

Combating Poverty

in a Changing Ireland



Combat Poverty Agency Strategic Plan 2002-2004

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





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CONTENTS

Summary	2
1. Introduction	3
• Statutory Remit	5
• Aim	5
• Principles	5
• Developing the Plan	6
2. Context	7
• Economic and Social Context	9
• Institutional Context	10
3. Strategic Objectives	13
• Key Issues	15
• Key Objectives	15
• Performance Indicators	16
• Objective 1 – Comprehensive Understanding of Poverty	17
• Objective 2 – Implementation of NAPS	21
• Objective 3 – Effective Public Services and Area-based Programmes	25
• Objective 4 – Contribution of Community Development	27
• Objective 5 – Distribution of Resources	29
4. Organisational Capacity	31
Strengthening Organisational Capacity	35
Glossary	37

Summary

The Combat Poverty Agency is a statutory agency established under the Combat Poverty Agency Act 1986. The four general functions of Combat Poverty under the Act are:

- Advising and making recommendations to the Minister for Social, Community and Family Affairs on all aspects of economic and social planning in relation to poverty in the State;
- The initiation of measures aimed at overcoming poverty in the State and the evaluation of such measures;
- The examination of the nature, causes and extent of poverty in the State and for that purpose the promotion, commission and interpretation of research;
- The promotion of greater public understanding of the nature, causes and extent of poverty in the State and the measures necessary to overcome such poverty.

2

During the period 2002-2004 Combat Poverty aims to provide leadership in working for the prevention and elimination of poverty and social exclusion through:

- Conducting high quality research and innovative initiatives;
- Advising policy makers on effective and innovative approaches to prevent and eliminate poverty;
- Promoting the results of its work.

In doing this our five strategic objectives are:

- To achieve a more comprehensive understanding of poverty and social exclusion, in particular child poverty, so as to inform and influence debate and policy;
- To support the effective implementation of the National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS) at national, local and European levels;
- To assess and promote effective public services and area-based programmes which tackle poverty and promote peace building;
- To strengthen the capacity of the community development sector in tackling poverty;
- To propose innovative policies aimed at a more equal distribution of income, resources and employment.

Introduction

3



Introduction

This is the sixth Strategic Plan prepared by the Combat Poverty Agency since its establishment in 1986. The Plan has been submitted to and approved by the Minister for Social, Community and Family Affairs, Dermot Ahern, TD. The preparation of a three year Strategic Plan is a requirement under the Combat Poverty Agency Act 1986.

Statutory Remit

Combat Poverty is the sole national statutory organisation with an anti-poverty remit. We act as a catalyst for change by seeking to influence public policy and elicit public support for action on poverty. In doing this we recognise that our effectiveness and credibility will depend on being an authoritative and independent voice on poverty. Our prime strategic asset has been recognised as our intellectual capital, as evidenced by technical knowledge and expertise, rigorous analysis, creative approaches and forward thinking in working for the prevention and elimination of poverty. In this Plan there is a clear focus on our policy advisory and influencing role.

Aim

The aim of Combat Poverty is to promote a just and inclusive society by working for the prevention and elimination of poverty and social exclusion. We will achieve this aim by:

- Conducting high quality research and innovative initiatives, which are recognised for their rigour and creative approach;
- Advising policy makers on effective and innovative approaches to prevent and eliminate poverty;
- Promoting our work among policy makers, the social partners, relevant community and voluntary sector groups and the public.
- Combat Poverty will realise this aim through the four general functions set out in the Combat Poverty Agency Act, 1986: policy advice; project support and innovation; research; public education.

Principles

Combat Poverty recognises the structural nature of poverty and acknowledges that effective, sustainable economic and social development requires the prevention and elimination of poverty. Accordingly, we will be guided in our work by the following principles:

- **Equality:** The achievement of a more equal distribution of resources and opportunities and the eradication of discrimination are essential to prevent and eliminate poverty.
- **Empowerment:** The involvement, empowerment and representation of individuals and communities affected by poverty is necessary in order to tackle poverty effectively.
- **Economic, Social and Cultural Rights:** Tackling poverty involves the recognition of economic, social and cultural rights.
- **Partnership:** Partnership between government, the social partners and those affected or concerned by poverty is necessary to effectively tackle poverty.
- **Peace Building:** The promotion of a more stable and peaceful society is an essential element in the development of a just and inclusive society.

Developing the Plan

In preparing this Plan Combat Poverty was informed by an independent evaluation of the impact of its previous three-year Plan and briefing papers on contextual issues. We consulted extensively with key stakeholders and received submissions from groups and individuals concerned with tackling poverty. Valuable suggestions were received from the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs. Combat Poverty acknowledges the effective contributions of all those who contributed to the planning process. Finally, we drew on all of this material and our own expertise, experience and insights to develop the Plan.

Context

7





Context

In recent years Ireland has experienced unprecedented economic growth. Important advances have been made in tackling poverty and social exclusion. The living standards of the poorest in society have improved and the number of people experiencing consistent poverty has fallen. However, relative income poverty has not declined as the income gap between the better off and less well off has widened. Evidence shows that societies with a more equal distribution of income achieve more equal social outcomes which enable people to participate more fully in society. This requires addressing the structural causes of poverty. New and emerging causes of poverty also need to be identified and tackled.

Economic and Social Context

The short-term economic prospects are uncertain. Economic development is essential if sufficient resources are to be made available to combat poverty. The rapid economic growth of the last five years has meant that Ireland is now among the wealthier nations in the world. This recent growth and Ireland's favourable dependency ratio provide a window of opportunity to tackle many of the country's economic and social problems.

Poverty Trends

While there has been a significant decline in consistent poverty, the numbers falling below relative income poverty lines have remained high compared to many other European countries. The adequacy of social welfare rates, recently considered by a PPF Working Group on Benchmarking and Indexation, will be of critical importance in determining levels of poverty over the next few years. There is also a need to ensure that tax and welfare policy is more balanced towards the less well off.

Public Services

Even though the new affluence provides a range of opportunities to improve living standards and the quality of life, the inadequacy of the current infrastructure and gaps in public service provision represent constraints. In tackling poverty and social exclusion attention will need to be given to how public services such as education, health, child-care, transport, housing and social services can address the needs of those in poverty and promote social cohesion.

People at Risk of Poverty

Certain household types remain at high risk of poverty. The most recent information available identifies single adult households, lone parents and larger families as high risk groups. Households headed by a person who is unemployed, who is ill or disabled and who is working in the home (mostly women) are at high risk of poverty. It is also known that people who are homeless and ethnic minority groups, including Travellers, experience high levels of poverty. Child poverty is relatively high in Ireland by European standards. Combat Poverty is concerned to ensure that the needs of particular groups of the population who are at high risk of poverty, particularly children, are addressed.

Institutional Context

National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS)

The National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS) sets targets for poverty reduction across a number of areas: income, education, employment, health, housing, children, women, older people, vulnerable urban and rural dwellers as well as recognising the needs of people with disabilities and ethnic minority groups. The effective implementation of NAPS will be critical in bringing about a concerted effort to tackle poverty.

National and Local Dimensions

National policies which are complemented by local programmes and actions that have a direct influence on people in their local community environment are required in tackling poverty and social exclusion.

European Context

The European Union (EU) is now playing a more important role in the development of policy on poverty and social exclusion. Through the European open method of policy co-ordination social policies are being developed to modernise social protection systems and to combat social exclusion. Of particular relevance to Combat Poverty are the National Action Plans against Poverty and Social Exclusion (NAPsincl) prepared by Member States.

The EU will also be launching a new social action programme on social exclusion in 2002. This provides Combat Poverty with an opportunity to learn from and influence anti-poverty policy at European level.

The EU provides funding to Ireland through the Structural Funds, including the Peace II Programme in the Border Region and Northern Ireland. Combat Poverty is keen to assess how effective the Structural

Fund programmes are in promoting social inclusion and how their effectiveness in tackling poverty and promoting peace building can be enhanced.

Poverty and Peace Building

The Combat Poverty Agency is responsible with Area Development Management (ADM) Ltd. for implementing a substantial part of the EU Peace II Programme in the Border Region. Along with the Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust and Co-Operation Ireland, Combat Poverty and ADM Ltd. are also responsible for managing two cross-border measures of the Peace II Programme. In the context of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement, the establishment of North/South Bodies and the implementation of the Peace II Programme, Combat Poverty will be concerned with the promotion of inclusion, reconciliation and peace-building.

Collaboration

The institutional framework in which Combat Poverty operates has changed significantly over the last five years. Some of the main relevant developments include:

- An increase in the number of organisations concerned with rights, inequality, social inclusion, poverty and related interests operating at European, national, regional, local and programme level;
- The ongoing development of the community and voluntary sector, and in particular the implementation of the White Paper on Supporting Voluntary Activity;
- The further development of social partnership, including the involvement of the community and voluntary sector;
- The increased integration of local government and local development and the development and implementation of local anti-poverty plans.

In fulfilling its remit Combat Poverty will seek to recognise where the remits of these other organisations and developments intersect with poverty and collaborate at these points of intersection. We will seek to do this at a range of levels and through a variety of working relationships, but especially in partnership with Government agencies, the social partners and with the many individuals, groups and institutions concerned to combat poverty.

12

Strategic Plan **2002-2004**

Strategic Objectives

13



Strategic Objectives

Key Issues

Key issues which have informed the content of this Strategic Plan include:

- A fall in consistent poverty;
- An income gap between the better off and the less well off;
- Evidence of new emerging causes of poverty;
- Relatively high levels of poverty among children and some other population groups;
- Access to, and the quality of public services in tackling poverty and social exclusion;
- The advent of new all-island structures and a new EU funded Peace II Programme;
- The need to involve people experiencing poverty in the decisions that affect them.

The National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS) is a key element in addressing many of these issues. Combat Poverty will actively support the implementation of NAPS.

Key Objectives

Combat Poverty has identified five strategic objectives for 2002 to 2004. These are:

- To achieve a more comprehensive understanding of poverty and social exclusion, in particular child poverty, so as to inform and influence debate and policy;
- To support the effective implementation of the National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS) at national, local and European levels;
- To assess and promote effective public services and area-based programmes which tackle poverty and promote peace building;
- To strengthen the capacity of the community development sector in tackling poverty;
- To propose innovative policies aimed at a more equal distribution of income, resources and employment.

Performance Indicators

In delivering these key objectives Combat Poverty will measure its performance by establishing a set of performance indicators. Summary indicators are attached to the Objectives in the Plan. These will be elaborated in annual work plans. In addition, an overall formative and summative evaluation of the Plan will be undertaken to assess the impact of Combat Poverty's efforts in working for the prevention and elimination of poverty.

OBJECTIVE 1:

TO ACHIEVE A MORE COMPREHENSIVE UNDERSTANDING OF POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION, IN PARTICULAR CHILD POVERTY, SO AS TO INFORM AND INFLUENCE DEBATE AND POLICY

This objective will be achieved through the following goals:

Goal 1:

Combat Poverty will initiate new poverty research and support new and existing data collection and analysis.

To achieve this goal we will:

- Examine and publish data on poverty from national and local poverty surveys, with particular relevance to current data gaps;
- Commission research to identify new and emerging causes of poverty and their policy implications;
- Investigate and highlight people's experience of poverty;
- Examine the links between conflict and poverty;
- Enhance the contribution of academics and researchers to poverty research.

Goal 2:

Combat Poverty will develop and promote a better understanding of child poverty and the policy solutions required to eliminate it.

To achieve this goal we will:

- Undertake research to establish the costs of child rearing;
- Support mechanisms that monitor trends in child poverty and children's well-being;
- Support innovative approaches to involve children and young people experiencing poverty in helping to identify their own needs and suggesting policy solutions.

Goal 3:

Combat Poverty will advise policy makers about approaches to tackling poverty and social exclusion.

To achieve this goal we will:

- Establish and maintain a regular schedule of policy exchanges with the Minister for Social, Community and Family Affairs and departmental officials;
- Promote Combat Poverty policy positions to all relevant stakeholders on aspects of poverty related to economic and social planning;
- Contribute to debates on the future of social partnership and identify key poverty issues for a new national agreement;
- Participate in and contribute to government advisory bodies and task forces.

18

Goal 4:

Combat Poverty will inform a wider understanding of poverty and solutions to it through the promotion of key messages

To achieve this goal we will:

- Produce information materials about poverty, community development and peace and reconciliation issues, and respond to relevant requests for information and advice;
- Develop Combat Poverty's library, website and information services;
- Ensure informed national and local media coverage of poverty issues;
- Maintain and develop a teacher education and curriculum development programme;
- Develop and maintain strategic alliances with key stakeholders to engage in public debate on poverty.

Key Performance Indicators

- *Studies published based on relevant national surveys;*
- *A baseline measure provided of the extent of poverty among groups not included in national surveys and indicators identified which will measure improvements in their living conditions;*
- *Research publications produced on the emerging causes of poverty;*
- *Poverty-related academic research studies supported;*
- *Publication communicating the experience of poverty, in particular child poverty, disseminated;*
- *Research on the costs of child rearing published and promoted;*
- *Submission made on key poverty issues for any future national agreement;*
- *Regular policy exchanges held with the Minister for Social, Community and Family Affairs and Departmental officials;*
- *Meetings held with each of the social partners;*
- *Key messages identified and promoted;*
- *Increased usage of a quality library and website service.*

20

Strategic Plan **2002-2004**

OBJECTIVE 2:

TO SUPPORT THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY (NAPS) AT NATIONAL, LOCAL AND EUROPEAN LEVELS

This objective will be achieved through the following goals:

Goal 5:

Combat Poverty will support the effective implementation of anti-poverty strategies at national and European levels

To achieve this goal we will:

- Identify and agree specific actions for Combat Poverty in the Irish National Anti-Poverty Strategy;
- Provide advice and support on the implementation of the Irish National Anti-Poverty Strategy, in particular on a data and research strategy including the development of indicators;
- Work to ensure that the EU National Action Plans against Poverty and Social Exclusion (NAPsincl) strengthen anti-poverty action in Europe and Ireland;
- Identify and promote best practice on social inclusion and anti-poverty initiatives by participating in the EU Social Exclusion Programme and other EU social policy forums, including transnational and all-island exchanges;
- Contribute to the further development of poverty proofing, including consideration of links to other forms of proofing;
- Facilitate the involvement of people experiencing poverty and the organisations which represent them in anti-poverty strategies.

Goal 6:

Combat Poverty will contribute to developing local anti-poverty strategies with a particular focus on the role of local government.

To achieve this goal we will:

- Identify and promote best practice in the development of local

anti-poverty strategies, in particular through the Local Government Anti-Poverty Learning Network, with reference to the Peace II Programme in the Border Region;

- Support the work of Social Inclusion Units in local authorities;
- Support local authorities to effectively involve relevant community and voluntary groups in local policy and planning in relation to poverty;
- Enhance the exchange of knowledge and learning between local and national anti-poverty strategies.

Goal 7:

Combat Poverty will investigate and highlight the links between economic, social and cultural rights and poverty reduction.

To achieve this goal we will:

- Examine Irish and international experience on the relationship between economic, social and cultural rights and poverty reduction;
- Explore the role of rights in promoting social inclusion and peace building.

22

Key Performance Indicators

- *Participation in NAPS Steering Committee structures and other relevant NAPS/NAPincl committees and groups;*
- *Best practice in anti-poverty policies and practices identified through participation in the EU Social Exclusion Programme;*
- *A series of analyses to support the implementation of NAPS produced;*
- *Poverty proofing documentation provided;*
- *A programme of work delivered through the local government anti-poverty learning network;*
- *A document on the lessons from the local government anti-poverty work submitted annually to the NAPS Steering Committee;*
- *Evaluation of the local government anti-poverty learning network commissioned and the key lessons published and promoted;*
- *A study on the relationship between economic, social and cultural rights and poverty reduction published and promoted;*
- *Collaborative actions undertaken on the role of rights in promoting social exclusion and peace building.*

OBJECTIVE 3:

TO ASSESS AND PROMOTE EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SERVICES AND AREA-BASED PROGRAMMES WHICH TACKLE POVERTY AND PROMOTE PEACE BUILDING

This objective will be achieved through the following goals:

Goal 8:

Combat Poverty will advise on improvements in the policy, provision and funding of public services to enhance their impact on poverty reduction.

To achieve this goal we will:

- Promote policy and best practice for tackling educational disadvantage, including early education and after-school initiatives;
- Develop pilot work on addressing health inequalities, through community development approaches;
- Undertake comparative research and develop proposals on the future development of social expenditure, including assessing the value of universal and targeted approaches to the prevention and elimination of poverty;
- Identify policies and good practice for involving groups experiencing poverty in planning, access to and delivery of quality public services;
- Examine ways in which policies to combat poverty and social exclusion can contribute to economic and social development.

Goal 9:

Combat Poverty, jointly with ADM Ltd. will implement the EU funded Peace II Programme in the Border Region of Ireland and on an all-island basis.

To achieve this goal we will:

- Provide funding, advice and developmental support to the Peace II Programme;
- Work with ADM/CPA staff to develop joint work programmes on issues of common concern;

- Integrate practice and policy issues arising from the Peace II Programme with the Combat Poverty policy advice role;
- Identify the key lessons of the Peace II Programme through evaluative and other methods with a view to ensuring sustainable supports for peace building;
- Consider key areas of work which would benefit from an all-island dimension.

Goal 10:

Combat Poverty will contribute to the planning, implementation and assessment of area-based programmes for tackling poverty.

To achieve this goal we will:

- Investigate the nature and extent of spatial disparities in income and living standards;
- Promote best practice in community and integrated development in area programmes, with a particular focus on the Border Region;
- Contribute to strengthening the focus on social inclusion within the National Development Plan, with particular reference to the Regional and Peace II Programmes.

Key Performance Indicators

- *Key learning from work on educational disadvantage disseminated;*
- *The key lessons on how community development approaches can help to reduce health inequalities documented and disseminated;*
- *A study on social expenditure published and promoted;*
- *Strategic issues of common concern between ADM/CPA and Combat Poverty staff identified and progressed;*
- *A Peace II dimension included in Combat Poverty policy submissions, where appropriate;*
- *A number of all-island initiatives undertaken;*
- *Enhanced social inclusion indicators included in the Regional and Peace II Programmes.*

OBJECTIVE 4:

TO STRENGTHEN THE CAPACITY OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SECTOR IN TACKLING POVERTY

This objective will be achieved through the following goals:

Goal 11:

Combat Poverty will work to support the effectiveness of community development practitioners in tackling poverty and social exclusion.

To achieve this goal we will:

- Undertake and disseminate research into the contribution of community development in tackling poverty;
- Develop and promote resource materials, in collaboration with others, which strengthen community development practice;
- In collaboration with others, support community development practitioners to reflect on and enhance community development as an anti-poverty tool;
- Work with relevant bodies to develop strategic supports, and support the networking of community and voluntary groups to make an effective contribution to national, regional and local decision making processes.

Goal 12:

Combat Poverty will support the capacity of community and voluntary groups to influence anti-poverty and social inclusion policy.

To achieve this goal we will:

- Fund and develop a programme of support for national anti-poverty networks;
- Administer a grants scheme to support community and voluntary groups to inform and influence policy related to poverty;
- Support groups in developing the links between practice and policy.

Key Performance Indicators

- *Research and resource materials on the role of community development in tackling poverty published and promoted;*
- *An annual national collaborative event held with community development practitioners;*
- *Ongoing support and review of the National Anti-Poverty Network Programme undertaken;*
- *A programme of support delivered through a Combat Poverty Agency Grants Scheme;*
- *A number of practice and policy initiatives completed.*

OBJECTIVE 5:

TO PROPOSE INNOVATIVE POLICIES AIMED AT A MORE EQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME, RESOURCES AND EMPLOYMENT

This objective will be achieved through the following goals:

Goal 13:

Combat Poverty will advise, assess and publicise tax and welfare proposals for redistributing income to low-income households

To achieve this goal we will:

- Develop and publish proposals for tax and welfare reform, including social insurance;
- Support research and data collection to inform a comprehensive understanding of adequacy of welfare payments, in the light of Irish and international policy.

Goal 14:

Combat Poverty will monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of policies and programmes to meet the income support and related needs of people who are unemployed and others in poverty.

To achieve this goal we will:

- Monitor policies and programmes to prevent and tackle long-term unemployment;
- Contribute to the monitoring and review of welfare programmes by the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs;
- Assess the effectiveness of welfare provision in responding to existing and emerging social needs, in particular food poverty.

Key Performance Indicators

- *An annual pre-Budget submission published and promoted;*
- *Submissions made to the reviews of the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs welfare programmes;*
- *A research study on combating food poverty published and promoted.*

Organisational Capacity

31



Organisational Capacity

Effective strategic planning involves matching ambitions to resources and making hard choices between competing priorities. Combat Poverty has prioritised what we see as the key concerns for the next three years where we have particular expertise to bring about effective change, on our own or in collaboration with others. We recognise that there are many uncertainties in the current climate and there may be other important demands placed on us during the course of the three years. To be able to meet these demands will require decisions on prioritising certain actions identified in the Plan or the allocation of additional resources. At all times we seek to be an efficient and effective organisation in working for the prevention and elimination of poverty and social exclusion.

Combat Poverty is implementing performance management and development practices to ensure that people working for us are effectively supported in their commitment to deliver the objectives of the Plan. We seek to be a learning organisation that embraces consultation, openness, effective communication and partnership as chosen ways of working. We value our staff and actively implement a human resource development policy.

STRENGTHENING ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY

This objective will be achieved through the following goals:

Goal 15:

Combat Poverty will offer a positive work environment as reflected in our human resource policies and our work culture of openness and partnership.

To achieve this goal we will:

- Introduce and develop performance management and development practices for all staff;
- Seek to have a highly talented and diverse workforce, and support consistency and quality in work performance across all functions and at all levels;
- Actively foster and encourage staff development, including the exploration of opportunities for staff exchanges through collaborative working with other agencies and organisations;
- Further develop work-life policies that support staff in fulfilling family and other responsibilities with work commitments.

Goal 16:

Combat Poverty will develop administrative, monitoring and operational procedures in accordance with best practice and in fulfilment of regulatory and statutory obligations.

To achieve this goal we will:

- Provide and maintain a high quality service to all our customers, internal and external;
- Develop and improve existing financial, human resource and equality policies, systems and procedures in fulfilment of our duties of compliance, and of effective and efficient use of all resources;

- Identify and implement effective auditing and evaluative tools for assessing capacity to achieve the objectives and goals set out in this Plan;
- Enhance the use of the information technology capacity to serve all our stakeholders;
- Ensure that the competencies of Board members and others who regularly inform our work from an external perspective are identified and recognised.

Key Performance Indicators

- Combat Poverty's Human Resource Development Policy implemented and reviewed;
- Performance management and development practices implemented;
- A Combat Poverty Agency Customer Service Action Plan produced and implemented;
- Ongoing reviews and evaluation of the Strategic Plan undertaken.

Glossary

37



Glossary

All-island: Initiatives which involve collaboration between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Area-based programmes: a co-ordinated series of actions which are devised and delivered within a particular spatial context to address social and economic disadvantage e.g. RAPID, CLÁR.

Area Development Management Ltd.: ADM Ltd. is an independent company set up by the Irish Government and the EU to support local economic and social development. It distributes funding through three main programmes: Local Development Social Inclusion Programme, Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in the Border Region and the Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme. Combat Poverty is jointly responsible with ADM Ltd. for implementing a major part of the EU Peace II Programme in the Border Region. There is a joint office in Monaghan, referred to as ADM/CPA.

Benchmarking: This means a point of reference. It is often used in the public sector as a term for comparing the performance in the public sector with the private sector or for comparing systems in Ireland with systems in other countries.

Border Region: The six border counties of Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan and Sligo.

Community development: The long-term process whereby people who are marginalised or living in poverty work together to identify their needs, create change, exert more influence in the decisions which affect their lives and work to improve the quality of their lives, the communities in which they live, and the society of which they are part.

Consistent poverty: A person is said to be in consistent poverty when he or she has both a low relative income and lacks at least one of a number of specified basic necessities such as warm clothes and adequate food and heating.

Cross-border: Activities and actions which take place on a collaborative basis between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Economic, social and cultural rights: Refers to the rights of all persons to live a fully human life which meets their physical, emotional, intellectual and social needs. Being deprived of these rights is often symptomatic of living in poverty.

Empowerment: The process of transferring decision-making power from influential sectors to poor communities and individuals who have been traditionally excluded from it.

Formative evaluation: An ongoing review to describe and analyse how an activity is carried out and to interpret the outcomes. It is valuable in helping those directly involved in the activity to assess its strengths and weaknesses and the changes required to improve its effectiveness.

Indexation: a method by which social welfare payments would be increased by a certain amount each year. This amount would relate to a particular factor ie. index in the economy eg. inflation, earnings, incomes.

Local government: Local and regional administrative structures, including County Councils, City Councils (previously Corporations), Urban District Councils and Town Councils. They are responsible for providing services to local communities and operate under the supervision of the Minister for the Environment and Local Government.

40

National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS): The 10 year plan of the Irish Government aimed at tackling poverty which involves consultation, target setting and poverty proofing. NAPS aims to achieve better understanding of the structural causes of poverty such as unemployment, low income and educational disadvantage.

National Development Plan: The Irish Government's strategy for allocating EU Structural Funds and other public monies aimed to stimulate long term growth and a fairer distribution of resources across the whole economy.

Open Method of Policy Co-ordination: European term for setting guidelines at EU level for plans to be drawn up by Member States, for example in the areas of employment and social inclusion. The guidelines include specific timetables for achieving goals set, the establishment of indicators to compare best practice, translating the European guidelines into national and regional policies, and periodic monitoring and review.

Peace II Programme: The EU funded Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, which runs from 2000 to 2004.

Peace Building: Peace building is a dynamic process, a continuum of development that involves the construction of new relationships and the

reconstruction of some existing relationships as part of a progression from conflict and distrust towards the development of sustainable relationships and a more peaceful and stable society in a post conflict situation. The EU funded Peace II Programme aims to contribute towards peace building and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

Performance indicator: A method to measure the degree to which key objectives are achieved.

Poverty: People are said to be living in poverty if their income and resources are so inadequate as to preclude them from having a standard of living considered acceptable in Irish society. Because of their poverty they may experience multiple disadvantage through unemployment, low income, poor housing, inadequate health care and barriers to education. They are often excluded and marginalised from participating in activities that are the norm for other people.

Poverty lines: Poverty lines are poverty measures based on average household income to show the number of households falling below different levels of income and how far below each level they fall. Poverty lines are commonly set at 40%, 50% and 60% of average income.

Poverty proofing: The process whereby government departments, agencies and local authorities assess policies and programmes at design and review stages to establish their likely impact on reducing poverty and inequality.

PPF: The Programme for Prosperity and Fairness. This is the fifth national agreement, running from 2000 to 2002, drawn up between the Government and Social Partners.

Regional Operational Programmes: For EU Structural Fund purposes two regions have been designated in Ireland: the Border, Midland and Western (BMW) Region and the Southern and Eastern (S&E) Region. Investment will be delivered to these two regions through the Regional Operational Programmes as set out in the National Development Plan for Ireland 2000 to 2006.

Relative (income) poverty: The use of income poverty lines to measure rates of poverty in a society. Relative income poverty is thus defined by reference to an income threshold set at a particular percentage of average income, adjusted for family size and composition. It is a commonly used poverty measure to gauge change over time, make comparisons between groups in the population and to compare

poverty rates between countries. It is affected by the overall income distribution.

Social cohesion: Bringing together, in an integrated way, economic, social, health and educational policies to facilitate the participation of citizens in societal life.

Social exclusion: The process whereby certain groups are pushed to the edge of society and prevented from participating fully by virtue of their poverty, inadequate education or lifeskills. This distances them from job, income and education opportunities as well as social and community networks and they have little access to power and decision-making bodies.

Social inclusion: Ensuring the fullest participation of the marginalised and those living in poverty in decision-making processes as a means to raise their standard of living and improve their quality of life.

Social Inclusion Units: Structures developed or being developed by local authorities which have a dedicated emphasis on tackling social exclusion. These Units seek to extend key elements of the National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS) to local level and to promote social inclusion as a key priority within local government.

Social partnership: A means of reaching agreement between the Irish Government and various social partners - employers, trade unions, farmers, community and voluntary groups. The Government and the social partners try to agree on pay, tax and social welfare, as well as other economic and social policy issues.

Structural poverty: Refers to the kind of deprivation which is reinforced by administrative, economic and social barriers preventing access to new life skills, employment opportunities, improved health care and better housing.

Summative evaluation: A review designed to judge the effectiveness of an activity in terms of its outcomes and impact. The focus may be on measuring outcomes and quantifying costs and benefits. It is often carried out at the end of a process by a person(s) who was not originally involved in the activity.

Sustainable economic and social development: The type of broad-based, long-term human growth which encourages the continual development of skills, capacities and talents to the fullest possible extent as a means of challenging poverty and social exclusion.