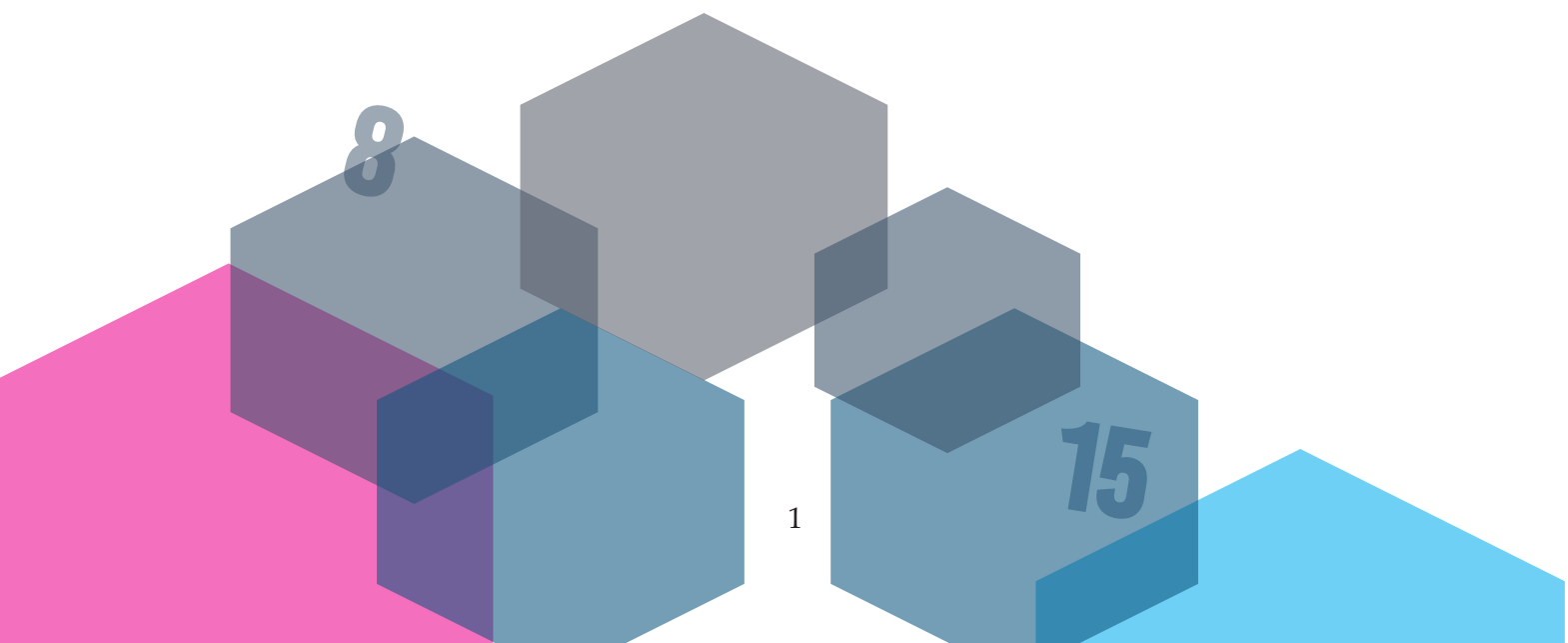# Safety in Numbers

An Evaluation of Community Crime Impact Assessment (CCIA) Pilot Projects

Safety in Numbers:

An Evaluation of Community Crime Impact Assessment (CCIA) Pilot Projects

Report of Evaluation
carried out by
Jane Mulcahy

Acknowledgements

Jane Mulcahy is a Research, Policy, Advocacy and Legal Consultant who recently successfully defended her PhD in Law at UCC on "Connected Corrections and Corrected Connections: post-release supervision of long sentence male prisoners", which was funded by the Irish Research Council and the Probation Service under the employment-based PhD scheme.

See https://law-and-justice.org/,
https://soundcloud.com/jane-mulcahy and
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tTfAP_K2c5A&t=1s

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Foreword

By Johnny Connolly,

Centre for Crime, Justice and Victim Studies, School of Law, University of Limerick

The pilot programme for the Community Crime Impact Assessment (CCIA) is an initiative in the National Drug Strategy 2017-2025, led by the Community and Voluntary Sector. It aims to measure the impact of drug related crime and wider public nuisance issues on communities with a view to informing a collaborative problem-solving approach to tackle such issues, while also monitoring the effectiveness of the response through repeat assessments over time. The inclusion of the CCIA as an action in the Strategy arises from a concern that the disproportionate burden of such issues in those communities where the illicit drugs trade has the most pernicious effects, is not sufficiently reflected in terms of a coherent and sustained policy response. Where drug policy aims to alleviate drug-related harms to individuals and society, it must be informed by an understanding of how those harms are unevenly distributed throughout society. Notwithstanding the significant developments in the evidence-base around drug issues over the past two decades, in terms of drug-related deaths, prevalence and treatment data for example, there remains a significant gap in terms of the understanding of drug-related community violence and intimidation.

What is referred to in Criminology as the 'dark figure of crime', that is the number of crimes that are either never reported to the police or never recorded by them when they are, is significantly higher for drug-related crimes. Recent Irish research, discussed in this evaluation report, has found that this is primarily due to people's reluctance to report to the authorities, for fear of reprisal from those locally involved in the illicit drugs trade. [1] As a consequence, the significance of this widespread experience, so corrosive of community quality of life, can be downplayed or ignored. The seriousness of this issue is reminiscent of the early stages of the heroin epidemic. Since the emergence of the heroin problem in inner-city Dublin in the 1980s, in the face of official denial of the seriousness of the problem, it was local community-based research that first brought the issues to public attention. [2]

For example, a study in 1983, popularly known as *The Bradshaw Report*, would provide stark evidence of the prevalence of heroin use in the north Dublin inner city, with a 10 per cent prevalence rate among the 15 to 24 age group and a 12 and 13 per cent prevalence rate for boys and girls respectively in the 15 to 19 age group. [3] Butler describes this report as 'simply giving a scientific gloss to the statistics which local (drug) activists had already compiled'. [4] Activists in the north and south inner city and in Ballymun, engaged in 'popular epidemiology … in an attempt to persuade the Department of

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[1] Johnny Connolly and Lisa Buckley, *Demanding money with menace: Drug-related intimidation and community violence in Ireland* (Citywide Drugs Crisis Campaign 2016) https://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/25201

[2] Shane Butler, Alcohol, *Drugs and Health Promotion in Modern Ireland* (Institute of Public Administration 2002) 139.

[3] Geoffrey Dean and John S. Bradshaw, 'Drug Misuse in Ireland, 1982–1983: Investigation in a North Central Dublin Area, and in Galway, Sligo and Cork' (Medico-Social Research Board 1983) <https://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/5060/ accessed 24 August 2019

[4] Shane Butler, *Alcohol, Drugs and Health Promotion in Modern Ireland* (Institute of Public Administration 2002) 139.

Health and the Eastern Health Board that their communities were experiencing a new and unprecedented wave of heroin use'.[5] Officially, the drug problem was regarded as a temporary phenomenon rooted in individual pathology, the seriousness of which was being greatly exaggerated.[6] This perspective dominated official policy, thereby dismissing analyses and research that highlighted the structural factors associated with the growth of problem drug use and the illicit drugs trade, such as poverty, unemployment, educational disadvantage and poor housing.[7]

Ironically, the committee that produced the Rabbitte Report in the Autumn of 1996 had been established just a few months earlier as a consequence of the murder of Veronica Guerin by organized criminals involved in the drugs trade. Similarly, over the past decade, community-based organisations like the National Family Support Network and the Citywide Drugs Crisis Campaign, have struggled to put drug-related community violence and intimidation on to the public and policy agenda.[8] The systemic violence and related community disruption and fear associated with the illicit drug trade has intensified since the mid-1990's to a point where it has become normalised, the ripple effects further eroding quality of life and community efficacy.

The Steering Group, in developing the CCIA Pilot initiative, considered approaches in other jurisdictions. A report by the Garda Inspectorate from 2014 called for An Garda Síochána and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions to consider adopting the Community Impact Statement (CIS) mechanism.[9] This is usually a police-led mechanism, adopted in some countries, which seeks to incorporate community crime impacts into criminal justice decision making around prosecutions and sentencing for example. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and a number of countries have experimented with Drug Harm Indices to measure the financial costs associated with specific drugs; to individuals in terms of personal harm (i.e. the harms that descend upon an individual as a consequence of their drug use), which will comprise physical health, psychological wellbeing and personal wealth; to the community (i.e. the cost of crime attributable to drug use, injury to others, the various harms to family and friends and a reduced tax base); the cost of intervention – interventions occur as a result of attempts to address the harms associated with illicit drug use and include health, education and law enforcement.[10]

The CCIA, in a novel approach, sought to find a way to give a voice to the negative collective community experience associated with drugs misuse, in a straightforward and safe way so as to inform future responses that might contribute to re-building community efficacy. In doing so, it aims to shift the focus of community safety away from a sole focus on crime reduction but to incorporate a broader sense of localised harm reduction. Similarly, the indicators of quality of life need to be broadened beyond police and local authority

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[5] Ibid, 154.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Geoffrey Dean, John S. Bradshaw and Paul Lavelle, 'Drug misuse in Ireland, 1982–1983: investigation in a north central Dublin area, and in Galway, Sligo and Cork' (Medico-Social Research Board, 1983) <https://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/5060/> accessed 20 August 2019;

[8] Arising out of this campaigning work we have seen the establishment of the Drug Related Intimidation Reporting Programme, a joint initiative between the Garda National Drugs and Organised Crime Bureau and the National Family Support Network www.fsn.ie; the publication of a major report on the issue by the Health Research Board, successor to the Medico-Social Research Board Drug-related intimidation. The Irish situation and international responses: an evidence review. Dublin: Health Research Board; The issue is now also firmly acknowledged as a central concern in the National Drugs Strategy: http://www.drugs.ie/downloadDocs/2017/ReducingHarmSupportingRecovery2017_2025.pdf

[9] Garda Inspectorate (2014) *Crime Investigation Report*, Part 7, 13, available at https://www.gsinsp.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Crime-Investigation-Full-Report.pdf

[10] For a recent analysis see McFadden Consultancy (2016) Research Report: The New Zealand Drug Harm Index 2016 (2nd edn). Wellington: Ministry of Health.

data for example to incorporate the community experience, as a valid and complimentary form of evidence, triangulated with other sources of information, to inform a partnership-based, measured problem-oriented response.

The development and piloting of the CCIA coincided with the publication of the report of the Commission on the Future of Policing in November 2018. [11] The Commission has placed community policing as central to the future vision of policing and community safety in Ireland. In setting out its vision, the Commission highlighted the need for a creative, information-led problem-solving approach, in conjunction with community-based safety structures. Problem-oriented policing places more emphasis on understanding the connections between problems and why they are occurring, and on tackling problems identified by local communities that have been resistant to other, more conventional responses. The model requires thorough analysis of the causes of crime and disorder, identifying strategies for intervention (beyond law enforcement), involving other agencies and the community in delivering them, and checking whether benefits accrued.[12] The building of genuine community partnerships, collaboration with local policing structures and key community groups in the development of local plans were identified as essential requirements for effective policing. Highlighting the importance of being information-led, the Commission states: 'Without an accurate picture of the problems affecting community safety, police leaders are hampered in making decisions about the resources they need and how to deploy them'. [13]

A central objective of the pilot projects was to provide a model for CCIAs that can be replicated elsewhere. A key finding of this evaluation was the widespread agreement among interviewees that the tool "is a cutting-edge way of measuring and responding to community safety issues', utilising a 'common-

sense, accessible format, with an emphasis on structure, intent and focus"[14]. The findings of this evaluation indicate that there is great potential for the tool to be adopted by other communities with strong pre-existing structures and sufficient community capacity to make meaningful progress in tackling crime and anti-social behaviour in their area.

Another key innovation of the *Future of Policing in Ireland* report is the establishment of a new Policing and Community Safety Oversight Commission, to supercede the Policing Authority and the Garda Inspectorate, with supporting legislation. Its core function is to promote inter-agency working and scrutinise the role of all agencies as they affect policing and community safety. It will also have a role in developing local structures to function effectively, to drive improvements in community safety and to support innovation in policing practice. The CCIA can perform a very important role in supporting this new policing and community safety infrastructure, by providing a mechanism through which the concerns and priorities of some of the most marginalised and alienated communities can feed into the development of new and innovative responses to complex problems. The collective nature of evidence gathering in the CCIA process provides protection for the individual too fearful to report crime. The practical focus on bringing together all relevant stakeholders in a practical problem solving approach, with follow up assessments can help address disillusionment and the perception that nothing works and nothing can change. The democratic value of improving community-based safety structures and processes cannot be underestimated, as the legitimacy and indeed the effectiveness of any policing and criminal justice system derives from the active engagement of the citizen.

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[11] Commission on the Future of Policing, *The Future of Policing in Ireland* (2018).
[12] A Higgins (2018) *The Future of Neighbourhood Policing* (London: The Policing Foundation).
[13] Ibid p22
[14] This Report p36

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The pilot programme for the Community Crime Impact Assessment (CCIA) is an initiative under Action 4.1.40 of the National Drug Strategy 2017-2025.[15] Action 4.1.40, led by the Community and Voluntary Sector, aims to "measure the impact of drug related crime and wider public nuisance issues on communities" by developing and piloting "a Community Impact Assessment Tool in order to measure the impact of drug-related crime and wider public nuisance issues on communities".[16]

Community Crime Impact Assessments (CCIAs) are a community-led mechanism for identifying the impact of issues relating to antisocial behaviour and criminal activity in a particular area, informing a collaborative problem-solving approach to tackle such issues, and monitoring the effectiveness of the response through repeat assessments over time.

A steering group was established to oversee the pilot programme, which included the co-ordinator from Community Action Network, representatives from Citywide Drugs Crisis Campaign, Fatima Groups United, Safer Blanchardstown and the North Inner City Policing Forum, and an academic. The steering group oversaw:

- The development of an assessment tool and the use of it in each area
- The development and implementation of a problem-solving strategy based on the assessment
- A second assessment to measure the impact of the strategy.

Three areas were picked for the pilot primarily because Local Community Policing structures were in place and positive relationships already existed between community representatives, members of An Garda Síochána and the Local Authorities. The pilots were initiated with the support of the Joint Policing Committee in each area and under the auspices of the relevant Local Community Policing Structures. As of September 2019, pilot projects were completed in specific areas within Dublin 8 and Dublin 15. A third pilot project which was planned for an area within Dublin 1 was not completed due to a restructuring process in North Inner City Local Policing Forum.

The CCIA is designed to put people's experience at the heart of the process, emphasising collectivity, both in terms of presenting a collective voice on community safety issues, and also in delivering a collective, collaborative response. Allied to capturing the community voice was a desire to shift the indicators, by taking the exclusive focus off Garda measures, and also moving away from an exclusive focus on crime to one on broader social harms. Sometimes what hurts and adversely affects community safety is not a *crime* per se, but it is still a problem that impacts on people's quality of life and that requires a problem-solving approach.

A key objective of the pilot projects and the CCIA is that the community experience would not only be accepted as evidence, but that it would prompt this problem-solving approach, with a timely, coordinated, collaborative response that is subject to analysis after implementation to examine the effectiveness of the action(s) taken. A further key objective is to track community safety over time, by asking a range of stakeholders, including representatives of An Garda Síochána and the Local Authority whether people in the community feel safer after the implementation of specific interventions.

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[15] Department of Health (2017) *Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery A health-led response to drug and alcohol use in Ireland 2017-2025* (Dublin: Department of Health), 93, available at
http://www.drugs.ie/downloadDocs/2017/ReducingHarmSupportingRecovery2017_2025.pdf
[16] Ibid.

The evaluation concludes that CCIAs can, and should, play a key role in advancing community safety in Ireland as part of a wider package of rights-based and reparative measures to build individual and community resilience. The CCIA approach can be easily adopted by community activists across Ireland to measure perceptions of safety in their areas, and to develop collaborative, problem-solving responses to the problem(s) identified.

The evaluation has found that the two completed CCIA pilot projects have done more than merely create a mechanism within existing local policing structures for hearing, validating and bearing witness to the social and emotional wounds visited on community members. In terms of developing responses to meet community needs, the Dublin 8 and Dublin 15 pilots have demonstrated the value of a multi-agency, problem-solving, solution-oriented approach to tackling community safety issues that fosters strong, collaborative relationships between statutory agencies, residents and other stakeholders working within particular communities, such as drugs workers and youth groups.

Going forward, communities that are interested in conducting a CCIA should first assess the existing capacity in the area. Structures such as Local Policing Forums and Joint Policing Committees are essential for ensuring that there is accountability in the process, improving communication flow and empowering residents to take a more proactive role in enhancing the quality of life for themselves and others in their area. Indeed regular use of the CCIA tool is likely to strengthen local structures and enhance relationships between key players, leading to more effective multi-agency responses to intractable issues.
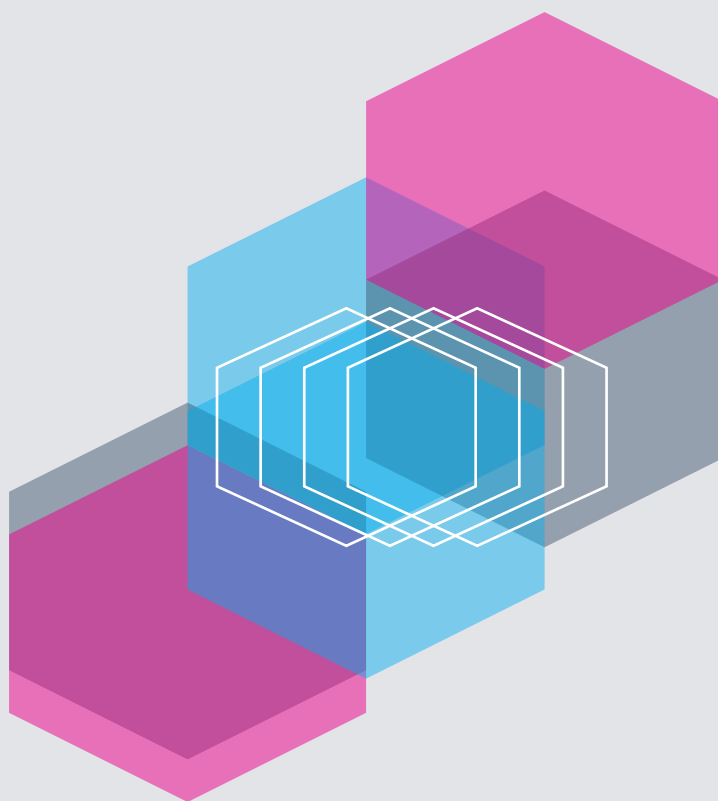
Background

The pilot programme for the Community Crime Impact Assessment (CCIA) is an initiative under Action 4.1.40 of the National Drug Strategy 2017-2025.[17] Action 4.1.40, led by the Community and Voluntary Sector, aims to "measure the impact of drug related crime and wider public nuisance issues on communities" by developing and piloting "a Community Impact Assessment Tool in order to measure the impact of drug-related crime and wider public nuisance issues on communities".[18]

Community Crime Impact Assessments (CCIAs) are a community-led mechanism for identifying the impact of issues relating to antisocial behaviour and criminal activity in a particular area, informing a collaborative problem-solving approach to tackle such issues, and monitoring the effectiveness of the response through repeat assessments over time.

The inclusion of the CCIA as a community-led action in the Strategy was primarily due to representations by the Community Sector at a national level as to the value of capturing the community voice and experience as evidence of community safety, or the lack thereof. The National Drugs Strategy (NDS) also includes a separate and distinct initiative to be led by An Garda Síochána (AGS), namely Action 3.2.27, which calls for consideration of the use of Community Impact Statements within the Criminal Justice System in Ireland.[19]

Three areas were picked for the pilot primarily because Local Community Policing structures were in place in those areas and positive rela-tionships already existed between community representatives, members of AGS and the Local Authorities. The pilots were initiated with the support of the Joint Policing Committee in each area and under the auspices of the relevant Local Community Policing Structures.

Local Policing Forums are community-based collaborative structures involving An Garda Síochána, Council staff, local politicians, community representatives, members of Drug Task Forces and other relevant agencies within the Joint Policing Committee framework.[20]

Joint Policing Committees were established in 2006 in all Local Authorities on foot of a joint Directive from the Department of Justice and the Department of the Environment Community and Local Government following on from the *Garda Síochána Act 2005*.

JPCs are intended to provide a collaborative space within which the Local Authority, senior Gardaí responsible for policing and safety in a particular area, political representatives and community activists can develop workable solutions to anti-social behaviour and crime in specific areas.

A steering group was established to oversee the pilot programme, which included the co-ordinator from Community Action Network, representatives from Citywide Drugs Crisis Campaign, Fatima Groups United, Safer Blanchardstown and the North Inner City Community Policing Forum, and an academic. The steering group oversaw:

- The development of an assessment tool and the use of it in each area
- The development and implementation of a

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[17] Department of Health (2017) *Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery A health-led response to drug and alcohol use in Ireland 2017-2025* (Dublin: Department of Health), 93, available at http://www.drugs.ie/downloadDocs/2017/ReducingHarmSupportingRecovery2017_2025.pdf

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid, 92.

[20] J. Connolly (2019) *Building Community Resilience* (Dublin: Four Forum Network and Dublin City Council) 75.

problem-solving strategy based on the assessment

- A second assessment to measure the impact of the strategy.

Assessments involved compiling data from residents, Gardaí, Local Authorities and other relevant statutory and community and voluntary bodies, and correlating the findings with data from official sources, such as Garda PULSE data and data from Dublin City Council.[21]

As of September 2019, pilot projects were completed in specific areas in Dublin 8 and Dublin 15. A third pilot project which was planned for Dublin 1 was not completed due to a restructuring process in North Inner City Local Policing Forum.

As per the terms of reference set by the Steering Group, this evaluation seeks to:

- Describe the purpose of CCIAs in the context of community safety work responding to public disorder and drug-related crime nationally and internationally
- Outline the narrative of the planning of the project, including its objectives
- Assess the effectiveness of the structures to deliver the assessment
- Assess the effectiveness of the tool developed to deliver the assessments
- Assess the overall effectiveness of the tool for the community
- Assess the potential of the tool and the problem-solving process to be replicated elsewhere.
- Make recommendations for improvement to ensure that the CCIA is a reliable tool.

METHODOLOGY FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE PILOT PROGRAMME

This evaluation involved a literature review, documentary analysis (including materials compiled during the CCIA pilots) and qualitative research, namely semi-structured face-to-face and telephone interviews with key players involved with the two completed pilot projects in Dublin 8 and Dublin 15.

The interviews took place between January and April 2020. Fourteen interviews were conducted, including with five Steering Group members, the Chief Inspector of the Garda Inspectorate, a community activist who conducted the pilot in Dublin 8, a business-owner in Dublin 8, a Garda from Dublin 8, a Garda from Dublin 15, a Fingal County Councillor and three residents who were involved in the Dublin 15 problem-solving group.

Interviews were recorded and transcribed by the author using a naturalistic approach, in which speech was neither modified nor sanitised.[22] Thematic analysis was conducted whereby the interview data was analysed and coded into themes such as "purpose", "structures", "process", "the tool", "problem-solving", "triangulation", "participants", "communication", "relationships", "follow-up", "sustainability", "community policing" and "replication".

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[21] Ibid, 15.

[22] D. Oliver *et al*. (2005) "Constraints and Opportunities with Interview Transcription: Towards Reflection in Qualitative Research" Soc Forces 84(2), 1273–1289.

In this section I provide a short literature review relevant to community safety and the CCIA process, including issues relating to the reliability of crime data, the future of policing in Ireland and problem-solving.

In the context of community safety, it has long been recognised that there is a substantial "dark figure of crime",[23] i.e. a gulf between reported and unreported crimes.[24] Drug-related crime and intimidation, in particular, has a huge dark figure, according to Irish studies by Hourigan,[25] Connolly[26] and Jennings.[27] Non-reporting due to fear of reprisal was extremely common. Many victims of crime knew the offender, and/or lived near them. There were real, immediate safety reasons for not reporting drug-related crime. Connolly's quality of life study used unobtrusive measures like discarded needles, broken bus shelters and abandoned cars as indicators of a community under strain. Connolly built on his creative approach to data collection in the *Building Community Resilience* report published in 2019

by using Garda intelligence, applying Redmond's Twinsight methodology to identify "hotspots" and network activity.[28] Hotspots are places where anti-social behaviour and drug-related crime are particularly intense and unrelenting, a source of public nuisance and intimidation.

The State cannot develop meaningful responses to crime unless the criminal justice agencies have an accurate sense of the problem. In his forward to Reddy and Redmond's *Making it Count* report exploring "ways of improving the measurement of effectiveness in the Irish youth justice system",[29] Minister for State in the Department of Justice and Equality, David Stanton TD acknowledged that it is impossible to develop and deliver effective interventions "without good quality data and effective systems for collecting it".[30]

There are various sources of crime data, such as police data on reported crime, bail applications and prosecutions, police intelligence, recidivism studies,[31] court statistics and victimisation

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[23] A. Biderman & A. Reiss (1967) "On Exploring the "Dark Figure" of Crime", *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 374*(1), 1–15.

[24] Department of Justice and Equality, "Minister McEntee welcomes publication of CSO Crime and Victimisation Survey 2019" 08 July 2020, available at http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR20000138 Minister for Justice and Equality, Helen McEntee TD stated: **"Official recorded crime statistics can only give us a limited picture of people's experience of crime within our communities, given their reliance on crimes actually reported to Gardaí. Combining them with the Crime and Victimisation Survey helps build a more rounded picture of the public's experience of crime, allowing us to further identify and analyse ongoing crime trends and concerns across Ireland and providing a very valuable insight for future policy making."** (emphasis in original)

[25] N. Hourigan (2011) Understanding Limerick Social Exclusion and Change. Cork: Cork University Press, 85.

[26] J. Connolly (2003) *Drugs, crime and community: Monitoring quality of life in the North Dublin Inner City* (Dublin: North Inner City Dublin Drugs Task Force).

[27] P. Jennings (2015) *Melting the iceberg of fear: A collective response to anti-social behaviour, drugs misuse, criminal activity and drug debt intimidation* (Dublin: Safer Blanchardstown).

[28] Department of Children and Youth Affairs, *Lifting the Lid on Greentown – Why we should be concerned about the influence criminal networks have on children's offending behaviour in Ireland* (Dublin: Government Publications, 2016).

[29] J. Reddy & S. Redmond (2019) *Improving the Measurement of Effectiveness in the Irish Youth Justice System.* Research Evidence into Policy, Programmes and Practice (REPPP) Project, University of Limerick, 4.

[30] Ibid, 1.

[31] IPS (2013) *Irish Prison Service Recidivism Study 2013* (Longford: IPS) 3. See also CSO, "Prison Recidivism 2010 cohort", 09 November 2016, available at

surveys.[32] The Central Statistics Office recently published Crime and Victimisation Survey for 2019 found that 10% of respondents had been victims of "personal crime", i.e. a victim of a violent or non-violent theft or attempted theft, a physical assault or a fraud incident in the previous 12 months. People from affluent areas were more likely to report the incident than those in disadvantaged areas.[33] In terms of high levels on non-reporting among victims of crime, only 4 in 10 respondents who were a victim of a personal crime and 6 out of 10 households (59%) that experienced either a burglary or vandalism to their property reported the crimes to AGS. While two-thirds (68%) of respondents felt that An Garda Síochána were "very effective" or "quite effective" at tackling crime in their local area, one in ten (10%) said the Gardaí were "not effective at all".[34]

In terms of endeavouring to fill a gap in the existing policing data in Ireland, namely elevating the lived experience of hidden victims using a collective reporting format, a report by the Garda Inspectorate from 2014 called for AGS and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions to consider adopting the Community Impact Statement (CIS) mechanism.[35] In the UK senior police officers can prepare a CIS[36] on the impact certain crimes

have on the local community to inform:

- The decision to charge a suspect with an offence;
- Restorative justice interventions;
- Decisions on possible conditions of a caution;
- Proposals for sentencing in pre-sanction reports;
- Partnership activity to tackle issues raised by the community;
- Sentencing.[37]

By contrast with the UK approach, the Canadian Community Impact Statement model is not necessarily a police-led initiative.[38] Any individual selected by the community in question can compile a statement on behalf of the community and present it in court.[39]

The Future of Policing in Ireland report of the Commission on the Future of Policing published in 2018 commented on the dubious reliability of crime data in Ireland and elsewhere,[40] noting that the Scottish police estimate that for every crime recorded, approximately four other crimes may have been committed.[41] The Commission discussed the benefits of a creative, data-driven, problem-solving approach to policing.[42] This includes

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http://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/prir/prisonrecidivism2010cohort/
[32] Ibid, 4. See also S. Parsons (2015) "Crime Trends", *The Routledge Handbook of Irish Criminology*, D. Healy, C. Hamilton, Y. Daly & M. Butler eds., 15-49.
[33] See https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cv/crimeandvictimisation2019/personalcrime/
[34] See https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cv/crimeandvictimisation2019/introductionandsummaryofresults/
[35] Garda Inspectorate (2014) *Crime Investigation Report*, Part 7, 13, available at https://www.gsinsp.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Crime-Investigation-Full-Report.pdf
[36] A Community Impact Statement can be made under section 9 of the Criminal Justice Act 1967 and tendered under Part 27 of the Criminal Procedure Rules 2010.
[37] Garda Inspectorate, above note 19, Part 7, 12-13.
[38] See https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/cj-jp/victims-victimes/factsheets-fiches/community-collectivite.html
[39] Ibid. "Each community chooses someone to prepare the community impact statement. This can be any person from the community that has been harmed by an offence or who has knowledge of the harm caused to the community. For example, community organizations, cities, religious organizations, and Aboriginal bands have prepared community impact statements."
[40] Commission on the Future of Policing, *The Future of Policing in Ireland* (2018), 22.
[41] Police Scotland, *Written submission from Police Scotland to Parliament of Scotland Justice Committee Demand-led policing: service of the first and last resource*, 17 January 2017, available at http://www.parliament.scot/S5_JusticeCommittee/Inquiries/DLP_Police_Scotland.pdf
[42] Commission on the Future of Policing, above note 24, 6.

timely, accurate data from the communities which AGS serve, which means listening to, and believing people's lived experiences of anti-social behaviour and crime.

A problem-oriented approach to policing is informed by an understanding of the problem and also the effects of the subsequent intervention. A key finding of The Policing Foundation's *The Future of Neighbourhood Policing* report published in 2018 was that problem-solving:

> *is core to the 'official' understanding of what neighbourhood policing is for. The working understanding of 'problem solving' has expanded to include (and may even tend to default to) case-based working, in which vulnerable/high-risk/high-demand individuals are the subjects, and multi-agency case work the mechanism for response.*[43]

Problem-oriented policing (POP) seeks to not only address the specific problem identified but also to tackle the underlying criminogenic factors. It necessitates greater levels of community engagement "to ensure that the police are meeting community needs", recognises and incorporates the expertise of all the individuals and groups involved in the process, utilising a wide range of resources in developing solutions.[44] Connolly advocates for a problem-oriented approach to strategically respond to crime hotspots, stating that POP:

> *is a proactive alternative to traditional response policing. […] POP places more emphasis on understanding the connections between problems and why they are occurring, and on tackling problems identified by local communities that have been resistant to other, more conventional responses. The model requires thorough analysis of the causes of crime and*

disorder, identifying strategies for intervention (beyond law enforcement), involving other agencies and the community in delivering them, and checking whether benefits accrued.[45]

POP involves four key steps: Scanning, Analysis, Response and Assessment (SARA). At the scanning stage, participants examine whether there are two or more incidents that are related in some way and cause harm, generating a public expectation of action.[46] At the analysis stage, participants ask a number of questions including "what do we need to know?" and "where do we get this information?" The response phase actions and interventions may involve the elimination of the problem, management of the problem, reduction in the scope of the problem, reduction in the harm of the problem and improvements in the overall process.[47] In the final assessment phase of the problem-solving process, participants return and evaluate the performance of their actions and interventions, asking:

- How have we done?
- Can we improve our effort?
- Has the problem gone elsewhere?
- Should we continue or reassess and move on?[48]

The Commission on the Future of Policing recognised the phenomenon on hidden victimisation in communities and highlighted the importance of community policing. It emphasised that policing and security issues are not the sole responsibility of An Garda Síochána. Policing "must be done with communities".[49] According to the Commission, a multi-agency, whole-of-society approach to community safety is necessary, underpinned by a new Policing and Community Safety Act, to enable appropriate information-sharing subject to safeguards, the development of joint action plans and the location of 24-hour multi-agency

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[43] A. Higgins (2018) *The Future of Neighbourhood Policing* (London: The Policing Foundation), 51.
[44] An Garda Siochana, COMMUNITY ORIENTED PROBLEM SOLVING slides, 12.
[45] Connolly, above note 4, 15.
[46] Commission on the Future of Policing, above note 24, 19.
[47] Ibid, 21.
[48] Ibid, 22.
[49] Ibid, X.

Crisis Intervention Teams in all police divisions.[50] The Commission also recommended the establishment of a Policing and Community Safety Oversight Commission **"with a core function to promote inter-agency working and scrutinise the role of all agencies as they affect policing and community safety"**.[51]

Echoing the first principle of the report by the Commission on the Future of Policing, namely "Human Rights as a Foundation of Policing",[52] Connolly's *Building Community Resilience* report similarly recommended that responses to anti-social behaviour and crime should be driven by human rights. The rights of the community residents "to live safely, free from fear and crime" must be balanced against the competing rights of the suspects and accused persons to fair procedures, i.e. right to a fair trial, to legal representation, to freedom from torture and arbitrary arrest.[53] In 2013, Donoghue wrote about the "fear factor" and powerlessness felt by disadvantaged communities due to persistent anti-social behaviour and gang culture, noting "the importance of having a care and control approach in creating safe and sustainable communities where human rights are central."[54] Connolly also called for a balance of care and control, stating that responses need

to be mindful of the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)[55] and "trauma-informed".[56]

The *Building Community Resilience* report characterised the LPFs and JPCs as lacking a clear focus, poorly resourced, weak and disconnected, but nonetheless recognised their potential "to help build bridges between agencies and the community, to facilitate local police accountability and to help build community confidence."[57] The report's analysis of the South Central JPC minutes found that similar issues were discussed in LPFs and in JPCs, including poor visibility of Gardaí on the ground - especially dedicated Community Gardaí – and community frustration due to the "lack of response" when people report serious incidents.[58] Connolly recommended the use of CCIAs: "as a means of informing local policing and community safety strategies and as a way of monitoring interventions."[59]

Structures known as Community Safety Groups (CSGs) are small collaborative efforts that operate in specific local communities, usually "hotspot" areas. They consist of local activists, residents, representatives from the Local Authority and members of AGS who problem-solve community safety issues using detailed

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[50] Ibid, IX.

[51] Ibid, 43 (emphasis in original).

[52] Ibid, 10.

[53] Connolly, above note 4, 13.

[54] J. Donoghue (2013) "Care and Control - Challenges for Creating Safe and Sustainable Communities", 1, available at https://www.communityworkireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/control-and-care-joe-donohue-2013.pdf

[55] V. Felitti *et al.*, "The relationship of adult health status to childhood abuse and household dysfunction" (1998) 14 American Journal of Preventive Medicine 245-258. See also See also J. Mulcahy (2018 Daring to Ask "What Happened to You?" - Why Correctional Systems Must Become Trauma-Responsive, Advancing Corrections 5, 71-86; J Mulcahy, *Hurting Children: submission to the Committee on the Future of Mental Health* (2018) available at
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326265527_Hurting_Children_submission_to_the_Committee_on_the_Future_of_Mental_Health; J Mulcahy, "Preventing relational trauma and healing emotional pain: the role of communities", *Shared Agendas: Community Justice and Offending* April 2019, available at
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/332632192_Preventing_relational_trauma_and_healing_emotional_pain_the_role_of_communities and
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AK52QnHKGiU.

[56] Connolly, above note 4, 13.

[57] Ibid, 84-85.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Ibid, 15.

analysis and strategic thinking. A 2012 review of CSGs in the Canal Communities area commended this type of partnership approach, noting that residents are "a key constituent in the community perspective."[60] The review commented that in some cases resident representation in CSGs is strong, while in others it is "non-existent". Although the Gardaí and Local Authorities have a preference for as much "first-hand, real-time information as possible" from "trustworthy", "community-minded" people living in the locality, residents are often understandably reluctant to participate in CSGs due to fears for their personal safety, combined with a sense of futility because of the seeming inability of the statutory to respond effectively because their hands are somehow tied.[61]

A recommendation was included in the 2014 report by the Garda Inspectorate which called for adoption in Ireland of the Community Impact Statement mechanism[62] and this recommendation is still under consideration by AGS. In an interview with Mark Toland in March 2020, the Chief Inspector of the Garda Inspectorate described the benefits of using the Community Impact Statement in London as part of a package of measures aimed at reducing lethal knife crime in Brent and a campaign of building positive relationships with the local residents from 2006 to 2010. Other

measures included the cultivation of a Critical Incident Advisory Group, the introduction of specialised court dealing with domestic violence, the placement of a full-time police officer in local schools, comprehensive staff training about communication and de-escalation skills, public education around stop and search powers, and an initiative in which the police officers knocked on every door in Brent, re-introducing themselves to the community.

Complaints against police officers in Brent went from the highest in London to the second lowest, and in the last 18 months of Chief Inspector Toland's time in Brent there was no recorded homicide. Despite these impressive achievements, improving community confidence in policing during his tenure in Brent proved elusive. The stark reduction of violent deaths had not led to improvements in the residents of Brent enjoyment of a felt sense of safety in each other's presence. Nonetheless, Chief Inspector Toland stated that the Community Impact Statement was a very useful tool in policing Brent and helped improve communication and information flow with the community and provided him with a platform to communicate with the Magistrates about policing challenges and, in particular, the harms of knife crime for the entire community.

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[60] *New territory in community work, a review of community safety groups* (2012), 8
[61] Connolly, above note 4, 82.
[62] Garda Inspectorate, above note 19, 13.

Purpose of the CCIA

> The community voice is a kind of community practice wisdom […] probably the most valid form of evidence. *Interviewee 6, Steering Group Member, March 2020*

The CCIA pilot project grew out of concern about the impact of crime, anti-social behaviour and wider social harms on people's quality of life, the often-hidden nature of the impact and a desire to figure out a way to record it and take effective action to address it. The purpose of the CCIA was to provide a means of recording the community experience of crime and anti-social behaviour in a reliable way, so that responses are fully informed. The Steering Group for the pilot was keen to measure the quality of life for people in three specific areas and determine whether interventions that are put in place to address community safety problems actually improve matters on the ground.

The first task for the Steering Group was to design an Assessment Tool that would be used in carrying out the community assessment and that could provide a template for use in other areas. The approach taken by the Steering Group was to design an assessment tool which provides for a balance between having a structured and consistent format for gathering information while at the same time being practical and appropriate for use by non-researchers in a community setting. According to the template for the CCIA tool (see Appendix A), the CCIA should:

A. Give a trustworthy snapshot of the nature and particularly the impact of drug-related criminality on the inhabitants of a specified locality. The tool will provide for triangulation in gathering data – collecting informaion from different sources in order to confirm the veracity of evidence

B. Provide data that will be a reliable basis for planning how to tackle such issues and which parties are needed to implement such strategies.

C. Monitor through repetition at reasonable intervals the effectiveness of any such strategies

D. Be a resource-light and easy to use way of taking an assessment

E. Have the confidence of all relevant parties to any solution to the issues causing the impact.

The CCIA is designed to put people's experience at the heart of the process, emphasising collectivity, both in terms of presenting a collective voice on community safety issues, and also in delivering a collective, collaborative response. As one Steering Group member put it, the collaborative approach to addressing a community problem is fundamentally based on the premise that it should be viewed not as "a problem for me/you, but a problem for us".

> I think part of what this exercise is – it's not creating a lynch-mob, but it's actually trying to hear. Hear it and then go back to the powers that be and say "this is what people are saying. So what are *we* going to do?" *Interviewee 1, Steering Group member /CCIA facilitator, February 2020*
>
> So, the Community Policing Forums allow the structure, but also, crucially they have that thing around the collectivity, which is essential to this. Collectivity is there in how you collect the data, if you like. So, in the traditional way of policing an individual person rings up, or goes to the station and reports something, and when they do that there's a very strong onus on what they're reporting being something that is a *crime*, in a sense, for it to get any attention. Whereas this is a form of collective reporting, so it's a group of people who are saying "our life, our community is affected by these things that are going on around us, and we would like something done about it." So, it allows for that – that it's not a pressure on an individual to report, but also what they're reporting doesn't necessarily have to be, you

know, defined under a particular statute. It's a message from a collective group that "this is affecting our quality of life", and the collectivity is obviously crucial again in the response, which is where having the structures comes in. *Interviewee 2, Steering Group member, February 2020*

I suppose it's based on a premise really that while the impact of antisocial behaviour is generally considered to be, or looked at in terms of its impact on individuals – you know, so houses are targeted, or individuals are targeted and that. There hasn't been as much consideration given to the impact on a community. So, the intent within this tool is to get a sense of the impact of antisocial behaviour on a community, to do that at a moment in time and again to bring the findings of that to those who have responsibility for that – the Gardaí and Council – and then to go back after a period and further measure and say "well, have you noticed any difference?" *Interviewee 3, Steering Group member, February 2020*

Like my overriding sense of this tool was really what it does at a base level is it allows the ordinary person on the street to say "I have a problem. I don't like the way such-and-such a person, or such-and-such a group are at the end of the road" and feel that it is getting to the Guards, and more importantly that the Guards are listening and doing something with it. *Interviewee 8, AGS Dublin 8, April 2020*

Allied to capturing the community voice was a desire to shift the indicators, by taking the exclusive focus off Garda measures, and also moving away from an exclusive focus on crime to broader social harms. Sometimes what hurts and adversely affects community safety is not a *crime* per se. For example, in the Dublin 15 pilot, litter, dumping and poor upkeep of houses and gardens had a profound negative impact on some residents' sense of safety and psychological wellbeing, more so than the "mainstream crime" mentioned by the local Garda, namely the drugs trade and joyriding.

A key objective of the pilot projects and the tool is that the community experience would not only be accepted as evidence, but that it would prompt a timely, coordinated, collaborative response that is subject to analysis after implementation to examine the effectiveness of the action(s) taken. The members of AGS interviewed described the various demands on their energy / resources, acknowledging that the policing focus on an area can be short-lived and directed primarily at mainstream crime issues, and as soon as a crisis erupts elsewhere, Garda resources will be redeployed there to tackle the situation.

Another key objective of the pilot projects and the CCIA tool is to track community safety over time, by asking a range of stakeholders, including representatives of AGS and the Local Authority whether people in the community feel safer after the implementation of specific interventions. A Steering Group member stated that the concept of "progressive realization",[63] borrowed from the human rights field, means that the CCIA process is designed to be ongoing and sustainable over time, changing and adapting as issues are solved and new problems emerge. The assessment is, therefore, not intended to be a once-off event. The CCIA process is intended to ensure that the process of listening to the community about social harms in an area, developing a multi-disciplinary, problem-solving response, then conducting a follow-up assessment and further problem-solving as necessary is viable for a prolonged period. A planned benefit of CCIAs is that once the process is formalised and repeated regularly, they should generate valuable data about community safety issues over time, i.e. initial assessment, response, analysis, further assessments, new problem-solving responses, *etc.*

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[63] Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (2008) *Frequently Asked Questions on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Fact Sheet No. 33* (United Nations: Geneva) 13.

One Steering Group member /CCIA facilitator interviewed in February 2020, stated that the CCIA has a bearing on community values. He expressed a desire to see a decline in the numb acceptance of residents of the drugs trade in their community. He hoped that successes achieved through the CCIA process might gradually nudge residents out of their state of being frozen in fear, mobilising them into action. In terms of altering values, he wished that the collective tolerance for drug sale, supply and usage would lessen.

Role of Local Policing/Safety Structures

In this section I will explain how and why local policing structures are central to the CCIA process. **There was consensus among interviewees that pre-existing collaborative relationships and the existence of efficient local structures – Local Policing Forums (LPFs), Joint Policing Committees (JPCs) and Community Safety Groups (CSGs) - are vital to effectively carrying out a CCIA.** Although several interviewees expressed views about LPFs and JPCs similar to Connolly's *Building Community Resilience* findings, there was nonetheless broad acceptance that the CCIA approach had to become embedded within existing structures to have any prospect of success or sustainability.

The idea was that all three areas would be workin' off the same sheet if you like, and that we'd be comin' at this in a way that's common, even though the areas are different. And it was important to us as well that we picked areas where there was already good relationships between Community Gardaí, Dublin City Council and so on, where policing forum structures were strong. It was the easiest, because that meant that those structures didn't have to be set up to deliver the thing. The other tension I suppose we had was – I was sort of clear about holding this line – that it needs to work within the structures that were there,

rather than bypassing them, or ignoring them. So, we needed to work in Local Policing Forum and Joint Policing Committees structures and see this project as owned by them, even if they weren't strong, or sometimes even (slight laugh) not all that interested, but these were the bodies that were supposed to be doing this and we were saying "we're going to make that work." So, we saw the project as one of those things – it sort of gets a crowbar into a crack, you know, that will hopefully widen. *Interviewee 3, Steering Group member, February 2020*

A Garda interviewee described the Dublin 8 structures as strong and energetic. He also stated that in the planning stage of the pilots he was adamant that the CCIA process had to be aligned with the existing structures to maximise the efficiency and to ensure the sustainability of the response:

in my mind the alignment of all these groups was crucial to success. If you're going to do this, it feeds into your forum, which in turn feeds into your JPC, which then in turn is brought before your local policing representatives – the upper management of policing representatives, local public representatives – but there's how your ground-level policing issues, policing problems, concerns for the community are fed up through that process, and again there's an accountability piece there as well. They're recorded and pushed up that direction and if there's no action being taken – there should be action taken – you have that accountability. […] So I do think, in order for sustainability – these bodies have been put in place, they are by and large staffed by very, very good people, and you just need an alignment and a process that is clear as to how it works. *Interviewee 8, AGS Dublin 8, April 2020*

Other interviewees acknowledged that the structures are critical in terms of drawing on pre-existing positive relationships and bolstering interagency working and energising

a collective, coordinated response to challenges. They are also a means of expanding relational networks and building alliances with new, or previously unknown stakeholders working in the area in which the CCIA is undertaken as part of the problem-solving process.

The structures are central to enhanced communication and a collective response to identified issues and they provide a forum for generating a degree of consensus so that the collective community experience is accepted by the powers that be as presenting a fairly accurate picture. Official data will either corroborate the community experience or reveal discrepancies which the problem-solving process may try to rectify. In terms of elevating the community voice and giving the collective experience evidentiary weight, four of the Steering Group members agreed that it is imperative that the senior Garda in the pilot areas "would broadly accept that the community statement is true".

Planning the Assessments

In terms of planning the pilot assessments, important considerations related to:

- the geographical boundaries (e.g. specific areas in Dublin 8 and Dublin 15)
- the timescale (e.g. is the CCIA conducted over a two-week period, over a month etc.?)
- how to guard against bias among participants (selection criteria and triangulation)
- The hidden voices ("who are we missing?")
- What constitutes a problem? (social harms, including but not limited to breaches of the criminal law?)
- What's the threshold for intervention?

The assessment tool (see Appendix A) is designed to focus on an area within a designated geographical boundary and the two pilot projects being evaluated concentrated on specific areas in Dublin 8 and Dublin 15 respectively.

In each area, the co-ordinator of the pilot project presented a proposal to pilot the CCIA to the relevant Joint Policing Committee, with the support of the Chief Superintendent for the area, and received "the imprimatur" to proceed. It should be noted that this process was supported at a national level by the Garda representative on the National Oversight Forum on Drugs (now the National Oversight Committee.) The Dublin 8 pilot was carried out in conjunction with Fatima Groups United and Community Action Network under the Canals Community LPF and was chosen as a pilot site primarily because of capacity and strong relationships among key stakeholders.

The Dublin 15 pilot was carried out in conjunction with Safer Blanchardstown, and AGS chose the specific area, which was a policing priority due to high levels of problem drug use, anti-social behaviour and crime. It was also identified as having wider structural issues that could not be improved by a police response alone. According to a local Garda interviewed, the area required a multi-agency, collaborative response and the active involvement by the local community.

As mentioned in the introduction, the Dublin 1 pilot was ultimately discontinued due to a process of restructuring in the LPF and a broader intervention plan that was put in place in the North East Inner City.

The Steering Group for the pilot appreciated the importance of the tool employing a consistent methodology that could be replicated elsewhere. One Steering member, stressed the need for test questions and internal validation tests, "to repeat back to the person things they had said earlier to check for accuracy". In terms of the capacity of the tool to be easily replicated elsewhere, which was a key goal of the Steering Group members, a balance has to be struck between "something that is rigorous, yet accessible and useful".

In terms of guarding against bias among participants, there was agreement among the Steering Group members that careful consideration has to be given as to: "Who are we talking to? Why? Who will we talk to in the Gardaí and the Local Authority?" While members of AGS and the Local Authority will generally be consulted as a matter of course when conducting a CCIA, due to the involvement of local community safety structures, a wide range of other participants can be included to capture the community voice, including local residents, drug workers, youth workers, elected public representatives, business owners, council workers cleaning the park, etc. A Steering Group member/CCIA facilitator who was interviewed in February 2020, stated that the tool "must not simply be about listening to those who shout loudest or complain the most."

Members of the Steering Group stated that there is no clear, pre-agreed definition of the term "community" for the purposes of conducting a CCIA, emphasising the importance of "tri-

angulating the data", i.e. obtaining information from multiple different sources. Methodological triangulation in the social sciences means that multiple qualitative and/or quantitative methods are used to study a topic. When the findings from the various methods reveal the same or similar findings, validity is established.

Triangulation in the pilot projects involved comparing and contrasting the community information with AGS and Local Authority data. Data from drug treatment providers and Youth Services could also be used as a comparator. Where there is a serious discrepancy between information from the CCIA and official data sources, community activists can inform the authorities that the official data does not reflect the community experience.

It is also important to attend to possible missing voices and experiences. Another Steering Group member gave an example of the need to tune into racist incidents in communities by speaking to ethnic minority people about their felt sense of community safety. Due to the fact that youth workers in the pilot communities are predominantly white people, racist attacks could easily be omitted from assessments, unless the CCIA facilitator consciously seeks out individuals who might be subject to racist targeting.

Carrying out the Assessments.

According to the CCIA tool (see Appendix A) the person conducting the assessment of community safety is to engage in five methods of data collection, *the first* and most important of which are the structured conversations with a selection of residents about:

- The nature of the activity (e.g. public drug-dealing, vandalism, late night parties, anti-social behaviour, drug paraphernalia etc.), whether it is a new or ongoing issue, connected with the drug trade etc;
- The impact on people living nearby, e.g. loss of sleep, general anxiety, intimidation, feeling ashamed of the area etc;

- Responses of local people, e.g. talking to perpetrators, making official complaints, sharing experiences with services or neighbours, etc;
- Assessment of responses by Gardaí, Local Authority, youth groups, drug services etc;
- Suggested solutions for the problem.

The tool itself is basically a form of "listening survey"[64] where facilitators tune into what people are saying "with strong feeling", for example about anti-social behaviour, the drugs trade or incessant dumping in the area. It aims to capture things that people are talking about anyway, bringing structure to ordinary, everyday conversations about community safety matters:

> it's part of our daily work […] When I did it, I picked a cross section of people to get a sense of what would fit. Like there's a great kind of phrase about "listening with intent" so […] I do it all the time. If it's the breakfast morning on a Thursday, it'd be packed here. People sit down and hear what people are saying. Like everyone's talking about the antisocial behaviour, coz it's the worst in the world, and it is. But we kind of have to put the tool in there. So, it's about listening with intent, I think. And obviously some of it was structured interviews. *Interviewee 1, Steering Group member /CCIA facilitator, February 2020*

The second data gathering approach involves structured conversations with relevant non-residents such as Council staff (estate managers, housing officers, anti-social behaviour officers, parks, maintenance, cleaners), Gardaí, youth projects, drug projects, community projects, local politicians, business-owners, etc. In this regard, the CCIA tool suggests that it may be useful to ask some non-researchers do further data gathering to inform the process, "e.g. asking a Parks Council worker to note how many needles they pick up."

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[64] M, Sheehy (2001) *Partners Companion to Training for Transformation* (Dublin: Partners Training for Transformation) 11 – 19.

A third type of date gathering is looking at other sources of relevant data, such as Garda data/PULSE, and Local Authority complaint figures (e.g. if someone is reported as "moving house", this might be due to criminal activity such as intimidation**). A fourth type is unobtrusive observation** (i.e. "signs of current anti-social behaviour, burnt out cars, graffiti, vandalised property, fires, etc.") and **a fifth type is other sources of information such as newspaper articles and social media commentary.**

— DUBLIN 8 —

FIRST ASSESSMENT

The Dublin 8 CCIA was undertaken in May and June of 2018, arising from reports at CSG meetings and the LPF of persistent juvenile anti-social behaviour and public drug dealing in the area which has a significant negative impact on the quality of life of residents. The CCIA was approved by the Dublin South Central JPC on the 24th of September 2018. A Strategy was developed by the Canal Communities LPC on the 25th September 2018, and updated in February 2019.

According to the summary data analysed on the Dublin 8 pilot, structured conversations were conducted for the initial assessment with a range of residents through the community, with corroboration from Gardaí, Dublin City Council (DCC) staff, and community workers. Interviewees included –

- a woman living in the area for 16 years; living with husband; age group 50's
- a couple living in the area for 11 years; 2 children aged 9 and 7; age group 30's-40's
- a seventeen-year-old teenage boy
- 5 members of a local Environment Group, all of which have lived locally for many years
- a young mother living in a local flat complex all her life; living with her partner; age group mid 20's, two young kids 4 and 2
- a grandmother living in a local flat complex for 30 years who had 3 adult children and 4 grand children

- members of FGU, resident reps, chair and manager
- eight local businesses
- a Community Garda
- DCC staff.

One Steering Group member noted that some residents have mixed feelings about the idea of research. However, a CCIA facilitator observed that since the tool involves an informal casual conversation with a familiar community leader, residents are unlikely to feel ill-at-ease in a way that they might be with an academic outsider:

> I was to identify a range of people […] and businesses within the village that I would interview and ask to be involved with the Community Impact Assessment tool. So, I did that and it was quite – well, the businesses were all identifiable, in that they were the businesses, and then the residents really I chose on the basis of having a variety in age, and range. It wasn't a strict, say, random sample or anything. I thought a couple with children, an older person, and a teenager and then there was also a woman who was involved in an environmental group who was able to bring together a group for me. So, it was thought out, like. There wasn't anything scientific in the choice of people, if you like. It was people I knew I could get access to. *Interviewee 4, CCIA facilitator Dublin 8, February 2020*

The residents who participated in the Dublin 8 pilot were willing to do so on the basis that they were "saying these things all the time" and the community activists just wanted to take a written note of their concerns.

> There are certain times when l confronted those taking drugs at the playground, but this depends on the individuals involved. I wouldn't ring the police, l would go to the local leaders/ workers to express my concerns, however to be honest this would only happen when things have escalated, this probably means that l have accepted certain levels of criminality and drug deal-

ing, which is part of life for some families. *Resident, Dublin 8*

Well it goes without saying there is no community policing in our area, people only see guards when there is a raid or something, you never see the police walking around talking to the locals anymore. *Resident, Dublin 8*

One business-owner agreed to participate primarily out of gratitude that the community activist undertaking the CCIA was striving to improve the area amid neglect and under-investment by the statutory agencies:

[X] is my neighbour and she asked, so I would try and help people who are trying to do something positive. Like I would feel, I think it's important for us all to stand up and shout out about it. I think people in places like [this] almost become complacent against bad behaviour and we, it's almost people expect it. And it's nice when some-one in the community goes "no, actually, this isn't right. We shouldn't have to put up with this level of whatever" – be it anti-social behaviour, be it aggression, be it open drug dealin' – whatever it is. We shouldn't have to tolerate it. We should feel safe. And there seems to be different rules for different communities in Dublin. Like, I have friends who live in parts of Dublin and they cannot believe what we have to tolerate here. […] And that's not right. We all pay the same taxes. We all pay the same VAT. You know? We all should have equally good environ-ments to live in. But unfortunately areas like [this] are forgotten. It's ghettoised. The Guards are chasing people for petty things, I see, and not dealing with the bigger issues, coz they haven't got the resources. And I don't think people in certain areas would tolerate it. But the people […] have become "well, what do you expect?" And it's nice to see a neighbour saying "no, this isn't right. Let's try and do something". I really app-reciated that [X] was trying to do that, and why she was trying to do it. *Interviewee 7, business-owner Dublin 8, March 2020*

The issues identified through the assessment were:

- Stealing from gardens – front and back, including refuse bins
- Young people throwing eggs and/or stones at windows
- Breakages of car windows and mirrors and thefts from unlocked cars
- Vandalism including uprooting of garden plants, graffiti
- Littering, public urination and dog dirt on the street as well as dumping of rubbish on corners or in a particular laneway
- Public drug dealing -the most concerning aspect of which being its location – in and around playgrounds and close to residences. Cars pulling up at various locations to buy illegal drugs. People gathering to drink and/or use illicit drugs.
- A recent phenomenon was large groups of teenagers from across Dublin 8 and 12 gathering in the local area to fight among themselves and cause significant nuisance for local people.
- A small group of local young children involved in low levels of anti-social behaviour including smashing windows, bullying other kids & name calling of non-Irish national kids/families using the playground.
- Thefts from shops – abuse of staff. The most serious incidences have been at one particular retail outlet where six armed robberies had taken place so far this year. One incident was particularly violent, with a staff member assaulted. Staff now wear panic buttons.
- Persistent racist abuse, particularly of shop-staff
- Loss of local Garda capacity. At the time the local Garda sergeant had been temporarily reassigned and was unavailable to the community to tackle the local issues. There had been a significant loss of community Gardai to the area over a number of years and the issue was particularly acute at the time of the assessment.

Problem Solving

Following the Assessment, a meeting of local community workers, Dublin City Council officials and a Garda Inspector reviewed the report. It was agreed by all present that the report reflected the reality of anti-social behaviour in the community at the time.

The following measures were proposed -

- To intensify measures targeting drug dealing and anti-social behaviour activity. This will involve:
  - Calling in tenants for breach of tenancy and referring to Dublin City Council's Antisocial Policy Unit where appropriate
  - Surveillance by the Garda Crime Unit
  - Increased searches of persons and properties for drugs, as well as enforcement of bail conditions where a person before the courts is precluded from being in the area or is subject to curfew as part of bail conditions.
- To work to establish a team of Garda Drug unit for the Policing District
- To work to strengthen the Garda Community Policing Unit with at least two sergeants in place to supervise the expanded unit, allowing for more effective patrolling of the area
- To reconvene a meeting of local businesses linked with Gardaí to explore security measures including Business Watch
- To take a further Community Crime Impact Assessment will be taken in six months (March 2019)

The intensification of anti-anti-social behaviour measures by the Gardai did occur following the Assessment. A Drugs Unit was established for the district. Community Gardaí on the beat did increase though slowly and partially. No meeting of local businesses was arranged, but the Garda Inspector established direct contact with business owners. A further CCIA was taken after six months.

— DUBLIN 8 —
FOLLOW-UP ASSESSMENT

A follow-up assessment in Dublin 8 was taken after six months in March/April of 2019 and a second review of actions followed. Interviews were held with four of the 13 residents interviewed in June 2018 and with four of the original eight businesses, as well as community members of the CSG. A statement was also taken from FGU Management. According to the Dublin 8 pilot project documentation analysed, the assessment indicated that the key strategy of deploying more Gardaí on beats more regularly, together with problem-solving policing approach at two CSGs, the re-activa-tion of a Drugs Squad and engagement with businesses all contributed to improvements in community safety.

CCIA participants were glad that their views would be sought for a second time to chart any positive changes and note enduring problems,

> They were interested, as well, that we would come back, that we would follow up, because follow-up was lacking, so to actually come back six months later was of interest to them. There was a difference in the response rate from the individuals that I spoke to, and the families – the residents – the individuals as residents had noticed some improvement. Now, it's always qualified by time of year as well, because people always notice that antisocial behaviour is more prevalent and stronger in the summer, because, you know drinking publicly and all that sort of behaviour. So they had noticed an improvement, apart from that one family who was in the process of selling a house and they had been aware of – even though it wasn't their experience – they had been aware that some of the people who were looking to buy their house had been warned off the area due to antisocial behaviour. Like, it was more that sort of hearsay stuff and that, and that gets

attached to an area. It effects your sort of confidence in relation to rearing children with security and then the prospect of them getting into trouble, you know, all of those things actually add up to an impact as well. The businesses hadn't noticed as much of an improvement. There was a bit of a difference there. […]So I did something different in goin' out and talkin' to them. People feel heard. It always makes for an improvement. Now, that is always the case initially. But then it, if follow-up doesn't make a difference, sometimes it can feel even worse. *Interviewee 4, CCIA facilitator Dublin 8, February 2020*

Following the initial assessment which revealed widespread dissatisfaction on the part of business owners about the promptness and/or quality of the Garda response to crimes committed in their establishments, the responsible Inspector-in-charge offered his personal number to businesses, so they could contact him directly about their concerns if there were delays on future Garda call-outs. The business-owner interviewed for this evaluation expressed irritation that it should be incumbent on her to reach out to the Inspector to obtain a timely Garda response:

I remember one time we phoned them four times in one day, just trying to get somebody down, and actually it was more than four – I was ringin' them repeatedly goin' "please come, please come" and they just – I knew I was just buggin' them. […] So, then the Community Guard used to be saying to us "make the call, log the call, because the more calls they get, the more resources that the station gets". But the station is givin' awful vibes like "aw, I can't believe I have to answer the phone to you again." So, which is it? You know what I mean? And that's what bothers me. So I kind of gave up the ghost. I just stopped ringin' them again. *Interviewee 7, business-owner Dublin 8, March 2020*

However, providing the Inspector's number to dissatisfied business-owners was primarily intended to improve accountability for perceived inadequacy or delay of the Garda response. Even if business-owners remained dissatisfied with the explanation for the situation, at least the channels of communication were open and they had an opportunity to ventilate their concerns:

The service should be of a level where you look for the Guards, you get the Guards. But look it, – there will be circumstances where you ring the Guards and they're just doin' something else. They're just caught on another call somewhere, be it a domestic call, or whatever. The control centre deals with them on a level of priority, and that's sometimes why the likes of antisocial behaviour in shops, the likes of intimidation – which are serious – they fall down that list of priorities. And where the likes of the phone number or the likes of a personal contact number works, they can ring up and say "I want an explanation", and that's a kind of accountability piece as opposed to anything else. […]Then at least the public can say "if I did not get the service I expected of the Guards, then I can contact someone and ask why". And to me, again it's being heard. You listen. You have an issue with the service you're gettin' and the explanation still mightn't be to your satisfaction. At least you're gettin' an explanation. *Interviewee 8, AGS Dublin 8, April 2020*

— DUBLIN 15 —

FIRST ASSESSMENT

The interviews for the Dublin 15 were conducted over the week of 28th January to 1st February 2019, led by Safer Blanchardstown.[65] In addition to conducting interviews with Garda and Council staff, as well as local youth and community drug team workers and one elected representative for the area, the CCIA facilitator planned to speak to three residents, "**chosen for their level headedness and for their history of local activism**" (emphasis in original), according to the pilot documentation.

The facilitator also intended to seek Garda PULSE data and information from Fingal County Council Housing Division on complaints for the period of six months prior to the assessment: "**Gardaí/Fingal will confirm/ refute issues raised by residents.**" (emphasis in original). In terms of incorporating unobtrusive observation into the CCIA methodology, he planned to do an hour-long walkabout to identify and record through note taking and photographs locations needing attention.

According to the pilot documentation, the aim of the Dublin 15 problem-solving group was "to develop a plan to try to address the issues identified in the interviews by residents and workers and to which statutory agencies agreed were an accurate reflection of community issues already held on record by them." The SARA process—Scanning, Analysis, Response, Assessment—seeks not only to address the specific problem(s) identified but also to tackle the underlining causes, ensuring that the police are meeting community needs, incorporating the expertise of all people/groups involved in the process, and utilising a wide range of resources in developing solutions.[66] A divergence between the reported experiences of residents vis-à-vis recorded crime data might, according to the Dublin 15 CCIA facilitator, give rise to an action

in the problem-solving process, namely various steps that could be taken to narrow the disconnect.

Problem Solving

Members of the local Residents Association, Gardaí and Council staff, a local politician, community drug team workers and youth workers who participated in the initial CCIA were invited to contribute to a problem-solving group which would identify possible responses to the priority issues. Everyone agreed to engage with the process, which:

> allows for and provides a mechanism for identifying "missing voices" in the analysis stage where the questions asked are who, what, where, when etc. i.e. who are we missing, who do we need to contact, who do we need to bring on board, what other affects is this problem having etc. Through this method the problem-solving process teases out all aspects of a problem including racist incidents or exclusion. Therefore problem-solving is problem-led and solution-focused. *Interviewee 5, Steering Group member /CCIA coordinator, email June 2020*

A Garda interviewee observed that community safety issues can only be tackled holistically and effectively through multi-agency collaboration. He expressed the view that residents must be at the heart of the process to generate buy in and to ensure that the response is relevant and responsive to their needs:

> everybody talks about multi-agency responses and everybody talks about shared interests and "actually we're all on the same page and we want to achieve a common goal" but in order to do that you actually need to sit down with all these multi agencies and you need to have everybody having the discussion regarding what the issues, the problems are in a specific area, and that's a simple fact. Ya know, the pilot – we were able to identify the key groups within the area. We were able to get them to

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[65] See http://saferblanchardstown.com/safercm/
[66] An Garda Siochana, above note 28, 12.

sit down. We were able to identify then the issues and problems from everybody's perspective, from all agencies and then see who is best to tackle these, whether it be from Fingal County Council – who, in my personal opinion for this were brilliant in the tasks they were asked to do – they did it very quickly. It resolved a lot of issues very quickly. […] Once you're talking whether it be about mainstream policing issues, or housing issues or litter issues, you know, whatever the issues are – once you're able to talk, the channels of communication open there, and everybody has a buy in to that. Also, it was important to have residents on it. If ya don't have residents – it's all well and good for me, Fingal, [the CCIA co-ordinator], everybody now saying what we think the problems are – but if the residents aren't there with the buy in, you've got an uphill struggle. *Interviewee 13, AGS Dublin 15, April 2020*

The problem-solving group identified the following problems during the scanning stage of the SARA model (Scanning, Analysis, Response and Assessment.)

Poverty
- Drug-related issues, including Drug Dealing (creates a social status for some young people), Drug use (mainly weed), Drug debt, Drug debt intimidation, Gangs hanging round using and selling drugs
- Stolen cars being driven round the estate at all hours
- Scramblers being used in the area
- Dirt of the area with litter strewn round all over the place
- Boarded up houses (mainly private) gardens filled with rubbish
- Mental health issues for residents living in this constant state
- Lack of police presence especially community policing
- This leads to a lack of knowledge in the estate e.g. who is doing what/when

- A culture building up around reduced civic concern: lack of motivation and people not caring about the area,
- People don't want to live or be housed in the area, residents feel the area is left behind and forgotten.

The CCIA coordinator commented on the benefits of the problem-solving approach for breaking down communication barriers, building trust and stimulating an open, constructive partnership. Members of AGS, the Local Authority, community representatives, residents and groups working in the area will all have their voices heard as part of the problem-solving process, allowing for statutory agencies to see that the community will also have to listen to their concerns:

it's people being listened to. So, if I'm complainin' about the dirt outside my door, and I complained about it and no-one does anything about it, then I'm not listened to. Right? And if I'm in the Local Authority and I'm cleanin' this up and goin' and cleanin' it up the next day and cleanin' it up the next day, I've a pain in me arse cleanin' this, so I'm not comin' back here tomorrow. So then you sit the two of them in the room and this one says "I'm sick of this rubbish outside me door" and the other fella says "well, I'm sick of pickin' it up". "Well, what are we goin' to do about it? Because it's not me that's throwing it there." "Oh, well, I'm sorry to hear that. I just assumed that it was there, and I'm sorry" – so all of a sudden now they see each other in a different light, because they were both listened to. So that's what I'm saying – when I say being listened to, it's not about the people themselves being listened to, it's also about the Council too being listened to as well, and it's about being heard and having your voice around the table, and that encourages people to work together better. […] It's about kinda sittin' down and takin' a deep breath. *Interviewee 5, Steering Group member /CCIA facilitator February 2020*

A resident expressed the view that the tool and the problem-solving process is an effective mechanism for promoting social behaviour, community cohesion and fear reduction, especially among newcomers to the area who may feel particularly vulnerable:

> it's a comin' together of a larger group and it's almost safety in numbers – that, you know, you get to know who your representatives are, and various different groups, the tenants association, and stuff like that – and you probably feel that you have someone to talk to about things. A lot of the time it's people isolate themselves, because of the fear of that unknown, and when you start to get to know people of a positive nature, first and foremost, and then they work in the community spirit – like, I remember [A …] havin' someone like him, [… who] doesn't paint an extremist picture, he doesn't have an agenda other than to better his own community and he's realistic in his approach, so havin' someone like tha' involved with this group, or on board with these groups sort of puts anyone who feels like they're only new, or not so long in the community, they're livin' in fear, he can pu' them at their ease, because he's lived around here for a long time and he's seen it all before. Ya know, that way. He's seen that this goes through phases. Phases and stages.
> *Interviewee 10, resident Dublin 15, April 2020*

At the analysis stage of the SARA model, the top three priorities identified in Dublin 15 were (1) problems associated with the drugs trade, (2) problems caused by stolen cars travelling at high speeds through the estate and (3) the general dirt of the area. While people wanted to resolve the open drug dealing and drug use, the pilot coordinator was of the view that it was far too complex an issue for such a small group to tackle at this stage. Eventually, the group agreed that a clean-up day, spear-headed by the Residents Association should be the main action, to give the physical environment a much-needed lift.

The process of following up with people about changes in community safety six months after the initial CCIA was conducted greatly appealed to Dublin 8 participants. Indeed, according to one of the CCIA facilitators, a major reason why local residents and were keen to participate in pilot was due to the inbuilt follow-up. This is a community where timely follow-up is generally felt to be lacking, so participants valued the fact that a response was promised by the agencies.

— DUBLIN 15 —
FOLLOW-UP ASSESSMENT

According to the pilot project documentation, the Dublin 15 problem-solving group met to evaluate the impact of implemented actions on the 24th of September 2019. The actions were implemented over the summer months with all partners to the process taking part. All bar three of the actions, enumerated in the section on problem-solving, were implemented.

Most of the interviewees associated with the Dublin 15 pilot assessed the problem-solving process to be a worthwhile undertaking, which led to a practice and visible outcome for the community. The key action of the clean-up day was deemed very successful in giving the area a much-needed lift. Moreover, it had the unintended, positive side-effect of ending the joy-riding and moving motorbikes out of the estate, and also increased the focus of the Council on the area. Therefore, while the clean-up aimed to foster community confidence by dealing with the "low-hanging fruit", it had an ameliorating effect on both the drugs issue and dangers of speeding, noisy vehicles in the area.

In terms of the analysis stage of the SARA problem-solving model, the interventions in the Dublin 15 pilot appeared to have simply moved the young people engaging in anti-social behaviour and drug-related problems into neighbouring estates. The underlying familial and social issues driving teens to these self-

destructive behaviours remained unaddressed. According to the pilot notes:

> [t]he Youth Service report they now do not find youths gathering in [area] but do so in […] the adjoining estates. The inference here is that the problem, in relation to gangs hanging round, drug use and open drug dealing, may have been moved and at some point direct work with these youths will need to take place.

However, an Steering Group member noted that an outcome of the pilot CCIA can be to have a "overflow" effect in that improvements in one estate may encourage residents in other estates to actively seek similar initiatives in their estates. This happened in an estate that borders the Dublin 15 pilot area.

A key objective of the Dublin 15 problem-solving group mentioned by several interviewees was to strengthen the Residents Association and expand their networks with other groups and agencies working in the area with a view to building community capacity, as well as fostering relational health among people in the locality, breaking down isolation and leading to improvements in Garda intelligence obtained from residents due to enhanced trust:

> [t]hey can see the fruit of their work as being part of a Residents Association, and how effective it was when they were workin' together with the Local Authority and the Guards and the other services in the area. And they don't feel so, you know, looked down on, or left out anymore, and that they do have a voice and now they've become a much stronger group. […] It's about keepin' and supportin' the Residents Association, which is the hub of all of this. And then you say to the Residents Association "oh, look, we were going to do this." "Sure, why not? Just call in this and call in that", because now they have connections in the Council and they've connections in the Guards, and those connections work both ways. So, I'm sure the Guards, ya know, because they are seen as a little bit more friendly probably

pick up a little bit more information in terms of their own work, and the Local Authority the same. And so, in this way, people are policing their own community. So without lookin' at that kind of bigger goal, you let it sit and let it germinate. *Interviewee 5, Steering Group member /CCIA coordinator, March 2020*

It was just gettin' to know these people, rather than just ringin' and leavin' a message. If you knew about it, knowin' there's somebody there – a face to go with the name of the person – or it's just no' a phone number, and you can relate to someone then. […] I kind of kept in touch with Foroige, just with the people involved there and I've a good relationship with the Community Guard. I keep in touch with them. *Interviewee 11, resident Dublin 15, April 2020*

One interviewee felt that it was imperative to communicate clearly with the community that the Council had taken effective action as part of the problem-solving process which yielded positive dividends for the community. Fingal County Council did not appear to make the link between the sterling work that they had done in the Dublin 15 pilot as part of the clean-up initiative and the fact the Council received no complaints from residents in the intervening period.

Despite the success of the clean-up day, a resident expressed despondency and hopelessness about perpetual dumping and the slow response from the Council to clear up the mess:

> [s]omebody dumped two fridge freezers. Two, no' even one, and they're behind where the vans are parked, so nobody knew who done it. It could even be the ones who are there with the van. This happens all the time, and then eventually you send an email saying "well, if one of the kids hurts themselves, then you'll pick them up", djunno wha' I mean? And they were like, "but we don't want to be cleaning the area, because that's just giving people – lettin' people dump". "Well, I just dump it there, they'll

clean it." (*annoyed*) But you can't leave fridge freezers and shi' around the place either, djunno wha' I mean? […] The neighbour across the road is doin' it. I'm sick of it at this stage. Every time something gets lifted from that area, something else appears in it. You know? And it's dirty. *Interviewee 9, resident Dublin 15, April 2020*

A County Councillor agreed that dumping is an ongoing problem in the area. However, she stated that this issue was not unique to this part of Dublin 15, but rather an unfortunate feature of housing estates more generally.

The aforementioned resident attributed the dumping to a foreign national neighbour on her road and also expressed the view that the Council was housing too many foreign nationals in the locality and that priority should be given to families with ties to the area. Several interviewees associated with the Dublin 15 pilot mentioned the abuse and animosity encountered by families of African origin who were comparatively new to the area, noting that racism was one of the problems that would need to be addressed in the area going forward. Importantly, it was the problem-solving process that enabled racism to emerge as an issue that needed to be tackled within the area.

In terms of the sustainability of the process, a Garda interviewee stated that the focus on the area in the Dublin 15 pilot will be maintained over time. From a policing perspective the area was, and will continue to be, a priority issue because of certain residents in the estate who are involved in anti-social behaviour and drug-related crime. To shift community values, he noted that a Garda response alone would be incapable of instituting long-term positive change and might, in fact, lead to an intensification of offending behaviour.

In this section I outline some considerations and questions that emerged during the evaluation about the optimal approach for recording of information, the timing of the second assessment, managing participant expectations and replication.

The tool involves a series of informal conversations with people in the community being assessed to discern the collective sense of safety in the area. However, the CCIA facilitators must formally record the content of conversations to give structure and credibility to the community experience. As noted above, they ask open questions of participants like "what's it like around here?", "what are some of the things that you are worried about?", and "how do the issues affect you?" soliciting information on worry for self or others, sleep deprivation, anxiety, shame and other manifestations of overwhelming stress.

The CCIA process does not require an external researcher to record and elevate the community voice. The tool itself is designed to encourage the facilitator to tune into what people are saying "with strong feeling", e.g. about anti-social behaviour, drug-related crime and other quality of life issues in the area. It involves an accessible and non-threatening listening survey methodology which community activists embedded in communities can easily incorporate into their everyday work. Given the fact that the CCIA is to be carried out by busy community workers embedded in the area, rather than academics who have to justify their research methods to university ethics departments and defend the generalisability and validity of findings to highly critical peers, the informal listening survey approach appears to be appropriate for advancing the needs of the community. Ideally, the CCIA facilitator should take a short written recording of the discussion in which they note what individuals are saying with feeling. However, where residents are fearful of having their comments noted there and then, the activist should fill in the tool as

soon as reasonably possible after obtaining the information. It is more important to "capture the spirit" of the conversation than the precise words a participant used.

While most Steering Group members favoured the informal listening survey approach of highly attuned, present listening by a person immersed in the community, the academic member of the Steering Group member was of the view that the data-gathering process ideally needed to be formalised and methodologically rigorous. One community activist expressly mentioned that she filled in the CCIA tool in front of the people she was surveying, writing down their responses as they gave them. She also mentioned the importance of trust and the value of having a prior relationship with people who shared their experiences. Another community activist found the process of data-gathering and the recording of the conversations could be somewhat of a burden, due to an already hectic workload and having to contend with a plethora of recording mechanisms for various partners and funding streams. However, he fully accepted the importance of maintaining the integrity of the process and minimising bias in data collected by selecting level-headed, trustworthy information sources. He also mentioned that past personal experience of crime and anti-social behaviour can colour opinion and unfairly label people as offenders long after the behaviour in question has stopped, and that the integrity of the process had to be "minded".

Regarding the fact that the CCIA requires a follow-up assessment after six months of the original consultation, two community activists were unsure if this time-frame was optimal. One felt that it was unduly onerous, due to the wide range of other tasks he had to undertake in the community. However, most interviewees believed that six months was a suitable time-frame, on the basis that participants might be unable to recollect the situation reported if the follow-up was on a yearly basis. A Steering

Group member involved with the Dublin 15 pilot who was employed full-time as a community activist believed that more frequent check-ins might be easier and more efficient than an official check-in after six months. The timeline for the Dublin 15 intervention was approximately five months. This interviewee expressed the view that "the timeline should reflect the issue being dealt with. Less complex = less time".

The constraints that the person conducting the CCIA is operating under, and the complexity of the issue(s) being addressed following the initial assessment may dictate whether more frequent check-ins to chart progress are doable, or whether a shorter period for the CCIA, problem-solving process, intervention(s) and follow-up is preferable. The general consensus was that the appropriate time for the follow-up assessment is six months after the initial assessment to allow for the impact of interventions to become apparent, and also to determine whether the same problem comes back, or moves elsewhere. If it were only done yearly, the participants are likely to have forgotten what they originally said and the momentum in terms of sustaining energy and action to keep tackling issues will be lost.

Honest communication is a major objective of the CCIA and is crucial at all stages of the process. Listening, validating and sharing pertinent information, including about modest success due to implemented actions, will enable trust, relational health and mutual cooperation to grow for the benefit of all those invested in the process. There are limits to what the statutory agencies can achieve, and personnel must carefully manage the expectations of the community in terms of not overpromising and under-delivering. Stakeholders must publicly claim credit for the work they do in imple-menting actions as part of the CCIA problem-solving process to improve community safety. This is especially important for statutory agencies, who are often criticised for inaction.

A central objective of the pilot projects is to provide a model for CCIAs that can be replicated elsewhere. There was widespread agreement among interviewees that the tool is a cutting-edge way of measuring and responding to community safety issues. It utilises a common-sense, accessible format, with an emphasis on structure, intent and focus and was described as "a good short-cut to making things happen". The Steering Group member s unanimously agreed that there has been immense learning from the pilot and that the CCIA tool could usefully be adopted by invested stakeholders in other areas with decent local structures for the benefit of the community in question. AGS interviewees and residents similarly found the CCIA process beneficial. One CCIA facilitator sang the praises of the tool saying that the best way to improve it is "to use it".

The findings of this evaluation certainly indicate that there is great potential for the tool to be adopted by other communities with strong pre-existing structures and sufficient community capacity to make meaningful progress is tackling anti-social behaviour and crime in their area. However, even in a community where there are weak or non-existent structures, the CCIA tool and the problem-solving process could be used as a vehicle for strengthening relationships and building community partnerships by starting small, as with the clean-up day in Dublin 15. A modest success is likely to generate enthusiasm among partners for future joint working to improve the quality of life of residents and advance community safety.
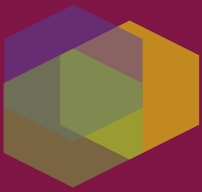
Conclusions

CCIAs can, and should, play a key role in advancing community safety in Ireland as part of a wider package of rights-based, humanistic and reparative measures to build individual and community resilience. The CCIA approach can be easily adopted by community activists across Ireland to measure perceptions of safety in their areas, and to develop collaborative, problem-solving responses to the problem(s) identified.

One of the main aims of the Steering Group in devising the tool to measure community safety is to provide balance and shift the indicators away from a sole focus on recorded crime data in the Garda PULSE system and official Council complaints and to have the collective community voice accepted as a valid form of evidence about anti-social behaviour, crime and estate management issues in their area by AGS and the Local Authority. The reliability of official data sources is undermined by the understandable reluctance of residents to report crime and other social harms due to fear of reprisals or a sense of futility due to past negative experiences with AGS and the Council.

While one of the main goals of the CCIA is for the collective community voice to be accepted by statutory agencies as evidence, it needs to be triangulated with other sources of data, including PULSE data and Council complaints. The CCIA approach is designed to ensure that the focus on a particular geographical area by various stakeholders, including AGS and the Council, is sustainable over time, and that any actions and interventions implemented as part of the problem-solving process will be evaluated at regular intervals within the existing local structures. Significantly the problem-solving process provides for peer accountability of all participating agencies / groups / organisations including the local community.

The evaluation has found that the two completed CCIA pilot projects have done more than merely create a mechanism within existing local policing structures for hearing, validating and bearing witness to the social and emotional wounds visited on community members. In terms of developing responses to meet community needs, the Dublin 8 and Dublin 15 pilots both demonstrated the value of multi-agency, problem-solving, solution-oriented approach to tackling community safety issues that fosters strong, collaborative relationships between statutory agencies, residents and other stakeholders working within particular communities, such as drugs workers and youth groups.

The Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland has placed community policing as central to the future vision of policing and community safety in Ireland. Adequate numbers of committed Community Gardaí, who are in situ for the long haul, will improve the effectiveness of any policing interventions implemented as part of the CCIA process. The value of visible, accessible, friendly Gardaí in disadvantaged communities is undeniable in that people affected by anti-social behaviour and crime may discretely bring matters to police attention in the context of a casual conversation on the street corner or in a shop, minimising the risk of reprisal. It does not require proactive action on their part to ring up the Garda station to register an official complaint. However, as Garda interviewees made clear, incidents do need to be officially reported and recorded in the system if crime and anti-social behaviour is to be taken seriously by the community as a whole, and addressed by an appropriate and timely policing response.

Trust is hard won and easily lost, especially in communities with high levels of stress and adversity, which predisposes inhabitants to be fearful of the unknown and hostile to authority figures. The non-reporting of crimes is, in itself, an indicator that a community is unsafe. A

notable increase in recorded crime may not necessarily mean that more crimes have been committed in an area than previously, but rather that residents and business-owners feel that it worth their while to report it, confident that an effective, prompt, compassionate Garda response will be forthcoming, i.e. that the State can and will protect them from intimidation and further harm, or at least make a concerted effort to do so.

Going forward, communities that are interested in conducting a CCIA should first assess the existing capacity in the area. Structures such as LPFs and JPCs are essential for ensuring that there is accountability in the process, improving communication flow between the statutory agencies and the wider community and empowering residents to take a more proactive role in enhancing the quality of life for themselves and others in their area. Indeed regular use of the CCIA tool is likely to strengthen local structures and enhance relationships between key players, leading to more effective multi-agency responses to intractable issues. CSGs are, essentially, the sort of problem-solving entities envisaged in the CCIA process. LPFs and CSGs are appropriate mechanisms for fostering close, confidential collaborative relationships and adopting a problem-solving, strategic approach to anti-social behaviour and crime in a local area.

Recommendations

1.	The use of the CCIA has a key role to play in advancing community safety in Ireland as part of a wider package of measures to build individual and community resilience and should be brought for consideration to the NDS National Oversight Committee, chaired by the Minister with responsibility for the NDS.
2.	The CCIA approach can be adopted by community activists across Ireland to measure perceptions of safety in their areas, and to develop collaborative, problem-solving responses to the problem(s) identified, and wider implementation of the CCIA should be supported through the Standing Sub-Committee of the National Oversight Committee.
3.	The Policing Authority or its proposed successor, the Policing and Community Safety Oversight Commission, should support the development and use of community safety measurements such as the CCIA as a tool in local policing and problem solving.
4.	The Policing Authority or its proposed successor, the Policing and Community Safety Oversight Commission, should have a role in ensuring that crime and community safety measurements such as CCIA are robust and reliable.
5.	To ensure that the CCIA is robust, community activists conducting the initial assessment must ensure that a broad cross-section of reliable stakeholders provide information on community safety issues, guarding against bias in the sample and identifying whether there are any missing voices.
6.	In particular, any problem-solving approach to racist abuse, hate speech and discrimination should involve people from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds to gauge their sense of community safety and to ensure they are engaged in the identification of workable solutions.

COMMUNITY CRIME IMPACT ASSESSMENT (CCIA)

A Template for Pilot under Strategic Objective 4.1.40
National Drugs Strategy

Including Preparatory Report Template

Rationale

CCIA is an instrument intended to give due weight to the experience of a community of living with drug-related criminality and anti-social behaviour. CCIA's could be adapted to assess the impact of other issues on a community, but the focus in this project is on drug-related issues.

CCIAs are part of the National Drug Strategy Reducing Harm Supporting Recovery 2017-2025. Strategic Action 4.1. 40 aims to:
"Measure the impact of drug related crime and wider public nuisance issues on communities"
by:
"Developing and piloting a Community Impact Assessment Tool in order to measure the impact of drug-related crime and wider public nuisance issues on communities".

The initiative is based on Community Impact Statements, used in other jurisdictions including the UK. It was recommended by the Garda Inspectorate that such measures should be introduced to Ireland:

> *"In some policing jurisdictions, senior police officers can complete a Community Impact Statement on the impact particular crimes are having on the local community… It is a multi-functional tool which can be used across the justice system to enable decision makers to tailor responses to the local issues it describes"*

A Community Impact Assessment tool should–

● Give a trustworthy snapshot of the nature and particularly the impact of drug-related criminality on the inhabitants of a specified locality. The tool will provide for *triangulation* in gathering data – collecting information from different sources in order to confirm the veracity of evidence

● Provide data that will be a reliable basis for planning how to tackle such issues and which parties are needed to implement such strategies.

● Monitor through repetition at reasonable intervals the effectiveness of any such strategies

● Be a resource-light and easy to use way of taking an assessment

● Have the confidence of all relevant parties to any solution to the issues

Method

There are five methods which will make up a CCIA tool

1. Speak to residents – a selection of reliable informants using a structured conversation as follows-

   Ask the informant about their current and recent experience of community safety issues in the designated area. Try to get a picture of:

   The nature of the activity – (public drug-dealing, intimidation, vandalism, late night parties and other public disorder, drug and drinking detritus etc.) Put it in context – is this a pattern that is new to the area, has it always been there or does it happen periodically? How does the experience connect to the drug trade?

   The impact on people living nearby – (loss of sleep, general anxiety, feeling intimidated, concern for young people, damage to property, disruption to normal routines such as parking a car or walking certain routes, feeling ashamed of the area etc.)

   How they or other neighbours have responded – (talking to perpetrators, complaining to authorities, sharing experiences with services, sharing experiences with neighbours, engaging positively with youth, public spaces etc.)

   Their sense of how well authorities and services have responded. (Gardaí, LA, youth groups, drug services)

   Their ideas about what needs to happen to address the issue.

2. Structured conversations with relevant non-residents who have a role that gives them insight and whose evidence is trustworthy – such as:

   - DCC staff (estate managers, housing officers, anti-social behaviour officers, parks, maintenance,

   - Others – priests, elected representatives etc, local businesses

   In some cases, it may be useful to ask some of these to research further e.g. asking a Parks Council worker to note how many needles they pick up.

3. **Data research**
   From PULSE and DCC complaints figures

   Any other local research concurrent with the assessment (e.g.) resident's survey

4. **Unobtrusive observation**
   Note any signs of current anti-social behaviour, burnt out cars, graffiti, vandalised property, fires, etc.

5. **Miscellaneous**
   Current newspaper articles, other research, social media commentary etc.

Preparatory report Template

A   Preliminaries

     What is the **geographical boundary** of the neighbourhood to be assessed?

     _____

     _____

     What is the reason for choosing this area?

     _____

     What is the **time-period** for the assessment?

     _____

B   Which parties are endorsing this assessment?
     Give the name of the person in any organisation cited.

     Gardaí (mandatory)
     Name   _____

     Rank   _____

     Local Authority (mandatory)
     Name   _____

     Role   _____

     Community Groups/Organisations (At least one)

     Name of Organisation _____

     Name of Organisation representative _____

     Role   _____

     Others

     Name   _____

     Role   _____

1. Resident Structured Conversations

As stated there are five methods which make up a CCIA tool:

1a   How many residents will be spoken to?

　　　　　_____

1b   What is the reason for choosing these residents?

　　　　　_____

1c   Who will conduct conversations?

　　　　　_____

1d   How will conversations be recorded?

　　　　　_____

2. Non-Resident Informants

2a   Which informants will be spoken to?

　　　　　_____

2b   What is the reason for choosing these informants?

　　　　　_____

2c   Who will conduct conversations?

　　　　　_____

2d   How will conversations be recorded?

　　　　　_____

2e   Will any of these informants be asked to do research/inquiry of their own? If so which informants and what research/inquiry?

　　　　　_____

3 Data research

3a What data sources will be sought?

_____

3b What period will be sought?

_____

PULSE (mandatory)
How will this data be collected?

_____

C/O Community Garda

DCC complaints (Mandatory)
How will this data be collected?

_____

Others
How will this data be collected?

_____

4. Unobtrusive observation

4a   How will observation be conducted by researcher? E.g. Walkabout, photography

_____

4b   Planned dates and times of observation?

_____

5. Miscellaneous

Current newspaper articles, other research, social media commentary etc.

_____

What other data sources will be sought?

_____

Are there any important contextual notes for the period of the assessment?
Contemporary Notes/community safety strategies at Community Safety Groups

_____

_____

_____

Placing People at the
Heart of Change

Community Action Network is a Social Justice organisation in existence since 1987. CAN is about *Placing People at the Heart of Change* – where the people are those of us that live with inequalities and the change is in the systems that create those inequalities. CAN supports communities that live with inequalities to respond to their key challenges, one of which is community safety.

Safer Blanchardstown is the Dublin 15 Local Policing Forum established in 2006 to assist in responding to issues relating to crime, drugs, anti-social behaviour and other community safety related issues identified by partners. This is achieved by working in partnership to: identify issues of concern, finding solutions, increasing quality of life and sense of safety for residents.
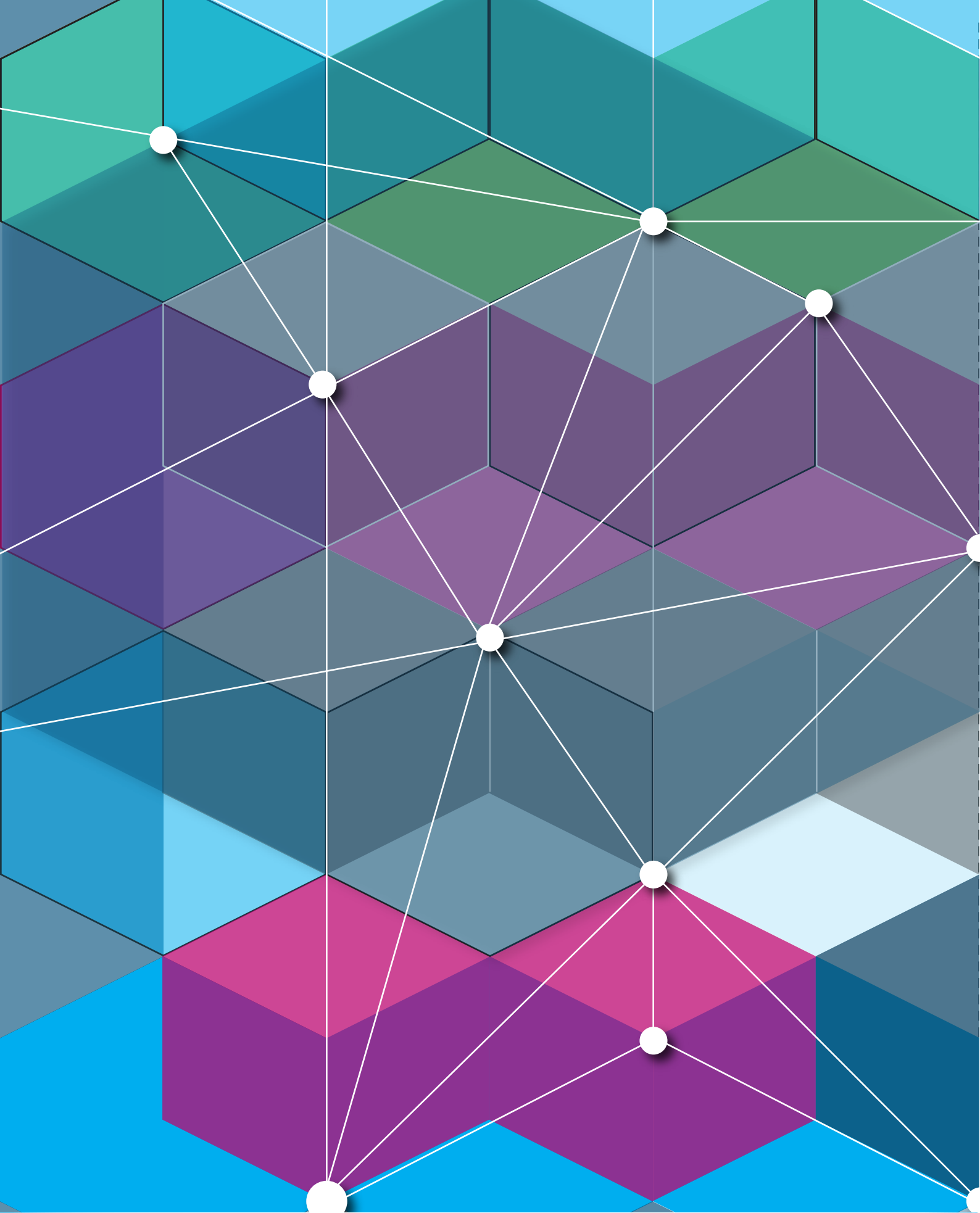

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Citywide Drugs Crisis Campaign is a national network of community organisations that are involved in addressing the drugs issue and it represents the community sector on the National Committees for the National Drugs Strategy (NDS).

Fatima Groups United Family Resource Centre is the representative body of residents and projects in Fatima/Herberton and is located in the F2 Centre, Rialto, Dublin 8.

The FRC project operates from community development principles providing key services in the areas of health and wellbeing, education, employment, arts, childcare, counselling supports, information and advice, family support and advocacy, civic awareness and community development.