



**Inaugural Meeting on
30th January 2003
of the
NAPS Social Inclusion Forum
Conference Report**



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Conference Report

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Foreword from the Chairperson



The present report is a summary record of the proceedings of the first meeting of the NAPS Social Inclusion Forum that was held on 30th January last in the Royal Hospital Kilmainham. The Minister for Social and Family Affairs, Ms. Mary Coughlan TD., in her address at this meeting, described the Social Inclusion Forum as a key building block of the Government's revised NAPS document "*Building an Inclusive Society*" and as one of the crucial institutional structures that will underpin its on-going implementation and evaluation.

The NESF has been given the responsibility of convening the NAPS Forum on an annual basis by the Government. The remit of the NESF relates to monitoring and evaluating the implementation of equality and social inclusion policies, and this linkage will enable synergies and working relationships to be built up between the two bodies.

On the basis of the feed-back received from the participants, this inaugural meeting of the Forum was successful in one of its primary goals: facilitating those who are not directly represented in the social partnership process to express and discuss their views and experience on the wide range of policy and implementation issues relating to the NAPS. The meeting also provided an opportunity for participants and members of the NESF to engage in fruitful discussions and establish useful contacts.

The immediate purposes of the meeting, however, was to enable delegates to input their views and experience into the consultation process leading up to preparation of Ireland's second National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion (NAPincl). This forms part of the EU Strategy, agreed to by the European Council, of implementing in each Member State, Community level objectives, taking into account national circumstances and policy priorities. This new Plan will cover the period 2003-2005 and has to be submitted to the European Commission before the end of July 2003.

As part of this process, this report has been submitted to Ministers and the Cabinet Committee on Social Inclusion, chaired by the Taoiseach; the Senior Officials Group; the newly-created Office for Social Inclusion and the Social Inclusion Units in Government Departments. A copy is also being sent to each member of the Oireachtas as well as to all delegates who attended the Forum meeting.

Lastly, I avail of this opportunity to thank again all those who presented papers at the Plenary Session or who made presentations or acted as rapporteurs at the Workshops, as well as to the staff in the NESF Secretariat, the Department of Social and Family Affairs, the Combat Poverty Agency and the European Commission.



Dr. Maureen Gaffney

Chairperson

NAPS Social Inclusion Forum

National Economic and Social Forum

Section I

Introduction and Executive Summary

Introduction and Executive Summary

- 1.1 Following an extensive review and consultation process, the Government in early 2002 published its revised National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS) document, entitled *“Building an Inclusive Society”*. This provides a new framework for tackling poverty and social exclusion and was undertaken in consultation with the Social Partners, as part of the commitments under the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness.
- 1.2 The overall objectives of this new Strategy are to reduce to 2% and, ideally, eliminate consistent poverty, build an inclusive society and develop social capital, particularly within disadvantaged communities. In addition, the Strategy includes health and housing and accommodation as new themes in the NAPS; identifies vulnerable groups, including women, children and young people, older people, people with disabilities, and ethnic minorities for particular focus and consideration; and establishes new targets. The revised NAPS also identifies some new institutional structures and arrangements to underpin implementation of the Strategy.
- 1.3 These structures and arrangements are seen as of critical importance and are designed to put the poverty and social inclusion agenda at the centre of public life in this country. The NAPS Social Inclusion Forum was established by the Government as a part of these new institutional structures and it will be convened annually by the National Economic and Social Forum (NESF).
- 1.4 The inaugural meeting of the NAPS Forum took place in the Royal Hospital, Kilmainham on 30th January 2003. A copy of the Programme for the meeting is contained in Appendix I of this report. This was carefully structured and organised so as to allow for and seek to ensure as full involvement and participation as possible by the very wide range of delegates that attended. There were well over 300 delegates and those who registered are listed in Appendix II.
- 1.5 This report of the first meeting of the Forum provides a summary of the papers that were presented, of the discussions both at the Plenary Sessions and at the separate Workshops and an overview of the proceedings of the day. It draws on these papers, the presentations at the Workshops and the notes by the rapporteurs and the transcript of the Plenary discussions. A copy of papers that were presented on the day can be obtained by contacting the NESF Secretariat at 16 Parnell Square Dublin 1 or by E-mail at info@nesf.ie. or via the NESF internet website at www.nesf.ie.
- 1.6 In her opening address at this meeting, *the Chairperson, Dr. Maureen Gaffney*, recalled that the primary objective of this Forum is to provide organisations and individuals not involved in the social partnership process with the opportunity to

contribute to the process of monitoring and developing the NAPS. For this purpose, she stated that the Forum will aim to provide an important opportunity for those concerned to:

- input their views on key policies and implementation issues;
- monitor and evaluate progress on the NAPS, as well as to offer advice on any shortcomings; and
- contribute to the process of drawing up Ireland's second NAPincl, covering the period 2003-2005, that will be submitted to the EU Commission in Brussels by the end of July 2003 as part of the EU's 10-year Social Inclusion Strategy.

1.7 The structure of the report is as follows:

- **Section II** provides a summary of the papers that were presented by Mr. Jérôme Vignon, of the EU Commission, and Mr. Robin Hanan of the European Anti-Poverty Network; these set out the EU dimension, the interface and linkages between this and the domestic context, and the challenges facing Ireland in the preparation of its revised NAPincl;
- **Section III** summarises the main points made by the Minister for Social and Family Affairs, Ms. Mary Coughlan T.D., in her address at the meeting, and the address by the newly-appointed Director of the Office for Social Inclusion, Mr. Gerry Mangan, who outlined the functions and role of this Office;
- **Section IV** outlines the key points from the discussions at the Plenary Session that followed the above presentations;
- **Section V** summarises the proceedings from the Workshops that were held in the morning to consider four key policy themes under the NAPS: namely income adequacy and unemployment, educational disadvantage, health and housing and accommodation.
- **Section VI** deals with the Workshops held in the afternoon which focussed on process issues such as the roll out of NAPS to the local level, mainly the Local Authorities and the Health Boards, developing a working model for the NAPS Social Inclusion Forum in the future, mainstreaming equality issues in the development and implementation of the NAPS and on-going monitoring of the NAPS targets.
- **Section VII** presents the main conclusions and suggestions of a *general nature* on the way forward in tackling the challenges and barriers that were identified earlier on in the report.

1.8 The main *specific* suggestions from the Workshops on the way forward to tackling these challenges and barriers are summarised in Box A overleaf.

Box A: Suggestions on the Way Forward – Issues to be Addressed

<p>Income Adequacy & Unemployment:</p> <p>Adopt income equality measure and index welfare payments</p> <p>Prioritise work incentives, index income disregards and more resources for activation measures</p> <p>Carry out a welfare-to-work-audit</p> <p>Right-to-choose between work at/or outside the home</p> <p>More government accountability in budget process; take those on low income out of the tax net</p>	<p>Education Disadvantage:</p> <p>Give more priority for School literacy</p> <p>Greater focus on Adult literacy, especially mothers</p> <p>Do more on early childhood education</p> <p>Provide for the 25% whose needs are not met by the formal education system</p> <p>Raise awareness of the NAPS, particularly for teachers</p>
<p>Health:</p> <p>Tackle the two-tier health system</p> <p>Provide more resources for participation and access to decision-making</p> <p>Better data, to cover also health and well-being</p> <p>Speed up the slow pace of change</p> <p>Multi-dimensional nature of health and need for a social model of health to be developed</p> <p>Adopt a rights-based approach (UN criticisms)</p>	<p>Housing & Accommodation:</p> <p>Act on quality/security of tenure in the private rented sector</p> <p>Do more on affordability of Housing</p> <p>Poverty-proofing of legislation</p> <p>Set targets for vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities and older people</p> <p>Improve housing conditions/ quality of life in local authority estates</p> <p>Increase supply of social housing, end discrimination in access</p>

Box A: Suggestions on the Way Forward – Issues to be Addressed (contd.)

NAPS at Local Level:

More coordination, integration of services, better data, listen to local voices more

Build on the work of the CDBs. Need for local social inclusion strategies

Greater commitment by local politicians and officials

Mainstreaming Equality in the NAPS:

Action needed on rights base, EU potential, data collection, indicators and equality reviews

Include socio-economic status in review of equality legislation

Better link equality with anti-poverty policies and mainstream

Model for the NAPS Forum:

Forum should be a process, with interim action, its aims need to be clear and how it links in to policy-making, particularly with politicians

Build on existing structures and hear from those who are not on other fora and have direct experience of poverty and social exclusion

Monitoring NAPS Targets:

Monitor outcomes, broaden measures of inclusion to cover quality of life and social capital; up-date consistent poverty indicators

Improve and widen data coverage, ethical issues in surveys, balance between quantitative and qualitative data should be addressed

Section II

The EU Context

The EU Context

- 2.1 *Mr. Jérôme Vignon, Director, DG Employment and Social Affairs of the European Commission*, opened his presentation by acknowledging Ireland's contribution to the debate on poverty and social exclusion at European level and the importance of the Irish NAPS in providing a model for the EU NAPincl process, the second round of which will come into being in 2003, with all national plans from the Member States due in Brussels by July of this year.
- 2.2 Mr. Vignon drew attention to the new emphasis in the EU on the strong links between higher competitiveness, better economic performance, greater employment and social cohesion, and more specifically, the emphasis on achieving such cohesion through cooperation and convergence towards best practices and what is now known as the Open Method of Coordination on poverty and social exclusion that was launched at the Lisbon European Council.
- 2.3 He made reference to two ongoing processes within the EU of importance in the fight against poverty and social exclusion. The first of these is the drafting at present by the European Convention of a "Constitutional Treaty", where the debate has shown wide support for a strengthened commitment to social cohesion. In time, this could lead on to giving formal Treaty recognition to the Open Method of Co-ordination and to the Charter of Fundamental Rights. The second process is that of Enlargement with the possibility that the 'first wave' of new Member States may participate in the co-ordination of social inclusion policies from 2004.
- 2.4 In reflecting on the importance of the present Social Inclusion Forum, Mr. Vignon pointed out that a key objective of the Union's social inclusion process is to mobilise all actors and stakeholders in the struggle against poverty and social exclusion. This has been a key feature of the Irish approach to tackling poverty in recent years, and one that will be strengthened by this Forum and from which other Member States can learn.
- 2.5 In looking across the EU, while there are national variations¹, low income and insufficient access to basic goods and services are still endemic in Europe today with 15% of the EU population, or more than 50 million people at risk of poverty. Without welfare transfers, this risk of poverty would have jumped to 24%, or 40% if pensioners are included. The impact of September 11th 2001 and the slowdown in the world economy are likely to increase the risk of poverty and test our commitment to combating poverty and exclusion.

1 The risk of poverty varies from 9% in Sweden to 21% in Greece and Portugal, while the figure for Ireland is 18%.

- 2.6 Although there is still much to be done in the fight against poverty and social exclusion, Mr. Vignon pointed to progress that has already been made since the European Council of Lisbon in March 2000. All Member States drew up their first National Plans by June 2001. A sound basis for monitoring progress and assessing the effectiveness of policy efforts has been established with agreement on 18 common indicators and the Joint Report on Social Inclusion. These were endorsed at the Laeken European Council Summit in December 2001. In addition, in January 2003 the new Community Action Programme to encourage co-operation between Member States in combating social exclusion came into operation.
- 2.7 Mr. Vignon was clear that the second round of NAPIncl needs to be more ambitious and forward looking, should set clear objectives and priorities, have specific and measurable targets which draw on the commonly agreed indicators, and lead to new and effective actions on the ground. All of this means that the fight against poverty and social exclusion needs to be better mainstreamed and better integrated into national policy-making and across all policy areas, including budgetary and fiscal policies, employment policies and Structural Funds. This mainstreaming process needs to take place at EU as well as at national level. In this regard, it will be very important to ensure that appropriate institutional structures are in place, at both political and administrative levels, and at local and regional levels, to co-ordinate actions and policies. This should ensure on-going involvement of NGOs and the Social Partners in the process.
- 2.8 Mr. Vignon spoke of the challenges facing the second round of NAPIncl. It is envisaged that these will be more ambitious and forward-looking, identify and build on progress made during the 2001/03 Plans and provide an opportunity for assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the main policy instruments. The National Action Plans should set specific and measurable targets that draw on the indicators agreed at the Laeken European Council, identify what specific and concrete changes or additions are proposed to existing policies or what new initiatives are planned in order to address identified problems and weaknesses.
- 2.9 He mentioned that the recent review here of the NAPS covers much of this ground and provides a very good starting point. Looking at the Irish situation from a European perspective, Mr. Vignon stated that much progress had been made in recent years, particularly on the economic and employment fronts. This provides a very positive context for making significant progress in this country on the eradication of poverty and social exclusion.
- 2.10 In identifying specific challenges facing Ireland in its second National Action Plan, Mr. Vignon referred to:
- the very high levels of income inequality and a risk of poverty rate that is significantly higher than the best performing Member States; a major challenge in this is to ensure that economic growth is shared more evenly and that those at the bottom are not left further behind;

- even allowing for its younger population and lower dependency ratios in recent years, a much lower percentage of Irish GDP is spent on social protection compared with other Member States;
- this is reflected in the relatively under-developed state of many public services here; access to these services is crucial for people on low incomes if we are to build an inclusive society;
- this country is one of the EU States that faces a significant challenge in the number of young people at risk of poverty and social exclusion; it will be very important to break this cycle of deprivation that is passed from one generation to the next; and
- the concentrations of poverty and social exclusion in particular urban and rural communities.

2.11 Mr. Vignon highlighted the pioneering work done here by our Local Area Partnerships and the growing and encouraging emphasis on involving Regional and Local Authorities. Before concluding, he mentioned that Ireland's experience will enable it to play an important role in advancing the goal of a more inclusive Europe and that its EU Presidency next year will come at a critical time, with the review of the second round of National Plans, the adoption of a new Joint Council/ Commission Report on Social Inclusion and the bringing in of the ten countries that are due to join the EU into the social inclusion process.

2.12 In his address, *Mr. Robin Hanan of the European Anti Poverty Network (EAPN)* highlighted some of the opportunities and some of the challenges presented by the European Strategy Against Poverty and Social Exclusion. He paid particular attention to the challenges for the next Irish National Action Plan. He stressed that despite rapid economic growth and the anti-poverty strategies, Ireland remains one of the most unequal countries in the EU.

2.13 In identifying the potential of the European Strategy, Mr. Hanan drew attention to the very clear and strong political commitment by EU Leaders to making a decisive impact on poverty and social exclusion in the EU. As the Strategy has strong high-level political input and political design, the challenge now is to have that political drive channelled into its implementation and resourcing. He referred to the importance of the Open Method of Co-ordination in providing important opportunities for mutual learning and emphasised the involvement of all the relevant actors, particularly people and communities who are affected by poverty and social exclusion.

2.14 The NAPincl process draws substantively on the Irish NAPS model and important common features include mainstreaming of the fight against poverty and social exclusion in all areas of Government policy, and the use of global and sectoral targets to identify what needs to be achieved.

- 2.15 On the other hand, important features of the NAPincl model that could be used in the Irish NAPS include the view of poverty as a denial of rights and ways that people can be supported to assert their rights, the linking of specific actions to targets and indicators, the commitment to mobilising all relevant actors and the opportunity to compare ourselves with and learn from other Member States.
- 2.16 In commenting on the experience of the first round of NAPincl plans in the EU, Mr. Hanan expressed disappointment that many lacked long-term vision and did not result in the required strategies, new initiatives or additional resources necessary to tackle poverty and social exclusion. In particular, little commitment to the plans or to mainstreaming anti-poverty and social exclusion policies was evident in the areas of budgetary and finance policies and finance ministries.
- 2.17 Many of the plans emphasised analysis over action with a tendency to list and link existing policy rather than provide new actions, with a significant number of governments seeing the plans simply as a reporting exercise. The gender dimensions of poverty and the rights of minorities were poorly dealt with in the National Action Plans and in many countries little or only token involvement of people affected by poverty was evident. In addition, in many countries the level of awareness of the Plans among politicians, policy makers and the public was low.
- 2.18 Some of these problems are to be expected in the first round of plans and in particular given the relatively short time-frame that governments were given to produce them. Here in Ireland, the timing problem was particularly acute as our first NAPincl (2001-2003) had to be finalised right in the middle of the review that was underway of our then existing National Anti-Poverty Strategy. However, none of these limitations apply this time round and it should now be possible to develop more coherent actions and a clearer long-term vision for the 10-year timeframe of the EU strategy.
- 2.19 He instanced how Ireland faces severe challenges in preparing its second National Action Plan. Although there has been a marked slow-down in economic growth here, we still have the fastest growing economy in the EU but we are also one of the most divided societies, with one of the highest levels of poverty, particularly that of children, poorly developed public services and, in many cases, one of the most marked divisions between private and public services.
- 2.20 Mr. Hanan went on to emphasise that the success or otherwise of this Plan and of the NAPS depends on the choices made by the Government here between policies on taxation and social spending. The challenges he identified include the following:
- **mainstreaming policy against poverty** in economic and budgetary policies; this is an area of weakness also in most other EU countries; although the NAPS has elaborate co-ordination mechanisms, it has made little impact on these policies;

- **developing a rights-based approach;** this is strong in the EU framework, which sees poverty as a denial of such rights and is now also increasingly becoming part of the debate in Ireland at the grassroots levels;
- **greater mainstreaming of gender equality;** this is one of the few areas where the objectives and the common outline for the National Action Plans has been strengthened at EU level;
- **responding to the needs of ethnic minorities;** these are increasingly scapegoated as the cause of social problems across the EU; in this country, recent Government decisions have made the situation worse such as changes in work permits, direct provision for asylum seekers and the ‘trespass’ legislation aimed at Travellers; and.
- **resourcing the Plan;** the need for designated resources to implement the Plan and that are not, with the budgetary cutbacks, threatened in favour of other interests; the most vulnerable should not again be the first to suffer; this is one of the real tests of political commitment to the NAPS process.

2.21 Mr. Hanan also identified two other challenges that face not just national governments but also the community and voluntary anti-poverty sector. The first of these is to involve people most affected by policies as much as possible and as directly as possible in the design, delivery and monitoring of the National Action Plans. This requires that sufficient time is allowed for the necessary consultation processes and that resources and information is provided to enable this to happen. The second challenge is to use the second round of the National Action Plans to put in place a long-term vision which sees social inclusion and the eradication of poverty as absolutely central to what Ireland and the EU is all about.

2.22 In conclusion, Mr. Hanan emphasised the need for political commitment at the highest level of government and that the fight against poverty and social exclusion in the European Union and in Ireland should be given the same sort of priority that the project on economic and monetary union was given or, going back further, that the process of industrialisation was given in this country. Resources should not now be cut simply in the interests of maintaining a low tax base here or in the interest of keeping other more powerful interest groups happier.

Section III

The NAPS and NAPincl in Ireland

The NAPS and NAPIncl in Ireland

- 3.1 The *Minister for Social and Family Affairs, Mary Coughlan T.D.* opened her address by commenting on the particular timeliness of the Social Inclusion Forum. It was almost one year since the launch of the revised NAPS and the present time provides an opportunity for reflection on this, and to input to the preparation of the second National Action Plan, as part of the EU NAPIncl process, which is now beginning. It was also relevant that the event was happening under the auspices of the NESF which is a crucial institutional structure in the fight against poverty and exclusion.
- 3.2 The Minister referred to the significant changes in economic conditions that have occurred since the review of the NAPS in 2001. These changes present real challenges and difficulties to the Government in ensuring that priority continues to be given to our society's most vulnerable members. The approach and objectives of the NAPS set out a clear and coherent framework for achieving an inclusive society, and the Minister stated that the priorities set out there remain valid regardless of economic circumstances.
- 3.3 The targets attached to the objectives of the NAPS cover the broad spectrum of Government activity and reflect the need for a multi-dimensional and cross-cutting strategic approach to anti-poverty policy. Equally, the specific targets relating to particularly vulnerable groups focus attention on the needs of these groups.
- 3.4 In speaking about institutional arrangements, the Minister spoke of the importance of the newly-established Office for Social Inclusion (OSI) within the Department of Social and Family Affairs, which has a key responsibility for driving the NAPS forward.
- 3.5 The OSI will also oversee the preparation of Ireland's second National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion. Providing both opportunities and challenges, this EU wide process is one to which the Government are deeply committed. Opportunities arise in the Open Method of Co-ordination to share experiences and compare ourselves with and learn from other Member States. Challenges arise in ensuring that these opportunities are exploited and in maintaining our long-term vision while responding to short or medium-term priorities, ensuring that our own national strategy remains flexible, dynamic and capable of responding to changing needs, and in securing the involvement of all sectors of society.
- 3.6 Just as the first National Action Plan (2001-2003) reflected the fact that our own NAPS was under review at the time, the second Plan (2003-2005) will reflect the revised NAPS. However, the Minister stressed that it must go further than this and now take account of the economic changes that have happened since that review, the progress made in the relevant policy areas and the further consultation that is planned with all stakeholders, beginning with the discussions at to-day's meeting of the Social Inclusion Forum.

- 3.7 In conclusion, the Minister thanked all those present for their ongoing commitment to the achievement of a fairer and more inclusive society.
- 3.8 **Mr. Gerry Mangan, Director, Office for Social Inclusion (OSI)** spoke about the new Office which has been set up under the revised NAPS and replaces the previous NAPS Unit in the Department of Social and Family Affairs. The Office has five key functions.
- 3.9 The first function is to oversee and monitor the NAPS. In doing this, the OSI will have strong links with Social Inclusion Units in the key Government Departments, will consult with the Social Inclusion Consultative Group and on an annual basis with the present NAPS Social Inclusion Forum. The OSI will report to Government through the Senior Officials' Group and to a Cabinet Sub-Committee on Social Inclusion that is chaired by the Taoiseach.
- 3.10 The second function will be to prepare Ireland's second National Action Plan. This new Plan must not simply reiterate the revised NAPS and for this purpose the NAPS targets will be considered again and efforts made to enhance the focus on gender mainstreaming, on migrants and ethnic minorities and an equality perspective. Consultation on the Plan will take place through the present NAPS Forum, the Social Inclusion Consultative Group and a wider consultation process with relevant groups. The OSI will also be participating in a number of other EU projects including one on mainstreaming poverty proofing, one on the development of indicators and a peer review of the programme.
- 3.11 Mr. Mangan also reminded the Forum that Ireland will assume the EU Presidency this time next year. The OSI is consulting with the European Commission on how the debate in relation to the modernisation of social protection and combating social exclusion can be advanced during our Presidency.
- 3.12 The third function of the OSI relates to enhancing the poverty proofing process. Mr. Mangan mentioned that enhanced poverty proofing guidelines will be prepared and the process will be integrated with other proofing mechanisms such as equality proofing, gender proofing, and rural proofing. When poverty proofing is seen to be working effectively at national level, it will then be extended to local level.
- 3.13 The development of a data and research strategy for the NAPS is the fourth function of the OSI. In this area it will be advised by a technical advisory group of experts and the strategy will seek to address data deficiencies and ensure that data collected is relevant, timely and accurate. In addition, data will be disaggregated in order to examine the position of particularly vulnerable groups including women, older people, people with disabilities, migrants and ethnic minorities. The EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) Survey, which will replace the Living in Ireland Survey, will start in 2003 and will be carried out here by the CSO. In collaboration with others, the OSI will develop a comprehensive and integrated programme of research that focuses on key themes such as educational

disadvantage, health, housing and income adequacy as well as on the emerging causes of poverty.

- 3.14 The fifth function of the OSI is to develop a communication strategy for the NAPS. This will aim to improve real awareness within the public sector that combating social exclusion and promoting social inclusion is now a central Government and EU objective and must be taken into account right across the policy domain. It will also promote the NAPS in local government and continue to inform the Social Partners on the implementation and progress of the NAPS. In addition, the communication strategy will promote the involvement of people experiencing poverty in policy decisions affecting them and will work, as a priority, to find ways of doing so effectively. Finally, the communication strategy will aim to inform the public generally of poverty and its nature, causes and extent and the fact that with sufficient will and effort it can be eradicated.
- 3.15 In conclusion, Mr. Mangan expressed his awareness of just how much support there is for the NAPS among the Social Inclusion Forum participants as well as his hope that, through the OSI, this can be channelled into a concerted means of promoting a more inclusive society in conjunction with our EU partners.

Section IV

Discussions at the Morning's Plenary Session

Discussions at the Morning's Plenary Session²

- 4.1 The presentations made earlier on generated a lot of discussion at this Plenary which immediately followed. In much of this, a sense of frustration, exasperation and anger among the participants was clearly evident. Although covering a wide range of specific points, the main issues that arose can be grouped under the following headings. Many of the issues raised, however, were cross-cutting ones and closely related to each other.
- 4.2 ***The Gap Between Statements, Targets and Actions:*** many of the participants expressed their frustration at what they saw as the very obvious contradictions that arise between strategies and stated commitments and actions, the dichotomy between theory and practice. This was raised in relation to both the EU and national level. At the EU level, the stated integrated approach and sensitisation of officials and policies to poverty and exclusion was challenged (the effects of the proposed reforms of the CAP in rural areas were cited) and seen to be weak in respect of how policies impact on the realities of people's lives.

Further to this it was suggested that the EU institutions themselves lacked any real system of values and rights that would ensure that the stated anti-poverty targets and commitments would be met. This needed urgent attention in the Convention on the Future of Europe and should be written into the Treaty in the same way as budgetary and economic policies are.

So I have a really serious problem with the dichotomy between theory and practice and jargon and action. And I just want to see that if we are setting ... or having a new plan, a new National Action Plan, that somehow it becomes realistic because I'm really, really getting frustrated and angry about all of this - Community Worker, Dublin Inner City.

This contradiction between policy, political commitments and actions was also referred to in the Irish context. The absence of the Minister for Social and Family Affairs³, other Ministers and high-ranking officials was also raised in this context. In addition, a number of participants made reference to the fact that the NAPS contained commitments in relation to unemployment, urban and rural poverty and homelessness, yet cutbacks in employment programmes, community development programmes and recent budgetary changes in relation to housing

2 This discussion is based on the presentations that were made by the Minister, Mr. J. Vignon and Mr.R.Hanan. These are summarised in Sections II and III of this Report. Mr. G. Mangan's paper was presented directly prior to lunch but there was no opportunity for discussion on it.

3 The Minister for Social and Family Affairs was required to leave the Forum after her presentation to attend to Dáil business.

(e.g. the budget for social housing has been cut back, yet there are 48,000 households on Local Authority waiting lists) and social welfare are seen to only worsen these problems.

This was labelled by one participant as ‘double-speak’, the stated commitment to anti-poverty strategies on the one hand and the actions, particularly in budgetary decisions that contradict this. The most basic indicator of this was that, although Ireland’s NAPS has been in existence for seven years now, yet we have still one of the highest poverty rates in the EU and are among the most unequal of European societies. The impact of the NAPS and other policies on people’s lives was, therefore, seen to be minimal.

And many of the people living in poverty understand... But what they see is double-speak. That when we talk about social inclusion in Ireland, we only mean it in certain spheres. But we don't mean it when the budget is being set every year. And we don't mean it in the Department of An Taoiseach. And we don't mean it in the Department of Finance. - Worker with an agency for the homeless.

- 4.3 ***The Use of Language:*** the use of terminology and jargon was seen by a number of participants as a means of excluding people from the debates, with the morning’s presentations including many examples of this. Both speakers and participants agreed that such language could also serve to depersonalise exclusion and this could be addressed by allowing people experiencing poverty to address the policy makers and experts. In addition, the need to clearly name poverty, exclusion and deprivation for what they are, in terms that can be understood and bear witness to the reality of these issues, was stated.

I feel very excluded ... because I don't have the language and I don't have the buzzwords. - Worker with an organisation working with people with psychiatric illness.

- 4.4 ***The Position of Vulnerable Groups:*** the particular circumstances of a number of groups were highlighted by the participants. These included the homeless, young people and men, but most particularly people with disabilities. Issues raised in relation to this latter group included the under-representation of people with disabilities in poverty statistics⁴, the need to view disability not as a separate group but as an issue that covers all of the themes and other target groups of the NAPS (women, children, older people and ethnic minorities) and the mainstreaming challenge this presents and the lack of recognition of the additional costs people with a disability have.

In responding to the particular issue of mainstreaming the issue of disability, Mr. Vignon stated that the approach being adopted at EU level is known as a ‘design-

⁴ Doubts were expressed on the validity of the figure of 18% cited by the EU Commission for those at risk of poverty in this country as this may not fully factor in the number of people with a disability; these are now more numerous in rural areas than farmers.

for-all' which reflects the fact that policies that serve to improve the position of one group, such as people with a disability, should also serve to improve the position of other groups experiencing poverty and exclusion.

The National Action Plan, our own NAPS, is five years in operation now. It has meant absolutely zilch to disabled people out there. We still have extra costs because we have a disability. No one has taken cognisance of that except that we've set up a working group which might report in maybe ten year's time if we're lucky. And this is our answer to ... to all of the things. We set up working groups and we look at things. We examine them. We have more reports written. We have more documentation about poverty, about exclusion, than would fill this room, but we have very little action. - Representative of a network for people with disabilities.

- 4.5 ***The Participation of People Experiencing Poverty:*** The lack of participation and sense of disengagement from the policy process among people experiencing poverty or those that work directly with them on the ground was raised by a number of participants. This was closely related to the issue on the use of jargon and also the perceived contradictions between what is stated in policy documents and what is done in practice. A number of participants referred to the lack of people in these categories being represented at the Social Inclusion Forum.

...first of all at this conference I don't see any of my colleagues who are working and slaving in the flats complexes here. I don't know how this got to be put together but there are very few people here actually working directly with poor people on the ground. - Community worker, Dublin Inner City.

It should be noted, however, that a subsequent show of hands from those working directly with people on the ground indicated a reasonable representation of this group. In addition, Mr. Hanan in response referred to the role of the network organisations in representing people experiencing poverty and exclusion.

Related to the issue of participation, a number of delegates signalled the importance of looking at what is already being done at local level to address poverty and at models of good practice in other institutional structures and spheres of activity. In this the roles and activities of the County and City Development Boards, the Area Partnerships, the Learning Network that a number of Local Authorities are participating in, as well as specific programmes operated by the St.Vincent de Paul were mentioned.

- 4.6 ***Measuring Poverty and Progress:*** A number of issues were raised on the availability of data on poverty and exclusion. These included the lack of data disaggregated at local level, the need for data to be shared across national and local structures, and the lack of recognition on the need for qualitative data that more clearly illustrates the reality of poverty and exclusion. Linked to these issues, and also to the issue of political commitment mentioned above, was the question of sanctions at EU level

against those Member States that fail to meet the targets specified in the National Action Plans.

...statistics alone cannot define the human condition. The stress. The strains. And there is no place within these agencies set up to look at these issues where one is actually allowed to discuss these issues. - Representative of an organisation working with the homeless.

In a response to these issues, Mr. Vignon acknowledged the need for good quality data, referred to the monitoring of progress on the established EU indicators, the Joint Council/Commission Report, that the monitoring process will have Commission recommendations if targets are not met, and the use of Peer Review as a form of pressure on Member States to perform well.

Mr. Hanan also referred to the fact that, unlike monetary, budgetary or trade policy, social policy remains an area of national rather than EU competency and control. Therefore, the EU does not have the legal capacity to impose sanctions in this area. Closely related to the dichotomy between the theory and practice in anti-poverty policies, this is an issue that will be discussed in the Convention on the Future of Europe.

Section V

Key Policy Areas for the NAPS

Key Policy Areas for the NAPS

5.1 Participants considered four key policy themes for the NAPS in four parallel Workshops that were held in the morning. These Workshops were introduced by guest speakers and a record of the discussion was taken by rapporteurs.

Income Adequacy and Unemployment Workshop

5.2 *Ms. Mary Murphy, Dublin City University*, introduced this Workshop and focussed as follows on the main challenges facing the NAPS in addressing key issues in relation to unemployment and income adequacy.

- In the NAPS ensuring adequate income maintenance and promoting employment participation are clearly linked. This requires a social protection system that protects the real incomes of the most vulnerable while also encouraging economic participation. The net effect of Budget 2003 has probably been to reduce social welfare incomes in real terms while the position of the most vulnerable has been weakened further. Effective poverty proofing of the Budget could help here, but greater political debate and the involvement of those reliant on social welfare payments in the development of policies also needs to be undertaken.
- The NAPS needs to include an income equality measure (as recommended by the Combat Poverty Agency, the NESC and others) as well as appropriate indexing (up-rating) mechanisms for both adult and child welfare payments. Review and monitoring mechanisms for the targets in this area also need to be developed, as these are not outlined in the NAPS.
- NAPS faces challenges in relation to the review of Supplementary Welfare Allowance, the usefulness of Child Benefit to alleviate child poverty, the cost of disability, the cost of education, the employment and income adequacy rights of ethnic minorities and improving the capacity of women in poverty to move into employment. All of these have been or are the subject of working groups or official reviews.
- In addressing long-term unemployment, and specifically among vulnerable groups (unemployment for these groups should be reduced to the national average), the challenges include how and when to proceed with sensitive proactive engagement measures, greater investment in labour market programmes, the development of localised strategies and of a strategy to eliminate long-term unemployment in rural areas.

- Within this, specific regard must be taken to reforming social welfare and labour market policies for women if the female labour force participation target of 60% set out in Ireland’s Employment Action Plan is to be met.
- Other key challenges include using the institutional mechanisms of the NAPS to ensure commitment to a comprehensive audit of welfare-to-work practices within the Department of Social and Family Affairs, the indexation of income disregards for various welfare payments (the income thresholds for retention of secondary benefits have been frozen over the last few years), the development of information strategies and of strategies to help those in low paid employment progress to better paid and more highly skilled jobs. Those on the minimum wage should be taken out of the tax net.
- Finally, the most immediate challenge lies in the economic situation, the cuts in resources for job creation by the IDA, SFADCO etc and education/training programmes (CE, the BTWA and FÁS) and securing the budgetary resources to implement the NAPS and meet additional challenges.

Discussions at the Workshop

- 5.3 The discussions following Ms. Murphy’s presentation reinforced many of the points made by her. These included the very real tensions between providing adequate welfare income and maintaining work incentives, the need for the indexing of welfare payments to prices or wages, the additional costs incurred by various groups, such as people with disabilities, to be recognised and the need for a welfare-to-work audit.
- 5.4 The question of rights arose with the views expressed that an adequate income is a basic human right and that people should have the right to choose whether or not to work outside the home. Within this, the right to a basic income was raised with a number of participants seeing this as the way forward. Under the proposed reforms of the CAP, farmers will have a basic income guaranteed.
- 5.5 The recent changes in labour market programmes and supports such as the “roll back” of Community Employment and the Social Economy Programme and changes in eligibility for the Back-to-Work Allowance were all seen to impact negatively on people’s welfare-to-work opportunities. In the light of these changes, the potential for greater resourcing seems to be questionable.
- 5.6 The discussions underlined the need for transparent systems to decide on trade-offs and which policies get funding priority, what targets are being set and how they are being met. Within this, the need for more effective redistribution of wealth and greater political commitment to this end should have a higher priority.

- 5.7 Reference was also made to the need for greater participation of stakeholders in policy decisions. In achieving this, more dialogue between the Government and those involved in labour market programmes and greater Government accountability in the budgeting process is necessary. In addition, the role of the Community and Voluntary Pillar in the social partnership arrangements was seen to be weakening due to the apparent loss of investment in and commitment to social policy. The need for greater equality between the Social Partners was flagged. That some groups are excluded by virtue of having no voice and therefore no means of participation was also raised, specifically in respect of children.
- 5.8 The virtues of work were also challenged. More particularly, the negative impact of long working hours on involvement and the sense of inclusion among local communities was highlighted.

Educational Disadvantage Workshop

- 5.9 In his presentation to the Workshop on Education, *Dr. Roland Tormey, Mary Immaculate College Limerick*, identified four areas which posed challenges to the NAPS: funding, awareness raising and communication, clear targets and progress benchmarks, and educational conservatism.
- 5.10 In relation to *funding*, Dr. Tormey suggested that as funding is now tight, priority should be given to the areas identified in the NAPS. However, current budget allocations in the area of adult literacy, proposed reduction of the budget for the Education Welfare Board, as well as proposed reductions in resource teachers' hours make meeting the NAPS target impossible.
- 5.11 As regards *awareness raising and communication*, he stated that there is need for wider ownership and greater awareness of the NAPS, particularly among teachers, other educational practitioners and educational administrators. This has not happened. Innovative, integrated, effective and coherent means of communication need to be developed in order to ensure this. There is an over-reliance on traditional means such as Departmental guidelines, circulars etc.
- 5.12 In relation to *targets and benchmarks*, interim targets need to be set within all of the NAPS targets. These should be widely communicated so that progress towards these interim, as well as progress towards the overall targets is transparent in relation to tracking progress.
- 5.13 In concluding, Dr. Tormey highlighted how the Irish "one-size-fits all" approach to education that regards those children that do not progress as troublesome or extra work is not conducive to necessary change. This educational conservatism has resulted in various targeted schemes and initiatives are not seen as part of the mainstream education system, but instead as an opportunity to pass off "troublesome" pupils to someone else. For example, in the case of curricular

reform he singled out that the Leaving Cert. Applied Programme and the Junior Cert. Special Programme are not regarded as being on an equal basis to the established programmes. What is necessary is an education system that values and caters for diversity and is flexible and responsive to the learners' needs.

Discussions at the Workshop

- 5.14 The discussion that followed Dr. Tormey's presentation identified some of the challenges facing the NAPS in respect of educational disadvantage. These included the need to communicate the NAPS, its targets and the policies to achieve these more widely. In addition, while the emphasis on adult education and adult literacy in the NAPS was widely welcomed, the needs and roles of all educational sectors, including both the formal and informal sectors, should be recognised. More diversity and flexibility was needed within the formal system. A major challenge for the education system was meeting the needs of the 25% of the current school-aged population not currently being served by the mainstream system.
- 5.15 Special initiatives and pilot programmes are valuable in informing policy development, but need to be integrated with mainstream provision, while still maintaining their focus on and serving the needs of the target group. Greater integration of the educational services targeting young people and other vulnerable groups is seen as crucial. A further challenge to the NAPS is the adoption of a rights-based approach and ensuring that policies adopted to curb anti-social behaviour do not infringe on a child's right to an education.
- 5.16 A number of priority issues were identified in the discussion. These included early intervention/early childhood education, school literacy, adult literacy and meeting the needs of pupils currently not being well served by the formal system.
- 5.17 In addition to the vulnerable groups already identified in the NAPS, a number of other groups were also identified as being in need of specific attention. These included homeless people, disadvantaged men, and vulnerable families, including those that have experienced marital/relationship breakdown, and whose educational needs should be addressed within the context of integrated service provision. The role of the voluntary sector should be recognised in meeting the needs of these groups. In addition, the role played by the VEC sector, which was at the forefront of many valuable activities such as Adult Education Services, Adult Literacy Services, Prisoner Education, Senior Traveller Training Centres, the Vocational Training Opportunity Scheme and Youthreach, should also be recognised and drawn on.
- 5.18 Some suggestions were also made regarding institutional and operational structures and procedures. Specifically, it was suggested that these structures also needed to be better integrated across the entire lifelong learning spectrum. This can help achieve value for investment and quality outcomes. In addition, it was

suggested that NESF should engage with the Educational Disadvantage Committee and Forum. The multiplicity of early interventions by various agencies needs to be better integrated and coordinated.

Health Workshop

- 5.19 *Kevin Balanda, Institute of Public Health* presented the opening paper to this Workshop. In this presentation, he outlined the establishment and working of the NAPS Working Group on Health for the NAPS review, the guiding principles that informed the deliberations of the Group, targets agreed by the Working Group in relation to Health Status (reducing differences in illnesses and mortality rates between socio-economic groups), Equity of Access to Health Services (to include primary health care, acute hospital services, community services and higher income thresholds for medical cards), Public Policy (adoption of health impact assessments), Research, Monitoring and Review of the targets.
- 5.20 In addition, Mr. Balanda referred to other strategies that impacted on the Working Group's deliberations as well as those that are shaping the current debate. These included the National Health Strategy, the Primary Care Strategy, the National Health Information Strategy and the National Health Research Strategy.

Discussions at the Workshop

- 5.21 It was considered that a good model of consultation was demonstrated by the NAPS Working Group on health where the process of collaborative working and participation in the Group was good. There was disappointment that these Groups did not continue to meet for the purposes of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the NAPS. It was recommended that the NAPS Working Groups should re-form to do this.
- 5.22 It was also suggested that active participation in the design, implementation and monitoring of services should go beyond consultation and consumer panels and use community development approaches to participation. In whatever form it takes, participation at all levels needed to be adequately resourced and access to decision-making guaranteed. However, considerable distrust of the decision-making process was expressed and it was suggested that the people involved are removed from the reality of people's experience. The process should seek, therefore, to engage those who experience social exclusion and those who represent them and provide adequate feedback to ensure accountability and openness.
- 5.23 Disappointment was also expressed on the slow process in the implementation of the NAPS. Frustration was aired again in the apparent 'doublespeak' in seeking to develop public policy to improve the health of the most disadvantaged, but with

cutbacks in the areas most in need of investment. Disappointment was expressed that neither the NAPS nor the National Health Strategy tackled Ireland's two-tier health system, while a lack of knowledge of the NAPS at local level was seen to hinder progress in rolling out the Strategy and achieving tangible change.

- 5.24 The lack of a rights-based approach in the NAPS was also cited as another area of disappointment. The UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in examining Ireland's performance under the International Covenant criticised the Government here for failing to include a rights-based approach in: (i) the revised NAPS; and (ii) the National Health Strategy and urged that both strategies be revised accordingly.
- 5.25 The intention to improve data collection was welcomed. However, the identification of what kinds of data to be collected and how, and the setting of targets needs to be informed by a participatory process. The need for indicators of health and well-being rather than simply ill health or illness was also highlighted.
- 5.26 Views were exchanged regarding the responsibility for health and these varied from those supporting personal responsibility for health behaviour assisted through health prevention and health promotion, to advocacy of a focus on the major determinants of health and the role of services in reducing inequities. It was stressed that a focus on the broader socio-economic and environmental factors determining health should be kept on the agenda. Research shows the effects of hierarchical systems, lack of control, stress in everyday life, poverty and social exclusion on quality of life and health and well-being. In this context, a social model of health should be promoted.
- 5.27 Much discussion took place on the health services. Points made here included the need to re-orientate services to have enough flexibility to respond to the NAPS at a local level, for all services to be 'health promoting services' and for greater resources. Cutbacks in health spending were seen to impact particularly on older people, children, and people with disabilities. Medical cards for children, research into the costs of disability, issues concerning mental health, long-term care and health screening for older people were all raised.
- 5.28 Inequity of services was also raised with the availability and quality of particular services varying for different groups and locations. Access to health care, particularly primary care, is not comprehensive for all. The lack of services for men (in areas such as domestic violence, suicide and stress) was also raised.
- 5.29 Supports for key stakeholders and services that support health, such as community health initiatives, need to be better resourced. The multi-dimensional nature of health inequalities requires health to be taken into account in all public policies, especially those on income adequacy, housing and education. Multi-sectoral working on health that involves a range of actors should be continued and supported. Social services and the local authorities have a key role.

Housing and Accommodation Workshop

- 5.30 In opening this Workshop *Dr. Tony Fahey, ESRI*, concentrated on trends in housing costs and affordability, and compared the private rented sector here with other housing sectors. The largest increases in housing costs over the period 1973-2000 have occurred in the private rented sector, both in terms of weekly rent/mortgage payments (in constant prices) as well as a percentage of total housing expenditures.
- 5.31 In the privately-owned sector, Dr. Fahey mentioned that falling interest rates and higher household incomes have served to counter-balance the effect of increased house prices (with the result that there has been no overall increase during the 1990s in the relative financial burden of house purchasers), although this is influenced by the lifecycle stage. Young house purchasers in the early stages of family formation spend a much higher proportion of their incomes on housing (up to twice as much) than those in the middle or later lifecycle stages, with these trends remaining relatively static over the late 1990s.
- 5.32 However, even younger house purchasers do not on average spend as much of their income on housing as those in the private rented sector. In 1999-2000, 20 per cent of private rented tenants (approx. 20/25,000 households) were spending above 35 per cent of their household income on housing, compared to only 1 per cent of home-owners (approx. 4/5,000 households) who were above this threshold of affordability. Within the debate on housing policies, Dr. Fahey considered, therefore, that one of the concerns in relation to affordable housing should relate to the private rented sector.
- 5.33 In comparison with our EU counterparts, he highlighted that housing costs in Ireland, averaged over all households, are relatively low (below 10 per cent of income), see Box B beneath. This is due to a number of factors including moderately high rates of home ownership, moderately low mortgage costs, low social rents and private rents that are close to the EU average.

Box B: Housing Costs (rent and mortgage payments) for Households in selected EU countries, 1996

<i>Mean housing cost as % of net monthly income:</i>	Denmark	Netherlands	Finland	UK	Ireland	Portugal
1. For all households	25.8	22.5	18.9	17.8	9.2	6.2
2. Excluding those with no housing costs	28.4	24.6	31.7	26.2	16.7	16.4
3. For owners with mortgage	23.2	22.2	26.2	17.8	17.5	23.8
4. For renters	33.2	26.5	36.0	37.3	14.9	11.9
– private renters	29.7	25.7	35.5	34.2	24.3	13.7
– social renters	35.7	26.6	36.6	38.4	9.5	2.7

Source: European Community Household Panel Survey 1996.

Discussions at the Workshop

- 5.34 The discussion that followed this presentation broadened out to cover a number of additional issues. In relation to the supply of private rented housing and accommodation, concern was raised about rogue landlords who were heavily subsidised by the State but provided low quality accommodation. The amendment to the Supplementary Welfare Allowance (to control rent levels) was now contributing to the already low supply of social and affordable housing, and the question was asked as to whether this policy change had been poverty proofed. In addition, the potential impact of estate management on the supply of accommodation and on living conditions was raised.
- 5.35 Issues were raised in relation to a number of specific groups. In relation to disability and accommodation, the lack of targets for this group was highlighted and the need for adaptable/life-time proof accommodation stressed. It was claimed that the Disabled Person's Grant is being 'dismantled'. The need for targets in relation to accommodation for older people (e.g. sheltered accommodation) and the quality of this was also raised. In relation to homeless people, it was stressed that this is not just about securing housing or accommodation but also about a whole range of needs that should be measured and reflected in the targets set. The target set for Traveller accommodation was not met.
- 5.36 As regards access to housing/accommodation, it was suggested that the relevant forms be designed in more user-friendly ways so that they are understandable to all and that access to crisis/night shelter accommodation is not dependent on people filling in forms.
- 5.37 A number of other issues were also raised on the NAPS targets. These included a query on what happened to the original targets set by the NAPS Working Group on Housing and Accommodation that are not included in the revised NAPS document, of what happens when targets are not met and the possible need for sanctions, and the difficulties in monitoring the targets set. Related to this latter point, a number of issues were raised on required research, particularly the need for ethical, qualitative and quantitative research.
- 5.38 Other issues discussed in this Workshop included the need for different indicators of housing and accommodation in rural areas where vulnerable groups are less visible, the difficulty of completing local poverty profiles, the lack of consultation in the last NAPIncl process and problems with establishing the extent to which results are linked to anti-poverty actions.

Section VI

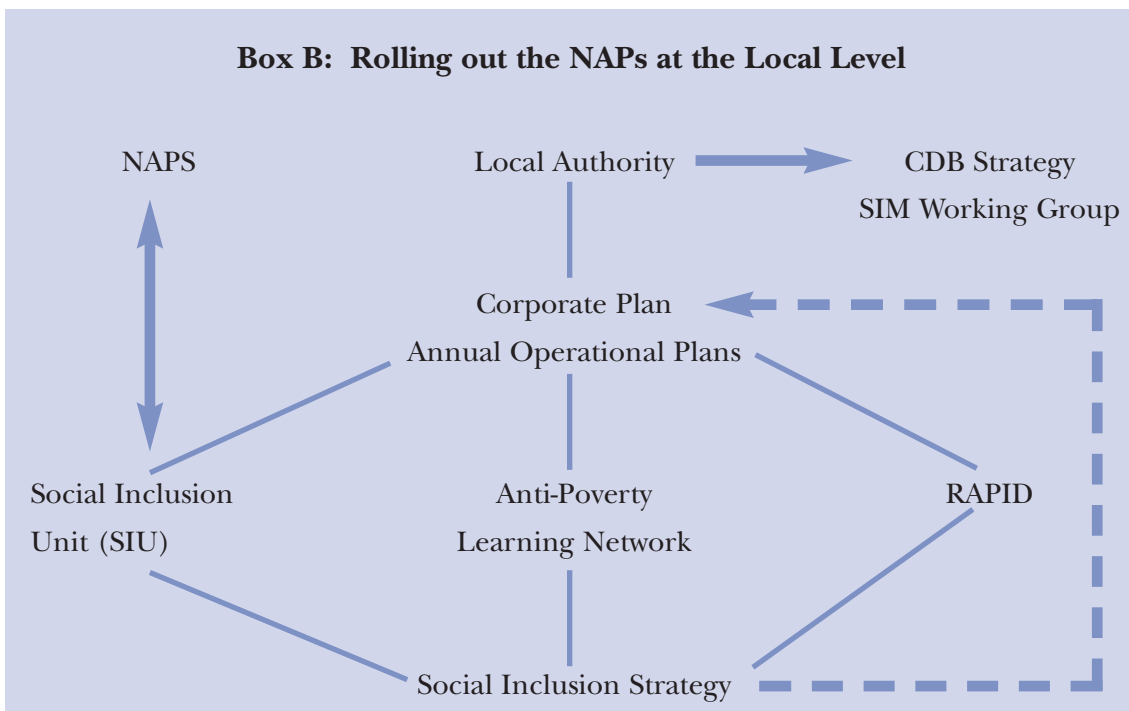
Developing the NAPS

Developing the NAPS

6.1 In the Workshops in the afternoon, participants considered four areas central to the development of the NAPS process. Again, guest speakers introduced these Workshops and rapporteurs took a record of the discussions.

Workshop on Bringing the NAPS to Local Level

6.2 In opening his presentation, *Mr. Pat Dowling, Limerick City Development Board*, drew attention to some of the NAPS areas that fall within the remit of the Local Authorities, Health Boards, the Department of Social and Family Affairs and other public services delivered at local level. These include commitments in relation to older people, housing and accommodation, urban poverty and Travellers. He stated that an increased focus on NAPS was now evident at local level and that a multi-agency approach to social inclusion is being developed through the various local structures (see Box B below), particularly through the work of the County and City Development Boards, Social Inclusion Co-ordinating Groups, the Community and Voluntary Fora and RAPID⁵.



5 Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development (RAPID) is a development programme that is targeted at disadvantaged urban areas. It operates under the auspices of the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

- 6.3 Key programmes and initiatives were identified in the roll out of the NAPS to Local Authorities. These included the Local Government Anti-Poverty Learning Network, that is supported by the Combat Poverty Agency, the Department of the Environment and Local Government, and the Department of Social and Family Affairs, the nine pilot Social Inclusion Units, established under the Partnership for Prosperity and Fairness, and the RAPID Programme.
- 6.4 Examples of the work that is being carried by the Limerick City Social Inclusion Unit are the revision to the rent schemes for Local Authority housing, guidelines on access to IT for disabled people, developing policies for immigrants and drawing up social inclusion plans under RAPID.
- 6.5 In looking at the roll out of the NAPS to the Mid-Western Health Board, Mr. Dowling referred to the role of the Health Board in relation to specific targets and actions in the City Development Board Strategy. This included the development of a multi-agency approach to poverty, researching the income needs of families, programmes for older people and the integration of people with disabilities into mainstream services. The Board is planning a series of Workshops throughout 2003 that will feed into a Social Inclusion Action Plan, which will be presented to the Board by end of the year. The Health Board also has specific commitments as part of the RAPID process in three RAPID areas in relation to local health services, mental health, disabilities, refugees and asylum seekers and drugs.
- 6.6 Mr. Dowling went on to outline some of the policy considerations for local government in the roll out of the NAPS. First, Local Authorities are now required to poverty proof their policies and consider the social inclusion impact of their actions, policies and programmes. Second, and given developments in community development and leadership, Local Authorities must now rethink how they engage with and support communities. Third, the potential role of the private sector in developing deprived areas should be explored. Fourth, although there are restrictions on Local Government spending, the experience of the RAPID Programme has highlighted the need for integrated local plans based on multi-agency co-operation. Finally, Local Government structures must now meet the challenge of internalising a clear focus on social inclusion and anti-poverty awareness.

Discussions at the Workshop

- 6.7 The Workshop discussed the challenges and barriers in bringing the NAPS to local levels. The main points arising in this regard were the need to develop an integrated approach by all relevant State agencies at local level, the need for the voice of the marginalised to be heard and to have an effective input into the delivery of social inclusion policies at local level, the identification and collection of appropriate social inclusion data to facilitate the development and implementation of effective policies on the ground and the need to address the

issue of resources. There was recognition that additional resources could have taxation implications.

- 6.8 In addition to identifying challenges and barriers, the participants also considered some possible solutions to these. These included the Local Authorities developing and implementing a local social inclusion action plan and that local agencies should develop internal structures to drive forward social inclusion within their organisations. The achievement of better co-ordination could provide added value from existing sources. While the County/City Development Board Social Inclusion Co-ordinating Group could play a crucial role, this can only be achieved if all the relevant agencies play their part.
- 6.9 Likewise, while the Local Government Anti-Poverty Learning Network and the pilot Social Inclusion Units are welcome innovations, realising their full potential will require the commitment of elected members and local authority senior officials. In addition, the support of the Combat Poverty Agency for the Learning Network as well as the support of other relevant agencies is essential.
- 6.10 The importance of the successful application of the NAPS and social inclusion policies generally at local level for certain key groups was highlighted. Among the groups specifically mentioned were people with disabilities, the elderly, the educationally disadvantaged and those in need of housing.

Workshop on Developing a Model for the Social Inclusion Forum

- 6.11 In opening his presentation to this Workshop, **Mr. Fintan Farrell, European Anti-Poverty Network, Brussels** welcomed the increased consultation activity evident in relation to the NAPincl process and highlighted that examples of good practice in relation to consultation can be found across the EU, including Ireland⁶. Within this context he suggested that the ambition or aim of the Social Inclusion Forum should be to hold politicians accountable to the commitment made at the European Council in Lisbon in March 2000 to making a decisive impact on poverty and social exclusion by the year 2010 and to make a strong contribution to the mobilisation of all actors in achieving this goal.
- 6.12 For the Social Inclusion Forum to deliver on such ambitious aims it must not just function on the day of the meeting itself. Mr. Farrell emphasised that the preparatory work that informs the Forum is crucial and must have certain features. First, it must interact with relevant processes at national and EU level including the National Budgetary process, the Social Partnership process, the EU Structural Funds, the National Employment Action Plan, the implementation of Equality Legislation and relevant Data Gathering exercises. In addition, this preparatory process must involve a wide range of actors including the National Parliament,

6 The EAPN intends to prepare a report on the models of consultation that are emerging.

relevant State Agencies, the Social Partners, Local Authorities, the Research Community, the Community and Voluntary Sector and the relevant European Networks.

- 6.13 In relation to the involvement of the Community and Voluntary Sector (NGOs), Mr. Farrell stated that this should respect the independence of the sector. The process should involve a wide range of organisations, specifically those representing the interests of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, in addition to those directly experiencing poverty and exclusion at first hand. In addition, the notion of citizen participation, that allows a space for individual input should be developed. This process should also aim to build on the existing structures rather than develop new ones and the role of the Social Inclusion Forum in devising a strategy for the engagement of the sector was flagged.
- 6.14 Mr. Farrell encouraged the adoption of a ‘think globally, act locally’ approach. In this, those agencies that are active at the local level should be aware of developments and policy at the national, European and global level and use this to contextualise their work and harness opportunities arising.
- 6.15 In short, Mr. Farrell raised the following three key questions:
- What are the aims and ambition of the NAPS Forum?
 - How should this Forum engage with relevant policy-making processes?
 - How will the Forum mobilise all the actors?

Discussions at the Workshop

- 6.16 While there was wide agreement on the inclusion of people in poverty in the Social Inclusion Forum, a number of issues were raised, however, as to how this could be achieved. A variety of models were suggested, including taking a random sample of those on the Live Register and the Citizen’s Jury model. The involvement of people experiencing poverty and exclusion was the responsibility of all sectors but care must be taken not to raise expectations of what such involvement might mean and not then delivering on this. It was also noted that many organisations and individuals are now suffering from consultation fatigue and that this present consultation exercise must have a clear outcome.
- 6.17 There is a need to develop a clear aim for the Social Inclusion Forum. Suggestions included holding politicians to account and providing an opportunity for people experiencing poverty and exclusion to express their views. While no agreement was reached on the overall aim of the Forum, participants were clear that it should not be simply a talking shop and yet another layer in the consultation process.

6.18 It was agreed that the Social Inclusion Forum should be a dynamic, pro-active process that goes beyond a one-day event. It was less clear, however, as to how this was to be achieved. Some suggestions centered on building on existing structures, such as the NESF or developing models already in use by different organisations. Reference was made to an interesting initiative that was recently undertaken by the NESF in involving older people in a project it was undertaking in this area. However, participants were clear that preparatory work throughout the year was essential in maintaining people's interest and motivation. In addition, the Social Inclusion Forum needs to have clear anticipated outcomes, including the formulation of clear positions in relation to the NAPS themes and the identification of actions that should take place between annual events. This needs to be clearly linked to the policy-making process. Good links with the Oireachtas should be developed and the politicians should be held accountable for commitments and outcomes.

Workshop on Mainstreaming Equality in the NAPS

- 6.19 In his presentation to this Workshop, *Mr. Niall Crowley, CEO of the Equality Authority*, stated that an effective anti-poverty strategy is one that recognises that poverty and inequality are closely linked, acknowledges diversity and mainstreams and targets those experiencing inequality and poverty. There are solid foundations for such an approach, both within the EU objectives for the Fight Against Poverty and Social Exclusion and in the NAPS.
- 6.20 Ireland's equality legislation (which is unique in the EU in covering nine distinct grounds) already provides a basis for developing the equality dimension to the NAPS and Ireland's National Action Plan. This entails focusing on the combined experience of poverty and inequality by the targeted groups, namely women, carers, lone parents, older people, young people, people with disabilities, and migrant and minority ethnic people including Travellers.
- 6.21 However, one obvious omission is that of the gay and lesbian community and this has to be rectified as well as the weak emphasis on mainstreaming those experiencing both poverty and inequality. In addition, there is a need to extend the objectives of the NAPS beyond economic or redistributive concerns to include *political, cultural and affective* objectives. NAPS should also include a key objective that reflects a specific equality focus to take account of and address the situation, experience and identity of those experiencing a combination of inequality and poverty.

- 6.22 Mr. Crowley identified the following four key challenges in mainstreaming equality within the NAPS.
- the fragmentation of policy approaches to poverty and inequality, reflected in the variety of existing approaches and policies e.g. our equality legislation has no specific focus on poverty; poverty proofing is developing but equality proofing is still at a ‘learning phase’ while the NAPS has still to develop a mainstreaming approach to equality;
 - the implementation of equality strategies where these have been developed;
 - the development of poverty and equality proofing; and
 - building the effective infrastructure required for evidence-based decision making in relation to poverty and inequality.
- 6.23 The further development of the NAPS needs to be underpinned by investing human and financial resources in poverty proofing processes, operationalising the focus on inequalities likely to lead to poverty within poverty, developing capacity-building at national, regional and local levels and putting in place a statutory duty on the public sector to promote equality and to combat poverty.
- 6.24 Parallel with this, there is a need to implement an effective equality data strategy, develop anti-poverty indicators and build and disseminate a knowledge base on the interface between poverty and inequality.
- 6.25 Finally, Mr. Crowley underlined that one of the implications of the above is that all public sector service providers should put in place an equal status policy, equality and diversity training, an equal status review of customer services and a commitment to promote and implement an equality dimension to service provision.

Discussions at the Workshop

- 6.26 Participants expressed the view that certain groups benefited from positive discrimination rather than equality in mainstreaming, as in the case of gender, and that this was reinforced by some initiatives promoted under the National Development Plan by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. A particular misunderstanding is that those in positions of authority know best on what is required for mainstreaming equality issues. Reduced resources and lack of data and capacity to measure the extent and progress of mainstreaming were also flagged as issues.
- 6.27 Comments on the nature and extent of supports for people with disabilities and older people in accessing education led to a wide discussion on the nature of mainstreaming. The view was expressed that often all of the effort is expected on the part of those seeking to access mainstream provision, while only minimal

expectation of change is needed from those who operate within the mainstream. Mainstreaming should not mean having access to lesser opportunities but rather an enhanced or higher quality services and participation by everybody.

- 6.28 Broadening the grounds and scope of both the equality legislation - including the extension of the grounds to cover economic status and the scope of the NAPS to reflect those further grounds - were broadly seen as positive and desirable. However, these need to be tempered by an appreciation of the level of support required to advance both equality and poverty issues, particularly where there is a clear inter-relationship of both experiences.
- 6.29 The potential for poverty and equality proofing to be further integrated was recognised, but some caution was expressed as to the danger of overstretching the objectives of the NAPS in attempting to cover all nine grounds included in the equality legislation.⁷ In addition, particular attention should be paid to the diversity of experiences of people and recognise the differences in mainstreaming based on local, national, urban and rural realities. These were seen as frequently being informed by wider considerations rather than the needs of a particular area.
- 6.30 It was also considered important that different indicators be devised to measure the mainstreaming experience of different groups, as the same outcomes are not relevant for all. Some indicators which would demonstrate that mainstreaming is working would include for example, the right for all to access second level education and that particular groups should not be targeted as problematic e. g in the delivery of services such as healthcare.

Workshop on Monitoring the NAPS Targets

- 6.31 In addressing this Workshop, *Ms. Helen Johnston, Director of the Combat Poverty Agency*, mentioned that the revised NAPS has resulted in the inclusion of 36 targets, compared to only 6 targets in the original 1997 Strategy. The overall NAPS target is the elimination of consistent poverty (households that have below 60% of the average disposable household income *and also* experience enforced deprivation) and much of the effort in relation to measuring poverty has focused on this. Where income or related data are not available proxy measures are used, such as unemployment, level of education, poor quality housing etc.
- 6.32 The original NAPS did not include any indicators of progress. However, Ireland's first National Action Plan 2001-2003 acknowledged the need for these and the revised NAPS refers to the use of the EU social indicators as a means of monitoring and evaluating the NAPS. Work at national level to develop indicators has been progressing. Research undertaken for the Combat Poverty Agency has identified 52

⁷ This legislation prohibits discrimination on the grounds of gender, age, religion, ethnicity, membership of the Traveller community, family status, marital status, disability and sexual orientation.

indicators that cover the NAPS, social inclusion indicators have been developed for the National Development Plan and work on local indicators is being developed. In addition, the National Statistics Board has been progressing work on identifying social and equality indicators across the Civil Service.

- 6.33 Closely related to the development of indicators is the question of data. There is general agreement on both the lack of and need for appropriate and timely data in order to effectively set targets and indicators and to monitor progress. The revised NAPS contains a commitment to the development of a data strategy, the cornerstone of which will be the EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC).
- 6.34 The role of research in informing the NAPS and the public policies that underpin it is widely recognised. The Office for Social Inclusion will have a key role to play in this area. A number of studies commissioned by the Combat Poverty Agency, many of which have been undertaken by the ESRI, have been important in this respect. This research has covered particular themes, such as the spatial dimension of poverty, it has examined the position and experience of certain groups including women and children in poverty, and has also included qualitative and area-based studies.

Discussions at the Workshop

- 6.35 In relation to the definition of poverty, there was some discussion on the need to broaden this out to include quality of life indicators and measures of social capital. This would help to measure poor communities as well as poor individuals and more accurately reflect the lived experience of poverty. Consistent poverty indicators need to be modernised and the compatibility of the fall in consistent poverty while at the same time relative income poverty has increased needs to be explored.
- 6.36 A number of issues were raised in relation to targets. It was considered that these should have an element of added value rather than those that can be achieved with little or no intervention from the Government, as was the case with many of the targets in the original NAPS. Research and an understanding of the process required to meet the targets should inform their setting. Where such research or knowledge is lacking this should be clearly stated. Targets should be monitored, revised and reviewed on an on-going basis and both qualitative and quantitative data should be used in their assessment. In addition, there may be some overlap in measuring the targets, for example between measuring long-term unemployment and the position of people with disabilities.
- 6.37 Monitoring the implementation of the NAPS as well as its ultimate outcomes was discussed. Relevant initiatives and programmes should be assessed in terms of their adequacy and their potential to help meet the NAPS targets and questions were raised where there are no measures in place to meet the targets set. The causal effects and links between inputs, process and outcomes need to be assessed.

- 6.38 With regard to data collection and analysis, it was suggested that local data availability and analysis could be improved by relatively small changes in existing information systems. However, different local boundaries, such as those that apply to the Local Authorities and those of the Health Boards, make local data analysis difficult. Due to differences in the quality from different sources, data may possibly need to be 'quality proofed'. Again, the need for greater balance between qualitative and quantitative research was highlighted.
- 6.39 A number of concerns were raised in relation to the ethics of researching people experiencing poverty. The need to see people experiencing poverty as active participants in research rather than as passive subjects, their involvement in research and the monitoring of the NAPS, the need for a high degree of both sensitivity and objectivity among researchers carrying out research and the development of a national code of research ethics that would protect the rights and civil liberties of individuals were all raised.
- 6.40 A number of issues were also discussed in relation to specific target groups. In particular, it was noted that the targets monitoring household poverty need to take account of the additional costs of disabled children and that special attention needs to be given to appropriate indicators for rural poverty which is different in nature, effect and visibility to that of urban poverty.

Section VII

Conclusions

Conclusions

- 7.1 At the concluding Plenary Session in the afternoon, *Ms. Helen Johnston, Director of the Combat Poverty Agency*, presented an overview of the main issues from the day's discussions earlier on. More detailed accounts of the points raised at the various Workshops are recorded in the preceding Sections of this report.
- 7.2 In relation to the national context, she pinpointed the following three key points: (i) the current uncertain economic situation provides challenges to implementing the NAPS and meeting the targets within the time-scale set; (ii) the NAPS Social Inclusion Forum is a key building block of the NAPS, particularly in developing the second National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion for submission to the EU Commission; and (iii) the importance of all sectors of society playing a role in anti-poverty strategies.
- 7.3 With regard to the development of Ireland's second National Action Plan, this needs to be ambitious and forward looking and to set out clear objectives and priorities, targets and indicators. In addition, the Plan needs to better mainstream and integrate across all policy areas and to lead to new and effective actions on the ground. Civil society, especially those experiencing poverty, needs to be more involved in the development and implementation of the Plan.

Key Challenges and Barriers

- 7.4 The key challenges and barriers that emerged from the day's discussions were as follows.
- ensuring the *adequate and full participation of people living in poverty* in informing any national action plan/strategy against poverty; the use of appropriate language and the avoidance of jargon is important here;
 - developing a *stronger rights-based approach* to anti-poverty policies; a specific suggestion was that rights should be unconditional so that people have choices e.g. the right to work inside or outside the home; income adequacy and education are seen as a fundamental human rights; education was singled out in the context of up to a quarter of our young people whose needs are not being met by the current education system;
 - *mainstreaming anti-poverty policies* and clear mechanisms to achieve this at European, national and local levels; in particular there is a need for a stronger gender and equality dimension; the integration of services is also particularly important so as to avoid duplication and address gaps - targeted initiatives for young people was cited as an example of where this is needed;

- ***better policy links*** to ensure that the actions undertaken will help towards meeting the targets; a more effective balance and coherence is required between different Government policies and programmes and the NAPS also needs to be speeded up in its delivery;
- the ***changed economic circumstances*** now prevailing provide a test of the strength of the policy framework for promoting social solidarity; recent cutbacks, particularly in social inclusion schemes and measures, do not provide grounds for confidence in the Government’s commitment to promoting social solidarity;
- ***resources are needed*** to implement the NAPS and may require greater redistribution of wealth; this will involve political commitment and strong public support; the affordability of housing in the private rented sector was flagged as a particular issue, as was the supply and quality of social housing;
- ***more information and data***, both quantitative and qualitative on the extent and nature of poverty; and
- ***improve communications on*** poverty and related issues, how these are being addressed through the NAPS, and the extent to which policies and programmes are making a difference.

Suggestions on the Way Forward

7.5 The suggestions of a *general nature* that were made at the Plenary and in the Workshops on how the NAPS should now move forward are summarised in Box C:

Box C: Suggestions of a *general nature* on the Way Forward

- *adopt a long-term vision;*
- *improve integration between different policies and programmes at European, national, regional, and local levels;*
- *mainstream social inclusion policies and in particular, identify and implement cross-cutting measures;*
- *set priorities in relation to fiscal and budgetary policies at both European and national levels; poverty proofing can play an important role in this;*
- *measure the impact of the NAPS on people at local level; avoid duplication and address gaps;*
- *set targets for poverty reduction and dates for their achievement; develop indicators for measuring outcomes;*
- *better communicate the purpose, content and progress in implementation of the NAPS;*
- *political and public support for the redistribution of resources to implement the NAPS and its prioritisation in tackling poverty;*
- *include and involve people experiencing poverty in the NAPS and use of appropriate language and avoidance of jargon;*
- *development of a stronger rights-based approach to anti poverty policies; and*
- *consider use of sanctions at EU and national level if targets are not met.*

7.6 Vulnerable groups identified for particular attention in the discussions included people with disabilities, women and men, children and young people, homeless people, Travellers, poor families, poor gays and lesbians and older people. In addition, the need to address rural as well as urban issues was highlighted.

7.7 Ms. Johnston concluded by identifying and summarising some of the key challenges and barriers that emerged in each of the Workshops and the ways that progress could be made on these. These are detailed in Section V and Section VI above and are summarised under the main policy themes in Box A of Section I of the report.

Discussions at the Final Plenary Session

- 7.8 A lot of discussion centered on the absence of the Minister of Social and Family Affairs and other political figures from the proceedings. Many participants expressed their anger and frustration at this and returned to the issue of the contradiction between political commitments and actual policy delivery on the ground. Although it was recognised that the Minister was well represented by her officials at the Forum and that the proceedings of the day would be fed back to her in detail, this was not the same as her being there and hearing people's views, frustrations and aspirations at first hand. This also applied to other relevant Ministers who needed to hear what was being said.
- 7.9 It was suggested that the feelings expressed at the Forum should be harnessed and put to good use by participants expressing their views not only to the NESF (especially its Oireachtas members) but also directly to their local politicians, members of the Government and also Opposition Spokespersons. This would improve the chances of the issues getting higher priority in the political debate.
- 7.10 The existence of and the growing ideological gap between the direction of Government policy and poverty and social issues was raised. In addressing this gap, the role and importance of a communications strategy that would seek to increase public awareness and convince the public that these issues need to be tackled as a priority was highlighted. The role of the media in publicising poverty and social exclusion issues, the importance of this in influencing public opinion and the links between public opinion and the political agenda were also raised.
- 7.11 There then followed a discussion on the purpose and working of the Social Inclusion Units within Government Departments. These are made up of officials who are responsible for co-ordinating the particular Departmental responsibility and commitments under the NAPS and the measures aimed at achieving these. The Office of Social Inclusion (OSI) will liaise with these Units with a view to achieving an overall picture in relation to compliance with the National Action Plan and/or the NAPS.
- 7.12 In this regard, it was suggested that the OSI should aim to act as a model of good practice for other Units and Agencies. It should also seek to ensure that information is easily accessible and understandable for all the different groups and that training is provided for front-line staff.
- 7.13 A question was also raised in respect of the ownership of the Social Inclusion Forum. In response, the Chairperson, **Dr. Maureen Gaffney**, stated that the NESF has been given the responsibility by the Government for the organisation of the NAPS Forum and for the production of the conference report of the day and its publication in due course. In this context, she stressed that if participants wanted

to express additional views on the issues discussed that they were most welcome to forward these in writing, over the 'phone, or by e-mail to the NESF Secretariat afterwards.⁸

- 7.14 In closing the Forum, the Chairperson, ***Dr. Maureen Gaffney***, thanked everybody for giving so freely of their time, experience and knowledge. One of the central issues she felt that had emerged from the day is whether or not the State sees its citizens as the centre of everything it does and how responsive it is to its citizens. In making this possible, all sectors need to work together and the Social Inclusion Forum is a step towards achieving this.
- 7.15 Finally, she mentioned that it must be accepted as a reality, rather than rhetoric, that the problems facing many of our citizens cannot be solved without the goodwill, information, expertise and problem-solving skills of all sectors in our society, including the non-statutory sector, and that this needs to be built on further into the future.

8 Delegate feedback forms were also distributed on the day. The views expressed in these were supportive of the points made and issues raised through the day; they also stated that the conference was worthwhile and was well organised.

Appendix I

Meeting of the NAPS Social Inclusion Forum

Royal Hospital Kilmainham (RHK)

Thursday 30th January 2003

PROGRAMME

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 9.30 a.m. (onwards) | Arrival of Participants and Guests in the RHK.
Registration with Tea/Coffee provided. |
| 10.00 a.m. | Introductory Remarks by the Forum's Chairperson,
Dr. Maureen Gaffney. |
| 10.05 a.m. | Address by the Minister for Social and Family Affairs,
Ms Mary Coughlan, T.D. |
| 10.20 a.m. | EU Dimension: Presentation by Mr. Jérôme Vignon,
Director, DG Employment and Social Affairs, European
Commission. |
| 10.35 a.m. | Presentation on the EU/ National Linkages by Mr. Robin
Hanan, European Anti-Poverty Network Ireland. |
| 10.50 a.m. | Questions and Open Discussions. |
| 11.45 a.m. | Coffee Break. |

12.00 p.m. Presentation on the NAPS by Mr. Gerry Mangan, Director of the Office for Social Inclusion, Department of Social and Family Affairs.

12.15 p.m. Meeting of Workshop Groups on:

Income Adequacy/Unemployment:

- *Chair:* Ms. Paula Carey, Irish Congress of Trade Unions.
- *Presenter:* Ms. Mary Murphy, Dublin City University.
- *Rapporteur:* Dr. Pádraig Carmody, Combat Poverty Agency.

Education:

- *Chair:* Mr. Noel Kelly, Northside Partnership.
- *Presenter:* Dr. Roland Tormey, Training College, Limerick.
- *Rapporteur:* Ms. Patricia O'Connor, Social Inclusion Unit, Dept. of Education and Science.

Health:

- *Chair:* Ms. Noreen Kearney, TCD and an Independent Member of the NESF.
- *Presenter:* Mr. Kevin Balanda, Institute of Public Health.
- *Rapporteur:* Ms. Angie Daly, Combat Poverty Agency.

Housing and Accommodation:

- *Chair:* Dr. Michelle Norris, Housing Unit, IPA.
- *Presenter:* Dr. Tony Fahey, ESRI.
- *Rapporteur:* Mr. David Silke, NESF Secretariat.

1.30 p.m. Break for Lunch.

2.45 p.m.

Meeting of Workshop Groups on:

Bringing the NAPS to local levels, including the Local Authorities and the Health Boards:

- *Chair:* Ms. Mary O’ Donoghue, Offaly County Development Board.
- *Presenter:* Mr. Pat Dowling, Limerick City Development Board.
- *Rapporteur:* Mr. Joe Allen, Department of the Environment and Local Government.

Developing a Model for the Social Inclusion Forum:

- *Chair:* Professor Seámus Ó’ Cinnéide, NUI Maynooth.
- *Presenter:* Mr. Fintan Farrell, Director, European Anti-Poverty Network, Brussels.
- *Rapporteur:* Ms. Liz Sullivan, Combat Poverty Agency.

Mainstreaming Equality Issues in the development and implementation of the NAPS:

- *Chair:* Ms Gráinne Healy, National Women’s Council.
- *Presenter:* Mr. Niall Crowley, Chief Executive, Equality Authority.
- *Rapporteur:* Mr. Donal Toolan, Forum of People with Disabilities.

Monitoring the NAPS targets – poverty measurement, indicators, data improvements and research:

- *Chair:* Ms. Marie O’Neill, Department of Social and Family Affairs.
- *Presenter:* Ms. Helen Johnston, Director, Combat Poverty Agency.
- *Rapporteur:* Dr. Richard Layte, ESRI.

4.15 p.m.

Feedback from the Workshops, Overview Presentation by Helen Johnston, followed by Open Discussions.

5.15 p.m.

Concluding Remarks by the Forum’s Chairperson, Dr. Maureen Gaffney.

List of Registered Delegates

Mr	Joe	Allen	Department of the Environment and Local Government
Mr	Peter	Archer	Educational Research Centre
Ms	Marianne	Azema	Dublin City Council
Mr	Kevin	Balanda	Institute of Public Health
Ms	Elaine	Barnes	Department of Social & Family Affairs
Mr	Gerry	Behan	Limerick County Development Board
Mr	Niall	Behan	Blanchardstown RAPID
Mr	Alan	Beirne	Parental Equality
Ms	Kathleen	Bonar	Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
Mr	Jerry	Boyle	RAPID Office
Ms	Berni	Brady	Aontas
Mr	Richard	Brady	Fingal County Council
Ms	Marian	Brattman	National Youth Council of Ireland
Mr	Catherine	Brennan	Comhairle
Mr	Roderick	Brennan	Tallaght Partnership
Dr	Valerie	Breslin	Irish Penal Reform Trust
Ms	Sara	Burke	Institute of Public Health
Ms	Margaret	Burns	Council for Social Welfare
Ms	Elaine	Byrne	Combat Poverty Agency
Ms	Valerie	Byrne	Combat Poverty Agency
Mr	Declan	Byrne	Laois Co Council
Mr	Peter	Cafferkey	Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources
Mrs	Sheila	Cahill	Kerry County Council
Ms	Helen	Campbell	Exchange House – Travellers' Youth Service
Mr	Bernard	Cantillon	Union of Students in Ireland
Ms	Paula	Carey	ICTU
Dr	Padraig	Carmody	Combat Poverty Agency
Mr	Bob	Carroll	National Council on Ageing & Older People
Ms	Aideen	Cassidy	Curriculum Development Unit Junior Certificate Schools Programme
Ms	June	Cassidy	Irish Association of Older People
Ms	Sheila	Clarke	The National Economic and Social Council
Mr	Leonard	Cleary	Clare County Council
Ms	Mary T	Cleary	Amen
Ms	Ruth	Cleary	Amen
Mr	Aidan	Clifford	Curriculum Development Unit

Ms	Maria	Corbett	Children's Rights Alliance
Ms	Carmel	Corrigan	Consultant
Mr	Fergal	Costello	Higher Education Authority
Ms	Tracy	Costelloe	St Nicholas Society
Ms	Mary	Coughlan TD	Minister, Department of Social & Family Affairs
Mr	Kieran	Coyne	Galway County Council
Dr	Tony	Crooks	Area Development Management Limited
Ms	Bernadette	Croud	Eastern Regional Health Authority
Mr	Niall	Crowley	Equality Authority
Ms	Julie	Cruickshank	South Western Area Health Board
Ms	Marie	Cudden	Drogheda Community Forum
Ms	Caroline	Cullen	Best Health for Children
Ms	Caroline	Cullen	Louth County Council
Ms	Linda	Curran	Co-Operation Fingal (North)
Ms	Angela	Daly	Combat Poverty Agency
Mr	Paul	Daly	An Oige
Mr	Geoff	Day	North Eastern Health Board
Ms	Margo	Delaney	Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice
Ms	Christine	Dibelius	Clann Housing Association
Mr	John	Dolan	Disability Federation of Ireland
Ms	Sinead	Doody	Limerick City Council
Mr	Patsy	Doolan	Making Minds Matter
Ms	Brid	Dooley	Galway City Council
Mr	Pat	Dowling	Limerick City Council
Mr	Daithi	Downey	Focus Ireland
Ms	Marion	Drennan	Teachers Union Of Ireland
Mr	Peter	Duffy	Department of Social and Family Affairs
Ms	Marian	Duffy	Carlow County Council
Ms	Carmel	Duggan	WRC Social & Economic Consultants
Mr	Allen	Dunne	Disability Federation of Ireland
Mr	Jack	Dunphy	
Ms	Fiona	Englis	Wexford Area Partnership
Dr	Tony	Fahey	ESRI
Mr	Fintan	Farrell	EAPN, Brussels
Ms	Avril	Feeney	Dublin City Council
Ms	Fidelma	Finch	National Parents Council (Primary)
Ms	Sunniva	Finlay	Dublin City-Wide Drugs Crisis Campaign
Mr	Peter	Finnegan	Dublin City Council
Mr	Niall	Fitzduff	Rural Communities Network
Mrs	Kathleen	Fitzgerald	Rathoe Social Inclusion Programme

Mr	Mark	Fitzpatrick	Tuiscent Training Centre
Ms	Eileen	Fitzpatrick	National Centre for Guidance in Education
Ms	Gabrielle	Flemming	P.W.D.I
Mrs	Phyllis	Forte	RAPID Community Ref
Ms	Lynda	Fox	Dunlaoghaire/Rathdown County Council
Dr	James	Frawley	Teagasc
Mr	Hugh	Frazer	European Commission
Mr	Laurence	Fullam	Westmeath Employment Pact
Ms	Joyce	Furlong	Athlone and District Youth Service
Dr	Maureen	Gaffney	National Economic and Social Forum
Mr	Joe	Gallagher	Training Workshop in Horticulture
Mr	Vivian	Geiran	Probation and Welfare Service
Dr	Ann Louise	Gilligan	National Educational Welfare Board
Ms	Ceri	Goddard	Combat Poverty Agency
Ms	Gwyn	Grace	Comhairle
Ms	Maura	Grant	Department of Education and Science Breaking the Cycle (Urban)
Ms	Lisa	Grant	Waterford City Council
Mr	Brendan	Griffin	IVEA Mc Cann House
Mr	Ivan	Grimes	Department of Finance
Mr	Donal	Guerin	Cork City Council
Mr	John	Hammond	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
Mr	Robin	Hanan	European Anti-Poverty Network
Ms	Anna May	Harkin	Department of Health and Children
Ms	Noeleen	Hartigan	SIMON Community of Ireland
Ms	Mairead	Hayes	Irish Senior Citizens Parliament
Ms	Grainne	Healy	National Women's Council of Ireland
Ms	Paula	Hennelly	National Economic and Social Forum
Mr	Fiacre	Hensey	ENNIS Rapid Programme
Ms	Liz	Hore	Wexford Borough Council
Mr	Marcus	Hufsky	KiltyClogher-Cashel Development Company
Ms	Marien	Hughes	Comhairle
Ms	Valerie	Hughes	Department of Health and Children
Mr	Philip	Jacob	The Katharine Howard Foundation
Ms	Helen	Johnston	Combat Poverty Agency
Mr	Bob	Jordan	SIMON Community of Ireland
Ms	Fidelma	Joyce	Combat Poverty Agency
Mr	Dermot	Kavanagh	Merchants Quay Project
Mrs	Anne	Kavanagh	PAUL Partnership
Ms	Noreen	Kearney	Department of Social Studies, TCD

Mr	Christy	Keeley	RAPID, South West Inner City
Mr	Noel	Kelly	Northside Partnership
Ms	Clare	Kelly	Legal Aid Board
Ms	Hilary	Kenny	Irish Pre-School Playgroups Assoc.
Ms	Mary	Kenny	Northern Area Health Board
Ms	Celine	Keogh	Hill St. Family Resource Centre
Ms	Helen	Keogh	Curriculum Development Unit VTOS
Mr	Jack	Keyes	Offaly County Council
Ms	Bernie	Kiely	Curriculum Development Unit Junior Certificate Schools Programme
Mr	Michael	Killeen	Longford County Council
Ms	Rita	Lacey	Waterford City Council
Ms	Jennifer	Land	Dublin City Council, RAPID Programme
Ms	Patricia	Langton	Ballymun Womens Resource centre
Mr	Tom	Lavin	County Leitrim Partnership
Ms	Siobhán	Lawlor	National Childrens Office
Dr	Richard	Layte	ESRI
Ms	Alice	Leahy	TRUST
Ms	Anna	Lee	Tallaght Partnership
Mrs	Ide	Lenihan	EAPN
Mr	Pat	Leogue	OAK Partnership
Ms	Liz	Leonard	Barnardos
Ms	Rosemary	Lindsay	
Mr	David	Little	Northern Area Health Board
Ms	Camille	Loftus	WRC - sec
Ms	Julia	Long	Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
Ms	Gemma	Lynch	National Adult Literacy Agency
Mr	Mel	MacGiobuin	North InnerCity Drugs Task Force
Ms	Bernadette	MacMahon	Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice
Mr	Séadna	MacSeoin	KWCD Area Based Partnership
Mr	Gerry	Mangan	Department of Social and Family Affairs
Ms	Monica	Manning	Community Action Network
Mr	Peter	McCann	Department of the Environment and Local Government
Ms	Ailish	McCarthy	Money Advice & Budgeting Service
Ms	Mary	McCarthy	Centre for Gender & Womens Studies
Ms	Denise	McCool	Donegal County Council
Ms	Marie	McDermott	Mildlands Regional Youth Service
Ms	Natalie	McDonnell	Treoir
Mr	Olan	McGowan	Irish Wheelchair Association

Mr	Joe	McGrath	Kerry County Council
Ms	Shira	Mehlman	FÁS
Mr	Frank	Mills	South Western Area Health Board
Mr	Paul	Morrin	Department of Social and Family Affairs
Mr	Frank	Mulcahy	Kildare Network of People with Disabilities
Ms	Linda	Mulhall	Kildare County Council
Ms	Mary	Mullins	Roscommon County Council
Ms	Mary	Mulvanerty	Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
Ms	Ann	Murphy	Department of Social and Family Affairs
Ms	Mary	Murphy	Dublin City University
Ms	Helen	Murphy	Department of Agriculture and Food
Ms	Yvonne	Murphy	Laois County Council
Ms	Joan	Murphy	West Limerick Resources Ltd
Ms	Karen	Murphy	Irish Council for Social Housing
Ms	Bernadette	Murphy	Headway Ireland Ltd
Mrs	Betty	Murphy	Irish Farmers Association
Ms	Dolers	Murphy	
Ms	Martina	Murray	Respond Housing Association
Ms	Maire	Ni Choinnaith	Catholic Youth Care
Ms	Feargha	NiBhroin	Respond Housing Association
Ms.	Margaret	Nolan	Wexford County Council
Dr	Michelle	Norris	Housing Unit, IPA
Ms	Mary	O'Donoghue	Department of the Environment and Local Government
Mr	Denis	O'Brien	Irish Emigrant Publications
Mr	Paul	O'Brien	Department of Finance
Prof	Seámus	Ó'Cinnéide	NUI Maynooth
Sr	Maureen	O'Connell	Presentation Sisters Justice Network
Mr	Conall	O'Connor	Department of Social and Family Affairs
Ms	Patricia	O'Connor	Department of Education & Science
Mr	Allen	O'Connor	
Ms	Mary	O'Connor	Children in Hospital Ireland
Mr	Philip	O'Connor	Dublin Employment Pact
Ms	Claire	O'Connor	National Disability Authority
Mr	Michael	O'Corcora	Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
Ms	Mary	O'Donoghue	Offaly County Council
Mr	Tim	O'Donoghue	Kerry Diocesan Youth Service
Ms	Seán	O'Flynn	Educational Disadvantage Committee
Ms	Margaret	O'Gorman	Combat Poverty Agency

Mr	Seamus	O'Grady	NUI Galway
Ms	Lydia	O'Halloran	Irish Red Cross Youth
Ms	Mary	O'Halloran	Cork County Council
Mr	Sean	O'hEigeartaigh	National Economic and Social Forum
Mr	Brendan	O'Leary	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Ms	Marie	O'Neill	Department of Social and Family Affairs
Mr	Cliondha	O'Neill	Rehab
Ms	Brenda	O'Neill	Rialto Community Network
Mr	Eoin	O'Seaghda	Department of Social and Family Affairs
Ms	Mary-Clare	O'Sullivan	Department of Social & Family Affairs
Mr	Des	Page	Waterford County Council
Ms	Ger	Power	North Centre City Community Action Project
Mr	Kevin	Power	National Youth Federation
Ms	Catherine	Prendergast	Daughters of Charity
Ms	Kathleen	Prendergast	Clonmel Borough Council
Ms	Aideen	Quilty	Women's Educational Research and Resource Centre
Mr	Tony	Quilty	Mid-Western Health Board
Ms	Eileen	Quinlivan	Kildare County Council
Ms	Patricia	Quinn	Money Advice and Budgeting Service
Ms	Orla	Quinn	European Commission
Ms	Brigid	Quirke	Pavee Point Travellers Centre
Ms	Patricia	Reilly	Wicklow County Council
Mr	Charles	Roarty	Energy Action Limited
Ms	Bernadette	Roe	Dublin City Council
Ms	Helen	Russell	ESRI
Ms	Ann	Ryan	South Tipperary County Council
Ms	Mariead	Ryan	Department of the Environment & Local Government
Mr	John	Saunders	Schizophrenia Ireland
Ms	Joan	Scannell	Parentline
Ms	Torri	Schellhorn	Community & Enterprise
Ms	Susan	Shaw	Triskele Community Training and Development
Ms	Peg	Sheehan	Shannon Erne Guild of Folk Artists
Mr	David	Silke	National Economic and Social Forum
Ms	Julie	Smyth	Combat Poverty Agency
Mr	James	Stone	Midland Regional Authority
Mr	David	Stratton	Age Action Ireland Ltd.
Ms	Liz	Sullivan	Combat Poverty Agency
Ms	Mary	Syron	Irish Nurses Organisation

Ms	Joan	Tattan Dennis	Rural Resettlement Ireland Ltd
Ms	Sheevaun	Thompson	South-East Regional Authority
Ms	June	Tinsley	Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed
Mr	Donal	Toolan	Forum of People with Disabilities
Dr	Roland	Tormey	St Mary's College, Limerick
Ms	Anne	Transon	Enable Ireland
Mr	Jerome	Vignon	DG Employment & Social Affairs, European Commission
Mr	Seamus	Walker	Wicklow County Council
Mr	Gerard	Walker	National Economic and Social Forum
Ms	Joan	Walsh	NEPS
Ms	Rigina	Walsh	Best Health for Children
Ms	Barbara	Walshe	Combat Poverty Agency
Mr	Padraic	White	White & Associates
Mr	Stuart	Williams	ATD Fourth World
Mr	Eoin	Woulfe	Ballon Rathoe Development Assoc
Ms	Catherine	Zappone	Human Rights Commission

