to the short duration of the URBAN initiative, many of the Community Infrastructure measures have had unrealistic time frames allocated to some of the building projects. The result has been that progress across the board is extremely varied with most of the projects finally coming to fruition in late 1999. Within the south Dublin URBAN staff it was felt that many of these delays were unavoidable due to unforeseen costs with some setbacks due to the time spent on the extensive consultation process with the local community. In this respect, it is felt that the ultimate result will be more sustainable and will more strongly reflect the needs of the community that will be using the facility. Although, project co-ordinators cannot anticipate every problem, it is important to allow some leeway and not simply speed forward with projects simply to meet a completion date.

* When considering the methods of consultation employed in south Dublin URBAN, there have been many examples of success in various projects e.g. Jobstown. A

significant point raised in the structured interviews was the large percentage of local people who did not become involved and also the high fall out rate among those who did participate. In addressing this problem, it would be useful to make it as easy as possible for those who wish to attend by providing people with childcare and travel costs. It is also important to allocate sufficient resources to publicise these community meetings in a way that disseminates through to the target group across a wide geographical area.

It seems a fairly obvious statement to make but consultation must be a two-way process. Although URBAN has made inroads into encouraging the Local Authority to adopt new ways of working with the local communities, the overall result could be limited. The effectiveness of the consultation process has been very much dependent on individual staff members within the Local Authority and due to the turnover and rotation of staff within statutory agencies, much of the progress can be lost at any point. Innovative processes should be adopted as policy by the Local Authorities to ensure that a structured procedure is put in place which staff members must abide by. (Mid Term Review, 1998)

* The level of innovation within the URBAN initiative is quite difficult to measure. Although new practices have been implemented at a local level and have had quite a positive impact, it is hard to see this innovation in a wider context. There should be particular attention paid to the innovative participatory mechanisms that have been put in place and there should be a renewed effort to look for new ways of tackling urban disadvantage in south Dublin.

* One key objective of the URBAN programme was to develop new models of urban governance. The area-based partnerships and the URBAN initiative have, to some extent, filled a vacuum within a weak system of local government. However, it has been pointed

out that these programmes cannot be substitutes for permanent structures that can be established within the local authority to ensure continuity and coherence. It is important that these Local Authorities take on the lessons learned through URBAN and the area based partnerships and integrate these lessons into their structures to ensure that the knowledge gained is sustainable post 1999. It has become evident that there are tensions between Local Authorities and area-based partnerships regarding representative democracy and participative democracy, as elected representatives feel that there is a distinct democratic deficit within such programmes. It is important that the elected representatives on the Steering Group are fully informed and understand the function, role and objectives of URBAN in order to deal with such tensions and to ensure that the empowerment of the local residents can complement representative democracy instead of conflicting with it. A system must also be put in place to disseminate URBAN best practice so that *all* Local Authorities can benefit from knowledge gained, not just the target area.

* Another key objective of URBAN was to ensure that a process was set in place which would continue. This objective was also reiterated by the community during the initial consultation process in that there was opposition to projects which might be sustained only for the lifetime of the URBAN programme and then disappear. Sustainability was seen as important in terms of building future capacity and future enthusiasm within the community. These views emphasise the need for successful capacity building, not only within the community but also within the Local Authorities and area-based partnerships. If these stakeholders are appropriately trained to effectively deal with the target communities, then a system of structured learning can develop that is mutually beneficial.

* Where infrastructural projects have been completed, it is vital to get the target group on board in order to establish a sense of pride and community ownership towards the new development. This may subsequently curb the level of vandalism and neglect which could result (O'Shea, 1999). In building projects where there has been no training or capacity training made available, there has been evidence that instances of vandalism and graffiti are higher. The most important actors in ensuring the sustainability of URBAN are undoubtedly the Local Authorities. The involvement of Dublin Corporation in some of the projects, e.g. Darndale Village Centre, is an important step forward in ensuring long-term viability of the URBAN experience. An important way of doing this is for management boards to be made up of the relevant stakeholders, such as the relevant community groups, the Local Authorities and representatives of area-based partnerships as well as other agencies (Mid Term review, 1998). It is important that all of the projects address the objective of sustainability in some way to preserve the ethos and legacy of URBAN post-1999.

* In terms of the visibility of the URBAN programme, the rationale fuelling this objective was that there was a particular need to initiate improvements to the physical and community environment. The offices in south Dublin were specifically chosen in order to maximise accessibility by providing good meeting facilities and having a high street location. However, visibility in terms of individual measures is very much dependent on the type of project being undertaken. It is important that all projects attain the maximum publicity by making this a priority within the overall plan for the individual action.

* Transnational networks are seen as an important way of disseminating and gathering information throughout the European URBAN network. It is not surprising that

considering the difficulties experienced with the various new initiatives, the focus on promoting transnational linkages has been limited. South Dublin URBAN has well developed links to Derry (Northern Ireland), Amsterdam (Holland) and Bristol (Britain). The exchanges have involved conferences and study visits with a particular focus on community business initiatives and the development of the social economy. It is very important to place the transnational element at the heart of the URBAN programme and to have some focus on this objective despite whatever start-up problems may preoccupy the URBAN staff. It is important that steps are taken at a higher level on the part of the Commission to minimise the barriers which are in the way to achieving a high level of information pooling and transnational linkages. The value of in depth evaluation of projects is particularly useful for the exchanges, as it is very important to know the strengths and weaknesses of projects thus being confident on what information to impart.

* The recruitment of a community architect to work with the community planner was a significant step for the South Dublin URBAN initiative. This made the architect an employed member of the URBAN staff and thus allowed for more time to be made available to the local community during the consultation process. This was not an option previously due to the time constraints on the Local Authority architect. The decision to place the URBAN architect in the local authority offices was a conscious one made by the URBAN staff as it was felt that more resources would be available there and it would involve the local authority in projects. However, with hindsight, the decision has not worked out as anticipated as the architect has become absorbed by the local authority and influenced in a way that would not have taken place had the architect been placed in the

URBAN office. The benefit of hindsight offers the chance to learn lessons and use this knowledge for future programmes and projects.

* One of the limiting factors within the URBAN programme is the life span of the initiative which places time constraints on all the projects. The Action Plan spanned from 1997-1999 and the aims and objectives for the area, particularly for infrastructure were quite unrealistic. URBAN has not simply disappeared at the end of 1999 and funds are still being drawn down (although it is clear that these will be significantly less than 1997/8/9) to realise all the original objectives of the Action Plan and to phase out the URBAN initiative on a gradual basis.

7.10 SOUTH DUBLIN URBAN INITIATIVE: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The South Dublin URBAN initiative has been particularly successful in the levels of consultation it has encouraged and although some of the projects, particularly the community infrastructure ones, have experienced delays, the overall advantages outweigh the disadvantages thus contributing to the overall sustainability of the particular project. The Local Authorities, facilitated by URBAN, have learnt a great deal in terms of public consultation and about the local communities they represent; it is vital that this momentum is not lost through the rotation of staff within the local authority or the completion of the URBAN initiative. There is also considerable potential which has not been exploited in terms of building up European networks of communication and advancing the capacity for improvement of methods of local urban governance within the programme.

South Dublin URBAN is a relatively small programme in comparison to others such as the area-based partnerships. However, the initiative has tapped into areas such as creating new models of urban governance, mainstreaming and consultation which were not the priority of other programmes. This programme has facilitated the input of more Structural Funding into the south Dublin area and due to the focus of improvement on the physical surroundings, it has led to more infrastructural and estate environmental plans. The overall impact URBAN can make is quite limited as this is one of the smaller initiatives. However, the programmes have managed to identify and highlight gaps in service provision and problems between the local structures and the local authorities in the target areas. Even if the experience of URBAN is forgotten, it has left behind an infrastructural imprint on the area and perhaps more importantly it has unlocked the potential of the local people and has empowered them in a way which has not been attempted before. This will be the legacy of South Dublin URBAN.

7.11 NORDUBCO

7.11.1 Introduction

North Dublin is an area which reflects a complex mix of socio-economic circumstances ranging from relatively affluent districts to areas with the highest levels of unemployment and social deprivation in the country (Northside Partnership, 1995). While many parts of the area have experienced high-class industrial development, infrastructural improvement and the development of a high level of quality urban services, there is a stark paradox whereby the improved national economy has by-passed those areas where the most severe social deprivation can be found. The area has seen considerable infrastructural

development taking place with both the opening up the M1 to the airport and the M50. This has consequently enhanced the development potential of north Dublin in terms of job creation and the substantial areas for amenity and recreational use. However even with these distinct advantages certain parts remain severely disadvantaged.

7.12 ORIGINS OF NORDUBCO

North Dublin Development Coalition (Nordubco) was set up in late 1996 by the Ballymun Partnership, Finglas/Cabra Partnership, Dublin City University, Dublin Corporation and Fingal County Council to advance the economic and social development of the north Dublin region. Nordubco arches over these organisations and brings them together to deal with issues in north Dublin on a broader scale than most other development agencies have done in the past. In this way, Nordubco is not restricted to working on a micro level in a certain locality and can therefore retain a degree of perspective which can often be lost when constrained to focus on a smaller scale. This coalition is an original alliance that has been accepted, in many ways, more readily than the area based partnerships. The ethos fuelling the organisation is embodied in the overall aim:

'to create a positive vision for the community and working life in the north Dublin region which will embrace all of its inhabitants and ensure that the region plays a key role in the development of greater Dublin' (Nordubco, 1999:1).

Nordubco has spent much of the time since its inception developing networks, securing funding, staging conferences and gathering information. This work has provided the foundation for Nordubco's main publication, 'Towards a vision for North Dublin' which

was intended to create discussion and focus on resolving the serious structural problems that exist in this region.

7.13 NORDUBCO AREA

The North Dublin Development Coalition (Nordubco) is concerned with north Dublin as an entire region extending from the city centre as far as Balbriggan and out to Blanchardstown. The catchment areas of the three partnerships are also incorporated which include areas with extremely high levels of unemployment and social deprivation. By adopting such an extensive area as the focus for Nordubco, it is felt that a more holistic solution can be implemented.

Within this target area, the core of the deprivation has been shown to lie adjacent to areas which have been developed, or are beginning to develop at a rapid rate (Nordubco, 1999). The north Dublin region as a whole exhibits huge potential strengths and opportunities for the future and the benefits of the airport and the M50 hinterlands are vital in that they can be utilised to enhance a regional growth dynamic which could subsequently improve areas of deprivation.

The primary remit of the partnerships and other development agencies such as Ballymun Regeneration Ltd. is to focus on particular localities experiencing socio-economic deprivation. However, the structure of Nordubco is such that it is in a unique position to provide an overview of the area and the developments both taking place and pending and in this way can create discussion on the larger scale problems affecting north Dublin. Although, Nordubco is, in essence, a development agency it has managed to retain a definite strategic presence. This has been due to the input and participation of the wide

variety of partnership bodies and organisations working in the area who provide information on the needs of those residing in specific localities within the Nordubco area.

7.14 MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE OF NORDUBCO

Nordubco is incorporated as a company limited by guarantee with no share capital.

There are three area partnerships, Dublin Corporation and Fingal County Council involved in the company and each of these founding organisations is represented on the board. It seeks to encompass as many relevant institutions as possible that can have some input into the improvement of the region. This includes senior people from business, the community sector, politics, the civil service, academia, local government, religious bodies, the media, state and semi-state institutions and other local organisations. See appendix 8 for further information on Nordubco.

7.15 ASSESSMENT

* This organisation brings together a number of key agencies which have previously remained independent of one another. The make-up of Nordubco is unique in that it not only has the co-operation of the area-based partnerships but it also has significant input from Dublin Corporation and Fingal County Council. This level of involvement from these particular representatives is notable as it facilitates the development of a range of ideas on a wide variety of issues for a larger catchment area. Nordubco is concerned with north Dublin as a sub-region and by dealing with the bigger picture, a multi-dimensional approach can be implemented and co-ordinated on a different level.

* As an independent company, Nordubco has experienced significant funding problems which are partly due to the lack of funding from Europe. The company did not qualify for funding as the URBAN programme for north Dublin was already being financed.

* The lack of any significant funding from Europe does result in Nordubco having a less than secure resource base however, investment obtained from the private sector allows the organisation more lee-way. As there are no direct financial ties to European funding organisations such as the ESF or ERDF, Nordubco is not obliged to adhere to the specific guidelines of these agencies, does not have to draw down funds and is not subject to evaluation from the funding agencies.

* Nordubco has been accepted positively by various bodies such as the Chamber of Commerce as a coalition which can have a clear impact on north Dublin. There has been increased negativity over time apparent towards the area-based partnerships and they have been criticised heavily. This, to a certain extent, has exposed the need for an organisation like Nordubco which does not have a 'democratic deficit' and does not focus solely on areas of disadvantage. The disillusionment towards the area-based partnerships may have paved the way for Nordubco to step in and take up the role as a lobbying, umbrella organisation which arches over various agencies to co-ordinate an overall strategy for the sub-region.

* Nordubco is a relatively new organisation and much time has been spent developing networks and gathering information on north Dublin. The objectives of the company are broad and unusually large scale and one of the main functions is to hold seminars and promote debate and involvement in the development of policies and ultimately facilitate the formation of a common view on the development of north Dublin. It is therefore

difficult to assess the overall impact that Nordubco has had although it is clear that the company has played an integral part in securing funding and approval for the North Fringe Interceptor Sewer and Ballymun Arts Centre which received an extra £1.5 million for the project.

* Nordubco is also unique in that it has the full support of Fingal County Council and Dublin Corporation. To have two influential bodies such as these directly involved in the company lends considerable weight to the influence and reputation of Nordubco as an innovative group, not only within the region but also at local and central government level.

* As a development organisation, it could be argued that Nordubco has spread itself too thinly by identifying eleven different themes. The themes are varying and multi-dimensional and encompass huge infrastructural developments taking place in the north Dublin region. The original concept behind the formation of Nordubco was that it would retain a perspective on the sub-region that was lost by area-based organisations. However it is possible that Nordubco could also lose its perspective by trying to include too many aspects of development.

* It is important that Nordubco facilitates the implementation of projects because development continues whilst proposals are being discussed. This increases the risk of missing opportunities and results in a lack of co-ordination of the overall strategies. It is important to have a commitment to implementing specific proposals rather than act as a 'talking shop'.

7.16 NORDUBCO: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Nordubco, as an overarching development agency, through its Action Plan has set out an insightful and coherent strategy for north Dublin to tackle the structural problems which are inhibiting effective improvement of the area. By its very nature, Nordubco is in a position to consider the broader, structural problems and development opportunities within North Dublin and relate these issues to the relevant stakeholders who can initiate programmes of action. This organisation has also promoted awareness in the area through the organisation of conferences and meetings and many have welcomed the organisation, perhaps due to a lack of faith in the effectiveness of the area-based partnerships. Nordubco, through its structure has created a level of horizontal integration between the local authority, the county council, area-based partnerships and the university and although the Nordubco is still in the early stages, it is a vital cog in the machinery fuelling the rejuvenation of north Dublin.

7.17 NORTHERN IRELAND - BROWNLOW COMMUNITY TRUST

7.17.1 Introduction

Brownlow was to form a small part of the new town of Craigavon which was proposed in the 1960s to provide good quality housing and employment as part of an overspill policy to reduce overcrowding in Belfast. This proposal was put forward by Sir Robert Matthew in 1963.

Craigavon is situated approximately 40km to the southwest of Belfast and was to form a new linear city which would join the two existing towns of Lurgan and Portadown. Despite some resistance from these towns, the overall aim was to relieve housing

pressure in Belfast by encouraging people to move to a high quality environment that would also contain employment opportunities. The construction of the new town began in 1968 with optimistic assumptions - it was envisaged that the town would reach a population of 200,000 by the year 2000 and become the regional centre of the Craigavon Borough Council. However, these initial projections were revised downwards due to a number of factors. The economic recession in the U.K and the effects of the 'Troubles' depressed business expansion and deterred inward investment and it was the closure of the most prominent company in Craigavon, the Goodyear tyre factory which largely sealed the fate of the new town. Ultimately, with these factors and through worsening economic conditions and changes in planning policy, the need for the new town had largely disappeared by the early 1980s. The planned development of new housing for Craigavon was curtailed after only one of the new housing areas was built and this area was Brownlow.

Brownlow was then left as a series of 23 urban housing estates which were built on the assumption that there would be a high level of car ownership in the area. Portadown is 5km to the southwest of Brownlow and Lurgan is 3km to the northeast and the poor bus service in the area compounds the sense of isolation and social exclusion for those who are not car owners. Many of the leisure, social and health facilities which would normally be associated with new towns were never constructed and the area has small and limited shopping facilities in four neighbourhood centres where there is also a health centre and a police station. Despite the fact that many aspects of life were not provided for in Brownlow, the area has an extremely good road transport system and is well connected to the rest of the country which is a positive factor in the attraction of inward investment.

7.18 THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF BROWNLOW

In statistical terms this area represents one of the highest concentrations of multiple deprivation in Northern Ireland. Brownlow has a population structure which is largely skewed towards the younger age, this reflected the tendency for many young people to make the move from Belfast to Craigavon rather than older age groups who would be more settled and reluctant to move to a new area. The area scores highly on most indicators of deprivation and this relative deprivation is reflected in the social conditions which typify most deprived areas. For example, the higher than average levels of unemployment and lone parent families, low levels of educational attainment and skills, low levels of car ownership, many health problems and many incomes of less than half the average income in Northern Ireland. Although Brownlow does have relatively good housing conditions and some good amenities, the other factors of poverty and deprivation tend to reinforce the marginalisation of the community in almost every other sense. The Greater Brownlow Review made this point also noting that what makes the situation for the residents of Brownlow different is the sense of isolation and alienation in the area due to the lack of jobs and opportunities thus reinforcing the culture of no hope within the community.

7.19 BROWNLOW COMMUNITY TRUST AND ITS ORIGINS

There has been a long history of community activity in Brownlow, going back as far as the development of the town itself. During the 1960s and 1970s when it became clear that the development of the town was not going to be as originally planned, community activity became more apparent as people realised that the social and economic needs of

residents needed to be considered. The Brownlow Community Development Association (BCDA) was set up in 1988 as a non-political, non-sectarian organisation for the benefit of the whole of the Brownlow area, with membership open to all community groups in the area. This has been acknowledged as one of the positive stepping stones which paved the way to the successful application from the Brownlow area for the third European poverty programme (Poverty 3) in 1989. Another outcome of the Greater Brownlow Review was the formation of a community company to act as the mechanism to implement the Brownlow Initiative. This initiative called for:

- * The development of a village centre (much like the schemes in north Dublin e.g. Darndale) to improve the provision of shops and other services
- * The improvement of the physical structure in Brownlow to improve the overall image of the town.

The community company which was then established to take the initiative forward was Brownlow Limited, a company limited by guarantee, with a board of directors drawn from local companies, the statutory agencies, elected community representatives and the borough council. This tripartite structure was mirrored to some degree in the partnership companies in the Republic with the exception that there were elected representatives from local government on the board. The remit of this company was largely economic regeneration which incorporated employment and training programmes, small business development, physical development of the village square, refurbishment of shop units and a community hall, and some longer term initiatives for tourism and housing.

The opportunity presented by the Third European Poverty programme for the area was realised and a swift application was made for inclusion in this programme. The initial

work for the application was prepared by the Southern Health and Social Services Board (SH & SSB), the BCDA and the Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust (NIVT) with the overall co-ordination from a new body, the Brownlow Community Trust. This body is also a company limited by guarantee with charitable status. The management board consists of 23 representatives from the statutory agencies and the community. What is notable is the fact that there is no involvement on the board from the private sector due to the limited presence of this sector in the area.

7.20 THE THIRD EU POVERTY PROGRAMME

When the Third EU Poverty programme was launched, Brownlow was selected along with Toxeth in Merseyside and Pilton in Edinburgh as the projects for the U.K. The Poverty 3 programme was built on the ideas and experiences of the two poverty programmes which preceded it and the new programmes were to employ three main strategies and principles in their operation:

- * The idea of partnership through the creation of sound networks of communication and influence between the projects, their target populations and key social and economic actors in the regions.
- * Recognition that poverty is multi-dimensional and that actions under Poverty 3 incorporate all the dimensions of the problem and tackle them simultaneously without dispersing the overall coherence of the effort.
- * Participation - target populations are the main partners in the programme. In this way it was hoped that those living in poverty would become the main actors in changing their situation.

Evaluation was also a key part of this project and in order to impart best practice, monitoring and evaluation were considered a crucial element of the project. Therefore, the Brownlow Community Trust was subject to several evaluation programmes, both internally and externally, the Trust had its own internal evaluator and project researcher, there were two evaluators from the University of Ulster and regular meetings were also held with all the evaluators of the U.K. Poverty 3 programmes. This illustrates the importance attached to the proper evaluation of projects to ensure that workable ideas and experiences can be transferred to other areas of disadvantage

7.21 CAUSES OF POVERTY IN BROWNLOW

The primary determining factors of poverty in Brownlow were identified as follows:

- * Restructuring of the employment and industrial base (epitomised by the closure of Goodyear tyre factory)
- * High proportion of welfare dependent individuals and families
- * High proportion of single parent families and unemployed families with large numbers of children
- * Lack of amenities i.e. shopping facilities
- * Social exclusion from Lurgan and Portadown.

The target groups identified for support were:²²

- * Women

²² The Trust identified four target groups in its original application for Poverty 3; the long-term unemployed, the young unemployed, single parent families and children. These were subsequently revised in 1992 to the above mentioned as it was felt that recognition and support for women was needed as they

* Children

* Long-term unemployed

* Young unemployed (Brownlow Community Trust, 1992).

7.22 OBJECTIVES OF THE BROWNLOW COMMUNITY TRUST

These are outlined in the mission statement of the BCT:

‘Brownlow Community Trust will promote the social, economic and cultural integration of those marginalised by poverty by:

* Promoting their participation in the wider decision making and policy process

* Securing their active involvement in interrelated strategic aims. (BCT, 1993)

Other objectives included:

* Decreasing the sense of dependency of local people

* Encouraging enterprise and initiative through employment (particularly self employment) initiatives

* Reducing the social isolation of the Brownlow community

* Improving services and amenities and the overall quality of life in Brownlow

See appendix 9 for further information on Brownlow Community Trust.

7.23 ASSESSMENT OF THE BROWNLOW COMMUNITY TRUST PROJECT

* The BCT has acted as a catalyst in bringing officials from the statutory agencies around the table into multi-agency fora and making these public agencies less remote to the people they serve.

often carry many of the burdens of deprivation and experience difficulties accessing jobs due to a lack of childcare facilities

* The Trust has enabled the residents to participate more fully in improving their area by including them on management boards and by working as employees and volunteers in certain schemes and projects. The initial distrust from these residents has largely been diffused as time has gone on.

* This project has enabled the concept of partnership to be explored and experimented with, in a way that has been previously lacking in community development in Northern Ireland. An example was established in Brownlow for other initiatives to follow. However, there is considerable criticism of structures in Northern Ireland in that it is felt that true partnership remains elusive. This is largely due to the transfer of services from local and central government and the presence of government agencies continues to be more evident than in other areas of the U.K. (Bailey *et al*, 1995:119).

* Brownlow has adopted the principle of promoting the achievements in the area and the remaining problems for two main reasons. One is to publicise the benefits of working in partnership with relevant agencies and the other is to make a case for any additional funding that may be secured for the future.

* The realisation that an integrated approach is vital in tackling areas of disadvantage has now become ingrained in the philosophy underpinning any scheme implemented in the area. Brownlow became a high priority for resource allocation from a number of agencies and there is no doubt that the funds from Poverty 3 made a clear impact that may not have been possible if the application had been turned down.

* There are major problems that have yet to be addressed in the area - one concern which is notable is the lack of direct involvement from the business sector, i.e. the Industrial Development Authority (IDB) and the Local Economic Development Unit. To implement

a holistic approach, it is vital to have the support and inclusion of all agencies that provide services and funds to an area. The aversion of such bodies to partnership is rooted in their reluctance to involve themselves in area based projects in any forum which may be seen to pressure them to perform better in that locality (Brownlow Community Trust, 1994).

* The difference between these bodies and the statutory agencies lies in the fact that given all the policy changes linked to financial restraint they have a motivation to explore with the voluntary sector how partnership might ease the public burden, while delivering a more tailored service to the community (Brownlow Community Trust, 1994).

* There is a distinct need for job creation in Brownlow in order to make an impact on the large number of unemployed and long-term unemployed in the area. Many problems still remain in Brownlow and although the finance from Poverty 3 was crucial in what it made possible and the catalyst it provided, there is still much more to be done as it takes time and a great deal of money to reverse years of disadvantage.

7.24 BROWNLOW COMMUNITY TRUST: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The optimistic predictions for the development of the new town of Craigavon soon gave way to disillusionment and disappointment when it became clear that the original plans which incorporated leisure, social and health facilities for particular areas were to be seriously curtailed. The area of Brownlow was left largely as an underdeveloped housing estate with limited amenities and high concentrations of multiple disadvantage.

The funding from the E.U, through Poverty 3, facilitated the implementation of a comprehensive anti-poverty initiative in the area which has since been hailed as one of

the best examples of partnership in Northern Ireland. A positive factor in the implementation of the initiative was the high level and well-developed nature of community activity in Brownlow. By building on this commitment and on existing relationships, a very strong foundation for a solid and sustainable project was created.

The stakeholders brought on board were fully committed to the success of this partnership. The full participation of actors involved in an anti-poverty initiative is a key principle which is vital for the positive development of any local anti-poverty strategy and, more often than not, is very difficult to achieve and sustain.

The integrated and multi-dimensional approach adopted within Brownlow was extremely useful in setting a precedent in Northern Ireland which would formalise the partnership process and also ensure that Brownlow Community Trust would act as an example of best practice for other areas with similar problems. There were many lessons learnt through the experience in Brownlow, however, one in particular that stands out is the effect of the lack of business sector involvement. This was one of the main weaknesses in the initiative and illustrates how the impact of a project can be limited if all relevant stakeholders are not involved. One of the main problems in Brownlow is the lack of job creation and with some commitment from the business sector this aspect of disadvantage could be tackled more effectively.

The Brownlow Community Trust has acted as a major stimulant in encouraging a more holistic approach towards social and economic regeneration and in many ways remains the 'original' partnership upon which many in Northern Ireland have been based. In this way, Brownlow will always be a unique example of a successful partnership.

7.25 OVERALL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS OF IRISH CASE STUDIES

Poverty and social exclusion are the day-to-day reality for a notable percentage of the population in Ireland and this percentage has been allowed to develop and grow during a period of major economic growth. The large-scale changes in society as a whole such as the increasing number of long-term unemployed, one parent families and non-white minorities have intensified the growing gap between the affluent and the deprived.

The problems associated with social exclusion are apparent both north and south of the border and there is a distinct realisation that to maintain any degree of social cohesion, the two governments must work together, as well as individually, to implement projects and schemes to tackle social exclusion. The concept of social exclusion, although a relatively recent arrival, is now widely used right across Europe as many countries deal with the consequences of 'globalisation'. The widespread economic restructuring has caused policy makers in Europe to be concerned about the social consequences of this change. Consequently, tackling social exclusion has become a priority on the national agenda of many countries, including Ireland. The variety of strategies and solutions which have been put in place to combat social exclusion is notable in that each scheme highlights the important similarities in the experiences of different cities and neighbourhoods. Each of the case studies raises pertinent questions concerning the problem of social exclusion and the ways to combat it. They are valuable in drawing conclusions on the nature of social exclusion and the correct way to deal with the phenomenon both on a micro and macro level.

Area partnerships have become one of the most important vehicles for implementing multi-dimensional programmes to effect change in areas where poverty is spatially

concentrated in Ireland. They are an important element in the extension of social partnership to the local level and in establishing a bottom up approach within the context of local development. These partnerships are characterised by their variety and are generally driven by the specific requirements of their particular catchment area.

An essential aspect of successful partnership has been the need to achieve a level of intersectoral consensus from the outset and thus get the key actors involved in a common goal in the early stages. It is also important to consider the interface between these local anti-poverty strategies and the how they link into broader government development programmes.

The number of issues identified within the partnership action plans must be prioritised on the basis of the overall, long term developmental strategy for the area and underpinning this should be the realisation that this strategy is not simply about addressing financial resources, but is also about enhancing the participation of the most disadvantaged, as in the South Dublin URBAN initiative.

Each partnership is unique, in that, there are varying factors at play which will influence its structure, agenda and overall impact in the catchment area. Despite the individuality of each organisation, there are key principles which apply to all local partnerships in terms of involving all relevant stakeholders, building on existing relationships between agencies, having a strong input during consultation exercises and developing an appropriate vision of action for the specific area which can help tackle social exclusion and break the cycle of decline.

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Chapter Eight

London Case Studies

8.2 Waterfront Health Action Project

8.6 Thamesmead Anti-Poverty Project

8.0 INTRODUCTION

London has many areas which fail to meet the norms of urban sustainability, largely due to the intense social problems being experienced there. The case studies provide examples of social inclusion programmes being implemented in the London area and highlight the problems which can be experienced when implementing such programmes at the local level.

Homelessness is perhaps the ultimate manifestation of social exclusion and is widespread, intensified by a growing shortage of affordable housing and increase in inequality. The present government has set a target to reduce the numbers of rough sleepers by two-thirds by 2002 (DETR report, 1998).

London has been particularly affected by this problem with large numbers of people living on the streets both long and short term. Appendix 10 provides a detailed analysis of Centrepont, an organisation which has implemented a number of programmes to combat homelessness.

8.1 THAMESMEAD

8.1.1 Introduction

This section includes examples of two significant projects which have been put in place to improve the quality of life around the general area of Thamesmead since 1991. Both projects are involved in community development although with different issues as their focus. The projects are the Waterfront Health Action Project (WHAP) and the Thamesmead Anti-Poverty Project which is run under the Thamesmead Family Service

Unit (TFSU). WHAP was set up in December 1991 as a result of local professional concerns regarding the health of low-income families in the area. It pre-dates the Anti-Poverty Project by five years and its catchment area encompasses the electoral wards of Belvedere, Erith, Thamesmead East, Thamesmead Moorings, Abbeywood and Eynsham. The Anti-Poverty Project overlaps this, to a certain degree, by covering the areas of Abbeywood/Eynsham together with Thamesmead East and Thamesmead Moorings, leading to a population of approximately 30,000 served by the project. Although there is a notable overlap in the areas covered by the projects, they complement one another in terms of the work they carry out. This is perhaps due to the differing roles played by each organisation: the WHAP project has a pronounced focus on health issues for those on low incomes and other marginalised groups whereas the Anti-Poverty Project has a wider role to play. It is involved in a variety of community development initiatives ranging from the provision of legal services to the benefits advice and advocacy services. Between them, these two projects encapsulate the wide number of issues and problems which arise in areas of deprivation and therefore provide sound examples to examine within the U.K.

8.2 WATERFRONT HEALTH ACTION PROJECT (WHAP)

As mentioned previously, WHAP was set up in 1991 in response to increasing concerns regarding the health and well-being of people from certain electoral districts who are particularly open to the adverse effects of a variety of environmental factors. In the implementation stages of WHAP, a 'Community Attitudes to Health' survey was designed and carried out within the locality. Four hundred residents were interviewed and the results laid the foundation for the implementation of an open access, daytime drop-in

centre. The response and attendance from residents was so great that within a few weeks it became clear that a larger venue was required. WHAP consequently moved to a larger community centre in Abbeywood.

8.3 AIMS OF WHAP

All of WHAP's aims, objectives and activities are summarised under two headings:

- The strengthening of community action
- Developing personal skills

At an ideological level, the managers of the WHAP project have linked in with the definition of health promotion encapsulated by the World Health Organisation's Ottawa Charter. The framework for health promotion activity put forward underlies much of the work and overall objectives of WHAP and is summarised below as:

- Building healthy public policy
- Creating supportive environments
- Strengthening community action
- Developing personal skills
- Reorientating health services (WHO, 1986).

These concepts have been incorporated into the overall constitution of WHAP which provides the foundation for the organisation. One of the most important characteristics of WHAP is the degree of partnership which has been achieved between the professional members and the local residents. All parties have been involved in various aspects of the implementation of WHAP since its inception such as undertaking training, participation on committees and working parties and contributing to strategic development and reports.

These activities allow residents the opportunity to see how organisations work and highlights the need for guidelines, standards and operational policies. This process encourages a sense of responsibility which prepares these same residents to participate in decision-making and planning with other organisations which operate in the area (WHAP, 1998).

8.4 ASSESSMENT

* Initially, WHAP did experience some criticism for its focus solely on health related issues, however, this criticism was not validated by the results of a 'Community Attitude to Health Survey' carried out in 1993. This survey found statistically significant correlations between measures of social disadvantage, experience of racial and sex discrimination and symptoms of psychological distress together with physical ailments. In summary, negative social problems were interlinked with mental and physical symptoms of illness and thus the usefulness of WHAP to the local community is irrefutable.

* A reason given for the success of the drop-in centre was that the facility was open to anyone residing in the area including those groups often forgotten even by community projects, such as the over-60s, ethnic minorities and also those recovering from mental illness. The WHAP, perhaps by its very nature, has never been a project frequented by employed residents. The evening sessions at the drop-in have never taken off, indicating the lack of demand for the service by those who are in employment. It would be an advantage though, to involve this group in the project as role models and to share experiences. Creating a social mix, although not always feasible, can be an advantage for projects such as WHAP.

* Another factor contributing to the success of the project is the location of WHAP. For any service to be successful, it is important to locate in an area where people are passing to and fro on daily business, for example near the shopping centre or school. The William Temple community centre is located where people can literally 'drop-in' without going out of their way to access the service thereby increasing the likelihood that they will make use of the services.

* It became clear from consultation with the local residents that practical information on various issues²³ should be made available at the drop-in centre through talks and demonstrations. It was felt that information provided in leaflet form was simply not effective or particularly useful as the problems experienced by families and individuals are often quite complex and many in the area have literacy problems.

* An important aspect in the development of the centre was the clear need to support a facility like this with some form of childcare to ensure that lone parents, one of the main target groups, could avail of the services as the need arose. This centre was improved by creating a safe play area for the children and a project specifically designed for lone parents was implemented which, naturally, provided childcare.

* There is a significant Chinese and Vietnamese community in the Thamesmead area and it is important to be open to encourage ethnic minorities to attend the centre. It was felt that this was an area in which WHAP was not particularly successful as there were few people from ethnic minority groups using the centre. It is hoped that the presence of Asian volunteers in the centre will alleviate this problem as people will be more likely to come when there are workers there from their own social group. It is also an important

²³ These matters include health problems, benefits advice, forms and bureaucracy, coping with stress and substance abuse.

opportunity for volunteers, helpers and users from various backgrounds to interact and work as part of a team within WHAP. This level of interaction can go some way to alleviating racial tensions within the local community.

* One of the main problems with WHAP, and indeed with many other community organisations, has been funding. The failure to find funding after the cessation of the Health Authority funding (1996) has put WHAP in an extremely precarious position whereby they are completely dependent on the health and goodwill of a number of volunteers and helpers. It was suggested that if the funding was available for a project such as WHAP, the presence of three paid core workers²⁴ would be ideal to enhance the overall stability and smooth running of the project.

* Financial constraints have taken their toll on WHAP by severely limiting the activities and services that can be organised for local residents. A notable factor is that the principal expenditure for WHAP is rent. If this and the telephone costs were met by outside agencies, then the money generated from fundraising could be channelled back into the project rather than used simply to meet overheads.

* A number of factors relating to the volunteers and helpers within WHAP was highlighted during the interview. Any project which is heavily reliant on the input of local residents as volunteers is likely to experience similar problems.

- The project found that the changing recruitment of volunteers in terms of numbers and skills-mix was a notable trend since the inception of WHAP. It is now felt that this high turnover is a natural feature of an organisation such as this because as

²⁴ It was suggested that the core workers required would be a volunteer co-ordinator, a project manager and an administrative assistant.

volunteers and helpers gain confidence and experience, it is likely that they will move on to other voluntary work, further education or paid employment.

- WHAP has found difficulty in maintaining an adequate number of volunteers as the volunteers normally approach the organisation in response to word of mouth and community networking. The lack of funds to cover the travel and telephone costs of volunteers must act as a deterrent to those who might benefit from the experience as those who are likely to volunteer are also likely to be on a low income. Although the procedure for the recruitment of these volunteers is quite formal, WHAP has not adopted a policy of active community development in order to tap into the potential of the local residents to have some input into the project. *'It is not enough to rely on local ties to the organisation for the recruitment of volunteers.'* (Williams, 1999)

- The equal involvement of professional members and local residents in the establishment and running of the organisation from its inception has led to the evolution of a sound partnership between these two parties. It should be noted however that an important aspect in the maintenance of this working relationship is the level of independent mediation which has been used within WHAP. The project has found that mediation has been crucial in helping the volunteers to overcome any resentment they may harbour towards professional volunteers simply because they belong to a profession. Time spent on mediation is well spent in the long term as it helps volunteers to see professionals as human beings and at the same time encourages professionals to reduce professional distance by mutual learning and participation.

* An observation regarding training courses completed by users, helpers and volunteers was that they were able to participate in and complete quite long and involved courses, clearly benefiting at the time. However, these participants would then show signs of difficulty in applying the knowledge they acquired in a practical situation. This highlights the need for tutors to regularly reinforce and explain clear messages from the training and ensure that participants fully understand the practical application of the material presented in the course.

8.5 WHAP : SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

WHAP, despite limited resources has become a focus of informal support for local residents and has offered practical training courses and organisational experiences which have enhanced the personal development of many users. This type of support service is useful in that it will appeal to those simply wanting to participate within the community and those looking for stepping-stones to future employment. The community café has become a centre where the health and well being of users can be directly observed and improved and has facilitated the development of other community-based projects also focused on health. Residents that are healthy are more likely to participate in the various educational initiatives. In tackling this aspect of deprivation, WHAP was an important factor in laying down a strong foundation for the implementation of the TAPP as a complementary development group.

8.6 THAMESMEAD ANTI-POVERTY PROJECT (TAPP)

8.6.1 Introduction

The TAPP was set up in November 1996 with funding from the National Lottery Charities Board in response to the findings of an intensive workshop carried out with local residents in the Thamesmead and Abbeywood areas. These residents were all on low incomes for a variety of reasons and came together to discuss the problems of living on a low income, how their communities had developed over the past ten years and what they believed their communities would be like to live in, in ten years time. The results of these discussions proved to be extremely informative and despite the negative experiences and predictions for the future, the group also put forward a number of valid ideas for reversing these trends. Key voluntary groups involving the local residents took the lead in translating the suggestions into practical action and with the injection of funds, the TAPP was thus established, based at Thamesmead Family Service Unit.

8.7 AIMS OF THE TAPP

The ultimate objective of the project was to put forward the rationale for an anti-poverty strategy that would work effectively at 'grass-roots' level. This strategy was to be based on evidence collected during the first two years of the TAPP and was also to focus on community development strategies and concepts that would improve the quality of life for individuals and families.

8.8 AREA AND TARGET GROUPS FOR THE TAPP

The TAPP encompasses a number of areas covered by the Boroughs of Greenwich and Bexley such as Thamesmead East, Abbeywood and Eynsham. Although there can be significant variation between electoral wards, the socio-economic data gathered to support the APP indicates that these areas are experiencing moderate to severe economic deprivation, coupled with social and educational exclusion. The Jarman Underprivileged Area Score carried out for wards in the area indicated a real need for an anti-poverty strategy.

The data also indicated the groups of people who should be targeted by the TAPP and any strategy resulting from it. These included:

- any person on a low income (i.e. in receipt of benefits)
- unemployed people
- young adults
- lone parents
- the unskilled or semi-skilled
- ethnic minorities
- the disabled
- children of low income families.

See appendix 11 for further information on Thamesmead Anti Poverty Project.

8.9 ASSESSMENT

* An important aspect of this project is that there is an emphasis not only on bringing people back into the workforce (although the schemes and initiatives will also provide training and assistance for community enterprise) but on improving the general quality of

life of the local residents in a holistic strategy that would take into account the wider needs of these people. These needs range from the provision of language courses for ethnic minorities to training courses in nutrition and childcare.

* The initial groundwork carried out to provide the basis for a strategy in the area was notable in that it was broad and informative including both qualitative research from discussion groups and quantitative research from census data and also evaluations of various projects in the area. The depth of the information, particularly from the residents themselves, went a long way to ensure that the projects established were targeted and in accordance with the specific needs of the community. Often, money is spent implementing projects which are perceived to be useful by professionals living outside the area and it is these projects that often do not have the desired impact on the area or its residents.

* A lesson learnt from carrying out the 'listening exercise' in the early stages of the project was that in order to develop a local anti-poverty strategy effectively it must be *owned* by all the stakeholders, perhaps most importantly the community. In this way all the groups and organisations can be on board from the inception of the strategy and can play an active role in its formulation and implementation.

* Establishing initiatives and programmes in the target area has proved to be problematic due to the presence of two local authorities (Bexley and Greenwich) in the area. These local authorities vary in their approach to the target area and this has been reflected in the way they deal with and prioritise different issues and problems. This has had many negative implications for the availability and consistency of funding and services, particularly advice services, to the residents of the area. Two examples of this are the

closure of the Citizens Advice Bureau since 1996 and the lack of a job centre in the area. This perhaps explains the high level of dissatisfaction expressed by residents on the provision of welfare, housing and employment advice.

* Despite some work from projects, ethnic minorities still face severe racial tension in some areas of the locality and this, in turn, reinforces the sense of social exclusion. There are not enough resources and legal back up available to effectively challenge the actions of employers, landlords, local authorities and police that fail to address racial tensions. This consequently, leaves many families and individuals open to discrimination and exploitation. An example of this is that Thamesmead Town Ltd (the landlord) does not translate its literature into Chinese regularly and does not employ a Chinese/Vietnamese worker to interface with these tenants.

* To encourage more integration within the community, much work has been carried out with children. It is clear that to reduce racial tension, it important to focus on the children by teaching Chinese and Vietnamese children to become bilingual and all children to mix on some level preferably before the age of five. Although the APP has succeeded to a certain extent, it is clear that the two communities remain quite polarised and resources should be targeted to improve social mixing with the adults.

* The English classes set up for the Chinese/Vietnamese communities have had a high success rate and the lessons learnt need to be built upon and extended. It is also important that staff in schools are sensitive to the needs of Chinese and Vietnamese children and facilitate the improvement of their English.

* The discussion groups brought to the fore the problems that families, living on low incomes had accessing cheap food and nutrition. This is a vital aspect of any anti-poverty

strategy often overlooked when various initiatives and projects are established. The identification of this as a specific problem led to the development of a course (Foodwise) which was based on the information which came directly from the residents who would participate in the course. Bexley College worked to construct the course in a flexible format and also in a way that would enable those who successfully completed to go on to other practical courses (Cookwise). One of the essential components underlying the course was that it would encourage a sense of mutual learning between tutor and participants. Foodwise has been widely acknowledged as an example of best practice regarding courses of this nature. It was extremely successful in attracting a broad range of participants on low incomes with physical, sensory and learning disabilities and has paved the way for the development of spin-off courses. (For example, courses for parents on children's nutrition.) The need for a low budget food outlet or a food co-op was also suggested and this is an idea which should be furthered, for example, by carrying out a feasibility study.

* Another area which was identified as lacking was the provision of childcare. It was felt that there was a distinct lack of facilities in the area with the TAPP only having resources to establish lone parent groups on a limited basis.

'There is no doubt that local women could fill this gap in childcare provision. Increasing training in childcare and development and aiming it towards local women would be a great advantage for the area and would also create a path for local employment once these local women complete any training given and gain some practical experience' (Dean, 1999:19).

* In setting up any strategy, networking is vital for gaining support, sharing ideas of best practice and tapping into sources of funding. A drawback to the strategy is the fact that the APP has not linked into the National Anti-Poverty Alliance. To network with this group, it is necessary to establish a local alliance and the anti-poverty project simply would not have the resources available to implement and sustain it. It remains to be seen whether the APP will access resources from funding bodies to establish such an alliance.

The multi-site, multi-agency resource centres are at the core of the proposed anti-poverty strategy for the Thamesmead/Abbeywood areas and it remains to be seen whether the bid for resources on the basis of this proposal will be accepted. It is still useful, however to analyse the ideas behind the strategy as it is quite an innovative project.

* It was felt that this approach takes the concept of community empowerment to a new level. The resource centre would be situated in the locality so that solutions to local problems are generated at grassroots level, within the neighbourhood. In this way, any ideas put forward would be specifically tailored to the area.

* Dean (1999) believed that the development of a number of interconnected, individual sites would give each centre the freedom to evolve and grow according to the needs of the immediate local population. This creates an initiative which operates within the neighbourhood and having a resource centre operating at this level is significant in developing a strategy working at the grassroots.

* The co-ordination of the three sites is a vital aspect of the whole approach and therefore the centrally managed group plays one of the most important roles in facilitating the free-flow of ideas and supporting all three centres. One of the problems which could evolve is

a degree of competitiveness and rivalry between the centres in terms of the provision of services and drawing down funds. Dean (1999) believed that a good level of cohesion could be maintained between the three sites through the project co-ordinator who would work across the resource centres.

* As well as the emphasis on involving all relevant agencies, it is also important to link in with other government and borough-wide initiatives. This creates more chances for drawing down funds from other sources to use for job creation.

8.10 TAPP : SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The TAPP has built upon the work of WHAP by trying to alter the culture of '*personal survival*' which compromises the ability of local individuals to form healthy relationships, improve their education or participate in social activities. Most of the projects and activities are based in the Thamesmead areas thus acting as a pull factor in encouraging people to attend. Most of the projects have been concerned with building self-confidence and have operated within a flexible framework, as local residents seem to have little or no confidence in conventional structures. Again, financial constraints have limited the remit and the extent to which the project can provide adequate services and activities. Thus, there remains considerable unmet demand in the area particularly regarding advocacy and counselling services.

The ultimate objective of the TAPP to date has been to put forward an anti-poverty strategy for the area which has taken the form of multi-site, multi agency resource centres and it remains to be seen if this objective will be realised.

8.11 OVERALL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS OF LONDON CASE STUDIES

Much of the recent government rhetoric concerned with anti-poverty policy in the U.K. has been with the shift towards the promotion of multi-dimensional local economic development. The two case studies emphasise the increasing importance of community economic development. Initiatives such as the development of co-operatives and community enterprise, credit unions and support for informal economic activity represent the move towards a more significant 'third sector' or 'social economy' which is distinct from the public and private sector.

WHAP provided a solid foundation for the establishment of TAPP and set a precedent in the catchment area through networking and the research and consultation carried out. Accessing resources has been problematic though, with a reliance on fundraising and volunteers to staff the projects. It seems unacceptable that a community based, multi-dimensional project such as this was not identified as a priority for the continuation of funding. TAPP and the proposed multi-agency resource centres are an innovative response to the varying needs of the different neighbourhoods within Thamesmead.

These programmes have provided essential sources of action at the local level and within Thamesmead have created a framework within which local experience can be exchanged. More effective links within national and regional agencies may have improved the funding allocation for the projects but the creation of the Anti-Poverty Strategy represents an important development for this area.

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Chapter Nine

Social Exclusion and Policy Responses in the Netherlands

Case Studies

9.5 The Bijlmer, Amsterdam

9.12 Delfshaven, Rotterdam

9.0 INTRODUCTION

The western part of the Netherlands is one of the most urbanised regions in Western Europe. The sprawling conurbation has been called *Randstad Holland* (the Ring City) and has a radius of approximately 50km. It takes the form of a horseshoe with the open end located in the more sparsely populated southeast, the northern arc encompassing the cities of Amsterdam and Utrecht, and the cities of The Hague and Rotterdam dominating the southern arc. The area has been described as a '*complex polynuclear urban agglomeration*' (Harding *et al*, 1994), meaning that no single city dominates the region with each performing independent regional, national and international urban functions. This gives each city a distinctive character and status as illustrated below.

Table 7: Functions of the main Randstad cities.

Randstad City	Main Function
Amsterdam	Capital city of the Netherlands; financial and cultural centre
The Hague	Government and administrative centre
Rotterdam	Trade, distribution and allied commerce and industry. Premier port
Utrecht	Main transportation centre

Source: Adapted from Brunt, 1997 p-280

The Randstad has long been the focus of the Dutch economy and the large-scale development has created major problems in terms of the competition for a limited land resource. These problems have become apparent in the demand for housing, the severe shortage of recreational land, the increase in daily commuting and a significant rise in the levels of environmental pollution. (Brunt, 1997) This pressure on the Randstad has also contributed to the growth of social polarisation in the cities between the wealthier, middle class residents located in the newer suburbs and the low income, elderly and ethnic minorities, overconcentrated in the inner cities. The growing problems have forced these

issues to the fore and have led to a number of developments in terms of urban policy and the projects put in place in areas of cities to improve the quality of life for residents.

9.1 URBAN POLICY

There has been a dawning realisation in recent years that the only effective way to tackle the complexity of problems associated with areas of disadvantage is by an integral package of policy measures. If the problems are linked then the solutions should also be linked. This necessity for integral policy has been adopted by both the Flemish and Dutch governments and is particularly evident in their 'Big Cities Policy'.

In the Netherlands, there is a nationally co-ordinated policy in place in order to lessen the fragmentation of policies at national level. This policy also aims to deregulate and reinvigorate municipal government and create a new alliance between the central government and the cities to tackle the problems and enhance the opportunities of the cities. The adoption of this policy has led to covenants between central government and the 'big cities' in which they agree to make a joint effort to strengthen the social and economic foundation of the cities.

'It is of the highest priority to ensure that cities do not become [more] divided along socio-economic and ethnic lines and on the other hand that the cities' growth potential is being realised.'

(URBAN, 1998)

The policy areas covered by these covenants include: employment, education, care, public safety and the quality of life in deprived areas with specific objectives to encourage the growth of small and medium-sized businesses, to reduce crime rates and

integrate ethnic minorities. These agreements (covenants) have been established for the four largest cities²⁵ and with 21 others, they have identified targets for results which are measurable and concrete and that will record the contributions made by both parties i.e. central government and the city. Notable developments initiated by these covenants are the partnerships between central government and the cities, partnerships at local level with private organisations, local businesses and citizens' involvement.

9.1.1 Co-ordination of the urban policy

The Big Cities Policy is primarily the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Internal Affairs. However to implement a policy which is integrated throughout the cabinet, it was necessary to establish a political steering group under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister. This group also included the Ministers of Finance, Internal Affairs, Social Affairs and Employment, Justice, and when necessary the ministers of Economic Affairs, Transport, Health, Spatial Planning and Housing. An interministerial Project Group consisting of high-level officials was also established to co-ordinate the various policy themes at cabinet level and under this project group, working groups have been formed to implement the agreements at city level with the participation of key players in the cities. The co-production of policy under the Big Cities policy has led to numerous developments for the cities and has also been beneficial to both the surrounding regions and the Netherlands as a whole.

²⁵ The four largest cities are Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht

9.2 THE DUTCH WELFARE STATE

In discussing the anti-poverty policy within the Netherlands, it is important to highlight the organisation and policy of the Dutch welfare state. The Netherlands has quite a diverse population with distinct ethnic groups²⁶ and the Dutch welfare state has generally tended to tackle poverty with national programmes, only indirectly touching upon ethnicity. Musterd and Ostendorf (1996) believe that the state did not develop any particular policy instruments to focus on ethnic-related problems mainly to avoid discrimination and consequently prevent the stigmatisation and polarisation within specific groups. They also believe that the welfare state has effective policies in place to tackle poverty regarding the redistribution of income, combating social segregation and the promotion of social mobility.

9.2.1 Redistribution of affluence

The Dutch welfare state has established a number of measures to ensure the redistribution of income and secure access to good quality housing for all people. These measures include tax codes, social benefits, disability and unemployment benefits, and welfare payments, housing subsidies and health care subsidies. These payments, particularly the unemployment benefit, are quite substantial compared to that of other European countries and therefore the level of income inequality experienced in the Netherlands is relatively low (Musterd *et al*, 1996). The housing stock available for social renting is relatively new and of good quality, therefore it is still perceived as desirable. With regard to providing people with the ability to consume, there are very slight differences between population

²⁶ The four main ethnic groups are the Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese and Antilleans

groups due to the variety and scale of the social benefits provided by the Dutch welfare state.

9.2.2 Combating social segregation

One of the main factors in tackling social segregation is the type of housing policy adopted by a particular government. The Netherlands has been very successful in this respect due to the policy behind the provision of social housing. This policy incorporates the following concepts; housing *needs* will ultimately determine whether a household will be allocated a dwelling and the number of individuals belonging to the household will determine the size of the allocated dwelling. If the particular household cannot afford to pay the rent on this dwelling, then rent subsidies will be made available where appropriate (Musterd *et al*, 1996). Thus, it is not unusual for a mixture of households by income level to occur and maintaining a social mix has been and continues to be a policy goal for the local authorities throughout the Netherlands.

9.2.3 Promoting social mobility

To encourage mobility in any society, it is important to make education as accessible as possible as this is a key factor in an individual's ability to participate in the labour market. The Dutch educational system is very open as the control of the system is within the remit of the state and the overall costs to the users are quite low.

Unemployment is still relatively high in the Netherlands and as the links between being employed and social mobility are undisputed it is vital to respond to the problem of unemployment effectively, as this may be a significant problem in the future. Musterd *et*

al (1996) claim that the Dutch welfare state focuses too much on meeting consumption needs rather than spending more money on the implementation of programmes to encourage re-entry to the labour market.

9.3 THE DUTCH URBAN PROGRAMME

URBAN (the EU programme) is intended in principle for cities and conurbations of over 100,000 inhabitants and as the Big Cities policy was very much in keeping with the concept of URBAN, it was logical that the programme should be effectively incorporated in the Big Cities Policy. It was envisaged that the money obtained from URBAN would provide a much-needed boost to the revitalisation of problem areas in the Netherlands.

In 1994, the Netherlands submitted aid applications to the EU under the terms of the URBAN initiative for the areas of the Bijlmer (Amsterdam) and Schilderswijk (The Hague). The applications were approved at the end of 1994 and when the initiative was extended in mid-1996, applications were also submitted for Delfshaven (Rotterdam) and Kanaalstraat (Utrecht). Final approval was granted in early 1997.

The URBAN initiative has been established as a supplementary instrument within the framework of the national Big Cities Policy (BCP). Although the European regulatory framework and procedures apply, the ultimate goal is to achieve an integrated approach to the economic, social and environmental problems that affect the major cities in the Netherlands (Maragou, 1999).

9.4 ROTTERDAM

Rotterdam is a city which has been dominated by trade and distribution and has also functioned as a 'gateway' city within the Netherlands. The port in Rotterdam is one of the

largest, by tonnage shipped, in the world. Although this is a significant source of employment for the area, developments in port technology and a downturn in transshipment (Harding et al, 1994) have led to notable falls in the demand for labour and a subsequent rise in unemployment. Rotterdam is often characterised as an over-industrialised city with a blue-collar image, an image the municipality have been trying to escape from through developments such as the Kop van Zuid.

9.5 AMSTERDAM

This city performs a significant 'gateway' role for the Netherlands with its links into a significant regional, national and international goods and passenger network. Foreign investment has been an important factor in the economic development of Amsterdam and the key attractions offered by the city are its location, its distributional infrastructure, the presence of the airport and the multi-lingual Dutch work force. Despite the economic development in Amsterdam, this did not impact significantly upon the labour market (perhaps because much of the investment was capital intensive resulting in a 'jobless growth') and thus unemployment still remains a notable problem in the city.

The city, because of its urban history related to international trade has always contained immigrant populations from a variety of backgrounds and origins. These ethnic minorities tend to suffer severe labour market disadvantage and constitute a growing percentage of those who are marginalised in Amsterdam.

9.6 THE BIJLMER

Amsterdam had been experiencing a severe housing shortage since the war and did not have enough space to build the large developments that were badly needed within its own

boundaries. Although the Bijlmer does not border directly on the city this was the best site available to develop at the time. In the early 1960s, the council of Weesperkarspel bought the land in the Bijlmer to help alleviate the housing problem and the City of Amsterdam acquired control of the district.²⁷ What began as an innovative urban planning experiment has, 25 years later, become an urban planners' nightmare with the area exhibiting nearly every social, economic and environmental problem associated with areas of deprivation. See appendix 12 for more information on the Bijlmer.

9.7 ASSESSMENT

* In the case of the Bijlmer, it is notable that both the local and central governments refused to accept that this was an 'urban ghetto' that the Netherlands would have to learn to live with. Instead, a pro-active approach was taken whereby the government committed 900 million guilders for the renewal of the physical environment and 26.9 million was made available from the national government and Europe for the improvement of the social fabric. Both the Big Cities Policy and the URBAN initiative, working at a citywide and grassroots level facilitated an effective strategy for the socio-economic development of the area which has made a significant impact.

* In a district such as the Bijlmer, it was essential that building and social renewal projects occur alongside one another to prevent recurring problems. It was mainly the input of the URBAN initiative along with the efforts of the municipality of Amsterdam and the sub-municipality of Zuidoost Amsterdam which encouraged this socio-economic revitalisation of the area thus supporting the needs of the residents and encouraging them

²⁷ Since 1987, the Bijlmer has formed part of the South East municipal district

to put down roots. The development of a holistic response in the Bijlmer has definitely gone far to ensure that the strategy has a longer-term effect.

* In keeping with the aim of drawing the community closer together an urban planning measure was implemented to bring the elevated roads in the Bijlmer down to normal level in order to both increase social cohesion and improve community safety. This would, therefore eliminate the many tunnels and underground passageways and subsequently reduce the visual barriers between the different parts of the district. In this way, the community of the Bijlmer was brought closer together through the alteration of the physical environment. This demonstrates the importance of considering all aspects of the environment in a developmental strategy which needs to maintain the community in the future.

* The Bijlmer has an extremely large immigrant population and this multi-cultural composition of the population²⁸ allows for a wide variety of cultural expression. By creating places which the different ethnic groups identify as their own, then the cultural potential of the Bijlmer can be reflected and levels of antagonism reduced.

* The urban renewal scheme has highlighted the importance of tapping into the 'hidden entrepreneurship' within disadvantaged communities. For the residents of the Bijlmer, particularly the ethnic minorities this represents an important source of employment.

'We have to encourage ethnic entrepreneurship and, at the same time manage to make sure that white contractors do not get all the new construction work. If the shops in the area function well, this can improve the atmosphere of the area greatly. We simply cannot afford to fail again in the Bijlme.' (Mulder, 1999).

²⁸ There are 70 nationalities in the Bijlmer mainly Surinamese, Antillean, Aruban and Ghanaian

* One of the main problems experienced within the organisational structure of the Bijlmer Regeneration Project and the URBAN was that many felt that they did not have any say in deciding where and how the URBAN funds should be spent. Initially, the integration of the URBAN organisation into the Bijlmer Regeneration Project did contribute to the overall efficiency of the project. However, a number of people questioned how the funds from URBAN were being allocated and a black council was formed to press for a 'multiculturalisation' of the decision making process. The allocation process was suspended for six months until the supervisory committee was enlarged to include a representative from the black council. From this point the black community became more active and involved and new priorities for the funding were brought to the fore. This development led to a wider support base for the programme which was more in keeping with the URBAN philosophy.

9.8 BIJLMER: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The complete regeneration of the Bijlmer is expected to take until around 2005. Improving the social fabric and reducing the large turnover of residents are some of the main concerns that still need to be rectified so that the Bijlmer becomes an area in which people would consider staying. The urban renewal strategy implemented in the Bijlmer has been extremely effective and the URBAN funds have been vital in influencing the positive development of both the physical and social environment. Within the Bijlmer, there is a notable element of patience concerning the rejuvenation of the area.

9.9 DELFSHAVEN

Another URBAN programme in the Netherlands was set up in the borough of Delfshaven in the city of Rotterdam. This area of Rotterdam has the highest level of unemployment and experiences many other socio-economic problems. The Big Cities Policy works alongside the European initiative to invest in both improvements in economic structures and social capital-intensive initiatives. See appendix 13 for further information on Delfshaven.

9.10 ASSESSMENT

* The examples described in Appendix 18 illustrate the strong emphasis on community-orientated development within the sub-municipality of Delfshaven. The ultimate objective of the various initiatives is to achieve the social coherence of each neighbourhood in the area and ensure that there are no segregated zones or isolated communities.

* The bright and shocking nature of some of the refurbishing initiatives (painting the transformer kiosk and the Tovertunnel) was not an accident. The artists involved were asked to create a design that would stand out and be noticed in the neighbourhood. The advantage of this was that the residents could see that things were changing and that the development of their locality was underway and thus morale could be improved and the more cynical locals could be encouraged to participate.

* The Big Cities project did experience some conflict with the URBAN programme on a number of occasions regarding the focus of the strategies. It was felt that the committee managing the URBAN projects within Delfshaven was too dependent on physical

intervention (i.e. replanning public amenities) which they believed was sufficient to bring the neighbourhood in the right direction. In comparison, the management of the Big Cities Project in Delfshaven, believed that the focus should be on changing the mentality of the residents and in particular the retailers associations who can come together and make real improvements to the shopping areas in Delfshaven. This conflict was never truly resolved, with each organisation retaining the focus they felt was more appropriate for the area and pushing forward initiatives to further their objectives.

* Much work had to be undertaken to change the mentality of the shopkeepers in Delfshaven. For years these people, in order to beat competition, tended to put their own interests before those of the group (retail association) as a whole. Although, some progress has been made on this front, there is still much that could be done to further the level of partnership. It was suggested that if a shopping street manager was appointed, then this person could facilitate the 'educational groundwork' which would be necessary for this purpose.

* The 'Praathulp' project was one which had to be handled carefully as cultural differences meant that the husbands of the women involved in the initiative were quite suspicious of the fact that their wives were getting an education, however necessary it was to making life easier within the community. Although, the women were encouraged as far as possible to continue their education in Basiseducatie (basic education) the cultural differences had to be respected if their husbands refused. These differences also became apparent when, under the Mens-en Werk scheme, the women could not work in bars where people would be drinking and smoking, on account of their faith. There is a notable focus on manual work and many women prefer cleaning to earn a living.

* The Safety Assistants Initiative is an important example of the implementation of a strategy which operates from the bottom-up to enhance the quality of life in certain neighbourhoods. The very presence of these assistants acts as a deterrent to prostitutes and drug abusers to loiter around the area. One simple example of how they can make a subtle difference is their duty to report rubbish bags lying on the street on days that bags are not picked up, so that the Roteb can remove them quickly. It is a well-known fact that if the rubbish is left lying, more people will dump their rubbish alongside that bag. It has been proven that the small tasks do make a difference.

9.11 DELFSHAVEN: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The initiatives facilitated through the Big Cities Policy and URBAN have provided the impetus for the major stakeholders within Delfshaven to turn this area, not only into a tourist attraction but also a pleasant district for its inhabitants. The area is on the eve of major physical changes to the environment, however, even with these changes and the renewed urge in local people to play their part in tackling the problems, Delfshaven still has a long way to go.

9.12 DUTCH CASE STUDIES: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

There are clear differences between Rotterdam and Amsterdam in historical, functional and cultural terms within their particular urban forms (Harding *et al*, 1996). These differences are also reflected in the schemes for social renewal which, in Rotterdam appear more advanced. The social renewal debate in Rotterdam has been instilled in both

professionals and the inhabitants of the city over a longer period of time with the underpinning ethos to implement policies which encourage 'workfare not welfare'.

The Big Cities Policy (BCP) is a major factor pertaining to the success of the various initiatives in the Bijlmer and Delfshaven. The policy has encouraged people to think in terms of a long-term process which is often something authorities do not have the patience to do. In this way the BCP encourages interventions which will benefit in the longer-term instead of implementing short-term solutions that have no lasting effect.

The BCP also reduces the sense of rivalry between different cities (particularly Amsterdam and Rotterdam) as it not only facilitates the co-ordination of an effective citywide policy, but also enhances the level of co-operation and partnership between the 'big cities' in the Netherlands.

The city municipalities have been a powerful influence within the Netherlands and the development of the BCP has encouraged these authorities to reassess their role and become less insular as not all the problems which are apparent in their area can be solved within the city boundaries.

The example of Delfshaven is notable in that a challenge was made to the rules imposed by the URBAN initiative by the Big Cities Project manager. Often, when the resources provided from URBAN come through, the target areas stretch themselves to satisfy the rules imposed as a condition of the URBAN dossier. It was felt that some of the initiatives were defined too rigidly before they were implemented and that they would eventually founder on the rules. A degree of flexibility is vital in projects for areas such as the Delfshaven to come to fruition and achieve their objectives.

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Chapter 10

Conclusions and Signposts for future policy direction in

Ireland

10.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter highlights the principal issues relating to urban social exclusion. It also provides an overview of the main aspects of the case studies and makes recommendations for future policy direction with regard to the tackling of social exclusion in Ireland.

Within the constraints indicated it is believed that the stated objectives of the thesis have been achieved and the overall research questions addressed.

10.1 DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY

The concept of poverty is one which has provoked much debate over the years. The wide range of ideas on how best to define and measure poverty has progressed from that of absolute, basic needs and relative poverty to the recent development of the concept of 'social exclusion'. This has been one of the most important factors in encouraging a fresh approach and an increased focus on the causes, effects and solutions to this problem. It has influenced policy makers to view the situation of those caught in the poverty trap as highly diverse and consequently to deal with the various social situations and problems as being dynamic, multi-dimensional processes. Donnison et al (1990) emphasised the recent concept of a 'new poverty' prevalent in Europe today. This 'new poverty' has evolved due to the influence of societal processes and changes active in recent years, for example, changes in family structure and employment, and an aging population in many countries. These alterations have meant that there are more people affected by social exclusion and these people are drawn from more varied sections of society. In the past,

deprivation and poverty were more prevalent in rural areas, however, earlier chapters have drawn attention to the increasing problems of deprivation within the urban arena as the process of urban expansion continues. The manner in which poverty manifests itself in an urban and rural settings is truly distinct²⁹ and the current worldwide urban shift has inevitably heightened the need for improved urban indicators for measuring the quality of life of the individual. The urgent necessity for more information and also for more transferable models of best practice in urban areas was particularly apparent from the case studies in Ireland and the U.K. Maragou (1999), interviewed for the Dutch case study, believed that the co-ordination promoted through the Big Cities Policy promoted the production and dissemination of information within and between the cities involved in the policy.

With the enlargement of the European Union to the east, it is vital that the Treaty of Europe is comprehensive enough to ensure that the problems of poverty and deprivation do not become deeply rooted within communities in the European Union.

The idea of the 'sustainable city' is one which is being promoted across Europe and the London study is one example of the desire to improve the quality of life in an area with a holistic approach involving all the stakeholders.

10.1.2 The Poverty debate

Many of the obstacles experienced in dealing with social exclusion stem from the widely acknowledged inability of academics and policy makers alike to agree on a comprehensive definition of poverty. The lack of a concrete base to work from does affect the approach policy makers and practitioners take, in terms of the scales and types

²⁹ There are specific environmental and societal developmental processes operating in rural areas which are not apparent or are displayed in alternative ways in urban areas.

of programme then implemented in the target areas. It is necessary that the debate on the concept and definition of poverty, which has become increasingly divisive over time, produces more concrete answers and thus creates some consensus on practical solutions to deal with the causes and not only the effects of urban social exclusion. Experience from the case study analyses, both in Ireland and the U.K. revealed that attitudes deriving from status and governance culture, displayed by the different actors involved created difficulties in arriving at a truly shared consensus between equals in respect of actions to be taken to tackle urban poverty.

Therefore, ways must be found to ensure that commitment and communication are achieved between people working at different levels such as was shown in the Dutch case studies (Chapter 9).

10.2 EUROPE

It is clear that Europe has a vital role to play in tackling social exclusion which extends further than simply financing the projects that bid for funding. Indeed, there is a stark contrast between the predecessors of the European Union, namely the EEC and EC, with their primary purpose of being an economic union and their successor the present EU which highlights the indivisibility of the social and economic spheres as a key element of societal sustainability, as reinforced by the Maastrich and Amsterdam treaties. The move to underline the importance of social issues at the European level is an integral aspect of implementing change in dealing with the many issues that social policy encapsulates. This top-down pan-European approach should advance to the point where it can merge with the work of those dealing with similar social issues at the national and sub-national

levels. There is still much to be achieved at each level and a need for a coherent mechanism to integrate the ideas, best practice and policy changes into a two-way system in order to ensure that there is a free-flow of information between the bottom-up and the top-down dimensions.

10.3 POVERTY IN IRELAND

One of the main points made in chapter five is the fact that despite the advent of the so called “Celtic Tiger”, there remain serious inequalities within Irish society. This is something which is only now beginning to be accepted as fact as people often ignore the negative aspects of something which is perceived to be completely beneficial for all in society.

Rural and urban poverty continues to be one of the most serious social problems in Ireland as inequality continues to deepen. The wide range of local development initiatives implemented, particularly since 1991, has resulted in a wealth of experience to draw on in designing new projects and has contributed to the likelihood of their success. However, the lack of any real integration between the partnership companies and local government is a major factor in hindering local development in Ireland.³⁰ The Dutch case studies (chapter nine) illustrate the benefits of harnessing the support of the major stakeholders through one policy (Big Cities Policy) which facilitates the implementation of a wide range of initiatives over a longer period of time. In this way, fragmentation and rivalry between areas and stakeholders can be reduced.

³⁰ The number of local development initiatives has been criticised as undermining the expanding role of local government.

It has become apparent in undertaking this research project, that to gain a meaningful insight into urban poverty within a particular country, the policies and programmes which have been implemented in response to the problem must be examined. Understanding these responses can reveal the perceptions of poverty³¹ which provide the basis for action and ultimately determine and drive the initiatives developed to combat poverty.

O’Cinneide (1987) stated that ‘there is a veritable policy vacuum as far as poverty is concerned’. However, developments since then such as social partnership, the area-based partnerships and the National Anti-Poverty Strategy have gone some way towards creating a greater awareness of social exclusion in Ireland and the policies and programmes which are actively in place to alleviate the problem.

10.4 BEST PRACTICE

It has been recognised that in order to tackle effectively the problems associated with urban poverty across Europe, the lessons learnt from these projects and policies which have been successful in improving the quality of life for their target groups should be disseminated both within and between different areas and member states. The concept of ‘best practice’ is one which is still gathering momentum and although there are structures in place to encourage the dissemination of ideas and information between community groups and development agencies, these need to be further developed.

In order to recommend an initiative or even some element of an initiative as ‘best practice’ it is essential that:

- it is innovative

³¹ It is widely accepted that any responses to poverty are dependent to a large extent on perceptions of the general cause of the problem. (Alcock, 1997)

- it makes a difference
- it has a sustainable effect
- and it has the potential for replication. (Maragou, 1999)

10.5 THE NATIONAL – LOCAL INTERFACE

One of the main issues which came to the fore through structured interviews with those involved in the actual day-to-day implementation of initiatives, was the concern regarding the increased tendency within Ireland to try and fulfil national policy objectives through relatively small-scale local initiatives. It was felt that this put undue pressure on these already strained local organisations in terms of the limitations of the staff and the time and resources which are required to participate fully within the partnership structure. The partnership companies are quite high profile delivery agencies, yet relatively low cost in the broad scheme of things. Therefore, as projects of central government, it could be said that they provide the government with the image of being extremely active in regard to tackling poverty and long-term unemployment.

As the issues of social exclusion and poverty have been pushed increasingly to the fore in Ireland and as the number of individual anti-poverty programmes increases, the absence of an overarching national urban policy has become more apparent. In comparison to the Dutch Big Cities Policy, which is a nationally co-ordinated policy which reduces the fragmentation and therefore weaknesses of policies and programmes developed at national level, the policy failures seem understandable working within the very flimsy framework which is in place in Ireland.

Although it is important to recognise the value of continuing to pilot new initiatives and encourage innovation, it is also equally important to ensure that all these solutions do not fall short in the longer term. There are many who would agree with the view that these interventions are no more than 'a series of small-scale projects which have failed to become integrated with national policies in any way'. (Dean, 1999)

Any continued failure to solve the problems of deprived and run-down neighbourhoods represents quite a costly failure. It is important to note that, ultimately, hundreds of small-scale localised initiatives can be implemented and improve the quality of life for the participants. However, without an effective national policy in place to deal with the structural causes of poverty, the overall, long-term impact which can be made is fairly limited. It is clear that national governance policies and macro-economic policies have as much impact on poverty as targeted interventions, if not more. Therefore it is important to balance the initiatives in the localities by making a concerted effort towards institutional reform and the implementation of more policies that work for the poor.

Although Ireland has considerable experience in local partnership, there still exists a significant inability to recommend workable practical policies and concrete reforms of existing policies (Rafferty, 1999). It almost goes without saying that in order to implement a complex, interrelated anti-poverty policy, it is vital to have the institutional framework to support it.

10.6 DEVOLVING POWER TO THE LOCAL LEVEL

From the examination of the structure of local administration in Ireland (Chapter 5) it is clear that Ireland remains constrained by the very centralised nature of its administration.

It would not be unfair to state that local government is the weakest statutory partner. Despite the development of strategic policy committees and growing social infrastructure, the Irish public sector remains reluctant to devolve power to local managers and central government retains a dominance in framing local policy. This is a very real barrier to change in terms of making anti-poverty policy in Ireland more effective. The local development agencies with what has been described as their 'democratic deficit' have been perceived as rivals rather than allies to the present system of local government and, as such, there has been limited involvement from elected local representatives.³² The fact that the gap between delivery agencies and the local authorities has not been bridged is a significant factor in contributing to the lack of coordination and integration of anti-poverty initiatives in Ireland. It is essential that Ireland continues on the path to devolving power to local government and that the new responsibilities are coupled with the resources and capacity building to ensure the longer term viability of local government reform. By developing local policy making, opportunities are subsequently created which allow for new methods of dealing with problems in deprived neighbourhoods to be established on a trial basis without committing the whole country to a particular course of action that may be unsuccessful.

10.7 LINKING ANTI-POVERTY PROGRAMMES TO NATIONAL PRIORITIES

One of the recurring main issues which came through in many of the case studies was that of 'governance'. Often it is effective governance which is the 'missing link' between any national anti-poverty effort and the level of impact which can be made upon the

³² Nordubco is one agency which has harnessed the support of the local authority by involving Dublin Corporation from the very beginning of the work of the coalition.

quality of life of the target group. If there are institutions of governance in place which are accountable and responsive, then national policies and programmes can be implemented more effectively. An acceptable level of governance will work as an intermediary to ensure that public policy can filter down to a 'grassroots' level.

Within Ireland, particularly, but also in the U.K., there is a significant detachment between localised anti-poverty initiatives and mainstream national policy. This is a significant factor as, despite the range and diversity of anti-poverty initiatives in place, it is national policy which still exerts a major influence over disadvantaged areas. The macro-economic climate will ultimately determine policy priorities, often at the expense of more controversial policies which are pro-poor, e.g. basic income.

10.8 POVERTY PROOFING

In order to effect fundamental change, any policies being implemented must be assessed for the impact they will have on those people who live in persistent poverty. It does not make sense to establish numerous programmes and initiatives to work at the local, neighbourhood level and then have any progress made undermined by national policies that reinforce the vicious circle in which residents of deprived neighbourhoods find themselves. Although establishing such a mechanism was one of the objectives of NAPS, in time it has become clear that the concept of poverty proofing is not perceived as a priority. In a postal survey carried out by the NESF to examine the implementation of poverty proofing, only four of the thirteen government departments that were contacted replied (Irish Times, May 22nd, 2000). Indeed it is almost seen as something which is in competition with other interests at government level (Fitzgerald, G Irish

Times, 2000). It is generally accepted that while some changes have taken place in recent years regarding the manner in which poverty is dealt with within central government, a general apathy remains which is a very significant barrier to change. This consequently adds weight to the argument to make poverty proofing a statutory requirement. There is much rhetoric regarding 'cross departmental links' in central government, however, the actual mechanisms for the implementation of these links have not been fully developed. It has become clear that there is a distinct need to provide the staff who will be responsible for representing their particular department/section with the various skills needed for effective participation in partnership and poverty proofing.

It is important that the government also opens up the lines of communication to the various local development agencies and community associations. Although Ireland does not appear to rely as heavily on its community and voluntary agencies for the provision of services as the U.K., there is still much progress to be made in terms of the level of input that these groups have in decision-making at central government level. It was surprising to learn that the levels of communication and horizontal links between the bodies covered in the Irish case studies were quite limited.

10.9 CONSULTATION AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCESSES

In recent years, there has been more recognition of the value of the knowledge and ideas that the inhabitants of particular localities can provide to local partnerships. It is important that the statutory sector recognises the increased workload of the community groups. To make a notable contribution, these groups need to be resourced properly in order to develop the community's own vision and respond to changes in their area. It is

now evident that voluntary and community bodies can often be more effective in programme implementation as by their very nature they can provide a more flexible and sensitive service than the state.

Fully involving these groups is more than just encouraging participation and consultation, it is about cooperation and in the long term this can reduce tension between those working in the local development agencies and local people.

From an analysis of the case study projects, a number of general factors that heightened participation in the locality can be identified.

Participation was strongest where:

- projects had been working in a particular area for a long period of time
- projects have had the participation and involvement of their target population as both the means and the goals of the activities
- projects brought the services of experts to the target populations³³
- projects which served a smaller catchment area and population
- project team members live alongside the target population.

Effective consultation and participation between project managers and local residents from the outset of an initiative will enhance the long term viability and increase the capacity of the residents to manage their area more effectively. One of the major challenges to effecting change in the Irish case study areas is the complex relationship between the local authorities and the target communities. The sense of apathy on the part of the local authority representatives and the lack of empowerment of local people combine to prevent a constructive relationship being built up over time. The Dutch case

³³ An example of this is Community Technical Aid (CTA) run by an experienced community worker from the area.

study projects were generally more effective in fostering a healthy relationship with their local authorities. It is particularly notable in the various projects in Rotterdam and Amsterdam (more so than in Ireland and the U.K.) that the majority of project workers were from the locality. This may have limited the sense of class based professionalism which has crept into many Irish and U.K. organisational structures in anti-poverty initiatives. From the Bijlmer case study, the benefits of encouraging estate residents to take responsibility and ownership for their community can be truly seen.³⁴ This sense of empowerment consequently led to gaining the support of the local housing corporations and thus the residents embarked on a regeneration exercise into which they had significant input. This is something that the local authorities in Ireland seem threatened by, indeed one of the views put forward by interviewees was that this community spirit and what it had to offer local development initiatives was largely being ignored and somewhat suppressed.³⁵

From the case studies, one issue which can be highlighted as contributing to the fragmentation and disintegration of initiatives is the tensions that sometimes exist and often grow between various stakeholders working within an area i.e. central and local government departments, community and government representatives etc...

It is important that all the representatives are recognised for the input they can provide and that where there are consultation mechanisms in place, the effort put in to participate and generate ideas is reflected in the type of policy or project which results. Within Ireland, there was significant disappointment and disillusionment with the final NAPS document, one of the most important poverty policy documents ever to be published. It

³⁴ This group of people were known as the 'Bijlmer believers'

was felt that the input of the community sector which had actively participated in the extensive consultation process was not reflected in the finalised policy document.

The Civic Forum which is still being implemented in Northern Ireland is yet another example whereby certain elements within a process feel threatened by the inclusion of such groups who previously had little or no influence over new initiatives, policies or projects. This feeling was mirrored to a certain degree in Dublin as it was suggested that the community sector within the DICP was still not fully accepted as an equal member on the board of the partnership. Indeed this opinion went further to suggest that this was also the case in terms of the social partners (Chapter 7 – DICP case study).

The Civic Forum should be noted in that, despite the negativity, many are excited by the possibility that the many community and voluntary groups throughout Northern Ireland now have a neutral arena within which they can pursue their relevant issues.

One very successful consultation process was that which was implemented in South Dublin URBAN Initiative. This four-step programme involved all stakeholders from the initial stages through to the finalisation of the Action Plan and as far as possible took into consideration all of the ideas and grievances put forward by the various participants. This case study in particular was a notable example considering the degree of consensus reached. A significant recommendation that could be made from this experience would be that despite the fact that it would make the consideration of a project or policy a more lengthy process, it would be most beneficial to complete a three or four stage consultation process. Indeed, if a significant level of consensus is reached, any initiative or policy implemented is more likely to succeed in the longer term. A different yet also quite

³⁵ This was a view put forward by representatives of three diverse, publicly funded community organisations.

effective method of consensus was established in TAPP (Chapter 8, London case study) which worked like a co-operative with the strategy being effectively 'owned' by all the stakeholders and 'listening exercises' being regularly carried out within the community. The Netherlands has also experimented with a wide range of innovative practices in consultation. Both the Big Cities Policy and the URBAN initiative work both at a citywide and 'grassroots' level to reduce the gap between these two sets of people who, ultimately, work towards the same goal. The Big Cities Policy also works to reduce the sense of rivalry, which is almost an inevitable occurrence between different areas and regions, and establishes dialogue and consultation as a necessary and expected requirement.

10.10 TRAINING

Many lessons have been learnt through operational trial and error of various projects in Ireland and indeed across the E.U. One very important point that has become clear over time is that there is more to truly improving an area than focusing on job creation. In order to place people in jobs that they will actually stay in it is important that any training or education measures implemented as part of an overall development initiative are targeted as far as possible to match the capacities of the local unemployed and the opportunities which are likely to arise in that particular locality. In many cases, a stepping stone approach is required whereby people who have been long term unemployed can prepare slowly to become economically active through enabling mechanisms and confidence-building activities. In this way, such people are then more likely to get more out of any work placement/learning course in which they are placed. This was an aspect

of policy which is well developed in the UK through the creation of employment zones. This combination of an area-based initiative with individual “job accounts” (see chapter 6) to encourage flexibility has proved to be very successful although this is a policy which is still in the very early stages. The scheme offers a degree of control over the path the individual wishes to take and is also pro-active in terms of the involvement of local partnerships.

This type of framework needs to be supported by better links and employer networks in project areas. Courses can then be tailored to the needs of employers to ensure the uptake of those who have been provided with the necessary skills.

10.11 NEW MANAGEMENT PARADIGMS

It is also clear from the examination of the different case studies, that variations in the type and style of management used to oversee initiatives have a very significant impact on the level of success and the specific outcomes which may occur in the area as a result of spin-off opportunities generated.

The partnership companies which have grown up in Ireland since the 1990s are one example of just how far-reaching a new approach to area management can be. As discussed in chapter five, the OECD (1996) identified these organisations as examples of transferable best practice specifically because of their tripartite structure and the existence of top-down / bottom-up linkages. This initiative was enthusiastically accepted as a chance to establish ‘local communities as the primary movers’ (Craig, 1994).

Although the partnerships have faced many problems over the years, it must be noted that their creation facilitated the increased participation of the community sector and enabled many initiatives and research projects to be carried out.

They are a prime example of how innovative experiments in the approach that is taken to managing areas of disadvantage can facilitate dialogue and enable many other small scale initiatives to be tried and tested. It is within this culture of partnership where most valuable change has taken place.

Often initiatives which originate within a target area and are designed for that specific area are more likely to be imaginative, highly flexible and specifically tailored to the particular needs of that area in a way that cannot be achieved when 'importing' initiatives from national level or from other areas of disadvantage.

One of the most notable features of Nordubco (chapter seven) is the make-up of the management structure of the organisation. In a similar style to that established in the Bijlmer area of Amsterdam³⁶ (chapter nine), Nordubco set out to create an overarching body on a larger scale incorporating all the relevant organisations that would have some influence or input into the target area. Thus Nordubco is unique, in that, it brings together three area partnerships, Dublin Corporation, Fingal County Council as well as senior representatives from business, politics, academia, state and semi-state bodies and other local organisations in a way that few other organisations have in a working body.

Ireland needs to continue to ensure that the managerial dynamism which was encouraged throughout the 1990s continues despite flagging support for the partnership strategy. This

³⁶ The various projects implemented under the auspices of the URBAN programme were closely supported and supervised by the city councils and other major institutions as they had already been deeply involved in the regeneration of the area for many years.

can be carried out particularly through the work of the social partners and the networks of local organisations operating at grassroots level. The diverse range of opinion and practice was both the strength and weakness of the partnerships and should be encapsulated within new organisations being created in the future.

10.12 THE POLICY RETHINK

As discussed in chapter five, many academics and practitioners (Lee, 1997; Bannon and Quinn, 1996) believe that Ireland still lacks an effective policy framework for urban development. According to Garret Fitzgerald (Irish Times, 5/8/00) the action currently being taken by the government is falling quite short in terms of the scale of the problem of persistent poverty in Ireland and this failure of both the economic and political systems to manage the distribution of increased resources is unacceptable.

The implementation of a framework, encapsulating a successful set of interlocking urban programmes with realistic targets and indicators, such as that put forward in the London study (1999), would go far to reverse the vicious circles of decline apparent in so many urban areas in Ireland.

10.13 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Both documentary and field research undertaken for this project have established that social exclusion in European urban areas is an evident and measurable reality constantly evolving in the light of changing technological and socio-economic forces. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that public policy initiatives, whether at E.U., national, regional and local levels, have the capacity to address the resultant problems albeit with varying

degrees of success. The challenge for policy makers and affected communities alike is to work together to overcome the obstacles that have been shown to hinder the successful outcome of programme initiatives.

Key issues identified which are significant for the future policy agenda in Ireland include:

- Embracing the concept of the sustainable city where an improved quality of life for the individual is the main aim. An essential element in the achievement of this aim is adopting an holistic approach, involving all the stakeholders.
- To create strategic and long term links which will encourage commitment and communication between people working at different levels.
- The need to adapt and work to create a coherent mechanism to ensure the integration of ideas and best practice. This involves cutting across traditional boundaries and obstacles to the free flow of information between key agents and therefore reducing fragmentation.
- Making it the primary task of national government to provided an effective policy framework incorporating an overarching urban policy which will address the structural causes of poverty. The macro-economic climate determines policy priorities and this is an area which is particularly vulnerable to changes in these priorities.
- The implementation of effective governance at the local level remains is an important factor in addressing the detachment between local initiatives and national policies.

- Incorporating the concept of poverty proofing as a priority and perhaps a statutory requirement to ensure that new policies and initiatives are assessed for the impact they will have on those who live in persistent poverty and that existing initiatives are not undermined by national policies.
- Encouraging effective consultation and participation as a mechanism to enhance the long term viability of projects at the same time as empowering local people by including them in the decision-making process.
- Creating initiatives which focus on training and education. Such initiatives are vital as part an overall development programme as they can instil a sense of worth in individuals who have been long term unemployed. This stepping-stone to becoming economically active approach can often be more sustainable in the long term.
- Changing the nature of initiatives and programmes by encouraging managerial dynamism and innovative experiments in new organisations being created in the future.

This research demonstrated that ‘best practice’ can be identified, disseminated and transferred across national and transnational boundaries given the appropriate cultural settings, institutional framework and political will.

In order to apply any lessons learnt it is important that they are not lost within the system. It is necessary to research, develop and implement effective mechanisms to ensure that relevant innovations can influence those who ultimately design and introduce policy into the national and local context in Ireland. There are notable similarities in the experiences

of social exclusion across Europe and many of the problems have common roots. However, the differences ensure that simply copying the solutions is not possible. Rather any innovative methods should encourage other communities to raise questions, even if the answers are different.

The wide array of programmes which have been implemented, not only in the case study areas, but in thousands of areas throughout Europe should link in with a commitment at regional and national level which leans towards the long term. In this way, the active policies can be re-worked to gear towards prevention instead of simply managing poverty.

Regarding Ireland, the phenomenon of the 'Celtic Tiger' has also been described as the 'clockwork mouse' (See chapter 5). With this in mind it is important to ensure that, although the poor will always be with us in some form, as the era of the Celtic Tiger draws to a close, structures at national, regional and local level are reinforced with renewed commitment to improving the quality of life for those people who find themselves marginalised in today's 'booming' economy. The 2003 UN Human Development Report has criticised the Irish Government's failures such as the poverty gap and persistent levels of inequality, which remain prevalent in Irish society today.

To answer the research question, the evidence of this dissertation is that urban poverty and social exclusion are amenable to public policy intervention and there are demonstrated models of best practice. Of particular significance in this case are the partnership models in Ireland and the Big Cities project in the Netherlands.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: List of Interviewees

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Odran Reid	Nordubco
Quentin Olivier	Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA)
Eileen Mullan	Brownlow Community Trust
Pauline Geoghegan	European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN)
Mick Rafferty	Community Technical Aid
Maria Tyrrell	Dublin Inner City Partnership / Larkin Centre
Sharon Cosgrove	URBAN (Urban Manager)
Anna Lee	Combat Poverty Agency
Andrew Condon	Tallaght Welfare / Belvedere Youth Club
Pauline Mangan	URBAN – Jobstown Improvement Scheme
Joseph Larraghy	National Economic and Social Forum (NESF)
Fr. Michael Mernagh	South Inner City Community Development Association
Olivia Fitzpatrick	Lisburn Enterprise Organisation
Dr. Liz Dean	TAPP / WHAP
Sarah Russell	Centrepoint
Alison Kenny	Local Futures Group
Mark Mulgreavy	De Paul Trust
Teresa Maragou	URBAN Co-ordinator
Joop Goudberg	ATD-Vierde Wereld
Gerard Engebrink	Rotterdam Public Social Service

Appendix Two

Appendix 2: General Interview Format

- Do you believe that there are more innovative practices at work to tackle social exclusion?
- Do you feel that area-based partnerships and localised responses are an effective model to tackle social exclusion?
- Do you feel that their existence points to a weakness of existing institutions?
- What changes would have occurred in terms of deprivation if these initiatives had not been introduced?
- Do you believe the booming economy in Ireland has affected the most disadvantaged, particularly urban areas?
- What national policies do you feel are complementing the work to tackle social exclusion on the ground?
- What are the major problems that affect your area? How do you prioritise?
- How do these problems differ from those experienced in other areas?
- What are the distinctive features of the project in which you are involved?
- What are the principle strengths and weaknesses?
- What is your view of the NAPS / NESF / Social Exclusion Unit / Big Cities Policy?
- What is the role of the business sector in the anti-poverty initiative?
- Do you believe that there will always be people who do not want to be helped?
- From your experience what constitutes an effective model to tackle social exclusion?

Appendix Three

Appendix 3 – The Deprivation Index

<u>Characteristic</u>	<u>% of pop.</u>
1. Has not had a weeks holiday away from home in last 12 months	53.6
2.(Adults only). Has not had a relative or friend to the home for a meal or a snack in the last 4 weeks	33.4
3.(Adults only). Has not been out in the last 4 weeks to a relative or friend for a meal or a snack	45.1
4.(Children only - under 15) Has not had a friend to play or to tea in the last 4 weeks	36.3
5. (Children only) Did not have a party on last birthday	56.6
6.Has not had an afternoon or evening out for entertainment in the last 2 weeks.	47.0
7. Does not have fresh meat (include. meals out) as many as 4 days a week	19.3
8. Has gone through one or more days in the past fortnight without a cooked meal	7.0
9. Has not had a cooked breakfast most days of the week	67.3
10. Household does not have a refridgerator	45.1
11. Household does not usually have a Sunday joint	25.9
12. Household does not have sole use of 4 amenities indoors: flush W.C, sink or washbasin and cold water tap, fixed bath or shower, and gas or electric cooker)	21.4

Source; Townsend 1979, p.250

Poverty in the UK - Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1979

Appendix Four

Overall Deprivation in Ireland

Combined Deprivation Score
Source: Haase 1995

- ◻ most affluent areas (1145)
- ▨ middle ground (1146)
- most disadvantaged areas (1145)



Appendix Five

Appendix 5: Dublin Inner City Partnership Case Study Information

OUTPUTS, OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS OF THE DICP ACTION PLAN

When considering the original objective of the DICP which was to combat unemployment in the inner city, perhaps the most significant contribution is the development of community managed inner city Local Employment Services (LES). This is one of the main initiatives through which the Partnership directly responds to the various needs of the long-term unemployed inner city residents and has provided access to over 2,500 jobs. The LES effectively acts as a recruitment and support agency for inner city job seekers and employers, linking both groups and also has a full-time co-ordinator, based in the Partnership offices. This guidance service plays an important role in providing the intensive career guidance for those clients who require specific skills to assist and speed up their progression and access to the labour market. The LES also works with local employment organisations to secure local labour clauses for new developments in the inner city. Examples of such agreements include Temple Bar Properties and the Dublin Docklands Development Authority which had a clause to ensure that at least one fifth of employees were from the inner city. (Progress Report, 1997-1998)

New enterprise support

The two local pre-enterprise services supported by the DICP are based in the Fountain Resource Group and the Larkin Unemployed Centre. Both these centres provide training, information and general support for long-term unemployed clients who wish to develop business ideas and become self-employed. The services also include help with funding applications, securing workspace, accounts, business plans, registration for the Area Based Allowance (ABA) provided by the Department of Social

Community and Family Affairs and other general advice. Support for commercial enterprise has resulted in the creation of 800 new jobs/businesses for unemployed residents.

Childcare schemes

The overall objectives are to assist parents to return to education and work, to provide local employment and to encourage the development of pre-school provision. One of the main initiatives in this area was the **childcare subsidy**. This was designed to impact on costs for long-term unemployed parents trying to access education and training options to be more prepared for the job market.

The development of ten new childcare centres and the creation of an **Inner City Childcare Network** which is made up of a wide range of community service providers have also impacted on the level and availability of childcare in the inner city. The main aim of the network was to provide support to local groups and ultimately develop a strategy containing a specific statement of policy, recommendations and overall proposals for the development of childcare structures.

(Action Plan, 2001-2006)

Education

The range of educational needs within the inner city calls for a number of initiatives at a variety of levels.¹ Perhaps the three most significant educational initiatives the partnership have facilitated or co-funded are the **Primary School Initiative (PSI)**, the **Dublin Schools Business Partnership** and the **Dublin Inner City Schools Computerisation (DISC)**.

¹ These include pre-school, after-school, second level, third level access and adult education.

The PSI is a programme of training and support for teachers, pupils and parents in ten inner city schools to promote active participation by schools in their own development and to test new models of intervention at primary level. Practically this has meant training for both teachers and parents, the provision of additional resources such as computers and extending activities for children to increase the emphasis on drama, languages, art and excursions. (Progress Report, 1997-1998)

The Dublin Schools Business Partnership of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce was established in 1991 and is co-funded by the DICP. Schools and businesses agree a programme of activities which is practical and job focused and includes career guidance, advice on curriculum vitae and interview preparation. In this way the pupils will be better equipped to go through the process of applying for, being interviewed and placed in a new job. The scheme also organises visits to businesses, job placement and communication skills training and mentoring and it is hoped that with these provisions, the programme caters adequately for the variety of needs of the pupils.

The DISC project is a notable scheme in promoting the importance of technology for young people today. DISC links the primary, secondary third level and business sectors with the National Centre for Technology in Education in a major investment in technology for inner city schools.² The overall aim of the project is to upgrade twenty-two inner city schools to high specification in multi-media computer capacity over a three-year period. This project will impact on over 4,500 pupils and 250 teachers.

² The key agents in this project are the Partnership, Dublin Institute of Technology, the PSI schools and Siemens Nederland

Other outputs with regard to adult education include the publication of the Directory of Adult and Community Education in Inner City Dublin and adult education and literacy projects for 2000 local people.

The partnership provided funding for the **Dublin Adult Learning Centre (DALC)** to enable the centre to function fully as a basic education centre for the inner city area. (Strategic Action Plan, 2001-2006)

Environment

As part of the overall strategy for the inner city, the DICP committed itself to the promotion of and the active improvement in the quality of the physical environment within the inner city. Community Technical Aid (CTA) plays an integral part in this aspect of the DICP and has been contracted by the partnership to provide architectural support to a number of refurbishment projects.

Developments include the refurbishment of the ICON premises, the acquisition of a building by South Inner City Community Development Association (SICCCDA) for conversion into training workshops, the development of a building for use as a community resource centre and the refurbishment of a factory into a multi-purpose community resource centre. (Progress Report, 1997-1998) These community-based refurbishment projects are very significant in that they involve the people from the locality in 'visible' projects for the improvement of their area of which they can be proud.

Developing local leadership

The DICP works hard to encourage the localities within the catchment area to assert themselves and improve the community-based infrastructure. This subsequently

enables them to enhance their capacity to make demands, determine their priorities and direction and have a substantial input into locally based integrated development. In accordance with this strategy, the partnership has assisted the Ballybough Redevelopment Action Group (BRAG) to advance a project which will employ a Community Project Officer to facilitate the development of a local community centre and an overall strategic plan for Ballybough. The partnership has also funded a capacity building programme specifically for community leaders and has assisted the community to develop an Employment and Environmental programme approved under the Dublin Employment Pact. (Progress Report, 1997-1998)

Research and policy development

The DICP emphasised the importance of research on a wide range of social issues as a way to identify areas of concern, direct resources into the appropriate projects and carry out evaluation on an on-going basis. A number of significant research projects has been carried out by the DICP.

Such reports and studies keep the DICP up-to-date with growing problems within the catchment area and on the development of appropriate mechanisms to tackle these problems.

These outcomes and developments have been significant in translating the improvements in the Irish economy into real benefits for local people in the inner city. The summary of progress above highlights the fact that the DICP has made notable inroads into raising awareness of the needs of unemployed people. It has also extended the range of services and initiatives available for these unemployed people and for all people from disadvantaged community who may be 'at risk' of

unemployment. The wide variety of schemes, projects and initiatives implemented and co-funded by the partnership makes it difficult to examine every project. However, table 3 illustrates the specific number of places provided by the main employment, education and enterprise programmes within the DICP area.

Partnership Action Plan – Outcomes 1997-2001

	1997-2001
Local Employment Centres (Placed)	2,500
Community Employment (Throughput)	5,000
Enterprise Support	
Commercial	800
Education	
Adult Education	2,000
Total	10,300

Adapted from Progress Report, 1997-1998 and Strategic Action Plan 2001-2006

FUNDING

Half of the overall funding for the Partnership has originated in Brussels and the projected total of the DICP's funding over the four year Action Plan period amounted to £11,280,000 with the annual requirement reaching £2,820,000. There has also been direct investment of £4 million into various programmes from 1996 to 1998. Sabel (1996) has emphasised the fact that the Partnerships are in a unique position to take advantage of the resources of the various funding bodies. These include the national public sector bodies, the patronage of the social partners, and the local expertise of community groups, without being directly answerable to any of them. In this way, the

Partnership assumes a distinctive character that theoretically should avoid any self interest in the use of resources, with a mutual dedication from the board to work to improve the particular target areas for the partnership.

Appendix Six

Appendix 6: Areas covered by the South Dublin URBAN Initiative

Clonsilla	Fallagh
Bawnogue	Killinarden
Deansreath	Brookfield
Balgaddy	Jobstown
Clonburris	Fettercairn
Neilstown	Avonbeg
Rowleagh	
Quarryvale	

Appendix Seven

Appendix 7: South Dublin URBAN Case Study Information

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE OF SOUTH DUBLIN URBAN INITIATIVE

The management structure of the URBAN Initiative is a vital component of the overall implementation strategy. The Steering Group is made up of 16 representatives from a number of organizations such as South Dublin County Council, Tallaght and Clondalkin Partnership and the County Enterprise Board. Through the inclusion of representation from this range of agencies, it is hoped that complementarity and consistency will be maintained with other programmes in the area thus ensuring that duplication of resources and efforts is avoided. (Annual report, 1997) Five co-ordination groups were established in 1997, each had agreed programmes of work, set performance indicators and targets for each action and set timetables for implementation of programmes. To carry out particular actions, projects groups, local management groups, neighbourhood planning groups and task groups were established to ensure the creation of new relationships and work practices which would be complementary to each action. Also incorporated within the management structure is a team to manage the overall programme and several contracts between URBAN and other agencies for the implementation of various aspects of different projects within the programme. (Annual report, 1997) The management structure was set up in a way that would ensure maximum benefit for the overall programme in efficiency and effectiveness terms by avoiding the creation of new structures in cases where it would be possible to build upon or adapt existing structures. (Nexus, 1996)

MAIN FEATURES OF THE SOUTH DUBLIN URBAN PROGRAMME

The URBAN Initiative contains three critical features which were highlighted in the Mid term evaluation. These are:

- the pursuit of effective management of deprived urban neighbourhoods involving innovation, networking and sharing experience;
- the creation of new and appropriate models of urban governance; and
- the facilitation of those models to address more effectively the changing environments within disadvantaged neighbourhoods. (Mid-term review, June 1998)

Ultimately the long-term goal of the programme is to achieve a lasting improvement in living conditions in the target areas and to do so in an integrated and sustainable manner. This is to ensure that a process is set in place which can act as a framework for future developments after the URBAN programme has finished.

South Dublin Action Plan

The first major information output on URBAN was the 1997-1999 Action Plan which was launched in April 1997. This contained the broad objectives for the South Dublin initiative and highlighted the wide range of activities which the programme supports.

They are:

- to tackle the problems associated with socio-economic exclusion.
- to support economic and social revitalisation.
- to renovate (or replace) obsolete infrastructures and facilities.
- to improve the environment.

- to encourage and support the active involvement of all parts of the community, in particular marginalised groups such as travellers, women and disabled people in the URBAN programme.
- to undertake innovative actions and projects.
- to promote and adopt co-operative and participative working arrangements and structures to implement the programme.
- to follow the 'guiding principles' and the proposed actions which arose out of the consultation process. *
- to develop and test new approaches to the provision of services by the local authority in particular through developing new consultative and participative structures. (URBAN Action Plan, 1997)

The range of measures and projects provided through the various sub-programmes demands that the projects implemented through URBAN can add to current outreach activities of mainstream service deliverers and build on and extend the work already carried out by the area-based partnerships.

During the consultation stage, concern was expressed on the issue of exactly how the initiative would relate to the plans and activities of both the Tallaght and Clondalkin Partnerships and this encouraged the Steering Group to emphasise characteristics of URBAN which remain distinct from that of the Partnerships.

These were summarised under two main aspects in that:

(1) *URBAN offers the opportunity to translate lessons learned from more innovative local development initiatives into more formal policy and practice.* (Nexus, 1996)

The initiative claims to complement and enhance the work and activities of the area-based partnerships in the disadvantaged areas and build upon the structures and procedures established under Sub-Programme 1 of the Local Development

Programme in creating a 'local development structure'. One of the key objectives of URBAN is the development of new models of local governance with the ultimate view of establishing new relationships between structures of representative and participative democracy. The emphasis on the principles of partnership, participation and integrated development are part of the process to establish a new framework within which a range of factors reinforcing social exclusion can be tackled using the appropriate agencies.

(2) URBAN provides the opportunity to broaden the multi-dimensional approach.
(Nexus, 1996)

The URBAN programme functions on the basis that both the causes and effects of social exclusion have social, economic, institutional and physical dimensions to them and although the OPLURD also recognises these linkages, there are limitations in addressing them satisfactorily within the Operational Programme. Under Sub-programme 2, support for initiatives is measure-based in that the partnerships can qualify for funding when the specific measures fall under ERDF or ESF funding criteria. This creates drawbacks due to the fact that the transnational aspects tend to be restricted to specific development programmes or actions whereas URBAN provides the opportunity to promote exchanges regarding the development process itself, which is arguably a more important contribution in terms of the sustainability of the programme. As URBAN is a European-wide programme, this factor enhances the level of transnational exchange thus creating a wealth of good practices that can be drawn upon. (Nexus, 1996)

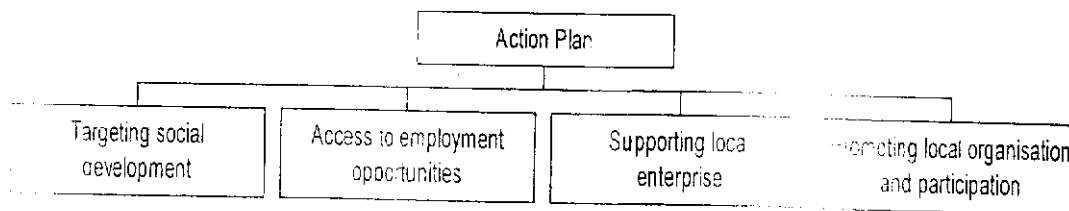
One of the underlying goals of URBAN is to initiate a multi-faceted response to address the important connections between the physical and non-physical dimensions of exclusion in a way that is often sidelined in other programmes.

Target groups in the South Dublin Programme consist of the following:

- long term unemployed and those experiencing educational disadvantage
- young unemployed/early school leavers
- community groups
- travellers
- women
- disabled

The ability of URBAN to reach the target groups identified within each measure / project is a vital measure of the success of the programme. However, the extent to which this has been achieved is difficult to measure completely as infrastructural projects have, perhaps predictably, been slower to reach target groups than other projects such as community development or capacity building. Figures from the two annual reports (1997 / 1998) of people participating in programmes provide some indication of the extent to which target groups are being reached in the URBAN area. For example, at the end of 1997, more than 54 employment opportunities were created through measure one (Enterprise and Employment), five people went into employment through measure two (Training and Education) and one community infrastructure project was completed.

The projects within the Action Plan largely stem from six measures which are specified in the Operational Programme URBAN.



FUNDING

The URBAN Community Initiative funds programmes in a total of 118 urban areas. Eighty-five programmes were launched in June 1994, and a further 33 programmes were launched in a 'second wave' in 1996. URBAN is co-financed by two of the European Community's Structural Funds: the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF). The total EU contribution amounts to approximately ECU891 million of which around 82% is provided by the ERDF and 18% by the ESF. The estimated total eligible investment for URBAN is ECU1.8 billion. Other funding sources include national, regional and local authorities, as well as the private sector and social organisations. The Monitoring Committee, following the advice of the E.U Commission, put forward a 50 / 50 split for the two funds and this has caused difficulty in south Dublin regarding the breakdown of the overall spending.

It is clear that the most important measure, in terms of expenditure is Community Infrastructure, which by its very nature will incur more spending. Despite the higher distribution of spending, a high proportion of the infrastructural projects are not at as an advanced stage as would be hoped in south Dublin.

The Mid term review (1998) highlights the major postponement in spending which is not unusual in Structural Funding programmes. In considering the late start to the URBAN programme and the level of consultation, perhaps it is understandable that these delays have occurred. However, more than half of the spending in south Dublin was due to occur in 1999. This is a worrying problem due to the timescale of the URBAN programme and may have an impact on the overall implementation of

projects with the possibility of considerable under-expenditure. (Mid-Term Review, 1998)

Appendix Eight

Appendix 8: Nordubco Case Study Information

MAIN FEATURES OF NORDUBCO

Nordubco seeks to ensure that sustainable economic and social development takes place in the region by encouraging the horizontal integration of local area development with planning decisions at an urban level. Although the company does incorporate education and community development into its overall 'vision' for the improvement of north Dublin, this does not come across as the dominant thrust behind the company. The main focus is centred on unlocking the development potential of various areas, encouraging infrastructural investment, developing the idea of 'village centres' and implementing an environmental strategy. Nordubco does not neglect issues of training and education; instead it aims to combine the socio-economic challenges with environmental objectives in a long-term process of developing all aspects of the area.

The key objectives of Nordubco are to:

- advance the conditions for economic and social development within the region
- seek tangible support for major development projects and infrastructural improvements in the region
- develop a strategic plan for the region
- improve the quality of life and attractiveness of the area for its inhabitants
- complement the work of the area-based partnerships. (Nordubco, 1999)

Part of the mission statement of Nordubco is that it will work to ensure that an adequate infrastructure is put in place in north Dublin which, in turn, will encourage those involved in the planning of key national projects to consider the area as a potential development zone.

To match such development, Nordubco has also highlighted the need for investment in people. In the past, employers setting up businesses have found difficulty in accessing an educated, creative and mobile labour force from this area. It is therefore a vital element of any strategy for the region to ensure that local unemployed persons can attain the necessary skills to take advantage of employment opportunities as they arise and also so that employers will have a skilled local employment base to recruit from. (Nordubco, 1999) This is another aspect of the work of Nordubco and is embodied within the overall objective to create a strategy for north Dublin.

NORDUBCO ACTION PLAN

The authors of this report developed it in a thematic way to bring a different perspective and emphasis to development issues for the sub-region. The aim of this document was to stimulate debate and help to form a collective view on the development of north Dublin and ultimately bring forward realistic recommendations which would be innovative and assist in overcoming social exclusion. The report is a thematic document dealing with eleven main issues which are:

- Development
- Governance and community development
- Environment and living conditions
- Village centres
- Transportation
- Drainage, water and telecommunications
- Positive development zones
- Industry and enterprise development
- Education

- Areas of development potential
- Development projects (Nordubco, 1999)

The Action Plan and the issues it encapsulates highlight the distinctive challenges facing north Dublin. There is a number of objectives within each theme which underpin the overall vision for the area. One of the most urgent areas of concern for Nordubco is the infrastructural deficit which severely limits the level of economic and employment potential which can be achieved. Nordubco has become involved in the infrastructural improvement schemes, which are underway and those still in the process of being designated for development, in order to ensure that the developments are beneficial to the community and the area as a whole.

Although all of the issues are particularly relevant to encouraging continued, sustainable economic growth to promote jobs, perhaps the most significant aspect of the Action Plan in terms of this study is the theme dealing with governance and community development. Support for community development is an integral part of the ethos of Nordubco and the plethora of projects and initiatives in this arena has enhanced the role of Nordubco as an umbrella organisation spanning across a number of partnerships and other organisations. It is hoped that Nordubco will complement the work of the community development organisations and by helping the communities help themselves, yield real material benefits for disadvantaged residents.

Appendix Nine

Appendix 9: Brownlow Community Trust Case Study Information

Notable projects within Brownlow Community Trust Poverty Programme

Chrysalis women's centre

This centre was opened in March 1993 and is located on the Burnside estate. It was developed by the Burnside Centre Planning Group³ and exists to facilitate meetings and various training courses for women which will provide skills to enable these women to participate more fully in the labour market. The centre is managed by women from the locality, illustrating the success that can be achieved when the energy of local people is harnessed and employed to fuel change in their area.

Children's policy forum

This is an interagency forum that was established in early 1992. The objectives of this body were to:

- * Provide a workplan for play and childcare facilities within Brownlow
- * Liase with statutory agencies, voluntary and community groups
- * Promote and support innovative childcare and play ideas
- * Help with the raising of finance
- * Promote better healthcare for children
- * Improve awareness of the childcare and play policies of the statutory agencies
- * Encourage participation in the childcare and play opportunities for minority groups

³ This group consisted of local women, representatives from the SH & SSB, the Burnside Centre Planning Group and Play (1995)

It must be noted that some years after the establishment of the forum, despite support for many groups and projects, the issue of childcare facilities was still lacking in some areas of Brownlow. (Bailey *et al*, 1995: 114)

Craigavon unemployed workers' centre

This project is incorporated under the umbrella of the Unemployed Project, the objective of which was to enable the local unemployed people of Brownlow to compete on an equal footing with others outside the area. This centre was opened in 1987 and the BCT now offers its complete support to its work. It is located in a house on one of the estates, this is a notable element in trying to encourage local people to access the services it offers which include counselling, education, and training, campaigning and a benefits take-up scheme.⁴

Health project

As Brownlow figured quite badly regarding many health issues, this area became a priority for the BCT. With low birth weights, high incidences of asthma, heart disease (which is a prominent health issue in Northern Ireland anyway) and cancer, the area needed this project which takes into consideration the multi-dimensional nature of deprivation. There was a variety of schemes established which included the Leisure Centre Initiative to increase access to the leisure centre for those on low incomes and also community development and networking with other health projects in Northern Ireland.

⁴ This take-up scheme is estimated to have brought over one million pounds in extra benefit payments to the area

three sites are the school, the careers service and the voluntary service agencies and there are particular wards and boroughs which should be focused on in implementing the prevention strategy.

Research has shown that homeless young people come disproportionately from highly deprived wards. By firstly taking the index of deprivation and the proportion of children in lone parent families, 99% of the time, it is usually possible to identify all the wards of 'origin' of homeless young people.

Appendix 16 illustrates the most vulnerable ward in each borough with its rank on the London index and within these areas of high risk, other factors must be taken into consideration. The sites for engagement must take on specific roles and be tailored to meet the needs of the particular area.

Schools

Schools with high rates of exclusion in areas of deprivation are those which must be targeted.

'In my experience, teachers can only provide a certain level of help. Most young people who are at risk of being excluded often view teachers as a symbol of authority and therefore will not use them as a resource.'

(Russell, 1999)

This observation led to the suggestion that an independent service within the school would be more appropriate which would include training in life skills and the placement of a school counsellor.

Appendix Ten

Appendix 10: Overview of Centrepoint Case Study

CENTREPOINT

Centrepoint provides a comprehensive range of services for young people at risk, with housing being at the core of the organisations remit. As well as addressing the effects of homelessness on vulnerable young people, Centrepoint also tackles the causes. The ultimate goal for the variety of projects is that the services provided will offer direct provision and/or access to employment, training and education giving the end result of a feasible exit route out of the no home/no job, no job/no home cycle for the individual. As part of the prevention strategy which underpins the Centrepoint plans, the organisation has played an important role in shaping New Deal policies. New Deal is the biggest single Government investment in young people in the last 30 years (£3.2 billion) and presents a distinct opportunity to meet the needs of young people who find themselves socially excluded.

One of the overall aims of Centrepoint is to ensure that the young people who end up on the street every year, do not become the next generation of the long-term street homeless. In order to achieve this, the emergency shelters that are set up to prevent anyone sleeping rough are used as a stepping stone to placement in longer-term projects. These projects are tailored to the needs of the individuals and help young people develop the skills and knowledge they need to live independently.

'Centrepoint provides a secure place to stay with a strong support network within which the individual will be listened to. We want to instill a sense of confidence and empower

these kids to get out of this vicious circle. It is also important to educate the public and breakdown stereotypes regarding homeless people. (Russell, 1999)

The range of services that this organisation provides has established it as one of the main bodies for tackling homelessness in London. An important element of the work of Centrepoint is the continuing lobbying activities and policy research to influence issues at the national level where welfare reform can make a notable difference to the risks young people are exposed to.

TRENDS UNDERLYING THE WORK OF CENTREPOINT

- 37% of the young people admitted to Centrepoint are 17 years old or younger
- Between 1997 and 1998 over one quarter (28%) of young people at Centrepoint had been in care
- 8 out of 10 (75%) of young women surveyed in Centrepoint hostels left their last home due to factors beyond their control
- 52% of Centrepoint's residents who were runaways from home before the age of 16 had experienced sleeping rough.
- Nearly half (45%) of young people surveyed at Centrepoint came from black or ethnic minority groups. This compares to an overall population belonging to ethnic minority groups of 5.5%.
- 42% of young people surveyed at Centrepoint between 1997 and 1998 were women
- Almost one third (30%) of the surveyed young people at Centrepoint had no income at all.

(Centrepoint, 1998)

These results are the facts which tailor the responses and structure the projects that Centrepoint sets up. Provision is made for support in the immediate, medium and long term and there is a wide range of programmes dealing with each area of need. Some of these are discussed below.

SERVICES IMPLEMENTED THROUGH CENTREPOINT

Direct Access – Off the streets project

'This is the point from where Centrepoint really began. We have come a long way, from simply being able to give someone a bed for a night to having a variety of programmes designed to get the person off the streets for good.' (Abraham, 1999)

Centrepoint began in 1969 with an emergency shelter in St. Annes Church in Soho. This project continues today and provides twelve beds for individuals who would, alternatively have to sleep rough. Laundry services, bathroom facilities, a good meal and someone to talk to in confidence are all facilities that the individual can make use of. An important aspect of this project is the services which are brought in in the evenings for the young people who have come to the hostel. The services include the Hungerford Drug Service, doctors and other medical professionals and the London Connection Streetwork team and having this type of support network available on site has proved to be very successful.

'Sometimes you won't get [the young person] to talk to anyone at all but on many other occasions, having the professionals within the hostel, in a neutral environment I suppose, will encourage the person to get the help they need.' (Russell, 1999)

This type of programme copes with the short term needs of those who find themselves having to sleep rough. However, having the variety of services available can help steer these young people in the right direction to finding a medium/longer-term solution such as finding a hostel place and getting set up in a flat. This ensures that the individuals are reached before too long spent on the streets.

INTAKE – Medium support hostel

This programme was a homeless project which remained independent of Centrepont until 1990 after which the two merged. Intake was run as a collective unit and first began as part of the West End soup run in 1966. It became a direct access hostel for young people focusing particularly on a target group of young ex-offenders. The hostel is run as a medium support unit for 16-25 year olds who are generally quite self-sufficient. Reinforcing the specialism in ex-offenders is the contract which has been set up with the Inner London Probation Service which commits the hostel to house and work with six of their clients at any one time. One of the notable features of this project is the high staffing ratio which, although difficult to constantly maintain, allows a close level of support to help develop a variety of life skills which include budgeting, cooking, cleaning, interpersonal skills and the opportunity to deal with any emotional problems. Essentially, Intake acts as a halfway house for young people from particularly difficult backgrounds who would otherwise end up on the streets, to find their feet and secure the next step in finding accommodation and/or a job. A key worker is allocated to each individual who familiarises himself or herself with the situation and arranges the appropriate services to avoid the risk of the individual

becoming homeless once again. One of the reasons for the successes of the medium support projects is that the young people are kept at the hostels for a period of time until the keyworker feels that they have a grasp of the rules for tenancy and the self confidence to live independently. Even when these young people have made the break from the hostel, they can still contact staff with any problems that they might encounter, for example, problems with housing benefit or income support or with a college course.

'It is a clear trend that our keyworkers are more successful with the female residents and this is something that must be addressed in the future. From Intakes involvement with the London Borough of Islington who fund two beds in the hostel, there is significant potential for the local authorities to become more aligned with some of Centrepoin's programmes.'

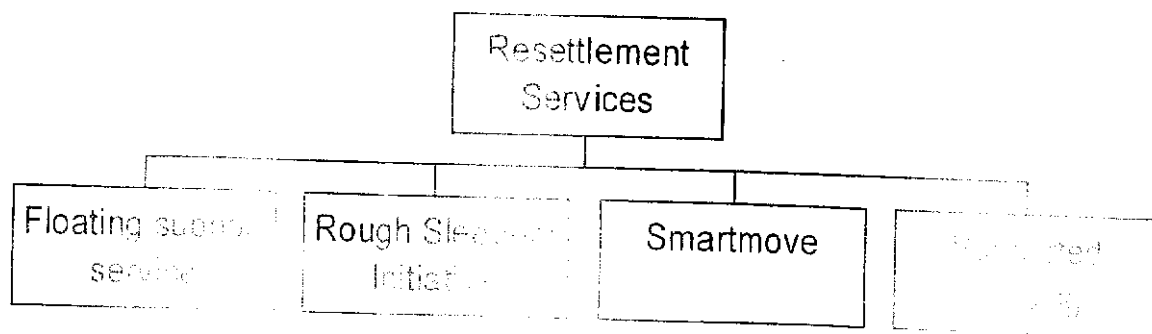
(O'Connor, 1999)

This project is significant as having the London Borough of Islington involved has set a precedent for local authorities to become involved in these projects for the homeless.

Having funding for two beds allows for individuals to be taken in for a six week assessment and care period from which point they will move on to the most appropriate accommodation. This is an area which must be looked into further as it presents a secure source of funding for the hostel for a significant period of time.

Resettlement

Centrepoin has a distinct resettlement service within its structure which plays a vital role in enabling young people to move on from the experience of homelessness and settle into



their own home. The resettlement team works with residents across Centrepoint's projects developing a programme around the individual's specific housing, training and employment needs. There are four different services provided within the resettlement structure.

Floating support service

This project deals specifically with care leavers in the Westminster area who need support to move into more permanent accommodation. This scheme was developed through partnership between the Peabody Trust, Paddington Churches, Network Housing Association and the Westminster Leaving Care team which meant that a variety of service providers were involved in the initiative. Members of the floating support team spend two hours a week with individuals who have previously been in care and try and encourage them to acquire the skills they will need to fulfil a tenancy agreement. This normally lasts for a six-month period and is a crucial co-dependent period that will make the difference to an individual in the longer term.

Rough Sleepers Initiative (RSI)

This is a Government funded initiative and involves working with younger people who have been on the streets of central London and who are living in temporary hostels but who are ready to live in their own flat. These individuals are given support to find accommodation in the first place and then follow-up help to deal with any tenancy, social or employment issues as they arise. A floating support scheme which mirrors the one described above is also in place to support the initiative.

Smartmove

This is a pan-London scheme targeted at young people who are independent but who need a support system in accessing private rented accommodation. The initiative provides practical, financial support by guaranteeing individuals a months rent in advance and the deposit to secure the accommodation. In this instance, Centrepoint acts as a franchisee of CRISIS to provide this rent bond to help young people who, otherwise would miss out on private rented accommodation. Westminster Christian Council supplies the funding for the rent bond, and approximately thirty young people have been housed under the scheme.

Supported Housing

During 1998, the services of Centrepoint were restructured into four geographical areas: North/North West; East/ North East; South and Central. This placed the organisation closer to the point of delivery and therefore in a better position to deliver its broad range of services at a local level. This was particularly significant for the housing team who were dispersed to four geographical locations:

'The team can now work with other actors who operate at the grass roots level in a way that was not feasible before. This has created more of an outreach service that decentralises the work of Centrepoint. The target group can therefore be contacted more effectively.'

(Jones, 1999)

The housing service provided by Centrepoint is now more integrated with other projects which are operating on the ground thus a more efficient, horizontal structure has been

created to prevent young people drifting into Central London and into the 'homelessness circuit'.

Education and Training

Empowerment is one of the core elements in combating homelessness which underpins all of Centrepoint's initiatives throughout London and, indeed nationally.

One of the main ways to instill this sense of self-confidence within the young people who access Centrepoint is to fill the gaps in their education and training. Recently, training and employment has taken a higher profile within the organisation due to the establishment of the new directorate which oversees all activities and takes the lead in the new educational developments. This new department has resources which include training facilities and a recruitment service, a peer education group and two education workers. The remit of the department also extends to incorporate life skills training which is also an important element of empowering the target group and can ultimately determine how well the young person manages a tenancy and job success. The objective is to make education, employment and training an accessible option for all young people within Centrepoint.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

An important part of the work of Centrepoint is the policy and research department which campaigns to influence the policy decisions of government, local authorities and other bodies. It is vital that any call for change is backed up by fact and this particular department has produced a number of important research publications on the causes and

prevention of youth homelessness. The current policy areas covered by this department include:

- Access to housing
- The benefits system
- Employment and training
- Young people's involvement
- Care leavers at risk
- Prevention of homelessness

The research and policy development unit is also important in the other services it delivers. Within its remit is a responsibility to disseminate information on good practice to agencies around the country and to provide policy briefings to a wide range of people ranging from Centrepoint staff to MPs. It is also responsible for training and consultancy support to agencies and groups and for the continued statistical monitoring and analysis of the young people coming to the organisation.

FUNDING

Centrepoint relies heavily on the support of volunteers to staff many of the schemes and initiatives throughout London such as the 'Off the Streets' programme and also those who get involved in fundraising. The organisation has secured the support of a wide range of funders including a number of statutory authorities.

1999 has seen a distinct focus from Centrepoint on the expansion of the National Development Plan and the £1 million received from the Diana; Princess of Wales Memorial Fund has been largely allocated to securing a new West End direct access project thus taking pressure off existing facilities.

ASSESSMENT

* Having the resources to provide a range of training courses within Centrepoint has increased the likelihood of homeless individuals who access the service to find a job and permanent accommodation. The courses are tailored to meet the specific needs of young people and are designed to incorporate aspects of life skills as well as skills that would be useful in finding a job.

* By linking up with New Deal, Centrepoint can ensure that the national policy actually has a real impact on the young homeless. Having a significant input into the type of strategy that is developed, the chief executive of Centrepoint is chairman of the task force for New Deal for young people, is valuable in ensuring that the strategy incorporates the needs of the homeless.

'Those who are homeless, who are the very group of people needing government support the most, are the same people who find themselves unable to access the benefits or enroll in programmes because of their situation. The policies targeting young people often miss the homeless young people.'

(Mulgreavy, 1999)

* From the structured interview it was made clear that local authorities could play a more pro-active role in projects for the homeless both in terms of funding and in providing better quality administrative data. A clear problem for Centrepoint is the unavailability of

data from housing records and social service records which can be correlated to identify particular wards and patterns of residence for young people who are at risk of becoming homeless.

* The organisation of Centrepoint is well thought out as the variety of hostels and services allow for the young person to be assessed and placed in the appropriate environment for his/her particular needs. The person can also be taken through a step-by-step programme to a point where they are resettled but can still access the services of Centrepoint. Although this does put pressure on staff and resources, in the long term it does prevent these young people from ending up back on the streets if they experience problems resettling.

* Centrepoint has maintained a high profile over the years thus attracting funding and support from large organisations and service providers. Thus Centrepoint has become involved in a wide variety of projects and it was suggested that the organisation had extended its remit too far, to the point that it was in danger of providing a number of average facilities rather than fewer facilities with a higher quality service.

PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES

In order to impact on the level of youth homelessness in London and indeed nationally, it is vital to identify the young people most at risk *before* the age of 14. By doing this, a scheme of prevention rather than curing the symptoms can be implemented. From the structured interview it was suggested that three separate sites would be appropriate areas to establish specific programmes which would work to prevent youth homelessness. The three sites are the school, the careers service and the voluntary service agencies and there

are particular wards and boroughs which should be focused on in implementing the prevention strategy.

Research has shown that homeless young people come disproportionately from highly deprived wards. By firstly taking the index of deprivation and the proportion of children in lone parent families, 99% of the time, it is usually possible to identify all the wards of 'origin' of homeless young people.

Appendix 16 illustrates the most vulnerable ward in each borough with its rank on the London index and within these areas of high risk, other factors must be taken into consideration. The sites for engagement must take on specific roles and be tailored to meet the needs of the particular area.

Schools

Schools with high rates of exclusion in areas of deprivation are those which must be targeted.

'In my experience, teachers can only provide a certain level of help. Most young people who are at risk of being excluded often view teachers as a symbol of authority and therefore will not use them as a resource.'

(Russell, 1999)

This observation led to the suggestion that an independent service within the school would be more appropriate which would include training in life skills and the placement of a school counsellor.

Voluntary agencies

Research has shown that the majority of young homeless (75%) will contact and use the services offered by voluntary agencies. Although many organisations were particularly helpful to the target group, it was suggested that these voluntary groups should actively pursue and target a younger age group through schools and youth clubs where individuals can find out where to go and how to contact the various services.

Careers Services

The careers service was also suggested as a suitable site of engagement as many young people contact the service seeking advice on a variety of issues. The careers service, if managed efficiently can be run as a one-stop shop providing help in regard to accessing education and training courses, benefits advice and the provision of help that will enable the target group to secure employment, for example, interview skills and c.v writing.

This preventative action, in the long term is more likely to make an impact on the levels of youth homelessness. The emergency shelters deal with the outcomes and symptoms of a problems which is more complex, runs deeper and must be tackled at an earlier age.

CENTREPOINT: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In devising programmes for youth homelessness, Centrepoint is an organisation which covers all scenarios, from those who have been on the streets for months to those who have been homeless just a day. Some have criticised Centrepoint for extending its remit too far, and therefore running the risk of providing a wide variety of average services

Appendix Eleven

Appendix 11: Thamesmead Anti Poverty Project Case Study Information

The role of the TAPP

The survey and discussion work revealed quite a lot of dissatisfaction with the level of services provision in the area. Suggestions for specific services which should be made available to people on low-income families were as follows:

- legal services (housing, welfare, equal opportunities and human rights)
- benefits advice
- information/services concerning substance misuse
- advocacy services
- initiatives supporting a return to the mainstream economy
- support services and initiatives addressing racism and sexism
- specific services for the Chinese/Vietnamese communities (Dean, 1999b)

These suggestions and the ideas for community development initiatives to tackle poverty and the problems associated with it were all considered by the TAPP. A misconception of the local residents was that the TAPP could provide paid workers who would help develop local people's skills, fundraise for the future, set up a volunteer network, and help to develop community amenities and activities. However, in reality, time, resources and the remit of the project limited the extent to which these ideas were realised.

One of the main aims for TAPP was to plan a workable anti-poverty strategy to cover the catchment area involving the main local organisations. A lead partnership of these

organisations was subsequently formed to develop and implement this strategy to address the multiple problems in localised areas.

AN ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY FOR THAMESMEAD AND ABBEYWOOD

The partnership put forward the idea that to tackle the problems of social and economic disadvantage a series of linked resources centres across three sites should be developed. In this way, local needs could be identified and addressed where they arise. The proposed resource centres would be within walking distance for residents, accessible to disabled people and would offer a variety of activities and services based on the needs of the immediate locality. (Dean, 1999b) It is envisaged that a variety of organisations will be involved in different capacities to deliver activities and services within each centre. The resource centres will be linked with each other in a democratic organisational structure and there are general features which will characterise each centre. These key features for the centres are:

- They will be easily accessible by local people of any age including whole families.
- The emphasis will be on 'user friendly' approaches, incorporating a holistic outlook towards local people's needs.
- Users at the centre will be able to be engaged in a helper/volunteering scheme offering training and personal development should they wish. The position of volunteer/helper comes with equal responsibility and accountability as the workers within organisations.
- Networking between users, helpers and volunteers, and between sites will be actively developed and encouraged.

- Users, helpers and volunteers will be represented within the decision-making structures of the organisation, and their active participation will be encouraged and maintained.
 - Services will be provided by various agencies.
 - The organisation of the centres will be sufficiently flexible to allow the organic development of services and initiatives over time dependent on identifiable localised need.
- (Dean,
1999b)

There would be a core number of services and initiatives that will be common to each centre however it is hoped that the centres will develop individually in a way that complements local need.

A spin-off expected to result from the establishment of the resource centres is the growth in the creation of community businesses. As each site evolves, so a proactive agenda to draw down resources will be implemented and it is hoped that the additional funds would create new jobs as well as bring expertise to support the development of innovative local initiatives.

DELIVERY STRUCTURE

It was proposed that the multi-agency partnership involved in the initial set up of the strategy, as well as any other nominated or interested parties, should take on the role as the Steering Committee to implement the resource centre project.

It was hoped that the project will be flexible enough to allow the key staff within each site to try innovative ways of working with local people and thus develop new methods of accountability and new partnerships. These staff will be led by a project

co-ordinator who will liase with the other centres and facilitate cohesion and interaction between the sites.

Appendix Twelve

Appendix 12: Bijlmer Case Study Information

A Functional town

The concept behind the original plan for the Bijlmer was to construct it as a functional town. This idea involves creating a town in which living, working, traffic and recreation were separated.

A plan was put forward which proposed the construction of high-rise (10-floor) deck access apartments laid out in a honeycomb pattern with large green spaces between the blocks. This plan also included bicycle and pedestrian routes and car traffic was to be led above ground level to multi-story car parks.

A number of factors came into play that prevented the original plan being brought to completion. Budget cuts affected the plan and in order to increase the capacity of the tower blocks, the number of floors was increased and dwelling units were also incorporated that were not originally intended. Financial constraints resulted in reducing the numbers of lifts and long galleries were created to provide deck access to the apartments. Concessions were also made regarding the car parks which had to be connected later via parking decks with avenues. The clear failure to create the necessary infrastructure had a significant effect on the population of the area as they found themselves isolated. Rapid and efficient links to the city (via the metro) were only realised much later.

The first dwellings in the Hoogoord block were completed two years later in 1968 and Amsterdammers attracted by the promise of a spacious dwelling in the 'town of the future' began to move out to the Bijlmer.

The growth of a Disfunctional town

A major blow to the realisation of the plan at the Bijlmer as originally intended was the launch of the national policy regarding 'overspill towns' in the early 1970s. Tens of thousands of low-rise dwellings were constructed in the new towns of Lelystad, Purmerend and Almere and for many of those who originally moved to the Bijlmer, these residential developments were much more attractive than the apartment blocks. This, combined with the slow population growth, high rents and social problems already manifesting themselves around the blocks led to many of the units being left vacant in the early seventies.

The composition of the population was also skewed in that there were large numbers of one-parent families, single people and couples without children moving there and a smaller number of families than originally foreseen. The Bijlmer became an area with a bad reputation and many people moving there did so simply because they had no other option. These people were also the first to leave if the opportunity presented itself.

Another factor which impacted upon the development of the Bijlmer was the influx of Surinamese people into Holland. In 1975, Surinam⁵ became independent and many Surinamese inhabitants, who possessed Dutch passports until then, chose to hold their Dutch nationality and moved to the Netherlands. Many people also immigrated from Netherlands Antilles around this time and tended to settle in the Bijlmer. The influx of migrants caused overpopulation in some of the blocks (particularly in the Glijphoeve block) and as many did not have employment, the social problems in the area intensified.

⁵ Surinam was once Dutch Guyana

This 'functional town' failed in many respects; it was expensive, had insufficient services, unsafe car parks, drug abuse and a high crime rate. All these factors interacted to ensure that people would not stay in the area and the high turnover of people subsequently created an unstable social structure.

THE PUSH FOR CHANGE

As the image of the Bijlmer deteriorated, a small group of local people (sometimes referred to as the 'Bijlmer believers') campaigned to the authorities and the housing corporations to complete the Bijlmer by following the original plans without the influence of financial constraints. It was decided that in order to construct the rest of the Bijlmer and the adjacent Gaasperdam effectively, it would be necessary to return to urban planning principles developed earlier. This led to the construction of four-story blocks with individual access to just four apartments and also low-rise houses and to improve the situation in the high-rise area, the rents were lowered and the car parks were made free of charge. Gliphoeve was vacated and completely renovated with significant improvements being made. Extra lifts were installed, the long galleries were closed and empty storage spaces on the ground floor were converted into homes with gardens. The large green spaces between the blocks were used effectively in that plots of land were issued to residents so they could grow their own flowers and vegetables.

A notable development in the area was that the housing corporations⁶ came together to jointly found the housing corporation Nieuw Amsterdam which gained control of nearly all the apartments in the Bijlmer. Consequently, this corporation was able to write off the losses on the apartments which amounted to millions of guilders. It was

believed that this dramatic move would be the solution to the Bijlmer's problems. However, the proportion of empty apartments still continued to rise to 25% and Nieuw Amsterdam's losses began to mount up. It was in response to the increasing pressure that a committee for the renewal of the Bijlmer was set up. This was comprised of three partners, the Nieuw Amsterdam housing corporation, the district council of Zuidoost and the City of Amsterdam. In 1992, a phased urban renewal process was set in motion which was based on social, spatial and management renewal. Figure 6 illustrates the variety of projects that have been implemented as part of this process and which improved the quality of life in the Bijlmer for its residents. The renewal of the Bijlmer is a lengthy process and it will take several years for the area to rejuvenate itself. The socio-economic projects which have been established in recent years are the result of the work and resources of the URBAN programme which works in conjunction with the Big Cities policy. Some notable examples of these projects are discussed later in this chapter.

Brief summary of the urban renewal projects in the Bijlmer

Spatial renewal	Demolition of two apartment blocks in the Ganzenhoef area (800 dwellings)
	New shopping centre incorporating markets, shops, offices and social, cultural and health facilities
	Demolition of multi-story car parks creating an area for over 1000 low-rise dwellings
	New entertainment centre incorporating a multi-screen cinema, concert venue and cultural centre
	Renovation of the sports centre
	Renovation of the oldest apartment block in the Bijlmer (Hoogoord)
	Renovation of residential surroundings
	Repair and part demolition of Groecheveen ⁷

⁶ One housing corporation refused to become involved in this development as it was felt it was not economically viable.

⁷ This is one of the apartment blocks that was badly hit by the plane crash on October 4th 1992.

Social Renewal	Emphasis has been placed on creating a social mix by having 1/3 of homes in the social rental category, 1/3 in premium rental and 1/3 owner occupied
	Construction of a regional technical training centre
	Establishment of an adult education centre in Ganzenhoef
	People due to be rehoused are visited to discuss their housing arrangements. These visits will also be used to offer residents help in finding training
	Residents (mainly immigrant) are involved in construction projects that also provide training
	Large numbers of long term unemployed residents are trained and employed in neighbourhood watch duties in semi-public areas of the blocks
Management Renewal	Project 'Ideal Building' has been established in a number of apartment blocks. This initiates intensive supervision and employs staff from Nieuw Amsterdam in the buildings to combat vandalism
	The Neighbourhood Improvement Bureau has been active in involving the residents and other stakeholders in discussions on how to maintain and use the public spaces

Source: Based on data from Nieuw Amsterdam woningcorporatie (1998)

THE URBAN INITIATIVE PROJECTS IN THE BIJLMER

The European Community and the Dutch National Government together contribute Dfl. 26 million to the URBAN programme for the socio-economic renewal projects in the Bijlmer. The European Community funds for URBAN are drawn from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF) and the government funds are drawn from the budgets for Urban Policy (Grote Stedenbeleid). The funding made available has facilitated the implementation of a variety of projects that would not have been possible without the resources made available from URBAN.

SUMMARY OF URBAN PROJECTS UNDERTAKEN IN THE BIJLMER

Fort Kraaiennest

The construction of a supervised playground near the Kraaiennest shopping centre in the Bijlmer was one of the first projects to proceed as part of the URBAN

programme in this area. Up to approximately 3,300 square metres of public ground was identified to be rearranged.

In the construction of the playground, certain factors brought up by the children from the flats⁸ had to be taken into consideration. This included the fact that within many immigrant cultures it is customary for the older children to look after the younger children therefore facilities for the older children (tennis courts) had to be included in the overall design.

In staffing 'Fort Kraaiennest', three supervisory jobs were created through the 'Mekert'⁹ job scheme which allows for flexible opening hours. These supervisors are also young employees and this ensures that a favourable relationship is maintained as far as possible between the staff and users of the facility. The supervisors of the playground are under the management and supervision of the community centre 'De Bonte Kraai' which is nearby.

Otrobanda Project

The objective of this project was to create a safe haven for a problem group in Kraaiennest. Shop owners and local residents have long been unsettled by the disturbances caused by a group of 150-200 people (men and women aged around 25) hanging around the shopping centre. These gangs of people tended to come from a troubled background, were low skilled and in a weak social position and they were often involved in small-scale criminal activities such as some drug abuse and petty theft.

The city district council sought the help of the police, community workers (Buurtwerk Zuidoost) and the Nieuw Amsterdam housing association to devise an initiative

tailored to the needs of this group. Thus the foundation was laid for the 'Otrobanda' project which aimed to offer this group of people a place of their own and to use this as a base to begin to tackle the problems of the individuals. With the URBAN subsidy, a clubhouse was built to house this project. An innovative aspect of the initiative to make the clubhouse a 'safe haven' was that 11 members of the group were given the responsibility of the management of the project. They were also given the opportunity to obtain the 'Social Hygiene' certificate in order to carry out activities in the clubhouse involving food and drink and this paved the way for these members to move on and take up job opportunities or further education. This continuous flow of club staff to permanent employment or education allows others using the facility to receive the same opportunities. In this way a positive path is created whereby people can come into the project, use the various services such as job counselling and find their way into permanent employment.¹⁰

Integral drug relief scheme

Drug abuse in Amsterdam Southeast has become a significant problem and the individual relief organisations have found it difficult to cope. The Help for the Homeless, Streetcornerwork and the Jellinek Clinic for Alcohol and Drug Abuse, with the help of URBAN funds, have been able to build a collective shelter in the Bijlmer to tackle this problem. Since the construction of the semi-permanent shelter, these organisations have come together to offer joint integrated drug relief. The shelter is centrally located in the high rise area of the Bijlmer where the problems tend to be more concentrated.

⁸ The children from the surrounding area had a very significant input into what decisions on the playground to incorporate

⁹ The Melkert scheme creates new jobs in the public sector which are financed by the state

¹⁰ It has been found that the members often have good prospects within the official labour market

In the past, one of the main problems regarding combating the drug problem, was that the various organisations were spread very far apart, making it difficult to assess the clients' problems effectively. One of the main features of the scheme is the central client administration in the new relief centre which facilitates better management of the clients and the process of referral. Having the various elements of drug relief geared together in a joint effort has been extremely beneficial to both the clients and those running the organisations.

Starting a business in the Southeast (II)

Following the success of a project which was launched by the Institute for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (IMK), funds were sought from URBAN to implement a repeat initiative. The project was seen as an example of best practice as the first attempt at 'Starting a business in the southeast' had enabled 31 long-term unemployed residents to set up their own businesses.

The follow up project worked in much the same way, that is, to help long-term unemployed people with training to start up their own business. In order to encourage the full participation of the residents, the training location was very accessible to residents of the southeast. An in-depth recruitment process was carried out as almost 100 people could enter the programme. Thirty-five candidates completed the basic training which incorporated various aspects of business training and 24 people reached their objective, that is, to set up their own business. The different sectors entered into included computing, import/export, hat design, childcare, consultancy, advertising, gardening, holiday travel, insurance, architecture, wholesale trade, shops and catering.

There were many participants who did drop-out from the course during various phases, however, as far as possible, they were supported by the job centre in finding jobs or other training that was in some way connected to interests which emerged during the course. This proved to be a successful pathway to employment for those who dropped out as it opened up other opportunities and interests. It is hoped that 'Starting a business in the southeast (III)', can be continued on and improved following the success of the two previous projects.

Services centre Southeast

This was a pilot project initiated by Centrum Ontwikkeling Projecten (COP), the project development centre, to provide job opportunities for the long-term unemployed and contribute to improving the living environment within the Bijlmer. The URBAN funds were sought to improve the facilities at the service centre (to furnish and equip offices and workplaces). It is hoped that this improvement can enhance the success of the initiative as an example of best practice and that the project will then be extended to other city districts.

In improving the living environment, the Service Centre has a team of employees who are trained to provide a professional advice service to residents who are concerned about the prevention of burglary and this service is supported by a technical team who carry out the proposed security measures. Assistant caretakers, often from the locality are employed by the Supervision, Maintenance and Environment section of the service centre to assist the caretakers of the Nieuw Amsterdam housing corporation with their work. The emphasis is on the surveillance of the grounds surrounding the flats, the passageways and the public spaces.

In terms of security, the service centre employs flat supervisors and other security staff to carry out a range of duties. One example is that home health visitors are escorted to the flats when visiting patients in the evenings and there are plans to offer this service to family doctors.

The maintenance crew of the services centre is now liaising with the Environmental Technical Service (Milieutechnisch Bedrijf) and a team of consultants to work with residents on a variety of environmental matters. There are already plans to set up a number of waste reception points.

The salary costs are met through the 'Melkert' job scheme and the services centre has made it one of its objectives to help the people acquiring work experience through the scheme to find regular employment. A number of contractual agreements are being settled with companies and it is expected that at least 50% of the employees will obtain permanent employment.

Grunder project

In keeping with the theme embraced in the services centre project, a scheme to manage and improve the living environment of the Grunder neighbourhood was put forward by the Nieuw Amsterdam housing association. The main challenge of this project was to encourage residents in both enhancing their social contacts and their involvement in the improvement of the quality of their living environment.

Generally, introducing the issue of neighbourhood management has proved extremely difficult as the social problems in the area set in motion a vicious circle that results in very little involvement with the neighbourhood at all. Many people moved to the Bijlmer out of necessity and not by choice as they had nowhere else to go. The residents tend to be immigrants in a very precarious social position and as many are

long-term unemployed, many residents find themselves with severe rent arrears and often have to move out. With such a high turnover, it is difficult to facilitate any level of social cohesion in the neighbourhood. It was decided that the best way to tackle the problem was to work on each high-rise separately and the Grunder flats were chosen as the pilot project because it was felt that it was this neighbourhood which epitomised the variety of problems in the Bijlmer. The problems in this neighbourhood were above average¹¹ and would therefore be the hardest test for the initiative, hopefully making it more effective and lessons could be learnt from this phase to apply in other areas of the Bijlmer.

The Intercultural Service of Amsterdam was called in to work with the residents and encourage them to become active in the community. An innovative aspect of this scheme was harnessing the involvement of a large number of voluntary residents, each representing a particular section of the building, recruited to act as intermediaries. Surveillants (through the Melkert job scheme) were placed in the lifts and hallways to help the residents feel safer in their neighbourhood and the children of the residents were also involved. A number of the young people were appointed to a flat brigade which works to keep the flats tidy and clean. The pilot project has also managed to get nearly all the stakeholders involved in the management including the housing department, the city district and the police.

Public Comprehensive School, Bijlmer

The Open Schoolgemeenschap Bijlmer (Public Comprehensive School) has distinguished itself as the only meeting the needs of the community regarding the education of its children but also by playing an innovative role in fulfilling various

¹¹ 96% of the residents are immigrants (33 nationalities).

functions in the neighbourhood. Examples of this include opening the assembly hall at the weekends to hold church services and cultural activities.

The dated school building had become an increasing hindrance to this function and the subsidy which facilitated the essential renovation of the classrooms was not sufficient to complete the renewal of the assembly hall, the music class and the multimedia library which play important educational functions within the community.

It was the subsequent contribution from the URBAN budget that enabled the school to carry on with the renewal of the assembly hall and to furnish and equip it for community theatre performances. This assembly hall is let out to church groups at the weekends and the new music studio is used for music lessons and is made available for concerts performed by music clubs. The multimedia area of the school, primarily intended for the schools own pupils, is also open after school hours to pupils of other schools who can use the facilities within the scope of homework class.

This Public Comprehensive School has been hailed as extremely progressive in terms of enhancing the concept of an 'integral school' with facilities for the entire community. Since the URBAN funds were granted and the improvements which have been made, the school has acquired the status of a 'forward line school' for the introduction of information and communication technology. This is yet another aspect of the facilities in the school which will benefit the entire community as they are made available.

Appendix Thirteen

Appendix 13: delfshaven Case Study Information

SUMMARY OF INNOVATIVE PROJECTS WITHIN DELFSHAVEN

The residents panel in Bospolder/Tussendijken

The role of residents in the renewal of an area is generally accepted as vital to the concrete resolution of problems in such areas. For this reason, a residents panel¹² was established to represent the Bospolder/Tussendijken area and after many meetings and discussions, recommendations were made to the URBAN committee through the preparation of an action plan.

A huge problem in the area has been caused by drug abuse which was reinforced by some landlords. The residents in the area do not have the capacity to deal with this problem themselves. However, an inventory of all the 'shady' landlords was made, thus giving the problem a higher profile among residents and local authorities and providing the information for the authorities so they can act sooner.

One of the first recommendations carried out was the refurbishment of an electricity transformer kiosk. Residents and council members painted the building with bright colours, based on a design by a local artist, making it less of an eyesore and something of which the local community could be proud.

Other recommendations made were to construct speed ramps, provide better lighting for the area, improve play areas for the children and to build a jetty for anglers.

Praathulp (talk help) Project

This project has been in existence since 1994 and trains migrant mothers of primary school children, who speak little or no Dutch, in conversational lessons in Dutch. The

¹² This consists of residents from Zoutzandderstraat, Grote Oudekerkplein and Mathenesserdijk

classes are carried out in different locations in the neighbourhoods of Bospolder/Tussendijken, Spangen and Schiemonnd and originally began with four groups of twelve women. Nowadays, at least fourteen groups start every school year. The lessons are given in the primary schools making the classes extremely accessible for these women. These classes give the participants more freedom and independence and give them the opportunity to socialise with other women in the community. Some women do progress to the regular language lessons of Basiseducatie if their husbands permit them.

The Driehoekschool

This school has been a Brede school (broad school) for some years now. This implies that, apart from education, the school provides a number of other activities.

Through the Praathulp (Talk help) the school tackles a prevailing problem in the area namely the low level of education of the parents and the low number of parents who speak Dutch. For this reason, many children in the school face a significant disadvantage in terms of language as well as a number of other socio-economic problems. These issues all combine to slow down the development and education of the migrant children as compared to an average Dutch child, children at the age of four are already two years behind. The effects of the Praathulp become apparent over time when it gets easier to talk to the mothers about the progress of their child in school and other related issues. This type of contact is essential for both the parents, the children and the school.

The ethos behind the Driehoekschool is that the parents and the school share the responsibility for the children's upbringing and education. Parenting skills are therefore provided within the school which emphasises the need for interaction

between parent and child, good meals and parental assertiveness. A range of activities is organised for the children including sports, dance projects, music, gardening and a facility where they can borrow toys.

'This is a great school project for parents and children. I get a good feeling when I see children coming in the doors that speak three words of Dutch and I see the same children leave with advice on doing pre-university education.' (Babyn, 1999)

Gezonde Jeugd (Healthy youth project)

This initiative is aimed at the promotion of the improvement of the physical and psycho-social health of children and young people for the long-term. A sub-section of the Healthy Youth project is the Klein zijn (being a child) in the Bospolder/Tussendijken area. The aim of this is to eliminate the restricting factors which affect children's leisure time such as too little space or the wrong playing material. In trying to solve this problem, cycling lessons and sport and games gatherings are organised in which all the children can participate. Another part of the Healthy Youth project is the Thuis-op-straat (home in the street) scheme. There are squares in the neighbourhood that have a central function largely as a play area for the children and this initiative concentrates on appointing square wardens, sport and game coaches and supervisors. By taking these steps it is hoped that the space in the squares which is limited, will be managed more effectively. It is hoped that the struggle that usually occurs for playing space (where the weaker children usually lose out) will end as the supervisors determine which age group can play on the square at a particular time. This project has brought together a broad network of people from a variety of backgrounds within the community such as teachers, community workers, social and cultural workers, school doctors and police officers.

In keeping with improving the situation of the children in the neighbourhood a 'Jonge Kinderen en Veiligheid' (young children and safety) project was set up with the intention of reducing the number of accidents both inside and outside the house. The initial stage in establishing this scheme involved carrying out a number of surveys and interviews regarding hazardous situations mainly with children and parents. On the basis of the results, an action plan was produced containing a number of recommendations. It became clear that parents generally misjudge the risks inside the home, as they are more worried about hazards outside the home.

The initiative provides practical information for parents regarding which products make the home safer for their children such as corner buffers, socket protectors and gates in front of stoves and stairways. The main part of the Young Children and Safety project is the Reuzenhuis (giant's house) which was built under the instruction of the Stichting Consument en Veiligheid (Consumer and Safety Foundation).¹³ The objective of the giant's house is to make it easier for adults to envisage what their home is like through the eyes of their child. Hazardous situations are recreated in the house with objects and furniture so large that the adults feel like children again. After visiting the Reuzenhuis, parents often view their own house quite differently.

Mens-en-werk (people and work) Project

This project which facilitated the 'Intensieve BestandsBenadering' (intensive pool approach) came into being in July 1997. This established a partnership between the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, the Arbeidsbureau (job centre), the borough and the Project-bureau Werk voor Delfshaven (work for Delfshaven project bureau) to open up more opportunities and possibilities of finding work for the

¹³ The construction of the Reuzenhuis was realised through a television programme 'The Challenge.'

unemployed people of the Bospolden/Tussendijken area. Another aspect of the Mens-en-werk programme was to gain insight into the development of the unemployed through research.

Safety Assistants Initiative

In September 1997, the first safety assistants (both male and female) in the neighbourhood, Grote Visserijstraat were appointed and have been running successfully since then. Their task is to observe and report on various aspects of the neighbourhood. The Grote Visserijstraat area alone can offer up to 24 Mekert jobs to the long-term unemployed and start them on a pathway to employment. Many of the participants on this scheme have moved on to private enterprises and other security positions. For the residents and safety assistants, this initiative is mutually beneficial as the newly appointed safety assistants learn new skills¹⁴ and take up a position of authority within the neighbourhood. The residents enjoy an overall improvement in the quality of the area, for example, a reduction in the drug problem.

The remit of these assistants is quite broad and has developed since the inception of the scheme to include noting loose paving stone in order to inform the public works, retracing stolen cars, providing local information for tourists and informing sanitation of discarded rubbish.

At the end of each week, the findings for the neighbourhood are discussed with the overall neighbourhood team which include representatives from the sanitation department, housing corporations, the borough, the police and the residents. The range of functions, even down to the very simple, that the assistants carry out all contribute in a huge way to the improvement of the quality of life within the neighbourhood.

¹⁴ The safety assistants are trained and act as representatives on any special circumstances

This initiative has been repeated in a number of neighbourhoods in Delfshaven and is hailed as an example of best practice due to the number of Melkert jobs it can provide.

Support for Businesses

There is a number of other projects which have been significant in the promotion of the business interests of potential entrepreneurs. The Startende Zelfstandige Ondernemers (starting independent entrepreneurs) project has been successful in training unemployed people to become independent entrepreneurs. The training included all aspects of business management including developing a business plan, advertising, finance etc.

Improvement of the shopping streets in Delfshaven

More and more attention is being paid to the shopping areas throughout Rotterdam as in recent years socio-economic problems have been becoming increasingly visible in retail districts and thus negatively affecting businesses. Criminality, drug abuse, vandalism and pollution have all had a negative impact which have culminated to make shopping much less attractive in Delfshaven. Strengthening the shopping streets, therefore is an integral part of the overall improvement of the area as economically they are essential for employment. In the past, although the residents have become involved in self-help activities to smarten up the area, shopkeepers have not been forthcoming in their support and have not been particularly successful in joining together with other shopkeepers to make a combined effort. With the renewed emphasis on improvement of shopping streets, the shopping associations have become more active in putting their opinions forward and making recommendations for their

area. A number of plans have been put in place on the basis of these recommendations which consolidate the position of these streets. These include intensifying the efforts to clean up the area, better lighting, sunblinds to make the shop fronts more attractive, new paving and more police operations to tackle the drug problem.

One fairly simple, yet effective alteration to the street was the combining of signposts and traffic signs on a single post wherever this was feasible and safe. The effect of this was subtle but it made a huge difference to the general appearance of the street as from the road there was now a better view of the shop windows. It was also suggested that the tradespeople would benefit from relevant courses such as book keeping and window dressing.

The need for a shopping street manager has never been more apparent, however, the process is slow and although the selection procedure has already been put in place there are many streets who do not have a manager to facilitate development.

Historisch Delfshaven – The tourist attraction

One of the main areas within Delfshaven with enormous potential as a tourist attraction is the 'Historisch Delfshaven' area. This has been presented as an authentic village within a bustling modern city with the old brewery, the tinworks, the glass engravery, a museum, and a number of antiques shops. However, this 'village' is not very well known and the adjacent streets with their social problems create problems in attracting visitors. There is a variety of projects to enhance the area as an entity in itself such as the new footbridge, organising events such as classical concerts, new lighting and paving.

One of the most significant initiatives implemented within the scope of the Big Cities Policy was the Tovertunnel (Enchanted Tunnel). This narrow tunnel between De

Schans and De Aelbrechtolk had been an eyesore to the residents of historic Delfshaven for years and towards the end of 1996, the dirty alley was given a facelift. A local artist and inhabitant of the area turned the alley into a work of art by painting the 44-metre wall, turning it into an underwater landscape. This mural was then complemented by multi-coloured neon lights and ceramic tiles and to guard against renewed vandalism, the open air art work was covered with a thick protective layer. The tunnel is kept clean by the borough and has been positively received by the residents and sought out by tourists who often come to make a wish there.