

**The Systematic Destruction of the Community Development,  
Anti-Poverty and Equality Movement (2002-2015)**

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## Introduction

The 1980s and 1990s witnessed the development of a vibrant state-funded community development, anti-poverty and equality sector which built on community and citizen involvement of the 1960s and 1970s (section 1.3). The principles underpinning these developments were supported by government policy, most notably *The White Paper on the Relationship between the Community and Voluntary Sector and the State* (Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs 2000).

The state supported and funded community empowerment and community capacity building, encouraged local communities to participate in decisions, and supported the initiation of projects to respond to community needs. European Union (EU) poverty and community programmes gave important support and funding. In this Paper, this model is called Participatory Democracy.

The sociologist Foucault (1966; 1977; 1980) has outlined in great detail the “rise of the social” from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards. Participatory Democracy was part of this “social paradigm”.

The importance of the social reached a peak in Britain and in many of the northern European countries post World War 2 when the significance of social solidarity and citizenship was recognised in the creation of welfare states in Northern Europe. Keynesian economics were used in these countries to stimulate employment and increase public services, which, in turn increased consumer demand.

## Shift from Participatory Democracy to Neoliberalism

As the community sector gained in strength towards the end of the 1990s, the role of the sector became a key concern of the political establishment as tensions between representative and participatory democracy developed (Chapter Two).

June 2002 was a key moment. Fianna Fáil and the Progressive Democrats entered a coalition government (2002-2007). The arrival of this Coalition Government signalled a new approach to the strategic management of the community, anti-poverty and equality sector.

The growing lack of political support for the sector gave key politicians and civil servants the opportunity to valorise a new model for managing community development, anti-poverty and equality interventions. The transformation which occurred in the community development, anti-poverty and equality sector can be broadly described as a shift from Participatory Democracy to Neoliberalism. This shift would have profound consequences for the community and voluntary sector as a whole.

What was effectively a “paradigm”<sup>1</sup> shift was imposed on the sector from 2002 onwards.

A similar shift had occurred in education in the 1990s. Lynch *et al* (2012) referred to the new framework as “new managerialism”, and, Collins *et al* (2007) in relation to a range of sectors (energy, roads, heritage and telecommunications) described it as “new public service management” (NPM). Such a framework combines Neoliberalism and Managerialism. In the words of Collins (2007) it was both an “ideology and a strategic management design”.

## Neoliberalism

Neoliberal globalisation first took root in the United States in the 1970s following the economic downturn after the oil crisis. In Europe, according to Harvey (2005; 2009), the shift to Neoliberalism reflected a historical transformation in how western European societies were governed. The shift broke the “uneasy compact between labour and capital” and led to realignment within global capitalism and threatened the distributive ideology of the welfare state (Harvey 2006).

The emergence of Neoliberal globalisation which began to penetrate Europe in the late 1970s and early 1980s gradually eroded the values underpinning the “social” paradigm of the welfare and interventionist state.

In post 2002 Ireland, many of these elements of Neoliberalism were imposed on the community development, anti-poverty and equality sector. Business and managerial models which were out of alignment with the needs of working class communities were enforced on community development work (Chapter Three).

This development in Ireland was part of a world-wide trend towards Neoliberal globalisation. Neoliberalism endorsed market liberalisation and promoted market exchange as an ethic in itself (Harvey 2006). Privatisation and de-regulation of the economy and public services were also fostered and narrow market-driven business models were imposed. Such practices were considered to be the most efficient mechanisms for allocating resources and producing quality services.

Neoliberalism undermined the concepts of citizenship, social solidarity and a commitment to the most vulnerable, which had developed in the post-World War 2 era (Chomsky 2017). The idea of providing security against hardship for the most vulnerable within a unified social citizenship was absent (Butler and Collins 2004). The de-socialisation or withdrawal of

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<sup>1</sup> The term paradigm was used in the study in a common sense way to describe a framework, model or set of assumptions. Paradigm shift described a profound or fundamental change in society’s view on how things work. An example given is the Copernicus revolution, which saw a shift to the sun at the centre of the universe. The term was derived from Thomas Kuhn’s, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962).

the state from social interventions and public welfare was promoted signalling what was termed a “crisis of the social” (Rose 1999).

Ideologically Neoliberal globalisation lacked a structural or institutional analysis of poverty or inequality and claimed that the welfare state was over centralised and was inefficient in terms of costs.

At a political level, Neoliberal globalisation encouraged the dismantling of institutions and narratives that promoted egalitarian distributive measures (Harvey 2006). It sought to weaken civic and political activism and engagement in social movements (Chomsky 2017).

### **The Dismantling of the Community Development, Anti-Poverty and Equality Sector**

Funding for projects was cut in the mid-2000s and when the recession of 2008 hit disproportionate severe cuts were made by the Fine Fáil/Green Party Coalition Government (2007-2011). Harvey (2012) estimated that between 2008 and 2011, the community and voluntary sector in Ireland was reduced by 35 per cent in contrast to 7 per cent for other sectors. In a separate estimation, Bamber (2013) claimed that the decrease in funding was as high as 41 per cent.

Community Development Projects (CDPs) and other local development programmes were ordered to desist from campaigning and advocacy (section 3.1).

In 2009, and without warning 19 of the 180 Community Development Projects (CDPs) were closed and the remaining Community Development Projects (CDPs) were dissolved. Local project structures and project workers were taken over and colonised. The language of “community development” was still used but now it referred to what was primarily a market-driven work activation and training programme (the Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP) (2010-2015)) that had effectively replaced grass-roots local and community development projects (sections 3.2; 3.3).

“Community development and community empowerment” no longer meant building cohesion and solidarity and responding to community needs. The meaning of these words was replaced to describe the “self-activation of individuals” de-contextualised from their economic and community context..

Critical also was the scaling down or closing of the following: the Combat Poverty Agency (section 4.1); Regional Support Agencies and the support structure within Pobal (originally Area Development Management (section 3.4). In a major setback the equality infrastructure was re-shaped (4.2) leading to a profound weakening of the capacity of the anti-poverty and equality infrastructure to contribute to the anti-poverty and equality public debate.

These measures taken by the state, effectively brought an end to independently managed state-funded community and local development.

Although the rhetoric of value for money and accountability were key narratives of the government, the systematic destruction of the sector was centrally political, aimed at disempowering the community, anti-poverty and equality sector.

The vibrant public debate between the state, semi-autonomous social inclusion agencies, the voluntary and community sector and the broader civil society was silenced. In many communities, this created a sense of hopelessness, despair and anger.

The systematic destruction of a vision of solidarity and equality sent a strong signal that the voices of poor communities no longer mattered.

The strategic use of research consultants and intermediary organisations (Newman; Goodbody; and Centre for Effective Services) to rein in the sector was noteworthy (sections 3.4; 3.6; 3.7).

Given this historical and political background, the research conducted here asked the following questions: by what means and sequence did the Neoliberal agenda emerge victorious in the governance of community development, anti-poverty and equality in Ireland? What mechanisms were used by the state to close down and silence a vibrant sector and a public debate on poverty, equality and community development?

## **Outline of Paper**

Chapter One examines the historical importance of community development and social movements in Ireland, together with new forms of community mobilisation which emerged in Ireland in the 1960s and 1970s.

Chapter Two discusses some of the tensions and struggles encountered by the community development, anti-poverty and equality sector in the “contested space” of the community. It also focuses on the disparate factions inside the state.

Chapter Three examines the mechanisms used by the state to close down the community and local development programmes.

Chapter Four outlines the closing down of the Combat Poverty Agency and the re-shaping of the Equality Authority.

Chapter Five summarises some of the main issues and conclusions of the study.



## Research Methodology

The research methodology included desk research and interviewing key informants.

Interviewing included semi structured qualitative interviews with 25 key informants:

- People who held key senior positions in the civil service in the 1990s and had responsibility for the Community Development Programme (CDP). Positions held ranged from Principal Officer to Secretary General of Government Departments
- Senior staff of intermediary agencies
- Project Leaders of Community Development Projects (CDPs) in Dublin City
- People who had academic or specialist knowledge of community development

Interviews were held between May 2016 and April 2017 and lasted between one and a half and two hours, with a minority of interviews stretching to three hours.

In view of the sensitive nature of the discussions, interviewees were given assurance that confidentiality and anonymity would be maintained and that their identities would be protected, unless it was otherwise specifically agreed.

Interviewees	Number
Former/current Senior Civil Servants in Government Departments	6
Former/current Public Servants in semi-autonomous intermediary agencies	6
Former/current Workers in Other Intermediaries/Support Agencies	4
Former/current Project leaders of Community Development Projects (CDPs)	6
Academics	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>

Interview data was simultaneously supported by desk research on the following: government policy documents, government statements, evaluation reports and key published and unpublished material of Community Developments Projects.

Conclusions were established through data triangulation which involved comparing and cross-checking the multiple sources of data including divergent views.

A timeline on the evolution of the community, anti-poverty and equality sector is provided in the Appendix.

## Chapter One: Community Activism in Ireland

### 1.1 Historical Background

Historical evidence has shown that social movements and community development in Ireland have played a significant role in moderating how power is distributed in society and in assisting marginalised groups, working class communities and poorer rural societies to make significant gains.

Kiberd and Mathews (2015) noted that late 19<sup>th</sup> century Ireland saw, not only an important literary revival movement, but also an extensive civic debate and civic action outside of the colonial state, conventional politics and institutional religion. Groups came together and agitated for political change in relation to sovereignty, women's suffrage, land reform and working class rights. At this time too, the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) was formed, and, the rural co-operative movement, based on the principles of self-help and mutuality, developed consumer and producer co-operatives managed by members. The co-op movement helped to counteract the exploitation of the rural poor who had a weak bargaining position on the market (Bolger 1977).

The middle decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the emergence of Muintir na Tire in the 1930s which promoted the idea of active community participation, and, helped to build the infrastructure of electricity and water in rural Ireland (Commins 1978). Active too during this period were the United Irishwomen (now the Irish Countrywomen's Association (ICA) founded in 1910 (Heverin 2000), and, the Irish Housewives Association (IHA) (Tweedy 1992).

Ireland in the 1960s and 1970s witnessed many vibrant social movements. The "second wave" of the women's liberation movement questioned the role of women in the family and in society and adopted new ways of organising such as direct action and consciousness-raising in groups (Connolly 2002; Levine 1982; Stopper 2006).

Important too in the 1970s was: the student movement; the anti- nuclear campaign which helped to make Ireland a nuclear free zone; the National Farmers' Association which demanded that the voice of farmers be heard; Save Wood Quay which opposed the building of civic offices on a Viking settlement site; the Living City Group and working class activism which resisted the de-tenanting of Dublin's inner city and helped to reverse the destruction of the city; (McDonald 1985; North Central Community Council 1978); Concerned parents against Drugs; Save the West Campaign and the Civil Rights Movement in the Gaeltacht (Curtin and Varley 1995).

Citizen activism also emerged in the form of tenants' and residents' organisations and housing action groups. The Dublin Housing Action Committee (DHAC) was one of the largest politically active organisations of those years. It was made up of alliances of workers, students, homeless people and several political parties. Significant too was the National

Association of Tenants Organisations (NATO) which was founded in Dublin's South Inner City to improve the housing and maintenance conditions of tenants. NATO campaigned for the introduction of a differential rent scheme in public housing. The differential rent scheme introduced by the state determined that rents should not be in excess of ten per cent of a tenant's income. This action by the state was in response to a rent strike which saw thousands of tenants on strike and refusing to pay rent.

In Northern Ireland, the Civil Rights Movement was born in 1968 seeking to end discrimination in employment, housing and voting.

## 1.2 New Community Activism

In the late 1960s, the community became a site for a new type of grass-root community organising. This was first given expression in Ballyfermot, West Dublin and in Dublin's North Inner City where the Irish Foundation for Human Development<sup>2</sup> played an important role.

Connolly (2009) made the point that for the most part community activism and the newer forms of community development up until the mid-1980s originated and grew outside of state structures. Most organisations were funded by member subscriptions or voluntary contributions and operated on a purely voluntary basis.

Rafferty (1990) recounted that many people active in this new form of community organising had prior experience in the urban labour movement and in organisations such as National Association of Tenants Organisations (NATO) and the Dublin Housing Action Committee (DHAC).

The late 1980s and early 1990s was a time of high emigration, income deprivation and social marginalisation. The unemployment rate had reached 17 per cent and consistent poverty levels were at 16 per cent.

During this time of austerity there was broad support for anti-poverty, equality and community empowerment measures. Politically progressive people who had highlighted the persistence of poverty and inequality in the 1970s<sup>3</sup> continued in the 1980s to advocate for anti-poverty interventions. Inside Dáil Éireann, many members of the Labour Party were committed to eliminating poverty. Sympathetic civil servants (some of whom were directly involved in EU Initiatives) were in key positions enabling them to support anti-poverty and community empowerment initiatives.

Mary Robinson who was President of Ireland between 1990 and 1997 understood the significance of empowering local community groups to be transformative at local

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<sup>2</sup> The Irish Foundation for Human Development (IFHD) was founded by Dr Ivor Brown who was Chief Psychiatrist of the Eastern Health Board and Head of Psychiatry in University College Dublin. Most of its funding came from the corporate sector.

<sup>3</sup> Sr Stanislaus Kennedy, Noreen Kearney, Seamus O Cinnéide, Tony Browne and Mary Whelan, among others.

neighbourhood level. Her endorsement was highly significant for the broader recognition of the sector.

Gradually a supportive structure and funding arrangements were developed for community development and community services and the sector accessed significant funding from the state, the European Union and philanthropic organisations. EU funding through the European Poverty Programmes and Community Initiative Programmes such as HORIZON and NOW in the 1970's, 1980's and 1990's made significant contributions.

Improved funding gave rise to the increased professionalisation of the community sector as many community activists of the 1970s became paid community workers or worked in community-based services run by community groups which were funded by the state (Connolly 2009). However this incorporation of the community sector into state structures drew the community sector into a paradoxical relationship with the state and had the potential to threaten the autonomy of the sector.

### **Community Development Programme**

Following on from EU Poverty 2 (1984-1990), the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) was the lead government department with a brief for community development in the 1990s. The Community Development Programme (CDP) was established in 1990 by Michael Woods (FF), Minister for Social Welfare (under the Fianna Fáil/Progressive Democrats Coalition (1987-1992). In 1994, a Family Resource Centre (FRC) Programme was set up under Michael Woods TD. The work of the DSW expanded culminating in 2001 in over 200 Community Development Projects (CDPs) and 100 Family Resource Centres (FRCs). Fifteen Regional Support Agencies were established to support the Community Development Projects (CDPs) and the Family Resource Centres (FRCs). Projects comprised both geographically based projects and projects concerned with community of interest such as the Traveller and Migrant communities.

The Department of Social Welfare (DSW) also supported the development of women's groups, men's groups and community networks.

Under this emerging model, community development comprised several key components:

- It built relationships and empowered people to participate in decision-making structures that affected their communities
- It emphasised critical social analysis
- It focused on the process by which change can be achieved
- It developed local social infrastructure including local neighbourhood networks and coalition building between organisations

Using these principles of community development and in response to local needs, community-led models of service provision were developed in a range of areas, such as employment and training, drug use, violence against women, child care, adult education,

Traveller support, migrant support and youth services (Kelleher and Whelan 1992; Nexus Research with Farrell Grant Sparks 2000; Nexus 2006).

For example, in relation to women drug users, the CDP of the Inner City Organisational Group (ICRG) played a major role in the establishment of, and subsequent support to, SAOL (a women's drug project) in responding to the needs of women drug users and their children. St Michael's Estate CDP, Inchicore pioneered the first community-based outreach service on violence against women in an urban area.

Where there was a lack of state response, projects lobbied and mounted campaigns for improved conditions as local communities sought to exert "power from below".<sup>4</sup> Campaigns were fought by St Michael's CDP, Inchicore and other projects around tenant issues and the unacceptable conditions of local authority flats including dampness leading to health problems. An important victory was won by St Michael's CDP when the European Committee of Social Rights found in favour of tenants and ruled that Ireland failed to provide adequate accommodation conditions on Local Authority estates (St Michael's Estate, 2017).

Over a period of almost 30 years, campaigns around the land use aimed at retaining public land in public ownership for the purpose of building public housing, was a central focus of many inner city organisations, including the North Wall Community Association in Dublin's north inner city and St Michael's Estate community, Inchicore.

Working class communities were characterised by strong familial and neighbourhood bonds. The role that women played carrying out community development work strengthened community bonds and social networks and built social capital<sup>5</sup>. These networks of support helped communities to cope with the under-lying, on-going daily crisis which poor communities faced due to lack of income and exclusion (O'Neill 1992).

### **Poverty and Equality Infrastructure**

Other anti-poverty and equality initiatives were coming on-stream. This included the establishment of the Combat Poverty Agency (CPA) in 1986. An equality infrastructure was initiated in 1994 which led to the establishment of the Equality Tribunal and the Equality Authority (EA).

### **National Partnership Programmes**

The expansion of community development and anti-poverty and equality measures need to be seen in the context of a rise of national social partnerships in the late 1980s. Dermot McCarthy (1998) and Bill Roche (2008) viewed the emergence of a partnership approach by

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<sup>4</sup> A term used by Fox-Pivan (2008).

<sup>5</sup> Social capital is the value of networks, associations, mutual aid formation and trust within a defined community.

governments as a response by political elites to a “crisis in state legitimization”, as economic austerity hit home.

In the context of European Social Partnership agreements, the Irish National Partnership was comparatively unusual in that in 1994, social partnership was extended by the Rainbow Coalition (1994-1997) to involve civil society groups (Larragy 2006).

Although Taoiseach Bertie Ahern negotiated six of the seven national partnerships in the 1990s and 2000s, three senior civil servants: Dermot McCarthy; Paddy Teahon and Pádraig Ó hUiginn were pivotal mediators and brokers (Roche 2008).

### 1.3 The Politics of Participatory Democracy

The publication of the *White Paper on the Relationship between the Community and Voluntary Sector and the State* (Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs 2000) was important in that it gave formal recognition to the community and voluntary sector. The White Paper articulated a vision of Participatory Democracy to govern local community and voluntary activities. It outlined the values of social justice, equity, social solidarity and social citizenship to underpin the framework and a belief that citizens had a right to participate in decisions that affected their lives (Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs 2000). It affirmed the value of empowering working class and rural communities and other communities of interest such as Traveller and Migrant communities.

It recognised the following:

- The value of bottom-up development
- The capacity of communities to identify and create innovative solutions to unmet need
- The importance of advocacy and campaigning

Significantly, it committed to providing a three-year funding framework for local projects. Given the brief that local projects must involve local people to be responsive to local needs, community development was perceived as being semi-autonomous from the state. One civil servant articulated his belief in the ideas underpinning the Participatory Democracy paradigm as follows:

*Community groups participate in civic space, that ambiguous space between the market and the state.... This space is important. Representative democracy marginalises some sectors of society.... Civil society gives these citizens space to critically interact with government and to influence events. This helps to create a healthy society (civil servant)*

The vibrancy of the community, anti-poverty and equality sector during this period led some people to describe it as a “golden era”:

*The mid 1980s to 2000 was a golden era... It generated energy and mobilised citizens to enact transformative change (community activist)*

A community-led approach built social capital and created formal and informal networks of information and exchange where critical reflection and dialogue thrived:

*People were exchanging and debating ideas. They were linking with Dublin Inner City Partnership and Task Forces such as the National Drugs Task Force. There was real enthusiasm that things could be accomplished (community activist)*

One community activist summarised the mood of the 1990s:

*There was a buzz all the time around the community. What was happening captured the imagination of people in communities and they wanted to become part of it (community activist)*

Given the impressive infrastructure of support that was established by the state during the 1980s and 1990s, it is not surprising that workers in the sector experienced supportive relationships with the state:

*They (civil servants) knew what community development was about (community activist)*

*There was a layer of people in the civil service such as..... who supported a bottom up approach..... Although they all had boundaries they could support the values underpinning community development (community activist)*

Civil servants also experienced a positive climate:

*In the 1990s there was an underlying sense of optimism and a social democratic instinct was present.... There was a context in which creative innovative solutions were possible (civil servant)*

*Community development helped us to respond better. The groups knew what was happening on the ground and this helped us to keep in touch with the needs of the community (civil servant)*

However, on June 6th 2002 Fianna Fáil and the Progressive Democrats (2002-2007) entered a coalition government and the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs was established (section 2.2). This development was a key moment for the sector. Despite the support of senior politicians and civil servants, community development and anti-poverty and equality work became a contested terrain.

Between 2002 and 2010 a major paradigm shift occurred in how the sector was governed. ". Lynch *et al* (2012) referred to such a model as "new managerialism", and, Collins *et al* (2007) described it as "new public service management" (NPM). Such a framework combines

Neoliberalism and Managerialism. In the words of Collins (2007) it was both an “ideology and a strategic management design”.

In effect, Neoliberal Managerialism was part of the movement towards Neoliberal globalisation. The new paradigm succeeded in fragmenting and effectively destroying the Participatory Democracy framework. By 2010, the sector witnessed the end of state-funded community development and grass root anti-poverty work.

How had this been allowed to happen, and what were the underlying values of the Neoliberal agenda?



## Chapter Two: Contested Space

For a period of time (mid 1980s to 2002) the community, anti-poverty and equality movement occupied what was in Gramsci's<sup>6</sup> phraseology, a site of struggle to win concessions and counter the hegemony of economic and political elites (1971).

This ambiguous space, which needed to be negotiated and claimed, posed significant challenges for the state:

*The challenge was to reconcile representative democracy with the challenges of participatory democracy; and, to resolve the diversity of demands on the state with the need of the state to govern (civil servant)*

Notwithstanding attempts by many government officials and the community anti-poverty and equality sector to reconcile disparate interests, the interdependent framework which held the politics of Participatory Democracy together was fragmenting.

"Rules of engagement" were breaking down. This was the result of several factors: the growing strength of the community, anti-poverty and equality sector in terms of public education and campaigning; the diverse and de-centralised activities which gave rise to disparate voices and had the potential to shift power away from elected representatives and the bureaucracies of local and central government.

### 2.1 Fragmentation of the Participatory Democracy Paradigm

The by-passing of the official political system in the early 1990s by the European Commission also generated resentment and antagonism. Area Development Management (ADM) was set up as an independent company on the insistence of the European Commission which considered that Ireland had an over-centralised administration, and, local government lacked the capacity and competencies to manage EU Structural Funds. Large sums of funding were invested directly in Local Development Companies (LDCs)<sup>7</sup> under which local politicians had little say on where the funding was being spent:

*What got politicians up against the community and local development sector, was that they did not have a place on the local ADM structures. The sector should have worked with politicians. They should have been more astute (civil servant)*

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<sup>6</sup> Antonio Gramsci was an Italian theorist of early 20th century Italy.

<sup>7</sup> Local Development Companies (LDCs) were partnership companies. The partnership company structure in Ireland has been in existence since 1991, with the formation of the pilot partnership structures under the Programme for Economic and Social Progress (PESP). Their main focus was to address long-term unemployment. Although the names of these structures have changed since 1991, the composition of the partners remained the same, in that they involve representation from state agencies, social partners, community and voluntary organisations. The representation was widened to include local authority elected Representatives.

The public challenges to government policy as the sector grew in strength became unacceptable to politicians. In the view of one civil servant:

*The sector cannot take on the state and expect to be funded by the state*

There was a feeling among politicians that the sector had gone beyond its brief in its campaigning and public education role:

*There was the view that 'CDPs are trouble'.... County Managers resented Local partnerships (civil servant)*

*Some politicians felt that 'the whole thing was out of control', 'the sector had lost the run of itself'. ... The political system wanted the sector gone (civil servant)*

*Community organisations became rivals to local government and politicians. The political system was sceptical. They saw them as alternative forms of local democracy. They became cagey of autonomous forms of community development (civil servant)*

Also, politicians felt that the sector had little respect for representative democracy:

*It was not acknowledged by participants that money was coming from public funding. Even Ministers not hostile got little credit that government was funding the programmes (civil servant)*

*Many lacked the skills of diplomacy. Politicians began to despise the sector (civil servant)*

The public education role of the Combat Poverty Agency (CPA) and the high profile role of the Equality Authority (EA) also aggravated politicians (Chapter Four).

## **2.2 Factions Inside the State**

The Participatory Democracy paradigm which governed the sector continued to fragment.

The struggle for power was not confined to the state/community relationship. The state too was a site of contestation. Overlapping factions were competing for control over community development, local development and the equality agenda:

*There was a struggle for power and influence. There was a battle as to where social and local development fitted into government policy and structures (civil servant)*

Notwithstanding the tension between the community sector and the state, neither the community sector nor state officials within the parent department (Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs) who supported the sector, anticipated what would eventually become the total dismantling of the community, anti-poverty and equality sector.

Despite the vociferous criticism by some politicians of the community sector, the group of civil servants, who were centrally involved in establishing the infrastructure for community development, anti-poverty and equality continued to support the sector.

During the 1990s significant discussion and reflection had taken place within the civil service as to how best to manage: an expanded community development sector; local development; poverty and social inclusion; and, the equality infrastructure which was developing. In discussions, the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs (DSCFA, originally the Department of Social Welfare) sought to retain its mandate for community development, Family Resource Centres (FRCs), the Combat Poverty Agency (CPA) and the national anti-poverty strategy (NAPS). Some senior civil servants were hopeful that the department could also become a core government department for local development, equality and for other developmental projects. However, this was not to happen.

The government set up a new Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (DCRAGA) (2002-2010) which had the support of the Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern. Éamon Ó Cuív was Minister. Noel Ahern was Minister of State, with special responsibility for drugs and community affairs (2002-2007). Two senior civil servants, one of whom had given significant support to the community, anti-poverty and equality sector exerted a key influence in the setting up of the new department.

The official rationale for establishing a separate department was that a special Minister with responsibility for “citizenship projects” would strengthen the support to the community and local development sector. One of the two civil servants responsible explained:

*It was envisaged that a mechanism would be put in place where active citizenship projects would be the core business of a Department. There would be a special Minister with responsibility for local and community development (civil servant)*

The Community Development Programme (CDP) under the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs (DSCFA), local development programmes managed by Pobal and the rural LEADER programme were brought under the new Department.

The Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs was a big loser:

*Large scale destruction took place of the work which had been built up over 20 years (civil servant)*

The carve-up resulted in the fragmentation of programmes that had been established by the Department of Social Welfare (DSW):

*A lot of the interrelated developments were split, fracturing the work and the entire area of social policy we were engaged in. Developments were spread throughout several departments: Family Resource Centres (FRCs), Combat Poverty Agency (CPA) and National Anti-Poverty Programme (NAPS) remained under the Department of Social,*

*Community and Family Affairs (DSCFA); equality and childcare under Justice, Equality and Law Reform; and community and local development under DCRAGA (civil servant)*

No planning and no consultation took place with the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs which was the parent department for community development.

The fact that the Family Resource Centre (FRC) Programme was not brought under the brief of DCRAGA was of considerable relief to many people, as FRCs avoided the fate of CDPs and local development projects, which were dissolved in 2009. Family Resource Centres (FRCs) were retained under the brief of the DSCFA and at a later stage were put under the Child and Family Agency, an agency under the remit of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. Such Centres have continued to make significant contributions to community-based development.

The Department of the Environment and Local Government (DELG) failed to obtain a mandate for community and local development. Some key senior civil servants who supported community-based development were opposed to the DELG obtaining such a brief. Consistent with the European Commission position, this faction believed that as Ireland had a highly centralised state bureaucracy with few powers devolved to local government, the Department of Environment and Local Government (DELG) did not have the capacity or capability to administer community and local development projects. The view was that:

*Putting community development under the leadership of local authorities was always around... Environment had little capacity. They did not know about community development as their main functions related to roads and house building and physical infrastructure (civil servant)*

As part of the carve-up, the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform took over the mandate for the Equality Authority (EA). It also acquired the brief for Childcare. In subsequent years this brief was transferred to the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

## **2.3 The Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs**

The main winner of these changes was the new Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs which had been set up in haste in 2002.

However, even in 2002 ominous signs for the future of community and local development were evident:

*People in the new Department lacked knowledge and expertise of the social and community sector (civil servant)*

*Once DCRAGA was set up the writing was on the wall. This was the end of community development ... and anti-poverty work (civil servant)*

Little planning went into establishing the Department:

*There was no planning in the change-over. It (Community Development Programme) should have been left with Social Welfare (civil servant)*

People, who had played a lead role in promoting community development in the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) either did not transfer to the new Department or where they did transfer, were not assigned to community development:

*Some people who had sponsored community development moved from Social Welfare to the new department. ...However they were not given the responsibility for community development in the new department and were reassigned to other posts (civil servant)*

This resulted in the sector having:

*Few allies or sponsors in the new Department (civil servant)*

The growing lack of political support for community based development gave a core group of civil servants in the newly established Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (DCRAGA) the opportunity to valorise a new model for managing the community and local development sectors. The new model which was imposed on the sector was characterised by several people interviewed for this study as “managerialism”:

*.....the new Department imposed managerialism. There was no political vision or value base to this approach.*

“Value for money” became a core theme in the new model as “the social” receded into the background:

*The department became obsessed with financial accounting (civil servant)*

*It was Kafta-like. The whole emphasis was on accounting (civil servant)*

Policy relating to community and local development was side-lined in the new department:

*The White Paper<sup>8</sup> was left in tatters. ...and there was no policy (civil servant)*

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<sup>88</sup> The White Paper on the Relationship between the Community and Voluntary Sector and the State, Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs 2000.

## Chapter Three: The Dismantling of the Community Development, Anti-Poverty and Equality Sector

Following the establishment of the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (DCRAGA), the sector experienced a major shift in how the state related to it.

Demoralisation set in:

*The malevolence from DCRAGA was unreal. Some people experienced complete annihilation as projects were closed.<sup>9</sup> We could not believe what was happening* (community activist)

*The hostility was unbelievable* (community activist)

It was becoming evident by the early 2000s that critical perspectives on the economic and social causes of poverty and social exclusion were not being tolerated. Any dissent would be reined in.

### 3.1 Closing-Down Dissent

Officials from the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (DCRAGA) brought the message from politicians that community and local development projects were not to engage in political activism or campaigning work. The sector was formally warned at a public meeting in 2004. A strong message was later given to the sector by the Centre of Effective Services (CES) who were contracted by the DCRAGA, that the sector should not undermine or be in conflict with representative democracy (Bamber *et al* 2009: page 20):

*When the state funds community development, however, decision-making needs to be congruent with policy if it is not to undermine or to conflict with representative democratic processes* (Bamber *et al* 2009: page 20)

This view was contrary to the principles and aspirations of the White Paper (2000) which had outlined a vision of Participatory Democracy. The White Paper acceptance of advocacy, public education and campaigning was based on the premise that representative democracy can marginalise or ignore some of the most vulnerable sections of society.

A senior civil servant who was familiar with community development work noted:

*The voice of the people was completely silenced (under DCGGA)... Community development lost its independence. Community Development Projects (CDPs) always had a big role in giving a voice to the people. This was now gone* (civil servant)

### 3.2 Closures

In 2009, nineteen of the 180 Community Development Projects (CDPs) were closed with two weeks' notice and despite a ruling from the Labour Court, workers were made redundant

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<sup>9</sup> This refers to the closure of intermediary agencies and the complete closure of nineteen Community Development Projects (CDPs).

without full redundancy entitlements. Many of the workers made redundant were members of SIPTU trade union and the redundancy claim sanctioned by the Labour Court is still being pursued on their behalf by SIPTU.

Communication on redundancies came, not by personal contact, but by way of email or text on December 16<sup>th</sup> 2009. For one community worker, December 17<sup>th</sup> 2009 was frozen in time:

*The email about our closure came at 5 to 5 on the 17<sup>th</sup> December. We thought, 'this is a mistake'. This could not be happening (Former Project Leader)*

Little explanation was given as to why some projects were targeted for closure. One worker explained:

*They wiped out 20 years of our work just like that in three weaselly words, 'needs not demonstrated'*

Workers were devastated:

*It was as if my life's work was erased. It was like a bereavement (Former Project Leader)*

The shock of the closure one week before Christmas Day was deeply felt by staff and their families:

*The closures had a devastating impact, terrible to hear two weeks before Christmas..... I found myself not sleeping, worrying about two kids still in college. We lost two workers and our CE workers. We were on the marches, meetings and protests but the resistance was no good (Former Project Leader)*

With no redundancy payments and no entitlements to a work pension, the economic realities of the closures hit hard. Many workers ended up unemployed, while some workers ended up on temporary employment and training schemes. Unable to pay the rent in her private sector housing, one woman interviewed ended up homeless.

Project budgets of the remaining projects were cut and projects were ordered to desist from campaigning and advocacy (section 3.1). Although funding cuts had commenced prior to the financial crisis, when the economic downturn hit, cutbacks were exacerbated. Harvey (2012) estimated that between 2008 and 2011 the community and voluntary sector was cut by 35 per cent in contrast to 7 per cent for other sectors. In a separate estimation, Bamber (2013) claimed that the decrease in funding was as high as 41 per cent.

### **3.3 Triumph of Managerialism: The End of Community Development**

The remaining community and local development projects under the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (DCRAGA) were dissolved. On November 25<sup>th</sup> 2009

a new programme, the Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP) (2010-2015) was announced (McDonnell 2009).

Local project structures, project workers and the language of community development were taken over and colonised, and a centrally driven, what was primarily a work activation and training programme with repressive bureaucratic procedures was put in place effectively putting an end to state-funded community development work.

The target groups of the Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP, 2010-2015) had been some of the most marginalised in Irish society and included people from the Roma Community, people from the Traveller Community, unattached and disaffected young people, homeless people, drug users, refugees, asylum seekers, lone parents and people with disabilities.

The Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP) which ostensibly aimed to tackle poverty and social exclusion did not, and could not meet the needs of the diverse communities that were in its remit.

The Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP) was designed to centralise control within the new Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (DCRAGA). Targets and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were centrally set and achieving targets was monitored by a centralised Information Technology (IT) system named IRIS (Integrated Reporting and Information System).

Local Development Companies (LDCs) that managed the programme were accountable to central government through Pobal. These Companies were responsible for achieving targets set by the centre and adhering to budgetary obligations. Local projects in turn were answerable to the LDCs.

The result was a complex relationship between the state and community organisations as control was exercised through devolved structures with stifling levels of bureaucracy.

“Value for money” was a dominant rhetoric and a rationale used within government to close down projects and centralise control over the remaining projects. Little or no consideration was given to reports that showed that money on community development was well spent (Nexus Research with Farrell Grant Sparks 2000; Nexus Research 2006).

Ironically, value for money in the new Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP) was measured by crude numerical indicators on throughput. It was a cost per unit model with interventions calculated in terms of cost and benefit that gave an accounting value. A worker described it in the following words:

*Value for money was a simple mathematical equation. There were two Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): number of individuals and number of groups. You divided up the total sum of money available by the number of individuals and groups*



*worked with. For instance you have 100 Euro and worked with ten individuals. You divided 100 by ten and got ten*

Administrative and reporting responsibilities in the Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP) were excessive and time consuming:

*Under the LCDP framework, detailed financial returns under timeframe headings were required*

The through-put and financial returns had to be manged across the four goals of the programme with a five per cent leeway for any goal (Pobal and the Department of Environment Community and Local Government 2016):

- 10 per cent of work was to be spent on raising awareness (goal 1);
- 40 per cent on education and training (goal 2);
- 40 per cent on assisting clients to become work-ready (goal 3)
- 10 per cent on the policy role of identifying gaps in services (goal 4)

In this way state control was exerted at a distance, over managers and workers using what Nikolas Rose (2000) referred to as “time management” and “actuarial technologies” or what Michel Foucault called the “micro technologies of control” (Foucault 1966).

For those for whom interventions were made, assessing needs of individuals and groups was necessarily superficial as the programme itself was not grounded in a needs-based approach. The emphasis on work readiness made it difficult for the LCDP to address personal difficulties being experienced by individuals such as drug problems, poverty, violence against women and children or inadequate accommodation. Under the programme framework, the individual person became a number on a caseload, a number whose conduct was continually monitored in terms of the extent to which s/he was “activated” and “work ready”.

The Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP) also excluded qualitative impact indicators, such as the extent to which the well-being and resilience of participants had increased as a result of the programme. Building the collective voice of participants or strengthening familial and neighbourhood bonds was also given little attention.

Target numbers to be reached in the LCDP were considered excessively high (Community Work Ireland, 2017). No additional time was available to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable. This meant that the most marginalised were further excluded and abandoned as a result of the structure and underlying philosophies of the programmes, despite the fact that the aim of the LCDP (2010-2015) was to tackle poverty and exclusion.

The types of concerns raised in this Paper about the LCDP were evident in Britain and other European countries. According to Rose (1996), state intervention programmes for the most vulnerable and excluded, have tended to focus on reshaping conduct and behaviour so that

the person engages in self-management, self-responsibility, continual training and life-long learning to become market-ready.

The structure of the LCDP programme encouraged what was called “game-ing” the system. Working with the less vulnerable was less time consuming. For instance, working with an established tenant group was a lot easier than trying to meet the needs of or establish a group of vulnerable Roma tenants. In this way, the less vulnerable were given priority as project workers fought hard to save time and reach targets.

In spite of the narrow scope of the programme, many project workers remained committed to user-led and community-led approaches and engaged in what Thomas and Davies (2005) refer to as the “micro-politics of resistance”. This involved “trying to subvert the system” and making time to undertake work with groups and individuals that were not strictly within the terms of the programme. For instance, some undertook advocacy work with a tenant group relabelling it education or training. Many also continued to work with community groups and organisations in their own time trying to abide by the principles of community development while dealing with the short-comings of the new strictly numerical demands of the Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP).

Since the programme was not aligned with the needs of the target groups, and there was an in-built disincentive to work with the most disadvantaged individuals and groups, there is little doubt that the annual €46 million invested in LCDP was not optimised.

In summary the critique of the Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP) was as follows:

- a highly centralised market-driven programme primarily focused on work activation and training, replaced community development work
- social policy underpinning LCDP was weak and was de-contextualised from the lives of the target groups
- measures to identify individual and collective needs was superficial and not community-led
- sustained and holistic community-led strategy was not facilitated by the programme. This would have required a sensitive and flexible approach in programme design for “hard to reach” populations such as people from the Roma Community, people from the Traveller Community unattached and disaffected young people and drug users
- social value, social capital and the building of the social infrastructure of local neighbourhoods and the broader local community was not given recognition
- outcome measures were narrowly defined, bureaucratic, inflexible, administratively heavy and hindered innovation
- multi annual funding was not in place
- some of the most marginalised groups in our society were further marginalised

In all of these developments, one agency had played a crucial role: “The Centre for Effective Services”.

### 3.4 The Centre for Effective Services

The Centre for Effective Services (CES) was founded in 2008 by Atlantic Philanthropies and two government departments (Department of Health and Children and the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (DCRAGA)). The Centre was established under a five year joint funding arrangement with €5 million from Atlantic Philanthropies and €2.5 from each of the government departments.

The role of the Centre for Effective Services (CES) in the re-design of community development was controversial as it was perceived to have assisted DCRAGA to put in place a highly centralised model of governance.

The Centre promoted what it called Implementation Science which was a scientific way of connecting design, monitoring, evaluation, assessment, impact and delivery of services with scientific and technical knowledge of “what works” (Ghate 2010).

One of the main motivations for creating the Centre for Effective Services (CES) was to retain corporate knowledge relating to social programmes:

*The role of CES was to hold on to knowledge and expertise.... In the civil service knowledge gets lost as civil servants are transferred to different departments every few years. When people are transferred accumulated knowledge gets lost. When a particular civil servant goes the knowledge goes (civil servant)*

Also, it was recognised that there was an implementation deficit disorder in the implementation of Irish public policy which had a poor record in moving from policy to practical programmes. It was considered that an organisation with expertise in Implementation Science could assist with effective policy implementation.

It was anticipated that CES would be involved primarily with children’s services. The idea of involving CES in community and local development came later in July 2008.<sup>10</sup>

The design/redesign of the Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP) by the Centre for Effective Services (CES) was carried out between 2008 and 2013 and involved the following:

- A review of reports on the Community Development Programme (CDP) and the Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP)
- A Review of the international evidence base for effective community development programmes (Bamber *et al* 2010)
- Recommendations on the goals of the LCDP

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<sup>10</sup> IMPACT Trade Union FOI received on January 21<sup>st</sup> 2009.

- A Mid-Term Review of the LCDP 2011-2012 (Bamber *et al* 2013)

In addition, it bench-marked the two programmes against international best practice (Bamber *et al* 2009; Ghate 2009).

The involvement of the Centre of Effective Services (CES) in the local and community sector was a contentious issue, not only because of its role in re-shaping community and local development work into a highly centralised programme, but also when quasi non-governmental organisations were being “reined in” by the government, effectively a new non-governmental organisation was established in the social inclusion area.

The large sum of money invested by the government in the Centre for Effective Services (CES) at a time when the community sector was experiencing severe funding cutbacks, took the community sector by surprise. At the same time that the budget was being agreed with CES, the Pobal budget was cut by 30 per cent and 90 staff members made redundant. This included the liaison section in Pobal which provided much stimulus and support to local and community development work.

Moreover, the staff of Pobal were concerned that CES was replacing part of its role. An agreement between CES and DCRAGA was signed on October 1<sup>st</sup> 2008. The range of services contracted involved several functions then being carried out by Pobal including programme design; programme advice and implementation; and, evaluation. The overlap was of concern to civil servants. One senior civil servant noted:

*I .. have concern that some of what is being anticipated/required from CES will cut across/duplicate functions already being carried out by Pobal. Given current and increasing financial constraints, is this a wise or practical approach.....Initial documentation I received appears to envisage ongoing support of implementation of new programme, which is fundamentally a Pobal role and may give rise to duplication of effort and costs<sup>11</sup>*

The fact that there was no public procurement process involved in the awarding of the DCRAGA contract to CES was an added concern. This denied Pobal the opportunity to tender for the contract. A key reason forwarded for the lack of a public procurement process was that it was part of the work that CES was already being funded to undertake.<sup>12</sup> Claims were also made that CES had non-for-profit status and had international expertise on design, delivery and evaluation which was not otherwise to be found in Ireland.<sup>13</sup> Similar arguments were made by officials at the Public Accounts Committee February 5<sup>th</sup> 2009 when questioned by Roisin Shorthall TD, Thomas Tommy Broughan TD and Jim O’Keefe TD. In

<sup>11</sup> IMPACT Trade Union FOI, received on January 21<sup>st</sup> 2009: email Des Moore to Clodagh McDonnell, 13<sup>th</sup> August 2008.

<sup>12</sup> Personnel communication with CES personnel.

<sup>13</sup> IMPACT Trade Union FOI received on January 21<sup>st</sup> 2009: Internal DCRAGA Documents– note from Clodagh McDonnell to Secretary General, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2008.

addition, the capacity of CES to undertake rigorous value for money evaluations was emphasised.

Local and community development projects were also not well disposed to CES. This was the result of several factors:

- A disagreement over core community development principles. These included, for example, that the sector should not challenge representative democracy
- The over-centralised nature of the programme which CES assisted in devising

However, it is important not to conflate the position held by the Centre for Effective Services (CES) and the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (DCRGA). Much of the positive advice outlined by the Centre for Effective Services (CES) which could have benefitted local communities was not taken on board by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (DCRGA). These included the following recommendations: programmes should be needs-based; government departments should be engaged closely with local communities in order to build local leadership and capacity of communities; qualitative evaluations should be undertaken on the impact and benefits to users of programmes (Bamber *et al* 2010; 2013). Also, the competitive tendering out on the market of social inclusion programmes was not endorsed by the Centre of Effective Services (2015) (Section 3.5).

### 3.5 Under Local Government

When the Fine Gael/Labour Coalition entered government in 2011, Phil Hogan, TD as Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (March 2011 – July 2014) took over the brief for community and local development. Local Development Companies (LDCs) were aligned with local authority areas and in June 2014, Local Development Companies (LDCs) were integrated with local authority structures under an “alignment” process.

The issue of the over centralisation of the Irish administrative state had been debated for over forty years as Irish local government is one of the most centralised systems in Europe with few functions (Barrington 1975). The policy of giving local government the brief for community development received much criticism including that of Lloyd (2015) who argued that local government had neither the capacity nor capability to govern community or local development with a social inclusion focus. In effect this policy further embedded community development in a centralised approach.

The successor to the Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP) was the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP, 2015- 2017). Projects under SICAP were competitively tendered out on the market. This process was demanding with the Tendering Directive alone comprising 180 pages.

This commodification of projects further rooted community programmes in a market-driven approach. The competitive tendering process went ahead, despite the advice offered in a report commissioned by the government and carried out by Centre for Effective Services (CES) (2015) which argued that there was limited evidence that commissioning for social inclusion service provision resulted in better outcomes.

The community and voluntary sector was highly critical of this move by the government (Community Work Ireland 2016; Daughters of Charity 2016; O'Connor 2016; McCarthy and Muldowney 2015) arguing that the tendering process prioritised quantitative measures and incentivised "cherry picking" of users of services in order to achieve targets. This further marginalised the more "hard to reach populations".

Also the tendering process: did not allow for: a holistic, community-led strategy; did not give recognition to social value, social capital and the building of local neighbourhood structures; privileged larger organisations as smaller organisations had less capacity to engage in such as complex tendering process.

Most importantly, the community and voluntary sector argued that the tendering process set in motion mechanisms for opening up the management of community services to for-profit organisations which would further side-line community based principles.

This was the first time that a social inclusion programme was competitively tendered out on the market

At the same time that the community and local development sector was being dissolved by the state, plans were in train to close, merge or integrate back into central government a host of semi-autonomous agencies. Agencies included the National Economic and Social Forum (NESF); the Women's Health Council (WHC), the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI), and the National Steering Committee on Violence against Women (NSCVAW).

The Combat Poverty Agency (CPA) and the Equality Authority (EA) which occupied an important space between government departments and the community, anti-poverty and equality sector were also casualties of government decisions to rein-in the sector.

## Chapter Four: Silencing “Disruptive” Agencies

### 4.1 The Combat Poverty Agency

As far back as 2001 politicians voiced reservations about the direction of the Combat Poverty Agency (CPA). Misgivings focused on the independence of CPA and its public education role. In 2009 the Agency was formally dissolved by a motion passed in Dáil Éireann, and a reduced brief was re-centered back into central government.

The Combat Poverty Agency (CPA) was established by the Labour/Fine Gael Government (1982-1987). Over 23 years (1986-2009) the Combat Poverty Agency (CPA) played a major role in creating a national public debate on poverty and inequality and empowered local communities to “have their say”. It brought together personnel from a research institute, universities, voluntary organisations and working class and rural communities in strong alliances to combat social exclusion and poverty. Importantly there was a synergy between the National Economic and Social Forum (NESF), Equality Authority and Combat Poverty Agency (CPA).

The brief of the CPA was as follows: advice to government on policy; project support and innovation; research on poverty; and, public education. Ironically it was the public education role which created tension between the Agency and the political and civil service elites.

The Agency assisted public bodies to build capacity to address social inclusion issues. *Building Healthy Communities* (2003-2008) involved collaboration with the Health Service Executive (HSE) and *Having Your Say* (2005-2007) involved co-operation with Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (DCRAGA). In addition, it worked with local authorities to strengthen their capacity in relation to social inclusion.

A key public education role of CPA related to the *Open Your Eyes to Child Poverty*<sup>14</sup> initiative which highlighted the fact that:

*One in four Irish children can't participate in everyday activities, others take for granted because of lack of money. They live in homes with less than half the average Irish income. In effect, they are denied the basic right to an adequate standard of living and so are excluded from society. We now have the resources to tackle the issue, what we need is the will to do it (Open Your Eyes to Child Poverty 2000)*

In *the Evaluation of Combat Poverty Strategic Plan (1999-2001)*, the Newman Report (2001) stated that civil servants were of the opinion that the Combat Poverty Agency (CPA) should not be involved in public education campaigns such as the *Open Your Eyes to Child Poverty*

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<sup>14</sup> Open Your Eyes to Child Poverty was comprised the following organisations: Barnardo's, Combat Poverty Agency (CPA), Focus Ireland, Pavee Point, People with Disabilities, Children's Rights Alliance, National Youth Council and St Vincent dePaul.

Initiative. Such involvement, Newman stated, compromised the Agency and led to the perception that the Agency was not neutral. The role of the Agency was to advise not to advocate.

One civil servant interviewed for the current research explained the thinking at the time:

*Some thought that CPA had gone too far. The view coming from politicians was that organisations cannot be critical of the government and expect to be funded by the state (civil servant)*

Further criticism was to come from consultants in 2005 when Goodbody Consultants reported that there was concern among personnel of “some government departments” about the “balance” in CPA research. The contention was that the Agency’s research was bordering on advocacy work leading to a perception that the Agency was not neutral.

In 2006, a publication to mark the Agency’s 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary was blocked by the government (Frazer 2009). This book aimed to draw lessons from the previous 20 years and to outline a way forward for addressing poverty and exclusion.

A view had been gaining popularity among politicians and civil servants that the function of intermediary agencies was to advise the government and not to advocate for policy change. This view was consistent with the view outlined in the Newman (2001) and Goodbody (2005) reports. A critique of the advocacy role being undertaken by intermediary organisations was also made in the publication, *Advisors or Advocates?* (Quinn 2008). The author Orlaigh Quinn was a senior civil servant and on the board of the Combat Poverty Agency (CPA) between 2004 and 2008:

Quinn (2008) also proposed that consideration should be given to taking away the policy advisory role of intermediary agencies and re-centralising it within government departments.

Arguments made by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD 2008) were used to support the closing down of the Combat Poverty Agency (CPA):

*There was an OECD Review<sup>15</sup> of Irish public services recommending that the state take back decision-making power from quasi autonomous agencies or quangos as they are called in Ireland (civil servant)*

The *Report of the Steering Committee Review of Combat Poverty Agency* was published in September 2008. This was an internal review undertaken by the Office of Social Inclusion (OSI) in the Department of Social and Family Affairs (DSFA). Membership of the Steering Committee comprised representatives from eight government departments and the Acting

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<sup>15</sup> The OECD, *The Report, Ireland: Towards an integrated Public Service*, Paris 2008.



Chair of the Combat Poverty (CPA). The Committee was chaired by a former Secretary General of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

Since the Review was carried out by an interested party the neutrality of the process must be called into question: no consultation was undertaken with the community, voluntary or local development sector; the Steering Committee comprised almost entirely of government representatives.

In making the recommendation to the Minister to close the Combat Poverty Agency (CPA), the Review drew on the OECD report (2008) which favoured a centralised model of policy development as opposed to an independent stand-alone agency.

There was little evidence put forward that the Agency had not fulfilled its brief. The substantial work of the Combat Poverty Agency (CPA) as an independent agency in: project support and innovation; research, and, public education received little or no consideration.

Little consideration was given to the substantial trust built up by the Agency over twenty years with some of the most marginalised communities and organisations in Ireland. Such trust had allowed the Agency to base policy recommendations and advice on the real needs of people and communities. The benefits to government of policy initiatives emerging at local level were given little attention.

Outlining various options, the *Report of Steering Committee* recommended the integration of the CPA with the Office of Social Inclusion (OSI) in the Department of Social and Family Affairs (DSFA).

The rationale given by the Steering Committee was that in merging the Agency with the Office of Social Inclusion (OSI,) which was part of the civil service, co-ordination on cross-cutting issues relating to poverty and social inclusion, would be strengthened.

As Combat Poverty Agency (CPA) was set up by statute, it was a requirement that it be dissolved by a motion passed in Dáil Éireann. On December 1<sup>st</sup> 2008 part 5 of the Social Welfare (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill was passed 72 to 60 in Dáil Éireann, which dissolved the Combat Poverty Agency (CPA).

The Labour Party, Fine Gael and Sinn Féin vociferously opposed the dissolution of CPA in Dáil Éireann, claiming that there was need for an independent voice to tackle poverty. The claim that the closure was political and was intended to silence the Agency was repeatedly stated. The point was also made that there would be few if any financial savings from the closing of CPA.

Minister Mary Hanafin (Minister of the Department of Social and Family Affairs (DSFA)) between May 2008 and March 2010) was the Minister in charge when Combat Poverty Agency (CPA) ceased to exist in July 2009.

A special team was established to plan the transitioning of Combat Poverty Agency (CPA) to the Office for Social Inclusion (OSI). Much of the CPA research budget was transferred to the new Social Inclusion Division and the Division continues to undertake research on poverty and social inclusion including the Social Inclusion Monitor which reports on progress towards the national social target for poverty reduction. The Division hosts an annual conference on research into poverty. The issues covered have included jobless householders, low pay and social transfers.

It also convenes the Social Inclusion Forum (SIF) with the assistance of the Community Workers Cooperative (CWC) and the European Anti-Poverty Network Ireland (EAPN). The Social Inclusion Forum (SIF) was established by Government as part of the structures to monitor and evaluate Ireland's National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (NAPinclusion) 2007-2016. In addition, the Social Inclusion Division oversees a funding scheme for the UN Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

Combat Poverty Agency staff were devastated by the decision to close the Combat Poverty Agency:

*We expected change but we did not expect the Agency to close (worker in intermediary agency)*

People interviewed for this research highly valued the role of the Combat Poverty Agency (CPA) which was seen as a progressive catalyst that supported and strengthened communities, citizenship and participatory democracy:

*It (CPA) helped create vibrant public discussion on poverty. It gave leadership (community activist)*

*An independent voice is missing. A lot has been lost (civil servant)*

*Its work and research on child poverty was great. There is a deafening public silence on child poverty since It (CPA) closed (community activist)*

There was also a perception that the core reason why CPA was closed was political:

*We believe that the CPA was closed because it was too aligned with poor communities (community activist)*

In closing CPA, an authoritative voice on poverty and social exclusion was silenced.

## 4.2 The Equality Authority

The Equality Authority was set up in October 1999.<sup>16</sup> It provided legal advice and representation to a wide range and significant number of individuals in bringing forward cases under the equality legislation before the Equality Tribunal.<sup>17</sup>

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The Authority had four main functions:

The cases which the Agency supported were characterised by ongoing discrimination, against women (especially when pregnant), people with a disability, people perceived as too old for certain jobs or services (or too young), Travellers, and immigrant workers. Many of the cases taken were against public agencies.

In December 2008, the budget of the Equality Authority (EA) was cut by 43 per cent (a sum of €2.5 million). It is difficult not to come to the conclusion that the reason for such a disproportionate cut in its budget was the result of the large number of high profile cases taken against the public sector and other vested interests.

In protest against the large budget cut, the chief executive, Niall Crowley who was a strong defender of equality and human rights and six board members resigned as a matter of principle. In his book *Empty Promises: Bringing the Equality Authority to Heel* (2010), Niall Crowley charts the hostile attitude of politicians, the media and other vested interests to the Equality Authority (EA).

A change in how civil servants in its parent Department (Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform) related to the leadership of the Equality Authority (EA) was apparent since the mid-2000s:

*A layer of new civil servants were promoted in the Department of Justice who were less sympathetic. .. They did not like an independent body such as the Equality Authority. They did not like what it (Equality Authority) was doing as it was taking cases against government departments. Over a five year period there was a war with interference with the Board, attempts to merge the body with others, and eventually, the cutting of budgets and the civil servants trying to dismantle the Authority (worker in intermediary agency)*

The Equality Authority (EA) was reduced and eventually merged into the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission in 2014.

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- <sup>16</sup> Work towards the elimination of discrimination in employment, in the provision of goods and services; in educational establishments; and, relating to accommodation and clubs.
  - Promote equal opportunities under the 1998 Employment Equality Act and the 2000 Equal Status Act. Under these Acts discrimination is prohibited on the grounds of gender, marital status, family status, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, age and membership of the Traveller community
  - Provide information to the public on the Acts
  - Monitor and keep under review several pieces of legislation relating to equal treatment

<sup>17</sup> The Equality Tribunal was established in 1999 under equality legislation as a quasi-judicial body and decided on cases of alleged discrimination under Irish equality legislation.

The Equality Tribunal which heard cases of discrimination and decided or mediated these cases was merged with four organisations into the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC)<sup>18</sup> in October 2015 (Crowley 2016). The Equality Tribunal sits uneasily in the WRC whose remit is mainly concerned with workplace issues and lacks capacity to deal with the broader equal treatment agenda (Crowley 2016). The equality agenda stretches beyond workplace issues to discrimination in the provision of goods and services, education and accommodation. The equal treatment agenda is to a large extent invisible in the work of the WRC to date.

This weakening of the equality agenda was a major set-back to the anti-poverty and equality public debate.

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<sup>18</sup> The Workplace Relations Commission was a merger of the: the Equality Tribunal; the National Employment Rights Agency; the first instance functions of the Employment Appeals Tribunal; and the Labour Relations Commission.

## Chapter Five: Summary and Conclusions

### 5.1 Summary

The shift that took place in the community development, anti-poverty and equality sector between 2002 and 2015 has been broadly defined in this Paper as a shift from Participatory Democracy to Neoliberal Managerialism.

The consequences of adopting Neoliberal principles into the management of community development, anti-poverty and the equality sector and related areas were many.

### Transformation of Community Development

Several features characterised the paradigm shift which underpinned the transformation of the community development and local development programmes (Chapter Three):

- the replacement of community and local development programmes by what were primarily centralised work activation and training programmes bringing an end to state-funded bottom-up community development work
- the imposition of a centralised monitoring system with narrow Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which were not aligned with the needs of the target groups and which imposed significant administrative burdens on projects
- the marketization and the commodification of the community and local development sector with local projects put out on the market for competitive tender

The influence, which community projects, working class communities and other communities of interests such as Travellers and Migrants had shifted dramatically to managers and accountants in central government.

The role of the community worker moved from bottom-up development worker to managing numbers and caseloads. This left little space for workers to engage in grass-root community organising (section 3.3) although many project workers continued to undertake community work in their own time and to abide by the principles of community development.

### Marginalisation

Through the imposition of centralised programmes which were not aligned to the needs of the target groups, many people in the target groups were further marginalised and abandoned. Target groups included the Roma Community, people from the Traveller Community, unattached and disaffected young people, drug users, refugees, asylum seekers, lone parents and people with disabilities.

Many of these participants lived in inner city areas and working class housing estates. Despite high levels of economic growth in Ireland as a whole, shocking levels of deprivation continue to be experienced in these areas, in terms of the following: low-paid precarious

employment; a scarcity of housing; disproportionate levels of disability; health inequalities; lack of drug addiction services; and the existence of gangland crime.

Other participants lived in what Rose (1996) termed “marginalised spaces”, in the overcrowded, over-price private rented sector, direct provision, poorly serviced halting sites, emergency hostels, emergency accommodation in hotels and shop-door fronts.

### **Values of Individualism Replaced Social Solidarity**

Under the new model social problems were individualised and de-contextualised from their social and economic context. The principles of social value, social solidarity and the building of social capital were given little attention.

The competitive tendering process for community and local development programmes further embedded these programmes in a market-drive approach hostile to community empowerment values.

### **Silencing of the Sector**

Political dissent was no longer tolerated and Community Development Projects (CDPs) and other local and community organisations funded by the state were ordered to desist from campaigning and advocacy.

In closing the Combat Poverty Agency (CPA) and the scaling down of the Equality Agency, an authoritative voice on poverty and social exclusion was silenced.

### **Systematic Process of Dismantling**

What the current study has shown is that the incorporation of Neoliberalism into the community, anti-poverty and equality sector was a systematic process which targeted: national programmes; local projects; national agencies and organisations; area based partnerships; and smaller grass-root projects.

Although the rhetoric of value for money and accountability were key narratives of the government, the systematic destruction of the community development, anti-poverty and equality infrastructure was centrally political, aimed at disempowering the sector.

The lack of consultation with people who had in-depth knowledge of the sector such as the community sector itself and the Combat Poverty Agency (CPA) was revealing. Significantly, state policy and commitments outlined in the White Paper<sup>19</sup> were disregarded.

### **Human Casualties**

What David Harvey (2006) called the “disabling” and “destructive” effects of Neoliberalism resulted in human casualties as the life work of workers both in the state and in the

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<sup>19</sup> *A Framework for Supporting Voluntary Activity and for Developing the Relationship between the State and the Community and Voluntary Sector* (Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs, Dublin 2000).

community sector was severely undermined. Lives of individuals and families were thrown into chaos as workers lost jobs or were reassigned to other responsibilities.

The hollowing out and systematic destruction of a vision of empowerment, solidarity, social justice and equality sent a strong signal that the voices of poor communities no longer mattered.

Despite a ruling from the Labour Court, community workers were made redundant without full redundancy entitlements. The redundancy claim sanctioned by the Labour Court is still being pursued on their behalf by SIPTU.

### **Effects of Neoliberal Globalisation**

Neoliberal globalisation involved the restoration and consolidation of upper class power as financiers sought to increase capital accumulation and profits, leading to the current situation of ever increasing concentration of wealth of the top ten per cent of the population (Harvey 2006). This new paradigm was supported and promulgated by international organisations such as the World Bank, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). At times it was imposed without democratic consent.

A key impact of Neoliberal globalisation in Ireland was on the banking sector which in turn had devastating consequences for Irish society as a whole. New forms of finance capital were privileged under the new model. One of its basic principles was that state power should protect financial institutions at all costs (Harvey 2009). The full force of such beliefs was severely felt in Ireland following the Irish banking crash of 2007- 2010. Reversing capitalist principles, private banking debt was socialised, while much of the burdens on the poor were privatised. The ensuing bank bail-out programme (2010-2013) with a net cost of 42 billion Euro to the Irish people was seen as a financial coup against the Irish government and Irish people led by an unelected European Troika (European Commission, European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

### **Resistance**

The trauma, shame, hopelessness, anger and demoralisation experienced, resulted in a silence around the destruction of the community development, anti-poverty and equality sector.

Despite the demoralisation, resistance was organised in the form of the National Community Development Forum (NCDF), Spectacle of Defiance (Bissett 2015), Communities against Cuts, Claiming the Future and Equality and Rights Alliance. However, collective defiance was difficult to sustain, due to lack of resources and demoralisation. What was left of the sector continued to weaken.

Notwithstanding this, much of the community and local activism which was built up under state-funded programmes in the 1980s and 1990s has moved onto street protests and was highly visible on the recent street anti-austerity marches concerned with water charges, cut-backs in community and social services, the bank bail-out, homelessness and affordable housing.

## **5. 2 Conclusions**

Several conclusions are outlined below.

### **Independent Evaluation**

A key concern in the present Paper is the extent to which state-funded programmes, which replaced community development, responded to the needs of the most marginalised. There is need for independent participatory research giving voice to the most marginalised in our society (homeless people, Travellers, asylum seekers) to determine the extent to which these populations have benefited from state programmes such as the Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP). The well-being of participants and the extent to which the development of social value and social capital were facilitated by these programmes should be central to such examination.

An examination of the extent to which Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of state programmes such as the LCDP, and other current programmes for the most marginalised are or were relevant, should be included.

### **Working Class Neighbourhoods**

Social and economic marginalisation is endemic in many urban working class neighbourhoods. Large scale investment is required to re-generate these neighbourhoods. This needs to be locally-driven, long-term and co-ordinated across a wide range of areas including education, local authority housing, health, preschool, community policing, drugs strategy.

### **Naming Neoliberalism**

The withdrawal of the state from empowering poor people and poor communities needs to be challenged, as Neoliberal thinking continues to seep into social and public welfare sectors, side-lining paradigms that are underpinned by the social values of equality, social solidarity and social justice.

It is not without foundation that Neoliberalism was called by Monbiot (2016), the ideology with no-name. Much of its power lay in its anonymity. Seldom was it named in the crises to which it gave rise such as: the financial meltdown of 2007/2008; the offshoring of wealth by the superrich, documented in the Panama Papers in December 2016; and, the resurgence of child poverty, to name but a few.



It was academics, practitioners and church leaders who helped to create a climate which allowed “new community development” and anti-poverty initiatives of the 1960s and 1970s to flourish. Today academics need to take up the debate on how the new paradigm is impacting on many areas of social and economic concern.

### **Reining in the Market**

Market economics need to be rebalanced and alternatives to market-driven approaches supported. The direct involvement by the state, and the role of mutual benefit organisations, co-operatives and other non-profit mechanisms, where the welfare of users are to the forefront, need to be promoted and supported.

For instance, the increased commodification of the housing market took place in the early 1990s as public land and working class neighbourhoods was subjected to Public Private Partnerships. Subsequently, the Irish state gradually withdrew from local authority house building.

This move towards increased marketization shifted the responsibility for housing on to the private sector and contributed to the current crisis in homelessness and distressed mortgages. The persistence of the crisis was in part due to the reluctance of the Irish state to undertake the robust interventions that were needed, as the political elite waited for the re-balancing of a self-regulating housing market.

Remedies need to focus on the need for the state to re-engage in a substantial housing building programme and to retain public land in public ownership.

There is also need to assist and fund initiatives based on the principles of social value such as co-operative housing and examine an increased role for credit unions which are owned and provide mutual benefit and support for members. Approved housing associations to address mortgage default needs to be supported. The outsourcing of loans that cannot be paid to Financial Investment and Vulture Funds is unacceptable as the state is essentially outsourcing repossessions. When there is debt default, these Funds prioritise repossessions as opposed to restructuring loans with little consideration given to the welfare or circumstances of debtors.

### **Reform of Local Government**

Ireland has one of the most centralised government structures in Europe. Devolution of central government powers and increased powers for local government needs to be urgently addressed.

### **Human Rights Discourse**

Increasingly, activists and progressive forces are framing poverty and inequality as a breach of human rights. Consideration could be given to how community development organisations in Ireland can engage with a human rights framework. In particular this should

involve the question as how the language of human rights can be applied to issues affecting communities (as opposed to the individual) and how investment in community development can be instrumental in securing human rights.

### **Building an Autonomous Anti-Poverty, Equality and Community Development Movement**

It is unrealistic to think that the state will, in this climate of Neoliberalism sponsor a community development, anti-poverty and equality movement. The requirement now, as perceived by many participants interviewed, is for a bottom-up, autonomous, independent movement.

Perhaps funding could be sourced from the trade union movement or philanthropic foundations such as the Carnegie Foundation to facilitate a reflective process on how this could be achieved.

Consideration could also be given to examining strategies in other countries, such as Local People Leading (LPL) which was initiated in Scotland to campaign to build strong independent communities in Scotland (Demarco 2008).

### **Trade Union and Other Alliances**

When the crunch came and the infrastructure relating to community development, anti-poverty and equality was threatened, the sector lacked economic and political power. It also had few supporters or allies inside or outside the state.

Some activists now recognise that a strategic error on the part of the sector was its failure to develop, at an early stage, alliances with progressive forces within the state and alliances across civil society with for instance, trade councils, the broader trade union movement, environmental organisations and the global justice sector. This could have made the sector less susceptible to being neutralised by the state.

### **Global Networking**

Building alliances with the global justice sector could help not only to exchange worthwhile practices in anti-poverty, equality and community development work, but also to increase our understanding of how to tackle environmental destruction in terms of carbon emissions, bio-diversity loss, ocean acidification, water depletion and chemical pollution.

Global networking could also give us greater knowledge on how global corporations and financial institutions strategize to keep the poor, poor and the rich, rich. Important here are income and wealth inequalities where wealth concentration at a global level is increasingly being diverted to the top ten per cent.

## Further Questions

In the 1970s the community sector developed in response to a *crisis in state legitimation*. Today, that crisis is once again acute. For that reason, following this research some wider questions need to be asked.

Although we live in a democratic society, did the people of Ireland ever give explicit consent to the ethics and philosophies of Neoliberalism?

Given the current crises of homelessness and affordable housing, the radical inequalities in health provision and outcomes, and the gross disparities of income, can the underlying values of Neoliberalism be brought to consciousness, made explicit, and subjected to the democratic processes, in other words, *the will of the people*.

## Appendix

### Timeline: Community Development, Anti-Poverty and Equality Structures (Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century to 2015)

Timeline	Key Moments	Events
Late 19 <sup>th</sup> C		Strong movements agitated for political change in relation to sovereignty, women's suffrage and land reform. The rural co-operative movement developed consumer and producer co-operatives managed by members. The Irish Countrywomen's Association provided an important space for women to meet and organise
1960s and early 1970s	Mobilisation	Key campaigns: Dublin Housing Action Committee, second wave of the women's liberation movement, anti-nuclear movement, Living City Group, Save the West Campaign and Civil Rights Movement in the Gaeltacht. The Northern Ireland the Civil Rights Movement established to end discrimination in employment, housing and voting
1970s to 1990	Emergence of "New" Forms of Community Development	<p>New forms of grass-root community development emerged in Ballyfermot, and the north inner city, Dublin</p> <p>Mounting economic crisis of unemployment, emigration, income deprivation and social marginalisation in the 1980s. Unemployment reached almost 17 per cent in 1991</p> <p>The re-commencement of national social partnerships in the late 1980s was seen as a response to a crisis in state legitimisation by political elites (Roche 2008, Dermot McCarthy (1998)</p> <p>In the 1980s Women's Community Education projects expanded rapidly</p> <p>Establishment of the EU Poverty 2 (1984-1988) and the Combat Poverty Agency, 1986. The Department of Social Welfare had oversight of these programmes</p>
1990	"Golden Era" of Community Development governed by a Participatory Democracy Paradigm	<p>Expansion of the Community Development Programme under the Department of Social Welfare culminating in over 200 Community Development Projects nationwide, over 100 Family Resource Centres (FRCs) and 15 Regional Support Agencies</p> <p>EU Poverty 3 (1990-1995) established</p> <p>In 1993, the National Economic and Social Forum established</p> <p>Equality infrastructure initiated in 1994 by Mervyn Taylor (Labour), Minister for Equality and Law Reform (1994-1997)</p> <p>In 1996, participation of the community and voluntary on the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) that advised the government on long-term economic and social planning</p>

1997	Celtic Tiger	In 1997, under Proinsias De Rossa, (Minister for Social Welfare between 1994-1997) a significant landmark was achieved with the publication of National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS), <i>Sharing in Progress</i> . This set out the extent of poverty and social exclusion as well as the strategic policy direction needed to tackle the issue
2000		Beginning of expansion of economy (1997-2007), much of it based on international bond borrowings invested in the building industry  Under Dermot Ahern (Minister for Social Community and Family Affairs 1997-2002) the White Paper, <i>A Framework for Supporting Voluntary Activity and for Developing the Relationship between the State and the Community and Voluntary Sector</i> , published 2000
2002	Shift from the Participatory Democracy Paradigm Begins	June 6 <sup>th</sup> 2002, Fianna Fáil (FF) and Progressive Democrats (PD) came into power (2002-2007). The Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (DCRAGA) established under Minister Éamon Ó Cuív (2002-2010). The Community Development Programme (CDP) brought under DCRAGA in 2002
2004		Warning to CDPs to desist from public campaigning and advocacy. Community Development funding cut by 17 per cent in 2004. Regional Support Agencies closed. This was long before the economic recession hit in 2008
2004	Cohesion Process Begins	LEADER Companies were merged with 94 Area Based Partnerships and reduced to 52 organisations, renamed Local Development Companies
2005		In 2005 Pobal which was an independent agency was brought directly under central government control. Support structure for community development within Pobal disbanded
2007-2011		Fianna Fáil (FF) and Green party in government
2008		Ireland experienced one of its worst economic recession (2008 – 2017) in its history which left many of the Irish financial institutions insolvent
2008		Decision announced to disband the Combat Poverty Agency (CPA) in October 2008. Dáil motion passed to affect this in July 2009
2008		Budget of the Equality Authority (EA) reduced by 43 per cent and chief executive and board members resign in protest against cuts
2010		Establishment of the Centre for Effective Services (CES) which was involved in the re-design of community and local development programmes between 2008 and 2013  Closure without warning of 19 Community Development Projects (CDPs) in 2010

2010	<p>"Cohesion Process" continued</p> <p>The end of community development -</p>	Under the "Cohesion Process", the Community Development Programme (CDP) and the Local Development and Social Inclusion Programme (LDSIP 2004-2009) were dissolved and projects brought under the newly established Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP. 2010-2015) which was primarily a work activation programme, responsible to Pobal . This was effectively the end of state-sponsored community development
2010	November 2010, agreement by Troika (European Commission, European Central Bank and International Monetary Fund) to €64 billion Bank Bail Out	Austerity measures imposed on Irish people, with a disproportionate impact on the Voluntary and Community Sector
2011-2016		Fine Gael and Labour Party in Coalition Government
2011		In May 2011, The LCDP was transferred to the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government
2014	"Alignment Process"	Phil Hogan as Minister for the Environment Community and Local Government between 2011-2014 under the Fine Gael/Labour Coalition, integrated Local Development Companies (LDCs) with local authority structures under an "Alignment Process" in June 2014
2015-2017	Paradigm Shift Completed	The successor to the LCDP, the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP, 2015- 2017 was the first time that a social inclusion programme was competitively tendered out on the market

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### **Patricia Kelleher, PhD**

Patricia Kelleher co-founded the research consultancy firm, *kelleherassociates* in 1987 which has a long track record working with the voluntary and statutory sectors. Her interests include: social class, housing and homelessness, violence against violence; and community development and empowerment.

Patricia Kelleher has a PhD in Sociology from University College Dublin and was a Research Fellow at the Centre for European Studies, Harvard University.

### **Cathleen O'Neill, MA**

Cathleen O'Neill is a community activist and has extensive experience working in community development and in particular in Kilbarrack community, north Dublin and in the Dublin's north inner city. Cathleen has an MA in Equality Studies from University College Dublin.

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<sup>i</sup> Personal communication with CES.