COMMUNITIES & THE ACADEMY

Siobhán O'Dowd, Project Co-Ordinator

Ballyphehane/Togher Community Development Project & CESCA Equality Alliance Cork, Ireland

In conjunction with

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Cork Education and Training Board & CESCA Equality Alliance, Cork.

Ballyphehane/Togher CDP
est.1994 as part of the National CDP Programme

CDP Programme grew to 180 nationally by 2010

130 CDPs amalgamated with local development companies in 2011 to become the LCDP programme

25 CDPs survived to remain independent self-governed community organisations

Ballyphehane Togher CDP needed to secure its future as an organisation and create its own identity 2012/2013 Community Anchor project

Dione Hills, Tavistock Institute – "Community Anchor Projects"

- Strong, sustainable, self-governed, community-based organisations provide a crucial focus and support for community development and change in their neighbourhood or community.
- Give a solid foundation to a wide variety of self-help and capacity building activities in local communities, and
- History & roots within their communities range and depth of their relationships, networks and experience.

CDP GUIDELINES FOR WORKING WITH ACADEMICS

- Community Groups value what you do & recognise worth;
- Accept / maintain links with university courses that add value to the work of project, advance aims of group or enhance field of practice;
- Build relationships based on equality not hierarchy;
- Write clear contract containing expectations and insist on these being met;
- Don't accept drive-by relationships with academic staff or institutions.

ACADEMICS – WHY THEY NEED US

- Guided practice opportunities for students in vocational/occupational setting, shared learning & pedagogy;
- Research: real world application of theoretical/ideological frameworks;
- Connection between academic disciplines and communities as site for practice in these disciplines;
- Impact criteria now included in recruitment, research & promotion criteria.

Lego Academics @LegoAcademics · 18 Dec 2014
The REF has...RETURNED!!

BALLYPHEHANE TOGHER CDP'S EXPERIENCE OF ACADEMIC PLACEMENTS

Second Level & Further Education:

- Transition Year placements & Applied Leaving Cert.
- National Learning Centre & Headstrong Irl – work placements for people with disabilities

Third level:

- BA Early Years Education, B Soc Sc, B Soc Youth & Community Work
- Childcare – Levels 7 & 8 placements
- Social Care: Certificate, Diploma, Degree
- Speech Therapy, Occupational therapy, Social Work
- EU Erasmus Programme: Business administration, Social Work, Teaching
- MA, MScs – Maynooth, Trinity, UCC

EXPERIENCE OF ACADEMIC PLACEMENTS, CONT'D

Placement Visits & Learning Sessions:

- Health Promotion & Public Health,
- Public Health Nursing, Occupational & Speech Therapy, Community Mental Health Teams
- Trainee GP Scheme & Graduate Medical Entry Programme
- *Third level courses CDP has contributed to:*
- CIT – BA Community Education & Development
- UCC - ACE – Cert/ Diploma Leadership in the Community
- UCC B Soc Sc Youth & Community Work
- NUI Maynooth & NCWI Women's Studies Programme
- UL – Graduate Medical Entry Programme – Health Sciences - Primary Care module.

WHAT THE CDP HAS LEARNED FROM ACADEMIC COLLABORATIONS

- Interaction: placements need to be of value to CDP *and* University; student contract makes this explicit;
- Validation of work / practice of community groups;
- New insights / alternative methods devised in academic settings reinvigorate community practice.

Question value of university courses that draw from community groups but add nothing

Example: first year students newly into university – unable to benefit from placement visits, difficult to find any value for project in hosting such visits.

Innovative collaborations that challenge and change both community groups & universities <u>are possible</u>!

Community projects under threat

Madam, – In the midst of all the coverage of cutbacks and the forthcoming budget, one major proposal has received very little attention. This is the intention of the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs to wind down and close all 182 community development projects (CDPs) across the most disadvantaged communities in the State. The department intends to close CDPs deemed "unviable" immediately, and to ask those deemed "viable" to voluntarily close and be incorporated into a larger centralised structure, run by Local Development Social Inclusion Partnership companies (LDSIP). This move will dispense with CDP voluntary management committees, will accommodate only some existing fulltime staff, but will redeploy the resources and funding generated by local communities into centralised LDSIPs. It is claimed that this "amalgamation" will give rise to cost efficiencies, but what is more cost efficient than volunteers who work for nothing in managing local resource centres, programmes, staff and funding?

CDPs provide an extraordinary range of programmes including childcare; support for those with disabilities, Travellers and older people. They are run by voluntary boards composed of local people who know and understand the needs of their own communities; these boards are demonstrably cost-effective and very well managed. Moreover, every euro allocated to them by the department has been matched by funding obtained from other sources.

We believe that the agenda behind this proposal has little to do with cost savings but much to do with the dislike in certain quarters for an innovative programme which has given a direct and effective voice to local communities to decide on their own needs and priorities.

Under the proposed arrangements, voluntary boards will lose their role and be obliged to hand over the fruits of their work and fundraising to organisations at a remove from communities, where the vital local voice will no longer be heard.

The CDP programme as it stands is a shining example of self-empowerment and active, ethical citizenship and directly benefits those individuals and communities who did not enjoy the benefits of the Celtic Tiger and who are suffering disproportionately now.

We call on Minister Éamon Ó Cuív and on Minister for State John Curran to abandon this proposal and to guarantee the funding and autonomy of the CDP programme. It is needed now more than ever. – Yours, etc,

Prof KATHLEEN LYNCH, UCD; Prof BRYAN FANNING, UCD; Prof ANNE RYAN, NUIM; Prof PAT O'CONNOR, UL; Prof PEADAR KIRBY, UL; Prof TOM LODGE, UL; Prof ALASTAIR CHRISTIE, UCC; Prof PATRICIA COUGHLAN, UCC; RONNIE DORNEY, HSE South; BARRY MURRAY, HSE South; DENIS BARRETT, City of Cork VEC; DENISE CHARLTON, Immigrant Council of Ireland; NIALL CROWLEY, Independent equality expert; Sr STANISLAUS KENNEDY, Focus Ireland; SIOBHAN O'DONOGHUE, Migrant Rights Centre Ireland; AILBHE SMYTH, Equality Rights Alliance; Dr ANNE MacFARLANE, NUIG; Dr ANASTASIA CRICKLEY, NUIM; Dr BRÍD CONNOLLY, NUIM; HILARY TIERNEY, NUIM; Dr MARY GILMARTIN, NUIM; Dr HILARY TOVEY, TCD; Dr ELIZABETH KIELY, UCC; Dr DENIS LINEHAN, UCC; Dr PIARAS Mac ÉINRÍ, UCC; Dr CIARÁN McCULLAGH, UCC; ROSIE MEADE, UCC; Dr ORLA O'DONOVAN, UCC; TOM O'CONNOR, Cork Institute of Technology; Dr COLM O'DOHERTY, Institute of Technology Tralee; Dr KIERAN ALLEN, UCD; JOHN BAKER, UCD; Dr ROLAND ERNE, UCD; Dr ALICE FELDMAN, UCD; Dr STEVEN LOYAL, UCD; Dr ANDY STOREY, UCD; Dr EOIN DEVEREUX, UL; Dr BREDA GRAY, UL; BRIAN KEARY, UL; Dr ORLA McDONNELL, UL; MARY O'DONOGHUE, UL & Dr TINA O'TOOLE UL, C/o School of Languages, Literature, Culture & Communication, University of Limerick.

25/11/09

ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT OF 18 CDPS CORK AND KERRY

Tom O'Connor, CIT

Example - Campaign to save Community Development Programme - Economics of community development & Letter to Irish Times

ACE UCC & Cork ETB, Cork City Council – UNESCO – Learning Neighbourhoods workshop in Ballyphehane.

MBA Trust UCC & CESCA – Equality Charter for Employers, supported social employment and social enterprise

MBA Charitable Trust

CESCA Member Organisations

- *The organisations involved in CESCA are:*

- HSE Social Inclusion Services Cork · Ballyphehane / Togher Community Development Project (CDP)
- 'Before 5' family centre   Churchfield Community Trust
- Cork Gay Project   LINC, Advocating for Lesbians and Bisexual Women in Ireland
- Mahon Community Development Project (CDP)   Mayfield Community Development Project (CDP)
- Meitheal Mara   NASC (Irish Immigrant Support Centre)
- Northside Community Health Initiative, Cork (NICHE)   The Social and Health Education Project (SHEP
- Traveller Visibility Group (TVG   Cork YMCA

RESEARCH PROCESS, SENSITIVITY AND ETHICS, TRUST & RELATIONSHIPS, AFTER EFFECTS

Many disadvantaged communities find themselves over-researched and under resourced. Ballyphehane Togher CDP refuses to engage in research processes that
- **objectify the community** or groups within it / perpetuates stereotypes
- is about **deficit models** of communities
         (eg geography of poverty-type
         research, test tubes for theory,
         research fodder)
- **that ignores social and structural inequalities** and ascribes behaviours or issues to individuals or groups of individuals as matter of personal responsibility/choice.

COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRE & CRECHE

The above researchers are all trained members of the Ballyphehane research group and have resided in the greater Ballyphehane area for the last thirty to fifty years.

Over the years all members of this group have been actively involved in numerous local organizations in a voluntary capacity and have a genuine interest and understanding of what has emerged in this report. The participants have generously shared

their knowledge and experience to make this research a truly participatory piece of work.

One of the main attributes that this research group has brought to the project is their knowledge of the Ballyphehane Community and their huge commitment to enhancing the Community spirit in the Ballyphehane area.

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Participative research – participated in, owned and directed by those being researched where not only are the findings of the research shared with communities, they are created by members of these communities; this de-mystyfies research process.

![All Ireland Traveller Health Study — Our Geels. Summary of Findings]
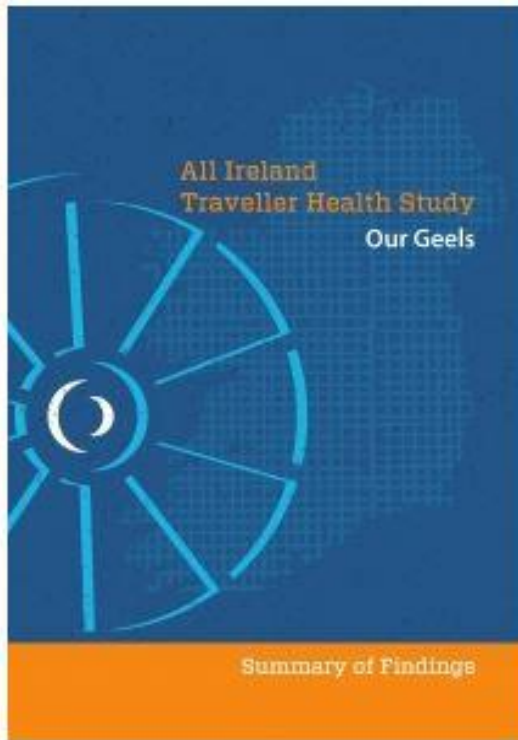
Participative research examples

- Older people's Millennium Study
- All Ireland Traveller health Study

Research similar to learning placements: is it of value, does it acknowledge community respectfully, will research be shared, is mindful of those who participate, sensitive to their needs & concerns, raise unreasonable expectations etc.