Family, Youth and Community Support Measure

End of Programme Review

2000 – 2006

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List of Abbreviations

LDSIP	Local Development Social Inclusion Programme 2000 - 2006
SCOPE	System for Coordinated Programme Evaluation
FYC	Family, Youth and Community Support Measure
CBYI	Community Based Youth Initiatives
CD	Community Development
VEC	Vocational Education Committee
KCP	Kildare Community Partnership
KELT	Kildare European Leader Teoranta
HSE	Health Service Executive
NDP	National Development Plan
MRDTF	Midland Regional Drugs Taskforce
EDDS	Edenderry District Disability Society
EASA	Edenderry Addressing Substance Misuse

Table of Contents

The Context of this report:

In April 2007, OAK Partnership commissioned an external review of the Family Youth and Community Support (FYC) and the Services for the Unemployed Measure in respect of the period 2000/2006.

Aims and Methodology of the Research:

i. Overall Aim of the FYC Review

This research forms part of OAK Partnership's evaluation and monitoring programme, which aims to capture the qualitative and quantitative dimensions of the Partnership's work and to inform the implementation and strategic development of the LDSIP at a local and national level.

More specifically, the study aims to examine the initiatives and approaches developed by the Family, Youth and Community (FYC) Support Measure, to assess the impact of this work in supporting the communities of North Offaly and North West Kildare and to identify key lessons learned during the period 2003 – 2006.

ii. Terms of Reference

1. Examine the progress of the FYC Measure against OAK Partnership's Strategic Plan 2000 - 2006, the revised strategies of the OAK Partnership's Implementation Plan 2003 - 2006 and the objectives of the LDSIP;
2. Evaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of the range of supports, services and initiatives offered in meeting programme objectives;
3. Examine how the FYC Measure has adapted its structure and strategies to respond to changing client needs and assess the impact of the Measure in supporting priority target groups;
4. Examine the level of inter-agency collaboration and its impact on service development and delivery;
5. Examine the way in which organisational learning has developed over time and how lessons have been implemented;
6. Develop key recommendations based on the learning of the FYC Measure which will inform the future development of initiatives in Counties Offaly and Kildare;

iii. Methodology

The research has involved a range of secondary and primary information sources, including a review of literature, an analysis of SCOPE data, focus group discussions and consultations with the FYC Working Group, Board, stakeholders, clients and staff of OAK Partnership.

Literature Review

During 2000 – 2006 a number of evaluations of the Community Development and Community Based Youth Initiative Measures were undertaken both nationally and locally. However these reports examined selected aspects of the measures in isolation as per their respective terms of reference. The first step in the review therefore was to undertake a review of all relevant research and publications and present their salient findings before a collective review.

Analysis of SCOPE Data

Developed by Pobal, Systems for Coordinated Programme Evaluation (SCOPE) is an integrated approach to programme monitoring and evaluation capturing the quantitative dimensions of the LDSIP Programme. The SCOPE generated data was used in this review to explore progression outcomes for FYC clients during the period 2003-2006[1] to examine the profile of target groups and the range of supports provided, and outputs achieved.

Focus Group Discussions

Three focus group discussions were undertaken to capture a range of views on the work, achievements and learning of the FYC Measure. A focus group with representatives of key agencies was undertaken to assess their role in supporting the work of FYC and to examine the level of inter-agency collaboration developed. A focus group of FYC staff was held to examine the achievements of the Measure, its strengths and weaknesses, and the challenges to be considered for the future. A third public focus group discussion was hosted during October 2007 to capture the views of persons and groups within the wider community.

Consultation with the Board of Directors, Manager Management Committee, Working Groups, & Stakeholders

The review team met on a number of occasions with:
- o The FYC working group;
- o The Board of Management;
- o The SUE working group;
- o The Staff of OAK Partnership;

Interviews were held with the Manager of OAK Partnership and with key FYC staff including Community Development Workers, the Education Coordinator and Youth Worker.

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[1] The period 2003 – 2006 was used, as data entry to the Scope system was considered unreliable before this date.

A number of key stakeholders and interested parties were interviewed individually. They included representatives involved in the childcare, disability, youth and community development sectors and agencies supporting families. They were consulted in relation to the impact that OAK Partnership has had in each of the sectors, the levels of Inter-agency collaboration, levels of pre-development support provided by OAK Partnership, and the existence of outreach support. Interviewees included;

- o ACORN: Kevin Farrell,
- o Edenderry Community Childcare: Margaret Brerton,
- o Edenderry Community Development Programme: Nick Foley,
- o Garda: Niall O' Leary,
- o Lifestart: Caroline O'Driscoll,
- o Edenderry District Disability Society: Tom Kilmurry,
- o School Completion Programme: Gerry Collins.

Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with key representatives involved in strategic development within both counties. Their views were sought in order to gather objective information and an overview of the perspectives relating to OAK Partnership's ability to leverage funding and coordinate the integration of services delivery within their geographical area. The following were interviewed;

- o Director of Community and Enterprise: Frank Heslin;
- o Kildare Area Manager, Teagasc, Con Feighery;
- o Representatives of Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI) and People with Disabilities Ireland (PWDI);
- o Offaly County Manager: Pat Gallagher;
- o Irish Rural Link: Seamus Boland, Chief Executive Officer;

Feedback was provided to the OAK Partnership and its Board of Management in relation to the report's progress at regular intervals throughout the process.

iv. Report Format

This report consists of 8 chapters presented as follows:

Chapter 1 – Introduction
Chapter 2 – Literature Review
Chapter 3 – Family, Youth and Community Measure Model of Programme Delivery
Chapter 4 – Interagency Collaboration
Chapter 5 – FYC Outputs and Results 2002 - 2006
Chapter 6 - Impact Assessment of FYC 2003 – 2006
Chapter 7 – Conclusions and Challenges for the Future
Chapter 8 – Recommendations

Chapter 1 - Introduction

As part of the completion of its work in the North West Kildare / North Offaly area OAK Partnership has commissioned a review of the OAK Partnership's work for the period 2000 – 2006. The recommendations of the review will play a key role in informing the county-wide emerging from the National Cohesion Process initiated by the Minister for Community Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs. The Cohesion Process seeks to realign local development structures and social inclusion programmes into single county-wide structures separately in Counties Offaly and Kildare.

This section outlines the background to the review, provides an overview of the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme (LDSIP) and details the Family, Youth and Community Support (FYC) Measure.

1.1. Background to this Review

In 2005 the Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs announced plans for cohesion of the local and rural development sector nationally. Since this announcement the relevant local development agencies in County Offaly (OAK Partnership, Tullamore Wider Options, West Offaly Partnership and Offaly LEADER) and in County Kildare (OAK Partnership, Kildare Community Partnership and KELT) have been engaged in a negotiation/planning process that culminated in the establishment of a new organisational structure for the local development sector in each county in January 2009.

In preparation for the new county-wide structures OAK Partnership have undertaken a review of the Partnership's contribution towards the objectives of the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme (LDSIP) during the period 2000 – 2006. This review includes three strands:

- An overall review of OAK Partnership.
- Review of the Family, Youth and Community Support (FYC) Measure.
- Review of the Services for the Unemployed (SUE) Measure.

This report will specifically examine the approach and achievements of the Family, Youth and Community Support (FYC) Measure.

1.2. The LDSIP and the Family, Youth and Community Support Measure

The first Partnership programme, 1989 to 1999, prioritised addressing long-term unemployment. This programme arose out of the serious levels of unemployment that had

arisen in particular "blackspots" and the inadequate impact of mainstream agencies in addressing the trend towards social exclusion of long-term unemployed people. The Partnership programme introduced a new concept of agencies from the state, social partners, and community and voluntary sectors working together to synergise their individual efforts into an integrated area response targeted at those at risk or in socially excluded situations.

The second partnership programme developed from the first programme, and sought to address the social exclusion in a further integrated way. It was recognised that the first programme, while making a valuable impact on the needs of the socially excluded target groups, was a learning curve for sectors and agencies on how to work together for integrated development. The second programme, the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme (LDSIP), enabled these four sectors and agencies to continue their work and enhance their focus on socially excluded groups.

The Local Development Social Inclusion Programme (LDSIP) enabled funding to be made available to Partnerships and Community Groups that adopt a Partnership approach to tackling local issues on the basis of comprehensive, integrated local action plans designed to counter exclusion[2]. The provision of an LDSIP fund dedicated to local socially inclusive development provided an incentive for groups struggling to find more effective ways to integrate service delivery for the most marginalised people to continue their collective effort.

Pobal (formerly ADM) is an intermediary company established by the Irish Government and the European Commission to promote social inclusion, reconciliation, equality, and to counter disadvantage though local social and economic development. As part of the 2000 – 2006 National Development Plan, Pobal had national responsibility for the LDSIP, with the programme implemented locally by 38 Area-based Partnerships, 31 Community Based Partnerships and two Employment Pacts.

The overall objective of the LDSIP is: 'To counter disadvantage and promote equality, social and economic inclusion through the provision of funding and support to Partnerships and Community Groups that adopt a partnership approach to tackling issues on the basis of comprehensive, integrated local development plans, designed to counter social exclusion and to equitably target the opportunities and benefits of development to the most disadvantaged individuals and groups within their areas'. (LDSIP Guidelines 2000 – 2006).

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[2] Local Development Social Inclusion Programme Guidelines, 2000-2006

The provision of a programme with a clear focus on this objective provided a valuable framework for the various area partnership stakeholders. While actions funded by the LDSIP involve integrated responses to the multi-dimensional nature of social exclusion, they are grouped into three areas of activity[3]:

Measure A: Services for the unemployed

Measure B: Community development

Measure C: Community-based youth initiatives

The following disadvantaged individuals and communities are specifically named amongst the target groups of the LDSIP:
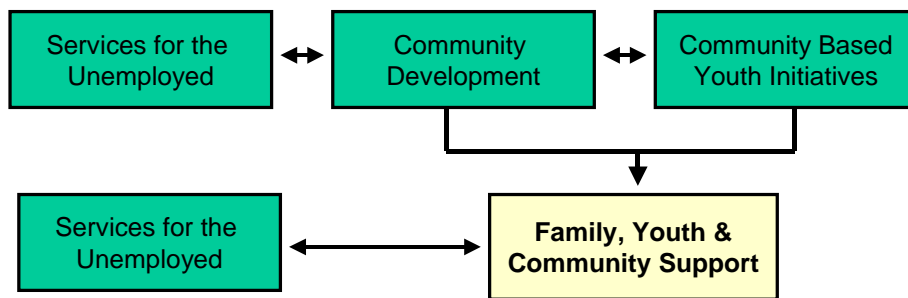
The long-term unemployed	Young people at risk
The underemployed	Disadvantaged women
Lone parents	Disadvantaged young people
Substance misusers	Travellers
Asylum seekers and refugees	Older people
Low-income farm household's	Disabled people
Ex-prisoners and ex-offenders	Homeless people
Disadvantaged communities	

1.3. Family, Youth and Community Support (FYC) Measure in the Context of the LDSIP

Following a review of the Partnerships activities in 2003, the Board of the OAK Partnership agreed to develop a new strategic approach for the 2004 - 2006 period. This new approach merged the Community Based Youth Initiative Measure and Community Development Measures of the LDSIP under a single Family Youth and Community Support Measure. The new FYC Measure focused on the needs of disadvantaged families and individuals within the community who had not been already engaged in the capacity building work of OAK Partnership or state agencies.

An important aspect of the FYC Measure therefore was to focus on pre-development work. This has included outreach work and small group work, tailored to address the needs identified through one-to-one contact with individuals. The strategic objectives of OAK Partnership's Family Youth and Community (FYC) Measure were consistent with the combined objectives of Measure B (Community development) and Measure C (Community-based youth initiatives) the LDSIP.

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[3] Since 2003 OAK Partnership have combined Measure B and C to form the Family, Youth and Community Support Measure.

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│  Services for   │ ◄─► │   Community     │ ◄─► │ Community Based  │
│  the Unemployed │     │  Development    │     │ Youth Initiatives│
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│  Services for   │ ◄────────────► │ Family, Youth &  │
│  the Unemployed │                │Community Support │
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To understand OAK Partnership's Family, Youth and Community Support Measure it is necessary to review its origins within the context of the LDSIP's Community Development and Community Based Youth Initiative Measures.

Community Development Measure

Community development is about enabling people to enhance their capacity to play a role in shaping the society of which they are part. Community development works towards helping groups and communities to articulate needs and to take part in collective action to influence the processes that shape their lives. It is recognised that some groups and individuals have the capacity to participate more fully than others. Therefore the priority of community development within the LDSIP is to engage with the most marginalised and socially excluded groups and communities.

The objectives of the Community Development Measure are:

- To enhance the capacity of people living in disadvantaged areas to participate fully in local development opportunities and to counter social exclusion;
- To provide support for small-scale improvements to the local environmental and community infrastructure;
- To add value to the effective delivery of mainstream policies and programmes through the provision of linkage and co-ordination as they effect the long-term unemployed and the socially excluded; and,
- To put mechanisms in place to ensure local initiatives inform and strengthen policy development.

Support for community development, which enhances the capacity of disadvantaged local communities to participate in mainstream development initiatives, is an integral part of the Government's overall social and economic development strategy. (National Development Plan 2000-2006).

Community Based Youth Initiatives

The National Development Plan identified a lack of educational achievement and self-esteem as key factors leading to unemployment, crime and social deprivation. The plan further noted that early intervention in the process of addressing disadvantage is essential if these problems are to be avoided and the cycle of disadvantage broken. The Community Based Youth Initiatives Measure focuses on disadvantaged young people and provides for additional or alternative supports both within the formal education system and in community settings. The measure targets young people by providing them with opportunities to maximise their potential for self-realisation and self-fulfilment. The Measure provides local partnership arrangements for the co-ordination and development of learning opportunities in a range of settings to enhance the educational, social and personal development needs of young people.

The Objectives of the Community Based Youth Initiative Measure are:

- To enhance the social and personal development of young people who have left school early or are at risk of early school leaving, at risk of underachieving at school, or who are involved or at risk of becoming involved in drug misuse, criminal activity and other forms of anti-social behaviour;
- To expand the range of community based education and youth development opportunities available from early years through to early adulthood in areas of disadvantage;
- To alert young people to the dangers of substance abuse and to equip them with the skills to make the right choices in terms of saying no to drugs;
- To add value to the effective delivery of mainstream policies and programmes through the provision of linkage and co-ordination initiatives towards the long-term unemployed and the socially excluded and;
- To put in place mechanisms to ensure local initiatives inform and strength policy development.

The decision by the Board of OAK Partnership to place all socially focused actions under one measure (FYC) is a continuance of the strategic direction of this Partnership. While the Board of the Partnership were responsible to ADM/Pobal to report under a range of funding headings and were working with a range of Statutory and Non-Statutory Agencies with specific target group responsibilities, the Board decided to adopt a 'person-centered' approach to addressing social inclusion, rather than being determined by funding lines, separate measures, or agencies focused on specific target groups.

In this way in 2003 the OAK Partnership gave practical expression to the growing realisation that work with the socially excluded can be more effective if delivered through sustained, integrated and seamless programmes. The Partnership Board presented a vision of

addressing social exclusion via the wider and immediate community through integrated service provision to the person (person centered). This approach enabled specialised agencies to work in an integrated way with relevant stakeholders (the community and voluntary sector, and social partners) as and where relevant within a holistic model.

1.4. FYC Measure Objectives 2004 – 2006

In an evaluation of OAK Employment Service in 2003[4] the OAK Partnership identified the complex range of issues being presented by clients of the Partnership and the subsequent need for greater cross-measure collaboration to meet these needs. As a step towards providing a more cohesive and integrated approach, the OAK Partnership moved away from the traditional three-Measure model set out by Pobal by merging the CBYI and CD Measures into the single FYC Measure.

Arising the following objectives for FYC Measure were identified:
1. OAK Partnership will establish a Family, Youth and Community Support Working Group to develop and monitor the implementation of a range of integrated initiatives aimed at disadvantaged individuals and communities.
2. OAK Partnership staff will engage in outreach work in specific locations with individuals and groups to develop participation, establish local needs and undertake initial pre-development work in association with local development and state agencies.
3. OAK Partnership will provide specific training to individuals and groups to enhance their quality of life and improve their participation in decision-making roles. [During the 2004 – 2006 period this included parenting, personal development, volunteer support, leadership, facilitation, committee and management skills.]
4. OAK Partnership will implement a range of actions, which will encourage youth participation in innovative developmental programmes based in and out of school settings.

In delivering on the objectives of the FYC Measure the following principles were expressed[5]:
- Targeting resources on individuals and groups who experience the most extreme poverty and social exclusion;
- Actively promoting equality and in particular gender equality to achieve a more just and equal society;
- Applying community development approaches and principles to achieve the participation and full involvement of disadvantaged groups and communities in planning and decision making at every level;

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[4] Murphy, Phyllis (2003) *Evaluation of OAK Employment Service.*

[5] ADM, 'Local Development Social Inclusion Programme Guidelines 2000 – 2006'

- Promoting meaningful partnership to increase co-operation, co-ordination and effective decision making to address needs identified;
- Supporting integrated and multi - sectoral responses to exclusion that recognise the social and economic dimensions of exclusion;
- Developing mechanisms for mainstreaming lessons learned at local level and maximising their contribution to the policy making process.

1.5. Programme Continuity - NDP 2007 – 2013

Under the 2007-2013 National Development Plan €417 million is provided under the Local Development Social Inclusion Sub-Programme to support locally-based social inclusion measures. The Sub-Programme has a particular focus on supporting people and communities suffering disadvantage and exclusion through a wide spectrum of locally promoted actions. The alignment of local, community and rural development organisations leading to 'cohesed' overarching county-wide structures will enable the provision of the services to all persons, irrespective of location, with equal access to available services including employment, education and training opportunities.

Similar to the LDSIP 2000-2006, the Sub-Programme will aim to promote social inclusion and will contribute to achieving objectives under the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion. The new programme will have national coverage and will continue to target the most disadvantaged areas, groups and individuals, particularly those experiencing cumulative disadvantage. It will involve the provision of funds and support to 'cohesed' partnership companies to promote social inclusion at local level. Local actions delivered by the 'cohesed' partnership companies will complement and add value to other services.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

3.1. Introduction

This literature review seeks to outline, analyse and synthesise the research undertaken within the FYC Measure during the period 2000 - 2006, both from a national perspective undertaken by Pobal, and locally through the studies carried out by OAK Partnership. This review will contribute to the development of a more unified understanding of the FYC Measure. By synthesising the research outcomes, common findings can be extracted and framed within the context of the Measure.

3.2. Research and Evaluation Studies 2000 - 2006

Table 1: summary of Research Studies 2000 - 2006

Subject Area	Report Title	Commissioned By:	Author	Date
Community Based Youth Initiatives	Findings from Study on Family Involvement in Education	Pobal Planet –(The Partnerships Network)	Siobhan Phillips / Anne Eustace (Eustace Patterson).	2006
	Evaluation of the Millennium Partnership Fund	Higher Education Authority	Siobhan Phillips / Anne Eustace (Eustace Patterson).	2005
	Able to Learn: Including Disabled People within Education System	ADM (Now Pobal)	Jacqui Browne	2005
	Equality in Education: An Examination of Community Based Youth Initiatives Under the LDSIP.	ADM (Now Pobal)	Neil Haran	2003
	Submission to the Higher Education Authority regarding the Discussion paper 'Funding to Achieve Equity of Access to Higher Education'	OAK Partnership	Clare Duffy	2005

Subject Area	Report Title	Commissioned By:	Author	Date
	Submission to Dept. Education & Science School Planning Section on School Accommodation	OAK Partnership Offaly VEC	Clare Duffy	2004
	Early School Leaving in County Kildare	OAK Partnership Action South Kildare Kildare VEC HSE Kildare Youth Services Newbridge Community Training	Valerie Duffy / Colm Regan.	2003
	The Acorn Project Edenderry: An Interagency Approach to Youth at Risk.	Acorn Project OAK Partnership	Clare Duffy	2003
	Feasibility Study on Measuring the Impact of the Lifestart Programme in the Offaly & Kildare Region	Offaly & Kildare Lifestart Project	Centre for Social and Educational Research. DIT	2001
Community Development	Submission to the Taskforce on Active Citizenship	OAK Partnership, KELT North West Kildare CDP	Clare Duffy	2006
	Community Development within the LDSIP: A Framework to Guide the Community Development Measure.	ADM (Now Pobal)	Aiden Lloyd Eilin Geraghty	2005
	Age and Change: A Community Development Approach to Working with Older People	ADM (Now Pobal)	Barry Lynch	2005
	Submission to the Midland Regional Drugs Taskforce on Substance Misuse	OAK Partnership	Clare Duffy	2005
	Evaluation of the Carers-Care in the Home Programme	OAK Partnership / Carers Association	Clare Duffy	2006

3.3. Overview of Research and Evaluation Studies

Community Based Youth Initiative Studies

Findings from Study on Family Involvement in Education - **Siobhan Phillips / Anne Eustace 2006**

Family involvement is of pivotal importance to children's cognitive, emotional and social development. However a families' capacity to become involved is shaped by a number of economic and circumstantial factors, some of which can be most effectively remedied at community level. As such the research set out to identify and document effective models for the engagement of parents of educationally disadvantaged children who are among the target groups of the LDSIP and to highlight national educational policy in respect of parental involvement in education and specially parents from socio-economically disadvantaged areas.

Evaluation of the Millennium Partnership Fund for Disadvantage - **Siobhan Phillips / Anne Eustace 2005**

At the time of the evaluation, the Millennium Partnership Fund had been in operation for five years. In this context it was important to consider how the strategic utilisation of the fund at community level could be optimised for future years and into the next development phase. It was also important to reflect on the extent to which the fund had made a difference in relation to retention and participation in further and higher education. The evaluation also sought to contribute to the development of national policy on the role of communities in facilitating equity of access to higher education.

Able to Learn: Including Disabled People within Education System - **Jacqui Browne 2005.**

In 1998 ADM published 'Achieving the Inclusion of People with Disabilities within Integrated Local Development'. Following the success of that publication the ADM Equality Task Group decided to update it in 2002, this time addressing each of the Measures of the LDSIP independently. The document 'Able to Learn: Including People with disabilities within the Education System' is focussed on the Community Based Youth Initiatives Measure and was intended to support the full inclusion of disabled children and young people within the Measure.

Equality in Education: An Examination of Community Based Youth Initiatives Under the LDSIP - **Neil Haran 2003.**

This study, commissioned by ADM, involved the examination of work undertaken by 17 Partnerships and Community Groups to promote and achieve equality in education under the Community Based Youth Initiatives Measure of the LDSIP. The document outlines a qualitative process that led to the development of (a) CBYI strategies of participating

partnerships and community groups located along a continuum of equality strategies under the headings of equality of opportunity; equality of treatment; and equality of outcome. (b) the identification of good practice emerging from those strategies.

Submission to the Higher Education Authority regarding the Discussion paper 'Funding to Achieve Equity of Access to Higher Education' – **Clare Duffy 2005.**

The submission outlined the response of OAK Partnership to the discussion paper *'Funding to Achieve Equity of Access to Higher Education'* and was based on the Partnerships experience in supporting access to higher education through their administration of the Millennium Partnership Fund and the Adult Education Support Fund.

Submission to Dept. Education & Science School Planning Section on School Accommodation – **Clare Duffy 2004**

The submission was undertaken by OAK Partnership on behalf of Offaly VEC and outlined the feedback of local Primary and Second Level Schools as well as the views of other interested parties including second chance education initiatives, Offaly Vocational Education Committee and OAK Partnership Company. The document addresses key issues of concern regarding the draft development plan, reconfigures enrolment trends and details projected area development and enrolment projections for the period 2004 – 2010.

Early School Leaving in County Kildare **- Valerie Duffy /Colm Regan 2003**

The study assessed the extent of early school leaving in County Kildare and sought to capture the views of early school leavers, their parents and service providers to identify factors affecting young persons choice to leave school and the consequences of such a decision on the lives and life choices.

The Acorn Project: An Interagency Approach to Youth at Risk – **Clare Duffy 2003.**

The report presents the achievements of the Edenderry Early School Leavers Steering Committee. It outlines the history and background to the Acorn Project and seeks to inform understanding of the Acorn Project model of practice. This project focused on the needs of local young people and has evolved to become a much-valued support to youth at risk and early school leavers in Edenderry.

Feasibility Study on Measuring the Impact of the Lifestart Programme in the Offaly & Kildare Region - **Project Centre for Social and Educational Research (DIT) 2001.**

The study aimed to assess the feasibility of using standardised internationally recognised measurements to measure the impact of the Lifestart programme on children's development. More specifically the research aimed to establish criteria for measuring the social and educational development of participating and non-participating children and to develop instruments to assist with the evaluation of the project over time.

Community Development Studies

Facing the Facts: A Study of the Challenges Facing People Parenting Alone in North Offaly and North West Kildare **– Clare Duffy 2006**

The research was commissioned by OAK Partnership in response to their work with lone parents and their understanding of the increasing challenges faced by one-parent families. Focused on the areas of North Offaly and North West Kildare, the research was designed to inform and direct the efforts of those working with people parenting alone within the region, (including Government agencies, local employers, training providers and community and voluntary organisations), to assist them to develop policies and practices to promote a more inclusive, cohesive and sustainable society.

Submission to the Taskforce on Active Citizenship **– Clare Duffy 2006**

The submission outlined the collective feedback of the three commissioning organisations (OAK Partnership, KELT and North West Kildare CDP) as well as the views of those who attended a public consultation on Active Citizenship in North Kildare and North Offaly. The submission responded to the questions presented by the Taskforce on Active Citizenship in their consultation paper and to their invitation for feedback on the future of active citizenship within the region.

Community Development within the LDSIP: A Framework to Guide the Community Development Measure **- Aiden Lloyd & Eilin Geraghty 2005.**

The document was prepared at the mid-point of the 2001-2006 LDSIP and provided an objective description of the current status and direction of the LDSIPs Community Development Measure and presented a framework for the Measure for the 2004–2006 period.

Age and Change: A Community Development Approach to Working with Older People **– Barry Lynch 2005.**

The purpose of the study was to facilitate Partnerships and Community groups funded under the LDSIP, in planning and implementing a community development strategy for working with older people appropriate to their particular context. In particular, the study sought to provide useful information, insights and conceptual frameworks that will facilitate translations of the objective and principles of the LDSIP into an integrated and effective local community development strategy to address the needs, issues and concerns of older people.

Submission to the Midland Regional Drugs Taskforce on Substance Misuse – **Clare Duffy 2005.**

The submission to the Midland Regional Drugs Taskforce outlined the collective feedback of local agencies, employers and training programmes as well as the views of other interested stakeholders including schools, second chance education initiatives, the School Completions Programme and OAK Partnership. The document addresses key issues of concern regarding substance misuse within the North Offaly / North West Kildare region and presents a number of proposed actions which are needed to help address these issues.

Evaluation of the Carers Care in the Home Programme – **Clare Duffy 2005.**

The evaluation took the form of an open informal discussion, structured to examine three key questions: (1) To examine participants overall comments on the Care in the Home Programme and (2) To give carers the opportunity to make suggestions as to how the Programme could be improved for future participants and (3) To examine the future needs of the group and to assess how these needs might be supported by OAK Partnership or the Carers Association.
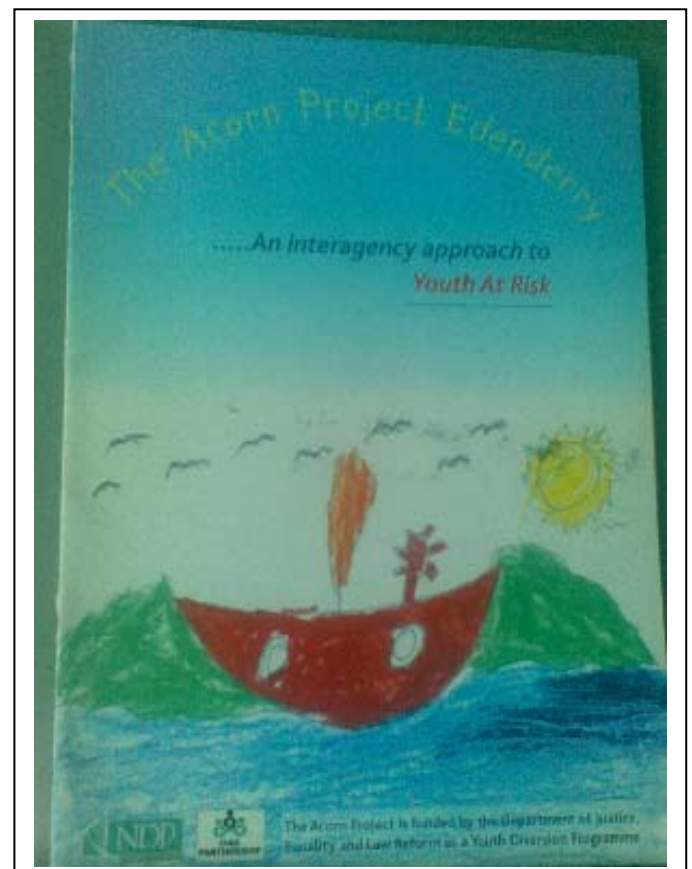
Table 2: Summary of Research Findings - Community Based Youth Initiative Studies

Report	Focus	Key Findings	Conclusions
Findings from Study on Family Involvement in Education - Siobhan Phillips / Anne Eustace 2006	Identified effective models for engagement of parents of educationally disadvantaged children and highlighted national educational policy in respect of parental involvement in education.	Factors underpinning successful approaches to parental involvement: i. Teacher, parent & social expectations. ii. Intensity of involvement & delivery. iii. Schools policy & practice. iv. Teacher training. v. Engaging hard-to-reach parents. vi. Parenting education programmes. vii. Family learning. viii. Home visiting programmes. ix. Working in Partnership.	Conclusions – Towards a Framework for Parent Involvement: i. Limitations of current structures and approaches i.e. limited system nationally for early identification of families at risk of educational disadvantage. ii. Need to improve the nature and quality of family involvement e.g. strong commitment to involve low-income and disadvantaged parents in activities to improve student achievement. iii. Intervention programme should become more systematic. iv. Institutions / agencies need to overcome territory and boundary type issues. v. Interventions should be targeted at those who are hard to reach or perceived to be at risk of educational underachievement. vi. Intervention programmes must be well funded.
Evaluation of the MPF (Millennium Partnership Fund) - Siobhan Phillips / Anne Eustace 2005	Evaluation of the Fund at community level and presents recommendations on how the Fund could be optimised in the future.	i. MPF has served an important function in supporting students from disadvantaged areas to attend further and higher education. ii. Significant potential to facilitate outreach and role modeling if further developed within a holistic strategy to combat educational disadvantage.	i. Data on drop out rates, progression and awards are not currently gathered. This data needs to be built into requirements and routinely tracked by managing agent. ii. The intended scope of the MPF implies that geographic boundary's issues should not arise. iii. Balance between the provision of financial and non-financial supports. iv. Fit with other supports e.g. need for a central database containing all grant sources being provided to beneficiaries as to improve impact analysis, decision making and guard against double funding or fraud. v. Administrative issues i.e. the fit of the MPF with the role and responsibilities of the Access Officer needs further clarification. vi. Model for the future i.e. potential tool for outreach and role modeling. vii. Scope of MPF needs to be aligned with the Action Groups vision of eligibility organisations and target groups. viii. Immediate need for early education interventions (preschool through to secondary) that prime less privileged children. ix. MPF should not exclude individuals who fit socio economic indices of disadvantage but fall outside a geographic area. x. The provision of information on all forms of students support needs to be improved.

Report	Focus	Key Findings	Conclusions
Able to Learn: Including Disabled People within Education System - Jacqui Browne 2005.	Guidelines to support the full inclusion of disabled children and young people within the CBYI Measure.	The legislative Framework for an Inclusive School: i. Admissions Policy ii. School Plan iii. Consultation with students iv. Contact between school, students, parents & community. v. Codes of behaviour. vi. Equal Status Act. vii. Accommodation & mainstreaming.	To be meaningful, inclusion involves changes in organisational structure and teaching methods – a whole school approach. This involves awareness, thinking through and planning. An inclusive school is one that: ▪ values diversity and the contribution of all pupils, ▪ Is flexible and responsive and, ▪ Supports teachers to provide what pupils need.
Equality in Education: An Examination of Community Based Youth Initiatives Under the LDSIP - Neil Haran 2003.	Examines the work undertaken by 17 Partnerships and Community Groups to promote equality in education under the Community Based Youth Initiatives Measure.	Emergent good model practices: i. Effective collaboration between Partnerships and schools. ii. Adopting a community development approach to project implementation. iii. Developing area based approaches in promoting equality in education. iv. Providing flexible, needs driven school and project based learning opportunities. v. Developing equal learning relationships. vi. Empowering parents in education. vii. The provision of in-service training to teacher on equality matters. viii. Undertaking research to identify the nature of services required to support young people at risk of educational underachievement.	For community based youth initiatives: ▪ Community based youth initiatives should seek to build effective collaborative strategies with key educational providers. ▪ Should adopt community development approaches. ▪ Develop local solutions to local problems. ▪ Provide flexible learning opportunities for young people at risk of educational underachievement. ▪ Engage in regular and comprehensive evaluation. For the LDSIP: ▪ Adopt the equality framework (outlined in the report) as a starting point the in LDSIP's thinking on equality in education. ▪ Develop an evaluation framework. ▪ Equality of outcomes should be overarching aim of all Partnership activity within the CBYI Measure. ▪ Recognise that the CBYI Measure alone cannot progress the achievement of equality of treatment or outcomes in education but must also rely on mainstream education providers. ▪ Need for national policy to recognise that the LDSIP is well placed to address the needs of disadvantaged communities and to acknowledge that the programme is making a significant contribution to equality in education. For school system: ▪ School system must respond positively to the challenges of managing change and accommodating diversity. ▪ Must look to Partnerships / community groups as a source of

Report	Focus	Key Findings	Conclusions
			support. ▪ Need for greater flexibility in the manner in which educational provision takes place. ▪ Must believe that children from disadvantaged communities have the potential to achieve within the system and must adjust provision accordingly.
Submission to the Higher Education Authority regarding the Discussion paper 'Funding to Achieve Equity of Access to Higher Education' – Clare Duffy 2005.	Partnership's response to the discussion paper *'Funding to Achieve Equity of Access to Higher Education'* and was based on the Partnerships experience of supporting access to higher education.	i. Importance of supporting part-time education initiatives e.g. mature students. ii. Childcare costs represent a major barrier to participation. iii. Any initiative must consider access, participation and retention. iv. There is a strong sense of under-developed potential in community-based initiative to achieve equity in access to education. v. Higher education institutions should be involved in outreach and pre-entry initiatives. However funding for such initiatives should be administered from within the community sector	Issues impacting on the achievement of equity within higher education: ▪ One-to-One Support ▪ Central Processing Unit ▪ European Social Fund (ESF) ▪ Students Outside Funding Boundaries ▪ Information Resources ▪ Access to Funding Information throughout Second Level ▪ Special Case Review System ▪ 'Tiered' Grant Support ▪ Multi Annual Funding ▪ Mentoring Support ▪ Further Education Links
Submission to Dept. Education & Science School Planning Section on School Accommodation – Clare Duffy 2004	Undertaken on behalf of Offaly VEC, the document addresses issues of concern regarding the draft development plan, reconfigures enrolment trends and details projected area development and enrolment projections for the period 2004 – 2010.	i. Demographic trends 1996 – 2002. ii. Interpretation of enrolment trends. iii. Exclusion of 4 primary schools within catchment Area. iv. Inaccurate recording of land zoned for residential development v. Plan does not take account of private residential development vi. Special needs provision.	i. Enrolment figures should be analysed for the period 1999 – 2004 when much of the development of the area took place rather than the period 1994 – 2004. In doing so enrolment within the areas Primary Schools shows an increase of 15% while Post Primary Schools enrolments have grown by 1%. ii. The Plan has excluded 4 Primary Schools that feed directly into both Edenderry secondary schools. Combined these 4 schools also show an increase in enrolments of 13 percent since 1999. iii. Land zoned for residential development in the immediate catchment area is almost three times the amount suggested in the Draft Area Development Plan. A total of 9992 acres have actually been zoned for development (not 351). iv. Parish baptism figures over the past 5 years show a 19 percent increase in baptisms during the period 1999 – 2003.

Report	Focus	Key Findings	Conclusions
Early School Leaving in County Kildare - Valerie Duffy /Colm Regan 2003	Assessed the extent of early school leaving in County Kildare and sought to capture the views of early school leavers, their parents and service providers.	Findings were catergorised as: 1. Qualitative Findings: ▪ School & curriculum ▪ Individual & family issues ▪ Social issues ▪ Health issues 2. Quantitative Findings ▪ Social Guarantees Register ▪ Progression after leaving school undocumented ▪ Lack of support for ESL's. ▪ Geographically areas identified as high risk of ESL. ▪	Conclusions & Recommendations: i. Establish Kildare Early School Leavers Task Group. ii. Lack of fundamentally necessary data on ESL. iii. Gaps and inconsistencies in ESL services provision. iv. Sharing research outcomes. v. Sharing information on currently available services. vi. Funding for proven effective interventions. vii. Extend the current Tracking & Mentoring Programme. viii. Effective implementation of Education Welfare Act. ix. School/community focused initiatives. x. Partnership involving community & statutory structures, initiatives and organisations. xi. Parenting programmes.
The Acorn Project: An Interagency Approach to Youth at Risk – Clare Duffy 2003.	Presents the history, background and achievements of the Acorn Project and sets out the Acorn framework for programme delivery.	The Acorn Project provides, by means of a multi agency approach, a range of educational and personal development support programmes to young people who are experiencing difficulties in school, home or social situations. This is achieved through the delivery of two key modules: Youth at Risk Module & Youth Development Module.	Recommendations ▪ Project integration with the formal education system. ▪ Professional development of staff within education system. ▪ Linkage with School completion Programme. ▪ Expansion of services to include drop-in facility. ▪ Access to funding. ▪ Provision of youth counsellor. ▪ Role of parents. ▪ Drugs awareness training. ▪ Compulsory court referrals.
Feasibility Study on Measuring the Impact of the Lifestart Programme in the Offaly & Kildare Region - Project Centre for Social and Educational Research (DIT) 2001.	Research aimed to establish criteria for measuring the social and educational development of children and to develop instruments to assist with the evaluation of the project over time.	Three measures were selected for pilot testing: Child Observation Record (COR), Family Day care Rating Scale (FDCRS) and Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment (HOME).	The authors recommended Lifestart undertake one of two larger studies: *Option A*: A pre and post-programme longitudinal study involving a sample of 100 families. *Option B:* A matched stratified sample approach involving an experiment group (75 families) who participate in the Lifestart Programme and a control group of 75 families who do not participate. Both studies would explore how Lifestart has facilitated changes on child development outcomes.

Table 3: Summary of Research Findings - Community Development

Report	Focus	Key Findings	Conclusions
Facing the Facts: A Study of the Challenges Facing People Parenting Alone in North Offaly and North West Kildare – Clare Duffy 2006	Research informed the work of organisations supporting people parenting alone and assisted them to develop practices which will promote a more inclusive, cohesive and sustainable society.	The research explored the six most fundamental issues identified by lone parents: 1. Financial - rights and entitlements 2. Childcare provision, availability and affordability 3. Access to Information 4. Training and employment options 5. Isolation, fear and loneliness 6. Negative Social Attitudes	*Financial Rights & Entitlements* ▪ Policy Reform: ▪ User-friendly Systems & Supports ▪ Welfare Flexibility ▪ Low Cost Credit Options *Childcare, Provision, Availability and Affordability* ▪ Community-based Childcare Provision ▪ Reimbursement of Childcare Costs ▪ OPFP Earnings Disregard ▪ Access to Childcare *Access to Information and Resources* ▪ Outreach Information Centres ▪ Promotion of Information Services *Training and Employment Options* ▪ Provision of Affordable Childcare ▪ Promotion of Life-Lone Learning ▪ Removal of Disincentives to Employment *Isolation, Fear and Loneliness* ▪ Lone Parent Support Group ▪ Involvement at a Local Level *Negative Social Attitudes* ▪ Agency Attitudes / Societal Attitudes
Submission to the Taskforce on Active Citizenship – Clare Duffy 2006	Outlined the feedback of OAK Partnership, KELT and North West Kildare CDP on the future of active citizenship within the region.	The consultations explored six of the nineteen questions suggested by the Taskforce on Active Citizenship.	Recommendations were presented under the headings: ▪ What does it mean to be an 'active citizen'? ▪ How can people be encouraged to be more active citizens? ▪ How can active citizenship help include newcomers? ▪ How can we develop a sense of active citizenship amongst young people? ▪ What type of supports do communities require? ▪ What are the challenges in establishing and running a community/voluntary organisation?

Report	Focus	Key Findings	Conclusions
Community Development within the LDSIP: A Framework to Guide the Measure - Aiden Lloyd & Eilin Geraghty 2005.	A description of the current status and direction of the CD Measure and presented a framework for the Measure for the 2004–2006 period.	Future direction of the CD Measure: Objective 1: Equality of formal rights, opportunities and access. Objective 2: Equality of participation. Objective 3: Equality of outcome. Objective 4: Equality of condition.	The conceptual framework: ▪ Improved targeting ▪ Full participation ▪ Strategic focus on social change ▪ Strengthened focus in rural area.
Age and Change: A Community Development Approach to Working with Older People – Barry Lynch 2005.	Conceptual framework that will facilitate translations of the objective and principles of the LDSIP into an integrated local CD strategy to address the needs of older people.	Key CD principles underpinning pre-development work with older people: ▪ Consultation ▪ Participation ▪ Ownership ▪ Inclusion ▪ Partnership	Recommended steps to formulate a strategy ▪ Preliminary map of the context ▪ Consultation ▪ Vision building ▪ Capacity building ▪ Information & communication ▪ Networking ▪ Influencing policy.
Submission to the Midland Regional Drugs Taskforce on Substance Misuse – Clare Duffy 2005.	The submission addressed key issues regarding substance misuse within the North Offaly and North West Kildare and presents a number of proposed actions needed to help address these issues.	Findings reflected the four pillars as outlined in the National Drugs Strategy: *Supply Reduction* ▪ Access / Availability of Alcohol and Illegal Substances ▪ Governing Supply – Role of the Gardai ▪ Judicial and Legislative Issues *Prevention* ▪ Provision of recreational activities ▪ Parental role in prevention ▪ Education ▪ Awareness *Treatment* ▪ Treatment & rehabilitation services *Research* ▪ Lack of understanding of drugs issues.	Recommendations: <u>Supply Reduction</u> ▪ Gardai given the resources to employ new strategies for drug detection and supply reduction. ▪ Establish a dedicated drugs task group within the North Offaly North West Kildare region. <u>Prevention</u> ▪ Improve the facilities and recreational activities available to young people living within North Offaly and North West Kildare. ▪ Community & parental educational programmes on drugs. ▪ Drugs awareness campaign. ▪ Representation on MRDTF should be extended to include those with direct experience of drug related issues. <u>Treatment</u> ▪ Comprehensive treatment and rehabilitation services within the midland region to recovering drug users. ▪ Treatment and rehabilitation process should be integrated and community employment and social economy employment should be a means to full employment or an objective in its own

Report	Focus	Key Findings	Conclusions
			right for all rehabilitated addicts. ▪ Substance Misuse Action Plan <u>Research</u> ▪ Undertake research highlighting the level of drug misuse within the region to develop a fuller understanding of the extent of the problem and enable the local community to undertake more targeted responses.
Evaluation of the Carers Care in the Home Programme – Clare Duffy 2005.	Examined participants overall comments on the Care in the Home Programme and examined the future support needs of the group.	Key findings related to: ▪ Communications and Stress Management ▪ Training on coping with bereavement and the terminally ill ▪ First Aid ▪ District Nurse ▪ Manual Handling	Recommendations: ▪ Follow-up Care in the Home Programme ▪ Special Needs Caring Programme ▪ Carer Support Group ▪ Follow-up contact from OAK and the Carers Association:

3.4. Emergent Findings

A review of the research undertaken across the Community Development and Community Based Youth Initiative Measures by ADM/Pobal and OAK Partnership does not highlight any significant commonality in report findings (as was the case in the literature review undertaken within the Services for the Unemployed Measure) but rather raises a number of important considerations, namely:

- The research and evaluation studies that have been undertaken to date have tended to examine only specific aspects or initiatives of the CD and CBYI Measures separately. Arising it not appropriate to distill learning for the FYC Measure as a whole. This finding should be understood within the context of the imminent change of the area partnership to a new county-wide structure combining all local development agencies through the cohesion process. This policy and practice change was not expected when the FYC measure was established.

- While the FYC Measure was formed in 2003, Pobal required that reporting mechanisms (SCOPE, Programme of Activities, Progress Reports, etc) continue to focus on the separate Measures of CBYI and CD. This has meant that while the Partnership now operates under the new FYC Measure, reporting and research has continued to be documented under the separate CBYI and CD Measures.

- The LDSIP guidelines state that community development principles are key in the implementation of the LDSIP at local level[6]. However, to date the Partnership has not undertaken any review of its community development practices to establish their impact and effectiveness or to develop models of best practice.

- While it is generally accepted that the nature of community development makes it difficult to capture quantitative outcomes, the SCOPE system does not provide an accurate reflection of the extent of work undertaken by the CD Measure. By enumerating only the number of groups supported important information on the supports provided to individuals is ignored.

In light of these issues it is difficult to glean common findings & conclusions for FYC Measure as a whole.

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[6] Local Development Social Inclusion Programme Guidelines 2000 – 2006.

Chapter 3 – Family, Youth and Community Support Measure: Model of Programme Delivery

4.1. Family, Youth and Community Support Measure

The formation of the FYC Measure in 2003 marked the development of an innovative strategic approach by the OAK Partnership. The merging of CBYI and CD Measures into the single strand FYC Measure allowed the OAK Partnership to offer streamlined supports and services as well as improving communication between OAK Partnership staff working within the Measure.

This new FYC Measure focused on the needs of disadvantaged families and individuals who were not engaged in the capacity building work of OAK Partnership or state agencies. A fundamental element of the focus of FYC therefore was pre-development work. This included outreach work and small group work, tailored to address the needs identified through one-to-one contact with individuals.

Benefits of Creating a Single Strand FYC Measure

⇒   Improved communication

⇒   Collaborative working

⇒   Streamlined services and supports

⇒   Person centred, holistic approach

⇒   Improved client referral

Chart 1 illustrates the initiatives, actions and networks supported by the FYC Measure during 2003 – 2006. The diagram categorises the Measures work into three distinct areas:

⇒ Education Development.

⇒ Community Development.

⇒ Youth Development.

The overlapping areas of the circles reflect *collaborative work* and joint actions shared across one or more of the categories. These include:

⇒ Education Development / Community Development Actions.

⇒ Education Development / Youth Development Actions.

⇒ Community Development / Youth Development Actions.

⇒ Community Development / Education Development / Youth Development Actions.

Chart 1: FYC Model of Programme Delivery
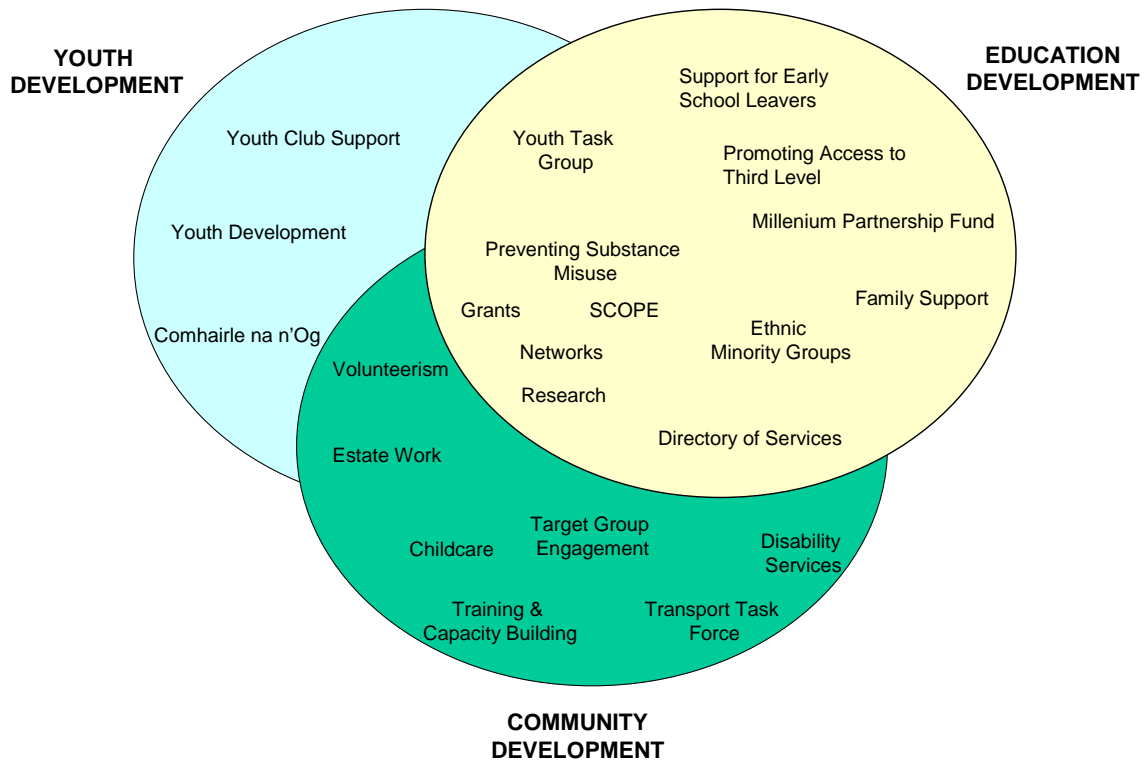
The following section of the report will examine the FYC model of programme delivery using the areas of work and actions outlined in Chart 1.

4.2. FYC Model of Programme Delivery 2003 - 2006

4.2.1. Education Development

Education Development is concerned with initiatives that enhance the social, personal and educational development of young people, (especially disadvantaged young people) and adults seeking to return to education. Projects under this measure are also concerned with putting in place initiatives that work with young people who have left school early or are at risk of doing so. Many of the actions are aimed at providing a range of community based education and youth development opportunities from early years through to adulthood.

During 2003 - -2006, Educational Development has included the following actions:
   i.   Support for Early School Leaving
   ii.   Promoting Access to Third Level
   iii. Millennium Partnership Fund
   iv.   Family Support

i. Support for Early School Leaving

It is estimated that up to 21% of our young people leave school early without completing their Leaving Certificate. Many of these students actually leave before they complete their Junior Certificate and more than 1,000 children nationally do not transfer from primary to post primary schools. Actions to support early school leavers form an important part the Partnerships Education Development work and are aimed at providing a proactive response to the needs of early school leavers and other young people who were experiencing various forms of social exclusion by assisting them to return to education or supporting them through alternative second chance education initiatives.

The Partnerships actions to support early school leaving fall under one of two strands:
⇒ Actions to support *potential* early school leavers
⇒ Actions to support *actual* early school leavers

Supports for potential early school leavers include actions that help young people who are underachieving within the formal education system, after school groups, homework clubs, summer programmes and day trips. A Progression Support Fund is also available for once-off supports for young people to assist them in staying in school.

Actions to support actual early school leavers are delivered through the following actions:
▪ Acorn Project
▪ Kildare Tracking and Mentoring Programme
▪ Kildare Early School Leavers Task Group

Acorn Project

The Acorn Project is a Youth Diversion Project funded by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform that works with young people at risk. In 1999 an inter-agency committee came together to tackle the issue of early school leaving in Edenderry. In mid 1999, OAK Partnership agreed to provide funding on a temporary basis to initiate the proposed Early School Leaving Programme. While a pilot initiative to deal with early school leaving was underway, the Steering Committee submitted an application for the Dept of Justice, Equality and Law Reform for funding under its Youth Diversion Programme. In November 2001, following a successful application, the Edenderry Acorn Project was established. OAK Partnership continues to support the Acorn Project on an annual basis by providing representation on the local Advisory Committee and through grant support for new and innovative elements of the project each year.

Kildare Tracking & Mentoring Project

The Tracking and Mentoring project, based in North West Kildare, is an inter-agency initiative led by Kildare Youth Services. The project (known nationally as the Pathways Programme) aims to guide and empower young people who have left school early, or are in danger of doing so, to explore and make meaningful choices from the full range of options available to them. OAK Partnership have supported the project since 1997. Initially support was non-financial, provided through the Education Coordinators representation on the Advisory Committee. However, since 2005 OAK Partnership has become a key funder of the project.

Kildare Early School Leavers Task Group

The Kildare Early School Leavers Task Group was established in 2004 following the publication of the report *Early School Leaving in County Kildare*[7]. The research indicated that there needed to be a more cohesive and integrated approach to addressing early school leaving involving young people, schools, parents and communities. The Kildare Early School Leaver Task Group have a specific role to encourage a coherent approach between statutory and voluntary sectors. In addition the Task Group lobby on early school leaving issues and work to promote how best the education system might serve the needs of early school leavers. The Partnership is represented on the Kildare Early School Leavers Task Group by the Education Coordinator.

ii. Promoting Access to Third Level

Actions to promote access to third level education were established by the Partnership to help maximise the opportunities of certain target groups to access further and higher education and as a consequence to participate fully in the economy, in employment and society through the acquisition of the necessary skills and qualifications. The development of third level access initiatives has promoted the participation of students with disabilities, students from disadvantaged backgrounds, including those from the Traveller community, ethnic minorities and mature "second chance" students, in third-level and further education courses.

The FYC Measure promotes access to third level through two strands of work:
- Information and guidance
- Offaly Outreach Education Project

Information and Advice

OAK Partnership have underpinned the widely shared ideology of lifelong learning through their commitment to supporting individuals seeking access to third level education. This is achieved in part through the provision of one to one information and advice services with the Partnership's Education Coordinator.

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[7] The report was commissioned by an ad-hoc interagency committee consisting of representatives from OAK Partnership, Kildare VEC, HSE, Kildare youth Service, FAS and Kildare Community Partnership.

Offaly Outreach Education Project

In March 2006 Offaly Outreach Education Project (in association with OAK Partnership, West Offaly Partnership, Tullamore Wider Options and Offaly VEC) was successful in its tender to become the Higher Education Authority Community Based Equity of Access Rural Pilot Project. The Project aims to achieve equity of access to higher education for under represented groups in the County, including Travellers, people with disabilities, mature students and students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Partnership has provided ongoing support for the Project through the Employment Service Coordinators representation on the Offaly Life Long Learning Committee. The Education Coordinator also works closely with the Coordinator of Offaly Outreach Education Project and supports the implementation of actions in promoting access to higher education. In October 2006 the Partnership completed a study on behalf of the Project that identified a set of base-level indicators used to assess progress towards agreed goals, both during and on completion of the Projects three-year timescale.

iii. Millennium Partnership Fund

Achieving an equitable education system has been a priority for the Irish State for over a decade. Three government white papers on education (1995, 1999, 2000), as well as a range of other national policy documents, legislation and funding programmes (including the NDP and European Structural Funding) have underpinned the commitment of the State to the objective of tackling social inclusion through education as well as the wider goal of supporting lifelong learning. Through their administration of the Millenium Partnership Fund, OAK Partnership have supported students from disadvantaged areas with regard to retention and participation in further or higher education courses. Funding is allocated on a competitive year-to-year basis to the Partnership through Pobal. Since first administering the Millennium Partnership Fund in 2001/2002, OAK Partnership have distributed a total of €210,197 in grant funding and have supported 248 individuals (exc 2001/2002) who have benefited from the financial and /or non-financial support of the Fund.

iv. Family Support Services

Family support services refer to the range of provisions developed to promote the welfare of children and families in their own homes and communities. These services are provided to particularly vulnerable families and often include pre-school, parental education, development, and support activities, as well as family visiting schemes and youth education and training projects. Family support services are provided through the FYC Measures support of the following initiatives.

Offaly and Kildare Lifestart

Lifestart is an early intervention programme designed to assist parents to play an active role in their child's development. This home-based educational programme for parents and guardians of children aged up to 5 years, addresses the physical, intellectual, emotional and social development of the child. In 1997 OAK Partnership established the project in collaboration with Offaly VEC. While the project now receives mainstream funding from Kildare and Offaly VEC's, the HSE and FAS, the OAK Partnership continues to support the project through representation on the project Board of Directors.

Parenting Programmes

During 2003, the Partnership received funding from DSFA to deliver a series of Lone Parent Programmes in Edenderry, Daingean and Portarlington. In 2003, following completion of the Parenting Programmes, OAK Partnership (through the Lone Parent Working Group) agreed to provide funding for the employment of a full time Family Support Worker, with Barnardos in Edenderry acting as the employer. The position had a particular focus on the development and delivery of targeted programmes to children, young people and families and achieving effective working relationships with relevant statutory, voluntary and community groups in the provision of family support services. This pilot initiative ended when the Family Support Worker left the position after a short time to take up alternative employment.

4.2.2. Community Development

Community Development actions relate to the funding and administration of a range of programmes of support so that socially excluded groups and local communities can be active participants in identifying and meeting their own development needs, working alongside the Statutory Agencies and others involved in local development initiatives.

During 2003 – 2006 Community Development has included the following actions:

   i.   Target Group Engagement
  ii.   Training and Capacity Building
 iii.   Transport Task Force
 iv.   Childcare
  v.   Disability Services

i. Target Group Engagement

Community development is centrally hinged on target group participation. By delivering a range of target group-specific actions, community development has built and enhanced the capacity of the most marginalised to participate in responses specific to their needs and has added significant value to other social and economic actions aimed at the target groups.

The following actions are examples of target group specific initiatives undertaken by the FYC Measure.

- The Fir Project
- Older Peoples Forum
- Care in the Home Training Programme

Fir Project

The Fir Project was a 16-week training programme for disadvantaged men aged 18-30 years. The aim of the Project was to engage a group of disadvantaged men in group discussion, activities and training in order to build their belief in themselves, their skills in dealing with other people, and to help them feel included in the community. Two separate programmes were delivered. The first Project ran from November 2004 until April 2005 with a second one running from February until May 2007. The project was based in Edenderry and participants came primarily from the town and surrounding area.

Older People

The Partnership has a range of actions to support older people. Consultations take place annually with representatives from older persons groups to identify current needs and issues affecting older people. In 2005 the Partnership hosted an information seminar based on a partnership approach between voluntary, and statutory organisations and all those involved in providing information and services to older people. The Partnership's Community Development Workers also provide ongoing support to older persons' groups in the completion of application forms, sourcing and applying for funding, sourcing training, and the provision supports for older people.

Care in the Home Training Programme

The *Care in the Home* Programme was a 26-week training course aimed at providing support and guidance for carers, home respite workers and those interested in working as a carer on the practical aspects of caring. The programme, which was jointly funded by the Carers Association, the Dept. of Social and Family Affairs, HSE, Midland Region and OAK Partnership, was delivered in the offices of OAK Partnership to 14 participants from November to June 2006.

ii. Training and Capacity Building

Capacity building is an ongoing process through which individuals and groups enhance their ability to identify and meet development challenges. The Partnership's role is to facilitate this learning through the provision and delivery of training programmes aimed at enhancing the capacity of community groups and supporting individuals in acquiring new skills. The Partnership achieved this through the provision of the following training programmes:

Committee Skills Training

Committee Skills Training is a FETAC approved[8] training programme developed by OAK Partnership to assist groups to develop the skills necessary to improve group structures within their own organisation and to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to increase the effectiveness of committee meetings and of committees officers. Since 2000 the Partnership have delivered Committee Skills Training to 13 voluntary and community groups throughout the region, including:

- Churchview Heights /Clonmullen Residents Association, Edenderry
- Edenderry Parent & Toddler Group
- OAK area clubs & organisations
- Cloncollig Community Development Committee
- Residents of Tara Crescent, Tullamore
- Clara voluntary and community groups
- Greenwood Park / Fairgreen Residents Committee (conjunction with Edenderry CDP)
- Robertstown Parents Association
- Robertstown Parents and Toddler Group
- Prosperous Residents Group
- Daingean Sports Complex Committee
- Edenderry American Flag Club
- Edenderry District Disability Society

In 2007 the Partnership delivered a 'Train the Trainers' course for agencies representative interested in delivering Committee Skills Training in their local areas.

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[8] FETAC granted approval for the Committee Skills Training Programme in 2007.

Anti-Racism Awareness Programme

In 2006, staff from the FYC Measure completed National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) training on anti-racism and intercultural awareness. This programme enabled the Partnership to deliver this training to local community and voluntary groups. Groups to whom the Partnership delivered Anti-Racism Awareness Training include:

- Business Development Programme
- Joblink
- Allenwood Foundations for Employment Programme
- Carers Care in the Home Training Programme.

iii. Transport Working Group

Arising from the recommendations of the transport conference hosted by OAK Partnership, a Transport Working Group was established in September 2000 involving community, statutory and private interests, with the aim of coordinating a partnership approach to addressing the transport needs of isolated communities in North Offaly and North West Kildare. As such the Partnership sought approval for a Rural Transport Initiative (RTI) for the region. The consultative process undertaken in the preparation of the RTI proposal involved substantial needs assessment among the communities living within the Partnership area. Research was undertaken in area profiling, consultations with statutory agencies, service providers and target groups. RTI funding was received and the OK Community Transport Project was launched. Since then, Community Development Workers have continued to support the Project through ongoing consultations with target groups in assessing their transport needs.

iv. Childcare

In working with disadvantaged families the OAK Partnership has focused its childcare development work on the provision of affordable childcare as well as supporting an increase in the range of services provided within the childcare sector in the North West Kildare / North Offaly area. The Partnership had employed a full-time Childcare Worker until 2003 when the County Childcare Committees were established. Since then the Partnership has continued its close linkages with the County Childcare Committees in the implementation of their Action Plans.

Since 2000, the Partnership has undertaken a range of childcare actions including:

- Childcare Needs Analysis Study
- Offaly Childcare Conference
- Training Programmes
- Service Providers Network
- Ongoing Support for County Childcare Committees
- Support for funding application s under Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme.

v. Disability Services

In 2004, OAK Partnership and the Midland Health Board (now the HSE Midland Region) commissioned a study to examine the feasibility of establishing a Disability Resource Centre in Edenderry for people with physical/sensory disabilities. The study recommended that the Centre should be established and could be expanded to act as a resource venue for other areas of care. Following this recommendation, the MHB provided funding to OAK Partnership for the employment of a Disability Services Project Worker. However, the Disability Resource Centre itself was never established.

Since their employment in 2005, the Disability Services Project Worker has supported persons with physical and sensory disabilities and service providers to improve access to social, education and personal development programmes. The supports offered include:

- one-to-one advice and guidance
- occupational therapy
- training/education supports
- Chiropody services
- Day trips & social outings.

The Disability Services Worker has also supported the establishment of the Edenderry District Disability Service (EDDS) - a support group for persons with a disability who promote the development of services for people with disabilities in the region. In 2008, following the success of a ten-week training programme for clients with disabilities, the Partnership launched *The Club* – an informal meeting place for clients who wish to pursue a range of personal and social development modules.

Since December 2007 the HSE no longer provide funding for the Disability Services Worker. The position was then fully funded by OAK Partnership.

4.2.3. Youth Development

Youth development is the process through which young people acquire the cognitive, social, and emotional skills required to navigate life. Within the Youth Work Act 2001, youth work is defined as a planned programme of education designed for the purpose of aiding and enhancing the personal and social development of young persons through their voluntary participation. Youth work is complementary to their formal, academic or vocational education and training; and is provided primarily by voluntary youth work organisations.

Traditionally the OAK Partnership delivered Youth Development actions under the Community Based Youth Initiative strand of the LDSIP. However, in 2003 the Partnership (with funding

from the HSE Midland Region) employed a full-time Youth Development Worker[9]. A key function of the position was to provide a support service for voluntary organisations working with young people. A Youth Task Group was established to oversee the Partnerships Youth Development actions. Youth Development actions have focused in three main areas:

   i.   Youth Club Support
   ii.   Comhairle na n'Og
   iii.   Youth Development

i. Youth Club Support

A significant focus of the Youth Development Workers role is to facilitate local groups to establish youth clubs, providing a safe, accessible place for young people to meet and participate voluntarily.   The approach taken by the worker was to involve young people in the planning and development of the youth club with the support and guidance of adult leaders. In assisting groups to establish youth clubs, the Youth Development Worker provided information and advice, helped source Leadership Skills Training for adult volunteers and provided small grants towards the establishment of the club. Since 2003 the following areas have been supported by the OAK Partnership in setting up youth clubs:

- Daingean
- Ballinagar
- Derrinturn
- Geashill
- Rathangan
- Edenderry

ii. Comhairle na n'Og

Comhairle na nÓg were set up under the National Children's Strategy in the 34 City and County Development Boards throughout the country, to give children and young people a voice in the development of local services and policies. Issues are selected and debated at a local level and nominees are selected to represent the views emerging from the County Comhairle at the National Youth Parliament or Dáil na nÓg.   The Youth Development Worker represents OAK Partnership on the Offaly Comhairle na n'Og and have supported their work though the organisation of local youth fora and the selection of local nominees to participate on Dáil na nÓg.

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[9] Since 2007, when Kildare Youth Services employed a part-time Youth Worker for North East Kildare, OAK Partnerships Youth Development Worker has worked only in County Offaly.

iii. Youth Development

In addition to the support given to youth clubs and Comhairle na n'Og, the Partnership also provide ongoing advocacy and intermediary assistance to young people and their families, particularly those not currently involved with any other service. These supports include referral to specialist services, awareness building, training and development and advocacy services. In doing so, the OAK Partnership support disadvantaged young people in integrating with existing services, and assist them in building the skills and competencies that allow them to function and contribute in their daily lives.

COLLABORATIVE ACTIONS

4.2.4. Education Development / Community Development Actions

Collaborative actions shared across Education Development and Community Development include:

    i.   Support for Ethnic Minority Groups

    ii.   Directory of Services

i. Support for Ethnic Minority Groups

Cultural diversity has become an increasingly visible aspect of Irish society bringing with it both opportunities and challenges. While it holds immense possibilities for the enrichment of our community, it also challenges the FYC Measure to adapt creatively to the changes required to realise this potential and to ensure that the experience is a positive one for all, particularly for those in minority ethnic groups. The FYC Measure has provided a range of capacity building and information supports for ethnic minority groups to assist their integration and participation within the local community. Many of these actions have been joint initiatives offered in collaboration with other local agencies.

Since 2003, the following supports and initiatives have been provided:

- Information evening for ethnic minority groups.
- International Food & Street Festival (in conjunction with Edenderry CDP).
- Directory of Services (in conjunction with Edenderry CDP).
- English classes (in conjunction with Offaly VEC).
- Representation on Offaly CDB Ethnic Minority Sub Group.
- Jobs Club for Nigerian Women Seeking Employment.

ii. Directory of Services

In October 2006, OAK Partnership and Edenderry CDP launched a Directory of Services booklet. The directory was collated to help newcomers to Edenderry familiarise themselves with the services available locally and to encourage their integration and participation in local activities. The Directory was also translated into Polish and Lithuanian for non-Irish nationals

living locally. A total of 6000 directories were distributed through local community groups, organisations, schools and the Citizens Information Centre.

4.2.5. Education Development / Youth Development Actions
Education Development and Youth Development collaborate on the Youth Task Force action.

i. Youth Task Force
The Youth Task Group was established in September 2004 to oversee the implementation of OAK Partnership's strategy to coordinate youth based activities. The purpose of the Task Group is to develop and monitor actions relevant to particular strategic objectives. The working group also work alongside other organisations and community groups supporting youth at risk to identify gaps in service provision and work towards addressing these gaps by identifying actions that can be jointly funded through interagency collaboration. One of the main responsibilities of the Youth Task Group is to provide support to the Youth Development Worker. The Youth Task Group is led by OAK Partnership with membership from Kildare Youth Services, Midland Regional Youth Services, Foroige, Kildare VEC, Kildare County Council, North West Kildare Community Development Association, Barnardos, Acorn Project, an Gardai Siochanna, Edenderry School Completion Project, Tullamore Community Care and North Offaly Development Group.

4.2.6. Community Development / Youth Development Actions
Collaborative actions between Community Development and Youth Development include:
i.   Estate Work
ii. Volunteerism

i. Estate Work
OAK Partnership recognises the importance of resident participation in estate management and commit to work collaboratively with residents in local authority estates to promote greater community spirit, active citizenship and pride in their local area. Actions supporting local authority estates have focused on Churchview Heights (Edenderry), Ashgrove (Derrinturn) and St Patrick's Park (Rathangan).

The pre-development work which was carried out by the Partnership within these targeted communities included:
- Organise local community building activities/projects and showcase local talents.
- Promote 'Celebration of Community' activities.
- Build relationships within the community.
- Provide opportunities for people to volunteer.
- Enhance community spirit and pride.
- Change how people living within the estates view their community.

- Provide grant support and assistance in sourcing funding.
- Capacity building training including training in Committee Skills.

Examples of Community Building Actions Supported

$\Rightarrow$ International Food & Street Festival

$\Rightarrow$ Pride of Place Competition

$\Rightarrow$ Clean up Days

$\Rightarrow$ Homework Clubs

$\Rightarrow$ Community Cabin

$\Rightarrow$ Committee Skills Training

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ii. Volunteerism

OAK Partnership is committed to supporting and promoting volunteerism while advancing public understanding of the vital role played by local volunteers and voluntary organizations. The Partnerships work in supporting volunteerism can be categorised into two areas:

Supporting Existing Volunteers

The OAK Partnership has hosted numerous events to celebrate and promote the valuable work undertaken by local volunteers. Events have included a Celebration of Volunteerism evening, quiz nights, information seminars and the delivery of Committee Skills and Youth Leadership training. The Partnership has also hosted the Patrick Fay Citizenship Awards, an accolade that recognises the hard work and outstanding achievements of individuals and voluntary groups within their local communities. The Patick Fay Award was established by OAK Partnership in 2003 to commemorate the outstanding voluntary work undertaken by their late Chairman Mr. Patrick Fay. The Board of OAK Partnership have made these awards an annual event as part of the Partnership's contribution to the support of voluntary work in North Offaly and North West Kildare.

Promoting Volunteerism

In 2006 OAK Partnership hosted a Volunteerism Week, aimed at promoting and encouraging greater volunteer participation. The events which took place throughout the OAK region from 24th – 28th September, included a Volunteering Information Session in St. Mary's Secondary School, Committee Skills Training Blitz, Volunteering Table Quiz evening and a Volunteer Companion Event. The Partnership also sponsored an advertisiment in local newspapers inviting people to volunteer with local organisations needing their support.

4.2.7. Community Development / Education Development / Youth Development Actions

Collaborative actions involving all three strands of the FYC Measure (Education, Youth and Community Development) include:

  i.   Preventing Substance Misuse
  ii. Grant Supports
  iii. Scope
  iv. Networks
  v.   Research

i.   Preventing Substance Misuse

OAK Partnership's actions to prevent substance misuse are designed to help young people to make healthy choices, particularly in relation to legal and illegal drugs and to prevent substance misuse. Preventing substance misuse is complex and no single group has the solution to this increasing problem. OAK Partnership works in a cooperative way with the HSE, Gardai, parents and local communities to address substance misuse. Initiative supported include:

⇒   Midland Regional Drugs Task Force

⇒   Edenderry Addressing Substance Misuse

Midland Regional Drugs Task Force

The Midlands Regional Drugs Task Force (MRDTF) was established in 2003 and is the responsible body for tackling the issues associated with illicit drug use in the Midland Region,

covering the counties Laois, Offaly, Longford and Westmeath. The role of the Task Force is to research, develop, implement and monitor a co-ordinated response to illicit drug use at regional level based on best evidence of what is effective. This is achieved through a partnership approach involving the statutory, voluntary and community sectors. OAK Partnership supports the MRDTF through the representation of the Education Coordinator on the MRDTF Board and Education Committee, and the Research and Evaluation Officer's representation on the Research Advisory Committee.

Edenderry Addressing Substance Misuse

Edenderry Addressing Substance Misuse (EASA) is a community group, formed in 2006, to raise awareness of the issues associated with substance misuse and to source relevant information and support for drug users and their families in the Edenderry area. The group works in partnership with community, voluntary and statutory representatives under the framework of the National Drugs Strategy Plan 2001-2008. The group also works in conjunction with the MRDTF to raise awareness of the issues associated with drugs, to support substance misuse prevention initiatives, identify gaps in service provision and lobby for new services to meet the needs identified. Since its launch the group have been successfull in launching a number of initiatives, including:

- **Family Support Network**: EASA facilitated the establishment of a local Family Support Network that meets weekly in the Barnardos Family Centre to provide a space for parents and families of substance misusers to come together and share experiences.
- **Drugs and Alcohol Awareness Week:** Hosted during October 2007 the weeklong event included workshops, public talks, substance misuse information sessions, a soccer tournament and youth disco.
- **Telephone Helpline:** A telephone helpline was launched for individuals directly or indirectly affected by substance misuse.
- **Community Drug Research**[10]: Edenderry was selected for inclusion in research to be undertaken by the HRB into community drug use in the midland region.

ii. Grant Supports

The FYC Measure offers a range of grant schemes to local community and voluntary organisations. These grants have included:

- **Community Grants Scheme**: Including Community Infrastructure, Older Persons and Women's Group grants. Grants are available to groups that promote social inclusion and seek to improve the quality of life in local communities.
- **Progression Support Fund**: Provides assistance to clients facing financial barriers to progression opportunities.

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[10] The research has been commissioned by the MRDTF.

- **Project Support Fund**: Grant support to enable local community and voluntary groups to establish or develop projects that will contribute to the enhancement of the quality of life of members of the local community.
- **Millennium Partnership Fund**: Distributed by the Partnership on behalf of Pobal, the Millennium Partnership Fund supports students from disadvantaged areas with regard to retention and participation in Further and Higher Education courses.
- **Third Level Grants:** Provides special–case assistance to third level students who do not qualify for funding under the Millennium Partnership Fund.

iii. SCOPE

Systems for Coordinated Programme Evaluation (SCOPE) is an integrated approach to programme monitoring and evaluation, capturing the quantitative dimensions of the LDSIP Programme. This 'on-line' database was developed to facilitate ADM/Pobal and Area Partnerships in setting targets at national and local level and reporting on the outputs and results achieved. The SCOPE database is a centralised system located in ADM/Pobal head office to which all Partnerships have access locally. Each quarter Partnership staff must enter details of the work undertaken locally with regard to key performance indicators e.g. Number of Groups Supported, Early Schools Leaving Initiatives Supported, etc. Actions for the FYC Measure are recorded under the traditional LDSIP Measures of Community Development and Community Based Youth Initiatives.

iv. Networks & Collaboration

An important aspect of the Partnership work is the support given to local networks and committees in supporting the delivery of integrated actions and to ensure that resources directed at tackling social exclusion are well coordinated and effectively targeted. Table 4 provides a summary of the networks and committees supported by FYC staff.

Table 4: Networks Supported

Community Development Worker	Education Officer	Youth Worker	Disability Resource Worker
Carers Training Support Programme	Edenderry Against Substance Abuse	Youth Task Force	Edenderry District Disability Society
	Midland Regional Drugs Taskforce	Comhairle na nOg	Carers Association
	Board of the Acorn Project	Edenderry Against Substance Abuse	Centre for Independent Living
			Irish Wheelchair Association

The extent of interagency collaboration between FYC staff and external organisations is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

v. Research

An important aspect of OAK Partnerships work in responding to the issue of social exclusion is to conduct and facilitate action-oriented research that informs and influences policy and practice. The research function works to evaluate, validate and uniformly communicate the impact and extent of social issues affecting the Partnerships catchment area. As such the Partnership works with government agencies, community-based organisations, non-profit groups and local industry to conduct research on social issues and to determine the impact of Partnership programmes in working towards greater social inclusion.

Since 2003 a number of research studies have been undertaken within the FYC Measure:

Research

- In Our Shoes: A Study of the Challenges Facing People Parenting Alone in North Offaly and North West Kildare.
- A Framework Towards Equality in Education.
- Early School Leaving in County Kildare.
- Equality in Education: An Examination of Community Based Youth Initiatives Under the LDSIP.

Evaluations

- The Acorn Project Edenderry: An Interagency Approach to Youth at Risk.
- Evaluation of the Carers Care in the Home Training Programme.

Submissions

- Submission to the Higher Education Authority regarding the Discussion paper 'Funding to Achieve Equity of Access to Higher Education.
- Submission to the Midland Regional Drugs Taskforce on Regional Substance Misuse
- Submission to the Taskforce on Active Citizenship.
- Submission to Dept. Education & Science School Planning Section on School Accommodation.

Collaborative Research

- Establishing Baseline Indicators for the Offaly Outreach Education Project.
- Rhode Local Area Development Plan.
- A Review of the Independent Parenting Engage Programme Kildare.

Chapter 4 – Interagency Collaboration

5.1. Collaborative Partners

The development of integrated partnership process working at a local level has given rise to many models of effective collaborative working. The success of the implementation and progression of the FYC work programme is dependent upon collaboration and cooperation with a number of key agencies and Government Departments committed to the achievement of shared goals. Representatives from these agencies make up the FYC Working Group as follows;

Membership of the FYC Working Group	
The Acorn Project	Offaly County Council
Kildare County Council	North Offaly Development Company
Kildare Youth Services	Health Service Executive (HSE)
Lullymore Heritage Park	Health Promotions Serivce (HSE)
Dept. Social & Family Affairs	Kildare Adult Education Centre
North West Kildare CDP	Edenderry CDP
Community Representatives	Barnardos
Health Promotion (HSE)	

Table 5 provides a summary of how FYC staff link on a formal basis with other organisations through their representation on committees and networks.

Table 5: Interagency Cooperation and Linkage

| Agency	Area of Partnership	Areas of Cooperation and Linkage
Offaly County Council	Local Authority Estates Community Forum	Collaboration between Community Development Workers in Local Authority Estates. Community Development Worker represented on the County Community Forum.
Kildare County Council	Local Authority Estates	Collaboration between Community Development Workers in Local Authority Estates.
Health Service Executive	Partnership for Youth Health Youth Development Worker Disability Resource Worker Carers Training Prog	Education Coordinator on Board for Youth Health Committee. Financial support towards the employment of a Youth Development Worker. Financial support towards the employment of a Disability Resource Worker. Funding of respite care for participants of the Care in the Home programme.
Vocational Education Committee (VEC)	FYC Working Group English Classes Offaly Outreach Education Project	Support through the Back To Education Initiative for local education and training programmes. Provision of English Tuition to non-nationals. The Education Coordinator provides support the Offaly Life Long Learning Committee.
County Development Board	Offaly Play Policy and Strategy Steering Group Kildare Early School Leavers Task Group Comhairle na nOg	Community Development Worker represents OAK on the Offaly Play Policy and Strategy Steering group. Education Co-ordinator participating on the Kildare Early School Leavers Task Group Youth Development Worker participating on working group for Comhairle na nOg
County Childcare Committee	EOCP Consultative Committee Offaly County Childcare Committee	Participation by the Community Development Worker on the EOCP Consultative Committee. Community Development Worker is a Board Member of Offaly County Childcare Committee.
Other NGO's	Edenderry CDP Midland Regional Youth Service Midland Regional Drugs Task Force. Acorn Project Carers Association Centre for Independent Living Irish Wheelchair Assoc.	Participation by Community Worker on the Voluntary Management Committee. Education Coordinator on Board of Directors. Education Co-ordinator is a Committee member of the Task Force & Education Sub Committee. Education Coordinator Board Member of Acorn Project. Ongoing networking and collaboration
Pobal	Pobal	Education Co-ordinator involved in Network and thematic working group.
School Completion Programme	Edenderry Management Committee	Participation by Education Coordinator as a member of the Management Committee.

Chapter 5 – FYC Outputs and Results 2002 - 2006

This section draws on local data collected using SCOPE and explores the outcomes of OAK Partnership's FYC Measure during the period 2002 – 2006. It examines the profile of target groups and progress towards achieving LDSIP output targets. As SCOPE data is recorded under the separate Measures of Community Development and Community Based Youth Initiatives, it is not possible to present FYC results as a single Measure but rather it is necessary to present outputs under the original Measure headings (i.e. CD and CBYI).

6.1. Profile of Caseload – Community Development

According to SCOPE the annual caseload for OAK Partnership's Community Development Measure averages approximately 20 groups, with a cumulative total of 78 groups supported between 2002 and 2006. Almost one quarter of the caseload supported by the Measure during this period were groups from Disadvantaged Communities. The next largest target groups supported were Disadvantaged Women at 16% and Lone Parents at 12%. Ex-prisoners / Offenders, Homeless People, Substance Misusers and Gay, Lesbians & Bisexuals together accounted for less than 6% of the Measures total caseload (See Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Community Development Caseload by Target Group 2002 - 2006**
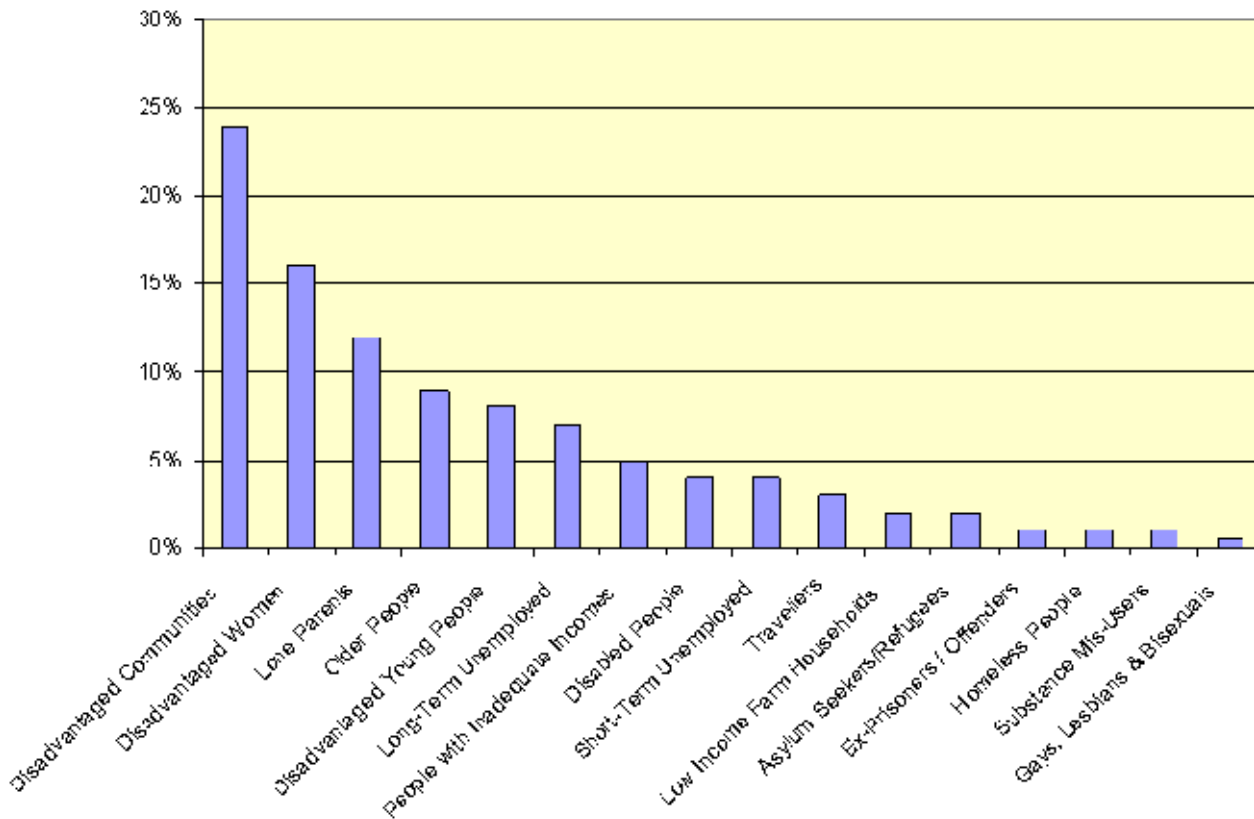
During the period 2002 – 20006 the Community Development Measure supported eight initiatives. A summary of the initiatives is presented in table 6.

Table 6: Community Development Initiatives Supported 2002 – 2006.

Initiative Name	Type	Subtype
Child Protection Training	CD Training & Education	CD Training
Committee Skills Training	CD Training & Education	CD Training
Community Development Grant Scheme 2003	Developmental Support for Groups	Developmental Support for Groups
Carers Training Support Programme	Developmental Support for Groups	Developmental Support for Groups
Rathangan Youth Initiative	Developmental Support for Groups	Developmental Support for Groups
Area Based Forum Support	Environmental and Infrastructure	Small-scale improvements
Lone Parent Research	Research, Information & Dissemination	Evaluations
Web Site Monitoring Group	Research, Information & Dissemination	Seminars

Figure 2 shows the category of supports given to groups during 2002- 2006. Almost half of all supports were categorized as either 'Supports to Assist Groups to Initiate Actions' or 'Support in the Development of New Project Proposals'.

Figure 2: Category of Supports Given to CD Groups 2002 - 2006
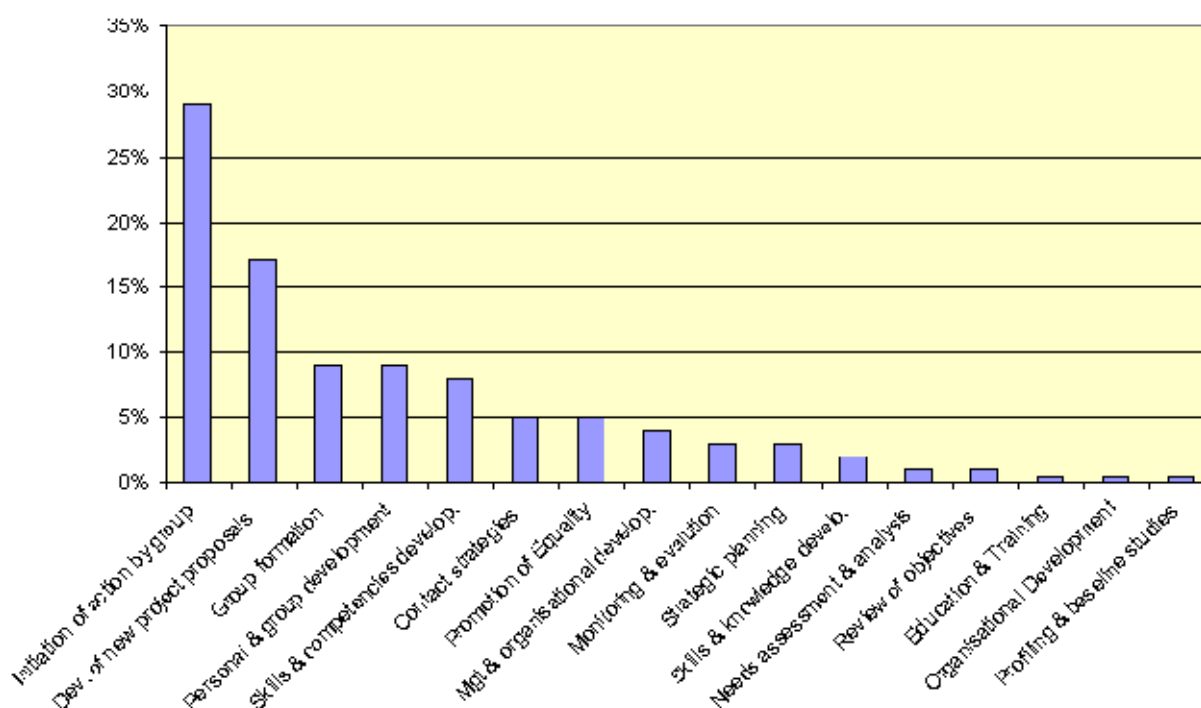
6.2. Profile of Caseload – Community Based Youth Initiatives

During 2002–2006 the Community Based Youth Initiative Measure supported 1,226 young people, 581 adults and 50 initiatives. Of the 50 initiatives supported 27% targeted Disadvantaged Young People, 21% Potential Early School Leavers and 20% Young People with Behavioural Difficulties. Young Travelers, Asylum Seekers, Teenage Parents and Homeless People together accounted for less than 15% of the Measures caseload. (See Figure 3).

Figure 3: CBYI Caseload by Target Group 2002 - 2006
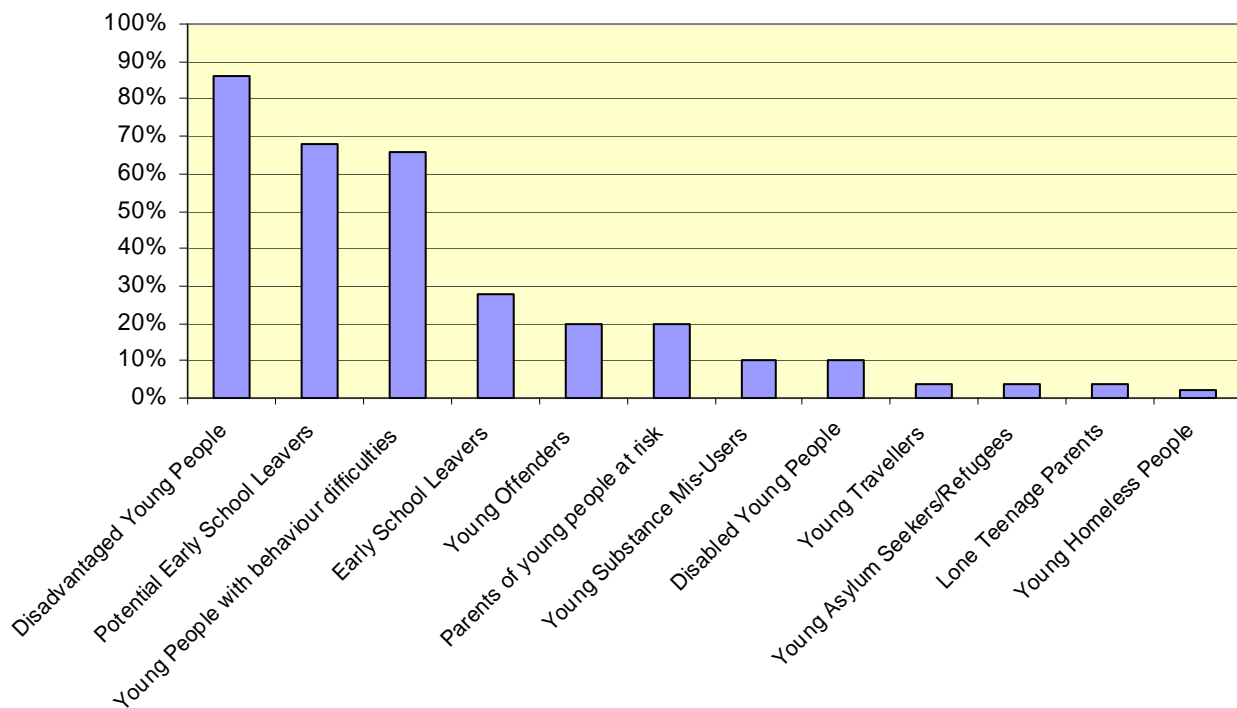
A profile of the 50 initiatives supported by CBYI during 2002 – 2006 shows that just under half were to Prevent Early School Leaving and Underachievement, 22% were Promoting Developmental Youth Work and 15% were Addressing the Needs of Early School Leavers. (See Figure 4). A further analysis shows that Community-based Initiatives account for the most significant proportion of the type of initiative supported with 63% of initiatives falling within this category. During School Initiatives and After-School Initiatives each accounted for 12% of total number supported. (See Figure 4 and 5).

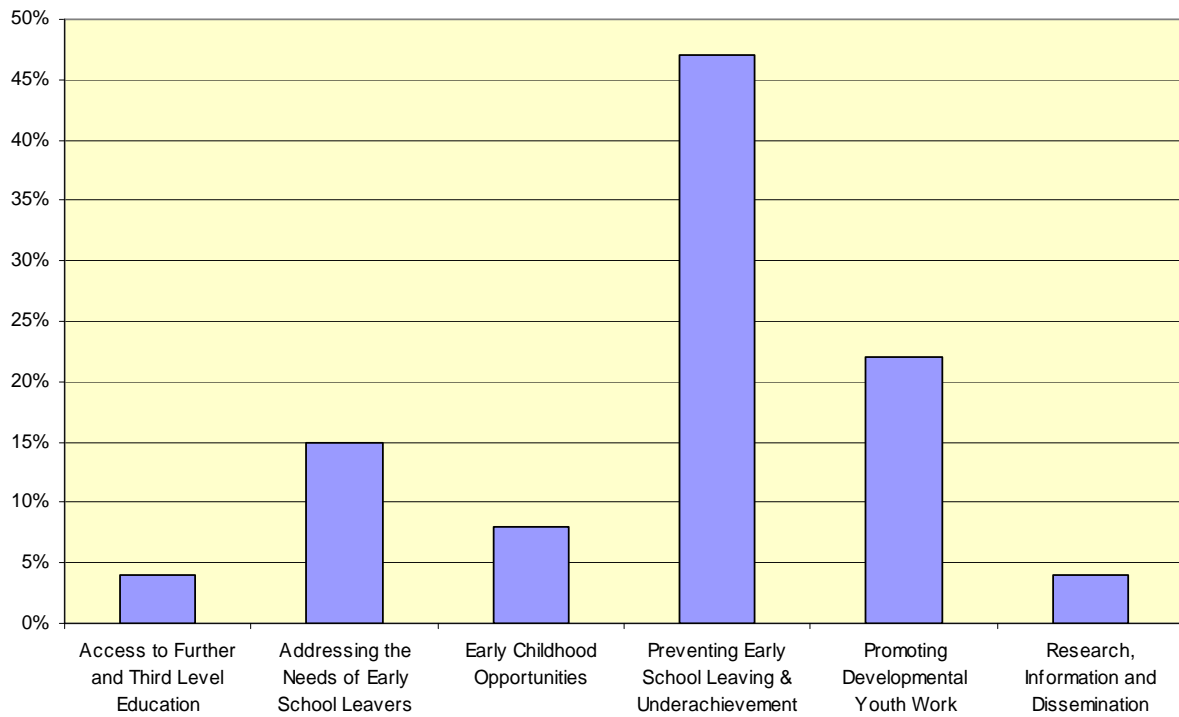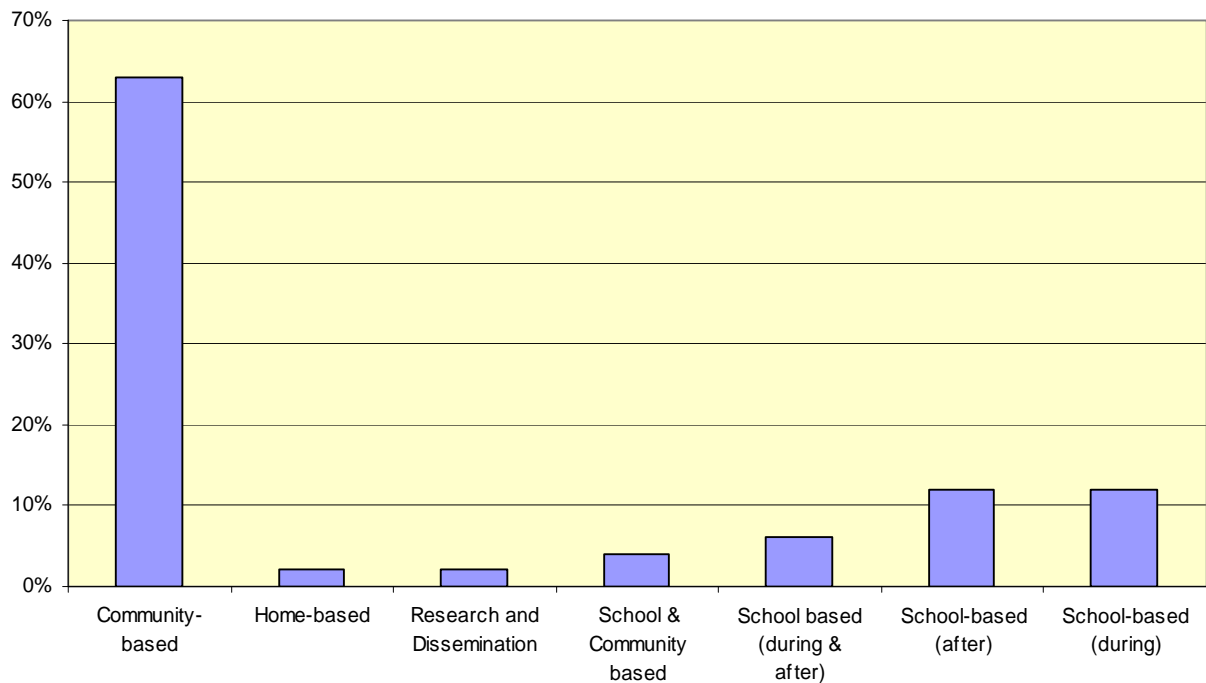**Figure 4: Profile of CBYI Initiatives Supported 2002 – 2006.**

**Figure 5: Type Of Initiative Supported**

6.3. Achievement of Targets

Community Development and Community Based Youth Initiative targets were agreed annually by OAK Partnership and submitted to Pobal in the Programme of Activities. Figure 6 to 8 shows the Partnerships performance in the achievement of these targets during the period 2003 – 2006.[11]

Community Development performance exceeded targets set in two of the indicators –New Groups Receiving Support and Established Groups Receiving Support. This is indicative of the vibrancy of the community and voluntary sector in the OAK area. It is in keeping with the history of this partnership that has its origins in the local community and voluntary movements. Community development performance targets set with regard to Groups Receiving Pre-development Support; Groups Receiving Training Supports and, Networks and Collaborations were underachieved. This outcome can be balanced with the overachievement in relation to new and established groups. The most notable underachievement in relation to community development was in relation to Environment and Infrastructure Initiatives. There was a lack of awareness by groups involved in community development of the opportunity within these initiatives. It is indicative of the stage of development of the new and existing groups and their perception of the priorities of their community development work.

Figure 6: 2003 – 2006 Community Development Outputs Against Measure Targets.

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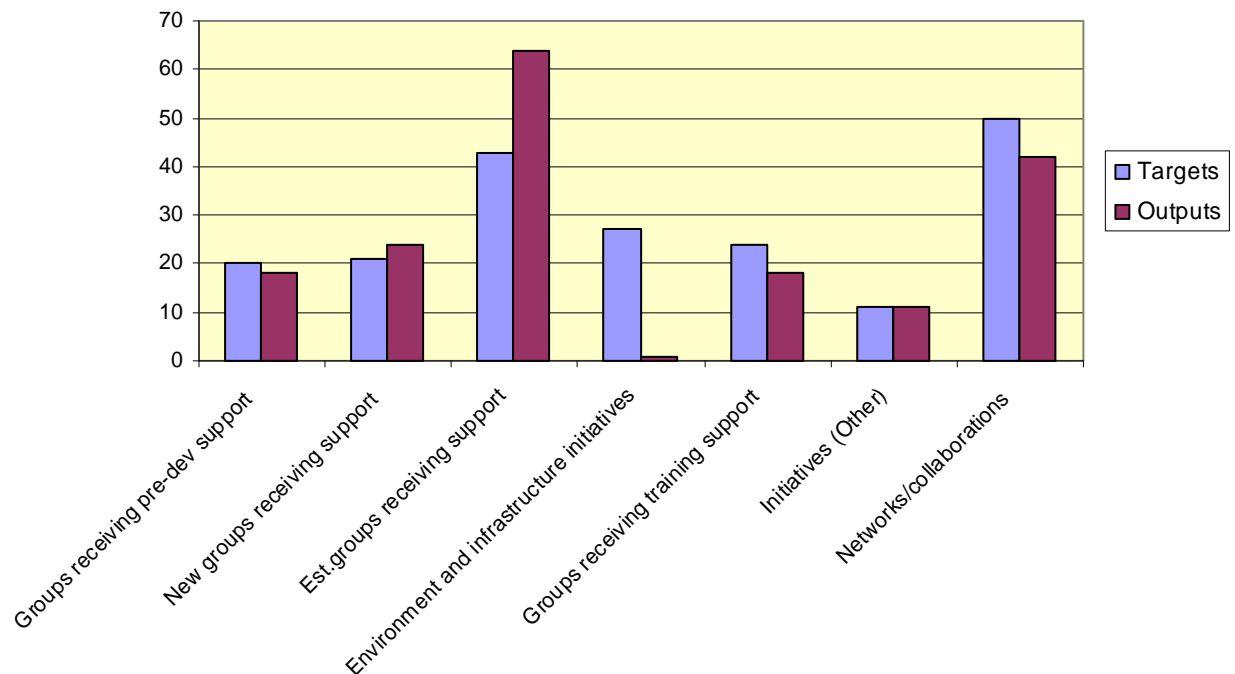
[11] The period 2003 – 2006 has been used to illustrate performance since the FYC Measure was formed in 2003.

Figures 7 and 8 shows the performance of CBYI Measure relative to targets for the period 2003 - 2006. In all but one case (Research and Equality Initiatives) the Partnership has outperformed the targets set. In the case of the Number of Adults Supported, the Partnership has achieved more than three times the target set; it has quadrupled the target set for the Number of Early Childhood Education Initiatives; and has achieved almost double the target set for Preventing Early School Leaving, Promoting Developmental Youth Work, Promoting Access to Further and Third Level Education, the Delivery of Training of Trainer Initiatives and Supporting Networks and Collaborations.

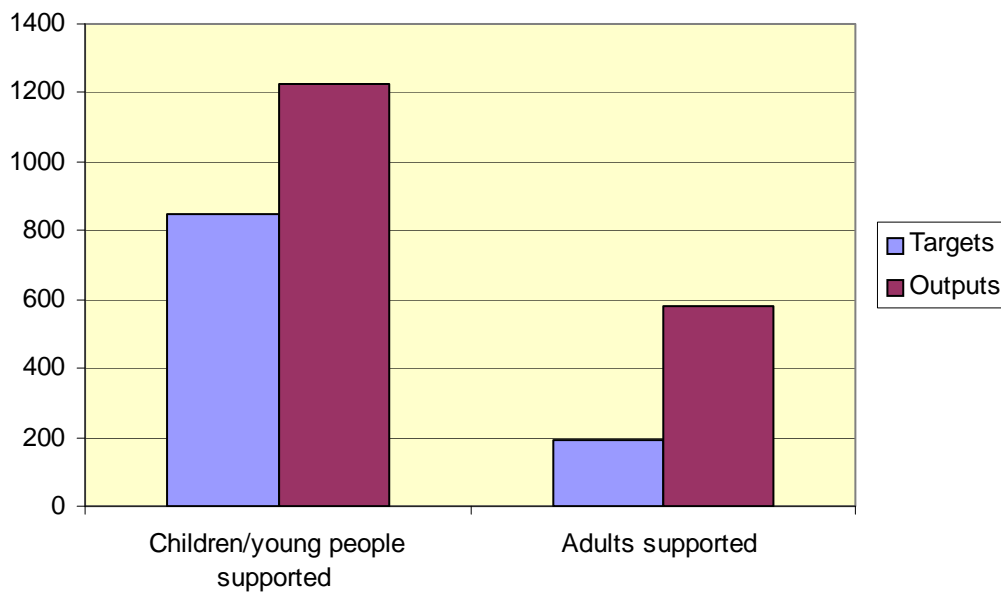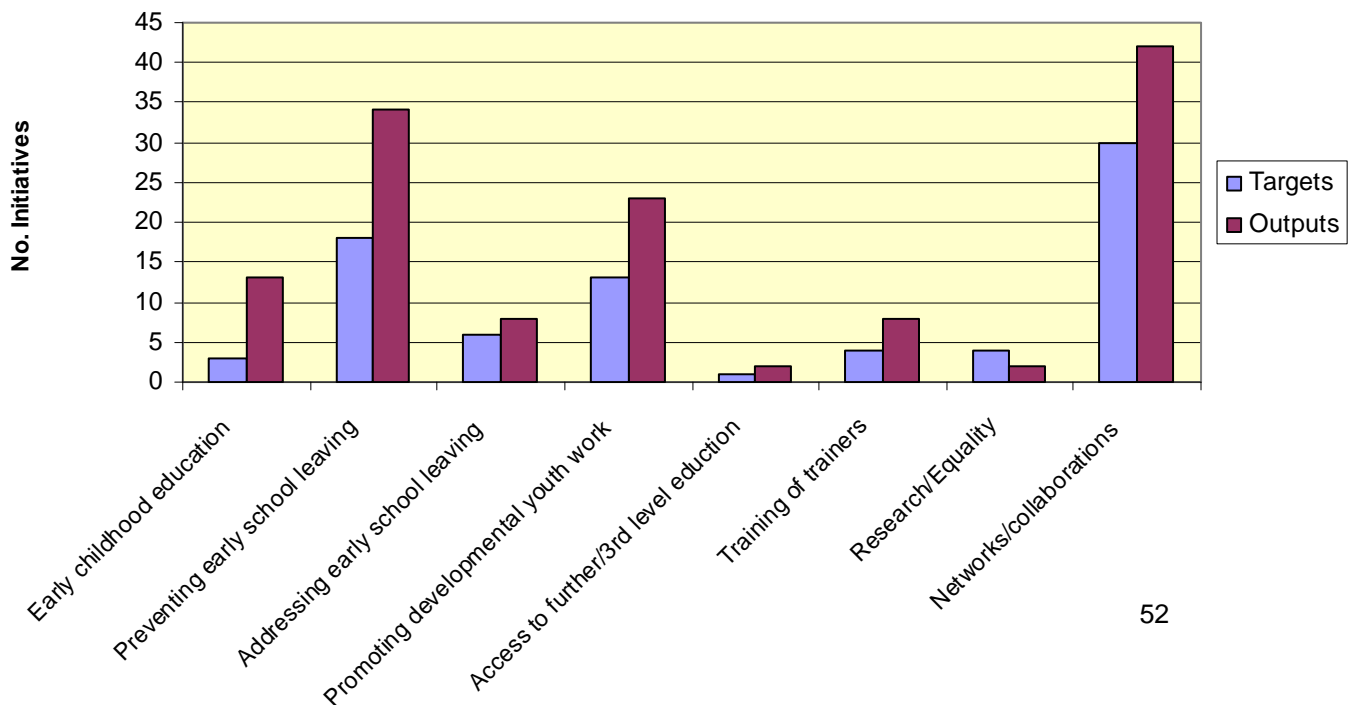**Figure 7: 2003 – 2006 Community Based Youth Initiatives Caseload Against Measure Targets.**

Figure 8: 2003 – 2006 Community Based Youth Initiative Outputs Against Measure Targets

52

Chapter 6 – Impact Assessment of FYC 2003 – 2006

In order to assess the qualitative impact of OAK Partnership's FYC Measure, the review included a series of focus group consultations with staff and agencies as well as one to one interviews with FYC staff, the Partnership Manager and agency representatives. This section examines the collective findings of these consultations.

7.1. FYC Strengths 2003 - 2006

1. Collaboration between CBYI and CD and the Formation of the FYC Measure:

An evaluation of OAK Employment Service in 2003[12], the Partnership identified the complex range of issues being presented by clients of the Partnership and the subsequent need for greater cross-measure collaboration to meet these needs. As a step towards providing a more cohesive and integrated approach, the OAK Partnership moved away from the traditional three-measure model set out by Pobal by merging the CBYI and CD Measures into the single FYC Measure. This move enabled the OAK Partnership to combine resources thus improving the supports offered to clients, streamlining processes, improving information-sharing and communication, and providing the greater opportunity for the leverage of funding. The formation of the FYC Measure also removed physical boundaries between staff by creating an office shared by all those working within the Measure.

2. Family, Youth and Community Support Working Group

The FYC Working Group, formed in 2003, has proven to an effective mechanism for supporting the work of the FYC Measure. The success of the working group is aided by the strong representation of key agencies, consistent attendance, participation and open discussion at meetings as well as the network of collaboration and linkage that has been created among working group members.

3. Effective Staff Team

The FYC Measure has developed a strong and dedicated team of staff, with each person committed to the promotion of social inclusion. Vital to the strength of the team is the specialist expertise and experience that each staff member brings to their role. Together these individual strengths provide a complete framework of supports for clients and community groups. Staff have been supported by the Partnership in upgrading their skills through further education and training in the areas of adult education, rural development, counseling, community and youth work. Collaboration across the Measure is also encouraged through regular team meetings.

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[12] Murphy, Phyllis (2003) *Evaluation of OAK Employment Service.*

4. Continuous Review and Organisational Learning

While the literature review presented in Chapter 3 highlights the lack of formal evaluation of the FYC, a notable achievement of the Measure is the mechanisms for informal review and active learning that were developed. These review mechanisms, (which include open lines of communication and information sharing, regular team meetings, participation on networks, FYC Working Group, etc.), enabled the OAK Partnership to incorporate staff experience and knowledge to develop practices that continuously improve it's good practice and add value to the Partnership's work. The informal nature of these review mechanisms also gives the OAK Partnership the flexibility to respond quickly to emerging client needs.

5. Targeted Approach

The FYC Measure uses a targeted approach that hinged on the identification of the target groups and geographic areas most in need. The approach draws together key players at a local level to identify needs, agree priorities and determine strategies to promote social inclusion. Since 2003, the OAK Partnership have identified seven priority target groups; the long term unemployed; disadvantaged communities; young people at risk and parents and guardians of young people at risk; low Income farm families; older people; people with disabilities and people parenting alone. Specific area support was given to communities in Derrinturn, Edenderry and Rathangan.

6. Joint working and interagency collaboration

The success of the FYC Measure is dependent upon collaboration and cooperation with key stakeholders and communities. The fostering of effective partnership relationships has enabled the provision of services and supports that any one of these partners could not have achieved alone. Such joint working is based on partners sharing common goals, maximising available resources and recognising the unique role and strengths of each organisation.

7.3. FYC Weaknesses 2003 – 2006

1. Poor Linkage across FYC and SUE Measures

While the formation of FYC sought to improve the integration and cohesiveness of the Partnerships Measures, collaboration with Services for the Unemployed has remained relatively weak. As no formal mechanism for information sharing and referral was created to ensure effective collaboration between FYC and SUE Measures, communication was limited to Coordination Meetings, which proved to be an inadequate forum for linkage. This weakness should also be understood in the context of the 'cohesion' process. The move to form new local development structures under a single county entity pre-empted collaborative work within existing structures during this period of time.

While the formation of FYC helped remove some of the physical boundaries between the CD and CBYI Measures lines of communication and reporting structures within the Measure remained underdeveloped. The mechanisms through which information is shared among staff and across the organisation could be developed further. While this initiative (FYC) was innovative the full impact of greater coordination, inclusion, integration, and collaboration at various levels in the measure were not fully exploited. It is unfortunate that this initiative coincided so closely with the reprioritisation towards county-wide programme cohesion.

2. Inadequacy of SCOPE to Capture Quantitative Achievements

The inadequacy of the SCOPE system to capture qualitative outcomes of FYC's work and the requirement to continue to report under the separate Measures of CBYI and CD has meant that the OAK Partnership is without an accurate measure the achievements of FYC since its formation in 2003. Given these system limitations and noting the under representative picture generated by SCOPE (and thus reported to Pobal), it may have been advisable for the OAK Partnership to have created a more reliable database for capturing FYC achievements.

3. Job Security and Staff Continuity

The nature of community development places a heavy reliance on the expertise, skills and experience of key staff. Very often the success or failure of an initiative is dependent on the trust, rapport and relationships that has been built between OAK Partnership staff, local communities and agency representatives. In recent years the Partnership has lost a number of key members of staff and as such have had to recover the relationships and skills that were lost as a result. The loss of key staff has also impacted on the implementation of the FYC work plan resulting in some actions being interrupted, delayed or not completed as planned.

4. Lack of Formal Review

To date, no formal evaluation of the FYC Measure has taken place and as such the opportunity to formally appraise and measure the outcomes of FYC and to document learning is missing. This is a key weakness for the FYC Measure as without a comprehensive evaluation it is unlikely that initiatives can be mainstreamed or successful models replicated.

5. Interagency Working Arrangements

While interagency collaboration has been identified as a strength of the FYC Measure, such joint working tends to be informal, dependent on one-to-one relationships with agency representatives and lacking in any systematic working arrangements. This can lead to a dilution of accountability among partner organisations and confusion for those involved. While the Partnership does not advocate the creation of rigid working protocols, there are significant opportunities to form more planned and cohesive working arrangements with partner organisations.

6. Public Awareness of FYC Initiatives

Overall the OAK Partnership has not been adequately proactive in promoting and raising awareness of the organisation and FYC initiatives. Awareness of Partnership activities is low among individuals living in communities not directly targeted by OAK.

Chapter 7 – Conclusions and Challenges for the Future

8.1. Conclusions

Findings from the literature review and the qualitative results of stakeholder consultations show a high degree of success within the FYC Measure in supporting, empowering and building the capacity of individuals and communities, particularly through the FYC Measure's approach to interagency collaboration, team working and targeting resources to those most in need. The OAK Partnerships decision to create the FYC Measure and to provide an integrated, holistic model of support reflected the Partnerships ability to identify, respond and evolve in line with changing client needs.

Quantitative data presented in the SCOPE impact assessment relating to Community Development shows significant variances between the performance of CBYI and CD outputs. For example, while the Partnership has outperformed all but one of the performance targets set with regard to Community Based Youth Initiatives, performance targets for Community Development have been exceeded for two indicators, namely New Groups Receiving Support and Established Groups Receiving Support. The ambiguity between qualitative stakeholder feedback and quantitative SCOPE outputs can in part be explained by the inadequacy of the SCOPE system to accurately capture outcomes of Community Development[13] work, the ongoing requirement to report under the separate Measures of CBYI and CD and the fact that the system enumerates only the number of groups (and not individuals) supported under the CD Measure. However, it is noted that the Community Development initiatives fall short in meeting targets that had been agreed and set at a local level.

Despite this, the FYC Measure was effective in working to the objectives set out in the 2003 – 2006 Implementation Plan and has contributed greatly to meeting the aims of the Partnership and those of the overall LDSIP Programme.

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[13] The limitations of SCOPE in capturing Community Development work was brought to the attention of Pobal on several occasions during the period of the LDSIP.

Key factors in the implementation of the FYC Measure are echoed throughout the review and can be summarised as follows:

1. The importance and need for **pre-development work** with marginalized groups to build their capacity to participate and meet their multiple needs. Such pre-development support requires person-to-person contact, building familiarity and personal engagement leading on to serving needs through a group process.

2. The necessity of ensuring that interventions have **a local focus** that can be tailored to meet the needs of local communities or individuals through a cross/inter-agency response.

3. The **development of soft skills** – such as engagement, participation, awareness raising and confident relationship building are key ingredients that must be cultivated within communities if sustainable economic and social activity is to be engendered.

4. Creating a **holistic model of support that addresses multiple needs** of disadvantaged communities. Enhancing communities and building their capacity is not about addressing single issues but rather providing integrated responses to multiple needs preferable within a single strand.

5. Recognising that **it is people who strengthen communities**. A community in which people feel at home, part of some collective identity or place and capable of acting together to achieve common aims is likely to be a better, safer and happier environment for all.

6. The need to respond to the dynamics of community change and the needs of **new and emerging communities**.

7. The need for **on-going education, capacity building and reflective practice** to continually seek models of effective practice.

8. The need to access a wide array of data sources to present a coherent area and/or sectoral socio-economic profile and to identify **quality standards and performance indicators** of interventions.

The following recommendations reflect these factors and offer new implementation structures the opportunity of building on previous experience. The recommendations are presented at three levels, Client Level Strategies, Partnership/Inter-Agency Level Strategies, and, Programme Level Strategies.

Chapter 8 – Recommendations

This section sets out recommendations for future strategies relating to the development and provision of local family, youth and community services. The recommendations arise from the conclusions of this report and are presented at the client, partnership, and programme level. The recommendations are cognisant of the recommendations from the Services for the Unemployed End of Programme Review 2000-2006 (OAK Partnership, 2009).

9.1. Client Level Strategies

i. Multiple Needs of Target Groups & Individuals

As a result of work undertaken within the FYC measure it is evident that disadvantaged target groups have multiple needs there are best met through an integrated strategic approach. Bringing together the service providers to target their services at the most disadvantaged provided an opportunity for greater coordination and integration of delivery

The profile of LDSIP target groups has changed during the period of this programme. Initially the partnership programme sought to respond primarily to the needs of the long-term unemployed and identified marginalised target groups. It became evident during this time of rapid economic progress that the most disadvantaged of these groups, not only did not benefit from the economic upswing, but were at risk of further marginalisation. As a result their needs are in a dynamic process of change and accessing such groups requires highly specific skilled targeting.

The outcomes of the FYC measure also noted that, in cases of relatively significant marginalisation, targeting is best undertaken on a specific to one-to-one (person-centered) basis. This is labour-intensive and time-consuming, but is the best practice to tackle such disadvantage within a broader group or community targeted support process.

The feedback from all stakeholders active in FYC measure work is that specifically focused co-ordinated and integrated delivery will have greater effective impact with a consequent more effective use of resources. This compliments the outcomes of the SUE (Services to the Unemployed) review outcome.

As noted in this report the 'cohesion' process at county level diverted attention from focusing on how agencies could more effectively innovate for integration. However the content of this report, bringing together the impacts of the education strategy and the community development strategy, is indicative of the benefit of collaboration and integration.

ii. Responding to Emerging Needs

The development of individuals and community is never static. As a result the quality & quantity of need is constantly changing. Sometimes this may express itself in newly emerging target groups with new service needs.

Arising from this review of the experience of the FYC development workers and its steering committee if a partnership approach is to respond to the needs of marginalised target groups/individuals it requires the following;

- o   A competent current baseline of qualitative and quantitative information
- o   A competent current data base of services available from providers
- o   An ongoing dialogue on the impact of particular service provision to targeted individuals and groups
- o   An ongoing consultative process with providers of services and with targeted groups to determine the most effective way of accessing and delivering services
- o   An established way of sharing learning from experience

This review recommends the need for a pro-active, multi-modal strategy to engage with targeted groups. This can be done through already established formalised structures and newly convened innovative methods. The pro-active, multi-channel strategy would gather qualitative and quantitative information to advise on changing needs and appropriate integrated responses.

iii. Supporting people to move from dependency to independency

The overriding outcome of the work of the partnership is to identify the meet needs of people moving from a dependent life-situation to an independent life-situation. The review has identified that marginalised groups are predominantly affected by multiple disadvantage. The Services to the Unemployed (SUE) End of Programme Review identified that prior to accessing gainful employment marginalised individuals may have to address a range of other needs. The provision of one support is inadequate to move people to an independent situation. The review shows that a medium to long-term cumulative delivery of integrated services required to sustain a positive progression out of disadvantage. The absence of this cumulative integrated delivery has resulted in a revolving door where certain people/groups and areas repeatedly emerge in need over time.

This review shows that, while specialist services have their role, a generalised one-stop access point that works in a facilitative way with people is important to achieve sustained progress. These access points are best provided through integration of the range of services and their delivery agencies.

The FYC working group identified the need for a protocol/procedure that records the best practice methods learned from local experience thus far to guide future strategies to address disadvantage. The working group also noted that the best practice of service delivery should be linked to community education work that increases people own capacity to reflect and analyse the factors that contribute to their disadvantaged situation and informs individual, community and societal strategies to address marginalisation.

iv. Resilience Skills at Local and Community Level and Ongoing After-Care Support

The rational for combining Measure B (Community Development) and Measure C (Community-Based Youth Initiatives) in 2003 was in-response to 'seamless integration' constraints due to compartmentalisation and possible duplication between the two measures. Those working with disadvantaged individuals are highly influenced by the community within which they live. Arising they identified the need for community development area based measures to compliment sectoral measures (such as youth work), and broad formal measures (such as educational interventions). The combination of these complimentary programmes would not only be more effective but would also enhance community resilience to counter disadvantage.

This review identifies that community based work in disadvantaged communities is 'slow-burning' and requires time to initiate an action and medium to long term support to sustain progress within the context of a marginalised environment. The working group identified the need to prepare a protocol of best practice for this work based on local experience and that this protocol would identify qualitative and quantitative indicators of progress particularly in the pre-development foundational community based work.

The FYC measure is an indication of the need for openness in combining resources across agencies, flexibility in approach, and the need for integration of co-ordinated delivery for long-term resilience.

9.2. Partnership/Inter-Agency Level Strategies

i. Positive promotion of engagement with local development agencies

In our post-modern society there is a deficit of community of social capital. This has had an impact on the quality of life of individuals, family units, and functional communities. Partnership work has identified the need for ongoing engagement with the communities to build resilience in the face of change. Partnership work has also identified that support after positive intervention is essential to sustain a positive outcome.

Area Partnerships, such as the OAK Partnership, were mandated to work with disadvantaged communities and with designated disadvantaged target groups. As a result the work of

partnerships was designated as agencies of last resort. Due to restrictions in resources and strategies, partnership stakeholders were predominantly reactive to problem situations and needs identified in action plans, rather than proactive in supporting socio-economic-ally healthy communities and areas

The advent of the new county structures-wide can now place the social inclusion work of area partnerships in a mainstream local development context working hand in hand with public service providers and socio-economic development agencies within the context of a county development plan and a county development board.

The feedback from FYC partners identifies the need for a united proactive strategy that encourages local communities to engage positively for local integrated development that prioritises socially inclusive actions. This would transform the perception of that engagement as a positive innovation of progression to maintain the health and resilience of local communities

ii. Tailoring progression pathways

The combined outcome of the service is the unemployed (SUE) and the family, youth and community (FYC) reviews identify that marginalised people have individual progression needs. The review has further identified that dealing with the marginalised people within groups can be disadvantageous to those people at particular points in their lives.

Therefore, this review recommends that person-cantered progression pathways (PCPs) as the best practice to meet the wide range of needs in an integrated way. The reviews note that there is recognition of the person-cantered approach in relation to employment but that recognition of effective family, youth and community work is pre-disposed towards group work. The review recommends that person-centered work be recognised as a seamless part to group and community work. The review also recommends that agencies involved in partnership draw on their experience to develop templates for tailoring progression pathways as models of best practice.

The review also suggests that the experience of person-cantered pathways (PCPs) be adopted to apply to community groups and community areas so that communities can participate in a recognised non-politicised process of local area planning

Iii. Framework for Cross Agency Partnership Work

The outcome of this review has identified that to respond to multiple disadvantage requires integration and collaboration among stakeholders over as sustained period. However, the experience of sectoral focused government in Ireland does not facilitate cross-sectoral integration of programmes.

The experience of state agencies working with area partnerships is positive and effective but is determined significantly by the commitment of the individual employee of that state agency. Social partner community agencies equally depend on the goodwill of the local activist to work with an area partnership.

The feedback from the FYC measure is that all stakeholders involved in the working group noted the benefit of their participation as a means of networking, of developing strategic partnerships and of gaining an insight into what was happening. The working group members noted that agencies working with a partnership approach, can prepare a targeted integrated plan for the target individual and/or the target community. This plan would engage a range of cross-sectoral services including welfare, education, training, employment, capacity building, and resilient skills. The strategy would bring a wide range of public and community service providers together in a team approach, and would result in greater levels of service integration and complementarity. This approach will also enable interventions at higher inter-agency planning level to advocate for a streamlined approach in the delivery of services. As noted in the Service to the Unemployed Measure End of Programme Review, figure 12 (Appendix 1), the soft supports from education and community development needs to be specifically linked with the hard supports of employment creation and provision to ensure that individuals and their communities move sustainability out of disadvantage.

The review identified that there was one-only instance of an agency formalising its partnership approach with OAK Partnership. As a result the responsibility for working with OAK Partnership was not determined by an individual commitment. The framework document integrated work with the partnership into the agency wide resource planning process. This review recommends that a framework for cross agency collaboration through partnership be adopted and resourced to formalise inter-agency collaboration.

iv. Inter-Agency Collaboration and Capacity Building
The FYC review notes the willingness of staff and working group agencies to combine two separate measures (B & C) into one as an opportunity for greater interagency collaboration and more effective delivery of their programmes. The review also noted that the directive to 'cohese' local development structures within county boundaries interrupted this innovatory process. The review also noted the challenges to individuals to maintain their involvement and the challenges to supporting a cross agency grouping. A number of points arise;
  o The terms of reference for the FYC measure-working group was prepared in 2003 but were not used to guide the work of the working group thereafter. Therefore it is noted that all working groups should participate in developing their own terms of reference initially, that the terms of reference should be consistently used as a reference point

for the group, and that the working group should review the terms of reference annually.

o At the annual review the working group should also be facilitated to complete a reflective-practice exercise to identify lessons from experience. In this way the working group is also a learning group.

o The working group is an active instrument of deliberation and recommendation (within it's terms of reference). Therefore the group needs to be supported to meet regularly (8 to 10 times per year) and needs a process of information updating between meetings. This is particularly important so that members are aware of the impact of decisions made at the more recent meetings.

o The review recommends also that new members coming into a working group should be inducted, briefed and supported in their early stages so that the participation of the member or the agency is not compromised. The familiarisation of new members did not receive adequate attention in the FYC working group.

o Cross-agency participation in a partnership-working group requires a range of skills. Partnerships should ensure the staff and participants of working groups get access to specific education and training that builds their capacity as an effective unit working in partnership. This capacity building should be delivered at a level that recognises the contribution of the members.

o It is recommended that county-wide agencies look to the experienced people within various partnerships to prepare and deliver capacity building/training programmes appropriate to their area.

o This review recommends that the experience and skills distilled from the work of a range of partnership working groups be pro-actively brought to the attention of the new county-wide structures. This review recommends that the experience of agencies working in action groups within partnership structures be applied to the new county-wide structures where economic and social inclusion programmes will be required to work in synergy for sustainable and resilient local development.

Arising this review recommends that a best practice protocol for interagency collaboration be developed to guide the application of best practice to cross agency and partnership work.

v. Mapping, Tracking, and Responding

The management of personal and community development of marginalised individuals and groups is a complex and multifaceted process. It is noted that information is essential to monitoring and evaluation of progression and to ensure that agencies respond in the appropriate way. Therefore the review recommends that local development agencies take advantage of technological innovation in tracking and mapping progression. This information can be made visible with innovative mapping without compromising the personal data of the individual. It is also recommended that local development agencies work together to deliver

strategies for responding to the emerging needs of marginalised communities based on data aggregated through socio-economic mapping techniques.

The limitations of the SCOPE (Systems for Co-ordinated Programme Evaluation) data is referred to in the review(s). One significant limitation noted is the focus of SCOPE data on group outcomes. It is recommended that the SCOPE data collection procedure be extended to include outcomes of individual need identification work, programmes and progression (within the limitations of confidentiality and data protection) and narrative enquiry. It is suggested that as individuals gain confidence through meeting their own needs they will progress to a greater sense of group cohesion and that their participation would become more proactive, communal and self-sustaining.

9.3. Programme Level Strategies

i. Performance indicators

Performance indicators should, as accurately as possible, reflect the impact of an action strategy. According to the FYC review feedback the range of indicators reported for SCOPE was helpful, but did not capture the multifaceted nature of the FYC measure. Qualitative and individualised impacts were not captured adequately with the SCOPE reporting system. This review recommends that performance indicators give equivalent importance to individual and community impact. The review recommends that performance indicators include;

- o Reporting on individual and group impacts to change local circumstances.
- o Reporting on the impact of local collaboration of statutory and non-statutory stakeholders to resource local initiatives related to family, youth and community support.
- o Reporting on uncertified and non-formal training and education.
- o Reporting on increased levels of participation and inclusion reflected through greater confidence, motivation and quality of life.
- o Reporting on models of best practice to enable individuals, family units, and communities increase their resilience to adapt to social and economic change.

The annual reviews of working groups should include a review of the most approapriate indicators of performance in the localised situation. Each measure is also recommended to prepare an end of year report as an input to the annual partnership report. This report will encapsulate the cumulative work of the group, the review of the working group terms of reference, a reflective statement and suggested amendments to indicators of performance.

ii. Merging LDSIP measures into a single strand programme

This review highlights the need for an increasingly integrated and a holistic approach to addressing disadvantage and marginalisation. The initiative taken within the OAK Partnership to combine two measures (B & C) into one has resulted in a higher level of coherence between actions. There is uniform agreement among commentators, working group members, staff and activists that the combination of the two measures removed restrictive boundaries. It is suggested that future social inclusion programmes should not be divided into distinct measures. Rather, the response to social exclusion should be a single strand programme that strengthens integration and cross-agency-measure collaboration in the implementation of social inclusion actions at local, area and national levels. More emphasis should be placed on the management of the local development plan through action projects within a coherent integrated programme with qualitative and quantitative measures of progress. The single strand approach should invite an opportunity for greater dynamic participation of state, non-state and social partner agencies in a diverse range of consultative and partnership forums.

iii. Handbook - Directive of best practice

The end of programme review commissioned by the board of the OAK Partnership has identified a number of practices, arising from experience, that has increased effectiveness of the delivery of actions. The experience of this partnership, similar to many others around the country, has built a core of experienced staff and stakeholders who now have an institutional memory of how best to work together. As these partnerships are undergoing significant change arising from the 'cohesion' process it is expected that some of this institutional knowledge will be lost.

The OAK Partnership undertook this review to capture the essence of their experience of best practice for the benefit of future work under renewed county-wide structures. It is opportune in this time of transition that the stakeholders in the delivery of measures, such as the FYC measure, come together to design a Practice Handbook. This Handbook would be directive of best practice accumulated by staff and stakeholders to address particular social exclusion challenges.

iv. Protocol/Quality Standards for Best Practice in Community Based Work

The outcome of this review has identified that to respond to multiple disadvantage requires integration and collaboration among stakeholders over as sustained period. As yet there is no common based protocol guiding community development and community based work.

Arising from the experience of partnership and the wide involvement of statutory, non-statutory and social partner agencies in local development there is significant experience of collaborative delivery of services at community level. Relative to this experience of service

delivery at community level there is relatively little experience of social analysis, community citizenship and community level empowerment to draw on. Yet community based work is most effective when it is based on empowerment, active citizenship and a reflective analysis of local society from a local community perspective.

This report recommends the development of a protocol of best practice in community development work that addresses community based responses to all aspects of local development. This protocol should assess the qualities of these responses but within a suitable framework, such as the Logical Levels Model. Arising this report recommends progression to identify quality standards that would be uniformly expected in Community-Based Development work[14]. The work undertaken to develop sector wide quality standards following protocols developed individually for work in mental health services[15] settings and youth work[16] settings have benefited each sector significantly.

<center>END</center>

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[14] This review recognises the work of the Community Workers Co-Operative. See
http://www.cwc.ie/news/StandardsForQualityCommunity_01.12.08/Towards%20Standards%20for%20Quality%20Community%20Work%20-%20complete.pdf
[15] See
http://www.mhcirl.ie/docs/Quality%20Framework%20for%20Mental%20Health%20Services%20in%20Ireland%20140207.pdf
[16] See
http://www.education.ie/home/home.jsp?maincat=&pcategory=17216&ecategory=17265&sectionpage=12251&language=EN&link=link001&page=1&doc=40461

Figure 12: Framework for Cross Measure Team-working and Social Advocacy

FYC Measure ⟷ **SUE Measure**

- Information & Referral
- Guidance & Counselling
- Foundation level Training
- Vocational/ Employment/ Enterprise Skills Training & Mentoring
- Small-holder Specific Support & Mentoring
- Supported commercial enterprise

- Outreach & Engagement
- Predevelopment Training
- Social Advocacy

Client

Self Development

- Mainstream Education/Training
- Mainstream Employment/ Self-Employment