

A NEIGHBOURHOOD-LEVEL VIEW OF AREA-BASED INTERVENTIONS

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Introduction

The rapid increase in the number and range of state-funded area-based interventions (ABIs) in recent years has been documented in Chapter 6. These interventions and the associated funding streams are mixed and matched in various ways at local level, as community and voluntary organisations, as well as local statutory bodies, deploy them to tackle poverty and social exclusion. In addition to the national programmes described earlier, neighbourhood-level organisations are able to draw also on a number of localised measures, so that the picture of area-based interventions at the point of delivery is even more complex than at national level. The proliferation of ABIs, differences in the strength of their spatial targeting, and the adoption of different targeting mechanisms for different programmes, together mean that the 'density' of these interventions varies considerably from locality to locality, even amongst the seven neighbourhoods covered in this study. This in turn suggests, *prima facie*, that there are likely to be significant differences across localities in the amount of area-based funding received, and that in certain instances there may be a considerable concentration of support channelled through these mechanisms.

However, in large part because of the complex pattern of area-based interventions, to date there has been no structured attempt to gather and report the information that would allow an assessment of the overall level of funding in particular localities. At the most basic level, we have been unable to answer the question: is it a little or is it a lot? This chapter represents a first attempt to fill this gap in our knowledge of the local significance of ABIs, by examining the detailed pattern of interventions 'on the ground', in four of the case study neighbourhoods with different demographic and socioeconomic profiles. The objectives are, first, to indicate the range and scope of area-based interventions in each of the selected neighbourhoods by compiling an 'inventory of interventions', and, second, to estimate the level of funding channelled into the neighbourhoods via area-based interventions over a

specified period of time, in an attempt to get some impression of the overall commitment of financial resources. Third, we identify a number of issues arising with area-based measures, their funding and implementation, at the local level.

As detailed in Chapter 1, the four neighbourhoods selected for this exercise comprise two relatively high-intervention neighbourhoods, Moyross in Limerick and Fatima Mansions in Dublin, and two relatively low-intervention neighbourhoods, Cranmore in Sligo and Deanrock in Cork. All four neighbourhoods have been the subject of regeneration initiatives in recent years, though these vary considerably in scale, sources of funding, and stage of development. The Fatima Mansions regeneration programme, which began in 2004, is the most advanced, and also the most reliant on private funding through a public-private partnership. The Moyross regeneration programme is the most recent, the masterplans for which were launched in October 2008. However, the area has a long history of ABI activity extending back to the EU Poverty 3 programme introduced in 1989. The neighbourhoods also vary in terms of the severity of their problems, and recent development trends. Moyross and Fatima Mansions were among the most distressed of the seven neighbourhoods in 1996, and indeed ranked among the most disadvantaged localities nationally, as indicated by the Pobal HP Deprivation Index (see Chapter 2).¹ Although the latter improved in terms of liveability and disadvantage during the ensuing decade, liveability in the former declined (see Chapter 3). In contrast, Cranmore and Deanrock were among the least disadvantaged neighbourhoods of the seven in 1996. However, whereas Cranmore showed a degree of stabilisation to maintain its position as one of the less problematical of the neighbourhoods, the wider Toghher area, containing Deanrock, deteriorated in terms of its score on the PHDI.² As well as being the most disadvantaged of the neighbourhoods in 2006, Moyross is also distinguished from the other three neighbourhoods that are of interest in the present chapter by virtue of its considerably larger size. In 2006 it contained an estimated 1,014 households, roughly double the number in the next largest neighbourhood, Cranmore (511). Fatima Mansions, where the re-housing programme was not yet complete, was by far the smallest neighbourhood with just 150 households (see Chapters 1, 2, and 3).

The remainder of the chapter is structured as follows. The next section describes some of the challenges involved in accessing and collating data on area-based interventions at local level, and outlines the protocols and methodology used in order to construct the inventory of interventions for the four neighbourhoods, and to appraise the overall financial commitment. The results of this exercise are then presented, in the form of an overview of the number and range of interventions across the four neighbourhoods, and an inter-neighbourhood comparison of the levels of funding per household. To help interpret these data and form an impression as to the overall significance of the funding involved, we provide a comparison with mainstream social welfare spending. The penultimate section identifies and discusses a number of issues arising from the funding of area-based interventions, and more generally the deployment of these measures in the four neighbourhoods. This discussion is based on information gathered from interviews

with representatives of community, voluntary, and statutory organisations active in the neighbourhoods, as well as on insights gained in the course of compiling the data for the inventory of interventions. Some general conclusions are set out in the closing section.

Methodology

The difficulties inherent in the identification of area-based interventions at national level have been outlined in Chapter 6, where a wide-ranging definition was employed, encompassing measures that are relatively weakly targeted spatially, as well as those with a stronger and more explicit focus on designated areas of disadvantage. When we shift our focus to the local level the task of identifying and accurately accounting for area-based interventions is even more complex. This is because, as noted above, not all spending in the four neighbourhoods that comes under the heading of special or area-based interventions is sourced from national funding programmes; some of it may come from local or city-based sources. In addition, the link between national ABIs and local interventions is not always clearly traceable. For instance we came across cases where a statutory body draws funding from a national funding mechanism and channels it through a local voluntary body operating in a neighbourhood, or across a group of neighbourhoods, which in turn combines that funding with monies received from other sources, to deliver a service or range of services to the local community. In such situations, national funding bodies were often unable to provide a detailed geographical breakdown of the final disbursement of funding, a problem that is exacerbated by the absence, in most instances, of an appropriate spatial framework for doing so in terms of the actual neighbourhoods targeted, as opposed to the spatial units employed for administrative purposes.

Because of these difficulties, it was decided to adopt a local, neighbourhood-specific approach to the identification and costing of ABIs in this strand of the research. Instead of attempting to trace each national funding programme through to local level, we followed a bottom-up methodology, by trying to identify all locally based organisations that draw funding through area-based interventions. One consequence of this decision was that, despite our best efforts, it was not possible to adhere rigidly to a common methodology across all four neighbourhoods. The methodology described hereunder was therefore adapted to the needs of each local situation.

Before the local delivery projects could be identified, it was necessary to decide on a working definition of area-based interventions. For consistency with the broadly based approach at national level, we included local projects funded via both strongly and weakly spatially targeted programmes. The most important of the latter group, in terms of the level of spending across all four neighbourhoods, are the community employment projects.

The starting point in building the inventory of interventions for each neighbourhood was the national list of ABIs set out in Chapter 6, on which the

local knowledge of team members was brought to bear in order to produce a preliminary list of activities funded through ABIs in the neighbourhood. Next, local directories of services were consulted where available, including those compiled by bodies such as the Partnerships and City/County Development Boards. The lists derived from these sources were then added to, and proofed, using documentary information obtained from some of the larger funding bodies, as well as information collected in field surveys of the neighbourhoods. Interviews with key informants (primarily representatives of community, voluntary, and statutory organisations working in the neighbourhoods) were used as a further means of identifying active and relevant area-based projects in the four neighbourhoods. Based on the wide range of sources consulted, and the cross-checks that we put in place, we are confident that, while we cannot claim to have identified every single area-based initiative or project, we have captured all those that made a significant contribution to the neighbourhoods.

Once the local interventions were identified, information on their activities in the neighbourhoods was requested from them for the calendar year 2006, which, at the time of the fieldwork, was the most recent year for which they were likely to have final accounts. Where full annual accounts were obtained these provided information on both the income and expenditure of the organisation or project. Our preference was to use expenditure data where possible, since this relates more closely to the impact of the project in the neighbourhood than data on income (which might not be fully disbursed in the year in which it is received). However, it did not prove possible to focus exclusively on expenditure, as the required information was not always forthcoming. The need to mix income with expenditure data gave rise to some problems in the collation of the data, and in particular the danger of overstating the level of area-based interventions by double counting expenditure and income data for the same activity. In order to deal with this issue, detailed information was sought from all the local organisations (in particular those that acted as 'umbrella bodies' that employed staff or ran a community employment scheme on behalf of smaller agencies) about their relationships with other bodies, and about what precisely was included in their annual accounts. While this helped avoid double counting, variations across neighbourhoods in the way information on expenditure and resource inputs was attributed to individual projects made it impossible to present a reliable comparison across estates of expenditure data disaggregated by project.

Gaps in the data collected at local level meant that expenditure had to be estimated in a number of instances. The two most important cases where some degree of estimation was required are the community employment/jobs initiative and DEIS schemes. Expenditure under the CE and JI schemes was adjusted (deflated), to exclude the social security payments that would have been incurred in the absence of the schemes (see Chapter 6). For Crammore, Deanrock, and Fatima this adjustment was based on the national estimate that 34.1 per cent of total expenditure under CE is additional to the imputed social security payments. In the case of Moyross, however, detailed information on CE scheme expenditure was

available, on the basis of which the 'net' or additional CE/JI scheme expenditure was calculated at 24.3 per cent of the total. The variation of this figure from the adjustment factor for the other neighbourhoods may be attributed to differences in the nature of the schemes, and to the atypical balance between CE and JI schemes in this neighbourhood.³ With regard to DEIS expenditure, detailed information was available for Moyross and Deanrock only. Expenditure for Cranmore and Fatima was therefore estimated from the number of children living there and the average expenditure per child in the other two neighbourhoods. It should also be noted that, because none of the four neighbourhoods under examination contained a secondary school, DEIS expenditure was calculated for primary schools only.

A further problem to be overcome in trying to arrive at an accurate picture of the overall level of intervention in the neighbourhoods is that in many cases the operational boundaries of the projects (often only vaguely defined) were not coterminous with the boundaries of the neighbourhoods. Thus, projects based in the four neighbourhoods in some instances dealt with clients from neighbouring areas, and conversely area-based initiatives and services located outside (but close to) the case study neighbourhoods were often availed of by residents of these neighbourhoods. In general the approach adopted was to allocate expenditure by a project to each neighbourhood according to the proportion of total users/clients resident in the neighbourhood. This information was obtained from the projects themselves.

Finally, it should be noted that the neighbourhood-level data collected relate to the current or revenue spending of activities, not to their capital spending. The omission of capital spending is due to the fact that it tends to be rather 'lumpy' and sporadic, occurring sometimes at a very high level in a particular year and then not for a period of several years. We also omitted private and philanthropic expenditure from the comparative analysis since our focus, as in Chapter 6, is on public funding. However, we managed to generate reasonably comprehensive estimates of funding from private and philanthropic sources for Fatima Mansions – the neighbourhood in which it is most significant – and these data are given below.

Area-based interventions in the case-study neighbourhoods

Number and function: The results of the inventory of interventions for the four neighbourhoods are summarised in Table 7.1, and reported at neighbourhood level in Tables 7.2 to 7.5. These tables reveal a wide range of local 'on the ground' interventions, and funding sources associated with them.

The number of ABI-funded services in 2006 is large: 23 in Moyross (including an education bursaries programme), 17 in Fatima Mansions, and 14 in Cranmore. Deanrock is somewhat of an outlier in this regard with only six relevant services in operation in this neighbourhood in 2006. Reflecting differences in the nature of local problems and needs, there was some variation across neighbourhoods in the type of activities present. All neighbourhoods had projects focused on community

TABLE 7.1 Number and funding sources of area-based interventions by estate

Estate	No. of area-based interventions	Average no. of funding sources per project
Cranmore	14	2.6
Deanrock	6	2.0
Fatima Mansions	17	2.1
Moyross	23	2.5
All Four Estates	60	2.4

development as well as on family support and childcare, but concentrations of projects with particular focuses were evident. In the largest and most disadvantaged neighbourhood, Moyross, there was a concentration evident in the areas of youth work and community development (see Table 7.5). Childcare and family support initiatives featured prominently in Cranmore, and adult education and training in Fatima (Tables 7.2 and 7.4 respectively). In the smaller and less disadvantaged Deanrock neighbourhood four of the six projects were focused mainly on children and youth (Table 7.3).

Source and level of funding: The funding sources that neighbourhood-level organisations drew on were also numerous. Twenty-one of the 60 organisations and projects listed drew on three or more sources of funding in 2006 and, on average, projects drew on 2.4 sources of funding across all four neighbourhoods (see Table 7.1). Funding arrangements for area-based services in Cranmore and Moyross appear particularly complex – the average number of funding sources per project was 2.6 in the former and 2.5 in the latter. In both Cranmore and Fatima Mansions a significant proportion of funding for neighbourhood-based services was derived from the neighbourhood regeneration programme, but whereas in Cranmore this was public money channelled through the local authority, in Fatima Mansions the source was the 'community dividend' contributed by the developer who was the private-sector partner in the public-private partnership that implemented the regeneration programme (see Chapter 4). As indicated earlier, this private funding is not included in our estimates of the overall level of publicly funded ABI spending on the neighbourhoods.

All of the voluntary services in the neighbourhoods relied to a considerable degree on Community Employment and Jobs Initiative schemes for staff. In Cranmore, Deanrock, and Moyross, several different community-based services employed staff under these schemes. In Fatima Mansions, a single umbrella body for community-based services (Fatima Groups United) employed all of the CE/JI staff and assigned them to the various community services operating in the area. However, these workers accounted for a smaller share of staffing in community services in Fatima Mansions than in the other neighbourhoods.

Table 7.6 presents our estimates of the level of public revenue expenditure on all area-based interventions in the four neighbourhoods in 2006. This table reveals a

TABLE 7.2 Services funded by area-based interventions in Crammore, 2006

Service	Function	Funding programme/agency
Abbey Quarter Community Centre	Youth work, childcare	X
Abbey Quarter Community Employment scheme	Education for adults	X
Crammore Community Co-op	Community development	X
Crammore Regeneration Project	Estate regeneration	X
Foroige the CRIB	Youth work	X
Jobs club/Jobs Initiative/Back to Work Enterprise Scheme	Employment	X
Mercy College School	Education for children, sports	X
North Connacht Youth and Community Services	Youth work	X
Vocational Education Committee		
Special Projects to Assist Disadvantaged Youth		X
RAPID		X
Remedial Works Scheme		X
Programme of grants for locally based community and voluntary organisations		X
Private and philanthropic sector		X
Other statutory source (area based)		X
Local employment service		X
Partnership		X
Local Authority		X
Health Services Executive		X
Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme		X
Dormant Accounts Fund		X
Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS)		X
Community Employment Scheme		X
Resource House Project	Family support, childcare	X
Sligo Family Support Ltd.	Family support, childcare	X
Sligo Leader Partnership	Community development, youth work, recreation	X
Sligo Sports and Recreation Partnership	Sport and recreation	X
Sligo Social Service Council Ltd.	Family support, childcare	X
St Anne's/Avalon Centre	Youth work, eldercare	X
Vocational Education Committee		X

Table 7.3 Services funded by area-based interventions in Deanrock, 2006

Service	Function	Funding programme/agency
School	Education for children	
TACT (Youth Diversion Programme)	Youth work	
Together Community Centre	Community development	
Together Link Up	Drug misuse	
Together Family Centre	Family support	
Together Special Youth Project (SPY)	Childcare Youth work	
		X
	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS)	
	Family and Community Services Resource Centres Programme	
	Community Employment Scheme	
	Health Service Executive	
	Local Drugs Task Force	
	Ogra Corraí	
	Other statutory source	
	Pobal	
	Vocational Education Committee	
	Young Peoples' Facilities and Services Fund	
		X

TABLE 7.4 Services funded by area-based interventions in Fatima Mansions, 2006

Service	Function	Funding programme/agency
Community Employment Scheme	Employment, training for adults	
Digital Community Project	Education, training for adults	
Equality for Women Project	Education, training for adults	
Fatima ArkLink	Arts, youth work	
Fatima Children's Day Centre	Childcare	
Fatima Groups United	Community development	
Fatima Health Initiative	Health promotion	
Fatima Homework Club	Education for children, childcare	
		X
	ARK Children's Cultural Centre	
	Cityarts	
	City of Dublin Youth Services Board	
	Client contributions	
	Community Development Programme	
	Community Employment	
	Combat Poverty Agency	
	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS)	
	Fatima Regeneration Board*	
	Health Services Executive	
	Irish Youth Federation	
	Local Drugs Task Force	
	Local Authority	
	Local Partnership Company	
	National Childcare Investment Programme	
	Other statutory source (area based)	
		X

(Continued)

TABLE 7.4 (Continued)

Service	Function	Funding programme/agency
Regeneration	Regeneration	Private /philanthropic sector
Regeneration Board	Regeneration	Other statutory source (area based)
Fatima Youth Initiative	Youth work	National Childcare Investment Programme
Fatima Community Drug Team	Drug misuse	Local Partnership Company
Fatima Family Centre	Family support, childcare	Local Authority
Rialto Learning Community	Education, training for children	Local Drugs Task Force
Rialto Youth Project	Youth work	Irish Youth Federation
Rialto outreach project in Fatima Schools	Education for children	Health Services Executive
Towersongs	Arts, culture	Fatima Regeneration Board*
		Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS)
		Combat Poverty Agency
		Community Employment
		Community Development Programme
		Client contributions
		City of Dublin Youth Services Board
		Cityarts
		ARK Children's Cultural Centre
Regeneration	Regeneration	
Regeneration Board	Regeneration	
Fatima Youth Initiative	Youth work	
Rialto Community Drug Team	Drug misuse	
Fatima Family Centre	Family support, childcare	
Rialto Learning Community	Education, training for children	
Rialto Youth Project	Youth work	
Rialto outreach project in Fatima Schools	Education for children	
Towersongs	Arts, culture	

Note: *funded by the private sector via the public-private partnership project for the regeneration of the estate

TABLE 7.5 Services funded by area-based interventions in Moyross, 2006

Service	Function	Funding programme/agency
Adult and community education	Education for adults	Young People's Facilities and Services Fund
Barnardos	Family support, childcare	Youth Diversion Programme
Blue Box Creative Learning	Education for children	Vocational Education Committee
Bursaries and Scholarships	Education for adults	Private /philanthropic sector
CCYDG/Youth Diversion Project	Youth work, support for ex offenders	National Childcare Investment Programme
Céim ar Chéim (probation service)	Training, support for ex offenders	Other statutory source (non-area based)
		Other statutory source (area based)
		Local Partnership Company
		Local employment service
		Health Service Executive
		Local Authority
		Dept of the Environment
		Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS)
		Community Employment Scheme
		Community Development Programme

(Continued)

TABLE 7.5 (Continued)

Service	Function	Funding programme/agency
Community Development Programme Corpus Christ Parish Community Employment Scheme Limerick Youth Service Youth Intervention Project Moyross Action Centre	Community development Access to employment, training for adults, service provision Youthwork Welfare rights, community development	Community Development Programme
		Community Development Programme
		Community Employment Scheme
		Community Employment Scheme
		Community Employment Scheme
		Community Employment Scheme
		Community Employment Scheme
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		Community Employment Scheme
		Community Employment Scheme
		Community Employment Scheme

Service	Function	Funding programme/agency
Moyross Community Development Network Moyross Community Enterprise Centre Moyross Development Company Moyross Estate Management	Community development development, estate management Community development and enterprise support Housing management, resident participation, regeneration	Community Development Programme
		Community Development Programme
		Community Employment Scheme
		Community Employment Scheme
		Community Employment Scheme
		Community Employment Scheme
		Community Employment Scheme
		Community Employment Scheme
		Community Employment Scheme
		Community Employment Scheme
		Community Employment Scheme
		Community Employment Scheme
		Community Employment Scheme

(Continued)

TABLE 7.6 Current public expenditure on area-based initiatives in four estates, 2006

Estate	Total expenditure (€)	Estimated no of households ¹	Expenditure per household (€)	Expenditure per household as percentage of overall average
Cranmore	1,337,892	511	2,618	84
Deanrock	309,370	336	921	29
Fatima Mansions	536,679	150	3,578	114
Moyross	4,114,042	1,014	4,057	130
All Four Estates	6,297,983	2,011	3,132	100

Note: ¹ Because estate boundaries do not correspond to the small areas used for the census of population, and there is no definitive information available from other sources, the number of households had to be locally estimated for each estate

wide range of inter-neighbourhood variation, not just in total spending but also in spending per household, with the latter varying from a low of €921 in Deanrock to a high of €4,057 in Moyross. Deanrock again appears as an outlier in the data, with spending per household that is less than one-third of the average for all four neighbourhoods. The estimates for Fatima Mansions (14 per cent above average) and Cranmore (16 per cent below average) are both closer to the Moyross estimate (30 per cent above average). The results bear out our expectations, in that Moyross and Fatima Mansions were chosen for inclusion in this exercise as two high-intervention neighbourhoods, compared with the relatively low level of intervention in Deanrock and Cranmore. Furthermore, per household spending in Moyross, Fatima Mansions, and Cranmore is in line with the illustrative national expenditure estimates set out in Chapter 6, which are based on the assumption that all spending from national ABI programmes is concentrated on the most disadvantaged 10 per cent of households. However, per household ABI spending in Deanrock is considerably below what would be expected from these national expenditure estimates.

As mentioned above, the table does not include funding supplied to ABIs by private and philanthropic agencies. We estimate that the contribution made by these sources was modest in Cranmore, Deanrock, and Moyross. In the case of Fatima Mansions, however, private funding (from the community dividend paid by the private developer involved in the regeneration PPP) and, to a lesser extent, philanthropic funding, were substantial. We estimate that these sources contributed approximately €4,500 per household in ABI expenditure to that neighbourhood in 2006.

There are several possible explanations for the wide inter-neighbourhood variation in public revenue spending on ABIs. First, variation may be in part the result of differences in the sizes of the neighbourhoods. While the calculation of

spending per household facilitates comparison of resource input across neighbourhoods by adjusting for the number of households, the effects of size may not be entirely removed by this calculation. This is because larger and more self-contained neighbourhoods, such as Moyross and Cranmore, are more likely to contain area-based interventions within their boundaries. We tried to allow for this in the data collection by taking into account on a *pro rata* basis the spending of projects located outside a neighbourhood if they were availed of to a significant degree by residents of the neighbourhood. However, projects located outside the neighbourhood are more difficult to identify, so the account may be incomplete. Second, in both Cranmore and Deanrock lower ABI expenditure reflected the greater reliance on the community employment scheme for the staffing of projects in these neighbourhoods. In contrast, comparatively more expensive salaried staff was more commonly employed to implement ABIs in Moyross and, particularly, Fatima Mansions.

A third, and more obvious, explanation for differences in ABI spending is that they reflect differences in needs, as measured by the severity of poverty and related social problems. There is some evidence to support this explanation in the fact that Moyross, with the highest level of expenditure per household, was also the most disadvantaged, not just of these four, but of all seven neighbourhoods in the wider study (see Chapter 2). Thereafter, however, the association between expenditure and need is weak: Deanrock, with by far the lowest level of spending, ranked as the second most disadvantaged area in 2006 and the relative rankings of Fatima Mansions and Cranmore on the HP Deprivation Index (third and fourth respectively) are reversed in terms of spending per household (second and third respectively). However, as noted in Chapter 2, accurate comparisons between neighbourhoods in terms of their relative disadvantage are difficult to make, because of the non-coincidence of neighbourhood boundaries with the spatial units for which disadvantage is measured. As a consequence, we lack the kind of data that would enable us to properly assess the relationship between spending and needs.

A fourth possible explanation is that variations in ABI activities across the neighbourhoods derive from differences in the local capacity to access and attract funding. This capacity depends to a great extent on the density and quality of local community and voluntary organisations. The relatively high levels of spending in both Moyross and Fatima Mansions may well be explained by this factor, at least in part, as both neighbourhoods have notably strong community development infrastructures (see Chapter 3).

Leaving aside the issue of inter-neighbourhood variation in spending levels, a more fundamental question is: how should we regard the overall level of spending on area-based interventions, amounting to €3,132 per household on average across the four neighbourhoods? In terms of the query raised in the introduction: is it a little or is it a lot? In order to help answer this we can use as a benchmark data related to spending on mainstream social security benefits. This information was generated as part of an analysis of the 2004 rent assessment records of Limerick City Council (McCafferty and Canny, 2005), which indicated that social security

payments in 2004 to tenants in local authority rented housing in Moyross amounted to €7,204,604. The estimated €4,114,042 spent on area-based interventions in 2006 therefore amounted to 57 per cent of social security payments (including insurance-based benefits, means-tested benefits, and universal benefits such as child benefit). Inflating the latter forward to 2006 in line with increases in social welfare rates would obviously reduce this proportion, as would grossing up the social security expenditure to account for tenant households for whom information was unavailable in the 2004 study, as well as non-tenant households (owner occupiers and those in the process of purchasing their homes via the local authority tenant purchase scheme) albeit that the latter are likely to depend less on benefits as compared to tenant households. We can improve the accuracy of the comparison to some extent by comparing expenditure levels on a per household basis. This reveals that spending per household under area-based initiatives in Moyross in 2006 (€4,057) had a value equivalent to 47 per cent of social security transfers per household (€8,618) in 2004.

Issues with the funding of area-based interventions at neighbourhood level

The analysis set out above has provided some insights into the overall level of funding through area-based initiatives on four of the seven neighbourhoods in our study, as well as into the range and complexity of such interventions. The complexity of the funding environment also emerged prominently in the key informant interviews; indeed in general it was commented on more than the overall level of funding. This section summarises some of the main issues in relation to funding and related matters as they arose in these interviews, beginning with the issue of complexity.

The complexity of funding arrangements: The representatives of the local organisations engaged in promoting and managing interventions on the ground identified both advantages and disadvantages arising from complexity in funding arrangements. One of the perceived advantages is that the need to fund local projects from multiple sources (often a mix of local, regional, and national funding programmes) requires working in partnership and a lot of networking, which in turn helps bring cohesion and integration to the delivery of local services. Thus, one interviewee (voluntary organisation) commented 'good inter-agency cooperation is vital to the work of [named organisation]'. It can also promote certain efficiencies in organisational roles and service delivery. This is evident in the way that organisations like the Partnerships increasingly operate at a more strategic level, tapping into local knowledge and evidence to target the funding effectively, and providing information and support services to more localised organisations. In this vein, a representative of a small local ABI in one of the case study neighbourhoods told us:

The [named Partnership] operates a number of development programmes ... [with] funding provided through the Exchequer and the EU. The [named

Partnership] adapts the funding to the local needs. They are well-placed to do this as they understand the local groups, and have the baseline information and statistics to ensure that the funding is appropriate.

In some areas, the establishment of regeneration programmes based on new structures has brought 'cohesion of services within the area'. For instance, one service provider (voluntary sector) commented:

[P]rior to the regeneration many people felt there was a dearth of funding in [named area] coupled with a lack of services, but an audit of services in the area showed that there was a good deal of funding and service delivery ... the process acted as a catalyst for cohesion for these services ... there is room for further cohesion.

The demands of funding arrangements are also seen to have resulted in improved local organisational capacity, and funding relationships that are better structured in terms of formal contracts that link service delivery to funding:

'In recent years there has been growing recognition of the competence of [named organisation] by the major funding bodies, and there is now better, more structured, engagement with the funders, involving service level agreements etc.'

Another significant advantage of the funding environment for local initiatives, as identified by respondents, is the transfer of good practice to local organisations. This can result in improvements in the quality of services provided to clients, and in the overall level of performance. Examples here include requirements to have policies on health and safety and child protection in place in local organisations in order to qualify for funding support, requirements for staff engaged in service delivery to be appropriately qualified, and the need to have policies on confidentiality and informed consent for those accessing support services:

Because [named organisation] works very closely with the social work service of the HSE ... It has a strict policy of not sharing information without the permission of the family ... Some agencies don't always report to social workers because of lack of response ... and perhaps for fear of losing the engagement of families. However, [the named organisation's] experience is that families won't stop engaging provided an up-front, honest approach is adopted.

The perceived disadvantages of complexity in the funding environment relate primarily to the administrative burden of preparing funding applications and meeting accountability requirements (reporting and monitoring), and the fact that

organisations lacking the necessary capacity are effectively excluded. For instance, a manager of one voluntary sector agency commented:

'To sustain its activities [named organisation] has to put together a patchwork quilt of funding from different agencies. There are different application procedures for each agency, and different reporting schedules and requirements'.

A representative of another relatively large-scale voluntary organisation noted that, whereas in the past the organisation received most of its funding from EU sources, it now receives support from multiple sources, such as the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, the local council, and the local regeneration project. This interviewee describes the funding process as a 'maze' with 'no system of uniformity in application and reporting requirements', while the bureaucracy attached to the funding process is seen as tedious and increasingly complex. It was noted that separate financial reports are required for their own organisation, the revenue commissioners, and all the individual funders.

Even with the support of intermediaries such as the Partnerships, some smaller-scale neighbourhood-based organisations reported that they cannot successfully manage the administrative side of funding applications and monitoring and reporting requirements, and some have faced difficulties linked to their lack of capacity (e.g., interruption of project delivery, and inability to pay staff because of cash flow problems). A small voluntary organisation operating projects targeted at vulnerable young people referred to 'haphazard' funding arrangements and difficulties it had encountered with cash flow and deficits in its accounts. These problems were eventually resolved by a larger scale organisation taking on the contractual and financial management aspects of a group of projects (as described above):

'So . . . just in the last year they negotiated with a youth organisation . . . to take over the project . . . and since then the funding, I presume, still comes through the justice department, but . . . goes to a bigger organisation and then they pay for everything'.

The fact that some sources of funding are not managed directly by the organisations responsible for implementing the interventions further amplifies the complexity of funding arrangements and adds to the difficulty of accurately accounting for spending under specific ABIs.

Lack of clarity and certainty: A general problem identified by interviewees in programmes like RAPID, and even the newest wave of neighbourhood regeneration programmes, is that local actors do not know what funding is actually available for the local plan. This is because these initiatives are not structured as programmatic interventions that have dedicated funding available, but rather as funding access and coordination mechanisms, drawing on existing national public spending programmes. Therefore, local groups cannot be confident that the funds are actually

available to their area for plan implementation. This lack of clarity can be problematic, and the issue becomes highly politicised in local environments, negatively affecting inter-organisational cooperation and relationships with residents in neighbourhoods. Often residents do not understand how the system works, and when expected monies do not flow, local organisations can be heavily criticised, sometimes unfairly.

The lack of clarity was mentioned in particular in relation to the RAPID programme. According to our interviewees, the scope of RAPID is often articulated in such a way that it is unclear whether there are dedicated funds available through the programme, and, if so, what amounts of funds are involved. Methods of accessing funds for local action are complex and uncertain:

[T]here isn't really any funding [associated with RAPID]. . . . It can vary every year. You might get €300,000 one year, you might get €200,000 the next year . . . we have . . . a scheme which is around estate enhancement and . . . a lot of that comes from the Department of the Environment, and . . . that is basically once every two years, I think, and it is around things like traffic calming. . . . RAPID itself does not have a budget . . . the idea . . . is that the [statutory] agencies should be prioritising RAPID within their own budget . . . sometimes that happens and sometimes it doesn't . . . it is very difficult.

Bias towards capital as opposed to revenue funding: Several key informants identified what they considered to be a bias towards capital as opposed to revenue funding in ABIs. Local organisations perceive this bias in the unwillingness of state agencies to agree recurrent or revenue funding, which is less easy to 'contain' than one-off capital funding. This unwillingness creates uncertainty regarding the continuity of local projects and service provision, and a need to continuously 'chase' funding (which diverts time and energy from core activities). A further problem concerns staff contracts of employment, especially in ABIs where, although funding is not formally time-limited, there is no guarantee it will continue. In these situations it is not possible to offer permanent employment contracts to staff and, during the Celtic Tiger boom, when alternative employment opportunities were plentiful, this resulted in a high turnover of staff in some areas, and a loss of experienced, highly trained, and skilled staff. This is a significant problem because it tends to be people-based services rather than buildings that are needed most in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and they are needed on an ongoing basis.

A further aspect of the bias towards capital funding is that the benefits of expenditures on the management of construction projects and related services (design, engineering, fitting) generally leak from disadvantaged areas, since professional staff employed in service provision typically do not live in the neighbourhoods. Indeed it is often the case that employment even in basic construction work does not benefit local people. Moreover, while the types of facility that are provided through capital investment projects (e.g., housing improvements and community

infrastructure such as community centres and crèches) are needed, they do not support the development of private/commercial services that are typically needed to generate local employment opportunities and to retain expenditure of local income within the areas.

Rigidity in the rules of funding programmes: Among the key actors involved in the implementation of ABIs in the case study neighbourhoods there is a strong perception that the rules of the national funding programmes for ABIs are often both too narrow, and applied in an excessively rigid, inflexible manner. In some cases, local organisations report difficulties in trying to get projects to 'fit' with objectives specified nationally, and with reporting frameworks that, sometimes, do not reflect what they are actually trying to achieve. In other words, programme objectives are not necessarily responding well to local need.

Rules and requirements of funding programmes are also seen to place new demands on small, often poorly resourced, organisations, resulting in the exclusion of certain types of individuals from involvement with the organisations. One interviewee in a youth organisation referred to the many changes to relevant regulations, particularly in the area of child protection, and their effects on youth services. While the need for guidelines is acknowledged, the interviewee highlighted a 'downside' in the strain these have placed on voluntary sector services, where the traditional involvement of volunteers in service is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain due to the necessity to implement the guidelines. For instance, the system for Garda clearance involves a lengthy process, and excludes many with previous offences, even if these offences were committed in the distant past and would appear to bear little relevance to an individual's suitability for the current situation. While Garda clearance is acknowledged as extremely important, it excludes people or 'writes them off'.

Proliferation and duplication of interventions: The preceding discussion noted the gains that arise from local organisations drawing together supports from several different sources or funding bodies. Local projects acting in this way are often the primary means of achieving integration across national or regional/local funding programmes in areas such as health, education, and housing. However, the key informants also identified a proliferation of projects, and of ABI funding programmes to support them, as a problem resulting in the duplication of effort between different local projects. Such duplication can occur even when the projects operate under the umbrella of a single organisation.

On access funding ... we have been contracted by a number of agencies to provide ... projects and services in the [named] area ... they all tend to come under the name of [named organisation] but technically they are separate stand alone projects. As a result ... we have a youth information centre which is funded through the Department of Education and Science, we have five Garda Youth Diversion Projects ... we have the local drugs task force funded project ... one of the cafés ... is funded through the Crisis Pregnancy Agency and one of the cafés is funded through the ... local drugs task force. I am

trying to remember all the different projects. We have a project that is another local drugs task force funded project. And so you can see our funding comes from a range of different sources. And then within [named area] there is up to 14 different services and projects all under the banner of [named organisation].

Often the problem of duplication arises between single-purpose, stand-alone initiatives focused on specific target groups. For example, in one of the case study neighbourhoods there were three different projects with a stated remit of dealing with 'children at risk', all of which engaged in similar work, often with the same clients. As reported by a representative of one of the organisations involved:

There is little cooperation or day-to-day contact between the agencies [named agencies working in the same field], and no formal sharing of information about the children and families they are working with. When one learns of the other's activities it tends to be by accident.

Another informant reported that:

There are good relations with the [named project] ... the [organisation] manager sits on the board of the [named project] ... and manages three of the other [similar projects] in the city ... However, cooperation between agencies is more problematical at the operational level with, for example, a considerable area of overlap and waste on the ground, which often results in hitting the same [clients] twice.

The key actor interviews highlight a lack of decision-making power on the part of agency personnel involved in partnerships and a similar lack of local autonomy in the regional/local structures of mainstream funding agencies as reasons for the perceived duplication of activities, because these deficits militate against integrated working on the ground. For instance, one service provider in a voluntary organisation commented:

I don't really know whether cooperation has improved. People working for organisations in the community have a very tight remit. Most of them working in structures with other agencies have seniors to answer to, and can't make decisions about things.

Importance of active labour market programmes to ABI implementation: The process of preparing the inventory of actions and accounting for total ABI expenditure highlighted the importance of community employment (CE) and to a lesser extent job initiative (JI) schemes. They account for a significant proportion of area-based local spending that, in turn, underscores their significance for the viability of local projects, as well as their importance to the delivery of local services. Several service providers in the voluntary sector stressed the importance of CE, with one large

voluntary organisation drawing attention to the role of 'the large and vital CE scheme', which provides 24 workers in five areas: security, housekeeping, driving, reception, and childcare. A voluntary organisation in one of the neighbourhoods mentioned that, over the years, the training element of the CE programme had become more sophisticated, with accredited courses in childcare, computers, health and safety, first aid, and manual handling being provided to participants. Some interviewees from the ABIs based in the case study neighbourhoods highlighted how CE schemes had evolved over time to create capacity and new projects and services:

[W]e inherited the Community Employment project and I suppose my analysis at the time was you build slow and you build up. ... [T]he Community Employment project became a kind of vehicle for ... residents' training and ... participation through education ... community development training ... meetings ... and the arts ... because some interested parties that got involved ... who had an arts background ... we attracted people in who were very committed people ... very creative and very strong willed ... then the project began to roll itself out.

Nominally, both CE and JI are active labour market programmes (ALMPs), that is, a means to support the long-term unemployed and lone parents to gain skills, develop networks relating to employment, and make the transition back into the mainstream labour market. Evaluations of CE have shown that it has not been effective in these terms, even at times of buoyant demand in the labour market (e.g., Indecon International Economic Consultants, 2002; O'Connell, 2002). As a result, calls have been made for it to be scaled back or abolished, and it has been argued that the numbers employed on CE schemes should have fallen to low levels when overall employment growth was strong in the first half of the 2000s (Grubb *et al.*, 2009). However, in times of recession the case for CE-type employment schemes becomes stronger, and they can be viewed as a useful means to add value to the social protection system. With a modest additional expenditure over and above that which clients would receive in any event as benefit recipients, they provide two significant social benefits: first, they give a valuable role in their communities to CE workers, many of whom otherwise would be marginalised and economically inactive; and, second, they help sustain valuable social services and community organisations in disadvantaged areas. Viewed in these terms, the justification for these schemes becomes stronger, and there is a strong case that the terms under which they are evaluated should not be restricted to considerations that arise under ALMPs in the strict sense.

Conclusions

Despite the increasing number, scale, and scope of area-based interventions in Ireland there has remained a considerable information deficit in relation to their

local impact. This chapter has attempted to redress this deficit by assembling and costing an inventory of interventions for four of the seven case-study neighbourhoods that are the focus of this book. Our research in the neighbourhoods of Crammore, Deanrock, Fatima Mansions, and Moyross has highlighted the wide range and variety of local projects that can be regarded as area-based interventions. These ABIs are located in public policy areas ranging across health, education and training, employment support, childcare, youth work, family support, drugs treatment and prevention, housing, and community development. Both the number and the types of initiatives vary across the neighbourhoods, reflecting differences in the social composition of neighbourhoods and their needs. However, a notable feature is the large number of projects with a focus on issues where the area-based approach represents a relatively recent policy development, such as 'at-risk' youth and multi-problem families. These are now comparable both in number and in scale to projects in traditional, more established domains of area-based activity, such as employment support and community development. In part, this trend may reflect the time at which the exercise was undertaken – after a sustained period of economic growth and falling unemployment. In part too, though, it reflects the increasing incidence of social pathologies in disadvantaged areas.

The research reveals that government expenditure in 2006 on area-based initiatives averaged over €3,000 per household across the four neighbourhoods under examination in this chapter. While this level of funding is certainly not insignificant, nevertheless it is put in context by the fact that it represents less than half of social security benefit expenditure per household in the neighbourhood with the highest level of spending. Perhaps more significant than the overall level of ABI funding is the marked variation in the funding received by the different neighbourhoods under examination, with the spending per household ranging from over 70 per cent below the average to 30 per cent above it. Given the differences in the nature and severity of problems faced in the neighbourhoods, variation in funding levels is to be expected, but we do not have the kind of data needed to establish whether there is a close relationship between resource input and level of need. While there is some evidence that spending is related to need, it would appear that need alone does not fully explain the variation in expenditure. Among the other explanatory factors, the most likely candidate is variation in the capacity of neighbourhoods to access and to effectively deploy funding. This points to the importance of high quality, locally based organisations that are well administered and well connected to funding agencies and programmes, and ultimately serves to emphasise the continuing importance of community development.

The importance of local capacity has increased in recent years in line with an increase in the complexity of the funding environment. One aspect of this is that three-quarters of local projects are funded through more than one source, and almost one-third draw their support from three or more sources. A second aspect is the increasing emphasis placed on value for money and accountability in the use of public funds, which has led to more onerous requirements in applying for funding, and in ongoing monitoring and reporting of expenditure. Together with

DRUG USE, DRUG MARKETS, AND AREA-BASED POLICY RESPONSES

Aileen O'Gorman

increased regulation (in areas such as child protection) the complexity of the funding environment has increased the burden of administration for local activities. This was a prominent concern of the key informants we spoke to, who highlighted the waste of resources in administrative work. Indeed this issue generated more adverse comment than, for example, the amount of funding available, as did a number of other issues such as lack of certainty about monies available, and about the long-term funding base for projects, inflexibility in the rules governing the eligibility of activities for funding, and the duplication of initiatives. In general it would appear that, at the time our analysis was undertaken, concern about the resourcing of area-based initiatives had been replaced by concern about inefficiencies in the design, management, and administration of funding programmes.

Finally, one of the most significant findings arising from the exercise described here is the difficulty in carrying it out. The attempt to build a comprehensive picture of area-based initiatives encountered major problems in acquiring the necessary data. At national level, bodies such as government departments were unable to provide a breakdown of area-based spending at a sufficient level of detail as to permit the data to be collated for the neighbourhoods. At local level, projects were often unable to identify the ultimate source of funding channelled through intermediary organisations. If the focus of area-based measures is to improve the position of communities suffering particularly acute social problems then it is vital that they work together, and be monitored and evaluated not individually but on an area-wide basis. At present the information to do this is not available, and not is the institutional framework.

Notes

- 1 As indicated in Chapter 2, these comparisons are affected by differences in the degree to which the boundaries of the electoral division reflected those of the individual neighbourhoods.
- 2 However, as noted in Chapter 3, this deterioration was not reflected in the picture emerging from the interviews conducted in Deanrock.
- 3 J1 scheme expenditure in Moyross is more significant than on the other estates, and expenditure on the non-wage elements under this scheme is significantly less in proportionate terms than under CE.

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Introduction

In the decade since the first phase of our fieldwork was conducted, patterns and trends in drug use have changed substantially in Ireland. Here, as elsewhere, the consumption of an assortment of licit and illicit substances has become *normalised* and embedded into the social and cultural practices of many different social groups (Parker, Aldridge, and Measham, 1998; Measham, Aldridge, and Parker, 2001; Parker, Williams, and Aldridge, 2002). Drug use is now much less the covert sub-cultural practice it was in the 1980s and 1990s, and the (typically combined) use of alcohol, cannabis, cocaine, and amphetamine-type substances (ATS such as: amphetamine/'speed', methamphetamine, MDMA/ecstasy, etc.) has become a regular feature of weekend and festive socialising among many social groups in Ireland.

At the time of our 2007–9 fieldwork, a national drug prevalence survey reported that one in four (24 per cent) of the Irish population had ever used an illegal drug (National Advisory Committee on Drugs and Alcohol Information and Research Unit, 2008). The vast majority of these were cannabis users (22 per cent), with a significantly smaller level of ecstasy and cocaine users (between 5 and 6 per cent each). Cocaine use had increased significantly in the 2000s to the extent that Ireland had one of the highest rates of use within the EU by the middle of this decade (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, 2004, 2008), and rates of heroin use had also risen, most notably outside of the Dublin region, where use of this drug had not previously been prevalent (Kelly, Carvalho, and Teljeur, 2009).

Public discourse on 'drug use' invariably revolves around illegal drug use, though our consumption of legal drugs is far higher, and arguably more harmful (see Nutt, King, and Phillips, 2010). Almost three-quarters of the Irish population