Respond!
Housing Association

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Next Phase

www.respond.ie

Respond!, formed in 1982, is one of Ireland's largest housing associations. We seek to create a positive future for people by alleviating poverty and creating vibrant, socially integrated communities. We provide a range of services from design and planning through to management and care. Respond! designs and constructs dwellings for traditional families, lone parent families, the elderly, homeless and other special need groups.

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1   Introduction

Background

Respond!'s goal is to provide housing and assist in the building of stable communities for those on low incomes or otherwise in need of housing. We seek to ensure that such communities will foster the growth of the individual resident and that of the whole community. We aim to assist our communities to grow to the stage where sufficient local community leadership exists to enable residents to access the services of and participate fully in the structures of wider society.

To that end, we invest in personal and community development activity and family supports in order to build the capacity of residents for such a role. The family should be and is at the centre of the opportunity for a holistic approach in the development of both communities and the individuals within those communities.

Over time, the demands on Respond! to provide housing have increased significantly and continue to grow. On account of the desirability to meet the needs of new communities and of lessening existing communities' reliance on Respond!, our community development investment programme has a finite life in each estate, generally five years from establishment. After five years we will step back to allow local Community Enablers lead community development supports on individual estates and through local, regional clusters and a National Federation.

Our community supports are targeted towards the development of local resident enablers that will be capable of coordinating each estate's community services and interacting with external service providers and agencies in an autonomous way. Such supports are designed to realise the ultimate goal of overcoming disadvantage for the people on our estates. To help bring this about, we concentrate on a) identifying those who can play enabling and other community roles, b) supporting them through the provision of capacity-building activities, training and experiences c) assisting them to work through regional and ultimately national groups to further develop local community management issues and innovate new practices and services. These Community Enablers are essential to making Respond!'s mission a reality. Whilst they voluntarily and selflessly place themselves at the service of their community, Respond! is committed to supporting their training and personal development needs and to ensuring that they are not at a financial disadvantage on account of their service.

Our thanks to Joe Saunders, Consultant, for his input and work with us over the last few months and for his contribution to this document and to all those who have given time and effort to the finalisation of its content.

2   Objective and Methods

The main objective of our community development activity is to support integrated local economic and social development through programmes that counter disadvantage and promote the inclusion and participation of disadvantaged people and communities in the structures and conditions enjoyed by the rest of society. The nature of the plan is progressive, moving communities from one stage of development to the next. The role of Respond! and its staff is to ensure that progression through the use of programmed events, education and applied community resources.

In October 2004, Respond! published its **Community Development Strategic Plan**. This adopted the definition of community development used by the Department of Social & Family Affairs for its Community Development Programme,
• " Community Development is about promoting positive change in society in favour of those who benefit least.
• …It is about involving people, most especially the disadvantaged, in making changes, which they identify as important and which use and develop their own skills, knowledge and experience.
• Community development seeks to challenge the causes of poverty/disadvantage and to offer new opportunities for those lacking choice, power and resources."
  (Community Development Programme, Dept. of Social Welfare, Dublin, 1995)

This definition shows that community development work contains three principal characteristics i.e. 1) it seeks to effect change through actions and services 2) it has working principles and methods that are inclusive and empowering of disadvantage, treating them as more than consumers of services and 3) it seeks to challenge the causes of poverty. Respond! recognises that, whilst it assists in building community in its own estates, these areas are not isolated from the rest of society and its structures. For this reason, Respond!'s community development activity aims to integrate with and build on existing structures and programmes where they exist and support their residents to participate fully in them.
This plan demonstrates Respond!'s strategic approach to our community development programme. Whilst specific to the needs of Respond!'s communities, our plan reflects many national policies, including:
Towards 2016: Ten Year Framework Social Partnership Agreement, National Anti-Poverty Strategy 2006 – 2010, National Employment Action Plans and the National Development plan 2007 to 2013.

Objective
Respond!'s overall objective is to develop sufficient local Community Enablers, within five years of the opening of an estate*, to enable residents to participate fully in and access the services and structures of wider society. In developing such enablers, there is a particular focus on ensuring that it serves and is committed to those who are most disadvantaged on our estates. In supporting local enablers, Respond! is focussed on those policies, procedures and programmes that are of benefit to the most disadvantaged of our residents.

(*or, for existing estates, within five years of the start of the Community Development Support Programme)

In fulfilment of the mission of Respond! and in preparing estates for such community development autonomy, we have also adopted the following sub-objectives and methodologies that have been developed by Pobal in furtherance of the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme that attempts to meet the needs of the disadvantaged groups in all parts of the country.

Our sub-objectives, in line with Pobal's schema, are Targeting Disadvantage and Promoting Participation and Inclusion of our residents in the management of their own community development affairs and their interaction with wider social, economic and cultural affairs.

• **Targeting Disadvantage** requires a detailed understanding of the needs of the people who live in an area, specifically those who are marginalised and long-term unemployed. Disadvantage is multi-faceted and responses need to be integrated. As Respond! does not wish to duplicate existing services, we aim to ensure that our communities receive multi sectoral approaches to tackling disadvantage. In this, Respond! adopts the following most appropriate role e.g.

1. **Direct Provision** – direct provision where no partner exists;
2. **Through Partnership** - co-delivery of service or intervention;
3. **Through brokerage** - invite appropriate agency and local group to work together;
4. **By signposting** -. Direct referral toward appropriate delivery agency and monitoring the effectiveness of such delivery;
5. **Advocacy** where no services exist and where a need is identified but not met, at local, regional or national level

Sample Indicator Headings Do Residents have?	Potential Respond! role
Access to Childcare	Provision of childcare where appropriate
Access to Family Resource/Support Services	Provision; Brokerage; Referral
Access to Education Brokerage;	Referral
Adequate Income, Labour Market Participation and Economic Independence	Brokerage; Referral
A safe and orderly Environment	Support local community participants; Brokerage

Respond! believes the supports listed are among those necessary to target disadvantage for our communities. Where necessary, we can engage in direct provision but it is our preference to ensure the availability of these supports in conjunction with partner agencies. Our staff works with relevant structures and providers to enable this.

Such partners include: Local Partnership company, HSE, VEC, Family Resource Centres, Community Development Projects, NGOs working with target groups, this list is not exhaustive.

Such structures include: RAPID programmes, local inter-agency groups such as Integrated Services to Travellers groups, local Task Force.

Respond! will seek to maximise the effective use of its own personnel and resources through partnership, inter-agency work, brokering or facilitating service as well as direct provision where necessary. In certain cases, it will contract the external agencies to provide services.

- Alongside service provision, Respond! will develop a key focus on the **Participation and Inclusion of these Target Groups** in collective decision-making which generates ownership and responsibility and ensures that such decisions are relevant to residents needs.

Example Indicators	Examples of Respond!'s role
Evidence of participation in Estate Management By Community Enablers	• Ensure CD staff contact all residents • Identify Community Enablers and others willing to take on community roles • Organise /assist Community Enablers to organise community events • Provision of training • Provision of mentoring and other supports to build capacity
Evidence of participation in Community and Civic life By Community Enablers	• Provision of training • Provision of mentoring and other supports to build capacity • Provision of supports for Community Enablers to engage in external structures • Provision of supports for Community Enablers to engage in Respond!'s federated structures

Methodologies/ Working principles

In pursuit of these objectives, Respond! is cognisant of the policies and methods of other community support agencies and best practice in the sector. In order to make maximum use of resources, integrate with existing programme and adhere to the best principles of modern social inclusion work, we have adopted the following methodologies for our work.

A **Focus on Equality** and equality of outcome is essential to countering disadvantage and is achieved through strategies for the access, participation and inclusion of those groups which experience inequality.

A **Multi-Sectoral Approach** towards identifying and addressing the needs of local communities requires full participation from the State, social partners, community and voluntary sectors and enhances strategic planning.

Partnership at local level between the community sector, the social partners and the State agencies increases co-operation, co-ordination and effective

Strategic Planning promotes best use and targeting of State, private and community resources.

Respond!'s Model of Clusters and Federation

We work with key Community Enablers through local and regional clusters and eventually through a National Federation to provide training and capacity building as well as to facilitate planning and implementation by Community Enablers. Training is given to assist Community Enablers to provide low-level services on their estate, building to more intensive training in Respond! policy, facilitation skills, motivation and leadership, specific training for delivery of community services, personal development etc. The Clusters are resourced by Respond! as a key tool in the promotion of social inclusion and countering disadvantage.

The focus of CDOs' work (see later section), with integrated Family Resource Officers, will be on working with key Community Enablers through the clusters as well as on their estates.

Local clusters will typically be six estates grouped together for training and developmental activity. These estates will work together to train for and to deliver low-level service activity initially, leading to more in-depth training. Training can be divided into the following categories:

1) Respond! Strategy and policy, 2) Leadership and Motivation, 3) Facilitation, 4) specific skills training – this latter category will encourage participation.

The more general roles of the local clusters include seeking resources from Respond! and others; limited advocacy role mainly re. Local authorities, VECs etc with most advocacy being done at national level. The cluster groups should focus more on programmes of improvement for the community and the ways in which resources (Respond!'s and other social partners') can be better applied and they are not a forum for representation on issues such as rent levels, maintenance services or right-to-buy.

Local clusters feed to regional clusters. These will comprise typically 10 –20 estates of 6-7 local clusters, taking up issues of regional advocacy and training. The role of the Regional Clusters will be as an instrument of support to the local clusters where learning and experiences can be shared and issues of common interest can be considered and discussed. A limited level of advocacy can be carried out on behalf of their communities. These Regional Clusters will be selected by invitation or appointment by Respond! and will include staff from the relevant region.

The National Federation will be appointed by Respond! from regional clusters and staff. The role of the National Federation is to examine national issues, government (local and national) policy on childcare, allocation policy, social housing, sustainable communities and all issues that pertain to countering disadvantage.

It will be the role of the NCDC and the RCDC's to develop training plans for each of their cluster groups and that these training plans should reflect the levels that each of the clusters are working at (local, regional and national). These plans should also reflect the different levels that may be represented within each level (Capacity 1 , 2 and 3 individuals) and allow for the cross learning and mentoring of individuals.

3   Community Enablers

The individuals that we are seeking to attract are to be referred to as **Community Enablers**. Our objective is to identify those individuals who have the will and the spirit to see beyond their own development and who will seek to improve the communities they live in for themselves and the wider community.

These individuals will be willing to work with others on the estates to deliver programmes of activities and events on a voluntary basis. They are not necessarily the "leaders" of the estate or those who are most vocal, they are the "doers" and "seers" on the estate.

In identifying and recruiting these individuals we are seeking people with the following character traits:
• They exhibit personal drive;
• They are self-motivated;
• They demonstrate a degree of empathy for those living on the estates;
• They are committed to the ethos of Community Development;
• They are open – to change, to discussion, to listening.

The above traits are seen as critical in identifying those that can both influence and assist in the implementation of the Community Development Strategy. The following traits and characteristics should be considered also:
• Individuals should be affable;
• They should be A-political;
• They should have some communication and listening skills;
• They should share the vision of improvement for their community;
• They should be a consensus builder;
• There should be a mix of genders; and
• There should be a mix of ages.

A mix of skills and experiences should also be considered when recruiting individuals to fulfil these roles, these are outlined below. If the other core elements exist then the opportunity for personal development of the following skills should be considered:
• Business related experience or skills;
• Experience or skill in the provision of social work;
• Experience or skills in education;
• Experience or skills in family support type work;
• Committee skills and experience.

It may be difficult to attract or identify individuals with all these skills however it is important that we understand the levels of attainment and abilities of the individuals we are attracting in to this role. Their importance to the process or delivering the Community Development Strategy cannot be over stressed. They will be working on our estates and in the clusters in the development of plans and the delivery of resources. They will be involved in the programme of concientisation over the life of the plans and they will be involved in the analysis of the Socio-economic analysis of their community and the wider areas within which they live.

The role of the Community Enabler is in many respects as important as the role of the CDO and FRO in the development and roll out of the programmes of Community Development.

4   Categorisation of Our Estates by Capacity

Estates are described in terms of their community participation and capacities as well as their socio-economic profile and level of disadvantage.

Capacity 1 Estates

Description

On Capacity 1 Estates almost all residents see themselves as individuals; there is no sense of community as an integrated conscious concept; residents see themselves as simply consumers of a housing association's products and services; interaction with other agencies and service providers is in a dependent rather than participative or creative mode; the community is incapable of resolving local conflicts; there are no persons identified who have both the current capacity and willingness to engage in training or activities that can start on the road towards the achievement of a contract for the residents to provide their own community development services. Therefore, all community development activity must be initiated by Respond! CD staff, including the identification of participants.

What such Estates need from Respond!'s Community Development Programme

A large number of our estates are currently in this category. Given the deployment of resources outlined in the following sections, the Community Development Programme can achieve the following for such estates and all new estates coming on stream within one year*:

- Direct visits to explain Respond!'s role at all stages of the five-year community development programme.
- Estate profile – this also answers the questions posed earlier in relation to the key external components of disadvantage – Do residents have access to childcare, family resources/support services, educational opportunities and employment/enterprise supports? Do they have a safe and orderly environment? This can be answered on the basis of proximity to services and the willingness of service providers to co-operate. This will identify the role that Respond! must play, subject to resources, on the continuum from direct provision to referral.
- Post–tenancy training to build local capacity for low-level service activities – to be done through local clusters.
- Development of community activities.
- Development of community development taster activities through which to identify those willing to take on leadership and other community roles.
- Development of understanding by Respond! staff of the community's particular situation and needs.
- Linkage to and brokerage of external agencies and service providers.
  (* Presumes Pre-Tenancy training complete or underway)

To implement this year one programme, an operational plan will be agreed between the Community Development Officer (CDO) and Regional Community Development Coordinator (RCDC) for each estate and approved by National Community Development Coordinator (NCDC) in line with available CD programme budgets. This will include -

- Training needs of each Community Enabler - from itemised list in Appendix 1 & 2,
- Training needs of staff – from itemised list in Appendix 1 & 2,
- Training costs – from itemised list in Appendix 2,
- Time inputs at estate and cluster level identified,
- Agenda for low level service activities,
- Clear identification of how proposed local actions link to overall CD programme goals,
- Cost and identification of all external funding sources e.g. VEC Youth Fund etc,

NB There is much to be achieved in year one for our Capacity 1 estates. It is considered highly attainable, given the resources committed by the organisation, the focus on leadership and the cluster approach. For this reason, Year 1 and Capacity 1 can be considered as interchangeable for all but those few estates that are currently more developed.

Capacity 2 Estates

Description

In such estates there is a range from

• Where there is a minimum of passive support for community development activity, some potential participants have been identified, some residents are engaged in non-mandatory self development or educational activities; some social programmes for specific needs are taking place (e.g. clean-up, fun days)

to

• More complex community development activities are taking place with more complex roles being played by residents (e.g. engagement with or lobbying of external structures e.g. local Partnership, RAPID programme etc); such residents are questioning of external power structures; they are participating in training, reflection and capacity building activities provided by Respond! and others, and are open to the idea of local provision of information and services by residents with Respond! taking a back seat. They are developing skills at participating in and benefiting from external structures e.g. interacting with agencies, grant applications etc.

What such Estates need from Respond!'s Community Development Programme

• Training – on site and off–site; by Respond! and also contracted 3rd parties,
• Continuing organisation of more complex community services,
• Support for Community Enablers to organise more basic ones,
• Support for Community Enablers to access and participate in external bodies and bring new services to the estate,
• Advocacy where appropriate,
• Support for Community Enablers in regional federation,
• Development of Plan to ensure effective supports are in place at the end of the five-year Community Development Programme. This will involve Respond!, leaders and other Community Enablers, other residents and external bodies with social inclusion remit e.g. Area Partnership, VEC, DSFA, HSE, any CDPs or FRC in the area, other relevant agencies or NGOs.

As estates move to complete their time at Capacity 2, the overall focus is on training and planning for handover of the Community Development and participation activities, so that when Capacity 3 work begins, all concerned are aware that the time spent defined as Capacity 3 is limited and that ongoing direct supports will cease.

Again, an operational plan will be agreed between the CDO and RCDC for each estate and approved by NCDC in line with available CD programme budgets. This will concentrate more on supporting community leaders at estate and cluster level to participate in external structures and integrate their estates into and benefit from wider civic structures and programmes. In effect, they will seek to mainstream their estates through seeking direct contact with and services from agencies and NGOs who address the aspects of disadvantage described in section 1.

This phase will therefore involve, for instance, discussions between an Area Partnership group and a cluster representing all the estates in the former's area of operation, leading to a plan for the full range of social inclusion measures in the area to be targeted at Respond! estates.

Capacity 3 Estates
Description
These estates are capable and willing to take responsibility for information provision and management of community development activity on the estate.

They are capable of interacting with agencies and attracting funding and services with minimum support.

They see Respond! as an enabler/helper on their own and their community's behalf.

They can identify themselves in relation to overall socio-economic and cultural power structures and wish to advance their own and their community's self –interest.

They can be depended upon to take responsibility for planning and delivering agreed actions or services.

What such Estates need from Respond!'s Community Development Programme
Such estates and its Community Enablers need the customised supports and training necessary to enable them to operate their estate's community development programme with little or no assistance from Respond! and to operate effectively in external structures and the Respond! National Federation. Hence, Capacity 3 estates are considered to be in a phase prior to the autonomy of Community Development supports from Respond!. Supports should be based on planning for the period when local Community Enablers take over the provision of community development activities. This plan should start to be developed once an estate can be identified as Capacity 2. All training activity and almost all the time of the CDO is dedicated to this Plan. Whilst some of this will be local work, there will be a concentration on working with groups of estates simultaneously at Cluster level.

5   Implementation

The core of Respond!'s community development programme is carried out by CDOs and Family Resource Officers (FRO) working at local estate, regional cluster and federation level. On-the-ground community development workers, including FROs are seen by Respond! as the key to delivering effective supports and empowering Community Enabler activity.

In pursuit of Respond!'s key aim of building Community Enabler capacity within estates, the core functions of CDO/FROs are:

- To initiate community-based local activities that can attract the participation of as many residents as possible who are motivated to assist in the delivery of measures to counter disadvantage locally. ("Quick wins");
- To identify Community Enablers from pre –tenancy training onwards who are concerned with the greater/wider benefit of the community;
- To support such Community Enablers through their training and personal development including by providing childcare interventions and support as required;
- To further support such Community Enablers to participate in local and regional cluster activity.

Community Development and Family Resource Staff
In order for CDOs and FROs to work effectively for their target groups with a sense of purpose and job satisfaction, Respond! is committed to supporting them in the following ways:
- Providing a clear vision of the objective of the work;
- Management Support;
- Relevant training and staff development;
- Other resources including deployment of appropriate staff numbers and investment in community activity and training; and
- National and local communications and branding activities that explain and reinforce Respond!'s mission and methods to residents and external agencies from pre-tenancy agreements and training up to national press.
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What are staff required to do in respect of the targets for each of the three type of estates? The following tables give an outline of the types of activities and approaches that CDOs and FROs should and can employ in the development of plans for their estates. The focus of all plans should be on moving the estates and the Community Enablers from one Capacity Level to the next. At all times the CD teams (CDOs, FROs, RCDCs, NCDC) should be looking forward ensuring the progressiveness of their plans for their estates. The following tables are not exhaustive and each estate should have a specific plan relevant to its identified needs and the available resources (identified from the Area Profile and from Respond!'s own resources):

Capacity 1 Estates

Targeting Disadvantage	Childcare – Ensure provision in Community Building and/or off-site*; Family Resource services - Ensure provision in Community Building and/or off-site*; *role of Childcare Management and FR staff under direction of RCDC Education – link to VEC, Partnership and other providers to ensure availability and uptake of community education opportunities (Measure C of LDSIP); Income and Economic Independence – Link to FÁS and Measure B of Partnership's LDSIP; Orderly Environment – develop and support environmental work such as clean-ups;
Promoting Participation and Inclusion	Visit each home: explain Respond!'s goal and role; Develop taster activities for potential leaders and other Community Enablers; Develop Area Profile including Needs and Assets; Understand specific local needs and communicate to NCDC and RCDC for local customised planning; Introduce Community Enablers to other agencies; Work with other agencies to target their activity on the estate ;

Capacity 2 Estates

Targeting Disadvantage	Childcare and Family Resource - ongoing provision is role of Childcare Management and FR staff under direction of NCDC, supported by CDO where desirable; Income and Economic Independence – ensure ongoing role by external and support for Community Enablers in interacting with such bodies; Education – Assisting Community Enablers in planning and implementing a programme of educational activities linked to VEC, Partnership and other providers; Orderly Environment – mainly support for residents to organise own affairs but deeper role in more complex events or on issues such as anti-social behaviour in the community;
Promoting Participation and Inclusion	Organise specific training for Leadership and Community Roles (contracted externally if appropriate); Support Community Enablers in relating to and participating in external structures; Support Community Enablers in regional cluster structure; Support Community Enablers to organise community events;

Capacity 3 Estates

Targeting Disadvantage	Childcare and Family Resource services sought and developed by the Community Enablers with advocacy issues being raised at regional cluster level; Arrange for handover, where appropriate, of Education and Income/Economic Independence activities to VEC, Partnership, FÁS and other existing agencies; Orderly Environment – support local community to develop estate protocols for independent local implementation in lead –in to Year 5
Promoting Participation and Inclusion	Design and implement customised plan to ensure effective supports are in place at the end of the five-year Community Development Programme; Support for participants in regional cluster and National Federation;

At each changing level or milestone, the achievement should be marked by an event and communicated locally so that everyone is clear that a new phase in being embarked upon and "backsliding" is prevented.

Deployment & Management Structure

**Staff Deployment (including current and proposed levels)**

Staff resources and deployment will be based on the requirement to build Community Enabler capacity through the local clusters as well as the need for direct provision of services in estates, based on needs identified in Estate and Area Profiles and assessment of what mainstream service providers can deliver as well as discussion with the latter to facilitate more services locally. The following diagram outlines the structure and roles of the CD teams.

Community Development Staff
There is one Regional Community Development Coordinator in each region, to whom both Community Development Officers and Childcare/Family Resource Officers report. Family Resource Officers and Childcare staff will be engaged in hitting the targets by the delivery of actions which focus on early childhood development, education, parenting skills and household enhancement programmes which are baseline interventions in our plan.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT AND STAFF STRUCTURE
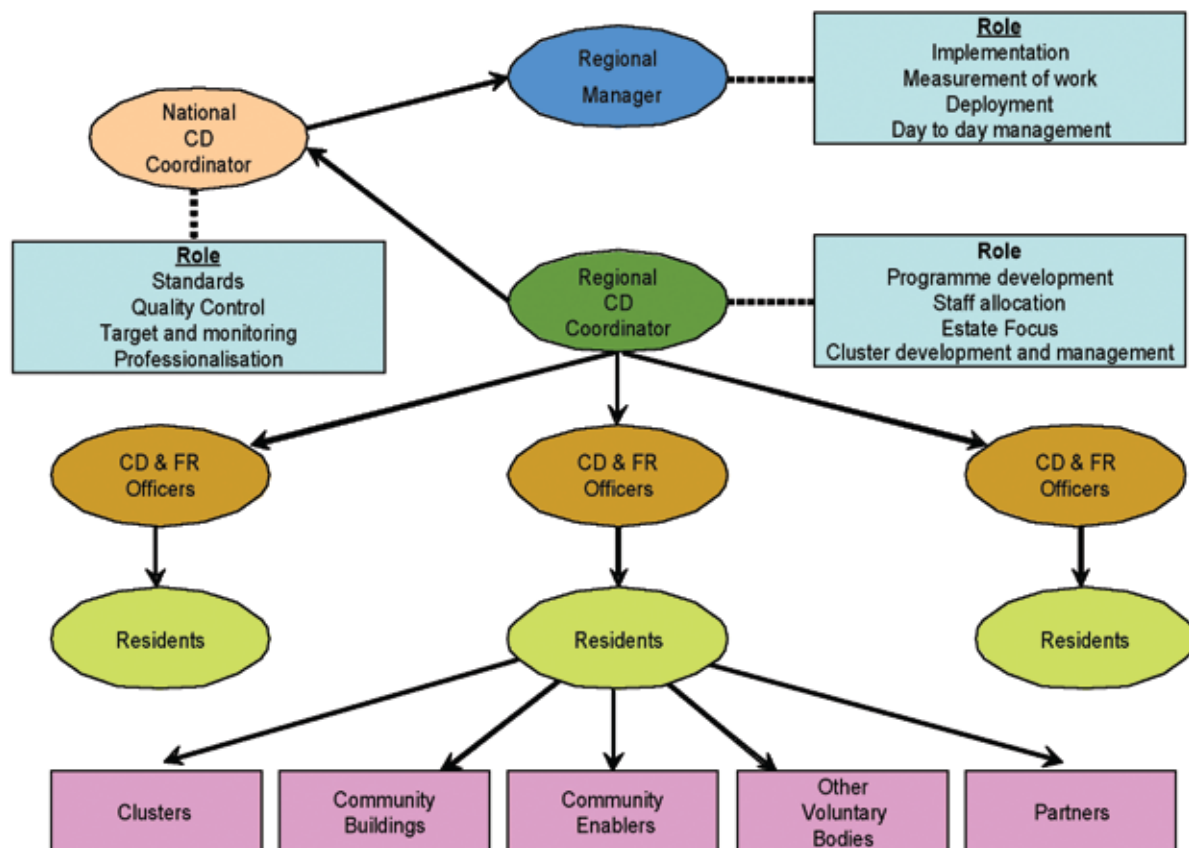
The Regional Community Development Coordinators report to the Regional Managers on a day-to-day basis (regarding working schedules, leave, HR issues) but report to the National Community Development Coordinator in relation to the delivery, monitoring and review of the Plan. The CDOs and FROs planning documents will be forwarded to the Regional Co-ordinator whose regional plan and cluster plans will go to the NCDC for approval and subsequently copied to Regional Managers who will manage the implementation.

It is envisaged that Regional Co-ordinators will hold weekly team meetings with CDOs and FR staff. Monthly support meetings will be held by the NCDC for Regional Co-ordinators and may also hold on-site meetings with CDOs where considered appropriate. These meetings will allow the NCDC ensure quality control throughout the implementation of the programme.

Regional Co-ordinators will present monthly reports at regional meetings attended by senior management and the NCDC.

The staffing complement, including Coordinators (including vacant posts), currently are as follows:
- Dublin/NE Region 7 (including Youth Development Pilot initiative)
- South East Region 8
- West/Midlands Region 6

Staffing levels will be supplemented by the development of Community Enablers. Where necessary the numbers of staff and their roles will be reviewed to ensure that there is success in the deployment of the plan.

There will be one Family Resource Staff member in each region. The role of this individual is to review the requirements for family development within our estates, to promote family development in the clusters (at local, and regional level), to provide direct services where required and to signpost and advocate on behalf of families in their region.

The role of the National Community Development Co-ordinator will be to monitor, support and review the implementation of the plan with the Regional Coordinators. The NCDC has and will continue to identify appropriate training to assist staff in the delivery of the plan and identify network and partnership opportunities for our communities.

What does Respond! mean when it describes the supports it will give its staff?

Providing a clear vision of the objective of the work	The core aim of the Community Development programme is to develop local Community Enablers who will be capable of coordinating each estate's community services in an autonomous way within a period of 5 years
Management Support	CDO and FRO staff are managed by Regional Co-ordinators under the national programme of the National Community Development Co-ordinator. The training and support needs of each CDO and FRO are agreed by the Regional Co-ordinator and approved by the NCDC.
Relevant training and staff development	Itemised in Appendix 1 & 2
National and local communications and branding activities	These will explain and reinforce Respond!'s mission and methods to residents, potential residents, external agencies and national audiences. This will ensure consistent messaging re. goals from pre-tenancy agreements and training up to national press.
Other resources	This will include the deployment of appropriate staff numbers and investment in community activity and training

The strategy for implementation of the above is:
- Unveiling and development of understanding of this document (1 February 2007, this will be followed up with regional meetings to develop understanding further)
- Regional meetings to :
  - Develop understanding of Capacity classifications;
  - Understand definition of Community Enablers;
  - Identification of dependency issues;
  - Identify classification of estates and quantify and name the potential/existing Community Enablers;
  - Select and determine Clusters (local and Regional);
  - Review staff competency to deliver on programme (including a SWOT analysis) and consider training requirements;
  - Consider staff deployment and what precisely are we going to do on the estates and in the clusters;
  - Consider consistent reporting mechanisms.
- Review of outputs from the regional meeting on 12 February and confirmation of plans.
- Carry out Needs analysis and area profiles
- Role out of plans to Estates, Community Enablers and Clusters including unveiling of the strategy implementation plans.

6   Conclusion

The Community Development Strategy was launched late in 2004. In the period since that time its objectives and its rationale has been developed and explained across the organisation. We have started the recruitment and the development of skills within the organisation to deliver on this strategy. Now at the commencement of 2007 we are at the point of delivery and full implementation. This is the single most important business priority for Respond! and as such will receive the greatest attention over the coming years. In our Jubilee year we will ensure the success of this Strategy through communication both internally and externally with our communities and the general public.

The Strategy has at the heart of it the family and the community. The family offers the opportunity to develop in a holistic way the individuals and the communities in which they live. Our focus and our drive is to develop those individuals (Community Enablers) and families so that their communities can benefit and thrive.
Our estates will experience the commitment of the organisation and its staff through direct provision of services, the signposting of services and the advocacy on behalf of the estate and through the development of local and regional clusters and a National Federation of Community Enablers.

While our Strategy has a five-year timescale attached to it, some estates may move quicker others at a more measured pace but progression through the different Capacity levels will be our goal and will drive the plans we have. Each CDO and FRO will develop plans with the Community Enablers to ensure that the focus is on achieving that next Capacity level.

Staff will receive support though additional resources, more focused training and, with monitoring and measurement based on the delivery of the Strategy, have a clearer view of the expectations that are placed upon them by Respond! and the communities within which they work. There will be challenging times however with the support of the regional and national structures there will be opportunity to communicate and celebrate successes and lessons learned.

The success of this Strategy determines the success of Respond! in its aims and objectives, as such, it will remain our number one priority for the coming years.

Implementation of Training
Staff Specific
Training where Respond! staff should attend independently of Community Enablers viz. Staff specific, in order of priority and grouped into thematic blocks

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Community development: the Respond! Strategy	1 day
The importance and role of Community Enablers	half day
Relationship between paid staff and Community Enablers	half day
Total 2 days	

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Outcome focused planning for Community Enabling	half day
Identification and selection of Community Enablers	half day
Community Enabler Assessment Toolkit	1 day
Total 2 days	

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Building effective Community Enabler teams	half day
Supervision and support for resident Community Enablers	half day
Health and safety in the Community Enabler environment	1 - 1.5 days
Total 2 -2.5 days	

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Joint Staff/Community Enabler Training Blocks

This part of the programme can include both staff and Community Enablers. Due to the likely difficulties in Community Enablers' availability for residential or full day training, course durations are listed individually. These may be run as modules over compact timeframes e.g. number of successive evenings of weeks.

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Respond! and the Community Enabler - What do we each expect?	1 day
What motivates us to get involved?	half day
Team building	half day

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Understanding diversity	1 day
Communicating across language barriers	2 hours

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Facilitation skills, basic and advanced	1 day
Advocacy practical and for others	1 day

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Get the message: Communicating and listening	half day
Drug awareness	half day

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Dealing with conflict	half day
Positive conflict management	1 day

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Designing an estate plan	1 day

Community Enabler Specific training

Again, due to the likely difficulties in Community Enablers' availability for residential or full day training, course durations are listed individually. These may be run as modules over compact timeframes e.g. number of successive evenings of weeks.

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Leadership and self-development	3 hours
Motivating others	half day
Support and supervision for helpers	half day
Health and Safety in the Community Enabler environment	1 day
Peer mentoring for Community Enablers and leaders	3 hours

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Running effective meetings	2.5 hours
Introduction to new members	2 hours
The Annual General Meeting	1 hour

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Budgeting for beginners	2 hours
Records and book keeping for community groups	2 hours
Demystifying the role of hon. Treasurer	4 hours
Developing a fundraising strategy	1 day

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Writing skills	2.5 hours
Creating your own media –news sheets and publicity	half day
Planning, promoting and running an event	3 hours

Conducting a survey	3 hours
Analysing information	3 hours
General Internet skills training	2 hours

Detailed Course Outlines

Staff Specific

There is a maximum 19 days over first year but no staff member will to do every module

Staff Specific Course(s)	Time	Purpose	Expected Outcome	Course Delivery	Cost
Community Development: the Respond! Strategic approach	Full Day	Presentation of 5 year plan and what it means for Community development Officers and support staff	People knowledgeable about Respond!'s objective and their role	In house	Training cost as per Community Enabler plus relative salary
The importance and role of the Estate Leader	Half day	Respond!'s vision of what an estate leader does now, skill requirements and future role	Understanding of role of leader in plan delivery and future. Supports need for leader from staff	Respond! and VI	Training cost as per Community Enabler plus relative salary
Identification and selection of Community Enablers	Half day	How to spot a Community Enabler/ leader, clearance procedures and practicalities	Staff developing Community Enabler pool on their estates	VI	Training cost as per Community Enabler plus relative salary
Relationship between paid staff and Community Enablers	2.5hr	Procedures for working with Community Enablers. Professional boundaries	Respecting and valuing Community Enabler. Keeping professional boundaries	VI	Training cost as per Community Enabler plus relative salary
Outcome focused planning for Community Enablers	Half day	What do we want from Community Enabler service	How to plan to use Community Enabler resource to achieve plan objectives	VI	Training cost as per Community Enabler plus relative salary
Community Enabler assessment Toolkit	Day	Procedure to review of Community Enablers work	Use of benchmark to measure effectiveness and progress	VI	Training cost as per Community Enabler plus relative salary
Motivating resident Community Enablers and leaders	Half Day	How and why staff need to motivate Community Enablers	Staff capable of keeping Community Enablers engaged	VI	Training cost as per Community Enabler plus relative salary

30

Building effective Community Enabler teams	4hr	Support exercises for staff working with Community Enablers with a team focus	Create a sustainable team Which requires reduced staff input	VI	Training cost as per Community Enabler plus relative salary
Introducing outcomes	5hr	How important are outcomes in relation to funding? The benefits from monitoring outcomes Different models Data collection needed	to build in outcome monitoring and evaluation systems which identify and measure the benefits gained from activities	Community Evaluation (NI)	€100 pp plus travel and salaries
Making Funding Applications	3hr	Inform staff of annual schedule of funding, funding agencies. The Respond! Fund	Staff able to make an appropriate application and plan activities in accordance for	In house and armichael Centre	Training cost as per Community Enabler plus relative salary
Support / supervision for Resident Community Enablers	4hr	Procedures for supervising and supporting Community Enablers	Community Enablers are not left in vacuum re their work. Minimisation of disciplinary actions	VI	Training cost as per Community Enabler plus relative salary Health and Safety in the Community Enabler environment
Procedures for leaders and helper	3 half day essions	Managing Procedures for Community Enablers What's available	Staff ensure that all Community Enablers have the necessary knowledge	In house	Training cost as per Community Enabler plus relative salary
Focus on Working Principles – Equality: how it informs the work	Full Day	What it means in practice as a community development principle	Staff to be familiar with legislation and best practice; and able to be pro-active in promoting equality	Tbc	Tbc

Co-workers
Training is divided into Capacity Levels and, in many cases, two or three levels will train together for reasons of scale, economy and to provide a role model effect. The capacity level determines the timeframe in which it takes place i.e. 1 = first year; 2 = year 2-3;
3 = from start of year 3 to finish from late year 3 to year 5 at latest.

Timing and scheduling of this training is to be determined in the operational plan for each estate agreed by Regional Co-ordinator, CDO and FRO.
(NB * indicates integrated training courses with Respond!! staff)

Resident Community Enabler Course(s)	Capacity Level	Time	Purpose	Expected Outcome	Provider	€ pp
Community Development: the Respond! Strategic approach		Full Day	Presentation of plan and what it means for Community Enablers	People knowledgeable about Respond!'s objective and their role	In house	50
Respond! and the Community Enabler: what do we each expect?	1,2,3	Full day	Induction Introducing Community Enablers to the organisation and the plan	*expectations *commitment *supports	In house	50
What motivates us to get involved?	1	Half Day	Exploring with Community Enablers why they want to be and what will encourage them to stay involved	Community Enabler clear about commitment and Community Enabler career path	In house And VI	50
Leadership and self development	1.2	3hr	The Community Enabler as a leader within the community/ developing role and personal development / support	Develop strengths for leadership and identify personal strengths to support leadership role	VI	100
*Motivating others	1,2,3	Half Day	Looking at ways of expanding the estate's Community Enablers and peer supports	Community Enabler sees him/herself as key in process of sustaining activity	VI	100
Health and Safety in the Community Enabler environment Procedures for leaders and helpers First Aid Fire Safety	1, 2 1,2,3 1,2		Responsibilities of Community Enablers, Practical skills and experiential learning	Know procedures in crisis situations	In house	50
Peer Mentoring for Community Enablers and Leaders	2,3	3hrs	How a Community Enabler who has broad experience can advise, support and debrief a newer Community Enabler who is assigned to the experienced Community Enabler	Support less experienced helper/Community Enabler	VI	100

*Support / supervision for helpers	2,3	4hr	Procedures for supporting and supervising helpers/ other Community Enablers	Ability to support and manage new Community Enablers	VI	100
Get the message: Communicating and listening	2	4hr	What do we mean by communication? How do we do this? How might our message be received The importance of listening, analysing and reiteration	To articulate what they actually want to say and to hear and take on board the opinions for others	Carmichael Centre	50
*Team building	1	2hr	The Community Enabler as a member of a team/ role/ relationships / focus of team	Participation and work as part of a team	Carmichael Hse	100
Running effective meetings	1,2	2.5hr	Why have meetings? Managing a meeting Getting people back to the next one. Procedures	Run meetings which have a sense of purpose and keep participants engaged	In house	50
Introduction to new members	2	2hrs	Problems of getting new committee members is often down to group's inability to give encouragement or induction to a new member	Look at setting up programme to welcome new member, give history and programme details, roles of officers, estate activities etc.	In house	50
*The Annual General Meeting	2	1hr	Procedures for running AGM's inc notices, elections and minutes and accounts	Run an annual general meeting effectively / efficiently	In house	50
*Budgeting for beginners	1	2 hr	For Community Enablers groups who have no funds but have activities planned which need financing	Know how to write a finance plan for a project and general funding issues	In house	50
*Records and book keeping for community groups	1	2hrs	Outline basic requirements for a committee inc. agenda, notifications, minutes and finances	Will have templates which they can work from and commence to use them on own estates	In house	50
*De-mystifying the role of Treasurer	1	4hrs	The procedure for managing a groups monies, account keeping and presentation, statements, etc	Knowledge of work required from the position and look at skills required	In house	50

*Developing a fundraising strategy	2	Full day	What funds are out there, when can they be accessed, developing programmes around this. Fundraiser activities, accountability Detailed knowledge of funding available	And how to write proposals Planning funding targets	In house	50
Writing Skills	1	2.5hr	To equip Community Enablers with skill to write letters to council, funders, etc and looking at equality and diversity issues	Ability to express with clarity in written media Explore literacy skills	In house	50
*General internet skills training: searching for information	2	2 hrs	Accessing relevant community development information and sites	Knowledge of how to access community development and Community Enabler information on web	Comhairle The Wheel	75
*Creating your own media- news sheets and publicity	1,2	5hr	Practical workshop on newssheets and graphics	Ability to communicate in visual media	In house	50
*Planning, promoting and running an event	1	3 hr	Step by step procedures to running big and small events	Effective and successful events	In house	50
*Conducting a survey	2	3hr	What do we want to know from the survey Key questions recognising equality and diversity Procedures Collecting	Ability to undertake research without appearing to be invasive to residents	In house	50
*Analysing information	2	3hr	Looking at reason for survey Are answers giving information required Percentages. Results and feedback What to do with results	Use information collected to develop estate activities Data protection	In house	50
*Communicating across language barriers	2	2hrs	Working with multicultural people and children.	Communicating with foreign nationals, understanding without having to know language	Multicultural trainer	100
*Understanding diversity	1	Full day	Looking at issue of living on an estate with people from diverse backgrounds Accepting that difference can be a reason for conflict and how residents can address this	Understanding different behaviours are not always a reason for conflict. How potential conflict situations can be defused	Multicultural trainer Mediation Bureau	100

*Drug Awareness	1,2,3	4hr	Educate re drug abuse, early warning signs	Awareness, How to deal with situation, supports	Merchant's Quay Project	Neg
*Dealing with conflict	1	4hr	How to react in conflict situations, how to defuse a potential situation Self protection	Learn how to react in conflict situations/ What to do	Carmichael Hse	100
*Positive conflict management	2	Full day	Follow on from dealing with conflict to actually managing situation through resolution	How to defuse a conflict situation, mediation services	Carmichael Hse	100
*Advocacy – a practical approach	2	Full Day	The Community Enabler representing an issue/ other person's issue to create a positive outcome	Know what advocating means and where and when skill would be used	Comhairle	75
*Advocating for others	3	Full day	Advanced representation skills inc equality and diversity issues	To be able to use advocacy in representation of an individual or an issue	Comhairle	75
*Facilitation skills	2,3	Full day	Main requirements for a facilitator Planning a work session with a group getting information and opinions, ensuring inclusivity, feed back		Meitheal	50
*Advanced facilitation skills	3	Full day	Advanced group work		Meitheal	50
*Designing an Estate Plan	3	Full Day	Putting together a development plan for an estate, who are the main players? What do we need to know, inclusivity,	Physical design, programmes and budgets, where might this funding come from timescales for planning programme	Inhouse	50

VI = Volunteer Ireland

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Rationale

Patrick Cogan, ofm   Oct 2004

Community Development in the Respond! Context

Executive Summary:

Respond! is a registered Housing Association with Charitable Status and has been active since its inception in 1981 in the provision of housing for low-income families and other persons in need of housing. Its memorandum sets the agenda (consider the following extract);

Respond! sets itself
- *to 'prevent and relieve hardship and distress*
- *amongst those who are homeless and*
- *amongst those in need who are living in adverse housing conditions*
- *for the benefit of the community as a whole.'*

We are concerned 'to
- *advance education,*
- *relieve poverty and to*
- *further other charitable purposes beneficial to the community.'*

We do this by providing housing in supported communities and, where possible, in integrated estates.

The provision of housing is but the first step in Respond!'s programme. Our main concern is to ensure that we provide stable communities for persons of low-income and for those in need generally. We seek to ensure that these communities will foster the growth of the individual resident as well as that of the whole community, and we are concerned and active in promoting the self-management of our estates wherever possible.

To that end we have been active in community development programmes in all of our estates over the years, and these have included job-promotion and job-development initiatives as well as capacity building endeavours of all kinds. However, we need to strengthen our community development focus so that our programmes will be more efficient and fruitful for our residents as well as more economic for Respond! over the next five years.

Respond!'s Strategic Approach to Community Development:

The definition of community development which best suits the organisation is as follows:-

'Community Development is about promoting positive change in society in favour of those who benefit least. ..It is about involving people, most especially the disadvantaged, in making changes which they identify as important and which use and develop their own skills, knowledge and experience. Community Development seeks to challenge the causes of poverty/disadvantage and to offer new opportunities for those lacking choice, power and resources.'

Community Development Programme -1995: Department of Social Welfare, Ireland
1. The first element in our strategy is to review the community development qualifications and competencies of our staff so that, as an organisation, we are assured of being professionally equipped to bring community development programmes and initiatives to fruition in our estates. Whatever recruitment, training and deployment are required to that end will be sought and accessed as a matter of urgency.

2. **In fulfilment of the mission of Respond!, and in keeping with the definition of community development chosen previously, we will espouse the objectives set out in the ADM model of community development as follows:**

The Main Objective of *Community Development:* is to support integrated local economic and social development through managing Programmes targeted at countering disadvantage and exclusion, and promoting reconciliation and equality…. We will address the following targets:

a. Targeting Disadvantage requires a detailed understanding of the needs of the people who live in an area, specifically those who are marginalised and long-term unemployed. Lone parents, Travellers, socially excluded women and men, disadvantaged young people, children at risk of early school leaving and people with disabilities.

b. Participation and Inclusion of these Target Groups in collective decision making generates ownership of and responsibility for the decisions which are made and ensures that such decisions are relevant to their needs.

c.Improving the economic independence of participants is an essential part of the process of effective Local Development

d. A Focus on Equality and equality of outcome is essential to countering disadvantage and is achieved through strategies for the access, participation and inclusion of those groups which experience inequality.

e. A Multi-Sectoral Approach towards identifying and addressing the needs of local communities requires full participation from the State, social partners, community and voluntary sectors and enhances strategic planning.

f. Partnership at local level between the community sector, the social partners and the State agencies increases co-operation, co-ordination and effective decision making.

g. Strategic Planning promotes best use and targeting of State, private and community resources.

We choose these targets as a template because we are currently working very closely with ADM in many community development and child-care programmes in several parts of the country, and because their focus, programmes and trained staff have a community development coherence from which we can learn, and perhaps to which we can blend our own objectives.

3. **The in-house Strategic Plan (in skeleton form as yet) will need to take account of the differing strategies and programmes which may be required in existing estates and in new estates. However, the schedule will focus principally and in the first instance on new estates. As soon as we are content with this schedule we will seek to adapt it to existing estates. Confer Appendix 1 herein.**

The schedule will incorporate a programme of *Community Development* which will have regard to the SMART technique, namely, that it will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time related. It will also seek to identify those tasks which Respond! staff will be required to implement and those for which we need to rely on others to perform, whether they be residents or social partners or volunteers. By and large, Respond! staff will need to see themselves as enablers rather than doers. The role of Respond! Community Development staff will be principally in the analytical, planning, training, and motivational areas. That will mean that a more intensive programme of training trainers and training doers will have to be implemented as part of the total strategy.

Respond! will seek to work closely with our residents in order to set out a coherent strategy such as that recorded in Appendix 1, and to implement it progressively over the next five years. Reliant, to a considerable degree, upon the goodwill, the experiences, objectives and activity of residents implies that Respond! is not wholly free to set out now a complete strategic programme of outcomes for five years hence in the absence of having had relevant input and review from residents to that programme. On the other hand, we cannot be utterly dependent upon the input from residents, as this may fluctuate to such an extent that it will drag our limited resources and staff all over the place, and we may lose our focus. The task of dovetailing professionalism and community ownership, discussed briefly in the body of this paper, will need to be constantly addressed.

Many of the objectives set out in the skeleton are linked inextricably; for example, the planning and implementation of Objective 2a (Area Profile) will incorporate Objective 2b (Participation of the community). And the strategic approach such as set out in Objective 2g will need to be applied to the planning and implementation of all the objectives.

There will be three main sets of regular review: respectively, by the communities themselves, by the Respond! enabling staff and by Regional and National Managers. Respond! will invite specialist strategic analysts, with experience of Community Development perspectives, to assist in this process.

4. **It will be vital for Respond!'s Strategy that Work Programmes determined by its Community Development stance will incorporate parallel best practice customer care and estate maintenance/management programmes implemented by Respond!'s Estate Management Team.**

We have already noted in this paper that it would be folly to seek the goodwill of residents in the pursuit of voluntary *Community Development* objectives if the customer care issues mandated by the Letting Conditions are ignored or poorly performed. Accordingly, our Estate Management Team and our Stock and Maintenance personnel will be involved in a parallel programme which will dovetail into that being planned and implemented in respective estates. This coordinated yearly Estate Work Programme will be of prime importance in Respond!'s ongoing strategy.

5. **Respond! will set up and resource a National Policy Committee (NPC), under the leadership of a well qualified Policy Development Manager. This NPC will research Respond!'s ongoing strategic approach to Community Development as well as the research, development, implementation and advocacy of anti-poverty policies nationally.**

   Respond! and our estates need to have access to all the pertinent information concerning the impact of poverty on our residents and on how we might pursue policies to counteract such impacts. There will need to be a strong academic and research capability in the NPC as well as very close links to our staff working at the interface with tenants on our estates. The NPC will also need to have accurate data on the socio-economic status of our residents and particularly on the poverty levels being experienced by their children. All of this information will inform both Respond!'s and the residents' stance in relation to advocating policy measures on local, regional and national fronts. The NPC will need to be structured and set up immediately

6. **Respond! will implement this strategic plan of community development in each estate for a period of not more than five years, during which we shall seek to provide the financial, personnel and training resources necessary to achieve fruitful outcomes in accordance with our targets. For the end of that period, Respond! will strive to have put in place in each cluster of estates, and in each estate if possible, a structure and system of ongoing community development strategy, supported by trained local residents, which can advance the interests of the respective communities, if they so wish.**

   Currently Respond! has some 80 estates under its management and, given our current building programme, we might expect to add some 15 to 20 estates per annum to this number. Accordingly, it would not be feasible to recruit, train, deploy and remunerate staff for a longer term involvement in community development programmes in all of our estates. However, Respond! through its continuing national and regional teams of community development staff will be available to assist estates after this five year period if they seek help in designing and implementing their own programmes. Of course, this five-year strategy does not apply to our estate management commitment which will continue indefinitely in accordance with our Letting Conditions.

7. **Respond! will follow the Step by Step plans in-house and in each estate as set out on page 17.**

   While recognising that each estate, each cluster and each region will have their own unique culture, structures, agendas and ways of interaction, it is also important that Respond! should apply a coherent and agreed method to the implementation of our strategy in each of our locations, using a similar Step by Step model as set out here. The tailoring of one to the other will be a vital part of the implementation of the overall strategy.

8. **Respond! will seek to have reached the specific targets set out overleaf.**

   These targets are minimum targets, but they are all embracing of any specific goals which residents themselves may have in relation to their own estates. These targets are what Respond! brings to the table in negotiating with our residents, other local people and third party interests, as well as statutory and community bodies. They represent the 'business we are in' in regard to our anti-poverty and community development stance. They are not meant to pre-empt or exclude the ideas and goals of others.

Respond! Targets at Year 5

Minimum Objectives

Targeting Disadvantage   **Point 2.1 of ADM Targets (Pg. 3)**
(Enabling first leading to doing)

- Affordable Access to good pre-schooling for all estates
- Affordable Access to good after-schooling for all estates
- Realizable plans for promotion of, and access to, 3rd level education for estates' children
- Estate Awareness and Plan towards prevention of child poverty
- Community Awareness of, and access to, Social, Political and Networking Resources to combat poverty
- Tools and Training to access these Resources
- Body of as many informed socially committed residents as is possible active in the community
- Regularly Updated Area and Skill Profile
- Operational Community Charter (including anti-social behaviour programmes, measures)
- Family Support and Mediation Resources for all parents
- Involvement in appropriate ADM programmes especially those promoting economic independence

All to have been achieved in Year 5 with the full implementation of the remaining **6 ADM Targets**, viz., Inclusion, economic independence, multi-sectoral approach etc.

End of Executive Summary: Full Document Available on Request

What is Community Development?

At the outset of any task it is important to know what we wish to achieve at the end. This is especially true of the task of community development which is often difficult to define. In the literature, the term community development is used as virtually interchangeable with other terms such as *community work, community regeneration, sustainable development/ communities, social empowerment, and community cohesion* and others. So, Respond! needs to consider the many definitions of community development as evidenced by the following, and choose one which best suits its own mission:

1. 'Community work is the process of assisting people to improve their own communities by undertaking collective action'
   (Alan Twelvetrees: Community Work, pg 1)

2. 'Community Development maximises opportunities for everybody to realise their potential so that communities can grow and change according to their own needs and priorities. Active participation of people in issues which affect their lives, enables them to express their needs and take a part in meeting those needs.'
   (Eastleigh Council, England)

3. 'Community development is described as an interactive process of knowledge and action designed to change conditions which marginalize communities and groups and is underpinned by a vision of self-help and community self-reliance.
   (Irish White Paper, 2000: 49)

4. "Community Development work is a process which embraces community action, community service, community work and other community endeavour with an emphasis towards the disadvantaged, impoverished and powerless within society. Its values include participation, empowerment and self-help."
   "Of Mutual Benefit", Community Relations Council, UK, 1995

5. 'Community development is a range of practices dedicated to increasing the strength and effectiveness of community life, improving local conditions, especially for people in disadvantaged situations, and enabling people to participate in public decision-making and to achieve greater long-term control over their circumstances.'

(Community Development Foundation (CDF), England: Adopted by the Scottish Community Development Centre)

6. 'Community Development is about promoting positive change in society in favour of those who benefit least. ..It is about involving people, most especially the disadvantaged, in making changes which they identify as important and which use and develop their own skills, knowledge and experience. Community Development seeks to challenge the causes of poverty/ disadvantage and to offer new opportunities for those lacking choice, power and resources.'
Community Development Programme -1995: Department of Social Welfare, Ireland

7. 'Community Development is the process of developing active and sustainable communities based on social justice and mutual respect. It is about influencing power structures to remove the barriers that prevent people from participating in the issues that affect their lives.'
(Standing Conference for Community Development, UK)

8. 'Community development is a process of Conscientization whereby developing peoples are made aware of their oppressed situation, of their right to dignity and justice and the non-violent ways to bring that about.
(Paolo Freirian Model – 'Pedagogy of the Oppressed)

9. 'Community development policy is grounded on the principle of sustainable, equitable and participatory human and social development. Promotion of human rights, democracy, the rule of law and good governance are an integral part of it. .. The main objective of Community development policy must be to reduce and, eventually, to eradicate poverty. This objective entails support for sustainable economic and social and environmental development, promotion of the gradual integration of the developing countries into the world economy and a determination to combat inequality.'

(The European Community's Development Policy)

This paper will not discuss all of these definitions individually: it will simply point up some common differences between them which will affect our appreciation of the general discussion around the understanding of community development.

Definitions of community development tend to vary somewhat depending upon which community is being targeted for development and how that community is perceived in relation to the wider social and political community and to the ideological or value stance which we may have in relation to that. The definitions will veer from what one might call the pragmatic model to the radical model:

• the pragmatic model which simply seeks to influence the development of particular communities in whatever way is possible without reference to what might be the deeper causes of their poverty and disadvantage;
• the radical model which contends that communities will only be developed when these underlying causes are dealt with in parallel with the community's necessary advancement in education, resourcing and empowerment.

Arguably, the above definitions move progressively upwards from the mainly pragmatic and personalist model to the more radical and political model. However, 'Community development, like the camel, is easier to describe than define'. (The Politics of Community development: Powell & Geoghegan, 18). For example, in the first of these definitions, Alan Twelvetrees speaks about *Community Work*. However, he describes this work as a community development stance in its purest form, a bottom-up approach which emphasises "working 'non-directively' with people on *what they* decide to become involved with". He distinguishes the community development approach from the *social planning* approach whereby a community worker "is liaising and working directly with policy-makers and service providers to sensitise them to the needs of specific communities and to assist them to improve services or alter policies." The combined description which Twelvetrees gives to his *community work*, which encompasses both *community development* and *social planning*, differs very little from other authors in that they tend to include both his bottom-up, community-centred perspective and the social planning perspective under the term *'community development'*.

The pragmatic model will tend to rely fundamentally upon 'capacity building' programmes which will seek to improve the personal and social capabilities of the people in the targeted communities.

Though various levels of 'capacity building' interventions are vital in all community development programmes they have been used in the past to counteract a view which the CDF describes as a *'social pathology, ie, that poverty persisted largely because of 'maladaption' by the poor, a poverty 'subculture' in which the poor failed to engage in initiatives to make use of the resources available to them to overcome their situation.'*(CDFWebsite: http://www.cdf.org.uk/CD.htm). According to this view, effectively, the poor were poor because of their own failure to access the resources available: it was their own fault!

The author of this paper was involved in some of these 'capacity building' type interventions during the 80s in Waterford: at a time of rampant unemployment. I and other community active people were engaged to help unemployed people prepare CVs and interview techniques so that they would present themselves better for whatever jobs were available, in the knowledge that whatever advantage such preparation might provide for one person would simply prevent some other unemployed person from gainful employment. The overall unemployed community would not benefit one jot. It was clear that the issue of gainful employment could not simply be tackled by a 'capacity building' approach: economic and political measures were the key.

We have come a long way since then largely due to the anti-poverty initiatives, funded through Structural Funds from the European Union through the 90s, under the Area Development Management programmes set up principally in disadvantaged rural and urban areas of the country. We also acknowledge the work of the Community Workers Cooperative set up in 1983 and which has the following objectives:-

'We believe that equality and justice can only be achieved if those whose lives are most affected play a central role in shaping local and national government policies.
We work with our members to empower communities to achieve change. We lobby at local and national level for the needs of those who are disadvantaged to be addressed in all policy areas: health, education, rural development etc.'

The Combat Poverty Agency since its inception in 1986 and the Community Development Programmes set up under the Department of Social Welfare in 1990 and thereafter have also had a significant effect on our understanding of the role of community development in our communities. Many of the Community Development insights of that period are being continued and advanced under the modern Rapid (Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development) Programme and its rural equivalent CLÁR, both under ADM management.

The experience of managers and workers in the early Community Development initiatives was that the causes of poverty in communities were not simply a local issue of lack of personal or community capacity. It was principally to do with the lack of economic, social and political resources on a much wider level. The CDF, focusing on similar English experiences, asserts that, 'The radical analysis that emerged was that urban poverty was the result of national issues, particularly unemployment and bad housing conditions…. The role of community development workers was seen as enabling bridges to be developed between the poor and the more affluent working class (particularly through the trade unions), to challenge injustices and obtain significant changes in their conditions.' (CDF Website)

The more deprived and isolated the community the more it tends towards a radical understanding of community development, **provided it is aware of its poverty and the causes thereto**. For example, simply offering pragmatic models of development to the Black Community in America in the 50s would not have achieved for that community what was gained through positive action and intervention in the legal enforcement of access to Third Level campuses. The black community, aware of the causes of its poverty, took non-violent protest action as well as just social and educational interventions. This achieved their recognition as equals under law – there is still work to be done in relation to how a more healthy interface and integration with the white community can be achieved.

However, the opposite was true in Brazil in the early part of the 20th century. The people did not know that they were poor because most of them lived in very deprived rural areas or on the fringes of towns where resources were equally sparse for all except the rich who lived apart from the general population. They never saw their poverty set against the canvass of better possibilities: accordingly, poverty, sickness, unemployment and social deprivation were rife. The teacher Paolo Freire, spurred on by a strong Christian conviction and opposed to all forms of violence, set himself to teach the people, not only reading and writing, but simply …

- that they were poor;
- why they were poor;
- how to overcome their poverty; and
- that the solution was in their own hands.

Paolo Freire took the pedagogical approach to *community development*: it was certainly a radical approach but not one which fostered immediate interaction with government and vested interests. That would take more time until the conscientization values took root, community by community. Allying themselves to this model the authors of *The Politics of Community development'* describe *community development* in the following manner: It is a discourse of social action informed by communitarian values that aims to promote social inclusion and democratic participation. 'People power' or 'power to the people' are popular slogans associated with community development, emphasising its rootedness in concepts of empowerment. Equally, consciousness-raising, what the Brazilian community educator Paulo Freire called 'conscientisation', is a core construct, linking power to knowledge.' (pg. 18)

The European Union model, again a radical model, is a more global and economic understanding of the nature and causes and impacts of poverty. Local communities are not only affected by national, social, economic and political policies but also by those of the global world community. No matter how hard local farmers in a rural community in Africa may work they will not be able to compete in a world market where trade barriers prevent the sale of their produce. National and international action will be required to offer such communities an equal place at the world's table. So, community development in these local communities will fail if it does not focus also on what appropriate changes can be brought about in the wider national and international communities.

What Model of Community Development does Respond! choose?

Community Development is a core value in Respond!'s mission. This is set out in the following abstract from Respond!'s Memorandum:-

Respond! sets itself
- to 'prevent and relieve hardship and distress
- amongst those who are homeless and
- amongst those in need who are living in adverse housing conditions

for the benefit of the community as a whole.'

We are concerned 'to
- advance education,
- relieve poverty and to
- further other charitable purposes beneficial to the community.'

While Respond! focuses in on individual persons and households we are conscious that usually real human and social development can only take place when we live in vibrant, resourced and self-developing communities. In this regard the organisation favours the Community Development definition as set out in the national Community Development Programme (1995):-

'Community Development is about promoting positive change in society in favour of those who benefit least. ..It is about involving people, most especially the disadvantaged, in making changes which they identify as important and which use and develop their own skills, knowledge and experience. Community Development seeks to challenge the causes of poverty/disadvantage and to offer new opportunities for those lacking choice, power and resources.'
Community Development Programme -1995: Department of Social Welfare, Ireland

This approach does not eschew the need to be radical in our *Community Development* approach on occasion, conscious of the reality that the segregation of our largely low-income estates from the more affluent communities has not happened and is not happening by accident. So, a strong advocacy role by Respond! and its partner estates, side by side with the best practice programmes of *Community Development* will be necessary to bring about truly integrated and

resourced communities. However, our desire is to make that advocacy as acceptable as is feasible. Respond! prefers to work **with** people in power and authority to persuade them of just measures required to achieve more holistic communities. By and large we have found this measure to be successful.

At times, a stronger stance needs to be taken, such as in the lobbying required prior to the passing of the 1988 Housing (Miscellaneous) Act and against the adoption of the Exclusion Order in the 1997 Act. We also continue to strongly advocate a better system of housing schemes approval than that which is being operated by the Local Authorities and the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government currently. And at a time when many of our residents are being left behind in the widening gap between rich and poor in Ireland we may be called upon in the very near future to take more radical action with them to represent their case more vigorously. In this regard we may need to tend to the more radical policy outlined in the definition of community development favoured by the Standing Committee of Community development in the U.K., which has vastly more experience than ourselves (Definition 7 above):-

> '…Community development is about influencing power structures to remove the barriers that prevent people from participating in the issues that affect their lives.'

Nor should Respond! be too far away in its community development endeavours from the Freirian pedagogical model, particularly in our adult education work. *Information is power*, goes the slogan. Education qualifies and enriches the information we receive and allows us to form mature plans to harvest responsive actions from the myriad possibilities which education will present. Respond! works with those in power, but our primary task is to work with those on the fringes of power, those excluded from it, and those who may be victims of its abuse. Through adopted public policy Respond! houses low-income families in largely segregated communities. Respond! will need to ensure that these communities are not further segregated by being closed to educational opportunities. Our community development task will need to have a large component of vibrant and questioning adult educational courses which will afford residents opportunities of becoming aware of the impacts of their social situation and of the possible ways in which that situation can be improved for the benefit of their communities as a whole.

How Professional is Respond!'s Community Development Approach?:

First of all, we need to say a word about the professional approach adopted in relation to community development practices in general. In that regard, I can do no better than to quote from the CDF Website. In this section the author comments on the professionalisation of community development intervention which had occurred in England in the area of formal social work during the mid 20th century.

> *'The area of community work/development did not undergo the same degree of professionalisation, and there is no formal requirement for qualifications. There is an emphasis on working with the community, particularly with self-organised groups such as tenants and residents associations, local voluntary action groups, mutual support groups, play schemes, neighbourhood watch schemes (for crime prevention), etc. Often local groups arise in the context of particular problems coming to the fore, when particular individuals may take on leadership roles by popular acclaim because of the degree of commitment and effort they exhibit…*
>
> *In practice, approaches to community work/ development seem to be concerned with pragmatic attempts to help communities engage in collective action to deal with their shared needs and problems through mutual self-help. This is combined with the articulation of their needs to relevant state institutions on the basis of their rights to resources and support, and of the benefits to society that would accrue from the provision of such resources and support. Overt ideological politicisation has tended to be eschewed [the author is referring to the radical (or conflict) model of community development], although militant activity such as demonstrations and rent strikes may still take place in particular contexts.*
>
> *Community work/ development has thus developed as a professionalised area in a manner where jurisdictional control is problematic. By the very nature of the work itself, with the emphasis upon enabling the community to develop its own expertise coupled with the pragmatic versus conflict issues, professionalisation is itself problematic. Community work professionals have difficulty in claiming to have the technical expertise to define and deal with the problems which they seek to address, because the very definition of the problems*

and the strategies for dealing with them must be 'owned' by the community itself. The strong humanitarian and humanistic values basis is characteristic of community work as an occupation, probably as much as the expertise required. Because of this, entry to this area is very open. Many people enter as volunteers themselves, getting engaged in issues and initiatives to which they are committed. Local councils often provide some form of part-time wage payment, as 'sessional workers' ie without continuity of employment with the council. In some cases, this may lead on to more formal employment as a community worker. Some people enter employment with a local council, from a background of social work or a relevant degree such as applied social studies.'

The community development scene in Ireland can identify very much with the foregoing in terms of an historical appraisal of community development initiatives up to quite recently. Whereas Ireland has enjoyed a very strong voluntarist and social activist culture for many generations we nonetheless lacked a specialist and professional community development sector. However, over the last generation or so this has begun to change, not least because of the impact of the heretofore mentioned Community Development Programmes in the 90s, coupled with the initiatives sponsored under the Structural Funding streams from the EU, and continuing with the RAPID and CLÁR programmes under the management of ADM. At third level our students have access to Community development qualifications in many of our colleges, most notably in the outreach Degree programme in Community Development from Maynooth College and in the Masters programme in Community Development from Galway University, to name but two. Respond!'s own BSS course in Housing Studies contains much community development oriented material such as tenant participation, tenant management systems, dependency culture etc.

The movement from a principally voluntarist experience of *community development* to a greater input of paid and professional staff experience is documented in Powell and Geoghegan's study of the sector: - 'Community development as it exists today is well-resourced in comparison to previous incarnations… *Community development work has come to require that practitioners excel in such technical areas as strategic planning, policy analysis and financial projection.* (pg 129).. *Community development in its current form is characterised by a significant presence of paid workers….The heavy reliance on paid workers within community development has been common anecdotal knowledge for some time. It is in this context that debates have arisen in recent years as to the effect that such reliance has for, and on, community development. This debate has become known as the professionalisation debate.* (pg 130)

[This paper is not going to enter into that debate here which revolves around two different interpretations of professionalism in community development, namely, the 'vocational' model which is the *'institutionalisation of altruistic values'* (Turner, 1995: 129) and which would seek to work very closely with the voluntarist movement in individual communities, or the 'specialist' model which would seek to harness all the skills and competencies of professional community development staff to the end of improving the lot of local communities by so doing, with or without the central involvement of those communities.] Suffice it to say that Respond! agrees with the point of view expressed and quoted by Powell & Geoghegan: *'If community development was something that happens automatically or that could be done by amateurs on a part-time basis, then there would be little need for funds. Funds are needed, by common consent, because full-time community workers are needed; full-time workers require appropriate community development skills or qualifications* (O'Cinneide & Walsh, 1990: 334, emphasis added).

However, outside of the specialist ADM-type programmes, there is still a tendency for community development initiatives to be somewhat unfocussed, or soft-core; a little like the early experiences of the '*pragmatic model*' in England described before. Fahey contends that, in relation to Local Authority estates, 'Local area partnerships and community development initiatives have energised communities and increased local awareness of development needs, especially in disadvantaged areas where there is a high proportion of local authority housing' (Social Housing in Ireland, pg. 269). However, he goes on to assert that, 'these initiatives often have weak links with local government and thus have had only incidental bearing on the reform of mainstream Local Authority functions in areas such as housing.' (ibid)

Respond! is seeking to change that culture and to arrive at a more professional and strategically planned model of community development interventions in all the estates for which we share responsibility with the residents. Respond! shares in the description of community development as '*a structured intervention that gives communities greater control over the conditions that affect their lives. This does not solve all problems faced by a local community, but does build up confidence to tackle such problems as effectively as any local action can ... Community development is a skilled process and part of its approach is the belief that communities cannot be helped unless they themselves agree to this process. Community development has to look both ways: not only at how*

*the community is working at the grass roots, but also at how responsive key institutions are to the needs of local communities.' (*CDF). The professionalisation of *community development* is essential and Respond! supports this wholeheartedly, but we do so with the caveat that this professionalism must seek to work with local people rather than over them, or around them.

Taking account of this thrust, Respond! will review all the qualifications of our community development staff to ensure that we are equipped to bring this skilled process to bear upon our work in our communities. The organisation will set out to acquire and deliver whatever qualifications and expertise may be missing in our staff in this regard and we will continue to review and retrain and deploy as required.

What is Respond!'s track record in regard to Community Development initiatives?

Respond! acknowledges the value of the work we have carried out to date, to name but a few initiatives:-

Partnership
- Assisting other voluntary groups and housing associations to provide housing schemes in their own localities and to engage in their own local development work;
- Continuing to advocate with government departments and others the advancement of anti-poverty and community development programmes and practices;
- Consultancy and support services to middle-income families to provide housing for themselves through Respond!'s Agency Housing remit;
- creation of formal links with social partners in many areas;
- close working relationships with ADM, FÁS and several other agencies in estates;

Housing
- the provision of some 86 good quality housing estates, mainly for low-income families, with access to communal facilities in many of them;
- current housing programme of some 500-600 units per annum;
- the implementation of a rent capping policy in our estates;
- development of emergency and rehabilitation accommodation and programmes in several locations;
- Design and project management services to Local Authorities in their housing development programmes, particularly in integrated settings, and including Local Authority housing schemes and Affordable Housing schemes.

Education
- pre-tenancy and various post tenancy courses for family residents of these estates;
- widespread promotion among and training offered to state authorities and Local Authority personnel and others of tenant participation and empowerment principles in public estates;
- establishment of Bachelor of Social Science course in Housing Studies with a declared bias towards anti-poverty policies and programmes;
- recent development of a 'cluster' education and involvement process

Job Creation
- job creation and job-training initiatives for over ten years through FÁS-promoted and other state sponsored ventures in our estates and in the community at large, such as Community Employment Schemes, ADM schemes, Child-care schemes, Family Resource schemes etc..;
- the development of the Respond! Campus itself, now employing some 140 persons;
- setting up some local 'corner shops' to assist estate economy and convenience;

Childcare
- creating and supporting pre-schooling and after-schools programmes in many of our estates;
- deployment at national and regional level of family-resource and child-care coordinators;
- working in cooperation with the Irish Pre-School Playgroup Association and others;
- accredited training offered under part 1 of NCVA Child Care Certificate;

Elderly
- a Housing Programme purpose-designed for elderly persons which has provided sheltered housing and associated support services for over 700 elderly;
- day-care centres in many of our estates catering for elderly persons;
- a city-wide study of the needs of elderly persons in Waterford, 'Age of Opportunity', 1991: Waterford;
- development of Friends of Respond! Committees in Ennis and Youghal.

However, despite all of the foregoing record, Respond! considers that it needs to set out a more precise Community Development Strategy for our continuing involvement in our family rental estates specifically. Respond! is conscious that our family residents have been gathered into our separate estates on the basis of Respond!'s mission stance: namely, to 'prevent and relieve hardship and distress and 'to advance education, relieve poverty and to further other charitable purposes beneficial to the community'. We are conscious that housing all the less well-off together, in obedience to Local Authority letting priorities, does no real service to them. Accordingly, we owe it to our residents to ensure that, at least, they are no worse off by being housed in Respond! estates, and, better, that we open up for them and with them opportunities of self- and community advancement in harmonious integration with the wider community.

To that end Respond! will seek to set out a more deliberated and precise development strategy for our community development programme.

What is Respond!'s targeted constituency?

The main targets for Respond!'s *Community Development Strategy* will be our rental family estates. By the standards set out in the Combat Poverty literature our estates, generally, fall into the category of disadvantaged or poor. Combat Poverty defines poverty as follows: 'People are living in poverty if income and resources (material, cultural and social) are insufficient to provide an acceptable standard of living within the general society within which they live' (National Anti Poverty Strategy: NAPS).

The measure of relative poverty, which measure is accepted European-wide, is household income below 60% of the average industrial wage. On this measure Ireland has 22% of its population in poverty. According to the household income information we receive annually from our family rental residents, and corroborated in the main by the visual evidence of our own estate workers, Respond!'s residents show the following poverty measures:-

North East Region	-	30%
South East Region	-	26%
Western Region	-	38%

This is significantly higher than the national average. Our estates also have a high percentage of lone-parent families, who are also, by and large, families where the head of household is unmployed, 55%, in our Waterford Estates. (more statistics from Combat Poverty can be viewed in Appendix 4)

Respond! does not yet have detailed information about the **child-poverty** measure in respect of the children of our estates, but we would expect, given the foregoing, that we will be at least equivalent if not more than the national average of 23.4%.

It behoves Respond! to ensure that we do not shirk our responsibilities in taking a strong anti-poverty stance on behalf of, and in partnership with, our residents. Respond! has brought them together into these estates many of which David Page might typify as 'worrying concentration(s) of economic and social disadvantage' (Developing Communities, p.4). He suggests that 'Housing Associations must contemplate the long term prospect of managing areas of multiple deprivation unlike those encountered before, where housing standards are good but deprivation is otherwise great. This requires a different approach to enhance the quality of life of those housed and to limit, and if possible diminish, the effects of poverty'.

What are Respond!'s Guiding Principles in relation to Community Development strategy?

1. As set out above, the first element in our strategy is to review the community development qualifications and competencies of our staff so that, as an organisation, we are assured of being professionally equipped to bring community development programmes and initiatives to fruition in our estates. Whatever recruitment, training and deployment are required to that end will be sought and accessed as a matter of urgency.

2. In fulfilment of the mission of Respond!, and in keeping with the definition of community development chosen previously, we will espouse the objectives set out in the ADM model of community development as follows:

Main Objective of *Community development:* is to support integrated local economic and social development through managing Programmes targeted at countering disadvantage and exclusion, and promoting reconciliation and equality… We will address the following targets:

a. Targeting Disadvantage requires a detailed understanding of the needs of the people who live in an area, specifically those who are marginalised and long-term unemployed. Lone parents, Travellers, socially excluded women and men, disadvantaged young people, children at risk of early school leaving and people with disabilities.

b. Participation and Inclusion of these Target Groups in collective decision making generates ownership of and responsibility for the decisions which are made and ensures that such decisions are relevant to their needs.

c. Improving the economic independence of participants is an essential part of the process of effective Local Development

d. A Focus on Equality and equality of outcome is essential to countering disadvantage and is achieved through strategies for the access, participation and inclusion of those groups which experience inequality.

e. A multi-Sectoral Approach towards identifying and addressing the needs of local communities requires full participation from the State, social partners, community and voluntary sectors and enhances strategic planning.

f. Partnership at local level between the community sector, the social partners and the State agencies increases co-operation, co-ordination and effective decision making.

g. Strategic Planning promotes best use and targeting of State, private and community resources.

In relation to these specific targets we need to take cognisance of the following brief points (the enumeration mirrors the foregoing);

2a. Targeting Disadvantage:
In seeking to gain a 'detailed understanding of the needs of the people who live in an area' there is a tendency for community development workers to disavow, virtually, all they already know about the impact of poverty on low-income communities and seek an exclusively bottom-up approach. This approach may use the tool of area profiling to distil from the experiences and views of the local population what their needs are. While we cannot discredit this area profiling strategy we should be aware that it needs to be informed by the larger picture of what we already know about the effects of poverty in our society and particularly its impact upon low-income communities. The appendix will give references to such excellent studies, as 'Loading the Dice', 'Against All Odds', 'Social Housing in Ireland', and 'Housing, Poverty and Wealth in Ireland' all of which inform us as to the various impacts of poverty. When we consider further the many publications and reports and documents emanating from the 'Combat Poverty Agency', we can be in no doubt about the value of this researched and objective information.

According to Combat Poverty the most recent poverty data (2001) tells us that:

- 6% of the population live without basic necessities and on weekly incomes of less than €172 per adult;
- 4.9% (192,000) of population are on weekly incomes of less than €192 for an adult and €63 for a child and lack basic necessities;
- 22% of the population live on weekly incomes of less than €164 per adult and €54 per child per week;
- 6.5% of children (66,000) experience consistent poverty: 23.4% (237,000) are in income poverty.

A recent study carried out in Ireland on the impact of poverty, Against All Odds, under the aegis of Combat Poverty, highlights how inadequate resources and lack of basic necessities curtail people's everyday life. The families studied were very poor – the average weekly income for an adult was €124. Health problems or care responsibilities were

significant reasons for those who could not work. The study also highlights that poverty is a situation people want to escape. (Note: the measurement of poverty index is contained in Appendix 4)

The following findings were discovered, among others:

- People who live on low incomes are more likely to suffer poorer health, experience more psychological distress and generally lead shorter lives than those who are more affluent;
- In Ireland, for households headed by people who are ill or disabled, the risk of poverty has risen sharply.
- There were some health problems in two thirds of families;
- People affected by ill-health were more likely to live on a low income because they were unable to gain employment or because their employment experiences were likely to be sporadic due to ill-health;
- The state of people's physical and mental health was connected to their generally poor quality of life;
- For many, stress, isolation and depression were induced by lack of money;
- Inadequate income made a healthy diet difficult;
- The majority of people, including young people, did not participate in active leisure pursuits mainly due to lack of provision and affordability.

This study, in concert with many others conducted by Combat Poverty and other agencies over the last 15 years, has indicated that poverty in Ireland comes in the following forms:
- Poor Health
- Poor Educational Performance and Opportunities
- Child Poverty
- Fuel Poverty
- Exclusion
- Segregation
- Unemployment
- Cumulative Disadvantage

Combat Poverty has highlighted the following policy implications particularly in relation to **child poverty**:

- **Insufficient income** to meet basic everyday living costs was a significant problem. Social welfare payments primarily support those who are not or cannot be in work. Higher basic social welfare payments and child income supports (Child Benefit and Child Dependent Allowances) are two main ways to provide higher incomes for families on low income. Additional payments for child care, school and disability costs and exceptional costs such as new born babies would also make a difference.
- **Lack of affordable childcare,** direct access to the labour market, decent pay rates and loss of welfare benefits on return to work were all highlighted as important barriers to employment. Education and training for unemployed people, particularly families headed by an unemployed lone parent, require further investment. Return to work policies and programme also need to further address childcare costs and retention of benefits such as the Medical Card, particularly for those moving to low paid employment.
- **The provision of local play and recreation amenities** for children and young people should be significantly expanded and should be poverty-proofed to ensure that they benefit people experiencing poverty and disadvantage. The development of national play and recreation policies by the National Children's Office is a significant policy development and resources to deliver the policy at local level should be given high priority.
- Children living in poverty or experiencing social exclusion need to be supported to **participate in consultations** by local service planners on service development and monitoring. National guidelines on consultation with children are being developed by the National Children's Office. Their implementation should be adequately resourced across a range of public service providers. Further research should be undertaken to broaden our understanding of the risks associated with childhood. This could include research into children's experience of education and their involvement or distance from the social and educational environment of the school.

We acknowledge that too much emphasis on objective data and the possible remedies thrown up by such data may alienate local populations from participating in the ownership of their own solutions. On the other hand, focusing overly much on local concerns/needs to the exclusion of objectively weighed data may lead to short-term and

illusionary remedies. A well meshed integrated approach is necessary, which approach will take due account of the objective information as well as the understanding local communities have of it, and their own experiences and priorities in relation to it.

There has been some suggestion that we should model our strategic targets on **Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory**. This psychological theory propounds that we operate substantially as humans on the basis of requiring our needs to be fulfilled in a certain order or pattern: the most pressing and physiological needs first leading onto the more psychological (and spiritual) needs later. If the first needs are not met then it is not easy for us to become motivated to achieve the later needs.

In brief, this paper will set out these needs as noted in a paper by Dr. C. George Boeree, Psychology Department, Shippensburg University, Pennsylvania, 1998. (the full paper is in the Appendix)

1. The physiological needs.
These include the needs we have for oxygen, water, protein, salt, sugar, calcium, and other minerals and vitamins. Also, there's the need to be active, to rest, to sleep, to get rid of wastes, to avoid pain, and to have sex.

2. The safety and security needs.
When the physiological needs are largely taken care of, this second layer of needs comes into play. You will become increasingly interested in finding safe circumstances, stability, protection.

3. The love and belonging needs.
When physiological needs and safety needs are taken care of, by and large, a third layer starts to show up. You begin to feel the need for friends, a sweetheart, children, affectionate relationships in general, even a sense of community.

4. The esteem needs.
Next, we begin to look for a little self-esteem, the need for the respect of others, the need for status, fame, glory, recognition, attention, reputation, appreciation, dignity, even dominance, confidence, competence, achievement, mastery, independence, and freedom.

5. Self-actualization:
The last level is a bit different. Maslow has used a variety of terms to refer to this level: He has called it growth motivation (in contrast to deficit motivation), being needs and self-actualization. These needs are likely to become stronger as we "feed" them! They involve the continuous desire to fulfill potentials, to "be all that you can be." They are a matter of becoming the most complete, the fullest, "you" -- hence the term, self-actualization.

It would take a book to adjudicate on the various understandings and implications which have been voiced regarding Maslow's theory. For the author of this paper, let me simply say that Maslow's theory is a psychological theory of motivation: it seeks to explain how we motivate ourselves and what may be required by us as humans in order that we can be assured that the work we take on will fulfil our needs. This theory may contribute to how *community development* programmes can captivate and motivate people to become involved but it will not help us in relation to these programmes themselves. It does alert us to the fact that we need to walk before we can run in relation to working with people, rich or poor. But more especially, if they are poor, we will need to put a social framework in place which allows them to feel free and secure so that they can give all their attention and energies to the social task of *community development*. If this task is not seen as beneficial to them it is unlikely to attract their attention and their involvement. In this respect it can act beneficially as a brake upon over elaborate and too optimistic social plans.

However, I believe that developing social interaction and *community development* programmes based upon Maslow's theory would be almost impossible to evaluate on completion, since this theory, according to the literature, is notoriously difficult to measure anyway in relation to personal motivation, except in uninformed layman's parlance, and more particularly so when applied in a social motivation context. (I suggest, being fair to the theory, that the readers might wish to take up a further study of it for themselves.)

2b. Participation and Inclusion of these Target Groups:
Respond! is in a more informed start-up position than most community development activists, in that we have formed the communities in which we operate. Or, to be more correct, we have *gathered* these communities into what is no more initially, perhaps, than geographic communities. The linkage of our pre-tenancy courses to the allocation of houses has brought the residents into some basic social participation in this new community. How that grows will depend upon the good-will and involvement of the individual householders and the facilitation and resources that Respond! may provide to the mix. Respond! needs to be conscious that the initial assent by the prospective residents to social interaction during the pre-tenancy courses may be grudgingly given as a token payment towards the acquisition of tenancy. Thereafter, it may be spurned unless the grounds of continuing partnership are solidly constructed on mutual respect and enhanced resourcing.

Unlike other *community development* activists Respond! has the disadvantage of also being a landlord to the residents and therefore, if it does not satisfy its tenants, the target of customer dissatisfaction and customer expectation which could overload our *community development* agenda. Fahey attests that 'it is clear that a confluence of factors is at work in determining the relative success or failure of community activism on local authority estates…In those estates that have received support, encouragement and cooperation from the statutory agencies, residents' organisations have become active in estate governance and the quality of life is perceived to have improved…In those areas where relations with the statutory agencies are fraught with distrust, where there is a history of negligence and disinterest, little has been achieved in improving neighbourhood quality of life'. (Social Housing In Ireland, pg. 142). Respond! has got to get right its obligations of customer care if it is to aspire, in partnership with its residents, towards improving their overall quality of life.

Respond! will be conscious in its planning to take account of the need to build up the capacity of the residents: *capacity building*. This capacity building will need to be on a personal and community level if people are to feel capable of participating at all maturely in the work of *community development*. *In Building Civil Renewal* (Active Communities Directorate, UK, 2003b) capacity building is defined as **activities, resources and support that strengthen the skills and abilities of people and community groups to take effective action and leading roles in the development of their communities.**

In this respect we will need to be as concerned as much with *process* as we are with *product*. Any experienced community worker will say that it is far easier to organise some event in a social housing estate by oneself than to harness the time and resources of volunteer residents to do it. But when the event is over that is that! It is over. When one takes time to bring the volunteers together, to plan with them for the outcomes they want, to set out a budget, timescale and resources for the event, to set up contacts with third parties and to evaluate the whole venture when it is over, confirming the learned outcomes, then there is a lot more left behind in that estate when the event itself is finished. What is left behind is the sense of achievement, and the confidence and systems and know-how to plan and commit to other events in the future. *Capacity building* has been enlarged. Ownership of community development has taken place.

We need to be conscious also that our target communities themselves may have undergone huge changes which may be affecting their civic response to social disadvantage and decreasing their volunteer involvement in their communities. Powell and Guerin describe what they term 'profoundly pessimistic conclusions about the state of our culture. A frequently painted picture is of erosion of social ties, the weakening of civil society, and, at its most extreme, the break-up of society. This analysis is also based on a complete misreading of cultural trends. There are of course disturbing phenomena in postmodern society, notably the growth in crime and anti-social behaviour. It is also true that some institutions are in decline: the traditional nuclear and extended family, and some traditional large social organisations, such as political parties, the Churches and the rural associations. It would be utterly wrong, however, to infer from this that civil society is in decline in Ireland.' (Civil Society and Social Policy, pg. 84) They attest the opposite, namely

that 'civil society, far from weakening, has grown richer and denser. What is true is that civil society, in becoming more diverse, has grown more fragmented.'(ibid, 85). They affirm that 'the traditionalist's notion of voluntarism and community…does not recognise that the weakening of locality has been accompanied by the emergence of many other forms of voluntary and community action and collectivity, based on interest, gender, ethnicity, hobby, friendship, profession or knowledge, and these virtual collectivities may be local, regional, national, European or even global – think of the internet'(ibid, 85)

Whatever may be the value of that analysis, it is true to say that, in the experience of many voluntary and community based organisations there has been a very significant decrease in the level of voluntarism in local communities. Nor is there any great evidence that the so-called post-modern collective is bringing any great benefits to such fragmented communities. In fact, it could be argued that these communities may have been largely left behind in the pursuit of a collective paradigm such as described by Powell and Guerin. In reality, the communities in which Respond! seeks to work may have inherited almost the worst of all possible worlds: evincing most of the disadvantages of a fragmented society, including a decrease in voluntarism, and little of the positive benefits of post-modern social collectives.

However we understand it, it is sure that there is a lot of work needed to bring social ownership about and that that work will have to take account of the following matters:- the identification and motivation of community activists, their training, the inclusion of men, and young men in particular, in what Fahey terms 'gendered communities' (op. cit. 144) of mainly female activists, the development of a community development programme of real significance for each community, professional support for activists and assistance to help them avoid burnout in what are often experienced as thankless tasks.

2c. Improving the economic independence of participants:

Our past record indicates that we have been conscious of this need from the outset of the organisation. Already, we have had over 15 years experience of working with FÁS and ADM initiatives, and the like, in the advancement of job-training and job-creation programmes. Many of these were targeted towards our own residents and we have been able to provide a pathway for many to fulltime occupation today.

But we need to be realistic, both in the knowledge that the creation of work is dependent to a large degree on the health of the national economy, and in the knowledge that many of our residents may never aspire to fully independent economic work, because of the level of dependency in which they themselves are held by their families. For example, a lone parent of poor educational background may not be able to get any more than a part-time job, and such a job as is dependent upon Community Employment Schemes (or such other similar schemes), because of their need to be available for their children. While we may aspire to economic independence for all our residents we must also continue to advocate just and sufficient supports for those who may never be economically independent.

2d. Focus on Equality

Equality in so far as people are able, this needs to be borne in mind. An assumption that a liberal economy may make is that opportunities are there in abundance for those who wish to take advantage of them and that nobody is prevented by reason of gender, ethnicity etc. from taking them up. We are in the middle of the old dichotomy: free to or free from? We are all free to be equal. But we may not be free enough from dependency, ignorance, ill-health, disability to be equal: to know how we can access opportunity, to be confident in our competence to take advantage of it and to be free from the needs of our dependent children, for example, to embrace it wholeheartedly. The term '*poverty industry*' was coined by a practitioner of such a liberal economy, with all of the disparity that this term connotes: a 'waster' constituency satisfied to feed off the benefits of the state! Inequality has been so strongly endemic in much of our social housing communities that they will need much more targeted economic and educational interventions before they can be free enough to take up the opportunities availed of by freer and more resourced communities. So, Respond!'s stance in this respect is not to go cap in hand seeking charitable hand-outs for our people, but instead to go back to the various national authorities seeking payment for the bounced cheque that has been issued over generations to them. Justice is our business not charity.

2e. A Multi-Sectoral Approach

In this paper the valuable work of many national organisations and programmes has been invoked, such as FÁS, ADM, Combat Poverty Agency, Community development Programmes. There are many others such as the St. Vincent de Paul Society, Mabs, the various Vocational Education Committees and many others with excellent track records of community involvement across a host of disciplines and interests. Respond! is but one small part of that complex pattern, but we are a vital part in so far as we are the initial formator of our estate communities and their continuing supporter and facilitator.

One of our principal tasks is to seek to bring as many of our estates as possible into the spheres of operations of relevant social organisations and programmes such as are evinced by these other social partners, whether statutory, private or voluntary. *Community development* is as much about introducing people to the opportunities available through others as it is about building up their own capacity.

Respond! notes the caveat of Fahey when he concludes that 'multi-agency, multidimensional community development activities can be difficult to set up and operate and can add to the burdens of agencies that already have difficulty in carrying out their existing core functions well. For local authorities that have difficulty in providing a well-managed maintenance service, or implementing tenancy agreements with individual tenant households, it may be over-ambitious to embark on broad holistic development programmes for estates (Social Housing in Ireland, pg 269). He advises that 'It is important, therefore, that the recent emphasis on partnerships and broad community development initiatives, while welcome and valuable, should not distract attention from the improvement of internal core functions in local authorities, which is a fundamental requirement for advance in the quality and effectiveness of local authorities housing.' (ibid) Respond! has got to ensure that a multi-sectoral approach to advancing social justice and equality in low income estates does not displace or relegate to secondary importance the prime functions of good customer care and core estate management and maintenance which are the responsibility of Respond! itself.

Respond! also acknowledges the waste that is sometimes evident in the way several bodies target the same communities from different perspectives in the absence of one joint coherent and programmed approach to make better use of the often scarce but valuable resources. A multi-sectoral approach is vital, and to achieve this it is equally vital that all our staff give due recognition to its value and are trained to harness its potential to the full. This stance will help us avoid the competitive relationship that is so often evident in the way organisations work in disadvantaged communities.

In particular, we will need to learn from the experiences and contacts which organisations such as ADM and the many Local Authority County Development Boards have made with businesses and the business community as a sector. Respond!'s experience shows that there are many business people in our society who are very willing to offer their services and their expertise to low income communities in order to reverse poverty patterns, especially among children. It is not easy to apply such expertise to particular circumstances of specific estates and it is here that Respond! will need the advice and skill of other partners in the community. To this end, we will need to have regard for the work of such bodies as *Business in the Community, Ireland*, and *IBEC*, and the many *Chambers of Commerce*, which are located in their respective communities.

2f. Partnership

In the foregoing section on the multi-sectoral approach Respond! has indicated that it favours cooperation on this level. More is required: programmed and responsible partnership, that is what is required. It is not possible for Respond! to achieve the aims of justice and anti-poverty through its *community development* programmes other than by working closely and in partnership with relevant organisations in specific estates or regions. Already, for example, Respond! works closely with the Irish Pre-school Playgroup Association and with ADM in our work on estates. We will need to foster more of this kind of partnership. More, we will need to develop the partnership ideal further to incorporate longer term planning and the incorporation of the local community into that planning process. This, over time, may well mean the loss of some independence by Respond! in relation to targeted resources in particular areas in favour of a joint partnership approach to decision making. So be it. If the planning process is good enough, if the plan is sound and the outcomes are worthwhile and accountable and our resources are within our means then Respond! should have no fear of pooling its independence for the greater good.

In relation to working in partnership with state bodies, we need a word of caution. Partnership is at least a two-way street. It has been our experience over many years of working in communities that *partnership* is often invoked by state authorities when they wish to harness the resources of volunteers towards the targets set independently by themselves. We see this everyday in the social housing approval system: Local Authorities say that they are glad to work in partnership with housing associations, but, with honourable exceptions, they will not share the risk which these charities must take in order to bring the housing proposals to submission stage. Similarly, many statutory organisations will invoke the partnership ideal when they want volunteers to do unpaid or poorly paid, or short-term work, but often will not give them an equal share in the targeting, measurement or evaluation of that work, nor in longer term commitments to its continuation.

The communities in which Respond! works bear the brunt of many false promises made over generations: cynicism is rife, and the very last concept that Respond! should pioneer in such communities is that of partnership unless it is authentic and is planned to bring long-term benefits in the communities it purports to call 'partner'. In this regard Respond! embraces the recommendation proposed by Boyle and Butler of a 'more structured approach to the funding relationship between the voluntary and community sector and government in Ireland' (Autonomy v. Accountability, pg. 72.) Such an approach might include 'the use of compacts/accords and outcome-focussed contracts' (ibid). Already, Respond! has good experience of creating formal agency agreements with several local authorities in our housing production work and similar agreements with some Health Boards in relation to the delivery of agreed services.

2g. Strategic Planning

Long gone are the days, hopefully, of haphazard interventions in socially disadvantaged estates. As will be evident from the foregoing Respond! espouses a firm strategic planning approach to our *community development* involvement. We acknowledge that in the past not all our involvement was of that order: we have been amateurish and short-term at times. It is only with a carefully worked out and resourced plan, stretching over a good period of time, that Respond! can hope to win both the good-will and the commitment of our residents and the support of the state and society at large. This strategic plan needs to be a mature and adult plan. So, we will not short sell residents by superficial and short-term targets when the long-term and more substantial targets are clearly within sight. Nor will we allow ourselves to adopt the patronising game of playing along with some residents who have no intention of long-term commitment when challenging them to more accountable involvement would be the more realistic option.

Respond! itself does not have unlimited resources. As landlord, we are committed to the care of the residences as set out in our mortgage agreements and in our letting conditions – that is a long-term commitment. However, we cannot make a similar long-term commitment in relation to the *community development* programmes which we may espouse in our estates, precisely because our resources will not extend that far. Respond! has some 86 estates in our remit already. On its current building schedule, Respond! can expect to provide some twenty to twenty-five extra estates per annum over the next couple of years. While these estates will form part of agreed area or regional clusters and will be added to the work of our existing estate management staff, they will require more *community development* staff than we have currently. As time goes on, and acknowledging the meagre budget provision for education we can afford to make from our rental income, Respond! would simply be unable to pay for the staffing input into our community development programme if that programme were simply to last indefinitely in each estate. Accordingly, from 2005 onwards Respond! will commit itself to work with all our existing estates on our *community development* programme for a period not in excess of five years. At that stage, Respond! aspires to having built up the capacity of each estate to such an extent that the respective residents will be able to carry on their own programmes of *community development* by themselves or in concert with other social partners. In so far as Respond!'s resources will allow, after that period we will be available on an engagement and supportive basis to help these communities further if they so wish, through our regional and national community development sections.

3. The inhouse Strategic Plan (in skeleton form as yet) will need to take account of the differing strategies and programmes which may be required in existing estates and in new estates. However, the schedule will focus principally and in the first instance on new estates. As soon as we are content with this schedule we will seek to adapt it to existing estates. Confer Appendix 1 herein.

The schedule will incorporate a programme of *Community Development* which will have regard to the SMART technique, namely, that it will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time related. It will also seek to identify those tasks which Respond! staff will be required to implement and those for which we need to rely on others to perform, whether they be residents or social partners or volunteers. By and large, Respond! staff will need to see themselves as enablers rather than doers. The role of Respond! *Community Development* staff will be principally in the analytical, planning, training, and motivational areas. That will mean that a more intensive programme of training trainers and training doers will have to be implemented as part of the total strategy.

Respond! will seek to work closely with our residents in order to set out a coherent strategy such as that recorded overleaf, and to implement it progressively over the next five years. Reliant, to a considerable degree, upon the goodwill, the experiences, objectives and activity of residents implies that Respond! is not wholly free to set out now a complete strategic programme of outcomes for five years hence in the absence of having had relevant input and review from residents to that programme. On the other hand, we cannot be utterly dependent upon the input from residents, as this may fluctuate to such an extent that it will drag our limited resources and staff all over the place, and we may lose our focus. The task of dovetailing professionalism and community ownership, mentioned previously, will need to be constantly addressed.

Many of the objectives set out in the skeleton are linked inextricably; for example, the planning and implementation of Objective 1a (Area Profile) will incorporate Objective 1b (Participation of the community). And the strategic approach such as set out in Objective 1g will need to be applied to the planning and implementation of all the objectives.

There will be three main sets of regular review: respectively, by the communities themselves, by the Respond! enabling staff and by Regional and National Managers. Respond! will invite specialist strategic analysts, with experience of Community Development perspectives, to assist in this process.

4. It will be vital for Respond!'s Strategy that Work Programmes determined by its Community Development stance will incorporate parallel best practice customer care and estate maintenance/management programmes implemented by Respond!'s Estate Management Team.

We have already noted in this paper that it would be folly to seek the goodwill of residents in the pursuit of voluntary *Community Development* objectives if the customer care issues mandated by the Letting Conditions are ignored or poorly performed. Accordingly, our Estate Management Team and our Stock and Maintenance personnel will be involved in a parallel programme which will dovetail into that being planned and implemented in respective estates. This coordinated yearly Estate Work Programme will be of prime importance in Respond!'s ongoing strategy.

5. Respond! will set up and resource a National Policy Committee (NPC), under the leadership of a well qualified Policy Development Manager. This NPC will research Respond!'s ongoing strategic approach to Community Development as well as the research, development, implementation and advocacy of anti-poverty policies nationally.

Respond! and our estates need to have access to all the pertinent information concerning the impact of poverty on our residents and on how we might pursue policies to counteract such impacts. There will need to be a strong academic and research capability in the NPC as well as very close links to our staff working at the interface with tenants on our estates. The NPC will also need to have accurate data on the socio-economic status of our residents and particularly on the poverty levels being experienced by their children. All of this information will inform both Respond!'s and the residents' stance in relation to advocating policy measures on local, regional and national fronts. The NPC will need to be structured and set up immediately.

6. Respond! will implement this strategic plan of community development in each estate for a period of not more than five years, during which we shall seek to provide the financial, personnel and training resources necessary to achieve fruitful outcomes in accordance with our targets. For the end of that period, Respond! will strive to have put in place in each cluster of estates, and in each estate if possible, a structure and system of ongoing community development strategy, supported by trained local residents, which can advance the interests of the respective communities, if they so wish.

Currently Respond! has some 80 estates under its management and, given our current building programme, we might expect to add some 15 to 20 estates per annum to this number. Accordingly, it would not be feasible to recruit, train, deploy and remunerate staff for a longer term involvement in community development programmes in all of our estates. However, Respond! through its continuing national and regional teams of community development staff will be available to assist estates after this five year period if they seek help in designing and implementing their own programmes. Of course, this five-year strategy does not apply to our estate management commitment which will continue indefinitely in accordance with our Letting Conditions. In the meantime, each regional manager working closely with our company treasurer will set a detailed budget for our community development strategy over the next five years.

7. Respond! will follow the Step by Step plans inhouse and in each estate as set out overleaf.

While recognising that each estate, each cluster and each region will have their own unique culture, structures, agendas and ways of interaction, it is also important that Respond! should apply a coherent and agreed method to the implementation of our strategy in each of our locations, using a similar Step by Step model as set out here. The tailoring of one to the other will be a vital part of the implementation of the overall strategy.

Community Development: Step by Step

Please refer to Appendix 1 when reading this section.

The following steps will need to be taken sequentially. However, some steps will be taken in parallel with others and more will continue contemporaneously with others.

Staff Orientation:

10. Management to review Community Development **competence** of current staff;
11. **Recruit** qualified Community Development staff; the number to be determined by the need to implement this plan immediately in order to achieve a strong immediate impact upon our community development programme in target areas;
12. Provide **comprehensive training** in the new strategy and programme for all Community Development staff (this training programme to be set up immediately);
13. Develop **parallel strategy for best practice service for estate management staff**
14. Train estate management staff in this strategy
15. Instigate best practice estate management programmes
16. Deliver those programmes according to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
17. **Identify pilot estates** in each region in which the new Community Development process is initiated and evaluated intensively over the first three months of operation;
18. **Identify key Social Partners** regionally, nationally and locally and seek their involvement, interest, observations in our programme;
19. **Evaluate the level of community development already being undertaken**, and the level of interest of the residents, in these estates;
20. **Evaluate the usage of the Communal Building** in relation to its availability for our own residents, and those in the wider locality, with particular relevance for our community development programme;
21. Engage the **involvement of chosen residents** (perhaps the 'cluster' people) and train them to take part in the whole process;
22. Draw up a detailed best practice **Implementation Plan** for Community Development in some specific pilot estates;
23. **Deploy Community Development staff** regionally, and specifically to implement the Community Development programme in the chosen pilot estates;
24. **Set a clear timeframe** for the delivery of each element of the plan and a schedule for each member of the community development staff which will encompass a schedule for work-time/work-programme in the office and on the estates;
25. Engage an **outside consultant(s)** to assist in our review of the implementation of the programme;
26. **Review and evaluate** the programme, every week for the first month, and set out reviewed targets across entire regions; reviews thereafter every month for four months and thereafter every three months until the end of the first year;

27. **Roll out** the (revised) Community Development strategy and programme thereafter across our entire estates;
28. **Continuous regular** weekly, monthly and three monthly reviews of the operation of the plan in all new estates;
29. Set targets for **Year 2 onwards until Year 5**.

Estate Orientation: (best practice standard for estates)

1. Identify what elements of the programme are (or have been) incorporated into the **Pre-tenancy course**;
2. Identify what **further elements** need to be dealt with in a revision of the core plan;
3. Draw up a schedule and programme for the implementation of the **revised plan** in this particular estate, along the lines set out herunder:-
4. Draw on the goodwill and involvement of committed residents (perhaps some of the cluster people..?) and seek to **form them into a team**;
5. Consult with them in relation to the **final shape of the programme**, the times, dates etc.
6. Draw up with them a list of **local third parties** who may be able to offer assistance with the programme or who may give the programme an enthusiastic profile
7. **Prepare** an agenda for a meeting with these parties
8. **Meet** with them
9. **Review** the results and harvest the resources raised at the meeting
10. **Integrate these resources** into the overall plan
11. **Redesign** the plan to reflect the new integration
12. Set out to publicise and **raise enthusiasm** for the programme of action
13. **Recruit other helpers** and enthusiasts in the estate
14. Fix on a **detailed schedule** and personnel-roster
15. **Implement** the programme
16. **Review it** after every meeting with the team
17. Learn from the review and **provide continuing training** to the team members in parallel with the programme
18. Provide **regular updates** to the entire estate
19. Hold **estate-wide information** (party) sessions
20. Keep **plugging!!!**

Examples of some KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORs (KPIs)

Objectives	Planned Outcome for Year One End (To be Confirmed with Residents)	Key Performance Indicators KPIs Examples
1 a **Target Disadvantage**	1. **Full Area Profile** as set out in Area Profile Document 2. A skill bank drawn up 3. Estimation of Dependency (poverty) levels 4. Preschool in operation 5. After-schools homework 6. Community Charter 7. Three community events taken place	**1. Full Area Profile:** • Are all staff fully grounded re the causes and effects of poverty…. By what date? • Have they applied their knowledge to this particular estate(s)….. Impacts? • Have they set out a plan for the Area Profile according to the Area Profiling strategy (Appendix 3)…. What plan? • What Social Partners have they contacted?..to what purpose? …
1 b **Participation / Inclusion**	8. **Tenant participation** committee regularly meeting 9. Committee Meeting skills 10. Mediation skills/course 11. Involvement in Area Profiling 12. Cluster/Study Group of residents set up 13. Lateral community based events/programmes 14. Community Involvement with neighbouring estates 15. 2 evening parties for adults	**8. Tenant Participation Committee** • Who are the members? • Who calls the meetings? How? • Is there proper/timely notification? • Records of this? • Where are the meetings held? • How many attend? • Who are most/least in attendance? • Are there minutes? • What about filing?…
1 c **Improving Economic Independence**	16. Compile information on **unemployment per estate** 17. Access retraining initiatives 18. Access possibility of ADM + schemes 19. Meaningful contact with Businesses interests +	**16. Unemployment per estate** • Unemployment Trends in locality? • Local factors? • Estate factors? • Effects on residents? • Particular effects on children? • Remedies tried, if any…? • Other Social Partner involvement?… • Relationship to Skill Bank info..?…
1 d **Equality**	20. Regular invites to all to participate in estate events 21. The establishment of an Equality Awareness programme 22. Regular contact with minority residents to ensure they are free from any harassment 23. Establish a Charter on Bullying	20. and so on…
1 e **Multi-Sectoral Approach**	24. List all organisations with impact on the estate 25. Make contact with key ones 26. Study, with residents, how better cooperation can be had with them 27. Visit other estates/groups where cooperation is in place 28. Agree a plan for future action with them	

1 f Partnership	29. Study what levels of partnership might be appropriate with other sectors 30. Seek to cooperate on at least 2 estate-involving programmes 31. Invitees from Partners to visit estate 32. Become part of Tidy Estates etc..	
1 g Strategic Planning	33. More Training for Respond! staff 34. Set up a Regional/National Strategic Planning Group 35. Set up an estate-based strategy group 36. Agree on a Strategic Plan for Year One for the estate 37. Prepare for a Strategic Plan for Year two (etc) for the estate 38. Link all Plans to definite budgets	

Patrick Cogan, ofm   October 27, 2004

APPENDIX 1: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FIRST YEAR SCHEDULE

Objective:	Year One		
	Planned Outcome for Year One End (To be Confirmed with Residents)	**Key Performance Indicators For Product and Process**	**Review Analysis: Compliance/non-compliance/Reasons**
1 a **Target Disadvantage**	1. Full Area Profile as set out in Area Profile Document 2. A skill bank drawn up 3. Estimation of Dependency (poverty) levels 4. Preschool in operation 5. After-schools homework in operation 6. Community Charter 7. Three community events taken place	These to be worked out with key management staff	This review to take place every month per estate and at least every three months for clusters and regions
1 b **Participation / Inclusion**	8. Tenant participation committee regularly meeting 9. Committee Meeting skills training given 10. Mediation skills/course 11. Involvement in Area Profiling 12. Cluster/Study Group of residents set up 13. Lateral community based events/ programmes 14. Community Involvement with neighbouring estates 15. 2 evening parties for adults		
1 c **Improving Economic Independence**	16. Compile information on unemployment per estate 17. Access retraining initiatives 18. Access possibility of ADM + schemes 19. Meaningful contact with Business interests +		

1 d **Equality**	20. Regular invites to all to participate in estate events 21. The establishment of an Equality Awareness programme 22. Regular contact with minority residents to ensure they are free from any harassment 23. Establish a Charter on Bullying		
1 e **Multi-Sectoral Approach**	24. List all organisations with impact on the estate 25. Make contact with key ones 26. Study, with residents, how better cooperation can be had with them 27. Visit other estates/ groups where cooperation is in place 28. Agree a plan for future action with them		
1 f **Partnership**	29. Study what levels of partnership might be appropriate with other sectors 30. Seek to cooperate on at least 2 estate-involving programmes 31. Invitees from Partners to visit estate 32. Become part of Tidy Estates etc..		
1 g **Strategic Planning**	33. More Training for Respond! staff 34. Set up a Regional/ National Strategic Planning Group 35. Set up an estate-based strategy group 36. Agree on a Strategic Plan for Year One for the estate 37. Prepare for a Strategic Plan for Year two (etc) for the estate 38. Link all Plans to definite budgets		

APPENDIX 2: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SECOND YEAR SCHEDULE

Objective:	Year Two		
	Planned Outcomes for Year Two End(To be Confirmed with Residents)	Key Performance Indicators For Product and Process	eview Analysis: Compliance/non-compliance/Reasons
2 a Target Disadvantage	To be worked out as part of the Strategic Plan for Year Two	Once a step by step approach is set out to achieve the Outcomes, these KPIs to be worked out with key management staff	This review to take place every month per estate and at least every three months for clusters and regions
2 b Participation / Inclusion			
2 c Improving Economic Independence			
2 d Equality			
2 e Multi-Sectoral Approach			
2 f Partnership			
2 g Strategic Planning			

APPENDIX 3

AREA PROFILING
Questions, such as the following, need to be filled out and made more comprehensive with a view to establishing a standard Area Profiling Tool (APT) usable in all of our estates.

Product:
1. What do we want to know about this area and its population?

2. What may we know already but need to confirm, or otherwise, definitively?

3. What do other sectors know about the area?
    a. Who are they?
    b. How can we learn from them?

Process:
4. How do we go about this profiling work, times scheduling, planning etc?

5. Who do we invite to become involved?
    a. Involvement of estate-based personnel?
    b. Involvement of staff?
    c. Involvement of third parties?
    d. Involvement of paid researchers?

6. Do we need training or need to give training to undertake this process?

Evaluation:
7. What are the likely impacts of the data we have learnt on the people?
    a. For Good?
    b. For Ill?

8. What impacts need to be ameliorated, avoided?

9. Who/What can achieve this?

Response:
10. What can the people themselves do to achieve improvement in their social conditions?

11. What assistance do they need from…
    a. Other social partners?
    b. Voluntary groups?
    c. Statutory bodies?
    d. Government Policy, Government Action?

12. What assistance do they need from Respond!?

13. What training, organisation or plan is required?

14. What resources, timescales, finances, personnel can we deploy/employ?

APPENDIX 4

Poverty Index
Combat Poverty Agency: http://www.cpa.ie/index.html

Types of Poverty
There are different types of poverty. Lack of money or limited income are common to any definition of poverty. When we think of poverty we may think of starving people, living without proper housing, clothing or medical care – people who struggle to stay alive. This is known as absolute poverty. Some people in Ireland, including homeless people, may experience this type of poverty.

Relative Poverty
In Ireland and other developed countries, poverty is more usually called **relative poverty**. In this case, people are considered to be living in poverty if their standard of living is substantially less than the general standard of living in society. The government's **National Anti-Poverty Strategy** reflects this: **People are living in poverty if their income and resources (material, cultural and social) are so inadequate as to preclude them from having a standard of living that is regarded as acceptable by Irish society generally**. As a result of inadequate income and resources, people may be excluded and marginalised from participating in activities that are considered the norm for other people.

Relative poverty is made up of two key elements: **income poverty** and **deprivation**. The combination of these two elements is called **consistent poverty**.

Poverty is not the same everywhere. It varies as each society's standard of living is different. Poverty also varies over time as living standards change. The income level that might have indicated poverty ten years ago is not the same income level today as living standards have risen. While people in poverty may have more money than ten years ago their position relative to average incomes in society may have deteriorated. If the incomes of the rest of society increase more than the incomes of people in poverty, people's poverty will have worsened.

Causes of Poverty
Poverty is not inevitable. Poverty is an outcome of the way society allocates resources such as money, wealth, jobs, education, housing, healthcare and so on. The political system, the labour market, the social welfare system and the taxation system all influence the allocation of resources in society. Other factors, many of which are inter-related, that influence the likelihood of being in poverty include:

Having a job or not and the type of job
Size of family and type of family, eg. one parent, couple, couple with children etc
Age   People's social circumstances or social class
Gender   Disability
Educational experience   Ill health
Whether people own/rent a home   Experience of discrimination
Sexual orientation

Poverty stops some people from participating as equals in everyday life, from feeling part of their community and from developing their skills and talents. This process is often called social exclusion. The Irish government has set a national policy target of reducing consistent poverty to 2% by 2007.

Measuring Poverty
Measuring poverty helps us to:
• find out how much poverty exists
• monitor changes in poverty levels
• identify who is poor and what are the characteristics of people's poverty

Surveys in which households are asked to answer questions on their income and spending are the most common way to measure poverty.

A person is considered poor if either income or spending falls below some minimum level that represents basic needs in each society. This is usually called the **poverty line**.

Ways to Measure Poverty

Relative Income Poverty Lines: to set the poverty line, income is related to some proportion of average incomes. If the poverty line is set at 50% of average household income and average household income is €300 per week, then if the household income is below €150 per week, the household is considered to experience income poverty.

Poverty lines are set in a range from 40-70% of household income. Sometimes, median, rather than average household income is set as the cut off point. Median is the middle point of the income range from the lowest to the highest income. Household income is the money available to spend within a household (taking into account how many adults and children are included). Relative income poverty lines are commonly used in the EU and Ireland.

Relative Deprivation: this idea takes account of resources other than income. People are asked to identify items or activities they believe are 'necessities'. This forms the basis for a deprivation index. To be without an item or denied an activity from this index, because of lack of income, is to experience relative deprivation.

Combined Income-Deprivation Measure: used in Ireland to establish levels of **consistent poverty**. This combines relative income poverty lines with deprivation indicators.
Eight main indicators are used:

Not having:
- new, but second-hand clothes
- a meal with meat, fish or chicken every second day
- a warm waterproof overcoat
- two pairs of strong shoes
- a roast or its equivalent once a week

or conversely, having:
- debt problems arising from ordinary living expenses
- a day in the last two weeks without a substantial meal
- to go without heating during the last year through lack of money

If a household falls below 70% of average or median income and also lacks at least one of the items in the basic deprivation list, it is said to experience consistent poverty.

The Budget Standard Approach: a poverty line is calculated based on the cost of a specific basket of goods and services that are considered by experts, to represent a basic living standard.

Other Ways to Measure Poverty

Food Ratio Method: where the poor are distinguished from the non-poor by the proportion of their money spent on necessities such as food, clothes and shelter.

Social Security Poverty Line: when lowest level of social welfare payment (Supplementary Welfare Allowance in Ireland) is used as equivalent to a poverty line.

United Nations Poverty Index: combines measures such as life expectancy, literacy, long-term unemployment and relative income.

Some Facts on Poverty in Ireland

- In 2001, 192,000 people (5% of the population) lived in consistent poverty
- In 2001, more than 862,000 people (almost 22% of the population) lived on less than €164 per single person per week
- Consistent poverty levels reduced from 14.5% in 1994 to 5% in 2001
- Relative income poverty levels increased from 15.6% in 1994 to 22% in 2001
- The UN report (December 2003) shows that Ireland has the highest concentration of poverty among western countries outside the US
- Of 25,000 Travellers in Ireland, 11,000 live by the roadside and 50% of the Traveller population is under 15 years of age
- Unemployment amongst parents is the single biggest factor in child poverty
  - In 2001, according to the "Living in Ireland" survey, 1 in 15 children (6.5%) are living in households which are consistently poor i.e. a low income and lack certain basic necessities
  - In 2001, 23% of children in Ireland were living in relative poverty.
  - Around 5,000 young people leave school early every year
  - Around 1 in 10 leave primary school with serious literacy problems
- The cost of rent has risen as much as 30% per year since the 1990s and continues to rise.

APPENDIX 5

ABRAHAM MASLOW
1908-1970
by Dr. C. George Boeree, Psychology Department, Shippensburg University, Pennsylvania, 1998.

Full Article Available On Request

APPENDIX 6

Business in the Community, Ireland

Full Article Available On Request

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