

**STRATEGIES TO INFLUENCE
NATIONAL POLICY**

Focusing statutory provision on the long-term
unemployed in inner city Dublin

by

Dublin Inner City Partnership

Submitted to

Area Development Management

6 August 1999

Dublin Inner City Partnership,

16 Upper Ormond Quay, Dublin 7.

**Tel. +353 (1) 872 1321 Fax +353 (1) 872 1330
Email dicp@iol.ie Website <http://www.iol.ie/~dicp>**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Methodology	4
Defining ‘Mainstreaming’	6
DICP Experience of Mainstreaming	10
Organisational Innovation	10
Whole-time Jobs Initiative	11
An Síol	12
Childcare.....	13
Community Employment.....	13
Technical Aid	14
Integrated Services.....	14
Rutland Street Project.....	14
Drugs Task Force.....	15
Community Employment Innovative Projects.....	16
Description	16
Monitoring & Evaluation.....	17
Information Dissemination	18
Mainstream	19
FÁS Perspective.....	19
Primary Schools Initiative	22
Description	22
Evaluation	22
Information Dissemination	23
Mainstream	24
Department of Education & Science Perspective.....	24
Discussion.....	27
Why does mainstreaming fail?.....	27
Conclusion and Recommendations	31
Policy Recommendations.....	33
Recommendations for Partnership Companies.....	35

Acknowledgements

Patricia Curtin, Pat Houlihan, Elizabeth McGovern, Patricia O’Connor, Colm O’Maoláin, Pat Shiel, Brian Tubbert, Nessian Vaughan.

© Dublin Inner City Partnership, August 1999

“In Ireland, a unique thing has happened, and one which involves the government creating a certain space by giving the Partnerships necessary resources to experiment with new forms of service delivery within their locality. The idea now is if you could monitor these you could find out the different approaches used, and thus find out whether one approach is superior to another. One could learn how to get more for the money that the state has, change something in the mainstream delivery mechanisms and then maximise the effect on unemployment, poverty and social exclusion.” (Haase, 1998:23)

INTRODUCTION

~ Why conduct a case study on mainstreaming? ~

When area-based partnership companies (APCs) were first established in 1991, they were assigned a brief of improving the circumstances of people living in areas of disadvantage, both urban and rural. Specifically, they were to provide a local response to the problem of long-term unemployment. Part of this role was to test new methods of intervention and inform national policy-makers about best practice in specific areas. The fundamental ethos of partnership is to work towards social inclusion, which can entail questioning the strict hierarchy of centralised power by promoting local participation.

In 1996, the Local Development Programme was introduced with the aim of improving “co-ordination and evaluation at local level of mainstream programmes and policies to ensure their effective delivery to the long-term unemployed and the socially excluded and from this experience to contribute to the national policy making process.” (ADM, 1995:9) The National Development Plan noted that the Programme aimed to enable communities to improve the focus of mainstream provision for the unemployed in local areas (Crowley, nd, b).

It was intended the APCs would provide a fresh response to persistent problems of disadvantage. Unshackled from many of the constraints that are imposed on statutory organisations, APCs have been in the fortunate position to be able to take risks. Included in their overall goal of reducing long-term unemployment was an ambition of finding innovative ways to collaborate with statutory agencies and private sector organisations.

In addition to this experimental work, APCs have a role in protecting the long-term viability of projects that have proven benefits to local communities, which in many cases is linked to raising awareness of best practice — “Partnerships can also increase the chances of a project’s sustainability, by generating interest in the project at a range of political levels, as well as with local community and business groups.” (European Commission, Annual Report 1997:27)

Partnerships themselves clearly understand this task, according to a study conducted by the ESF Evaluation Unit. This report stated that most Partnerships placed a heavy emphasis on piloting initiatives with the ultimate aim of having them mainstreamed by statutory agencies. The same study indicated that statutory agencies were ‘well disposed’ to work with partnerships (1999:143).

Another important aspect of Partnership work is encouraging statutory agencies to use resources more creatively, and incorporating this new creativity into the policy or practice of the mainstream agency.

“The Partnership also has a role in seeking to influence the use and deployment by the different sectors and statutory agencies of the significant resources available to them in the inner city area with the aim of targeting as a priority unemployed inner city residents.” (Connolly, 1997:70)

Owing to composition of APC Boards, which include local authorities, social welfare, education and training agencies, the companies are able to introduce innovative thinking into statutory services and resource allocation (Turok, 1999:82). This aspect of mainstreaming has been one of the more successful areas of APC work — a 1996 report published by the OECD stated that “local partnerships have succeeded in adapting the objectives and resource allocation of state agencies within their areas in order to better meet local needs.” (Sabel, 1996:4)

However, Partnership companies have been criticised on a number of grounds. Sabel’s 1996 study of the original twelve APCs described partnerships as “extraordinarily innovative” but nonetheless “better at creating new things than building stable institutions that embody and extend their innovations.” (1996:85) Sabel questioned the ‘robustness’ of outcomes, i.e. the long-term, sustainable benefits of APC activities (1996:52). While admitting that partnerships are accessible and well placed to nurture ideas and solve problems, he queried if these capacities could be “formalised in enduring institutions” (1996:81).

Two years later, in Geddes’ report published by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, it was similarly noted that partnerships are weak in terms of providing *sustainable benefits*, which may only come about through mainstreaming.

“However, while the principle of local partnership is now quite widely accepted, there remain too few examples of partnerships which can demonstrate lasting impact in tackling poverty and social exclusion on a broad and multidimensional basis.” (Geddes, 1998:14)

Most recently, the ESF Evaluation Unit¹ (1999) concurred that, while the partnership approach has indeed been very effective at benefiting local communities, the main failing has been in the area of mainstreaming successful pilots.

In light of these reports, a case study on the mainstreaming process that highlights successes and failures at partnership level is very timely. It also allows partnership companies to respond to recent censure and to make recommendations for techniques that can usefully be employed to incorporate the learning from pilot models into statutory provision. It is more especially relevant in light of the uncertain future of partnerships, and the emphasis on trying to sustain what has already been achieved, for the sake of the disadvantaged communities partnerships serve.

One of the major difficulties associated with measuring outcomes of mainstreaming is the long-term nature of effort required, and the relative invisibility of some outcomes pertaining to policy change. The work conducted by APCs cannot be judged in isolation from the sum of activities of their communities, especially as many APCs play a brokerage role, facilitating local groups to operate innovative initiatives.

APCs may be involved in identifying, piloting or lobbying for innovative initiatives, but when these initiatives are mainstreamed, it is not always possible to credit one single actor with the mainstreaming success. For example, how does one measure the link between the DICP’s identification of the need for a plan for the Dublin Docklands area and the ultimate introduction of such a plan by the State in the guise of the Dublin Docklands Development Authority? This further underscores the nature of partnership work, i.e. the collaboration of a variety of sectors, and the *process* of mainstreaming. While APCs cannot take total credit for moving a pilot initiative into mainstream provision, nevertheless their role should not be underestimated.

¹ The European Social Fund Evaluation Unit is based in the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in Davitt House, Adelaide Road.

Partnership work further refers to changing the mainstream ways of thinking and building relationships of trust between sectors, but again these are rather elusive concepts for the quantitative researcher. There is evidence that APCs are indirectly successful in that they change values of mainstream provision, allowing more flexible, relevant and accessible programmes for their client group (ESF Evaluation Unit, 1999:39).

This case study will address questions such as why mainstreaming within local development is not working as effectively as intended, and in what ways it can be improved so that national policy can respond effectively and quickly to local experiences and the DICP brief. It will examine areas of attempted impact on i) programmes, ii) approaches, iii) priorities for policy and iv) organisational innovation.

Methodology

The research methods employed in this case study include a review of existing evaluations of DICP programmes, DICP internal documents, and relevant literature pertaining to urban development, social policy and mainstreaming. Interviews with DICP staff and representatives from statutory agencies were conducted. Coverage of partnership companies in local and national media, and speeches made by Government Ministers, also inform the document.

Section 1 of the case study outlines the background and reasons for undertaking research on the topic. Section 2 discusses competing definitions of mainstreaming, which are then illustrated with examples of initiatives that the DICP has prioritised for mainstreaming in Section 3.

Sections 4 and 5 present detailed analysis of the mainstreaming process in two DICP-led initiatives, one a labour market programme and the other an educational intervention programme. The former, Community Employment Innovative Projects, came about through negotiations between the DICP and the statutory agency, FÁS and are now part of the latter's mainstream programme.² In contrast, attempts to integrate the experience of the Primary Schools Initiative into Department of Education & Science policy or practice have not been fruitful to date, despite the commitment of participating schools and the DICP.

² CE Innovative Projects are also referred to as CE Special Projects.

Both initiatives have been formally evaluated by an external researcher, and an internal evaluation has also been conducted on the latter.³

Section 6 provides a discussion of obstacles to mainstreaming and ways of overcoming them, while the final Section (7) presents a series of recommendations to assist with effective mainstreaming.

³This was the Preventative Education case study on the Primary Schools Initiative produced for ADM in December 1998.

Section 2

DEFINING ‘MAINSTREAMING’

~ Arriving at a common understanding ~

The term ‘mainstreaming’ is widely used within the Local Development Programme, yet it is difficult to arrive at a precise definition, or more accurately, various definitions exist among the diverse agents involved in delivering the Programme.⁴

One understanding of the mainstreaming process encompasses a programme being initiated at ‘grass-roots’ level in the community, and once it has been evaluated — and where necessary modified — the new way of thinking or new practice is incorporated into mainstream programmes run by statutory agencies. In this way, groups and communities throughout the city and the country can benefit from models of best practice. The lesson from the pilot that is incorporated into the mainstream can be an actual programme, a way of working, or a use of resources. An evaluation of the DICP Primary Schools Initiative summarises the ideal process by which learning should be transferred:

“Area Based Partnerships take the risk of investing in pilot projects, and when the projects have proven their worth, they should be supported with core funding. Lessons in good practice should be transferred to other schools and networks. This is central to the concept of mainstreaming.” (DICP, 1998:23)

Evaluation is crucial to the process of mainstreaming since it presents formal evidence of the programme’s worth and assists with the transfer of information from the locally-based partnership to statutory agencies. In the Integrated Local Development handbook, ADM advises partnership companies to incorporate learning from pilots into statutory provision.

“Once such actions have been evaluated, and considered successful, Partnership/community groups should, where appropriate, seek to have them “mainstreamed” or supported by the appropriate providers/agency.” (ADM, 1995:17)

⁴ Crowley similarly notes ambiguity about the concept of mainstreaming and calls for a comprehensive understanding of and widespread commitment to the issue (Crowley, nd, b)

But there is also a role for ADM to highlight examples of best practice and attend to mainstreaming issues. The onus should not be solely on individual partnership companies to incorporate lessons from pilots into long-term programmes. ADM should strengthen arguments made by APCs and actively participate in lobbying for mainstreaming.

Haase sees mainstreaming successful programmes as one of the primary ways for partnerships to be effective, noting that by showing “a (statistically) significant difference in the outcome of one approach over another, we have a case for introducing lessons from the superior approach into the way in which the state agencies deliver their services.” (1998:24) Crowley also pinpoints the necessity for research and publication, in order to increase the *visibility* of particular client groups so that statutory programmes can meet their needs. Such reports set the agenda for change (Crowley, nd a:9).

With these understandings in mind, mainstreaming can mean any of the following:

- ? An initiative that starts in the community is successful in attracting core funding from State agencies;
- ? An innovative initiative is jointly planned by the community and statutory agency;
- ? Methods used in a community initiative are accepted by and transferred to State-run programmes.

These initiatives can be deemed innovative in terms of the content, aims, client group, methods used to achieve objectives, etc. According to Jim Walsh of the Combat Poverty Agency, mainstreaming a particular project is easiest to achieve (Walsh, 1998:3), where individual projects attract core funding, though they seldom have impacts outside of their immediate vicinity. Mainstreaming the practice, or methods used in a particular project, is somewhat more difficult, but can have wider-ranging implications. Policy mainstreaming occurs when whole programmes are mainstreamed nationally, such as the Area Allowance Scheme which became the Back to Work Allowance scheme. The model of moving from pilot to mainstream might be represented as follows:

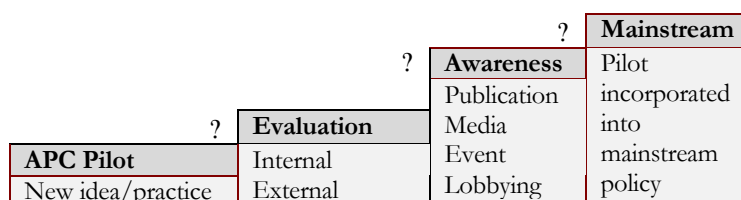


Figure 1 Mainstreaming Process

The concept of sustainability is central to an understanding of mainstreaming. The reason APCs seek to have successful programmes mainstreamed and supported by statutory agencies is precisely because they want to procure long-term benefits from development, instead of merely short-term intervention — “...our development is of such a kind that it can be sustained both socially and environmentally over a long and foreseeable time span.” (Kirby and Jacobson, 1998:8).

Speaking about sustainable development, Katherine Zappone of the National Women’s Council of Ireland notes that this “works best if the community is able to communicate effectively, with the local authorities, social, environmental and business leaders, and citizens/residents of the community.” (1998:54) Effective mainstreaming involves interdependence, where both State and community are mutually reliant on each other. The European Social Fund Evaluation Unit offers yet another definition.

“We understand mainstreaming as a broad concept which can include support for specific actions outside of the mainstream agencies but with their funding, the adaptation of existing mainstream practice and process taking account of the lessons learnt from innovative actions or, finally, a shift in the focus of policy itself. The first two types of mainstreaming rely on flexibility on the part of statutory agencies at a local or regional level...In relation to policy change, we believe that the above system has the capacity to yield strong results derived from locally initiated actions through the development of clarity, consensus and representative models.” (ESF, 1999:237)

Paradoxically, ‘mainstreaming’ seems to require the replication of what should be a dynamic process, within standard or routine provision. How can a programme, for example, be flexible and responsive to local needs, and yet simultaneously be delivered as one of the core services of a statutory agency? But perhaps this is only an apparent dichotomy, and perhaps the real lesson to be learned is that all programmes should be open to continual review and evaluation, as a way of ensuring they consistently achieve their objectives.

According to the network of Dublin-based partnership companies, programmes should be ‘evolutionary interventions’ that are continually reviewed and assessed as to their roles and impact (Dublin Partnership Companies, 1998:4). In other words, once mainstreamed, programmes should not be allowed to stagnate. Mainstreaming should not mean that the local

players are no longer consulted. Instead, even when they are incorporated into statutory provision, programmes should be constantly assessed, in collaboration with the target group.

In defining an understanding of mainstreaming, the DICP stresses the importance of retaining local control and ownership of initiatives, even when they are mainstreamed into core budgets. Mainstreaming should not mean that a programme is ‘handed over’ to the relevant Government Department, and that local control ceases. Nor should it mean that the state sector should merely ‘pick up the tab’ for a programme that is solely managed by the local/community sector. Rather, it should involve both statutory and community sectors *working together* in the design, implementation and evaluation. The State should *learn* from local experience and incorporate this new knowledge into its overall work programme.

Considering the broad range of activities nurtured by APCs, there is a need to be realistic about precisely which ones are suitable for mainstreaming. It is neither possible nor desirable to mainstream every innovative programme piloted by APCs. Only the ones that prove most beneficial should be targeted for mainstreaming and prioritised for resource allocation.

In summary, the process of mainstreaming means that results will endure past the lifetime of individual partnerships. While the primary concern of partnerships is to meet local need and address disadvantage, one of the key benefits of their work is that their efforts to mainstream programmes can ‘sensitise’ statutory agencies to local needs (ESF, 1999:238).

“If we can translate the major lessons learned by the Partnerships into mainstream delivery mechanisms of the state’s and private sector’s services, then their effectiveness may result in more than that which is being achieved by the Partnerships themselves.” (Haase, 1998:19)

DICP EXPERIENCE OF MAINSTREAMING

~ Attempting to sustain successful innovation ~

The DICP's first Action Plan assumed that the Partnership's primary function would be to "co-ordinate and redirect resources to the existing and emerging community based infrastructure" (DICP, 1992:5). Since then, the DICP has been working in a wide range of areas to arrive at its ultimate aim of sustainable rewards for inner city communities worst affected by long-term unemployment. Within the DICP area, there are numerous examples of initiatives that have been successfully mainstreamed, either in totality, or in practice and policy. PLANET, the network of area-based partnership companies, cites initiatives like the Local Employment Service, the Community Employment Programme and the Back to Training allowance as successful examples of mainstreaming (1999:5). There are also examples of initiatives that are in the process of being mainstreamed, and others still that have not been successful in attracting commitment from a statutory agency.

Organisational Innovation

One of the unique features of the modus operandi of APCs, that of uniting sectoral representatives to achieve change, has been mainstreamed into the work ethics of many statutory agencies. Partnerships have discovered new ways of working, challenging the traditional hierarchy by acting inclusively and inviting representation from community, voluntary, statutory and trade union representatives in a way that allows for their involvement at decision-making level. Partnership working provides opportunities for discussion forums that bring the relevant players together to address questions. An external evaluator of the joint FÁS/DICP CE Innovative Projects initiative in the inner city commented:

"The merit of the partnership approach has been described as the ability to reach agreements at local level that would not be possible at national level. Individual bodies have become involved in local projects on an experimental basis. Statutory bodies are funding projects which would not be considered at a National level." (DICP, 1999b:29)

Now many of these methods have been adopted as a routine way of working within various agencies. So too has the language of 'partnership' and networking been accepted into the normal vocabulary of many community and statutory groups.

Whole-time Jobs Initiative

The Whole-time Jobs Initiative (WTJI) is an example of a successful pilot programme, initiated in local areas in collaboration with area-based partnership companies. In the inner city, the WTJI has been very effective in terms of improving participants' skills levels, confidence and familiarity with the work environment. It has also supported the provision of important services in the community.

Since WTJI contracts were for a period of only three years, the first round is due to finish in December 1999, which will mean the loss of 230 full-time jobs in the inner city. Participants, projects, managing agents and the DICP all concur as to the need to mainstream at least some of these positions. In March 1999, the DICP held a seminar on the subject of safeguarding the existing WTJI positions.

Many participants in the seminar voiced their desire for permanent jobs on the Initiative, rather than contracts. Projects require core funding from Government, but do not necessarily want to lose ownership of programmes presently managed by the community. Mainstreaming could also include linking with statutory agencies and employers. (DICP, 1999c:8)

A key point emerging from the seminar was dissatisfaction with the fact that the initiative has not yet been formally evaluated. Although it has been operating for 3 years, the Department has only this year commissioned an evaluation, due for completion in Autumn 1999. However, relevant partnership companies have expressed concern over the terms of the research. The DICP made a submission to evaluators Deloitte & Touche, outlining dissatisfaction with the lack of emphasis on qualitative data and the inability of such a once-off evaluation to accurately capture the social and economic benefits of the WTJI *process*. Main criticisms were that the pilot questionnaire failed to inquire into the social aspects of the initiative and that it operated on the assumption that it was a labour market progression initiative, contrary to how workers and projects perceive it (Gates, 1999:1-2).

The Employment Network (TEN), Managing Agent for WTJI positions in the north east inner city successfully mainstreamed 5 posts between January and June 1999, and is developing a strategy by which to mainstream approximately 30 positions. However, TEN has identified a number of barriers to successful mainstreaming. For example, State agencies tend to focus on mainstreaming ‘developmental’ jobs, which makes it difficult to identify funding for support positions such as receptionists, caretakers, and cleaners. In addition, some projects do not want to keep individual WTJI workers, but would like to mainstream the actual jobs. If a project receives funding from a state agency for a particular position, the project may choose to hire a candidate with more qualifications than the WTJI worker who was previously performing the job.

In order to encourage the Department to secure the positions, the DICP launched a media campaign in June 1999, which recommended a consolidation period until the positions can be mainstreamed. This was successful in generating awareness of the topic, and achieved coverage in local and national newspapers, on radio programmes and news broadcasts. The outcome of these efforts, however, remains to be seen.

An Síol

An Síol Community Development Project in the north west inner city is an example of successful mainstreaming. This project started out as the North West Inner City Community Development Project (NWICCDP), providing education and training to the community in the local area.

When funding became available through the Community Development Programme set up by the Minister for Social Welfare in 1990, the DICP supported the NWICCDP application.

The project was awarded funding in 1997 from the Department and continued with its work of providing an area-based response to socio-economic development. An Síol aims “to reach out to people in the area encouraging them to believe in their dignity and uniqueness and to discover and unlock the potential within themselves and their communities.” Specifically, An Síol runs training programmes, support groups and networks, and involves local people in all stages of planning, organisation and implementation of these initiatives.

Childcare

The DICP ran a pilot childcare subsidy initiative during 1997 and 1998, with the aim of promoting progression for clients of the Inner City Employment Service (ICES). While the initiative was theoretically worthy, a number of practical difficulties impacted on the success of the pilot. Primarily, the scarcity of childcare provision in the inner city meant that even with the subsidy, many parents simply could not access a childcare place. For this reason, attempting to mainstream such a subsidy initiative before a national childcare strategy and adequate facilities to meet demand are in place would be a futile exercise.

Efforts to mainstream an inner city *childcare strategy* are ongoing though, and have met with considerable success to date. An Inner City Childcare Network has been established, overseen by a Steering Group. The Network presently comprises service providers and is expanding to include representation from a variety of sectors. The group's overall ambition is to mainstream the policy of best practice of childcare in the local area, rather than attempting to secure core funding for one particular project. In April 1999, the Network launched a report on inner city childcare needs which achieved media coverage, including the main evening news broadcast on RTE television.⁵ This served to focus political and community attention on the urgency of addressing the childcare issue.

Community Employment

The DICP was instrumental in mainstreaming specific practices within statutory agencies where national programmes were already operating. Negotiations took place with FÁS to improve the percentages of local people being recruited to the Community Employment Programme. The Partnership's Action Plan stated that it would "...seek to ensure that people who opted to participate are resident locally and determine that the organisations wishing to sponsor are community based." (DICP, 1992:12) This too has been successful, and the CE Programme in inner city Dublin now has a 75% local participation rate.

⁵ DICP (1999a) *Supporting Parents, Valuing Children: towards a quality childcare service in inner city Dublin*.

The DICP was also innovative in establishing a local CE Monitoring Committee, comprising representatives of the DICP Board and FÁS, which is now one of the core sub-committees of the Partnership.

The CE Programme itself was the mainstreamed outcome of its predecessor, the Community Employment Development Programme (Walsh, 1998:3), which built on the foundations of the Social Enterprise Scheme.

Technical Aid

The need for a technical aid service for the inner city area was outlined in the 1992-1994 DICP Action Plan. It was intended that this service would support local groups with professional fees and specialist advice. Community Technical Aid was established with the support of the DICP as a pilot venture. It was based on the Northern Ireland model, Community Technical Services. The DICP had originally anticipated that, when it proved successful, CTA would be mainstreamed by the Department of the Environment. Although CTA was not supported with core funding of this nature, it has moved beyond the pilot phase and is now well-established, operating on a commercial fee basis.

Integrated Services

The DICP identified a need for greater efficiency in refurbishment of Dublin Corporation flat complexes, and a higher level of local participation in management of flat complexes and environs. One of the DICP quadrant networks, ICON, was particularly assertive in making these demands in the north east inner city. An ICON proposal led to the introduction of, firstly, the Integrated Services Initiative in the north east inner city, which was later mainstreamed as the Integrated Services Process, now operating in four areas.

Rutland Street Project

An example of an educational intervention project that has made the successful transition from pilot to mainstream provision was the Rutland Street Education Project that ran in the 1970s. The Rutland Street Project was initially funded by the Van Leer Foundation. The project aimed to “enable children and youth through school-going age who are impeded by the social and

cultural inadequacy of their background and/or environment, nevertheless to achieve the greatest possible realisation of their innate intellectual potential...” (Holland, 1979:5)

The pilot ran over a five year period, with ongoing monitoring to trace the development of children. It incorporated unique features such as providing a cooked meal each day for children to enhance the nutritional, language and social training benefits of meal time. A major feature was developing a curriculum suitable for three and four year olds from disadvantaged areas because one did not already exist. Nurseries in Ireland had heretofore served a mainly middle-class catchment. (Kellaghan, 1977:44)

Lessons from this model now inform the Early Start Pre-school Programme that operates in certain disadvantaged areas.

Drugs Task Force

The Inter-Agency Drugs Project (IADP) operated on a voluntary basis in the north east inner city, providing a co-ordination role for treatment facilities in the area and raising awareness of the needs of recovering drug users. Both ICON and the DICP were active players in the mainstreaming of the project. When the National Drugs Strategy Team was established, IADP became the north inner city Drugs Task Force, building on its earlier successes as a voluntary project.

Formerly	Presently	Mainstreaming Agency
North West Inner City Community Development Project (NWICCDP).	An Síol Community Development Project	Department of Social, Community & Family Affairs
Local Employment Service	Inner City Employment Service	Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment
Social Employment Scheme / Community Employment Development Programme	Community Employment Programme	FÁS
Inter Agency Drugs Project	North Inner City Drugs Task Force	Department of Sport, Tourism & Recreation
Rutland Street Project	Early Start Project	Department of Education & Science
Identification of need for Docklands site	DDDA	Dublin Corporation
Integrated Services Initiative (ICON proposal)	Integrated Services Process – north east inner city	Department of Tourism, Sports and Recreation

Table 1 Examples of Mainstreaming in Dublin’s Inner City

COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT INNOVATIVE PROJECTS

Description

CE Innovative Projects are a unique use of the ordinary Community Employment Programme,⁶ negotiated between locally-based area partnership companies and the national statutory agency FÁS.⁷ In the inner city of Dublin, the DICP and the local FÁS (Dublin North region) have worked exceptionally well together in implementing CE Innovative Projects. Of all the partnership companies, the DICP has made the most extensive use of CE Innovative Projects.

Essentially CE Innovative Projects differ from CE proper in that some of the operational rules and eligibility criteria for participants and sponsors are relaxed. It is a much more flexible use of the programme, allowing it to focus more closely on meeting the needs of local people. Projects may be approved for up to 3 years in principle, subject to annual review. Features include an innovative work programme, objectives linked to local development plans or the provision of a particular service to a special needs client group.

In addition, the DICP creatively argued for the allocation of funds on a complementary basis, jointly financing the recruitment of four inner city Network Co-ordinators. CE Innovative Projects represent an example of programme bending.

“The central idea...is the redirection of mainstream public-sector programmes towards marginalised communities through “bending” resource streams and relaxing particular rules, regulations and administrative procedures which impede local development activity.” (Turok, 1999:75)

⁶ The main Community Employment (CE) Programme is the principal vehicle through which the State supports the provision of temporary employment for long-term unemployed people. It aims to help participants to develop skills and gain work experience that will enable them to access the open labour market. The scale of CE has recently been reduced from 40,000 to 37,000 in 1999. It will be further reduced by 5,000 places next year.

⁷ Foras Áiseanna Saothar (FÁS), the Training and Employment Authority, is a national statutory organisation established in 1988 under the Labour Services Act (1987). The agency's principal functions are to provide training, employment schemes, placement and guidance services.

Programme bending has the advantage of procuring long-term benefits, since it makes commitments beyond individual initiatives and avoids bureaucratic technicalities associated with building an entirely new programme. As a mainstreaming tool though, the extent of 'bending' is limited by the constraints of the existing programme. This technique may also restrict the community's ownership of initiatives.

In setting the terms of reference for CE Innovative Projects, policy makers were inviting a creative response from people working on the ground. Within the overall CE programme, CE Innovative projects represent up to five per cent of the total programme budget. If labour market interventions may generally be described as "...national programmes in response to national trends" (Connolly, 1997:61), then CE Innovative Projects are remarkably different in that they represent a local response to a local trend, i.e. very high rates of long-term unemployment in the DICP area.

Monitoring & Evaluation

In Dublin inner city, CE Innovative Projects are overseen by the CE Monitoring Committee which comprises representatives of the DICP Board drawn from different sectors and advised by FÁS. In this way, the community shares information and experiences with the State sector. Applications for Innovative Project status are made through this Committee.

Findings of an external evaluation of the initiative indicated that the local community was the driving force in the implementation of projects. Through CE Innovative Projects, decision-making has been transferred to the people, organisations, communities and groups who have experience of unemployment. Owing to flexibility in eligibility criteria, they have facilitated the participation of Travellers, Bosnian refugees, graduates (as Community Service Volunteers), and young adults 'at risk'. In some instances, projects could devote more time to training than work practice, depending on the needs of the client group. Projects were unanimous in their appreciation of the flexibility in the duration allotted to participants, noting that a second year's participation was necessary for the programme to meet its objectives. Benefits to participants were defined as:

- ? increased social interaction and integration;
- ? growth in self-confidence and self-esteem;

- ? holistic development of the individual;
- ? entrance into formal education;
- ? increase in income of lone parents;
- ? parenting and home-making skills;
- ? attainment of a sense of participation and ownership within communities.

The evaluation also lauded the importance attributed to the community sector within the DICP structure; the development of a good working relationship between the DICP and FÁS; and the establishment of structures that enable FÁS and the DICP to share information.

Among recommendations made by the evaluation were:

- ? The statutory sector should avail of the expertise of local people in devising programmes for their communities.
- ? The DICP should take strategic steps to increase awareness of the Partnership and its Action Plan for the area.
- ? All arising issues should form an agenda for discussion between FÁS and the DICP.
- ? Stringent records should be kept on the career progress of all participants within individual projects.
- ? Other partnership companies should support communities to retain ownership of community initiatives.
- ? There is a crucial role for FÁS Community Development Officers (CDOs) as a local resource in relation to local action plans.
- ? Rigorous evaluation procedures should be employed by all.

Information Dissemination

A evaluation report was produced and launched at an event attended by Minister Chris Flood, TD. Representatives of the CE Innovative projects, FÁS and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions also attended the event. Coverage in national and local papers highlighted the success of the initiative. Speaking at the launch, Minister Flood said:

“It is in everybody’s interest to consider how those pilot projects, which have proven successful at local level (particularly those which can be replicated at national level) can be incorporated into the policies and programmes of the relevant mainstream agencies. In essence, the Partnerships pave the way in sowing the seeds and putting down roots but, if proven initiatives are to properly flourish and grow, they may need the greater resources and sustainable support which mainstream agencies can provide. I believe that there is excellent co-operation and a genuine unity of purpose between the Partnership here in Inner

City Dublin and the mainstream public agencies, particularly FÁS. This represents a solid foundation on which to build for the future.”

Mainstream

Since the CE Innovative Programme in the inner city started off as a jointly planned venture between the DICP and FÁS, the process of mainstreaming has been significantly easier. CE Innovative is now incorporated under the standard FÁS CE programme, and has been successfully mainstreamed in the local area. In some other areas, however, APCs have not yet taken advantage of the features of CE Innovative Projects. It is hoped that the success of the programme in the inner city will encourage other partnerships to make more use of it. The real impact of mainstreaming will thus only be felt if the model of CE Innovative Projects is utilised on a national basis.

FÁS Perspective

A representative of the FÁS local training centre offered the following understanding of the mainstreaming process. Within FÁS, the definition of mainstreaming generally starts with an innovative programme being piloted to address a gap in provision. This programme is organised on a once-off basis and is not comparable to services that are part of the normal provision. The pilot is then incorporated into the normal provision, either on a national or regional basis. While certain programmes are more suitable to mainstream nationally, others are more likely to be mainstreamed regionally, since FÁS was specifically set up with a regional structure to suit local needs.

FÁS is developing ideas for new pilots at present — partly in response to Deloitte & Touche recommendations to improve progression from schemes — such as a Core Skills module that would include personal development and communications skills. If successful, this type of course might be suitable for mainstreaming nationally.

In some cases, FÁS has supported pilots which, they believe, should be mainstreamed by other Government departments. The FÁS brief is to provide training for labour market progression, rather than to resource core positions in community-based projects. Thus mainstreaming Community Employment scheme positions in, for example, childcare facilities or

on drug use recovery programmes, may be the responsibility of the Departments of Health & Children, or Social Community & Family Affairs.

At present, no group or individual has been assigned responsibility for mainstreaming services and positions that have heretofore been supported by Community Employment and the Whole-time Jobs Initiative. As the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment has directed a reduction in the scale of CE, FÁS recommends that some of these positions now receive core funding from another Department.

Although FÁS considers evaluation to be a very important element in the mainstreaming process, it is not always conducted on very formal basis. FÁS representatives who work closely with community projects are aware of strengths and weaknesses. It is not always necessary to put a programme on hold while the evaluation is being conducted. In this way, a pilot programme can sometimes transfer into the normal mainstream provision without interruption.

With regard to monitoring, the Planning and Research Department in FÁS Head Office analyses wider economic, demographic and labour market changes, which are then reflected in FÁS services. The research team looks for growth areas and tries to anticipate skills shortages in the labour market, such as information technology and childcare. This unit also conducts a number of follow-up surveys. Within the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment, the European Social Fund Evaluation Unit conducts evaluation research on EU programmes.

As part of a national statutory agency, distinct FÁS regions can experience tension operating programmes with national objectives in a local context. The Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment determines policy for FÁS and sanctions the scale of CE, while the Director General and the Board of FÁS establish FÁS policies. Regional FÁS offices are given targets and budgets to which they must adhere. Although they cannot change the structure or conditions of mainstream FÁS programmes (e.g. rate of pay), local FÁS offices nevertheless can use discretion with regard to allocation of resources and eligibility for programmes. They can use resources creatively, as occurred in Dublin's inner city when FÁS CE resources were allocated to part-fund salary costs of four network co-ordinators. Another constraint experienced by the

regional offices is the fact that budgets are allocated on an annual basis which can lead to difficulties in longer-term planning.

Within the last two years FÁS has undergone a dramatic restructuring process, under the Programme for Competitiveness and Work negotiated with trade unions. Training classes are now much larger, and this has freed up instructors to work in the employment services. The Community Services division within FÁS is another new development. Previously, CE and the Whole-time Jobs Initiative were based in the employment services unit, and Community Training Workshops and Community Youth Training Projects were in the external training unit. These are now under the remit of Community Services. This is relevant to mainstreaming since there is more direct contact with the community through FÁS Community Services Managers.⁸

⁸ FÁS Community Services are also represented on the Boards of the Partnership, the Integrated Service Process, and the local Drugs Task Forces.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS INITIATIVE

Description

The Primary Schools Initiative (PSI) is a DICP-funded programme of activities for teachers, parents and students in ten inner city schools. The schools are all based in areas of disadvantage, and have experienced falling student numbers and reduced resources over the years. The programme has its own full-time Manager and is supported by the DICP's Education and Training Working Group. The PSI has been operating for three years to the direct benefit of 80 teachers and 1000 pupils. Activities include training and education, technology and IT support, arts, foreign language, physical education, study visits and environmental projects.

From the beginning, the schools and the DICP sought the involvement and support of the Department of Education and Science. Although the Department has not invested financially in the programme to date, it has facilitated the PSI to operate by seconding a teacher to act as Programme Manager (salary costs borne by the DICP) and by allowing teachers time off for in-service training. The Department is also represented on the DICP Education and Training Working Group.

Evaluation

Two separate evaluations were carried out on the initiative; externally by Scott Boldt of Marino Institute of Education and an internal case study by the DICP. The former relied heavily on interviews with the Management Committee, teachers, and the Programme Manager, while the latter incorporated a literature review and interviews with parents, students and a Home School Community Teacher. Both evaluations pointed to the successes of the PSI.

“The Primary School Initiative funded by the DICP has acted as a catalyst, improving the morale and self-sufficiency in schools. Schools are active in the design, implementation and assessment of the programme. The Management Committee acts independently of the DICP. Schools have built on the foundations of the PSI by introducing further activities that are not funded by the Partnership...This has had a 'multiplier effect' on the entire community, increasing the profile of education, pride in the community, self-sufficiency in terms of designing and managing projects and providing long-term positive

impacts for children as they progress through the educational system.” (DICP, 1998:23)

The main strengths of this model were outlined as follows:

- ? it is pro-active rather than reactive
- ? it employs a universal model of intervention rather than the selective model
- ? it is holistic in approach
- ? it allows for the transfer of skills
- ? it relies on networking

The PSI is aware of the need to strengthen links with the Department of Education and Science. Recommendations from both reports called for core funding from the Department, especially in light of the uncertain future of partnerships in the post-1999 period. The DICP report also recommended a clearer definition of mainstreaming:

“With regard to future planning, schools also need to define what they mean by ‘mainstreaming’; whether this refers to core funding from the Department of Education and Science for schools to run projects of this nature, or whether it means the Department would take over the ownership of such initiatives in their entirety is not obvious. PSI schools may wish to remain independent of the Department and in control of initiatives, even when projects are mainstreamed. The PSI schools should clearly outline their understanding in relation to each of these concepts.” (DICP, 1998:22-23)

Information Dissemination

The Programme Manager has also had extensive direct contact with the Department on the subject of securing core funding in the coming years. Both evaluations were launched at an event attended by Minister Noel Treacy.⁹

The need for programmes such as the PSI is more than apparent, especially in the inner city of Dublin, where statistics points to higher levels of early school leaving and lower levels of access to Third Level education among the indigenous population than for the rest of the country.

“The challenge to design and develop strategies which will enable young people to stay at school for a longer period of time should be a ‘whole school’ responsibility,

⁹ Minister of Education and Science, Micheál Martin, T.D., had been invited to the launch, but was unable to attend owing to personal reasons.

and not just the responsibility of selected teachers within individual schools. A 'whole school' type of approach to educational disadvantage will make it more likely that pilot projects and initiatives will be mainstreamed (on account of the greater level of understanding and awareness about educational disadvantage, and approaches towards tackling educational disadvantage amongst *all* teachers within individual schools). (Rourke, 1999:94)

Mainstream

The initial concept for the PSI was voiced by participating schools in 1994. To date, the total costs of the project have been borne by the DICP, even though the original intention was to obtain part-funding from the Department of Education & Science. The process of attracting statutory commitment has been a long and tedious one, as illustrated below, and the outcome is still pending.

October 1994	Proposals from 2 schools seeking DICP assistance for supplementary curricular support for pupils
November 1994	DICP Working Group agreed to support a primary school initiative
December 1994	Meeting of Primary School Principals convened
January 1995	Sub-committee of the DICP's Education and Training Working Group appointed to draft a proposal on behalf of group
March 1995	Proposal presented to the Education and Training Working Group
April 1995	DICP representatives met with Department of Education & Science officials to discuss funding DICP gave commitment to part funding
May 1996	DICP contacted Department requesting funding commitment
June-Nov. 1996	On-going discussions regarding funding with the Department
January 1997	Needs assessment sent to Department of Education & Science for support
March 1997	Project commenced among eight schools
October 1997	Launch of initiative
March 1998	Exhibition of Children's Work
December 1998	Evaluation and Case Study of PSI completed
April 1999	Launch of Evaluation and Case Study
June 1999	Department formally requested by DICP to support PSI Programme Manager's position
July 1999	Department responds unfavourably to request

Table 2 Primary School Initiative Schedule of Actions

Department of Education & Science Perspective

The Department of Education and Science's (DES) understanding of mainstreaming relates to

- ? Incorporating key learning into ongoing practice and delivery
- ? Providing for continued funding
- ? Implementing new measures within the system on a national basis

The process of mainstreaming involves a number of steps: documenting the learning, feeding into Government Departments and local structures, and making recommendations. Mainstreaming may not mean that the service is continued by the same provider, and implementation is usually on a phased basis.

From the Department's perspective, there should be direct line of communication from the local partnerships, through ADM, to Government Departments. Partnerships have a duty to evaluate and disseminate information to inform national policy. APCs are intended to communicate with the Department through its ADM Liaison Committee, which represents all levels of education, though this has not been fully functional in recent years. There is also a sub-committee of APC Education Co-ordinators within the Department. Inspectors are involved in sub-committees and working groups of partnerships, and their recommendations carry weight within the Department. Recently a Social Inclusion unit was established with the remit of focusing on the educational needs of socio-economically disadvantaged clients groups.

Like other Departments, the DES is subject to financial constraints, although it has supported the initiative in ways that have not incurred a cost to the State. It must attend to a host of competing needs and allocate budgets between pre-schools, primary, second, further, adult literacy, third level, skill needs and poverty issues. The Department also notes a strong need for political and community support for new areas of expenditure. All DES funding is earmarked for particular purposes and agreed by the Department of Finance and the Dáil.

The Department is generally not willing to support 'once-off' projects operating in local areas. (Personal communication with Colm Ó'Maoláin, Dept. of Education and Science, 1 June 1999). Their definition of mainstreaming appears to be similar to that of the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment: "It does not encompass the provision of funding to facilitate the ad hoc continuation of pilot projects, which have a finite life-span." (quoted in Crowley, no date, b) Generally speaking, the DES will take lessons from a pilot programme and replicate them on a national basis.

The Department cites several examples of mainstreaming in the area of early-school leaving. Youthstart developed from individual projects in specific locations, and is now

mainstreamed nationally as Youthreach. Evaluation is critical and often takes place over a long timeframe, e.g. the Early Start programme was evaluated over 5 years in a longitudinal study. Developments such as new guidance, counselling and psychological services, childcare for VTOS participants, Youthreach and Traveller centres, and curricular reforms, all require piloting and evaluation before being integrated into the mainstream service. These evaluations of educational programmes often examine a number of criteria, including retention, literacy and numeracy levels.

Section 6

DISCUSSION

Successes and failures in mainstreaming

Evident from earlier sections of this report, the mainstreaming of an initiative is never guaranteed. Lessons and practices from some initiatives are successful in infiltrating statutory programmes. But there are other situations where pilots fail to contribute to national provision, regardless of how much pressure community groups and area-based partnership companies exert on the relevant State agency. Identifying these obstacles will give further understanding of the process required to achieve a sustainable outcome.

Why does mainstreaming fail?

When partnerships are not as successful at mainstreaming, Sabel explains that this is partly because "...the Irish state has been better at allowing innovation than at learning from its protagonists about how to generalise local successes and incorporate changes they suggest into the organisation of the functional administration. Thus many experimental projects undertaken by the local development groups may succeed, but the experiment as a whole may fail." (Sabel, 1996:85)

One of the major obstacles partnerships face in mainstreaming pilots is that formal structures to facilitate mainstreaming were not incorporated into partnership companies at set-up stage. Instead, these have evolved to differing degrees in different areas.

"The OECD points out, that in establishing Partnership Companies, no effective conduit was established to enable the experiences of Partnership Companies inform or influence national policy, or the priorities of those agencies with a remit in the area of socio-economic development. In order to help overcome the problem of "distance" there is a need to develop new capacities which enable Government Departments, State agencies and Local Authorities to more effectively interact with the Dublin Partnership Companies to determine and prioritise socio-economic actions at a local level. Related to this is the development of effective horizontal and vertical relationships at local, regional and national level that will help to reduce the distance." (Position Paper:4)

Research conducted by Goodbody Economic Consultants (1997) proposes that the relationship between partnerships and State agencies is crucial in determining the sustainable success of programmes.

“The effectiveness of Partnerships is clearly dependent upon the cooperation and support they receive from their partners and on the board and the agencies and organisations which they represent...Our consultations suggest that the cooperation of the statutory sector is uneven and while there are a number of very positive examples, there is scope for improvement.” (Goodbody, 197:6)

Mainstreaming is also contingent on structures of decision-making. The Irish system of public administration was rightly criticised for being “very traditional, very conventional, very centralised” (McCarthy, 1998:42), while Parkinson argues that Ireland is perhaps the most centralised of States in his study of social exclusion in Europe. National control of local issues is standard practice. In contrast, “Local government...has few powers and resources and limited status. This restricts its capacity to engage in constructive local partnership arrangements or to take many policy decisions.” (Parkinson, 1998:18) While partnerships have helped to shift priorities and resources of state agencies (Ibid.20), they suffer from ‘ambiguous political status’ because their control over resources had not been authorised administratively or legitimated directly by elections. This lack of public accountability and formal recognition is a hindrance to the mainstreaming process.

“The Irish government has encouraged and funded the growth of local partnerships. But it has not provided a route whereby the lessons of partnership both horizontal and vertical can be translated back into the central government machine thus limiting the impact of local partnerships upon the national policy framework for tackling social exclusion.” (Parkinson, 1998:22)

In the DICP, various statutory agencies and Government Departments are represented at Board and Working Group level, including FÁS, Department of Education and Science, CERT, the Eastern Health Board and Dublin Corporation. However, none has a formal responsibility to mainstream any of the DICP-led initiatives.

Added to this is the issue of seniority of representation. Statutory representatives on partnership Boards may not have the authority to commit to mainstreaming. The actual decision-makers may not be as accessible to partnership representatives. Notwithstanding this, as FÁS has

pointed out, individual statutory representatives often have a good deal of discretion regarding programmes, even if they cannot alter the overall structure and content of the state provision. There is an obvious need to identify where the decision making power lies.

“In seeking to understand the impact of public policy on the inner city it is first necessary to understand what policy comprises, who is involved in determining policy and how and in whose interest it is formulated. This is especially important in Ireland because much of the public policy is decided within a highly centralised state which operates increasingly on a liberal corporatist model despite the often stated adherence to pluralism.” (Connolly, 1997:41)

The DICP was originally under the remit of the Department of the Taoiseach, though it was later moved to the Department of Enterprise and Employment for a period, and is now under the Department of Tourism, Sports and Recreation. Parkinson has identified this shift as potentially problematic in terms of the authority of partnership companies:

“The partnership initiative originally received substantial political support at the centre of government because it was run from the Taoiseach’s office. This was regarded as necessary to give it the clout to deliver integrated partnership based working. The change of government has led it to be placed in another department. Whether this will mean it will lose support and effectiveness as a consequence remains to be determined.” (Parkinson, 1998:22)

Connolly notes that while in theory, policy is under democratic control, the practice is different (1997:47).

“The present system of determining public policy is flawed when viewed from the perspective of meeting local needs and providing local benefit. The hierarchical structures of decision making, with responsibility to the Minister, fosters inertia and prevents a more innovative and flexible approach capable of adjusting to rapidly changing circumstances. A more dynamic and inclusive system of policy making which is sensitive to residential needs is likely to result in a qualitatively different outcome. The key issue now is how best to achieve the changes necessary to ensure future benefits.” (Connolly, 1997:83)

According to Crowley, mainstreaming fails in some situations because “there is no interconnectedness between the actions, there is no coherent institutional framework to pursue a mainstreaming approach, and there is no common understanding of mainstreaming across the different actions.” (Crowley, nd, b)

In its report the ESF Evaluation Unit commented that mainstreaming is not happening systematically, and noted a lack of involvement by the State education and training systems in the delivery of initiatives part-funded by partnerships (1999:135-136). It conceded that there are often shortcomings at the receiving end of messages (1999:200).

Survey findings have indicated that the two major barriers to the redirection of mainstream budgets experienced by area-based partnership companies were negative attitudes of people and organisations to change, and lack of flexibility on the part of statutory agencies. Uncertainty about future role and resources of partnerships was also identified as unhelpful, leading as it does to a 'short term mentality' (ESF Evaluation Unit, 1999:136).

Turok addresses the criticism that partnerships are unable to penetrate mainstream thinking in a way that will bring lasting benefits and illustrates the complexity of the partnership work methods: "...the notion of partnership working is ambiguous, undeveloped and glosses over the genuine difficulties involved." (Turok, 1999:73) Among the difficulties he lists are an uneven balance of power, conflicting interests and lack of trust. He also suggests that while the Government may transfer responsibility to local actors for aspects of education, housing, or environmental issues, it does not always also delegate the power and resources (Ibid:73).

Peter Davitt notes that in order for partnerships to be effective catalysts, there is a need to '...reduce the "distance" between the activity of individual local Dublin Partnership Companies and policy making structures.' (Davitt, 1998:13) This distance between local actors and national bodies results from three factors:

- the absence of coherent planning regarding local actions at the level of Government Departments or State agencies
- the presence of rigid hierarchical and functional divisions of responsibility within Departments and agencies
- the failure of the State sector to develop structures and processes appropriate to working with local groups. (Davitt, 1998:14)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

~ Promoting Successful Mainstreaming ~

Partnership companies in general, and the Dublin Inner City Partnership in particular, have clearly had a good deal of success in mainstreaming pilots and imparting lessons about best practice to national policy makers. According to Davitt, “Dublin Partnership Companies have developed new initiatives with national significance in areas such as child-care, women’s development, enterprise, education training and employment...they influenced the formation and implementation of a number of Government ‘special interventions’ such as the Back to Work Allowance, the Area Allowance Enterprise, the LESN and the Drugs Taskforce.” (Davitt, 1998:3) Parkinson also concludes that the area based partnerships are making progress and that communities are more active in decision making process (1998:23).

It is important to build on this success though and continue to maintain the focus of mainstreaming. In order to do this we need a strategy to transfer lessons of best practice, share information and maximise benefits from pilots.

“Mechanisms need to be identified through which projects and initiatives being developed through Partnership Companies can be mainstreamed into the ongoing operations of schools and other educational institutions. There is concern about the long-term sustainability of the preventative education measures which have been profiled in the case studies. Linkages need to be established between the projects being piloted at the local level and relevant educational authorities i.e. Department of Education and Science, Vocational Education Committees.” (Rourke, 1999:89)

Crowley notes that partnerships and other ADM-funded organisations can contribute to mainstreaming in various ways, such as by promoting the community’s understanding of policy issues, supporting local groups to make demands, and creating linkages (no date, a:9) Not all of these will have concrete, quantifiable outcomes, which presents a dilemma for evaluators of APC programmes.

“For a local development approach to be effective, institutional mechanisms should be designed to respect this autonomy [of community sector] and to facilitate this creativity.” (Zappone, 1998:56)

If the lack of data and documentation, and weak links between organisations are factors impeding mainstreaming, then an improved system of communication and recording needs to be developed in order to pass on the inform mainstream of lessons (ESF Evaluation Unit, 1999:200). The ESF Evaluation Unit report posits that partnerships would be more effective if they focused on large-scale, policy innovation rather than small scale delivery (1999:138)

With the partnerships’ uncertain future, effective mainstreaming of proven programmes is becoming increasingly more important. Communities need guarantees that services will continue to be delivered, through sustained support from statutory agencies.

“Indeed, the role of representative politics in determining public policy has been considerably weakened by the growth of ‘technocratic government’ and the major influence of powerful unelected corporate bodies on policy-making and implementation as set out above. In addition, private sector interests, including large multinational companies, exercise a significant influence on policy formation...” (Connolly, 1997:47)

Policy Recommendations

Of primary importance is the development of a system for mainstreaming to address the dearth of formal structures to facilitate mainstreaming.

Within the Department of Education and Science, the ADM liaison committee is responsible for transferring lessons of good practice from ADM to the Department. While the intention is admirable, the committee has not been operating as originally designed and according to the Department, it has not been meeting on a regular basis. Re-establishing this committee and assigning clear terms of reference would enable partnership companies to communicate effectively with the Department on models of best practice, via ADM.

Reactivate ADM Liaison Committee in Department of Education & Science

A 'Mainstreaming Forum' has recently been established within the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment with the objective of prioritising outcomes of the EU Employment Programme, which operated between 1996-97 and 1998-99. The Forum is charged with identifying the most successful outcomes and targeting the relevant Department or Agency to have responsibility for mainstreaming outcomes. In this way, accountability for mainstreaming particular outcomes is assigned to a specific agent, and progress on mainstreaming is consistently monitored.

Similar forums should be established to focus on mainstreaming particular initiatives. For example, a forum should be established to assist with mainstreaming of positions formerly funded by the Community Employment Programme. A Jobs Task Force should be established to address the mainstreaming of Whole-time Jobs Initiative positions, some of which are due to finish towards the end of 1999.

Replicate Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment's Mainstreaming Forum in each Government Department

In tandem with a weak structure for mainstreaming is an ambiguity of the scope, authority and future role of partnerships. This needs to be addressed in order to facilitate longer-term planning.

Sabel highlighted that partnerships are vulnerable because of their anomalous character and the fact that their discretion over public resources not precisely authorised (Sabel, 1996:10). The ESF Evaluation Unit (1999) also called for a clarification of roles and improve mutual understanding. Secure funding for the future is also an essential requirement (1999:151).

Partnerships need clear definitions and criteria with which to proceed, so that they can stand over their demands to mainstream initiatives.

Clarify role, authority and resources of Area-based Partnership Companies

Parkinson recommends improving powers and resources of local authorities (1998:22), so that they will be able to sanction additional spending to incorporate lessons from pilot programmes into their overall service.

Wider remit and resources of Local Authorities

Ring-fencing a percentage of State agency budgets to support innovative projects at a local level would ensure that the best examples of innovation are given the required supports.

Ring-fencing State budgets for innovative programmes

One of the frustrations with the mainstreaming process is the occasional lack of clarity about statutory agencies' reasons for choosing to mainstream some initiatives and not others. The provision of clear information on why certain projects are not selected for mainstreaming would be useful to Area-based partnership companies and their communities as it would allow them to refine their programmes and procedures.

Transparency in decision-making

Recommendations for Partnership Companies

Area-based partnership companies should maximise their lobbying efforts through effective and consistent use of local and national media. Communication and generating awareness of successful pilots are central to mainstreaming.

Employ media to good effect to attract attention to successful programmes

Davitt (1998) highlighted the multi-dimensional aspect of work of Dublin partnership companies and notes that brokerage with local agencies, institutions and employers is an important factor contributing to the achievements of Dublin partnership companies (Davitt, 1998:10). Ivan Turok delineated three types of APC operating in Ireland:

- ? those involved primarily in service delivery
- ? those with an agency role who are most active in designing new measures
- ? those with a brokerage role, who support community-based organisations to build their own skills by assisting with planning, lobbying, and co-ordination. (1999:82)

While there are advantages to each model, perhaps the latter role of brokerage will in the long term increase a community's capacity to design and deliver programmes and lobby on issues. This would have the effect of increasing pressure on relevant authorities to incorporate learning from the community.

Increased emphasis on brokerage role of APCs to improve capacity of local organisations

Where possible, APCs should seek the involvement of the statutory sector at all stages of design and operation of pilot projects. Even if statutory agencies are not in a position to fund pilots, the innovative initiative can nevertheless benefit from statutory experience and from developing relationships of trust between the community and statutory sector. Obtaining some level of State commitment to pilot initiatives at an early stage will in the longer term increase the initiative's chances of sustainability.

Involve statutory sector at all stages of design and operation of programmes

Another method of achieving a desired outcome is known as programme 'bending', whereby existing State programmes are modified or relaxed to meet local needs. It involves re-focusing mainstream programmes and resources, so that they are directly targeted at disadvantaged communities. It can mean increased resources or alterations to the programme to ensure it is both relevant to local need and accessible to its target group (Crowley, nd, b).

Utilise Programme Bending so that innovative elements can be incorporated into existing statutory programmes

APCs should aim for good statutory representation at Board and Working Group level. This will help establish good working relationships and mutual respect, and provides a regular channel of access to the potential mainstreamer. Any quandaries with statutory representation, such as irregular attendance, should be addressed as a priority.

Good statutory representation in APC structures

The ESF Evaluation Unit identified weak monitoring as an impediment to mainstreaming. Actors in the Local Development Programme are often beset by "...a lack of clearly articulated, consensual statements supported by objectively evaluated actions which have been tested in a number of sites..." (1999:236) The development of qualitative and quantitative monitoring systems will assist APCs to present a case for mainstreaming particular initiatives.

Implement stringent qualitative and quantitative monitoring and recording systems

Setting targets to monitor the progress of mainstreaming efforts will allow partnerships to know when they have achieved their objectives, and address any barriers as they arise.

Set targets for mainstreaming

There is a need for unity on policy issues when lobbying. Working through networks, such as PLANET, can lend greater authority when campaigning on issues. A wider geographical basis for making demands is also more likely to hold sway in political circles.

Unity on policy issues

In his report for the OCED, Sabel (1996) called for vertical and horizontal communication. APCs need to communicate and share information with each other and with community/voluntary sector, as well as with ADM and statutory sector.

Develop communication lines

Statutory agencies may be more likely to part-fund innovative initiatives than provide the totality of resources, since there is less risk involved. With this in mind, APCs should seek complementary sources of funds for innovative programmes from the private and business sectors.

Seek complementary funding

APCS should consider providing specific training for community groups in lobbying and negotiation skills and in fund-raising. This will have the effect of increasing statutory agencies' awareness of successful pilots and understanding of communities' needs.

Training for community personnel

In order to successfully engage in lobbying, community groups require accessible, accurate information which they can use in their campaigns. APCs should ensure that the information needs of their target groups are met. This could be achieved through newsletters, email, meetings and seminars.

Information provision to community groups

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Area Development Management (1995) *Integrated Local Development Handbook*. Dublin: Author.
- Casey, B., Metcalf, H. and Millward, N. (1997) *Employers' Use of Flexible Labour*. London: Policy Studies Institute.
- Connolly, D. (1997) *Developing Dublin — Who Benefits?: An evaluation of the impact of inner city disadvantaged communities of socio-economic local development arising from public policy*. Masters of Science (Economics) in Policy Studies thesis, University of Dublin/Institute of Public Administration.
- Crowley, N. (no date, a) *Travellers and Preventative Education*, Conference Paper.
- Crowley, N. (no date, b) *Mainstreaming*. Paper presented to Economic and Social Research Institute.
- Davitt, P. (1998) *Local Area Based Partnership Approach: Pursing Equity Beyond 2000*, Position Paper of the Dublin Area Partnership Companies.
- Department of Education and Science (December 1998) *DES National Anti-Poverty Strategy, Annual Report 1998*.
- Dublin Inner City Partnership (1992) *Programme for Action 1992-1993*. Dublin: Author.
- Dublin Inner City Partnership (1994) *Partnership Action Plan 1994-1996*. Dublin: Author.
- Dublin Inner City Partnership (1998) *Case Study on the Primary Schools Initiative*. Dublin: Author.
- Dublin Inner City Partnership (1999a) *Supporting Parents, Valuing Children: towards a quality childcare service in inner city Dublin*. Dublin: Author.
- Dublin Inner City Partnership, (1999b) *Partners in Social Integration: experiences from Community Employment Innovative Projects in Dublin's Inner City*. Dublin: DICP and FÁS.

- Dublin Inner City Partnership, (1999c) *Safeguarding the 1000 Workers' Jobs on the Whole-time Jobs Initiative*. Report on a seminar held in Marino Institute of Education on 23rd March 1999.
- ECOTEC Research and Consulting Limited (no date) *Urban Pilot Projects, Annual Report 1997*. Brussels: European Commission.
- European Social Fund Programme Evaluation Unit (April 1999) Evaluation Report, *ESF & the Local Urban and Rural Development Operational Programme*. Dublin: Author.
- Fahey, T. (ed) (1999) *Social Housing in Ireland: A study of success, failure and lessons learned*. Dublin: The Katherine Howard Foundation and the Combat Poverty Agency.
- Gates, P. (1999) *Dublin Inner City Partnership Submission to Deloitte and Touche on the Review of the Whole Time Jobs Initiative*.
- Geddes, M. (1998) *Local Partnership: A Successful Strategy for Social Cohesion?* Dublin: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions.
- Goodbody Economic Consultants (1997) *Mid-Term Evaluation of the Operational Programme for Local Urban and Rural Development*.
- Goodbody Economic Consultants (April 1999) *A Report on the Impact of the Operation Programme for Local Urban and Rural Development on Long-Term Unemployment*. **(Draft)**
- Hasse, T. 'The Distribution of Poverty and the Partnerships' Response'; in P. Kirby and D. Jacobson (eds.) *In the Shadow of the Tiger: New Approaches to Combating Social Exclusion*. Dublin: Dublin City University Press, pp. 18-30.
- Holland, Seamus (1979) *Rutland Street: The story of an educational experiment for disadvantaged children in Dublin*. Dublin: Pergamon Press and the Bernard van Leer Foundation.
- Kellaghan, Thomas (1977) *The evaluation of an intervention programme for disadvantaged children*. Windsor: NFER Publishing Company Limited.
- Kirby, P. and Jacobson, D. (editors) (1998) *In the Shadow of the Tiger: New Approaches to Combating Social Exclusion*. Dublin: Dublin City University Press.

- McCarthy, D. 'The Genesis and Evolution of the Irish State's Commitment to Social Partnership at Local Level', *Ibid.* pp. 39-48.
- Nolan, B. and Watson, D. (1999) *Women and Poverty in Ireland*. Dublin: Oak Tree Press in association with the Combat Poverty Agency.
- Parkinson, M. (1998) *Designing Area-Based Responses to Social Exclusion: Experiences from Europe*. European Institute for Urban Affairs. (Report commissioned by The Joseph Rowntree Foundation.)
- PLANET (1999) *Partnership in the New Millennium*. Wexford: Author.
- Riegal, Ralph, '50,000 learning disorder pupils slip through school system.' *Irish Independent*, 22 March 1997, page 7.
- Rourke, S. (1999) *Insights No. 8, Preventative Education and Strategies to Tackle Educational Disadvantage, A Compilation of Case Studies on Themes and Issues within the Local Development Programme*. Dublin: Area Development Management. **Draft.**
- Sabel, Charles and the LEED Programme (1996) *Ireland, Local Partnerships and Social Innovation*. Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).
- Scottish Community Development Centre, *Evaluation in Community Development Work — Seminar Report*. October 1998.
- Turok, I. 'Localisation or Mainstream Bending in Urban Regeneration? European Experience,' in *Local Economy*, May 1999, pp. 72-86.
- Walsh, J. (1998) 'Mainstreaming the Policy Impact of Local Partnerships: Priority Issues for Policy and Practice.' Paper presented at Local Partnerships: Key Challenges, Future Directions Seminar, Dublin, December 4, 1998.
- Walshe, J., 'Why our jobs schemes are not working,' *Irish Independent*, 2 March 1999, page 1.

Zappone, K. (1998) 'Top-Down or Bottom-Up: The Involvement of the Community Sector in Partnerships', in Kirby and Jacobson op. cit. pp. 50-58.